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INTERNATIONAL LITERACY ASSOCIATION ISSUES BRIEF ON ROLES AND LIMITATIONS OF STANDARDIZED READING TESTS

NEWARK, Del. (November 15, 2017) — The use of standardized test scores to measure reading proficiency is a long-standing source of debate in education reform. Although these scores provide useful information that may contribute to students' reading growth, they are often considered the "coin of the realm"—silencing other valuable indicators and assessments while disproportionately influencing important educational decisions. Furthermore, low test scores can have cascading, negative impacts on students, schools and their surrounding communities—leading to poor student morale, high staff turnover, lower real estate prices and more.

According to ILA's recent brief, the dominance of standardized reading tests "stems from an insufficient understanding of their limitations." Without endorsing or negating their value, the brief explores the roles, uses and caveats of standardized reading tests to assess student achievement, compare students, evaluate programs, create educational policy and determine accountability.

ILA advocates for a different weighting of standardized reading tests as well as a more thorough understanding of reading development that recognizes "an array of formative classroom-based assessments." The brief ends with five salient considerations that teachers and administrators can use to inform internal decision making:

1. There is no research that supports a correlation between increased standardized testing and increased reading achievement.
2. Standardized reading tests do not fully reflect students' reading achievement and development.
3. Standardized reading tests can impede the development of students' self-efficacy and motivation.
4. Standardized reading tests confine reading curriculum and can undermine high-quality teaching.
5. Standardized reading tests are time-consuming and expensive—demanding resources that could be used to support students' reading achievement in other ways.

To read more, visit the 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 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.