

U.S. Department of Education
2022 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

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

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

Official School Name Lincoln K-8 School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1122 8th Avenue Southeast
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Rochester State MN Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 55904-5008

County Olmsted County

Telephone (507) 328-3550 Fax (507) 328-3545

Web site/URL https://lincoln.rochesterschools.org E-mail jasonju@rochesterschools.org

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. Kent Pekel E-mail kepekel@rochesterschools.org
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Rochester Public School District Tel. (507) 328-3000

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 Jean Marvin
(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, leave blank.*

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. 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, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2021 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.
3. The school configuration must include one or more of grades K-12. Schools located on the same campus (physical location and mailing address) must apply as an entire school (i.e. K-8; 6-12; K-12 school). Two (or more) schools located on separate campuses, must apply individually even if they have the same principal. A single school located on multiple campuses with one principal must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2016 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 or 2021.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. The nominated school has, or is subject to, a nondiscrimination policy (provide either a link to the policy or submit a text of the policy), is committed to equal opportunity for all students and all staff consistent with applicable law and does not have any outstanding findings of unlawful discrimination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s nomination and/or rescind a school’s award if unlawful discrimination is later discovered.

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.

The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's nomination and/or rescind a school's award if one of these eligibility requirements is later discovered to have not been met or otherwise been violated.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the current school year (2021-2022) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools. For charter schools: If a charter school is part of the public school system, information should be provided for the public school district. If a charter school is considered its own district or part of a charter district, the information provided should reflect that.)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 17 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 4 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 3 High schools
 - 1 K-12 schools
- 25 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools. **Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not for the district.**)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/> (Find your school and check “Locale”)

- Urban (city or town)
 Suburban
 Rural

3. Number of students in the school as of October 1, 2021 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school. Include all students enrolled, in-person, participating in a hybrid model, or online only. If online schooling or other COVID-19 school issues make this difficult to obtain, provide the most accurate and up-to-date information available:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	31	24	55
1	24	28	52
2	26	29	55
3	32	24	56
4	30	18	48
5	30	24	54
6	30	21	51
7	25	24	49
8	27	18	45
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	255	210	465

*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 8 % Asian
 - 7 % Black or African American
 - 5 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 72 % White
 - 8 % 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 2020 - 2021 school year: 8%

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, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	18
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2020 until the end of the 2020-2021 school year	20
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	38
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2020	471
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.08
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	8

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

Vietnamese, Hmong, Spanish, Somali, Arabic, Bengali, Lao, Khmer, Yoruba, Telugu, Urdu

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 4 %
17 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 14 %

Total number students who qualify: 65

8. Students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504: 14 %
66 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. All students receiving special education services with an IEP or 504 should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>4</u> Autism | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities |
| <u>0</u> Deafness | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness | <u>13</u> Other Health Impaired |
| <u>1</u> Developmental Delay | <u>20</u> Specific Learning Disability |
| <u>5</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>21</u> Speech or Language Impairment |
| <u>1</u> Hearing Impairment | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury |
| <u>1</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: 15
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	19
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	14
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	11
Student support personnel e.g., school 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 18:1

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

Required Information	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017
Daily student attendance	96%	95%	96%	96%	96%
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 2021.

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.

Rochester Public Schools District: To inspire, challenge, and empower all students with the knowledge and skills required to reach their full potential to contribute to future generations and to become involved members of a global community.

16. Provide a URL link to or text of the school’s nondiscrimination policy.

Rochester Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability.

<https://go.boarddocs.com/mn/rps535/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=9NYRJA69CACF#>

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

Each year, families have the opportunity to apply for District-Wide Schools and Programs. These schools are located within Rochester, and may deliver the curriculum in a different manner than neighborhood schools. District-wide schools and programs are available tuition free to students. Transportation is also provided to eligible students that are enrolled at district-wide schools.

The application window opens each November and the first random selection will occur mid-January of the same school year. To apply, families must fill out an application online, in print, or in person at the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. All applications are then uploaded into a district database. Applications received by each selection process date will be placed into the selection process which includes a random selection process by our computer program.

If selected, families will be notified by phone the following week after the selection process date. Students not selected in the initial random selection or subsequent selections will remain in the applicant pool for future space and will be notified if selected at that time.

PART III – SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Lincoln K-8 District Wide School is the only K-8 school in the Rochester Public School (RPS) District. Like the other five RPS district wide option schools, students and families at Lincoln can live anywhere within our district boundaries and may access district transportation at no charge. Our student body reflects the racial, cultural, and socio-economic diversity of the City of Rochester. As a district wide school, neighborhood geography does not define our community. Therefore, our students, families, and staff intentionally commit to cultivating our own unique community. Being a part of the Lincoln family establishes deep relationships that extend beyond the nine years of student attendance.

Lincoln’s mission is to educate and empower our children in a family-oriented and creative community by cultivating excellence. Staff use a thematic approach to deliver a curriculum that supports the individual learning styles of the whole child. Our innovative science and engineering curriculum supports academic excellence and fosters the next generation of talented and creative STEM leaders. We are also a creative community that integrates visual arts and music across grades K-8.

Lincoln was started in 1975 by a grassroots group of parents and teachers in the Rochester Public School District who wanted a different educational setting than what was available. In the original “alternative school” application to the district, Lincoln described its “prime concerns” as “with the total individual, and with a harmonious balance of the person’s social, intellectual, affective, and physical needs. The major focus of the school should be to help develop each pupil’s potentialities to the greatest extent possible.”

Since 1975, the “prime concern” has been the consistent focus through three physical locations and five school name changes. Over the years, implementing our focus has been accomplished through innovation, collaboration, and creative partnerships.

In the late 1980s, Lincoln applied the works of Michele Borba and her Five Building Blocks of Self Esteem. We strived to create a trusting relationship with students and parents where reasonable limit-setting created a positive and caring family environment. In 1990, Lincoln adopted Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences. Teachers brought instruction to the classroom that supported all types of intelligences, helping students gain deeper insight into their strengths and areas for development in each area of intellect.

During the mid-1990s, Lincoln led the district in accelerating our integration of technology as a critical component and influence on teaching and learning. Lincoln staff initiated this acceleration, astutely recognizing the new opportunities available through evolving hardware and educational applications and the future importance of technological fluency. Staff voluntarily sought out opportunities for professional development to learn how to use and apply cutting-edge technology to the classroom and have continued their commitment to embedding contemporary technology into daily teaching ever since. We began with two computer labs where students had weekly instruction and did classroom-embedded projects, funded in partnership with our parents, families, and community donors. Our technological capacity developed into one of the district’s first one to one laptop and iPad programs. Today, we maintain a one to one iPad ratio, and these tools have become part of our daily lives in all areas of the curriculum. We also established a collaborative technology lab where groups of students and teachers can work on projects together. Early adoption of technology and consistent integration of technology into our curriculum facilitated the transition and implementation of distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. This technological fluency allowed our teachers, staff, and parents to maintain focus on their students’ needs instead of technology implementation and troubleshooting.

In 2009, Lincoln was one of the original partners and developers in InSciEd Out (Integrated Science Education Outreach). InSciEd Out began as a collaborative partnership with the Mayo Clinic and Winona State University-Rochester to rebuild science education from pre-K through grade 12. The InSciEd Out mission is to engage students and empower teachers through research-based, experiential classroom learning. Lincoln teachers and staff were instrumental in writing the foundational curriculum and continue to contribute to curriculum and professional development for InSciEd Out. The impact of InSciEd Out extends beyond Lincoln. Since the partnership began, this program has trained more than 350 RPS teachers, elevated

the education of 35,000+ RPS students, and experienced the benefits of tens of thousands of scientist volunteer hours. InSciEd Out continues to be adapted and applied within seven hubs located in Minnesota, Illinois, Florida, India, and Ghana today.

Lincoln is a Project Lead the Way (PLTW) Distinguished School for providing broad access to transformative learning opportunities for students through PLTW Launch (K-5) and Gateway (6-8). It is one of just 404 elementary schools across the U.S. to receive this honor. Teachers at Lincoln helped design and field test the PLTW modules. Two of our staff are designated as PLTW Master Teachers and help train other educators across the nation how to use the materials and facilitate instruction.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.

1a. Overall approach, which may include overarching philosophy or approaches common across subject areas:

At Lincoln, our learning environment reflects practical and relevant teaching and learning. We encourage children to see themselves as readers, writers, mathematicians, scientists, and problem solvers. We value the process and the product and understand that all children are unique individuals. These core values are evident in all curricular areas.

Lincoln is a leader in incorporating technology into student learning objectives. As one of the first schools to integrate iPads at a one to one ratio for our students, we have been able to utilize a variety of learning modalities to meet the individual needs of our students. Developing this early comfort in scientific exploration and technology sets the stage for student success in their future academic and professional endeavors. The commitment to these priorities has enabled our school to demonstrate consistent academic success, even with the challenges presented by the pandemic.

1b. Reading/English language arts curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

All Lincoln students have daily reading/ELA instruction provided by the classroom teacher. The staff uses a variety of assessments to determine each student’s reading strengths and determine what support each student will need to support their reading growth. All classrooms have daily independent reading time in which teachers conference with students or meet with small groups. Teachers provide daily read-alouds, and students are checked frequently for comprehension through various modalities in speaking, listening, reading, and writing. For example, our 2nd graders host a “Poetry and Punch” for their families, where they demonstrate their oral communication skills and poetry comprehension. Teachers conduct formative assessments to target specific student skills and provide differentiation in daily practice using educational applications.

Students at Lincoln have access to the school library and classroom libraries, where they may self-select appropriate books to build and nurture an interest in reading. Additionally, Lincoln provides a unique program within our district where students have access to leveled books that are “just right books” and “read to me” books (for K-1 students) to take home for additional reading practice. This program improves accessibility for students to appropriately challenging literature and supports our home-to-school literacy partnership with our Lincoln families. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, students checked out and read over 22,000 books through this “Lincoln Lynx” reading program.

Reading instruction in our primary grades is grounded in research on the Science of Reading. All K-2 classrooms follow a daily phonemic awareness and phonics curriculum (Heggerty). Curricula follow a sequential order, and explicit instruction in literacy skills for all K-5 students promotes achievement.

Students in grades 3-8 focus on developing skills in comprehension, word study, and vocabulary strategies. Teachers provide scaffolded support while students read and analyze novels as a whole class, in book clubs, in small groups, and independent reading.

Throughout all grade levels, students learn and practice writing for multiple purposes. The careful integration of writing throughout the curriculum results in practical experience with daily journaling, research writing, composition, and the development of narrative stories. Students also have opportunities to build communication skills beyond the standard ELA curricular requirements. At Lincoln, students build oral communication skills through participation in musicals and plays, Socratic Seminars, the weekly Lincoln video broadcast, or serving as volunteer student tour guides of our school for prospective families.

1c. Mathematics curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

Lincoln’s math instruction focuses on number talks, collaborative problem solving, and explaining mathematical thinking. Students are encouraged to explain how they reached an answer using their oral or written communication skills. Our math curriculum challenges students to truly understand and apply mathematical concepts by solving problems in multiple ways rather than focusing on the answer or using a singular approach. We utilize a variety of materials and resources. K-6 math instruction is grounded in the Everyday Math curriculum, utilizing a “spiraling curriculum” model and teaching and learning through math games. Students are encouraged to see themselves as mathematicians and embrace a growth mindset. While automaticity of number facts is encouraged and practiced, speed is not graded or timed. Students apply math skills in other subjects, such as science, through an integrated curriculum. Students have access to additional math enrichment activities across all grade levels. They are encouraged to explore and nurture their mathematical growth through participation in activities such as Math Counts, Math Masters, or one of our many enrichment applications (i.e., Khan Academy, IXL, Prodigy, and Study Island).

Student math skills are reviewed in 4th and 5th grade to identify the appropriate sequence of math classes in 6-8th grades. Teachers, students, and parents have open conversations about the best math placement to meet the needs of each student and challenge them to maximize their academic growth. Our 5th-graders can choose to proceed with grade level/6th-grade math or advance through single- or double-acceleration coursework. Teachers and gifted specialists monitor student performance to identify needed skill supports. The accelerated pathway enables our students to take high school-level math courses when they are ready, rather than waiting for when they physically move to high school. These courses are offered in collaboration with one of our district’s high schools but allow our students to remain in our building during the school day. Math acceleration is common at Lincoln, with over 100 students enrolled in advanced math coursework; this includes students doing 9th grade Linear Algebra and other students doing 10th-grade Geometry.

Teachers across the building routinely utilize educational applications such as IXL and Study Island to practice skills and concepts. These electronic programs provide immediate feedback to students and teachers about skill mastery. Following direct instruction and completion of their math practice, students may engage with a menu of options for furthering mathematics learning and building their skill levels. Incentives for students to reach certain levels in educational applications provide additional motivation and recognition for achievement, and all-school celebrations of student milestones foster an academic community that takes pride in hard work and reaching goals.

1d. Science curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

Lincoln’s science program focuses on the nature of science while allowing students to participate in inquiry-based instruction to grow their skills and knowledge. When students exit Lincoln’s science program, they are prepared to observe the world, ask scientific questions, and develop processes to answer their inquiries. Lincoln is unique in the district in utilizing curriculum from InSciEd Out (Integrated Science Education Outreach), Project Lead the Way (PLTW), and Amplify Science across all grade levels K-8. As RPS adopts the Next Generation Science Standards and the new Minnesota Science Standards, Lincoln’s unique approach to science instruction serves as a model for innovation, adoption, and curriculum implementation across all grade levels

InSciEd Out is a cross-curricular learning experience developed by Lincoln staff collaborating with Mayo Clinic scientists, where students study community and global issues through experimental design. Lincoln teachers are committed to improving scientific literacy; many teachers have participated in the InSciEd Out teacher training at Mayo Clinic to improve their understanding and teaching of science. Lincoln has used grant funding to support science learning by building a dedicated, fully-equipped zebrafish lab with networked microscopes, cameras, incubators, and fish hatchery aquatic systems.

PLTW develops transportable knowledge and skills through pathways in computer science, engineering, and biomedical science. Lincoln is the only elementary school in the district that has implemented PLTW in grades K-5; students begin engineering, robotics, and design projects in kindergarten. Grant funds helped fund and create a dedicated Makerspace for use by all grade levels with access to 3-D printers, fabrication and construction resources, electronics and robotics supplies, and supportive technology. Here, kindergarten

students learn foundational skills for coding using BeeBots. Frequently, projects designed and made in our Makerspace allow our students to test their creations in partnership with other grade levels and serve as role model scientists. For example, our middle school students design toys that kindergarten students test and vote on, selecting the best invention. Our school also has many green walls enabling students to explore and utilize green screen technology for digital presentations.

Including InSciEd Out and PLTW curriculum in grades K-5 allows our 6-8th graders to grow their technology, science, and engineering skills to a more advanced level. Each year, students in 6th-8th grade must conduct an independent science experiment. Lincoln staff and Mayo Clinic volunteers work with students through the scientific process during the school day, providing equitable access to resources and mentoring for all students. Traditionally, a majority of our middle school students also compete in the International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) Regional Science Fair, though it is not required. Lincoln has had students qualify for the Minnesota State Science and Engineering Fair every year for the past 15 years and has had many student projects published in peer-reviewed scientific journals. PLTW provides opportunities to bridge scientific curricular standards to real-world skills. In each grade, students gain experience with coding and its relation to our ever-changing world. Coding, 3-D printing, robotics, and drones have become part of the student's academic experience at Lincoln. Extracurricular opportunities are also available to participate in the FIRST Lego League program and competitions.

1e. Social studies/history/civic learning curriculum content, instruction, and assessment:

Our K-8 Social Studies curriculum follows our Minnesota State Standards. Teachers creatively bring these standards to life by creating relevant learning experiences for their students through cross-curricular activities, and classrooms share their learning with families.

For example, our kindergarten students learn about Festivals of Light, connecting with families who celebrate the different cultural holidays, so students have first-hand experience with these holidays. They culminate their learning with a family program highlighting the art, music, and traditions of each holiday they have studied. Classrooms in kindergarten, 1st, and 4th grade perform in musical productions based on social studies or civic learning curriculums at their grade level. Annually around Veteran's Day, students can share stories and photos of family veterans in a prominent hallway display. The entire school participates in a Veteran's Day program, where our concert band plays the United States Armed Forces Medley, and Lincoln community veterans are honored.

Our 6th through 8th-grade students are placed in multi-grade classrooms and participate in a three-year cycle of middle school social studies standards. Students cycle through geography, Minnesota history, U.S. history, and world history. The multi-grade classrooms allow for community building among students and the opportunity to experience multiple perspectives in classroom discussions and group work. These students also focus on current events, allowing them to connect history with the present, engage with the larger world around them, and share their thinking in a safe, familiar space.

Lincoln has made it a priority to highlight the histories and diversity of our school community by highlighting the designated awareness months for historically marginalized groups in our country. Each month, the main hallway of our school showcases an interactive display with the names and faces of important people or events from each community. Teachers in grades K-8 are encouraged to include these displays in their lessons for the month and share their stories all year during social studies time.

1f. For secondary schools:

1g. For schools that offer preschool for three- and/or four-year old students:

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Lincoln's physical education (PE) program is based on content standards and makes health, activity, fitness, and motor skill development the center of student advancement. Our program is student-centered and based on student characteristics and interests. We teach lifetime activities that students can use to improve their personal wellness. We value the diversity of all students in PE and intentionally build lessons that are inclusive and accessible. K-5 students have 30 minutes of PE twice in a 6-day cycle. Students in 6th-8th grade have PE every other day for 45 minutes. During COVID-19 distance learning (DL), our teacher "Coach C" adapted the PE curriculum so that students could meet the same goals using everyday objects within their homes. He challenged families to participate alongside promoting whole family wellness as a fun activity. Students continued to see and be inspired by their teacher in demonstration videos accompanying the lessons.

Our music curriculum offers more than basic instruction. Elementary lessons focus on notation, rhythms, music from diverse cultures, and the aesthetic that music adds to the human experience. Boom whackers, ethnic drums, and xylophones provide hands-on opportunities for all students. All students are given opportunities for musical exploration through educational applications such as Garage Band. Lincoln students begin formal instrumental work in third and fourth grade on recorders. Our 6th through 8th-grade students participate in Band, Orchestra, or Choir, which give two performances per year. Instrumental students participate in small group and individual lessons to hone their skills. Choral students have the opportunity to learn the ukulele to accompany their vocal performances. Eighth graders can work and perform in our Trash Can Drumming Ensemble. For the past 14 years, Lincoln music teachers have been instrumental in organizing the "Rocktown Tour," a student musical and performance event that motivates elementary students to strive for academic excellence. Lincoln has performed this tour at ten district elementary schools over the years.

Lincoln provides art lessons in a choice-based classroom giving students numerous stations from which to learn. Students are encouraged to learn new skills using various equipment and materials. In addition to regular lessons, our students combine their art skills with community service. Examples of projects include murals, painting outdoor furniture and "buddy benches" to brighten school grounds, preparing artwork to sell at the school's fundraising auction, and two to three public exhibitions per year. At present, our middle school students are showcasing their talents on the Library Media walls as they paint student-driven murals. During COVID-19 DL, our art teacher demonstrated projects through videos to support project-based learning at home. Her adaptability and rapid incorporation of additional technology to this tactile and experiential area of study allowed students to maintain a connection with their teacher and their love of art. She adapted lessons to ensure that all students would have access to the necessary materials to participate in art from their home environment. The Principal personally delivered any other necessary art materials to students so that all students could participate.

The school media library is an active learning space where students hunt for information and find good books. Students are found working in small groups with teachers or para-professionals, preparing group projects, getting help from volunteers, or hanging out for a break. Library shelves are carefully curated for diversity to reflect the student population and the world around them. Active solicitation of student feedback drives changes on the shelves, maintaining high student engagement with the library and a love for reading. Elementary students receive lessons on a six-day cycle that include coding, online safety, computer literacy, research skills, and expanding their joy in reading and story-telling.

3. Academic Supports

3a. Students performing below grade level:

The reading intervention program at Lincoln is a positive and supportive program designed to give students an extra boost in their academic skills and self-esteem. Regular formative assessments identify students that may benefit from reading intervention. We provide supplementary interventions in small groups and individualized settings. There is a focus on different strategies to teach reading, and we provide differentiated instruction to all of our diverse learners. Reinforcement of skills learned in the classroom complement further instruction in skills not yet mastered. The creation of individualized lessons supports each student's needs and aims to expand knowledge of language, words, and how they work. Interventions

support developing phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Lincoln's Reading Specialist, AmeriCorps staff (K-3), and the classroom teachers meet regularly to ensure that we are meeting the learning needs of each student. In addition, we regularly assess our instruction, ensuring that it is customized to meet the student's changing needs and identify when reading intervention is no longer needed. We hope to promote and foster a lifelong love for reading and share our enthusiasm for literacy with students and their families.

3b. Students performing above grade level:

Our gifted services program strives to meet students' academic, creative, and affective needs through a partnership between staff, students, and families. Enrichment activities engage high-achieving students throughout their time at Lincoln. Furthermore, our Gifted Specialist offers classroom enrichment activities across the entire student body in partnership with our classroom teachers and staff.

All 1st-grade students participate in Primary Education Thinking Skills (PETS) lessons delivered by our Gifted Specialist. These classes help students develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills early.

In 2nd grade, an annual review of test scores identifies students who may benefit from gifted services. Students may qualify in one of four pathways: Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) at or above 116, two FAST/NWEA scores at or above the 95th percentile, a qualifying portfolio assessment (an alternate open-ended test), or being in the top 15% of their school's grade level on CogAT. Ongoing and annual assessment help determine current needs, recognizing that children grow and change. Policies guide the process for early entrance to kindergarten and grade acceleration.

Third, fourth and fifth graders are co-taught and organized into small group instruction for these verbal (reading/social studies) and non-verbal (math/science) classes. We offer a variety of challenging learning opportunities. Our curriculum covers inventions, speaking, debates, mock trials, scientific method, Hands-on Equations, and probability, supported by William and Mary and Project M3 curriculum. Many gifted math students challenge themselves to use critical thinking and problem-solving skills as they compete as individuals and teams for Math Masters competitions. Students read challenging books and practice writing words to prepare for a school-wide spelling bee. Teachers identify high-achieving students through a pretest for additional mathematical enrichments. Students may qualify for a subject or grade acceleration.

The Thomas Edison Pitch Contest, a competition where students advertise an invention, is offered to all students to learn about STEM, innovation, entrepreneurship, marketing, and presentation skills. In 2020, our team placed third in the national competition.

Our gifted services staff developed grade-level Google Classrooms providing additional enrichments at our students' fingertips, capitalizing on our routine integration of technology into instruction. All teachers, parents, and students (regardless of gifted services identification) have access to this resource to enhance student learning, with three new activities available monthly. Fourth graders can continue to work through 26 lessons of Hands-on Equations throughout the year to build pre-Algebra skills.

3c. Special education:

Lincoln supports students with a wide range of abilities using various individualized, evidence-based strategies to support integration in the general education classroom. Services for our students may occur in the general education classroom or the special education classroom. This approach allows students to learn in their least restrictive environment. We commit to the belief that most students can access the general education curriculum in general education classrooms with appropriate accommodations and modifications. During small group times, students receiving special education services are provided with instruction at their levels to increase comprehension of the core curriculum.

Our special education team at Lincoln consists of two full-time special education teachers licensed as Academic and Behavioral Specialists (ABS), one part-time special education teacher, one Speech and Language Pathologist, a school social worker, and a special education instructional coach. We also have

team members shared with other schools within our district to provide related services based on individual student needs. These include an Occupational Therapist, a Development Adaptive Physical Education teacher, a Visual Impairment teacher, and a Deaf and Hard of Hearing teacher. These services support students with communication, fine and gross motor, vision, and hearing impairments. Our school psychologist is also an integral part of our evaluation process.

Lincoln utilizes a Child Study and Intervention Team (CSI) to provide research-based intervention support for students when academic and behavioral concerns exist. General and special education staff work in partnership on this team. The CSI team determines if a student should move forward with a special education evaluation. CSI meets twice a month throughout the calendar school year, allowing for timely assessment and intervention if necessary.

Although all of these services are available across the district, Lincoln is unique in that we develop a long-standing relationship with our families, students, and staff because we serve students in all grades, kindergarten through 8th grade. We are a small school and work closely with our whole support staff to collaborate in the best interest of each student.

3d. English Language Learners, if a special program or intervention is offered:

The English Language program at Lincoln aims to help multilingual students become self-sufficient in the classroom as quickly as possible. We provide them with a comfortable space to practice their language skills in a low-risk environment. We believe that each multilingual learner comes to school with the absolute gift of being familiar with more than one language and nearly fluent in more than one culture. While students are engaged in the mastery of English, their impressive cultural and linguistic skills bring significant contributions as members of our school community.

The program currently includes seventeen students and actively serves fourteen. Those fourteen multilingual students bring their knowledge of Arabic, Khmer, Somali, Yoruba, Bengali, Spanish, Urdu, Lao, and Telugu to Lincoln.

Instruction is available to multilingual students several times during the school week. Students receive small group or individual instruction during these meetings tailored to master the four domains of language: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The focus of instruction is the students' cognitive academic language proficiency, knowing that academic language is essential for their success in their classroom and throughout their academic career. Academic language usually develops to a point where it is secure in 4-7 years. In order to give them a strong foundation in academic English, students receive research-based vocabulary instruction.

3e. Other populations (e.g., migrant, homeless), if a special program or intervention is offered:

PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

1. Engaging Students:

Lincoln cultivates positive classroom communities where students feel safe and loved by using specific social-emotional learning lessons from resources such as Zones of Regulation, Second Step, and Culturally Relevant Minds. Our K-5 classrooms prioritize extra movement breaks in their day, and our middle school students have afternoon recess to reset and refocus for the afternoon. We implemented a Big Buddies and Little Buddies program that pairs K-3 graders with 4-8 graders to build relationships and provide leadership and mentoring opportunities monthly. As a result, our students have a greater sense of social responsibility for our community.

Our building-wide recognition program highlights our adoption of Positive Behavioral Intervention Support (PBIS) and focuses on being respectful, responsible, and safe. Using yellow positive behavior slips, students who display and observe respectful and responsible behavior within the school family receive recognition for their positive contributions. Students can also earn yellow slips for participating in community-wide fun activities, such as “hunts” to find Linc the Lynx, our school mascot, hiding somewhere in the building. Each Monday is filled with excitement and anticipation in the hallways as students search to be the first to discover our hidden friend!

Multiple intelligences are fostered at Lincoln through relevant learning opportunities created by our expert teachers that promote high student engagement. Frequent collaboration between partners or small groups, hands-on learning in multiple curricular areas, student choice in process and product for learning, student-directed exploration such as Genius Hour, and songs and movement reinforce learning.

Engaging students as part of the school-wide community is an important component in our commitment to provide a safe, welcoming learning environment for students. Student groups such as Student Government choose “national days” to celebrate building-wide, such as the Pi day challenge and Random Acts of Kindness Day. We have traditions such as the staff versus 8th grade football game which gets the whole school cheering for their favorite team. Students work alongside staff to put together a weekly broadcast highlighting school happenings, celebrations, and important reminders. With that same idea of highlighting talent, productions have been essential to keep the child well rounded using music, acting, and visual skills to put on a performance for the whole school to enjoy.

Lincoln has cultivated beehives, a pollinator field, a Butterfly Garden, and raised-bed gardens maintained by students, staff, and volunteer parents and used in the classroom and extracurricular opportunities. Children also stay engaged as they build community with one another on special field trips. Trips include time spent outside during multi-grade track and field days at a nearby public park and participation in the middle school camping trip. Students camp, swim, bike, hike, and work together to plan and experience nature with their teachers during this unique and memorable learning experience.

Lincoln was an early adopter of education technology, being the first school in the district to integrate curriculum using SmartBoards, tablets, SmartTables, heart rate monitors in PE, and 3-D printers. Lincoln was one of the first four schools in the district to pilot a one-to-one iPad program. However, Lincoln learned that implementing technology was not enough to engage our students fully. We began integrating broader STEM and cross-curricular concepts into our academics and classroom environments. We have found that the opportunities STEM provides through hands-on projects and student choice in academic endeavors have provided a foundation for growth in student engagement that has supported successful student outcomes.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Since the inception of our school in 1975, our Lincoln families strongly desired to partner with the school to create a positive and successful learning environment. Parents and staff co-created the Program Planning Team (PPT), which allows every parent to be a voting member on decisions. The mission of PPT is to encourage parent and community involvement in our school and provide support for educational enrichment

and fun family events throughout the year. PPT does not impose a membership fee to encourage and allow all parents and staff to participate. PPT conducts an annual fundraising auction. This auction highlights Lincoln's strong sense of community. Many of our items are donated by current and former Lincoln community members (although once part of our community, one is always a part of our community). The creativity of the Lincoln community spills into the donations as well. Over the years, we have seen one-of-a-kind contributions from our staff and families. The auction is typically a family affair with various ways for all ages to participate throughout the event. Monies raised fund many of the unique opportunities Lincoln students have. Vetting these opportunities occurs through a "special projects" proposal process where staff, parents, and students can propose new ideas to enhance education at Lincoln. This process has funded things such as drones, bees, gardens, 3D printers, and starter kits for participation in First Lego League.

PPT also coordinates our school volunteer opportunities and conducts tours of the school for prospective families during the lottery enrollment process. They provide opportunities for student and family social engagement outside of the school day and offer a platform for parents and families to dialog with building leadership on school issues and decision-making.

Lincoln prides itself on strong school-home partnerships. Challenges to our regular communication pathways and connections with families during the COVID-19 pandemic were no match for our teachers and staff. As committed professionals and passionate educators, our team went to where the students and families were. They delivered materials to student homes, conducted virtual check-ins with families, and organized online social times allowing small groups of students to connect during the school day. Parent volunteers helped from home by creating materials and curricular supports for the children under teacher direction. Our PPT adapted their activities to virtual formats, including meetings and the annual auction. They shifted in-person social events to physically-distanced events such as online bingo and trivia nights and organized outdoor activities to facilitate peer interaction. Through their intense and intentional efforts, our community maintained a high level of participation and engagement of families.

Lincoln relies on partnerships to deliver new and innovative curricula to our students. Several long-standing partnerships exist with organizations that contribute to the quality of our student's education. This list includes businesses and government entities like the Mayo Clinic, IBM, Olmsted Medical Center, the City of Rochester, and Olmsted County. When we need building and gardening supplies, we look to our partner at Lowes. Lowes provided \$63,000 to rebuild our science room, create a fish laboratory and equip the lab with wireless microscopes, incubators, and fish habitats to raise and breed zebrafish.

We continue to partner with the Mayo Clinic Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology to develop and implement the InSciEdOut curriculum that engages and excites students while meeting educational standards. Using InSciEd Out resources, we partner with professional scientists, aquatic retailers, and volunteers to bring science to life for students in the classroom.

Partnerships with nonprofit organizations such as United Way of Olmsted County, Channel One Regional Food Bank, Cradle 2 Career Rochester, and the Rochester Public School Foundation help our children realize their full potential by breaking down barriers to success such as food insecurity.

When the school brainstormed about an outdoor classroom, a former parent and landscape architect volunteered to design one that was unique to Lincoln and researched a landscape woodworker to help construct it. Fundraising projects in partnership with PPT provided the financial resources to complete the project just in time for use as a space of mask-relieve for our students during the pandemic. Lincoln also partners with the Rochester Master Gardeners to provide advice and assistance with our various garden spaces. We have received grants and awards for work with students in gardening and beekeeping. These partnerships and opportunities highlight our commitment to providing students with a meaningful educational experience and fostering deep connections within our larger community.

3. Creating Professional Culture:

The professional culture at Lincoln has always been one of respect, teamwork, and professionalism. Our teachers model lifelong learning. Our teaching staff are highly qualified and value relevance and innovation

in their planning time. Staff gather for book studies, discussion groups, and to share plans. Data-driven Professional Learning Committees (PLCs) meet twice a month to reflect on student learning and adjust instruction based on student needs. They participate in professional development courses during and outside their workday. Staff is encouraged to give their input in course offerings, resulting in professional development choice boards of coursework that could directly benefit their role. We have incorporated half-day coursework, professional discussions, grade-level work time, and elbow-to-elbow training to learn as an individual. We believe that this approach can best serve our staff and students with a wide range of needs in a K-8 building.

Each year the staff has the opportunity to sign up for two building committees. Many of these committees are tied directly to the backbone of the professional culture here at Lincoln. Our Lincoln Leadership team develops our annual site plan and goals and serves as the communication between teaching teams and building staff. Other committees include PBIS, Intervention and Child Study, and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Our Sunshine Committee focuses on staff wellness, an essential component of our building-wide professional culture.

4. School Leadership:

Our principal has provided consistency and excellence in leadership at Lincoln over his 15 years as principal at Lincoln. As the sole administrator in the building, he bears a great responsibility for managing the students, teachers, and staff across nine grade levels. He embraces collaborative leadership to empower Lincoln's high-performing, innovative staff. This partnership creates an environment where teachers and staff can actively reimagine the possibilities within our school for student opportunity and growth and act to implement change. He possesses an infectious enthusiasm that is only paralleled by his commitment to the success of the whole school. He is frequently found in the hallways, classrooms, or outside, taking his share of bus duty. He leads by example and never asks a teacher or staff member to do anything he would not do. He is a highly accessible leader and welcomes parent ideas and feedback and regularly attends school functions, building a solid sense of trust and community. He also actively recruits parents to volunteer within the school with the belief that the best school for a child is one where families and teachers are highly engaged in the success of their children. He is frequently quoted as saying, "It is my dream to be tripping over volunteers in the school!" Many of the unique opportunities we have created for our students would not be possible without his open and enthusiastic support for innovation and facilitation of the work to make it happen.

During his time at Lincoln, the principal has been the recipient of the 2011 Science and Mathematics Elementary and Middle School Principal of the Year by the Science Museum of Minnesota and the Minnesota Elementary Principals' Association. He was also named the 2015 Ethics in Education award by the Synergy & Leadership Exchange, 2010 STEM/Forward Outstanding Educator from the Southeast Service Cooperative, and the recipient of the Human Rights Award by the Human Rights Commission of Olmsted County in 2008. While his awards and accolades speak volumes, it is, perhaps, his ability to inspire the Lincoln community to strive to be "the best school in the universe!"

The principal goes above and beyond in his coordination efforts with community partners to provide experiences to students and meet both academic and social needs. These opportunities include students experiencing events for the first time, such as museums, concerts, plays, and professional sporting events.

In addition to administrative leadership, our school provides many opportunities for engagement with leadership. The Lincoln Leadership Team (LLT) utilizes a team of teacher and staff leaders who work with the administration to proactively meet the school community's needs. The principal regularly meets with the PPT Co-Presidents and attends the PPT meetings each month to provide school updates and information on focus topics and brainstorm and help meet student and school needs.

Student representatives to the RPS District Student School Board attend monthly meetings with students across the district and meet with the principal to identify strategies and ideas that can positively impact Lincoln. The principal supports and encourages participation in Lincoln's Student Government, which

discusses ideas and issues, lending a student voice to the development of opportunities for the Lincoln community.

5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:

Our Lincoln community mirrors the diversity of our Rochester community. We strive to make our school one that validates and affirms our students' identities; this is evident as one walks through our hallways. Photos of our students and staff line our walls, and interactive cultural displays highlighting individuals and stories of different cultural groups entice our students to understand each other better. We celebrate various types of diversity each month throughout the year. We invite students to visit the displays to learn about these individuals by completing trivia, scanning QR codes for information, or studying a timeline. Our weekly broadcast includes a cultural highlight such as videos informing students about a holiday or event during that week or month. The best part of the broadcast is its focus on students. Students of all grade levels and backgrounds participate in creating news stories, sharing the lunch menu, providing weekly weather updates, reading jokes or quotes, or highlighting the student of the week. This broadcast was a meaningful connection for students and families during distance learning and continues to be a bright spot in our week.

The Lincoln Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion team meets regularly to provide resources, staff development, and building-wide activities for our students. Guided by the Rochester Public Schools Equity Policy and Equity Belief Statements, the team ensures that diversity and inclusion recognize students' cultural and gender identities. Our school counselor facilitates age-appropriate classroom lessons for grades K-8 focused on identity and acceptance. Middle school students participate in affinity groups, providing insight into how shared experiences shape identity. Another student-led group, Anti-Racists for Change, meets monthly with a teacher facilitator to bring awareness and advocacy to our school and the local community.

Our teachers are committed to creating welcoming and affirming classrooms. This commitment is evident through our Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching (CLRT) cohorts. With support from Dr. Sharroky Hollie and his team, our teachers were trained and observed in CLRT protocols for two years, increasing our knowledge of rings of culture and cultural behaviors. This greater understanding allows us to be more intentional in our lesson design to meet the needs of the diverse learning communities in our classrooms. Our team participated in a building-wide book study on Sarah Ahmed's *Being the Change: Lessons and Strategies to Teach Social Comprehension*. Subsequently, our staff, followed by our students, journeyed through lessons on the story of our names, identity webs, and a closer look at classroom libraries and the stories we share in our classrooms. More recently, we are focusing on stories that celebrate the individual and provide multiple perspectives to change the narrative of our families and students from historically marginalized groups. Our media specialist has increased the collection of diverse texts in our school library and highlighted these texts to staff and students.

We love to celebrate all aspects of our Lincoln community!

PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The vital components to the consistent success of Lincoln over time are innovation, collaboration, and adaptability. These principles shape all student experiences that support excellence in academic outcomes and positive social-emotional learning.

A 1977 evaluation of the Lincoln Elementary School program with the North Central Association described the Lincoln collaborative environment this way:

“Most importantly, the alternative is the people who teach and learn together every day and the different ways in which the structure allows them to develop. It is the planning of the environment by the people who will participate in it, an environment that will allow them to work towards goals they believe to be worthwhile.”

“Once a decision is made, is there follow through? Yes, because the teachers and administrator usually make cooperative decisions; consequently, both the teacher and the administrator make a greater effort in carrying out that decision. The administrator also has the capability and resources of getting things done that we need.”

Over the years, there have been many educational innovations available for consideration. Rather than waiting for district-level initiatives, Lincoln teachers, staff, and administrators have always been at the forefront of initiating their own investigations into cutting-edge educational resources and strategies. Lincoln continuously examines innovative ideas for their ability to contribute to purposeful change that benefits students.

Innovation at Lincoln has moved ideas to practice through the collaboration between staff, administration, students, families, and the Rochester community. Innovation at Lincoln is inspirational. No matter the innovation, once there was a demonstration among staff and administrators that it was a student-focused, student-forward strategy, there were few objections from staff, administration, and families to do whatever it took to make the new opportunity happen.

Innovation also requires adaptability. Without a willingness to change and adapt, the Lincoln school environment would not have evolved into what it is today. Our community has embraced innovation at our core, which breaks down the barriers, objections, and attitudes that stand in the way of change. Staff and administrators see complexities as opportunities to propel implementation forward instead of stopping it in its tracks.

Our students see their teachers model lifelong learning by crafting curricular enhancements and learning strategies using modern knowledge and technology. The students’ daily experience of innovative opportunities at Lincoln - that their own teachers and staff developed - demonstrates Lincoln’s ongoing commitment to making the school experience meaningful and impactful for future student success.

Even though Lincoln was initially considered an “alternative” school 46 years ago, it is clear that Lincoln’s focus, philosophy, and innovative teaching and learning epitomize the modern RPS mission “to inspire, challenge, and empower all students with the knowledge and skills required to reach their full potential, to contribute to future generations, and to become involved members of a global community.” Our students are primed to meet and exceed the district’s Graduate Profile goals of developing each student to be an Ethical Contributor, Critical Thinker, Skilled Communicator, Effective Collaborator, Resilient Learner, and Success-Ready Individual. Lincoln’s teachers and staff, curriculum, teaching strategies, community partnerships, and commitment to innovative collaboration build these skills beginning in Kindergarten. Our success is in the synergistic effect of an entire academic community dedicated to achieving excellence.