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press@reading.org

WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY BECOMES FIRST PROGRAM TO EARN ILA'S TOP HONOR—TWICE

NEWARK, Del. (July 15, 2025) — The International Literacy Association (ILA) proudly announces that the Reading/Literacy Specialist program at West Virginia University (WVU) has become the first educator preparation program to renew its National Recognition With Distinction (NRWD) status—the highest honor awarded through ILA's National Recognition program.

WVU first earned the designation in 2019 and is the first institution to successfully complete the renewal process and be awarded the distinction a second time.

“WVU's renewal marks a milestone not just for the institution, but for the field,” said ILA Executive Director Nicola Wedderburn. “Maintaining such a high level of excellence over time is an extraordinary accomplishment—and a testament to the deep, sustained commitment of the faculty to preparing literacy professionals who are truly ready to meet the needs of today's learners.”

ILA National Recognition honors outstanding literacy professional preparation programs that prepare candidates for the roles of elementary/intermediate classroom teachers and reading/literacy specialists. Institutions that earn this honor demonstrate that they have exemplary programs that adhere to a rigorous set of standards and ensure their teacher candidates are well prepared and ready to meet today's challenges.

Read what recipients have to say about how ILA National Recognition has impacted their institution and learn how to get your program added to this prestigious list: literacyworldwide.org/natrec.

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 nearly 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.

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