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## INTERNATIONAL LITERACY ASSOCIATION'S 2018 WHAT'S HOT IN LITERACY REPORT SHOWS EDUCATORS PRIORITIZE ISSUES OF EQUITY, ACCESS AND QUALITY

Newark, Del. (Jan. 8, 2018) — A new report released today by the International Literacy Association (ILA) reveals wide gaps between what's truly valuable to educators around the globe and what's getting the most attention from the media, policymakers and others in the field.

The ILA 2018 What's Hot in Literacy Report provides a snapshot of what 2,097 literacy professionals from 91 countries and territories deem the most critical topics to advancing literacy worldwide.

The survey asked respondents to rate 17 literacy-related topics in terms of what's *hot* and what's *important*. Topping the hot list for the second year in a row: Digital Literacy, a topic that dropped from No. 8 in 2017 to No. 13 in terms of importance.

On the flip side, topics such as Access to Books and Content, Mother Tongue Literacy and Equity in Literacy Education ranked significantly higher in importance than they did heat. These gaps reflect the challenges of teaching in today's world, such as a rise in racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity; a growing number of English learners; and an unequitable distribution of resources in classrooms—and illustrate a growing number of unmet needs in these areas.

"We learned that many educators, working with increasingly diverse student bodies, do not have sufficient training, parental support or resources to respond to student needs," said ILA Executive Director Marcie Craig Post. "This survey helps us to identify where more support is needed so we can provide solutions."

Respondents recognized positive early literacy experiences, family engagement and professional preparation and development as among the most critical factors for advancing literacy for all.

### Equity and access go hand in hand

Respondents indicated not only that issues of both equity and access should be a higher priority, but many also remarked that schools bear the responsibility of providing equitable opportunities and resources for all students.

- According to 86% of respondents, **Equity in Literacy Education** is extremely or very important, placing it in the No. 2 spot.
- **Access to Books and Content**—giving students access to content and books that are relevant for all learners, for both pleasure and academic reading—is rated extremely or very important by 82% of all respondents.
- Outside of the United States, 71% of respondents said **Mother Tongue Literacy** is very or extremely important, compared with 62% of respondents from the United States. U.S. respondents are also less likely to say this topic is hot.

- **Strategies for Differentiating Instruction**—tailoring instruction to accommodate each individual student's needs—ranks among the top five most important *and* hottest topics overall.

### **The community–literacy connection**

One of the greatest predictors of lifelong success, early literacy experiences create the foundation for learning in all subject areas. Many respondents remarked on the importance of exposing young children to books, words, stories and more—early and often. Respondents also noted the importance of involving families and community-based organizations in these early literacy activities.

- **Early Literacy** remains the No. 1 most important topic for the second year and ranks as the second hottest topic overall.
- Only 35% of respondents said **Family Engagement** is very or extremely hot, whereas 79% of respondents believe that it is very or extremely important.

### **Excellence in literacy education**

Another important aspect of equitable education is ensuring teachers' readiness to respond to their students' unique literacy strengths and needs. Respondents expressed that improvement initiatives often focus too much on standards and not enough on the conditions of teaching and learning in schools. Results show a desire for more preparation and knowledge for wider support and involvement across communities.

- **Teacher Preparation** holds the highest gap among the topics, ranking No. 3 among important topics but No. 12 among hot topics.
- According to 73% of respondents, **Administrators as Literacy Leaders** is very or extremely important, but only 29% said that it's very or extremely hot.
- Often associated with standardized tests, **Summative Assessments**—measurements of student achievement and acquisition of literacy skills at the conclusion of an instructional period—is viewed as a hot topic (at No. 3) but the least important (coming in at No. 17).

The full survey findings are available in the ILA 2018 What's Hot in Literacy Report, available at [literacyworldwide.org/whatshot](http://literacyworldwide.org/whatshot).

### ***About What's Hot in Literacy***

The What's Hot in Literacy survey takes the temperature of the literacy dialogue, identifies trending literacy topics, and helps drive conversations in the directions they are most needed. It is published by ILA and co-managed by YouGov, a global market research firm. This year, the survey asked literacy professionals to rank 17 topics, derived from one-on-one qualitative interviews, on a hot and important scale. It received a total of 2,097 respondents from 91 countries and territories.

### ***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 78 countries. With over 60 years of experience, ILA has set the standard for how literacy is defined, taught and evaluated. 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](http://literacyworldwide.org).

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