

U.S. Department of Education
2018 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [X] Title I [] Charter [] Magnet [] Choice

Name of Principal Mr. Gaylen Scott Shirley

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Lincoln Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 358 East 2nd South Street

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

<u>Rexburg</u>	<u>ID</u>	<u>83440-2212</u>
City	State	Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Madison County

Telephone (208) 359-3330

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Web site/URL http://www.ms321.com/le/home

E-mail shirleys@msd321.com

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Dr. Geoffrey Thomas

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) E-mail thomasgm@msd321.com

District Name Madison School District Tel. (208) 359-3300

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board

President/Chairperson Mr. Kevin Howell

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date _____

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

Part I – Eligibility Certification

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group and all subgroups, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2018 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2012 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, or 2017.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
9. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
10. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
11. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
12. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2017-2018) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 6 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 2 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 1 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 9 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
 - Suburban
 - Rural or small city/town
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2017 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	43	53	96
1	35	39	74
2	34	38	72
3	33	32	65
4	36	37	73
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	181	199	380

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 0 % Asian
 - 3 % Black or African American
 - 8 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 87 % White
 - 0 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2016 – 2017 school year: 9%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain.

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	19
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2016 until the end of the 2016-2017 school year	15
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	34
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2016	367
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.09
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	9

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 4 %
14 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):

1 Russian, 1 Ukranian, 2 Portuguese, 2 Ndonga, 1 French, 7 Spanish

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 36 %
Total number students who qualify: 135

8. Students receiving special education services: 10 %
38 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>1</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>3</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>2</u> Developmentally Delayed | <u>0</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>28</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>4</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 5
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	17
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	1
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	8
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 22:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013
Daily student attendance	96%	95%	97%	94%	95%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2017.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school’s mission or vision statement.

Lincoln Elementary assists families in helping children grow intellectually, socially, emotionally, and physically.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

PART III – SUMMARY

Lincoln Elementary is comprised of three-hundred eighty students enrolled in kindergarten through fourth grade. Within Lincoln Elementary boundaries is Brigham Young University – Idaho, the largest employer in the area. Madison County has the highest poverty rate in the State of Idaho, with twenty-one percent of the nearly eight-thousand families below the poverty line. The rural setting surrounds the city of Rexburg with wheat and potato fields. Settled by Mormon pioneers, the political climate remains highly conservative. Ethnic diversity at Lincoln Elementary is relatively low, but because of high numbers of BYU-I students from around the world bringing their families to Rexburg while attending the university, our school racial composition is higher than sister schools in the district. Percentages are congruent with those of the entire state of Idaho. Student turnover, or mobility rate, is about nine percent. Foreign languages spoken by Lincoln students are English, Russian, Ukrainian, Portuguese, Ndonga, French, and Spanish. Thirty-six percent of the student population qualifies for free or reduced lunch support.

Built in 1964, Lincoln Elementary was originally intended to be named, “East Side Elementary,” with a sister school, “West Side Elementary,” constructed west of town. With the assassination of Pres. John F. Kennedy, and due to the fact that other schools in the district were already named for presidents, it was decided that West Side would become “Kennedy Elementary,” and East Side would become “Lincoln.” The school is presently the last school in the district scheduled for major remodeling and additions. A proposed bond in August of 2017 passed with eighty-one percent approval. Parents in the Lincoln Elementary attendance zone voted with an approval rate of above eighty-six percent in favor of bond passage. Such is the importance placed upon education at Lincoln and throughout the Madison School District.

The school and community pride themselves in a strong sense of family. A significant number of parents are connected with the university, either as faculty or students, and thereby emphasize and support academic achievement as well as excellence in arts, science, and physical education. The district boys’ basketball team recently placed first at state competition in academics as well as winning the consolation bracket. Winning the academic award, given to teams having the highest GPA, has been an ongoing tradition for the district. To many in the community, it is prized above the basketball state championship itself.

Our school mission statement emphasizes the importance of families and reflects our philosophy in general: “Lincoln Elementary assists families in helping children grow intellectually, socially, emotionally, and physically.” Every decision made at Lincoln Elementary is intended to align with that particular philosophy. District philosophy aligns with our school position with supporting policies. A Madison School District policy prohibits school activities on Monday nights so that families can have at least one night together with their families without any competing school activities.

Lincoln Elementary employs eighteen highly qualified teachers, two-thirds of whom have pursued or achieved master’s degrees. These educators utilize research-based instructional approaches and qualitative data to meet the needs of every learner in their classrooms. Lincoln’s educational philosophy includes, “recognizing the differences among students and seeking to meet their individual needs”. This instructional approach emphasizes high expectations of academic growth.

Parent involvement at Lincoln is both a blessing and a challenge. Whenever school productions or presentations are staged, the number of parents, grandparents, cousins, aunts, and uncles in the building is staggering, stretching our physical facilities to the extreme. A significant challenge is adequate parking for all the vehicles. Even during an average day, adequate parking spaces are difficult to find. Hope is on the horizon with the passage of the district school bond last August. A plan is in place to remedy this challenge.

One of the most amazing characteristics of Lincoln Elementary is the number of teachers who take part of their summer vacation to visit the home of each child assigned to their classroom the following year. It begins in kindergarten where teachers prepare a special packet of activities for their new students to complete before school begins. These teachers wrote a grant to provide small backpacks for each new

student. The assigned materials are placed inside the backpacks and delivered to the home of each child. Pictures of the children are taken and posted in the hallway outside their new classroom door. Upon attending the Back to School open house the day before school begins, students already have a bond with their teachers making the first day of school so much more enjoyable and relatively stress-free. We truly strive each day to make school and learning the most enjoyable part of a child's day.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum:

Instruction at Lincoln Elementary adheres to Idaho’s adopted Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Teachers align instructional efforts to Mathematics and English Language Arts & Literacy Standards in Science and Social Studies. Educators focus on developing reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in all content areas. Every subject integrates skill development and understanding from other content areas. This interdisciplinary approach promotes engagement, maximizes learning experiences, and develops critical skills necessary for lifelong learners.

Curricular adoptions are recommended after extensive evaluation by parents, teachers, administrators and board members. Materials must demonstrate standard alignment, sensitivity to cultural diversity, accessibility for a range of learners, a variety of assessment measures, and coherent sequencing. Subsequent to purchase, teachers begin the intricate process of scrutinizing the program for areas of deficiency. This continuous curriculum revision and approval process through reflective practice and responsiveness to students is ongoing.

Each year, teachers contribute one week of their summer vacation to curricular alignment. During this week, teacher professionals develop a scope and sequence that determines standards emphasis, lesson development, and content coverage. Teachers share current pedagogical practices and improve unit plans. As part of the discourse, educators plan curricular frameworks that ensure adequate coverage of critical content standards. Learning outcomes are analyzed and adjusted to appropriately demonstrate core competencies for each grade and subject.

In kindergarten through second grades, teachers seek to build foundational reading skills through print concepts, phonological awareness, phonics, word recognition, and fluency. In second through fourth grades, emphasis is placed on word analysis, decoding words for meaning, fluency, and comprehension. Recently, the teachers experienced a desire to provide students with increased exposure to nonfiction text. Their purpose was to develop critical reading skills and thoughtful engagement while exposing students to global experiences. During summer collaboration, teachers will utilize resources from National Geographic’s Reach for Reading curriculum to facilitate that goal. Program resources will be used to augment teachers’ efforts to build critical reading skills through standards, introduce science and social studies content, and provide students from rural, Rexburg, Idaho with a window into the world. Science and Social Studies are integrated into the language arts block.

Lincoln’s core mathematics instruction begins with addition and subtraction concepts, skills, and problem-solving in kindergarten through second grades. Number sense and place value understanding are consistently developed as prerequisite foundational skills necessary to the conceptualization of successive mathematics standards. In third and fourth grades, educators predominantly engage students in activities to promote mastery of multiplication and division concepts, skills, and problem-solving competence. Additionally, third and fourth grade students acquire the ability to represent and express fractions as numbers. Each grade level at Lincoln recognizes a required fluency appropriate to their students’ level of development. Fluency and accuracy are practiced daily and students are promoted through a school-wide recognition system sponsored by parents. Teachers use the Envision program published by Pearson to cover the CCSS. During summer collaboration they adjust the curriculum to provide coherent instructional outcomes for their respective grade levels. Lincoln’s teachers incorporate each of the eight mathematical practices in their classrooms daily to build skills that prepare students for lifelong math proficiency. Reading, writing, speaking, listening, and science are integrated into every math unit as well.

Social studies and science are integrated into daily language arts and mathematics instruction. Students in third and fourth grade participate in science and social studies lessons with literacy interwoven. Third grade students are instructed in foundational skills of life science. Fourth grade students engage in a study of the solar system, states of matter, and earth science. Teachers are looking forward to the experience of aligning their scope and sequence to Idaho’s recently adopted Next Generation Science Standards.

For social studies, third grade students study their community, including the history and culture of the Rexburg (City) and Madison County. Furthermore, students explore a unit on citizen responsibility. Fourth grade students study Idaho History including the first settlers, western expansion, geography, economics, and government. Every student in the school participates in Idaho Day each year on March 4th. As part of this statewide initiative, teachers are encouraged to celebrate Idaho and educate students about her history.

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Lincoln Elementary benefits from involved parents and teachers who support other curriculum areas. Approximately twenty-five years ago, the PTO concentrated efforts on providing the school with a computer lab. Since that time the school has increased the number of devices available and students appreciate the benefits of technology integration. Every grade has computer lab time each week. Students familiarize themselves with a variety of software and hardware. In third grade, students are introduced to keyboarding and achieve an appropriate level of mastery by the end of fourth grade.

The art curriculum has been cultivated over the last twenty years. Ambitious parents designed a curriculum to be utilized in the classrooms at least twice a month. Students learn about famous artists, classical pieces, and techniques. Through a variety of mediums, students explore styles and create portfolios containing their work. As an extension to the art curriculum, a family art night displays student creations. Students review their portfolios and determine which piece they would like to label, to title, and showcase. Parents are invited to an evening gallery event to view and bid on the students' art pieces. The PTO uses the funds to support the program. Additionally, the students enter their pieces in the Rexburg Civics Club's Annual Art Expo. Submissions are displayed for the public to view, and each year several Lincoln students receive recognition.

Each week students visit the school library. The librarian reads aloud from a variety of genres and generates interest in unfamiliar literature. She coordinates with teachers to establish goals and help students locate books at their appropriate instructional level. Students listen to stories and check out books.

Students receive monthly music instruction. A district music teacher visits each classroom and instructs the students in foundational music skills including rhythm, melody, pitch, and expression. They practice singing various song styles and following the beat. Teachers extend the concepts taught in music by incorporating singing into classroom activities.

Physical Education is highly emphasized at Lincoln Elementary. Every class participates in a weekly class focusing on developing students' proprioceptive awareness. Students build hand-eye coordination, concentration, body awareness, endurance, and strength. In addition to weekly PE, Lincoln focuses on nutrition, health, and fitness every day. A motivated teacher wrote a grant for Fuel Up to Play 60 seven years ago that has continued to develop the curriculum and activities promoted by the school. Students participate in monthly nutrition lessons following a yearlong theme. To promote healthy lifestyle choices in the school, grants have funded snacks, smoothie blenders, sports gear, and playground equipment. Every month, students enjoy a snack during their nutrition lesson and receive a smoothie the following week. These are connected to the theme and promote healthy eating habits. In addition to the nutrition focus, this teacher has emphasized being active as well. Parent volunteers track the distance participants walk and run at recess. A recent grant funded a scanner that allows teachers, parents, and students to scan a badge as they pass and record their miles. Incentives are given at each milestone. Participants receive charms and attend a party for meeting preliminary requirements. With more determination, they can earn a T-shirt. Each year Nike provides the school with four pairs of shoes to award students with the most accumulated miles. Teachers share heartwarming stories of students who have earned the shoes through dedication and perseverance. The teacher who coordinates the curriculum has extended the success of the program to other schools in the district as well. Additionally, she has used the program to encourage students to develop leadership skills. Student ambassadors are taught to fulfill official leadership roles, learn responsibility, and honor commitments. Physical Education, health, and nutrition instruction are firmly established as an

additional curriculum in the school.

Parents, teachers, and students have instituted other curriculum and instruction into Lincoln Elementary's focused content through dedication and hard work. Many of these programs operate through the cooperation of teachers and parents for decades. They are as essential to the academic success of each student as the core curriculum. Stakeholders agree that Lincoln would not be as effective if any of these programs were retired.

3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:

In addition to a robust core reading program, Lincoln's team has a thoroughly developed process for increasing reading proficiency of students as individuals. Students take a computer-adaptive screener and diagnostic at the beginning of each school year to identify individual student competency in the five critical areas of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension. By identifying specific areas for improvement, teachers are prepared to make data-driven decisions utilizing the outcome driven model. Applying the screener as an indicator of early reading proficiency, teachers identify students in need of additional reading support at both low and high levels of achievement. Teachers then validate the need for support with additional data as needed. During grade level collaboration teachers then plan for intervention implementation to support students' acquisition of determined deficit skills regardless of present skill level. Crucial to this process is the continuous evaluation of the effectiveness of support through progress monitoring. Finally, teachers review the outcomes and begin the cycle again.

"Walk to Read" takes place as an additional thirty-minute reading block designed to provide students with specific instruction based on tiers of skills and competencies. Teachers follow the Response to Intervention (RTI) model and group students by common identifiable skills. They invoke the support of trained Title I paraprofessionals to meet the needs of homogenous groups of students. Over a dozen research-based interventions, with various levels of each, are utilized at Lincoln to address targeted reading performance deficiencies as well as identified strengths. These are aligned, by research to the five critical areas of reading. Flexible grouping, collaboration among team members, and consistent progress monitoring ensure that every student advances in their ability to decode and comprehend text.

Grade level teams plan enrichment activities for students reading above the expected level. For these high achieving students, reading instruction focuses on inspiring a love of reading. This is done through high-interest, nonfiction text, while simultaneously developing reading skills and the ability to learn from content. Additionally, these students read rich literature and participate in discussions involving theme, character analysis, unfamiliar vocabulary, and plot. Higher-order questioning techniques are modeled as well as comprehension skills developed through writing. Students enjoy opportunities to read grade-level texts at their individual instructional level. Students read from all genres in an effort to increase student engagement.

Teachers use screeners and diagnostic assessments to identify individual student needs prior to instruction in the major works of the grade. Results are utilized to plan Response to Intervention (RTI). Lesson delivery begins with clearly stated and discussed learning objectives followed by a problem presented for students to work through. Subsequent to this, teachers facilitate a class discussion guided by student examples and high levels of engagement. As supported by recent research, teachers follow their whole group mini-lesson with small group differentiated instruction. Students work independently and with peers to complete leveled assignments, receiving instructional guidance from the teacher. Manipulatives and models are incorporated into every learning activity. Leveled assignments include re-teaching with scaffolded, teacher-guided instruction for struggling students, on-level guidance for typical learners, and enrichment and extension activities for students demonstrating advanced levels of conceptual understanding. Math lessons feature multidisciplinary approaches with science activities embedded to reach students with varied learning preferences. Students who continue to struggle with the presented concept after the mini-lesson, small group teacher-guided instruction, and peer support receive additional explicit instruction through paraprofessionals. The Math Diagnosis and Intervention System delivers interventions building critical

foundations in concepts of numbers, place value, facts, computation of whole numbers, measurement and data, and fractions.

In addition to core instructional materials, the Lincoln team employs a variety of external programs to build the understanding of mathematical concepts. Math Masters involves parents in the process of increasing math fact automaticity. Students enjoy using the Reflex math facts program online to improve fluency, as well. Additionally, students are encouraged to use district-supported, technology-based intervention and enrichment programs aligned to learning goals to develop understanding and skill acquisition.

At the end of fourth grade, students are assessed in number sense, procedural fluency, computational understanding, and problem-solving. Qualifying students are identified for advanced placement in mathematics courses the following year. Lincoln's teachers strive to communicate high expectations of learning for all students.

Sustainability of high academic performance over time will be maintained by continuous monitoring of what we teach (curriculum and interventions), how we teach (professional development), and how well it is working (data analysis). Naturally, these three require monetary financing. Idaho ranks forty-ninth in educational expenditure per child. We are located in the county with the highest poverty rate in Idaho. Every dollar is important. Every Title I expenditure must be weighed carefully in order to sustain present levels of high academic performance. When we received the Title I check for being an Idaho Blue Ribbon School, we were so happy to be able to use those funds toward sustaining present levels of performance. We decided as a staff that if we are selected as a National Blue Ribbon School, we could not, in good conscience, spend those precious dollars to send the principal and a teacher all the way to Washington D.C. and back. Sustainability of our programs is much more precious to us as well as to the children we serve. We would be happy to accept the award, if offered, through Skype, or other electronic media until such a time that conditions in the state improve.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Each morning begins with the principal welcoming students to school over the intercom. Birthday announcements are followed by daily news. Upon closing, the principal always reminds students to thank their teachers and classroom aides for helping them learn. Then comes the climax when the principal says, “Remember, we have only three rules at our school: We are respectful, responsible, and READY!” Upon saying ready, all the children shout “Ready” in unison. The school token economy, known as “Cat Cash” rewards children for both academic as well as behavioral achievements. Every Friday, a name drawn from each class receives a prize with an announcement of student winners on the intercom.

Of the thirty-eight bulletin boards in the school hallways, thirty-three display student creations, many of which include student photographs. Three encourage students to read, and the remaining two were created by parents following the school shooting in Florida. Parents came to the principal with the idea of creating two huge banners with the words, “We Love Our Teachers,” in large print. Every student in the school signed these banners in support.

Fourth grade students may apply to be “Student Ambassadors,” who wear red vests and assist other students. They stand in the hallway as the children walk to their classrooms. They meet regularly with a teacher advisor to plan activities. At the last two school board meetings at Lincoln, the Ambassadors welcomed the board, conducted the Pledge of Allegiance, and performed a musical production, all without the principal or teachers saying a word.

The “Friendship Club” meets weekly to help students who feel they may not have enough friends. It is a small “working lunch” where students learn ways to make more friends. Lessons are taught by interns from the district “Madison Cares” organization, who follow a prescribed social skills curriculum. A “Buddy Bench” was designated on the playground where students may sit if they need a friend. All students have a duty to see if someone on the bench needs a friend. A story about the bench was recently covered in the local newspaper.

Teachers are motivated by the trust placed in them. One teacher approached the principal with the idea to replace all the desks in her room with alternative classroom furniture, including couches, pillows, etc. The principal gave permission for the change, which has been a tremendous success for students. Parents have stated their support and approval for this novel approach. Teachers know they are supported by the administration in their risk-taking innovations to motivate and inspire student achievement.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Madison School District policy prohibits school activities on Monday nights after 6:30 p.m., so that families can have that time available to themselves. This is strong evidence of a district-wide philosophy of strengthening families first.

Because safety is our primary concern, our association with local law enforcement is of critical importance. Children must be safe in order to learn. Our school works closely with the city police department to plan and carry out lock-down drills. District and city officials meet regularly to discuss developing issues. The recent tragedy in Florida led to a change in evacuation procedures. Local law enforcement encouraged officers to walk through schools regularly, which is also appreciated by staff and parents. Children love interacting with local police, especially when they bring the canine unit. Children love dogs.

The local fire department has been particularly eager to provide learning activities for children. At our year-end field day, a special “smoke trailer” provides children an opportunity to experience a smoke-filled room. The fun begins when the fire trailer sprays children with the huge water cannon.

Lincoln enjoys a close association with the local university (BYU-I), which is within walking distance for our students, opening many doors to additional learning opportunities. In turn, university students visit the school as practicum or early field students. Lincoln Elementary students are invited to Halloween and Christmas concerts at the university. BYU-I returned missionaries to foreign countries also assist in translating for non-English speaking students (see languages listed in demographics). Frequent requests are made to the principal from university students requesting opportunities to volunteer in any way at Lincoln. University faculty visit regularly with the principal in regard to early field, practicum, and student teachers.

Local businesses, such as McDonald's and Sonic, invited Lincoln teachers to spend a couple of hours as "waitresses and waiters" in their restaurants. A generous portion of the money made during that time was then donated back to the teachers' classroom accounts. A local tire store owner met with the principal offering a discount to teachers. In his words, "We love our teachers and want to give something back." These leaders also play a role in our annual "career fair" where students dress up like a professional of their choosing.

Teachers extend learning by providing after-school reading clubs. They organize such activities individually with parents who then provide transportation. As mentioned previously, teachers also make summer visits to the homes of students before school begins.

Teachers, local business leaders, university officials, and local law enforcement leaders communicate with our school and district regularly through meetings as well as electronic means to promote efforts toward assisting student achievement.

3. Professional Development:

Professional development takes two forms within Lincoln Elementary. First, teachers personally strive to remain current with educational changes and seek opportunities to grow and develop professionally. This flexibility and responsiveness are crucial to the success of our school. The educational field is consistently progressing and Lincoln's teachers respond proactively. This year, a team of teachers created their own cohort and began a master's degree program together. When asked to implement changes, every teacher consistently responds with a positive attitude. Furthermore, teachers initiate and pursue professional development opportunities.

Second, teachers are constantly offering to share their expertise and knowledge with colleagues. Our educational team is responsive to suggestions from coworkers. An example of this is our school-wide book study. In response to the superintendent's recommendation that every school actively promote a love of reading in Madison's students, a few teachers recommended the faculty read and discuss *The Book Whisperer*. They felt the text would promote professional discourse and generate ideas to increase reading desire among students. Furthermore, members of each grade level offered to present information and facilitate faculty meeting discussions throughout the school year.

The principal recognizes and appreciates the efforts of teachers to positively impact the educational process through professional development. Teachers are supported in their requests to attend conferences and observe colleagues. Lincoln's administrator supports teachers in efforts to serve on district committees and provide workshops for their colleagues. He is considerate of the commitment this takes and expresses gratitude. Additionally, the principal invites district personnel to participate in the school's professional development efforts. Recently, he involved the district instructional support coaches in the school's book study.

The level of commitment to the profession is clearly evident in the Lincoln staff. The teachers support district in-service days with 100% attendance. In addition to this, teachers have varying meetings held at the district office throughout the school year that they attentively support. First-year teachers participate in sixty hours of induction classes. Established teachers attend monthly district alignment meetings. Most of our teachers elect to participate in summer collaboration and curricular alignment as well. Several teachers

have volunteered to be district leaders and provide professional development training to teachers contracted at all six of our elementary schools. They devote their personal time to preparing and learning about best practices in math and literacy instruction, technology implementation, progress reporting, assessments, and data. Subsequently, they willingly share their expertise.

4. School Leadership:

The leadership philosophy of the school is one of continuous collaboration between 1) teachers and parents, 2) teachers and district administrators, and 3) between teachers themselves.

The principal's role is to coordinate ongoing collaboration through the sharing of current information. Each day the principal publishes The Lincoln Morning News through group email to all school stakeholders, featuring schedules, changes, communications from district personnel, etc. PTO leadership, district personnel, and school board members also receive copies. The principal is fluent in English and Spanish. He is sixty-six years old and could retire at any time, but claims, "I'm not done yet, it's too much fun."

Grade-level teams meet weekly to discuss student progress data. The special education teacher and Title I paras attend monthly to coordinate efforts toward student achievement. The PTO leadership team meets regularly with school administration. Teachers communicate daily with parents through Classroom Dojo, an online teacher/parent texting program. Schoolwide parent communication is through ConnectEd, a mass-texting, and email messaging.

District collaboration takes place monthly as teachers from each grade level meet together to discuss student needs on a district-wide level. School collaboration is enhanced as teachers participate as members of Child Advocate Teams (CAT), technology, school improvement teams, safety, and social committees, as well as district-level committees and PTO liaison teams.

An obvious example is a recent issue involving Free/Reduced Lunch Count (FRL) and Schoolwide classification. In December of 2017, the school was notified of being chosen as a Blue Ribbon school for Idaho. At the same time, the school was in danger of not qualifying for Title I funds due to the percentage of applying parents falling below 35%. In addition, many qualifying parents were not applying for deserved benefits. The principal enlisted assistance from district personnel to keep the school notified as to changing percentages. Additional tips were provided by the Idaho State Department of Education. The principal then met with teachers to brainstorm ideas. Several teachers were anxious because loan forgiveness on student loans as long as they taught at a Title I school was in jeopardy. Additional ideas included promoting among parents of kindergarten children who are half-day students and do not eat lunch but still qualify to do so. A campaign by teachers to contact parents under the required guidelines of confidentiality listed by law was conducted. The principal met with PTO leaders. Instructional videos were created and posted online. PTO parents encouraged neighbors and friends. By the March 1 deadline, percentages had increased from 32% to 36%. All stakeholders well understood the difficulty Lincoln would have faced by the threat of possibly losing Title I Schoolwide status and worked together to maintain necessary funding for excellence.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Information transparency leading to an academic “triage” is the key to success for all stakeholders at Lincoln Elementary. Borrowing from the medical model, a triage is a process of sorting and allocating treatment according to a system of priorities based on the urgency of need for care. In educational terms, students are evaluated at data meetings as well as collaboration sessions where intervention strategies are identified and quickly communicated to all stakeholders.

Parents access current academic information through PowerSchool online services. Current attendance, as well as Food Services menus and account balances, are readily available. Parents also submit critical contact information as well as relevant medical considerations for children, such as demographics, addresses, immunizations, food allergies, and emergency contacts. They may also check online to see if their child is actually in attendance as well as current grades.

Through electronic means, parents are kept current of changes in schedules, current news, and immediate needs, such as the need for more volunteers at the school. PTO leaders are regular recipients of the Lincoln Morning News which guided their decision to spend Title I Parent Involvement funds on new computers for the school.

Teachers meet weekly in collaboration and data meetings to share information. Monthly data meetings with district personnel report on students referred for additional services. District and school personnel have access to Google spreadsheets that provide real-time information regarding the current status of referred children, yet maintains confidentiality requirements. In similar fashion, teachers are kept current as to available funds in their classroom accounts.

As mentioned above, teachers maintain real-time communication with parents through text-based programs, such as Classroom Dojo, emailing, etc. These kinds of programs show parents a record of rewards as well as concerns.

Central district office personnel keep Lincoln informed as to real-time funding balances in a variety of accounts through online programs. Data collection is meticulously gathered and analyzed on district, as well as individual school levels.

The principal creates and publishes training and informational videos according to need for both professional development as well as for informing parents. Lincoln parents appreciate seeing a “real person” in a video rather than reading a lengthy letter. Social media has served Lincoln well whenever volunteers are needed quickly. Real-time academic “medication” is critical to student survival.

The “Morning News” published each morning by the principal coordinates all the above components into a stage where all the actors play their individual roles designed to feature each child as the star of the show. At Lincoln Elementary, information technology (IT) has been transformed into transparent information (TI), or in other words, IT=TI, a true communicative property.