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## Editor's Corner

*Patricia L. Scharer, Editor-in-Chief*

My, my, 7 years just flies by! I've been editor of *The Journal of Reading Recovery* for 7 years now, so it's time to both reflect and look ahead.

### *Reflection #1: Teamwork*

First, thanks go to all those who have served as section editors, reviewers, and writers during my tenure as editor. The talents I have observed and experienced have been impressive. Colleagues like Mary Anne Doyle whose great ideas about ways to provide support for Reading Recovery professionals have been amazing. And, of course, we can't forget the expertise of Vicki Fox who has not only done the technical editing and layout, but also worked behind the scenes with all of us as we met to plan the next issue. Staff from LCNA have not only been consistent contributors but have also provided an extra set of eyes to make sure that each issue is the best it can possibly be.

### *Reflection #2: Expanding the Conversation*

Our editorial team thought it would be important to widen both the types of contributors and audience of JRR. So, we designed a new column focused on celebrating the work on literacy scholars outside of Reading Recovery. Our goals were to not only find similarities across our work but also to expand our understanding of literacy experts who also study children's progress as readers and writers. Many of our scholars have been keynote speakers at the annual conference; others have been nominated and invited to write for our journal because of the potential contribution to our work. It was our hope that these articles could be studied and discussed at professional development looking for connections across our work, as well as ways the articles could inform our work.

### *Reflection #3: Learning Political Action*

Working as the JRR editor and reading many articles each year has led me to recognize that our former stance of working hard for our students and sharing our data is not enough. I once asked Jeff Williams why it feels like we are a target. After all, we have always taken the high road and never slammed other programs. Jeff, in his wise way replied, "It's because we are the best." That's a wonderful compliment, and I believe that too but, recent legislation across that U.S. has shown that being the best is



not enough. In too many states, Reading Recovery has been indirectly (but effectively) targeted by having laws passed making an “MSV approach” illegal. Of course, there’s no such thing as an MSV approach but even a limited understanding coupled with a smear campaign has been enough to lose Reading Recovery teachers across the U.S. I doubt that the students we would serve are accelerating with the phonics programs from the state “approved” list and, over time, data will support my claim. But, meanwhile, there are children who would have learned to read in 12–20 weeks with a trained Reading Recovery teacher, who will either repeat the same instruction in first grade again or enter second grade as a non-reader. We must do more. Here’s my challenge for the future — learn how to use our voices, data, and supporters to reverse such legislation. Don’t give up on our kids.

#### *Reflection #4: Spread the Word*

When I read the manuscript by David and Sharon Reinking, published in this issue, I decided it should be required reading for every administrator, parent, and legislator. The compendium very clearly identifies the limitations of teaching phonics rules to young children. That is not to say that children do not need to learn about letter-sound relationships. But, they also need to learn the many, many other possibilities in a nontransparent language like English as well as other ways to strategically figure out unknown words. We realize that this is, perhaps, the longest article ever published in JRR. And, I would hope that readers will read both the text before the compendium and the compendium itself. But, what the Reinkings have done is a gift to our profession and deserves to be shared as part of the conversation about how much phonics is most likely not only to teach children to read but also support them as they become readers. This will take intentional effort on our part. Let’s get to it!

Finally, be sure to also spend time reading and discussing the “The Past Informing the Present” article by Gay Su Pinnell. The article was originally published during the celebration of 25 years of Reading Recovery (*The Journal of Reading Recovery*, 9(2), 17–23) and includes an update by Gay about the powerful relevance of the article today as well as a challenge for the future.

Happy Reading!



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