

**INTERNATIONAL**  
**Reading Association**



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November 12, 2009

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Re: Draft College and Career Ready Standards

Dear Dane and Gene:

Thank you for inviting the International Reading Association to provide a response to the latest draft of the core standards. Development of these standards is both important and daunting. In our previous communication we provided recommendations about content that we continue to believe should be considered as you develop the standards. In this letter, written on behalf of the Board of Directors, we would like to share our recommendations about what might allow the core standards to have the desired effect of improving the literacy achievement of America's students.

1. Set the standards at a level high enough to provide a national vision of the kind of readers we hope will graduate from our high schools. Our members would like the standards to be inspiring, reflecting our nation's ambitious aspirations for students' achievement.
2. Give this work credibility by providing a coherent conceptual framework for the standards, reaching beyond policy documents. Our members will wonder about the theories of literacy, teaching, and learning underlying the standards.
3. Establish the research base for the standards. Our members expect to see the citation of specific studies, especially those published in refereed journals such as the *Journal of Literacy Research* and the *Reading Research Quarterly*.
4. Build opportunities for input from teachers into the process. As you

know, many of our members are expert teachers of reading and writing. They have a detailed understanding of the situations commonly encountered in classrooms, schools, and districts, and their insights could lead to the design of standards more likely to be effective in promoting changes in students' literacy learning.

In short, we urge you to reach for core standards that elevate our expectations for America's students. These standards should be clearly based in theory and research, so that they can lead to well designed instruction and assessments. Finally, we ask that you consider scheduled opportunities with adequate lead time for teachers to provide input.

We appreciate the efforts made by project staff to keep in touch with us. We hope you find these suggestions helpful, and we look forward to further communication with you.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kathy Au', written in a cursive style.

**Kathy Au, President  
International Reading Association**