

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Illinois Principals Association Names Jaclynn Shoufler as 2025 Herman Graves Award Recipient

Springfield, IL – The Illinois Principals Association is pleased to announce that Jaclynn (Jacie) Shoufler, principal of Riverton Elementary School, Riverton Community Unit School District #14, has received the 2025 Herman Graves Award. Shoufler was announced as the winner at the association’s annual conference on October 21, 2025, in Peoria, IL.

The Herman Graves Award, sponsored by Horace Mann Companies of Springfield, IL, was established in 1991 to recognize outstanding service to IPA. Herman Graves was selected as the first honoree, and the award was established because of the intrinsic contributions he made to the Association and his enthusiasm for the profession. Regional winners are chosen from the 21 regional areas of the Illinois Principals Association. From these elite administrators, a state winner is chosen by a committee composed of IPA Past Presidents.

“Jacie epitomizes all aspects of the type of leader the IPA recognizes with the Herman Graves Award,” states IPA Executive Director Dr. Jason Leahy. “She provides outstanding leadership in her learning organization. She supports her peers in her Region. She strongly advocates on behalf of her colleagues statewide. Jacie is well-deserving of this recognition.”

Jacie Shoufler has been a member of the Illinois Principals Association for 21 years. During this time, she has served as State Director, Region Director, and as a member of the Abe Lincoln Region of the Illinois Principals Association (*includes schools in Christian, DeWitt, Logan, Macon, Menard, Moultrie, Piatt, Sangamon, and Shelby counties*). Shoufler has also represented school principals as part of the ISBE Unified Academic Achievement Standards Policy Definition Task Force and the State Superintendent’s Principal Advisory Council. Shoufler has also been recognized by her peers as Abe Lincoln Elementary Principal of the Year, Reaching Out and Building Bridges Award, regional Herman Graves Award.

Shoufler has supported the development of other school leaders by serving as a mentor to current and aspiring school leaders and participates in “Women Empowering Women,” that comprises school leaders across four IPA regions. Shoufler has advocated for the principalship and her school by hosting former State Representative Tim Butler as “Principal for a Day.” Finally, Shoufler supports the principalship by consistently attending the IPA Annual Conference since 2008, professional development activities within the Abe Lincoln region, and most recently attended the 2024 UNITED conference co-hosted by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP).

Shoufler’s peers and colleagues shared the following:

“Under (Jacie’s) leadership, Riverton Elementary School has implemented new programs to improve instruction in reading and math. Jacie maintains a student-centered focus; leading the implementation of Book Blast, individualized mental-health therapy, and the construction of a new playground. She is also a strong advocate for the profession and is a leader within our

region. Colleagues often seek advice from Jacie as she is well respected. She mentors new and inexperienced principals, seeks to improve her knowledge through professional learning, and serves the Illinois Principals Association as its strongest champion within our region. There is no individual more deserving of the Herman Graves Award.”

- Brad Polanin, Superintendent, Riverton CUSD #14

“Jacie is a leader in our region and county. She currently serves as the Abe Lincoln State Director for the Illinois Principals Association. Jacie has held the position of State Director since 2023 and previously served as the Region director since 2016. She also serves within the Sangamon County Schoolmasters organization on both the Elementary School Principals and the Curriculum Development committees. Jacie is instrumental in serving the IPA and area leaders in our area and state.”

- Megan Doerfler, Assistant Principal/Curriculum Director, Williamsville Jr. High School

“Jacie has been an active member of the IPA for several years. She continues to serve on the board in the Abe Lincoln Region in various roles and continues to assist others in their roles on the Abe Lincoln Region Board. She takes on new challenges and continues to recruit and promote the Illinois Principals Association. She is an excellent candidate for the Herman Graves Award.”

- Jen Carter, Assistant Principal, Riverton Elementary School

Jacie Shoufler resides in Williamsville, Illinois with her husband Clay, principal of Williamsville Jr. High School, and their three children - Blake, Isabelle, and Gavin. Shoufler received her Master's in Educational Leadership from the University of Illinois at Springfield and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Elementary Education at Illinois College.

The Illinois Principals Association is a leadership organization which serves over 7,000 educational leaders throughout the state of Illinois and whose mission is to develop, support, and advocate for innovative educational leaders. For more information about the IPA, please visit www.ilprincipals.org.

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