



International Reading Association

A membership organization of literacy professionals

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

Kathryn H. Au

Kathryn H. Au, chief executive officer of SchoolRise LLC, is president-elect of the International Reading Association and will become president in 2009. Au served as a member of the IRA Board of Directors from 1998-2001. In addition to serving on a number of IRA committees, she was president of the IRA Aloha State Council in 1997-98 and organized Hawaii's first state conference. Au received the Causey Award for Outstanding Contributions to Reading Research and was elected to the Reading Hall of Fame in 1998.



Au received her AB *cum laude* from Brown University, her MA from the University of Hawaii, and her PhD from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She taught grades K-2 and worked as a curriculum developer and researcher at the Kamehameha Elementary Education Program, a research and development effort dedicated to the literacy education of native Hawaiian students. Au was a professor at the University of Hawaii, where she became the first person to hold an endowed chair in education.

Au's research interest is the school literacy learning of students of diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Her latest book on this topic is *Multicultural Issues and Literacy Achievement* (2006). She is best known for her research on culturally responsive instruction. Her current research is on school change to improve students' literacy achievement, focusing on an approach called the standards-based change process.

Statement of philosophy

"IRA must continue to promote the view that it is teachers, not programs, who ultimately make the difference in students' success as readers and writers. In the United States, as well as in exciting new projects around the globe, IRA is working actively to advance the professional development of teachers. I believe the key issue facing IRA is how this valuable work can be carried forward in a tension-filled world. IRA must address many challenges in this age of accountability pressures, sound bites, and conflict. Yet this contentious atmosphere has had the positive effect of clarifying certain key points. As literacy educators, we clearly understand that reading builds on but goes beyond basic skills, that teacher expertise rather than programs alone are the key to sustained success, and that research of all varieties is needed to flesh out the picture. We know too that much remains to be done in bringing equal opportunities for literacy learning to all students, especially those of diverse cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. IRA should strive to advance teachers' expertise particularly in serving these students. IRA must be a calm and steady presence, standing as it has for 50 years, for literacy as

a lifelong process of learning, for the value of research, and for high quality instruction for all students.”

Presentation topics

School change to promote literacy achievement

Culturally responsive instruction

Improving the literacy achievement of students of diverse backgrounds

Contact

SchoolRise LLC

1668 Kanalui Street

Honolulu, HI 96816

808-737-4008 (phone)

kau@reading.org