

Foundation for Lincoln Public Schools

Impact Report

2021-2022

TOGETHER, WE MADE A DIFFERENCE FOR:



41,766 STUDENTS



7,500+ TEACHERS & STAFF



62 SCHOOLS



8 FOCUS PROGRAMS



Foundation
LINCOLN PUBLIC SCHOOLS



When our kids thrive, our community wins

Lincoln is a special place to call home. It's the people who make it that way—friendly, helpful, there for one another. Committed to the things we all hold dear.

THE PROOF IS IN YOUR HANDS.

Our city and our schools deliver a wealth of opportunities. But when new challenges put those opportunities at risk, Lincoln steps forward to make the difference.

In these pages, you'll find the numbers and statistics that highlight the generosity of the 1,650 donors who gave in the 2021-22 fiscal year. You'll also read the stories of opportunities created and restored for the students, families, and staff at Lincoln Public Schools.

Together we received \$5,314,852 to keep 41,766 kids learning and excelling, because in Lincoln, we stand behind the things we all hold dear. The proof is in your hands because when our kids thrive, our community wins.



Wendy Van

Wendy Van, President

Good for kids, good for community

In our 30+ years of service to LPS, so many community leaders and talented volunteers have supported the things that help our school district thrive – things tax dollars simply cannot provide.

With your help, we can keep our schools at their best. That's good for kids—and the community.

As an independent 501(c)(3) organization, the Foundation serves Lincoln Public Schools students and staff in **FOUR KEY AREAS.**

1.



STRONG, STABLE FAMILIES

Early Childhood Learning
Family Engagement
Emergency Needs

2.



BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Arts and Music
Extra-Curricular Activities

3.



NEXT-LEVEL LEARNING

Camps and Clubs
Academic and Creative Exploration
Full-Service Community Schools

4.



COLLEGE AND CAREER

Scholarship
Technical Skills
Career Preparation



Igniting a Spark

Stu Elliott joined a computer club at Southeast High School in 1965, an experience that led to a successful career in computers and finance. In 2020, he created the Stu Elliott Student Assistance Fund* so that LPS staff could provide support “when they see that spark in a student that Anna Zeman saw in me” – and so no one would be left out due to financial constraints.

STU'S FUND DISBURSED \$12,433, AIDING 55 STUDENTS IN FY 2021-2022.

Among other things, the fund has helped students pay for placement testing, entrance exams, and travel and registration costs for competitions, performance, educational trips, and more.

SPARKING A PASSION FOR BUSINESS

A student at North Star High School qualified to attend the FBLA National Conference in Chicago by winning First

Place overall in the Business Management competition. By covering the cost to attend the competition, this fund gave this student a chance to continue growing in her community and the business world.

ENRICHING SUMMER LEARNING

With his little brother enrolled in Head Start and his older brother needing to take summer school, this fund helped the middle son attend enriching summer activities. This opportunity helped him better his English language skills and continue to build positive peer relationships in a safe environment.

PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

Without a computer at home and being the first in her family to attend college, this fund helped purchase a laptop for a high school senior. Born in a refugee camp and coming to the U.S. in 5th grade, her family was not familiar with technology. Making it so she had a laptop computer before she graduated helped her prepare for college and the future.



READ MORE ABOUT STU AND HIS LIFE (HANGING GIFT HERE)



*Does not include support for athletics and is open to students who do not qualify for free or reduced lunch.



Music to Our Ears

Gifts from the Schmieding Foundation and Casey's are transforming auditoriums at Culler, Dawes, and Lefler middle schools back into vibrant spaces that serve both students and the community.

All three of these middle schools were constructed in the mid-1950s. This project will give new life to spaces and provide learning opportunities that have not existed at these schools for quite some time.

“The new audio system is adaptable to today’s technology and has been designed to provide balanced audio output throughout the space,” said Tim Loseke with LPS Facilities.

RESOUNDING SUPPORT

“The Schmieding Foundation is pleased to support the sound system upgrades at Culler, Lefler, and Dawes middle schools,” said Lance Taylor, president of the Schmieding Foundation. “It’s exciting that these upgrades will allow additional opportunities for student productions and performances.”

POWERING PERFORMANCE

“We have extremely talented and creative students at Culler Middle School who love to perform,” said Culler Principal Michaela Hahn. “Unfortunately, their efforts have always been minimized by the acoustics and sound system in our auditorium. We can’t wait for these much-needed improvements so that our students can get the attention that they deserve!”

RALLYING STUDENT PRIDE

“A sound system is a staple for performing arts. I have seen projects like this become rallying points for students taking pride in their performances,” said Trevor Cochrane, Dawes vocal music and drama teacher. “I see this as an exciting opportunity for Dawes and its students.”

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



THIS PROJECT WILL IMPACT 3,048 STUDENTS AT CULLER, DAWES, AND LEFLER MIDDLE SCHOOLS.





Lights, Camera, Action

Fund a Need links Lincoln Public Schools with the online world, putting a powerful fundraising tool in the hands of every staff member.

"It's amazing," said Will West. "Being able to reach out and really express what's needed, and have people there, responding, is wonderful! I love that it normalizes teachers and classrooms needing things. LPS is lucky to have this as a resource."

BROADCASTING NOW

Through the platform, Lincoln High teacher Will West was able to outfit a broadcast studio for KLHS, Lincoln High's student-led broadcast news production network.

GAINING HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE

Fund a Need has taken the student experience from the textbook to Lincoln High halls by putting equipment in their hands. "It makes my job easier," West said. "Much of what I teach would be just 'knowledge' if it weren't for the tools we have gathered through Fund a Need."

CREATING A RIPPLE EFFECT

"The student experience is having a ripple effect, too," West said. One student plans to include sports broadcasting in her college studies – a direct result of her experience in West's classes.

"The work I've done the past two years certainly could not have been done without the Foundation for LPS' Fund a Need," West said. "They, with the donors, have made my job a dream!"

Carrying On a Legacy

Brenda Hoffman cared for Mike Epstein's mother for eight years at a local assisted living facility until she passed away in 2011. Epstein was so grateful for the care she provided; he asked if there was any way he could repay her. She said "yes" and asked that he be a TeamMates mentor for her son, Montoya Laravie.

MENTORING A ROLE MODEL

"To be honest, mentoring Montoya was one of the most satisfying experiences of my life," said Epstein. Laravie, a proud member of the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska, loved the outdoors and spent many late nights fishing and camping. Friends and family say he could always make people laugh. His goal was to return to Lincoln to serve as a role model for Native students.

HONORING A MEMORY

Epstein mentored Montoya throughout his time at Lincoln High and kept in close contact after he went to college. When Montoya passed away unexpectedly in 2019, Epstein established an endowed college scholarship for Native students to honor his memory and dream of graduating college.

"I BELIEVE THAT MONTOYA WOULD BE HONORED TO HAVE A SCHOLARSHIP NAMED FOR HIM."

FORMING A BOND

LaRyssa Baxter became the first recipient of the LHS Montoya James Laravie (Mato Was'aka "Strong Bear") Scholarship in 2022. Epstein believes forming that bond between donor and student helps students succeed in college so he was glad to meet LaRyssa after she received this award.

"I believe that Montoya would be honored to have a scholarship named for him to be directed to Native students from LPS," Epstein said. "It achieves a primary goal that he had established."

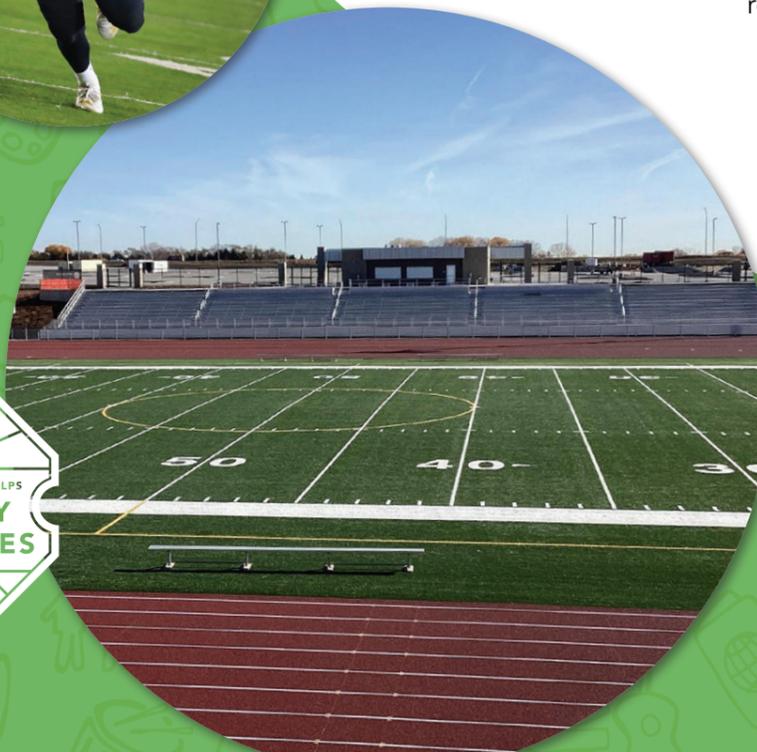


539 → DONORS TO FUND A NEED
 108 → TOTAL FUND A NEED CAMPAIGNS CREATED
 \$100,151 → RAISED IN FUND A NEED CAMPAIGNS

IN FY 2021-2022



CHECK OUT CURRENT FUND A NEED CAMPAIGNS



If You Build It, They Will Play



Lincoln voters committed \$15.4 million toward a \$33 million investment in premier athletic and activity facilities in 2020. Our Fielding Dreams Capital Campaign is dedicated to raising the remaining \$17.6 million.

“Strong schools, and all the activities surrounding them, help to build strong communities. We’re excited about this unique opportunity to partner with Lincoln Public Schools and support the students and programs of LPS,” said Jason Muhleisen, UBT Executive Vice President.

CONTINUING A TRADITION

LPS Superintendent Dr. Paul Gausman stated, “Lincoln has a long history of remarkable facilities to move academics

forward, and the Fielding Dreams campaign gives us the opportunity to continue this important tradition.”

MAKING IT A GAME-CHANGER

This will be a game-changer for so many LPS students. Statistics show that 97% of students participating in LPS activities graduate on time, compared to 80.5% for the district overall.

“YOU KNOW WE JUST DON'T RECOGNIZE THE MOST SIGNIFICANT MOMENTS OF OUR LIVES WHILE THEY'RE HAPPENING.

BACK THEN I THOUGHT, WELL, THERE'LL BE OTHER DAYS. I DIDN'T REALIZE THAT THAT WAS THE ONLY DAY.”

—Archibald “Moonlight” Graham,
Field of Dreams



LEARN MORE!



FUNDRAISING GOAL FOR NEW LPS ACTIVITY COMPLEXES

LPS Contribution from Bond Issue	\$15,419,000
+	
Fielding Dreams Capital Campaign	\$17,650,000

Total	\$33,069,000

The Gift That Keeps on Giving



Laurie Gottsche (now Scott) (LHS, Class of 1981) was a high school dropout on a troubled path before she met long-time teacher and administrator Thomas Christie at Lincoln High. Mr. Christie saw her potential, telling her, "You are such a bright person who can go so far in life." – something she never forgot.

"WE SHOULD ALL THINK ABOUT LEAVING A GIFT, NOT ONLY TO BE CHARITABLE IN OUR LIFETIMES BUT TO GIVE TO OTHERS AFTER YOU'RE GONE."

– LAURIE SCOTT



FINDING AN ALLY

After getting into drugs, running away from home, and living in foster homes and on the streets, Scott finally returned to high school.

While attending an African American history class, she found Mr. Christie. She said, "He just knew I needed some support and encouragement." And he emphasized she was a "thinker."

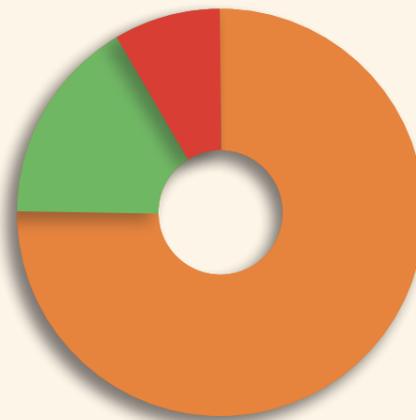
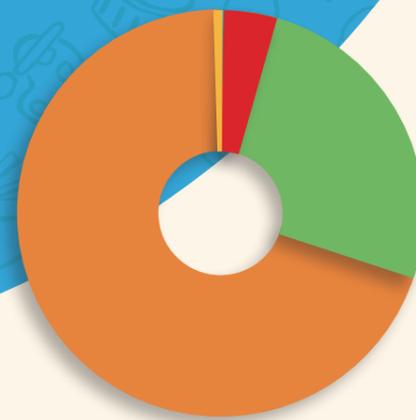
THINKING ABOUT THE FUTURE

Scott remembers Mr. Christie asking her to stay after class one day. She had just given an oral presentation to the class on an African American poet. Assuming she was in trouble, the conversation quickly turned to Scott's college plans. After acknowledging she had never really thought about college, Mr. Christie encouraged her to continue her education.

GIVING CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE

Today, Scott credits her success – including earning a master's degree in political science and having a successful career as a development director – to Mr. Christie and Lincoln Public Schools. "He gave me a lot of confidence in myself and made me realize that I could indeed do something meaningful with my life," said Scott.

Laurie has planned a bequest to the Foundation for LPS for a scholarship in Thomas Christie's name. If you would like to leave a lasting legacy for Lincoln Public Schools through a planned gift like Laurie's, please get in touch with Gary Reber at 402-436-1855 or gary.reber@lps.org.



2021-2022 Financials

INCOME

Contributions: \$3,637,781

Grants: \$39,439

Invested Income: \$1,534,120

Other Revenue: \$103,512

TOTAL RECEIVED: \$5,314,852

EXPENSES

Programs, Scholarships, Grants and Awards: \$2,203,084

General Admin: \$441,595

Fundraising: \$225,823

TOTAL DISBURSED: \$2,870,502*

*Includes endowed contributions.

Numbers provided in the 2021-2022 financial audit performed by Buckley & Sitzman, LLP. Amount raised, funds disbursed, and number of donors are from the Foundation for LPS 2021/2022 Fiscal Year (September 1, 2021 to August 31, 2022).

The Foundation for LPS thanks these sponsors who are opening doors for our kids—today and tomorrow.

See the 1,650 donors who gave to us in 2021-2022 at:



Abel Foundation, Hoegemeyer Family Foundation, James Huntington Foundation, James Stuart III Family Foundation, Krieger Family Foundation, Lincoln Area Retired School Personnel, Lincoln Southeast Class of 1981, The Hampton Family Foundation, UNL Collegiate Chapter—NafME



Foundation for Lincoln Public Schools

BOARD OFFICERS

Patrick Beans, Chair

Natalia Wiita, Chair Elect

Steve Schmidt, Treasurer

James Walbridge, Secretary

BOARD MEMBERS

Dr. Paul Gausman, Superintendent

Barbara Baier

Kris Baack, Ph.D.

Dr. Nancy Biggs

Dr. James Blake

Mo Boyd

Ginna Claussen

Brent Comstock

Jessica Greenwald

John Laflin

Anne Loudon

Karli Mackley

Britta Muhleisen

John Olsson

Deb Rasmussen

Max Rodenburg

Kelly Ross

Ed Schulenberg

Jeff Salem

Mike Tavlin

Dr. Joseph Toczek

Guy Trainin

Russ Uhing



FoundationforLPS.org

