New Year, New Look!

We’ve all really hit the ground running this August, haven’t we? Larger class sizes, 1:1 in the whole school, and a busy first few weeks of school have most of us running at top speed. But it’s great to be back. The IMC is now up and running and we’re excited to be back in the business of getting books in the hands of readers and helping teachers and classes in a variety of ways.

Come visit us in the IMC to check out our new look. We’ve done a little rearranging, added some new displays, and got some cool new signage courtesy of Don Whitman and his Tech kids.

Appearances aren’t the only things that have changed in the IMC. The 1:1 initiative changes the way we teach and conduct business in our classrooms and other school spaces. We’ve been adjusting in the IMC as well. We’ve converted what used to be our laptop lab space in the back of the IMC to a “charging station.” Students can bring their devices here to charge and to work, and classes are still welcome to reserve the space. The desktop lab is still up and running and is available for students and classes to use to print. As always, to sign up to use IMC space, just use the calendar on Sharepoint.

We’re looking forward to seeing classes in the IMC for book talks, book shopping, and classes. The freshman English classes will be coming through for their annual orientation, and Health classes will be coming in for instruction on digital citizenship and online safety. Our mission statement in the IMC, “we are here to help and happy to do so” applies to everyone, and we welcome teachers to take advantage of the opportunities in the IMC. Here are a few things we can do for you, either in the IMC or in your classroom:

- Book talk pleasure reading books to classes for Independent Novel Units or for topic-specific reading related to curriculum
- Put together a book cart of materials for research purposes
- Teach and review with students the proper way to research and find information using the school subscription databases (and not Google!)

Our goal here in the IMC is that you and your students always feel comfortable coming in for help, for a book recommendation, or just for a chance to browse. Please feel free to e-mail or stop by to see what we can do for you in the IMC. Have a great year!
Once again, NCHS is participating in the Abraham Lincoln Readers’ Choice Award, sponsored by the Illinois State Library Media Association.

Each year, 20 books are nominated by high school students, teachers, and librarians in the state of Illinois. Students who read at least four of the chosen books are eligible to vote for their favorite. Past Abe award winners include *The Fault in Our Stars*, *Divergent*, and *Hunger Games*.

The nominees this year look amazing! For a full list, stop by the IMC, but meantime, here are my favorites so far:

**One Shot at Forever**, by Chris Ballard: This book is special because it’s a true story that takes place in a small Illinois town. The 1971 Macon High School baseball team’s new coach, Lynn Sweet, had no experience, and yet his team, the smallest in Illinois history to make the State final, represented heart, commitment and defying all odds.

**Orphan Train**, by Christina Baker Kline: Between 1854 and 1929, so-called Orphan Trains ran regularly from the East Coast to the Midwest, carrying thousands of abandoned children whose fates would be determined by pure luck. Would they be adopted by a loving family, or face a childhood and adolescence of forced labor and servitude? This fictional recounting of actual historical events is powerful and gripping, horrifying and uplifting at the same time.

**Rot & Ruin**, by Jonathan Maberry: Trust me, I’m the last person who would voluntarily read a book about zombies, but when I grudgingly picked this one up over the summer, I was sucked in, big time. This book had my heart racing, I was flipping pages as fast as I could, and best of all, you will absolutely fall in love with the characters. Amazing.

**We Were Liars**, by E. Lockhart: This is a book that goes beyond what it looks like on the surface. Rich girl Gat spends her summers on her family’s private island off the coast of Massachusetts with her cousins. However, she cannot piece together her memories of a buried tragic event that happened the summer she turned 15.

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Visit our Scholastic Book Fair in the IMC Oct. 23—30. Your purchases help us get new books for the library!