



**For Immediate Release**  
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**The Siena School Joins New LD Education Association**  
***The Association of LD Schools (ALDS) Will Promote Community and Collaboration***  
***Among Schools Supporting Students with Learning Differences***

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**Silver Spring, Maryland, and Oakton, Virginia, October 10, 2023** — As the nation enters Learning Disability Awareness Month, The Siena School is excited to share that it is a founding school of a new education organization focused on collaborating and advocating for students with learning differences.

The [Association of LD Schools](#) (ALDS) is a new non-profit, private school organization including over 50 founding schools across the country and in Canada that serve students with learning differences such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia, and executive dysfunction. The organization is an opportunity for LD schools nationwide to have a formal opportunity to partner together, share resources, and support one another to make a positive impact for all students with learning differences.

“As a founding school of ALDS, Siena continues its leadership in the field of dyslexia education, partnering with like-minded peers to further strengthen our dedication to best practices,” notes Executive Head of School [Dr. Jilly Darefsky](#). “We are excited for the opportunities this collaboration brings.”

ALDS is an outgrowth of partnerships formed among LD school leaders at an annual LD Leadership Retreat and a luncheon at the International Dyslexia Association’s annual conference. LD schools are frequently the only specialized school of their kind in their region, so the association will make it easier for schools and educators to find opportunities to connect and grow relationships to support one another and impact more students.



“At ALDS, our goal is clear: to foster an inclusive and empowering environment where schools dedicated to supporting students with learning differences can come together, collaborate, and flourish,” said Cheryl Cook, who recently served as the academic dean at Lawrence School in Ohio and is serving as the Association’s founding Executive Director. “My goal for ALDS is to figure out how we can help LD school leaders and educators connect with each other about their work and efforts to support learners. We are stronger together.”

A [LEAD on READ podcast](#) from the Windward School interviewing Cheryl and highlighting the work of ALDS was released last week.

All founding schools will have the opportunity to help shape the future of the association. ALDS’s founding board members are from the following schools: Spring Valley School (Birmingham, AL), Noble Academy (Greensboro, NC), Landmark School (Beverly, MA), The New Community School (Richmond, VA), Gulliver Prep School (Miami, FL), Westmark School (Los Angeles, CA), Hamlin Robinson School (Seattle, WA), and Windward School (New York City and White Plains, New York).

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**About ALDS:** The Association of LD Schools (ALDS) is a formal community established to connect and support schools that specialize in education of students with learning differences (LD), such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia, and executive dysfunction. As a formal 501c3 non-profit, ALDS will be able to connect the community of LD institutions by dedicating both time and resources to organizing opportunities for interactive collaboration and reaching other schools sharing a common goal. Ultimately, ALDS will advance the movement of reaching more students and change the future of education for students who learn differently. Learn more at: [ldschoools.org](https://ldschoools.org).

**About The Siena School:** [The Siena School](#), a leader in dyslexia education, serves bright, college-bound students with language-based learning differences. The school was established in 2006 in [Silver Spring, MD](#), where it currently serves students in grades 4-12. The [Northern Virginia campus](#) serves grades 3-11. The [Silver Spring Satellite Campus](#) will serve grades 3-4 beginning in the 2024-25 school year. Siena’s staff and board of advisors include distinguished national, state, and local education leaders and professionals. Siena’s program is designed for students with mild to moderate learning needs who are experiencing a discrepancy between their academic achievement and intellectual abilities in one or more areas such as reading, writing, oral expression, or math. For further information, visit [www.thesienaschool.org](https://www.thesienaschool.org).