Editor’s Corner

Patricia L. Scharer, Editor-in-Chief

Courageous Actions

Readers will discover several themes in this issue of *The Journal of Reading Recovery* — the influence of close observation on teaching, moral issues of equity and excellence, and the resilience of Reading Recovery professionals. Allyson Matczuk uses Clay’s “setting sail” metaphor to challenge Reading Recovery teachers to use every observation of difficulties early in lessons to design the most effective lessons. Examples of Jason’s book graph, running records, and close observations in writing provide insights into planning precision teaching moves needed to accelerate learning. Similarly, Mary Ann Poparad writes about the power of Literacy Lessons for special populations. Poparad argues that careful observation of student reading and writing behaviors during Literacy Lessons not only supports student learning but also increases teachers’ professional knowledge and expertise.

As part of our ongoing Distinguished Scholars Series, Douglas Reeves explores the multiple meanings of equity and excellence. The five examples he uses are, indeed, somewhat removed from primary students, but will resonate with Reading Recovery professionals who feel the urgency to support struggling students but are met with opposition. For example, Reeves argues that the path to Advanced Placement courses begin with young children as learning gaps will grow larger every year. When discussing homework, Reeves notes four characteristics of effective practice, each of which is found in every Reading Recovery lesson. His article aligns issues found in Reading Recovery to those throughout the education system. Reeves concludes with a charge for educators that we “need courageous action now” (p. 26).

Finally, this issue celebrates the resilience of Reading Recovery teachers despite a life-altering pandemic. Lorianne Fitzgerald and her colleagues describe their collaboration across multiple universities to provide as many resources as possible to teachers using Zoom or distance-learning platforms when school started in 2019. Their work, individually and collectively, enabled many teachers to sustain high-quality lessons, even at a distance. The success of Reading Recovery teachers in fall 2019, is further described by Susan Mauck and Jeffrey Brymer-Bashore in the IDEC report. And in Canada, Stephanie Cecchina had the opportunity to work with Jake, a rising second grader whose participation in Reading Recovery had been interrupted by the global pandemic. Within 10 weeks, Jake progressed from being a reluctant writer reading at level 5 to a confident writer, willing to take risks, and reading level 27. The opportunity to work with Jake came about because of the creativity of the district, collaboration with parents, and the talents of his teacher. Courageous actions, indeed!

Happy Reading!

Patricia L. Scharer

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