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## MRA Highlights

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# **MRA HIGHLIGHTS**

by Clarice Stafford, President



The MRA Board of Directors has provided leadership and coordinated a number of activities to promote the goals of the organization. Some highlights of this 1975-1976 MRA year follow.

## **Leadership Workshop July 1975**

During July a leadership workshop was held in Grand Rapids for officers of local councils. Twenty-six officers representing fifteen councils, attended "Operation Update."

The workshop participants prepared a calendar of activities for the year, explored ideas and resources for programs, formulated alternative plans for increasing membership and shared successful activities.

A leadership workshop has been planned for the 1976 MRA Conference In Grand Rapids. Mrs. Glenowyn Jones, Language Arts Consultant for the Gene-

see Intermediate Schools, and newly elected State IRA Organization Coordinator, will serve as chairperson.

## **Michigan Reading Assessment Conference - Phase II August 1975**

The Michigan Reading Association continued their study of the Michigan Education Assessment Program Tests in Reading. The Phase I study completed in April 1975 included an analysis of tested objectives, items, booklets and procedures. The study was coordinated by the Professional Studies and Standards Committee.

The Phase II study focused on recommendations based on the data collected during Phase I. A conference was held at St. Mary's Lake in August to initiate the work for this task.

Recommendations are organized around five issues: dimensions of reading, evaluation of State of Michigan Minimal Communications Objectives - Reading, evaluation of test construction, use of test results and professional program and instructional development.

The Michigan Reading Association has prepared a report of this major study. The report will be distributed to the membership in the near future.

## **Common Goals of Michigan Education January 1976**

The Professional Studies and Standards Committee coordinated a review and proposed revisions of The Common Goals of Michigan Education. The proposed revisions focused on the need for a right to read for students in general education.

### **Local Council Assembly September 1975**

The Local Council Assembly has provided "grass roots" guidance from local councils. At their initial meeting, held on April 15, 1975 at the MRA Conference in Grand Rapids, the Assembly generated, clarified and prioritized goals for the Michigan Reading Association.

On September 20, 1975, the Local Council Assembly exercised its advisory function by reviewing the MRA Board of Directors' committee reports. In addition, Assembly members provided specific recommendations and/or activities for implementing goals.

### **Professional Services to Membership 1975-76**

The Board of Directors approved a \$500 grant to four local councils in the Thumb area for a regional workshop.

An ad hoc LEAP Committee, Local Educators Assistance Program was created. The committee has developed a three pronged plan: publications emphasizing "how to do it," "instant help" whereby members can petition for consultation and encouraging and sponsoring regional conferences.

The Public Relations Committee published the first issue of News, A Newsletter of the Michigan Reading Association. The first issue included a President's Message, Board Briefs, recognition of an outstanding teacher, and an idea exchange column.

### **Legislative Action 1975-1976**

The Legislative Committee provided the organization with action oriented leadership. Upon its recommendation, the Board of Directors secured the services of Ms. Elizabeth Kummer as a legislative advocate. She has provided the organization with timely information about legislation affecting reading instruction.

A second major activity of the Legislative Committee was requesting the membership to contact legislators on behalf of reading support services. The response of the membership to this request was a significant factor in restoring financial support for this program.

### **Policies and Procedures Handbook 1975-1976**

A Policies and Procedures Handbook is being prepared and will be presented to the Board of Directors for approval at their March meeting in Grand Rapids. Included in the handbook will be qualifications, a job description and recommended procedures for elected positions; as well as composition and major responsibilities of appointed committees.

### **Annual Conference March 1976**

The MRA Annual Conference provides members an outstanding professional resource. The theme this year is: "Reading, a Foundation of Freedom."