

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

press@reading.org

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT TYLER'S READING SPECIALIST PROGRAM RECEIVES HIGHEST HONORS FROM INTERNATIONAL LITERACY ASSOCIATION

NEWARK, Del. (July 15, 2024) — The International Literacy Association (ILA) announced today that The University of Texas at Tyler (UT Tyler) was awarded National Recognition With Distinction for its MEd Reading Specialist Program. This honor follows the university's initial National Recognition status earned earlier this year and further signifies its exceptional commitment to excellence in literacy education and preparing the next generation of educators.

National Recognition With Distinction is awarded to exceptional licensure, certificate and endorsement programs for reading/literacy specialists and elementary/intermediate classroom teachers that not only meet but *exceed* the rigorous standards set forth in ILA's [Standards for the Preparation of Literacy Professionals](#).

After an institution earns National Recognition, it may be invited, depending on its review, to participate in a comprehensive site visit and in-depth interviews with faculty, staff, current students and alumni. UT Tyler's program demonstrated exemplary performance in these evaluations, earning this latest distinction—which is the highest institutional honor awarded by ILA.

"We are thrilled to receive National Recognition With Distinction from ILA," said Gina Doepker, associate professor of literacy education and program coordinator of the MEd program. "This accolade reflects our dedication to providing top-tier education and training for future literacy specialists. Our continuous efforts to enhance our program have been validated, and we are immensely proud of this achievement."

J. Helen Perkins, president of the ILA Board of Directors and chair of the ILA Commission on National Recognition, expressed her admiration for UT Tyler's accomplishment.

"UT Tyler's National Recognition With Distinction status illustrates their exceptional commitment to advancing literacy education," she said. "Their program's outstanding quality and dedication to developing proficient literacy specialists highlight the university's leadership in the field. This honor is well deserved and speaks volumes about their innovative and effective approach to teacher preparation."

UT Tyler now stands among an elite group of institutions recognized by ILA for their teacher preparation programs. Other universities that have received National Recognition With Distinction include Grambling State University, Sam Houston State University, University of North Georgia and West Virginia University.

To learn more about ILA National Recognition and National Recognition With Distinction, and to see a complete list of recipients, visit the [ILA website](#).

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 more than 65 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.

###