

President's Message

Happy New Year to each of you! Our new year blew in with much cold weather, throughout the country; with forceful winds and full of energy. How many of us can say that we began the year full of energy as we made those New Year resolutions? This year, as we continue to promote literacy for all learners, what resolutions have you made? Could some of them have been to:

- Promote community and parental involvement in reading;
- Advocate for literacy issues through legislation actions;
- Advocate life-long reading;
- Clarify educational issues for decision makers;
- Support research in literacy;
- Join or become more involved in your local and/or state reading council;
- Attend the Florida Reading Association and International Reading Association Conferences.



So, throw caution to the wind; try some of the above resolutions.

I had an opportunity, at a recent Duval County Reading Council meeting, to hear Alan Sitomer, former California Teacher of the Year and book author, speak about the Common Core State Standards. As the state of Florida considers making changes to the CCSS, as professionals, we need to make a strong effort to stay informed so we know which way the wind is blowing and what is causing the rough winds!

Alan Sitomer ended his presentation by reminding us why we became educators. With all the challenges we face year-in and year-out, there is such enormous satisfaction in making a positive impact on the lives of children. So, I encourage you to weather the storm and keep your eye on the goal.

May the wind blow in a positive direction for you this year.

Denise N. Pedro

FRA President



Lights! Camera! Literacy!

October 16-19, 2014

Only nine short months and the annual FRA conference will be here again. We have been working extremely hard to make this the best conference yet! What a line-up!

We have secured three of the five keynote speakers. **Dr. Steven Layne** (www.stevelayne.com) will ignite your passion in our opening keynote. Take time to check out some of his books including Igniting a Passion for Reading, Love the Baby, and Mergers. He definitely has something for everyone!

Alan Sitomer (www.alanlawrencesitomer.com) will keep us laughing as he dispels common core myths. A 2007 California Teacher of the Year, Alan is a nationally renowned speaker specializing in engaging reluctant readers. Some of his titles include Teaching Teens & Reaping Results, The Hoopster, and Daddies Do It Different.

On Saturday, **Kelly Gallagher** (www.kellygallagher.org) will entertain us with his common sense approach to reading. Kelly has dedicated the past 22 years to building and sharing his knowledge about literacy. His first book, Reading Reasons, contains practical mini-lessons that get to the heart of reading motivation. Readicide makes you take a long hard look at reading practices and holds all of us accountable for instilling the love of reading in our students. What a treat!

The author luncheons will be just as **awesome!** Friday brings us **Alane Ferguson** (www.alaneferguson.com). This Edgar Award winning author will peak your interest with her stories of forensic investigations that are the focus of her novels - The Christopher Killer (a 2008-2009 Florida Teen Read nominee), Circle of Blood, and Angel of Death. These books will certainly keep the interest of middle and high school readers!

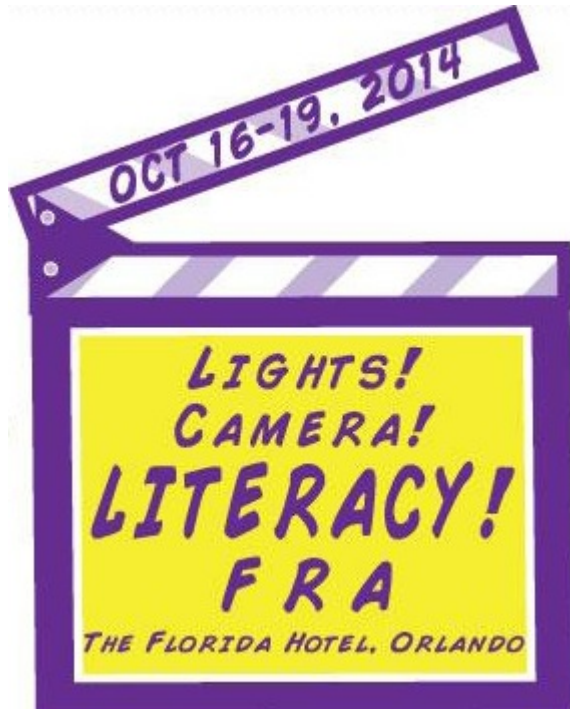
Saturday will be just as dynamic when **Anna Dewdney** (www.annadewdney.com) comes to town. Her Llama, Llama, Red Pajama book skyrocketed her onto the New York Times best-selling author and illustrator list. Her subsequent "Llama, Llama" stories have been entertaining children for many years. Join us as she shares her love of reading and writing. This is just the preview of the coming attractions.

Many authors of both children and young adult literature have committed to attending along with well-known reading researchers. We also plan to offer make and take workshops so you can go back to your classroom and implement these fantastic research-based ideas right away. Stay in touch with our website, www.FLReads.org to keep up with the stars of Lights! Camera! Literacy!

Jeanne Petronio, 2014 FRA Conference Chair

Lights! Camera! Literacy!

Call for Proposals



Florida Reading Association (FRA) members and other individuals interested in FRA's goals and purposes are invited to submit proposals to present a session(s) at the 52nd Annual Conference. Proposals must be received no later than March 15, 2014. Notification of the committee's decision will be sent to the proposal contact by June 7, 2014. Log on to our website, www.FLReads.org. Follow the conference link to submit a proposal.

The Florida Hotel and Conference Center



The conference is moving! This year we will be at the Florida Hotel and Conference Center at the Florida Mall in Orlando. We will be the **only** conference, taking up most of the space at this hotel. We have booked every break out room, both ballrooms, and blocked more than half the sleeping rooms. Hope to see you there!

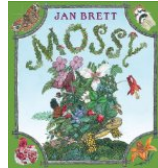
Children's Book Award



**Bee a
Reader!**

Can you believe the school year is half over! We hope you have been enjoying this year's titles for the Florida Reading Association's Children's Book Award program.

Mossy by Jan Brett



Little Nelly's Big Book by Pippa Goodhart



Lost and Found by Bill Harley



The World's Greatest Lion by Ralph Helfer



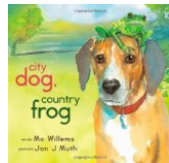
Fantastic Flying Books of Mr. Morris Lessmore by William Joyce



Eight Days Gone by Linda McReynolds



City Dog, Country Frog by Mo Willems



I Need My Own Country by Rick Walton



For stickers to show the students voted or for labels to mark your books, please visit the Children's Book Award web site at <http://www.flreads.org> and select the Children's Book Award link. Activities for this year's books are available at <http://beereader.edu.glogster.com/2013-2014-childrens-book-award/>. (The glog works best with Firefox)

Voting for this year's books can be submitted at the Children's Book Award web site any time up to April 15, 2014.

Please contact the co-chairs with any questions.

Jodi Vizzi, Hillsborough County Public Schools, Jodi.Vizzi@sdhc.k12.fl.us

Barbara Burns, Sarasota County, MumsieBurns@msn.com

Idea Share!



Florida Reading Association Reads Everywhere! Photo Contest

**Raising Future FRA Members
Clay County District Director**

Victoria Carroll- 4th Grade teacher at Clay Hill Elementary School

I will create a collage of my students wearing the FRA Reads Everywhere! T-shirt. Throughout the year, I sent my t-shirt home with students in a Ziplock bag. I included a note to encourage parents to take a photo of their child reading a book while wearing the FRA t-shirt. I am getting the word out about FRA to parents and students through this t-shirt, and I am boosting enthusiasm for reading with fun. My students look forward to the shirt coming back so it can be passed on, and seeing everyone's interesting photos!

District Directors

CLAY COUNTY READING COUNCIL (Director: Victoria Carroll)

Our November 2013 meeting included illustrator Laurie Allen Klein as a speaker. She has illustrated *Meet The Planets* and *The Balloon Trees*. Accompanying Ms. Klein was Curriculum Specialist, Laurie Hays, who shared how to incorporate standards with lessons using Klein's books.

At Our January 2014 meeting, we welcomed children's author, Ronda Friend. She spent two days at local schools, and spoke with teachers at Reading Council. She focused on inspiring everyone to write.

Our May meeting will include induction of new officers and Terrence Cavanaugh, a guest speaker from University of North Florida and member of the FRA Board of Directors. He will speak about using technology in the classroom.

DUVAL COUNTY READING COUNCIL (Director: Sandra Pruitt)

Alan Sitomer presented at our last council meeting. Alan is California's 2007 Teacher of the Year and the founder of The Writer's Success Academy. Mr. Sitomer is a nationally renowned speaker who specializes in engaging underperforming students. He has authored 16 books to date. Currently, he works as a literacy specialist with particular emphasis on helping districts, teachers, and students meet the demands of Common Core.

The Duval County Reading Council's Installation Meeting is tentatively planned for April. This will be our fourth meeting of the year. Our speaker will be children's author, Lester Laminack.

Duval County Reading Council donated over a hundred gift bags to Hubbard House, a facility for abused women and children. The bags were filled with some necessities and some luxuries that will help these women and children.

We are also continuing our Little Red Bookshelf project to support local neighborhoods and magazine subscriptions to benefit Hubbard House and Ronald McDonald House.

LEE COUNTY READING COUNCIL (Director: Shannon Barone)

Lee County Reading Council kicked off the school year with a visit from Florida author Tom Tufts. Mr. Tufts did a great presentation on using Florida historical fiction in middle school classrooms, and gave great tips to elementary and secondary educators, as well. James Dean, a Thinking Maps representative, did a presentation in the fall at one of Lee County's official Thinking Map schools. Mr. Dean, along with several teachers from Patriot Elementary, shared authentic student thinking maps and gave participants tips for using the maps in their own classrooms. Upcoming events include "Read Like an Investigator and Write Like a Reporter" with Trudy Johnson and Cindy Schurr in February and Scholastic will host an evening in April. Be sure to check out our website for more information: www.leecountyreadingcouncil.net!

LEON COUNTY READING COUNCIL (Director: Kathy Hall)

Announces 2014 Leon County Spelling Bee Champ

And the winner is.....It took almost three and a half hours, 34 rounds, and most of the words provided by the Scripps National Spelling Bee to determine the 2014 Leon County Spelling Bee Champion. This historic contest happened on the evening of January 9th at the Leon High School auditorium. The proud winner was an amazing 4th grader, Farzan Shihu. He is a student at Conley Elementary School. Competing in his first Spelling Bee against experienced students, including 8th graders, he handily spelled words unfamiliar to many adults. After several back and forth rounds with his runner-up, Julia Hernandez from Trinity Catholic Middle School, Julia misspelled the word *sedentary*. Farzan came back to seal his win by triumphantly spelling *dodecahedron* (a 12-sided cube).

Each January the Leon County Reading Council, an organization of teachers and community members who promote literacy, conducts the Leon County Spelling Bee. This year the participants were the spelling champs representing 32 elementary and middle schools, including public, private, and homeschooled students. Farzan Shihu is now the Leon County student who will go on to compete in the Big Bend Spelling Bee against the winners from nearby counties. The 31st Annual Tallahassee Democrat Big Bend Regional Spelling Bee will be held on February 8th at 9 a.m. at Tallahassee Community College, Aquilina Howell Center, 444 Appleyard Drive. Admission is free. For more information you may call 599-2181. Julia Fernandez is the alternate from Leon County, who would compete in case the winner is unable to attend. The winner of the Big Bend Regional Spelling Bee goes on to the Scripps National Spelling Bee in May in Washington, DC.

Good luck, Farzan! We like your chances of going far in your spelling career!

Future Leon County Reading Council Events:

- March 1st Dr. Seuss Breakfast Fundraiser
- Annual Narrative Writing Contest
- FRA Leadership Conference
- Planning Elections & End-of-the Year Celebration
- Membership Drive
- February Awards

PINELLAS READING COUNCIL (PRC) (Director: Margaret Adams)

PRC began the New Year by sending a newsletter to all members.

On February 25, Dr. Cher Gauweiler and St. Pete College students will share their Jamaica service learning project experiences at Stavros Institute. PRC supports their efforts by funding uniforms for Jamaican students. In addition, PRC members will be asked to donate books to send to Jamaica with the next service learning group.

Members were reminded to support the Secondary Reading Council conference at Sand Key Jan. 24-26 and IRA in New Orleans in May. Attendance at FRA leadership was also discussed. FRA Reads Everywhere t-shirts were available so members could join the fun of reading everywhere.

A spring newsletter was planned as well as a March workshop sponsored by Achieve 3000. Reading Rompers and information packets will be delivered to the Kimberly Home, a pregnancy resource center that offers support to women and families, in the spring.

For more information about PRC log on to
<https://sites.google.com/site/pinellasreadingcouncil/home>

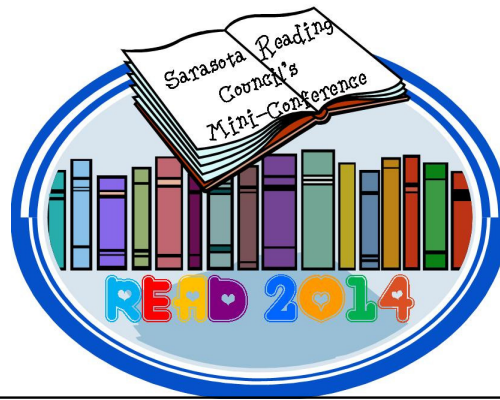
Local Reading Councils enhance the IRA/FRA experience by providing:

Connection. Joining a diverse group of professionals who share a passion for literacy, instruction, and student achievement, can expand professional relations and transform formal and informal learning opportunities.

Leadership outside classroom walls. Teaching can be an isolation career, but volunteer-led professional organizations develop and grow leadership skills that can be applied to a variety of areas.

Community building for a literate future. Councils engage whole communities in literacy awareness campaigns through recognition programs, community service, and special projects.

For the District Director for your specific area, you may directly contact any local council or access them through www.FLReads.org. Click on FRA Organizations, and then click on Local Councils and Associations. Alternately, contact the IRA Coordinator Deanne Nelson at:
dinflorida@gmail.com.



The Sarasota Reading Council

presents

READ 2014: Literacy Mini-Conference

Saturday, March 1, 2014

8:00am—1:00pm

Riverview High School

1 Ram Way, Sarasota, FL 34231

Continental Breakfast

Keynote Speaker—Tanny McGregor

(author of Genre Connections and Comprehension Connections, Heinemann)

Concurrent Sessions for grades K-12

Featured Speakers Connie Campbell Dierking and Dr. Rick DuVall

Door Prizes

Exhibits

Sarasota Reading Council Members: FREE

Sarasota County Teachers/Staff Non-SRC Members: \$10

Pre-registered Out-of-County Teachers: \$15

Registration Day Of Event: \$20 (cash or check only)

Affiliated Networks

Just Read, Florida!

In November 2013 the Department of Education's Just Read, Florida! office issued a technical assistance paper (TAPS) addressing questions concerning third grade progression and the use of the student portfolio for promotion to fourth grade. The State Legislation (Section 1008.25(6)(b)4., F.S.) states that *a student who scores a Level 1 on the Grade 3 FCAT 2.0 Reading may be promoted to fourth grade if the student demonstrates through a student portfolio that the student is performing at least at Level 2 on the statewide standardized assessment.*

The Florida State Board of Education has also delineated this legislation in rule (6A-1.094221, F.A.C.) which states that a portfolio must be accepted as meeting the portfolio option for demonstrating mastery of the required reading skills, the student portfolio must:

- Be selected by the student's teacher;
- Be an accurate picture of the student's ability and only include student work that has been independently produced in the classroom;
- Include evidence that the benchmarks assessed by the Grade 3 statewide standardized assessment have been met. This includes multiple choice items and passages that are approximately 60 percent literary text and 40 percent information text that are between 100-700 words with an average of 500 words. Such evidence could include chapter or unit tests from the district's/school's adopted core reading curriculum that are aligned with the third grade reading standards or teacher-prepared assessments that are aligned with the third grade reading standards;
- Be an organized collection of evidence of the student's mastery of the third grade reading standards Language Arts that are assessed by the Grade 3 statewide standardized assessment. For each benchmark, there must be at least three examples of mastery as demonstrated by a grade of 70 percent or above; and
- Be signed by the teacher and the principal as an accurate assessment of the required reading skills.

Additionally, that the Just Read, Florida! Office developed a Third-Grade State Portfolio in partnership with the Bay County School District. There are an array of assessments per benchmark at the 3.6-3.9 reading level and the 4.0-4.5 reading level from which teachers may select for the student portfolio. A Third-Grade Portfolio CD was provided to each district in 2010. Contact your district for more information pertaining to the Third-Grade State Portfolio.

The student portfolio and an alternative assessment are the two state-approved options for good cause exemption and midyear promotion. The student must be offered both options. However, the student must only demonstrate proficiency on one of the options in order to receive a good cause exemption or be promoted midyear.

The third grade TAPS document may be found at

[http://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-6736/dps-2013-56.pdf\(memo\)](http://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-6736/dps-2013-56.pdf(memo))

Teacher Evaluation – a critical element in a high quality educational system

Florida's public education system is in the midst of a major systemic change process. The many shifts in professional practice underway are needed because we want our students to have an efficient world-class education system that engages and prepares all students to be globally competitive for college and careers. Doing so requires a system of connected processes that enable Florida's educators to pursue more challenging learning goals for our students and deepen understanding of instructional and leadership practices that have the best probability of preparing all students for fulfilling lives.

Such a paradigm shift requires moving from the educational system of the 20th century to the 21st century system our students need going forward. This requires significant shifts in many systemic elements. Many serious questions need to be asked and sustainable answers found:

- How do we support our workforce to enable students to become college and career ready?
- How do we insure fidelity of implementation of statutes and rules related to student growth and achievement?
- How do we focus on priorities for instructional and leadership strategies?
- What are our capacities for needs assessments, collaboration, improvement planning, and strategic resourcing?
- What are our capacities for rigorous pursuit of quality through continuous progress and re-organization?

As answers to such questions evolve, many elements of the statewide public education system are undergoing change at the school, district, and state level. These include shifts in:

- Academic standards students will need for success
- Standards for educators
- Professional development priorities, polices, and practices
- Teacher and school leader evaluation systems
- Collegial learning processes
- Assessment capacities
- Data collection and analysis processes
- Problem solving and needs assessment processes
- Technology infusion for a digital age

One of the early shifts in this long-term systemic change process has been teacher evaluation practices. Florida law requires that all instructional personnel have an annual evaluation and that the proficiency of each teacher be classified in one of four broad levels: highly effective, effective, needs improvement (developing), or unsatisfactory. These summative ratings are based on a mix of observation of practices and student growth measures.

While much public attention goes to these state-required summative ratings, the heart of the paradigm shifts in progress on evaluation is embedded in the restructuring of school district evaluation systems. Florida's districts are now using evaluation processes that focus the observation of practice portion on practices identified by contemporary research as significant to student growth. The practice portion of evaluation has shifted from an end-of-the-year checklist to an ongoing monitoring and feedback process that supports growth and attention to more meaningful educator practices. Supporting this shift are on-going processes to improve:

- Inter-rater reliability processes that deepen supervisors' understanding of the expectations embedded in new district evaluation systems.
- Job-embedded professional learning processes at school sites that enable teachers to work together to improve practices addressed in evaluation indicators/components.
- Monitoring and feedback processes that give teachers meaningful support all year to improve proficiency on key instructional practices.
- Using evaluation-related processes to support key initiatives for school improvement.

While shifts in the practice portion of evaluation are in progress, so too are shifts regarding the student results portion. The historical assumption that final grades are a sufficient measure of student progress are giving way to a perspective that more detailed evidence of student progress on targeted academic standards is needed. As required by state law, at least 50% of each teacher's annual evaluation is based on student results. For subjects assessed by a required state assessment, the teacher's annual evaluation includes the results of that teacher's students on such assessments. Since more than half of all teachers have instructional assignments not measured by a state assessment, districts are developing a broad array of end-of-course exams and/or specific learning goals which serve as student growth measures in annual evaluations. These measures support analyses of student learning needs as well as evidence of teacher impact.

These two broad shifts in evaluation are resulting in increased attention to the quality of instructional practices and deepening understanding of the connection between teacher practice and student results. This is an ongoing shift. Individual educators, schools and districts will master these processes in ways that benefit students at varying rates and make ongoing adjustments to evaluation elements based on continuous improvement processes. The improvements sought in student outcomes will occur first in schools and districts that support evaluation processes with high quality professional learning practices, expand the quality and accuracy of student growth measures, and support faculty development with job-embedded collegial learning and problem-solving practices at the school level.

For more information about evaluation systems contact Dr. John Moore (john.moore@fldoe.org) at the Florida Department of Education or explore the Evaluation Systems section of the Florida School Leaders website accessed thru the state's single sign-on system (<https://portal.fldoesso.org/PORTAL/Sign-on/SSO-Home.aspx/>)

Secondary Reading Council of Florida

The Secondary Reading Council of Florida hosted their 20th Annual Winter Conference at the Sheraton Sand Key Resort in Clearwater Beach, Florida, from January 24-26, 2014. Keynote speakers, who came from all over the United States, presented their expertise on literacy in the classrooms. Dr. Timothy Rasinski, Dr. Ernest Morrell, and Dr. Enrique Puig were a few of the featured speakers.

In addition to teachers, administrators attended from across the state. Some of the administrators brought teachers from many different grade levels to learn from the experts who presented a variety of outstanding sessions. The attendees were not only able to learn from the presenters, but they were also able to learn together. One attendee commented on how the teachers who attended “bonded and gathered so many valuable experiences that they were stronger teachers and instructional leaders.” Other attendees made comments about how the “sessions with strategies were immediately applicable.”

The Secondary Reading Council President believes “the goal of the organization is to bring together educators from all different content areas, to collaborate and learn how to incorporate differentiated instruction, literacy, RtI, and other topics immediately in their classrooms.” The committee members are now preparing for a Saturday workshop with Cris Tovani on March 29th in Palm Beach County. For more information, please go to www.srcfl.org or email Rachelle Savitz at savitzrs@gmail.com.



READ 2014: Literacy Mini-Conference Registration

Participant Name: _____

School: _____

Participant Email: _____ District

Name: _____

SRC Members—Skip this step and register for FREE by signing up on PD site

____ Sarasota Non-SRC Member --\$10 (includes membership) Register on PD site and pay online or at the door.

____ Out-of-County Participant—registration is \$15 Register via email and pay online or at the door.

____ Registration at the Door—\$20 (Cash or Check only)

****Payment Options:** PayPal at the SRC website (www.sarasotareadingcouncil.com), Check or Cash
Pre-registrations received via email or the Sarasota PD site can be paid at the door with cash or check.
Complete and email out-of-county registrations to Susan Nations,
susan.nations@sarasotacountyschools.net

FRA Membership
P.O. Box 151555
Cape Coral, FL 33915
www.FLReads.org

Check Appropriate Box: [] New Member [] Renewal

Name _____

E-mail _____ Phone _____
(Required to receive electronic journals and newsletter)

Mailing Address _____ City _____

County _____ State _____ Zip code _____

School or Organization _____

Occupation: [] Elementary Teacher (PreK-5) [] Secondary Teacher (6-12)
[] District/School Administrator [] College/University Instructor
[] Retired Educator [] Full Time College Student
[] Consultant/Representative [] Other _____

I am a current member of: [] International Reading Association (IRA)
[] Local Reading Council _____

Referred for membership by a current FRA member? If so, please list both

Member's name _____ Member # _____

The membership year is from July 1 through June 30. Membership applications received after March 1 will become effective immediately and extend through June 30 of the following year.

- Membership Type: [] Regular with electronic Florida Reading Journal (FRJ) \$30.00
[] Regular with print FRJ \$60.00
[] Retired with electronic FRJ \$20.00
[] Retired with print FRJ \$50.00
[] Full Time Student with electronic FRJ \$20.00
[] Full time Student with print FRJ \$50.00

Faculty Sponsor's Signature (Required)

College/University

Make checks payable to: FRA

[] VISA [] MasterCard [] American Express Expiration Date: ___ / ___ (month / year)

Card # _____ - _____ - _____ - _____ Signature _____

NEWSLETTER

Articles for the next *FRA Newsletter* should be sent to the newsletter editor:

Danielle V. Dennis, Ph.D.
University of South Florida
Department of Childhood Education & Literacy Studies

E-mail: ddennisusf@gmail.com

NOTE: E-mailing articles allows the editor to cut and paste your information directly into the *FRA Newsletter*.

FRA Newsletter

Published by the Florida Reading Association, an affiliate of the International Reading Association



Deadlines for Upcoming Newsletter Issues:

Issue	Deadline
Spring	March 31
Summer	June 15

Join FRA on social media!



Florida Reading Association



@FLReads



FLReads