

Candidate for Vice President of the Board

James Darin Pope, Deputy Superintendent, Tuscaloosa City Schools; Adjunct Instructor, University of Alabama



Please share a brief statement on ways you would like to see ILA grow and how you plan to contribute to these efforts as a member of the Board of Directors.

As a current member of the International Literacy Association Board of Directors, I remain committed to advancing ILA's role as a global leader in evidence-based literacy research, policy, and practice. I would like to see the organization continue strengthening the connection between research and classroom implementation so that educators have greater access to practical, research-informed resources that improve literacy outcomes for all learners. I also hope to see continued growth in global collaboration and engagement among educators, researchers, and literacy leaders. Expanding opportunities for members to share perspectives and innovative practices will help ensure that ILA reflects the diverse contexts in which literacy development occurs around the world. In my role on the Board, I will continue contributing by bringing the perspective of district level leadership and literacy advocacy to conversations about strategy, partnerships, and professional learning. I am committed to supporting initiatives that promote equitable access to high-quality literacy instruction, strengthen professional networks, and amplify educator voices. Through this work, I will continue helping advance ILA's mission to ensure every learner becomes a confident and capable reader and writer.

Tell us about your contributions to ILA.

As a member of the International Literacy Association Board of Directors, I contribute to advancing ILA's mission by helping guide strategic priorities that strengthen the connection between literacy research, policy, and classroom practice. I serve as chair of the ILA Administrators Collaborative, where I work to elevate the role of educational leaders in advancing strong literacy systems. I also contribute as a member of the Membership Committee and Program Committee, supporting efforts to expand member engagement and develop high-quality professional learning opportunities. Through these roles, I help strengthen collaboration and ensure ILA continues to support literacy leaders worldwide.

Tell us about your contributions to the literacy profession.

I have led districtwide literacy efforts that strengthen the connection between research-based instruction and effective classroom practice. My work has focused on building comprehensive literacy systems that support teachers through high-quality professional learning, coaching, and the implementation of evidence-based instructional practices. Through collaboration with school leaders, educators, and community partners, these initiatives have helped increase the number of high-performing readers in third grade and sustained strong literacy outcomes for students beyond the elementary years. I remain committed to advancing equitable literacy opportunities and supporting educators in delivering high-quality instruction that ensures long-term reading success.

What role do you see ILA playing to help our members and stakeholders navigate 2026 and beyond?

The International Literacy Association plays a critical role in helping members and stakeholders navigate the evolving literacy landscape by serving as a source of research, professional learning, and global collaboration. As policies, technologies, and literacy demands continue to shift, ILA can provide clear guidance grounded in evidence-based practices while elevating the voices of educators and literacy leaders. ILA should continue strengthening networks that connect researchers, practitioners, and policymakers so members can share effective strategies and respond to emerging challenges. By leading conversations about equitable literacy access and instruction, ILA will remain essential to supporting educators and advancing outcomes worldwide.

What would you say are the most important aspects of serving on the Board of Directors and how are you uniquely qualified to fill that role?

Serving on the Board of Directors requires strategic leadership, a strong commitment to ILA's mission, and the ability to connect research, policy, and practice in meaningful ways. Board members must help guide the organization's vision while ensuring that decisions support educators and improve literacy outcomes for learners worldwide. I bring a unique perspective as a district level leader who has successfully implemented evidence-based literacy initiatives that have led to strong reading outcomes for students. My experience as chair of the ILA Administrators Collaborative and my work on ILA committees position me to contribute thoughtful leadership and informed decision-making.

Please list your academic degrees and other professional certifications.

Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education; Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education; Master of Science in School Counseling; Master of Science in Management and Administration of Educational Programs; Master of Science in Instructional Leadership; Educational Specialist in Reading; Doctorate of Education in Reading; AASA Urban Superintendent Certified.

Candidate for At-Large Member of the Board



Patrick Burke, Assistant Professor, Dublin City University

Please share a brief statement on ways you would like to see ILA grow and how you plan to contribute to these efforts as a member of the Board of Directors.

At a time of multiple global literacy crises—including declining reading for pleasure and the spread of mis- and disinformation—the International Literacy Association has a crucial role to play. As a truly international network, ILA has credibility and reach beyond all other comparable organizations. It must sustain its strong base in the United States while deepening relationships with affiliates worldwide, positioning itself to address what literacy will look like not only in 2026, but in 2036, 2046, and beyond. Teachers, students, and the right to read must be kept at the center of this vision.

ILA can grow its reach in a number of ways. Firstly, ILA should expand research-informed materials for use in preservice teacher education, thus ensuring that the organization is recognized from an early point in educators' careers. Secondly, ILA should continue to focus on professional learning needs identified by members, with a focus on inclusive literacy and evidence-based practices and interventions. Thirdly, ILA should establish a horizon-scanning group to produce forward-looking policy briefs on issues such as Generative AI, assistive technologies, and their interplay with foundational skills. Fourthly, ILA should partner with affiliates to provide expert advice to state and national bodies, e.g. through policy summits. My classroom, research, and policy experience means I could contribute meaningfully to these endeavors.

Tell us about your contributions to ILA.

Since joining ILA as an early career teacher, I have contributed to many ILA initiatives. I serve as chair of the Dina Feitelson and Albert J Harris Research Awards committee, steering a panel of international literacy scholars to spotlight exemplary literacy studies worldwide. Previously, I served as an expert contributor to the ILA Literacy Glossary and guest edited *Literacy Today*, while also peer-reviewing for ILA journals. I led the Literacy Association of Ireland in its fiftieth anniversary celebrations during my term as president in 2025. I have also contributed to projects of the Federation of European Literacy Associations.

Tell us about your contributions to the literacy profession.

I started my career as an elementary teacher in a linguistically diverse school in Dublin, Ireland. Since then, I have influenced literacy policy and research on a wider scale. I serve as chairperson of the committee that drafts curriculum standards for literacy in all primary and special schools in Ireland. I have taught evidence-based pedagogy to thousands of student teachers in my role as a teacher educator. My research has informed practical and scholarly publications, as well as professional development for teachers. My leadership in the field has been recognized, including being named an ILA 30 Under 30 honoree in 2019.

What role do you see ILA playing to help our members and stakeholders navigate 2026 and beyond?

In the coming period, it is likely that the literacy field will undergo rapid change as Generative AI becomes more embedded in instruction and how we consume information further evolves. This will have both benefits and drawbacks. ILA has always played a leadership role in reviewing and sharing high-quality, research-informed practice. It will play an even more important role in the coming period. Through its network of affiliates, professional development materials, publications and research journals, ILA must position itself as a thought leader in this space. It must provide practical, research-informed advice for teachers globally.

What would you say are the most important aspects of serving on the Board of Directors and how are you uniquely qualified to fill that role?

Being a Board member requires dedication to ILA's mission and an understanding of good governance. My experience as a member of national and international committees has shown me that it is possible to disagree on details while maintaining a shared common vision. ILA's aim of an equitable society in which all learners achieve their full literacy potential is one to which I fully ascribe. Teachers must remain at the heart of this work. I would work diligently and collaboratively to extend ILA's reach on a global front, drawing on my knowledge of literacy policy in North America, Europe, and further afield.

Please list your academic degrees and other professional certifications.

Doctor of Philosophy in Education, Dublin City University, Ireland with a focus on disciplinary literacy in elementary and secondary grades; Master of Education in Reading/Literacy, Frostburg State University, Maryland, United States; Bachelor of Education in Education and Psychology, Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick. Registered teacher - Teaching Council of Ireland.

Candidate for At-Large Member of the Board



Tanya Christ, Spangler Distinguished Professor of Early Child Literacy, East Carolina University

Please share a brief statement on ways you would like to see ILA grow and how you plan to contribute to these efforts as a member of the Board of Directors.

The International Literacy Association has long served as a trusted professional home where literacy educators, researchers, and leaders can access high-quality research, resources, and professional learning. As a member of the Board of Directors, I would like to see ILA continue to grow in ways that deepen member engagement and strengthen the community. For example, I would like to expand ILA's professional learning to include sustained opportunities, such as ILA-led professional learning communities that would bring educators together over time around focused topics. Additionally, I would like to strengthen ILA's role as the premier research-based professional home by creating more spaces for members to interact with one another around ideas, research, and practice. For example, we could develop From Page to Practice sessions, in which authors could talk and answer questions about their recently published articles in *The Reading Teacher* or *Reading Research Quarterly* to help teachers and administrators translate these into practices in their local contexts.

Tell us about your contributions to ILA.

I have contributed to ILA through leadership and service roles that reflect my commitment to literacy research, professional learning, and member engagement. For the past year, I have served on the ILA Children's Rights to Read Coalition, chairing subcommittees for International Literacy Day and World Read-Aloud Day and leading development of practical classroom and family engagement resources. I have also served as a member of the Dina Feitelson Research Award and Albert J. Harris Award Committee (2024–2026), the ILA Administrator Task Force (2023–2024), and Elva Knight Grant Proposal Review Committee (2013–2019). I have also contributed to the ILA community through presentations, publications, and engagement with affiliated organizations (e.g., Michigan Reading Association, New York State Reading Association, North Carolina Reading Association).

Tell us about your contributions to the literacy profession.

My contributions to the literacy profession reflect a career grounded in teaching, research, teacher development, and community engagement. I began as an early elementary teacher in New York City Public Schools, and that classroom foundation continues to shape my work. As a literacy scholar and teacher educator, my research has focused on early literacy processes, digital text engagement, culturally and linguistically responsive literacy practices, and teacher learning, including AI literacy. I have authored more than 75 publications, contributed to externally funded projects, and worked to connect research and practice through professional development and community initiatives.

What role do you see ILA playing to help our members and stakeholders navigate 2026 and beyond?

ILA plays a vital role as a trusted, research-based leader at a time of rapid change and increasing complexity in literacy education. I see ILA continuing to serve as both a beacon and a bridge by providing credible, evidence-based guidance and connecting research, practice, advocacy, and community. As educators navigate issues related to equity, children's rights to read, digital and AI-related change, and effective instruction, ILA can support members through high-quality professional learning and dialogue across roles and settings. In 2026 and beyond, ILA must remain the organization members turn to for trustworthy leadership, meaningful connection, and actionable support.

What would you say are the most important aspects of serving on the Board of Directors and how are you uniquely qualified to fill that role?

Serving effectively on the Board of Directors requires thoughtful stewardship, strategic vision, sound fiscal judgment, and meaningful engagement with members and stakeholders. I am well prepared to contribute in these ways because my career spans classroom teaching, teacher education, research, program leadership, community partnership work, and sustained professional service. Across these experiences, I have developed strengths in listening carefully, working collaboratively, thinking strategically, and using research to inform practical decisions. I bring a leadership style grounded in integrity, thoughtful problem-solving, and service. As a Board member, I would bring broad perspective, collaborative leadership, and deep commitment to advancing ILA's mission.

Please list your academic degrees and other professional certifications.

Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, Buffalo State College; Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education, North Carolina Central University; Master of Science in Elementary Education, Buffalo State College; Ed.M. in Literacy Specialist, University at Buffalo, SUNY; Ph.D. in Literacy Education, University at Buffalo, SUNY.

Candidate for At-Large Member of the Board



Cheron H. Davis, Associate Professor of Reading Education, Department of Elementary Education, Florida A&M University

Please share a brief statement on ways you would like to see ILA grow and how you plan to contribute to these efforts as a member of the Board of Directors.

I would like to see the International Literacy Association grow as an even stronger bridge between literacy research, teacher preparation, and classroom practice. I believe the organization is well-positioned to lead important conversations about evidence-based instruction while also ensuring those conversations are inclusive, culturally responsive, and connected to the needs of diverse learners. As a Board member, I would like to help expand ILA's support for teacher educators, particularly those at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and other Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), whose perspectives and preparation programs deserve greater visibility in state, national, and global literacy spaces.

I would also like to see ILA grow its leadership pipeline. We do an excellent job of recognizing promising leaders, but I believe we can do more to develop them through sustained mentorship, fellowship opportunities, and meaningful engagement with some of the field's leading thinkers. My contribution would be grounded in my experience as a literacy professor, affiliate leader, program reviewer, mentor, and committee chair. I would work to strengthen partnerships, amplify underrepresented voices, and support strategic efforts that improve literacy teaching and learning for all.

Tell us about your contributions to ILA.

From local reading councils to chairing international committees, my ILA journey reflects sustained service, leadership, and deep commitment to literacy. For more than 20 years, I have served on the executive board of local councils in Alabama and Florida. I am currently an Executive Board member of the Florida Literacy Association, a program reviewer for ILA National Recognition, mentor to ILA 30 Under 30 honorees, and chair of both the Maryann Manning Outstanding Volunteer Service Award Committee and the William S. Gray Citation of Merit Committee. I am ready to bring that experience, vision, and dedication to the ILA Board of Directors.

Tell us about your contributions to the literacy profession.

My contributions to the literacy profession reflect a career devoted to strengthening how children learn to read and how teachers learn to teach. As a former elementary teacher and current literacy professor, I have advanced evidence-based reading instruction through teacher preparation, research, mentorship, and professional leadership. My work bridges literacy, equity, and interdisciplinary learning, with a particular focus on improving outcomes for marginalized students and preparing highly effective educators. Across classrooms, universities, affiliates, and professional organizations, I have worked to elevate underrepresented voices, develop future literacy leaders, and move strong literacy practices from research into real classrooms.

What role do you see ILA playing to help our members and stakeholders navigate 2026 and beyond?

In 2026 and beyond, I see ILA continuing to lead with a clear and unifying truth: Literacy and justice for all. In a time when perspectives may differ, we can still find common ground in the shared belief that every child deserves the opportunity to become a strong reader, writer, and thinker. That common goal gives ILA both purpose and power. ILA can help members and stakeholders navigate the future by providing trusted, evidence-based resources, meaningful professional learning, and a global community where literacy remains the bridge that connects us in service of children, teachers, and a more just world.

What would you say are the most important aspects of serving on the Board of Directors and how are you uniquely qualified to fill that role?

The most important aspects of serving on the Board of Directors are safeguarding ILA's mission, exercising fiscal responsibility, and leading with trust, transparency, and openness. Board members must listen carefully, communicate clearly, and make decisions that reflect both sound governance and the needs of members. I am uniquely qualified because I bring experience across the full ILA leadership pipeline, from local and state affiliate service to international committee chairing. As a literacy professor, teacher educator, and Board leader, I take seriously the responsibility to care for the organization, elevate diverse voices, and help guide ILA with integrity and vision.

Please list your academic degrees and other professional certifications.

Ph.D. in Reading Education, M.Ed. in Elementary Education and B.S. in Elementary Education from Auburn University; Ed.S. in Elementary Education and Certification in School Leadership from Troy University.

Candidate for At-Large Member of the Board



Watsachol Narongsaksakul, Graduate Research Assistant, Illinois State University

Please share a brief statement on ways you would like to see ILA grow and how you plan to contribute to these efforts as a member of the Board of Directors.

Literacy is a fundamental human right. The International Literacy Association is the leading organization that connects research and practice to understand and build relationships for literacy exchange. To support these growth areas, I will contribute my research at the intersection of AI ethics, STEM, and English learners (ELs). By providing user-friendly resources, ILA members ethically leverage AI to support literacy instruction aligned with AI literacy frameworks and devote less time to manual differentiation and more time to complex comprehension. Another area is creating a digital platform to sustain a global community of practice, connecting ILA members across affiliates to collaboratively share research, innovative practices, and culturally responsive strategies that reflect the diverse realities of literacy worldwide to elevate global affiliate leadership and visibility.

Tell us about your contributions to ILA.

My contributions center on empowering educators and students to navigate an increasingly interconnected world of global citizens and relationships with AI. I have served as a committee member of the Thailand Literacy Association (TLiA) since 2019, supporting seminars, conferences, and regional organizations in collaboration with ILA's partnership efforts to address literacy challenges across Asia.

Tell us about your contributions to the literacy profession.

A cornerstone of my work is the "Go Glocal" project, supported by UNESCO, which integrates global citizenship education into English language teaching for secondary students in Thailand, offering teachers instructional modules that connect local cultural realities to global challenges and fostering critical thinking, digital literacy, and active global citizenship among English language learners. As a doctoral researcher at ISU, I examine the ethical integration of AI in K-12 education, providing actionable strategies shared through AI literacy for teacher preparation programs, including presentations at the Association of Teacher Educators (ATE) and the Learning Technology Center of Illinois Hi, AI conference.

What role do you see ILA playing to help our members and stakeholders navigate 2026 and beyond?

In celebrating ILA's 70th anniversary, ILA leads the global conversation regarding actively building new literacy among its communities and transforming AI technology apprehension into equitable, evidence-based practice in literacy leadership worldwide. I advocate for revising the Standards for the Preparation of Literacy Professionals, 2017 Edition, to explicitly require AI competencies, ensuring literacy programs equip specialists, educators, and administrators to navigate emerging technologies responsibly.

What would you say are the most important aspects of serving on the Board of Directors and how are you uniquely qualified to fill that role?

I understand how to empower local affiliates and amplify practitioner voices at the organizational level by providing open discussions, facilitating leadership development, and fostering collaboration across networks to ensure their needs and perspectives are represented in high-level strategic governance for decision-making processes. I am uniquely qualified as a member-at-large to bridge this gap through extensive leadership roles as a member of the TESOL Affiliate Network Professional Council (ANCP), former social media chair of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages and Bilingual Education (ITBE), and a member of the TLiA.

Please list your academic degrees and other professional certifications.

Ed.D. in Teaching and Learning, Illinois State University (in progress); M.Sc. in TESOL, Queen's University Belfast; B.A. (Hons) in Business English/International Business Management, Assumption University; Lifelong Learning and Community Learning Centers Certificates: Basic Applications and Overview of Generative AI certificate, Information Technology Passport (IP); Google Certified Educator.

Candidate for At-Large Member of the Board



Willy Ngaka, Associate Professor, Department of Adult, Community and Lifelong Learning, Kyambogo University

Please share a brief statement on ways you would like to see ILA grow and how you plan to contribute to these efforts as a member of the Board of Directors.

Being a membership organization, the International Literacy Association needs to grow its membership across the globe. I hope to see ILA invest in recruitment at national and global levels. Members should be encouraged to actively participate in ILA's diverse activities. ILA should continuously direct efforts towards educating and sensitizing people on its activities using both in-person and virtual events. With a wealth of over 20 years of experience in coordinating nonformal, adult, and lifelong learning in a university setting in Africa, coupled with my frequent interactions with people of diverse backgrounds across different networks in Africa and globally, I will deploy my community mobilization skills to market ILA's activities and convince people to join ILA. I intend to emphasize why it's important to become an ILA member and the diverse benefits associated with ILA membership. I hope to utilize my role as the coordinator of the UNESCO/University Twining (UNITWIN) Network on "literacies, green skilling, and capacity development for sustainable communities in Africa" to popularize ILA's mission and activities. I plan to increase my involvement with ILA's national affiliates in Africa through different activities like organizing webinars, annual reading tents, and national literacy conferences to contribute to the realization of ILA's mission.

Tell us about your contributions to ILA.

I have been an active member of ILA and the Reading Association of Uganda since 2005 and am currently serving as a member of the William S. Gray Citation of Merit Committee. I have helped many people join ILA so that they can benefit from ILA's various literacy resources. I work closely with Uganda's ministry responsible for literacy and Reading Association and Councils to support the organization of International Literacy Days, annual literacy conferences, and other literacy events such as Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) days, reading tents, and school outreach for literacy sensitization to contribute to ILA's mission.

Tell us about your contributions to the literacy profession.

I have contributed and continue to contribute to the literacy profession in various ways, including research, teaching literacy courses in universities, promoting community-based literacy interventions and serving in global literacy initiatives. My PhD research, which received a 2006 IRA research award, was about literacy. I have published numerous literacy-related articles in peer reviewed journals; taught literacy in two universities; been a member of UNESCO's Jury for International Literacy Prizes in the period 2017–2022 and Reading Association of Uganda since 2003; and founded the Centre for Literacy and Community Development to promote grassroots literacy for socioeconomic transformation among the poor in Uganda.

What role do you see ILA playing to help our members and stakeholders navigate 2026 and beyond?

I would like to see ILA leveraging its global identity and influence to partner with international and local NGOs, development partners and other agencies such as Rotary and Lions' Clubs, and different governments to mobilize resources to enhance equitable access to literacy skills, especially by the hard-to-reach people, displaced persons, and persons with special needs across the globe. Secondly, ILA needs to address the digital literacy and data cost-related challenges resulting from the digital divide that is now excluding many poor communities in different parts of the globe from participating in online learning for which digital literacy skills are required.

What would you say are the most important aspects of serving on the Board of Directors and how are you uniquely qualified to fill that role?

To me, the most important aspects of serving on ILA's Board of Directors are providing fiduciary oversight to ensure ILA's financial health; advancing ILA's mission; participating in Board activities, identifying potential leaders, and ensuring effective planning for future sustainability; and serving on committees or task forces to address specific areas. I am uniquely qualified to fill this role because I have a wealth of experience serving on boards and committees of different organizations at various levels including one of ILA's committees where virtual and in-person participation in meetings have been vital in ensuring the realization of the organizations' set goals.

Please list your academic degrees and other professional certifications.

Doctor of Philosophy, University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN); M.Ed. in Adult and Community Education, UKZN; Master of Project Monitoring and Evaluation, Uganda Technology and Management University (UTAMU); MA in Public Administration and Management, Makerere University; PGD-Project Monitoring and Evaluation, UTAMU; B.A. in Social Sciences, Makerere University; and Dip/Educ, Kyambogo University.

Candidate for At-Large Member of the Board



Elizabeth A. Swaggerty, Literacy Education Professor, East Carolina University

Please share a brief statement on ways you would like to see ILA grow and how you plan to contribute to these efforts as a member of the Board of Directors.

The International Literacy Association has long championed the professionalism and expertise of educators, and I believe the organization can continue to expand this teacher-centered focus. I would like to see ILA grow its role as a connector between research, policy, and classroom practice by offering resources that honor educators' deep knowledge of diverse learners and communities. ILA can help the field navigate both challenges and opportunities in literacy education with guidance that respects the skill, judgment, and contextual decision-making teachers bring to literacy work. ILA is also well-positioned to lead global and cross-disciplinary conversations about emerging topics such as the Science of Reading, multilingual and culturally sustaining literacy practices, and the role of AI in literacy learning and teacher preparation, always emphasizing research, ethical use, equity, and the strengths of diverse learners and educators. If elected, I would contribute experience grounded in literacy instruction, literacy teacher preparation, community engagement, and collaborative leadership. I would work to elevate teacher voices, expand member engagement, and strengthen partnerships across practitioner, research, and policy communities. My goal is to help ILA continue promoting human-centered, culturally sustaining, and educator-affirming literacy practice across global contexts.

Tell us about your contributions to ILA.

I have been an ILA member, taking advantage of resources and conferences, since I became a classroom teacher. I co-lead a taskforce on literacy teacher preparation, producing the Preliminary Report on Preparation for Literacy Instruction, 2015. I served as president of the Tar River Reading Council, supporting professional learning and membership growth in eastern North Carolina. Through the Literacy Ambassador program, colleagues and I annually invite undergraduate and graduate literacy education pre- and in-service teachers to the North Carolina Reading Conference for a "study away" professional development experience. I have also consistently served ILA as a reviewer for journals and grants.

Tell us about your contributions to the literacy profession.

I am a former elementary educator and a current professor of literacy education and department chair at East Carolina University, where I have served since 2006. My work centers on strengths-based approaches to K-12 literacy teacher preparation and community-engaged practice, focusing on children's literature, literacy instruction, teacher preparation, and early literacy and family shared reading. I have guided major teacher preparation program revisions and facilitated professional development across North Carolina and nationally. My service extends to the Literacy Research Association, United States Board on Books for Young People, Tar River Reading Council, Friends of Joyner Library Board, and Read ENC.

What role do you see ILA playing to help our members and stakeholders navigate 2026 and beyond?

ILA must continue to serve as a trusted, stabilizing voice as educators navigate shifting policies, technological change, and polarized public discourse. ILA can support the field by bringing stakeholders together across disciplines and offering research-informed guidance on literacy teacher preparation and Science of Reading implementation; leading conversations on AI literacy and ethical use; and advancing global, culturally sustaining approaches to reading instruction. By emphasizing nuance, professional judgment, and human-centered literacy practices, ILA can reaffirm trust in the profession, honor teacher expertise, and provide resources that reflect the diverse strengths of learners, families, and communities.

What would you say are the most important aspects of serving on the Board of Directors and how are you uniquely qualified to fill that role?

Serving on the Board requires strategic vision, responsible stewardship of resources, and a commitment to ILA's mission. Throughout my career as a literacy educator, researcher, and department chair, I have taught literacy to elementary and middle grades students, engaged in community-based literacy research, facilitated cross-disciplinary initiatives, managed budgets, guided long-term planning, and aligned financial decisions with organizational priorities. These experiences translate directly to ILA's fiduciary responsibilities. My expertise in literacy teacher preparation, community partnerships, and interdisciplinary program leadership positions me to serve on the board and advance ILA's priorities and mission.

Please list your academic degrees and other professional certifications.

Ph.D. Literacy Education; M.S. Elementary Teaching, Curriculum and Instruction; B.A. Human Learning and Behavior, Elementary Education: University of Tennessee, Knoxville; State of North Carolina Teaching License; Reading K-12; Elem. Education K-6

ABOUT THE ILA 2026 BOARD ELECTION

The opportunity to vote for candidates in the ILA 2026 Board Election is open to every individual member of the International Literacy Association whose membership was in good standing at the start of the election at **9:00 a.m. ET on April 1, 2026**. Election information appears on ILA's website at literacyworldwide.org/vote.

Please review the information about each candidate carefully, discuss the merits of the candidates with other members, and then make your decision and vote. Ballots must be submitted by **5:00 p.m. ET on April 30, 2026**.

Ballot Count Procedures

The ILA 2026 Board Election will be conducted online. This means that individual ILA members in good standing with valid email addresses will receive an emailed link to vote using their online ballot. Members in good standing who do not have email addresses or whose email addresses are not current may find voting instructions at literacyworldwide.org/vote.

The ILA 2026 Board Election will be handled by Election Buddy, an independent firm whose staff members oversee the distribution of electronic ballots, receive the electronically returned ballots, count the ballots electronically, and certify the results.

As an organization, the International Literacy Association disallows campaigning for office by candidates, other individuals, or chapters or affiliates. All candidates in this election have agreed to this policy. If you received campaign materials or solicitations, please keep this in mind when you vote.

ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL LITERACY ASSOCIATION

The International Literacy Association (ILA) is a professional membership organization of literacy educators, researchers, and experts spanning 128 countries. For 70 years, ILA has set the standard for how literacy is defined, taught, and evaluated, connecting research and practice to improve the quality of literacy learning across the globe. Through its *Standards for the Preparation of Literacy Professionals*, ILA provides an evidence-based benchmark for the development and evaluation of literacy professional preparation programs. ILA collaborates with partners across the world to develop, gather, and disseminate high-quality resources, which include three peer-reviewed and edited journals—*The Reading Teacher*, *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, and *Reading Research Quarterly*. Learn more at literacyworldwide.org.