



# Spotlight

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## President's Message

Welcome to another school year and welcome autumn! What a wonderful time of year it is. Children and teachers are starting another wonderful school year - one filled with hope and excitement. Fall is here, which means crisp weather, football, fall flavors, and beautiful fall foliage.

As the new school year begins, we, at NFRC, and literacy educators throughout the country, turn our attention to best practices in literacy instruction. With the aim of maximizing language arts instruction, we try to provide instruction that meets all the needs of our students. And, we try to infuse research-based, effective literacy practices in the classroom to provide high-quality instruction.

Are you a teacher seeking to learn more about literacy research and techniques that you can implement to optimize your language arts instruction? Are you an administrator wondering how to support your teachers to provide optimal literacy instruction? Are you support personnel wondering how you can help teachers by implementing literacy activities in your class? If so, please join NFRC as we read Dr. Julia B. Lindsey's book, *Reading Above the Fray*. This book provides educators with reliable, research-based practices for developing reading skills.

There will be two Zoom meetings to discuss the book and one Zoom presentation from Dr. Lindsey followed by a Q/A:

- Meeting #1 - Tuesday, 10/18, from 6-7:30 p.m. (discuss chapters 1-5)
- Meeting #2- Tuesday, 11/1, from 6-7:30 p.m. (discuss chapters 6-10)
- Meeting #3 – Tuesday, 11/15, from 6-7:30 p.m. (Dr. Lindsey's presentation & Q/A session)

The cost of attending is free to NFRC and NYSRA members. If you are not a member, the cost of attending is \$35 for educators and \$15 for students. 4.5 CTLE credits are available after attending all three meetings. Attend one, two, or all three meetings. You can register [here](#).

Also this fall, NYSRA is offering a virtual and in-person conference – Cultivating Genius. As stated on the NYSRA website,

This year's theme, ***Cultivating Genius***, focuses on best practices, research, and instructional strategies for restoring equity and excellence in today's literacy classrooms and empowering youth to find and nurture their own genius through literacy.

Check out the NYSRA website [here](#), for more information or to register.

Wishing you a wonderful fall,

Ashlee Campbell  
2022-2023 President, Niagara Frontier Reading Council



Ashlee Campbell

### **Habitat for Humanity**

NFRC continues to partner with Habitat for Humanity to provide books and bookcases to families receiving a Habitat for Humanity house. This is a wonderful partnership that allows NFRC to give new books and a new bookcase to each family as they move into their new home. Everyone at NFRC loves books and we want all children to have access to books, not only at school and the library, but at their home.

In 2021-2022, NFRC donated books, bookcases, and book baskets to 8 families (22 children total). So far this year, NFRC has donated books and a bookcase for two more families in August & September 2022. There are typically one to two house dedications each month. This year, both the bookcases and many books have been graciously donated to NFRC from two NFRC board members. Ashlee Campbell serves as the Habitat for Humanity liaison for the 2022-2023 year. Questions or donations, please contact Ashlee Campbell ([ashleeb@buffalo.edu](mailto:ashleeb@buffalo.edu)).

## **Less May Be an Option**

There is much to teach students. More information and methods appear every year and often curricula are formatted to include new concepts and ideas. However, back in the March 2022 edition of **Spotlight**, I proposed a “pause” in education so we would find our bearings post-pandemic before adding anything new.

In the October 2022 edition of Educational Leadership, Justin Reich, an assistant professor at MIT, offers “The Power of Doing Less in Schools.” He notes that, “Most people trying to make something better will look for things to add before they look for elements to subtract.” Reich suggests that, even though it is a challenge and those who authored new approaches may get angered at their removal, subtraction of educational elements may make for better programming and ease the load on teachers as well. Areas suggested by Reich include communication, rules, bureaucracy and curriculum. Standards can be prioritized, and a smaller list of instructional topics opens the door to deeper learning. One thought is that student absences will not have such a negative effect as more time can be spent instructing a reduced curriculum.

I eagerly read this article because I felt that teachers and students needed a “pause” period. This seemed a great follow-up idea that could restart more positive approaches to current instruction. Reich points out that we should not “sugarcoat” the idea of subtraction; wholesale gutting of school curricula is not helpful. But areas that can be eased would give all individuals and groups a chance to shake themselves out and refresh. When things settle and burdens are eased, then would be the time to look at school programs as a whole and find the gaps that would need filling.

Jack Agugliaro, editor

# Join NFRC

NIAGARA FRONTIER READING COUNCIL

Become part of a community dedicated to promoting literacy education, encouraging professional development, and providing community service to the WNY area.



## NFRC members include

Educators  
Administrators  
Parents  
Education Students  
Library Media Specialists  
Community Members

Register at

<https://www.thenfrc.org/>

## Membership Includes

- Complimentary membership to the New York State Reading Association (NYSRA)
- opportunity to attend other NYSRA events
- Reduced pricing for NFRC events
- Reduced registration for NYSRA's annual conference
- Digital newsletters from NFRC and NYSRA
- PD/CTLE credits
- Professional Book Discussion Group
- Professional Networking

Questions- contact Ashlee  
[ashleeb@buffalo.edu](mailto:ashleeb@buffalo.edu)





# **New York State Reading Association Conference 2022 Cultivating Genius November 11-13 Hotel Syracuse, Syracuse, NY**

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Dear Colleagues,

It is with great pleasure that we invite you to the New York State Reading Association Annual Conference which will be held at the Hotel Syracuse in Syracuse, NY on November 12-13, 2022. A great deal of planning goes into this event to bring to you current, high-quality professional development.

Our Keynote and Featured Speakers are sure to provide exceptional and immediately implementable ideas and practices for all literacy educators—from Pre-Kindergarten to Graduate-level students. Be sure to visit [nysreading.org](http://nysreading.org) to learn more about these speakers.

We have also created an amazing group of speakers from throughout New York State to present round-table sessions and 60-minute presentations centered on our theme of Cultivating Genius. Be on the lookout for an electronic program in the coming weeks and months.

On that note, the 2022 Conference is going green as much as possible! Be sure to bring your laptop and cell phone in November. Much of the documents that are usually included in our welcoming bags (don't worry—we are still giving out welcoming bags) will be QR-codes which you can scan to learn more information or to visit an online store or website.

Lastly, we are excited about the New York State Reading Association Pre-Conference event. We have created an amazing event which will detail the history of abolition and literacy in Syracuse and the Central New York Area. Be sure to register for that event now, as seats are limited.

You can register for the Pre-Conference event on November 11, the Cultivating Genius Conference on November 12-13, book your hotel room at Hotel Syracuse, and purchase your tickets to the President's Reception for Saturday evening and the Author's Breakfast on Sunday Morning by going to <https://www.nysreading.org/2022-Conference>.

We can't wait to see you in November in Syracuse as we Cultivate Genius together!

Sincerely,  
Keith Newvine & Sarah Fleming  
2022 Conference Co-Chairs



The #NYSRA22 Pre-conference Event



# The History of Syracuse: The Crossroads of Abolition & Literacy

Friday, November 11, 2022

9:30am - 6:30pm

Please join us for a fulfilling day of learning about Syracuse's storied past of abolition and literacy. We will travel to the National Abolition Hall of Fame and Museum in Peterboro, take a walking tour of downtown Syracuse with the Onondaga Historical Association, and hear from playwright Kyle Bass, author of Possessing Harriet. In addition we will also hear from LiteracyCNY as well as local ELA educator and NEH scholar Wendy Everard.

**6 hours of CTLE credits will be provided.**



**NATIONAL ABOLITION HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM**

We'll travel to Peterboro, NY to visit this site and the Gerrit Smith Estate.



**OHA ONONDAGA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION**  
Since 1863

Take a walking tour of sites in Syracuse like this one, the famed Jerry Rescue monument, which pays tribute to the freeing of fugitive slave William "Jerry" Henry from jail.



**Kyle Bass** is the author of Possessing Harriet which premiered at Syracuse Stage, was produced by Franklin Stage Company, and opens at East Lynne Theater Company in 2022. Citizen James, or The Young Man Without a Country, about young James Baldwin, streamed nationally in 2021, and salt/city/blues premieres at Syracuse Stage in 2022. Kyle is the co-screenwriter of Day of Days (Broad Green Pictures, 2017). Other plays include Tender Rain, which will premiere at Syracuse Stage in 2023, and Bleecker Street. His opera libretto Libba Cotten: Here This Day, commissioned by The Society for New Music, premiered in 2021. A two-time NYFA fellow, Kyle is Assistant Professor of Theater at Colgate University and Resident Playwright at Syracuse Stage. He lives in Syracuse, New York.

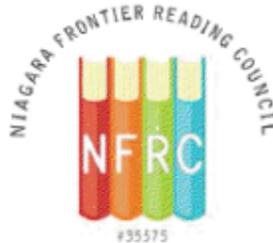
**\$80 member - \$130 non-member - \$50 student**

To register, go to:  
**nysreading.org**



# ***THE NFRC WANTS YOU!***

***IF ANY MEMBER WOULD LIKE TO TAKE A MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN THE NFRC, PLEASE EMAIL HEIDI CLARKE AT [heidiread@yahoo.com](mailto:heidiread@yahoo.com).***



## **NFRC 2022-2023 Slate of Officers & Board Members**

### **NFRC Officers 2022-2023**

- President - Dr. Ashlee Campbell
- Past President – Heidi Clarke
- Secretary - Jack Agugliaro
- Treasurer - Dr. John Strong
- Director of Membership - Carol Bush

### **Board Members 2022 - 2024**

- Judy Bradbury
- Katie Harmon
- Patty Oliphant
- Jessica Cramer

### **Board Members 2021 - 2023**

- Renee Andrzejewski
- Lisa Boyd
- Christine Woodcock
- Mary Beth Scumaci

## Chairperson Positions

**Editor of Spotlight-** Jack Agugliaro

**Web Designer & Editor-** Mary Beth Scumaci

**Social Media Chair-** Blythe Anderson

**Council Awards Chair-** Renee Andrzejewski

**Professional Development Chair-** Judy Bradbury

**Outreach Chair-** VACANT; **Co-Chair:** Judy Bradbury to oversee Little Free Libraries project

**CTLE Chair -** Patricia Oliphant

**Finance / Budget Chair-**

**Nominating Chair - Comprised of the Board**

**Liaison Chair-** Jack Agugliaro

**Audit Chair - VACANT**

**Western Regional Director 2018-21, NYSRA -** Cherie Gerych

### **About the NFRC:**

- We are non-profit educational organization chartered by The International Literacy Association since 1958.
- We are dedicated to the professional development and enhancement of literacy in our community.
- We are involved in professional issues affecting literacy.

### **NFRC Mission:**

Our mission is to promote literacy education, encourage professional development, and provide community service, which fosters literacy within Western New York. We hope to instill a passion for lifelong learning and encourage readers to build a vision of the future.

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### **Upcoming Events**

#### **Professional Book Discussion Group – *Reading Above the Fray***

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