

*President's Message*

# Sense of Belonging Strengthens Reading Recovery Community



*RRCNA President Maeghan McCormick*

Spring is here, and the end of the school year is in sight! That means my time as your RRCNA president is coming to a close and while it has been a challenging year, it certainly has not been without its rewards.

Serving on the RRCNA Executive Board has been a fantastic privilege because I get to partner with deeply dedicated educators and get to see firsthand their accomplishments with emergent readers and writers. Connecting with these colleagues is a treasured experience. I particularly valued the opportunity to meet them in person during professional development — especially at LitCon: National K-8 Literacy & Reading Recovery Conference!

If you were lucky enough to attend LitCon this year, you heard me share during the closing general session my personal ruminations on the state of literacy education at this point in history. I shared my belief that there has never been a more challenging time to be an educator than in this post-COVID era, where our students have faced disrupted education, absenteeism, health uncertainties, and even food insecurity. Many in attendance commiserated with me in these thoughts, particularly that even as we have gotten back to “a new normal,” teachers continue to struggle through what seems to be an ever-

worsening anti-teacher sentiment, drastic teacher shortages, and our theories under constant attack from political and business interests.

Sharing these frustrations with a room of 1,000-plus educators was both an intimidating experience and a cathartic one! I felt in that moment that I wasn't alone. That

students' eyes. Those moments, coupled with the camaraderie we share, with our professional learning communities give us the strength to face the naysayers.

As I shared in my address, it often seems that politicians see children as constituents. Big business sees them as prospects and dollar signs.

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*we weren't alone.* Together we experience frustrations and joys, and we support each other through it all. And yet again, as I so often am, I was reminded of the importance of belonging to the Reading Recovery Community.

Whether a Reading Recovery teacher, classroom teacher, literacy coach, interventionist, or administrator, we are one in this struggle but also one in our successes. And we see so many successes every day! Amidst the contention of daily politics, we see shining reminders of what matters when we witness those small “Aha moments” in our

But as educators, we've chosen a higher purpose, allowing us to see children as they truly are — little people with big dreams and enormous potential.

Thank you for choosing this higher purpose for your students *and* for your colleagues. As a Community, we hold each other up during this hard work! And now—when it's hard—it is more important than ever that we stay the course and continue to provide the best, most responsive literacy instruction to the students in our care.