

# LINCOLN SCHOOL



## School Improvement Plan 2015-2016 End-of-Year Report

### School Council Members:

Parents: Audrey Kalmus  
Heather Veague  
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Principals: Sarah Collmer, K-4  
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<b>Rubric for School Improvement Plan Level of Achievement (Status)</b>	
<b>CODE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTOR</b>
NOT YET	Strategies in this category are not yet initiated.
INITIATED	Strategies in this goal are in the beginning stages of implementation. This may include some completed professional development, pilot initiatives planned, plans for next steps in process.
DEVELOPING	Strategies in this category are in the developing stages. This may include basic professional development, continuing professional development planned, initial data collected, pilot projects initiated, teams functioning effectively.
ESTABLISHED	Strategies in the category have been established. This may include an on-going professional development plan, completed cycle of data collection, documented growth in areas of academic achievement.
REFINING	Strategies in this category are in the refining stage. This may include completed School Improvement Plan goal, expansion of successful practices to other grade levels or subjects, more comprehensive or advanced professional development.

<b>Strategic Objectives</b>			
<b>Educator Growth</b>	<b>Curriculum and Instruction</b>	<b>Assessment and Data</b>	<b>Responding to Student Needs</b>
Build educator expertise and a shared vision of effective teaching through the new educator evaluation system, professional collaboration, and professional development	Refine curriculum and instruction to strengthen the engagement and achievement of all students	Use assessment and data to effectively promote and monitor student growth	Respond skillfully to the academic, social emotional, and physical needs of all students

### **SCHOOL BASED GOALS**

- 1. To create/develop consistent behavior expectations and responses that allow for focused engagement, achievement, and development of all learners**
- 2. To support teachers as they use collaborative practices to create innovative learning opportunities for students**
- 3. To establish a meaningful K-8 community connection**

#### **Assessment of School Strengths and Areas of Focus: Assessment of School Strengths and Areas of Focus**

The Spring 2015 Community Survey results, the 2015-2016 District Strategic Plan, and faculty input guide our assessment of the school's strengths and areas of focus for this school year. The survey indicated a clear appreciation for the hard-working, dedicated teachers and staff whose communication with families was identified as strengths. Families feel their children are safe in school, engaged in their learning, and like coming to school. The Community Survey also identified some areas for focus. Families are seeking opportunities for advanced learning, and many are interested in developing a stronger sense of community at the Lincoln School.

This school improvement plan includes a goal to develop consistent expectations and responses for behavior, including social-emotional learning. Overall, behavior is quite good, and there are many social-emotional learning opportunities throughout the building. However, the goal is to have consistency so students know how to be successful!

The District Strategic Plan this year includes professional development that is designed to refine and enhance teachers' skill in providing rich, small group reading instruction and differentiated learning opportunities for students. Time will be given at faculty meetings and within team meetings in order for the district professional development to continue at the building level so that learning can be applied, practiced, and specifically tailored for students.

The final goal addresses our desire to develop a stronger K-8 learning community through special event(s) in which student interest, skills and achievements are celebrated.

## **GOAL 1**

**District Strategic Objective - Curriculum and Instruction: Curriculum is engaging, provides appropriate cognitive demand, and supports the academic, creative, social, and emotional development of all students**

**District Strategic Priority: C1. Develop instructional practices and models for differentiating instruction to meet the individual needs of all students**

**School-Based Goal:** To create/develop consistent behavior expectations and responses that allow for focused engagement, achievement, and development of all learners

### **REPORT:**

The audit completed in the fall with all grades revealed that the behaviors that led to our focus were primarily lower level and distracting in a classroom setting. This led our work with our faculties in the direction of more professional development, adjustment of adult response to student behavior, and re-assessing and modifying whole-school behavior expectations.

#### **K-4**

The K-4 faculty made solid progress in establishing consistent behavior expectations. Over the course of several faculty meetings throughout the year, the faculty engaged in thoughtful discussion and collaborative analysis of behavior concerns and how we respond to them. This work led us to the new CARES acronym for school-wide behavior expectations: **C**ooperate **A**dvocate (or Ask) **R**esponsible **E**mpathy **S**afe. These expectations are positive and linked to the ***Growth as a Learner*** standards on the report card. These expectations are aligned with the first tier in the PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Support) framework that is for all students, all staff, and all settings. We have not implemented the use of the CARES acronym yet as it will be important for us to carefully plan how we explain and provide instruction on how to meet the expectations.

Two cohorts of faculty members attended professional development opportunities specifically addressing this School Improvement Goal. The first group attended ***Rethinking Behavior Support*** with Jessica Minahan, author of "The Behavior Code: A Practical Guide to Understanding and Teaching the Most Challenging Students." The second group attended a presentation by Dr. George Sugai, one of the leading experts on PBIS. Participants in these workshops have shared strategies with their colleagues both informally and through our faculty newsletter.

#### **5-8**

In grades 5-8, the primary areas of concern during the day were at lunch and in the hallways. Developmental Design, our social and emotional curriculum, directly addresses language and how we engage students in the use of our social contract (which guides behavioral expectations for the school each year). On Institute Day and the day following, we invited Scott Tiynk from Developmental Designs to work with us as a whole group and as teams to think about our practices. There was an immediate

impact as we all re-engaged with the Social Contract and were more aware of making it a living document for everyone. Faculty meetings in October, December, and February also allowed us to revisit our expectations for students through consensograms and conversations to clarify what we ask of and how we, as adults, respond to our students. This led to renewed commitment by adults to be in the hallways between classes, thus giving students predictable responses to behavior in the hallway and to the use of locker breaks as a way to organize.

In addition, our new lunch procedure addressed a multitude of behavioral expectations as it gave us an opportunity to do collaborative problem solving with our students. Student Council shared the new lunch procedure that offered students choices between being inside or outside, when they would eat, and how they would group themselves across grade levels. In the fall, Student Council began working on what the winter plan would look like in order to retain student choice. They were able to create a structure that allowed for students and adults to have their needs met. The teacher conversations about lunchtime behaviors have decreased at faculty meeting, as the students' responses have been in line with the new behavior expectations.

Students in grades 3-8 participate in a student survey of their classroom experience. This year's results indicate a positive upward trend in the indicators that relate to classroom learning environment and expectations: students listening to each other in class and clarity around work expectations.

School Council also spent time looking at our Parent Handbook. We identified places where our information was redundant or unclear. As part of that conversation, we enlisted students to film examples of whole-school procedures for one K-4 procedure (Hallway High Fives) and one 5-8 procedure (lunch time routines) so that we could highlight the purpose and how it plays out on our website.

**ACTION PLAN STATUS FOR GOAL 1:**

To create/develop consistent behavior expectations and responses that allow for focused engagement, achievement, and development of all learners

Activities	Outputs and Measures	Status	Possible Next Steps
Perform an audit of current behaviors of concern and discipline practices	Data from audit	Established	Continue to collect data to ensure that we are clear and that our practices are in line with what we expect and communicate
Provide professional development about PBIS* during faculty meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Schoolwide Expectations &amp; Language</li> <li>● Interventions and Supports for at-risk and high-risk behaviors</li> </ul> *Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Exit Slips on content, and questions</li> <li>● Faculty survey</li> <li>● Work products including behavior category charts and acronym development</li> </ul>	Developing	Finish the work with school-wide expectations so that the students are clear about K-4 and 5-8 and how they connect. [Continue using faculty meeting time to understand the PBIS Framework and student-centered and collaborative approaches to responding when students do not meet our expectations] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lincoln K-4 Book Club: <i>Lost at School</i> by Ross Greene is an informative text on the ways communication between and amongst students, teachers and families can help or hinder problematic behavior.</li> <li>● Potential Collaboration with consultants for “Allies, Achievers and Risk-takers” professional development</li> <li>● Refine systems to collect data, analyzing and measuring student outcomes</li> </ul>

**ACTION PLAN STATUS FOR GOAL 1, Continued**

Activities	Outputs and Measures	Status	Possible Next Steps
Determine consistent language and practices for behavior instruction and response to unexpected behaviors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Continuum of behavior interventions and supports, K-8 with developmental consideration</li> <li>● Student survey results indicate fewer students worrying about behavior management in the classroom</li> <li>● 5-8 Teachers monitoring hallways – reporting less unexpected behaviors by students between classes</li> </ul>	Developing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Define Tier II and III supports and interventions that are already in place</li> <li>● 5-8 summer work, directed toward knowing learners and structuring classroom instruction to meet the needs of a variety of learners, will support behavior expectations</li> </ul>
Ongoing communication with students and families.	Newsletter updates Principals’ coffees	Established	Summer work project to write lesson plans to explicitly teach CARES expectations across settings in our school  Continue to look at our Parent Handbook and how we communicate about behaviors. Monitor student survey results.

**GOAL 2**

**District Strategic Objective- Educator Growth: Educators demonstrate continual growth and professional collaboration built on a shared vision of effective teaching**

**District Strategic Priority: A1. Develop expertise in team-based collaborative Practices; A2. Develop instructional coaching capacity, for teachers and administrators, across the district**

**School-Based Goal: To support teachers as they use collaborative practices to create innovative learning opportunities for students**

**REPORT**

The vision of administering professional development across the district came as the administrative team looked at how to get the most benefit from our district-wide Wednesday afternoon professional development. In order to further develop the PD work, time was allotted on the Monday afternoon building meeting schedule for Module Follow Up. Teams were able to utilize this meeting time to further their work in each of the district PD modules (Small Group Reading Instruction, Differentiation, and Collaborative Practices). Some teams were able to schedule time with curriculum specialists while others moved forward as a team.

The District PD Module on Collaborative Practices, along with the Facilitative Leadership training, provided a strong foundation for the team leaders, content specialists and the administrative team. As this was the ‘training year,’ the benefits have not yet been fully realized. However, we see places where teachers are incorporating the use of data or text protocols with each other and with their students. For example, teams have used protocols from the Facilitative Leadership resource book and report

benefits such as the inclusion of each team member’s voice; sharper focus on the root of a problem; efficient problem- solving; and facilitating professional relationships. Teachers, specialists and administrators have been able to more effectively discuss student work, student needs, IEP Goals, instruction, and dilemmas to name a few. As a result, the faculty is engaged in meaningful conversations about challenging topics that help to calibrate and prioritize our values in teaching and learning. A continued commitment to deepen this work will ensure that instruction and learning benefits are maximized.

**ACTION PLAN STATUS FOR GOAL 2:**

To support teachers as they use collaborative practices to create innovative learning opportunities for students

Activities	Outputs and Measures	Status	Possible Next Steps
<b>Planning content for follow up sessions</b>	Goals and agendas	Developing	Continue to work on refining and revisiting norms to focus conversations and to adapt to our new levels of skills.
<b>Follow up sessions connected to professional development modules</b>	<p>Observation of faculty teams carrying out collaborative practices will be documented by principals, i.e., agendas and minutes from Team meetings and Common Planning Time.</p> <p>Faculty will share the outcomes (results) of their collaborative work with their principals.</p> <p>Peer observation program participation</p>	Developing	<p>Continue to work as a school to find ways to integrate the collaborative practices into our work.</p> <p>Plan for optimal use of time, so outcomes for teachers and student learning are maximized</p>
<b>Empowering teacher leaders</b>	<p>Department, team, and faculty meeting agendas, when compared with those from last year, reflect an increased focus on student and professional learning</p> <p>Administrator observations of participant leadership during department and team meetings will reflect an increased focus on learning.</p> <p>Participants will use protocols, with evidence that the protocols selected match the needs of the task and skills of the group at that moment.</p>	Developing	<p>Continue to look at student work regularly.</p> <p>Support teams as they refine their use of protocols and looking at student work, engagement, and behaviors as a way to understand teaching and learning.</p> <p>Help team leaders and CLTs continue the work (i.e., co-facilitate to build facilitation skills).</p> <p>Consult with Gene Thompson Grove in May, so that the entire 5-8 faculty can experience a protocol through her expertise with follow up in grade level team meetings.</p>
<b>Activating Teacher Leadership</b>	Number of teachers in leadership roles increases		Define, more broadly, ways in which teachers can be leaders.

### GOAL 3

**District Strategic Objective – Instruction: Instruction is student centered and focused on the engagement, achievement, and development of all learners**

**District Strategic Priority – C1. Develop instructional practices and models for differentiating instruction to meet the individual needs of all students**

**School- Based Goal - To establish a meaningful K-8 community connection**

#### REPORT

Throughout the year we have had many energetic brainstorms, including one with the School Council, which generated big and small ideas for how we could connect the K-8 students and faculty. It took us until this spring to get to the right idea for a K-8 event. We are organizing “Art Show Buddy Classes” by pairing classes PK-8 to view the art show at Hartwell together. Buddy classes will have a short time to get acquainted and set goals for their viewing. Teachers will coordinate and guide the students through the art show. Still to be determined is a way to capture the experience; we are enlisting the expertise of the art teachers to finalize. Once we have had this experience, we will debrief together to determine the impact on the school community.

In addition to this PK-8 event, many classes were able to collaborate with another grade level.

- Kindergarten and third grade Reading Buddies
- Second and fifth grade Writing Buddies
- 8th grade Mentors (individuals) for younger students
- 8th graders spoke to 4th graders on how they overcame a challenge on the 90th Day of School (i.e., half-way through the school year, and as 4th graders, half-way through the Lincoln School)
- Library Pages (grades 4-8) learned how to help in the library- checking in/out books, helping library patrons
- 5-8 Lunch Protocol which has increased student mixing in cross-graded and family ways
- Community service extension allows older students to work in younger grade levels
- Younger students are invited to preview the spring musical

#### ACTION PLAN STATUS FOR GOAL 3:

To establish a meaningful K-8 community connection

Activities	Outputs and Measures	Status	Possible next steps
<b>Plan and implement an event that involves all K-8 students in a purposeful learning event.</b>	Minutes of meetings Event description including overarching theme and learning outcomes Artifacts/mementos from the event	Initiated	Look for more opportunities to engage K-8 as a school.
<b>Meet with development team including principals and teachers</b>	Minutes of meetings	Not Yet	Create a development team that makes an annual event possible
<b>Advertise and hold event</b>	Communications, pictures of event Evaluation of event	Developing	