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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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FOR MORE INFORMATION
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Note: Members of the media are welcome at the event, and should contact Shaun Harner at (402) 304-0762 if they need assistance on-site. Prior to the event, there will be media availability at North Star with Wendy Van, LPS Superintendent Dr. Steve Joel and University of Nebraska president Hank Bounds from 5:30 to 6 PM.

**Foundation for LPS Announces Winners of 2017 Inspire Awards;
University of Nebraska President Hank Bounds is Keynote Speaker**

Lincoln, Neb – The Foundation for LPS has announced the winners of the 2016 Inspire Awards, which will be held on April 20th at Lincoln North Star High School. This is the third year that the Awards have been presented.

Every year, the Inspire Awards honor one student and one staff member from each of the 63 LPS schools who are an inspiration to their school and community. Along with the individuals recognized, one school is also honored for their distinction in academic excellence and goal achievement, and receives a monetary award to use on a special school project. Roper Elementary was selected and will be presented with the award at the event.

"You can find excellence in every nook and cranny of our district," said Foundation President Wendy Van. "These awards give us the chance to shine a light on those bright spots, and remind us of the power both students and staff have to change the lives of others

"I am grateful to the Foundation for Lincoln Public Schools for this special opportunity to honor some of the best and brightest in our school district," said Steve Joel, superintendent of Lincoln Public Schools. "These students and staff members symbolize the excellence we see in our schools each and every day - and we congratulate them for making their school communities a better place to teach and learn."

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Dr. Hank Bounds, the University of Nebraska president, will give the keynote remarks. Bounds has devoted his 25-year career to helping change students' lives in the same way education opened doors in his own life. He began as a high school teacher, then rose to principal, superintendent and state superintendent before becoming Mississippi's commissioner of higher education in 2009 and president of the University of Nebraska in 2015.

"I'm thrilled to speak to this group of staff and young people, and am grateful to live in a state that values education. As a lifelong educator, I can't overstate how meaningful this is. When it comes to support for public education, there is no place like Nebraska," Dr. Bounds said.

"America's great public schools—from kindergarten all the way up to college—are something that sets this country apart. The fact that all kids have a basic right to a quality education, and that our nation considers that a public responsibility, is just incredible."

The Foundation for Lincoln Public Schools supports LPS by raising private dollars for things that tax dollars cannot provide, ranging from additional technology and field trips to scholarships and emergency funds for students in need. As LPS grows, so do the needs of students, teachers and classrooms. Student enrollment at Lincoln Public Schools soared to record highs this school year, with almost 41,000 students attending the school district – a growth of 987 students over last year.

The event is set to begin at 6:00 pm. See attachment for a list of winners, by school.

About the Foundation for LPS – The Foundation for Lincoln Public Schools (FLPS) believes that all students should have what they need to reach their full potential. We engage our community to inspire students and educators, and create educational opportunities that enhance academic and personal success.

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