



2026 Event Details



*This I Believe is NPR Illinois' annual essay program for Illinois high school seniors;
An expression of belief on the verge of adulthood.*

NPR Illinois asks class of 2027 high school seniors to share what they believe! This I Believe was started by radio journalist Edward R. Murrow in 1951 to allow anyone to distill the guiding principles by which they live.

The Rotary Club of Springfield Sunrise has partnered with NPR Illinois since the local program began in 2007 and provides a monetary award to the selected authors. The Illinois Times also provides support to the program by printing the selected essays in an issue.



A “Meet the Authors” evening event will be held at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum where the authors will deliver their essays from the stage on November 4, 2026.

NPR Illinois will air the essays as recorded by the selected authors the last two weeks of October (at approximately 7:45 am and 4:45 pm). The essays and audio will also be posted at nprillinois.org. Previous essays are available on the website at nprillinois.org under the “Community Voices” tab.

2026 DEADLINES & PROGRAM DATES

DATE	ITEM	NOTES
Sep 1	Essay Submissions Accepted	Go to nprillinois.org under the “Community Voices” tab
Sept 30	Essay Deadline (11:59:59 pm)	All essays submitted at nprillinois.org
Oct 12 & Oct 13	Notifications made	Notifications made to students, families, teachers
Oct 19 - Oct 23 Oct 26 – Oct 30	Essays run on NPR Illinois	At approximately 7:45 am & 4:45 pm
TBD	Essays in the newspaper	TBD
Nov 4	Meet the Authors, 6:30 to 8 p.m.	6 p.m. Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum