

Lincoln Academy Charter School
Renewal Application

2014-2015

Table of Contents

	Page Number
Introduction	1
Program/Procedures/Curriculum	2
Vision Statement	2
Mission Statement	2
Elements of Lincoln Academy	2
School Information & Statistics	4
Staff List 2014-2015	4
School Calendar	5
School Hours	5
School Governance	5
Parental Involvement	6
Lincoln Academy Parent Teacher Organization	7
Academic Program	7
K-8 Core Knowledge Curriculum	8
Important Aspects of the Core Knowledge Curriculum	9
K-8 Math Program	10
K-5 Elementary Reading Program	10
K-5 Elementary Writing Program	11
Middle School Reading and Writing Program	11
Middle School History and Geography	12
Middle School Science	12
Middle School Technology Program	12
K-5 Elementary Specials	12
Middle School Electives	12
Block Scheduling in the Middle School	13
Department of Student Success	13
Advanced Learning Plan Groups	13
Assessment	14
Grading Scale	14
Homework	14
Honor Roll	15
Goals of Lincoln Academy	15
General Guidelines for the Operation of the LA Program	16
Enrichment/Extracurricular Activities	16
Minds at Work/Creative Minds	16

Athletics	17
NEHS/NJHS	17
Field Trips and Assemblies	17
Unified School Improvement Plan	18
TCAP/CMAS Statistics & Trends	20
Budgeting & Finances	21
Parent & Student Surveys	22
Safety & Emergency Plans/Discipline	23
Discipline Philosophy & Procedures	24
Environment	24
Disciplinary Records	25
Love & Logic	25
S.W.O.T	26
Areas of Strength	26
Areas of Weakness	28
Areas for Opportunity	29
Areas of Threats	30
Achievements	31
Summary	33

INTRODUCTION

Lincoln Academy K-8 is proud to present this request for charter renewal for the school years 2014-2015 through 2019-2020 to the Jefferson County R-1 School Board. Lincoln Academy was granted its original charter in 1996 and since opening its doors in 1997 it has been meeting or exceeding the accepted standards for a successful charter school. The first year Lincoln Academy opened its doors, 119 students were enrolled in grades Kindergarten through 5th grade. In 2009 Lincoln Academy has grown to a Kindergarten through 8th grade school with an enrollment of 490 students. Our K-5 program has 17 fully equipped classrooms and a computer lab. Our middle school program, started in 2005, but grew to capacity with the addition of grade 8 in 2006. In 2006, the total middle school enrollment was 122 and currently we educate 155 middle school students. Our middle school now has 8 classrooms including a fully functioning technology lab, auxiliary technology lab, and a science lab. In addition, we have a library, gymnasium, student center (cafeteria), playgrounds, music room, art room, as well as four special education classrooms to serve our K-8 students.

In 2013, we moved our school campus from the 69th and Pierce Street location to the well known Arvada campus on 72nd and Oak Street. This move has enabled our school to grow in enrollment to include an additional class per grade level. Our enrollment increased 14% our first year in our new location. Currently, our enrollment is 621 with K-3 being at full capacity. We will be at full capacity with 3 classes per grade level in the 2019 school year. Not only has this move allowed us to increase the number of students we serve, but our football field, 3 houses and a total of 15 acres will provide us with many opportunities to serve the community, as well as our students.

This document will lay out the components that have made us a successful charter school as well as the unique features that set us apart from other schools. It is with great pride that we present the Jefferson County School Board with this document for charter renewal.

PROGRAMS/PROCEDURES/CURRICULUM

LINCOLN ACADEMY VISION STATEMENT

The vision of Lincoln Academy is to prepare all students for their future endeavors by providing a comprehensive Core Knowledge education.

LINCOLN ACADEMY MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Lincoln Academy is to help all students attain their highest social and academic potential through an academically rigorous, content-rich education program in a safe, orderly, and caring environment.

The mission will be accomplished through the use of the Core Knowledge Sequence (as researched and developed by Dr. E.D. Hirsch of the University of Virginia and the Core Knowledge Foundation) and a traditional, fundamental, "back-to-basics" approach.

ELEMENTS OF LINCOLN ACADEMY

Lincoln Academy's charter was developed on the foundational idea that children can master learning skills while they are being exposed to meaningful content. For years, educators have identified skills that should be taught at each grade level, but content decisions have often been left to individual classroom teachers. Thus, a vast disparity of topics is taught depending on the personal interests and expertise of a specific teacher. Often, curriculum across schools and even within schools at the same grade level has been quite diverse. The Core Knowledge Sequence, used by Lincoln Academy, was developed to provide students with a rich vocabulary and broad knowledge base on which future instruction can build, broaden, and deepen. The ultimate goal is to insure that all children are given access to the same knowledge base that assures later educational success.

The Core Knowledge Sequence provides a detailed, explicit, and systematic sequence of grade-specific content that can be taught consistently year after year. This core content is organized to spiral through the grade levels, becoming more sophisticated and detailed in each successive grade.

It has been our experience in using this approach that students retain information much longer and develop skills more easily when meaningful content is combined with the teaching of skills.

As an official Core Knowledge school, the Core Knowledge Sequence is intended to make up 90% of the curriculum taught in the school. This still leaves ample opportunity to include additional content as well as skills acquisition.

In addition to the Core Knowledge Sequence, Lincoln Academy emphasizes the teaching of basic skills with a traditional and conventional approach, in a self-contained educational environment. Our academically rigorous program is organized so that the entire class generally works as a single group on grade level material with ability grouping occurring where necessary. Emphasis is placed on the basic foundations necessary for an academically sound education: reading (with emphasis on phonics), mathematics, English, grammar, geography, history, government, penmanship, spelling, fine arts, physical education, science, and technology. Homework is assigned on a regular basis with the goal of strengthening and/or enriching daily work.

Strict discipline and order is maintained. Students are expected to respect authority, accept responsibility, respect the rights of others, take care of their own property and be careful with the property of others. No student is allowed to disrupt the education of other students.

Our learning environment delivers the Core Knowledge curriculum through a rich variety of strategies and experiences. Attention is given to "learning how to learn," which helps develop successful life-long learners. Students, staff and parents work as collaborative partners in creating challenging and successful learning opportunities to ensure that each child achieves his or her highest potential.

SCHOOL INFORMATION & STATISTICS*

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Total # of Students**	514	524	532	603
% of students entering from private schools	2%	1%	1%	2%
% of students entering from home schooling	0%	.6%	.4%	.5%
% of students entering from out of district	2%	.4%	2%	4%
% of Identified Gifted and Talented Students	11%	11%	10%	8%
% of Special Education Students	14%	15%	13%	12%
% of ELL Students	7%	8%	11%	14%
% of Minority Students	31%	30%	30%	31%
Attendance Rate	97%	97%	96%	96%
% of Free and Reduced Students	17%	19%	25%	21%

* Responses greater than 1% are rounded to the nearest whole per cent. Responses less than 1% are rounded to the nearest one-tenth of a per cent.

**Total # of students as of October 1 of that school year.

*** Mobility rate is per cent of previous year's total enrollment who did not return for the indicated school year.

STAFF LIST 2014-2015

Over the past 5 years our staff has increased by 12.5% while our student body population has increased by 17.5%. We have seen the greatest growth in our staff in the following areas: Educational Assistants, Special Educational, and Facilities crew. In the appendices (Appendix A) is a list of our current staff as well as a document that outlines who does what at Lincoln Academy (Appendix B).

SCHOOL CALENDAR

Lincoln Academy generally follows the Jeffco calendar with a few exceptions. Our school calendar is included in the appendices (Appendix C).

SCHOOL HOURS

The class day runs from 8:00 a.m. to 3:05 p.m. in the elementary and from 8:10 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. in the middle school. On half days both the elementary and the middle school are dismissed at 12:00 p.m. There is a 40 minute lunch/recess period for each grade. Elementary (Appendix D) and Middle School (Appendix E) master schedules are included in the appendices

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

The school is governed by a Board of Directors (Board) elected at the annual meeting of the membership (the parents of the school) for a three-year term. Board members have staggered terms so that every year approximately two Board seats are up for election. Seven parents serve on the Board and the Principal serves as an ex-officio (non-voting) member of the Board.

The Lincoln Academy Board of Directors functions under the Carver Governance Model. The overall tasks of the Board are to make policy decisions that uphold, interpret and clarify the school philosophy and vision, maintain relations and communication with the District, and to take appropriate action to comply with applicable laws or district policies. On behalf of the school, the Board contracts for goods and services, prepares the operating budget, selects, terminates and evaluates the Principal, determines employee compensation, determines the educational program, adopts the school improvement plan (UIP), procures insurance, purchases and leases major equipment and supplies. Implementations of the policies and procedures, as well as daily operations, are the responsibility of school personnel.

The Board meets once per month (the second Monday of the month except in July) to discuss school operations and to hear reports from the Principal, various board members and committee chairpersons. During these meetings, the Board examines operations, establishes new policies, and reviews and changes existing policies as needed. Requests, concerns and informational items are offered from parents and teachers during the public comment portion of the meeting.

Lincoln Academy Board of Director Members 2014-2015:

President	Doug Neely
Vice President	Derek Luyk
Treasurer	Jeff Baucum
Secretary	Kristi Geisz
Member	Carrol Robinson
Member	Ben DeGrow

Member	Phil Courtney
Principal (ex-officio)	Janelle Johnson

In addition to our Board of Directors, Lincoln Academy has a functioning Building Corporation and Lincoln Academy Foundation.

The LA Building Corporation is a non-profit corporation formed in 2001. According to its articles of incorporation: "The Corporation is organized exclusively for the purpose of holding title, as nominee or otherwise, to real and/or personal property for, and to make same available for use by, the Lincoln Academy Charter School…and to otherwise provide facilities, equipment and other physical plant and related support to the Charter school." The Building Corporation legally owns and holds the bond for the current LA facilities and then signs the annual lease with the LA Board of Directors for use of these same LA facilities. The Building Corporation additionally legally owns property adjacent to our current Lincoln Academy facility.

The Lincoln Academy Foundation is a Non-profit 501(c) (3) organization formed in the year 2000. The Foundation was formed for "the improvement of educational opportunities and resources for all children enrolled or participating in educational activities at Lincoln Academy Charter School." The Foundation is able to receive tax-deductible donations and last year raised and donated $32,000 to Lincoln Academy.

Board of Director's By-Laws (Appendix F)
Board of Director's Policies (Appendix G)

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

A basic tenet of Lincoln Academy's philosophy is parental involvement in the school. Everyone has something to offer that will benefit their child's education and a school is stronger when everyone contributes. Parent involvement sends a clear message to the children about the importance of their education. Parents are involved at Lincoln Academy in several areas. They are the framework of our Parent Teacher Organization as well as the Board of Directors. Parents volunteer in the school by assisting the teacher in the classroom, serving as a guest speaker for a particular unit, helping with various student organizations, driving to sporting events or classroom fieldtrips, or any number of other projects that directly benefit the school operation. Parent involvement in this manner assists Lincoln Academy in keeping costs under control and fosters a community environment.

Our parents average over 9,000 hours of service, per year over the last four years. However, last year due to our move, we recorded 10,515 hours. Parents log their hours via an online database designed by one of our former students.

LINCOLN ACADEMY PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

The Lincoln Academy Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) serves a critical function and role within the school. The PTO is a parent support organization that has a community building function and a fundraising function. The PTO is similar to a PTA in many ways and is governed according to its own by-laws. Monthly meetings are open to the entire school community and are scheduled for the second Tuesday of each month, when school is in session.

The PTO provides support to enhance student learning experiences; assists with the organization and implementation of school programs, projects, and events; and works in partnership with the school Administrative team and the Board of Directors. The PTO helps keep parents informed of volunteer opportunities through our weekly school newsletter; the Lincoln Loop, as well as the Volunteer Handbook. The PTO also serves as the primary fundraising organization for the school. Our PTO makes a significant financial contribution to our school every year, most recently donating $10,000 to our new playground construction.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Lincoln Academy offers a rigorous academic program delivered in a traditional whole group setting. The curriculum is focused on basic academic skills in reading, writing, math, history, science, and literature based on the Core Knowledge Sequence. Lincoln Academy seeks to make all students high achievers in core academic subjects by building on the virtues of traditional American education and by incorporating modern technology, research-based methodologies, as well as the wisdom and experience of teachers and parents.

The core principle at Lincoln Academy is that all students can and will reach their highest academic and social potential. Mastery of subject matter is our overall goal, regardless of the child's background, learning style, or pace. Due to the fact that students learn at different rates and in different ways, teaching strategies are varied according to each student's needs. Students progress through the curriculum as a whole class but are given many opportunities for individual or small group instruction. Students are taught to be responsible for their own learning and individual progress toward mastery and given time to recognize and implement what needs to be improved.

Building upon the solid foundation of the K-5 Core Knowledge Sequence, the Middle School program continues the content-rich, academically aggressive approach to education, with an intention to prepare students for the rigors of high school. Middle School students finish the 6-8th grade Core Knowledge Sequence, while adding a variety of elective classes.

K- 8 CORE KNOWLEDGE CURRICULUM

Lincoln Academy uses the Core Knowledge curriculum as the basis for history and geography (American and world), science, language arts, math, visual arts and music. Core Knowledge is a research-based program that was developed by Dr. E.D. Hirsch, Jr. and is based on a large body of research. Dr. Hirsch has argued that for sake of academic excellence, greater fairness and higher literacy, 'early' (i.e. elementary school) schooling should provide a solid, specific and shared core curriculum in order to help children establish strong foundations of knowledge. The Core Knowledge curriculum is used in hundreds of schools across the country and is founded on the premise that a grade-by-grade core of common learning is necessary to ensure a sound and fair elementary education.

The Core Knowledge curriculum comprises anywhere from 90-100% of the curriculum in the areas of language arts, history and geography (American and world), visual arts, music, mathematics and science. Core Knowledge accounts for about 90% of the complete curriculum at Lincoln Academy. The specific content is laid out by grade level in the Core Knowledge Sequence, making it easy for staff and parents to see what and where certain content is taught. Lincoln Academy teachers also map out a yearly plan for when the content is taught, which also enables cross-curriculum connections to be made as well as ensures all content is being taught throughout the year.

Elementary year long plans (Appendix H)
Middle school year long plans (Appendix I)
Specials year long plans (Appendix J)

Core Knowledge lays out a complete program that provides students with a broad-based education, free of significant gaps. It clearly defines the content knowledge and skills that each student must be taught at each grade level and creates high levels of academic expectations. Students progress as they build on knowledge from year to year. In addition, Core Knowledge not only eliminates some of the gaps and repetition characterized in some standard curriculums, but it also aids in delivering cultural literacy in a systematic manner while leaving room for creativity.

The Core Knowledge curriculum prepares students for a lifetime of learning in a manner that can be described as solid, sequenced, specific and shared:

Solid - Core Knowledge represents a body of knowledge, ideas, and principles essential for building a strong educational foundation. The Core Knowledge curriculum utilizes a sequence of information teachers use to educate students. From Kindergarten through Eighth Grade, subjects that are covered include History, Geography, Science, Literature, Poetry, common Sayings and Phrases, and a variety of other rich topics.

Sequenced - For children to progress in their education they must first have a strong foundation. As they move from grade to grade through the Core Knowledge Sequence, their knowledge builds on previous instruction. The foundations for the subjects mentioned above are built in the early grades, with basic vocabulary and concepts. In the upper elementary grades, the topics are re-visited with more in-depth information and ideas. In middle school, students visit topics at a very high cognitive level. This method eliminates unnecessary repetition and prevents gaps in learning.

Specific - How does Core Knowledge answer the question, "What do our children need to know?" Rather than with general, vague statements, the Core Knowledge Sequence identifies specific, important knowledge. It outlines exactly what and when children are taught in a way that helps students to understand the material and make connections with previous knowledge.

Shared - In order for children to develop true literacy and understanding, they must share a broad range of knowledge. Core Knowledge gives children this knowledge in a solid, sequenced and specific way. Core Knowledge helps to provide all children, regardless of background, with the shared knowledge they need to be culturally literate.

IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF THE CORE KNOWLEDGE CURRICULUM:

Comprehensive – Core Knowledge thoroughly covers our common body of knowledge in a very specific and sequenced way. The lessons build on one another, grade by grade, allowing for broad and deep knowledge.

Integrated – Core Knowledge is structured such that lessons in core subject areas being taught concurrently are related, whenever possible. For example, when the Renaissance period is being studied in history students are reading related books in language arts and studying the paintings and music from the period as well.

Eliminates repetition – Repetitions in curriculum can cause boredom in children and that boredom can turn off learning. Due to the fact that Core Knowledge is specific and comprehensive, repetitions are eliminated.

Eliminates gaps – Without a highly specific curriculum, gaps in learning often happen. For example, students may learn about rainforests three times and never be exposed to the Native Americans or the War of 1812. By having a grade by grade, specific curriculum, Core Knowledge ensures that every topic is covered.

Research-Based – The Core Knowledge curriculum is research-based with proven results. For a more detailed look at the research and results, the Overview of Research on Core Knowledge, including data from Colorado, compiled in January of 2004, is on the Core Knowledge website. The Core Knowledge curriculum has been in existence for over 19 years and has been used in hundreds of schools across the country, including many schools in the state of Colorado.

K-8 MATH PROGRAM

Saxon Math

Lincoln Academy uses Saxon math as its primary K-8 math program. The Saxon math program is based on introducing a topic to a student and then allowing the student to build upon that concept as they continue to learn new ones. This creates a learning curve that provides the time most students need to master each part of every standard. With this approach, no skills or concepts get dropped and students retain what they have learned well beyond the test. The Saxon math curriculum reaches mastery of math skills through the development of concepts that use hands-on activities and rich mathematical conversations which actively engage students in the learning process. Concepts are developed, reviewed, and practiced over time. Students move from the concrete to the pictorial to the abstract. A variety of assessments, both oral and written, are integrated to evaluate student achievement.

Daily in grades K-3, students participate in a beginning-of-the day math activity called The Meeting. During The Meeting they practice skills related to the calendar, counting, patterning, number recognition, time, money, problem-solving strategies, and estimation. During the year, The Meeting changes slightly as the children acquire additional knowledge and skills.

In grades 3-5, students are placed in one of three leveled classes for math instruction. Each level is tailored to the needs of the students. Grade level math offers a standard curriculum using the Saxon lesson as written. Accelerated math covers the same concepts, but may delve further into the reasoning and applications of these concepts. The pace may move more quickly than in the grade level class. The small group offers students who are below grade level the opportunity to work in a setting with fewer students, and concentrate on solidifying a concept before moving on to the next lesson. Beginning in fourth grade, students transition from using worksheets to using a text book. The lesson content is similar, but students are able to become more independent and prepared for middle school by writing answers to the homework questions on a separate sheet. Middle school continues to use the Saxon textbooks along with the computer program called Think Through Math.

K-5 ELEMENTARY READING PROGRAM

***Imagine It!* (Grades K-4)**

An effective language arts program is the cornerstone of every student's education. Without the basic skills of reading, writing, and communicating, students cannot fully participate in the educational process. Lincoln Academy utilizes the *Imagine It!* reading program in grades K-4. This program is a comprehensive reading, writing and learning program that:

- Develops confident and fluent readers through print and phonemic awareness activities and explicit, systematic phonics instruction.

- Engages students in constructing meaning through the teaching and application of comprehension skills, strategies and discussions.
- Incorporates writing and language arts skills, including spelling, and vocabulary, through explicit instruction and meaningful practice.
- Includes excellent, thought-provoking literature to create a classroom environment in which students explore, discuss and research ideas.
- Develops research and study skills that give students the tools to become independent, self-directed learners.

***Daybook* (Grade 5)**

Daybook is a journal-like book that promotes daily reading and writing experiences. The integrated, interactive pages provide students with multiple opportunities to read a variety of literature and other texts, and to respond to what they read. It honors the relationship between the reader and the text, and conveys the message that good readers take risks, relate to their reading, and take ownership of the learning process.

Each *Daybook* lesson focuses on a specific strategy, and provides students with the tools they need to become proficient, confident readers. The framework is structured around six essential strategies of critical reading and writing:

- Making Connections, Asking Questions, Determining Importance, Visualizing, Making Inferences, Synthesizing

K-5 ELEMENTARY WRITING PROGRAM

Lincoln Academy uses a combination of proven and rigorous writing programs which are integrated into the curriculum: Writer's Workshop, *6 + 1 Trait Writing, Step Up to Writing* and *Write Tools.* Our school uses these programs to combine the writing process and content for a balanced approach to writing instruction. Our writing instruction has been the focus of our UIP for the last two years.

MIDDLE SCHOOL READING AND WRITING PROGRAM

The Middle School Language Arts program continues on the strong, fundamental foundation built in the elementary school. Improving and fostering students' skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening is emphasized. In-class writing, vocabulary, spelling, journal writing, grammar, poetry, speech and short stories are emphasized throughout the Language Arts curriculum. The Core Knowledge Language Arts curriculum is expanded upon in the middle school grades.

The middle school literature has been organized from a thematic perspective. This means that instead of the more traditional way of grouping literary pieces by their genres – for example, by having a "short story unit" followed by a "poetry unit" – a variety of different works and types of works are interspersed into each themed unit. The literature themes are meant to help students better grasp the complexities of the Core Knowledge literary pieces by recognizing and grouping recurring themes,

characters, and literary elements. By recognizing that certain techniques in Western literature arise again and again, students will be better able to both understand and appreciate the works.

MIDDLE SCHOOL HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

History and Geography are taught concurrently in Lincoln Academy's Middle School program. Students continue to study the Core Knowledge history and geography topics that are outlined in the scope and sequence. Students also participate in International Towne and have the opportunity to take a trip to Washington, D.C.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SCIENCE

The Lincoln Academy Middle School Science program continues to build on the content and skills developed in the elementary Core Knowledge program while fully preparing students for Science studies at the high school level and meeting state standards. To compliment the Core Knowledge program, students use several volumes of the Prentice Hall Science Explorer textbook both in hard cover and online to guide them through the many hands-on lab experiments and activities. Students also have the opportunity to enhance their science knowledge and skills by taking a Science Elective class such as Mechanical Challenges, Florida Ecosystems, or Comparative Anatomy. In addition, students may choose to travel to Florida to study firsthand the everglades and coral reefs. Students also have the opportunity to participate in field trips or programs such as the CU Science Discovery Seminars or the NREL Solar and Hydrogen Car Challenge.

MIDDLE SCHOOL TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM

At Lincoln Academy, the technology program is a core class as we believe that students need the fundamentals to succeed, but also will need to know how to use technology to enhance and expand their learning experience. Students begin with the basics of Microsoft in 6th grade and move on to topics as web design in 8th grade. The technology program also enhances other core subjects within the middle school program.

K-5 ELEMENTARY SPECIALS

Art, Music, Physical Education, Technology, and Library are offered to all kindergarten through fifth grade students throughout the year. Students attend a rotation of one or two specials each day. Over the week students attend art, music and PE twice and computers and library once.

MIDDLE SCHOOL ELECTIVES

Students have a variety of elective classes to choose from to explore a wide range of topics. Everything from Art, Music and Physical Education to Yearbook and Teacher assistant are offered.

BLOCK SCHEDULING IN THE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Lincoln Academy middle school operates with the alternating or A/B block schedule. Students take six 90-minute core classes that meet every other day. Students also alternate their elective courses, but these classes are only 65 minutes in length. We believe that the block schedule provides the needed time for teachers to develop lessons and use teaching practices that provide the academic rigor as outlined in the school's mission and vision statements. The block schedule also provides time for teachers to teach and when needed differentiate the depth required by an academically rigorous, content-rich curriculum. We believe in the block schedule that classrooms become more student-centered and involved and students are no longer just sitting and listening to a lecture, but are active participants in more complex academic tasks.

DEPARTMENT OF STUDENT SUCCESS

Lincoln Academy's Department Of Student Success serves students with Individual Educational Plans (IEPs), READ Plans, Individual Literacy Plans (ILPs), and English as a Second Language (ESL) plans. Our DSS department is comprised of a Special Education Coordinator, School Social Worker, School Psychologist, Speech Therapist, Occupational Therapist, School Nurse and four Literacy paraprofessionals. In addition, we have an Advanced Learning Plan (ALP) Coordinator, a 504 Coordinator, and a district ESL tutor. This team of intervention employees works with students on a daily basis to support and serve the needs of students within our school. The team consults with teachers, parents, and students to ensure that the needs of students are met and that specialized educational plans are implemented within the general educational curriculum.

In accordance with Colorado Law, Lincoln Academy follows each student's IEP and works with the individual student's goals to ensure that each student receives a well balanced education.

ADVANCED LEARNING PLAN GROUPS

Students who are identified as having an ALP or who might be showing advancement in certain areas, but are not identified meet in a small group twice a week. Our ALP teacher focuses on one ALP goal a month in groups.

In order to reach as many students as possible through ALP enrichment, the non-identified students in ALP groups are fluid. This means that as the goals change by the month classroom teachers have the ability to change the students who are sent to ALP groups. This allows the students to get enrichment in areas of advancement and gives more students the opportunity to receive enrichment.

ASSESSMENT

At Lincoln Academy, assessments are curriculum-based measurements and are continual and meaningful. Assessment is the cornerstone to good instruction. Lincoln Academy participates in all state-mandated testing as well as the Jefferson County School District's assessments that are relevant to the educational practices of Lincoln Academy. Currently, Lincoln Academy uses the following assessment tools: DRA2, DIBELS Next, DIBELS Deep and Reading 3D. These assessments, as well as classroom summative and formative assessments allow teachers to direct the instruction and monitor student learning and progress. Lincoln Academy also may use formal and informal assessments in all other subject areas. Some examples of these assessments include: self-evaluations, speeches, presentations, projects, and written tests.

Pre-testing is also used to assess and allow teachers to differentiate instruction. Focusing on students' prior knowledge and re-teaching content only when students have not reached competency allows teachers to focus on growth and develop interests beyond the basic grade level expectations.

GRADING SCALE

The grading scale for **kindergarten** and 1st Grade are as follows:

E	Exceeds Expectations
M	Meets Expectations
P	Progressing towards Expectations/Additional Support Needed
I	Below Expectations/Intensive Support Needed

Report cards are given out 2 times a year for kindergarten and at the end of each trimester for the remaining grades.

The grading scale for **2nd through 8th** grade is as follows:

A (100-92)	Exceptional Achievement
B (82-91)	Above Average Achievement
C (72-81)	Average Achievement
D (60-71)	Below Average Achievement
F (Below 60)	Unsatisfactory Achievement

HOMEWORK

Homework is a part of the Lincoln Academy program. Homework assignments constitute part of a student's grade. On average students should expect 20 to 60 minutes of homework per night in the elementary school. In the middle school, students may have up to 30 minutes per core subject area each night. Homework is assigned for the following reasons:

- To reinforce concepts and skills that have been presented in class
- To foster creativity and discipline through enrichment projects and research
- To train students to work independently and accept responsibility for completing a task

HONOR ROLL

At the end of each trimester period, Lincoln Academy recognizes and congratulates the students whose grades have reached Honor Roll status. Grade point averages are calculated for students who are at or above grade level in grades three through eight.

- Platinum Honor Roll for receiving a trimester GPA of 4.0
- Gold Honor Roll for receiving a trimester GPA of 3.75-3.99
- Silver Honor Roll for receiving a trimester GPA of 3.5-3.74
- Bronze Honor Roll for receiving a trimester GPA of 3.0-3.49

GOALS OF LINCOLN ACADEMY

Academic~ Each student will:

- Develop communication skills in the areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing.
- Develop a grade appropriate level of knowledge of mathematics and the sciences.
- Develop an appreciation and knowledge of world and American history and our country's heritage.
- Develop an appreciation of his/her physical environment.
- Develop good study habits.
- Achieve his/her full learning potential.
- Hold high expectations for the quality of their own work.
- Attend school regularly and arrive on time.

Physical~ Each student will:

- Develop coordination skills.
- Develop an appreciation of sports through observation and participation.
- Develop safety awareness.

Artistic~ Each student will:

- Develop an awareness of and appreciation for nature.
- Develop an understanding and enjoyment of art and its materials.
- Develop a knowledge and enjoyment of a variety of musical expressions.
- Enjoy creative expression through drama, musicals, and other art forms.
- Enjoy and participate in artistic experiences in the community.

Character~ Each student will:

- Be assisted in developing a positive self-image.
- Develop appreciation, compassion, and respect for others.
- Experience success in group participation as a leader and follower.
- Develop self-control and responsibility as a way of life.
- Develop the ability to meet change, uncertainty, and complexity with confidence.
- Prepare for intelligent, responsible citizenship.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE OPERATION OF THE LINCOLN ACADEMY PROGRAM

1. Most elementary classes are organized on a self-contained basis. However, each day for 30 minutes students will be grouped based on individual needs in literacy and given this time for small group instruction, called Flooding. Occasionally, students may be pulled from class for additional instruction and improvement of specific academic skills at the discretion of the classroom teachers and the Department of Student Success Team (DSS).
2. Strong classroom discipline supported by the administration will be maintained to provide an atmosphere necessary for effective teaching and learning.
3. Citizenship, patriotism, and respect for high moral standards are emphasized at all grade levels.
4. Homework is a critical part of the program. Homework fosters good study habits and is vital for optimum development.
5. The use of proper spelling, grammar, penmanship, and general format is expected in most written assignments.
6. Regular communication is critical in the education process. Frequent phone, written, and email communications will take place to keep families well informed. This includes grade level websites, a weekly school-wide informational memo, and other school communication.

ENRICHMENT/ EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

MINDS AT WORK/CREATIVE MINDS

For the past several years, we have conducted an annual "Minds at Work Exhibition" for grades 3-5. It is optional but encouraged for kindergarten through second grade. "Creative Minds" is required for grades 6-8. This is a great alternative to Science Fair that allows students to display their knowledge in a variety of areas. Students complete a project (research, creative, etc…) at home and place their information on a display board. Then, for one day in the fall for middle school and the spring for elementary, students bring their projects to school to display in the gym. Parents, teachers, and students are all invited to view the projects throughout the day. Each student receives comments from at least one teacher (typically not their own) about their project.

In the past several years we have seen projects such as games students have created, research topics about nature and science, books students have written, songs that students have created and recorded, and biographical research projects about students' heroes. The list of creativity and ideas is endless.

ATHLETICS

In 2009, our students in 6th, 7th, and 8th were given the opportunity to participate in middle school sports. Sports that are offered for boys and girls are basketball, volleyball, cross country and soccer. Students compete with other middle schools and private schools in a league with new schools being added each year: Woodrow Wilson Academy, Excel Academy, Jefferson Academy, Faith Christian Academy, Country Day School, Prospect Ridge, Two Roads, and Stargate Academy.

Students compete in regular games and in championship competitions at the end of each session. Our girls' basketball team has won the league championship in 2010, 2011, 2012. Our boys' volleyball team won the championship in 2010, 2011, 2013. Girls' soccer won the championship in 2012 and boys' soccer won the championship in 2012 and 2014.

Good sportsmanship is expected of students who participate as athletes and spectators in all school-related activities. We are proud to say that our girls' volleyball team won the league sportsmanship award in 2009 and 2011. Additionally our boys' basketball team won the league sportsmanship award in 2009 and 2012. This award is voted on by all league coaches and given to the school that best exemplifies good sportsmanship. We are proud of our students' athletic achievements in addition to their academic endeavors.

NEHS/NJHS

Lincoln Academy has a chapter of the National Elementary Honor Society and an active chapter of National Junior Honor Society.

FIELD TRIPS AND ASSEMBLIES

Each year, students have multiple opportunities to be exposed to learning outside the classroom walls through curriculum related field trips and assemblies. Such experiences include visiting the Denver Zoo or the Natural Museum of Science and participating in their student programs, exploring geology at the Colorado School of Mines museum, visiting the Colorado Symphony, attending various performances at the Arvada Center or the Denver Center for the Performing Arts, or taking a walking tour of downtown Denver. Lincoln Academy fifth graders also participate in Young Ameritowne and our sixth graders participate in a four-day Outdoor Education Program facilitated by Camp IDRAHAJE. Seventh and eighth grade students attend International Town every other year. In addition, seventh and eighth grade students may choose to go to Florida on a Science trip and/or to Washington D.C. on a history expedition. Both of these programs are facilitated through World Strides.

Authors, cultural musical groups and dance troops, meteorologists, storytellers, Chinese acrobats and veterinarians that bring exotic animals have visited our school to enhance and enrich student learning as well.

UNIFED IMPROVEMENT (ACCOUNTABILITY) PLAN

Lincoln Academy uses the School Performance Framework (SPF) compiled by CDE, to determine the areas of focus on our Unified Improvement Plan (UIP).

For the last 5 years, Lincoln Academy has achieved Performance Plan status for our elementary and our middle school.

School Performance Framework from 2010-Present (Appendix K)

Lincoln Academy does not modify the content that is taught to improve our test scores since we teach the Core Knowledge curriculum. We can however; look improvement in structure through our curriculum maps, instruction, and pedagogy to improve scores and growth for students. Lincoln Academy teachers do not teach to the test. The Core Knowledge Foundation states that stopping content instruction to prepare students for standardized tests is poor practice; teaching the Core Knowledge curriculum with fidelity increases student knowledge. This in turn makes students more able to improve their performance on these tests. We do, however, expose students to vocabulary and test taking strategies throughout the year. This helps them to be better prepared for all assessments.

Upon receiving the annual standardized testing data and the SPF, a team of administration and teachers reviews the data for strengths and growth areas. Additionally we review three years of CSAP/TCAP (and eventually CMAS) achievement and growth data to identify trends and areas of growth. Lincoln Academy consistently outperforms the state, district, and other area charter schools in most areas.

Our priority performance goal for this last year was student growth scores in the area of writing. In the preceding years we made math our focus. While each of these areas has scored well in academic achievement, our team has concluded that both math and writing will be priorities for the current year.

As a school, writing can be an area of focus for us partly because it shows a minor relative weakness as compared to other areas, but also has the most room for growth systemically, since we do not have a complete, closely aligned curriculum Kindergarten through eighth grade. As for math, we see a need for change in student growth scores in middle school math, and a positive change for students typically underserved by schools (growth gaps).

Our process for identifying these goals was first to collect a team of teachers to pour over the data and suggest some trends that we saw in the broad general data, trends in student cohorts, and data broken out by subcategories. Part of this team was trained by

the Colorado League of Charter Schools to compose the UIP drafts. While drafts were in process, discussion of goals with our charter board took place, followed by a meeting with our SAC committee where community input was sought on writing goals specifically, but also math growth and gaps. We finally approved the UIP with our charter board after a formal review.

Our plan to improve, then, is essentially to analyze our current needs in writing and create writing curriculum specific to Lincoln Academy. We have previously done some work on scope and sequence, who teaches what writing content when, through our vertical teams. What we must focus on now is our methods—*how* do we teach writing at Lincoln? What is the "Lincoln Way" in the area of writing? Our goals direct us to answer these questions this year and begin to build a system to generate stronger writers.

In math, we are going to focus on differentiation. Since our general growth and growth gaps are a focus, it makes sense to try to make instruction specific to a student's needs. Intuitively, our math department anticipated our goals and has already begun to use an individualized math program called Think Through Math across a couple of blocks of the day. This program quizzes and offers instruction to students on an individualized basis. This will offer our highest achievers a chance to go a bit higher than before, as well as give our students who struggle more opportunity to address their specific content needs. Our hope is that this will impact both growth in general and our students who often experience growth gaps.

The reader will also find two goals related to the READ Act, addressing increasing the number of students at grade level in reading and reducing the number of students who have Significant Reading Deficiencies (SRD). This goal is recommended to all schools by the state this year, but does not fall within our primary area of concern. This goal is arduously pursued on a continual basis through collaboration between our Department of Student Services and general classroom teachers. Our "flooding" program is designed to offer differentiated reading time in elementary and special coursework in middle school.

Unified Improvement Plan (Appendix L)

TCAP/CMAS STATISTICS & TRENDS

The teaching staff has continued to plan for increasing student achievement by implementing researched based strategies across the curriculum. We also continue to evaluate what changes we can make in our program without compromising our original charter concept and the Core Knowledge curriculum. The following list outlines the strategies that are in place to increase our standardized test scores:

- TCAP trends for each individual student have been studied and teachers were able to develop strategies for addressing areas of weakness for individuals as well as groups of students. Teachers are using these reports to provide differentiation for students.
- Using interventions and accommodations for students has been our model to increase student achievement for over 10 years. Through the use of classroom teacher observations and data analysis small groups of students are formed with similar deficiencies or academic needs.
- The administration works with teachers to determine the best outside training or workshops for teachers to attend to meet specific classroom needs. Specifically, student engagement has been an emphasis this year as well as differentiation.
- Teachers set professional development goals each year to connect with their own professional growth as well as focusing on a student academic growth.
- Lincoln Academy teaches general test taking strategies, and familiarizes students with the format of standardized tests.
- Lincoln Academy feels that while TCAP/CMAS is one indicator there are other valuable tools that help establish student benchmarks. Our staff uses CogAT scores, DIBELS, DRA2, DIBELS Deep, and DIBELS 3D, as well as other formative and summative assessments.

2014 TCAP Achievement Comparison (Appendix M)

TCAP Percentage of Student Proficient or Advanced by Cohort (Appendix N)

CMAS Reports 2013-2014 (Appendix O)

BUDGETING & FINANCES

Lincoln Academy has a strong budget and has continued to operate with a very healthy carry forward balance. The majority of our budget (65%) is allocated to personnel (salaries and benefits).

A few years ago, our school made it a priority to create a salary schedule for licensed teaching staff that was more closely aligned with the district. We believe this was an important decision in order to attract and retain a qualified and high quality staff. During the years of recession our salary gap between our compensation levels and the district's grew. However, with the recent increase of Mil Levy funds, we once again were able to bring our licensed employees to within 90% of the district compensation.

A committee of the Board of Directors is the Finance Council. This committee is comprised of the Board Treasurer, the school finance manager, the principal, and two parents. This committee meets monthly to review the budget and spending trends and makes any budgetary recommendations to the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors through the financial council has created a budget priority list. This list is divided into three categories: safety, capital, and operational. As we moved into our new location, our spending needs increased significantly and as a school we want to make sure we continue to spend wisely

Finances and adherence to a sound budget continue to be a high priority. With a solid carry forward and strong and consistent enrollment, we feel that our finances are quite stable.

LA Financials 2011-2014 (Appendix P)

2014-2015 Current Year Budget (Appendix Q)

LA Projected 5-year Budget (Appendix R)

PARENT & STUDENT SURVEYS

Lincoln Academy has surveyed parents to address areas of strength and concern since the school was founded. The survey has changed over time, but continues to drive some of the goals of the Board and the staff at Lincoln Academy.

We believe there are many areas of strength as reported in last year's Parent Survey.

Elementary Parent Satisfaction Survey Results (Appendix S)
Middle School Parent Satisfaction Survey Results (Appendix T)
General Parent Satisfaction Survey Results (Appendix U)

Lincoln Academy also participates in the district Make Your Voice Heard Survey. The results of the 2013-2014 survey are also included in the appendices (Appendix V).

SAFETY & EMERGENCY PLANS/DISCIPLINE

Lincoln Academy takes the safety and security of its students, community, and facilities very seriously. To that end, there have been facility upgrades, procedural improvements, and training to ensure that we are providing a safe atmosphere for students and faculty.

We work closely with the Jeffco Safety and Security Team to ensure that we are up to date on our safety procedures and plans. In addition, district mandates have sharpened the school's planning and response to various dangers. A careful and documented visitor policy and school-wide training has given us a much higher awareness of potential threats. In the 2013-2014 school year we made significant improvements to our school communication and safety systems.

- Installed over 30 security cameras around the property to monitor activity.
- Installed a secured front entry system that includes a doorbell with a remote buzzer to control who enters the building.
- Installed key pads and/or keyless entry on 13 doors to allow easy, but limited, access to our building.
- Purchased 30 high-quality 2-way radios to improve communication throughout the building
- Updated and installed a new telephone system with state of the art telephones in every classroom and office

Scenario-driven emergency drills, secure building procedures, and staff training in effective and rapid response have increased vigilance and awareness. Each year we train our entire staff using the Standard Response Protocol. Every classroom and office has the SRP commands and processes posted to assist people during an emergency. Comprehensive Safety and Emergency Plans, teacher and student preparation, SERT (School Emergency Response Team), effective communications, and Incident Command are among the systems in place to insure that Lincoln Academy is as prepared as possible for any incident. Each year we review and update our Safety and Emergency Plan, and integrate any changes initiated by the district.

Students at Lincoln Academy have a right to learn in a safe environment free from threats, intimidation, and bullying. LA Staff members are trained and have interventions available to protect students. Conflict Mediation/Resolution, bullying prevention trainings, character education, Threat Assessment Teams, and Problem Solving Team are resources available to work with situations that merit intervention. Close interaction among DSS, teachers, and administration provide effective support to students, families, and staff.

Through all of the above means, Lincoln Academy strives to have the safest and most secure school for students to attend.

Our School Response Team Incident Command organization chart (Appendix W).

DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY & PROCEDURES

Some of the most important lessons for any student to learn are how to respect authority, respect the rights of others, and take care of his/her own and others' property. The purpose of "discipline" is inherent in the term itself. The term "discipline" derives from a word indicating a "learner" or "student" (disciple). It is not the intention of the school discipline policy to simply punish a student for wrong doing, but to instruct, train, and educate that student so that he or she will make a better choice at the next opportunity. Additionally, no student will be allowed to disrupt the education of other students. Although it is necessary to have school and classroom rules, our emphasis has not been on do's and don'ts, but guiding the student to a proper response to any given situation. In order to accomplish this, we have set discipline standards that are enforced fairly and consistently. We also adhere to the *Jefferson County Public Schools Conduct Code and Related Policies.*

Since the classroom teacher is the primary one who works directly with the children, he or she carries the bulk of the discipline responsibility. It is important that the teacher works closely with the parents in these matters and communications are open and honest. It is of utmost importance that the teacher and parents work together as a team in discipline matters.

Lincoln Academy uses the foundation of *Love & Logic* for its discipline structure. We encourage teachers to set limits, build positive and healthy relationships, bully proof their classrooms, and allow students to own and process their behaviors. If a student's behavior is distracting or disrupting the learning environment, the following steps will occur: their teacher will re-direct them three times at most, and if this does not suffice, the teacher will send them to the hallway (another classroom for elementary), to refocus and discuss whether or not they can maintain in the classroom. If the student cannot maintain, they will be sent to administration and they will determine the outcome/consequence of the student's behavior.

Lincoln Academy has four non-negotiable behaviors that will not be tolerated and will result in an automatic 'go home for the day(s)' and must return with a parent to discuss the incident and problem solve the next steps. The four behaviors are as follows:

1. Cursing at any staff member
2. Direct defiance of any nature
3. Harmful physical contact (more than jostling)
4. Grossly inappropriate behavior

ENVIRONMENT

It is the policy of Lincoln Academy to maintain an environment for its students which is free from alcohol, drugs, and any form of harassment. Any student caught partaking in these activities will face administrative action, and perhaps district or legal involvement,

ranging from suspension or expulsion to legal/criminal charges against the student. In these cases, the school resource officer or other officers of the jurisdiction may question students. Parental notification will take place consistent with the Jefferson County School District guidelines. Students and parents are encouraged to carefully read the *Jefferson County Public Schools Student Conduct Code* distributed by the Jefferson County School District. The administration of Lincoln Academy enforces these procedures and directives.

Complaints of any kind of harassment will be handled without delay in a manner that considers the interests of both the complainant and respondent.

Any student witnessing or suffering harassment shall report the matter to a trusted adult in the school (teacher, educational assistant, or administrator). The employee receiving the complaint will initiate the investigation process. Retaliation is prohibited for reports of harassment made in good faith.

DISCIPLINARY RECORDS

The following table compares student office referrals for suspension or expulsion for the three previous school years.

Student Referrals for Suspension/Expulsion			
	# of suspensions	# of expulsions	Student Incident Rate
2010-2011	14	0	2.9%
2011-2012	16	0	3.2%
2012-2013	14	0	2.8%
2013-2014	34	0	6.0%

LOVE & LOGIC

At Lincoln Academy we use the Love and Logic philosophy as a part of our classroom behavior program. Love and Logic provides practical tools and techniques that help adults achieve respectful, healthy relationship with children. It also helps children learn the best lessons when they are given a task and allowed to make their own choices (and fail) when the cost of failure is still small. Children's failures are coupled with love and empathy from their teachers. Love and Logic does the following:

- Uses humor, hope, and empathy to build up the adult/child relationship
- Emphasizes respect and dignity for both children and adults
- Provides real limits in a loving way
- Teaches consequences and healthy decision-making

S.W.O.T

AREAS OF STRENGTH

K-8 Core Knowledge Curriculum—Core Knowledge is an idea that for the sake of academic excellence, greater fairness, and higher literacy, Lincoln Academy can provide a solid, specific, shared core curriculum in order to help children establish strong foundations of knowledge, grade by grade.

Strong Literacy and Math Programs—Beginning in Kindergarten and through grade 4, Lincoln Academy uses the *Imagine It* literacy curriculum, which builds student skills within each year, and through the early elementary years. Our upper elementary faculty teaches literacy with Daybook, which offers more open ended and higher level learning opportunities through comprehension, analysis, and synthesis. Our Middle School literacy program is enriched by the use of Core Knowledge literature.

In Math, our school uses the *Saxon* math curriculum, which repeats concepts over several lessons to solidify learning and provide a strong base of mathematics.

Back to Basics Instructional Philosophy—Back to basics is not about "getting back", but in moving ahead with education in a way that benefits students. Lincoln Academy focuses on whole group instruction that stimulates learning through reading, writing, phonics, literature, mathematics, technology, and more. We understand that our world is always changing, but students will always have the need for strong literacy skills, and knowledge about our world and our place in it. Lincoln Academy not only teaches academics, but we prepare students for a successful future out of the classroom by focusing on social skills, higher thinking skills and effective communication.

Department of Student Success

Lincoln Academy's Department of Student Success began to build an intensive early screening and intervention procedure in 2002, before the advent of the Response to Intervention model for special education. When the RtI process was unveiled to the special education professionals in the state our special education team realized that this is the method we had developed and had been using for several years. Our special education professionals regularly screen children for difficulties, based upon teacher or parent referral, and offer parents and faculty ideas for things to do at home or in the classroom, decide if more intensive intervention is needed, and follow-up to monitor progress. Over the years, we have continued to improve our methods with the addition of daily 30-minute "flooding periods" for grades K – 5 so small group interventions do not disrupt instruction time. Lincoln has added a mini-computer lab and researched-based computer programs as well as the addition of iPads. Our staff attends conferences

to find research-based teaching methods and remain current with what is considered best practice. We regularly bring back the information and methods we learn and apply these to our interventions. The DSS team meets weekly to ensure communication and students' needs are being meet.

Qualified, Stable and Compassionate Faculty and Staff—All of our staff is licensed and/or highly qualified in their areas. All teachers that are not licensed (4) are currently in an alternative licensure program and will be licensed by May 2015. They currently all have their alternative license from CDE. Currently 63% of our teachers have a Master's Degree or higher. In addition, the turnover rate of teachers is incredibly low. Our dedicated, excellent, and consistent school staff and administration understands our mission is to educate students and prepare them for a successful future. This also includes addressing discipline and emotional needs, for which we generally use the Love and Logic philosophy of students being accountable for choices they make.

New Location-With our recent move to the corner of 72nd and Oak, we are more visible to the community. This new visibility has increased the numbers on our wait list. In addition to the visibility our new location provides new facility and land potential.

Community and Family Oriented Culture—Lincoln Academy fosters a community atmosphere, which strongly involves families in our school. As a charter, we operate under a parent governed Board and have an active and effective PTO (Parent Teacher Organization.) We encourage our families to play a part in the success of our school. Lincoln Academy annually logs over 9,000 parent volunteer hours—some in the classroom and some helping with fundraising or other activities. Our PTO schedules community events such as movie nights, carnivals, and sock hops, which are well attended by our families, and we enjoy years of parental involvement as siblings move through our grades. The PTO also has a benevolence fund in which twice a year they give Lincoln families in need gift cards to Kings or Wal-Mart.

Fully Functioning Kitchen-After completing major renovations to the current kitchen that was designed to be a short-order kitchen, we now have an operational school cafeteria kitchen. For the first time in the history of Lincoln, we are able to make food on site!

Financially Strong Organization—Over the years, Lincoln Academy has built a large reserve, which helped us in getting strong financing to make the move to our new location. In spite of this expenditure, and the budget cuts from the state, we remain financially strong and confident of our fiscal future.

Strong District Support—Lincoln Academy is proud to be a part of the Jefferson County School system. As a charter, we have received extensive support from the district in all areas. The district team is always available to answer questions and provides training

opportunities to our staff and administration. Our Achievement Director works closely with us to insure effective communication between Lincoln Academy and our colleagues at Jeffco.

Opportunities for Professional Staff Development—Every year our staff is able to take advantage of several professional development opportunities, including Love and Logic training, Core Knowledge seminars, Literacy workshops and conferences, Kagan, and more. These opportunities help our staff to stay current on new ideas and developments in education, and help us more effectively educate our students.

Low Mobility Rates & High Attendance Rates—Lincoln Academy enjoys a mobility rate of less than 10%. This allows our students to benefit from continued education throughout the grade levels, and keeps our parent community stable and involved. In addition, our families understand the importance of regular attendance; therefore, they make school a priority for their children. This is seen through our attendance rate of 96% or higher.

Consistent Academic Success—Lincoln Academy has been accredited every year. We have been rated "Performance" by the CDE in both our elementary and middle school programs every year since the new rating system was put into place.

AREAS OF WEAKNESSES

Existing Building Constraints—Lincoln Academy purchased a previously existing property that was allocated to be a school, but our needs and the blueprints of the building do not match. This current building has been added on to several times, sometimes making the flow of getting students to different areas of the building difficult. Additionally, the care and maintenance of the property was not up to date. Therefore, a large portion of our finances has to be allocated to the building and ground needs.

Older Buildings—Although parts of our building are less than 2 years old, we do have several parts of our building that are 40 years old or more. In addition, the house that sits on the center of our property was built in 1910. The older buildings require ongoing maintenance. For example we discovered that 2 classrooms had no cooling system, therefore; requiring us to do some HVAC work. The maintenance needs have to come out of our budget or our reserve.

Larger Class Size—Because of previous financial constraints and facility needs, we have larger class sizes than we would prefer. Some classes are at 30 students in the older grade levels. We would prefer not to go over 26. However, teachers have the support of an education assistant a minimum of five hours per day.

Writing Curriculum-Our standardized scores continue to be lower in writing than we would desire. Without a coherent curriculum being used across the grade levels, the writing instruction can differ significantly from grade to grade. However, we are currently working as a school to identify and unify our writing instruction across the grade levels.

Staff Compensation-Our staff is compensation 10% lower than the district level.

Middle School Retention- We historically have a smaller graduating 8th grade class than our entering 6th grade class. On average over the last five years, 8.5 students have not continued with us from 6th grade on to 8th grade.

Elementary to Middle School Transition-Our 6th graders are part of the middle school program and when they switch from 5th grade and 1 teacher, to 6th grade and 7 teachers there are several issues with the transition including organization, time management, communication, and new expectations to name a few.

Board Development and Succession Planning-Currently our Board of Directors is a strong, diverse group of individuals. However, several of them have served on the board for many years and are not going to run again for office. We have a profound need for recruitment of highly competent and willing individuals to serve.

Lack of Tracking Lincoln Alumni-We would like to have a system to track the successes and future of endeavors of Lincoln graduates. We know that several have gone on to Colorado School of Mines, one currently is the Student Body President at Ralston Valley, several have achieved 4.0 or higher GPAs at High School graduation, but what else are our students doing?

AREAS FOR OPPORTUNITY

Grant Writing Team—A strategy to increase independent funding is to form a grant writing team to generate revenue for Lincoln Academy. While our school has obtained several grants over the last five years, there is still so much more financial potential to be tapped into through grants.

Marketing—Lincoln Academy is a school of choice, and as such, cannot rely on automatic enrollment. In the ever-increasing competition for quality students, we can step up our efforts to market LA as the premier Core Knowledge school in the area.

New District Charter Liaison- With the new full time position of the Achievement director for the charter schools, we have more opportunities to work with the district to be a successful charter school within the district.

Community Involvement- Lincoln Academy is always looking for broader community involvement that could enhance our school.

Facility Use for the Community-With our current Bond regulations, we are limited in the ways we can allow the community to use our facility, but we should provide those opportunities as much as we can.

AREAS OF THREATS

Negative Sentiments-With the recent political climate and negative sentiments about charter schools expressed in the district, we would like to be on the forefront of educating the public about how charter schools do operate. In addition, we have had an amiable relationship with the district and would like to strengthen those ties.

Different and Additional State Testing—Lincoln Academy joins several other schools in the state in our concern for the state standardized testing schedule. While this spring will be the true test of how much time, man power, and technology are needed, we have concerns about if this is the best for students.

Common Core – With the new standards being implemented and our foundation being rooted in Core Knowledge, as a school we will have to ensure the ways in which we are meeting the standards without compromising our foundation.

Funding-With the uncertainty of state allocation for K-12 education, we have concern about its continued effect on our school funding.

Additional School Choice—Over the past several years, students and families have more options for school choice than ever before. In addition to local neighborhood schools, more charter schools have formed. Also, many parents are choosing to home school their students or have them participate in on-line learning opportunities.
Board of Directors SWOT Analysis (Appendix X)

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Lincoln Academy was named an official Core Knowledge school in 2004 and has held that designation every year since then. To become an Official Core Knowledge School, we made a commitment to implement at least 95% or more of the *Core Knowledge Sequence*.
- In 2011, Lincoln Academy was awarded the Colorado Governor's Distinguished Improvement Award.
- Two of our teachers have been recognized by outside organizations for their excellence in teaching. In 2012, our Middle School Science Teacher, Larry Niemiec was honored with the My Teacher, My Hero award. Our music teacher, Karen Ullman, was also recognized with the 2012-2013 Outstanding Colorado Teacher Award by the Central City Opera.
- Parents are very satisfied and give thousands of hours to the school each year. They also raise substantial amounts of money for the school.
- Lincoln Academy has garnered almost $30,000 of grant support in the last five years. These monies have been used in our music program, to purchase iPads for use in our financial literacy class, and iPads for our DSS department to use with students.
- Our Board developed a pay scale for the teaching staff that is 90% of the district's 2013-2014 pay scale. It is competitive in relation to other charter schools and the district.
- State of the art technology is used to expand upon instructional strategies at all levels.
- Classrooms are equipped with LCD projectors, computers, and interactive boards.
- Our newly renovated Middle School building is equipped with a state of the art science lab and computer lab.
- Lincoln Academy has a strong waitlist in all grades. Not including Kindergarten, after taking in 71 new to Lincoln students, we still have 240 on our waitlist.
- Our annual Grandparents' Day draws more than 500 grandparents and special friends every year.
- Our annual Veterans Day Celebration draws over 100 veterans and family members each year and is a well-loved assembly for students, staff, and community members.
- We have established a scholarship named for our founding principal, Dr. Carlton, for graduating seniors who attended Lincoln Academy.
- We offer a before and after school program for our students through Champions Before and After School Care.
- During the 2013-2014 school year, our PTO donated $10,000 and our parents raised $32,000 through a fundraiser called Laps for Education in order to

relocate and update our playground to a safer and more convenient location on our property.

- In part, through the increase of Mil Levy additional funds, Lincoln Academy continues to make building and landscape improvements to enhance the school's appeal, educational environment, and environmental impact (going green). We have used 1/3 of the monies for this purpose.
- In addition, Lincoln Academy used 1/3 of the Mil Levy additional funds, to increase staff salaries through a one-time bonus or salary increase.
- The remaining 1/3 of Mil Levy additional funds will be used for future building expansion.
- Students in 6th grade attend Outdoor Lab School at ID-RA-HA-JE in Bailey, Colorado, each year in October.
- Lincoln Academy offers 7th and 8th grade students the opportunity to travel to Florida for science studies and Washington D.C. for history learning experiences.
- The Lincoln Academy Middle School is involved in a sports league with surrounding Middle Schools. Both boys and girls compete in soccer, volleyball, cross-country, and basketball. We have won a variety of championships and sportsmanship awards in the league, with our most recent championship in boys' soccer in the spring of 2014.
- We offer students the opportunity to participate in the Spelling Bee, Geography Bee, NEHS, and NJHS.
- We also participate in Bandimere's Race to Read program with all of our PreK-8 students participating.
- Students regularly compete in district Art Shows.
- Lincoln Academy also has an annual Art Show in which students art work K-8 is displayed and parents are invited for an Open House to view the art work.
- Our staff has aligned the Core Knowledge curriculum with State Standards.
- Twenty-seven of our forty-three (63%) teachers, special education professionals, and our administration have earned their Master's degree.
- 100% of classroom teachers are "Highly Qualified" as defined by No Child Left Behind.
- We have a dedicated group of teachers, staff, and faculty with a very little turn-over rate. Our teachers, on average, have been at Lincoln Academy for 7 years. Currently we have 16 out of 84 staff members who have been here 10 or more years.
- When offered and applicable, our staff is encouraged to attend district training.
- Lincoln Academy is participating in the Phase I implementation of the new district Dashboard.

SUMMARY

We are very proud of the educational environment that we have established at Lincoln Academy. We are an effective program and a high achieving school that has a stable financial history. We certainly hope we have made the Jeffco School Board proud by accomplishing what we have intended to do for over seventeen years. Thank you for continuing to offer families a choice in their child's schooling and thank you for giving us the opportunity to be a choice in the district.