

*Executive Director's Message*

# Why We Must Be Optimistic About Reading Recovery's Future

RRCNA Executive Director *Jady Johnson*



*Optimism is a strategy for making a better future. Because unless you believe the future can be better, you are unlikely to step up and take responsibility for making it so.*

— Noam Chomsky

As Reading Recovery teachers across the U.S. and Canada complete lessons and reports for the 2012–2013 school year, planning for next year's literacy programs is already underway in many schools and districts. For those of us at the Reading Recovery Council and in the North American Trainers Group, planning has begun to create a new strategic plan for Reading Recovery in North America.

Perhaps no activity is more important in association management than planning how human and financial resources will be put to use to further our mission. It is a time when representatives gather to consider the challenges and opportunities, and to set priorities for future work.

Four years ago, RRCNA and NATG created our first integrated strategic plan to guide our work. The plan has served us well by keeping us focused and helping us assess our progress. Consider these highlights of the past 4 years.

### *Recognition of Reading Recovery's research base*

In recent years, a team of Reading Recovery researchers has responded to requests for information and submitted reports that have gained recognition of Reading Recovery's strong research on effectiveness. Building on the 2007 and 2008 recognition from the What Works Clearinghouse, the National Center on Response to Intervention, National Center on Intensive Intervention, Campaign for Grade Level Reading, and most recently, the Promising Practices Network, have recognized Reading Recovery because of excellent research findings on effectiveness.

### *Early literacy resources in partnership with USDE*

Funding awarded in 2009–2010 by the U.S. Department of Education allowed us to develop web-based distance learning programs to support effective school literacy teams, videos demonstrating best practices in effective teaching, Reading Recovery as effective response to intervention, an administrator's institute, and a special website. (<http://fdf.readingrecovery.org>)

### *Marketing and advocacy campaign resources*

Market research revealed that administrators and elected officials are key in the decision to implement Reading

Recovery. The "I'm a Reflection of You" campaign reaches out to decision makers with a special website ([www.ReadingRecoveryWorks.org](http://www.ReadingRecoveryWorks.org)) that includes fact sheets, case studies, and videos of administrators and student progress. In addition, the Members Only section of the RRCNA website includes adminis-

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trator newsletters, a tri-fold brochure, and a PowerPoint presentation that can be customized for local use.

### *Development and advocacy support our mission*

Generous contributors have supported Reading Recovery's mission by funding teacher leader scholarships for training sites, professional development grants to attend conferences, advocacy efforts, and other strategic priorities. RRCNA and Reading Recovery professionals across the nation have advocated with national,

state, and local officials to create understanding and support.

#### *Redesigned website and other online resources*

A re-engineered RRCNA website makes resources available to our members and to the early literacy community. Because of its rich content, the new site is a favorite with search engines. In addition, Reading Recovery supporters can gather on FaceBook and now at the RRCNA Learning Center, a new online learning community. A monthly online newsletter, "Connections," keeps RRCNA members and Reading Recovery advocates up to date.

#### *Professional learning resources*

*Leader-directed modules* are now available for professional development. Among the most widely used

is the Running Record Professional Learning Series, a three-part series on coding, interpreting, and analyzing running records. A separate University Edition is also available. A new product, "Assessing Oral Language with the Record of Oral Language," is available, and a new Observation Survey module is now in production.

*More than 20 webcasts* focusing on teaching and learning topics are available on the RRCNA website.

Founded in 2000, *The Journal of Reading Recovery* continues to provide up-to-date professional development on Reading Recovery teaching, implementation, research, and RRCNA activities.

*The Reading Recovery Book List* is updated annually and is available in a convenient 3-ring binder as well as online.

#### **Yes, but...**

"Yes, but"... lurks in the background even as I recount the accomplishments of our past 4 years. We all understand the financial challenges states, schools, and districts are facing. The 5-year i3 grant has allowed our community to train many new Reading Recovery teachers who are reaching more children; however, this federal scale-up funding will wind down in 2015. Make no mistake, this is sobering work.

How can we be both realistic and optimistic? Reading Recovery professionals have a history of meeting difficult challenges, problem solving together, and creating solutions. Let's not underestimate ourselves. The future can be better.

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## RRCNA Board of Directors Election Results

We are pleased to share results of the recent election for terms beginning July 21, 2013.

#### **Vice President**

**Craig Dougherty**  
Superintendent,  
Sheridan County  
School District #2,  
Sheridan, WY



#### **Descubriendo la Lectura**

**Representative**  
**Karin Cecere**  
Teacher Leader,  
Lisle, IL



#### **Site Coordinator**

**Representative**  
**Audrey Bunch**  
Edenton-Chowan  
Schools,  
Edenton, NC



#### **Secretary**

**Elizabeth Kaye**  
Teacher Leader,  
Little Rock  
School District,  
Little Rock, AR



#### **Teacher Representative**

**Kellie Ehlers**  
Worthington  
City Schools,  
Worthington, OH



#### **Trainer**

**Representative**  
**Mary K. Lose**  
Oakland University,  
Rochester, MI

