THE PURPOSE of IMSLEC is to accredit training courses for the professional preparation of the Multisensory Structured Language Education specialist. IMSLEC is committed to quality training of MSLE clinicians and teachers, establishing standards and criteria of excellence for the programs it accredits.
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Jana Jones
Executive Director
Innovator Awards have honored individuals who demonstrate excellence in the teaching of or support of multisensory structured language education since 2003.

Innovator Awards

Outstanding MSLE Professional
Christie DeAraujo
Carin Illig

Outstanding MSLE Teacher
Heidi Flohr
Malika Meidinger
John Santonastaso

Outstanding Educator in a College or University
Kathleen Wessel

Outstanding MSLE Therapist
Elizabeth Q. Evans
Elizabeth A. Gonzalez
Dawn Laureauzano
Jessica Newman
Anna-Leena af Ursin Monza

Outstanding School Administrator
Kara Janasak
Danielle Sochor
Nicole Tuttle

Etoile Dubard Award
Kay Peterson

In the field of Multisensory Structured Language Education, The Etoile DuBard Award of Excellence is to be awarded annually at the IMSLEC fall meeting, to a person who meets the ideals, professionalism and dedication exemplified by the life of Etoile DuBard.

2018 IMSLEC Innovator Awards

Kay Peterson’s work training teachers and serving in organizations that raise dyslexia awareness has touched and changed many lives. She earned her bachelor’s degree in Child Development at Texas Tech and her master’s degree in Business Administration and Human Relations at Amber University. Kay received her MSLE training at the Shelton School in Dallas, TX and at Southwest Multisensory Training Center in McKinney, TX. She is a Certified Academic Language Therapist (CALT), a Qualified Instructor (QI), and a State of Texas Licensed Dyslexia Therapist (LDT).

Kay has teaching, educational consulting and administrative experience in public and private schools. Kay has also provided private academic language therapy. She is the Director of the Dyslexia Education and Evaluation Center at Mississippi College in Clinton, Mississippi. She is also the owner and director of LEAD/Literacy Education & Academic Development in Dallas. Kay is the owner of Elterbarry Press where she designs and publishes educational materials to support Orton-Gillingham based programs.

Kay has served as President and in other offices and board positions of the Academic Language Therapy Association (ALTA), President of the Alliance for Accreditation and Certification and President of the ALTA Foundation. She is currently the President of IMSLEC and treasurer of the ALTA Foundation.

In 2009, IMSLEC recognized Kay as an Outstanding Educator in a College or University. Kay was the 2014 recipient of ALTA’s Aylett R. Cox Educator Award.

Kay lives in Dallas, Texas and is married to Sam Peterson. They have two children, Sam Jr. and Elizabeth.
IMSLEC President’s Report

IMSLEC continues its work due to the many volunteer hours of our committee members and the dedication of our executive director, Jana Jones. We extend our gratitude to each one.

The executive committee schedules a monthly conference call to update the accreditation report, discuss budget items, and consider long range goals.

One long range goal which was finalized during the last year was the completion of the IMSLEC School Recognition process.

School Recognition: IMSLEC school recognition is a voluntary process that signifies the school administration and staff are committed to increasing student achievement by implementing multisensory, structured, language education (MSLE) as taught in IMSLEC Accredited Teacher/Therapy Training courses. The first four Recognized Schools are:

* Dubard School for Language Disorders, Hattiesburg, MS
* June Shelton School and Evaluation Center, Dallas, TX
* Key School of Carolina Day School, Asheville, NC
* Rawson Saunders School, Austin, TX

Another school is currently in the application process

Accreditation of courses is the primary goal and mission for IMSLEC. Our accreditation chair reports the following new course applications for accreditation:

* Frisco ISD
* Plano ISD
* Wired for Reading
* Inquiries from others

IMSLEC Accredited Training Courses

* 44 Training Courses
* Courses in 26 States
* 1 course in Puerto Rico
* 88 Training Sites
* 61 Practitioner level Accreditations
* 9 Therapy level Accreditations
* 18 Practitioner and Therapy Accreditations

As a member of the Alliance, we are looking forward to participating in the first Alliance Conference, September 27 and 28, 2019 in Charlotte, NC. We will send more information soon.

Kay Peterson

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedules to serve on IMSLEC Committees. Your efforts on new projects, application and self-study reviews, serving on SOSET visits, meetings, conference calls... The list could go on and on. Thank you for staying focused and energized as we all work together establishing standards and criteria of excellence for the programs we accredit.

IMSLEC’s 2018-2019 supporters:

**Pledges and Donations**

Karen Avrit                 Caren Karlage
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Carin Illig                 Nancy Cushen White
Jana Jones

**Your donations make a difference.**

Donations may be made at www.imslec.org

BOON Philanthropy and the ORTON NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP

We express our sincere appreciation to Boon Philanthropy for choosing IMSLEC as one of four organizations to distribute Boon Philanthropy’s Orton National Scholarship Grants. This generosity has allowed IMSLEC to provide increased opportunities for teaching and therapy level training in explicit, multisensory literacy instruction.

IMSLEC systematically distributed the scholarship grants to ten accredited training courses.

IMSLEC appreciatively looks forward to a continued partnership with Boon Philanthropy.
IMSLEC SCHOOL RECOGNITION BENEFITS

Why IMSLEC School Recognition?
IMSLEC seeks to recognize excellence in implementation of accredited MSLE approaches, as well as excellence in accredited professional training programs.

Benefits of IMSLEC School Recognition
IMSLEC School Recognition provides the following benefits to schools:

Evidence that the school staff has completed rigorous IMSLEC-approved Teacher/Therapy Training Courses

Ongoing opportunities for staff professional development through IMSLEC-approved continuing education

Periodic evaluation of academic program and staff

Increased student achievement

School Recognition/Prestige (IMSLEC newsletter and website, local news).

Authorization to use IMSLEC logos and the recognition statement on school publications

Referrals of parents and teachers to IMSLEC Accredited Schools

IMSLEC School Recognition is a voluntary process that indicates the school administration and staff are committed to increasing student achievement by implementing multisensory, structured, education (MSLE) as taught in IMSLEC® Accredited Teacher/Therapy Training Courses. Phase 1 of the School Recognition Process was piloted with four schools directly affiliated with IMSLEC-accredited courses. These four schools received IMSLEC recognition certificates at the fall 2017 board meeting. Information about applying for School Recognition is available at www.imslec.org under the Accreditation tab.

2018 Recognized Schools:

DuBard School for Language Disorders
Hattiesburg, MS
***

Key School at Carolina Day School
Asheville, NC
***

Rawson Saunders School
Austin, TX
***

Shelton School and Evaluation Center
Dallas, TX
***
Our mission statement has three parts, as follows:

◊ Provide the highest quality multisensory reading and written language tutorial services for children with dyslexia

◊ Promote and encourage education of professionals, tutorial trainees, and the public to become resources in teaching children to read

◊ Advance scientific knowledge of dyslexia through support of clinical research

Since our program opened, we have served over 13,350 children and trained over 3450 Practitioners and 170 Instructors of Practitioners.

As we celebrate this important milestone, we also want to acknowledge that we stand on the shoulders of giants. We would like to thank some individuals who have provided guidance, knowledge and support for our program: Karen Avrit, G. Emerson Dickman, Mary Farrell, Marcia Henry, Claire Nissenbaum, Joyce Pickering, and John O. Willis. And, a prayer of thanks to the late J. Philip Berquist and Phyllis B. Meisel.

Children's Dyslexia Centers, Inc. provides tutoring at no charge to children from early elementary through high school who have been diagnosed as dyslexic. Children are eligible regardless of economic status. The positive impact of early intervention on the lives of these children and their families is enormous and inspires our commitment to this program.
Teacher Quality: A Call to Action
By Dr. John J. Russell, Head of The Windward School

In *Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College*, Thomas Gray penned the verse “Where ignorance is bliss, ’Tis folly to be wise.” In 1742 when it was written, it had a very different meaning than it does today. Currently, the phrase means not knowing something is often more comfortable than knowing it. While that may be true in some instances, it is most certainly not true when it comes to the lack of knowledge that exists about the quality of teaching, which has long been identified as the most significant influence on student achievement.

Acknowledging the importance of teacher quality, the Federal No Child Left Behind Act (P.L. 107-110, 2002) required that by 2005-06 all children should be taught by “highly qualified” teachers in the core academic subjects (Palmer, 2015). The general public and far too many educators are ignorant of the disturbing reality that teacher preparation programs simply have not and still do not sufficiently prepare new teachers for the classroom and that state licensing examinations are not rigorous enough to protect students from teachers who are ill-equipped to teach. Failure to adequately prepare teachers and the general public’s misconceptions about the quality of the teaching that their children receive produce effects that are far from bliss for American students in general and for learning disabled students in particular. Simply stated, the consequences have been disastrous:

- The United States ranks 24th out of 85 industrialized nations in reading (Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), 2015).
- 57 million American adults are functionally illiterate/below basic in reading (Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), 2012/2014).
- Nationally, 66% of 8th grade students are below proficient in reading (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2015).
- In New York State 61% of all students in grades 3 through 8 are below proficient in English Language Arts/ELA (New York State Department of Education, 2016).
- In New York State 92% of all students with disabilities in grades 3 through 8 are below proficient in English Language Arts/ELA (New York State Department of Education, 2016).
Many Americans think that the ability to teach is more the result of innate talent than training. But recent research (Goldhaber, Liddle, & Theobald, 2013; Michelli, Dada, Eldridge, Tamim, & Karp, 2016) clearly demonstrates that the best teachers are made, not born. Tragically, teachers are not being adequately prepared to become even effective teachers, no less great teachers. Arthur Levine (2005), the former President of Teachers College, Columbia, summed up the problem by stating that graduate school programs that prepare principals “...range from inadequate to appalling.”

Unfortunately, things have not improved in the intervening years. In 2014, the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) released its annual review of teacher preparation programs in the United States. As was the case in previous studies, once again colleges and universities were cited for their substandard preparation of teachers. There remains a significant disconnect between the preparation teachers need to be successful and the preparation they actually receive in their pre-service and graduate education courses (Walsh, Glaser, & Denne-Wilcox, 2006). Of great significance to all parents, and especially to parents of learning disabled students, the NCQT evaluated 687 college and university pre-service teacher education programs that prepare teachers to teach students who are identified as “struggling readers” and found that 75% of these programs did not meet the basic standards set by NCQT. The most recent edition of Perspectives, published by the International Dyslexia Association (Fall, 2016) is dedicated to “Teaching the Teachers Eliminating Gaps to Better Serve Children with Dyslexia (sic).” In it, research findings (Mather, Bos, & Babur, 2001; Moats, 1994, 2009; Spear-Swerling, 2009) are cited confirming “…that many teachers, even those with experience and credentials, have limited knowledge about phonemic awareness and phonics and their importance for students at risk for reading problems.” Further buttressing this link between the lack of quality in programs designed to train teachers to teach reading and future student performance, researchers have found that 75% of the students who drop out of school have reading problems (Joshi, et. al, 2009). Adding evidence to this reality, Piasta et al. (2009) found that learning disabled students of teachers who had greater knowledge of reading concepts scored better.
on tests of reading achievement than their whose teachers were less informed. Although lack of adequate teacher preparation disproportionate harms students with disabilities, it has serious negative consequences for all students as well as for the teachers themselves who must suffer the professional and emotional burden of not being able to adequately support the children they work so hard to teach.

A recent study, conducted in 2015 by John Hattie of the University of Melbourne confirmed the dominant effect that teacher quality has on student performance in general. He conducted a meta-analysis of more than 65,000 research papers on the effectiveness of hundreds of interventions on the learning of millions of students and found that what matters most is teacher expertise. The most powerful ways to improve student learning identified by this meta-analysis all depended on what teachers did in the classroom. Every day teachers make hundreds of instructional decisions based on what they have been taught in their pre-service and graduate school programs. Regrettably, few teachers are exposed to research that is relevant to their jobs and are ill-prepared to critically assess scientific claims, leaving them vulnerable to fads and fallacies in their instructional decision making as they search for a program or methodology that will help them teach their students to read and write. (Siedenberg, 2012).

One way of gauging the impact of teacher quality is to look at differences in the growth of student achievement across teachers. Simply defined, good teachers are those who consistently obtain high levels of academic growth from students, while poor teachers are those who consistently produce minimal or no growth in learning. A substantial number of studies of the effect of teacher quality on gains in student achievement exist, and they clearly indicate how much teacher assignment can impact student learning gains. Stanford economist Eric Hanusek (2016) estimates that during an academic year students taught by teachers at the 90%tile for effectiveness learn 1.5 years’ worth of material, while those taught by teachers at the 10%tile learn a half years’ worth. In another study, teachers near the top of the quality distribution got an entire year’s worth of additional learning out of their students compared to teachers near the bottom. Importantly, this analysis solely considered students from minority and poor inner-city families, indicating that good teachers can overcome deficits that might
come from challenging living conditions. In an article in *The Economist* (June, 2016), Thomas Kane, a researcher at Harvard, estimates that if African-American children were all taught by teachers in the top 25%tile for quality, the achievement gap between black and white students would disappear in eight years. He similarly posits that the performance gap (PISA, 2015) between American students and their Asian counterparts would be eliminated in 4 years if all American students were taught by high quality teachers. So, having a highly skilled teacher teaching your child is a matter of the utmost importance.

Even in the face of overwhelming evidence of the lackluster preparation of teachers and its dire effect on students, colleges and universities have been notoriously slow to change their pre-service programs. While The National Reading Panel issued its report in 2000, currently there are only 25 colleges and universities accredited by the International Dyslexia Association as meeting the standards set out by that panel of distinguished reading scientists. Many, but certainly not all, state education departments, school districts and individual schools have had inadequate responses to the poor quality of teacher preparation. If change is to come, states must make teacher licensing examinations far more rigorous and based on research-based educational practices. This will have a ripple effect on colleges and universities. The economic reality is that for undergraduate and graduate programs to stay competitive their curricula will have to be altered in order for their graduates to pass the more demanding exams. Given the glacial pace of academic change, this will, no doubt, take time. Perhaps, Thomas Gray would have memorialized this hopeful thinking as *Ode on a VERY Distant Prospect of an Effective College Teacher Preparation Program*.

In the interim, if the quality of teaching is going to improve, political and educational initiatives need to be advanced, and parents must become better informed and politically active advocates for their children. If schools are going to improve the quality of teaching, comprehensive professional development is an absolute necessity. Dedicated, conscientious teachers can mitigate deficiencies in their preparation through professional development, but only if professional development programs are more rigorous and of a better quality than
Teacher Quality: A Call to Action
By Dr. John J. Russell,
Head of The Windward School
Continued...

than the undergraduate and graduate programs that are responsible for the deficits in the first place. In response to this reality, The Windward School has established a professional development program that is comprehensive, demanding, and extremely effective in closing the knowledge gap between research and teaching practices. Other schools have followed a similar path in their efforts to improve teacher quality and in turn, student achievement.

While the issues influencing teacher quality are complex, the response of dedicated and well-informed parents, teachers and schools can result in positive change. Margaret Meade said well: “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

Editor’s Note: This article originally appeared in the spring 2017 issue of The Beacon, The Windward School bi-annual newsletter for educators and parents.
McKinney Christian Academy – Multisensory Teacher Training (MCA-MTT) center offers teachers, administrators, and parents, training in multisensory teaching, discovery, and mastery techniques to support students with learning differences.

- accredited by IMSLEC (International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council) to train qualified applicants at the teaching and therapy levels
- approved by Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children to offer training in *Take Flight: A Comprehensive Intervention for Students with Dyslexia*
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Happy Holidays!

We wish you a wonderful Holiday Season!

Karen Avrit, Chris Bedenbaugh, Jana Jones, Kay Peterson, Jeanine Phillips, Nancy Cushen White

IMSLEC Executive Committee