Citation of Merit Award for Literacy
‘The Garth Boomer Award’
David Hornsby
July 2019

David Hornsby has made a hugely significant contribution to literacy education at local, national and international levels over his fifty plus years of service to education. During his long career he has been a teacher, an education department literacy consultant in both primary and secondary schools, a principal, a lecturer and an independent curriculum consultant. He brings a vast array of experience and expertise to his work and is a very popular and engaging presenter.

David has published an extensive number of articles and books for teachers. These cover the teaching of reading, planning for literacy, teaching phonics in context, and the use of literature in the classroom. His text on Guided Reading is highly regarded and won ‘The Australian Awards for Excellence in Educational Publishing – teacher reference category.’ His website is also an excellent resource for teachers.

David has worked with and established close relationships with many important Australian educators, including Deb Sukarna, Jo Parry, Kath Murdoch, Marie Emmitt, Lorraine Wilson, Robyn Ewing and Brian Cambourne.

He has been a long time member of ALEA and has offered support, advice and expertise on many occasions. He is currently on the committee for the ALEA National Conference 2019 and has dedicated many hours to help with this event.

A current area of interest for David is an exploration of the nature of English orthography and implications for teaching phonics and spelling. To support teachers, David has offered and delivered free sessions on this topic for ALEA local councils. With other significant literacy educators, he has also participated in a series of Phonics Symposia in several capital cities. These symposia have been very well received and in some places, extra sessions had to be arranged to meet the demand.

David has helped teachers and parents to understand that NAPLAN data provides only limited population data, not individual, diagnostic data. He has been vocal in his opposition to the data being used for inappropriate purposes and has stressed that assessment is a continuous process, not an event. He has played a vital role informing politicians and the media about the serious flaws in NAPLAN data and the unacceptable errors of measurement.

He has delivered excellent, high-quality professional learning not only in Australia, but internationally. He has worked extensively in the United States of America and the United Kingdom, and in many other places worldwide, including Costa Rica, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malta, New Zealand, Singapore – and most recently, China.

David’s reputation is quite remarkable. He is extremely well known in the education sector and is one of the most recognised and highly regarded educators in our system. His opinion on matters of literacy education are highly sought after and valued.

It with great pleasure that ALEA Awards David Hornsby the Citation of Merit Award for Literacy.