

This is a message Russ Whitehurst sent to David Boulton (early 2004) as a warning about what one of his superiors thought about the Children of the Code Project.

David,

For whatever it is worth, I'm forwarding to you an email I received earlier today from someone I respect and work for* who clearly isn't enamored of your project. I will share with my correspondent a disappointment with your project if it turns into a reworking of the reading wars. The field is beyond that.

Russ Whitehurst, Assistant Secretary of Education with the U.S. Department of Education
Director of the Institute of Education Sciences

*Note: his only two bosses were **Rod Paige** and **George W. Bush**

Russ,

Is there anything that can be done to shape the direction of this COTC project attached, so that it doesn't become yet one more missed opportunity? As it stands now, it's going to be a real mish-mosh. Reid Lyon, Chris Doherty, you and some other sensible folks are being interviewed. But they're also interviewing the no-nothings.

Their goal is to find some sort of compromise: "There are many tribes of thought in the world of reading. Some are still at 'war.' In the final analysis, we must all learn together to steward the health of our children's learning. If we can agree to come from that ground, from a concern with the ecology and health of our children's learning, we can engage in a deeper dialogue than the polarizing systems of thought about reading have previously allowed for. If you have something to say, please share your wisdom and passion. Click here to, speak up, share, and contribute to our dialogue and effort. We want to collaborate with you."

To refer to the debate as tribal warfare is insulting, and their presumption that they can "engage in a deeper dialogue" is arrogant and self-serving.

Perhaps you, Reid and/or Chris could suggest they interview Zig Engelmann (he's not on their list of people to be interviewed and Dick Allington is?!), although they may not want to hear what he has to say.

(name removed)

The following is what David sent to Russ in response:

Russ,

Thank you. I have the highest respect for your wisdom, ethics, and integrity and I am very grateful for the opportunity to engage in this conversation. I will meet you below in: **Times New Roman black bold**.

David,

David Boulton's response to Russ Whitehurst (early 2004)

For whatever it is worth, I'm forwarding to you an email I received earlier today from someone I respect and work for (that means a lot to me) who clearly isn't enamored of your project. Thank you very much for doing so. I will share with my correspondent a disappointment with your project if it turns into a reworking of the reading wars. I understand and agree with you. Our work is not in any way a 'reworking of the reading wars'. The field is beyond that. Doesn't that depend on how we define the 'field'? If we include the intuitions of public school teaching, teacher education and professional development, I don't you see how we could say that.

My understanding, based on conversations with you, Dr Lyon at NICHHD, Mr. Wendorf at NCLD and Mr. Doherty at the Department of Education and others is that:

1 - We have a reading crisis:

2 - This crisis is profoundly affecting a large number of our children and significantly draining our economy:

3 - The problem is not in the kids - 85 -95% of those struggling could read if we met them with the right teaching:

4 - We know enough now to significantly reduce the number of children harmed by not learning to read well:

5 - Knowing what we know;(the 'problem' is not 'in' the kids, [\(its in the code and how we reach and teach the kids\)](#) 85-95% of the millions of children that are growing up harmed by not learning to read well are 'casualties' of our collective ignorance and institutional inertia:

6 - We have a social-institutional education challenge:

My understanding is that we are attempting to bridge this gap through a number of strategies including:

7 - Instructional Design and Technology

8 - Improved Assessment

9 - Inspiring Teachers to Question the Process

10 - Institutional Incentives & Punishments

Essentially, in terms of the overcoming the inertia, the central approach of the Department of Education seems to a very significant degree to be top-down control, which I agree under the circumstances is warranted and needed. (10) This approach is of course, rightfully so in many ways, being resisted. This polarization is important to understanding one of the goals of the Children of the Code project:

David: One thing that became really clear from the interview with you, and in a different way with Dr. Whitehurst, is that there's this really clear sense that the research is now clear that there are ways to help 95% of the kids that are hitting the wall. However, we've got this inertia in the teacher and professional education system, with teachers and parents, that's working against, that's not listening

David Boulton's response to Russ Whitehurst (early 2004)

to, that's not open to the evidence and that's hanging on to an insufficiently differentiated sense of what the reading process is. And as a consequence of this and the 'soft bigotry of low expectations' we've got millions of kids in various degrees of trouble unnecessarily.

Dr. Lyon: Yes.

David: And this is very frustrating. So that ultimately this isn't so much of a neuroscience research challenge anymore, although there's much to be learned there still, **this is a social educational challenge.**

Dr. Lyon: Correct.

David: ...One obstacle is that many educators, because they view the federal government's economic control over education as draconian, dismiss the integrity of the underlying policy.

Dr. Lyon: Yeah, I hear you.

David: Right?

Dr. Lyon: Yes. Absolutely.

David: **The Children of the Code is about helping adults get underneath and recontextualize this challenge in a way that breaks through the dichotomies of phonics and whole language and these different polarities by understanding how this code came to be, understand that it is a technological artifact, and also understand how each of these different approaches and tactics we've used to teach this code, how they fit into this larger historical process so that it can help dispel the myths.**

Dr. Lyon: Yeah.

David: My sense is that it's not just that the kids are struggling with learning to read this code, **the adults are incredibly confused about what this code is and how it works. And because they're so fundamentally confused about it, they're prone to buying into beliefs because it's overwhelmingly confusing to them to have any other path to sync up with teaching reading.**

Dr. Lyon: Yeah.

David: So, the Children of the Code as a project, I believe, has good fulcrum efficiency in addressing the core challenge that you've articulated, that is the core challenge of the federal government with respect to helping children learn to read. And that is to close this gap between the assumption set and mind set of teachers and parents and what we've learned about this process by getting underneath and reframing it.

Dr. Lyon: Exactly.

Russ, having outlined my perspective to this point, I will next respond to the particulars in the email from your respected colleague.

Before doing so, one other preface. I understand how someone like your colleague might be concerned that we are 'disturbing the trajectory' that s/he and others have worked so hard to establish. I understand that someone with good intentions, who does not yet understand ours, could be concerned.

David Boulton's response to Russ Whitehurst (early 2004)

Russ,

Is there anything that can be done to shape the direction of this COTC project attached, so that it doesn't become yet one more missed opportunity?

Yes there is, engage with us in a mutually learning oriented dialogue that is intent on bridging the learning gap in the adult population that is working against the lives of so many of our children.

As it stands now, it's going to be a real mish-mosh. Reid Lyon, Chris Doherty, you and some other sensible folks are being interviewed. But they're also interviewing the no-nothings.

I have recently received similar emails from others with similar attitudes but with opposing perspectives:

(Nameless #1) Thanks for your invitation to participate in Children of the Code. I'm interested in doing so, but as I look at the list of current participants, it's clear that so far, although you don't take a position on the scripted, heavy skills-emphasis, mindless beginning reading instruction mandated in NCLB, most of the listed participants who would address the reading instruction NCLB requires are boosters of it (e.g., Whitehurst, Lyon, Tallal, Wendoff, Cunningham. Morrow [though relatively less so]). There is no one on the list you sent who is a critic of it, who challenges the so-called research evidence mustered to support it. Consequently, unless you have plans to include other critics, I would be the only one, which would mean that solely in terms of air time -- assuming we would each get approximately equal time -- a critical view of the NCLB reading instruction would receive a decidedly minor proportion of it; a pro-NCLB view would dominate.

That arrangement is not one I'd want to contribute to. If I were to be the only critic, I would like to have an amount of time to present my views that would be equal to the combined time of the boosters. Or, if you are interested in including a number of critics equal to NCLB boosters and giving equal time to both sides, I'd be willing to participate. Otherwise, I'm sorry to say, I wouldn't be willing to participate within a stacked deck. Thanks again for the invitation. (name removed)

Our response: I understand your position but I can't direct the series around such conditions. I can tell you Dr. Dick Allington is on our list to be interviewed.

I think we need to fundamentally reframe our relationship with the code. I see phonics as a superficial patch to an underlying code problem. I generally agree with the notion that natural learning is meaning centric AND yet I don't believe, given the mess in the code and the radically unnatural challenge to our brains to process it, that we can avoid systematic instruction. I think we are all avoiding dealing with the code itself.

As we can't meet your conditions, if you won't participate perhaps you can help me find some other people who might be interested. If we were to divide the teacher population into those who agree with and follow the policies in DC and those who oppose them, among the opposers who would be the top 10 most recognized names known for leading the 'opposition' (11)?

We will not be anyone's propaganda machine..

David Boulton's response to Russ Whitehurst (early 2004)

(Nameless #2) ...The second problem is that you seem to be heavy on one point of view about reading. I'd probably put up something Reid Lyon or Chris Doherty or Sandra Feldman says as "atrocities," adding brief critical commentary. From my point of view, these people are definitely part of the problem. I would point out heavy involvement with commercial programs, for example. Reading scientist, indeed. That's definitely a term I would mock.

Our response:

Having spoken personally and at length with Reid Lyon, Chris Doherty and Sandra Feldman (and everyone else listed as interviewees), I can tell you that they are all passionate and they all believe they are serving the children. I disagree with things they say but I do respect that their underlying intentions are good. Good people can have differences and disagree. I think the quick fire summary rejections and attacks on one another are a great disservice to the children. We need to learn together to get out of this box rather than defend our corners within it.

Russ, your colleague's POV is different but his or her characterization, 'no-nothings', is a mirror image of the kind of learning-antithetical postures in the emails above. It's precisely this kind of attitude that is feeding the perpetuation of the inertia.

Unless the intention is to turn the tide by control only,(10) we must engage with and learn from the people who hold different views. Recall, I did ask you to suggest some names of people I should interview to get 'opposing' views (11). I made a similar request of Dr. Lyon. What good is it to make this series only to have it boycotted by teachers and organizations around the country because it's perceived as so heavily 'cartel' biased. More importantly, to communicate with the people we want to reach, they need to feel as if their POVs are heard and acknowledged before we can travel beneath the POVs and develop any kind of shared understanding.

Their goal is to find some sort of compromise: "There are many tribes of thought in the world of reading. Some are still at 'war.' In the final analysis, we must all learn together to steward the health of our children's learning. If we can agree to come from that ground, from a concern with the ecology and health of our children's learning, we can engage in a deeper dialogue than the polarizing systems of thought about reading have previously allowed for. If you have something to say, please share your wisdom and passion. [Click here to, speak up, share, and contribute to our dialogue and effort. We want to collaborate with you.](#)"

No our goal isn't a compromise; it's a learning journey.

I regret the use of the term 'war' and have removed that sentence from the article and apologize to any and all that it offended. Having said that, my evidence, from emails like the ones above and from many other sources, is that a serious 'conflict' remains raging in this space. Our children are paying the price for our collective lack of learning here.

[To refer to the debate as tribal warfare is insulting, and their presumption that they can "engage in a deeper dialogue" is arrogant and self-serving.](#)

David Boulton's response to Russ Whitehurst (early 2004)

I can understand, if taken personally or as a statement made to the elite community of experts in the field, how your colleague might say the above in reference to the excerpt. However, our intention with this article was to speak to teachers, parents and the public in general. In that light, there *are* 'tribes of thought' that are currently in conflict and that must learn to work together on behalf of the health of our children's learning.

Perhaps you, Reid and/or Chris could suggest they interview Zig Engelmann (he's not on their list of people to be interviewed and Dick Allington is?!), although they may not want to hear what he has to say. (name removed)

We have added Zig Engelmann's name to our prospective interviewee list. We will get in contact with him and attempt to arrange an interview. We definitely want to hear what he has to say. We want to hear every unique POV we can find.

Russ, you and I connected. I think you know where I am coming from. We are both working in the service of our children's learning. A science of learning in dialogue with a science of education is essential to our children, our country, and ultimately to the world. I respect you and what you are doing. I want to help. I believe the Children of the Code will help. I welcome the dialogue and appreciate the opportunity.

Lets keep learning together.

Thank you,

David

Note: I am sharing this with my small nucleus of learner-partners. I received an email this morning from Dr. Lyon indicating that you had forwarded your email to me to him so I have copied him on my response. I would like your permission to share this exchange with Mr. Wendorf and Mr. Doherty such that they are reassured of my intentions and able to respond to any messages similar to your colleague's that are directed to them. More generally, I would also like to place this document on our website. If you don't want this circulated let me know within a week or so. I will abide by your decision.

1 - We have a reading crisis:

"We have a genuine national crisis. More and more, we are divided into two nations. One that reads, and one that doesn't. One that dreams, and one that doesn't".

- **George W. Bush, President**

"...I think it's simply intolerable that so many children have not got it by fourth grade and all of the negative consequences that flow from that really are a national crisis, something that has to be addressed by the federal government." - **Dr. Whitehurst, IES**

David Boulton's response to Russ Whitehurst (early 2004)

"... If you look at where we are today the bottom line is for a country like America to be leaving behind about 38-40% of its youngsters in terms of not learning to read is unconscionable. What makes it equally or doubly unconscionable is if you disaggregate those data, 70% approximately of young African Americans kids can't read. 70%! If you look at Hispanic kids, 65-70%!."

- **Dr. Lyon, NICHD**

"There's a reading crisis in the United States, it's undeniable. 39%, almost 40% of fourth graders do not read even at the basic level and as we know, a majority of students do not read at the proficient level" - **Mr. Wendorf, NCLD (return to top)**

2 - This crisis is profoundly affecting a large number of our children and significantly draining our economy:

David: Most of our children, to some degree, are having their lives all but fated by how well they learn to read.

Dr. Lyon: Absolutely.

David: What we're getting as we start to explore the facets of this is that it seems as if our children's futures are all but fated, not fated, but all but fated by how well they learn to read.

Dr. Whitehurst: Yes, that's true.

"Well, it's billions. Billions lost. I think the main thing to emphasize for anyone who has worked with a child or with an adult who has a reading problem, either is low literate or is just struggling with reading, is that it is very apparent that the lost human potential, the lost self-esteem...that is the most poignant. And, in the end, it's the most significant because the loss in self-esteem is what leads to a whole host of social pathologies that are very difficult to look in the face. The crime problem, substance abuse, school drop out, any of those things - very difficult to face. And there is a line to be drawn between low literacy skills and those social pathologies." - **Mr. Wendorf, NCLD**

David: So just in terms of magnitudes of order, not even counting the lost opportunity cost dimensions of adults who are not reading well, we're talking about hundreds of billions of dollars.

Dr. Whitehurst: Yes, absolutely. No question that the price tag is hundreds of billions of dollars; both to support the normal acquisition of reading and certainly to deal with the consequences of reading failure. **(return to top)**

3 - The problem is not in the kids - 85 -95% of those struggling could read if we met them with the right teaching:

"When we do things right, based upon evidence, not philosophy, not belief, not untested assumptions, but on what continues to grind out of the scientific mill, we reduce that shame, that 70% of many kids who can not learn to read to about 2-6%". - **Dr. Lyon, NICHD**

David Boulton's response to Russ Whitehurst (early 2004)

"And there is good research to show that up to 95% or so of reading problems, reading difficulties can be effectively addressed if that instruction is there and delivered in the right way."

- **Mr. Wendorf, NCLD (return to top)**

4 - We know enough now to significantly reduce the number of children harmed by not learning to read well:

"I believe we know enough now to do a dramatically better job in educating our children in reading and related skills and abilities. There are engineering tasks at hand that have to be attended to, and if we attend to those tasks the overall level of reading performance is going to soar" - **Dr. Whitehurst, IES**

"We know what we can do to help those youngsters. We know how to get to them early and we know how to identify these kids at risk, at 4 or 5 years of age. We know how to bring to bare good evidence based programs that if applied and implemented well move those kids all the way from the 10th percentile right up to the average range, to be concrete. We can reduce in many of our research sites in real classrooms in real schools with real kids at risk where 98% are free and reduced lunch, 80% are a minority. That 70% of kids leaving the first grade as failing readers reduces to 2-6% when we do it right." - **Dr. Lyon, NICHD(return to top)**

5 - Knowing what we know;(the 'problem' is not 'in' the kids, [\(it's in the code and how we reach and teach the kids\)](#), 85-95% of the millions of children that are growing up harmed by not learning to read well are 'casualties' of our collective ignorance and institutional inertia:

"That means we are producing failure where it doesn't have to be. ... When we look at the kids that are having a tough time learning to read and we went through the statistics, 38% nationally, disaggregate that, 70% kids from poverty and so forth hit the wall. 95% of those kids are instructional casualties. About 5-6% of those kids have what we call dyslexia or learning disabilities in reading. 95% of the kids hitting the wall in learning to read are what we call NBT : Never Been Taught. -**Dr. Lyon, NICHD**

"And the real problem, the tragedy is that even now we see that school districts are not fully embracing the most effective methods of teaching reading to children. They are not doing it. And the need more help, they need more guidance in making better decisions about the instructional materials they use and also the kind of professional development that teachers need in order to be effective. Because teachers do want to be successful. They do want to help kids, but they're not being given the chance." - **Mr. Wendorf, NCLD**

David Boulton's response to Russ Whitehurst (early 2004)

"Reading failure for nearly every child is not the child's failure, it's the failure of policy makers, the failure of schools, the failure of teachers, the failure of parents. We need to reconceptualize what it means to learn to read and who's responsible for its success if we're going to deal with the problem."- **Dr. Whitehurst, IES (return to top)**

6 - We have a social-institutional education challenge:

"I work for a president now, never thought I would be in a position to do that or have the honor to be able to serve a president. He knows all of this information. I don't mean to make this political; I mean this is an individual who is married to a former teacher where a common passion is children's development and learning. And his passion, very specifically is reading. It was when he was governor, that's how he brought the NIH into Texas and so forth, and it clearly is now. His statement that 'If we do not do well it demonstrates the soft bigotry of low expectations' comes out of the fact that he sees all of the data showing all of those kids at massive risk from disadvantaged homes when taught well doing as well as everybody else. If you can do it there, why aren't we doing it here? And if we're not doing it here it's because we have given in to the soft bigotry of low expectations which has in fact concretized itself in developing professional knowledge in teachers that is limited and not evidence based, and not implementing what we know and not providing the robust leadership in schools to make sure teachers have the information and that its implemented well.

"What I'm saying is that time after time our president, much of our leadership downtown, the secretary of education, the secretary of health and human services, all know these data. They all have taken very close looks at the fact that we have a national shame in terms of teaching our kids to read. They all know it doesn't have to be that way." - **Dr. Lyon, NICHD**

"But for somewhere in the neighborhood of 85-90% of children in America, this is not a figure grounded in specific statistical studies - it is a guesstimate on my part, for the vast majority of children who are reading less well than they could, the problem facing us is to take the knowledge we currently have and see that it is engineered into teaching materials, curriculum, teacher training, and professional development in such a way that we can benefit from all that knowledge in terms of what we actually deliver on the ground in classrooms to kids." - **Dr. Whitehurst, IES**

"The toughest challenge we have is in moving the science to the development of teachers and their preparation, such that what they learn is actually objective, is based upon converging evidence rather than philosophies, belief systems, *appeals to authority*. Getting the information to teachers already with kids who have been, in a sense, propagandized into these very broad and general and non-evidentiary kinds of approaches that they use in teaching reading." - **Dr. Lyon, NICHD**

"And the real problem, the tragedy is that even now we see that school districts are not fully embracing the most effective methods of teaching reading to children. They are not doing it. And the need more help, they need more guidance in making better decisions about the instructional materials they use and also the kind of professional development that teachers need in order to be effective. Because teachers do want to be successful. They do want to help kids, but they're not being given the chance. We need to raise public awareness and we need to change the way that decisions are made in schools." - **Mr. Wendorf, NCLD (return to top)**

7 - Instructional Design and Technology:

Dr. Whitehurst: If we shift back to the classroom, the model of the gifted and well trained teacher who can individualize instruction for every child, including reading instruction, may be unrealistic. It's arguable, and certainly in my position, that well designed instructional materials, by well designed I mean taking into account what we know about the code and how difficult it is, how to make it simpler and more transparent in particular stages in learning to read, well designed instructional materials, teachers who know how to support children as they are exposed to those instructional materials and periodic assessments so we know when children are falling behind. Standard packages of materials as preventive strategies may be sufficient to move us substantially ahead in terms of solving this problem. It will not get us the whole way, but it's going to get us, I think, a long way there. One of the principle problems here is instructional confusion. If we can reduce that confusion we're going to generate more successes in learning to read.

David: From your vantage of trying to find the fulcrum to lift the population and needing to do it through statistically probable approaches, there's no question we have to do that. **(return to point)**

Dr. Whitehurst: Yes.

David: Putting that aside, clearly, compared to being in sync with the flow of confusion the child is actually experiencing and meeting them in that confusion so as to help them through it, everything else is a statistical approximation.

Dr. Whitehurst: That would be the ideal pedagogical approach, instruction materials finely tuned to an individual child and that child's progress through the task to be solved. My own view is that software is eventually going to get us there for reading. And other areas of instruction where at least for some children you need the acutely fine tuned personalized instruction that you're talking about and it will be possible to design software approaches that can deal with spoken language and that can do some on-line, very rapid diagnosis of where the child's failure is and that can serve up instructional materials that are related to what that child is confused about.

David: Once we break through to voice recognition of the child's untrained voice and assuming the child has enough time of access to a computer during the developmental stages of reading... It will be a long time before the world learns to read on anything but paper.

Dr. Whitehurst: I think that's true. And so I didn't give you a time table. But I'm suggesting that in terms of a practical solution in providing a much more individualized instructional package for children faced with the realities of the teacher workforce, class size, the competing demands of the classroom, that the practical route to getting to what you suggested as the ideal outcome is a route that I think is going to have to be paved in part by software and technology. It's not that teachers can't do it or that parents can't do it, but practically, training teachers and parents to do that, having them have the time to do it with individual children is a high hurdle. **(return to point)**

David Boulton's response to Russ Whitehurst (early 2004)

8 - Improved Assessment:

Mr. Doherty: Too often, and it's going to sound overstated but it really isn't, that little kids would come in at the first day of kindergarten and they'd be sat down as a group, and that's okay, it's the first day of kindergarten and we're going to start now and they just get this kind of "instruction" where they didn't know anything about what that five year old knew or could do, they made huge assumptions that were almost always detrimental to the kid that assumed okay, you're five so implicitly we're assuming that you must know some stuff.

Well, what happens when they don't know near 100% of that stuff? What if they know 20% of that stuff? The kid is behind on day one and he keeps getting behind and he gets further and further behind, and there's no attempt to figure out what exactly he doesn't know and how, once you do find out what he knows, how to accelerate that kid. If you didn't know what you were supposed to know on day one you're already behind and two years into it you need to gain four years growth in two years to get back to zero. And none of these programs, I shouldn't say that, but by and large, the approach was not systematically to find out where children were, to teach them at that level, and to get them where they need to go. It just didn't happen.

David: To actually have a more granular assessment instrument that has a correlation to a menu of approved evidence based practices that can be focused specifically on the sub-par development of the various components that are required for reading on a per child basis.

Mr. Doherty: That's exactly right. Boy, that's beautifully stated and it's exactly right. **(return to point)**

9 - Inspiring Teachers to Question the Process

"If I had my druthers, instructional methods wouldn't be the big deal out there. What would be the big deal is if teachers could ask themselves what does it take to learn to read?" -**Dr. Lyon, NICHD**

David: We need to some how take what we've learned, what we can see in our experiments and our research and get that across in a way that actually shifts the way we think about this as a nation, as a country, as a people.

Dr. Lyon: Absolutely. And you know it's tougher than we ever thought, than I ever thought. And we're in fact trying to study the factors that maintain these kinds of dichotomous thinking, where people polarize phonics/whole language, qualitative versus quantitative research. Where people with little kids will grasp onto social-emotional development versus cognitive development, which is a fascinating dichotomy for this reason. When I talk to the president about reading he is fascinated himself about why is it that we have a great deal of information that isn't traveling, particularly when human life is at stake. He views education as not just education, but as public health. And it indeed is.

David: And national security.

Dr. Lyon: Absolutely. One question is why do people dichotomize phonics and whole language? Why do they look at qualitative versus quantitative methodologies? Why do they look at cognitive versus social

David Boulton's response to Russ Whitehurst (early 2004)

and emotional development? The common theme is a lack of knowledge. What pervades those dichotomies is a lack of understanding that goes directly to how we prepare educators in education. There is no reason why that kind of concrete thinking should exist but it does. **(return to point)**

10 - Institutional Incentives & Punishments

David: Okay, with that all as a background we start to move into, what is it that's animating the No Child Left Behind - Reading First initiative? What my sense is, and again this is just to give you a place to take off from, is that we realize that the ideal situation would be to bring teachers and administrators and the whole school-parent community into a deeper understanding of this and bring about some alignment in behavior based on the depth of that understanding. But in the absence of that, as restricted and inhibited by all of the different philosophies and belief mechanisms in play, the government has decided that this is too important and has decided to develop institutional incentives and structures to move education into focusing here in a different way.

Mr. Doherty: Yes, I agree with that.

David: And so the consequence of that has been the development of this legislation that you are overseeing the administration of which has created both incentives and penalties to focus educators into this space and to incent them to use the practices that have been affirmed by research and evidence to be working.

Mr. Doherty: That's right. **(return to point)**

11 - Searching for the opposing voices

-----Original Message-----

From: David Boulton

Subject: Children of the Code related question

Hello Raynetta,

I hope this finds you and Dr. Whitehurst well. Could you pass along to Dr. Whitehurst or answer on his behalf the following question:

The revolution in reading we are all working for is up against more than simply paradigm inertia. There are people out there like Richard Allington who (bizarrely) think that the NAEP numbers have been cooked to support a right wing agenda to commercialize education and robotize teachers. Allington aside, there are others like CIERA's authors:

Barbara M. Taylor, University of Minnesota

Richard C. Anderson, University of Illinois

Kathryn H. Au, University of Hawaii

Taffy E. Raphael, Oakland University

Julie E. McDaniel, Oakland, MI, Schools

Cecil G. Miskel, University of Michigan

David Boulton's response to Russ Whitehurst (early 2004)

who seem to be promoting whole language (balanced) by attacking the prevailing research methods.

I am interested in finding out who the really KEY players are in the 'opposition'. I want to understand how they think about reading so that I can better understand how to communicate with and through them. Can you tell me who you think are the most articulate, persuasive and thoughtful opponents of your reading agenda?

Thank you very much

David Boulton

From: Whitehurst, Grover

To: 'dboulton@implicit.org'

Cc: Lewis, Raynetta

Subject: FW: Children of the Code related question

David,

Identifying the key scholars who are critical of the National Reading Panel Report and the policy direction taken under Reading First in No Child Left Behind isn't something that I'm well equipped to do. I know who some of the critics are, of course, but this wasn't my area of research prior to federal service, and it isn't an issue I deal with frequently as IES director. Reid Lyon or Jack Fletcher or Sally Shawitz or Barbara Foorman or Joe Torgeson might be better informants.