

# Applause for the school board and Lindamood-Bell

If you are reading this editorial, chances are you were one of those lucky people who learned to read easily, or, if you struggled to learn, were lucky enough to find the kind of help you needed to master this essential skill.

Not everyone is so fortunate. Some of us are born with our brains wired a little differently, making it hard to decipher the squiggles and lines that make up the written language.

Without good reading skills, learning everything else is that much harder. Reading is fundamental to all other academic subjects, even mathematics.

Today, thanks to scientific research, we understand a lot more about what is involved in learning to read. And, we're beginning to understand how to apply that knowledge to help struggling readers catch up with their peers.

Lindamood-Bell Learning Processes, which has been at the forefront of this revolution, brought its model to Macon County earlier in the summer during a four-week workshop. The results, based on student testing and testimonials from parents, youngsters and teachers, have been nothing short of spectacular.

The Leave No Child Behind program set the admirable goal of having every third-grade child in America be able to read at grade level by 2014. We can wholeheartedly endorse this goal for our country, but getting there is another story.

Some children, no matter how gifted or intelligent, could never reach this goal in a standard learning environment — no matter how hard they and their teachers tried.

The Lindamood-Bell program has the potential to help every child reach that goal. Observing it in action and listening to the educators, parents and children who have been exposed to it has been an inspiration.

We applaud the Macon County School Board for bringing this program to county teachers and youth this summer, and for their intention of introducing it district-wide.

The cost of implementing it may seem high — a little more than \$210,000 this year — but what this investment will mean for our children cannot be measured.

It offers the promise of a successful academic career — and a successful life as wage-earner and involved citizen — for many who might have become discouraged and dropped out. How can you put a dollar value on that? How can you evaluate the benefit to society of creating a life-long reader?