

Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, and Professional Development

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The curriculum for the students of the Lincoln Public Schools is standards-based, meaning that national and state standards in each subject area form a foundation of curriculum concepts, skills, and outcomes. The district-specific focus for instruction is articulated in the Lincoln Learning Expectations (see www.lincnet.org/curriculum).

District administration uses the focus and outcomes of the Lincoln Learning Expectations to guide the purchase of instructional materials, to determine local assessments, and to steer funds towards professional development that will build educator expertise in teaching in a standards-based environment.

The base budget provides the resources necessary to sustain the current quality of curriculum, instruction, assessment and professional development. This budget continues to support specific curriculum materials for consistency in core subject instruction. It allocates funds, as well, for teachers to advance their learning through conferences and tuition reimbursement. Stipends for mentor teachers and funds for Institute Day enrich the experience of teachers both veteran and new to the district.

The new improvement initiatives proposed in this budget seek to raise the quality of our program for students and to increase the expertise of our teachers. These improvement areas are summarized below and are described more fully in the individual initiative requests.

Improvement Initiatives

These improvement initiatives build from the district's strategic priorities for the 2015-16 school year. The initiatives also anticipate areas of growth in 2016-17 that will be discussed and developed during the current school year.

Transition to new Science, Technology, and Engineering Standards (STE)

The state will implement new standards in STE during the fall of 2015, and implementation is a multi-year effort. Among several key shifts, the new standards require that engineering be taught in all grades 1-8, that the curriculum be grade-specific in grades K-5, rather than spanning several grades, and that a new set of eight STE inquiry practices play a central role in all student learning. The district began its STE transition in 2015-16 with a focus on new Life Science units. This Improvement Initiative supports the next phase – the second of three – with a focus on curriculum, materials, and professional development related to Earth and Space Science.

Bookroom Development and Improvements

Small group reading instruction is critical to meeting the differentiated literacy needs of students in all grades. In order to meet the reading needs of all students, educators must have access to an ample supply of leveled texts in multiple copies. Bookrooms are the centralized location for a school's communal collection of leveled texts. This

Improvement Initiative supports the creation of a bookroom collection at Hanscom Middle School, as well as improvements to the existing bookroom collections in Hanscom Primary School and Lincoln School 5-8.

Instructional materials for Social Studies, Gr. 7/8 at Hanscom Middle School

The Social Studies curriculum in Hanscom Middle School is designed to prepare students for a successful entry into Bedford High School. In response to changes in 2014-15 change to Bedford's Social Studies curriculum, faculty on the Hanscom campus quickly and appropriately rewrote LPS standards and curriculum in grade eight to align with those in Bedford. New instructional materials are now required to support the revised curriculum.

In Grade 7, the engaging Social Studies curriculum on the Hanscom campus has been well-received by both teachers and students. Faculty, however, currently have access only to a teacher's guide for the hands-on activities outlined for the year; students do not have copies of Social Studies textbooks that match the curriculum. This Improvement Initiative would support the purchase of instructional materials in Social Studies for grades 7 and 8 on the Hanscom campus.

Instructional materials for Mathematics in the middle grades

Middle school math materials purchased in 2009 have an inadequate alignment to the Common Core and the 2011 MA Frameworks. In addition, the district currently supports two separate sets of math instructional materials for the middle grades on the two campuses. On both campuses, teachers are required to supplement the existing textbooks with materials from a variety of sources in order to meet state standards. This Improvement Initiative seeks to fund the purchase of new, fully-aligned instructional materials for middle school math, with the same materials used on both campuses.