

*Executive Director's Message*

# Collective Voices Can Help Learners Who Need Us Most



*RRCNA Executive Director Billy Molasso*

Let me guess: You became an educator because you adore thoroughly digesting reams of “legal-ese” and analyzing the means and motivations behind rules, regulations, and mandates.

No? Maybe not.

I’ll try again. You became an educator because you deeply care for the well-being of your students and want to use your voice to help them learn. A true advocate for kids, especially those struggling with literacy.

I bet that’s closer to the mark.

Depending on how long you’ve been in education, you’ve likely found yourself treading in the wake of at least one tsunami of bad policy, be it testing mandates, overly prescriptive methods, or other “red tape” measures that—however well-intentioned in their inception—have contributed to educator overwhelm and presumably even the national teacher shortage. If only those laws had been shaped by or had the voices of true advocates behind them!

In “Interpreting Policy for Practice: A 4-Part Process” (page 17 of this issue), Rachael Gabriel outlines a framework through which educators can “systematically analyze policy so that they may respond to it with integrity” (p. 17). Gabriel offers multiple examples of policies enacted

over the past several years and examines where legislation slanted toward science of reading “has codified a narrow and often misleading brand of certainty about what counts as appropriate reading instruction and intervention” (p. 23). Gabriel

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illuminates where the underlying sentiment of a law may have been pure in its intent toward helping struggling readers, but where over-prescriptive measures often leave out those who may not fit into the narrow view of those who crafted the legislation.

Gabriel posits, “Since this batch of new laws is increasingly prescriptive about what to teach and assess, it is increasingly important that educa-

tors have tools and frameworks with which to productively engage with policy in order to ensure it is implemented with integrity in relation to both learners and the law” (p. 23).

That is exactly where the Reading Recovery Community comes in!

The time is long past where educators can sit by and assume that the laws and policy enacted will be thoughtfully laid out with the needs of our students in mind. Now is the time when real educators contribute to legislative conversation — to have their wisdom from the field, the classroom, and the intervention office be heard by those shaping policy. This need was the impetus for us to create the Legislative Response Team, which recently had its inaugural meeting to outline its goals and strategies for amplifying the voice of our members in state-level advocacy.

And when we say the “voices of our members,” this includes yours! This is officially your call to action. In the coming weeks and months (and hopefully years and decades), watch for opportunities to make your voice heard on legislative issues that affect our students. Need an easy way to contribute? Check out the new tools on our Advocacy page to allow you to easily contact local legislators on pertinent education bills in your district. You can also simply retweet a post,

# CONNECT & GET INVOLVED



As the board of directors continues to revamp the existing committee structure to best serve our members, check out these two opportunities for our members to get involved:



## NEW! Community Advocacy Committee

*Currently seeking chair, chair-elect, and members*

Calling passionate proponents of Reading Recovery to help us spread success stories in your community and beyond! The Community Advocacy Committee facilitates resources and strategies for Reading Recovery professionals to advocate in their local communities, including with other teachers in their buildings, with building and district leadership, school boards, parents and families, and others at the local community level. The Community Advocacy Committee will work in coordination with a new Legislation Response Team that will focus on state-level advocacy issues.

## Blog Review Committee

*Currently seeking members*



Blog Review Committee is looking for educators who love reading and Reading Recovery to recruit and give feedback to aspiring bloggers. This is an easy volunteer opportunity with a minimal time commitment that allows you the first look at key issues from the field — perfect for those who like to keep up with the latest in literacy.

**Interested in serving? Log in to the Reading Recovery Community Forum and go the Volunteer tab to find these and more volunteer opportunities.**

share one of your own, or otherwise use your expertise to enlighten those in your sphere of influence about Reading Recovery as a non-negotiable piece of literacy curriculum.

Would you like to contribute on an even deeper level? Sign up for the new Community Advocacy Committee to facilitate resources and strategies

for Reading Recovery professionals to strongly advocate for Reading Recovery, DLL, IPLE, and Literacy Lessons in their local communities—including with other teachers in their buildings, with building and district leadership, school boards, parents and families, and others at the local community level.

In whatever way you choose or are able to contribute, we urge you to be vocal in your support; **be louder than the detractors**. Who knows? Yours could be the voice that helps inform the next wave of policy. Let's use our collective voices in support of the learners who need us most.