



THE BEAUTY OF CHANGE

The power of change on perspective, learning, and becoming better versions of ourselves. **Inspired by Perfect Square by Michael Hall.**



A FAREWELL
TO DR. JOEL



2022
INSPIRE
AWARDS



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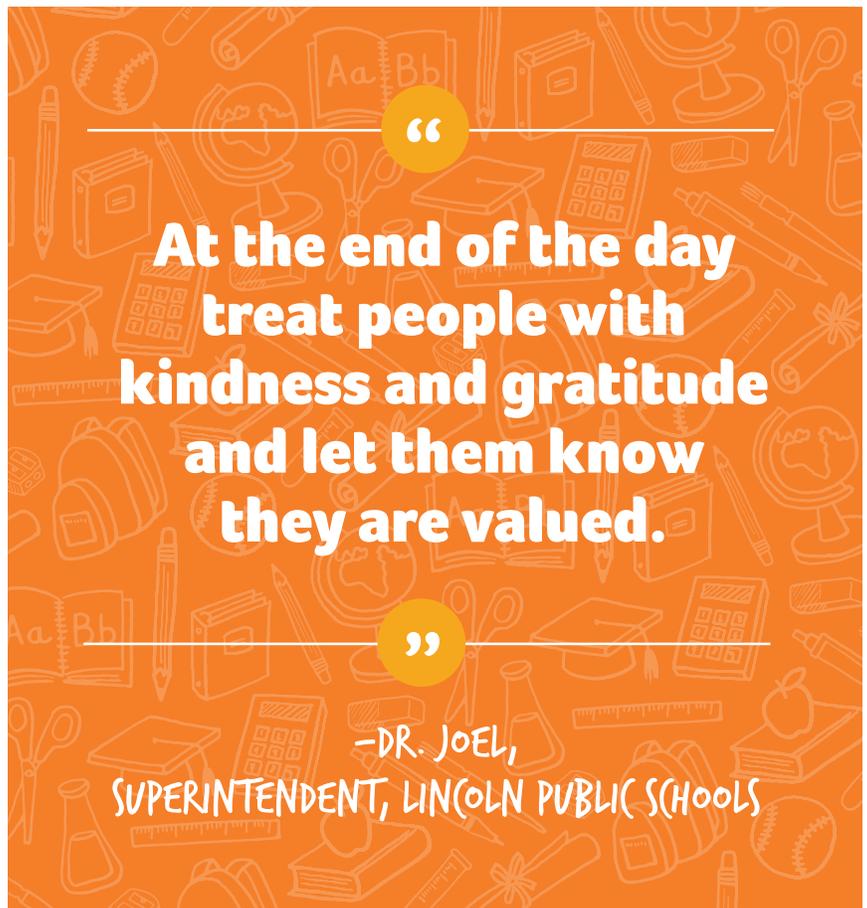
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Tribulation Often Brings Transformation

Dear reader,

While change and transition may come with some hesitation of the unknown, they also help us learn, evolve, gain perspective, and in the end—create a better version of ourselves and our world.

As we reflected on the last couple of years, we were inspired by this truth and left in awe on how impressively our schools, staff, board, and community rose to the challenges we faced. It reminded us of a children's book written by Michael Hall: *The Perfect Square*. And so, this story became the backbone of our spring newsletter message.

In this story, the square starts out perfectly happy. Then it begins to encounter hardship. Yet, through each struggle it transforms into a better version of itself. Each situation results in a re-creation of the square into something even more beautiful and even more useful until all its new creations unite to create an amazing new world—one that brings inspiration and positive experiences to others.

"On Monday, the square was cut into pieces and poked full of holes. It wasn't perfectly square anymore. So, it made itself into a fountain that babbled and giggled and clapped."

This story is an inspiring and empowering correlation to what many have felt in the last year or two. At times, we felt we were ripped, torn and shredded, but in the end, we have gained so much. Thank you for your ongoing support to help students change and grow to their fullest potential!



Wendy Van



“
**The right perspective
makes the
impossible possible.**
”

-UNKNOWN



New Beginnings



“ I get way too much credit for all the things about LPS that are so wonderful. It’s really a collective effort. No superintendent can accomplish great things without great teams, a great school, a great school board, and an amazing community. ”

DR. STEVE JOEL, SUPERINTENDENT, LINCOLN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Q. What are you proudest of from your time with LPS?

There are a few things, but our relationship with the school board certainly makes the top of the list in addition to the programs the Foundation has been able to bring to life—some of this just wouldn’t be possible without them. Another proud accomplishment is our first strategic plan that will lead to a higher-level of strategic thinking and

open the door for students from all walks of life, creative thinking, and an even stronger collaboration with the community.

“ This is truly a community where we don’t just say we are all in it together—but we live it, from the board to the staff to the community. ”

Q. How do you stay connected with the students of LPS?

I love to walk the hallways of our schools and I love meeting with the students. In fact, this is the favorite part of my job. I meet with students individually; I am a teen mentor in our district, and I also have a student advisory group in the LPS district that I meet with regularly. It's important to see what life is like through our young people who are starting to make their way.

Q. How has equity played a role in the priorities of LPS?

Lincoln Public Schools started working on equity about 12 years ago, way before the heavy focus of the world on equity. In fact, this is one area where we have truly led the country. I'm constantly asking students, "Do you feel that we are meeting your needs? Are our teachers more understanding and thoughtful about the differences every kid brings along with them?" I've seen our collective equity efforts at work within our classrooms and it's exciting.

Q. What makes LPS different from other districts?

One component that really sets us apart is longevity. The culture of a school district can be directly correlated to the longevity of the superintendent and the school board. Currently, across the country the culture of school districts is being shaken up due to the lack of longevity. We are lucky at LPS to still have longevity of both. And as I retire, we maintain components of longevity on our school board so history isn't lost. One really supports the other through change, and it will do the same for LPS.



Q. What will you miss the most about being superintendent?

I am going to miss the kids a lot, as well as my team. I've been very cognizant of everything I do is the last—the last time I'll visit a school, the last time I'll attend an event, etc. I am making it a priority to take it all in as my last day grows closer.

I'm not sad about my career ending, I'm excited for LPS. It isn't what you accomplish during your role, it's what the organization looks like when you leave. I feel great about what Dr. Paul Gausman is walking into. We are a better organization today than we were four years ago and that makes me feel good.

Q. What will you do in retirement?

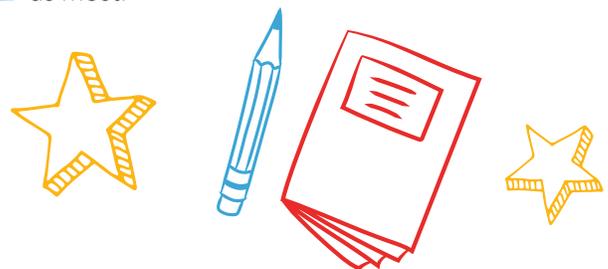
My wife and I have never taken a 2-week vacation so that's on the agenda. I am committed to working out and staying healthy, picking up golf, spending time with my grandchildren, and staying out of my wife's way!

“ There are very few things I don't like about this job. I have never had a day when I didn't want to go to work. ”

DR. STEVE JOEL

Q. What are the most important things to remember for our upcoming superintendent, or any superintendent?

- 1.** Never, ever forget that it's about the kids. They always come first. They are our legacy.
- 2.** During times of challenge make sure you are visible. Being present and responding in the moment is not a choice, it's a requirement.
- 3.** We get stronger through the things that challenge us most.



Nesha Schumann



BILLIE BUSSMANN VOLUNTEER
OF THE YEAR 



Recreating the story of impacting lives
in a positive way.

As the third recipient of the Foundation for Lincoln Public Schools' Billie Bussmann Spirit Award, Nesha Schumann was floored when she received the call. Her gratitude and humbleness of being in the same award category as Nancy O'Brien whisked her words away.



Inspired by students, creativity, and adding a personal touch to a world in a state of transformation — Nesha is the creator of "special hugs" from the Foundation that ignite personal moments for those in the community.

Nesha has held a passion for teaching her whole life. She not only belongs to a family of educators, but she practiced teaching herself as a young girl with her stuffed animals and dolls—you could say she began her first practicum before she even set foot in a school for the first time.

"If you love working with young people, you are born to be a teacher. You conjure your patience, your love, and your expertise and you put it to great use in shaping the lives of our young people," explained Nesha.

Once Nesha retired in 2017 after a 40-year career in education, her passion for students, giving back, and love for creating a special moment in the lives of everyone at Lincoln Public Schools didn't dim or burn out, it continued through her incredible journey of card making. A passion

Nesha began in 2005, for the Foundation, and has been doing ever since.

Nesha's incredible spirit of giving is hard at work creating approximately 225 cards every year for donors and others who impact LPS. Each card takes her around 45 minutes, so it's no small task. For Nesha it's a task of love and she will continue doing it until the Foundation tells her to stop.

Just like her students, and everyone who has made an impact on Nesha's life, each card is unique, "no two are ever alike," Nesha tells us.

Cards are sent out from the Foundation on holidays, birthdays, to say congratulations on achievements, and for many more occasions where a personal touch and a hug through the mail will create a special moment in a person's life.

As Nesha continues her chapters with Lincoln Public Schools, she revisits the beginning of the journey where Nancy O'Brien, last year's award recipient, met her on the steps of Northeast. Nancy became not only a mentor but an inspiration for Nesha throughout her career. Nesha continues to feel blessed, and a bit overwhelmed, to follow in Nancy's footsteps as an award recipient. As Nesha said, "Nancy is just one of those people who really affects your life in a positive way, I am so blessed to have called her a friend."

**“ If you love working with young people,
you are born to be a teacher. ”**



Congratulations



To OUR 2022 INSPIRE AWARD WINNERS.

This year's Inspire Award winners deserve some applause! They truly are an inspiration to our schools and our communities. Their efforts to go above and beyond and use their talents and creative thinking to create change are a representation of embracing change to create incredibly positive outcomes. To view all of the winners go to bit.ly/foundationinspire.

A FEW OF OUR INSPIRE STUDENT AWARD WINNERS



REEM AHMED
Lincoln North Star
12th Grade
Nominated By:
Principal Ryan Zabawa



EMMA BROWN
Lefler Middle School
8th Grade
Nominated By:
Principal Jessie Fries



KHALID TAIRAB
Roper Elementary
5th Grade
Nominated By:
Principal Lynn Fuller

Dawes Middle School

Inspire School of the Year
Principal Liz Miller





to All LPS 2022 Retirees for Your Service

As the 2021-2022 school year comes to an end, we want to congratulate and say thank you to all of the amazing staff and faculty who have served our students and community for so many years. The commitment and dedication to generations of youth does not go unnoticed. You are truly an inspiration for all of us.



Kelli Ackerman	John Gerber	Russ Lloyd	JD Sell
Bonnie Anderson	Bill Glanz	Lynnette Losh	Marcee Seng
Patti Bassett	Carol Goans	Diane Masterson	Chy Sheehan
Glenda Beckman	Cheryl Graves	Carol Mathias	Robert Sheehan
Dave Bell	Sibyl Gruhl	Lori Matthiessen	Brad Siedel
Angie Berkebile	Kristine Guthrie	Tracey Maul	Kathryn Slattery
Mike Boshart	Alysa Haack	Wendy Mayhew	Gay Sohl-Wahlstrom
Mike Bossard	Patty Hammond	Deborah McGinn	Mary Southworth
Debbie Bouffard	Terrie Hamsa	Janelle McKeown	Catherine Sphon
Peter Bouffard	Lisa Hansen	Ronald Merrill	Sharol Starr
Linda Bouwens	Sara Harding	Lou Ann Miller	Becky States
Cindy Breen	Micah Heibel	Susan Monroe	Michael Sterns
Mary Brtek	John Heineman	Lisa Morehouse	Shari Stock
Rhonda Brubacher	Terrance Herman	Burke Morrow	Jeff Stoehr
Al Budt	Erla Heyen	Tim Muggy	Donna Straight
Kristin Bunde	Debbie Hill	Mindy Murphy	Lynnette Streeter
Bob Burkett	Shelly Hillis	Terri Nelson	Dianne Svoboda
Donna Carlsen	Dennis Hruska	Barry Newman	Chris Swanigan
Joanne Catlett	Sue Hruska	Melissa Noonan	Terri Tabor Dimon
Roger Chapp	Holly Hulse	Michelle Novak	Michael Terveer
Shelley Clayburn	Pat Hunter-Pirtle	Calvin Olson	Rhonda Thies
Richard Clough	Rae Hunter-Pirtle	Kathi Olson	Lisa Thiessen
Debra Coffey	Steve Hyde	Norma Olson	Theresa Thompson
Cathy Conley	Mark Irvin	Randy Oltman	Rose Trudell
Darla Cooper	Carol Jaber	Sara Oltman	Shelley Tvrdy
Scott Cotton	Janice Jacobsen	Laura Parks	Russ Uhing
Jeff Coupens	Steve Joel	Diana Pasco	Jennifer Ungvarsky
Phyllis Cromer	Barbara Johnson	Janice Patterson	Tammy Volnek
Jim Danson	Kristin Johnson	Marilynn Peaslee	Judy Wadhams
Douglas Dawson	Susan Johnson	Iraida Peinado	Jolene Walker
Chris Deibler	Kevin Johnston	Gale Poe	Janice Walker
Lucinda Dietz	Randy Jones	Donald Poland	Teresa Wanser-Ernst
Kerry Dornbos	Maydene Juhnke	Darin Raguse	Mark Watt
Floyd Doughty	Gary Jungck	Lu Anne Ramel	Ivy Weber
Kathy Duhs	Cindy Karel	John Reigert	Tammy Weihe
Robert DuPont	Dianne Karges	Theresa Reinhard	Tami Westmoreland
Gregg Eckery Widick	Diana Ketchmark	Sherri Robinson	Brenda Wiemer
James Elsener	Thomas Ketchmark	Young Root	Kathi Wieskamp
Deb Eschliman	Catherine King	Charlene Schippert	Kristy Williams
Kevin Ferrell	Dottie Kitchen	Vicki Schulenberg	Bruce Williamson
Shari Freeman	Jim Kucera	Kathryn Schultz	Kathleen Wilson
Teresa Fricke	David Kulek	Karen Schur	Diane Wilson Dunning
Dianne Frydendall-Smith	Michelle Kunze	Clarence Schuster	Richard Zechmann
Lee Fuhrer	Jean Laws	Alice Schwahn	
Linda Fuhrer	Coreen Leblanc	Larry Scott	
Mary Garza	Cindy Lien	Teresa Searls	

Transforming the Past into an Experience of the Present

Becky Boswell of Lefler Middle School has been teaching eighth grade for 27 years. She adores working with kids and bringing them to a place where “a lightbulb goes off and they start to link things together—like the past to the present.”

That’s why, 15 years ago, Becky began a unique and creative adventure through the Civil War for her students. Students choose a certain battle, soldier, or story about the Civil War that interests them, and dive into the research. The project progresses with students building their own props, booths, and backdrops. Each student performs a monologue for the class and then they join in groups to unite their stories into play-like productions to perform live in front of parents, families, and friends. Becky laughs as she says, “My room is a disaster for weeks, I have to apologize to the custodians!”

The assignment has become almost famous at Lefler Middle School with students and families excited for their opportunity to perform and participate in a live audience showing. The experience provides an opportunity for kids who may not have other interests or activities within the school that allows them to be center stage. And it sparks a passion in some kids for a love of history because they are experiencing, not just learning about, the Civil War.

It’s always a huge undertaking from students, staff, families, and supporters of Lincoln Public Schools who sew costumes, buy crafts, and provide talents to make the students’ vision come to life. This past year, Becky used the Foundation for Lincoln Public Schools Fund-a-Need program to raise money for more authentic costumes for the women of the Civil War time. The initiative raised \$800 for the activity in a few months’ time.

THIS TEACHER ROCKS! 



“ The process is so simple. If you have a project, put it out there. The team at the Foundation is so great to work with, and the community, friends, family, and alums are so generous in supporting these goals for our students. ”

Becky has used the Fund-a-Need program numerous times and she states, “The process is so simple. If you have a project, put it out there. The team at the Foundation is so great to work with, and the community, friends, family, and alums are so generous in supporting these goals for our students.”

Becky is a huge advocate of bringing curriculum to students in engaging ways. She tells us, “There is a way to engage kids creatively where they learn so much while still meeting standards, and the Fund-a-Need program helps support this out-of-the-box thinking for our teachers and staff.”

Thank You For Your Gift



Name _____

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My check is enclosed.

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Credit Card Number _____

Visa Mastercard Discover Expiration Date _____ CVV _____

Make this a monthly gift. I would like my donation to remain anonymous.

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Yes, please notify the following individual(s) of my gift honoring them or memorializing a loved one. Name/address of person to be notified: _____

.....
Go to foundationforlps.org/give to make a donation online.

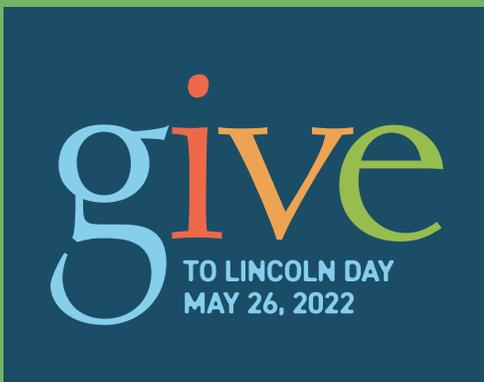
Please make checks payable to Foundation for Lincoln Public Schools, and mail to: PO BOX 82889
Lincoln, NE 68501

SPNEWS22

Investing in a Better Version of Ourselves

Change empowers us to be greater, stronger, and kinder, and it brings fresh new perspectives to our world.

Help us continue this path of evolution and new view of the world for our students, staff, and the community by donating to the Foundation for Lincoln Public Schools this spring.



GREAT SCHOOLS ARE THE HEART OF OUR COMMUNITY

Our schools are among the things that make Lincoln such a great place to live. The generosity of our people is another.

Now more than ever, our students and families need YOU to give to support Lincoln's schools.

When you do, you'll know in your heart you're helping today's kids, tomorrow's leaders, and the city we all love.

Give to Lincoln's kids by May 26 by going to bit.ly/lpsgivetolincolnday. After May 26 go to foundationforlps.org/give or use the provided envelope.

Let's show everyone that Lincoln's got heart.





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All students should have what they need to reach their full potential.

In order to accomplish that, we leverage the community to create opportunities that enhance academic and personal success of Lincoln Public School students and educators.

