

Exemplary Reading Program Award

Guidelines

DESCRIPTION: The Exemplary Reading Program Award is sponsored by the International Reading Association to recognize outstanding reading and language arts programs at all grade levels (elementary, middle, and high school). Its purpose is to call the public's attention to outstanding programs in schools throughout North America. Each participating state and province can choose one winning school.

OBJECTIVES: The program has five objectives: (1) to improve literacy in our society, (2) to recognize school staffs who demonstrate excellence in reading and literacy programs, (3) to encourage the development and refinement of exemplary reading/language arts programs, (4) to report to the public noteworthy efforts to improve reading/language arts, and (5) to disseminate specific information about high-quality programs so that other professionals can use it to improve their own instructional efforts.

- CRITERIA:**
1. All public, private, and parochial elementary and secondary schools are eligible for the award if the school has at least one IRA member.
 2. The school must apply with its *entire* reading program, not just one segment (i.e., Title I, resource room, library/media, teacher, one grade, and the like).
 3. The fully completed application form must be signed by the chief school officer (e.g., superintendent).
 4. The winning program should serve as a model for other schools and teachers.
 5. A school receiving the award cannot apply again within a period of five years.
 6. A school is not eligible to apply if a current state or provincial council officer is employed in the school.

JUDGING: Judging will be done by the Oregon Reading Association's Exemplary Reading Program Award (Exemplary School) Committee. The committee will review each application, applying the criteria listed in these guidelines and using a standardized scoring procedure. (See next page.) Schools meeting the criteria will be visited by representatives of the ORA Executive Board and the Exemplary School Committee.

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The school having the highest rating in each state/province will be the Exemplary Reading Program Award winner for that state/province. The name and application will be sent to IRA headquarters by the chair of each state/provincial Exemplary Reading Program Award Committee. IRA headquarters will notify each winning school of the honor and invite representatives for each award-winning school to attend the IRA annual convention, where the awards will be presented.

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| TIMELINE: | 2008-2009 | |
| | October 31 | Applications must be postmarked |
| | December 19 | Validated visits by state/provincial Exemplary Reading Program Award Committee members will be completed. |
| | January 9 | State/provincial Exemplary Reading Program Award Committee chairs will notify IRA headquarters of winners. |
| | March 1 | IRA headquarters will notify recipients of the award. |

HOW TO

PARTICIPATE: To participate in the program, complete the attached application form. Then prepare a description of your program, applying specifically the 8 guidelines **listed below**. The description may be in any order, as long as **ALL** criteria are addressed. **Please limit the description to five pages or less.** Please list the names and professional assignments of all those who were involved in completing the application. **NOTE:** Additional materials—such as books, journals, and newspapers—will not be considered as part of the application. However, you may want to display these items in your school if the ORA Award Committee chooses to make a site visit.

8 GUIDELINES

TO FOLLOW: *Your application should include evidence that*

1. The reading program facilitates student learning and is consistent with sound theory, research, and practice.
2. Teachers and students utilize a wide variety of reading materials.
3. There is evidence of a literature-rich environment, which includes teachers consistently sharing printed material with students and students exhibiting a love of reading.
4. Students demonstrate success in reading.
5. Comprehension strategies are taught and applied across the curriculum.
6. There is evidence of a strong reading-writing connection.
7. Building and district administrators provide leadership and offer support services to the program.
8. Parents and the community are involved in literacy activities.

Send your application form and program description to:

Exemplary School Award Committee Chair
Stephanie Higgins
3613 SW Willamette Avenue
Corvallis, OR 97333

Questions?
Contact Stephanie Higgins
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