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INTERNATIONAL LITERACY ASSOCIATION (ILA) UNVEILS UPDATED STANDARDS FOR LITERACY PROFESSIONALS

ILA's *Standards 2017*, Certificate of Distinction program set high bar for literacy professional preparation programs

Newark, Del. (May 15, 2018) — Published yesterday, the International Literacy Association's [*Standards for the Preparation of Literacy Professionals 2017 \(Standards 2017\)*](#) are the first-ever set of national standards guiding the preparation of literacy professionals.

Drafted by a team of 28 literacy experts from across the United States, and led by project cochairs Rita M. Bean, University of Pittsburgh, PA, and Diane E. Kern, University of Rhode Island, the updated standards describe the characteristics of effective literacy professional preparation programs, integrating research-based promising practices, professional wisdom and feedback from various stakeholders during public comment periods.

Last updated in 2010, the title reflects ILA's expanded definition of literacy beyond reading. *Standards 2017* promotes a broader repertoire of skills—achieved through more rigorous field work, digital learning and equity-building practices, among other key changes—ensuring that all candidates are prepared to meet the demands of 21st-century literacy instruction.

“*Standards 2017* sets forth a common vision of what all literacy programs should look like—and hands institutions a road map to get there,” says ILA Executive Director Marcie Craig Post. “This is an important step toward ensuring that all literacy professional preparation programs and practicing literacy professionals provide the foundational tools needed to deliver high-quality literacy instruction.”

Although the category of specialized reading professional was introduced 20 years ago, there remained some confusion about the various roles and responsibilities. *Standards 2017* delineates three roles of specialized literacy professionals—reading/literacy specialists, literacy coaches and literacy supervisors/coordinator—explaining the differences between and among the roles, clarifying expectations and enabling preparation programs to meet more specific goals.

Standards 2017 also revises guidance for the roles of principals, teacher educators and literacy partners and provides literacy-specific standards for classroom teachers for pre-K/primary, elementary/intermediate and middle/high school levels, ensuring that literacy practices are infused in all areas of the curriculum.

Reading and literacy specialist preparation programs that elect to participate, and whose scope and rigor meet the criteria outlined in *Standards 2017*, will be eligible to apply for the ILA Certificate of Distinction for the Preparation of Literacy Professionals (ILA CoD), which will help them to continually expand and improve their literacy programs, secure resources for improvement and attract applicants. ILA plans to expand the CoD program to include other roles at a later date.

Learn more at ilacertification.org.

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 78 countries. With over 60 years of experience, ILA has set the standard for how literacy is defined, taught and evaluated. ILA's Standards for the Preparation of Literacy Professionals 2017 provides a 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, 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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