



**VCASE Newsletter**  
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## President's Pen

### LEADERSHIP IN A CULTURE OF CHANGE

With the recent reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the continuing accountability requirements of No Child Left Behind, we as special education administrators are immersed in a culture of change. In his book, *Leading in a Culture of Change*, Michael Fullan, notes that there is literally more to learn today than ever before and that "the more complex society gets, the more sophisticated leadership must become."

A culture of change is comprised of rapidity and nonlinearity on one hand and equally great potential for creative breakthroughs on the other hand. How do we lead in a culture of complex change and achieve that creative breakthrough? Fullan tells us that it is important to resist a focus on short-term gains at the expense of deeper reform where gains are steady but not necessarily dramatic. Therefore, instead of adopting innovations, one after another, we must produce the capacity to seek, critically assess, and selectively incorporate new ideas and practices. As leaders, we must know when to think and act quickly and know when to think and act slowly so that we see the bigger picture and don't make up our minds prematurely.

Fullan emphasizes the value and importance of establishing relationships through professional learning communities. As we plan for the implementation of

IDEA 2004 and the continued implementation of NCLB, I encourage us to use one another as resources. VCASE, particularly in this culture of change, can be a vehicle for building the types of relationships that characterize strong professional learning communities.

Knowledge sharing is one action that fuels relationships and permeates professional learning communities. It is *knowledge sharing* that enabled our organization to be represented during the recent IDEA public hearing in Washington D. C. convened by the U. S. Department of Education to obtain input for developing the federal regulations. Based on input from the VCASE Executive Committee; many of you through your regional representatives; consultation with Doug Cox, VDOE; and CASE, I provided testimony on behalf of VCASE about some of our concerns and recommendations. The testimony included comments regarding the need for timely dissemination of federal regulations. The testimony also addressed our concerns about the 60 day timeline for completing evaluations following parental consent and a recommendation to define these in the regulations as 60 business days rather than calendar days. A copy of the complete testimony is available on our website at [www.vcase.org](http://www.vcase.org).

Fullan reminds us that to develop our own leadership and that of others, we should focus on reciprocity, the mutual obligation and value of sharing knowledge among organizational members. He states that "the key to developing leadership is to develop knowledge and share it; if it is not mutually shared, it won't be adequately developed in the first place and will not be available to the organization in any case." I look forward to seeing you at the Spring VCASE conference where there will be multiple opportunities for us to share our knowledge with one another and to continue moving forward in becoming a strong professional learning community.

**Patricia Addison**  
**VCASE President**

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## Neurobiological Factors and Learning Disabilities

by Jack Fletcher



With the earliest origins of the concept of learning disabilities (LDs), it has been presumed that if all known causes of achievement difficulties were identified (mental retardation, sensory disorders, emotional disorders, economic

disadvantage, inadequate instruction), those children who remained underachievers would have a form of “unexpected underachievement” that represents LDs. Thus, LDs are often conceptualized as disorders that originate within the child (i.e., “of constitutional origins”) and that are intrinsic to the child. The implication is that children with LDs are born with problems that alter brain function and in turn, make it difficult for the child to learn. Various approaches to identification, particularly IQ-discrepancy, have been justified in part as a marker for the presence of unexpected underachievement due to constitutional factors (Lyon, Fletcher, & Barnes, 2003).

More recent investigations of the neurobiological underpinnings of children with LDs have begun to question this view, largely because the notion of constitutional factors does not adequately take into account the interactions between neurobiological and environmental factors that represent the evolution of LDs. This interaction is most apparent in recent functional neuroimaging studies of children with reading disabilities, which suggest that the issue with many students identified with LDs is not so much that it is difficult for them to learn, but that they are difficult to teach. Functional neuroimaging represents an attempt to use magnetic resonance imaging or magnetic source imaging to measure the metabolic or neurophysiological changes that take place when a person engages in cognitive activity. Five recent studies have evaluated the relationship between brain function and instruction. (Aylward et al., 2003; Shaywitz et al., 2004; Simos et al., 2002; in press; Temple et al., 2003). These studies have found that effective instruction is associated not only with changes in brain function, which in theory could represent compensatory patterns (i.e., involvement of areas of the brain not usually involved in reading) but with apparent normalization of brain function. Thus, if a student with LD developed reading skills like those of a typical achiever, there was also typically a change in brain function that involved activation of areas in the left hemisphere paralleling activation patterns observed in typical achievers. These types of changes have been observed in children and adolescents with well-defined reading disabilities as well as children at-risk for reading difficulties.

Such findings are consistent with research on the genetics of reading disability, where about half of the variability can

be accounted for by heritable factors (Olson & Gayan, 2001). Thus, environmental factors account for a significant amount of the variability in educational outcomes. Some of these environmental factors involve the language and literacy environment in which a child develops. Although the association of economic disadvantage and achievement is well-known, it is also apparent that families in which the parents have reading problems do not have books in the home, do not read to the child, and otherwise do not engage in literacy activities that clearly facilitate the development of literacy and language skills (Olson & Gayan, 2001).

The other major environmental variable is instruction. Recent studies show that when intervention is provided for children at-risk early in their development, many children become average readers (Lyon, Fletcher, Fuchs, & Chabra, in press). Even children who begin remedial programs at older ages often progress if the intervention is intense enough. Some of these studies provide intervention that involves up to two hours instruction per day over a short period of time (e.g., 8-10 weeks; Simos et al., 2002; Torgesen et al., 2001). Although these studies often lead to significant improvement in word recognition and comprehension skills, students typically lag behind in their development of fluency. As fluency is a skill that develops with practice and repetition that specifically involves enhancement of sight word vocabulary, fluency deficits may be primarily experiential and a product of early reading difficulties that limit the student’s access to print (Torgesen et al., 2001).

These types of studies suggest that LDs are not direct products of constitutional factors, but reflect the interplay of genes, brains, and experiences. There are significant neurobiological factors that lead to risk for LDs. However, the neural systems that are commonly observed to be impaired in children with reading disabilities are malleable and plastic if the environment is altered in a way that is intense enough to impact these areas of the brain. These findings are important in the context of current efforts to revitalize the construct of LD through response to instruction models. Many students who are eventually identified as LD can learn to read if instruction is matched to their learning needs early in their development (Lyon, Fletcher, & Barnes, 2002).

This research also suggests that the most important exclusionary criterion involves ensuring that the student has adequate instruction. If a student receives quality instruction in general education as well as early intervention through pre-referral services, a student who is identified with LD would be one who demonstrates intractability in their learning characteristics. Intractability is not demonstrated simply by an IQ-achievement discrepancy or even by a score on a single assessment of achievement. Rather, intractability can only be demonstrated through efforts to instruct the child with careful monitoring of progress.

Implementation of response to instruction models through multi-tiered approaches to instruction promises to

alter the type of students who are eventually identified with LDs. These children will be more difficult to teach and will need the power and flexibility built into IDEA in order to maximize their experiences in school. Approaches that incorporate response to instruction criteria prioritize opportunity to learn and intractability as opposed to hypothetical markers of constitutional factors (e.g., IQ-discrepancy) that do not represent valid or reliable classifications. It is important for special educators to carefully think about how they conceptualize LDs, particularly the role of neurobiological and instructional factors. Many concerned about LD have had the concept of constitutional factors engrained into our conscious appraisals of students with LDs. More recent neurobiological research suggests that these conceptualizations need to be altered, particularly if the goal is to change the special education system into one oriented towards results, and not just process. Thus, all good instruction is brain-based and response to instruction must drive the search for constitutional factors that contribute to LDs.

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### **Nominations Needed for the James T. Micklem Award of Merit**

According to the Bylaws, VCASE has an opportunity to honor a member of VCASE who has had **an impact on the education of children with disabilities** on the local, regional, and/or state levels. Traditionally, this award has gone to individuals who were often close to retirement (although that's not a requirement) and who were recognized by many of the VCASE members as having made significant contributions to some aspect of the field of special education.

Our outgoing presidents always receive an award for making it through the six-year commitment to that office, so the executive board "traditionally" looks for someone who is not currently serving as an officer. Therefore, we are actively seeking nominations for the Micklem Award and encourage you to take a moment to consider who should receive recognition at our Spring 2005 conference this year. Please, email anyone on the executive committee with the name and the reasons why you are nominating that person. Requirements for nomination include the following:

√ *Hold a current membership in VCASE.*

√ *Have a special education /supervisory or administrative position in a public school division or a position which meets the **current** requirements of active membership.*

√ *Have made an impact on the education of children with disabilities on the local, regional, and /or state levels.*

√ *Have a minimum three (3) years active membership in VCASE.*

## Evidence-Based Strategies for Preparing Young Learners to Achieve at Literacy

by *Laura M. Justice*  
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The purpose of this article is to present specific approaches and activities that may be used to support young children's achievements in eight areas of understanding and knowledge. These areas comprise essential aspects of development in oral language and emergent literacy that, when well developed during the preschool years, enable children to profit from reading instruction during the elementary grades. The areas include vocabulary, narrative, phonological awareness, print concepts, and literacy motivation. In suggesting specific approaches and activities for supporting young children's achievements in each, I draw from the currently available scientific literature. Table 1 provides the approach or strategy for each area of learning and references to scientific works from which I draw my suggestions.

In considering the approaches and activities identified here, it is important to recognize that school personnel must work together in a team-based approach to collaborate for learning. The current scientific evidence points to the importance of layering instructional support upon students in response to their dynamic and unique needs as learners. Thus, educational teams must offer ongoing and committed support to one another to layer support upon students in each of the areas in a seamless and concerted manner. At the same time, the literature also points to the importance of providing students with both embedded and incidental learning experiences in conjunction with explicit, targeted and teacher-led exercises to provoke learning. In other words, we must employ an "embedded-explicit" approach that presents children with meaning-focused, contextualized, and child-initiated learning opportunities that are integrated with more direct skill-building routines. The activities and approaches described in the following sections can be used in a complementary way to provide classroom learning experiences that are embedded and explicit.

### Vocabulary

Vocabulary describes the lexical knowledge of children, including the words they understand and use and the linkages among words to form conceptual categories. Children with more diverse vocabularies are able to more precisely represent the world around them to others and to use this vocabulary for understanding and engaging in literacy experiences, such as shared storybook reading. A scientifically-based approach for developing children's vocabulary skills is through frequent interactive reading in small groups. Importantly, however, not all reading

experiences are equal. To build children's vocabulary, they need multiple opportunities to hear specific words. Hearing a word only one or two or even three times will not typically result in the solid attainment of that word for a child. Thus, read books with children frequently, repeatedly, and pause during and after reading sessions to discuss specific words from a variety of classes (e.g., nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, etc.).

### Narrative

Narrative describes children's ability to both produce and understand extended accounts of real events (e.g., a personal experience) or fictional events (e.g., a made-up story). Within classrooms, narratives are a frequent tool for child-to-child communication and for teacher-to-child instruction. In producing and understanding narratives, children must negotiate not only pragmatic aspects of communication (e.g., attending to listener needs) but also lexical and syntactic aspects of communication to organize an event that unfolds over time or through a cause-and-effect sequence. Narratives represent one of the more complex linguistic acts given this negotiation of pragmatic, lexical, and syntactic aspects of language. Often, teachers focus on helping children develop the "pieces" of language rather than the "whole" of language; narrative is an exemplar of the latter, and by enhancing children's production and understanding of narratives, this may in turn support children's achievement of the "pieces" (e.g. vocabulary, grammar, pragmatics). One approach for supporting narrative development is by engaging children in frequent, repeated opportunities to produce *scaffolded stories*. Teachers can do this by talking to children frequently and consistently about past experiences or recent events. Within these interactions, teachers should: (a) spend a lot of time on each topic, (b) ask open-ended questions and limit yes/no questions, particularly those focused on context and setting of events, (c) encourage elaboration of events through extensions and prompts (e.g., "He jumped in the water, and then..."), and (d) following the child's lead by talking about what the child wants to talk about (Peterson, Jesso, & McCabe, 1999). As an alternative, children can also engage in scaffolded stories with peers in their classroom, during which peers who have more well-developed narrative abilities provide models of good narrative. Children who have frequent experiences to produce scaffolded stories produce more well-developed narratives that contain more diverse vocabulary than children without such experiences.

### Phonological Awareness

Phonological awareness describes children's sensitivity to the segmental units of spoken language, to include words, syllables, onsets, rimes, and phonemes. Gradually over the preschool years, children become increasingly sensitized to and familiar with the segmental

units of spoken language. For instance, they begin to note how words comprise a series of syllables (e.g., butterfly has three parts) and how words “match” in phonological ways (e.g., Leo and Lakori match!). While reading instruction in first grade and beyond provides a bi-directional support to children’s achievements in phonological awareness, it is also important that children arrive at reading instruction with an emerging sensitivity to the phonological organization of speech. Educators who work with young children can foster phonological awareness in a variety of ways. While providing children with experiences with rhymes and alliteration patterns through books and other activities is important, what is also critical is for teachers to guide children explicitly to attend to sound patterns and not leave children to make these connections on their own. As an example, teachers can read storybooks with children regularly that feature rhyming patterns or alliterative patterns. However, just experiencing these phonological patterns through storybooks is an implicit learning experience, and for some children implicit learning is inadequate. These children benefit from explicit guidance to attend to sound structure. Thus, the teacher should stop when reading to point out rhymes and alliteration and to enable children to consider aspects of phonological under her guidance. For instance, when reading Dr. Seuss’ *Cat in the Hat*, the teacher stops to ask the children, “Did anyone hear a rhyme on this page?” and “What word rhymed with box?” In the conversation that follows these teacher prompts, children receive the opportunity to consider the phonological segments of language in an explicit rather than implicit way.

### **Print Concepts**

Print concepts describes children’s knowledge about the orthography of their written language. In our own descriptions of the development of print knowledge, we have emphasized five areas of development: *print interest*, *print functions*, *print conventions*, *print forms*, and *print part-to-whole relationships* (Justice & Ezell, 2004). Print interest refers to children’s coming to view print as an object warranting attention as a distinct type of environmental stimuli. We view the achievement of print interest as an early watershed event in emergent literacy, on the basis that this provides a vehicle through which the child will on her own readily and rapidly accumulate familiarity with print forms and functions. Print function refers to children awareness that print provides meaning to events and additional detail beyond other stimuli (e.g., pictures). Print conventions describes children’s growing knowledge of the idiosyncratic ways in which print is organized for various genre. Print forms describes children’s understanding that words, letters and other print units have distinct names and are used in specific, organized ways. Print part-to-whole relationships describes children’s growing knowledge of the combinatorial properties of print units, such as how letters make up words and that words can be linked to create larger propositions. An important way to support children’s developments in these areas is through *print-referencing*. With print-referencing,

teachers systematically and explicitly draw children’s attention towards print within the context of repeated interactive storybook readings by asking comments and questions about print. With print-referencing, children’s interest in, attention towards, and knowledge about print is actively cultivated by teachers to promote early literacy success and thereby facilitate children’s later transitions to decoding and comprehension. By providing this intervention within the context of an authentic literacy activity –shared book reading - educators can more readily emphasize the integrative relationships between the written code and its broader purpose of providing meaning to text. Importantly, print referencing promotes the child’s own self-regulated learning that occurs when she comes to view print as an object worthy of attention. The child’s own interest in print and emerging knowledge about print compels the child to engage with print at increasingly higher rates thereby rapidly accumulating her knowledge about print forms and functions.

### **Literacy Motivation**

When considering emergent literacy interventions for young children, as important as it is to support the achievement of specific skills or knowledge in children, it is as or more important to develop the child’s positive regard for literacy events. Estimates suggest that one in ten children resist literacy activities, and this figure may be as high as 40% for populations of at-risk children, such as those with disabilities. When delivering literacy interventions to young children, it is sometimes too easy to overlook the importance of instilling a positive regard for literacy given the immediacy of the task of preparing young children for the rigors of reading instruction. Nonetheless, some experts warn against a “broccoli effect” (Scarborough & Dobrich, 1994), which occurs when children are forced to do something they do not like which, in turn, fosters negativity towards that activity. Forcing children to engage with books or other literacy activities poses the risk of turning children against that activity in the way that forcing children to eat broccoli can turn them into a lifelong “broccoli resister.” Thus, I contend that when delivering emergent literacy interventions, educators must be intentional and relentless in their emphasis on helping children learn to enjoy and cultivate literacy experiences, such as writing, drawing, reading, and the like, as a foremost goal of intervention. Children who enjoy reading and literacy seek it out and serve as their own “self-propelling intervention devices”, whereas children who do not enjoy reading will find other activities to serve as substitutes. To cultivate young children’s positive regard for literacy, the most important vehicle is modeling the act and enjoyment of reading. Teachers should be literacy consumers and model this consumption often and enjoyably. Also, survey the classroom space to ensure that it too provides a warm vehicle for enjoyment of literacy, with ample time available to children to participate in the classroom library and experience books and other literacy tools. For children in one’s classroom who do resist storybook reading and other literacy events, teachers can structure one-on-one reading

interactions in ways that promote the child's positive regarding to literacy. Specific strategies include: (a) letting the child select the book, (b) following the child's lead when reading and limiting yes/no or other demand strategies, (c) letting the child handle the book and set the pace of the interaction, and (d) praising the child for the interactive routines she currently uses (even if they are non-conventional).

The activities and approaches presented here provide educators with some suggestions for preparing young learners to achieve at literacy. With the expanding knowledge base on effective literacy interventions for young children, practitioners have the opportunity to bridge the research to practice gap and enable all children a smooth transition into the world of reading and writing.

Developmental Area	Approach or Activity	Scientific References
<b>Vocabulary</b>	Repeated reading of the same books for continual exposure to new vocabulary; conversing during and after reading to discuss specific words and concepts	Elley (1989); Justice, Meier, & Walpole (2005); Penno, Wilkinson, & Moore (2002)
<b>Narrative</b>	Frequent scaffolded stories during which educator incorporates specific techniques to promote narrative; peer modeling of narratives	McGregor, 2000; Peterson, Jesso, & McCabe (1999)
<b>Phonological Awareness</b>	During literacy activities that feature phonological patterns such as rhyme and alliteration, pause to point out these patterns and engage the children in scaffolded conversations about these patterns	Justice & Ezell (2000); Ukrainetz, Cooney, Dyer, Kysar, & Harris (2000)
<b>Print Concepts</b>	Incorporate print referencing into storybook reading interactions as well as dramatic play settings in which the teacher comments and questions about print explicitly	Justice & Ezell (2000, 2002); Neuman & Roskos (1993)
<b>Literacy Motivation</b>	Provide ample opportunities to engage with books, writing, and other literacy events in the classroom that are mediated by adults; structure one-on-one book reading interactions with children that provide them control over activity	Katims (1991); Ukrainetz et al. (2000)

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## **VCASE SPRING 2005 CONFERENCE PRESENTER**



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### ***Plan to attend the Spring 2005 VCASE Conference***

***May 25-27, 2005  
At the  
Ramada Oceanfront  
Virginia Beach, VA***

***With Featured Speaker  
Ann Delehant***



***Look for details about registration  
and hotel in the coming  
Spring conference brochure.***

Featured Conference Presenter **Ann M. Delehant** is a committed training and development professional with more than twenty-five years of experience in a variety of roles and settings. She works as an external consultant for national consulting firms, professional associations, state education departments, universities, and several school districts where she serves at the school level and at Central Office. Ann is an experienced facilitator, staff developer, teacher, guidance counselor, grants writer, government relations' specialist, curriculum developer, and university instructor.

She currently works as an independent consultant serving as a facilitator, coach, trainer and evaluator. Ann provides services throughout the country, addressing a variety of topics including systems change, facilitation skills, effective staff development practices, using data to make decisions, accountability, long range planning, shared decision making, Board development, conflict resolution/mediation, new roles for central staff, and other issues. Ann designs audits of systems, major initiatives, and professional development programs by utilizing deep listening activities with critical stakeholder groups, preparing comprehensive reports, and presenting key observations, commendations and recommendations. Ann recently completed training to develop skills as a life coach and is supporting several educators in this new role.

Ann was the Director of Staff Development for the City School District in Rochester, New York. She was deeply connected to key reform initiatives in Rochester, supporting a broad array of activities such as the creation and training of school-based planning teams; the development of school leaders; the design and implementation of the mentor teacher-internship program; the creation of a partnership among the District, community college and local teacher preparatory colleges for paraprofessionals interested in teacher certification; and the orientation of all new employees.

Ann received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Communications and Education from Carlow College in Pittsburgh, PA. She holds Master degrees in Communications (Arizona State University), Counseling (Canisius College, Buffalo, New York), and Educational Administration (State University of New York at Brockport). She has continued her studies focusing on Adult Learning at the University of Rochester.

## NUANCES REGARDING IEEs AND FBAs

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The IDEA provides that a parent can obtain an independent educational evaluation (IEE) of their child. 20 U.S.C. § 1415(b)(1). In an attempt to expand this right, parents have been requesting an independent functional behavioral assessment (FBA) of their child. A hearing officer held in a recent decision that parents are not entitled to obtain independent functional behavioral assessments because these assessments are not evaluations. The thought process in this significant holding is analyzed in the following section.

The state regulations provide that an FBA shall be developed by the IEP team. 8 VAC 20-80-68(C)(2)(d). There is no provision in the regulations, however, that grants the parents a statutory right to request an independent functional behavioral assessment. For that right to exist, it must be specifically authorized by statute or regulation. See Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Education v. Riley, 106 F.3d 559, 566 (4th Cir. 1997)(holding that because Congress promulgated the IDEA pursuant to its spending power, Congress “can impose no burden upon the States unless it does so unambiguously”) (citing Board of Educ. v. Rowley, 458 U.S. 176, 190 n.11(1982)). There does not appear to be an unambiguous right granted to obtain an independent FBA.

The state regulations provide that a parent may request an independent evaluation, but an FBA is not an evaluation. An evaluation is defined as a procedure “to determine whether a child has a disability and the extent and nature of special education and related services that a child needs...” 8 VAC 20-80-10 “Evaluation”; 34 C.F.R. § 300.500(b)(2). An FBA is defined as “a process to determine the underlying cause or functions of a child’s behavior that impede the learning of the child with a disability or the learning of the child’s peers.” 8 VAC 20-80-10 “Functional behavioral assessment.” An evaluation provides information to make a determination related to the student’s eligibility and needs. 34 C.F.R. § 300.500(b)(2). An FBA is typically related to the discipline process.

8 VAC 20-80-68 (C)(2)(d); 34 C.F.R. § 300.520(b). An evaluation requires an affirmative procedure to determine

eligibility and needs, while an FBA may be “a review of existing data.” See 8 VAC 20-80-68 (C)(2)(d)(2). Nowhere in the federal or state special education regulations is an FBA equated to an evaluation. Because the regulations have expressly defined these concepts as separate and distinct, a parent’s right regarding an IEE does not extend to an FBA.

When presented with this argument, the hearing officer agreed and held that the federal and state special education regulations do not equate an FBA with an evaluation. An FBA is a process used to develop a revised positive behavior intervention plan and is a “problem solving process.” The hearing officer concluded that “[a]ccordingly, while a parent clearly has legal rights to request and in specified circumstances receive an IEE at public expense, a parent has no right under applicable law to receive an ‘independent FBA,’ the two being completely separate and distinct concepts serving different purposes under the legislation framework.”

As a result of this decision and the legal argument that an FBA is not an evaluation, school divisions should think before they automatically grant an independent evaluation of an FBA to a parent at school division expense.

## VCASE Elections Spring 2005

by Tom Nash



At the Spring VCASE Conference, there will be an election to choose a President-Elect, Secretary and Treasurer for the following two years. I encourage members who are interested in serving in a leadership capacity in the one organization that does represent Special Education Administrators to contact any of the Executive Committee officers. We will be glad to answer any of your questions or to go ahead and place your name in nomination if you are ready to commit. The newly elected President Elect, Secretary and Treasurer will join with the President (Tom Nash) and Past President (Pat Addison) to form the Executive Committee of VCASE.

Under the leadership of Pat Addison the Executive Committee has become a functioning team with each member providing strong support for our overall effort. From my

perspective as the President Elect for the past two years, I have directly benefited from the support of Pat Addison, Rick Richardson, Kay Cooper, Jane Rice and Jane Razeghi as we developed our Fall and Spring Conferences. I have been proud to work with the VCASE Executive Committee to support Special Education Administrators as they develop and expand their professional leadership and in turn improve the quality of special education services available to children with disabilities in Virginia's schools. The positions that will be open are listed below with a brief description of the key job responsibilities.

### **The President-Elect shall**

- ◆ chair the program committees for the spring and fall VCASE conferences;
- ◆ assumes the Presidency, if the office becomes vacant;
- ◆ and chairs the meetings in the President's absence.

### **The Secretary shall**

- ◆ take minutes at business meetings of the membership;
- ◆ schedule member meetings; solicits and promote VCASE membership; and
- ◆ maintain the membership database.

### **The Treasurer shall**

- ◆ prepare the annual budget and quarterly reports;
- ◆ pay VCASE bills;
- ◆ maintain financial accounts;
- ◆ work with an external auditor, with oversight by the President.

### **The Executive Committee shall**

- ◆ annually review the auditor's report;
- ◆ participate in monthly meetings in person or via phone conference;
- ◆ oversee committee functions & appoints chairs as directed by the President; and
- ◆ provide input for the evaluation of the Executive Secretary.

## **Upcoming Election for New VCASE Treasurer**

*by Kay Cooper*



This year, I will complete my ninth year as VCASE treasurer. I had originally intended to serve for two years, but I was having so much fun, I guess I forgot to resign! I leave my post with very mixed feelings. I will miss my association with my fellow VCASE officers. We have worked hard and laughed hard together and I treasure our camaraderie. I will miss the special relationships I have been able to build with many VCASE members. Come conference time, I hear from so many of you – “Am I a current member?” “Who are the speakers going to be?” “Can you give me a discount?”

One does not have to be a math genius to do this job. No one who knows me would ever describe me as such. It does take someone who is organized and can set up a system. Once that is done, the details take care of themselves. Time involvement is not terribly intense. Six weeks before each conference, I spend about five hours each week on registration. Other than that VCASE commitment is probably less than five hours per month. Twice a year I get just a little frantic. When the conference registrations start coming in, I keep track of them, send out invoices, and rake in the dough. Just before the conference, I print nametags, make sure we have adequate supplies, and set up the registration tables. I do balance the checkbook every month and write a financial report and draft a budget to present at the spring conference. The best part of the job is greeting our VCASE members at the registration tables in Charlottesville and Virginia Beach.

I urge anyone who wants to become more involved in VCASE to consider running for the position of treasurer this year. It is a terrific opportunity to meet other professionals from all over the Commonwealth and to be a part of an exciting and vibrant organization. I will still be at every conference, but from now on I'll be on the other side of the table!

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