2027 IRC CONFERENCE

Illinois Reading Council

EACH ONE
REACH ONE

PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

MARCH 11 - 12, 2027
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

THE ILLINOIS READING COUNCIL

invites you to join us at the

2027

IRC CONFERENCE

March 11-12, 2027 Springfield, Illinois

INTERESTED IN PRESENTING?

Program Proposals are being accepted online until December 15th!

FEATURED SPEAKERS INCLUDE

JERRY CRAFT

JAKE DAGGETT

JENNY FRENCH

JACOB GRANT

ALAN GRATZ

DAN GUTMAN

MINH LÊ

KATIE MCKNIGHT

DONALYN MILLER

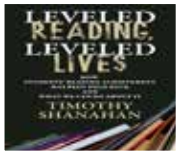
BRIANA MORALES

LYNDA MULLALY HUNT

DAN SANTAT

JENNIFER SERRAVALLO

TIMOTHY SHANAHAN

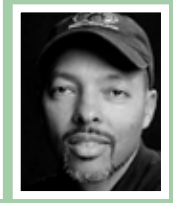


COLBY SHARP

LAUREN TARSHIS

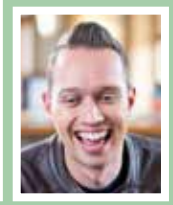
ALSO, DON'T MISS THE ILLINOIS READS AUTHOR PANELS AND BECKY ANDERSON!

ILLINOIS READS



Jerry Craft

Jerry Craft is the *New York Times* bestselling author and illustrator of the graphic novels ***New Kid, Class Act***, and ***School Trip***. ***New Kid*** is the only book in history to win the John Newbery Medal for the most outstanding contribution to children's literature (2020); the Kirkus Prize for Young Readers' Literature (2019), and the Coretta Scott King Author Award for the most outstanding work by an African American writer (2020). Jerry was born in Harlem and grew up in the Washington Heights section of New York City and now travels the world telling kids and their families about the importance of reading.



Jake Daggett

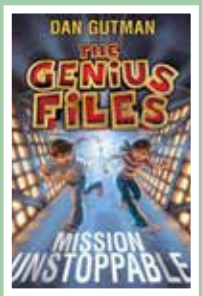
Jake Daggett is an Ohio native who began his teaching career in Milwaukee, WI in 2015. Having specialized in literacy instruction, he built a following on social media for his engaging and rhythmic phonics lessons and evidence-based structured literacy lessons, even landing him on *The Kelly Clarkson Show* in January 2024. Throughout his career, he has taught Pre-K, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grades and has recently stepped into the role of Foundational Literacy Director for a choice school in Milwaukee, WI. In his role, he supports a team of elementary teachers with their implementation of the science of reading. In addition, he co-teaches an online Science of Reading Course for Elevate Your Classroom. In his spare time, he presents nationally for conferences such as Elevate Your Classroom, Unlocking SOR, IL ASCD, and Plain Talk.

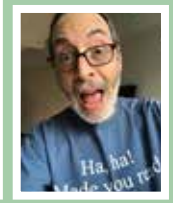
Jacob Grant

Jacob Grant, is an author, illustrator, and dad who makes picture books. He is a winner of the prestigious 2024 Bologna Children's Book Fair Illustration Exhibition, and he's also an ok kids soccer coach. Jacob is originally from Cincinnati, and now lives with his wife and two little ones in Oak Park, Illinois. Here he can be found writing and illustrating books like ***Umami, No Fair, No Pants,*** and ***Bear's Scare***. At the conference, please join IRC in congratulating Jacob as the 2027 recipient of the Prairie State Award for Excellence in Writing for Children.

Alan Gratz

Alan Gratz is the #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of more than twenty novels, graphic novels, and novellas for young readers, including ***War Games, Heroes, Two Degrees, Captain America: The Ghost Army, Ground Zero, Refugee, Allies, Resist, Prisoner B-3087***, and ***Ban This Book***. A Knoxville, Tennessee native, Alan is now a full-time writer living in Portland, Oregon with his family. Learn more about him online at www.alangratz.com.





Dan Gutman

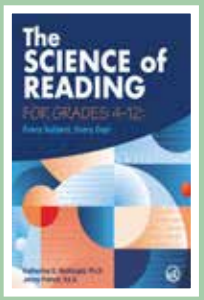
Dan Gutman is a children's book author who has written more than 200 books for kids from kindergarten up to middle school. For the littlest ones, he writes picture books like ***Rappy the Raptor***, about a rapping raptor named Rappy, who raps. For beginning readers, he writes ***My Weird School***, about a group of kids who go to a school in which all the grownups are crazy. There are more than a hundred books in the series, and thirty-seven million copies have been sold. For middle-graders, Dan has written ***The Homework Machine, The Million Dollar Shot, Houdini and Me, The Picasso Curse,*** and the twelve-book baseball card adventure series about a boy who has the power to travel back in time using a baseball card like a time machine. For more advanced readers, Dan has written two series, ***The Genius Files*** and ***Flashback Four***. When he's not writing books, Dan loves to ride his bike, play pickleball, throw Frisbees, and explore New York City, where he lives with his wife Nina. Learn more about Dan at www.dangutman.com.

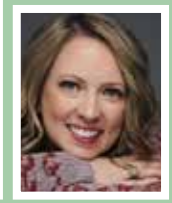
Minh Lê

Minh Lê is the award-winning author of the picture books ***Drawn Together*** (winner of the 2019 Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature), ***Built to Last, Real to Me, The Blur, Lift*** (an Eisner Award nominee), ***The Perfect Seat***, and ***Let Me Finish***! He also writes popular middle grade graphic novels, including ***Green Lantern: Legacy, Green Lantern: Alliance***, and ***Enlighten Me***. He has appeared in a number of acclaimed anthologies such as ***You Are Here: Connecting Flights, The Creativity Project*** and ***The Talk: Conversations about Race, Love & Truth***. He is currently working on several forthcoming projects, including ***A Lotus for You***, the authorized picture book biography of the world-renowned Zen Buddhist monk and Nobel Peace Prize nominee, Thích Nhất Hạnh. Fun fact: Minh was named one of the 100 Coolest Dads in America by Fatherly.com in 2018 (landing somewhere between LeBron James and President Barack Obama). During the day, he is a federal early childhood policy expert who has worked in education at the national, state, and local level -- both in and out of the classroom. Outside of spending time with his wonderful wife and children at their home in San Diego, his favorite place to be is in the middle of a good book.

Lynda Mullaly Hunt

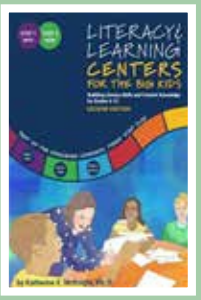
Lynda Mullaly Hunt is the author of *New York Times* bestsellers, ***Fish in a Tree*** and ***Shouting at the Rain***. She's also written the Indie Bestseller, ***One for the Murphys*** and picture book, ***Wish in a Tree*** (illustrated by the talented Nancy Carpenter). Her books have been published in 44 languages, and she has traveled far and wide to meet her readers. Lynda's newest novel, ***How to Build a Miracle***, will be released soon. She feels blessed to do this work and to be part of this remarkable community. Lynda lives in Massachusetts with her husband and impetuous pup.





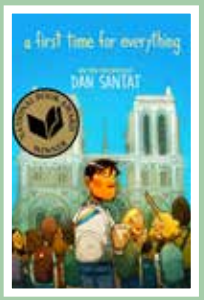
Jenny French

Jenny French has been an impactful middle school teacher, a terrible cheerleading coach, and an overambitious literacy specialist. She tried being an associate professor, where she was a round peg in a very square, serious hole. She served as an effective district leader, juggling small budgets and big goals, while mentoring young leaders. She found her groove as an innovative curriculum designer and now works as a contented, occasionally overbooked, but genuinely successful educational researcher, consultant and leadership coach. Her career highlights include developing a national reading curriculum, surviving more than one school district's tech upgrade, and gently telling very important people that their slides are ugly. She loves learning, coaching others, and color-coding things in Google Sheets.



Katie McKnight

Katie McKnight is a dynamic force for engaging learners everywhere, bringing over three decades of passion to education. From her early days teaching in Chicago Public Schools to her distinguished university career, she has always championed student success. As an award-winning author of 25 books, including the best-selling ***The Teacher's Big Book of Graphic Organizers***, she provides practical, proven strategies for educators. Katie is the founder of Engaging Learners, an educational company that has successfully transformed struggling schools. She also connects with educators worldwide through digital media, serving as the co-creator of the popular *"Coffee with Katie and Richard"* webinars and the co-host of *The Science of Reading for Grades 4-12* podcast. Whether she is presenting to a packed conference hall or consulting in a local classroom, her energy and dedication to making learning joyful are unmistakable. Her latest co-authored book is ***The Science of Reading for Grades 4-12: Every Subject, Every Day***.

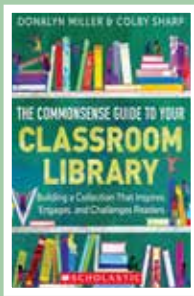


Dan Santat

Dan Santat is the National Book award-winning author of ***A First Time for Everything***, the Caldecott Medal-winning creator of ***The Adventures of Beekle: The Unimaginary Friend,*** the #1 *New York Times*-bestselling ***Are We There Yet?***, and the *New York Times*-bestselling book ***After the Fall (How Humpty Dumpty Got Back Up Again)***. Dan is the author and illustrator of over a hundred books for young people. Dan grew up in Southern California and is a graduate of the Art Center College of Design. He is the creator of the animated television series, ***The Replacements***. He has worked with numerous children's book authors and illustrators including Dav Pilkey (***Ricky Ricotta's Mighty Robot*** series), Samantha Berger (***Crankenstein***), Minh Le (***Drawn Together, Lift, The Blur***), and Laurel Snyder (***Endlessly Ever After***). Dan lives outside of Los Angeles with his wife, two kids, and many, many pets.

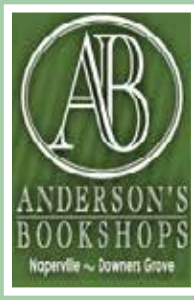
Donalyn Miller

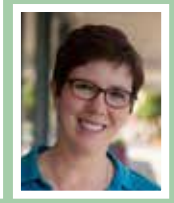
Donalyn Miller is an award-winning Texas educator and free reading advocate. She is the author or co-author of numerous books and articles about independent reading, book and library access, and the development of positive reading communities. Her most recent books are ***The Joy of Reading*** (Heinemann, 2022), co-written with Dr. Teri Lesesne and ***The Commonsense Guide to Your Classroom Library*** (Scholastic, 2022), co-written with Colby Sharp. Donalyn is the co-founder of ***The Nerdy Book Club blog*** and the founder of the summer and holiday reading challenge, ***#bookaday***. She currently works as a literacy coach, program advisor, workshop and conference presenter, and education writer. Donalyn currently volunteers for several advisory boards and literacy committees, including local, state, and national initiatives. Donalyn and her husband, Don, are empty nesters who live in San Antonio. They live atop a dragons' hoard of books and comics.



Colby Sharp

Colby Sharp is a husband and father of five. He teaches fifth grade at Parma Elementary. Colby is the co-founder of ***Nerdy Book Club***. He co-hosts ***The Yarn podcast*** with Travis Jonker. Colby co-authored ***Game Changer! Book Access for All Kid*** with Donalyn Miller, and he is the editor of ***The Creativity Project: An Awesometastic Story Collection***. ***A Commonsense Guide to Your Classroom Library*** written with Donalyn Miller, is his latest book.



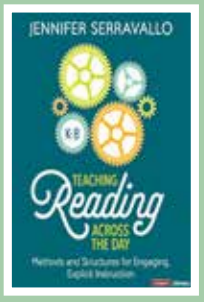


Becky Anderson

Becky Anderson Wilkins is synonymous with books. She is recognized worldwide as a leading independent book retailer who has tirelessly promoted the importance of reading and value of book publishing. As the owner of Anderson's Bookshops in Naperville and Downers Grove, Illinois, Becky built the company's reputation to such stature that it attracts prestigious author visits for hundreds of signing events and two annual literature conferences each year. She is committed to the community and partners with local school districts to raise funds for books. Becky won a Hall of Fame Award from the Illinois Reading Council, among many other honors.

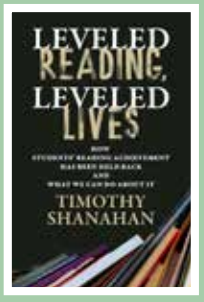
Briana Morales

Briana Carlson-Morales was the 2023 Illinois Teacher of the Year and 2021 NCTE Early Career Educator of Color. Briana is a proud Latina and freedom fighter for students in alternative education, where she has spent her career loving and learning alongside students furthest from justice in East St. Louis. As a school board member for the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice, she works to elevate the voices of justice-impacted youth. Creating healing-centered spaces where Black and brown students can feel seen, heard, and, one day, be free to be their authentic selves, she founded a nonprofit, (Sister)Hood of Hope, Inc., dedicated to honoring brighter futures for girls of color everywhere. She is currently pursuing an EdD in diversity and equity in education at the University of Illinois.



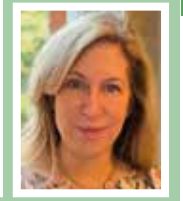
Jennifer Serravallo

Jennifer Serravallo is a *New York Times* bestselling author, award-winning educator, literacy consultant, frequent invited speaker at state and national conferences, and former member of the Parents Magazine editorial board. Jen is best known for creating books and resources rooted in research that help make responsive, strategic, differentiated literacy instruction possible for all educators. Jen's books are used around the world and several have been translated into French, Spanish, Chinese, and Italian. In 2023, she launched her podcast ***To the Classroom: Conversations with Researchers and Educators***. Jen holds a BA from Vassar College and an MA from Teachers College Columbia University, where she has also taught graduate and undergraduate classes. Follow Jen on X (@jserravallo) and Instagram (@jenniferserravallo), learn more from her website/blog: www.jenniferserravallo.com, and join the Reading and Writing Strategies Facebook Community.



Timothy Shanahan

Timothy Shanahan is Distinguished Professor Emeritus at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Previously, he was director of reading for the Chicago Public Schools, and Visiting Research Professor at Queens University, Belfast, Northern Ireland. He is author/editor of more than 300 publications including the book, ***Leveled Reading, Leveled Lives*** (Harvard Education Press, 2025). He is a past president of the International Literacy Association, and a member of the National Reading Panel. His research emphasizes the connections between learning to read and learning to write, literacy in the disciplines, and improvement of reading achievement. Professor Shanahan has co-edited the *Illinois Reading Council Journal*, and he was inducted into the Illinois Reading Hall of Fame in 2005. He is a former first-grade teacher. For more information, visit his website: www.shanahanonliteracy.com.



Lauren Tarshis

Lauren Tarshis is the *New York Times* bestselling author of the ***I Survived series*** that tells stories of young people and their resilience and strength in the midst of unimaginable disasters and times of turmoil. Lauren has brought her signature warmth and exhaustive research to topics such as the battle of D-Day, the American Revolution, Hurricane Katrina, the bombing of Pearl Harbor, and other world events. Her books, ***I Survived the California Wildfires, 2018*** and ***I Survived the Galveston Hurricane, 1900***, are no different. The ***I Survived series*** is currently being adapted into graphic novels, with ***I Survived the Nazi Invasion, 1944*** being released earlier this year. In addition to her historical fiction, Lauren has some tips on chocolate chip cookies and hiking. She lives in Connecticut with her family, and can be found online at laurentarshis.com.

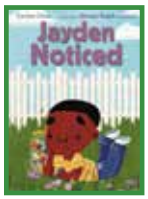
Illinois Reads Authors

Plan now to attend the **Illinois Reads Author Panels** at the 2027 IRC Conference! Featured authors will be from the **2027 Illinois Reads Books**! There are four panels planned during the conference. Come participate in this exciting chance to meet and greet Illinois Reads authors as they share the inspiration for their stories and current projects they are working on, and ask questions you've been anxious to know about your favorite characters. Following the sessions, authors will also be autographing their books in the Exhibit Hall at the Bank of Springfield Center. Books will also be available for purchase in the exhibit hall.

BIRTH TO 2ND GRADE

THURSDAY, MARCH 11, 2027
11:00 AM TO 12:00 PM BOS CENTER B-11B

Karla Clark
Grades K-2



Carolyn Crimi
Grades K-2

Jay Fleck
Birth to Age 4

Claudia Guadalupe Martínez
Grades K-2

Allison Szczecinski
Birth to Age 4

KINDERGARTEN TO 8TH GRADE

THURSDAY, MARCH 11, 2027
1:00 TO 2:00 PM BOS CENTER B-11B

Amy Alznauer
Grades 6-8

Rich Lo
Grades K-2

Jeff Miller
Grades 6-8

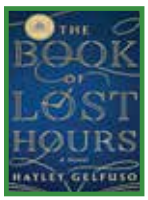
Ruth Spiro
Grades 3-5

Tom Watson
Grades 3-5

9TH GRADE TO ADULT

THURSDAY, MARCH 11, 2027
2:15 TO 3:15 PM BOS CENTER B-11B

Charlie Donlea
Adult



Hayley Gelfuso
Adult

Adib Khorram
Grades 9-12

Jo Salazar
Grades 9-12

Rebecca Stafford
Grades 9-12

ILLINOIS READS

A READING STATE OF MIND

Join IRC in the 2027 statewide literacy initiative! Six books in each age band, birth to adult, with fun activities, book clubs, author events, and more! Order bookmarks and posters today!

Visit our website for more information
www.illinoisreads.org

Ages Birth to 4

Tiny T. Rex Tries Soccer
by Jonathan Stutzman and illustrated by Jay Fleck
I was Born a Baby
by Meg Fleming
Roaring Mad Riley: An Anger Management Story for Kids
by Allison Szczecinski, M.Ed.
A Home Like This
by Laura Purdie Salas and illustrated by Miriam Nerlove
Sleepy Solar System
by Dr. John Hutton and illustrated by Doug Cenko
The Pool is Cool
by Dwayne Reed

Grades K to 2

I Know Things
by Karla Clark
Jayden Noticed
by Carolyn Crimi
Not a Dog
by Claudia Guadalupe Martínez
Pumpkin Smash!
Michelle Schaub
I am Not a Costume
by Maria DesJarlait
Chinese Kite Festival
by Rich Lo

Grades 3 to 5

Growing Together
by Ruth Spiro
My Word, Theodore!: How Books, Writing, and Reading Saved Theodore Roosevelt
by Kate Hannigan
Quetzal's Labyrinth
by Karla Arenas Valenti
Golemcrafters
by Emi Watanabe Cohen
Framed: A Graphic Novel
by Karina Evans and Andrea Bell
Stick Dog Meets Poo-Poo
by Tom Watson

Grades 6 to 8

Sisters Alone
by Shifa Saltagi Safadi
Shook
by Julian Randall
The Forgotten War: A World War II Battle on American Soil
by Candace Fleming
Where the Wild Horses Are
by Amy Alznauer
Wyatt the Wild
by Jeff Miller
Every Story Ever Told
by Ami Polonsky

Grades 9 to 12

The Sixth Faction
by Veronica Roth
Adam, Mine.
by K. Ancrum
If We Survive the Night
by Jo Salazar
One Word, Six Letters
by Adib Khorram
Verity Vox and the Curse of Foxfire
by Don Martin
Rabbit & Juliet
by Rebecca Stafford

Adult

It's Not Her
by Mary Kubica
The Book of Lost Hours: A Novel
by Hayley Gelfuso
Savvy Summers and the Sweet Potato Crimes: A Mystery
by Sandra Jackson-Opoku
Better Good: A Simple System for Creating Lasting Impact
by Scott M. Curran
Simple Sugar: Comforting Baking Recipes with Midwestern Heart
by Jenna Barnard
The Girl Who Was Taken
by Charlie Donlea

All Conference Attendees are invited to attend the

Welcome Reception

Wednesday, March 10, 2027

7:00 – 8:30 pm

PAL Hotel Ballroom

Complimentary appetizers will be served!

Hear the Authors Read

and Late-Night Autograph Session

THURSDAY, MARCH 11, 2027

8:30 – 10:30 PM PAL HOTEL BALLROOM

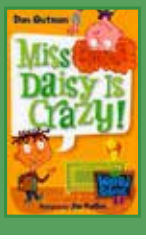
Sponsored by Anderson's Bookshops

JERRY CRAFT

JACOB GRANT

ALAN GRATZ

DAN GUTMAN



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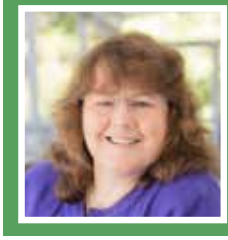
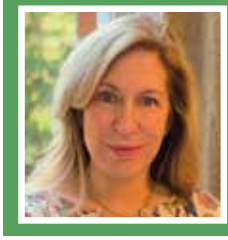
LYNDA MULLALY HUNT



DAN SANTAT

LAUREN TARSHIS



IRC Annual Membership Meeting will be held prior to start of event from 8:30 – 8:45 PM

PIZZA PARTY

for New & Preservice Teachers

Friday, March 12, 2027

3:00 – 4:00 PM

BOS CENTER EXHIBIT HALL

New & Preservice Teachers are invited to the Friday Afternoon Pizza Party. Join us for fun, games, and FREE pizza. Everyone will receive a DOOR PRIZE!

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CLOCK HOURS

The Illinois Reading Council is an approved ISBE Professional Development Provider. Registered attendees can earn one (1) clock hour for each session attended. Please note that meal functions and other events are also only one (1) clock hour. Registered presenters can also earn up to eight (8) clock hours for presenting a session. At the end of the conference, plan to submit the sessions that you attended and/or presented via the **Record of Sessions Attended Form** provided by IRC.

Please review your personal License Renewal Plan to determine which sessions fit. Be sure that your goals are broad enough to include a variety of literacy topics. The Illinois Reading Council is merely the provider. The responsibility for determining which sessions agree with your plan and are granted credits by your school district is yours.

The Illinois Reading Council will process the forms following the conference. Your clock hours will be entered directly into the **ISBE PD Plus System**. When entered, you will receive an email notification to log into your ISBE ELIS Account to complete the ISBE Evaluation Form through the ISBE PD Plus System. Once completed, you can print off your ISBE Evidence Form to keep for your records and your clock hours will be automatically added to your ISBE ELIS Account.

Plan now to attend one of the

CONFERENCE STRANDS

EARLY CHILDHOOD
Sessions focus on issues, research, and practices related to education from birth to age eight and foundational literacy.

EQUITY, INCLUSIVITY, & BELONGING
Sessions focus on affirming & responsive teaching practices that create an inclusive learning environment and sense of belonging for all students.

EVIDENCE-BASED LITERACY INSTRUCTION
Sessions focus on comprehensive, high-quality, & evidence-based instructional practices that support the seven literacy components and differentiated needs of all children.

LITERACY LEADERSHIP & COACHING
Sessions focus on issues, research, and practices related to administrators, school board members, curriculum coordinators, teacher leaders, literacy coaches, reading specialists, and other literacy leaders working to support systemic transformation for student success.

MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS
Sessions focus on issues, research, and asset-based educational practices that responsively and equitably support EL/ML students.

READING ENGAGEMENT
Sessions focus on fostering engagement and motivation in reading through relevancy, choice, and innovative practices to support dormant, disengaged, or disinterested readers.

SECONDARY READING LEAGUE
Sessions focus on issues, research, and practices related to adolescent literacy and secondary or post-secondary education..

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)
Sessions focus on supporting resilient mental health and using trauma-informed practices to create welcoming and empathetic classroom and school environments.

STEAM
Sessions focus on research, instruction, and innovative practices that embed literacy within Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and/or Math.

TEACHER EDUCATION & EARLY SERVICE
Sessions focus on issues, research, and practices related to teacher education, preservice and mentoring programs, and professional development.

TECHNOLOGY
Sessions focus on issues, research, and practices related to leveraging technology, virtual reality, and AI responsibility and equitably enhancing and expanding students' media literacy, computer literacy, and understanding of AI's impact to guide them toward becoming productive, ethical, and empathetic digital citizens.

WRITING
Sessions focus on research, instruction, and innovation in teaching writing.

YA & CHILDREN'S LITERATURE/ LIBRARIANS
Sessions focus on issues, research, and practices related to librarians or teachers building classroom libraries to promote current, diverse, high-quality children's or Young Adult (YA) literature and effective instructional practices.

IRC Conference App

Schedule, Handouts, and More

Download the **FREE IRC CONFERENCE APP** from the Apple Store, Android Marketplace, or the IRC Conference Website. The guide will feature an up-to-date conference schedule, exhibitor information, handouts, and more. The guide will be available starting **February 15, 2027**.

CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

Wednesday, March 10, 2027

Registration – Exhibit Hall in the Bank of Springfield Center	5:00 PM – 9:00 PM
Welcome Reception – PAL Hotel Ballroom Salon CD	7:00 PM – 8:30 PM

Thursday, March 11, 2027

Registration – Exhibit Hall in the Bank of Springfield Center	7:00 AM – 2:00 PM
Orientation for New Participants – PAL Hotel Bond Room	7:00 AM – 7:45 AM
Thursday Breakfast – PAL Hotel Ballroom Salon CD – *Lynda Mullaly Hunt*	7:00 AM – 8:30 AM
Exhibits – Exhibit Hall in the Bank of Springfield Center	8:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Teacher's Lounge – Meeting Space will be open for Conversation and Teamwork	8:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Hall of Councils Raffle Baskets – Exhibit Hall in the Bank of Springfield Center	8:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Sessions/Featured Speakers/Workshops	8:30 AM – 12:00 PM
Refreshments in Exhibit Area – Bank of Springfield Center Exhibit Hall	9:00 AM – 10:00 AM
Thursday Luncheon – PAL Hotel Ballroom Salon CD – *Tim Shanahan*	12:15 PM – 2:00 PM
Thursday Luncheon – PAL Freeport Rooms – *Dan Santat*	12:15 PM – 2:00 PM
Thursday Lunch Sessions – Bank of Springfield Center	1:00 PM – 2:00 PM
Sessions/Featured Speakers/Workshops	2:15 PM – 4:30 PM
Refreshments in Exhibit Area – Bank of Springfield Center Exhibit Hall	3:00 PM – 4:00 PM
Thursday PSA Banquet – PAL Freeport Rooms – *Lauren Tarshis*	6:15 PM – 8:15 PM
IRC Annual Membership Meeting – PAL Hotel Ballroom	8:30 PM – 8:45 PM
Hear the Authors Read and **Autographing** – PAL Hotel Ballroom	8:45 PM – 10:30 PM

Friday, March 12, 2027

Registration – Exhibit Hall in the Bank of Springfield Center	7:00 AM – 2:00 PM
Friday Breakfast – PAL Hotel Ballroom Salon CD – *Jerry Craft*	7:00 AM – 8:30 AM
Hall of Councils Raffle Baskets – Exhibit Hall in the Bank of Springfield Center	8:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Exhibits – Exhibit Hall in the Bank of Springfield Center	8:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Teacher's Lounge – Meeting Space will be open for Conversation and Teamwork	8:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Sessions/Featured Speakers/Workshops	8:30 AM – 12:00 PM
Refreshments in Exhibit Area – Bank of Springfield Center Exhibit Hall	9:00 AM – 10:00 AM
Friday Luncheon – PAL Hotel Ballroom Salon AB – *Alan Gratz*	12:15 PM – 2:00 PM
Friday Luncheon – PAL Hotel Ballroom Salon CD – *Donalyn Miller*	12:15 PM – 2:00 PM
Friday Lunch Sessions – Bank of Springfield Center	1:00 PM – 2:00 PM
Sessions/Featured Speakers/Workshops	2:15 PM – 4:30 PM
New and Preservice Teachers' Pizza Party – Bank of Springfield Center Exhibit Hall	3:00 PM – 4:00 PM

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special appreciation is extended to the following professionals for their extensive contributions to the success of the 2027 IRC Conference.

PUBLISHERS & BUSINESSES

Anderson's Bookshops	*Hear the Authors Read* *Featured Speaker Books* *New & Notable Books* *with Becky Anderson Wilkins*
BBB Educational Enterprieses	*Featured Speaker Books*
Imagine Learning	*Name Tag Lanyards*
Lake-Cook Distributors	*Student Helpers*
Seondary Reading League (SRL)	*Jenny French* *Katie McKnight*
Visit Springfield	*Illinois Reads Author Panels*

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE CHAIRS & STAFF

Jennifer Young, *2027 IRC Conference Chair*
Camille Lutz, *Assistant Chair & 2028 Chair*
Pat Braun, *Meal Tickets*
Lynette Evans, *New & Preservice Pizza Party*
Cindy Gerwin, *New & Preservice Pizza Party*
Karen Kortkamp, *Exhibits*
Cindi Koudelka, *Greeters/Hospitality*
Brenda Kraber, *Autographing*
Steven Layne, *Student Helpers*
Roxanne Owens, *Autographing*
Sheila Ruh, *Technology*
Katie Russell, *Greeters/Hospitality*
Sherry Sejnost, *Technology*
Carrie Sheridan, *Executive Director*
Joy Towner, *Student Helpers*
Alaina Weatherford, *Signs*
Melissa Wheeler, *Meal Tickets*
Cindy Wilson, *Autographing*

2026-2027 ILLINOIS READING COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President - **Deb Augsburger**
President Elect - **Jennifer Young**
Vice President - **Camille Lutz**
Past President - **Cindi Koudelka**
Treasurer - **Diana Wilkie**
Recording Secretary - **Melissa Wheeler**
State Coordinator - **Stephanie Benson**
Director of Membership - **Cindy Gerwin**

GENERAL CONFERENCE INFORMATION

Please take a moment to read the information below regarding the 2027 IRC Conference.

- **IRC Conference is an Open Forum**

The IRC Conference serves as an open forum and exchange of ideas and opinions. Opinions that are expressed by featured speakers, program presenters, and participants do not reflect endorsements by the Illinois Reading Council.

- **Conference Sessions**

All conference sessions will be held in the Bank of Springfield Center and President Abraham Lincoln Hotel.

- **Pre-Registration & Registration**

Pre-registered conferees may obtain their registration packets at the Registration Desk in the Exhibit Hall at the Bank of Springfield Center. On-site registration is also available. Hotel reservations and meal function tickets should be secured prior to arrival in Springfield. Registration Hours: Wednesday, March 10 – 5:00 PM - 9:00 PM Thursday, March 11 – 7:00 AM - 2:00 PM Friday, March 12 – 7:00 AM - 2:00 PM

- **ISBE PD Clock Hours**

IRC is an approved ISBE Professional Development Provider. Registered conference attendees can earn up to one clock hour for each session attended. Registered presenters can also earn up to eight clock hours for presenting a session. At the end of the conference, plan to submit your clock hours for the sessions that you attended and/or presented at the conference via an online form. The ISBE Evidence of Participation will be sent to you about two weeks after the conference.

- **Admission to Meetings**

Paid conferees receive a badge with their registration packet. Badges are required at all times and for all conference functions. Seating will be on a first-come, first-served basis. Pre-purchased tickets are required for all meal functions.

- **Special Accommodations**

Individuals who need special accommodations should make specific requests in writing to the IRC office three weeks prior to the conference in order for their needs to be met.

- **Food**

All scheduled meal functions require pre-purchased tickets. The concession area in the Bank of Springfield Center will be open during exhibit hours. Springfield restaurant information will be available at the hospitality table in the Exhibit Hall at the Bank of Springfield Center.

- **Hospitality & Information Table**

A hospitality and information table is located in the Exhibit Hall at the Bank of Springfield Center.

- **Message Board**

There will be a message board for conferees to leave notes in the registration area in the Exhibit Hall at the Bank of Springfield Center. A phone line (309-454-1341) has been established at the Registration Desk to receive emergency phone calls.

- **Lost and Found**

Inquire at the Registration Desk in the Exhibit Hall at the Bank of Springfield Center regarding lost and found items. IRC is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

- **Parking Options**

Downtown Springfield has many public parking options that cost anywhere from $5 to $10 a day to park. Details on the public parking will be available under the Resource Tab in the Conference APP.

- **Program Book and Conference APP**

In accordance with ILA guidelines, individuals have not been designated by titles. Acknowledgments to publishers and other companies for sponsoring speakers and special events are current as of this printing. Information in this program is subject to change. **Don't forget to bring a device to download the Conference App or the PDF of the Final Program Book as there will not be a printed Final Program Book.**

- **No Smoking**

In consideration of others we request your cooperation in observing the NO SMOKING regulations inside buildings.

- **Cell Phones**

Please silence phones during sessions at the conference.

- **Videotaping/Audiotaping/Photos**

Unless notified in writing, registration to the conference constitutes an agreement that the registrant's image, likeness, and appearance can be used in photographs of such events and activities. It is also not permitted to videotape, audiotape, or take photos of conference speakers without the speaker's consent.

- **Anti-Harassment Policy**

The Illinois Reading Council (IRC) does not allow harassment or discrimination of any kind at any IRC affiliated event. IRC and its affiliates will take appropriate and immediate action in response to complaints or knowledge of violations of this policy including removal from the event. To report an issue, please visit the Event Registration Desk.

- **Cancellation/Refund Policy**

Conference refund requests must be in writing and postmarked by February 1, 2027. Requests can also be faxed to (309) 454-3512 or emailed to irc@illinoisreadingcouncil.org. A $25 processing fee will be assessed. Please note that membership fees are non-refundable. Conference registrations are transferable, but replacement names must be requested by March 5, 2027.

Pre-Conference Sessions
Wednesday, March 10, 2027

7:00 – 8:30

Welcome Reception
PAL Hotel Ballroom
Salon CD

Conference Sessions
Thursday, March 11, 2027

7:00 – 7:45

Orientation to the IRC Conference (All) Presenters: Sherry Sejnost, Sheila Ruh

7:00 – 8:30

Thursday Breakfast
Of My Heart: Emotional Proximity in Children's Literature
Presenter: Lynda Mullaly Hunt

SCHOLARSHIPS

PROCEEDS FROM THE

HALL OF COUNCILS RAFFLE BASKETS

WILL BE FUNDING FIVE (5) CONFERENCE SCHOLARSHIPS!

APPLY BY JANUARY 15TH AT WWW.ILLINOISREADINGCOUNCIL.ORG/CONFERENCE-INFORMATION

8:30 – 9:30

The Research and Writing Process Behind Every I Survived Book (Grades PreK-9) *Presenter*: Lauren Tarshis

The Wheels of Reading Improvement (All) *Presenter*: Timothy Shanahan

The Art of the Memoir and How Kids Benefit From Self Reflection (All) *Presenter*: Dan Santat

Whole-Book Reading in a Digital World: Practical Moves for Deep Thinking (All) *Presenter*: Jennifer Serravallo

Awesometastic New Books! (All) *Presenter*: Colby Sharp

Novelty in Novel Reading: Refresh and Diversify your Read Alouds (Grades 4-6, Lib, Librarians & Children's/YA Literature) *Presenters*: Chrissy Blue, Kim Smith

Play In A Book: Bringing Literature to Life Through Drama (Grades PreK-9, ELL, Spec, Lib, Reading Engagement) *Presenter*: Laura St John

Active Literacy: Engaging Learning Strategies for Deepening Comprehension Using Picture Books (Grades PreK-6, Reading Engagement) *Presenter*: Kari Pawl

Writing: Let Them Cook! (All, Writing) *Presenters*: Keta Foltz, Amber Findlay, Christa Curley

The Write Tools Across the Curriculum: Helping Students Write to Learn and Communicate (All, Writing) *Presenters*: Jeanne Spiller, Lisa May

From "I CAN'T" to "I CAN!": Building Self Efficacy in Readers (Grades PreK-6, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenters*: Angela Withrow, Pamela Reilly

Each One, Reach One: The Reading Gym – Routines That Build Stronger Secondary Readers (Grades 6-12, ELL, Spec, Admin, SRL) *Presenter*: Laura Johnson

Skin, Speech, and Surveillance: Dystopian YA Literature Through a Raciolinguistic Lens (Grades 4-12, ELL, Univ Admin, Lib, Equity, Inclusivity, & Belonging) *Presenter*: Jennifer Erickson

From Balanced Literacy to Structured Literacy: A Coaching Framework for Leading Instructional Change (Grades PreK-6, Admin, Literacy Leadership & Coaching) *Presenters*: Melanie Walski, Amy Butler

Building Community Through One School, One Book: Bringing The Wild Robot to Life (Grades PreK-9, Admin, Lib, Reading Engagement) *Presenters*: Lauren Nicholas, Laurena Turner

From Voice to Impact: Culturally Relevant Small-Group Instruction That Transforms Schools (All, Equity, Inclusivity, & Belonging) *Presenter*: Larue Fitch

9:45 – 10:45

The Research and Writing Process Behind Every I Survived Book (Grades PreK-9) *Presenter*: Lauren Tarshis

The Wheels of Reading Improvement (All) *Presenter*: Timothy Shanahan

The Evolution of the Picture Book Medium in 30 Short Years (All) *Presenter*: Dan Santat

Small Group Instruction: Reading Methods that Work in ELA and Across Content Areas (All) *Presenter*: Jennifer Serravallo

Awesometastic New Books! (All) *Presenter*: Colby Sharp

Teach It So They Keep It: Explicit Vocabulary Instruction That Lasts (Grades 4-12) *Presenter*: Jenny French

Kicking off Kindergarten Stations (Centers) from Day 3! (Grades PreK-3) *Presenters*: Mindy Ashbaugh, Holly Boehs

Full Steam Ahead: How District Leaders Build, Scale, and Monitor Collective Teacher Efficacy (Grades PreK-12, Admin, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenter*: Faneshia Bolds

Reclaiming Our Educator Agency, Voice, and Passion (All, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenter*: Cindy Gerwin

Developmental Writing Pathway: Supporting Student Growth, Goal-Setting, and Ownership in Early Writing Development (Grades PreK-3, Writing) *Presenter*: McKenna Brennen

Put it in a Box: Using Graphic Organizers to Reach Struggling Readers and Writers (Grades 4-12, ELL, Spec, Writing) *Presenter*: Tracy Riebel

Teach What Works: A Tier 1 Reading Framework for K-5 School Leaders (All, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenter*: Samantha Caesar

Establishing an Effective English Language Development (ELD) Block for your Bilingual or Dual Language Programming (Grades PreK-9, ELL, Admin, Multilingual Learners) *Presenter*: Blanca Lilia Campillo

Unlock Their Potential: The Power of Student Discourse (Grades PreK-3, Admin, Literacy Leadership & Coaching) *Presenters*: Jennifer Janoso, Laura Carbajal

Shakespeare: The Original Influencer (Grades 6-12, Reading Engagement) *Presenters*: Anna Jakubowski, Brian Roach

The Little Shelter That Could: Supporting Readers and Writers Who Are Living in Homeless Shelters (Grades PreK-6, Equity, Inclusivity, & Belonging) *Presenter*: Sadia Warsi

11:00 – 12:00

So, You Want to Write a Novel... (All) *Presenter*: Lynda Mullaly Hunt

Illinois Reads Author Panel for Birth to 2nd Grades (All) *Presenters*: Illinois Reads Authors Karla Clark, Carolyn Crimi, Jay Fleck, Claudia Guadalupe Martínez, and Allison Szczecinski

New and Notable Books for Grades K-3 (Grades PreK-3) *Presenter*: Becky Anderson Wilkins

Ha! Ha! Made You Read! (Grades PreK-6) *Presenter*: Dan Gutman

Penguins, Turtles, and Pants (All) *Presenter*: Jacob Grant

Unlocking Comprehension: High-Impact Strategies for Teaching Academic Vocabulary (Grades 4-12) *Presenter*: Katie McKnight

Beyond "LITTLE KID" BOOKS: Picture Books Supporting SEL in the Upper Grades (Grades 4-9, Social Emotional Learning) *Presenters*: Melissa Taguchi, Katie Howell

Bridging Research and Practice: A Collaborative Approach to Building Reading Automaticity (Grades PreK-3, Spec, Admin) *Presenters*: Amy Brummel, Meaghan McKenna, Christina Gonzalez, Cherri Pettice

Reaching Toward Healing: How Books Help Us Find Resilience, Connection, and Hope (All, Social Emotional Learning) *Presenter*: Julie Hoffman

Making Criticality Visible: Assessing K–8 Students' Multimodal Responses to Sociocultural Issues (Grades PreK-9, ELL, Spec, Univ, Writing) *Presenter*: Sabiha Sultana

Text Integration Structures and Effective Note-Taking: One Size does not Fit All (All, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenters*: Mark Erlandson, Peg Grafwallner

AWSS - Academic Word & Sentence Study Framework (Grades 4-12, ELL, Spec, Adults, Univ, Admin, Lib, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenter*: Gena Lewis

From Talk to Text: Building Oral Language, Vocabulary, Reading & Writing with K-2 Newcomers (Grades PreK-3, ELL, Multilingual Learners) *Presenter*: Jacqueline Niziolek-Bever

Engineering Learning Cycles for Interdependent Tasks (Grades 4-12, Admin, Literacy Leadership & Coaching) *Presenter*: Kenya Mandeldove Sadler

Literacy League: When Teachers and Librarians Team Up (Grades 6-12, Admin, Lib, Reading Engagement) *Presenters*: Nichole Woodruff, Diana Wolf

Students DO the Talking (Grades 4-12, ELL, Equity, Inclusivity, & Belonging) *Presenters*: Jacquelyn Johnson, Melissa Harris, Valerie Albuck

12:15 – 2:00

Thursday Luncheon
Beyond "Just Right" Books: Teaching Students to Read Complex Text
Presenter: Timothy Shanahan

Thursday Luncheon
The Importance of A Reading Series for Culture
Presenter: Dan Santat

1:00 – 2:00

Illinois Reads Author Panel for Kindergarten to 8th Grades (All) *Presenters*: Illinois Reads Authors Amy Alznauer, Rich Lo, Jeff Miller, Ruth Spiro, and Tom Watson

New and Notable Books for Grades K-8 (Grades PreK-9) *Presenter*: Becky Anderson Wilkins

The Magic of Monthly Books: How Dolly Parton's Imagination Library Inspires Young Readers (Grades PreK-3, Admin, Lib, Early Childhood) *Presenters*: Andi Drileck, Audra Cottrell

Shrink the Paragraph and Grow the Reader: A Simple Routine for Stronger Comprehension (Grades PreK-9, ELL, Reading Engagement) *Presenter*: Ethan Lynn

What If You Were the Student? Understanding Behavior Through A Different Lens (All, Social Emotional Learning) *Presenter*: Shelley Kenow

Reignite Your Small Groups: Multimodal Moves That Engage (Grades PreK-6, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenter*: Jennifer Burchfiel

Building Confident Readers and Writers: Strategies for Dyslexia and Dysgraphia (Grades PreK-6, Spec, Univ, Admin, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenter*: Karyn Tomkinson

Writing to Learn, Writing to Show: Literacy Across the Content Areas (Grades PreK-6, Admin, Writing) *Presenter*: Patricia Pollack

How to Move from Writing Rigor to Writing Vigor for Student Success! (Grades 4-12, ELL, Spec, Writing) *Presenter*: Peg Grafwallner

Implementing SOR: The Important Thing about Literacy Leadership (All, Admin, Literacy Leadership & Coaching) *Presenter*: Jennifer Dianna

2:15 – 3:15

So, You Want to Write a Novel... (All) *Presenter*: Lynda Mullaly Hunt

Illinois Reads Author Panel for 9th Grade to Adults (All) *Presenters*: Illinois Reads Authors Charlie Donlea, Hayley Gelfuso, Adib Khorram, Jo Salazar, and Rebecca Stafford

Awesometastic New Books! (All) *Presenter*: Colby Sharp

Teaching Writing in Small Groups: Strategies and Methods for Success (All) *Presenter*: Jennifer Serravallo

Penguins, Turtles, and Pants (All) *Presenter*: Jacob Grant

The Science of Reading in Action: Strategies for Every Teacher, Every Day (Grades 4-12) *Presenters*: Jenny French and Katie McKnight

Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award: Each One Will Reach One of Your Students (If Not More)! (Grades 4-9, Librarians & Children's/YA Literature) *Presenter*: Ruth Gheysen

Stop Memorizing, Start Analyzing: Practical Spelling Strategies for the Classroom (Grades PreK-6, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenter*: Terri Kellerman

Through the Lens of Children's Literature: Exploring the Revised Illinois Social and Emotional Learning Standards (Grades PreK-6, ELL, Spec, Admin, Lib, Social Emotional Learning) *Presenter*: Laura Beltchenko

Making the Reading-Writing Connection Visible: Practical Literacy Lessons for Every Classroom (Grades PreK-9, Writing) *Presenter*: Kaitlyn Evans

The Science of Teaching Writing: Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory in Action (Grades 6-12, Adults, Univ, Writing) *Presenter*: Andrew Black

Beyond the Story: Context, History & Humanity (Grades 6-12, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenters*: Laurie Katz, Erin Logan

One Lesson, Many Learners: Using AI to Individualize Multilingual and Inclusive Literacy Instruction (Grades 6-12, ELL, Spec, Multilingual Learners) *Presenter*: Alex Bernstein

Where Do We Begin? Using Teacher Reflection to Drive Literacy Improvement (Grades 4-12, Literacy Leadership & Coaching) *Presenter*: Evelyn Murdock

Comprehending Nonfiction and Research Without Copying (Grades PreK-12, Reading Engagement) *Presenter*: Keith Polette

Wanting, Needing, Reading, Writing: Literacy Rights at the Intersections of Disability and Addiction (Grades 6-12, Spec, Equity, Inclusivity, & Belonging) *Presenter*: Sara Jozwik

3:30 – 4:30

Ha! Ha! Made You Read! (Grades PreK-6) *Presenter*: Dan Gutman

Empowered Pages: Reaching Readers Through Strong Female Representation (All) *Presenters*: Julie Hoffman, Cindi Koudelka, Jennifer Martin, Melissa Wheeler, Madison Benz

From Camp to Classroom: Activities to Establish a Strong Writing Community in the Classroom (Grades 4-12, Lib, Writing) *Presenter*: Alice McGinty

Beyond the Book: Turning Read Alouds Into STEAM Explorations (Grades PreK-6, Lib) *Presenter*: Maria Walther

The Kindergarten Playlist: Singing, Reading and Remixing the Foundations of Literacy (Grades PreK-3, Early Childhood) *Presenter*: Charmonique Joiner

Rigor without Barriers: Supporting Multilingual Learners (Grades PreK-9, ELL) *Presenter*: Haidee N Fernandez

Beyond Verbs and Nouns: Uncovering the Thinking Hidden Within Academic Standards (All, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenter*: Faneshia Bolds

Narrative Written Expression and the Power of Word Choice, with a little AI for Good Measure. (Grades PreK-6, ELL, Spec, Univ, Univ, Admin, Lib, Writing) *Presenter*: Laura Beltchenko

The Power of Picture Books in Student Identity (Grades PreK-9, ELL, Spec, Univ, Admin, Lib, Writing) *Presenter*: Sarah Cordova

Update Your Mentor Texts for Minilessons (Grades PreK-6, ELL, Spec, Lib, Librarians & Children's/YA Literature) *Presenter*: Christy Rush-Levine

From Knowledge Building to Meaning Making: Why ELA and Social Studies Belong Together (Grades PreK-6, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenter*: Shanti Elangovan

Your Story, Your Voice: Cultivating Identity Through Multimodal Memoir (Grades 4-12, SRL) *Presenter*: Kristen Walsh

Kryptonite or Superpower? Rethinking Tech's Role in Literacy (Grades PreK-9, Technology) *Presenters*: Juliana Amador, Katy Rudis

Early Reading Assessments: Making Informed Decisions about Assessment (Grades PreK-3, Admin, Evidence-Based) *Presenters*: Rachel Schachter, Peter Marti, Burcu Tatar, Katie Mooney, Elissa West-Frazier, Esther Lindstrom

Before They Can Read, Write, and Risk: Creating the Conditions for Literacy Engagement (Grades 6-9, Spec, Univ, Admin, Lib, Reading Engagement) *Presenters*: Lauren Ewanic, Emily Engimann

Utilizing Therapy Dogs in Your Classroom and Library (All, Equity, Inclusivity, & Belonging) *Presenter*: Kim Dykstra

5:00 – 6:00

College Instructors of Reading Professionals (CIRP) Reception

6:15 – 8:15

Thursday Prairie State Award Banquet
Our Mission: To Create a Generation of Readers and Learners
Presenter: Lauren Tarshis

8:30 – 8:45

Annual Membership Meeting

8:45 – 10:30

Hear the Authors Read and Autographing

HALL OF COUNCILS RAFFLE BASKETS

VISIT BOOTH 333
FOR A CHANCE TO
WIN A RAFFLE BASKET!

PROCEEDS
WILL FUND
CONFERENCE
SCHOLARSHIPS
FOR NEXT YEAR!

Admin = Administrators ELL = English Language Learners Lib = Librarians Spec = Special Needs Students Univ = Professors/Instructors

THE ILLINOIS READING COUNCIL
PRAIRIE STATE AWARD
FOR EXCELLENCE IN WRITING FOR CHILDREN

The Prairie State Award for Excellence in Writing for Children honors an Illinois author whose body of work demonstrates excellence, engenders a love of literature, and embraces an important part of the Illinois Reading Council Mission – to promote lifelong literacy.

Congratulations!
JACOB GRANT

Jacob Grant, is an author, illustrator, and dad who makes picture books. He is a winner of the prestigious 2024 Bologna Children's Book Fair Illustration Exhibition, and he's also an ok kids soccer coach. Jacob is originally from Cincinnati, and now lives with his wife and two little ones in Oak Park, Illinois. Here he can be found writing and illustrating books like ***Umami, No Fair, No Pants,*** and ***Bear's Scare***. At the conference, IRC is thrilled to announce that Jacob will be the 2027 recipient of the Prairie State Award for Excellence in Writing for Children. Jacob will be receiving his award at the Thursday Banquet and also participating in the Hear the Authors Read and Late Night Autographing event. Please join IRC in congratulating him!

Conference Sessions
Friday, March 12, 2027

7:00 – 8:30

Friday Breakfast
Creating Diversity in The New Realm
Presenter: Jerry Craft

8:30 – 9:30

Black, White, and Read All Over (All) *Presenter*: Alan Gratz

Dictation: Reimagining Spelling Instruction (Grades PreK-6) *Presenter*: Jake Daggett

Finding Home in the World of Books (Grades PreK-9) *Presenter*: Minh Lê

Building, Cultivating, and Managing a Classroom Library (All) *Presenter*: Donalyn Miller

Building Fluency in Adolescent Readers (Grades 4-12) *Presenter*: Jenny French

Differentiating Reading Instruction for Advanced Learners – YOU Got This! (Grades 4-12, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenter*: Diana Rea

Turning the Page on Toxic Friendships (All, Social Emotional Learning) *Presenter*: Ericka Bush

Play With Sounds, Build Strong Readers: Phonemic Awareness Through Everyday Word Play (Grades PreK-3, Early Childhood) *Presenter*: Terri Kellerman

The Art of Picture Books, Building Visual Interpretation, Inferenital Thinking and Insightful, Lively Discussions (All, Reading Engagement) *Presenter*: Laura Beltchenko

What Reading Builds, Writing Strengthens: Making Word Recognition Visible (Grades PreK-3, ELL, Spec, Writing) *Presenter*: Kaitlyn Evans

From Teacher to Author: How to Self-Publish, Model Authentic Writing, and Bring Your Students Along (Grades PreK-9, Writing) *Presenter*: Marisa De Astis

Literacy Without Limits: Unleashing the Joy of Reading and Shaping Tomorrow's Readers, Writers, and Storytellers (Grades PreK-3, Lib, Equity, Inclusivity, & Belonging) *Presenter*: Theresa Hickman

Multilingual Learners Are Everyone's Learners: Literacy Practices for Every Classroom (Grades 4-12, ELL, Multilingual Learners) *Presenter*: Evelyn Murdock

The Other Background Knowledge: Leveraging Sentence-Level Structures to Improve Comprehension (Grades 6-12, SRL) *Presenter*: Sarah Rosas

Immigrant Youth Stories as Catalysts for Literacy, Belonging, and Student Agency (Grades 9-12, ELL, Univ, Admin Lib, Multilingual Learners) *Presenter*: Tea Rozman

From Board Books to Lifelong Readers: Helping Parents and Teachers Come Together to Create Positive Literacy Experiences, (All, Reading Engagement) *Presenter*: Laura Kettlehut

Phonics, Phonemes & Patterns: Braiding Heggerty, UFLI, Orton-Gillingham, and Word Origins for Early Reading Success (Grades PreK-9, Admin, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenter*: Steve Oertle

Deep Fakes to Deep Thinking: The Overlap of AI Literacy and Media Literacy for Secondary Classrooms (Grades 6-12, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenter*: Matt Sherrill

9:45 – 10:45

Black, White, and Read All Over (All) *Presenter*: Alan Gratz

Penguins, Turtles, and Pants (All) *Presenter*: Jacob Grant

Better Left Unsaid: Unlocking the Power of Visual Storytelling (Grades PreK-9) *Presenter*: Minh Lê

Building, Cultivating, and Managing a Classroom Library (All) *Presenter*: Donalyn Miller

Empowering Evidence-Based Writing: Enhancing Comprehension and Mastery with AI (Grades PreK-12) *Presenter*: Katie McKnight

National Board Certification Awareness (All) *Presenter*: Kristina Henneise

Go Big or Gourd Home: Engaging Students with Pumpkin-Themed Literature in the Pumpkin Capital of the World (All, Reading Engagement) *Presenters*: Michelle O'Neall, Taylor Talbert, Kevin Daugherty

Spreading Knowledge and Dispelling Myths (All, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenters*: Lyndi Davis, Anne Brewster, Matt Layton, Louise Dechovitz, Ryann Skipworth,

Successful Strategies for Building Lifetime Readers (Grades PreK-9, Reading Engagement) *Presenter*: Steven Layne

Addressing Early Writing Across the School Day: Practical Approaches for K–2 Assessment and Instruction (Grades PreK-3, ELL, Spec, Univ, Admin, Lib, Writing) *Presenter*: Meaghan McKenna

It's Showtime! Lights, Camera, READ! (Grades PreK-6, Admin, Lib, Reading Engagement) *Presenters*: Jen Weichle, Jean Erwin, Rebecca Morton

In Pursuit of Inclusive Dreams: Using Art and Story to Envision Brighter Future Worlds (All, Equity, Inclusivity, & Belonging) *Presenters*: Melissa Wheeler, Libba Wilcox

Language as Identity: Practical Strategies for Multilingual Learners to Thrive (Grades 9-12, ELL, Univ, Multilingual Learners) *Presenter*: Maryann Hasso

Practical Literacy Strategies for the Secondary Classroom (Grades 6-12, ELL, Spec, SRL) *Presenter*: Angela Kus

The 7 Skills Every Student Needs in the Age of AI (Grades PreK-9, STEAM) *Presenter*: Terra Tarango

Race to Reading: Fueling a School-Wide Culture of Authentic Literacy and Academic Growth (All, Reading Engagement) *Presenters*: Dena Hodge-Bates, Annie Kaiser

Morphemes Matter! Introducing and Using Morphemes at All Levels (All, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenter*: Kristin Lems

Reading for Inquiry: Using Project-Based Learning to Teach Literature, History, and Human Responsibility Through Holocaust Texts (Grades 6-12, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenter*: Hanna Davis

11:00 – 12:00

The Importance of School Visits (All) *Presenter*: Jerry Craft

Attention, Memory, and Routine: Key Takeaways from the Science of Learning (Grades PreK-6) *Presenter*: Jake Daggett

New and Notable Books for Grades K-8 (Grades PreK-9) *Presenter*: Becky Anderson Wilkins

Ha! Ha! Made You Read! (Grades PreK-6) *Presenter*: Dan Gutman

Brushstrokes of Healing: Writing as a Palette for Processing Pain, Power, and Purpose (All) *Presenter*: Briana Carlson Morales

Keeping the Reading, Changing the Support: Integrating Foundational Skills Into Meaningful Literacy Experiences (Grades PreK-9, ELL, Spec, Univ, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenters*: Erin Quast, Val Garcia

Beyond Reading the Words: Building Knowledge Without Sacrificing Foundational Skills (Grades PreK-9, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenter*: Francine Swickheimer

Words That Stick: Growing Vocabulary Through Interactive Read Alouds (Grades PreK-3, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenter*: Maria Walther

Panels to Pages: Reaching Writers Through Graphic Novel Mentors (All, Writing) *Presenter*: Cindi Koudelka

Using Multimodal Texts for Disciplinary Knowledge (Grades 6-12, ELL, Spec, Univ, SRL) *Presenter*: Kara Kennedy

Writing and Morphology Strategies in the 5th-8th grade Classroom (Grades 4-9, Spec, Writing) *Presenters*: Emily Wilkie, Jessica Knight, Bethany Davis

Beyond Words: Putting Characters in the Hot Seat to Build Literacy, Empathy, and Student Voice (All, Equity, Inclusivity, & Belonging) *Presenters*: LaVerne Coke Wright, Regina Roberts

Join the Resistance – Combat the AI Push (All, Technology) *Presenter*: Trisha Honkoski

Intersectional Queer Literature: Establishing Social Justice Themes to Engage Young Adults in Critical Literacy (Grades 6-12, Univ, Lib, SRL) *Presenters*: Dwight Watson, Karla Erwin, Camden Harlan

Teaching Grammar through Writing: A Recipe for Success (Grades 4-12, ELL, Adults, Writing) *Presenter*: Keith Polette

Dyslexia in the Classroom: Recognize It, Understand It, Support It (Grades PreK-6, ELL, Spec, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenter*: Erin Nisi

How We Implemented LEXIA LETERS Training District Wide (K-5) Through the PLC Process (Grades PreK-6, Admin, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenters*: Erin Dooley, Dacia Cobarrubias

But I Don't Teach ELA! (Grades 6-12, Adults, Admin, Evidence-Based) *Presenter*: Bridgot Loesch

12:15 – 2:00

Friday Luncheon
The Sequel is You
Presenter: Alan Gratz

Friday Luncheon
The Joy of Reading: Joyful Reading Thrives in a Supportive Community
Presenter: Donalyn Miller

TEACHER'S LOUNGE

MEETING SPACE WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR CONVERSATION AND TEAMWORK!

THURSDAY FROM 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM
FRIDAY FROM 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

1:00 – 2:00

New and Notable Books for Grades 4-8 (Grades 4-9) *Presenter*: Becky Anderson Wilkins

Ink, Impact, and Sisterhood: Girls Writing Our Way to Change (All) *Presenter*: Briana Carlson Morales

Dyslexia in the Elementary Classroom: What's a Teacher to Do? (Grades PreK-6, Spec, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenter*: Anne Brewster

Oral Storytelling to Enhance Classroom Engagement (Grades PreK-6, ELL, Lib, Reading Engagement) *Presenters*: Jennifer Wagh, Srividhya Venkat

Every Student, Every Text: How Language Comprehension Skills Support Access to Complex Texts (Grades 4-12, ELL, Spec, Admin, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenter*: Sara Olson

Beyond Can't: True Stories That Challenge Bias and Inspire Inclusion (All, Equity, Inclusivity, & Belonging) *Presenter*: Shelley Kenow

Building Word Power: A Practical Approach to Morphology Instruction (Grades PreK-9, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenter*: Francine Swickheimer

Count on Literacy: Building Literacy in the Early Learning Math Classroom (Grades PreK-3, Early Childhood) *Presenter*: Jennifer Burchfiel

Two Sets of Eyes: How Students Benefit from Reading Like a Reader and Reading Like a Writer (Grades PreK-6, Admin, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenter*: Patricia Pollack

Reach Every Reader: Using Lexile Measures to Connect Students with the Right Text (All, Reading Engagement) *Presenter*: Julie Worden

No More CRAAP: Using Lateral Reading to Evaluate the Credibility of Digital Sources (Grades 4-12, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenters*: Mark Erlandson, Peg Grafwallner

2:15 – 3:15

The Importance of School Visits (All) *Presenter*: Jerry Craft

Attention, Memory, and Routine: Key Takeaways from the Science of Learning (Grades PreK-6) *Presenter*: Jake Daggett

Worth a Thousand Words: The Rich Literary World of Picture Books (Grades PreK-9) *Presenter*: Minh Lê

Brushstrokes of Healing: Writing as a Palette for Processing Pain, Power, and Purpose *Presenter*: Briana Carlson Morales

From Planning to Practice: Ensuring Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction Shows Up in Every Classroom (Grades 4-12, Admin, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenter*: Amber Pearson

It's Alive!: Energizing a Too-Long-Neglected Library (Grades 6-12, Lib, Librarians & Children's/YA Literature) *Presenter*: Jennifer Connolly

We Know What Works. So Why Aren't Students Reading? Bridging the Gap Between Literacy Strategy, Implementation, and Impact (Grades PreK-3, Reading Engagement) *Presenter*: Readonna Howell Rogers

Making Thinking Visible: Annotation, Text Coding, and Active Reading Strategies (Grades 4-9, ELL, Spec, Adults, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenter*: Timothy Hart

Visible Literacy Across the Grades: Why Reading Achievement Depends on Writing (All, Writing) *Presenter*: Kaitlyn Evans

Writing: Who is More Bored – Me or My Students? Enjoyment Leads to Success (Grades 4-9, Writing) *Presenter*: Sherri Silva

Black Boys Have Always Been Readers: Reclaiming Literacy, Identity, and Educational Freedom (All, Equity, Inclusivity, & Belonging) *Presenter*: Rhonda Russell-Henderson

Teaching Literacy in the Age of AI: Practical Strategies for Reading, Writing, and Responsible Use (All, Technology) *Presenter*: Sharon O'Neal

Beyond the Test: Rethinking Assessment for Multilingual Learners (Grades 9-12, ELL, Univ, Multilingual Learners) *Presenter*: Maryann Hasso

From Overwhelmed to Empowered: AI Tools for Literacy Teachers (Grades PreK-6, ELL, Technology) *Presenter*: Diana Brannon

Higher Order Literacy: The Keys to Comprehension (All, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenter*: Keith Polette

THEY CAN: Turning Student Data Into Student Ownership (Grades PreK-9, Evidence-Based Literacy Instruction) *Presenter*: Sydney Erichsen

What Should Students Still Carry for Themselves? (Grades 4-12, Admin, Lib, Technology) *Presenter*: Joy Pinnau

Supporting Multilingual Writers Through Belonging and Student Voice (Grades 9-12, ELL, Adults, Univ, Multilingual Learners) *Presenter*: Gargi Sethi

3:00 – 4:00

New & Preservice Teachers' Pizza Party

IRC AWARDS

Boomer Crotty Joy in Literacy Early Career Award
To Be Announced Soon
Thursday Breakfast at the PAL Hotel Ballroom Salon CD with Lynda Mullaly Hunt

Barack Obama Library Award
To Be Announced Soon
Thursday Luncheon at the PAL Hotel Ballroom Salon CD with Tim Shanahan

Family Literacy Award
To Be Announced Soon
Thursday Luncheon at the PAL Hotel Freeport Rooms with Dan Santat

Prairie State Award for Exellence in Children's Writing
Jacob Grant
Thursday PSA Banquet at the PAL Hotel Freeport Rooms with Lauren Tarshis

IRC Service Award
To Be Announced Soon
Friday Breakfast at the PAL Hotel Ballroom Salon CD with Jerry Craft

Jerry Johns Reading Educator of the Year Award
To Be Announced Soon
Friday Luncheon at the PAL Hotel Ballroom Salon CD with Donalyn Miller

Static Sticker Decal Contest
To Be Announced Soon
Friday Luncheon at the PAL Hotel Ballroom Salon AB with Alan Gratz

Order your tickets today!

COFFEE BREAK

FRIDAY, MARCH 12, 2027

8:30 to 9:30 AM

Sponsored by IRC

in the Exhibit Hall Refreshment Area

QR EXHIBIT HALL GAME

Complete your GAME SHEET for a chance to win a FREE REGISTRATION to the 2028 IRC Conference!

REMINDER!

Don't forget your device to download the Conference App as there will only be a PDF of the Final Program Book.

VISIT THE EXHIBITS

Thursday, March 11, 2027
8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Complimentary Refreshments
9:00 – 10:00 AM
3:00 – 4:00 PM

Friday, March 12, 2027
8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Coffee Break
8:30 – 9:30 AM
Complimentary Refreshments
9:00 – 10:00 AM

Hungry?

The BOS Center Concession Stand will be open in the Exhibit Hall.

Or, order your ***BOXED LUNCH*** *and head to one of the lunch time sessions planned from 1:00-2:00 PM in the BOS Center.*

2027 CONFERENCE SHIRT ORDER FORM

Preorder your ***2027 CONFERENCE SHIRTS*** by February 1, 2027. Only preorders will be available for pick-up at the IRC Conference Registration Area in the Bank of Springfield Center in Springfield, Illinois. Shirts **will not** be available for purchase at the conference.

SHORT SLEEVE T-SHIRT in Dusty Brown:

Small	$25.00	X	_____	=	_____
Medium	$25.00	X	_____	=	_____
Large	$25.00	X	_____	=	_____
XL	$25.00	X	_____	=	_____
XXL	$27.00	X	_____	=	_____
XXXL	$27.00	X	_____	=	_____

LONG SLEEVE T-SHIRT in Stonewashed Green:

Small	$30.00	X	_____	=	_____
Medium	$30.00	X	_____	=	_____
Large	$30.00	X	_____	=	_____
XL	$30.00	X	_____	=	_____
XXL	$32.00	X	_____	=	_____
XXXL	$32.00	X	_____	=	_____

PULLOVER HOODED T-SHIRT in Nordic Green:

Small	$35.00	X	_____	=	_____
Medium	$35.00	X	_____	=	_____
Large	$35.00	X	_____	=	_____
XL	$35.00	X	_____	=	_____
XXL	$37.00	X	_____	=	_____
XXXL	$37.00	X	_____	=	_____

FLEECE CREWNECK SWEATSHIRT in Charcoal:

Small	$35.00	X	_____	=	_____
Medium	$35.00	X	_____	=	_____
Large	$35.00	X	_____	=	_____
XL	$35.00	X	_____	=	_____
XXL	$37.00	X	_____	=	_____
XXXL	$37.00	X	_____	=	_____

DUE FEBRUARY 1, 2027 **TOTAL DUE** _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Make checks payable to IRC and return to:
Illinois Reading Council
1100 Beech Street, Building 8-2
Normal, IL 61761
online at: www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org
or fax to: (309) 454-3512

Method of Payment:
($5 fee if pay by credit card.) ☐ Check to IRC ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ Discover ☐ American Express

Cardholder's Name _____

Cardholder's Address _____

Credit Card Expiration Date Mo. ☐☐ Yr. ☐☐

CVV Code _____

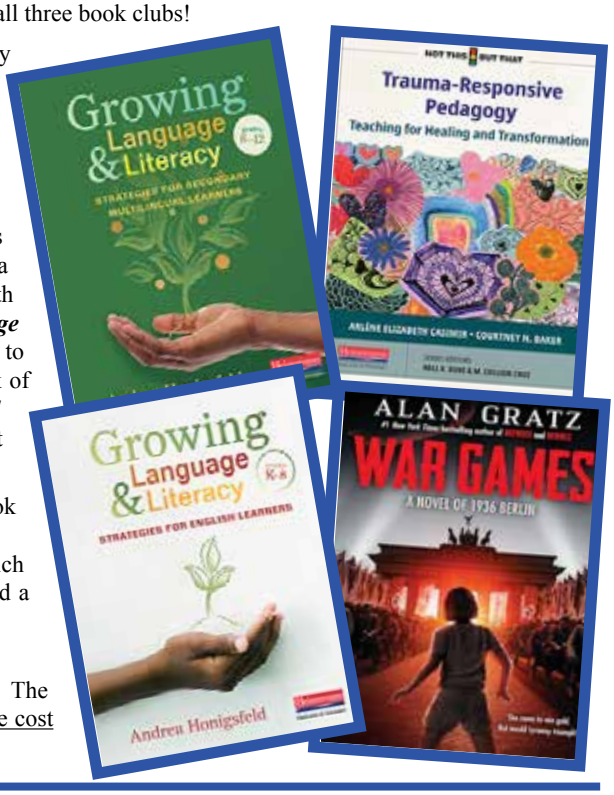
Illinois Reading Council
IRC
Empowering Lives Through Literacy

BOOK CLUB

To register, return this form with payment by October 18, 2026 to
Illinois Reading Council, 1100 Beech Street, Building 8-2, Normal, IL 61761 OR register online at www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org

Join educators from all over the state in the online **Fall 2026 IRC Book Club**! Choose one, two, or all three book clubs!

Read, reflect on, and respond to ***War Games*** by Alan Gratz and/or ***Trauma-Responsive Pedagogy*** by Arlène Elizabeth Casimir, Courtney N. Baker, Nell K. Duke, and M. Colleen Cruz and/or ***Growing Language & Literacy*** by Andrea Honigsfeld.



Beginning **October 18**, educators will participate in online discussions for the next seven-weeks. With the ***War Games*** book club, participants will learn how to hold book clubs with their own middle grade classrooms based on this historical fiction novel about Olympic gold, Nazi gold, and a daring heist during the 1936 Berlin Olympics. With the ***Trauma-Responsive Pedagogy*** book club, participants will be provided an actionable guide that offers research and inclusive frameworks to help create a trauma-responsive classroom with the tools needed to support their students through challenges. With the ***Growing Language & Literacy*** book club**,** participants will **choose between** ***Growing Language & Literacy: Strategies for English Learners*** that provides K to 8th Grade Teachers with strategies to support EL students' academic language and literacy development based on the TESOL framework of language acquisition **OR** ***Growing Language & Literacy: Strategies for Secondary Multilingual Learners*** that provides secondary 6th to 12th grade teachers practical strategies to support adolescent multilingual learners across all grade levels and content areas.

Participants who complete all assignments will be eligible to receive 15 PD clock hours for each book club. Required for participation:

- Gmail address (free at https://mail.google.com/). The Book Club uses Google Classroom, which does not work with Yahoo, AOL, Hotmail, etc. School gmail accounts may also not work and a personal gmail account will need to be created.
- Texts: Books can be purchased from the bookseller of your choice.

Register by October 18, 2026, to participate in the book club. Registration is FREE for IRC Members. The cost for non-members is $50, which includes IRC membership for one year. PLEASE NOTE: The cost of book is not included.

ONE NAME ON EACH FORM **Please print or type. Form may be reproduced.**

Name (Last)_____ (First)_____

Address_____ City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Telephone ( ) _____ Gmail Address Required _____

Are you an IRC member? _____Yes _____No Membership Number _____

BOOK CHOICE **(Check one, two, or all three book clubs):**

_____WAR GAMES **_____TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGY** **_____GROWING LANGUAGE & LITERACY K-8TH**

OR _____GROWING LANGUAGE & LITERACY 6-12TH

REGISTRATION **(Check one):**

IRC Members:

_____BOOK CLUB . . . . . FREE FOR IRC MEMBERS

Non-Members:

_____BOOK CLUB AND IRC MEMBERSHIP $50.00

(From IRC Membership Form, indicate local council choice _____)

METHOD OF PAYMENT
($2 service charge is added if paying by CC!)

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED **$_____**

☐ Check (payable to IRC)

☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ Discover ☐ American Express CVV Code _____ Credit Card Expiration Date Mo. ☐☐ Yr. ☐☐

Cardholder's Name_____ Address of Cardholder_____

Illinois Reading Council

IRC

Empowering Lives Through Literacy

IRC Webinar Series

All webinars will begin at 7:00 p.m.

IRC will be offering the Webinar Series for members only in 2026-2027. All webinars will begin at 7:00 p.m. Members who watch the live or recorded webinars can earn professional development clock hours. Mark your calendars and register to take part in this convenient, free IRC membership benefit. Members will receive monthly emails with links to register. Nonmembers can join online and email for the registration link.

September 2, 2026 ~ Timothy Rasinski

Vocabulary Instruction that Works: It's More than Word Lists

It's not enough for readers to be able to decode words accurately (phonics), they also need to know what those words mean (vocabulary). Too often, though, vocabulary instruction is relegated to word lists and work sheets. In his presentation, Tim Rasinski will present actionable, artful, and engaging approaches to develop students' vocabularies and also their love of words and word study.

October 7, 2026 ~ Pamela A. Mason

Honoring our Learners: Formal and Informal Classroom Assessments

Teachers use formal assessments to gather screening, progress, diagnostic, and summative data about their learners to inform their instruction. However, these assessments cannot capture all the ways in which the learners make sense of written text. In this session we will discuss multiple ways to collect formal and informal data on students' literacy progress and how these strategies can add nuance to the numbers provided by standardized assessments, honoring the funds of knowledge that our learners bring to classrooms every day.

November 4, 2026 ~ Barb Rosenstock

Real Life Revision Strategies

You and your students have sorted through ideas and produced rough drafts. What comes next? Revision! The 'messy middle' during revision is the point at which many student (and adult) writers throw in the towel. But revision isn't just changing a few words or "writing it again." Join children's author Barb Rosenstock as she presents practical techniques for turning drafts of any length into great writing. Learn how to write like a reader, use word counts and word banks in new ways, and consider the visual shape of a draft.

December 2, 2026 ~ Andrea Honigsfeld

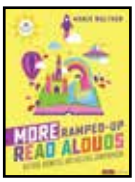
Wait, Don't Just Translate: Multidimensional Strategies for Multilingual Learners

To translate or not to translate, is that the question? Or is it more important to explore ways to use translation intentionally while implementing carefully designed, scaffolded lessons? This session is designed to explore how does translation help throughout the school day, especially in the earliest stages of language development and what strategies other than translation can be used to support newcomers' academic, language, literacy, and social-emotional growth.

January 6, 2027 ~ Maria Walther

Squeeze It In! Making Time for Meaningful Read-Aloud Experiences

Even on the busiest school days, interactive read-alouds can build knowledge and strengthen language comprehension. Join Maria to discover simple, effective ways to weave meaningful read-aloud experiences into your instructional day, even when you're using a published reading program. Explore recently published picture books and leave with practical, classroom-ready strategies that help students ponder and engage in purposeful conversations.



February 3, 2027 ~ Becky Anderson

Discovering the 2027 Illinois Reads Books

Join Becky Anderson as she presents the Illinois Reads books for 2027. Learn more about the Illinois Reads statewide literacy initiative that promotes reading for all Illinois citizens. Six books in each of the six age bands from Birth to Adult will be shared. A variety of book topics and themes are chosen for each age band, highlighting the work of Illinois Authors.

ILLINOIS READS

March 3, 2027 ~ Loren Long

My Life: Art, Stories, A Bus, A Boy, and an Island

In this webinar, Loren Long will share a bit of his origin story … "influential teachers in my childhood and influences in my art as an illustrator." And, he will share a bit of what he did leading up to his children's book career. Loren will also uncover his process for creating two recent picture books … *The Yellow Bus* and *The Boy and the Island*.

April 7, 2027 ~ Kristin Ziemke

Text and Tech: Reading All Ways

In this session, Kristin will share thinking strategies to enhance comprehension, communication, and critical thinking across print and digital texts. She'll provide ready-to-use lessons that personalize learning, build background knowledge, grow vocabulary, and support deeper reading. She'll show you how to tap students' natural curiosity with print and digital resources, resulting in learners who are inspired and empowered to develop expansive literacy skills for today's world.

May 5, 2027 ~ R. Joseph Rodríguez

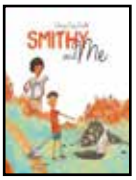
A Teacher's Right to Write & Publish: Scholars & Scribes from the Classroom

Join R. Joseph Rodríguez to learn about writing from the classroom and your own teacher's right to write and publish. Practice short forms of effective writing that lead to publication as well as longer forms through exercises and examples. Learn about the varied modes and media, which include articles, books, essays, poetry, and videos across audiences, organizations, platforms, and venues. Collect ideas to get started writing now with practices that lead to publication.

June 2, 2027 ~ Darcy Day Zoells

Enhancing Visual Literacy Through Picture Books

Applying the method of shared inquiry when reading picture books can help children with decoding and developing their ability to critically read the visual world. Humans tend to trust their eyes: "I saw it with my own eyes," "Seeing is believing." However, we know witnesses can be wrong, special effects are convincing, and biases can go unchecked. When one considers the curated and constructed nature of so much of our visually saturated world (adverting, TikTok, Instagram etc.), it's more important than ever that we look closely and question what we see. Story time is a great place to start that conversation with young children.



To register, sign into your IRC Membership Account at www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org

Illinois Reading Council

CONFERENCE HOUSING RESERVATIONS

Conference Dates – Thursday, March 11, 2027 and Friday, March 12, 2027

Special room rates have been negotiated at the hotels listed below. To obtain these special rates, reservations must be made directly with the hotel either by phone or online by **February 15, 2027**. All conference meetings and meal functions will be held at the Bank of Springfield Center and the President Abraham Lincoln Hotel. Please note there will be no shuttle service from the other hotels to the BOS Center. Downtown Springfield has many public parking options that cost anywhere from $5 to $10 a day to park. Details on the public parking will be provided in the Springfield Maps in the Program Books and on the Conference APP.

Go to www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org
Select **Conference** on the menu,
then click on **Reserve Housing Online!**

CONFERENCE HOTELS

Candlewood Suites.....$99
2501 Sunrise Drive, Springfield, IL 62703
217-522-5100
Group Code: Illinois Reading Council
About 4.7 miles south of the BOS Center

Carpenter Street Hotel.....$99
525 North 6th Street, Springfield, IL 62702
217-789-9100
Group Code: IRC – ***Phone Reservations Only***
About 0.7 miles west of the BOS Center

Drury Inn & Suites.....$161
3180 S. Dirksen Parkway, Springfield, IL 62703
217-529-3900
Group Code: IRC – 10200226
About 5.1 miles north of the BOS Center

Northfield Inn.....$129
3280 Northfield Drive, Springfield, IL 62702
217-523-7900
Group Code: READ031126
About 4.3 miles north of the BOS Center

President Abraham Lincoln Hotel.....$137
701 East Adams Street, Springfield, IL 62701
217-544-8800
Group Code: IRC – Illinois Reading Council
Located adjacent to the Convention Center

Ramada Springfield North.....$125
3281 Northfield Drive, Springfield, IL 62702
217-523-4000
Group Code: IRC – ***Phone Reservations Only***
About 4.3 miles north of the BOS Center

Residence Inn.....$179
2915 Stanford Avenue, Springfield, IL 62703
217-527-1100
Group Code: IL Reading Council
About 4.8 miles south of the BOS Center

State House Inn.....$125
101 E Adams Street, Springfield, IL 62701
217-528-5100
Group Code: IL Reading Council
About 0.7 miles west of the BOS Center

Special room rates end on February 15, 2027!

2027 IRC Conference Registration Form for March 11 - 12, 2027 in Springfield, IL

RETURN REGISTRATION FORM WITH PAYMENT TO:

Illinois Reading Council, 1100 Beech Street, Bldg 8-2, Normal, IL 61761

Email to: irc@illinoisreadingcouncil.org Fax to: 309-454-3512 Or, online at: www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org

ONE NAME ON EACH FORM **Please print or type. Form may be reproduced.**

Name (Last)_____ (First)_____

School/Business_____ City_____

Home Address_____ City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Email (*Confirmations sent by email*)_____ **Illinois Educator Information Number (IEIN)** _____

Telephone ( )_____–_____ Presenting at Conference? _____ Position/Grade Level? _____

REGISTRATION (*check one*) includes sessions on Thursday and Friday.

	On or Before February 5, 2027	After February 5, 2027
Registration for IRC Member (Membership Number: _____)		
____Current IRC Member for the Full Conference	$275	$300
____Retiree (Member)	$75	$100
____Preservice Teacher with Student ID (Member)	$75	$100
____Current IRC Member for One Day Only (Circle Choice: Thursday or Friday)	$215	$240
Registration for Non-Member (Includes one-year of IRC Membership. Select your local council: _____)		
____Non-Member for the Full Conference	$325	$350
____Retiree (Non-Member)	$125	$150
____Preservice Teacher with Student ID (Non-Member)	$105	$130
____Non-Member for One Day Only (Circle Choice: Thursday or Friday)	$265	$290

OPTIONAL MEALS AND EVENTS Check choice of menu and include payment with registration.

____**Wednesday Welcome Reception** **(PAL Hotel Ballroom Salon CD)**	FREE	FREE
____**Thursday Breakfast *with Lynda Mullaly Hunt*** **(PAL Hotel Ballroom Salon CD)**	$35	$40
_____Scrambled Eggs & Bacon _____Scrambled Eggs & Vegetarian Patty		
____**Thursday Luncheon *with Tim Shanahan*** **(PAL Hotel Ballroom Salon CD)**	$40	$45
_____Tuscan Chicken _____Vegetable Stir Fry		
____**Thursday Luncheon *with Dan Santat*** **(PAL Freeport Rooms)**	$40	$45
_____Tuscan Chicken _____Vegetable Stir Fry		
____**Thursday Boxed Lunch** **(Lunch Sessions in Bank of Springfield Center)**	$35	$40
_____Ham Croissant _____Grilled Vegetable Spinach Wrap _____Chicken Caesar Salad		
____**Thursday Banquet *with Lauren Tarshis*** **(PAL Freeport Rooms)**	$45	$50
_____Pan Seared Chicken Coq Au Vin _____Vegan Impossible Chicken Breast		
____**Friday Breakfast *with Jerry Craft*** **(PAL Hotel Ballroom Salon CD)**	$35	$40
_____Pancakes, Eggs, & Sausage _____Pancakes, Eggs, & Vegetarian Patty		
____**Friday Luncheon *with Alan Gratz*** **(PAL Hotel Ballroom Salon AB)**	$40	$45
_____Chicken Mango Chutney with Pilaf _____Cauliflower Steak Tofu Quinoa Pilaf		
____**Friday Luncheon *with Donalyn Miller*** **(PAL Hotel Ballroom Salon CD)**	$40	$45
_____Chicken Mango Chutney with Pilaf _____Cauliflower Steak Tofu Quinoa Pilaf		
____**Friday Boxed Lunch** **(Lunch Sessions in Bank of Springfield Center)**	$35	$40
_____Turkey Croissant _____Grilled Vegetable Flour Wrap _____Chicken Caesar Salad		
____**Friday Pizza Party for New and Preservice Teachers**	FREE	FREE

METHOD OF PAYMENT **TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED** **$**_____ **$**_____

(No P.O.'s accepted & $5 fee if pay by CC!)

☐ Check (payable to IRC)

☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ Discover ☐ American Express CVV Code _____ Credit Card Expiration Date Mo. Yr.

Cardholder's Name_____ Address of Cardholder_____

Special Accommodations – Individuals who need special accommodations must make specific requests in writing to the IRC office at least three weeks prior to the conference. Cancellation/Refund Policy – Requests must be made in writing by February 1, 2027. Please see the complete policy under General Conference Information or at the IRC Website. Unless notified in writing, this registration constitutes an agreement that the registrant's image, likeness, and appearance can be used in photographs of such events and activities.

Group Registration Rates

Attend the conference with a group of your staff

Group Rates per person:

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	10-19	20-39	40-59	60-79	80-99	100+
Discount		10%	20%	30%	40%	50%
Registration Fee	$275.00	$245.00	$220.00	$190.00	$165.00	$135.00

The group registration form is available online or register individually on page 31.

Be a Conference Volunteer

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

Email _____ Cell Phone _____

I would like to volunteer to work at the IRC Conference.

1. **While at the IRC Conference, I can volunteer to help for:**
   - _____ 1 hour, schedule me as needed. (Circle one or all: Thursday and/or Friday)
   - _____ 2 hours, schedule me as needed. (Circle one or all: Thursday and/or Friday)
   - _____ 3 hours, schedule me as needed. (Circle one or all: Thursday and/or Friday)
   - _____ Thursday morning block (1/2 day)
   - _____ Thursday afternoon block (1/2 day)
   - _____ Friday morning block (1/2 day)
   - _____ Friday afternoon block (1/2 day)
   - _____ Anytime, as needed.

2. **I would prefer to help in one or more of the following areas:**
   - _____ Collect tickets at a meal function
   - _____ Work at the registration booth
   - _____ Help with book sales/autographing sessions
   - _____ Help with the Tech on Call
   - _____ Help with the special events and receptions
   - _____ Help with the exhibits
   - _____ Assist with putting up or changing room signs
   - _____ Serve as a host for featured speakers
   - _____ Help with the IRC Membership Booth/Treasure Chest
   - _____ No preference, I will help as assigned.

Please send by February 1st to: Illinois Reading Council
1100 Beech Street, Building 8-2
Normal, IL 61761-1836

Or, fill out the online form on the Conference Page at www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org.

Illinois Reading Council
IRC
Empowering Lives Through Literacy

MEMBERSHIP FORM

1100 Beech Street, Building 8, Suite 2
Normal, IL 61761
Phone: 309-454-1341
Fax: 309-454-3512
Email: irc@illinoisreadingcouncil.org
Web: www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org

1 Please print or complete the form online.

Last Name _____ First Name _____ Middle Initial _____

Address _____ E-mail _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ County _____

Home Phone ( ) _____ Bus. Phone ( ) _____

School Name _____ District _____ City _____
or
Business/Institution _____ City _____

Are you a Preservice Teacher? _____ yes _____ no College/University _____

2 **List the council(s) you wish to join.**
When you join, you receive membership in the IRC, as well as membership in a local or special interest council. You must select at least one of the councils listed on the back.

1._____
2._____
3._____
4._____

3 **List the dues amount of each council you are joining.**
$50 - One year membership for IRC and one council. If you join more than one council, each additional council is $15.
$30 - Preservice Teacher membership and $5 for each additional council.

4 **Option to Purchase Print Journals.**
IRC Membership comes with online access to the *IRC Journal*. Current issues will also be sent by email quarterly to you. If you wish to purchase a print journal, it is an additional $20 per year.

Total Before Optional Print Journal _____
Add $20 Fee for Print Journal _____
TOTAL AMOUNT DUE _____

5 **Return this form with payment to:**

Illinois Reading Council
ATTN: Membership Dept.
1100 Beech St, Building 8, Suite 2
Normal, IL 61761

Paying by credit card? A $2 service charge is added.
Join Online or Fax: 309-454-3512

Method of Payment: (Sorry, no P.O.'s accepted.) ☐ Check to IRC ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ Discover ☐ American Express

Cardholder's Name _____ Credit Card Expiration Date Mo. ☐☐ Yr. ☐☐

Cardholder's Address _____ CVV Code _____

6 **In our continuing effort to provide meaningful services to our members, IRC requests the following information.**

Are you a member of the International Literacy Association (ILA)?

a. ___ yes membership # _____ expiration date _____
b. ___ no

Age
a. ___ 18-24
b. ___ 25-39
c. ___ 40-54
d. ___ 55 and over

Years in Education Profession
a. ___ 0-4
b. ___ 5-14
c. ___ 15-29
d. ___ 30 and over

Highest Degree Earned
a. ___ Bachelors
b. ___ Masters
c. ___ Doctorate

Present Position

Classroom Teacher:
a. ___ preschool
b. ___ K-3
c. ___ 4-6
d. ___ middle school/jr. high
e. ___ high school
f. ___ post Secondary

Administrator:
a. ___ curriculum/reading supervisor
b. ___ building principal
c. ___ superintendent
d. ___ other_____
_____

Other:
a. ___ librarian
b. ___ parent
c. ___ special ed. teacher
d. ___ gifted/talented teacher
e. ___ Title I /remedial
f. ___ reading specialist
g. ___ retired

Professional Areas of Interest (Check 3)
a. ___ administration
b. ___ adult literacy
c. ___ affective reading
d. ___ assessment
e. ___ children's literature
f. ___ comprehension
g. ___ content area reading
h. ___ family literacy
i. ___ holistic reading
j. ___ multilingual/multicultural
k. ___ newspapers in education
l. ___ parents and reading
m. ___ reading for gifted students
n. ___ research
o. ___ study skills
p. ___ teacher education
q ___ technology in reading
r. ___ Title I/remedial reading
s. ___ young adult literature
t. ___ young authors/writing

Illinois Reading Council Membership

Locations of IRC Local & Special Interest Council Regions by Counties

The annual membership of $50 includes membership in the Illinois Reading Council **and** a local or special interest council. The annual preservice teacher membership is $30 for one who has not been certified in the teaching profession and is working toward an initial teaching certificate. Please select the council(s) you wish to join from the list below. Residence in any of the designated council counties you join is not required. If you join more than one local or special interest council at this time, each additional council is $15. Preservice teachers pay $5 for each additional council. IRC Membership comes with online access to the webinars, book clubs, *IRC Journal*, and more. The *IRC Journal* and other membership benefits will also be sent by email to you. If you wish to purchase a print journal, it is an additional $20 per year. Follow the steps on the front of this form.

REGION 1

___ **Northern Illinois Reading Council** - (Boone, DeKalb, Winnebago, Eastern Lee & Ogle)

___ **Northwestern Illinois Reading Council** - (Jo Daviess, Stephenson, Carroll)

___ **Sauk Valley Reading Council** - (Eastern Whiteside & Henry, Western Lee, Ogle, & Bureau)

___ **Starved Rock Reading Council** - (LaSalle, Grundy, Kendall, Livingston, Eastern Bureau)

REGION 2

___ **Chicago Area Reading Association (CARA)** - (Chicago Area - Cook County within the Chicago city limits)

___ **Lake Area Reading Council** - (Western Lake, McHenry, Northwestern Cook)

___ **Suburban Council of IRA (SCIRA)** - (Eastern Lake, Northern Cook)

REGION 3

___ **Fox Valley Reading Council** - (Kane)

___ **Prairie Area Reading Council** - (Western DuPage County)

___ **West Suburban Reading Council** - (DuPage County east of Route 83 and those parts of Cook County west of Austin Boulevard excluding all areas within the Chicago city limits)

REGION 4

___ **Black Hawk Reading Council** - (Rock Island, Mercer, Western Henry & Whiteside)

___ **Illinois Valley Reading Council** - (Stark, Putnam, Marshall, Peoria, Woodford, Tazewell, Eastern Fulton, Mason)

___ **Mississippi Valley Reading Council** - (Adams, Brown, Pike, Scott, Greene, Calhoun)

___ **Western Illinois Reading Council** - (Henderson, Warren, Knox, McDonough, Hancock, Schuyler, Western Fulton)

REGION 5

___ **South Suburban Reading Council** - (Those parts of Cook Co. bounded on west by Will-Cook Rd., north by 115th St., and/or Chicago City limits)

___ **Two Rivers Reading Council** - (Kankakee, Iroquois, Northern Ford)

___ **Will County Reading Council** - (Will)

REGION 6

___ **Central Illinois Reading Council** - (Logan, Menard, Cass, Morgan, Sangamon, Christian, Montgomery)

___ **Macon County Reading Council** - (Macon)

___ **MID-State Reading Council** - (McLean, DeWitt)

REGION 7

___ **East Central-EIU Reading Council** - (Moultrie, Shelby, Cumberland, Coles, Clark, Edgar, Douglas)

___ **Illini Reading Council** - (Champaign, Piatt, Southern Ford)

___ **Vermilion Valley Reading Council** - (Vermilion)

REGION 8

___ **Lewis and Clark Reading Council** - (Macoupin, Jersey, Madison, St. Clair, Monroe, Washington, Clinton)

___ **National Road Reading Council** - (Bond, Effingham, Fayette, Marion)

REGION 9

___ **South Eastern Reading Council** - (Lawrence, Richland, Crawford, Jasper, Edwards, Clay, Wabash, Wayne, White)

___ **Southern Illinois Reading Council** - (Jefferson, Randolph, Perry, Franklin, Williamson, Saline, Gallatin, Union, Johnson, Pope, Alexander, Hardin, Pulaski, Massac, Jackson, Hamilton)

REGION 10

___ **CIRP** - (College Instructors of Reading Professionals)

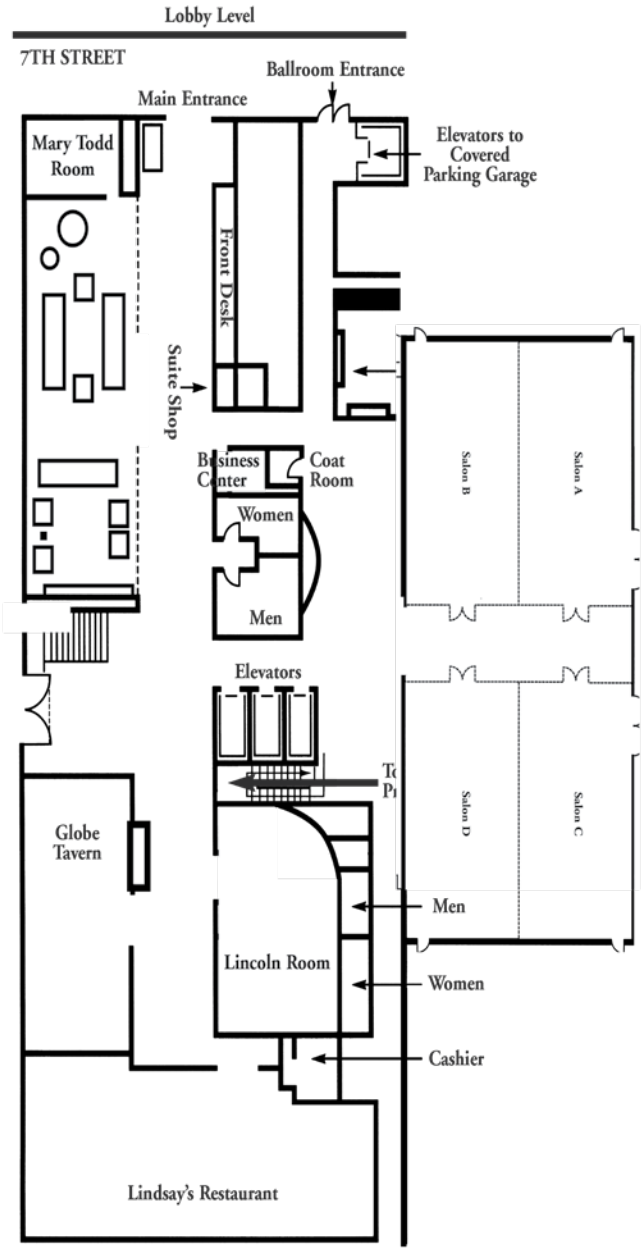
___ **ICARE** - (Illinois Council for Affective Reading Education)

___ **SRL** - (Secondary Reading League)

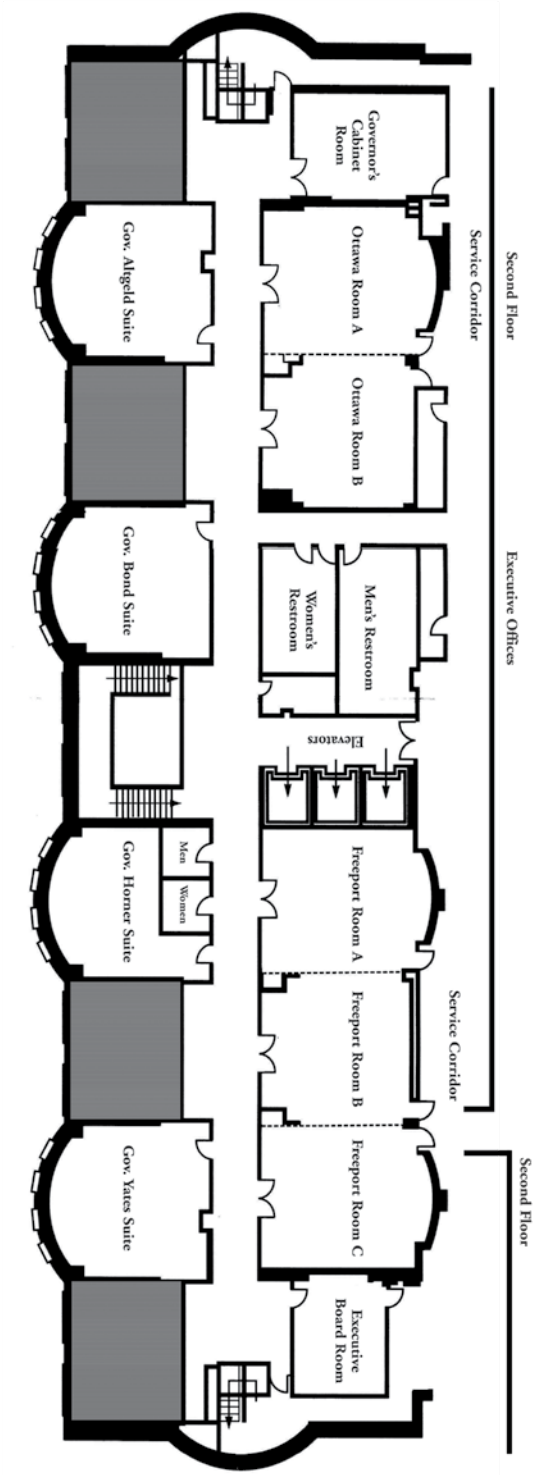
President Abraham Lincoln Springfield

701 E. Adams Street, Springfield, Illinois 62701

(Next door to the Bank of Springfield Center)



First Floor

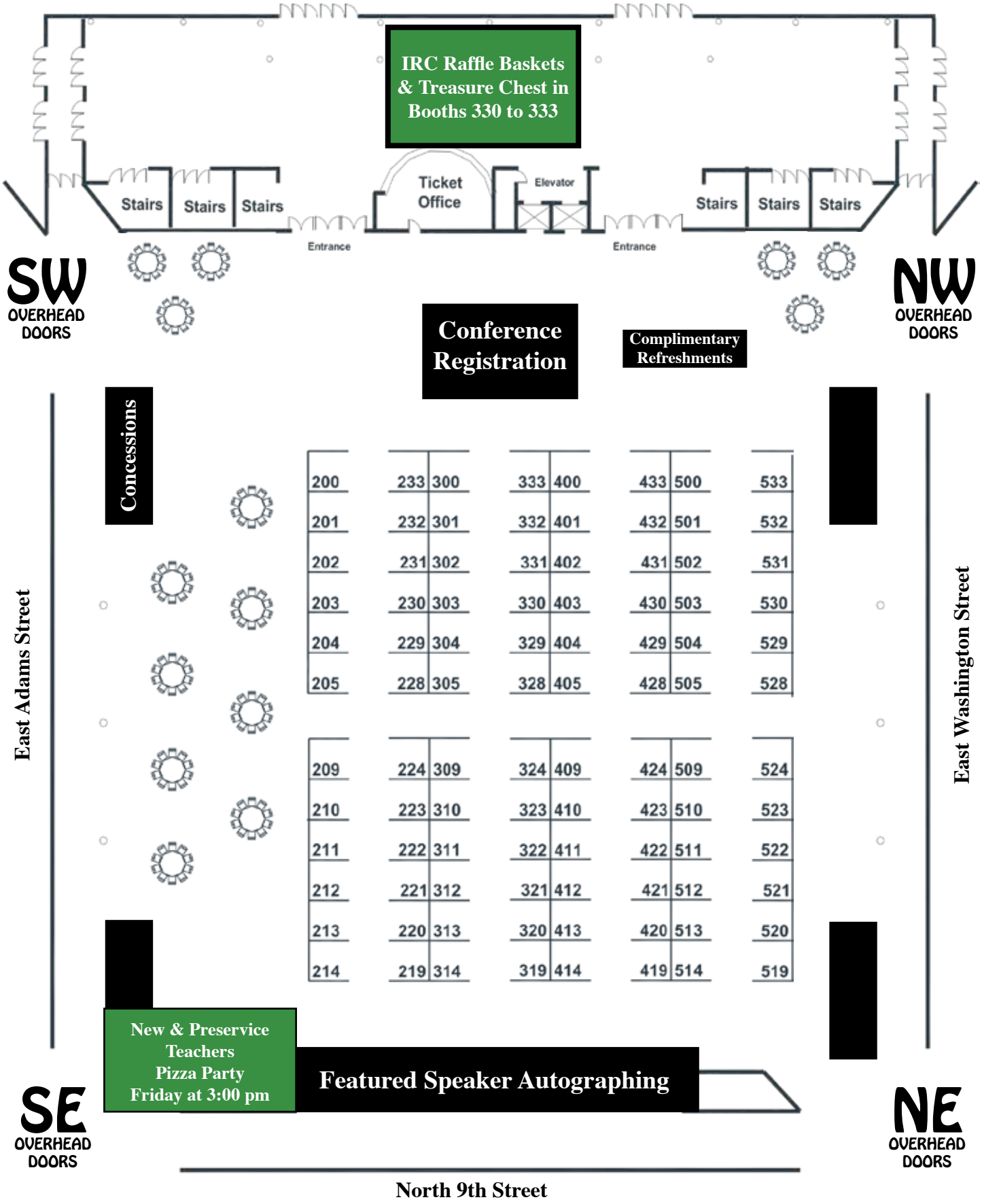


Second Floor

EXHIBIT MAP

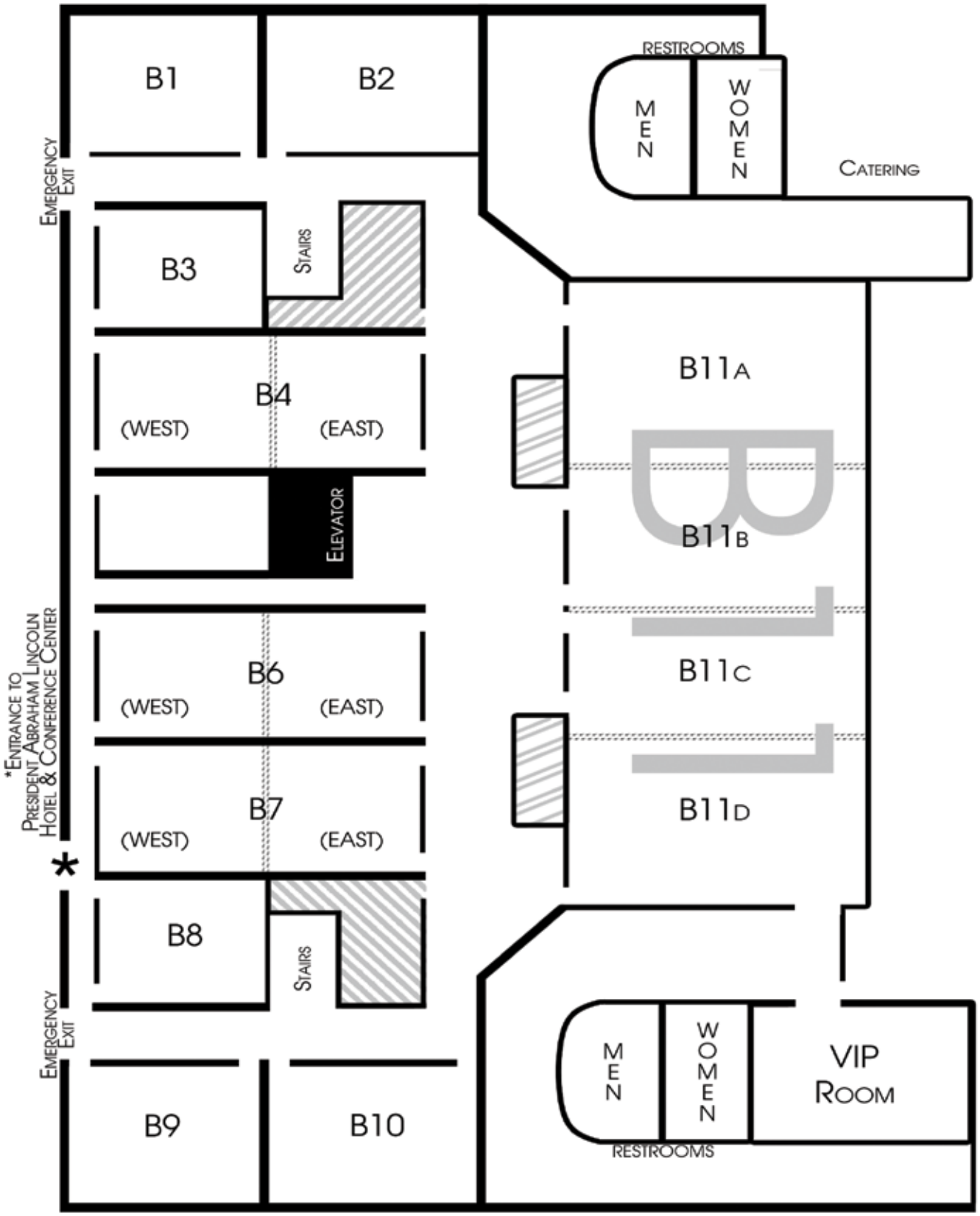
EXHIBIT HALL AT THE BANK OF SPRINGFIELD CENTER

1 Convention Center Plaza, Springfield, Illinois 62701



Bank of Springfield Center

1 Convention Center Plaza, Springfield, Illinois 62701 *(next to PAL Hotel)*



Meeting Rooms in Lower Level

ILLINOIS READING COUNCIL

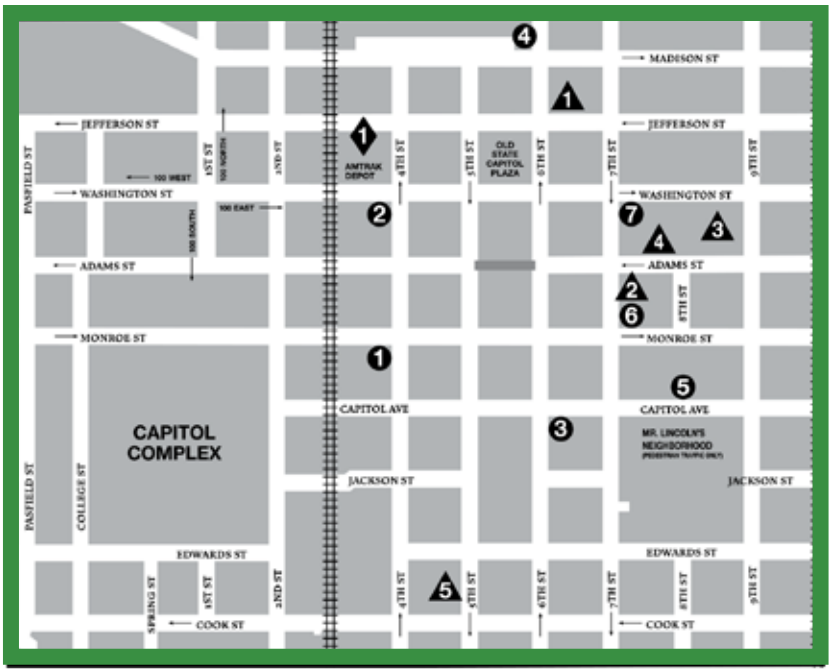
Springfield Overview

▲ HOTELS

1. Candlewood Suites
2. Carpenter Street Hotel
3. Comfort Suites
4. Drury Inn & Suites
5. Hampton Inn
6. Hilton Garden Inn
7. Microtel Inn & Suites
8. Northfield Inn & Suites
9. President Abraham Lincoln Springfield - a DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel
10. Ramada Ltd. North
11. Residence Inn
12. Wyndham Hotel - CLOSED

◆ TRANSPORTATION

1. Abraham Lincoln Capitol Airport



● PUBLIC PARKING GARAGES & LOTS

1. 4th & Monroe
2. 4th & Washington
3. 6th & Capitol
4. 6th & Madison (Presidential Museum)
5. 7th & Capitol (under public library)
6. 7th & Monroe (Near Hilton Springfield Hotel)
7. 7th & Washington (Near PCCC and President Abraham Lincoln Hotel)

▲ SITES & HOTELS

1. Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum
2. Wyndham Hotel - CLOSED
3. Prairie Capital Convention Center
4. President Abraham Lincoln Springfield - a DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel
5. Vachel Lindsay Home

◆ TRANSPORTATION

1. Amtrak

PROVIDED BY THE SPRINGFIELD ILLINOIS CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

109 North Seventh Street
Springfield, IL 62701
800-545-7300 • 217-789-2360
www.visit-springfieldillinois.com

IRC believes...

- literacy is a fundamental human right.
- literacy is a powerful tool for justice and equity and must be protected as a right for all students.
- in diversity, equity, and inclusion because representation matters.
- in protecting reader's rights, which include access to learning in a variety of methods, access to books, and access to choice.
- in the importance of libraries and librarians.
- in promoting the joy of reading, writing, and the power of story for lifelong learning.
- educators need to be equipped with peer-reviewed, sustainable, research-based practices.
- equitable assessment is a blend of informal and formal measures that informs instruction.
- learners have different strengths and needs, and therefore should have access to peer-reviewed, research-based strategies, methods, and practices within differentiated multi-tiered systems of support.
- educators need access to high quality resources and professional development that prepares them to be flexible and adaptable to best serve their students.
- families are an integral part of children's literacy lives.
- in celebrating creators of childrens' literature and young adult literature.
- that education is a valued profession, and therefore educators must be trusted and empowered as decision-makers.
- in community, collaborative conversations, and collegiality.

Illinois Reading Council
1100 Beech Street, Building 8-2
Normal, IL 61761

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 800
Springfield,, IL

Download Conference App

Download General Conference Information

Phone: 309-454-1341
Fax: 309-454-3512
Email: irc@illinoisreadingcouncil.org
IRC Website: www.illinoisreadingcouncil.org
Facebook: @IllinoisReadingCouncil
Instagram: www.instagram.com/ilreadcouncil/
Bluesky: bsky.app/profile/ilreadcouncil.bsky.social
Threads: www.threads.net/ilreadcouncil/
X: @ILReadCouncil #ircreads
Pinterest: www.pinterest.com/illinoisreading/

MISSION

The mission of the Illinois Reading Council is to provide support and leadership to all who promote and teach lifelong literacy.

VISION

The Illinois Reading Council advocates for high-quality literacy opportunities that empower all learners. As a leading literacy organization, the IRC provides access to research, materials, and methodologies to teach literacy and promote lifelong learning. As an active well-organized system of local and special interest councils and state committees, the IRC provides a supportive network for grass-roots involvement and the exchange of information for a diverse membership.