



# International Reading Association

*A membership organization of literacy professionals*

800 Barksdale Rd., Newark, DE 19714, USA • 302-731-1600

## Brenda Joiner Overturf

Brenda Joiner Overturf, **Literacy Specialist in Residence**, University of Louisville, will serve on the Board of Directors from 2009–2012. Overturf taught 18 years in Kentucky public schools at the elementary and middle school levels and then from 1999–2005 was the Jefferson County Public Schools (Louisville) district reading specialist. In Jefferson County, she was responsible for district-wide literacy planning and professional development in reading for 152 schools and thousands of P-12 teachers. In 2005, Overturf entered a partnership with the University of Louisville to lead the graduate program in reading education, where she teaches literacy courses, is a partner in a federal Striving Readers grant to develop adolescent literacy, and the director of the U of L Kentucky Reading Project. Overturf was the 2007-2008 president of the Kentucky Reading Association, the KRA 2006 state conference chair, and Governmental Relations Chair. She has served as co-chair of the Kentucky Adolescent Literacy Task Force, is co-author of *Improving Adolescent Literacy in Kentucky: A Joint Position Statement* (2008), and has served on the Kentucky Reading Leadership Team and the Governor's Literacy Summit Planning Committee. She has presented numerous national, international, and state conference sessions, and she has published articles in the *Kentucky Reading Journal* and the *Middle School Journal*. She has also been an active advocate for literacy initiatives and legislation at the state and national levels.



Before becoming a board member, Overturf served on the International Reading Association Government Relations Committee, the IRA Task Force on Professional Development, and the 2009 Presidential White Paper Task Force.

Overturf received her Ed.D. in Supervision/Literacy Education from the University of Louisville, her M.A. in Elementary Education with an emphasis in reading from Eastern Kentucky University, and her B.S. in Elementary Education from Georgetown College (KY). She was a semifinalist for the NRC Outstanding Graduate Student Research Award from the National Reading Conference in both 1997 and 2000.

### Statement of Philosophy

"IRA must grow as a vibrant organization. To accomplish this, IRA needs to aggressively attract younger teachers and assist them in becoming classroom literacy professionals. This will take attention to technology they understand (wikis, blogs, digital resources, etc.), growth of student organizations, and a focus on critical literacy. Another pressing issue is that of literacy equity. Literacy demands are higher than ever, and IRA must initiate and support efforts to provide high levels of literacy around the world. Early childhood, adolescent, and adult literacy are particular areas of emphasis."

### Presentation Topics

Digital Storytelling and Struggling Readers  
Literacy News from Capitol Hill  
Adolescent Literacy  
Systematic, Interactive Vocabulary Instruction

### Contact

[boverturf@reading.org](mailto:boverturf@reading.org)