

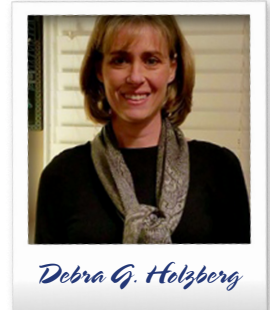
FEATURE ARTICLE

Teaching Self-Advocacy and Conflict Resolution Skills to Access Accommodations to Students with Learning Disabilities in Postsecondary Education

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Christine Gregoire, former governor of Washington said, “Education exposes young people to a broader world, a world full of opportunity and hope.” However, barriers to opportunities in education often preclude students with learning disabilities (LD) from achieving their educational goals and dreams. Since 1990, enrollment in postsecondary education has increased considerably. For example, in 1990, only 30% of students with LD were enrolled in postsecondary education of any type (e.g., vocational or technical school, 2-year college, 4-year college); in 2011, that number increased to 66.8%. In 1990, 5% of students with LD attended 4-year college and in 2011, that number increased to 21.2% (Newman, Wagner, Cameto, Knokey, & Shaver, 2010; Sanford et al., 2011). Much of the impetus to pursue postsecondary education is due to the positive correlation between earning level and level of education. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics individuals with a high school diploma earn an average of \$35,256 per year while those with a bachelor’s degree earn \$59,124 per year (http://www.bls.gov/emp/ep_chart_001.htm). Over an individual’s lifetime, that can equate to nearly \$1 million in additional earnings for college degree holders compared to their peers who did not graduate from college (Carnevale, Rose, & Cheah, 2011).

Data from the 2011 National Longitudinal Transition Study – 2 (NLTS-2) indicated 89.1% of students with LD reported working towards a postsecondary degree (i.e., technical school or 2-year or 4-year college program); yet, only 40.9% of students surveyed achieved their goal (Sanford et al., 2011). Failure to utilize available resources in postsecondary education may account for poor persistence rates for students with LD (Barnard-Brak, Lechtenberger & Lan, 2010; Sniatecki, Perry, & Snell, 2015). One reason for poor persistence rates may be due to students’ underutilization of academic accommodations. In order for students to utilize available resources such as academic accommodations, students must first disclose their disability to the institution.



Despite receiving accommodations in high school, only 17% of students with LD received accommodations in postsecondary education (Wagner, et al., 2011). For example, data from one university’s Office of Disability Services (ODS) Annual Report, indicated student registration for

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services increased with each academic year. For example, 7.9% of students registered were freshman, 18.6% were sophomores, 24.6% were juniors, and 39% were seniors (Fernald et al., 2014). These data indicate students are waiting longer to access accommodations. Reasons for non-disclosure include desire to shed the disability label (Barnard-Brak, Lechtenberger & Lan, 2010; Lightner, Kipps-Vaughn, Schulte, & Trice, 2012), the desire to be like other college students (Barnard-Brak et al., 2010; Kranke, Jackson, Taylor, Anderson-Fye, & Floersch, 2013), and the perception their disability is not significant enough to warrant accommodations (Barnard-Brak et al., 2010). Differences in the laws, policies, and available accommodations may also contribute to the reasons students with LD do not seek academic support in postsecondary educational settings (Cole & Cawthon, 2015; Summers, White, Zhang, & Gordon, 2014).

One major change that may influence how and why students receive services is the legal protections they receive at each level of education. In high school, students are protected by the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA; 2004) or by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504; 1973). In college, however, students receive accommodations under Section 504 and the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). In addition to the changes in laws protecting students with disabilities in postsecondary education, the way in which students access accommodations changes. Students are required to submit documentation of a disability in order to qualify for accommodations in postsecondary placements whereas in K-12 settings teachers identify when and if accommodations are necessary based on the individualized education plan (IEP). Further, while institutions are required to provide reasonable accommodations, the extent to which those accommodations are offered is solely at the discretion of the institution (Cole & Cawthon, 2015). In other words, an institution is under no obligation to provide more than minimum accommodations necessary for the student to gain access to course content. Lastly, many students are unaware of their rights and are unsure how to go about accessing accommodations necessary to support their learning (Cole & Cawthon, 2015; Summers, White, Zhang, & Gordon, 2014).

Postsecondary education presents new challenges for students with LD (Janiga & Costenbader, 2002; Wood, Kelley, Test, & Fowler, 2010). Aside from the typical adjustment students must make when beginning college, students with LD must first decide to access their

accommodations which requires acknowledging their disability and the way in which it impacts their learning. Then, they must understand the differences between IDEA and ADA and the way in which those differences impact students' ability to access accommodations (Cole & Cawthon, 2015). Most often students require academic accommodations, which can be described as a practice, intervention, or procedure that provides equal access to instruction or assessment and whose purpose is to mitigate the impact of a student's disability (McLaughlin, 2012). Essentially, accommodations are meant to level the playing field for students with disabilities. Examples of accommodations include note takers, extended time, separate testing setting, and instructor provided notes (Kim & Lee, 2015; Rao & Gartin, 2010).

The use of accommodations has been positively correlated with grade point average (GPA) and increased persistence rates (Kim & Lee, 2015; Mamiseishvili & Koch, 2011; Troiano, Liefeld, & Trachtenberg, 2010). Troiano, Liefeld, and Trachtenberg (2010) found students with disabilities who accessed academic support maintained higher GPAs and higher graduation rates. It is imperative students with LD understand the potential barriers to success in postsecondary education and learn behaviors demonstrated to facilitate success such as self-determination. Madaus (2011) characterized self-determination as "an essential component of successful transition to higher education and student success" (p. 10).

Rowe and colleagues (2014) operationally defined self-determination as "the ability to make choices, solve problems, set goals, evaluate options, take initiative to reach one's goals, and accept consequences of one's actions" (p. 116). Ancil, Ishikawa, and Scott (2008) identified three factors students with LD reported as improving their ability to access academic accommodations in postsecondary settings (a) knowledge of one's disability, (b) self-advocacy skills, and (c) conflict resolution skills. In order for a student to effectively advocate for their needs, they must first, acknowledge and understand their disability and the way in which it affects their learning. Next, they must take the initiative to seek out their school's disability support services (DSS) and arrange for their accommodations. Then, they must communicate with their instructors and provide them with supporting documentation from DSS. Finally, they must be prepared to manage conflict (i.e., pushback) with faculty, if necessary. Therefore, students planning to attend college must possess the necessary self-advocacy and

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conflict resolution skills to successfully access their academic accommodations.

Research has demonstrated the benefits of academic accommodations on the GPA and persistence rates of students with disabilities in postsecondary education (Kim & Lee, 2015; Mamiseishvili & Koch, 2011). However, often faculty’s reluctance to provide academic accommodations creates a barrier to students’ willingness to request accommodations. Lightner and colleagues (2012) found students who elect not to seek services from DSS express feelings of shame, fear, and concern that by accessing accommodations they will be perceived by instructors and peers as lazy or as gaining an unfair advantage. In addition, instructors articulate concerns about providing accommodations including concern over lowering the bar, added stress of additional responsibilities, maintaining academic integrity, and knowledge of the nature of the student’s disability (Hindes & Mather, 2007; Nelson,

Dodd, & Smith, 1990). This reluctance on the part of instructors to grant accommodations may lead to conflicts between students and instructors creating a barrier to student success.

Self-Advocacy and Conflict Resolution Training (SACR)

Harrison (2007) conducted a survey to evaluate conflict in postsecondary education and found the biggest issues included grievances about instructors. Among these grievances included issues of unfair grading, poor teaching or classroom instruction, exam policies, and personality issues. Conflict with instructors can lead to increased stress for students, difficulty concentrating on other courses, dropping the course which was the source of the conflict, enmity towards the instructor, and negative perceptions of the university (Harrison, 2007).

Given some students’ reluctance to seek accommodations and some instructors’ resistance to accommodate students, it is imperative students acquire conflict resolution skills to handle potential conflicts and effectively advocate for their accommodations. One method shown to improve the self-advocacy and conflict resolution skills of students with LD is the implementation of the *Self-Advocacy and Conflict Resolution Training (SACR; Rumrill, Palmer, Roessler, & Brown, 1999 [i.e., Bethune, 2015; Holzberg, Test, & Rusher, 2016; Palmer & Roessler, 2000])*. The SACR intervention was developed to address not only the communication required for self-advocacy, but also to build the skill of

negotiation, or conflict resolution. *SACR* instruction is divided into two modules. *Module I* is comprised of seven self-advocacy lessons including: (a) Introduction, (b) Disclosure, (c) Solution, (d) Resources, (e) Agreement, (f) Summary, and (g) Closure. Each lesson has specific target behaviors; for example, Introduction includes teaching the student to greet the instructor, state his/her name, and state the course name and section. *Module II* includes seven self-advocacy lessons including: (a) Specifying, (b) Reflecting, (c) Mutualizing, (d) Collaborating, (e) Inventing, (f) Summarizing, and (g) Selecting. A complete listing of *SACR* target behaviors can be found in *Table 1, below*.

Module I Self-Advocacy	Module II Conflict Resolution
Target Behaviors	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Greet the instructor <input type="checkbox"/> Identify disability status <input type="checkbox"/> Explain effects of the disability <input type="checkbox"/> Identification of previous accommodations <input type="checkbox"/> Explain the benefits of previous accommodations (if applicable) <input type="checkbox"/> Request the use of accommodations <input type="checkbox"/> Identify resources and how they help <input type="checkbox"/> Explain your role <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for agreement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Specifying <input type="checkbox"/> Reflecting <input type="checkbox"/> Mutualizing <input type="checkbox"/> Collaborating <input type="checkbox"/> Inventing <input type="checkbox"/> Summarizing <input type="checkbox"/> Selecting <input type="checkbox"/> Restate accommodation <input type="checkbox"/> Clarify your role <input type="checkbox"/> Close with a positive statement

Table 1. SACR Target Behaviors

Research demonstrates students with LD can be taught the steps of *SACR* instruction over four lessons using a model-lead-test approach with explicit instruction and/or scripted notecards (or notes in a smartphone) for role-play purposes (Holzberg, Test, & Rusher, 2016; Walker & Test, 2011). Together, the interventionist and the student select an accommodation to use in the role play (e.g., extended time).

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First, the interventionist (i.e., researcher or teacher) explains the objective of the lesson. Second, the interventionist models the target behaviors for the student. Next, the student practices the lesson using the scripted notecard. Finally, the interventionist role-plays (as the instructor) with the student (who is using the scripted notecard or smartphone for guided practice). Once the student has mastered one lesson (i.e., correctly demonstrated 85% of the target behaviors), the next lesson can be taught. Instruction takes place over four lessons; each session lasting 20-30 minutes for a total intervention time of approximately two hours. (See Figure 1, below, for a sample of the script.)

Teaching Students with Learning Disabilities the Steps of SACR

Lesson 1. As previously mentioned, SACR instruction can be broken into four lessons. Lesson 1 includes three target behaviors (i.e., greet the instructor, identify disability status, and explain the effects of the disability on the student’s learning). The goal of Lesson 1 is to establish a positive rapport with the instructor through a friendly introduction, state of the impact of the student’s disability (e.g., “I require extended time for tests”), and explain the effects of the disability. First, the interventionist will explain

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Figure 1. SACR Script.

Lesson 1	<p>Student: Hi, Professor Plum, I’m Anne Teak and I’m in your Monday/Wednesday History 1100 class.</p> <p>Instructor: Hello Anne. What can I do for you today?</p> <p>Student: I wanted to discuss my accommodations from the Office of Disability Services. I have a hard time listening to class lectures and taking notes at the same time.</p>
Lesson 2	<p>Instructor: Ok.</p> <p>Student: Last semester, I got a copy of my instructor’s notes which helped me fill in my notes if I missed important information. This enabled me to review for tests and to do better in my classes. Before the semester began, I met with the Office of Disability Services in order to get my accommodations. Here is the letter they gave me to give to my instructors; it has my approved accommodations listed. I’d like to let them know I have requested a copy of your class notes, is that ok with you?</p> <p>Instructor: You know Anne, I’m not comfortable with that.</p>
Lesson 3	<p>Student: I understand you may have some concerns about the accommodation, may I ask what bothers you?</p> <p>Instructor: I don’t think it is fair to the other students. Additionally, I do not write my lectures down, they are in my head, so I don’t have notes.</p> <p>Student: I understand you do not have your lecture notes written down and it would be extra work to put them in writing.</p> <p>Instructor: Nods in agreement.</p> <p>Student: I understand your concerns. From what we discussed, I believe we both want me to succeed in your class, but we may be coming it from different perspectives. Maybe we can come up with some solutions that will work for both of us.</p> <p>Instructor: Nods in agreement.</p> <p>Student: Having a copy of your notes would be very helpful in the past; but, it’s a lot of extra work for you. Maybe I could record class lectures. That way, if I miss something, I can go back and listen to the recording for what I missed. Or, maybe I could get a note taker for your class.</p>
Lesson 4	<p>Instructor: Considers the requests and nods in agreement.</p> <p>Student: Would you prefer for me to record class lectures or would you prefer for me to get a note taker for your class?</p> <p>Instructor: I would prefer you get a note taker for the class.</p> <p>Student: Great, so I will let the Office of Disability Services know that you agreed on a note taker for your class. Thank you for working with me; I am looking forward to your class!</p>

the objective of the lesson to the student (i.e., “Today you are going to learn how to introduce yourself and greet your professor. Remember to be relaxed and try not to say ‘uh’ or ‘um’ and remember to shake hands”). For example, “Hi, Professor Plum, I’m Anne Teak and I’m in your Monday/Wednesday History 1100 class.” The second and third behaviors in Lesson 1, are identify disability status and explain the disability in functional terms. It is important to note, students are not required to disclose their exact disability, just that they qualify for the accommodation(s) they are requesting. The goal of the skill is to inform the instructor how the student’s disability impacts their learning. For example, the student might say “I wanted to discuss my accommodations from the Office of Disability Services. I have a hard time listening to class lectures and taking notes at the same time.” The student has told the instructor two things: the reason for their visit, and the nature of their disability and how it impacts their learning. Once the interventionist has modeled the skill, the student practices using the scripted notecard (guided practice). Next, the interventionist and the student role play the scenario of the first three target behaviors until the student demonstrates mastery (i.e., demonstrates 85% of the target behaviors).

Lesson 2. The second lesson includes six target behaviors (i.e., explain the benefits of previous accommodations, request the use of accommodations, identify resources, describe how they help, the student explains their role, ask the instructor for agreement). The objective of the lesson is to teach students to explain the benefits they used in the past, ask for specific accommodation(s), explain to the instructor how they will access accommodations (i.e., ODS), teach student to explain their role in obtaining and arranging for accommodations, and to learn how to ask the instructor for their agreement. The interventionist explains the objective of the lesson and models the target behavior beginning from the first step. For example, the interventionist will say, “Hi, Professor Plum, I’m Anne Teak and I’m in your Monday/Wednesday History 1100 class. I wanted to discuss my accommodations from the Office of Disability Services. I have a hard time listening to class lectures and taking notes at the same time. Last semester, I got a copy of my instructor’s notes which helped me fill in my notes if I missed important information. This enabled me to review for tests and to do better in my classes. Before the semester began, I met with the Office of Disability Services in order to get my accommodations. Here is the letter they gave me to give to my instructors; it has my approved accommodations listed. I’d like to let them know I have requested a copy of your class notes, is that ok with you?” The student has told the instructor the accommodation

has been effective in the past, they have requested the accommodations, identified the resources (i.e., ODS), explained their responsibility in making arrangements for the accommodation, and asked the instructor for agreement. As in Lesson 1, after the interventionist has modeled the dialogue, the student practices using the scripted notecard (guided practice) with the interventionist until mastery is reached (i.e., demonstrates 85% of the target behaviors).

Lesson 3. The third lesson includes six target behaviors (i.e., specifying, reflecting, mutualizing, collaborating, inventing, and summarizing). At this time, the instructor has indicated their objections to the student’s request for accommodations. In other words, the instructor is pushing back and resisting the student’s request. For instance, when the student states their request and asks, “Is it ok with you?” the instructor may say, “You know, I’m not really comfortable with that.” The objective of Lesson Three is to clarify, with the instructor, their concerns, reflect the concerns back to the instructor to confirm understanding, explain the student believes they both want the student to succeed, attempt to work together to come up with some potential solutions to address the instructor’s concerns, and to summarize the solutions. Since, at this point, the instructor has expressed concern over granting the accommodation, the student must try to work with the instructor to reach a compromise (i.e., resolve the conflict).

The interventionist will demonstrate the conflict resolution target behaviors as follows, “I understand you may have some concerns about the accommodation, may I ask what bothers you?” The instructor will express concerns over providing class notes because it is “unfair” to the other students, or they may say the lectures are not on paper, they are in their head. The interventionist then reflects the instructor’s concern by saying, “I understand you do not have your lecture notes written down and it would be extra work to put them in writing.” [Instructor nods in agreement.] The interventionist continues by saying, “I understand your concerns. From what we discussed, I believe we both want me to succeed in your class, but we may be coming it from different perspectives. Maybe we can come up with some solutions that will work for both of us.” [Instructor affirms the statement.] “Having a copy of your notes would be very helpful in the past; but, it’s a lot of extra work for you. Maybe I could record class lectures. That way, if I miss something, I can go back and listen to the recording for what I missed. Or, maybe I could get a note taker for your class.” At this point, options have been presented to the instructor. In Lesson Three, the student has asked the instructor to specify the nature of his or her concerns, reflected those concerns back

to the instructor, asked to collaborate in order to reach a compromise, worked with the instructor to reach a compromise, stated the options, and summarized the choices. The student will practice these target behaviors using the scripted notecard. Once the student has practiced, the interventionist and the student will role-play the dialogue until mastery is reached (i.e., 85% of the target behaviors).

Lesson Four. The final lesson consists of four target behaviors (i.e., selecting, restating the selected accommodation, the student clarifies their role, and closes with a positive statement). During this lesson, the student and instructor generate options (i.e., recording class lectures or getting a note taker). The interventionist will review the previously learned target behaviors and will add the target behaviors from Lesson Four. The interventionist will model the dialogue learned thus far. The interventionist will summarize, “Great, so I will let the Office of Disability Services know that you agreed on a note taker for your class. Thank you for working with me; I am looking forward to your class!” This final step requires the student and instructor to select a mutually acceptable accommodation, then the student restates the accommodation and clarifies his or her role, and closes with a positive statement. The student will practice the target behaviors using the scripted notecard (guided practice) and the interventionist and the student will role-play the entire dialogue. Once the student has reached mastery (i.e., 17 out of 19 target behaviors), the intervention is complete.

Conclusion

Education opens doors and creates opportunities; students with LD are pursuing postsecondary education at increased rates in the hopes of expanding their opportunities for success. Research demonstrates students who use academic accommodations have higher grade point averages and increased persistence rates (Kim & Lee, 2015; Mamiseishvili & Koch, 2011; Troiano, Liefeld, & Trachtenberg, 2010). However, frequently students with LD lack the necessary self-advocacy skills and are unprepared to advocate for their accommodations. It is, therefore, imperative these skills be taught to students as early as possible. SACR instruction teaches students with LD the skills necessary to effectively advocate for accommodations in postsecondary educational settings and in life. 🌟

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Research Designs and Special Education Research: Different Designs Address Different Questions

By Bryan G. Cook & Lysandra Cook, University of Hawaii

In the November, 2016 issue of *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice*, Linda Mason introduced a new “Research to Practice” series, which aims to explain critical topics in special education research with the goal of enabling practitioners to critically consume and apply research findings. The first article in the series (Cook & Cook, 2016) explored the issue of research design. Research design refers to how a research study is developed or planned. Studies are fashioned to answer different types of questions. Accordingly, when reading a study it is critical to understand its design to know what questions it seeks to answer.

Four common types of research designs in special education research are descriptive, relational, experimental, and qualitative. Descriptive studies (e.g., surveys, case studies, observational studies) are designed to describe phenomena. Although systematically describing issues such as the reading performance of students with learning disabilities and teachers’ attitudes toward inclusion are informative, it is important to recognize descriptive studies cannot tell us why findings occurred (e.g., why do teachers hold generally positive attitudes toward inclusion?) or the effect of the findings (e.g., how do teachers’ positive attitudes toward inclusion impact student learning?).

Relational research involves examining (a) the relation of two or more variables or (b) the difference between two or more groups on a variable. For example, a researcher might conduct relational research to examine (a) the relation between amount of professional development and teachers’ attitudes toward inclusion or (b) whether elementary and secondary teachers’ attitudes toward inclusion are meaningfully different. Although relational research provides important findings, these studies are not designed to establish causality. For example, even if relational research establishes teachers who receive more professional development have more positive attitudes toward inclusion, this type of study does not indicate whether professional development causes positive attitudes. Indeed, it is possible that (a) having more positive attitudes toward inclusion causes teachers to seek out more professional development; or (b) attitudes toward inclusion and teachers’ professional development are not causally related, and another variable underlies the observed relation (e.g., positive attitudes toward inclusion and higher levels of professional

development might both be associated with teaching at elementary schools).


Experimental research is designed to reasonably establish that an independent variable controlled by the researcher (e.g., providing training on the legal and moral basis for inclusion) causes change in a dependent variable (e.g., teachers’ attitudes toward inclusion). Experimental research receives a lot of attention in special education because it establishes whether an instructional practice causes improved learner outcomes. One type of experimental study is a randomized controlled trial—in which researchers randomly assign participants to either a control group, which is taught using a “business as usual” approach, or to a treatment group, which is taught using the instructional practice being studied. If the researchers ensure the experiences of the two groups are the same except the presence of the treatment, then superior gains by the treatment group can be assumed to be caused by the treatment.

Single-case designs are another type of experimental study that establishes a functional relation between a treatment and learner outcomes. Despite their importance, experimental studies can be difficult and costly to conduct and do not answer many types of questions (e.g., they do not examine the impact of variables that cannot be manipulated by researchers, such as gender or disability type; they do not explore why or how one variable causes change in another).

Qualitative research encompasses a number of approaches (e.g., ethnographies, grounded theory, qualitative case studies) that examine words and phrases (rather than numbers) from sources such interviews, field notes, journals, and other documents. Qualitative researchers seek to provide rich and nuanced descriptions of individuals, events, issues, and relations between variables. For example, a qualitative researcher might conduct a series of interviews to explore why certain teachers hold positive attitudes toward inclusion. Although qualitative research can provide unique insights to the field, it is not designed to establish causality. For example, teachers enrolled in a study similar to the one mentioned above may misperceive how they developed their positive attitudes.

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The take-away message from the article is “different research designs address different types of questions” (Cook & Cook, p. 197). Just as researchers need to use the appropriate type of research design to best answers their research questions, special educators should interpret research findings with the research design of the study in mind. Careful consideration to the strengths and limitations of how the data was collected is critical when interpreting results. This does not imply that some designs are better than others, it just means that different research designs answer

different questions. We encourage interested readers to read the whole article at <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/ldrp.12110/full>. 

Reference

Cook, B. G., & Cook, L. (2016). Research designs and special education research: Different designs address different questions. *Learning Disabilities: Research & Practice, 31*, 190-198. doi: 10.1111/ldrp.12110

2016-2017 TREASURER'S REPORT

As Treasurer for DLD, I am tasked with paying bills, writing reimbursement checks, balancing books, filing taxes, and generally keeping an eye on the financial side of things. DLD has a long tradition of solid fiscal stewardship, even as membership numbers have declined. The Executive Board has spent hours and hours working on ways to meet members' needs, encourage new members, and make a valuable contribution to the field while holding steady on expenses. We are always interested in hearing your thoughts on these matters.

As general information for members, the fiscal year for DLD is July 1 to June 30 of each year. Our federal tax forms are posted on TeachingLD.org under About Us. For the last five years, our income has outpaced our expenses, allowing us to build a small cushion in regular cash accounts for developing new outreach programs. As you have read in other reports, our membership numbers continue to decline and that means our income from membership is declining. Fortunately, DLD has a contract with the *Learning Disabilities Research and Practice* publisher, John Wiley and Sons, which provides a percent of the profit from the journal to us. In addition, Wiley provides monetary support to our journal editor for editorial assistance so that she can build upon its stellar reputation. So keep submitting those quality manuscripts and reading *LDRP*! The Board continues to pursue other avenues to both generate revenue and make an impact on the field of learning disabilities.

I welcome any comments, questions, or suggestions you may have. If you would like more information about DLD and its financial position, please do not hesitate to contact me at treas@teachingld.org.

Sincerely,

Peggy Weiss



Update from the DLD Research Committee

The DLD Research Committee is chaired by **Bryan Cook** (University of Hawaii) and has six members: **Alison Boardman** (University of Colorado, Boulder), **Diane Haager** (California State University, Los Angeles), **Elizabeth Hughes** (Pennsylvania State University), **Michael Solis** (University of California at Riverside), **Jessica Toste** (University of Texas at Austin), and **Emily Solari** (University of California at Davis). The committee has two primary responsibilities: (a) planning, editing, and reviewing the *Current Practice Alerts* series (<http://teachingld.org/alerts>) and (b) reviewing and awarding the annual **John Wills Lloyd Outstanding Doctoral Research Award** (<http://teachingld.org/awards>).

NEW CURRENT PRACTICE ALERT

A new *Current Practice Alert* is now available for download: **Collaborative Strategic Reading, Alert 26**, can be found on the **TeachingLD** website under Resources: <http://teachingld.org/alerts>.

The Alerts series is a joint initiative sponsored by two divisions of the Council for Exceptional Children—the Division for Learning Disabilities (DLD) and the Division for Research (DR).



New Times Co-Editor Baby News!



Congratulations to co-editor of *New Times*, **Shaqwana Freeman-Green**, on the birth of her baby boy. Christopher Ryan Green Jr. was born on December 14, 2016. He weighed 6lbs 6oz and was 19 inches long. Baby and mother are doing well and the whole family was excited to welcome the new addition right before Christmas.

Division for Learning Disabilities

ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

April 19-22, 2017 • Boston, Massachusetts

The Executive Board of the Division for Learning Disabilities invites interested university undergraduate and graduate students who are members of DLD to submit proposals for poster presentations. The posters will be displayed during the DLD Reception at the CEC Convention in Boston.

Submission Deadline: Friday, February 3, 2017

Selection Criteria: Members of the DLD Executive Board, faculty members and graduate students from multiple universities will review proposals. Reviewers will select high-quality, research-based proposals that are relevant to the field of learning disabilities and DLD's purpose.

Proposal Guidelines: Proposals must include all of the following information to be considered for review. Incomplete or late proposals will not be reviewed.

1. Cover sheet: Include a one-page cover sheet listing the following information for EACH presenter. If more than one person is presenting, indicate who will serve as the primary contact (must be a student).

- a. Name
- b. Status (i.e., undergraduate, master's, doctoral student)
- c. School
- d. Mailing address
- e. Telephone number
- f. Email address

2. Proposal: The body of the proposal must include:

- a. Title: Title of presentation
- b. Student presenters: Student name(s) and CEC student member number(s)
- c. Sponsor: Name of sponsoring university faculty member (indicates that the content of the poster will be of high-quality and based on research; this faculty member is not required to be present at the poster session)

d. Abstract: 50 words or fewer

e. Description of poster: 250 to 500 words providing a brief description of the poster, including the following:

- i. Purpose, rationale, and research questions
- ii. Research methods
- iii. Completed or anticipated data analysis
- iv. Findings
- v. Conclusions and implications

Submission Guidelines: All the information outlined above should be saved in a word processing document (.doc) and sent as an attachment via e-mail to Carlos Lavin, DLD Student Representative, at StudRep@TeachingLD.org by **Friday, February 3, 2017**.

Notification of Acceptance: The DLD Student Representative will notify the primary contact about the status of the proposal by Friday, March 3, 2017. If the proposal is accepted students are expected to be present at the poster session and will receive a future email with information regarding (a) the location of the poster session; (b) required materials for the session; and (c) the specified format and presentation of the poster.

Please note: These posters are not part of the formal CEC program and will not be listed in the conference program. DLD is not offering any compensation or reimbursement for presenters. Visit www.teachingld.org for additional information about this and other initiatives of the Division for Learning Disabilities.

Questions? Contact **Carlos Lavin**, DLD Student Representative, at StudRep@TeachingLD.org.

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Shaqwana Freeman-Green

Meet our Officers, Committee Chairs, and Editors.

Go to: <http://teachingld.org/officers> and click on an officer's name (if highlighted) to view a brief biography. To contact a member of the executive board, visit: http://teachingld.org/contact_forms/new