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## Editors' Note

### Re-authorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

The law that regulates special education, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), is being considered for re-authorization. Currently, we are in a *wait and see* mode on IDEA. A Senate bill S 1248 and a House bill, 1350 have been passed, but they have yet to be consolidated and passed by the Full Congress.

The consensus is that if the IDEA bill does not come to the Senate floor by June, it is not likely to happen this year. This means that if IDEA re-authorization does not occur this year, then IDEA 1997 remains the law until the Congress passes a new law. For any child receiving special education, there are many important issues yet to be resolved in this legislation, including such important issues as short-term objectives in the IEP, more stringent laws for due process hearings, and alignment with No Child Left Behind. Some of the issues relate only to students with learning disabilities. For instance the use of *response-to-intervention* to determine eligibility, and removal of a child with learning disabilities who has behavior disorders. So currently we are all watching anxiously to see what is happening in Washington. The lives of children with learning disabilities are at stake.

### The Articles in This Issue

This issue of *Learning Disabilities: A Multidisciplinary Journal* contains some articles on important issues.

*How the President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education Devalues Special Education* by James M. Kauffman and Andrew L. Wiley evaluates the report submitted by the President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education (PCESE). The authors question the Commission's findings and recommendations on closing the achievement gap, practicing prevention, and identifying students with disabilities, as well as disproportionality.

*Expanding the Agenda in Mathematics Problem Solving for Students with Mild Disabilities: Alternative Representations* by Teresa E. Foley, Rene S. Parmar, and John F. Cawley is the second of a two-part series on Arithmetic Problem Solving for Students with Mild Disabilities. The first appeared in the previous issue (Volume 12, Number 3) of this Journal. This article focuses on presenting problems in alternative representations.

*Examining an Effect of Fluency: Application of Letter Sound Writing and Oral Word Segmentation to Spelling Words* by Richard M. Kubina, Jr., Ann Young, and Mark Kilwein explores two behaviors: how to write a set of letter sounds they heard, and orally segment words into their constituent letter-sound correspondences that students with specific learning disabilities in reading learned. The students applied these two elemental behaviors into a compound behavior of spelling and reading nonsense words.

*Learning Related Vision Problems: How Visual Processing Affects Reading Efficiency* by Harold A. Solan looks at research during the past decade on the notion that visual as well as phonological deficits are significantly correlated with reading and learning disorders. The contributions of vision as an enhancer of cognitive development are emphasized.

*Teaching Strategies for Maltreated Children with Learning Disabilities* by Barbara Lowenthal offers teaching strategies to use with children with learning disabilities who are identified as abused and maltreated.

We hope you enjoy reading these timely articles.

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Co-Editors