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INTERNATIONAL LITERACY ASSOCIATION ISSUES ADVISORY ON BEST PRACTICES IN LITERACY TEACHER PREPARATION

NEWARK, Del. (June 5, 2017) — In response to the emergence of new regulations and alternative pathways to teaching, the International Literacy Association (ILA) and the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) have issued a research advisory on teacher preparation for literacy instruction.

“It is widely acknowledged that teacher quality matters for influencing students’ literacy achievement,” explains Victoria J. Risko, co-chair of the ILA and NCTE Task Force on Literacy Teacher Preparation. “It follows that high-quality programs preparing teachers also matter.”

“Contrary to misconceptions and repeated claims about low impact,” she continues, “there is substantial evidence documenting the impact of teacher preparation courses on teacher learning, on their teaching practices in their classrooms as new teachers, and with some investigations, the impact of teacher preparation on pupil learning.”

These disparities in teacher education models lead to underprepared teachers and wider achievement gaps, the task force notes.

“Teacher preparation programs are one of the best investments we can make in our educators,” says ILA Executive Director Marcie Craig Post. “The quality of literacy instruction a student receives could determine his or her academic career. We need to ensure that from day one, our teachers are equipped with a strong knowledge base and the evidence-based, proven teaching strategies they need to succeed at their jobs.”

The ILA/NCTE research advisory is grounded in several course- and field-based studies as well as evidence gathered from analyses of successful literacy teacher preparation programs. The report outlines four critical quality indicators for prospective teachers’ learning and new teachers’ performance:

- **Knowledge development:** Teachers are most effective when equipped with a strong contextual understanding of both foundational content and pedagogical knowledge. This knowledge is most beneficial when applied with shared purpose, goals and philosophy and a culturally responsive curriculum.
- **Application of knowledge within authentic contexts:** Teachers should apply their knowledge to authentic learning experiences that encourage “prolonged engagement and explicit guidance and mentoring” through explanations, examples, demonstrations, feedback and other applications.

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- **Ongoing teacher development:** Teachers should participate in learning communities that provide opportunities for the guided exchange of constructive criticism.
- **Ongoing assessments:** Assessing program admission, monitoring progress, benchmarking accomplishments and tracking success are all crucial for maximum effectiveness.

Literacy teacher education programs that apply these principles retain more confident, prepared and competent teachers and higher achieving students, the task force reports. The full research advisory is available online [here](#).

This research advisory is just the latest in a long list of initiatives ILA has taken to invest in the next generation of literacy educators. The organization is offering free registration for undergraduate preservice teachers to attend the ILA 2017 Conference & Exhibits, where renowned literacy leaders and educational experts will present on the latest research and trends. Learn more at ilaconference.org/preservice.

About the International Literacy Association

The International Literacy Association (ILA) is a global advocacy and membership organization dedicated to advancing literacy for all through its network of more than 300,000 literacy educators, researchers and experts across 75 countries. With over 60 years of experience, ILA has set the standard for how literacy is defined, taught and evaluated. ILA collaborates with partners across the world to develop, gather and disseminate high-quality resources, best practices and cutting-edge research to empower educators, inspire students and inform policymakers. ILA publishes *The Reading Teacher*, *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy* and *Reading Research Quarterly*, which are peer reviewed and edited by leaders in the field. For more information, visit literacyworldwide.org.

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