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Alina O'Donnell
609.280.3905
press@reading.org

INTERNATIONAL LITERACY ASSOCIATION (ILA) ADVOCATES FOR TEACHER-DRIVEN PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Newark, Del. (June 5, 2018) — Teachers need less professional development (PD) and more opportunities for professional learning (PL), according to a new brief released by the International Literacy Association (ILA).

In *Democratizing Professional Growth With Teachers: From Development to Learning*, PD is defined as a model of professional training that is conceptualized and delivered by professional organizations or experts *to* an audience of educators, who absorb the information and take it back to their own classrooms. Professional learning is delivered *with* educators, who are given opportunities to “embrace their own agency and to draw upon the collective expertise of their colleagues.”

The brief reimagines a more “democratic” model of PL that allows educators to participate in its planning and implementation. According to ILA, PL is guided by a set of core tenets:

- Teachers must volunteer to participate in PL and be active learners within the event.
- Teachers must be co-constructors—rather than receivers—of content that is meaningful to them and is based on the work of their students.
- The facilitator of the PL should create spaces for participants to reflect and engage in conversations.
- PL environments should foster complex learning, reflexive thinking and risk taking inside teacher practices and offer a variety of formats, structures and time frames.
- PL should allow teachers to exercise their professional judgment to make substantive decisions regarding assessment practices in their classrooms and schools.

Published earlier this month, ILA’s Standards for the Preparation of Literacy Professionals 2017 embraces the term *professional learning*. This focus represents an important shift away from a stance of inquiry “on teachers” (e.g., research on best practices of teacher education) toward next generation professional learning that invites teachers into the act of research.

Access the full brief [here](#).

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.