



THE CARROLL SCHOOL CONNECTION

Winter 2010

www.carrollschool.org

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MESSAGE FROM STEVE WILKINS

One of the most interesting aspects of teaching bright children with dyslexia is keeping current on the brain research. Virtually every month there is a new research study that makes us think about what Carroll ought to be doing to meet the needs of our students. When I was first at Carroll in the late 1970s, we tried to do the best we could and to care well for the students. But there was powerfully little in the research to tell us how to guide our decisions about teaching.

Today, we are heavily influenced by research and science. For example, our entire language program, including Orton-Gillingham, is supported by the findings of the National Reading Panel that, in 2000, studied over 100,000 research papers about how to teach reading. Carroll has adjusted our program to follow the National Reading Panel's recommendations.

This issue of *The Connection* reveals some of the research-based decisions that Carroll has made: connecting our Orton-Gillingham phonics to the RAVE-O program based on the research of Tufts University's Dr. Maryanne Wolf; a strong emphasis on direct and explicit teaching of written expression; a new summer program based on the research about the strengths within the dyslexic profile; and a study that Carroll is spearheading with Yale and Tufts to understand the subtypes within dyslexia.

The field of educating dyslexics is so interesting, challenging, and rewarding because neuroscience, cognitive science, and technology are providing us with so many clues about how to make educational decisions. What a great time to be educating our talented, divergent, and creative children!

CARROLL NEWS New 9th Grade Program

Beginning in the fall of 2010, The Carroll School's academic offerings will include a 9th Grade Program. This program is designed for students who are bright, curious, and self-motivated but may lack the strategic thinking and executive functioning skills necessary for success in a college preparatory environment.

We will build a dynamic 9th grade program with the combination of long time Carroll students for whom our style of education works ideally and who no longer need remedial instruction, and students who are looking for one more year of targeted preparation for a rigorous high school program.

The fundamental components of the 9th grade program include:

- major emphasis on following the curriculum and performance expectations of local, academically rigorous public or independent secondary schools;
- intensive focus on where students need help the most—study skills, writing, organization, reading and comprehension, math, cognitive development, time management, output efficiency, handling lecture, use of technology, and more;
- extensive use of technological resources to make learning optimally accessible to our type of learner with the 21st Century classroom mindset.

Significant opportunities to accentuate the strengths within each student through use of differentiated instruction, multiple presentation styles, varied assessment techniques, integration of arts and movement, and student performance are hallmarks of this new program.

To learn more, please go to our website, www.carrollschool.org.



Carroll Friends

RAVE-O Lessons

Have you ever heard about RAVE-O and wondered what it means and why is it an integral part of Carroll's learning program for our younger children? The research done by Dr. Maryanne Wolf, Director of the Center for Reading and Language Research at Tufts University, revealed more about how the brain learns to read, suggesting that Carroll's curriculum must address a fuller range of language-based issues related to reading.

Dr. Wolf's research has uncovered that some dyslexic children have two identified deficits – one is phonological processing, their understanding of speech sounds in language, and the other deficit is naming speed. Naming speed is the rapid retrieval of visual symbols and words such as letters, numbers, objects, and colors. A weakness in naming speed can affect a child's ability to read and understand words at a rate rapid enough to comprehend reading material.

RAVE-O is a systematic approach to reading fluency and it is always implemented with a phonology program. RAVE-O stands for Retrieval, Automaticity, Vocabulary, Engagement with language, and Orthography (spelling patterns). One major premise of RAVE-O is the more a child knows about a word, the better and faster the child can read and comprehend it, both at the single word level and in connected text.

In addition to Orton-Gillingham tutorials, students in the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades (2 classrooms) have four RAVE-O lessons each week. Students are trained to develop accurate and automatic retrieval of words in order to improve comprehension. In a systematic way, students are given multiple exposures to the most common words and patterns in the English language.

Lessons focus on developing understanding of multiple meaning words like "jam" which could represent traffic "jam", jar of "jam", or "jamming" to music, and building connections within and among words. Lessons also focus on recognizing rime patterns (word parts) like, "am", "at", "ag"; adding suffixes (i.e. 's' and 'ing') to words, and using them in context. Teachers continually evaluate student progress with informal assessments.

Partnering in Research

Carroll is leading collaboration between a coalition of independent schools that specialize in learning differences, and a network of scientists from different universities. The research is focusing on (a) developing and sharing of evidence-based practices for preventing and treating learning disabilities and (b) studying their causes. The National Institute of Health is funding the network's effort to investigate types and causes of learning differences.

Dyslexia is a main area of interest.

Dyslexia is due in part to the genes a child inherits. Scientists have discovered a number of candidate genes. Although progress has been made, much of the genetic "puzzle" of dyslexia remains to be solved.

Our School is collaborating with leading dyslexia researchers, Drs. Elena Grigorenko at Yale and Dr. Maryanne Wolf at Tufts, and with other schools like Carroll to study genetic and behavioral data on dyslexia. By studying genetic material found in saliva, Dr. Grigorenko hopes to discover the specific genetic contributions to dyslexia. Maryanne Wolf, in turn, will investigate phenotypic patterns (observable characteristics). Merging these two types of data is a groundbreaking approach to dyslexia research, one that may produce breakthrough findings.

The goal of the research is to identify "subtypes" within the dyslexic profile. Based on in-depth, scientific understanding of these learners, schools like Carroll could connect a student's profile with educational practices designed specifically for his/her dyslexia subtype. This could change the teaching and learning landscape for children with dyslexia.

If any Carroll student, parent, grandparent, or other family member with dyslexia would like to participate in this research study, please contact Beth Cadogan, Director of Assessment, at (781) 259-8342 ext. 3019 or by e-mail at bcadogan@carrollschool.org.

Celebrating Martin Luther King, Jr. Day



Considering History

Carroll students recently participated in activities to learn more about the leadership and legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. Eighth Grade students partnered with younger students as they read stories about the principles of inclusion and equity, helped Fifth Grade students to design peace flags, and discussed ways to help the victims of the earthquake in Haiti. Sixth graders learned about the Civil Rights movement and saw the video of the "I Have A Dream" speech. Seventh graders were divided into "Brown Eyes" or "Blue Eyes" groups and experienced the challenges of an environment where everyone is not treated equally. Fourth graders read Doreen Rappaport's, *Martin's Big Words*, and discussed civil rights. Every meaningful activity expanded our students' understanding of Martin Luther King Jr.'s lasting legacy.



Would you like to spend a day in Rockland, Maine hauling lobster traps with a 3rd generation Maine lobsterman and savor your own fresh catch in a Down-East restaurant?

Then you should attend Carroll's 2010 Auction that will be held on April 10th at the Weston Golf Club to capture this opportunity. Other incredible "catches" are tickets to attend shows including Saturday Night Live, David Letterman, and Regis and Kelly. Or perhaps "beer for a year from Sam Adams", a Nantucket getaway, or tickets to professional sporting events would be your top choices.

And while you bid on these unique experiences, you are supporting Carroll in critical ways. Funds from this bi-annual event directly impact school-wide programs that benefit every student and provide Carroll with the financial flexibility to continue our innovative educational programs, research partnerships, teacher training, and outreach.

Auction Co-Chairs, Robin Cassell and Lynn Waller, have also introduced a new online bidding auction on Bidding for Good that will give everyone the opportunity to support Carroll. To learn more about Auction 2010, online bidding, and the stellar evening event on April 10th, go to our website www.carrollschool.org and select Auction 2010 Update.



KIDS @ CARROLL Students' Voices

Eighth graders in a Language Focus Area class are developing their skills in written expression. Each student was instructed to begin a short story with the same opening line. Their creative responses are testament to our students' strengths!

Crash

Jane woke up and had no idea where she was. Fluorescent lights flickered from the ceiling. Jane moaned as she tried to move. Every part of her body was in agonizingly sharp pain. She looked around the clean white room and felt the sting of an IV in her arm. The only colors in the room came from the flowers and cards with appealing fonts saying, "Get Well Soon."

What happened? She thought...

She was riding in the car with her mother. An S.U.V. smashed into them. The car tumbled across the highway until it settled off the road, landing upside down.

The car was still; Jane was unable to move.

Everything seemed blurry.

Then, she felt the pain. She started screaming, but it only took a minute for panic to choke her screams.

And that's all Jane could remember. *-Natalie*

Arising

Jenny woke up and had no idea where she was. She looked for something familiar, but to her horror, she found nothing. Standing, she discovered that the simple green T-shirt and jeans she last recalled wearing were replaced with a white, cotton, knee-length dress. She was barefoot in an empty white room, with no doors or windows and a ceiling made of a wire screen. Glancing occasionally at the ceiling, she began processing what might have happened. Then, she remembered. She and a group of friends discovered a large hole in the meadow floor. An alluring purple mist covered the entrance, and Jenny peered more closely...

Her vague memory was interrupted by a looming shadow above her head. Looking up, she saw an S.U.V.-sized manicured hand covered in a transparent latex glove, delicately coming towards her and lifting her off the ground.

- Anna

Always Pay Your Bets

Ronnie woke up and had no idea where he was. He kicked and screamed but could not be heard over the roaring plane engine. His head throbbed. His whole body ached. Thoughts ran through his mind. Did his friends jokingly take him from his bed and trap him in this box? This seemed more serious. He searched for a tool to escape. In his pocket, he felt a folded piece of paper. He unfolded it and positioned it toward a narrow beam of light from a crack. He immediately recognized the messy handwriting as Frankie's from the bar. Frank was a powerful man who was known for taking bets too far. Saturday night, Ronnie had a notion that the Cowboys would defeat the Patriots. He had no idea how it would temporarily disrupt his life until he began reading:

"Hope you've learned your lesson by the time you arrive in Texas. Good luck making your way back to Boston."

- Ben

Wrong Side of the House

Seth woke up and had no idea where he was. It was difficult for his eyes to adjust to the dim lighting. Soon he could distinguish the objects surrounding him. He saw tools on a wooden bench, and bikes in the corner. He concluded that he was in a workroom or a garage. He was stretched out on brown splintery steps that led up to a faded gray door. He began to recognize more of his environment. One of the bikes he knew was his, and he identified some picture books in the corner from his childhood. Illuminating light suddenly overflowed the room as the pale door flung open.

"Here he is!" The small echoing voice belonged to his worried sister. Soon, his whole family was surrounding him with questioning eyes.

"You should really try to stop sleepwalking," his mother laughed. "You're on the wrong side of the house!"

- Nina

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Learn More About
Summer@Carroll and the Technology,
Engineering, and Design Summer Programs
at www.carrollschool.org

Technology, Engineering, and Design Summer Camp

DATES: JUNE 29 - JULY 30
(no program JULY 5)

In addition to our 5-week academic Summer@Carroll program designed for children who are entering grades 1-9, Carroll is offering a new summer camp program called TED. Carroll's Technology, Engineering, and Design program is also an enrichment program designed for students with language-based learning disabilities who are entering grades 4-7.

This exciting new summer program allows campers to learn through fun, hands-on, collaborative technology and engineering projects. The curriculum is designed to inspire campers to create and innovate, and provides a balance between direct instruction and discovery learning. TED will give campers the opportunity to develop important social skills through group work. Additionally, there will be weekly opportunities to join Summer@Carroll campers for field trips such as canoeing, swimming at Walden Pond, or blueberry picking.

To learn more about Carroll's summer programs, go to our website and select Summer@Carroll.



TED Camp

CARROLL QUOTES

"I wish more dyslexic kids could go to Carroll."

5th Grade Student

"My wish for Carroll is for kids to give something to the teachers because they give a lot to us." *5th Grade Student*

"A day doesn't go by when we aren't thankful for the school. Three years later our daughter still compares everything to her experience at Carroll. Teachers constantly comment on her work ethic and advocacy skills." *Parent of alumna*

"The Carroll School is opening the world for my grandson and all the other Carroll students." *Grandparent*