Pennsylvania Branch of The International Dyslexia Association

Fall 2020

The newsletter of the Pennsylvania and Delaware Branch of the International Dyslexia Association

42nd Conference on Reading, Literacy & Learning

Literacy Across the Lifespan

VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

Saturday, October 3rd – Live Keynote: Margie Gillis, Ed. D.

Recorded Sessions available October 5 – 31

Registration and Information: PBIDA.org
At Provident Charter School, children with dyslexia flourish. Here, our specially trained teachers and staff understand the unique ways children with language-based learning difficulties learn and thrive.

By deploying a multi-sensory curriculum, teachers can help ensure academic success for all students. Through a robust diagnostic and prescriptive teaching process, your child’s teachers are able to capitalize on his/her strengths and also address the student’s individual area of need.

As a result, students at Provident Charter School blossom and grow academically, personally and socially.

Learn more today about how Provident Charter School can change your child’s life.

Call: 412-709-5160
www.providentcharterschool.org
Greetings to all PBIDA Members and Friends,

For all of us, the last few months have been a time of revamping how we live and work. This upheaval affected PBIDA’s conference planning as well. Our 2020 fall conference: Literacy Across the Lifespan on October 3 became virtual. While we will miss meeting together, we are excited that the virtual format will allow more people, from a wider area, to attend. In addition, recordings of all sessions will be available through October 31, allowing conference registrants to view sessions that are presented concurrently on October 3 later in the month, and, in many cases, earn additional CEU hours. I encourage you to attend this conference and learn from our featured speakers and panelists. See pages 5 & 7 for the schedule.

We are planning other events in addition to our fall conference:

• Family Support groups designed to reach a larger audience.
• A virtual math workshop with Marilyn Zecher: Multisensory Math – Teaching Mathematics in A Standards-Based Curriculum. October 30, 8:30-3:45 EDT. Followed by an evening presentation for parents.
• PBIDA Spring Conference in Pittsburgh featuring Anita Archer. Rescheduled for April 10, 2021.

Watch your inbox and follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter for more details.

We are also revising our inservice training on teaching students with dyslexia and our Dyslexia Simulation into virtual presentations. Contact dyslexia@pbida.org for scheduling either with your organization.

We are extremely grateful to our sponsors. Their support makes the work we do and the events we hold possible. In spite of the difficulties many of them are facing, they have continued to support the work of PBIDA. Check out the links in their ads in this issue, and be sure to visit our Virtual Exhibit Hall at the conference to see the incredible work that they are doing to support children learning to read.

I am sure you will find the articles in this issue of Focus helpful and inspiring.

• Meet Penny Maldofsky, our Hoopes awardee, an indomitable teacher – page 9
• Find Routine in Uncertainty – page 11
• Learn strategies for Coping with Anxiety – page 17
• Read a student’s path to reading success in Voices of Dyslexia – page 29
• Learn how Arcadia University is training new teachers in Structured Literacy – page 35

We each have a part to play in working to make sure all children learn to read. That is the message of Dr. Margie Gillis’ keynote address at our conference. I look forward to joining many of you (virtually) there.

Thank you all for the important work each of you is doing to help all children learn to read. Contact us to get more involved in PBIDA!

Christine Craig Seppi
President
International Dyslexia Association – PA Branch
Serving Pennsylvania and Delaware
Until all children can read

PBIDA Board Members

PRESIDENT
Christine Craig Seppi, M.A., CALP

VICE PRESIDENT
Lynn A. Dell, D.Ed., CCC/SLP

TREASURER
Joseph Nocera, Ed.D.

BOARD
Mindy Bramer, M.Ed., CALP, W.D.T., CERI
Dawn Brookhart, M.Ed., M.A.T.
Gail Crane, M.S.
Ann Darrow, B.S., Certified in Dyslexia & PACE
Tammy Hayes, M.A., CALP
Tracy Johnson, M.Ed, Ph.D (honorary)
Maria LoCasale-Bereschak, B.S.
Denise T. Morell, Ed.D.
Joseph Nocera, Ed.D.
Maria Paluselli, M.Ed.
Richard Sabousky, Ph.D.
Maria Toglia, M.S.

OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR
Olivia Farrell

FOCUS COMMITTEE
Amy S. Jackson
John Kruidenier
Christine Craig Seppi

PBIDA
1062 E. Lancaster Avenue, #15H
Rosemont, PA 19010
Phone: 610.527.1548
Toll-Free: 855.220.8885
Fax: 610.527.5011
dyslexia@pbida.org
www.pbida.org
Wilson Language Training and Wilson® Accredited Partners have received accreditation by the International Dyslexia Association. For more than 30 years, our mission has been dedicated to providing educators with the support needed to help their students, including those with dyslexia, become fluent, independent readers.

Wilson’s multisensory, structured literacy curricula promote reading and spelling achievement for students across three tiers of instruction. Wilson also offers extensive professional learning to support the implementation of each program and to optimize student success.

For more information, please visit our website at www.wilsonlanguage.com or call 800-899-8454.
Virtual Conference • October 3, 2020 (Live) • October 5-31, 2020 (Recorded)

Registration is Open – Be sure to register before midnight on October 1.

The virtual conference will allow for both live and recorded attendance options. The live virtual conference will be on October 3, 2020. Virtual exhibits, poster sessions, and live discussion panels make this virtual conference a unique experience for the attendee.

From October 5th through October 31st, the recorded conference (all sessions and virtual exhibits) will then be open to any pre-registered attendee. This platform will allow registered attendees the option to view sessions missed during the live virtual conference on October 3 and/or re-watch any favorite sessions previously viewed.

Conference Schedule – October 3, 2020

8:00 - 8:55 Exhibits and Poster Sessions Open

9:00 - 10:45 Welcome, Awards

Keynote Address: Margie Gillis, Ed.D.
Transforming How Reading Is Taught: Partnerships to Change Policies and Practice

Dr. Gillis will explain why the Science of Reading has not been readily embraced and will present her recommendations for how all stakeholders in children’s education need to work together to ensure that all children learn to read. Attendees will leave ready to help make positive changes in how reading is taught.

Read more about Margie Gillis on page 19

10:45 - 11:15 Break–Visit Virtual Exhibit Hall and Poster Sessions

11:15 - 12:45 Concurrent AM Sessions

AM-1 Jan Wasowicz, Ph.D., CCC/SLP
Reading, Writing, and Spelling – It’s about Oral Language and Building the Brain for Literacy: Early Years (pre-K through 2nd grade)

Speech and Language Pathologists, teachers, tutors, school psychologists and social workers will learn from Dr. Wasowicz how evidence-based, multi-linguistic activities simultaneously engage and functionally integrate a student’s oral and written language systems and how phoneme-to-grapheme mapping is used to more effectively teach phonics skills and develop sight word automaticity for reading and writing fluency.

Read more about Jan Wasowicz on page 23

AM-2 LeDerick Horne, Author, poet and disability rights advocate
Supports for Success: Seven Tips for Families

Mr. Horne will provide participants with seven essential, evidence-based tips to help families support children as they develop skills in self-advocacy, self-determination, and disability disclosure.

This session is titled for families; however, teachers, school psychologists, and social workers will also be informed, empowered, and inspired to support children in school and beyond.

Read more about LeDerick Horne on page 27

AM-3 Panel: Teaching the Science of Reading in Higher Education
This panel will address a timely and important national conversation about teaching the science of reading to teacher candidates in higher education. The discussion will include curricular development and clinical experiences that build teacher candidates’ competency as skilled teachers of reading and language arts.

12:45-1:45 Lunch Break–Virtual Exhibit Hall & Poster Sessions

(Continued on page 7)
Maguire Foundation is proud to support Pennsylvania Branch of the International Dyslexia Association’s 42nd Annual (and 1st Virtual!) Conference "Literacy Across the Lifespan"

Founded by James J. and Frances M. Maguire and grounded in the teachings of St. Ignatius Loyola that we are men and women for others, the Maguire Foundation invests in education, arts and humanities, and the relief of hunger and homelessness.

www.maguirefoundation.org
1:45-3:15  Concurrent PM Sessions

PM-1 Jan Wasowicz, Ph.D. CCC/SLP
Reading, Writing, and Spelling – It’s about oral language and building the brain for literacy: Later Years (3rd grade – middle school)

This session is a continuation from Dr. Wasowicz’s morning session to explore the importance of morphological and semantic knowledge in students’ developing advanced skills in reading, writing, and spelling. Attendees will learn strategies for the development and use of mental orthographic representations in long-term memory for accuracy and fluency of reading and writing.

PM-2 Panel:  I Am All Grown Up, What’s Next
How can students with dyslexia successfully transition to life beyond school? What skills are necessary, and what supports are helpful? The panelists, all successful adults with dyslexia, will identify and compare different skill sets and experiences that have made their successful career outcomes possible. People with dyslexia will come away from this session empowered for success, while parents, teachers, and others working with students with dyslexia will be better able to help the students they work with gain the skills they need to be successful.

PM-3 Panel:  Building Resiliency and Bridges for Children with Disabilities
This panel includes parents of children with disabilities, education professionals and adults with dyslexia. They will all draw on their firsthand experiences to provide meaningful insights and strategies for supporting children growing up with disabilities. The focus of this session is how to build resiliency and self-advocacy skills, as well as how to communicate effectively to facilitate positive and productive home-school relationships.

3:15-3:30  Closing Remarks & Announcements
3:30  Conference Ends

Details and Registration:  pa.dyslexiaida.org/events/fall2020conference/

Professional Continuing Education Credits Available

Check the CEU information at https://pa.dyslexiaida.org/v-cec/ for CEU credits offered for each session. Note: ASHA CEUs require attendance on October 3. Other CEUs are available for recorded as well as live sessions.

ACT 48 – up to 10.5 hours
ASHA CEUs – up to 4.5 hours
NASP CDPs – up to 4.5 hours
Social Work – up to 10.5 hours
ALTA, CERI, IMSLEC – up to 10.5 hours

Co-sponsors for Continuing Education:

University of Pittsburgh
School of Social Work

This program is offered for up to 10.5 hours of social work continuing education through co-sponsorship of the University of Pittsburgh’s School of Social Work, a Council on Social Work Education accredited school and therefore a PA pre-approved provider of social work continuing education. These credit hours satisfy requirements for LSW/LCSW, LMFT, and LPC biennial license renewal. For information on social work continuing education call (412) 346-8044

Conference Chair:
Lynn A. Dell, D. ED. CCC/SLP

Conference Committee:
Kathleen R. Biddle, Ph.D.
Juniata College
Tammy L. Hayes, M.S., CALP
Dr. Tracy Johnson
Adults with Dyslexia Advocate
Lisa McCarty, B.A., RN
Parent Advocate
Jessica L. McKee, MSW
Parent Advocate
Maria L. Toglia, M.S.
Certified School Psychologist, Parent Advocate
Fran J. Warkomski, Ed.D

EBS Healthcare is approved by the Continuing Education Board of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) to provide continuing education activities in speech-language pathology and audiology. See course information for number of ASHA CEUs, instructional level and content area. ASHA CE Provider approval does not imply endorsement of course content, specific products or clinical procedures.
Intentionally Small. Expertly Prepared.

A Mission-Driven Approach to Reopening

Prioritizing the health and safety of our community members, you can feel confident in the Woodlynde School advantage for your K-12 grade student.

Accepting Applications for Fall 2020

Woodlynde School
Ready for College. Ready for Life.

445 Upper Gulph Road, Strafford, PA 19087
www.woodlynde.org
2020 Janet L. Hoopes Award

Penny Moldofsky

By Diane Reott

No one is more deserving of the 2020 Janet L. Hoopes award than this year’s recipient, Penny Moldofsky. Penny served as the Director of Woodlynde’s Lower School for 25 years. She began the Literacy Institute at Woodlynde, an accredited Wilson partner, where she continues to serve as its Director. Her contributions to the education of those with learning disabilities far exceeds the classrooms at the Woodlynde School. Penny’s contribution reaches classrooms across Pennsylvania, Delaware and beyond. She has been an educator for over five decades and has trained over 1,000 professionals to become successful teachers of children and young adults with a variety of learning styles.

Penny attended the University of Pennsylvania where she received an M.S. in Education, Reading and Literacy and a B.S. in Education. During her senior year, Penny was enrolled in a class taught by Irene Gaskins; it changed the trajectory of her life. She joined Irene at Benchmark School a few years later and taught sample lessons for teachers stressing strategies for building comprehension. It was Irene who awakened Penny to listening to leaders in the field and applying their research to practice. Penny was asked to consult at the Woodlynde School and as fate would have it that advisory role became a full-time position as Head of their Lower School, including admissions, organization of the summer program and eventually teacher training.

Penny, always a lifelong learner, strove to find the best instructional material to serve her students. Penny is a Wilson® Credentialed Trainer for the Wilson Reading System and a Wilson Dyslexia Practitioner®. Penny has served as a member of the PBIDA Board and it was through her encouragement, determination and hard work that Woodlynde School hosted the PBIDA annual fall conference for two consecutive years. She has been asked to speak at national conferences such as the International Dyslexia Association and the National Association of Independent Schools, and she received the “Take the Lead” Award from the Girl Scouts of America.

Penny brings the science of reading to life and is the teacher students talk about as having had a pivotal role in igniting their belief in themselves and in their ability to learn. Penny was motivated by a treasured mentor, her aunt Ruth Wolk, a reading specialist in the city of Springfield, Massachusetts, where the majority of students were at the poverty level and struggling in reading. At her funeral, many of her now-grown students told Penny, “Mrs. Wolk saved my life, she taught me to read, but she also taught me to work hard every day.” Penny, like Aunt Ruth, is committed to her students with significant reading challenges. She provides lessons that are clear but supportive, encourages hard work and laughter, and, most importantly, never gives up on a child. Penny has taken these lessons a step further: as a teacher trainer, she brings them into classrooms everywhere. Those near and far who have had the pleasure of knowing and learning from Penny are forever changed by her support and mentorship.

The Hoopes Award was established in 1993 in honor of Dr. Janet L. Hoopes, who was the first recipient of the award. Dr. Hoopes was a founding member of PBIDA and also a founding board member of Hill Top Preparatory School for students with Learning Differences. This prestigious award is presented at PBIDA’s Annual Fall Conference to an individual or individuals in Pennsylvania or Delaware who has made a significant contribution to the education of those with learning differences.
WE ARE EXPANDING to a HIGH SCHOOL now K-12

WWW.QUAKERSCHOOL.ORG

Begin Admitting:
9th Grade: Fall 2019
10th Grade: Fall 2020
11th Grade: Fall 2021
12th Grade: Fall 2022

Find out if our new program is right for your learner.

Contact
Lori Boccuzzi, Assistant Head for Enrollment Management and Institutional Advancement,
215.674.2875, ext. 14 | admissions@quakerschool.org
www.quakerschool.org/academics/upper-school
I am a true believer in the power of routine.
As a Head of School, I witness every day the impact that daily structure and rhythms have on our students, all of whom have complex challenges or learning disabilities. These children crave the familiar, and we develop the routines they need to blossom socially, behaviorally, and academically in our care.

As a busy school administrator, I also recognize the way set systems improve my own work. I enjoy following a schedule, and I look forward to simple traditions -- such as my daily trip down the road to Wawa for a coffee and a moment of respite. Routines like this can, quite literally, fuel me for the rest of the day.

It was on one such routine trip on March 12, 2020, that I glanced at my phone and saw that Governor Wolf had ordered all schools in Bucks and Montgomery Counties closed by the end of the day in response to a surge in COVID-19 cases. Shortly thereafter, the Governor imposed extreme lockdown measures to stem the spread of this deadly disease, and ultimately closed schools on April 9 for the remainder of the school year.

There goes the routine.
While this complete upheaval of education norms caused panic in all school settings, it was especially challenging for a school like ours. The Quaker School at Horsham is a small, 75-student school. Our program is specifically designed for students with severe learning disabilities along with comorbidities such as ADHD, autism, anxiety disorders, and speech and language disorders. We serve students living in 20 different school districts, and the school's catchbasin extends from the Lehigh Valley to South Philadelphia, and even as far west as Lancaster.

How were we going to deliver our mission from afar to such a neurologically, geographically, racially, and socioeconomically diverse group of students?

Right away, we knew we needed a new approach to our “normal” routines. Here are a few of the ways TQS was able to successfully transition our students to virtual learning:

We were proactive and organized.
Fortunately, TQS’s administration had been in regular contact with colleagues in Seattle and had been preparing for the closure for two weeks. While not an ideal head start, it allowed us to begin planning.

We decided we would move to Virtual TQS in three phases in order to help our families and teachers ease into the new schedule:

- Phase 1 was a six-day school break, which led to the school’s spring break. The administration used this time to organize, communicate, and deploy resources.
- Phase 2 was asynchronous learning. For one week, students had one live morning meeting per day and received assignments via email, which were turned in daily.
- Phase 3 was a mix of synchronous and asynchronous learning. Faculty provided live classes, teacher office hours, and a morning and afternoon homeroom gathering.

The school made Chromebooks — which do not usually go home — available to families for pick-up. By April 6, TQS was fully virtual: all students had the technology they needed, and online schooling began in earnest.

We focused on critical services.
A critical part of TQS’s service delivery is our clinical services center, which delivers high-quality speech, occupational, and physical therapies, as well as social work, counseling, and behavior therapy. How could we do that in an online environment?

Here, we were lucky. Unlike conventional education, modalities for delivering online speech, occupational, and physical therapy were already well-established. Children in the outback of Australia and in the mountains of Montana need speech therapy, and thankfully the software and training that were developed to serve isolated populations were well known by our therapists.

Quickly after shutdown, TQS therapists were able to begin providing online 1:1 social work sessions, parent consultations, lunch groups, and social skills groups, as well as speech, occupational, and physical therapy, for the same amount of time as the sessions they ran in school. The clinical staff also held evening Zoom meetings to train parents to use one of our programs, Collaborative and Proactive Solutions, with their children.

The question that emerges for me now is, how can general education teacher training programs and internships begin preparing pre-service teachers for online instruction as nimbly as speech therapy programs appear to be preparing their students?

We surveyed our families.
After Virtual TQS had been running for about a month, we sent a survey to our families to see how we were doing. Across the board -- in our lower, middle, and upper schools -- parents reported that:

- Teacher communication was excellent.
- Students’ workload was interesting, personalized, meaningful, and appropriately challenging.
- Our technology apps and platforms were easy to use and access, support students’ learning, and are helping families stay connected.

(Continued on page 13)
Education Law Partners, P.C.

Education Law Partners, P.C. specializes in legal counsel and representation to students with disabilities and their parents in educational matters. We are among the most experienced education attorneys in the Pennsylvania area.

We have helped thousands of students from preschool age upward obtain the individualized educational program (IEP) and services they need to be successful in school and in life.

We are experienced in explaining the complex and changing field of special education and civil rights law to our clients, and in representing the needs of exceptional children at all phases of the special education process.

Check our website for services and available resources for parents.
www.specialedlawpartners.com

Contact us:

Phone: 267-223-0300   Fax: 888-384-2303
Email: FPalumbo@specialedlawpartners.com

100 South Broad Street, Suite 1950, Philadelphia, PA 19110
Lessons on Distance Learning During COVID-19 *(Continued from page 11)*

- Students’ schedules were the right mix of live meetings, free time, and one-on-one help from teachers.

This was important feedback on which we continue to build and evolve our practices.

**We re-assessed student assessment.**

Once we knew our parents were satisfied, we had to figure out how to assess how well our students were learning. This was no easy task since most of the traditional instruments we use to assess student learning are not valid online.

Working with our neuropsychologist, we developed a battery that would be delivered 1:1 virtually. TQS used select subtests from the WIAT III for progress monitoring. Our school warned families that these results needed to be interpreted with caution, as this test is a standardized assessment that compares each child’s results to a norm group of same age and grade-level students who have completed the school year.

Parents were given the option to opt-out, which some took. However, the progress monitoring results were surprisingly positive -- although we will really see where students are with their learning when they return to campus in the fall.

**Finally, we’re looking ahead.**

Now that the school year has ended, planning for next year has begun in earnest. Parents were very forgiving and understanding during the initial shutdown, as this shift to virtual learning took everyone by surprise.

However, the next time we move to virtual learning, we need the process to run seamlessly. We are currently developing various plans to meet different scenarios, and the school will most likely operate in one of three modes in the coming year: severe social distancing; moderate social distancing; and virtual learning. Our success, and the success of every school, will be determined by how well we can shift between modes.

No matter what is to come in the months ahead, all educators can agree that the 2020-2021 school year will be anything but routine. Yet hopefully, with the right preparation and strategies, we can create new routines that are flexible and comfortable enough to help our students shine through it all.
BUILDING CONFIDENCE EVERY DAY
In academics and beyond

One of the nation's best schools for bright students who learn differently, DVFriends provides innovative education rooted in our purposeful Quaker culture, authentic partnerships that support each student's success, and a welcoming and inclusive community.

Learn more: dvfriends.org
Contact Admissions: dvfriends.org/admissions/

Delaware Valley Friends School
19 E. Central Avenue | Paoli, PA | 610.640.4150
Virtual school can be a headache, and it can cause a headache too.

**Posture**
Your head is heavy! Proper posture lightens the load and decreases the strain on your neck that might cause a headache.

**Tips**
- **Work in a properly lit area** (but not too bright)
- **Reduce screen glare** with computer glasses or filters
- **Clean your computer display**
- **Use the 20-20-20 rule to rest your eyes:**
  - Work 20 min – Rest 20 sec – Look 20 feet away

**Brightness**
- Turn **DOWN the Brightness**
  - iPhones/iPads – **Use NightShift**
  - In Accessibility Settings – try **“Reduce White Point”**
  - F.lux – [justgetflux.com/](http://justgetflux.com/) adjusts your screen brightness to the time of day

**Read with your ears!**
- [audible.com](http://audible.com)
- [LearningAlly.org](http://learningally.org)
- [bookshare.org](http://bookshare.org)
- *and grab a fidget – we all get bored sitting in front of a screen all day*

---

**The Value of a Landmark Education, No Matter the Setting**
At Landmark School, we continue to adapt and innovate to individualize a program for every one of our students—no matter the setting.

- [Learn more](#)

Still leading the way, after 50 years.
For students in grades 2 - 12 with dyslexia and other Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD).

- [Admissions@landmarkschool.org](mailto:Admissions@landmarkschool.org)
- [LandmarkSchool.org](http://LandmarkSchool.org)
Laughlin Children’s Center uses the Orton-Gillingham approach to dyslexia tutoring services. Students benefit the most from instructional approaches that are systematic, cumulative, and multi-sensory.

With online and in-person sessions available at Laughlin Children’s Center, parents have many options available for treatment.

Laughlin Children’s Center empowers children with the tools they need to become confident, lifelong learners.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE!
15-20% of the population have some of the symptoms of dyslexia.

To schedule an evaluation or tutoring services:
laughlincenter.org/dyslexia
“The World Turned Upside Down”

Coping with Anxiety in a Pandemic

by Lisa Goldstein, MD, Child Psychiatrist and Ariel Mankin, PhD, School Psychologist

As we write this column in July we don’t know what will be happening when you read this in September. What will school look like? What about sports, family events, and life as we knew it? To quote Hamilton, An American Musical, “the world turned upside down” for students, parents and teachers in 2020.

A common non-clinical definition of anxiety is, “a feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease, typically about an imminent event or something with an uncertain outcome.” The Covid-19 pandemic is unique because we are all experiencing this same uncertainty together, and while we might show this in different ways, we are to varying degrees uneasy and frequently anxious. As we get ready for the new school year it is helpful to acknowledge that this experience is shared, whether we are students, parents, educators, or related professionals.

Before we can even begin to teach or learn we need to first be able to recognize and manage our own thoughts and feelings. Only then can we share helpful strategies with our children and students. Mental health approaches are often divided into the areas of cognitive, or our thoughts, and behavioral, or our actions; both impact our feelings. Each individual will discover specific strategies that work best for them. A few examples of cognitive skills include taking another’s perspective, mindfulness, and gratitude.

The ability to take another’s perspective is one of the most fundamental interpersonal skills we teach our children and will help us collaborate more effectively. Never has it been more true that parents and teachers are in this together as we attempt to make both the audio and the video work and keep a child sitting in front of a screen for most of the day without playing games. These challenges are brand new for both the teacher with the two year old on their lap during Zoom class, and the parent working full time from home while struggling to educate their child with a learning disability.

We also need to remember to be generous towards ourselves – each of us is doing the best we can right now. Mindfulness meditation provides a foundation for practicing being present in the moment, and teaches us to quiet the anxious and self-critical voice in our head.

Gratitude is a fundamental concept in positive psychology. While a positive outlook comes more naturally to some, we can cultivate thankfulness for even the small good things in our life, like more time for children to just play outside without carpools, coaches or teams. The explosion of Zoom has also allowed us to connect with family and friends across the country who we may have lost touch with during our hectic pre-Covid lives.

Apps offer a wide range of supports. Calm and Headspace teach meditation and mindfulness, while HeartRate+ Coherence shows your level of cardiorespiratory “coherence,” a biological relaxation response. It can take time and energy to find the approach that works best for you, but many have free trials. Search yourself or try: Insight Timer, Smiling Mind, Sanvello, Breethe, or Aura.

You are probably already engaging in a number of healthy behavioral strategies. Activities like going for a daily walk with your family or connecting with loved ones (either virtually or using social distancing) seem simple, but can dramatically improve the mental health of you and your family.

Another tip is to establish a regular sleeping pattern. We know that among adolescents, poor overall sleep quality is related to a range of negative outcomes such as aggression, impulsivity, risky behavior, and depression. The Child Mind Institute highlights these findings and provides helpful suggestions in their Parents Guide to Teenagers and Sleep: https://childmind.org/guide/parents-guide-to-teenagers-and-sleep/

When students return to school this fall in whatever form that may be, collaboration between parents and teachers will be crucial. Our usual worry about our children with disabilities has been amplified by our fear that they can’t afford “lost” time from instruction and the stress that both parents and teachers are feeling. Try to take each other’s perspective and be generous and grateful when working together to support your student.

Despite our best efforts it is likely that many students will need more intensive academic or social-emotional support after the extended school closure. Check out these guides from the National Association of School Psychologists, including one on navigating the special education system: https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/families-and-educators

Finally, don’t hesitate to seek out professional help if you or your child are struggling. Mental health professionals in the school and in the community are working virtually, and Depression, Anxiety, ADHD etc. still need treatment.
A coed college-prep boarding and day school for students, grades 6-12, with dyslexia and similar language-based learning disabilities. Gow provides not just another opportunity to try again, but a real opportunity to succeed.

155 Students
Day and boarding
Grades 6-12

On average our students come from:
25 states
20 countries

3-6 average class size
Orton-Gillingham based remediation
4:1 Student to faculty ratio

100% College acceptance
Class of 2019 was awarded $2.8 million in academic scholarships

Families are encouraged to apply for need-based financial aid

The Gow School has a five week summer program designed for students who struggle in school.

The Gow School Summer Program is for students who have been experiencing academic difficulties, or have been diagnosed with dyslexia or specific learning disabilities. Five weeks of learning and fun for ages 8-16.

Morning Academics  Afternoon Fun  Weekend Trips

2491 Emery Rd • South Wales, NY 14139 • P 716.687.2001 • gow.org/summer-programs
Why the Science of Reading has not been embraced by all educators is an important topic. As we hear more discussion of the science of reading, the widening of the achievement gap, and the role of higher education in the training of teachers in the profession, PBIDA is fortunate to have a leader in the forefront of these issues as our keynote speaker! In her keynote address, Transforming How Reading is Taught: Partnerships to Change Policies and Practice, Dr. Margie Gillis will describe the multifaceted nature of the educational system as the context for transforming reading instruction. Educators, state departments, policymakers, professors, philanthropists, and parents must work together to ensure that all children learn to read. Dr. Gillis will help each of us see the part we can play in changing the way reading is taught.

After the keynote address, Dr. Gillis will take part in the panel discussion, Teaching the Science of Reading in Higher Education. As a member of this panel, she will share more examples of her leadership in working to transform how reading is taught.

Dr. Gillis’ Background

Margie B. Gillis, Ed.D. is a nationally recognized Certified Academic Language Therapist (CALT) who has been teaching children of all ages to read for over 40 years. She has also worked in higher education, training preservice teachers to a high level of performance and providing professional development for teachers already in the field.

Dr. Gillis worked with Dr. Isabelle Liberman, a pioneer in discovering the role of phonemic awareness in reading while working on her Master’s Degree at the University of Connecticut. She received her Doctorate of Education from the University of Louisville in Special Education. Over the next twenty years as she worked around the country and after returning to Connecticut, Margie realized that major change was needed both in higher education for preservice teachers and in professional development for certified teachers if they were to be effective teachers of reading. Margie became an expert in the reading programs that districts were using in order to determine what instructional practices to target and to start replacing what was ineffective with evidence-based activities and materials through coaching/mentoring.

In 2009, Margie founded Literacy How, Inc. to provide professional development opportunities and coaching for teachers on how best to implement evidence-based reading practices in the classroom. Margie and her staff do not just provide activities for teachers. They also ensure that teachers know the objective of each session as well as the research base at its foundation.

To provide this information more widely, Dr. Gillis and Nancy Chapel Eberhardt developed the Literacy How Professional Learning Series of books for use in teaching and mentoring. In 2010, Margie founded the Anne E. Fowler Foundation to support scholarships for teachers for graduate work in reading and language development. (See www.literacyhow.org.)

Dr. Gillis has worked at the policy level through the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE). She was instrumental in Connecticut’s adoption of a universal screening test for K-3 students, implementing the Connecticut Foundations of Reading Test as part of the certification process for pre-service teachers, and in the design and execution of the Connecticut K-3 Literacy Initiative. In her capacity as Research Affiliate at Haskins Laboratories and at Fairfield University, Margie explores promising evidence-based literacy practices with the potential for scalability.

Dr. Gillis’ Thoughts on our Conference Theme

In keeping with the theme of the conference, “Literacy Across the Lifespan,” Dr. Gillis emphasizes the importance of using universal screening to identify students who need intensive intervention and to provide them with extra support from the beginning. But universal screening is not enough. Schools must have a system to move children in and out of intensive instruction based on data.
Change Minds, Change the World.

TEACH

WE STAY AHEAD OF THE COMPETITION
SO YOU’RE AT THE HEAD OF THE CLASS.

How do we know?
Here’s just a few examples...

• 1st Intervention Specialist program in PA
  - 2 degrees, 2 certifications, 5 years,

• 1 of 7 IDA accredited programs in PA
  - 1 of only 29 nationwide

• 1 of the first Early Childhood Residency programs in the state
  - A full year, immersive student teaching experience

• 1 of 24 accredited fully online Associates in Early Childhood programs in the US
  - Stackable Associates to Bachelors

• 1 of the first PDE approved SPED PK-12 programs to meet new certification requirements
  - Going beyond the bare minimum to give you the evidence based practices you need.

• The School of Education at Clarion University.
  - Preparing teachers since 1867.

clarion.edu/SOE

EDUCATING TEACHERS SINCE 1867
that tracks their progress. Schools must do a better job for all students rather than forcing them to stay in interventions that are not working.

Since dyslexia changes over the lifespan, Dr. Gillis has discussed the need to take those changes into account. For example, spelling and its impact on writing may need to be addressed through different methods in middle school and high school than in elementary school. In addition, assistive technology (AT) tools should play an important role for older students and for adults. Dr. Gillis recommends the AT resources suggested for all ages by Elaine Cheesman, Ph.D. on the IDA website and in Perspectives, the IDA magazine: https://dyslexiaida.org/dr-cheesmans-app-chat-typing-lessons-and-games-for-kids-and-adults/

Dr. Gillis argues that, while it is essential that students are provided with appropriate interventions and accommodations, schools and families need to help children develop their other interests and skills such as music, athletics, technology, and art. Each person must develop their own skill set for life. In addition, students need to be taught how to self-advocate for what they need to be successful.

Dr. Gillis praises the work done by parents in getting us where we are now in the dyslexia field. “Thank you for your heavy lifting, in fighting for legislation. We need to move forward with implementation and we need partnerships with parents and other policymakers to get us to ensure that all children can read. It is a civil right.”

Attend PBIDA’s fall conference to hear from Dr. Margie Gillis. You will come away inspired to continue to work to make sure all children learn to read.

Register Now: pa.dyslexiaida.org/events/fall2020conference/

Help Them Thrive.

Equip yourself with innovative techniques to teach all types of learners.

With Edinboro University’s Master of Education in Reading - Dyslexia Interventions degree, one of the only programs of its kind in Pennsylvania, you can support striving readers with the skills and strategies necessary to thrive.

“There is a longstanding history that explains how children learn to read and why some students struggle – a history that dates back over 40 years. Yet, we haven’t been able to move the needle to impact children’s reading scores. We are fighting against the status quo since teachers are still entering the workforce without the knowledge they need.”

Margie Gillis, Ed.D. (Continued from page 19)
Centreville Layton School offers a rigorous educational experience for students who learn differently. Our program identifies academic and social needs of individuals and provides a curriculum that focuses on problem solving and critical thinking. Through intervention and strengthening learning strategies, the school empowers each student to reach his or her potential.

302.571.0230
centrevillelayton.org
6201 Kennett Pike · Centreville, DE 19807
Jan Wasowicz, Ph.D., CCC-SLP
2020 Conference Featured Speaker

Dr. Jan Wasowicz will present two sessions at our fall conference on *Reading, Writing, and Spelling – It’s about Oral Language and Building the Brain for Literacy*. The first session focuses on pre-K through 2nd grade, where oral language, vocabulary, phonological awareness, and phonics skills play a large role in reading, spelling, and writing development. In the second session, the focus will shift to 3rd grade through middle school, when an increased use of morphological and semantic knowledge is employed as students rely upon a larger number of mental orthographic representations in long term memory to support reading fluency, reading comprehension and expressive writing skills.

**The Lifelong Instructional Model**

Dyslexia is a lifelong challenge, and Dr. Wasowicz addresses dyslexia across the lifespan with two essential threads: explicit remediation of decoding and encoding skills across all grades to the level of mastery AND guided practice of these strategies with the goal of independent application.

During K-2 foundational skill instruction, the primary emphasis is on phonemic awareness and phonics, but in later grades there is more focus on morphology and vocabulary. The integration of sounds, letters, and meanings (phonology, orthography, morphology) at every grade level is important, so while there is a shift in focus from early phono-orthographic to higher grade emphasis on morphologic-semantic skills and developing robust orthographic representations, functional integration of these language processes is the key.

It is never just about the sounds and letters. The “lifelong instructional model” is an integration of all evidence-based, multi-linguistic activities that simultaneously engage and functionally integrate a student’s oral and written language systems across all grade levels. There is a focus in the higher grades on developing breadth and depth of vocabulary knowledge and sentence-writing skills through development of morphological knowledge and syntax skills. Strategies for continued development and independent use of mental orthographic representations in long-term memory promote accuracy and fluency of reading and writing.

**Practical Recommendations for Parents and Teachers**

When asked what parents can do, Dr. Wasowicz provides two specific suggestions that she uses in her practice.

1. **Reading:** All students are required to read out loud with a parent/adult for 5-10 minutes every day. Reading out loud engages the phonological system and integrates sounds and print. A parent or adult must listen. If the student misreads a word, the parent should say “Look again,” prompting the student to carefully examine all of the letters of the word as they read the word out loud. Guessing a word from context is not allowed; the goal is to extinguish guessing in order to promote the process of orthographic mapping.

2. **Writing:** To further promote the critical process of orthographic mapping, students are required to say the sounds out loud while simultaneously writing the corresponding letter or letters for each spoken sound. This can be done with homework, spelling practice, letters to grandparents, thank you letters, etc.

These two evidence-based suggestions can also be utilized by teachers in the classroom. Both of these suggestions promote orthographic mapping and speech-to-print (encoding) instruction. The

*(Continued on page 25)*
Since 1970, Benchmark School has been transforming the lives of students with learning differences. Of our thousands of alumni, 98% have attended higher education, including the most prestigious universities and colleges in the nation. Schedule a personal tour and discover how you can empower your child’s future.
Jan Wasowicz, Ph.D., CCC-SLP (Continued from page 23)

importance of these processes cannot be overemphasized. Dr. Wasowicz likes to say, “Good reading instruction is good spelling instruction.” Instructional minutes are precious; use them wisely to make a difference in student success. Reading, writing and spelling instruction work powerfully together.

As in any field, it is important to stay up to date with current research so it may be applied for improved student success. It requires on-going “tweaking” of your current understanding to stay current with best practices because the evidence base is continually improving. Success in reading, writing, and spelling requires a systematic way of learning, practicing, and applying knowledge about sounds, letters, and meanings of spoken and written words. Readers and writers can use their knowledge about the sounds, letters, and meanings of words throughout their lifetime.

About the Speaker

Jan Wasowicz, Ph.D., CCC-SLP has more than 30 years of experience as a language, literacy, and learning specialist. She has worked with students who have language-based reading, writing, and spelling problems in a variety of educational settings, including public schools and private practice.

Dr. Wasowicz frequently speaks about best practices in literacy assessment and instruction at national, state, and local meetings and has taught numerous undergraduate and graduate courses, holding faculty positions at Northwestern University, Elmhurst College, Rush–Presbyterian–St. Luke’s Medical Center, and Governors State University.

She has authored articles published in scholarly journals, is the inventor of the original Earobics® software, and is co-author of SPELL and SPELL-Links to Reading & Writing. Dr. Wasowicz is an ASHA-certified, IL-licensed, and FL-licensed speech-language pathologist and she holds a professional educator license with multiple endorsements from the State Teacher Certification Board of Illinois.

Professional development, curricula, and materials for school and home use are available at learningbydesign.com
Helping Students with Dyslexia Succeed

Grades K-8
Orton-Gillingham Trained Teachers
Faith-Based Education
Customized Education Plans
One-on-One Tutoring

Multi-Sensory Instruction
Research-Based Curriculum
Home School Programs
New Multi-Sensory Playground
Small Class Sizes

299 Le Roi Rd. Pittsburgh, PA 15208 | 412-731—0122
www.pittsburghnewchurchschool.org
LeDerick Horne, Poet, Speaker, Advocate
2020 Conference Featured Speaker

LeDerick Horne is a featured speaker at our October 2020 conference. In his session Supports for Success: Seven Evidence-Based Tips for Families, LeDerick will draw from his book Empowering Students with Hidden Disabilities: A Path to Pride and Success to prepare participants, whether family members or educators, to empower children and students to rely on their strengths and reach their full potential.

LeDerick will also participate as a panelist with parents of children with disabilities and education professionals in the session Building Resiliency and Bridges for Children with Disabilities.

Labeled as neurologically impaired in third grade, LeDerick Horne defied the odds to graduate cum laude from New Jersey City University with a BA in Mathematics and a minor in Fine Arts with a painting emphasis. He has gone on to become a dynamic spoken-word poet, an inspiring motivational speaker, a tireless advocate for all people with disabilities, a bridge builder between learners and leaders across the United States and around the world, and an African American husband and father who serves as a role model for all races, genders, and generations.

The grandson of one of New Jersey’s most prominent civil rights leaders, LeDerick uses his gift for spoken-word poetry as the gateway to larger discussions on equal opportunity, pride, self-determination and hope for people with disabilities. His workshops, keynote speeches, and performances reach thousands of students, teachers, legislators, policy makers, business leaders, and service providers each year. LeDerick has presented at the White House, the United Nations, Harvard University, Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week, the National Association of State Directors of Special Education, and the State Departments of Education across the US. His work addresses the challenges of all disabilities, uniting the efforts of diverse groups in order to achieve substantive, systemic change.

LeDerick was the Founding Board Chair of Eye to Eye (eyetoeyenational.org), a national, award winning mentoring program for students with learning and attention issues. After serving as Chair from 2003 to 2012, he has continued as a board member. LeDerick also serves on the boards of a number of other organizations working for inclusive education for all students.

LeDerick’s spoken-word poetry is available on two albums (Rhyme Reason and Song, 2005 and Black and Blue, 2011) and on YouTube. He co-created New Street Poets, a spoken-word play about the effect of gentrification on urban culture. The play received accolades at the New York City International Fringe Festival and toured extensively throughout the U.S.

LeDerick helps educators realize the potential of the students they work with and helps parents develop the strength to keep fighting for their children to receive the help they need. He inspires people with learning disabilities to understand the labels they have and then create their own definitions of who they are, how their minds work, and to see their strengths and have confidence in their abilities.

“LeDerick isn’t just a popular speaker on disabilities in the country today—he’s experiences have been transformed into a very touching message of how labels and low expectations can hurt children, but also about how the care and concern of one adult can make all the difference. Whether he’s encouraging others with stories from his own personal journey, helping to inform policy discussions, providing hope for those who have lost hope, or fostering a better understanding of the potential within all people with disabilities, LeDerick is an invaluable source of inspiration and leadership.”

– Melody Musgrove
Former Director, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), U.S. Department of Education

www.lederick.com | facebook | instagram | twitter
My YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/user/lapoet77

Order Empowering Students with Hidden Disabilities: A Path to Pride and Success by Margo Izzo, Ph.D. and LeDerick Horne on BrookesPublishing.com or Amazon.com
Imagine You Had the Tools to Teach Every Child to Read

Evidence-Based Teacher Training
Science of Reading ● Online ● Personalized

aimpathways.org
Light at the End of the Tunnel
by Olivia Hansen

Part I: Letter from a Struggling Reader
March, 2018

Dear [Teachers, Principals and School Board Members],

I started school in our town when I was in kindergarten. I always loved to learn. I loved books and to hear them read to me. I really liked writing stories. I remember being so excited to start school. As a matter of fact, our family put a brick at our school with the message “To always love learning.” I wish I could say that this excitement would always have stayed for me.

By the end of kindergarten I was having some problems with reading, but it didn’t seem to be a big deal. I was sad that I couldn’t read as well as the other kids. I figured if I worked really hard at it I would get better. After all, my twin brother was reading and writing just fine.

I clearly remember in first grade having feelings that I was different. I was very sad and frustrated every day. I would try to make myself excited for school, but once the day started I found myself sad again. I would explain to my teacher that I couldn’t do the work. She would try to work with me but her level of frustration with me was very clear. This only made me more anxious. It was as if I was doing this on purpose in her mind. There were times when I would get so upset and frustrated that she would open her classroom door and send me to the counselor’s office where I would have to discuss how to handle my frustration better.

Second grade was not much better. The teacher really treated me like I was just being lazy. I wanted so badly to do well and it just wasn’t happening. At this point I was sad, depressed, and just felt stupid. I had no confidence. I tried hard to be a good student and friend while I was at school. I was telling teachers that something wasn’t right but no one was listening.

I did get extra help in school. I did tutoring during the week and even in the summers! Each year I would tell myself that this year was my year. Mom and Dad would tell me the same. I even remember one health class they were discussing dyslexia. I came home and told my mom that it made sense to me. I think I had this thing! My mom said that she had spoken with the school about getting me tested for dyslexia and they tested and said I didn’t have it. So I just continued to work hard.

By 3rd grade, my anxiety got so bad that I was going to therapy two times a week. I was covered in hives from head to toe for three years and they wouldn’t go away. I would get so sick with joint pains and fever that I couldn’t get out of bed. Sometimes the illness lasted for days. When other kids were out playing or doing sports I was home because I needed to rest.

Now to 6th grade. My anxiety was so bad I couldn’t function. I was depressed. I had no confidence. My past 5 years of school I remember crying every day, but this was so much worse than before. I couldn’t even get into school most days because the anxiety was so bad. Sometimes my mom would drive me back and forth to school for 3 hours so I could build the confidence to walk in. “Leave her” the school would say, but I would cling to her in panic. I knew her leaving me would make the panic so much worse.

My mom took me to my therapist again. This therapist was having me read out loud to her. Within minutes she asked to leave the room to talk to my mom. She asked my mom if I had been checked for dyslexia. My mom told her yes, I was tested by the school who said I didn’t have it.

This was the moment that changed everything for me
Explore where EBS can take you!

EBS is committed to supporting you every step of the way by investing in you and your future goals. As the industry leader, we offer the mentorship, training, support and tools you need to become successful. We are dedicated to helping you build and establish your career path, no matter which direction you choose. We have positions available in various settings throughout the country including our EBS Clinics. Whether you want to stay local, move to a new state, or even travel abroad, our team of Career Specialists are ready to assist!

Positions
Telepractitioners
Reading Specialists
Speech-Language Pathologists
Occupational Therapists
Special Education Teachers
Psychologists

Settings
Telepractice
EBS Children’s Institute Clinics
Public, Private & Charter Schools
Early Intervention
Homes

Training & Support
Free continuing education
Evidence-based software & apps
Lending library of resources, materials & assessments
And so much more!

Be Excited, Be Empowered, Be Exceptional, Be EBS!
800-578-7906 hr@ebshealthcare.com www.ebshealthcare.com www.ebsschools.com

Stay Connected!
Light at the End of the Tunnel (Continued from page 29)

After a neuropsychologist test, I was diagnosed with dyslexia and math dyslexia. And pretty severely too. Reading at a 1st grade level when I was in 6th grade? I was told that I was very very far behind and it would take years for me to catch up.

It was very scary, BUT it was also a relief. I had told my teachers for years that I saw letters flying off the pages, that I wasn’t being bad, but I really couldn’t do the work. My 1st grade teacher had written that I wrote letters backwards, had difficulty reading but that I was a resistant learner. That label followed me and it was very crushing to my feelings.

I was angry. I said “They ruined me.” I felt like years were robbed from me of being a kid because I was always doing school work and was always sick. I found out the hives and the illness had become what they were due to stress I had at school and anything to do with learning.

I had a talk with my mom and dad. We always say to take the bad and make it positive. Maybe something good can come of it. I entered a PTA photo contest where I sent a picture of a bridge that I had taken and wrote that it demonstrated me overcoming my struggles with dyslexia. I won the first round in the contest. I also realized that I really understood what it felt like to have dyslexia and have good communication skills so maybe I could be a voice for other kids. I can pick out a kid with dyslexia pretty quick now. Me, mom and dad discussed me talking to my first grade teacher to tell her about my recent diagnosis and give a voice to other kids by explaining how it felt. I wanted to start with her because it was in the 1st grade that I really started to know something was wrong.

School was over and it was the end of the day. We asked the office if we could go speak with her. Me and my mom and brother went to her class to talk to her. I explained my dyslexia and how it felt. I agreed with her when she said she tried to help me. I just said I wanted to give a voice to other kids who may be struggling. My last thing to her was “...so if you see another kid like me, they may have dyslexia.” We said our thank you and left. I could not believe what happened next. After saying hello to another teacher we passed by we saw my first grade teacher run past us looking upset. Then the principal came to us red in the face and yelled at us for blaming my teacher for my dyslexia. I couldn’t believe it! He was so angry with me. My mom explained that that was not what happened. He walked away. I went home crying and thought I was going to throw up. I was shocked and disappointed and so sad.

My school may have been good to me in ways like having lunch with the principal, but where it mattered they were not good. No one listened. They always acted like it was my fault and I wasn’t doing what I was supposed to do. I felt like they gave up on me. I didn’t get the help or support that I truly needed.

I am not going to let this experience get in my way. I still hope to be able to speak for kids that don’t know how to explain dyslexia for themselves. I want to let kids who struggle with reading to know it is not their fault and that they could have dyslexia like me.

I always said I wanted to grow up to be a writer. Before I didn’t think it was possible. I am now at a place where I am getting “intense remediation.” I have Wilson reading instruction and special math every day. I am working hard to get on track. I want to learn. I want to read. I still want to be a writer.

The most important thing is that my confidence is up. I feel smart because I can learn. I may be different but I don’t see it as a bad thing anymore.

On my picture that I did for the PTA contest I put a quote from my favorite author Roald Dahl, “Somewhere inside all of us is the power to change the world.” I believe this.

Olivia Hansen Age 13, 7th grade

Part II: Reflections

August, 2020

I have been reflecting on how far I have come both academically and emotionally since I was first diagnosed with dyslexia. Prior to that, I was in a very different place. I was depressed, anxious and lacking any real happiness. School and tutoring had become a normal and consistent part of my life year after year. No matter how hard I worked, I never seemed to see a light at the end of the tunnel. Now, it seems like a lifetime ago. Like the thoughts of me grasping my mom’s waist as teachers and members of the school tore me away from her and escorted me down the hallway of the school in order to get me in the classroom. Tears would stream down my face. I feel sad for this child. This child is me. Hard to believe.

(Continued on page 33)
Center School is providing instruction in a safe and healthy environment and continuing to deliver the excellence of our program. Our program offers:

✓ Small class sizes
✓ WILSON Reading System®
✓ Student centered curriculum

Discover our approach to learning. Our admissions team is available to provide virtual or individual meetings at a time that is convenient for you.

Contact tgetz@centerschoolpa.org or (215) 657-2200.

For over 30 years, Center School has successfully served children with language based learning differences.

Our highly qualified and experienced faculty discover how each student learns and then teach in a way that is best suited for their individual needs and specific learning styles.

We pride ourselves in empowering students to become independent and confident learners.
Light at the End of the Tunnel (Continued from page 31)

Intense learning remediation and the proper supports have given me the confidence and an understanding of my personal strengths, which will help me progress. There is no more shame or self-blame when I need extra help or a different way for the teacher to explain to me the information.

Don’t get me wrong. The old brain still needs to be reminded that things are not perfect. I still have school anxiety, but I have an understanding that I know what works for me and what does not. I am a good advocate for myself. In having the diagnosis, teachers also have a better understanding of me. For this reason, I think more teachers should be trained in identifying the signs of dyslexia. A lot of the trauma I experienced could have been avoided if even one of my teachers or special education teachers had been aware of the signs.

When I started AIM Academy in March of sixth grade, I immediately found a passion to learn. Every day, I woke up eager to go to school because I was in an environment that was dedicated to helping students like me. Not only did they teach in a way that I could understand, but they displayed a level of understanding that empowered me and made me feel that I was smart. When they taught me, the information clicked. I realized that there was hope for me. I realized that I was capable of learning and that I was just as capable as the other students in my previous school. Reading is the basis of all academic classes. If you are not able to read, you will not be able to complete the work. People like me just learn to read differently.

I will be returning to the public school setting this year. As a result of my experience with them, other parents became aware of the need for dyslexia screening for their own children. Many more children from the district have been diagnosed with dyslexia since. The school has now developed a Wilson reading program within the school. The awareness of dyslexia in their student population has also increased and become an area in which they are trying to improve. This is a step towards meaningful progress!

I know I can learn. I just learn differently. And that is not a bad thing.
MEETING LITERACY AND LANGUAGE NEEDS OF STRUGGLING READERS

Arcadia’s Literacy Studies, TESOL and Reading graduate programs prepare teachers to reach PreK-12 struggling readers, including English language learners and students with language-based learning disabilities. Develop the skills required to meet the challenges of teaching in inclusive environments with ELs, students with learning disabilities, elementary and secondary readers/writers.

Our programs, accredited by the International Dyslexia Association (IDA), the Center for Effective Reading Instruction (CERI), and the Pennsylvania Department of Education, include:

• Master’s in Literacy Studies: TESOL and Reading (with both certifications)
• Master’s of Reading (with Reading Specialist certification)
• Reading Specialist Certification
• ESL Program Specialist Certificate

For more information, visit arcadia.edu/PBIDALit
Arcadia University’s Graduate Programs in Reading
By Peggy Hickman, PhD and Kathy Wirth, Ed.D

The Reading Specialist Graduate Program at Arcadia University has as its foundation a grounding in evidence-based literacy practices focused on the science of reading. Together with coursework aligned to IDA and PDE certification standards, the program is intentionally designed to ensure educators have the knowledge and skills needed to not only address, but to also lead in responding to the structured reading and literacy needs of diverse learners in today’s schools.

Scope of the Program
Through program coursework and practica experiences, graduates develop a complex understanding of the social, cultural, psychological and political dimensions of literacy policies and practices for meeting the diverse learning needs of students in schools and communities. With attention to the overarching goal of supporting all students in pre-k through 12th grade to gain meaning from texts and to be able to access the range of meaning-based literacy opportunities available in our interconnected world, graduates are prepared to provide guidance not only to school teams in relation to decisions related to a multi-tiered system of literacy support; but they are also knowledgeable and skilled in teaching scientific, evidence-based, structured and targeted literacy instruction, in specific, strategic ways with diverse populations, including students with dyslexia, students struggling with language and literacy development, and English Language Learners. A primary goal is for graduates of Arcadia University’s reading programs is to be experts in addressing the multifaceted and critical needs of students who struggle in reading, centered in the science of reading (National Reading Panel, 2000) with diverse populations, so as to be vital, informed, proactive, and effective teachers of reading. They also graduate as well-informed members of school teams (including Response to Intervention/Multitiered Systems of Support, and multi-disciplinary teams), advocating for targeted, evidence-based instruction in reading for all students.

Coursework and Program Options
At Arcadia students can choose from different program options. Undergraduates completing their PA Level 1 teaching certification, can opt to enroll in our 5-year program, in which they begin coursework in their senior year toward an additional master’s degree in Reading with certification as a Reading

“I was drawn to Arcadia’s focus on preparing educators to create inclusive classrooms . . .”

(Continued on page 37)
DISCOVER THE PILOT DIFFERENCE

Unlock your child's potential with an education customized to their needs.

Since 1957, Pilot School has served children with language-based learning differences including, but not limited to, dyslexia, ADHD, and speech language delays. We challenge the myth of normal by creating an individualized curriculum for students from ages 4-14.

Watch your child's education transform thanks to our exceptional resources:

- 7 on-site educational specialists including OT/PT, Speech Language & Music therapy
- 5:1 student to teacher ratio
- Individualized Educational Plans for each child
- a new 91,000 square foot state-of-the-art building
- 50-acre campus with outdoor teaching space, Adventure Track, and saltwater therapeutic swimming pool

Schedule a tour or a call with Alix, the Head of School

LearnMore.PilotSchool.org
302-478-1740 | info@pilotschool.org
208 Woodlawn Road, Wilmington, DE 19803
Arcadia University’s Graduate Programs in Reading (Continued from page 35)

Specialist. The separate master’s degree in Reading with Reading Specialist certification is also a terrific program for individuals who have already earned a bachelor’s degree and are seeking a Level 1 teacher certification specifically in Reading.

Many of our students enroll in Arcadia’s third program option, which combines the Reading Specialist master’s/certification program with the knowledge and skills of the PA, ESL Program Specialist Certificate, in “Literacy Studies: TESOL and Reading.” All of Arcadia’s Reading Specialist graduate programs include two foundation courses in working with English learners, including fieldwork with individual and small groups of English Learners (aligning with the School of Education’s focus on preparing teachers to address the literacy needs of all students in PK-12 settings). However, our graduates of the Literacy Studies: TESOL and Reading also have embedded in their program, all of the PDE teacher knowledge and skills standards and fieldwork to obtain an additional PA, ESL Program Specialist certificate. In doing so, graduates are prepared to address not only English-speaking students’ literacy needs, but also the literacy needs of emergent bilingual students who may need additional language and literacy supports. As one graduate recently stated, “I was drawn to Arcadia’s focus on preparing educators to create inclusive classrooms . . . My interest in literacy for diverse students is the reason why I am pursuing the ESL certification in addition to the Reading Specialist PreK-12 certification. I want to be equipped to help all of my students, and I feel that acquiring this background is a crucial piece in my preparation to become a reading specialist.” Arcadia’s Literacy Studies: TESOL and Reading program is structured with exactly these goals and outcomes: expertise in addressing diverse student needs and targeted, strategic literacy instruction and intervention within multi-tiered systems of support structures; ability to provide guidance to multiple school teams in relation to structured literacy (International Dyslexia Association, 2016) and the science of reading; and expertise in first and second language development, assessment, instruction and intervention, and frameworks guiding processes for helping teams determine language development versus possible learning disability considerations for English learners.

Field Experiences and Practicum
Field experiences throughout the program provide an opportunity to engage in diverse, PreK-12 classroom settings and individualized instruction to apply the strategies and tools learned in coursework. Graduates implement a variety of formative and diagnostic assessments representing the range of those used in schools in the Philadelphia metropolitan and corresponding suburban regions, with students across these grade levels. They then use the data from these assessments to inform planning and systematic instruction with each student within meaning-based literacy contexts.

The final practicum is the culminating activity of the certification and master’s programs and is offered across four weeks each summer. Under the supervision of faculty, students engage in a unique experience on Arcadia’s campus with students from partner school districts. During the practicum, our students apply the knowledge of prescriptive/diagnostic assessment and instruction while working with individual and small groups of students as part of a community outreach program (the Arcadia Community Learning Center, or ACLC). At the beginning of the 4-week program, under the supervision of faculty supervisors, practicum students assess children’s literacy skills. A report is provided to parents/guardians of their child/children that reflects assessment information, as appropriate, so that they, together with their instructor, collaborate on establishing explicit, skills-based goals and engage throughout the practicum in monitoring their progress toward mastery within the context of engaging, meaning-making activities. Workshops are provided for parents to share with them ways to support the learning experiences of the child.

As a culminating experience, the instructors and students apply their new skills in creating summative literacy performances showcasing their progress, such as Author’s Chair or Readers’ Theater. At the completion of the program, both parents/guardians and the children are provided a summary of their program instruction and skills mastered, and a clear guide to next steps for skill development complete with resources to assist them.

In sum, at Arcadia we are proud of our commitment to our graduate Reading Specialist and TESOL degree and certification program graduates, in providing professionals with foundations, frameworks, and skill development in the science of reading and structured literacy for effective outcomes for diverse students.

Peggy Hickman, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor in the School of Education, Arcadia University, and the IDA Programs Accreditation Lead.

Kathleen (Kathy) Wirth, Ed.D., is the Reading and Literacy Studies Program Adviser and Program Director for the Arcadia Community Learning Center in the School of Education, Arcadia University
ACCOMPLISH READING®

Explicit Literacy Instruction
Feedback - Think Time - Improved Comprehension

ACCOMPLISH READING® APP prompts students to re-read and to rely on background knowledge to develop advanced comprehension strategies.

“ACCOMPLISH READING fills a gap in the market when it comes to reading apps. Students work independently, but teachers track student progress. Several students can use it and it has lots of content, making it a good value for $1.99. One of the best comprehension apps! - Educational App Store Teacher Review

www.accomplishonline.com
Apple, Android Tablets and Chromebooks.
Jane Offutt, Ph.D. Reading Specialist
Owner, Accomplishonline LLC

Thank you to our 2020 PBIDA Sponsors!

Platinum Sponsors

Gold Sponsor

DV Friends
GRADES 1-12
SAVE THE DATE

PBIDA’s Spring Conference in Pittsburgh

Co-Sponsored by

Carlow University’s Education Department

April 10, 2021

WE WELCOME OUR KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Dr. Anita L. Archer

Anita L. Archer, PhD, is an educational consultant to school districts on explicit instruction, the design and delivery of instruction, behavior management, and literacy instruction. She has taught elementary and middle school students and is the recipient of 10 awards honoring her excellence in teaching and contributions to the field of education. Dr. Archer has served on the faculties of San Diego State University, the University of Washington in Seattle, and the University of Oregon in Eugene. She is nationally known for her professional development activities, having presented in every state over the course of her 40-year career. Dr. Archer is coauthor, with Dr. Mary Gleason, of numerous curriculum materials addressing reading, writing, and study skills.