



Lincoln Public Schools

"An educational system with a tradition for excellence, challenged by growth and diversity, is dedicated to building a partnership of home, school, and community, in order to provide educational opportunity through standards-based curriculum and high quality instruction so that all students can learn the skills needed to be productive citizens in a global society."

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

To the Lincoln Public School Community:

The holiday season is upon us and that means that the school year is well underway. With this newsletter, we hope to bring you up to date with some of the activities and initiatives that we believe serve you and most importantly, our students, in a rewarding and enriching way. This is the first such newsletter during my tenure.

Central to the functioning of any successful school district is continuous and open communications between administration, staff and teachers on one hand, and students and their parents or guardians on the other. We hope to accomplish this through this newsletter, emails, Global Connect messages and of course, community participation in school sponsored events. Naturally, we welcome your input and suggestions regarding any and all of our goals.

With every best wish to you and yours for a happy and safe holiday season, I am sincerely yours,
Georgia Fortunato

Fairlawn ELC Friends are Responsible, Caring, & Polite

The Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports program at Fairlawn ELC is the cornerstone of student life. Teachers and support staff recognize students for being examples of good behavior among their peers. Students are rewarded both individually and in their classrooms. Each class earns tallies which are accumulated towards a specific reward. Students may individually earn rewards and be entered into a weekly drawing. A winner is drawn on Fridays, and is announced over the intercom and then invited to the main office. The student is given a *Bear Winner of the Week Certificate* and

gets to choose a surprise from the prize bin. Every month, individual bear recipients and classroom rewards are recognized in the FELC Newsletter. Students also enjoy working together to achieve a goal they can all enjoy.

The halls of FELC are lined with reinforcements picturing FELC students demonstrating appropriate behaviors in each school situation. On October 27th, all FELC students attended a special enrichment program facilitated by Judy Buch, a renowned ventriloquist. Mrs. Buch introduced FELC to her *people-oids*, a colorful cast of characters, including *Bearly Good*, *Daisy* and *Cosmo* - just to name a few, with an important message for students regarding conflict resolution. She used her puppets to encourage positive behaviors and demonstrate how the

choices we all make affect others. Mrs. Buch captured the attention of her audience which consisted of PK- Gr.1 students, staff, and parents. Mrs. Buch urged students to S.T.O.P.- Stop, Think about Options, and make a Plan when faced with a difficult decision.

Joyce Ruppell, Principal of Fairlawn ELC adds, "Everyday we see the students at FELC growing in their understanding of what it means to be responsible, caring, and polite. PBIS has assisted all adults to establish an environment where appropriate behavior is the norm. Teaching behavioral expectations and rewarding students for following them is a much more positive approach than waiting for misbehaviors to occur."

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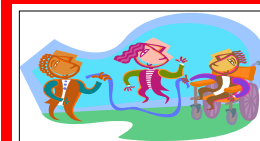
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Music Program is a Central Highlight

The arts play an integral part in the learning program of all Lincoln Schools. At Central Elementary, one of the highlights of the students' experience is the opportunity to participate in the many musical activities offered throughout the school year.

Under the capable direction of Mrs. Kelly Conlon, music teacher, along with the assistance of her colleagues on the school staff, Central students are afforded opportunities to learn and perform not only in weekly music classes, but are able to become involved in band, chorus, hand bell choir, musical productions and integrated activities that support other academic concepts.

The band enjoys an exceptionally high rate of student involvement with 56 of the 72 fifth grade students participating. Practice is held once a week, and two or three performances are held during the school year. A large majority of students who participate in the Central program continue on with their involvement in the instrumental program upon entering the Middle School.

The chorus is made up of 42 fourth and fifth grade students who meet before school each week. Three performances are held during the year, at which time the students demonstrate to parents and the community the musi-

cal skills they have developed throughout the year. The hand bell choir has approximately 50 members, who begin preparing for performances after the Holiday Season. The choir presents a program towards the end of the school year.

As a part of their classroom program, students learn to play the recorder. Fourth and fifth graders present two concerts during the year that are performed for their schoolmates and also for parents. This program provides the students with the opportunity to read music and participate in a performance that demonstrates their increased knowledge of musical notation and other music concepts.

Each year, all Central students participate in a musical production that is a highlight of the school year. Plans are already well underway for this year's program "A Little Bit Country", which will feature a country music theme. These musical productions attract a very large audience of parents, grandparents and relatives who are very impressed with the quality of the performances.

Perhaps the most important aspect of the music program is the support it gives to academic programs. Through the integration of music with other disciplines, the students readily grasp abstract concepts that enhance



their academic development. This year each grade level will participate in a musical performance that supports the science or social studies curriculum. The themes for these performances are: Grade Two, Insects; Grade Three, Sound and Pitch; Grade Four, Human Skeleton; and Grade Five, Landforms. The active involvement of all Central students in the various aspects of a quality music program provides them with the opportunity to perform, gain self-confidence and serves as one of the highlights of their school year. The strong support of the community in fostering the student's interest in music is truly appreciated.



Saylesville Elementary's School-wide Read-Aloud Program

Read-alouds, or reading text aloud to students, is an essential component of an effective literacy program and one that we use at Saylesville on a daily basis. Read-alouds allow children to hear and see the thinking that experienced readers, teachers, do as they read. As the teacher reads, he/she models his/her thinking, questioning, predicting, analyzing, making connections, etc. In addition to modeling effective reading strategies, this practice allows for students to become engaged in text that would normally be above his/her reading level, and it provides opportu-

nities for students to hear someone read with fluency, expression and reflection. It also allows for students to learn new vocabulary in the context of a story and to internalize the practices that readers do and that we ask them to do as they read.

All teachers at Saylesville read aloud to their students every day. They may read a chapter or two from a novel, a short story, a section of non-fiction text and/or a picture book. In addition to students hearing a variety of literature read in their classroom, we also

implemented a school-wide read aloud program three years ago.

Each month at our school-wide meeting, a new book is given to every homeroom teacher and others, such as the librarian, reading teachers and special subject teachers to share with the students. The teachers read the book aloud to their students, and then they all discuss the story and students respond to it verbally, in writing and/or through



Saylesville's Read-Aloud Program continued...



drawing. We then display some of the student's responses in the display case in the lobby, right outside of the office. In addition, at the next school-wide meeting, before the new book is given out, various students are selected to share their response to the book as well.

The books that we use each year are

selected by a group of teachers and they all support a theme. Themes in the past have been friendship, peace and democracy. This year our theme is humor and our first book is *Those Darn Squirrels!* Written by Adam Rubin and illustrated by Daniel Salmieri. The students look forward to their teacher receiving a special book, which is presented in a gift bag. Once everyone returns to their classrooms after the meeting, they have a few minutes to open the

bag and enjoy the new story.

We still have nine books planned for the remainder of the year. Please ask your child about these special read-aloud books. Also, please feel free to visit the public library or see Ms. Koczera, our librarian, to borrow a copy so that you can read it. I'm sure that your child wouldn't mind having the story read aloud again!

-Margret Knowlton, Principal

Student Led Conferences Improve Home/School Communication at LMS

Lincoln Middle School's journey toward student-led conferences began almost seven years ago, when a small group of teachers attended the NELMS Conference. During the conference, we had the opportunity to observe a presentation on student-led conferences. Several teachers from Team 5 and other teams also visited Spotlight middle schools throughout southern New England and discovered that this design for conferences was the preferred method. This format for parent/teacher/child interaction regarding the student's progress in school seemed to address the concerns that many teachers had about traditional conferences, including how to create positive and constructive communication between home and school as well as more actively engage students in their academic success.

In 2006, with the opening of the new middle school in Lincoln, Team 5 teachers decided that this was the perfect opportunity to try a new format for conferences. After consulting with our administrators and gaining permission to pilot student-led conferences, we set about the task of preparing the students. Each student was required to select and analyze work from all of their classes. Students were responsible for assessing their performance both in and outside of

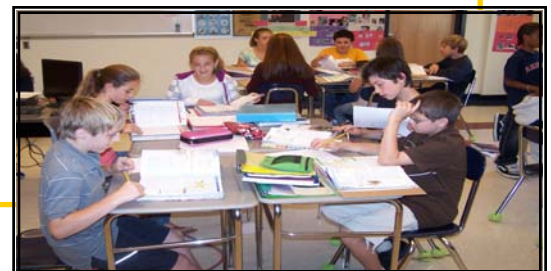
class, and considering how that behavior affected their overall success in school. Finally, students created two goals for themselves for the upcoming quarters. Students also practiced conducting a conference with a peer in preparation for the actual meeting with their parent or guardian.

On the day of the conferences, children on Team 5 escorted their significant adult into the assigned classroom, introduced him/her to the supervising teacher and retrieved their portfolios. Generally, two to three conferences occurred simultaneously. Students sat beside their parent/guardian and shared their work, analysis and academic goals. The teacher was ever present, answering questions and discussing work with the student and parent. However, the child was primarily responsible for orchestrating the conference. At the end of the session, the student, teacher and significant adult worked to create a third goal. Time was also built into our schedule to allow for parents to meet with individual teachers if needed.

Upon reflection, student-led conferences proved to be a successful replacement to the traditional parent-teacher format. Now, students actively engaged in their academic achievement. They worked with their parents/guardians to identify strengths and weakness, and created strategies to ensure positive outcomes. Parents were no longer

rushed through a 5-8 minute conference with a series of teachers. Sessions lasted from ten to twenty-five minutes; there was no time limit because our students were conducting the meeting. Thus, parents/guardians had ample time to engage in constructive conversations regarding their child's progress in school, both with the student and the teacher. We noticed that our attendance for conferences increased from 60% to 90% with the introduction of the student-led format. Not only were the conferences more constructive, positive and engaging, but we were able to form partnerships with more parents.

Since the pilot year, other teams in our building have adopted the student-led conference design. Team 5 teachers, along with teachers who have since participated in this initiative, have helped to train all staff members in this conference design. The 2009-2010 school year will mark the first year that student-led conferences will be conducted throughout Lincoln Middle School. In our quest to encourage positive home/school communication as well as develop responsibility and academic reflection in our classrooms, student-led conferences provide the opportunity for productive dialogue between students, parents and teachers.



The Compass Team Guides Lincoln High School Assessment

In March of 2008, Lincoln High School completed its decennial evaluation by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. Subsequent to that very positive evaluation, LHS took the initiative to participate in NEASC's first ever professional development activity to align the school's improvement plans to the standards for accreditation. A team of educators, termed the Compass Team (after the name of the seminar), has worked for the past two summers on the school's instructional strategies.

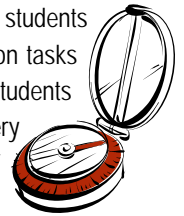
This diverse and dynamic instructional leadership team is comprised of LHS teachers Mrs. Tracey Cook, Social Studies; Mrs. Patricia Kilsey, Special Education and Transition Coordinator; Ms. Mary-

ann Mitchell, Business; Mr. Paul Dalpe, Proficiency Based Graduation Requirements Coordinator; Mr. Jay Schofield, English Department Chair; Mr. Marc Cobb, Assistant Principal; Mr. George Kilsey, Assistant Principal; Mrs. Charlotte Tavares, Administrative Liaison; Mrs. Melinda Smith, Director of Curriculum; and Mr. Kevin McNamara, Principal. The team focused on developing activities for the common planning time that high school teachers participate in during the school day. Last year, teachers focused on the implementation of our school-wide rubrics and developing additional strategies to heighten student engagement. During the development of the common planning agendas, the NEASC facilitators praised the group's work.

In the 2008-9 school year, NEASC's Commission on Public Secondary Schools Director Janet Allison and Associate Director Ann Ashworth visited the school. Ms. Allison viewed student exhibitions and Ms. Ashworth spoke with teachers about the implementation of the common planning agendas. From the quality work observed on these visits,

Lincoln High School was chosen to present at the *Showcase of Model School Programs* in October 2009.

LHS teachers Mrs. Diane Silva-Pimentel, Mr. Ronny Almeida and Mr. Paul Dalpe joined Principal Kevin McNamara in presenting how the adoption of exhibition and portfolio as graduation requirements have driven improvements in teaching and learning at the high school. The presentation focused on what changes must happen in all classrooms in order to support students as they prepare to successfully complete exhibition and portfolio. Not the least of these changes is the adoption of school-wide rubrics. These school-wide rubrics ensure that students are assessed by common indicators no matter the teacher or course. Additionally, all students are assessed by common tasks which are given to all students in every course in every grade regardless of level.



"Lincoln High School continues to develop plans and programs to improve teaching and learning. In order to ensure that all students achieve at high levels, clear and thoughtful planning must take place. With the work the Compass team, this process is on solid ground at LHS."

- Kevin McNamara, Principal
Lincoln High School

LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Ariana Lefebvre, Grade 11, recently organized an assembly for juniors and seniors focused on the dangers of tanning as part of her capstone project. Megan Rothschild, a spokesperson from the New England Melanoma Foundation, spoke at LHS on October 22. She told students about her obsession with

tanning and her ensuing battle with skin cancer.

Ariana became passionate about educating fellow teens about the dangers of skin cancer after her grandmother battled the disease. Ariana attended a conference in Boston that helped her to spread the word to teenagers about the dangers of tanning.

"Everyone was really into the assembly. Lots of kids asked for pamphlets at the end of the assembly. I was really glad to see how into it everyone was", said Ariana when asked about her classmates reactions.



Future LSEAC Meeting Dates:

- Lonsdale Elementary School - February 10, 2010
- Central Elementary School - May 12, 2010
- Lincoln High School - June 2, 2010

Lincoln Special Education Parent Advisory Committee

ARE YOU A PARENT OR TEACHER OF A SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENT IN THE LINCOLN SCHOOL DISTRICT?

Learn more about the innovative Special Education programming the Lincoln Public Schools offers to our students. Parents and Teachers of children PK-12 are encouraged to attend the informational meeting.

Please contact Chairperson Barbara Crosby via phone at 724-8213 or via email at bcrosby1@cox.net for more information about LSEAC.





RECOGNITION OF OUR INVALUABLE PROFESSIONALS



Mr. Michael Maloof, Grade 5 Educator, Lonsdale Elementary School

Mr. Michael Maloof is a fifth grade teacher at Lonsdale Elementary School. Mr. Maloof is an ahead of the curve educator. He is often self-taught with the newest and most innovative pedagogy in the field. He has a gift with students in every respect--academically, relationship-wise, and intuitively. His interventions with students who have behavioral issues are instinctive. Mr. Maloof has been involved with district-level professional development for Words Their Way, he is currently training Lonsdale

teachers to develop their own classroom websites, and he is often chosen as a teacher to observe for best practice instruction in Lonsdale School. He goes to great lengths to bring authentic learning experiences to his students. This includes, but is not limited to, a unit on the Blackstone River aligned with the 5th grade Environments Science Kit, a Social Studies Unit capitalizing on Election Day that involved community leaders and candidates for office, and a publishing company whereby students publish their narratives as books. The publishing

company has a name that is chosen by his students. The conviction that all students can and will learn is a belief he exudes as an educator. Lonsdale School and the Lincoln Public Schools are fortunate to have such a talented educator as a part of their faculty.



Mrs. Diane Silva-Pimentel, LHS Science Department

Since September of 2000, Mrs. Diane Silva-Pimentel has been a dynamic and engaging member of the Lincoln High School faculty. Currently pursuing her doctorate in curriculum and instruction with a focus in teaching biology at Boston College, Mrs. Pimentel sets high standards for herself and her students. When speaking with Mrs. Pimentel about her classes, she is enthusiastic and passionate. "It's not just about learning for now. It's about seeing how the science that we are learning fits in

later in life."

According to Science Department Chair Tom Reeve, "She pushes her students really hard. She conveys a passion about her subject that is passed on to her students. Her students emerge amazingly well prepared."

Preparation for the world and for lifelong learning is one of Mrs. Pimentel's primary goals. She models this everyday as she pursues her own advanced studies. Pimentel believes that her success in the classroom is a direct result of the support not only from family but from fellow educators. She is

extremely grateful to husband of 14 years Pedro and children Alex and Cynthia for their support. Mr. McNamara sums up Mrs. Pimentel's influence by saying, "Mrs. Pimentel is a great example to her students and colleagues. She is very conscientious, extremely humble and passionate about all aspects of teaching."



Mrs. Linda Valentine, LHS Custodial Staff

On February 9, 1979, Linda Valentine began her thirty year career with the Lincoln Public Schools as a custodian at Lincoln High School. During the ensuing three decades she has earned a reputation for being a stickler when it comes to the cleanliness of LHS. According to Lincoln's Director of Non-Instructional Operations Angelo Menicucci, "Linda is fussy about cleaning. She doesn't take short cuts or do half the job. She always puts forth her best efforts."

Linda is responsible for the 1st and 2nd shift custodians. During school vacation times, Linda sets the cleaning agenda based on her experience, staffing levels and timelines. When new custodians come on board at LHS, it is quite common for teachers to instruct them to clean things, "the way Linda does." Linda is also managing the many groups that use the high school after hours. She ensures that each group has its reserved area and that its needs are met. Given the busy calendar at LHS, this is no easy task. Kevin McNamara LHS Principal

effused, "As a principal, Linda is an invaluable resource to me and to the staff. She is highly motivated, self directed and meticulous." Keeping a building as large as LHS clean and tidy is no easy feat. Linda Valentine's hard work and commitment to excellence is admired by all.





Lincoln Students Benefit from ARRA Grant Funding for Specialized Programming

In January 2009, The Rhode Island Department of Education began to train districts on how to apply for the federal grant money under ARRA IDEA. Each district was responsible for providing the RI Department of Education with a detailed description of the services, materials, projects and/or initiatives the grant money would provide. Districts could determine how to use the funds in a variety of ways.

Lincoln's grant proposal was developed with input from administrators, teachers, parents from all schools as well as members of the larger community.

The programs to be included in the grant proposal all aligned with the ARRA education reform goal of "making progress toward rigorous college and career-ready standards and high quality assessments that are reliable for all students."

Lincoln's ARRA grant proposal included the following initiatives:

The Preschool programs and initiatives include:

- ◆ Professional Development and Training in the areas of ASD, Assistive Technology, SCERTS.
- ◆ Sound Field Systems for classrooms
- ◆ Sure Sight Vision Screener for Child Outreach Screening.
- ◆ Variety of Assistive technology such as Go Talk, Step by Step Communicators, Shoebox tasks, PECS systems, etc.

The Elementary schools will see initiatives such as:

- ◆ Social Thinking Program Training
- ◆ Professional Development/In-house Training on Differentiated Instruction
- ◆ Supplemental Math Program – Pinpoint
- ◆ Wide range of Assistive Technology to include sound field systems, writing programs, computers, cameras, smart boards, etc.

The Middle School initiatives will address the areas of English/Language Arts and Science.

The Middle School supports and initiatives will include:

- ◆ Assistive Technology such as a computer lab on a cart, software programs, accessible books on line, a scanner, and Variquest Printing system. The Variquest printing system will support career exploration initiatives for our students with disabilities and those students not currently identified as in need of special education services but who require early intervening services.
- ◆ Professional Development in the areas of assistive technology usage and differentiated instruction.
- ◆ Portable Planetarium and training. The planetarium is a full planetarium that will enable students with disabilities and students requiring early intervening services in the area of earth and space science to receive more hands-on instruction in concepts that

are more abstract.

Lincoln High School initiatives will expand LEAP (Learning Experiences and Academics Program).

LEAP initiatives focus on those students requiring another avenue to explore career opportunities they can pursue after graduation. LEAP may also prepare students for higher education and/or other advanced certification programs.

The components of LEAP to be funded with ARRA funds include:

- ◆ **Greenhouse Program**
- ◆ **Print Shop Program**
- ◆ **Tutorial Program**
- ◆ **Assistive Technology**
- ◆ **Professional Development- Differentiated Instruction, Behavioral Interventions/ Supports, and Inclusionary Practices.**

In September, the Rhode Island Department of Education approved the projects for Lincoln. We have begun working with the consultants on several of the projects and have contacted individuals to begin the professional development work.

*- Maryann Struble,
Director of Student Services*

Office of Curriculum, Assessment & Professional Development

Providing on-going professional development for classroom teachers is a critical component of the Lincoln Public Schools' plan to improve student achievement system-wide. With the recent cuts in state funding for professional development, it has become increasingly important for school districts in Rhode Island to identify alternatives for supporting professional staff. The Lincoln Public Schools are proud to announce two grant-funded initiatives to improve teaching and learning in Mathematics and Reading.

Building a Strong Foundation: Improving Student Achievement in Mathematics

Funding Source: Rhode Island Department of Education

Working in collaboration with the Cumberland and Woonsocket School Departments, the Lincoln School

Department was successful in obtaining funding that assures that Lincoln educators along with those from the two partner districts would be included in the first cohort from Rhode Island districts to work with the Charles A. Dana Center (www.utdanacenter.org) to improve mathematics instruction. The goal of this project is to increase instructional coherence at all levels of the system by aligning curriculum, instruction and assessment to each other and the state standards. All three districts will develop, refine and come to an agreement on standards aligned scope and sequence units of study in mathematics. School leaders will receive a set of tools and structures to support and supervise the implementation of the re-

vised math curriculum.

STEPS: Middle and High School Literacy
Funding Source: Rhode Island Department of Education

Using reading and learning strategies students meet the reading demands and learn content in all courses. Steps Middle and High School Literacy also explores the reading process, making it more tangible for content area teachers and their students. Content teachers in Grades 6-12 will receive twelve hours of professional development to support students in their classes.

*- Melinda Smith, Director of Curriculum,
Assessment & Professional Development*