

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Composing this message at 6:00 AM on a Sunday morning, the word that comes to my mind is *convergence* - a coming together from different directions – especially ideas or concepts or practices that were originally very different.

Let me explain. The last ten years of my career were happily spent teaching middle school students with severe learning challenges. These kids entered my classroom with math or literacy skills that hovered, initially, between a first and second grade level. However, they were the kind of kids you could talk to over your back fence for a whole summer, and never know something was amiss until you said, “Read this, write this, or do this math.”

My job was to get them *un-stuck* and help them move forward. With some students, generally misidentified *curriculum casualties*, the growth began almost immediately and they eventually transferred out of my class. Other students' growth, however, was incremental...occurring in those small, yet discernible steps that confirmed the *moving forward process*. These steps were hard won by student and teacher alike. With their growth on state assessments being measured in terms of those hoped for, giant leaps of progression from unsatisfactory to partially-proficient, to proficient, and to advanced, my students rarely crossed the *big divide* into a more proficient category. This outcome was common, despite their individual growth in academics as measured by other recognized assessments.

I considered myself to be a good to occasionally exceptional teacher, depending on the moment. I engaged in constant self-reflection of my teaching practices and *loved my kids*. However, if pressed in my teaching career, I would have struggled to clearly articulate what the qualities of *effective teaching* looked like and sounded like in an instructional setting. My struggle was further compounded when I tried to make sense of the conflicting results of my classroom assessments and the CSAP outcomes for my students. Today, my students would be evaluated on their individual growth, as per the recently enacted *growth model* in Colorado. Would I still be held accountable? Yes. Would the assessment outcomes, however, more accurately and definitively measure student growth? Yes.

Today, as a purveyor of research, I no longer struggle to articulate the qualities of effective teaching, from solid standards-based objectives to student engagement to effective questioning to descriptive feedback. Today, I readily know the answer to that question.

Finally, during my teaching career I often struggled to make *coherent sense* of all this *math stuff*. I knew math. I was good in math. But how could I best instruct to maximize the connections between math content strands? How could I teach in a way that would best facilitate transfer to related areas? How could I assist my students in accessing this wonderful world of mathematics? And finally, how could I genuinely *know what my students knew and understood* to best meet their needs?

Today, I would be much better equipped to make sense of all that *math stuff* through my understanding of learning trajectories. The empirically-based research in ***learning trajectories in mathematics*** encompasses the levels of thinking, knowledge, and skills that students go through as they learn math *and* the nature of instructional experiences that might best support students in reaching their goals. Today, as a self-reflective teacher and seeker of knowledge, I would be much better acquainted with my students' thinking, effective formative and diagnostic assessment methods to surface that thinking, and instructional strategies best suited to meet my students' needs.

Are our jobs difficult? You bet. Do we sit at dinner, contemplating the best way to approach an instructional objective tomorrow, while friends talk about the latest sports events? You bet. Do we, as committed, accountable, self-reflective educators, realize there is *no finish line* in the career of a truly committed educator? You bet.

As always, the Colorado Council for Learning Disabilities exists purely to help you in your endeavors to *be the best you can be*. This year, as part of the on-going professional development offerings through *Math on the "Planes"*, we are proud to host two eminent researchers and practitioners, Dr. Jere Comfrey and Dr. Alan Maloney. Together, these highly esteemed presenters will lead us through learning trajectories in mathematics, providing valuable information regarding student thinking, diagnostic assessments and real-time interventions. We hope to see many of our members there February 24 and 25.

Accountability, teacher efficacy, informed instructional practices that meet students where they are and help them to move forward...*convergence*.

Patty Meek
President
Colorado Council for Learning Disabilities

IN THIS ISSUE

1. President's Message
2. CDE Update
4. Odyssey.
5. Math on the "Planes"
6. Research
7. Courage to Risk
8. CCLD Website
9. Awards
10. CCLD Membership

UPCOMING EVENTS

Conference on Inclusive Education

Feb. 9-11, 2012
Denver, CO

Math on the "Planes"

Feb. 24-25, 2012
Aurora, CO

CEC Annual Convention & Expo

April 11-14, 2012
Denver, CO

Reading in the Rockies

Oct. 12-13, 2012
Beaver Creek, CO

Updates from the Colorado Department of Education (CDE)

Candy Myers,
Principal Consultant, CDE

- SLD-specific resources recently posted on the Colorado Department of Education's SLD webpage (<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-SLD.asp>).
 - Revised *SLD Identification* slideshow presentations:
 - Part 1: Introduction, Laws, & RtI in Relationship to SLD
 - Part 2: Eligibility Determination & 8 Areas of SLD
 - Part 3: Referral, Evaluation & Documentation
 - Part 4: Special Considerations, FAQs, and Changes in Educator Roles
 - *SLD FastFacts* (revised)
- Two sections of the SLD online class, *Specific Learning Disabilities: Eligibility Criteria and Identification Process* are currently in session. This class will be offered again in April. The posted syllabus gives information as to course expectations, course content, credit options, and how the online module is conducted (also on the SLD webpage given above).
- The Response to Intervention Unit is offering several online classes addressing topics such as: *Improving Literacy Outcomes for Students with Disabilities; Improving Math Outcomes for Students with Disabilities; Family, School & Community Partnerships; Assessment/Progress Monitoring; etc.* (<http://www.cde.state.co.us/RtI/ProfDevelopmentRtI.htm>)
- The Educator Effectiveness Unit is now piloting the Principal/Assistant Principal Evaluation Rubric and is currently in the early stages of developing the Teacher Evaluation Rubric. Check out their website for information on all components of this unit's work and you may want to sign up to receive updates via the *Educator Effectiveness Newsletter*. (<http://www.cde.state.co.us/EducatorEffectiveness/index.asp>)

[To receive early notification of any professional development opportunities offered by CDE, I suggest that you subscribe to the weekly CDE newsletter, the *SCOOP*. You can quickly scan the announcements, events, etc. to see if there is anything of interest to you. There is a link to the current week's SCOOP (usually emailed/posted on Wednesday of each week) and the archived issues under the "Newsroom" tab on the main CDE website (<http://www.cde.state.co.us/>). You will find instructions for signing up for the weekly email at the end of each individual publication.]

ODYSSEY

Debby Middel-Katzenmeyer
Odyssey Coordinator

We are hoping Odyssey will be up and running for the 2012-2013 school year. We will keep you informed in our next newsletter.

MATH ON THE “PLANES”

Kyle Hughes

Math on the “Planes” Professional Development Director



Presented by

Colorado Council for Learning Disabilities

Colorado Metro Math Intervention Team

Colorado Council for Teachers of Mathematics

February 24-25, 2012

**Using Learning Trajectories to Support
Understanding of Mathematics for All Students**

Dr. Jere Confrey and Dr. Alan Maloney

Successful implementation of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics depends on uncovering the embedded learning trajectories and understanding how they relate to the development of student thinking about rational number reasoning from K-8 grade. Proficiency in these topics is essential for success in algebra and beyond. Researchers and technology designers Dr. Jere Confrey and Dr. Alan Maloney will present learning trajectories posters, and describe assessments, related outcome spaces, and exemplars of student work. They will demonstrate their interactive diagnostic-assessment system that runs on tablets, smart phones, and computers, and show how the use of just-in-time student data can lead to a new generation of data-driven instructional practices that support customized solutions and interventions. Examples from real classrooms are shared with participants with opportunities for questions and discussions.

I want to encourage each of you to think about attending Math on the “Planes” this year. Dr. Confrey and Dr. Maloney are two of the leading experts in mathematics education and the new standards for the state of Colorado. They are not only knowledgeable but engaging presenters. They are tailoring their presentation specifically for our building and district-level teams working with learners who struggle with mathematics. Please forward this widely and encourage others to attend. This workshop is part of coordinated set of professional development offerings in our state designed to help implement the new standards which include CCTM regional workshops and conference.

Register at www.cocld.org

RESEARCH

Dr. Patty Meek Research

Attendees at the 2012 Math on the “Planes” will again have the opportunity to participate in action research projects. Research guidelines vary from year to year, depending on the material presented at the conference. As in the past, outstanding research projects submitted through Math on the “Planes” will be recognized by the CCLD board.

CCLD maintains its tangible legacy to teachers by encouraging them to explore and evaluate promising practices for students who are struggling learners. Year after year, as Math on the “Planes” continues to flourish in its role as both provider of professional development and advocate for struggling students. Teachers continue to complete outstanding action research projects. It is gratifying to know that the legacy of quality action research in the classroom continues as a fitting homage to early educational pioneers Gertrude Meyers, Ellie Smucker, and Beatrice Fern.

COURAGE TO RISK

Liz Peyton Courage to Risk Representative

Save the Date: This year there will be no Courage to Risk, because the National CEC conference will be held in Denver April 11-14 2012. Courage to Risk will resume again on January 25-26, 2013 at the Broadmoor Hotel. We hope to see you then at our 24th Annual Courage to Risk Conference!!! Check out the Courage to Risk website for related information.

www.couragetorisk.org

2010-2011 CCLD BOARD

President	Dr. Patty Meek
Secretary	Shaunie Smathers
Treasurer	*Pam Cochrane
CLD Board of Trustees & Leadership Development	*Kyle Hughes
Membership	Julie Holiday
CDE Liaison & National Updates	Candy Myers
Newsletter	Jane Duggan & *Pam Cochrane
Website Editor	Arlene Vigil-Olech
Math on the “Planes”	Kyle Hughes
Awards	*Pam Cochrane
Scholarships	*Sue Bloomquist
Odyssey Coordinator	*Debby Middel-Katzenmeyer
Courage to Risk Representative	*Liz Peyton

*indicates past CCLD president

CCLD WEBSITE

Arlene Vigil-Olech
Website Editor

www.cocld.org

This spring we have many exciting conferences happening in the Denver area. You can read about these upcoming events on our website www.cocld.org. All the information regarding the Math on the “Planes” which will be taking place in February 2012 is located under the *Of Interest* section on our home page and the Council for Exceptional Children Conference, which will take place in April 2012, is located under *Upcoming Events*. Take a moment to view these two upcoming events. While you are viewing these links, be sure to check our Resource page, which features the following websites and links: Literacy and Math Support, Local and National Resources, Professional Organizations and Family Support. We are always interested in adding new and exciting websites to our Resource Page. If there were a website, you would like to share with us, please contact me at the following email address amvigil@adams14.org.

CCLD AWARD Nominations for 2012

Pam Cochrane
Awards

As part of an effort to encourage and recognize quality instruction, each year the Colorado Council for Learning Disabilities honors an outstanding teacher, paraprofessional and professional person who work in the field of learning disabilities. We value the expertise of our members and want to recognize the efforts and innovations of those who are exceptionally effective in their work with students in our schools, or who work in a professional capacity to assist school districts and teachers in providing quality support and services to special educators in Colorado.

All three recipients of these awards will be recognized at a CCLD sponsored conference in Colorado, and will be featured in a special edition of the CCLD newsletter designed to showcase our award and scholarship and research project recipients. In addition, the CCLD Teacher of the Year will receive a complimentary conference registration, airfare and lodging for the Annual International Council for Learning Disabilities fall conference. The professional of the year will be nominated for the national Floyd G. Hudson Award presented by the Council for Learning Disabilities. This award is given to an individual who has made significant contributions in the field of learning disabilities, and who has impacted the lives of persons with learning disabilities. Attached to this newsletter are the nomination forms for these three awards. The award benefits and criteria for nomination, as well as the instructions for nomination are listed on each form. We count on our members to nominate those people in the field who have really made a difference and deserve to be recognized by our organization. Please complete the nomination forms by April 1, 2012. Nomination forms can be found on the cocld website. For more information on CCLD awards, please contact Pam Cochrane, pycochrane@comcast.net.

CCLD Membership has its rewards!

Julie Holiday Membership

We rely on word of mouth and colleague referrals to sustain our membership rosters, making us one of the largest state level organizations within the Council for Learning Disabilities. When sharing with colleagues about the benefits of membership in our professional organization, be sure to highlight the following:

- **Award Recognition:** *CCLD members are eligible for state and national award recognition.*
- **Networking Opportunities:** *CCLD members receive peer support and have an opportunity to communicate with professionals throughout the country at regional and national conferences.*
- **Reduced Registration Fees:** *CCLD members receive discounts to local and national conferences.*
- **Publications:** *CCLD publishes a newsletter for members three times a year with current information about special education issues and activities in Colorado and the nation. **CLD journals** include *Learning Disability Quarterly*, *Intervention in School and Clinic*, and *LD Forum*. The *LD Forum* has gone green! It will be delivered to your registered email, so be sure to keep your email address current in the database.*
- **Research Grants:** *CCLD promotes opportunities for action research on evidenced-based instructional practices that close the achievement gap for students with learning disabilities and other struggling learners in coordination with participation in Math on the “Planes”.*
- **Scholarships:** *CCLD awards scholarships to teacher candidates throughout the state.*

Membership information can be found at: <https://www.cldinternational.org/Membership/join.asp>