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## Message from the President

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# Message from the President

by Mary Howell



## *A Sunny Disposition*

A positive attitude can be found nearly anywhere. Just Google positive attitude and you will find well over 40 million articles, quotes, and ads for positive attitudes. It seems as though everyone is searching for a positive attitude and a quick way to create it. Sometimes it feels like a cliché. Especially in light of some environmental causes that may erode or damage a positive attitude.

One such erosion happens during the winter. The lack of sun, the cold air, the staying inside rather than going outside for recreation, can all have a negative effect on our attitude. It has been suggested by doctors – and some of the 40 million articles, quotes and ads – to get outside every day during the winter. Other people can influence your attitude. When I am around a positive attitude person, I find life to be joyous and positive. So the recommendation would be to surround yourself with positive people.

Sometimes mandates and legislation can erode our positive spin on work life. We have had some legislation lately that seem to erode our professionalism. Currently there is a bill to retain all children who do not pass the 3rd grade state assessment. This is in opposition to the research on retention, which indicates retention has negative effects on students. Write to your senators and representatives if you have a desire to impart positive influences in the state legislation.

I have a great solution for gaining a sunny disposition on life – join Michigan Reading Association. MRA is filled with positive people. Members work to improve their professional knowledge through journals, newsletters, and conferences. Come to the annual conference and be revitalized in your literacy endeavors. Join the thousands of state literacy leaders who want to make literacy a positive experience for everyone, from adults through preschoolers. Walk through the exhibit hall and meet some sunny vendors interested in helping you attain your literacy goals. Listen to the keynote speakers as they share their positive literacy journeys.

Be inspired. Join MRA and be a part of a sunny disposition!

Mary S. Howell, Ph.D.

*Mary Howell is a curriculum coordinator at Genesee Intermediate School District. Dr. Howell teaches Reading Recovery to veteran and new teachers and works with first grade struggling readers and writers and adolescent struggling readers. She will also put into action Multi-Tiered Systems of Support for the county. Previously, Mary worked with elementary and middle school students before becoming an early childhood curriculum coordinator. She holds a doctorate in reading education from Oakland University and currently teaches part-time at The University of Michigan-Flint.*