

Fall 2015 — ALTA bul*le*tin

The Newsletter of the Academic Language Therapy Association

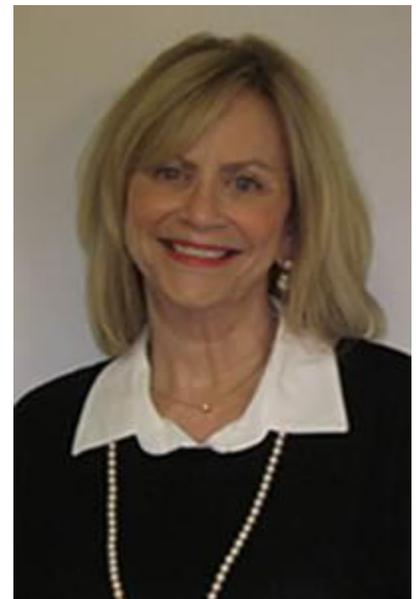
President's Message

Marilyn Mathis, M.Ed., CALT-QI
President, Academic Language Therapy Association

Fall Greetings ALTA Members!

October is *Dyslexia Awareness Month* and provides an opportunity to call national attention to issues surrounding Dyslexia, to acknowledge educators specializing in effective teaching strategies, and to celebrate the many achievements of children and adults with dyslexia. ALTA members are leading our field in state after state. From the classroom to the halls of higher education and to our state capitols, ALTA members are making a huge impact on the future of many students who struggle with dyslexia. Through your work, ALTA standards are changing the depth and breadth of knowledge and delivery of instruction expected for teachers of reading.

In looking back at our history for our 30th Anniversary Spring Conference, I found an article in a 2006 ALTA newsletter written upon the passing of Aylett Royall Cox, a pioneer in our field, referring to her as "a giant in the field of dyslexia intervention." The name of the article was "*She Changed Lives.*" I, along with many others, have been profoundly impacted by Aylett's contribution to the field of dyslexia and have the utmost respect for all that she brought to our field. As I look at the tremendous work being done by ALTA members across the country right now, I would like to say to all ALTA members . . . "*YOU* are all changing lives!" What a joy it is to know that our organization is making such a difference.



The ALTA Conference Committee has been hard at work creating an outstanding program that you will not want to miss. Our impressive list of speakers include nationally recognized leaders in the field of dyslexia like Marcia Henry, Judith Birsh, Margaret Smith, Tincey Miller and many of the Texas pioneers who will trace the history of Orton-Gillingham and the early beginnings of our ALTA organization. Also, featured will be Robert Sweet who has played an important role in how reading is thought about and taught in the US along with Reid Lyon, a major influence in the field of reading research. I hope to see you all at this historic event on April 15th & 16th, 2016.

Respectfully yours,

Marilyn Mathis

SAVE THE DATE!
29th Annual ALTA National Conference
April 15-16, 2016
Renaissance Dallas Richardson Hotel
Members will be notified when registration is open.

IDA National Fall Conference Reminder

Just around the corner, on October 28-31st, is the IDA Fall Conference in Grapevine, TX at the Gaylord Texan Hotel. ALTA and IMSLEC will share the Alliance Exhibit Booth #223. Please stop by on Wednesday at 7:30 PM for the grand opening of the exhibit hall and pick up your Alliance membership ribbons to identify you as an Alliance member.

Please see the invitation below:

An Invitation To Alliance Members

Please come to the Alliance Booth #223
Wednesday, Oct. 28, 2015 for
Exhibit Hall Opening Night!

Register to win
***Ready to Read: A Multisensory Approach to Language-
Based Comprehension Instruction, 1st Edition***

autographed in person
by Mary Farrell, Ph.D.

&

Register to win a **SMART Pen**
Drawing at 8:00 PM

IMSLEC and ALTA members
Please stop by to pick up your membership ribbons!

Additional Drawings for **Smart Pens & other Prizes**
will be held on Thursday and Friday at 6:00 PM

See you in Grapevine, Texas!

Marilyn Mathis, Alliance President

&

Members of the Board of the Alliance

Why Join ALTA? Spread the Word!!!

As ALTA members, you represent the highest standards of excellence in reading in your schools and communities. You are the teachers who are able to turn struggling readers into readers. You are the teachers who can change the future for students with dyslexia. You are the teachers to whom parents turn for expert advice. And, you are the teachers who greatly impact your peers. Often, ALTA members are asked, "How can I join an organization like ALTA?"

As ALTA members, we want to share with others why they should join ALTA, what it will mean for them, and how it will impact the future of our field:

- Membership in a professional organization with a national presence.
- Connections with other highly qualified professionals.
- Promotion of our profession, both locally and nationally.

Maybe it's time for your cohorts to put a gold seal on their credentials and join ALTA! Please share the following with likely candidates.

What is ALTA?

The Academic Language Therapy Association (ALTA) is a professional membership organization founded in 1985 to establish, maintain and promote standards of education, practice, and professional conduct for Certified Academic Language Therapists and Certified Academic Language Practitioners. ALTA was the first national group established solely for highly qualified written-language professionals with verified training and knowledge necessary to teach students with dyslexia and/or related disorders. Currently, ALTA is represented by nearly 2,000 members in 45 states, with 6 chapters and 4 regional councils.

It is the intent of the Academic Language Therapy Association that Certified Academic Language Therapists and Certified Academic Language Practitioners be universally recognized as highly qualified specialists who have met uniform standards of professional post-baccalaureate education, and that the credentials conferred by ALTA will assure the public and other professionals of the competence, integrity, and professionalism of these members.

What benefits would I gain by joining ALTA?

The Association offers a variety of important services. Membership provides you with:

- National registry
- State licensure (available in some states)
- Annual Conference
- Chapter membership with local/regional opportunities
- Employment opportunities and recommendations
- Newsletter
- Members' Only Website
- Professional Development opportunities
- Scholarships
- CEU opportunities
- Opportunities to participate in legislative efforts, community services, an on-line referral helpline, and speakers' bureau

Individuals who are graduates of an IMSLEC accredited training course or who have had commensurate training may apply to sit for the Alliance Exam and join ALTA.

Join ALTA and professionals who, like you, are committed to providing the highest quality services to individuals with dyslexia and related written language disorders!

ALTA Congressional Update

Linda Gladden and Courtney Hoffman

Congressmen and women in Washington, DC have been hard at work on behalf of dyslexia. The Bipartisan Dyslexia Caucus is chaired by Rep. Lamar Smith (R-TX) with Vice-Chair Julia Brownley (D-CA) and consists of members representing 34 states and the territory of Guam working to advance dyslexia initiatives. Is your congressman a member of the dyslexia caucus? [See list here.](#)

HR 3033, the READ Act, Research Excellence and Advancements for Dyslexia Act, introduced on 7/13/2015 has been referred to the House Science, Space and Technology Committee and is scheduled for a hearing on Wednesday, September 30th at 10 am. Witnesses slated to testify are **Geraldine "Tincy" Miller**, Texas State Board of Education; **Barbara Wilson**, Wilson Language Training; and **Dr. Rachel Robillard**, 504 Services and Response to Intervention, Austin Independent School District. This resolution requires the President's annual budget to request Congress each year to include a line item for at least \$5M to the Research in Disabilities Education program of the National Science Foundation for multi-directorate, merit-reviewed and competitively awarded research on the science of dyslexia, including the early identification of children and students with dyslexia, professional development for teachers and administrators, and curricula and educational tools needed for children with dyslexia. Rep. Lamar Smith (TX) introduced the resolution which has the following cosponsors: Rep. Julia Brownley (CA), Rep. Donald Beyer (VA), Rep. Larry Bucshon (IN), Rep. Barbara Comstock (VA), Rep. Donna Edwards (MD), Rep. Bill Johnson (OH), Rep. David Loebsack (IA), Rep. Steve Stivers (OH), Rep. Bruce Westerman (AR) and Rep. David Young (IA). If you see your congressman as a sponsor of the bill, please thank them. If their name is not listed, ask them why they are not supporting this measure!

Currently, the only federal dollars used for dyslexia track through special education. Those dollars are appropriated to individual states for special education classes that address a list of 130 disabilities, including dyslexia. A student placed in special education for dyslexia is technically utilizing federal funds by being in that classroom, though many other disabilities are being treated there as well. And because dyslexia is one of the 130 disabilities addressed through this funding, federal appropriators have been reluctant to specify funding for dyslexia outside of special education.

Much advocacy and education still needs to occur at the federal level for students with dyslexia. Take the time to write a letter or email to your congressman, thanking him/her if they are in the Dyslexia Caucus and/or encouraging participation, if not. Share why funding outside of special education is desirable, funding that will follow the student and encourage school districts to meet the needs of students with dyslexia.



Kim Jameson and Linda Gladden, Texas ALTA Co-Chairs, present Congressman Smith with the Champions for Children with Dyslexia award for his legislative efforts to help children with dyslexia.

Advocates for Literacy

September 25, 2015

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chairman
Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John Kline
Chairman
Education and the Workforce Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Bobby Scott
Ranking Member
Education and the Workforce Committee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Alexander and Kline and Ranking Members Murray and Scott:

On behalf of Advocates for Literacy, a coalition of 67 organizations focused on increasing the federal commitment to improve literacy instruction through evidenced based practices, **we urge you to maintain Title II, Part D language — Literacy Education for All, Results for the Nation — found in S. 1177, the *Every Child Achieves Act (ECAA)***, as your Committees prepare for conference negotiations to reauthorize the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)*. The purpose of this program is to improve student academic achievement in reading and writing by providing Federal support to States to develop and implement state-led comprehensive literacy instruction plans to ensure high-quality instruction and effective strategies in reading and writing from early education through grade 12.

Students need advanced reading and writing skills to gain entry into the modern global workplace. Postsecondary success depends on the ability of graduates to read and comprehend challenging content in such areas as math, science, and technology. In addition, early literacy success depends on supporting foundational language development in early childhood and the ability of schools to provide robust and comprehensive evidenced-based interventions that will reduce the number of children who may need more advanced services to support their individual literacy needs.

Unfortunately, *60 percent of eighth- and twelfth-graders read below the proficient level on the 2013 National Assessment of Educational Progress*. In addition, ACT's recent report, *The Condition of College & Career Readiness 2015*, suggests U.S. graduates continue to make little progress in college and career readiness. This year, 31% of all graduates that took the assessment met none of the four ACT College Readiness Benchmarks, suggesting they are likely to struggle after high school. Many of the more than 700,000 students who leave U.S. high schools each year without a diploma leave because they have low literacy skills. Teachers, principals and school leaders know how to reach these students in the K-12 continuum with evidence-based interventions, but they need the resources and flexibility to do so. For the past five years, the federal government has provided a select number of states with funding to implement comprehensive literacy programs, which have yielded improvements in academic success, but these opportunities have not been available to all states.

The bipartisan language supported unanimously by the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) authorizes the LEARN program and will allow States to use targeted federal investments to assist local education agencies (LEAs) with providing appropriate interventions to help all students — birth through grade 12 — graduate with the literacy skills necessary to be successful in the 21st century.

It is imperative our nation's students graduate with the skills to succeed in postsecondary education and the workforce, and, therefore, a strong federal commitment to literacy is essential. We urge the ESEA conferees to support improved literacy instruction for all students by accepting the LEARN language in the ECAA without changes. This will ensure States have the ability to support LEAs to deliver comprehensive and high-quality literacy instruction and implement effective strategies appropriate to specific grade levels and the individual needs of all students.

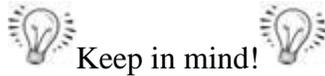
Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

1. Academic Language Therapy Association
2. ACT, Inc.
3. Advocacy Institute
4. Alliance for Excellent Education
5. American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
6. American Federation of Teachers
7. American Occupational Therapy Association
8. American School Counselor Association
9. Association for Career and Technical Education
10. Association of American Publishers
11. Association on Higher Education and Disability
12. Association for Middle Level Education
13. Council for Exceptional Children
14. Center for the Collaborative Classroom
15. Education Northwest
16. Early Care and Education Consortium
17. Easter Seals
18. Every Child Reading

19. First Five Year Fund
20. First Focus Campaign for Children
21. Grimes Reading Institute
22. Higher Education Consortium
23. Institute for Educational Leadership
24. International Dyslexia Association
25. HighScope Educational Research Foundation
26. International Literacy Association
27. Keys to Literacy
28. Knowledge Alliance
29. Learning Ally
30. Learning Disabilities Association of America
31. Literacy How, Inc
32. National Adolescent Literacy Coalition
33. National Association for the Education of Young Children
34. National Association of Elementary School Principals
35. National Association of School Psychologists
36. National Association of Secondary School Principals
37. National Association of State Boards of Education
38. National Association of State Directors of Special Education
39. National Black Child Development Institute
40. National Center for Families Learning
41. National Center for Learning Disabilities
42. National Coalition for Literacy
43. National Council of Teachers of English
44. National Down Syndrome Congress
45. National Down Syndrome Society
46. National Education Association
47. National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform
48. National Head Start Association
49. National Title I Association
50. National Urban Alliance for Effective Education
51. National Women's Law Center
52. National Writing Project
53. Nemours
54. Parent Child Home Program
55. Parents As Teachers
56. RLongSolutions
57. Reading Partners
58. Reading Recovery Council of North America
59. Scholastic Inc.
60. School Social Work Association of America
61. TASH
62. TESOL International Association
63. The Arc
64. United Cerebral Palsy
65. United Way Worldwide
66. WestEd
67. ZERO TO THREE

Keep in mind!



Attending ALTA approved events is a great way to garner your 10 yearly Continuing Education hours.

When that's not possible, you must request ALTA CEU approval at least two weeks IN ADVANCE of the event. Just go to the [Individual Event Approval Form](#).

Alliance Exam Applications Now Online

Maggie Rejino

We are pleased to inform you that ALTA has added an online application process to our website for future alliance exam applicants. This will help to make the application process easier and more efficient.

Please feel free to explore the online process and spread the word to anyone who is interested in taking the exam in the future. Simply click the "Join Now" middle tab near the top of the [ALTA homepage](#). All applicants will receive an email confirmation after they have submitted the application online. If approved they will also receive another email with the testing site information as well as downloadable study guides and additional information about ALTA. If you have any questions, please [contact the ALTA office](#).

Dear Academic Language Therapist - please wave your magic wand and make dyslexia go away

As a parent navigating the public education system, who has a child with dyslexia, what do I wish a language therapist could tell me? I want you to tell me my child's future is secure — that, after all *our* hard work (hers, yours and mine), my child will be reading well and be successful in school. That after she completes the research-based dyslexia program, her learning issues will be resolved and we'll be done.

There. I said it. My secret, impossible wish is that we will beat dyslexia and you will help us do it. How is that for having the weight of the world on your shoulders?

I am not a "newbie" parent. While the reality is we probably won't beat dyslexia, we can make it better. My child has been working on reading for four years. Currently she is half-way through the Scottish Rite Take Flight program. The questions I have now are completely different than the questions I had four years ago, and likely will be completely different four years from now. I continually research dyslexia, different therapies, and the law. During this process I have learned there is a lot of money to be made by providers and saved by schools. There are times I wonder who I can trust. I question if I should keep pushing my child. I worry if my child will look back some day and be grateful or resentful for the time spent learning to read.

As a language therapist, there are answers you can provide that will keep parents grounded, hopeful and committed.

Give my child homework to win the most important race — the race to read.

Make no mistake about it. If dyslexia isn't a frantic race to read, it should be. As language therapists, you've heard the statistics — if you're not reading by third grade, you likely won't catch up; if you have dyslexia you have to work 6 times as hard; best chances for success with dyslexia is before age 9 or it will take four times as long. **As much as we are sick of homework, we need dyslexia homework.** Because there is such a short window in which to make progress I want you to give me my child's trouble words. Just a little extra exposure to them, an extra 10 minutes each night makes a big difference. Can you help me be a better teacher? I will never have your knowledge, but I can model good practices. Ask me to read a book and teach me to ask questions to increase comprehension and inferencing ability. A simple handout once a month with pointers goes a long way. At the end of the program, I will be able to continue with my child.

Tell me where we are today and the plan for tomorrow

Can you tell me where my child is right now? What her comfort, independent and instructional reading levels are? I want to know how many *correct* words per minute my child is reading, and at what reading level she was tested at to get that number. I want to know if she is progressing and what gains are realistic.

Not having exposure to other kids with dyslexia, I want to know where my child sits on the scale of dyslexia. On a scale of 1-10, 1 being the lowest, 10 being the highest, how severe is my child's dyslexia? Of the dyslexic children you have worked with — are there unique struggles my child battles? Are you seeing other areas she needs help in — writing, math, speech or attention?

And, while there are a lot of questions I really want the answers to, like what is my child's outlook, where will my child max out at reading, what is the reality for my child with dyslexia — I know you can't give them now. But, while you can't predict the future, can you give insight? What realistically happens once my child completes a dyslexia program? Will there be regression? How can we prevent regression? What about fluency and comprehension, should we continue with reading instruction? Eventually enough will be enough, but how do you know when?

Help me level the playing field

Meanwhile, my child is bright. Technology can give her access to grade-level material. What are your favorite text to speech, speech to text, and reading apps? How can we use these to free up some working memory so people can see what she's really capable of? Can you help me find the words to educate teachers so they understand that fair isn't everybody getting the same thing, fair is everybody getting what they need to be successful?

The ability to read changes life outcomes, you are a hero.

According to the Department of Justice, "The link between academic failure and delinquency, violence and crime is welded to reading failure." Did you know 85 percent of all juveniles who interface with the juvenile court system are functionally illiterate and over 70 percent of inmates in America's prison cannot read above a fourth grade level? * THIS. WILL. NOT. BE. MY. GIRL.

Language therapists change lives. The best advice I can give any parent who has a child with dyslexia is, make sure your child is getting reading instruction from a certified language therapist. So far, *every* language therapist I've worked with fully understands Dyslexia and is usually connected to dyslexia in a significant way (child, self, sister). You are patient, kind, empathetic, wise, insightful and inspirational. **BECAUSE OF YOU**, my child will not become a statistic. She will be able to fill out a job application, follow directions, pursue higher education and have choices for a bright future. She may never like reading, but she will be able to. I am eternally grateful for the life-changing gift of reading that you are helping my child attain. So, when you hear

any parent say thank you, picture a mother or father thanking the fireman who rescued their child from a burning building. The simple two words of thanks come from the depths of our heart. We can never repay you. Thank you.

Nikki Medinger

Huffington Post

ALTA Members Selected to Guide Intervention in Colorado's First Public School to Address Dyslexia

ALTA members have begun a second year of leading intervention efforts at Odyssey Elementary, Colorado's first public school to address dyslexia. Teresa Hinote, CALT-QI, Tammy Kennington, CALT, and Bryn Abrahamsson, CALP, are teaching 90 children identified with profiles of dyslexia throughout the 2015-2016 school year.

"Working at Odyssey in the Literacy Excellence program is a dream come true for me," stated Abrahamsson, who is completing her second year of dyslexia therapy in the Literacy Intervention Specialist Certification Program. "Working with dyslexic readers all day long is giving me experience that is beyond anything I could have imagined and will echo in my life and more importantly, the lives of these children."

In fall of 2014, Odyssey Elementary School, located in Colorado Springs, became the first public school in Colorado to identify students with profiles of dyslexia and provide specific reading remediation. The school spent one year in preparation for launching the LEx School under the guidance and instruction of the Colorado Literacy & Learning Center ("CLLC").

"It has been a pleasure to work with the staff and leadership at Odyssey to see this come to fruition," reported Lynne Fitzhugh, Ph.D., CALT-QI, CLLC President. "This school-wide effort to impact literacy is changing the future for many children, especially for those with dyslexia."

Efforts began in 2012 when results in student data of reading interventionist Joanne Barner, CALT, came to the attention of Superintendent Dr. Mike Pickering. CLLC directed trainings for one-year in preparation of launching the LEx School. The trainings including a school-wide identification of dyslexia, structured literacy and MSLE for all classroom teachers, and grade-specific instruction. CLLC helped define teacher requirements to insure that highly qualified reading interventionists would work with students exhibiting a profile of dyslexia.

"Regardless of quantitative impact, which we are seeing move in the correct direction, the qualitative feedback from our students and parents has been fantastic," reported Dr. Pickering.

Last year, Odyssey employed two ALTA members, Ms. Hinote and Ms. Barner, to teach as interventionists with identified students in grades two through four.

"The LEx program is about far more than a test or standard — it's about providing a child with an opportunity to become a successful reader and to realize that he is smart and capable after all," reported Hinote.

This year, the school added fifth grade to the program and Ms. Hinote, Ms. Kennington, and Ms. Abrahamsson each teach six classes per day. Children in the program last year have begun a second year of remediation.

"Participating in and observing children acquire reading skills and enjoy reading for the first time in their educational experience is a joy beyond measure," commented Kennington.

According to one of the children in Odyssey's LEx program, "I feel like a better, smarter kid! And I can definitely read better!"

Odyssey's journey will be presented at the 2015 Annual IDA Conference in Grapevine this October. ***The Tipping Point: The Birth of a Literacy Excellence School*** is scheduled for Friday, October 30th, at 10:30 a.m. A supplementary 30-minute documentary of the LEx students, their teachers, and their parents, filmed by Matt Meister, FISD Communications Director and former news anchor, will be included.



Texas Legislative Update

Courtney Hoffman

On June 17, Texas Governor Greg Abbott signed HB 202, the bill that continues licensure for Dyslexia Therapists and Practitioners, moving the program to the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR). The transition from the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) will take several months and licenses will continue to be issued through DSHS until that transition is complete, likely March 2016. The Dyslexia Licensing Advisory Committee which provides industry input on rules and implementation will be reestablished at TDLR during the 2016-2017 interim.

This was a huge success since the 84th Session began with a recommendation from the Sunset Advisory Commission for abolishment of the licensure. Many came to testify and wrote letters, and all had an impact on the outcome. Thank you for your participation in this process. You made a difference!

HB 2205 by Rep. Myra Crownover (R-Denton) and Sen. Kel Seliger (R-Amarillo) included a provision from a bill by Rep. Gary VanDeaver (R-New Boston) that requires alternative education teacher preparation courses include instruction in detection and education of students with dyslexia, just as is required for a certificate from an institution of higher education. Alternative teacher preparation courses had previously received an exemption from this requirement. The passage of this legislation during the 84th Session closes the gap and ensures that all who receive a teaching certificate in Texas will have exposure to the basics about dyslexia.

During the Interim between legislative sessions continued education of legislators is a priority. If you have the opportunity, please thank your state representative and senator for continuing the dyslexia license. All members of the Texas House of Representatives are up for election every two years. Texas Senators face reelection every four years, so only half of the Senate will be on the November ballot. There are some legislators who have announced that they will not seek another term in the legislature. Look over this list and see if your legislator is retiring.

Not Seeking Reelection for the 85th Legislature

Senate	House
Eltife, Kevin(R) S-1	Aycock, Jimmie Don(R) H-54
Fraser, Troy(R) S-24	Crownover, Myra (R) H-64
	Farias, Joe(D) H-118
	Fletcher, Allen(R) H-130
	Harless, Patricia(R) H-126
	Hughes, Bryan(R) H-5
	Keffer, Jim (R) H-60
	King, Susan (R) H-71
	Marquez, Marisa (D) H-77
	McClendon, Ruth Jones (D) H-120
	Otto, John (R) H-18
	Simpson, David(R) H-7
	Turner, Scott (R) H-33
	Turner, Sylvester(D) H-139

In November, candidates will begin filing for the 2016 elections. There will be new faces on the campaign trail. Take the opportunity to share your story about what you do and how it impacts the lives of those you service. If you find a candidate or incumbent with a connection to the cause, please pass that information along to help us identify new champions.

March primaries in Texas take place on March 1, 2016, and the general election on November 8, 2016 in preparation for the 85th Legislative Session.

Political Will and Teamwork: What It Will Take to Close the Reading Achievement Gap

Margie B. Gillis, Ed.D., CALT, President, Literacy How; Research Affiliate, Fairfield University and Haskins Laboratories

In 2010, when asked by the head of a foundation what I might do first to address Connecticut's then-largest achievement gap in the country, I promptly responded, replace the DRA2 (Developmental Reading Assessment) with a **real** universal screener. That knee-jerk reaction set off a chain of events that has changed the face of literacy in our state.

Since then, a team of individuals representing the Black and Puerto Rican Caucus, the Commission on Children, the University of Connecticut, Hill for Literacy, private philanthropy, the State Department of Education (SDE), and Literacy How, has met regularly, adding language each year to the Reading Achievement Gap bill in order to ensure that our students learn to read proficiently by 3rd grade.

Here are some of the highlights of the legislation that has passed in the past 4 years:

Year 1: Public Act (PA) 11-85

- Initial reforms piloted the use of alternative instruments to assess children's reading
- Parent engagement efforts to teach parents about what they can do at home
- Use of external coaches to enhance classroom instruction

Year 2: PA 12-116

- Development of a pilot program in 5 schools that included individualized reading interventions for students who were reading well below benchmark levels
- Prior to instruction, special education and reading specialists were required to pass a dedicated reading exam. It was added to the state policy that requires PK -3rd general education teachers to take and pass the same test.
- Development of universal screening tools and a professional development (PD) system in reading

Year 3: PA 13-245

- Development of embedded PD to improve teacher knowledge and practice
- Requirement for certified K-3 teachers to take a 'reading survey' to create a PD plan with targeted support and information tailored to each school and grade

Year 4: Leadership and Resources to Embed and Expand

- Ensure internal leadership at SDE through the authorization and funding of a Chief Reading Officer who will report directly to the Commissioner

We have miles to go before we sleep but we have raised awareness, passed legislation, piloted and replicated a model to guide schools and districts, and learned how important it is to work together on behalf of our children — particularly those who need the best reading instruction in order to succeed.