

Lincoln School



REPORT ON THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2018-2019

School Council

Sarah Collmer, K-4 Principal

Sharon Hobbs, 5-8 Principal

Lis Herbert, K-4 Parent

Corinne Hairston-Parris, Teacher

Christine Staffin, Teacher

Sylvia Perry, 5-8 Parent

Hannah Stevenson, K-4 Parent

Liz Wilkinson, 5-8 Parent

Richard Panetta, Community Member

Rubric for School Improvement Plan Level of Achievement (Status)

CODE	DESCRIPTOR
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 ongoing 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.

Assessment of School Strengths and Areas of Focus

The 2018-2019 School Year marked year three of Collaborative Practices work in the district. Educators at the Lincoln School continued refining their practices as teams and delved into goals. The K-4 goals included book studies on culturally responsive teaching and math instruction, literacy goals aligned with the district professional development, and instructional models for related services. As a result of the Collaborative Practices work, classroom libraries are reorganized to capture student interests, and students have time to go book shopping so they have access to a variety of books to use throughout the week. Classes had lessons with the social worker and school psychologist to build social emotional competencies, and an examination of student engagement was completed by teachers who did peer observations and an analysis of redirections. Students learned how to use technology as a tool to organize information and demonstrate learning through the integration of iPads into lessons.

Teams at the 5-8 worked on creating interdisciplinary units that mirrored units that we had observed directly on LSF sponsored visits to Meridian Academy in Jamaica Plain and King Middle School in Portland, ME. The teachers worked to look at desired student learning and outcomes and then plan backwards to the project experience. Both sixth and seventh grades will complete their units in May and June of this year. The fifth grade used their collaborative practices time to continue to dive deeply into their learning about the units of study, practicing lessons and planning with each other. This work forwarded their practice with students in a more seamless manner. The specialists and eighth grade teams both looked at student behaviors and creating classroom environments that responded in a culturally sensitive and consistent manner to create a safe learning environment. The work involved reading articles and books together as well as working side by side to adjust their practices as students needed them to do so.

The district's literacy professional development has been a major focus for the K-5 faculty, literacy team and administrators. Consultants Tammy Mulligan and Clare Landrigan have worked with grade level teams at site visits, and with primary and intermediate groups for professional development workshops. Each session has been a mix of skill building in instructional practice, curriculum development, assessment, and building beliefs about how students develop as readers and writers. The Lucy Calkins Units of Study in Reading and Writing, the gradual release of responsibility, and the workshop model are woven together to create highly engaging and effective literacy learning. The opportunity to plan, observe and debrief demo lessons with our students has been a powerful learning experience for all participants. This initiative is a monumental undertaking that has been so thoughtfully crafted by the Literacy Content Specialist, Gwen Blumberg, the literacy coaches, Maureen Markelz and Rose Vignola, and Assistant Superintendent Jess Rose.

The school council reviewed and revised the school handbook for the Lincoln School. This document has not been updated for several years and our school council has a balanced membership that allowed us to make recommendations for updates that would be useful to

all members of the school community. The revised school handbook will provide our school community with updated information, procedures and practices.

District Strategic Objectives			
Educator Growth	Curriculum and Instruction	Instruction	Equity and Culture
Educators demonstrate continual growth, professional collaboration, innovation, and risk-taking built on a shared vision of effective teaching and practices, and equity for all students.	Curriculum is engaging, provides high cognitive demand, and supports the creative, social and emotional development, and academic growth of all students.	Instruction is student centered and focused on the engagement, achievement, and social and emotional development of all learners.	Educators and students work together to build a school culture that values, respects and responds to students' identities, and develops the social and emotional well-being of all students.

Goal 1: To support K-5 teachers as they study literacy and learn how to implement Lucy Calkins' units of study. <i>Strategic Priority B1. Support and guide educator development of instructional units that provide equitable access for all students, engage students and provide appropriate levels of cognitive demand, differentiation and student ownership of their learning experiences.</i>			
Activities	Outputs and Measures	Status	Possible Next Steps
Debrief district PD and site visits with faculty	Note catcher to document reflections - successes, challenges and questions	Developing	Teachers and principals will continue with this work next year when units are taught for the second time, and new units are piloted.
Observations of literacy instruction OR Learning Walks	Observational data	Developing	Teachers are visibly more comfortable with the units of study now. We will continue to coach and support them as they dive deeper into their own learning and the learning of their students.

By the end of this year the K-5 teachers will have participated in six site visits as cross campus grade-level teams, and five professional development workshops (including Institute Day) with the literacy consultants. Observing the consultants working with our students and then debriefing the instructional practices and choices has been a powerful learning experience for the educators. The combination of observation, group planning, and direct instruction from the consultants has provided a cohesive experience to help educators grow their skills and practices in the workshop model of instruction, and implement the Units of Study in reading and writing. The learning of adults, and the direct impact on our students has been remarkable. Students are learning how to talk more deeply about books, drawing and dramatizing stories, and building independent learning skills.

On Institute Day, teachers looked at winter writing samples of students next to the fall writing samples. The growth of all of our students was noticeable. The depth of their vocabulary, use of voice, and sentence length and complexity showed an understanding of the craft of writing in a different way than we have seen at that point in the year. The conversation students have with each other about the themes of books and how they change in the course of the story are also deeper than they have been in previous years. This is partly because the teachers are reading a common text aloud to model strategies and conversations, and because the students are gaining new understandings through the consistent use of one model of instruction.

Goal 2: School council will review and make recommendations for updates to the Lincoln School handbook to reflect the current practices and learnings of the faculty and parents.

Core Value: Collaboration and Community

Activities	Outputs and Measures	Status	Possible Next Steps
Review the most recent Lincoln School Handbook	Recommendations for updates to the school handbook.	Established	Publish the new handbook on the website and continue to monitor for things that need to be updated and changed as we move into the building project.
Consult with faculty and families about areas of the Lincoln School Handbook that need to be revised, removed or added	Family feedback Faculty and Student focus group discussions Analyze and document input	Initiated	Parts of the handbook were shared with team leaders and at parent coffees as it was being developed.
Develop recommendations to revise the Lincoln School Handbook	Draft language for recommended revisions and additions; summary of content recommended for removal including rationale	Established	Handbook will be revised and posted for the 2019-20 school year

The Lincoln School Handbook for Families had not been updated since 2015 and so School Council worked both as a whole group and also in K-4 and 5-8 groups to update what we hope will be a useful resource for all members of the school community. We worked to minimize redundancies and to make the information immediately accessible. At our monthly meetings we have had fruitful discussions about the content and format of the handbook information. Some of the larger revisions include the addition of a “Quick Guide” one-page orientation to new families, the school-wide community expectations (CARES at the K-4 and the 5-8 social contract), the inclusion of staff contact information, and updated procedures for K-4 drop off, placement and kindergarten enrollment. In the 5-8 portion, we noticed that there was no information about technology and how we allow (or don’t allow) students to have it available to them during the day. The group had robust conversation about what was helpful to students in the course of their learning as it related to the availability of technology. Following that conversation, the team leaders in the 5-8 also looked at the language and added their thoughts, as did parents at a Principal’s coffee. Although the information makes sense for the current students, we are aware of how quickly technology changes and how we will need to continue to monitor the language in the handbook to ensure that it mirrors what is happening in the school.

Our final handbook is intended to be a living document that is accessible on our website. We will continue to monitor its effectiveness in providing parents and students with up to date information about our school and how we operate as a school community.