



## A Message from the Editorial Team

This year, the focus of *RiaN* is on bridging the often-isolating gap between education researchers and practitioners. *RiaN*'s new direction focuses on our own Faculty of Education with the hope that you will be inspired to engage with the research as well as the researchers. In this issue of *RiaN*, we spotlight the research of our graduate students: Wei Yan, Pamela McDonald, Sawyer Hogenkamp, and Terry Soleas.

Sincerely, Clarissa de Leon, Stephen MacGregor, and Andrew Coombs (RiaN@queensu.ca)

### How does language proficiency contribute to international students' academic success?

Wei Yan, PhD Student

### What can teachers do to support children with severe difficulties in arithmetic?

Pamela McDonald, PhD Student

#### Why is this important?

- More than 8,000 international students enrolled in Ontario high schools in September 2015
- English proficiency is usually indicated through scores on standardized tests such as International English Language Testing System (IELTS), and Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), or school administered in-house tests
- It is essential that international students have a sufficient level of English proficiency since lectures, assignments, and communications are all conducted in English

#### What did the article uncover?

- Language proficiency contributes to international students' academic success
- Prior achievement is as important (if not more) as language proficiency and psychological factors such as academic self-efficacy in contributing to their academic success

#### Why does this matter?

- Language proficiency is not the single important thing to international students' academic success
- Teachers need to take other factors into consideration to help international students achieve their intended academic success

#### Why is this important?

- Difficulties developing numeracy skills early in childhood, particularly for those with mathematical learning disabilities (MLD), increases the risk of mental illness, incarceration, and unemployment
- While evidence suggests that working memory and executive functioning play some role in MLD, the nature of this role remains unclear
- Whether impairments in these domains are better understood as a developmental lag or cognitive deficit has relevant implications for intervention and instruction

#### What did the article uncover?

- Findings suggest that children with severe difficulties in arithmetic (SDA), a subset of MLDs, experience a developmental lag in executive functioning and working memory

#### Why does this matter?

- Students with SDA may benefit from instructional strategies that minimize the mental resources required by working memory and executive functioning systems
- Further the incorporation of mental training programs in the classroom may be beneficial for these students

Yan, W., & Cheng, L. (2015). How language proficiency contributes to Chinese students' academic success in Korean universities. *Language Testing in Asia*, 5(8).

McDonald, P. A., & Berg, D. H. (2017). Identifying the nature of impairments in executive functioning and working memory of children with severe difficulties in arithmetic. *Child Neuropsychology*.

## What are school bus drivers' perceptions of bullying?

Sawyer Hogenkamp, M.Ed. Student

## How well do teacher education programs prepare you for inclusive teaching practice?

Eleftherios Soleas, PhD Student

### Why is this important?

- Bullying is a cause for serious concern, particularly on school buses
- School bus drivers have valuable insights into how to best address bullying in this unique context

### What did these articles uncover?

- Lack of supervision is a significant risk factor contributing to bullying, especially when bus drivers are the lone supervisor
- Bus drivers tend to perceive bullying as acts of physical aggression, as opposed to acts of aggression repeated over time where there is a power imbalance
- Bus drivers rely on appropriate training in order to address bullying effectively

### Why does this matter?

- School bus driver's unique perceptions of bullying can better inform stakeholders on how to stop and prevent bullying on school buses

### Why is this important?

- Teacher candidates (TCs) have specific needs for inclusive teaching
- Often, discovering their needs takes the painful experience of discovering that they do not know something that they wish they did

### What did the article uncover?

- This article discovered what was missing for TCs as they were leaving teacher education.
- TCs did not know as many practical strategies as they had hoped and they saw a separation between the teaching they received and the classes they experienced

### Why does this matter?

- The time for teachers to learn how to be inclusive is during teacher education, not after
- This paper points to specific needs that TCs have and offers solution for them and the teacher education programs that could fulfill these needs going forward

Evans, N. (2014). *Exploring the school bus as an environment for bullying: A phenomenological study* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA.

Crable, T. E. (2016). *The lived experience of school bus drivers: Bullying prevention on school buses* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Walden University, Minneapolis, MN.

Raskauskas, J. (2005). Bullying on the school bus: A video analysis. *Journal of School Violence*, 4(3), 93-107.

Soleas, E. K. (2016). New teacher perceptions of inclusive practices: An examination of contemporary teacher education programs. *Alberta Journal of Educational Research*, 61(3), 294-313.

## Contributing Researchers



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