Deborah Loewenberg Ball is the William H. Payne Collegiate Professor in education at the University of Michigan, and an Arthur F. Thurnau Professor. She currently serves as dean of the School of Education and as director of TeachingWorks. She taught elementary school for more than 15 years, and continues to teach mathematics to elementary students every summer. Ball serves on the National Science Board and the Mathematical Sciences Research Institute Board of Trustees, and chairs the Spencer Foundation Board of Directors.

Ball's research focuses on the practice of mathematics instruction, and on the improvement of teacher training and development. She is an expert on teacher education, with a particular interest in how professional training and experience combine to equip beginning teachers with the skills and knowledge needed for responsible practice. Her work is informed by strong links both to the arts and sciences and to professional preparation in other domains.

Through TeachingWorks, she is leading an effort to develop a comprehensive professional training curriculum that spans initial training through at least the first three years of teaching practice, with corresponding assessments to determine whether beginning teachers are ready to be responsible for a classroom of students. This curriculum focuses on a set of core skills and knowledge that are "high-leverage" for responsible teaching. Skill with these tasks of teaching is crucial for all teachers if they are to help each of their students achieve. In addition, the curriculum addresses, in the specialized ways needed for teaching, the subject matter content that is high-leverage for teachers, including essential topics and skills represented in the Common Core State Standards.

Ball has authored or co-authored more than 150 publications and has lectured and made numerous major presentations around the world. Her research has been recognized with several awards and honors, and she has served on several national and international commissions and panels focused on policy initiatives and the improvement of education, including the National Mathematics Advisory Panel and the Commission on the Future of Undergraduate Education. She has been elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the National Academy of Education, and is a fellow of the American Mathematics Society and the American Educational Research Association.