Why Success by 3rd Grade is Our Passion

Our Story

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- From a mom's and educator's perspective

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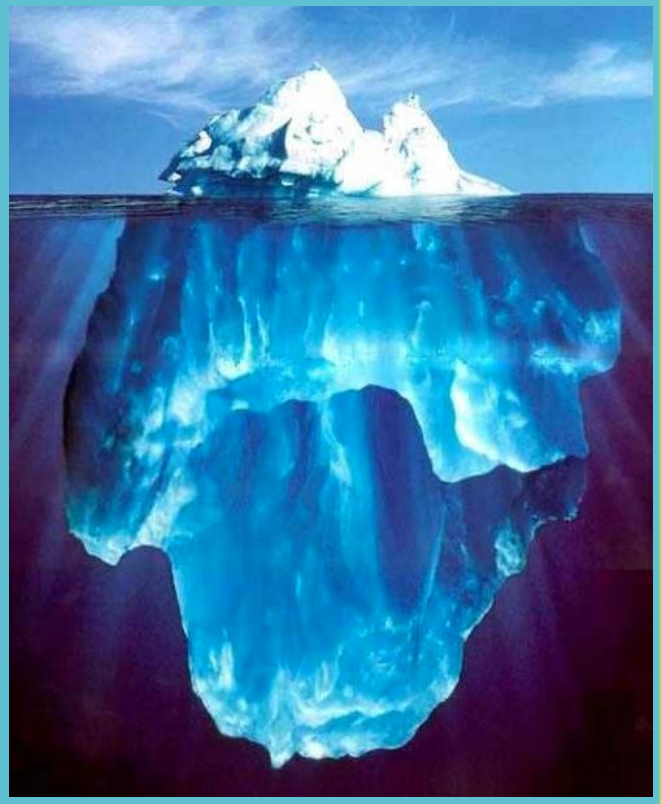
- From an advocate's and dad's perspective

What We Know

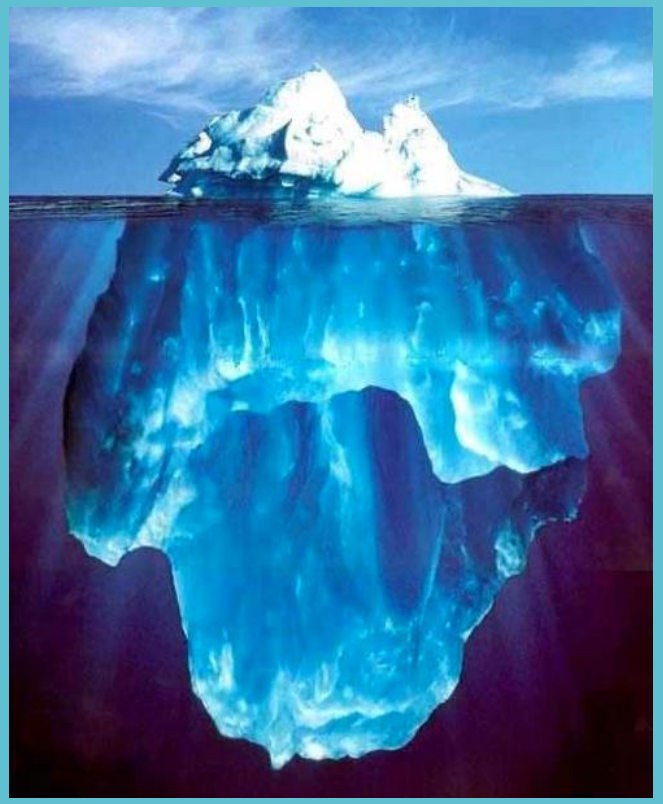
- Challenges
- Reading
- Homework
- Attention
- Frustration



What is Hidden

Issues:

- Learning Difference
- Processing
- Eye-teaming
- Motor planning
- How deep is the problem
- Impact of grade retention



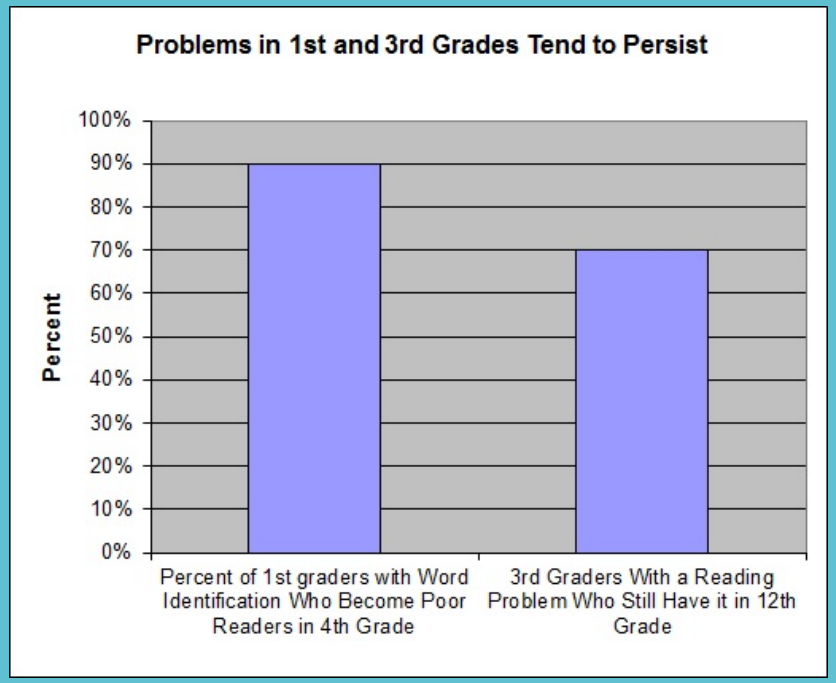
What Can Happen

- Presently, LD students are doing very poorly
- With new tests, results will be much worse
- Goals for this sub-group are disappearing

2 Key Facts That Drove Policy

Almost 90% of the first graders with a word identification problem will become poor readers in 4th grade

Over 70% of the 3rd graders With a reading disability will still have it in 12th grade



Mom's Perspective

- Watching your child struggle while siblings and friends get to play or do other more exciting activities.
- Observing your smart, creative child become ever more frustrated and and thinking "I'm stupid"
- Knowing there has to be a better way to help your child

Educator's Perspective

- Realizing every child learns differently
- Connect with what the student's abilities are and find ways to capitalize on them
- Create a trust and understanding between teacher and student that they can work together
- Acknowledge the child's emotional Issues
- The earlier these issues are identified, the better (Often not identified by educators)

Fears

- Grade retention (ranked 3rd most feared event after loss of a parent and going blind)
- Guilt, if only I had …
- Loss of self-esteem and friends
- Child's belief that there is something wrong with them

Success Translates Into

- “Can Do” Attitudes
- Acquisition of lifelong skills
- Parent-teacher bonding

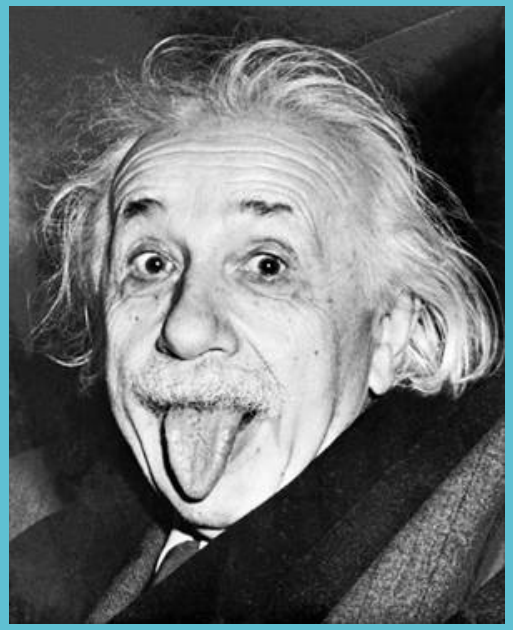
- Potential shifting of classes to be with friends
- Parental relief
- Entirely different future

Why Success by Third Grade

- Elvis Presley Effect
- Pivotal Year
- Changes a child's life
- Parents & professionals have real leverage to change kids' lives
- Addresses needs of students with LD, whether identified or not
- LDA can make the difference

Outrageous Success Translates into

- Students being in classes with friends and other smart students
- Huge boost in self-esteem
- Able to take electives, clubs and enjoy their summer
- Totally different trajectory
- Huge economic impact individually and for our society



Key **Issues** We Did Not Initially Know

- Students who **learn differently often are extremely emotional**
- Attention, working memory, eye teaming, motor planning **and/or** processing issues **are almost always co-existing conditions**
- Schools themselves do not address learning differences or related issues
- Committed and collaborative parents **and** professionals make the difference
- Principals and politicians rarely understand our kids or us

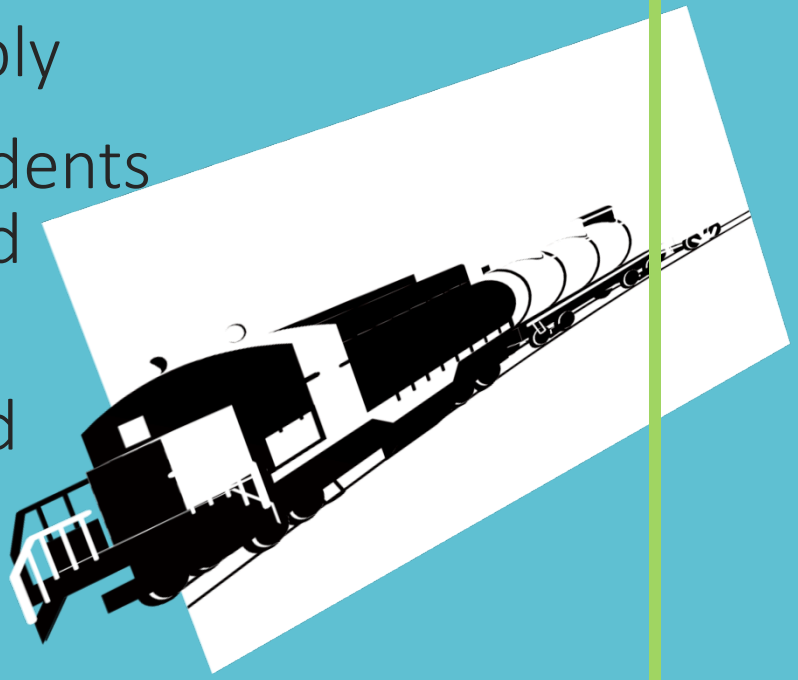
A Freight Train is headed towards us

Pre-Common Core Passing Rates are very low for students with LD

Passing rates will drop sharply

Without changes, many students with LD will not be identified or helped

Retention rates will soar and multiple retentions will increase



Why Success By Third Grade is necessary To Help The Next Generation

- Huge Issue for:
  - Parents
  - Teachers
  - Other professionals
- Help each person to
  - Understand risks
  - Get ideas to help your child or students
  - Develop a comprehensive individual and group effort

Reasons to Focus on Success by 3rd Grade In the Common Core Era

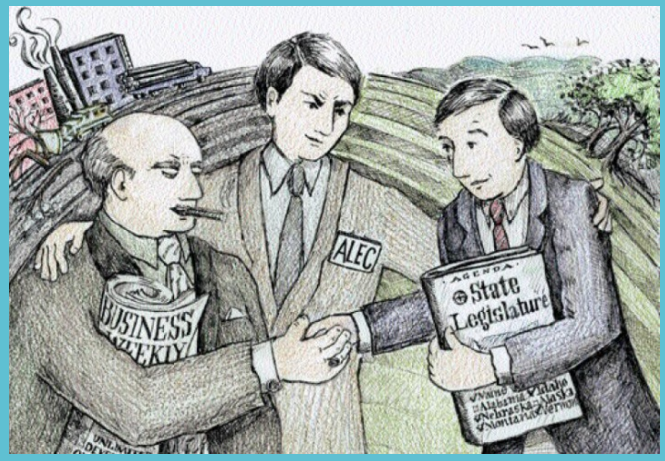
- 90 to 95% of students with LD will be below grade level & many will be retained
- Many unidentified students with LD will fail without the right help
- Without the right interventions, a generation will really suffer
- Early help is an excellent investment
- Done right, Success by 3rd Grade will be a game changer for your child, for many students, and for our society

Success by 3rd Grade
Critical Goal for Students with LD and LDA

- Few recognize the retention risks
- Reading gap is often HUGE
- Even if promoted, risk students will not understand what he or she reads in 4th grade
- Can change kids' lives
- Opportunity for LDA National and LDA Affiliates to initiate action
- Opportunity for school and district based efforts

Political Realities

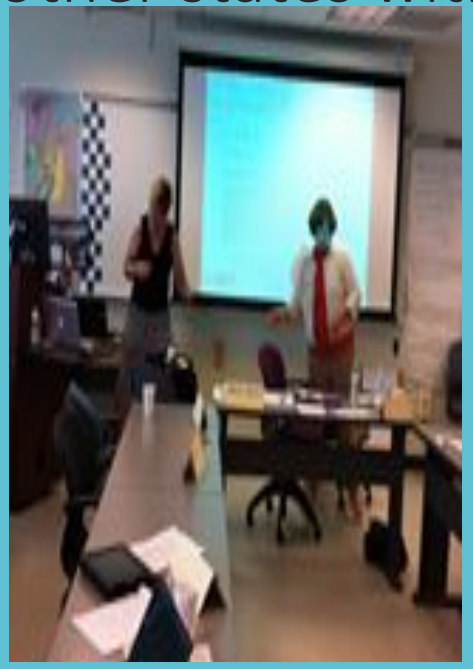
- AYP Goals helped students with LD, ESEA Waiver goals ???
- Common Core passing rates will be very low for LD students
- 3rd Grade Retention Policy a high priority for some



- Results Driven Accountability focuses on older students
- Privatization supporters have different motives
- Inclusion ??? for intensive reading help

Political Realities (continued)

- 3rd Grade Retention will be in full force by 2016
- Retention policies help drive privatization
- 3rd Grade Retention may spread to other states with massive effort & conservative legislatures
- Multiple retentions a real risk
- Room to improve the process
- Coalitions can make a difference



Experts Agree

"*A majority of kids with disabilities are performing very poorly—very, very poorly—where they receive all or most of their instruction in the mainstream classroom,*" said Doug Fuchs, a special education professor at Vanderbilt University in Nashville.

"*Inclusion must account for whether or not students are profiting educationally from the mainstream setting.*"

Time to Shift the Focus to Success by 3rd Grade

"The time has come for us to pay as much attention to third grade reading scores and we do to high school success. The time has come for us to invest the effort and money needed to make sure all Massachusetts children leave third grade as competent readers"

The Third Grade Reader by Margaret Blood, President of Strategies for Children, and Richard Weissbourd, from Harvard and Co-Founder of Read Boston

3 Interesting Points with New Standards

Of 44,000 3rd graders tested by Reading Plus®, 75% were reading on average at the 0.8 grade level

"Our current approach to testing and standards masks the extent of our nation's problem with reading proficiency."

"Up to half of the printed fourth-grade curriculum is incomprehensible to students who read below that grade level", Anne E. Casey
Early Warning, Why Reading by the End of Third Grade Matters

Success by 3rd Grade Opportunity For Parents

- Initiate RTI & Evaluation Processes
- Get present level of reading comprehension on passages of significant length & complexity
- Develop effective collaborative effort
- **BOLD IEP and Personal Goals**
- Identify learning style and relevant issues attention, eye teaming, etc.
- Utilize assistive technology
- Leverage outside help
- Work with other parents – groups
- <u>Go all out</u>

3rd Grade Retention

Studies do not support retention

Florida has some good options for promotion

EXEMPTIONS FROM THIRD-GRADE RETENTION

Good cause exemptions are for the following students:

1. Limited English proficient students
2. Students with disabilities whose individual educational plan (IEP) shows that it is not appropriate for them to take the FCAT.
3. Students who show an acceptable level of performance on an alternative standardized reading test
4. Students who show through a teacher-developed portfolio that they can read on grade level.*
5. Students with and without an IEP or 504 Plan that have received intensive remediation in reading for more than two years, but who still show a deficiency in reading; and who were previously retained.

*http://www.justreadflorida.com/docs/read_to_learn.pdf

Parent Advocacy Tips

- Is my child in RTI?
- Can we schedule an RTI review 1 time a month?
- Use an effective and collaborative advocate
- Request an evaluation using Melody Musgrove Letter
- Ask for a reading comprehension assessment
- Bring your own reading comprehension assessment
- Set reading comprehension goal to get back to grade level with 1 year – 2 years for older students
- Utilize accommodations -- consider more days
- Initiate portfolio or other processes ASAP

Tips For Professionals

- Early identification
- Most effective interventions
- Build collaboration
- Support proficiency driven IEP
- Leverage assistive technology
- Guide parents on how to help
- Support school and LDA Efforts

For LDA Affiliates

Consider Success by Third Grade initiatives and conferences

Market to younger parents with focus on helping their child succeed

Work together to develop legislative and policy improvements

Policy and Legislative Possibilities

1) Shift focus to identify as many students as appropriate by the end of 1st grade
2) Form State Wide Task Force on SB3G
3) Require proficiency driven IEPs
4) Require all students who are retained to be evaluated for why and potentially for services
5) Require all schools to offer pullout help
6) Have Success by 3rd Grade be a State Goal
7) Fund SB3G Leader and required programs
8) Have SB3G be a key goal for elementary schools

If You Want M

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Call us for a no cost consult

Visit www.3dlearner.com

Please contact us with questions or suggestions

Mira and Mark Halpert

Contact us at 561-361-7495

parents@3dlearner.com

Mark will be presenting at the Chicago Conference

Learning Disabilities Association of America

Join LDA Today!
www.ldaamerica.org

Why is Membership Important?

When you join LDA you are joining an organization with thousands of parents, educators, adults with LD and professionals in your city, state and nationwide to help advocate for the learning disabilities community. With your membership you will receive:

- **Membership in your state affiliate with access to local resources!**
- **Quality archived webinars like those presented today!**
- **Newsletter** for members-only: LDA Today
- **Discount** at state and national conferences
- **Discount Subscription** to *Learning Disabilities: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, a peer-reviewed journal published three times a year.
- **Members Only Community Forum** to connect with others in your same situation