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THE ROAD AHEAD

Dorothy J. McGinnis, President
Michigan Reading Association

As President of the Michigan Reading Association I wish to welcome you to the responsibilities and satisfactions of a new school year. As a professional organization we are confronted and at times frustrated by problems, old and new, which are apparent in the educational world. These problems can only be solved by group study, research and cooperative thinking. We must react toward these issues in terms of the total situation, not emotionally and not with pre-conceived ideas. The Michigan Reading Association has thrived, grown and expanded on conflicting issues and frustrations. Its past has been successful and, according to the signs on the horizon, its future will be even more so.

Our organization is confronted with some of the real issues of life. What is happening in our world should have meaning for every citizen. The American people are surprised by the social change that is taking place and are frustrated by their unpreparedness to solve the pressing problems before them. In the field of labor, automation demands vocational adaption in an ever-changing environment. Leisure time, which has increased and which will probably continue to increase, threatens our emotional stability and our social adjustment. Information in every discipline is expanding so rapidly that it cannot be integrated into our cultural pattern. If these great issues are to be met, effective reading must become a way of life for our people. It is to this end that the members of the Michigan Reading Association should be dedicated.

The Michigan Reading Association has some immediate goals which are to be achieved. At the present time we are making plans for our 12th annual conference to be held in Grand Rapids on March 10, 11, and 12. Leaders in the state have rallied to this undertaking and an excellent program, under the direction of Norma Conklin, President-Elect, is being prepared. As members of the Michigan Reading Association we must rise to the support of the Michigan

Reading Journal which is being published by Charles F. Sherwood and his Editorial Advisory Board. As professional leaders in the field we are confronted with problems dealing with the certification of reading consultants, reading clinicians, reading therapists and teachers of reading. Standards must be developed for these areas of specialization. Excellent progress in this direction is being accomplished by our Professional Standards Committee under the leadership of Beverly Chamberlain. Educators are asking the Michigan Reading Association to make recommendations concerning approaches, methods and techniques for the teaching of reading. Research has not provided definite answers, and a lack of substantial evidence places a tremendous responsibility upon our leadership.

We cannot solve all the problems apparent in our state and nation. We can, however, react to the situation as a whole and step by step reach out to our ultimate goal. The Michigan Reading Association through its personnel, membership and organization has put its hands to the plow and must not turn back.