



**INTERNATIONAL
READING ASSOCIATION**

Immediate Release, Media Contact:
John Micklos, Communications Manager, IRA
800 Barksdale Rd., PO Box 8139
Newark, DE 19711
Telephone 302-731-1600, ext. 250
E-mail: jmicklos@reading.org
Website: www.reading.org

NEWS RELEASE

Professional Development Needed to Make Standards Work, Says International Reading Association

NEWARK, DELAWARE: Professional development is key to making the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts a success, says the International Reading Association (IRA). Clearly, the standards, which were produced by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors Association (NGA), will have a major impact on language arts instruction at all levels across the United States. However, it is how they are implemented by teachers that will make all the difference.

Here are some key points that IRA would like to see focused upon as the implementation process for the standards moves forward.

Professional development: Teachers will need significant professional development in order to put into practice the ideas set forth in the standards. What are the critical elements of this professional development, and how will it be funded?

Assessment: Assessment should reflect the needs of instruction and provide data that will inform instruction in a meaningful way.

Reaching all students: The standards should be implemented in a way that reflects the needs of students representing diverse cultures and backgrounds. "For instance, how will the standards reflect the needs of English-language learners?" asks IRA President Patricia A. Edwards of Michigan State University. "How will the standards position racially, ethnically, and economically diverse students? Will the standards support them or put them at a disadvantage?"

Text complexity: This area needs further discussion and development. Scholars have been conducting research in this area for decades. This is an issue especially important for the states that have already incorporated this body of work into their own standards.

Motivation: Although difficult to measure, student motivation to read is a critical factor that should be further considered as the standards are used to guide the development of instruction to close the achievement gap.

Comprehension: Comprehension instruction needs to be part of the instructional program from the earliest grades. The goal for students in beginning reading instruction and through all grades is to develop a wide array (or comprehensive set) of skills and strategies for word identification, vocabulary learning, and reading comprehension.

"IRA hopes that the release of the final draft of these standards marks the beginning of an organic process whereby there is an ongoing review and refinement as the standards are put into practice," says Edwards.

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The International Reading Association is a community of 70,000 reading professionals in 100 countries, dedicated to promoting higher achievement levels in literacy, reading, and communication by continually advancing the quality of instruction worldwide. A network of 1,200 councils forms the working foundation for the Association.