

# ***The Lincoln School Foundation: Advancing Education Through Innovation since 1988***

***What does innovation mean to the LSF?***

The LSF has spent significant time in the past 3 years discussing what innovation means to our organization. We have considered key questions about what characterizes innovation, whether something “innovative” must be new to the field or just new to Lincoln Schools, whether innovation is just about technology, and what are the expected outcomes of innovation. These conversations, as well as our many years of experience funding teachers’ ideas for new and creative projects, have led us to the following definition, captured in the LSF mission statement:

*Our mission is to inspire and fund innovation that fosters critical thinking, collaboration, and authentic learning experiences for every student in the Lincoln Public Schools.*

***How is the LSF working to support innovation in our schools?***

To support innovation, the LSF has primarily funded grants that support LPS educators in designing new and creative projects to enrich our schools’ curriculum, that support a culture of innovation in the schools, and that build teachers’ foundational skills and knowledge to enable risk-taking and innovation in teaching. Below is a selection from the past five years of grant-making that demonstrate our work in these areas.

**Supporting innovation in the classroom**

The following projects focused on enabling teachers to develop curriculum fostering critical thinking, collaboration, and authentic learning.

<b>Grant</b>	<b>Year Awarded</b>	<b>How Supports Innovation?</b>	<b>Status of Project?</b>
Chicken Coop (David Trant, 6th grade Brooks)	2015-16	This engineering project provided a hands-on, authentic, open-ended learning experience for students, and provided opportunities for collaboration and creativity. This project could serve as a model for project-based learning in other knowledge domains.	David Trant continues to facilitate hands-on, authentic engineering projects in different forms.
Wetlands Boardwalk Curriculum Development (Mairead Curtis, District)	2016	This project was cross-curricular, including science, art, ELA, and math. It used Lincoln’s outdoor resources, including the boardwalk, to feed student curiosity, questions, and engagement.	The curriculum continues to inform teaching in all grades across the district.
Technology	2017-18	This project intended to seamlessly	Appropriate next

Integrated Classroom (Matt Reed, 4th grade Smith)		integrate technology across the 4th grade curriculum in this classroom. Use of technology provided authentic learning experiences and aimed to enhance critical thinking skills. This grant is a possible model for embedded technology districtwide.	steps are being assessed by Matt Reed and the administration for future development.
Colonial Rug Braiding (Colleen Pearce, 3rd grade Smith)	2014-15	This project used art to create a collaborative and authentic learning experience tied to multiple subject areas (art, science, social studies, etc.), and fostered collaboration among teachers across the grade level.	This project has continued in other forms within the 3rd grade curriculum (e.g., dying and braiding cloth for Wampanoag bags).
Cross-Generational Literacy Tutors: A Two Year Pilot (Gwen Blumberg, 1st grade Smith)	2014-16	This project provided an intersection between the school and community and offered a new way for students to develop their reading skills.	Did not continue after Gwen Blumberg switched to a new role.

### Fostering a culture of Innovation

The following projects focused on creating a culture of innovation in which teachers may feel more inspired and comfortable to take risks and try something new:

Grant	Year Awarded	How Supports Innovation?	Status of Project?
Site visits to innovative schools in the region (Sharon Hobbs and Sarah Collmer)	2017-18	The LSF supported faculty visits to Meridian Academy in Jamaica Plain and King Middle School in Portland, ME. The visits provide faculty and administration with the opportunity to see firsthand alternative models for teaching and learning.	Grants are in progress; one visit completed.
Development of Makerspace at Hanscom (Josh Gold and Becca Fasciano, Hanscom Middle School)	2015-16 and 2016-17	This project that included both an afterschool club and equipment for the Makerspace in HMS fostered a culture and mode of inquiry that is student-driven, project-based, authentic, creative, hands-on and collaborative.	Makerspace is integrated into curriculum at HMS.
Community education (Bemis Hall Lecture Series)	2017-18	The LSF supported the Bemis Hall Lecture on Education featuring Jal Mehta's lecture on deep learning. Supporting this effort created an opportunity to bring conversations about education to the broader community.	Lecture took place in April 2018

## **Building Foundational Structures for teaching and learning**

In order to innovate, the LSF believes that teachers must possess strong foundational skills from which to develop new curriculum and explore new ways to teach. When possible, the LSF has tried to provide opportunities for full teams of teachers to participate in professional learning opportunities together as a way to foster collaborative practices. The following projects served this purpose:

- Lucy Calkins Summer Reading Institute (two 3rd grade teachers, Smith)
  - Professional development initiative
  - Allows for collaboration with educators from Teacher's College and districts around the country
- Off-site, Online, & On-site PD (Kindergarten) 2017-18
  - District wide collaboration
  - professional development in pedagogy
  - A model for cross district learning
- Broadway Teachers Workshop (Kristin Hall) 2017-18
  - Allowed our one person drama department to establish a virtual professional learning community with teachers from other schools across the country
- Civil War Washington (Steve Cullen, Brooks) 2018-19

## ***What kinds of innovation would the LSF like to see in the future in LPS? What kinds of projects would we like to support?***

In upcoming years the LSF hopes to see the Lincoln schools embrace a culture of running pilots, risk-taking and creativity that will generate more grant requests for new and different work in the future. Areas in which we would like to see growth include:

- Student-centered and student-led projects
- Cross-disciplinary projects
- Authentic learning experiences including outdoor learning opportunities
- Makerspace opportunities on Lincoln campus

To enable the creation and implementation of these types of projects we would also like to consider:

- Collaborative work among teacher teams (e.g., interdisciplinary curriculum development, project-based curriculum development, integration of technology)
- Opportunities for teachers to visit and see other schools where innovation is happening
- Sharing of innovation within and across teacher teams, grade levels, and schools within the Lincoln Public Schools, as well as other schools in Lincoln (Carroll--reading; Birches--personalization)
  - opportunities for sharing curriculum and project ideas, conducting peer observations