

1-1-2007

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Recommended Citation

Thomas, K. F. (2007). Reading Advocacy: What Matters in Students', Parents', and Teachers' Lives. *Reading Horizons: A Journal of Literacy and Language Arts*, 47 (3). Retrieved from https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/reading_horizons/vol47/iss3/3

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Reading Advocacy: What Matters in Students', Parents', and Teachers' Lives

**Karen F. Thomas
Editor**

In December of 2006 and again in February of 2007, fifty Literacy Professors representing almost every college and university in Michigan met in a collegial forum to discuss and advocate for all students involved in reading instruction/education. This advocacy spans students from pre-kindergarten through college undergraduates and graduates. The many and varied issues and voices in the reading mix have become overwhelming for both the public at large and educators involved in reading instruction.

In an attempt to reach out to the families of Michigan whose lives are directly affected by all literacy instruction, the *Michigan Alliance of Reading Professors* (MARP) pledges to help make sense of the varied and numerous voices in the reading arena in a positive advocacy role. We support the following:

As the *Michigan Alliance of Reading Professors*, we dedicate ourselves to supporting and improving the lives of Michigan's families through effective literacy instruction.

OUR MISSION:

- To ensure that every student in Michigan receives reading instruction that is based on rigorous research;

- To promote teacher expertise and professional decision making in literacy assessment and instruction;
- To communicate with families, educators, policy-makers, and others about literacy issues;
- To advocate for the rights of literacy professionals to identify and implement effective reading instruction, assessment, and research; and
- To collaborate with other professional organizations who share our goals.

With an eye to the reading and literacy instruction for the 21st century, *MARP* looks forward to the challenges posited in our mission statement. Reading instruction that matters and keeps curiosity alive can only take place in the classrooms of knowledgeable, prepared teachers who plan based on the needs of each learner. This teacher/student relationship is crucial to effective reading instruction and *MARP*'s role is critical in forging these positive relationships.

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