



# Lincoln School Foundation

*Advancing Education Through Innovation*

December 2011

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

**A**s we approach the end of 2011, we take the opportunity to review the impact of three grants awarded by the Lincoln School Foundation in previous years. Back in 2008, Principal Steve McKenna introduced the Responsive Classroom program to Lincoln School, K-4.

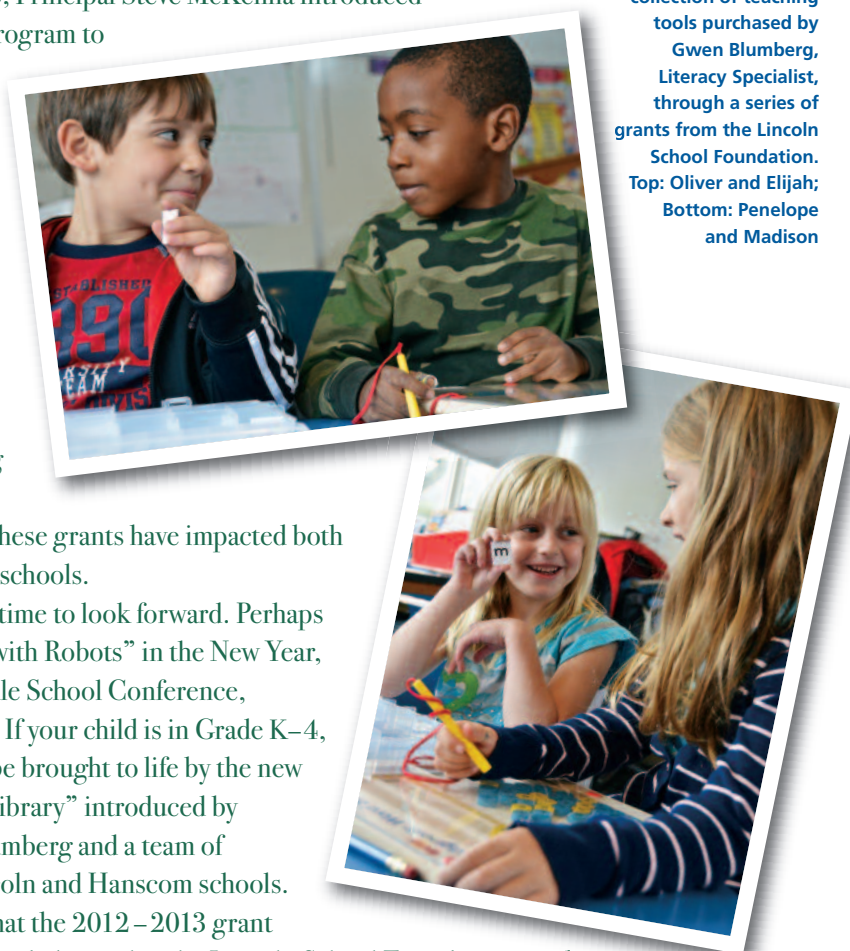
More recently, two grants were awarded to technology teachers in both the Lincoln and Hanscom schools, allowing them to pilot the use of Apple iPads in the classroom. We also take an in-depth look at a grant awarded to the Lincoln Kindergarten team, bringing together music, literacy and technology. Check out how these grants have impacted both teaching and learning in our schools.

Of course, it is also a time to look forward. Perhaps your child will be “Dancing with Robots” in the New Year, or will be attending the Middle School Conference, “Bridging the Culture Gap.” If your child is in Grade K-4, his or her literacy skills will be brought to life by the new and growing “Mentor Text Library” introduced by Literacy Specialist Gwen Blumberg and a team of collaborators from both Lincoln and Hanscom schools.

We don't yet know what the 2012-2013 grant applications will bring, but we do know that the Lincoln School Foundation needs your support as we launch our Annual Appeal. We are very pleased to announce that the Brooks and Joan Fortune Family Foundation, a private foundation dedicated to encouraging innovative ideas and excellence in education, has awarded a matching grant to the LSF. This grant will match, dollar for dollar, every first time donation to the LSF's Annual Appeal. Please take advantage of this opportunity to double the impact of your first gift and our endeavors on behalf of all teachers across the Lincoln School District.

Whether you are a first time contributor, or give regularly through our Annual Appeal and our “Honor A Teacher and Staff” (HATS) program, please give as generously as you can this year. Your gift will directly benefit our children and help keep our schools and our town strong. *Thank you.*

Lincoln School first graders working with letter tiles and word boards, part of a collection of teaching tools purchased by Gwen Blumberg, Literacy Specialist, through a series of grants from the Lincoln School Foundation. Top: Oliver and Elijah; Bottom: Penelope and Madison



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# LSF iPad Pilot Goes Mainstream!

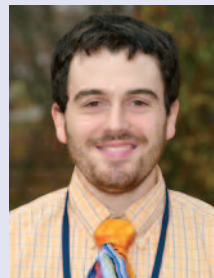
## Technology Driven Innovation in Education

**T**HE LINCOLN SCHOOL FOUNDATION exists to “advance education through innovation” in our work with the Lincoln School District. One way we serve this purpose is by funding pilot projects, encouraging teachers and their students to take risks and experiment with new tools or methods of learning. When successful, pilots often receive ongoing, expanded funding from the District and are incorporated into the District’s core curriculum. In two short years, iPad use in the schools has progressed from LSF pilot to broad District adoption and now enables one teacher to completely re-write his approach to education.

The LSF funded three requests to purchase iPads in the 2010–2011 grant cycle. Following the successful implementation of those iPads in the classroom, this year the District purchased 90 iPads—45 each for Lincoln and Hanscom—which are stored in carts that travel to different classrooms each day. First grade teacher Matt Reed, who received the first iPad grant from LSF, initially used the iPad to collect assessment data for reading and math and is currently using it to publish eBooks with his students. Eighth grade English teacher Jennifer Herbert plans to supplement her students’ study of “Anne Frank, Diary of a Young Girl” with a virtual tour of Anne Frank’s house on the District iPads.

The iPad’s unique user interface has also enabled other curriculum innovations. Lincoln School’s Dori Fishbone has been using iPads and the Dexteria app in her Occupational Therapy classes to work on fine motor precision, strength, and visual motor skills. She comments, “It is very helpful because the letter tracing app guides the child to the appropriate letter formation instead of just letting him trace it any which way.”

Many Lincoln School District teachers have commented that one of the greatest benefits to introducing the iPad technology in the classroom has been increased student engagement and motivation. On the Hanscom campus, Josh Gold piloted a program using an LSF funded iPad to “flip” the curriculum in his 6th grade math classroom. The flipped approach was first developed in 2007 by two Colorado teachers, Jonathan Bergmann and Aaron Sams, who began recording lectures for their students to view outside of school, freeing up more classroom time for labs, discussion, and individualized instruction. They write, “One of the



Josh Gold

greatest benefits of flipping is that overall interaction increases: Teacher to student and student to student. Since the role of the teacher has changed from presenter of content to learning coach, we spend our time talking to kids. We are answering questions, working with small groups, and guiding the learning of each student individually.”<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Gold’s innovative use of the LSF funded iPad to “flip” his classroom led to additional funding through a Boston University grant that provides each student with an iPad, enabling Mr. Gold to experiment further and to refine his ideas for transforming classroom instruction. Mr. Gold recently applied for a follow-on LSF grant to purchase equipment that will allow him to wirelessly mirror the iPad workspaces to the front of the classroom for on-demand discussions and group problem solving. Mr. Gold says, “The best part of this style of curriculum is that once it is developed, it allows for a truly differentiated curriculum enabling the teacher to leave no child behind and extend those able.”

The LSF commends the District and our talented teachers for their innovative uses of technology to advance education, both incrementally and with transformational change. Something tells us this is just the beginning, so we hope you will continue to generously support The Lincoln School Foundation’s mission in helping our schools pioneer new ways to create a community of lifelong learners.

<sup>1</sup> [thedailyriff.com/articles/how-the-flipped-classroom-is-radically-transforming-learning-536.php](http://thedailyriff.com/articles/how-the-flipped-classroom-is-radically-transforming-learning-536.php)

### An iPad teaching moment for Matt Reed



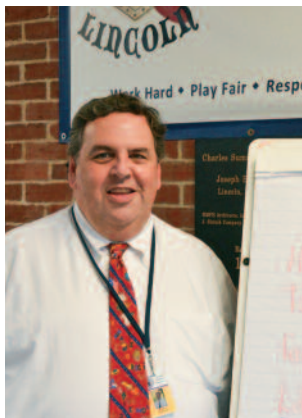
# RESPONSIVE CLASSROOM:

## Creating Positive Communities

**“Every child deserves a warm, safe and joyful learning environment. A place that supports them to take risks, a place to learn and to reach their full potential. . . . The Responsive Classroom is not a separate curriculum, but an approach to teaching . . . to create positive communities both within the classroom and throughout the school.”**

*Introduction to the Responsive Classroom Program*

**I**N 2007, Lincoln School Principal Steve McKenna received an LSF grant to train teachers in the Responsive Classroom techniques, which were already being imple-



**Steve McKenna**  
*Principal, Lincoln School, Grades K-4*

mented on the Hanscom campus. Four years later the Lincoln School is deeply committed to the program. Mr. McKenna, initially attracted to the program because of the school-wide aspect and the alignment between social-emotional and academic learning, reports that, “The training has been transformational and has enhanced the learning experiences of our students. We understand that learners succeed when a balance of academic and emotional needs are being met. Staff training has focused on an approach to teaching and learning that fosters safe and challenging classroom experiences. There has been a change in thinking about instruction—being deliberate about



**Blake Siskavich in morning meeting with his kindergartners**

expressing expectations for academics and behavior. The common language is empowering for staff.”

Kindergarten teacher Rachel Scheff was one of the first teachers trained in the program. “I love Responsive Classroom! It is an integral way of how I run my classroom. Our daily morning meetings set the tone for children to feel welcome and included. Modeling part of classroom tasks and how to

interact with each other are also a daily part of my teaching. The whole approach has been a great way to make students more respectful and independent. It has also strengthened the community aspect of our classroom.”

Fourth grade teacher Melissa d’Agostino agrees, explaining, “Morning meeting helps students build a community where they feel significant, comfortable and a sense of belonging. All of the components of morning meeting provide students with an opportunity to practice social and academic skills while having fun with their peers. It’s the perfect way to start each morning as it sets the tone for the rest of the day.”

Mr. McKenna believes that one of the best aspects of the program has been “an improved school culture where expectations for children are clear and consistent. It has helped to further develop our school as a learning community.”

The LSF is grateful to our supporters for providing the funding for this incredibly important program, and to the administration and staff for having the energy, enthusiasm and caring needed to implement this nationally respected model of building a truly great educational environment.

**“THE MENTOR TEXT LIBRARY is now up and running in the Literacy Center providing a variety of rich writing models for children in classroom writing workshops across grades K-4. I am incredibly grateful to the LSF for so generously funding this grant that is already proving to be a vital resource for teachers and their students.”**

**—Gwen Blumberg, Lincoln School literacy specialist**



**“THE TABLE TOP EASELS have been a wonderful addition to the HPS art room. We have used them to mix orange, green, purple and brown from the primary colors of red, yellow and blue! We use them as dry erase boards to practice making all kinds of lines. Even the kindergartners have used them for painting and drawing, so they are being well loved. Thanks again for your support!”**

**—Donna Lubin, Hanscom Primary School art specialist**



**“THE STUDENTS in the Hanscom Middle School Orchestra have benefited greatly through acquiring our new set of timpani and our two piccolos. Our flute players have been very excited to play the beautiful new piccolos and even give up their recess from time to time to practice. Our timpani player can now tune her instruments on her own without my assistance and the sound of these drums fills out the bottom of our orchestra in a joyous way.”**

**—Howard Worona, Hanscom music specialist**



**“THEY SOUND AMAZING! They bring the orchestra alive!”**  
**—Hanscom Middle School student about the two new piccolos purchased for the HMS music program**

# Singing our Way Through the Alphabet

Connecting Curriculum, Technology, Music, Fun, and Kindergarten Families

Veteran kindergarten teachers Becky Eston and Rachel Scheff know that innovation comes with the territory of teaching. After they adopted the New Phonics program several years ago, which uses animal puppets to forge connections between letters of the alphabet and their sounds, their colleague Siobhan Rooney began singing an old song about alligators from her camp days, weaving it into the week's lesson about the letter A. The song was a hit! The next week, Eston recalls, one child inquired, "Well, where's the inchworm song?" Miss Eston and Mrs. Scheff responded by spending hours coming up with ways to piggyback original lyrics onto familiar tunes, writing a song about an animal that represented each letter to be learned. "Using alliterative songs incorporates proven strategies for learning to read including rhyming, repetition, and predictability," says Eston.

This approach to literacy blossomed in new directions when Jen Whitt (née Cummings) and Blake Siskavich joined the team. Both are interested in educational applications of technology, and Mr. Siskavich also brought a strong musical background. He explains, "Music uses a different part of the brain and helps children remember words and sentences



by giving them rhythm flow and pitch." Using his experience with recording songs at home on the computer, he started to experiment with giving each song a distinct sound, thus exposing children to different styles of music. Next came the idea of creating mp3s of these songs for families to upload, which led to creating

computer-generated visual prompts that can be posted on class websites to accompany the songs at home. The beloved alphabet songs "weren't just going to trail off after being 'sung into the air' anymore," reflects Eston, but instead would live on and be reinforced in new ways. She continues, "We see in the classroom that the kids sing these songs outside of the actual lesson, and they have fun with them!" The project also strengthens the school-home connection. "I have families stop me in the hall and say they...have memorized the songs," adds Siskavich.



The Kindergarten Team (l to r): Becky Eston, Blake Siskavich, Rachel Scheff, and Jillian Daly

The Kindergarten Team was awarded an LSF grant last year to revamp the existing songs. Each teacher will record his or her own renditions of the songs and, at the end of the year, provide every kindergarten family with a CD of the collection. Scheff, Eston, and Siskavich, along with new kindergarten teacher Jillian Daly, are currently working on enhancing the lyrics by incorporating scientific facts about each animal, "which lets the song appeal to children at a variety of literacy levels," notes Eston.

Being supported to innovate promotes collaboration among teachers, creating a culture of openness to new ideas that quickly draws in new members of a team. "The great enthusiasm that is mirrored by Lincoln School Foundation," remarks Eston, "really spurs you along through realizing the aims of your grant."



The Lincoln School Foundation welcomes and relies on your financial support. Please help us continue to fund important grants that enrich our students and schools. Simply return this form with your check payable to *Lincoln School Foundation*. Thank you!

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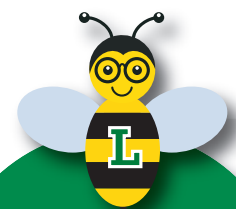
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Lincoln School Foundation, P.O. Box 256, Lincoln, Massachusetts 01773.

DECT NEWS



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LSF Spelling Bee  
Grades 3-6

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\$200

\$125

\$50

Other \_\_\_\_\_