IMSLEC Board Meets Despite Winter Storm Thor!

Teaneck, NJ. The IMSLEC Board of Directors convened on Thursday, March 5 for its spring meeting, but it was decidedly not spring in New Jersey. Predictably, weathermen warned of a strong winter storm moving across the country. Board members traveling from Texas, Kansas and California arrived safely although a bit anxious from their turbulent flights. The snow began falling on Wednesday night and continued throughout the following day. All schools in the state were closed on Thursday, including Fairleigh Dickinson where we were to meet. Thanks to our friendly hosts at The Clinton Inn, we were provided a room well suited for our meeting.

Board members worked through the morning, primarily focusing on accreditation topics emanating from IMSLEC’s increased recognition around the country. New course applicants are seeking IMSLEC accreditation to comply with recent legislation in states such as Ohio and Arkansas. In order to keep IMSLEC’s high standards and criteria, the board must find ways to assess instructional personnel who did not receive their training from an IMSLEC-accredited training course. An ad-hoc committee began work in February on policies and procedures to address this issue. A written policy and a checklist for the instructor to complete and return with supporting documentation will be refined over the next few months. The IMSLEC board will approve the final policy.

Recent advances in technology have compelled IMSLEC to look at the possibility of accrediting online courses in multisensory structured language education. Many Council members offer part but not all of their training online. The committee will continue meeting in the coming months to address questions such as:

1. Can a course be offered entirely online and still produce quality graduates?
2. Should additional criteria be considered when accrediting an online course?
3. How can a SOSET best evaluate an online course?

New partnerships with groups whose mission aligns with IMSLEC have been formed since the fall meeting. One partner is Learning Ally, formerly Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic. On Thursday afternoon the board spoke with Jim Halliday and Deborah Lynam of Learning Ally by conference call. The Board was able to view website upgrades that Learning Ally is developing to help parents find reputable professionals for tutoring, therapy or testing their learning different students. Educators will also find training sites in multisensory structured language education through the database. The board was pleased to see the progress that Learning Ally is making on this important project.
From the President

Greetings,

IMSLEC continues to be a very busy organization. In my last newsletter article, I told you about partnerships we are considering. Since then, our board has voted for IMSLEC to accept IDA’s invitation to join the Coalition for Evidence Based Instruction. Marilyn Mathis, ALTA and Alliance President, and I attended the first meeting which was held in Philadelphia on February 27. As of the meeting, the Coalition consisted of 16 members. IDA’s goal is to have 30 members by the next Coalition meeting in June. At the February meeting, the original name was changed to the new “working” title of Coalition for Universal Reading Excellence (CURE). The purpose statement that was adopted is as follows:

“The purpose of the Coalition for Universal Reading Excellence (C.U.R.E.) shall be to promote the adoption of proven instructional programs and practices in American school classrooms, in order to achieve reading proficiency for all students. Mastery of the skill of reading requires being able to automatically decode all the letter/sound relationships of the English spelling system, and develop an understanding of the meaning of words and sentences in written text. The end goal is to achieve reading fluency and an expanded vocabulary without guessing, consistent with age, and grade level. Reading Excellence means the ability to read, write and spell the English language with competence, knowledge and comprehension ...”

The Coalition meeting provided an opportunity for Marilyn and I to meet with Suzanne Carreker, IDA Vice President, to discuss the progress of the exam IDA is proposing to develop. Competencies for the exam were written by a broad sampling of graduates of IDA accredited programs. Suzanne reported that a survey was sent to several thousand IDA members to evaluate the importance of specific competencies to a teacher’s performance as highly qualified to teach reading. In the next phase of development, items for the exam will be developed. I will keep you posted as we learn more about the exam.

IMSLEC continues to work with Learning Ally to determine how our training courses can best be presented on the Learning Ally website. For example, IMSLEC’s representation on the Learning Ally website will include a list of all IMSLEC accredited training courses as well as links to training courses and training course graduates who choose to be listed. We expect that IMSLEC accredited (and thereby also IDA accredited) training course graduates will be identified as such.

I want to briefly note the subject that everyone is talking about this winter (i.e., the weather). Reflecting the nationwide distribution of our training courses, many of our IMSLEC conference calls begin with inquiries about local weather and, at this time of year, it’s always quite a range from extreme cold and snow for many of us to typically more pleasant weather for others. I’ll conclude with a phrase heard frequently these days—at least here in the Northeast:

“Stay safe and warm.”

Mary

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AA/EOE/ADAI
Since its inception, Mayerson Academy’s Orton-Gillingham Multisensory Reading Program has focused on helping classroom teachers and intervention specialists adapt OG methodology to their classroom settings. Each year, the Academy offers three open-enrollment courses during the year, accommodating up to 95 teachers as well as school-based courses contracted for by schools/districts. The impact on instruction and student success has been significant. We are awaiting the report on 2013-14 results from our independent evaluator. But meanwhile, we have other evidence of success:

An Ohio Department of Education (ODE) Dyslexia Pilot Grant which Mayerson Academy wrote for Cincinnati Public Schools in 2011-12, funded school-based courses targeting primary teachers who learn to deliver direct, systematic, multisensory instruction in their core program and in small group Tier 1 settings – reducing the numbers of students identified with disabilities – and interventionists who use OG for small group Tier 2 and more intensive Tier 3 intervention. Recently, ODE rated the Cincinnati Public Schools implementation of the Dyslexia Pilot Grant “Exemplary.” (http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Special-Education/Students-with-Disabilities/Specific-Learning-Disability/Dyslexia-Pilot-Project).

Our open-enrollment courses are partially funded through grants from the Charles H Dater and Smale Family Foundations. In anticipation of our annual report to these grantors, I asked participants to send in any “testimonials” to the impact of the training on their teaching and student success. I’m receiving many, many. Below is one from a classroom teacher and one from a teacher of students with multiple disabilities that attest to the impact:

I am such an advocate of Orton-Gillingham!! When I first attended Orton-Gillingham training I thought that it was interesting but I did not understand the extent of the impact it would make on my students. I am absolutely shocked looking at the growth in my students fall to winter DIBELS Next assessment scores. I only have 3 children not reading at benchmark and they missed the benchmark by 2 words!! I am so pleased with these results and cannot wait to see how the spring assessment scores turn out!

Morgan Cox, First Grade, Norwood City Schools

January 30, 2015

To Whom It Concerns,

I have been teaching special education for 14 years and am currently teaching intermediate students with multiple disabilities. This includes students with Autism as well as those with very low cognitive skills. As a graduate of Mount Saint Joseph, I felt I had a strong background in teaching reading phonetically, that is, until I took an Orton Gillingham course last summer.

Orton Gillingham has changed my life as a teacher and has opened a whole new world to my students. Children with cognitive disabilities typically have difficulty mastering sound/letter correspondence and also have poor retention for learned skills. Though I felt I learned many new teaching strategies during my OG training, I still was somewhat skeptical of its success with students who were so low. However, I jumped in feet first and vowed that I would teach OG for this entire school year.

At first, I was still learning the teaching strategies and tried hard to follow all of the methods exactly as I had been taught. I collected data for each student for the first two weeks of school and found that out of my 8 students only 3 of them were independent readers. Only 1 of these 3 students was able to identify sounds for letters...and she could not identify any short vowel sounds at all. I knew I had my work cut out for me!

I arranged the students into 3 small groups and started to work with each group individually while the other students were at independent learning centers. If you have ever been in a classroom with students with autism, you know that there is no such thing as an “independent learning center.” Try as I might, by the 2nd week in September I realized that the constant interruptions would make this strategy impossible. So I went to Plan B.

Plan B: I analyzed all of the collected data and had 8 different reading levels for my 8 students. The lowest level was a 5th grade student who still could not identify letters by name. The highest level was a 6th grade student who read fluently at an 8th grade level. But I had no choice and decided we would do a whole group lesson every day for 45 minutes. AND...I was starting at Square 1!

The lowest functioning student was relearning letter names that I taught him the year before. The highest functioning reader couldn’t spell and often just skipped over words she couldn’t pronounce. Her fluency data was based on her silent reading

Continued on pg 6
Fairleigh Dickinson University’s Regional Center for College Students with Learning Disabilities

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

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ALTA offers a variety of services to its members and the community, including continuing education opportunities, a national directory, website, newsletter, referral helpline and a national conference.

ALTA seeks and supports opportunities for state licensure.

ALTA invites everyone who successfully completes the Alliance Exam to make ALTA his or her national professional certifying organization.

For more information, visit www.ALTAread.org or call 1-972-233-9107, ext. 226

ALTA offers four levels of membership: Certified Academic Language Practitioner (CALP), Instructor of Certified Academic Language Practitioners (ICALP), Certified Academic Language Therapist (CALT), and Qualified Instructor (QI).

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Jun 8 - Jul 2 - Introductory
San Jose, CA
Jun 15 - Jul 10 - Introductory
Greenwood Village, CO
Jun 17 - Jul 17 - Introductory and Continuum Level
Newark, CA
Jun 22 - Jul 17 - Introductory and Continuum Level
Santa Ana, CA
Jun 24 - Jul 24 - Introductory and Continuum Level
San Francisco, CA
Jul 2 - Jul 31 - Introductory and Continuum Level
Seattle, WA
TBA Jul - Introductory and Continuum Level
Portland, OR
Jul 8 - Aug 1 - Continuum
San Jose, CA
Jul 13 - Aug 7 - Introductory and Continuum Level
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mail@slingerland.org • www.slingerland.org

*Accredited by IMSLEC at Teaching and Instructor of Teaching levels
skills, extensive speaking vocabulary and ability to answer higher level questions. But she had no idea how to break down an unknown word into separate sounds. The other 6 students fell at all stages in between, most of them having forgotten all of the word families we painstakingly learned the last two years.

After 2 days, I noticed that they were getting it. I would love to share each and every victory in this letter, but it would be a book! So I will fast forward to today’s celebration: A spelling test with words containing the soft g sound...that EVERY student passed with a score of 90% or above!!! Wait...maybe you didn’t catch that: My students who could not write the words CAT, DOG and could not spell their names correctly 80% of the time in August 2014, ALL passed a spelling test today with 90% or above! AND wrote the words in cursive! This is nothing short of a miracle!

During a recent small group session with the speech and language pathologist, I was listening as each of my students read a passage to her. They would self-correct, stop to isolate sounds, finger tap phonemes and blend. They were writing simple sentences independently as responses. They were telling her the rules for soft and hard c and explaining what jobs the D and the E had in -dge. I started to tear up. I couldn’t believe that they were applying their skills in a different setting. The SLP was floored and said she had never seen such progress in the MD population. My OG mentor, Millie Thompson, has seen their progress firsthand, as well and can attest to their unbelievable progress.

Quite simply: It Works! It is amazing how they are retaining the skills and are now able to apply them independently. What is most important is that all of my students are reading. They are borrowing books to take home, they are all raising their hands to read aloud, they are spelling sight words, rote words and grade level vocabulary words. They are working independently in learning centers.

Had I known that OG was so effective, I would have taken this course my first year of teaching.

The multisensory, systematic approach to teaching reading brings success to every kind of learner in my class. We have songs to sing, cheers to chant and dances to perform. We have posters to paint, charts to fill, pictures to draw and contests to win. Magic E is a real character with a hat, cape and wand... PlayDoh spelling tests are on our desks. However, most importantly, books are in our hands for stories and facts to be read. What an amazing gift is the ability to READ.

Thank you to those of you who have made this possible for my students. You have given them a chance to open a door to the world around them.

Sincerely,

Dori Lucas, LIS
Intervention Specialist, Intermediate Multiple Disabilities Teacher (4th-6th), Westwood School, Cincinnati Public Schools

---

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Science of Reading Partnership is one of the first programs to be accredited by the IDA
Hello everyone and welcome to Windward!

I am very happy to be here talking with you today and I look forward to getting to know you over this upcoming academic year. My name is Katherine Kaneko and I am a second year assistant teacher in the Middle School. I thought I might give you a quick synopsis of my background before I talk briefly about my experiences at Windward.

I graduated from Dartmouth College with a degree in history and went to Hanoi, Vietnam to work for a British law firm. After living in Hanoi and travelling in Asia, I returned to New York and worked as a financial analyst at JP Morgan, an investment bank. After about four years in investment banking, I became an investigative analyst in the racketeering division at the Manhattan District Attorney’s office. I then received an academic scholarship to attend law school and while there, I got married and had a baby. For the next nine years, I raised my two children, William and Elizabeth, which was an education in and of itself! I have been grateful for my experiences to this point, but professionally, none have been as fulfilling as working here at Windward.

When I arrived at the School last year, I was very anxious about starting in a new career where the intellectual and professional expectations were so high and the stakes so important. I was impressed by the caliber of people I met and admired their intelligence, kindness and warmth, along with their experiences. But I saw teaching as the hardest thing I had done and I worried that, in spite of my other training and professional experiences, I might not be able to adequately learn and teach the Windward program. Yet, from the outset, I had the clear sense that I was in a very unusual and unique environment. And that impression was borne out countless times throughout the year.

In many ways, I feel as though I have travelled the world looking for a community like Windward – an environment where the standards and the aspirations are extraordinarily high and yet the entire community exists for the overarching purpose of seeing everyone succeed – students and adults.

Windward has so many different personalities and experiences gathered under our roof, and yet because of the high standards, the professional support and the dialogue, we are a true community. We grow and sustain each other and our institution.

I want to emphasize how I found help, support and guidance at every turn – when I asked for it and even when I was not sure how to ask for it. I received profound encouragement and inspiration professionally and personally and I truly feel that I have grown as a person, and as a teacher, thanks to the Windward community.

One of the lessons I learned was that you could work very hard and also have an excellent time. (There is a lot of fun to be had here at Windward!) And I don’t just mean that in the sense of seeing a student grow and improve – that experience is breathtaking and humbling. It’s the fact that I am part of a community that works so hard, yet also knows how to enjoy the process and each other … whether it is an excellent conversation over lunch, our faculty book discussions, or a speaker who alters and ameliorates our perception of ourselves and others.

It is my relationship with my mentor teachers who made me laugh and taught me so much. It is the fact that I could take so many courses at Windward Teacher Training Institute and that I could keep learning! And of course there is Field Day, which defies description except to say that it is a well-organized, colorful experience of brutal athleticism and creativity that draws every Windward member into its thrall.

I would like to conclude by offering this: Windward will expect you to work hard. Yet, know that you are valued. You will be known and seen and supported. You will find help when you need it and when you didn’t know you needed it. You will find patience, tolerance, high standards and kindness. And you are welcomed and embraced, knowing that you will contribute not just to the quality of the Windward intellectual life, but that by rooting yourself deeply into the warmth and vitality of our Windward community, you will enrich all of us.

Welcome.
LINDHOLM VISITS BOYS & GIRLS CLUB
Visit in Conjunction with Hurricanes GOAL Grant

Durham, NC – Hurricanes forward Elias Lindholm visited students from The Hill Center and John Avery Boys & Girls Club in Durham on Wednesday, Jan. 28. The event took place at the John Avery gym.

The Hill Center and John Avery Boys & Girls Club received a GOAL Grant in the fall of 2014 to fund a collaborative effort to help literacy in the Durham community – a $150,000 commitment from the Foundation over a three-year span. The funds will enable John Avery Boys & Girls Club program participants to receive intensive reading remediation weekly through the Hill Center’s HillRAP program as well as provide student enrichment workshops for 140 student members, parent support activities, and professional development for the John Avery staff.

On Wednesday, Lindholm participated in question-and-answer sessions with Boys & Girls Club members in three different age groups – elementary school, middle school and high school. There were also games and trivia for the kids as well as an autograph session and group photo.

Jerome Levisy, Executive Director of the John Avery Boys and Girls Club is excited about this partnership with Hill, stating, “Education is essential to comprehensive youth development, and improving literacy skills serves as the foundation for success. I’m honored to partner with the Carolina Hurricanes and The Hill Center to deliver quality programs to the kids who need us most.” Beth Anderson echoed the same sentiment, stating, “We are so excited to partner with the John Avery Boys and Girls Club to enhance their education programming over the next three years. Jerome and his team are dedicated to helping Durham youth reach their full potential, and we are lucky to be able to work together to help their students succeed in school, and in life. We are very grateful to the Hurricanes’ Kids ‘N Community Foundation for this wonderful support.”

About The Hill Center: The Hill Center provides intensive remediation to students with learning differences and attention issues through academic, summer, and tutoring programs. We also train and mentor educators to deliver Hill’s proven methodology and better serve struggling learners.
Offering Take Flight: a comprehensive intervention for students with dyslexia developed by Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children, Dallas, TX.

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*Dyslexia Laws & Being Dyslexic*
Sept 19th, 2015

*Multisensory Study Skills*
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*CEU Courses

**NEWSLETTER**

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**IDA CONFERENCE**

OCT 28 - 31
DALLAS
The Dallas Branch of the International Dyslexia Association held its annual conference on February 6. Dr. Jan Hasbrouck was the keynote speaker of the day. Her topic was *Reading FAST or Reading WELL? Putting Fluency in Perspective.* Dr. Hasbrouck’s research in reading fluency, academic assessment, and interventions have been widely published.

Beverly Dooley, pictured by the Cover Drawing Contest Winner by Andrew Asmar, at the recent International Dyslexia Association, Dallas Branch held at The Renaissance Hotel in Richardson on February 6th.

Dr. Dooley, Peggy Brooks, Director of the Multisensory Teacher Training Program at McKinney Christian Academy and Diana Leonard, a Licensed Dyslexia Therapist at McKinney Christian Academy are pictured @ the McKinney Christian Academy booth. (at the Dyslexia conference).

**DALLAS BRANCH IDA CONFERENCE**

Training centers across the state of Texas met in Austin on February 4th during Dyslexia Awareness Day at the Capitol to be recognized at the House and Senate. After the sessions, Beverly Dooley and Pam Bazis visited Scott Sanford’s office, one of our state legislators, to make him more aware of dyslexia and the upcoming vote on licensure. Presently the dyslexia therapists and practitioners’ licensure is housed in the Department of State Health Services. The suggested bill would move the licensure to the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation. Another important bill that will be drawing attention will be HB 654. This bill calls for funding for the treatment of students identified with dyslexia.

Beverly Dooley, Director of the Directed Studies program at McKinney Christian Academy and Pam Bazis, Qualified Instructor at McKinney Christian Multi-Sensory Teacher Training representing the school and training center, pictured leaving the Senate.

**DYSLEXIA AWARENESS DAY AT TEXAS STATE CAPITOL**

Alice Womack Marsel-CALT-QI, Tincy Miller-State Board of Education, District 12 and Beverly Dooley- Director of Directed Studies program at McKinney Christian Academy attending the House of Representatives session on Dyslexia Awareness Day, February 4th at the Capitol.
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WINDWARD TEACHER TRAINING INSTITUTE
IMSLEC Innovator Awards were presented at the annual Council meeting in San Diego on November 11, 2014. IMSLEC began giving Innovator awards over 10 years ago for outstanding multisensory structured language education professionals, teachers, therapists and college or university educators. The award recognizes individuals for their outstanding dedication, professionalism and competence. From the testimonies given in honor of these ladies, innovator doesn’t go far enough in describing their commitment to the field of multisensory structured language education (MSLE). They were described as tenacious, passionate, dedicated, humble, detail-oriented and masterful. Moving from one school district to another, or from one state to another, did not alter their determination to offer students reading instruction that is evidence based and includes the Principles of Instruction that the IMSLEC Founders purported in 1996: Simultaneous Multisensory (VAKT), Systematic and Cumulative, Direct Instruction, Diagnostic Teaching to Automaticity, and Synthetic/Analytic Instruction.

Recipients of the 2014 Innovator awards were:

**Outstanding School Administrator**
Faye Brady

**Outstanding MSLE Teacher**
Heidi Poulin

**Outstanding MSLE Therapist**
Monica Orr
Jean Colner

**Outstanding MSLE Educator in a College or University**
Missy L. Schraeder

**Outstanding MSLE Professional**
Concha Wyatt
Patricia Bardin
Jeanine Phillips

Dr. Nancy Cushen White was awarded the Etoile DuBard Award for Excellence in the field of Multisensory Structured Language Education. This award is given annually at the IMSLEC fall meeting, to a person who meets the ideals, professionalism and dedication exemplified by the life of Etoile DuBard. Nancy’s nominator described her as the best of what our field has to offer — an outstanding professional, full of integrity with a heart for service on every level.

*Pictured sitting from left to right are Faye Brady, Nancy Cushen White, and Mary Farrell (IMSLC President)*

*Standing: Patty Barden, Jean Colner, Missy Schraeder, Jeanine Phillips, Concha Wyatt.*
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Assistive Technology: A Tool for Successful Transition for Students with Learning Disabilities from High School to College

A Conference for Educators, Parents and Students

There is No Fee for This Conference

Assistive technology is a highly effective learning tool for students with disabilities. This workshop will focus on the application of apps, software and tools — from note taking to study skills — that can bridge the transition from high school to college. Areas of executive function that can be enhanced by assistive technology, such as organizing and prioritizing work, supporting working memory and monitoring/self-regulating, will also be highlighted as part of the workshop.

**Schedule (For Both Days)**

8:30–9 a.m. Registration/Coffee
9–11:30 a.m. Presentation
11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. Lunch on your own
12:30–3 p.m. Presentation

**Educator’s Conference**
Friday, May 29, 2015, 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.
FDU’s Metropolitan Campus
Rutherford Room, Student Union Building
1000 River Road, Teaneck, N.J.
5 Hours of professional development — FDU Provider #291

**Parent’s and Student’s Conference**
Saturday, May 30, 2015, 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.
FDU’s Florham Campus
Dreyfuss Theater, Dreyfuss Building
285 Madison Avenue, Madison, N.J.

**Presenter**
Scott Marfilius is a highly experienced special education teacher and nationally known speaker on the use of assistive technology for students with disabilities. He has trained Regional Center for College Students with Learning Disabilities staff and taught graduate courses on assistive technology for FDU’s Center for Dyslexia Studies as well as presenting at national and international conferences on this topic.
**Educator’s Conference Registration Form**

**Friday, May 29, 2015**

Name __________________________________________ Email ________________________________

Address __________________________________________________________________________

Telephone Number ________________________________________________________________

School District ____________________________ Grade/Subject Teaching __________________

Disability of students you teach ______________________________________________________

Have you attended a workshop sponsored by the Regional Center for College Students with Learning Disabilities in the past? ___

How would you rate your knowledge of assistive technology with 1 being no knowledge and 5 being expert?

1…………2…………3…………4…………5

Have you used assistive technology with students in your class? If so, briefly describe: __________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

---

**Parent’s/Student’s Conference Registration Form**

**Saturday, May 30, 2015**

Parent’s Name __________________________________________ Email ________________________________

Student’s Grade ____________________________ Classification ________________________________

Address __________________________________________________________________________

Telephone Number ________________________________________________________________

Have you attended a workshop sponsored by the Regional Center for College Students with Learning Disabilities in the past? ___

Does your child use assistive technology in school? ______________________ if yes, please describe the type of assistive technology and the application __________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

---

**To Register**

Email registration to carmelat@fdu.edu, fax to 973-443-8089 or mail to

Carmela Trusso, Fairleigh Dickinson University, Regional Center for College Students with Learning Disabilities,
285 Madison Avenue, M-MS0-07, Madison, NJ 07940