



A Publication of the Council for Learning Disabilities December 2019

President's Message



Dear CLD Members,

I would like to begin my second annual message to the membership by extending a huge thank you to everyone who contributed to, and participated in, the 41st International Conference on Learning Disabilities during the first week of

October. The conference was a great success due in large part to **Conference Program Chair Brittany Hott** and the Conference Planning Committee, co-chaired by **Anne Brawand** and **Maria Peterson-Ahmad**. The Council for Learning Disabilities is fortunate to have such a committed group of professionals—both those named here and many others—willing to commit vast amounts of their time and expertise in service to the organization.

Conference highlights are many, so for the sake of brevity, I will mention only a few here. Every year we have the opportunity to hear the scholarship presented by the current year's award winners. This year, the Research Committee organized a panel consisting of presentations by the recipient of CLD's **Outstanding Research Award, Alex Smith**, as well as presentations by lead authors of **CLD's Must Read articles, Rajiv Satsangi** (*Learning Disability Quarterly*) and **Tracy Spies** (*Intervention in School and Clinic*). This aspect of the conference is both enriching and stimulating. I encourage you to contact **Margaret Flores**, chair of the Research Committee, if you would like to learn more about these awards.

I would also like to highlight the continued involvement of CLD's past presidents, including the selection of the **Wiederholt Distinguished Lecturer**. This year this notable honor went to **Michael Behrmann**, professor emeritus of special education at George Mason University. Honoring the contributions made by CLD past presidents was bittersweet, as we acknowledged the recent passing of our friend, colleague, and mentor, **Brian Bryant**. Brian was a dear man with an amazing spirit, who provided leadership to the organization for many decades. The diversity and vitality of members participating in this year's one-day Leadership Institute (led by **Esther Lindstrom**), as well as the announcement of this year's Leader-

ship Academy (Cohort 8), was a testament to his legacy and to **Diane Bryant's** continued leadership.

Behind the scenes at the conference, the Board of Trustees (BOT) held its bi-annual meeting, the Executive Committee (EC) held its bi-monthly meeting, and many members of the organization attended the Business Meeting. One highlight from the BOT meeting was a presentation of the initiatives taken by the Membership Committee, led by **Kristi Santi** and **Nanette S. Fritschmann**. Their work is most directly aligned with this year's goal of building membership, and the committee is making steady progress in the areas of recruitment, retention, and extending the inclusivity of our membership. Another highlight of both the BOT and EC meetings was the presentation of a diversity statement for the conference program, led by the efforts of **Brenda Barrio**, chair of the Diversity Committee. The BOT is now looking at how we can expand the work of the Diversity Committee to include the entire organization. CLD's eight other committees also reported on their progress. I encourage you to reach out to any of the committee chairs (see the CLD website at www.council-for-learning-disabilities.org) to learn more and get involved. Finally, at the Business Meeting, we were fortunate enough to learn that three highly respected professionals in our field are running for the **open position of Vice President of CLD**: Brenda Barrio, Kristi Santi, and Rebecca Shankland. Their biographical statements are included in this issue of *LD Forum*. I encourage you to learn more about our candidates and participate in our election later this year.

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In closing this quarter's President's Message, I would like to invite all members to contact me or anyone on the BOT or EC with ideas and input as we begin the strategic planning for the organization. I am happy to report that five members of the BOT have expressed an interest in serving on a special commit-

tee to engage in initial strategic planning efforts with the goal of including all of the membership as we move forward. I am honored to lead these efforts in 2019–2020 as we continue to build our membership through intentional and inclusive action.

Lindy Crawford
2019–2020 CLD President

Liaison Update

Eight Principles to Guide Specific Learning Disability Evaluation

Submitted by Roberta Strosnider & Debi Gartland, co-chairs, CLD Liaison Committee

In collaboration with our 10 partners, the Council for Learning Disabilities is proud to announce the release of eight principles to guide the evaluation process. These principles are available in the document *Eligibility for Special Education Under a Specific Learning Disability Classification*.

You've likely heard about some common challenges with the evaluation process for children with specific learning disabilities (SLD). Each state has its own process for determining eligibility for special education under the SLD category. Inconsistency across states can lead to frustration and confusion. In some places, there are delays in the evaluation process and students must frequently wait to fail before receiving special education services. There can also be a lack of transparency for parents who seek to understand the evaluation process.

Over the last year, in partnership with 10 other national organizations, we set out to tackle some of these challenges. Together, we examined the research on different identification methods, interviewed researchers, and connected with experts and practitioners in states across the country. We surveyed parents, psychologists, and state special education directors to understand their experiences with the SLD evaluation process. Our goal was to determine how best to encourage schools and districts to use comprehensive yet targeted evaluation practices that are supported by research and that can bring consistency to students and families.

The principles were developed in partnership with the following organizations:

- American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
- Council of Administrators of Special Education
- Council for Exceptional Children
- Council for Learning Disabilities
- Decoding Dyslexia
- Division for Learning Disabilities of the Council for Exceptional Children
- International Dyslexia Association
- Learning Disabilities Association of America
- National Association of School Psychologists
- National Association of State Directors of Special Education
- National Center for Learning Disabilities

Together, we developed a set of eight principles that should guide any evaluation process for students suspected of having SLD. The principles cover topics such as instruction and intervention, collaboration among team members, parent and family engagement, the use of cognitive assessments, and the use of RTI data in decision making.

There are several ways a district might determine that a child is eligible for special education due to having SLD. But there is room for improvement in the identification process, no matter which approach a district is using. For instance, regardless of the model, there must be room for the use of professional judgment—a critical component in any evaluation for special education under an SLD category. And any information from a comprehensive evaluation should inform real-time instructional decisions.

With these principles as our foundation, this work with our partners is just beginning. We will continue to tackle the persistent challenges related to identification of students with SLD and will work to help districts improve their processes and how they engage students and families. Working together, we can decrease frustration, increase collaboration, and better serve students.

For the full document, see the CLD website (<https://council-for-learning-disabilities.org/>), "CLD Updates."

Education for all students:
Principle 1: All students should have access to general education that includes rigorous, differentiated, universally designed core instruction, as well as supplemental, evidence-based interventions designed to respond to students' individual needs.
Principle 2: Education professionals—working as a team—should have the preparation, ongoing training, and resources required to: collect and use universal screening information; select and administer assessments to measure student learning and monitor progress; and provide evidence-based instruction and interventions to support students in accessing the core general education curriculum.
Principle 3: Teams of education professionals should establish and maintain clear lines of communication with families to gain valuable input related to a student's strengths as well as academic, social, behavioral, and health needs to ensure that families, students, and service providers can participate in collaborative decision making about future instruction.
Where a disability is suspected:
Principle 4: An evaluation must lead to a clear, unbiased, and timely decision regarding special education eligibility and inform future instruction, whether the student requires special education or not.
Where special education eligibility is being determined and SLD is suspected:
Principle 5: Policies for determining student eligibility for special education services under the SLD classification should require the use of valid and reliable measures and ensure consistency across school districts.
Principle 6: Comprehensive evaluations for special education eligibility under the SLD category must include data from targeted, valid, and reliable measures that are tailored to the unique learning and behavioral profile of each student. The selection of measures and an eligibility determination must consider both best practice and professional judgment.
Principle 7: Assessments that measure aspects of cognitive functioning may be used to rule out intellectual disabilities or to inform educational decisions by documenting areas in which the student is struggling or excelling.
Principle 8: Teams of education professionals should use the data collected on how a student responds to evidence-based interventions as an essential part of the evaluation. School personnel must not use response to intervention (RTI) procedures to delay a comprehensive evaluation and the determination of eligibility for special education services.

Nomination and Elections Committee Announces Candidates for Vice President

The CLD Nominations and Elections Committee is pleased to announce the three candidates who are running for vice president. The elected candidate will begin her term in July 2020 and will move through the presidential line of the organization (i.e., vice president, president-elect, president, immediate past-president). Candidate statements follow.



Brenda Barrio, Ph.D.
University of North Texas, TX

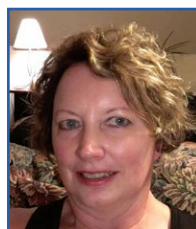
Brenda Barrio is an associate professor of special education (critical perspectives) at the University of North Texas. Dr. Barrio has been an active member of CLD since 2012, serving in various capacities and committees (Diversity, Membership, Standards, and Ethics). For the past three years, she has led the Diversity Committee, and in collaboration with CLD members, they have enhanced the focus on diversity at CLD and in the field of learning disabilities. This collaboration has led to expanding diversity research and practitioner-focused publications, presentations, and webinars. Dr. Barrio and her committee have most recently worked with Dr. Brittany Hott in including the first Diversity Highlight sessions at the CLD conference. Dr. Barrio's focus as vice president, and later as president, will be to continue the efforts of CLD to support equity and access for students with LD, especially those from diverse backgrounds.



Kristi Santi, Ph.D.
The University of Houston, TX

Kristi Santi is an associate professor at the University of Houston in the Special Populations program. Her current involvement in CLD includes being

treasurer of the Texas CLD, co-chair of the Membership Committee of CLD, and co-chair of the local arrangements committee for the 2019 CLD conference in San Antonio. She is the PI on two recently received OSEP grants, which involve training local school district educational personnel via the University of Houston Special Populations Ed.D. program, one of which aims to improve academic outcomes for students with dyslexia. Dr. Santi has been an active member of CLD since 2013 and would like to continue to support the vision and mission of CLD as an officer of the Executive Board.



Rebecca Shankland, Ph.D.
Appalachian State University, NC

Rebecca Shankland is an associate professor in special education at Appalachian State University. She earned her Ph.D. at Michigan State University in special education and literacy and taught students with disabilities for more than 30 years before moving to Appalachian State. She has been a member of CLD since 2009, serving as secretary and as a member of the Membership, Finance, and Diversity committees.

Finance Committee Updates

The Finance Committee met during the CLD 2019 Annual Conference in San Antonio, Texas. Members on the committee include **Beverly Weiser** (treasurer), **Lindy Crawford** (president), **Sheri Berkeley** (immediate past president), **Steve Chamberlain** (past president), **Rebecca Shankland**, **Sharon Ray**, and **Beth Jones**. During the conference and throughout the year, the Finance Committee (a) monitors the fiscal practices of the organization, (b) develops guidelines and makes recommendations for management, (c) creates guidelines for use of reserve funds that are consistent with the objectives of CLD's Mission Statement, (d) reviews the

annual budget prior to being submitted for approval by the BOT, and (e) serves in an advisory capacity to the BOT regarding matters that would affect the revenues and expenditures of the organization. The Finance Committee, along with the BOT and other committees, supports leadership development of professionals who serve individuals with learning disabilities and other challenges in learning. Additionally, the Finance Committee collaborates with other CLD committees on ways to build membership, including educators, researchers, university and college students, and parents of children experiencing learning difficulties.

Call for Proposals for CLD 2020

The Call for Proposals for the **42nd International Conference on Learning Disabilities**, to be held in historic Richmond, Virginia, October 15–16, 2020, will be released on December 2, 2019. The new portal for submission of proposals will also open on that same date.

Please be sure to check the CLD website on **December 2, 2019**, for more information. Proposals will be **due by February 15, 2020**, with notification of proposal status happening in late spring. The Council for Learning Disabilities

encourages proposals that focus on research, teaching and teacher education, and policy related to the outcomes of individuals with learning disabilities. The Executive Committee and Board of Trustees hope that you will consider CLD as the venue to disseminate your scholarship and recommendations for practice. Please contact CLD Vice President **Joseph Morgan** (joseph.morgan@unlv.edu) if you have any questions about the proposal submission process.

SAVE THE DATE

42ND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LEARNING DISABILITIES

October 15th–16th, 2020

Richmond Marriott • Richmond, Virginia

JOIN CLD IN HISTORIC RICHMOND, VIRGINIA!

- *Attend the conference!*
- *Consider submitting a proposal to present your work!*
- *Bring your colleagues and students!*
- *Collaborate with other leaders in the field of LD!*



WHY ATTEND CLD 2020?

1. Attend concurrent skill-building sessions on research, evidence-based interventions, teacher preparation, and policies for students with learning disabilities.
2. Network with local, state, and national scholars and educators in the field of learning disabilities.
3. Connect with colleagues and meet new collaborators.
4. Provide training and support to doctoral students studying learning disabilities.
5. Explore Richmond and all it has to offer!

Visit our website for conference updates: <https://council-for-learning-disabilities.org/>

Connect with CLD



Committee & Chapter News

Colorado CLD Announcements

The Colorado Council for Learning Disabilities (CCLD) will feature **Barbra Daugherty** for their annual Math on the Planes conference. Registration will open in early November. Please see our website for a conference brochure with more details on costs and accommodations.

Julia Mackay from Chipeta Elm was awarded Teacher of the Year and was honored at the San Antonio conference. As a result of attending the conference, Julia has expressed interest to be more involved in the Colorado chapter. Hopefully she will take a leadership role in recruiting new members.

CCLD is happy to announce that **Kelly Murillo** is their new president. Kelly is excited to take part in this organization and she is looking forward to promoting LD resources and developing more networking opportunities through recruitment of new members and reaching out to statewide colleges, universities, and other institutions of higher education to promote the council's mission and vision.

CCLD also has a new treasurer, **Shiloh Carpenter**. Shiloh is eager to be an active member of the CCLD; she is looking forward to supporting CCLD by reaching out to practitioners and current special education teachers to promote CCLD's Math on the Planes conference. Shiloh would like to see the Colorado chapter grow over the next couple years and is excited to take an active role in the process.

Finally, CCLD has set a goal to increase membership. We are looking forward to rolling out an aggressive agenda to bring in new recruits.

Virginia CLD Announcements

Virginia CLD is accepting proposals for their 2020 annual symposium. The theme for the symposium is High-Leverage Practices (HLPs). **Dr. Paul Riccomini** will be the keynote speaker, followed by a panel of experts who will discuss specific HLPs and answer audience questions. We welcome submissions on topics other than HLPs provided they include unique and innovative evidence-based, practitioner-friendly strategies for teaching students with disabilities.

Last year more than 350 educators from across the state attended the symposium. The participants included general and special education teachers, future teachers, teaching assistants, co-teachers, and English Language instructors, to name a few. This year's symposium is shaping up to be the best yet! The VCLD symposium will again be held at Old Dominion University on **Saturday, April 25, 2020**. Please consider submitting a proposal at <https://tinyurl.com/2020VCLDproposal>. **Deadline for submissions is November 30, 2019.**

This issue of LD Forum is dedicated to the memory of Dr. Brian Bryant (1951–2019), longtime supporter and past president of the Council for Learning Disabilities.

CLD Mission & Vision

Mission Statement: The Council for Learning Disabilities (CLD), an international organization composed of professionals who represent diverse disciplines, is committed to enhancing the education and quality of life for individuals with learning disabilities across the life span. CLD accomplishes this by promoting and disseminating evidence-based research and practices related to the education of individuals with learn-

ing disabilities. In addition, CLD fosters (a) collaboration among professionals; (b) development of leaders in the field; and (c) advocacy for policies that support individuals with learning disabilities at local, state, and national levels.

Vision Statement: All individuals with learning disabilities are empowered to achieve their potential.