

June 28,2016

My name is Barbara Donick. I am a member of Right to Read-Maryland, a coalition of educators and organizations who have the common goal of improving teacher preparation as it specifically relates to reading skills acquisition for all. In Maryland, both the NAEP and the PARCC testing results showed that approximately 60% of our 4th graders are not proficient in reading.

I am addressing this board because the Maryland State Board of Education along with the Professional Standards Teacher's Board controls through regulations the certification and preparation of Maryland's teachers. Last year we introduced House Bill 763 Task Force to Study Effectiveness of Teacher Education Programs in the Instruction of Reading. When this bill reached the Ways and Means Committee in the House of Delegates, MSDE opposed it because they were planning to create a work group to study and revise the four reading courses required for teachers. This work group is now in progress. These four courses were designed in 2004 with the assistance of Dr. Louisa Moats a national expert who has been involved in the field of reading research, clinical practice, classroom teaching, and teacher training for over four decades.

We want to ensure that this work group leads to the improvement of reading instruction based on sound policies. Dr. Moats has provided a road map to “ensure that anyone bent on finding programs that truly work can do so with confidence.”<sup>1</sup> The following are some of her suggestions.

1. Teachers licensed for elementary school should be required to complete a course of study in reading research, including scientific findings about how children learn to read, why some children fail to learn to read, and what instructional methods have been validated.
2. All teachers of reading and related language skills should be given ready access to models of effective teaching.
3. Continuing education for the teachers of teachers, certified by a respected and independent body, will be needed before colleges of education will change.
4. Teacher testing must be calibrated to measure knowledge of scientifically-based research and disciplinary knowledge base required for effective instruction. The majority of today's teacher licensing tests are irrelevant for predicting teacher competence and do not have content consistent with scientific based reading research (SBRR).
5. School boards must support the necessary conditions for instructional improvement in reading including professional development time and leadership training for principals among others.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.edexcellencemedia.net/publications/2007/...wholelanguagehighjinks/Moats](http://www.edexcellencemedia.net/publications/2007/...wholelanguagehighjinks/Moats)

The four reading courses are currently required to align with College and Career Reading Standards, and the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). Unfortunately, CAEP bases their reading requirements on the International Literacy Association (ILA) standards which do not follow SBRR. We would like to recommend that the state examine the Center for Effective Reading Instruction (CERI), a subsidiary of the International Dyslexia Association. This organization is reviewing and accrediting university programs for their alignment with scientific reading research.

The development of reading skills serves as the major foundational academic ability for all school based learning. We appreciate your time and attention to this critical issue.

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