



A Publication of the Council for Learning Disabilities

February 2016

President's Message



Dear Colleagues and CLD Members,

As a new year begins, it is a time to reflect on accomplishments and channel energy into new activities that will occur in the new academic year. In this message, I have highlighted a few key ideas for your consideration. To begin, we are gearing up for the **2016 conference in**

San Antonio. We are excited that, based on overwhelmingly positive findings from the 2015 conference survey, the conference was viewed by many as an opportunity to renew, network, and learn about critical issues in the field of learning disabilities (LD). We hope that you will join us for this year's conference and enjoy not only attending panels, round tables, and interactive paper sessions but also strolling along the River Walk, visiting the Alamo, or checking out the plazas at the Market Square. Announcements regarding requests for nominations for the Outstanding Researcher Award and outstanding teachers and leaders are in this issue of *LD Forum*, so plan to nominate your outstanding colleagues to be honored at the conference. Finally, don't miss our **J. Lee Wiederholt Distinguished Lecture speaker, Dr. Jack Fletcher**, who will open the conference and set the stage for two days of activities and professional development.

This year we are focused on the educational needs of students with severe LD whose learning difficulties often remain chronically persistent and resistant to interventions. It behooves educators and the research community to remain vigilant in identifying and validating practices that can reach this group of students who present the most challenging issues, often accompanied by limited progress. Researchers, educators, and policy makers must make a united effort to identify ways that school personnel can indeed reach these students with practices that significantly improve academic performance. Members from CLD's Board of Trustees (BoT) and various committees are assembling pertinent information regarding Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS) in rela-

tion to the needs of students with severe LD. You can look forward to hearing more about this work in coming months as this activity remains paramount for the 2015–2016 year.

On December 10, 2015, President Obama signed the bipartisan measure **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)**, which reauthorized the 50-year-old Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). This is certainly a huge accomplishment. Stakeholders, including members of CLD's Liaison Committee, made great efforts, voicing a great deal of concern to legislators to ensure that the best possible services for students with disabilities were enacted. Go to CLD's website for the latest information about this historic event.

Remember, **members matter!** You can get involved by attending the 2016 conference and taking advantage of the content in *Learning Disability Quarterly*, *Intervention in School and Clinic*, the *Infosheets*, and of course, *LD Forum*. These are ongoing offerings that can be advantageous for our members' professional development and provide updates on the latest trends in LD. You can be assured that your BoT is focusing on CLD's mission and goals as we work towards the vision of *All individuals with learning disabilities are empowered to achieve their potential*. Wishing you a wonderful New Year.

Diane Pedrotty Bryant
2015–2016 CLD President

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Editor's Note: This column provides readers with immediate access to evidence-based strategies on current topics that can easily be transferred from the pages of LD Forum into effective teaching practice in CLD members' classrooms. Authors who would like to submit a column are encouraged to contact the editor in advance to discuss ideas. Author guidelines are available on CLD's website.

5 Ways To ...

Collaborate with Families Regarding Tiered Instruction

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Family-school partnerships are a powerful tool in supporting students' academic, social, and behavioral growth. Student academic and behavioral outcomes improve when families and school professionals collaborate (Dowd-Eagle, 2007; Illinois SPDG, 2014). However, the role of families and ways to involve them in tiered instruction has received minimal attention in the professional literature (Berkeley, Bender, Peaster, & Saunders, 2009). Tiered instruction, also known as Response to Intervention (RtI), is a model that combines frequent progress monitoring, varying levels of dynamic academic and behavioral supports designed to meet the diverse needs of students, problem solving, and a specific process for identifying special education services for students with learning disabilities (Deshler, 2015). Developing collaborative partnerships with families should be a central feature of a tiered instructional system (Byrd, 2011), yet this seldom occurs. With this in mind, described in this article are five ways educational personnel can collaborate with families who have children receiving varying levels of support in tiered instruction.

1 Explain the Process and Procedures of Tiered Instruction. Because the concept and implementation of tiered instruction is relatively new, parents are likely to be unfamiliar with its purpose, procedures, research, and implementation (Byrd, 2011). Within the context of tiered instruction (i.e., Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3), Kashima, Schleich, and Spradlin (2009) emphasized that school personnel should remind parents that they will be notified when their child experiences difficulty and that they may request a full evaluation to determine their child's eligibility for special education services. However, if members of the problem-solving team believe a referral for formal evaluations is premature, they may postpone evaluation procedures while determining the effectiveness of an intervention and instead continue tiered instruction as a component of the screening and diagnostic process. Parent-teacher communication is especially important during this situation, as families must be assured that their child is receiving appropriate support. Using progress-monitoring data, and sharing these data with the family, can be a concrete way to ensure that tiered support is being provided and that progress is being closely monitored for impacts on student achievement. School personnel must

also continue to provide appropriate prior written notice and procedural safeguards to families (Howell, Patton, & Deiotte, 2008).

As a proactive measure, school personnel should inform families as soon as possible about the process or procedures for identifying students for special education services by providing parent meetings or workshops, developing and providing written or audio-based materials in the language spoken at home, and referring families to other resources. Howell et al. (2008) noted that school personnel can develop packets that include (a) a general brochure about tiered instruction; (b) information about the various interventions in the school's tiered program; (c) an explanation of how the tiered program impacts students, classrooms, parents, teachers, and the school; and (d) a list of school and district resources. Byrd (2011) explained that the school or a grade-level website can include information about tiered instruction with links to reputable sites. In addition, school personnel can develop a media-based presentation, such as a YouTube/Internet video about tiered instruction that families can view at home or school, or they can share information through informal breakfasts, discussion groups, meet-and-greet neighborhood walks, radio or TV spots, mailings, community meetings, or a parent resource library (Kashima et al., 2009). In short, educating families about tiered instruction increases their understanding about the special education process as team members make continuous data-based decisions about the amount of support the student needs (Byrd, 2011).

2 Define New Terminology. Educational jargon can be intimidating and can limit communication with parents, especially within a tiered instruction or problem-solving context (Byrd, 2011). Peña (2000) discovered that school jargon was so intimidating that it often made families reluctant to collaborate with school personnel. Especially when explaining Tiers 2 and 3, teachers can improve communication by clearly sharing and explaining the concepts, such as the terms included in Table 1, so that family members have background knowledge regarding current instructional practices and can therefore become active and equal team members.

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Educators should also consider family reading levels and native languages when creating brochures, flyers, or newsletters about tiered instruction. Materials should emphasize that placement of students in various tiers can and should adjust according to their skills, and that students can receive support in more than one tier at any point in time.

3 Address Common Parental Misconceptions About Teaching and Learning. Typically, teachers use instructional strategies and assessments in Tiers 2 and 3 that are more explicit, direct, and different from familiar Tier 1 general classroom instructional approaches. Therefore, to support family members as educational partners (especially during Tiers 2 and 3), teachers may need to address some common parental misconceptions regarding teaching and learning. Parents having these misconceptions may think they are helping their child when in fact other approaches, often used in Tiers 2 and Tier 3, are more beneficial. For example, parents may believe that their young child must learn alphabet letter names sequentially (a, b, c), which is a popular Tier 1 approach. However, learning letter sounds based on their frequency of use in words encountered by children (such as the sequence a, m, t, s, i, f, d, r, o, g) is more helpful in early reading (Carnine, Silbert, Kame'enui, & Tarver, 2010) and corresponds with Tier 2 or 3 techniques. Demonstrating for parents how blending letter sounds (rather than knowing letter names) is necessary for decoding regular-sounding words such as *mat* or *fit* often helps parents understand this concept. Similarly, parents may overemphasize the importance of rote counting with their child as often observed in Tier 1 general education early childhood settings. As part of any level of tiered support, parents can reinforce other critical early math skills, such as recognizing shapes, noting patterns, and subitizing (the ability to quickly recognize a given quantity), that are equally important early numeracy skills (Doabler & Fien, 2013).

Parents also benefit from learning other approaches. For example, parents may not think about asking questions, discussing pictures, and varying voice intonation when reading to their child, a typical Tier 1 approach (Neuman & Wright, 2006). Demonstrating these skills provides a powerful role model for parents to meaningfully engage their child with print. They would also benefit from understanding the importance of the concrete–representational–abstract sequence of presenting math concepts (Bahr & deGarcia, 2010) so they can scaffold their own math presentations if their child is having trouble, regardless of the child's tiered level. Older students benefit when teachers and parents reinforce study skills associated with various tiers, such as using an assignment planner, developing mnemonics, studying for an upcoming quiz or test in increments, breaking projects into small steps, developing vocabulary note cards, and preview-

Table 1. Family Friendly Definitions and Activities

Component	Definition	Activities ^a
Core Instruction (Tier 1)	The daily instruction teachers provide to students in subjects such as reading, math, writing, social studies, and science. This is the main instruction that happens in the classroom. It is the first intervention that all students receive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide families with access to what is being taught daily/weekly via class website or weekly newsletter • Provide families with copies of specific strategies that are taught to the class (e.g., a specific writing strategy) • Provide families with directions on how to support a specific subject at home (homework)
Targeted Instruction (Tier 2)	Instruction that focuses on a more specific intervention, usually in reading or math, in a small group with other students who need additional help. Students receiving Tier 2 intervention receive Core Instruction plus this support for extra help as a part of the school day.	Establish a “home goal” with the family, then: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send home reading passages for students to practice with their families • Send home math facts flash cards to practice as a family • Create a Check In/ Check Out homework system
Intensive Instruction (Tier 3)	Instruction that is more intensive because it is individualized for students. Students receiving Tier 3 intervention receive Core Instruction and Intensive Instruction. Tier 3 instruction is usually taught to very small groups of students (5 students or fewer) or even individually. Students will have individual goals.	Establish a “home goal” with the family, then: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send home specific targeted word lists or math skills/algorithms (10–15) with a “home goal” graph sheet • Provide families with directions on how to support a specific skill
Progress Monitoring	The frequent collection of information, or data, to determine the effectiveness of the teacher's approach. Teachers graph the data to see if the instruction was effective in helping students learn.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide frequent copies of progress monitoring data • Create opportunities for families to discuss progress-monitoring data with teachers

^aBased on student need/tier.

ing a text (Conderman, Hedin, & Bresnahan, 2013). When parents know and understand the rationale for these specific approaches, they can provide more consistent and efficient support for their child, regardless of the tier.

4 Teach Family Members How to Reinforce Student Learning at Home. Students benefit from learning that extends beyond the school

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day (Epstein, 2011). In fact, federal legislation requires that school personnel provide families with the tools they need to support their child’s learning at home (Sheridan & Kratochwill, 2010). Learning at home is one of Epstein’s six types, or approaches, of parental involvement. The goal is to provide information and ideas to families so they can help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities (Epstein, 2011). To support learning at home, teachers can provide parents with (a) the standards and skills associated with various subjects at each grade; (b) information about homework policies; (c) summer learning packets or activities; (d) ways to plan and prepare for college or work; and (e) family math, science, and reading activities that reinforce skills the child learned at school. As examples of this type of collaboration, Figures 1 and 2 present two engaging teacher-developed games that have successfully been used with parents, who played them with their children as part of Tier 2 instructional supports (Gerzel-Short, 2013).

These two games provide examples of authentic tools for families to use to practice important skills with their child. Teachers can provide suggestions regarding how to adapt these games and other similar activities to meet the needs of the student in corresponding to his or her level of tiered support. Educators cannot assume that sending home review worksheets provides sufficient and appropriate practice for the student or that parents will understand the skill. Providing directions, vocabulary, and examples assists families in advancing their child’s skill development at home.

5 Use Data to Collaborate with Families. Progress-monitoring data is one tool to engage families in collaborative dialogue about student achievement. According to the National Center on Response to Intervention (2013), sharing student data is most successful when teachers present information within the context of what they expect the child to learn or be able to do by the end of the academic year. Effective teachers frequently collect and graph progress-monitoring data, but they do not always share that data with families. Sharing data—including why and how data are collected—helps families understand (a) student expectations related to behavioral and academic standards, (b) how data inform instructional practices, and (c) their roles regarding student achievement and student learning (Ferrara, 2009).

Two strategies that include families in data collection and information sharing, especially during Tiers 2 and 3, involve having family members collect data on the following:

1. the student’s performance on various skill-related games and activities, such as those described earlier; and
2. the student’s progress toward specific Tier 2 or 3 goals, perhaps as part of progress monitoring.

Name of Game: Dinosaur Chase

Grade Levels Intended: K–2

Skill Addressed: Orally read consonant–vowel–consonant (CVC) words

Materials Needed: Dinosaur CVC word cards (see visual); 4 T-Rex cards; 10 blank cards (for writing additional sentences, phrases, or vocabulary words); dry erase marker

Game Instructions and Rules: This game is designed for children in Grades 2–4. Shuffle the word cards and place them face down in a deck in front of the players. Determine who goes first. Players take turns drawing cards from the deck, sounding out the word on the card, and then reading the word quickly. If the player reads the word correctly, he/she keeps the card, if he/she reads the word incorrectly, that card is placed back into the deck. When a player selects a T-Rex card, all of the cards collected are shuffled back into the deck. The player with the most cards wins the game.

Corrective Procedure: If the child does not sound out and/or say the word correctly or says that he or she does not know the word, another player models how to sound out the word such as: /m/ /a/ /p/ says *map*, asks the child to sound out the word, and has the child say the word. Some students benefit from adding a physical movement, such as a chopping motion with both hands, to note each sound.

Additional Game Ideas: As the child becomes more automatic with reading CVC words, players can add an additional challenge to read the word within a certain number of seconds or change the word patterns, such as CCVC, CVCC, or CVCe. Players can use a data chart so that they can record the number of words read correctly after each game. Another version of this game uses word cards that have princesses and a magic wand. Be sure to create cards that include student-preferred images.

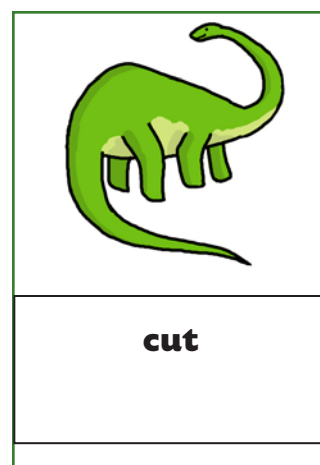


Figure 1. Sample engagement activity for CVC word reading in the home environment.

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Name of Game: Integer War Activity

Grade Levels Intended: Middle School

Skill Addressed: Multiplying integers up to 9

Materials Needed: Deck of Uno cards, scratch paper, pencil

Game Instructions and Rules: This game is designed for two players. Players select two-color suits from the deck of Uno cards, shuffle them, and play each color set face down on a table. One of the color suits represents positive integers, and the other color represents negative integers. Both players turn a card over from the integrated deck, and the first person to state the product of the two integers wins both cards. The player with the most cards wins the round.

Corrective Procedure: If the student is unsure of the answer, have him/her write the equation and, if needed, visually represent the numbers using scratch paper.

Additional Game Ideas: As the student's responses become more automatic, consider adding an additional suit or even two, so that players are solving more challenging equations. Increase the time accordingly based on the equation complexity.

Figure 2. Sample engagement activity for multiplying integers in the home environment.

The games described earlier can include a progress-monitoring component. For example, while playing the Dinosaur Chase game, family members could record the number of words the student orally reads without support or sounding out by using the Words I Know Chart (see Figure 3).

Teachers need to share the target goal (e.g., number of words) so family members can establish goals at home during each game and have a target (pictured with a star) on the home graph. Other forms of progress monitoring include:

- recording the number of minutes per day or week the child spends reading;
- recording the number of basic math operation problems a student correctly solves in a designated time, such as 3 minutes; and
- recording the number of homework assignments the child completed and submitted.

Strategies for engaging families in progress monitoring are limitless. Using data to target Tiers 2 and 3 instructional goals and then creating materials that support progress-monitoring targets helps family members become more involved in student learning

Conclusion

Family-school collaboration is an essential key for closing educational gaps that school personnel identify through tiered instruction. Teachers can collaborate with parents and other family members by explaining the process and procedures of tiered instruction, defining confusing terminology, addressing common parental misconceptions about teaching and learning, teaching family members how to reinforce student learning at home, and helping family members gather and use data for decision-making. These practices shift the view that families are partial participants to the idea that family members are full members of a tiered instructional team. In this manner, everyone wins: school personnel, families, and most important, students.

Authors' Note

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Figure 3. Progress monitoring chart for tracking number of words read correctly in the home environment.

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CLD Leadership Academy Cohort 6: Call for Nominations

Do you know someone early in his or her career who has potential to become a leader in CLD? Consider nominating this person for the CLD Leadership Academy! Self-nominations, with a letter of support from a current CLD member, are also encouraged. Participation in the Academy provides selected individuals with the opportunity to assume a leadership role on local, state, and/or national levels in service to students with learning disabilities and their families. Academy Leaders will attend the CLD International Conference on Learning Disabilities and participate in an orientation/planning session on the day prior to the official opening of the conference. They will be purposefully paired with a mentor who is a highly regarded leader in the LD field and will have numerous opportunities to network with CLD leadership. In ad-

dition, Academy Leaders will collaborate with other cohort members on a service project focused on a trending topic in the field. Academy Leaders are eligible for nomination for CLD annual awards.

Applications are currently available on the CLD website: <http://www.council-for-learning-disabilities.org/committed-to-building-the-leadership-capacity-of-professionals-in-special-education-field>

Nominations are due March 15, 2016. Persons selected for Cohort 6 will be notified by **June 1**. For questions, please contact **Sheri Berkeley**, Leadership Development Committee co-chair (sberkele@gmu.edu).



SEE YOU IN SAN ANTONIO!

38th International Conference on Learning Disabilities

OCTOBER 13-14, 2016

<http://www.council-for-learning-disabilities.org/professional-development/2016-annual-conference-2>

A few highlights to look forward to . . .

☀️ **2016 J. Lee Wiederholt Distinguished Lecturer**



We are honored to have **Dr. Jack Fletcher** from the University of Houston as the 2016 J. Lee Wiederholt Distinguished Lecturer. Dr. Fletcher is a neuropsychologist, and for more than 30 years he has studied issues related to learning and attention problems in children. His

work has addressed definitional and classification issues as well as neurobiological correlates of learning problems. Dr. Fletcher's recent work also encompasses intervention. Dr. Fletcher has served on the NICHD National Advisory Council, the Rand Reading Study Group, the National Research Council Committee on Scientific Principles in Education Research, and the President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education. He was the 2003 recipient of the Samuel T. Orton Award from the International Dyslexia Association and in 2006 was co-recipient of the Albert J. Harris Award from the International Reading Association. CLD welcomes Dr. Fletcher as our keynote speaker for 2016.

☀️ **The Outstanding Researcher Award**

While the **2016 Outstanding Researcher** has not yet been named, the **2015 Outstanding Researcher** was **Anne Brawand**, who was recognized for her work on word problem solving for middle school students with LD. This award is given to an early career researcher who has conducted exceptional dissertation research



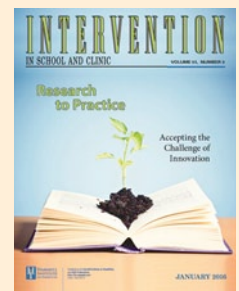
that contributes to the LD field. CLD recognizes the importance of fostering and promoting the work of such future leaders. Honorees are guests at the conference, receive a certificate and honorarium, and present their work at an invited session. Further, the paper that was submitted for nomination is considered for publication in *Learning Disability Quarterly*. For more information about this award, please see the following website (<http://goo.gl/LIVgcD>). **Nominations are due by May 1, 2016!**

☀️ **CLD Must Reads!**



Each year, the Research Committee reviews CLD's premier journals, *Learning Disability Quarterly* and *Intervention in School and Clinic*, for exceptional articles, which are rigorously reviewed according to award criteria. Authors are recognized for their outstanding work in the LD field. The **Must**

Reads session is a "must attend" event for our conference participants! This is a great opportunity to learn about seminal work in the making. Our 2015 honorees were **Dr. Nancy Nelson and colleagues** and **Dr. Natalie Ollinghouse and colleagues**. We look forward to learning about the work of our 2016 recipients.



☀️ SPONSOR THE 2016 CLD CONFERENCE! ☀️

Would your company or institution be interested in sponsoring an award, coffee break, Leadership Academy training, or other specially tailored event associated with the CLD conference? The conference committee is **now accepting sponsorships** for the 2016 CLD Conference in San Antonio, Texas. Sponsorship is very important to our conference success, and we have many great options to increase visibility

for your group, showcase programs, and/or share materials.

For more information and a copy of the sponsorship packet, please visit the conference webpage:

<http://goo.gl/tVS1g0>

or contact **Maria B. Peterson-Ahmad**
(maria.peterson-Ahmad@tamusa.edu)

Committee & Chapter News

Liaison Committee:

Update on Every Student Succeeds (ESSA) Act

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was passed by the House and Senate in early December. President Obama signed the act on December 10, 2015, and it is scheduled to take full effect in the 2017–2018 academic year. ESSA tries to preserve the spirit of NCLB while providing more freedom to states and local school districts to meet requirements. The Act changes the way in which states and school districts are held accountable for student performance. States are now responsible for designing accountability systems following federal guidelines that emphasize academics but also include an additional indicator of school quality and/or student success. The U.S. Department of Education is currently working on draft regulations, and states are working on their individual state plans. We **must** stay alert to comment on the draft regulations and be involved in the formulation of our state plans. Watch for alerts from us via email and the CLD website.

Debi Gartland and Roberta Strosnider
Liaison Committee Co-Chairs

Colorado Chapter News

There is a lot happening in the Colorado Council for Learning Disabilities this semester! We are looking forward to our next **Math on the “Planes” (MoP) conference in February**. The focus this year is creating a classroom environment that supports students who struggle with learning mathematics. Our presenter is **Dr. Eden M. Badertscher**. This systems approach to supporting struggling students through a classroom environment lens is a new focus area for MoP, and we are eagerly anticipating both the conference material and the

subsequent classroom research projects submitted by conference participants.

Courage to Risk (CTR), a statewide conference geared towards assisting struggling learners, occurred at the end of January. We honored our **2015 Colorado Teacher of the Year, Ms. Norine Green**, and the **Floyd G. Hudson Award winner, Dr. Margarita Bianco**, for a second time in front of a homegrown Colorado audience of parents and educators.

CCLD is extremely proud of our brand new website (coold.org). We are continuing to bolster our presence through Facebook and are employing innovative—and what we hope to be very successful—ways to bolster and sustain our membership.

Maryland Chapter News

Maryland-CLD and the Maryland chapter of the Council for Exceptional Children will co-sponsor the 2016 Winter Conference, **“IDEA: Celebrating 40 Years of Individualized Education for Exceptional Learners.”** It will be held Saturday, **February 20, 2016**, from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm at the Loyola University Maryland Graduate Center, 8890 McGaw Road, Columbia, MD 21045. The keynote speaker is **Dr. Margaret McLaughlin**, professor and associate dean, University of Maryland. In addition, there will be poster and interactive sessions. Current and future special and general educators of students with disabilities in pre-K, elementary, and secondary classrooms are encouraged to attend. For questions or further information, please contact **Rosemary Garr** (rgarr@towson.edu) or **Laila Richman** (lrichman@towson.edu).



2016 LDC Awards Nominations

The Leadership Development Committee of the Council for Learning Disabilities is seeking nominations for two prestigious awards: the Floyd G. Hudson Service Award and the Teacher of the Year Award.

Floyd G. Hudson Service Award

The Leadership Development Committee seeks nominations for the 2015–2016 Floyd G. Hudson Service Award presented for outstanding performance and commitment by a professional who works in the field of learning disabilities in a role outside of the classroom. This CLD member, working in a leadership capacity, enhances the professional learning of others in the field and impacts the lives of persons with learning disabilities. Nomination forms are due on May 1, 2016. Local chapters and members of the Board of Trustees may nominate candidates, one of whom is selected and then recognized at the annual international conference. In states without active chapters, nominations may be made by CLD members.

The award is named in memory of Dr. Floyd G. Hudson, a professor at the University of Kansas who was a leader in the early years of CLD. Dr. Hudson was instrumental in formulating early policy to drive federal and state initiatives in the area of learning disabilities. Don Deshler has said of him,

As I visit many schools across Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska, I can really see Floyd's lasting influence. He was a kind, generous, innovative, and collaborative professional. He worked closely with many school districts solving problems, preparing teachers, and implementing more effective programs. Even today, many people here in the Midwest and around the country tell me about their positive experiences working with Floyd, many of which took place more than 20 years ago.

The award recipients receive a complimentary conference registration and organization membership renewal. During the award program, the recipients are presented with a certificate of recognition and an honorarium. The recipients will also be profiled in *LD Forum* and on the CLD website. **Submission deadline for these awards is May 1, 2016.**

For additional information, see our website page (<http://goo.gl/qDifln>) or contact **Colleen Reutebuch**, LDC co-chair (ckreutebuch@austin.utexas.edu).

CLD NEWS & NOTES . . .

- ➡ The **Call for Nominations for the Outstanding Researcher Award** is available! Go to (goo.gl/LIVgcD) for additional information.
- ➡ Thank you to everyone who submitted **conference proposals to the 2016 CLD Conference** in San Antonio, Texas. The review process has begun; we will be in communication throughout the spring. Continue to

Outstanding Teacher of the Year

The Leadership Development Committee seeks nominations for the 2015–2016 Teacher of the Year Award. Each year, the Council for Learning Disabilities recognizes outstanding teachers who are CLD members and who consistently provide quality instruction to students with learning disabilities. These teachers, selected by local chapters, provide direct services to students. In states without active chapters, nominations can be made to the national organization by CLD members. Outstanding teachers are dedicated to implementing evidence-based instructional practices and collaborating with classroom teachers and other service providers to greatly improve the quality of education for all struggling learners

Candidates for nomination must:

- Be active, dues paying members of CLD, including state chapters if state chapter is active
- Provide direct services to students with learning disabilities
- Implement evidenced-based instructional practices that result in significant gains in achievement for children, adolescents, or adults who struggle academically
- Advocate for persons with learning disabilities

check <http://goo.gl/CvSdoi> for additional information about the conference.

- ➡ The **Midwest Chapter of CLD is official and operating!** They are currently working to put together a spring conference; details to be released at a later date.
- ➡ Not currently a member of CLD? Join us at **cldinternational.org**!