



A Message from the Chair

Spring brings new hope as winter melts away. Our families living with LD are now on the home stretch of the academic year and are taking advantage of the many activities and programs – current and new – offered by our LDA network to support them. As you will read here, our national office continues to work with dedicated professionals and volunteers across the country on various projects to support our LD community. If you would like to help our community, please drop us a line. We would love to have YOU join our energetic group.

Finally, a special note of THANKS to our national Executive Director, Claudette Larocque, who will retire at the end of June 2020 after 28 years of service! Our whole community wishes her well in her future endeavours!

Thealzel Lee
Chair, Learning Disabilities Association of Canada

A Message from the Executive Director

We recognize that with the constantly changing COVID-19 situation around the country, this is an unprecedented time for everyone – a time that is filled with uncertainty. These are uncharted waters for all of us. Please take care of yourselves and your love ones.

On December 19, 2019 LDAC held its Annual General Meeting, and I would like to extend a warm welcome to the following individuals elected to the LDAC board of directors for 2019/2020:

Continuing for the second year of their two year term:

Dr. Rhonda Rubin (Atlantic)	(2017)
Jean Luc Seguin (QC)	(2018)
Lorrie Goegan (AB)	(2014)

New Board member beginning a two year term:

Marilyn Irwin (SK)	(2019)
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Continuing Directors beginning a new two term:

Brendan O’Neill (BC)	(2015)
Thealzel Lee (Director at large)	(2010)

Professional Advisory Council (PAC):

All beginning 2 year terms:

- Lynn Green (NL) Retired RN: Health/ Environment



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- Dr. Karen MacMillan (AB) Registered Psychologist, Co Director at Foothills Academy, Calgary, AB. She is also an Adjunct Clinical Assistant Professor at the Werkland School of Education in Calgary.
- Kim McLean (AB) Instruction/Remediation Coach, Calgary Academy
- Dr. Gavin Reid (BC) Educational Psychologist and Consultant, working out of Edinburg, UK. He is registered with the BC College of Psychologists and with the Health Professionals Council in the UK.
- Dr. Gabrielle Young (NL) Assistant Professor at Memorial University of NL (MUN) Her research interests include the use of assistive technology, universal design and differentiated instruction.

We currently have vacancies on the national board for a person from YK, MB, and ON. I would like to remind everyone that a person can be nominated by the P/T LDA anytime, not just at the Annual General Meeting.

I would like to extend my deep appreciation to Bob Cram, Chair of the Communications Committee as well as to Lynne Wawryk-Epp, Chair of the Research Committee. Your invaluable contributions and expertise are truly appreciated.

Claudette Larocque
Executive Director, Learning Disabilities Association of Canada
Email: claudette@ldac-acta.ca

Committee Reports

Research Committee

The Research Committee provides this summary of a recent Canadian research project from Dr. Deborah Butler, Professor, UBC Faculty of Education and Dr. Leyton Schnellert, Associate Professor, UBC Faculty of Education.

Fostering success for students with learning disabilities (LD): Why fostering self-regulated learning is key

Across the past 30 years research has demonstrated that nurturing self-regulated learning (SRL) is critical to students' success. Self-regulation refers to learners' capacities to control their thoughts, feelings, and actions in ways that help them achieve valued goals. Self-regulating learners are metacognitive; for example, they understand themselves and so can make good decisions about what will work for them in particular situations. They understand and can navigate their emotions, motivation, and behaviour. They approach activities strategically, taking time to assess what's required, planning for how they might achieve goals, enacting strategies, and monitoring progress and making adjustments as



needed. In our research, we have shown *why* fostering SRL is so important in supporting students with LD to succeed in academic work (i.e., reading, writing, math, inquiry). For example, we have shown how students' success in academic tasks is derailed if they lack a clear sense of purpose (e.g., what they were being asked to do in an assignment). When supported to learn *how* to interpret tasks to discern expectations, students with LD are liberated to choose and/or develop better strategies for learning (see Butler, 2002). Our research has also shown *how* educators can foster SRL in inclusive and support settings. For example, when students are involved in co-constructing personalized strategies to achieve criteria, they experience gains in self-efficacy (i.e., confidence), agency, and achievement. When they develop their capacities as self-regulating learners, students with LD can be, and *feel*, successful in classrooms and schools (see Butler & Schnellert, 2015; Butler, Schnellert, & Perry, 2017).

Citations

Butler, D. L. (2002). Individualizing instruction in self-regulated learning. *Theory into Practice, 41*, 81-92.

Butler, D. L., & Schnellert, L. (2015). Success for students with learning disabilities: What does self-regulation have to do with it? In T. Cleary (Ed.), *Self-regulated learning interventions with at-risk youth: Enhancing adaptability, performance, and well-being* (pp. 89-111). Washington DC: APA Press.

Butler, D. L., Schnellert, L., & Perry, N. E. (2017). *Developing self-regulating learners*. Don Mills, ON: Pearson.

Chair: Lynne Wawryk-Epp

Members: Lorrie Goegan, Thealzel Lee, Rhonda Rubin, Gabrielle Young, Kim McLean, Garnett Francis, Claudette Larocque

On Leave: Gabriela Grabic

Note of Appreciation

Christina De Silva volunteered her time to collect the research on Specific Learning Disabilities at Brock University in St Catharines, Ontario, where she is completing a full time Master of Education program Degree in the Teaching, Learning and Development stream. Christina's commitment to the LDAC Research Hub is greatly appreciated. Thank you so much Christina!

Research Committee Chair: Lynne Wawryk-Epp



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Communications Committee

Our Committee met in January and February and has plans to meet again in mid-March. We circulated a survey to find out what provinces/territories had done during LD Awareness Month. We also have been developing a social media plan, and we hope to have LDAC become more active on social media again. We are also planning soon to renew our effort to collect information on adult programming in each province/territory. We have also been continuing to work on the newsletter.

Bob Cram –Chair

Members: Lorrie Goegan, Brendan O’Neill, Claudette Larocque, Brent MacPherson, Marilyn Irwin

Provincial/Territorial Updates

Ontario

LDAO is busy supporting the “Right to Read” inquiry now underway by the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC). Currently the inquiry is hearing from Parents across the Province as well as a detailed examination within eight Ontario public school boards. It is anticipated that results will be available late in 2020.

LDAO welcomes a review that should find ways to improve the systemic barriers that often occur for parents and students at a critical time in their educational journey. Ontario’s educational system is a very complex machine. Like anything that complex a detailed examination can find best practices and failing systems and recommend changes to benefit students with LDs and others where reading is proving a challenge.

Our quote on the community partner’s link is on the OHRC page is below.

“The Learning Disabilities Associations (LDAs) across Canada started from the Toronto office in 1963 and today is overseen coast-to-coast by the LDA of Canada. The LDAC led the efforts involving the Jeffrey Moore case where the Supreme Court of Canada examined the rights to education and considered the “ramp” required for those with Learning Disabilities to have the access they deserve.

The Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) is committed to students with Learning Disabilities being given the best possible opportunities to succeed in Ontario schools and therefore looks forward to the findings and recommendations of the OHRC inquiry.”



Details are available here:

http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/news_centre/ohrc-launches-right-read-public-inquiry

The Supreme Court decision on the Jeffrey Moore cases is available here: [Moore v. British Columbia \(Education\)](#).

Quebec

45th Conference of the Institute of Learning Disabilities

Regrettably, the crisis with COVID 19 forced us to cancel our annual conference. We evaluated the possibility of offering the Conference online, but despite all our efforts, the new requirements of the Quebec government to close all educational institutions, encouraged us to postpone our event, for everyone's safety.

Consequently, we will be delighted to welcome you on **March 24, 25 and 26, 2021** at the Le Westin hotel in Montreal for the 45th Congress of the Learning Disabilities Institute.

However, as part of our continued programming at the Institute, **2020 Training via Webinar and in person** continues throughout the year:

English workshops:

- <https://institutta.com/formations> (please click on English at the top right of the screen)

Thank you!

The team at the Institute of LD

Alberta

It has been a challenging time in Alberta over the last year with the budget cuts to education and policy changes. We continue to see increased classroom sizes and ever-increasing cuts to early intervention programs and assessments for struggling students. LDAA is working hard to ensure we continue to support the LD community through these difficult times.

On a positive note we will be re-launching our Right To Read (RTR) Online course in spring 2020. The RTR Program (Catching Children before They Fail) focuses on early identification and intervention for at-risk learners. The RTR Program includes a Reading Readiness Screening Tool and intervention strategies teachers can use to support their students. LDAA is currently exploring opportunities to enhance the RTR Program by offering a companion workshop



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series for tutors, parents and aligned professionals. We are excited about the opportunities to grow the program across the province.

While it is a challenging time in the province for all non-profit organizations, especially those organizations that support individuals with a disability, LDAA is committed to ensuring we continue to support the learning disabilities community and advocating for their rights.

Stay tuned for more information on the Right To Read Online workshop.

Toby Rabinovitz
LDA Alberta Executive Director

Manitoba

LDAM has been active in recent months in building awareness of learning disabilities in our province. We have taken several opportunities to reach out to the community through various media appearances. We recently participated in the Winnipeg Foundation's Fast Pitch experience. The Winnipeg Foundation's Fast Pitch is a coaching program to help build the capacity of, and create visibility for, Winnipeg's charitable sector. Fast Pitch is part of an international movement that helps organizations create powerful, high-energy cases for support, delivered in three minutes or less!

This October we will be hosting a Learning Summit for our community. The Learning Summit will provide parents, educators and professionals an opportunity to connect, share experiences and discuss challenges and strategies.

LDAM continues to look at new ways to support our community and most recently we have introduced a Lego Club, Robotics Club and parenting workshops to our programming for the community.

Karen Velthuys
Executive Director, Learning Disabilities Association of Manitoba

New Brunswick

We hope that everyone has made it through the winter safely and that the thought of spring around the corner is a boost that some may need. LDANB is pleased to announce the appointment of four new board members – Kelly Bird, Ginger Thibodeau, Louise Johnson, and Amy Wood. The knowledge of learning disabilities, background and skills that each bring to the board is vast and diverse. We are happy that they have joined LDANB and look forward to their involvement over the next year.



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LDANB will be hosting members of the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce on April 21 for a “Business over Breakfast” event. This is a great opportunity to host other non-profits and local businesses in our office and to share with the community who we are and what we do.

In celebration of LDANB's 50th year, we will be having a Bowl-A-Thon fundraiser on June 7th, at The Drome in Fredericton. We are busy planning a fun-filled day of bowling, face painting, prizes and, most importantly, raising awareness and funds to support New Brunswickers living with learning disabilities. Follow our Facebook page for additional details!

Finally, we will be holding our biannual symposium on learning disabilities October 22 and 23. As the program shapes up, we intend to have one full day of sessions for educators, psychologists, professionals and parents on October 22, and a half-day information session for parents/guardians on October 23. Tentative topics covered will be structured literacy, skills for supporting executive functioning, numeracy and assistive technology. If you have any questions about the symposium, please contact Ainsley at ed@ldanb-taanb.ca

Ainsley Congdon
Executive Director – Directrice Générale, LDANB-TAANB

Prince Edward Island

LDA Prince Edward Island has been busy across the winter working on its latest Strategic Plan. Doing what we do is needed. What do we need to do that we are not? Areas that have been explored and considered for expansion are improved promotion of LD Month, more assistive technology information sessions, exploring online delivery of tutoring services using existing remediation programs. We have secured funding for a prototype program to run for 20 weeks supporting adults who have dyslexic tendencies indicated using the LD Screening For Success tool. After evaluation we will consider how to build this into programming, if the prototype demonstrates its need and success. Our focus during our re-building years has been support for children and we know we are under serving the adult population. This is a step to address this issue. As with all LDAs across Canada, steps to improve service rely on funding to provide additional support. We meet with Provincial Ministers to maintain a positive view of our services and to offer opportunities for future partnerships. These collaborations allow us to exist and to reach more that need service.

Martin Dutton
Executive Director, Learning Disabilities Association PEI



Events and Other News

Parent-Educator Partnership for Literacy Development is holding a Literacy is a Right fundraiser for its scholarship program, April 18, 2020, Canadian Museum for Human Rights, Winnipeg, Manitoba. <https://sites.google.com/view/parent-educatorpartnershipforl/home>

The Ontario Human Rights Commission is continuing its inquiry, called Right to Read, into whether Ontario's public education system is failing to meet the needs of students with reading disabilities. This inquiry could have widespread effects across Canada. You can follow the developments here: <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/right-read-public-inquiry-on-reading-disabilities>.

Dr. Nadine Gaab of Boston Children's Hospital is leading the development of a downloadable early literacy screening app suitable for use with children as young as five years old. This app is being tested with kindergarten students now and includes screening for dyslexia. It is still unclear if it will be made available for free. More information here: <https://www.bostonearlyliteracyscreener.com/>.

Learning Disabilities Association of America Annual Conference, February 18-21, 2021, New Orleans, Louisiana. <https://ldaamerica.org/events/annual-conference/>