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Biography:

Seth A. Parsons, PhD., is an associate professor in the School of Education and the Sturtevant Center for Literacy at George Mason University. He teaches in the Literacy, Elementary Education, and Research Methods program areas. His award-winning research focuses on student reading motivation and engagement, teacher instructional adaptations, and teacher education and development. He is currently president of the Association of Literacy Educators and Researchers (ALER).

Candidate Statement:

I am honored to be nominated for the LRA Board of Directors. LRA is a leading educational research organization and thereby plays an important role in society today, during a turbulent time for education, research, and literacy.

Affiliation and Record of Accomplishment:

I am an associate professor in the School of Education and the Sturtevant Center for Literacy at George Mason University. My research focuses on (a) student reading motivation and engagement, (b) teacher adaptability, and (c) teacher education and professional development. I have published more than 60 articles and book chapters. My work has appeared in *Journal of Literacy Research*, *Review of Educational Research*, *LRA Yearbook*, *The Reading Teacher*, *Elementary School Journal*, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *The Journal of Educational Research*, *Literacy Research and Instruction*, *Reading Psychology*, and other outlets. My research received the Review of Research Award from the American Educational Research Association (2019) and the Distinguished Research in Teacher Education from the Association of Teacher Educators (2018).

History of Involvement in and Contributions to LRA:

I have been an active member of LRA since 2006, when I attended my first LRA (then NRC) as a doctoral student. I was so engrossed in the whole conference that I forgot to call my mother on her birthday, December 1—something she reminds me of to this day! As a doctoral student, I got involved with the Doctoral Student Study Group, first as an attendee and then as a co-organizer. I was part of the group convened by president Norm Stahl that converted this recurrent study group into the Doctoral Student Innovative Community Group, a group I continue to serve by mentoring a doctoral student LRA proposal each year. I have served as an area chair for Area 1 – Pre-service Teacher Education in Literacy (2009-2011); Area 2 – In-service Teacher Education/Professional Development in Literacy (2019); and, currently, Area 12 – Research Theory, Methods, and Practices. I was an inaugural member of the Research Committee (2011- 2014). I served as a member of the Early Career Achievement Award Committee (2014-2017). I currently



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chair the Ad Hoc Committee on Research Methodologies (2018-present). I have consistently reviewed manuscripts for JLR and the LRA Yearbook/LR:TMP, and I have reviewed conference proposals since 2007.

Platform for Contributions to LRA as an Officer of the Organization:

The field of literacy currently faces a pivotal moment. Literacy education and research is more political and mainstream than ever. It is common to see popular media with commentary on effective literacy instruction, or—more often—critiques of literacy instruction and literacy teacher preparation. For-profit organizations and businesses are stirring up controversy to sell product. At the same time, deep and persistent economic and racial inequities exist in literacy education for children and youth. The Literacy Research Association has a responsibility as an organization of literacy scholars to advocate for what is best for all students by promoting research, policy, social justice, and practice.

I have a history of engaging in this type of work. In addition to the research portfolio summarized above, I have served as the President of my local International Literacy Association council, the Greater Washington Reading Council; I am currently the President of the Association of Literacy Educators and Researchers (ALER); I am on the Leadership Team of the National Association for Professional Development Schools as the editor of their journal, *School-University Partnerships*; and I am a director of the National Center for Clinical Practice in Educator Preparation. Therefore, I have experience in working with local and national organizations to enhance practice in literacy and teacher preparation. Indeed, now is a good time for literacy organizations to work together to leverage positive advocacy and change in the U.S. and beyond. Many of our members are active in other literacy organizations such as ALER, NCTE, ILA, ARF, SSSR, UKLA, and others, including state-level organizations. Instead of operating in silos, there are opportunities for these organizations to work together, without losing our individual entities and strengths, to better advocate for socially just, research-based, and theory-driven instruction for all students. I can use my experience with different organizations to build connections with associations to move forward with such work.

I am a collaborative scholar who is devoted to supporting teachers to optimize the literacy instruction we provide children and youth. To advance this goal, I rely on practice that is guided by research, theory, and social justice. To approach the complex issues that currently face literacy education, we must use research to inform policy and practice and we must do so with equity at the forefront of our work. LRA is well-positioned to capitalize on the vast and diverse knowledge and experience of its members. As a board member, I will advocate for research-based, theory-informed, and equity-driven organizational efforts, using the collective knowledge and reach of its members, to promote positive progress in literacy education.