Where are the years going? My daughter, Bella, started her first year at Irving—my Olivia, her Senior year at Southeast. Sigh. As I watched other moms and dads kiss their children, and like me, wipe away tears, I steadied myself and knew that our kids are in great hands. Not just in the hands of our great teachers and administrators, but in the hands of our community—who goes to great lengths to make education something very special in Lincoln.

All day long, photos of families proudly escorting their children to their next year of development popped up on the #FirstDayLPS feed scrolling on my screen. Each face held tremendous promise, a little fear and a lot of hope. Those school doors open to welcome ALL children in our community and together we can make it possible for EACH of them to explore their unique purpose and impact on the world. I can’t help but think about the variety of visionary people who help make education happen, and I’m humbled. Donors like you play a significant role in the confidence parents have in our schools and in the experiences LPS students can have while growing up. We know that everyone is rooting for our kids, and many give their time and resources to ensure student success. Thank you, gratitude for this commitment can’t be expressed often enough.

#SpreadTheLoveLPS.

Want to get involved? I’d love to help. Give me a call and let us help you fulfill your philanthropic dreams for education.

Wendy Van
President
Foundation for Lincoln Public Schools

A Living History of the Civil War at Lefler Elementary

Eighth-grade teacher Becky Boswell brought the Civil War to life for her students last year, using resources from Fund a Need.

Students researched life during the Civil War era and chose characters to portray, such as a soldier, nurse, land-owner, politician or journalist. They wrote scripts, designed murals, painted sets and staged an evening performance.

According to Boswell, “This project pushed some students outside of their comfort zone because they had to wear a costume and perform in front of a crowd. But, there was strength in numbers and it was less intimidating because everyone was wearing a Civil War era costume and it became great fun.”

continued on page 3
Spark Summer Learning is a new STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) enrichment program at the Foundation for LPS that looks like a maker’s paradise. Created to help working parents find a fun learning environment for their kids over the entire summer, Spark also gave parents the option for their child to drop in for a week or more, as needed.

In our pilot summer, we took 50 children (aka Sparklers) through 10 different weekly themes. The common thread was developing kids as creative and collaborative problem solvers. Our curriculum built on itself during our 10-week stay at Adams Elementary. For example, concepts that we studied in our textiles week affected our “making” during the film and photography week. We applied principles from our Simple Machines studies during Sculpture and Structure week. Spark staff intentionally planned much of this curriculum integration, but many of the best moments came when students drew their own wonderfully unexpected connections. Like when Sparklers drew inspiration from discussions on biomimicry (Animal Discovery week) to complete a woodworking project at the Nebraska Innovation Studio.

To help our Sparklers identify these parallels within various themes and disciplines the Spark staff used a five-step design process in our weekly projects. This problem-solving framework encourages collaboration and is easily applied to everyday challenges. The collaborative nature of this process is what makes Spark special: our focus on community. Sparklers were encouraged to think of the needs of other community members as the primary way to enhance their own learning (allocentric thinking), and whether a student was with us for one week or all ten, this created important team building opportunities for the whole group. We also made a concerted effort to anchor these young people’s learning in the maker community beyond Spark. To do this we brought in Nano scientists, videographers, ethnomusicologists, and architects to help us solve problems.

According to Program Director Matt Tebo, “We made some great connections in the community, and we are excited to do even more next year.” Stay tuned to hear more about Spark this coming year.

Registration opens January 15, 2018 for next year.
Fund a Need

Fund a Need: Connecting the community with a new look and better functionality.

When we rolled out Fund a Need in 2003 we were on the cutting edge of crowdfunding. Now Fund a Need needs a facelift. So this fall, in partnership with Innovation Hub at Nelnet, we are launching a newer, faster, friendlier version of Fund a Need – including photos and videos – that puts more of the control in the hands of teachers and parent groups.

“Fund a Need has been a great investment - one that changed the lives of tens of thousands of students and teachers in LPS since its inception.” Says Gary Reber, Development Officer for School Communities at the Foundation for LPS. Having a tool that directly connects donors to student needs is key to creating enhanced opportunities for learning both in and out of the classroom.

With an easy to use interface and graphic design that highlights campaigns with photo and video to tell the story, our new platform is more dynamic. Keeping donors connected to a campaign with better communication tools and milestones will also become the norm. We are even creating a marketplace where school needs can be seen and addressed by preferred partners! Stay tuned for more information and a roll-out of our new, improved software in November. We can’t wait to share Fund a Need’s “Foundation Give” platform!

A LIVING HISTORY OF THE CIVIL WAR AT LEFLER ELEMENTARY CONTINUED...

“We heard different stories we’ve never heard before… I’m so glad I got to participate in this activity.” Commented Natalie, another eighth-grade student.

Says Borovich, “It allowed the students to become active participants and look at the war with different perspectives….Teaching our students to look at historical moments through a different lens encourages students to view other events with different perspectives which are necessary for the development of critical thinking skills.”
News

Show your LPS pride with an I Love LPS t-shirt. Proceeds support the Foundation’s efforts. Visit us at www.foundationforlps.org/t-shirts and help us “spread the love.”

Mark Your Calendars

Educator Awards Close
October 20
Nominate an educator at www.foundationforlps/educatorawards

Fantastic Fund a Need
November 1
With an easy to use interface and graphic design that highlights campaigns with photo and video to tell the story, our new platform is more dynamic. Keeping donors connected to a campaign with better communication tools and milestones will also become the norm. We are even creating a marketplace where school needs can be seen and addressed by preferred partners! Stay tuned for more information and a roll-out of our new, improved software in November. We can’t wait to share Fund a Need’s “Foundation Give” platform!

Giving Tuesday
November 28th
Don’t miss the biggest giving day of the year! Mark your calendar to give back during the holidays to the Foundation, so we can continue giving all students what they need to be successful.

Scholarship Applications Open
December 18 - January 25
www.foundationforlps/scholarships

Board:
A Big Thank You to our current and retiring Board Members - we couldn’t do the great work we do without them!

2017-18 Board Members:
*New Members
Chris Hove, Chair
Jackie Ostrowicki, Vice Chair
Karen Peppmuller, Treasurer
Jim Townsend, Secretary
Barbara Baier
Christina Ball
Rita Bennett
Kris Bergmeyer
Susie Bounds
James Bowen
*Cliff Carlson
Jared Carlson
Thomas Christie

Karla Cooper
Kimberly Goins
Jessica Greenwald
Jon Gross
Dean Hart
Cathy Hedstrom
Andy Hunzeker
Stephen C Joel
Bruce Mieth
Takako Olson
Russ Sebek
Jason Schmaderer
*Matt Schulte
Piyush Srivastav
Jennifer Strand
Judy Terwiliger

Retiring Board Members:
Boyd Ober, Past Chair
Lisa Smith, Past Chair
Dick Campbell, Past Secretary
Tom Cherry
Kathi Hesser

Foundation Trustees:
The Foundation’s Trustees have some new faces at the helm. Please welcome Leslie Gibbens & Brian Hefner as well as Ginna and Rich Claussen as Trustee Chairs.

Thank you to Trixie and Dave Schmidt, outgoing chairs for their dedication to students and learning.

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