FEATURE ARTICLE

Implementing SRSD Writing Instruction in Urban Classrooms for All Students

By Debra McKeown and

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The majority of students in the U.S. fail to meet proficiency standards in writing (National Center for Education Statistics, 2011), and this challenge is pronounced for students identified with and at risk for learning disabilities (LD) as their writing is often characterized by ineffective planning, organization, and execution (e.g., Graham, Harris, & Mason, 2005). These students use little time to plan (e.g., Garcia-Sanchez & Fidalgo-Redondo, 2006), and when they do create a plan, often they do not refer to it during the drafting process (Graham, 2006). Struggling writers and students with LD often know less about the required components of each genre and this logically results in less complete essays (e.g., Graham et al., 2005). Finally, these students often struggle with spelling, grammar, and appropriate punctuation resulting in lower quality essays (Graham, Collins, & Rigby-Wills, 2017).

Self-Regulated Strategy Development

Self-regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) is a mastery-focused instructional approach that includes explicit instruction in the genre, strategy use, and self-regulation to help the writer stay motivated and on task throughout the writing process (Harris, Graham, Mason, & Friedlander, 2008). SRSD for writing is an evidence-based practice (e.g., National Center on Intensive Intervention, 2016) which has been demonstrated effective with students with

LD (Graham et al., 2017), struggling writers (McKeown, Brindle, Harris, Graham, & Collins, 2016), and also in a variety of genres including persuasive (Harris, Graham, & Mason, 2003; McKeown et al., 2019b). SRSD includes the following six recursive stages *(see Figure 1 on page 2)*.

Practice-based Professional Development

Teachers report they are not adequately prepared to provide writing instruction (Graham, Harris, Fink-Chorzempa, & MacArthur, 2003) and receive limited coursework and professional development in the area of writing (Brindle, Graham, Harris, & Hebert, 2016). Practice-based Professional Development (PBPD) is a form of professional development that encourages teachers to work together in the *practice* of teaching as they acquire new pedagogical skills and knowledge. PBPD encourages (a) colleagues working in teams, (b) differentiated support to address needs in local classrooms, (c) specialists assessing and addressing teachers' content knowledge, (d) explicit modeling of the new skills by a specialist, (e) teachers' active engagement in the *practice* of the new skills as they receive peer and specialist feedback, and (f) use of the same materials as those used in the classroom (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Ball & Forzani, 2009; Harris et al., 2012b). PBPD has been used to support teachers in implementing SRSD successfully in previous studies (e.g., Festas et al., 2015; McKeown et al., 2016).

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Figure 1. SRSD inculdes the following six recursive stages:

Stage 1 | **Develop Background Knowledge**

- Provide a foundation of genre knowledge including elements and common vocabulary
- Read aloud examples and consider uses of the genre
- Assess understanding and address misunderstandings

Stage 2 | **Discuss It**

- Discuss how the strategy will support students in achieving sucess
- Discuss how to use the strategy to create a powerful plan
- Discuss how the strategy could be used with other tasks or content areas

Stage 3 | **Model It**

- Provide an explicit model from the initial prompt through the final draft
- Share the thought process a writer goes through while applying the strategy
- Focus on self-regulation by modeling self-talk to support goal setting, coping, strategy use, and self-evaluation
- Demonstrate evaluating performance against the expectations of the genre
- Collaborate with students throughout the model through gradual release of responibility as they begin to understand the expectations of strategy application

Stage 4 | **Memorize It**

- Support students in memorizing genre elements, genre characteristics, common vocabulary and if used, the genre-specific mnemonic
- Discuss the imortance of memorization

Stage 5 | **Support It**

- Facilitate small groups and pairs in using the strategy and tools
- Monitor performance and provide feedback, support, and prompting as necessary
- (Optional) Provide one-on-one support to address any concerns

Stage 6 | **Independent Performance**

- Further discuss generalization and encourage silent recitation of self-talk

(Harris, Graham, Brindle & Sandmel, 2009; Harris, Graham, Mason, & Friedlander, 2008)

A Recent Study

In a recent study, third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade teachers were provided two days of PBPD for SRSD in the persuasive genre. We evaluated (a) if teachers were able to implement the intervention with fidelity at Tier 1, (b) the impact on writing performance of several subgroups of learners, including struggling writers and those identified with learning disabilities, and (c) if teachers found the intervention to be acceptable and useful for their classrooms.

We worked in four schools in a Southeastern, urban district that served more than 50,000 students. Schools were matched on size (number of students), grade levels, socioeconomic status (determined by free/reduced lunch eligibility), and student achievement in reading and math, race/ethnicity of student body, and percent of English Language Learners prior to being assigned to experimental or control condition.

Twenty-five teachers (11 in the experimental group and 14 in the comparison group) and 685 students in 25 classrooms (318 in the experimental group and 367 in the comparison group) completed their participation in this study. Students diagnosed with a learning disability or receiving early intervention services (Tier 2) were classified by the schools as struggling students (175 [55.03%] struggling students in the treatment group and 125 [33.06%] in the comparison group).

Students completed essays in response to persuasive prompts before and after the intervention. The research team scored the essays for holistic and analytic quality among other factors. Researchers observed teachers to determine fidelity of implementation and focus groups of teachers met following the study to assess social validity.

Lesson Plans

For this study, one lesson was not equivalent to one day. That is, a lesson may last beyond one instructional session and for the more complex lessons such as Lessons 2 and 3, may even last 4-6 instructional sessions across the course of several days.

Lesson 1. Teachers discussed what good writing is, the writing process, and introduced students to the mnemonic POW (P=Pick an idea, O=Organize my notes, W=Write and say more) to support students in memorizing the steps of the writing process. Teachers discussed what notes were and how they might be used both in students' day-to-day lives as well as how they might use notes for successfully planning their writing. Teachers also introduced the persuasive genre and its many uses.

Next, teachers introduced the essential components of a strong persuasive essay (e.g., tell what you believe, include at least three reasons, examples, transition words, good ending) and introduced the mnemonic TREE (T-Topic sentence; R=Reasons, 3 or more; E=Examples and/or explanations; E=Ending; E=Examine, Do I have all my parts?). At the end of the lesson, students were encouraged to memorize the parts of a strong persuasive essay and genre-specific mnemonic with partners.

Lesson 2. The teacher presented an exemplar essay and asked the students to help find each component of TREE. Then they brainstormed the kind of notes the writer might have used to jot down that idea on her plan before having successfully written her essay. The teacher jotted those notes down on a TREE chart encouraging short phrases, abbreviations, and keeping ideas organized in a linear way to help students create quick, structured plans of their own. The teacher explicitly modeled her thinking process as she

moved through each section of the TREE graphic organizer, changing a sentence of the exemplar essay into a note near the corresponding letter on the organizer.

Then students were asked to engage with another essay to see if they could easily identify the required components of the genre. The teacher also asked students to offer additional or stronger reasons and support.

Once students could identify the component parts of the persuasive genre, the teacher provided a complete explicit model of the writing process. She conducted a think aloud as she talked through analyzing a new writing prompt, using the TREE mnemonic to organize her notes with the essential genre components, and then using those notes to write a strong persuasive essay. She then led students through checking their work against the plan to be sure all the requirements were met. In this model, teachers provided the majority of the ideas and instruction (about 70% teacher, 30% student).

Throughout this process, the teacher modeled using self-statements while thinking aloud such as *Let my mind be free. Let me think about what I am being asked to do.* to define the problem or *Oh, I know, I have a strategy to help me with this!* to reinforce strategy use. Other skills such as coping, staying motivated, encountering challenges, and evaluating performance were also modeled with self-statements. At the end of the modeling, the teacher asked the students to make a note of some of these self-statements that they may like to use in their own work. They were also encouraged to jot down some other statements or use good ideas their friends had suggested.

Before the lesson ended, students received rockets to help them track if they had included all the genre parts – a topic, three reasons, three examples, an ending, and transition words.

Lesson 3. The teacher followed the explicit model with a more collaborative model (about 30% teacher, 70% student), but again moved through the entire process from analyzing the prompt, through planning and writing a successful persuasive essay. Students were asked to contribute to the degree possible consistent with a gradual release of responsibility throughout the process. This step also allows teachers to evaluate if students understand how and when to use the strategy and tools and provide additional instruction as needed.

Lesson 4. Students began Lesson 4 by graphing the essay they just completed with the teacher and then graphing the baseline essay they had written before the intervention began

to compare their performance and see how much more they know now about successfully writing persuasive essays. After comparing their performance using the strategy, the teacher led the students in creating meaningful, personal writing goals.

Lesson 5. Teachers created collaborative groups and pairs to work through the writing process together. The teacher tasked the groups with completing a persuasive writing task from initial prompt through final essay and graphing their performance. The teacher provided support as needed to the groups and made note of any students who required any additional instruction in the previous stages of SRSD with plans to work with those students on those skills prior to moving to independent performance. The teacher reminded students to use the strategies, make a plan, remember their goals, use self-talk, and graph the completed essay. Teachers intervened as necessary to support students in determining the next step or encourage appropriate self-statements to support their use of the strategy.

Lesson 6. Students wrote a persuasive essay on their own using the skills and strategies appropriately.

Lesson 7. Students wrote a persuasive essay on their own using the skills and strategies appropriately under timed conditions to support their preparation toward the state-level end of grade assessment.

Findings

Writing is most commonly assessed by holistic scoring, a reflection of overall quality (Graham & Perin, 2007), and this measure is challenging to improve during shorter interventions. During this study, students receiving SRSD significantly improved performance in holistic writing quality by more than half a point compared to peers in the control condition, a finding supported by the literature (Graham, Harris, & McKeown, 2013).

Teachers in the experimental condition explicitly taught the elements of persuasive essays; thus, it was expected that their students' analytic quality scores would increase. On average, those students included nearly three (20%) additional than those in the control condition (on a 0-15 scale). These findings are consistent with prior research (2.83 to 3.02; Harris et al., 2012b).

For both holistic and analytic scoring, students in the experimental condition had similar outcomes without regard to race/ethnicity, gender, or disability status. That is, struggling writers (including those with LD) improved at a rate commensurate with their peers in the experimental condition.

Fidelity

The fidelity of implementation in this study was lower than expected (>88%; e.g., Harris et al., 2012a), but still fell within acceptable ranges ($M = 74.32\%$; $SD = 13.57\%$, range 51 - 92%). Higher fidelity was recorded during lessons when teachers were discussing the strategies or having students implement independently and lower when teachers were asked to provide explicit and collaborative models of the entire writing process. This is consistent with previous research where teachers have stated that modeling is awkward and they are uncomfortable monopolizing the instructional time with teacher talk (McKeown et al., 2019a); however, modeling is essential for changing student performance (Graham & Harris, 1989).

Lower fidelity, especially with regard to modeling) is expected to compromise outcomes and the overall effect sizes in student performance were lower than can be expected based on the results of other SRSD interventions (holistic quality ES = .15; analytic ES = .24; Durlak & DuPre, 2008; Sanetti, Fallon, & Collier-Meek, 2013). We also found that in classrooms where teachers had lower fidelity of implementation, the students' writing performance had greater variability. Students in the classrooms of teachers with higher fidelity consistently produced more reliable outcomes.

Social Validity

All teachers in the experimental conditions expressed enthusiasm for the intervention. They believed it positively influenced student performance and thought students enjoyed SRSD more than they had anticipated they might.

Interruptions and Buy-in

Throughout this study, several interruptions (short-term) and gaps (long-term) occurred in instruction at the schools. Causes were often related to test preparation, district- and state-level testing, and school vacations. Some lessons were not taught to mastery and in some cases, instruction was rushed. The variability in how many lessons and duration of those lessons may contribute to the more variable and lower than anticipated results (Noell, Gresham, & Gansle, 2002). Additionally, administrators at different schools pursued varying degrees of buy-in from their teachers. Research indicates teachers who have a choice of intervention implement with higher quality over time than those who do not (Johnson et al., 2013).

Conclusion

Across the U.S., children without disabilities outperform those who diagnosed with disabilities and the gap in performance has remained relatively constant across time (Musu-Gillette et al., 2016). The purpose of the study was to determine if PBPD for SRSD resulted in teachers implementing the evidence-based writing instruction with fidelity and if the intervention positively influenced student writing outcomes. In this study, we pursued a teaching strategy that benefitted all students without regard to race/ethnicity, gender, or disability status. However, the effect sizes for both measures were lower than other SRSD studies. In multiple meta-analyses, SRSD has an average effect size of 1.20 to 1.37 (Graham, McKeown, Kiuhara, & Harris, 2012; Graham & Perin, 2007). There are many factors that may have contributed to our lower effect compared to other SRSD studies. Fidelity of implementation was lower than desired and can be contributed to several factors common in public school settings (e.g., testing preparation, regular interruptions to the instructional day). Still, students improved their persuasive writing performance in both analytic and holistic quality. Teachers found SRSD to be an acceptable intervention for use with students in Tier 1 including struggling writers and students with LD.

For further information regarding details of the study, please use the following reference information:

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Greetings DLD members and Happy New Year!

I wanted to take this opportunity to extend an invitation for you to submit your information with any awards you have received (or have been nominated for) as it relates to children with learning disabilities. We would love to share your great work and feature you in our newsletter.

Also, I would like to put out a call for research or practice articles that can be featured in our publication. As a division we are expanding our readership, so please contact us if you have some ideas for an article that may include other high incidence disability populations.

The best way to contact us is through our newsletter email (**newsletter@teachingld.org**). I hope you enjoy our first issue of 2020, and do let us know if there are any topics you'd like to see covered in future issues.

I look forward to seeing all of you at CEC in Portland!

Shaqwana Freeman-Green, Ph.D.
Editor, DLD NewTimes

DLD Public Policy Update Fall 2019

By David Bateman, PhD, Public Policy Chair and Lisa Goran, PhD, CCC-SLP, Public Policy Committee Member

Policy Update and Current Conversations – The following is an overview of conversations and policies being addressed at the national level impacting students with disabilities.

CEC Signs Amicus Brief

CEC made a statement for public education and the rights of students with disabilities by signing onto an amicus brief in support of the plaintiff in the Supreme Court case *Espinoza v. Montana Department of Revenue*. The case focuses on the constitutionality of school vouchers for use at religious schools, but does not argue the impact on students with disabilities. However, the Supreme Court ruling will have a national impact, prompting the disability rights community to weigh in, illuminating the potential harm school vouchers can impose on students with disabilities nationwide.

The brief argues private school vouchers strip students with disabilities of their rights and legal recourse under federal laws such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The brief notes private schools often fail to ensure these rights and "while limited services may be available to students in some private schools, they are at best incomplete and thinly funded." The brief concludes private school vouchers would bring public education back to where it was before enactment of IDEA, stripping students with disabilities of educational opportunity.

Secret Service Releases Analysis of Targeted Violence in Nation's Schools

The Secret Service released Protecting America's Schools: *A U.S. Secret Service Analysis of Targeted School Violence*. Authored by the U.S. Secret Service National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC), the report builds on 20 years of NTAC research and guidance in the field of threat assessment and offers an in-depth analysis of the motives, behaviors, and situational factors of the attackers, as well as the tactics, resolutions, and other relevant details of 41 incidents of targeted school violence that occurred at K-12 schools in the U.S. from 2008 to 2017.

NTAC officials noted, "many of the tragedies could have been prevented" and emphasized the importance of schools establishing comprehensive targeted violence prevention programs whereby schools "identify students of concern, assess their risk for engaging in violence or other harmful activities, and implement intervention strategies to manage that risk."

When asked by the press which key factors stood out, the NTAC spokesperson noted, "It's clear that suspension is not prevention, therefore, we make several recommendations including that the threshold for intervention should be low, so that schools can identify students in distress before their behavior escalates to the level of eliciting concerns about safety."

CEC Makes Statement on Higher Education Act Reauthorization

CEC submitted a letter to House Education and Labor Committee Chair Bobby Scott (D-VA) and Ranking Member Virginia Foxx (R-NC) in response to the introduction and consideration of H.R. 4674, the College Affordability Act, a reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA). In the letter, CEC:

- Commended the Committee for taking a comprehensive approach to HEA, which was last reauthorized in 2008

- Lifted up provisions of the bill that address the special educator shortage crisis, including improvements to the Teacher Quality Partnership program, which supports teacher preparation, and initiatives that make college more affordable by strengthening grant and loan programs aimed at teachers

- Thanked the Committee for making improvements to accessibility on college campuses and a strong reauthorization of the Transition to Postsecondary Education for Students with Intellectual Disabilities program

- Urged the Committee to clarify and ensure that all preparation programs receiving federal funds, whether traditional, alternative, or "grow your own," meet the same rigorous standards to ensure quality

- Questioned changes to data collection that could be burdensome to institutions of higher education with preparation programs.

Senate Bill to Address School Violence through Threat Assessment

In response to recent mass shootings in El Paso and elsewhere, Senator John Cornyn (R-TX) introduced S. 2690, the RESPONSE Act, a bill that addresses the link between gun violence and school safety. The bill is aimed at preventing future mass shootings through law-enforcement, mental health, and school-based initiatives.

Senator Cornyn remarked the bill "aims to make schools less vulnerable through promoting best practices and internet safety policies that would help schools better identify and assess students whose behavior indicates a threat of violence."

Among its provisions, the bill would create best practices for establishment and implementation of behavioral intervention teams within schools that could report student behavior directly to law enforcement, bypassing an in-school process for behavioral interventions. This raises red flags for advocates, who are concerned students could be targeted based on disabilities and other factors and addressed in a punitive manner rather than receiving supports from educators who have knowledge of their students and training in providing interventions and supporting students' behavioral needs.

Disability rights, civil rights, education, and privacy groups responded to the bill last week with a letter that opposed the bill and, in particular, the link between mental health and gun violence. "While we applaud the recognition that the federal government has a role to play in addressing the grave and complex issues surrounding mass violence, [we] oppose legislation that links efforts to reduce mass violence with mental health reforms," the groups wrote.

For more information and to stay up to date, sign up for the DLD Twitter account **@TeachingLD**

NEW DLD WEBSITE

Have you visited DLD's website lately? If not, you should! **Teaching LD** (**https://www.teachingld.org/**) has been completely revamped with a new design and features. The front page of the site includes four story boxes; one of these boxes links to information about DLD, two highlight key content and events from the site, such as our upcoming presentations at the CEC conference in Portland and the last box displays our twitter feed. The infrastructure of the site is topic driven with 6 current topical areas: reading, writing, math, content areas, transition and behavior. Additional topic areas can been added as the need arise.

You can also explore the website via a search box. Currently, there are seven types of resources available on the site: Question and Answers, Tutorials, Practice Alerts, Practice Guides, Publications, Videos and External Resources. Along with exploring the site via topics, you can also select to see what is available via resource type. For example, you can find the practice alert on content enhancement routines by selecting, Practice Alerts under the Resource tab.

We owe Peggy Weiss a big thank you for overseeing the website redesign with help from Bill Therrien and Alex Miller. We hope you enjoy exploring the new DLD website and that you use it as a resource for serving students with LD for years to come.

Greetings Fellow DLD Members!

DLD has been on the move this year with several exciting initiatives. In this installment of our newsletter, I will be sharing with you our successful launch of the DLD@Night conference, linking you to our new TeachingLD.org website, inviting you to join us in Portland, OR for CEC this winter, and sharing details of two upcoming member opportunities.

DLD@NIGHT in New Orleans

First, on behalf of the Executive Board of DLD I want to express my gratitude to the teams below that made our first DLD@Night conference in New Orleans this November a huge success! In partnership with our TED colleagues, DLD provided four workshop strands for researchers, graduate students, classroom teachers, and school administrators. We are especially grateful to those attendees that drove several ours from across the state to join this effort to engage local educators.

In keeping with the needs of the field, our four workshops focused on early literacy interventions, mathematical learning, writing interventions, and preparing future educators to work with students diagnosed with dyslexia. The NOLA themed titles of each workshop along with the presenters are listed below. We are so grateful to these leaders in the field of learning disabilities for their engaging, thoughtful and energizing presentations! Please follow up at **TeachingLD.org** for related resources from these presentations.

Strand 1: Early Literacy Intervention: Tell It Like It Is
Jill Pentimonit, Ph.D. (American Institutes for Research)
Nancy Nelson, Ph.D. (University of Oregon)

Strand 2: Change is Gonna' Come: Maximize Students' Mathematical Learning by Intensifying Instruction
Christian Doabler, Ph.D. (University of Texa,s Austin)
Asha Jitendra, Ph.D. (University of California Riverside)
Sarah Powell, Ph.D. (University of Texas, Austin)

Strand 3: Ain't No Sunshine: The Importance of Teaching and Assessing Writing Instruction When Including Students with Diverse Learning Needs
Shawn Datchuk, Ph.D. (University of Iowa)
Micheal Hebert, Ph.D. (University of Nebraska, Lincoln)
Erica Lembke, Ph.D. (University of Missouri)

Strand 4: Stand By Me: Preparing Educators for the New Reality of Teaching Students with Dyslexia in K-12 Schools
Mary Brownell, Ph.D. (University of Florida)
Steve Ciullo, Ph.D. (Texas State University)
Kristin Sayeski, Ph.D. (University of Georgia)

Following the conference, the presenters and DLD Executive Board met with graduate students attending the conference in a Meet the Researcher session. It was clear that the field of LD is alive and well with so many generations of scholars sharing ideas and getting to know one another.

The Board would also like to thank the members of the conference planning committee for their hard work, dedication, and vision to bring DLD@Night together: David Bateman (Shippensburg Univ.), Shawn Datchuk (Univ. of Iowa), Miriam Ortiz (SMU), Maria Ruiz (Univ Louisiana, Lafayette), Bill Therrien (UVA), and Peggy Weiss (George Mason).

Join DLD in Portland!

As always, we invite you to join other DLD members at the **Council for Exceptional Children's International Conference** in Portland, OR from February 5 - 8. Be sure to attend the DLD Showcase *Learning Disabilities: Foundational Principles of Practice,* a special session chaired by DLD Past-President Kristin Sayeski *Dyslexia 2.0: How to Move Beyond the "Big 5" to Implement Effective Reading Instruction,* our joint presentation with other LD organizations on *Does the Future of IDEA include Learning Disabilities?,* or one of the 18 DLD-related sessions or 18 posters. Finally, please visit our exhibition table for some DLD swag and a chance to visit with a member of the Executive Board. We would love to answer your questions and get you involved!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (cont.)

Upcoming Events

There are two upcoming events to stay on the lookout for:

First, we are excited to continue our collaboration with TED by announcing the second DLD@Night conference in Long Beach, CA on November 5, 2020. We hope you will join us!

Second, we are partnering with the Council for Children with Behavior Disorders (CCBD) to offer a joint webinar for DLD and CCBD members to learn about academic and behavioral interventions for students with learning disabilities. This webinar will be free to all DLD members!

Please look for more information on these and other exciting DLD member events!

Best,

Michael Faggella-Luby, Ph.D.
Texas Christian University
President, Division for Learning Disabilities

PUBLICATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

I am pleased to provide a few updates regarding DLD's publications and the work of our committee. First, you may have noticed a few changes in this newsletter over the past year, thanks to the hard work of our newsletter team led by Editor Shaqwana Freeman-Green and Co-Editor Debbie Holzberg.

First, we brought back policy updates, provided by expert David Bateman, in an effort to keep readership abreast of the most relevant and impactful policy changes and decisions affecting the field. The last update was in volume 37 issue 2, where David summarized updates on the Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act and provided recommendations related to reauthorization of the law. We look forward to hearing what's new and important in terms of special education policy from David each issue.

Next, we have started a new column in this newsletter to highlight news and accomplishments of our membership. We know you all are doing great things, and we want to hear from you. New grant? Let us know! Receive an award for your work with students with LD? We want to share your news! Are you a doctoral student member of DLD who is on the job market? When you land that dream job, send us a note and we will share your wonderful news. **Please send news of your important work and accomplishments to newsletter@teachingld.org.**

In other news, *Learning Disabilities Research and Practice (LDR&P)* continues to maintain visibility and has grown in impact since 2016, thanks in large part to the extraordinary work of Editor Linda Mason and her team. According to the most recent data available (through 2018), more than 5,500 institutions worldwide have access to our journal through a subscription or license, and that number continues to grow. The number of article downloads has remained relatively stable over the past three years. Importantly, the two-year impact factor for *LDR&P* rose significantly from 1.25 in 2016 to 2.077 in 2018. Clearly, *LDR&P* continues to be an important and well-regarded conduit for disseminating the important work in the field of special education and LD.

July of 2020 will mark five years since Linda began her transition to Editor of *LDR&P*. We are grateful for her fantastic leadership and the work of her editorial team, as well as the many editorial board members and ad-hoc reviewers. It will soon be time to begin a search for the next editor of *LDR&P*, who will continue this important work. The goal is to bring the next editor on as co-editor in early 2021, with plans to transition to the editor role in January 2022. **Details about search for the next Editor of *LDR&P*, which we will conduct in calendar year 2020, will be available soon.**

Sincerely,
Kristen D. Beach
Publications and Communications Committee Chair

Call for a Special Series in *Learning Disability Quarterly* on Registered Reports

This special series will focus on introducing the learning disability research community to a new way to publish, the registered report. Unlike regular empirical articles, registered reports go through peer review *before* the study is conducted or results of the research are known. Authors submit their introduction, methods, analysis plans, and pilot data if applicable, as a "stage-1" manuscript. This manuscript then goes through peer review, with reviewers evaluating and making recommendations for study plans and authors responding. This process continues until the Editor rejects or grants "in-principle acceptance" to the stage-1 manuscript. If the stage-1 manuscript receives an in-principle acceptance, the authors then pre-register their approved study plans and start the study.

After completion of the study, the authors write up and submit a "stage-2" manuscript, which is the complete manuscript that adheres to APA formatting and *LDQ* Author Guidelines. At this stage, reviewers, the journal editor, and the guest editors review the completed manuscript to evaluate whether the pre-approved protocol was followed and conclusions are sound. If the plan was followed and results discussed appropriately, final acceptance is granted.

What makes registered reports different from regular publications is that the system of pre-review and pre-approval based on methodological quality:

1. Allows reviewers to provide constructive feedback proactively, before the study is conducted, which can be incorporated by the authors to improve the study.

2. Prevents reviewers and editors from deciding whether a publication merits publication based on (significant or interesting) findings, or forcing post-hoc changes to the analyses.

3. Removes the incentive for authors to engage in questionable research practices to attain statistically significant findings.

For this special series, our goal is to show the learning disability community that a range of research methodologies lend themselves to registered reports. Therefore, we are especially interested in publishing manuscripts that reflect a range of methodologies. We welcome submissions that propose using group experimental and quasi-experimental designs, single-case designs, correlational designs, qualitative methods, descriptive methods, individual differences methods, meta-analytical methods, secondary data analysis, replications, and other empirical methodologies appropriate for addressing research questions relevant to students with and at risk for learning disabilities. Proposed research studies must focus on empirically examining research questions with direct relevance for the education and outcomes of students with and/or demonstrably at risk for learning disabilities.

More information concerning registered reports, including workflow and checklists for investigators, is available at: **https://cos.io/rr/.** As registered reports are likely new for many special education researchers, we welcome questions concerning process or fit (see below for e-mail addresses).

Now Accepting Extended Abstracts

We invite interested researchers to submit extended abstracts of planned stage-1 manuscripts. For consideration, please email your extended abstract submission* to Bryan Cook *(see email below)*. You will receive a confirmation of receipt. We will invite approximately five stage-1 manuscripts for the special series based on quality of proposed methods and contribution to a methodologically diverse set of studies for the special series.

Timeline

Abstracts should be submitted by February 15, 2020, with decisions on abstracts anticipated by March 1, 2020. If invited to contribute to the special series, stage-1 manuscript (consisting of a complete Introduction and prospective Method) will be submitted for peer review by June 1, 2020. It is expected that stage-1 review will be completed on or before October 15, 2020. If granted in-principle acceptance, full stage-2 manuscripts, reporting the completed study, will be submitted for review by August 15, 2021. We anticipate final decisions on stage-2 manuscripts by November 15, 2021.

*To allow the guest editors to evaluate and invite selected stage-1 manuscripts for the special series, we ask that interested researchers initially submit an extended abstract that provides the following details. We anticipate that extended abstracts will be one to two pages in length. Note that, depending on the research design, some of these categories may need to be modified. Our intent is for authors to provide us with a meaningful overview of the proposed study.

- Title
- Study rationale/background
- Research questions (specify relevance for students with and/or at risk for learning disabilities)
- Primary research design/method
- Sample description
- Independent variable
- Measures and key outcomes
- Data analytic strategy
- Feasibility of recruiting sample and conducting study within the timeframe of the special issue.

Feel free to contact us if you have questions:

Bryan Cook: **bc3qu@virginia.edu**

Bill Therrien: **wjt2c@virginia.edu**

Sara Hart: **shart@fcrr.org**

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Subdivision Contact Info

Several jurisdictions have active DLD subdivisions. Many of these organizations have conferences and other activities for teachers. All subdivisions can provide more information about learning disabilities at the state, province, or local level. Please contact the representatives listed below for more information. If you are a DLD member and are interested in forming a subdivision in your state, contact DLD's Membership chair.

ILLINOIS – Elizabeth Mackie
Illinois@TeachingLD.org

NEW YORK – Shannon Budin
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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

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