

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Alina O'Donnell
609.280.3905
press@reading.org

INTERNATIONAL LITERACY ASSOCIATION (ILA) LAUNCHES GLOBAL CAMPAIGN ON CHILDREN'S RIGHTS TO READ

Newark, Del. (September 7, 2018) — Today, the International Literacy Association (ILA) launched a new initiative aimed at ensuring every child has access to the education, opportunities and resources needed to read. The announcement coincides with International Literacy Day, an annual celebration that highlights literacy as a human rights issue.

ILA's Children's Rights to Read—ten fundamental rights ILA asserts that every child deserves—frames reading as an issue of equity and social justice. The yearlong campaign will focus on activating educators, policymakers and literacy partners to join ILA in their efforts to raise awareness of these Rights and see them realized for every child, everywhere.

"The ability to read truly represents the difference between inclusion in and exclusion from society," said Bernadette Dwyer, president of the Board of Directors of ILA and chair of the Children's Rights to Read Task Force, which was charged with crafting the rights. "Teaching children to read opens up a world of possibilities, builds their capacity for creative and critical thinking, expands their knowledge base and develops their ability to respond with empathy and compassion to others."

The task force was comprised of literacy educators, researchers and advocates from five countries, which Dwyer stressed was crucial to creating a truly universal framework.

Among the rights: allowing children to select their own reading materials, allowing time for them to read for pleasure, and creating opportunities for them to share what they learn through reading by collaborating with others locally and globally.

"These rights entitle children to read in a way that's meaningful, enjoyable and personally enriching," said ILA Executive Director Marcie Craig Post. "Engaged reading is a cornerstone of literacy."

In addition to the Rights, the task force wrote an accompanying piece outlining how and why the 10 rights were selected. The explanation draws upon seminal and cutting-edge literacy research.

Resources to support educators and advance adoption of the Rights in schools and communities will be developed and released over the course of the campaign.

To download the Children's Rights to Read, learn more about the campaign, and sign on in support, visit literacyworldwide.org/rightstoread.

About Children's Rights to Read

The Children's Rights to Read initiative, launched by the International Literacy Association (ILA) to ensure every child has access to the education, opportunities and resources needed to read, focuses on 10 rights essential for individuals to reach full personal, social and educational potential. The global campaign asserts and affirms ILA's commitment to its mission of literacy for all and offers a framework for partnerships and action. To learn more and sign the pledge to support the Rights, visit literacyworldwide.org/rightstoread.

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 146 countries. With over 60 years of experience, ILA has set the standard for how literacy is defined, taught and evaluated. ILA's Standards for the Preparation of Literacy Professionals 2017 provides an evidence-based benchmark for the development and evaluation of literacy professional preparation programs. 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.

###