



# LPS records extraordinary 2003-2004 school year

We talked budgets, tough times and the expectations of student achievement.

But the 2003-2004 school year was really about the ordinary and extraordinary everyday lessons of education at Lincoln Public Schools.

Elementary children created their first inventions this past school year, took their first computer bytes, read their first words. Middle school students blossomed into mathematicians, artists and athletes. High school students conquered new worlds of chemistry, industrial technology and literature.

Right now we celebrate the beginning of a new school year, but we also take this moment to look back and relish the past school year.

Traditionally a community that provides strong support for its 54 public schools and more than 32,000 students, Lincoln honored that proud legacy once again in the 2003-2004 year.

Nestled in the heart of the Midwest, LPS continued to be a first-class, family-friendly place featuring a fine teaching staff, high-quality facilities and state-of-the-art technology.

This past school year:

- **Lincoln North Star** opened as

## Fingertip facts about Lincoln Public Schools



Lincoln Public Schools, second largest school district in the state, educated **32,120** students in **2003-04**.

- Students at LPS attended **54** schools: **36** elementary and preschool programs, **11** middle schools, **6** high schools and **1** alternative high school.

- Of the **32,120** students, a total of **9,051 – 29 percent** – participated in the free or reduced-cost lunch program.

the city's sixth high school, a \$39 million structure with an astounding 369,000 square feet of space (that's three blocks long). North Star was the second high school to open in Lincoln in two years, a feat never before accomplished. Funded with a \$90 million bond issue, North Star and Lincoln Southwest were the first high schools built here in 35 years.

- Teachers and staff members at LPS successfully eased their students through a **year of transition** that brought all grade configurations together in elementary schools of kindergarten through fifth grade, middle schools of

- Of the kids, **82.3 percent** were White, **7.3 percent** African American, **5.2 percent** Hispanic American, **3.9 percent** Asian American and **1.3 percent** Native American.

- A total of **5,036** people worked at LPS (filling **4,598** jobs budgeted), with **2,816** on the teacher's schedule.

- The **2003-2004** General Fund Budget for LPS totalled **\$244 million**.

sixth through eighth grade, and high schools of ninth through twelfth grade.

- **Honors and awards** were bestowed at all 54 schools (36 elementaries, 11 middle schools, six high schools and one alternative high school).

- **95 percent** of our **families were satisfied** with the quality of education at their children's schools.

- **75 percent** of our **LPS graduates** continued on to higher education.

- **Student achievement** continued to soar as Lincoln students consistently outscored their national and state peers on basic skills tests in reading, writing, math,

science and social studies.

- And, finally, the district survived the **very snowy winter** of 2004 armed with 200 tons of sand and 150 tons of salt.

These accomplishments did not come easily. Lincoln's schools continued to face challenges in public education. Budgets were tight. The community grew, changed and expected more of its students and graduates than ever before.

We met the challenges.

LPS students were offered an exemplary academic program with the core cornerstone lessons of reading and math, science and social studies – as well as lessons of enrichment in music and fine arts, athletics and debate, and much more.

Thanks to students and staff members, LPS shone as a premier school district.

Teachers, principals and administrators – all of the more than 5,000 dedicated people who worked at LPS – passed on a joy for learning, sending their students on journeys of discovery, curiosity and wonder.

This year we invite you to share in our journey, visit our schools, explore our classrooms. The school bell is ringing.

We're ready for another ordinary, extraordinary year.

## X = # ± Learning about our LPS students by the numbers ± = X%



Lincoln Public Schools was the second largest of the more than 500 public school districts in Nebraska in **2003-04** – with **32,120** students.

Those young people checked out more than a million books, ate millions of lunches and crumpled up thousands of paper towels in the school year.

- ± LPS kids attended **54** schools: **15,143** kids in **36** elementary and preschool, **7,139** in **11** middle schools, and **9,838** in **7** high schools.

- ± The English Language Learners program served **1,686** students from more than **50** countries.

- ± LPS employees included **2,816** on the teacher's schedule (with **249** new teachers), **534** para educators, **344** food

service workers, **302** office workers, **368** custodians and **151** administrators. LPS has **7,500** applications on file.

- ± Special education services were provided for **5,638** students.

- ± An LPS enrichment program served **3,963** gifted students.

- ± **90 percent** of students who completed Reading Recovery – one-on-one reading tutoring for first graders – were reading at grade level within a semester.

- ± About **6,000** students played musical instruments in bands and orchestras.

- ± More than **one million** items were checked out from media centers.



- ± Custodians replaced **35,200** packages of hand towels and **51,000** rolls of toilet paper (**1.6** rolls per student).

- ± Schools served **2.8 million** school lunches and **455,300** breakfasts – including **3.9 million** cartons of milk, **455,000** slices of pizza and **120,000** apples.

- ± Community organizations used LPS facilities for more than **85,360** hours.

- ± More than **10,000** pieces of mechanical equipment were required to keep facilities clean and in working order.

- ± While a typical house had about **1,500** square feet, LPS had more than **6.4 million** square feet to maintain – and **4.8 million** square feet of roof (the equivalent

of **15** Bob Devaney Sports Center roofs).

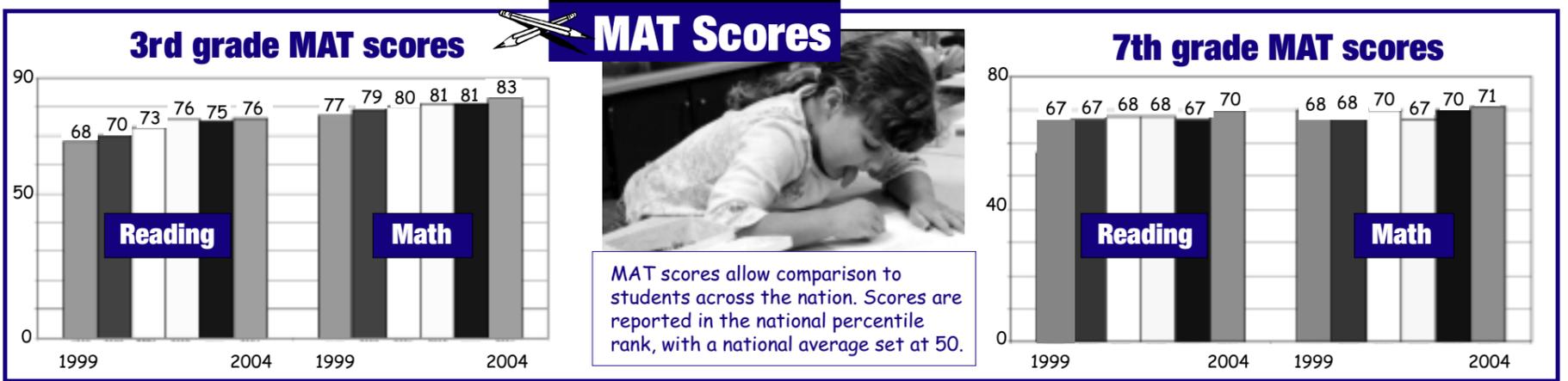
- ± LPS was one of the few school districts in the country given an **AAA** bond rating – the highest possible – from Standard & Poor's.

- ± LPS students made **414,542** visits to health offices. A total of **105,275** doses of medication were administered.

- ± LPS recycled about **1.14 million** pounds of materials.

- ± More than **450** Lincoln organizations participated in the Ventures in Partnerships program.

- ± More than **5,100** high school students, grades 9-12, tried out for athletic programs at LPS – in **19** different sports – and **4,546** kids made the teams.



# LPS aiming for excellence in achievement

Lincoln Public Schools aims for excellence in many measures of achievement. Over this past school year students and staff members piled up awards throughout the district. Student achievement soared as Lincoln students consistently outscored their national and state peers on basic skills tests in reading, writing, math, science and social studies. About 95 percent of LPS families said they were satisfied with the schools their children attend, and 94 percent said their kids enjoyed school.

Scores on the Metropolitan Achievement Tests (MAT), a standardized test administered to 11,894 students last spring, continued to increase steadily. Overall, LPS third graders did better this year than nearly 76 percent of test-takers nationwide in reading, and better than 83 percent in math. Seventh graders from LPS scored better in reading than 70 percent of students nationwide, and better than 71 percent in math.

## Parents rate LPS

Lincoln Public Schools annually conducts phone interviews with moms, dads and guardians, asking about the quality of education in the public schools. For 2003-2004:

- 95 percent were satisfied with the quality of education at our schools.
- 94 percent reported their children enjoyed school.
- 88 percent said schools did a very good or good job of teaching students to read; 88 percent said schools did a very good or good job of teaching writing; 88 percent said schools did a very good or good job of teaching math; 84 percent said schools did a very good or good job of teaching science; 85 percent said schools did a very good or good job of teaching social studies.

## Graduates continue education, enter work force, participate in community



Graduates from the class of 2001 at Lincoln Public Schools generally continued their schooling, entered the work force and participated in the life of the community.

Those were a few conclusions from the "Follow-up Study of the Class of 2001," a document that indicates 72 percent of former LPS students were still in school two years after graduation.

In the past year, phone interviews were conducted with 300 young people – about 15 percent of the 1,953 LPS students from the class of 2001 – kids who attended all four high schools at the time.

Highlights from the findings included:

- In the first fall after graduation 70 percent of graduates were working; 74 percent were in school (two- and four-year colleges and vocational schools); 2 percent were in the military, and less

than 1 percent were homemakers. A year later, 72 percent were still in school.

- The schools most often attended were the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (31 percent), Wesleyan University (5 percent), and Southeast Community College (16 percent). The most popular study areas were business, accounting and finance; education; medicine/health; history, anthropology, political science.

- 67 percent said their LPS preparation was excellent or good. Areas rated highest were preparation to learn on their own, read and understand what they read, use the library to locate information, continue their education, and think critically.

- 90 percent of graduates continued to reside in the Capital City. Six percent were married; 7 percent had children.

- 82 percent were registered to vote; 42 percent voted in the last election.

## Graduation demonstrations at LPS

2002-2003					2003-2004				
Percent meeting requirements:					Percent meeting requirements:				
	Grade 9	10	11	12		Grade 9	10	11	12
Reading	79% met	87	91	97	Reading	80% met	88	91	97
Math	62% met	73	81	95	Math	70% met	80	84	95
Writing	53% met	65	81	96	Writing	60% met	73	86	95

LPS students must meet specified demonstration requirements to graduate.

## ACT Scores (American College Test)

	LPS 2003	State 2003	Nation 2003
Composite	22.7	21.7	20.8
English	21.7	21.2	20.3
Math	23.2	21.4	20.6
Reading	22.9	22.0	21.2
Science	22.4	21.7	20.8

Two-thirds of the senior class take the ACT. Standard scores range from 1-36.

## PLAN Scores (Preliminary ACT)

	LPS 2001	LPS 2002	LPS 2003	Nation 2003
Composite	17.9	18.0	18.4	16.5
English	17.1	17.0	17.7	16.1
Math	18.4	18.8	18.9	16.3
Reading	17.4	17.1	17.8	15.8
Science	18.4	18.6	18.9	17.4

PLAN is administered district-wide and taken by most sophomores in the fall. Standard scores range from 1-32.

## State Standards

2003-2004	Grade 4	8	12
Mathematics	78 percent passed	77	74
English/ Language Arts	87 percent passed	85	85

Every student in the state now must begin to meet a new set of standards set by the Nebraska Department of Education.

## Sample of honors bestowed upon LPS students, staff, schools

### STAFF MEMBERS

**Jim Campbell**, Northeast High, Scottish Rite Teacher of the Year  
**Bill Bucher**, Lux Middle, Principal, Middle School Principal of the Year  
**Kevin J. Rippe**, East High, James Madison Fellowship  
 Time Warner Cable Spotlight Awards: **Mindy Wright, Toni Heimes, Dennis Hershberger**, Southwest High; **Allegra Penington**, Brownell Elementary; **Becky Boswell**, Lefler Middle; **Carol Patterson**, Pound Middle, National Teacher Awards; **Mindy Wright, Toni Heimes**, Southwest; **Becky Boswell**, Lefler; **Carol Patterson**, Pound; **Pam Gannon** and **Kathi Mercure**, Lux  
**Mary Beth Lehmanowsky**, East High, Principal, Marie Bourke Principal Leadership Award  
**Vicki Gratopp**, speech language pathologist, Ruth Eickman Outstanding Early Childhood Educator Award  
 Alltel Communications Outstanding Educator Awards: **Becky Boswell**, Lefler Middle; **Mary King**, Fredstrom Elementary; **Lori Payne Falcone**, Southwest High; **Brent Toalson**, Southeast High; **Linda Wilson**, Bryan  
**Josh Severin**, Scott Middle, Miss Myrtle Clark Outstanding Mathematics Educator Award  
 Leola Bullock Awards: **Ann Stokes**, Lefler Middle; **Richard Hargeshimer**, Bryan  
**Marjorie Boye**, Lincoln High, Helen Krieger Outstanding Healthcare Provider Award  
**Chris Baum**, Kahoa Elementary, John Prash Health and Physical Fitness Award  
**Judy Riordan**, Southeast High, Mike Troester Outstanding Educator Award  
**Ellen Williams**, Southeast High, Freda Battey Distinguished Educator Award  
**Robert Curtright**, Northeast High, Outstanding High School Science Teacher Award  
**Myrna Bornemeier**, Lux Middle, Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics Teaching  
**Brent Toalson**, Southeast High, Rudy L. Fredstrom Leadership Award

**Rob McEntarffer**, Southeast High, Moffett Memorial Award for Teaching Excellence Award, National Society for the Teaching of Psychology  
**Tom Hays**, supervisor for Gifted Education, LPS, National Association for Gifted Children Award for Outstanding Educator  
**Lois Mayo**, science curriculum specialist, LPS, elected to Board of Directors of National Science Teachers Association  
**Matt Larson**, mathematics curriculum specialist, LPS, Research Committee for National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Board of Directors  
**Ann Quinlan**, Southeast High, US-Eurasian Awards for Excellence in Teaching; Teacher of Excellence, Nebraska English Language Arts Council  
**Mary Reiman**, Southeast High, Knights of Ak-Sar-Ben Ike Friedman Teacher Leader  
**Larry Munksgaard**, Athletic Director, Southeast High, Central Regional Athletic Director of Year Sertoma Awards: **Teri Ourada**, East High; **Val Smith**, Lefler Middle; **Marilyn Bechtel**, Elliott Elementary; **Paul Kraus**, Yankee Hill; **Maureen Mattas**, Eastridge Elementary; **Cora Bruntorad**, West Lincoln Elementary; **Cindy Skiles**, Irving Middle; **Dean Stewart**, Kahoa Elementary; **Karen Pester**, Everett Elementary; **Kendra Angle**, Belmont Elementary  
**Pat Hunter-Pirtle**, Southeast High, Principal, Nebraska State Bandmasters Association Outstanding Administrator's Award  
**Susan Vanneman**, Mickle Middle; **Lana Peterson-Pressler**, Rousseau Elementary, National Board Certification  
**Wendy Bonaiuto**, Randolph Elementary, Principal; **Kathy Evasco**, West Lincoln Elementary, Principal, Distinguished Principals, Nebraska Association of Elementary School Principals  
**Carmel Sheppard**, Principal, Dawes Middle, YWCA Tribute to Women Award  
**Sara Landgren**, associate principal, Southwest High, Nebraska State Assistant Principal of Year  
**Nancy Larimer**, Northeast High, Mad Hatter Youth Service Award

**Anne Cognard**, East High, USA Today All-USA Teacher; Fulbright Teacher Program  
**John Heinemann**, Lincoln High, Distinguished Alumni, University of Northern Iowa Communications  
**DiAnn Fowler**, Irving Middle, honorable mention, Apple Computer's iLife Educator Contest  
**Chris Maly**, Lincoln High, Dale E. Black Outstanding Young Teacher of Speech and Theatre, Nebraska Speech and Theater Association  
**Nancy Childs**, LPS curriculum art specialist, Nebraska Art Teachers Association Supervision and Administration Award  
**De Tonack**, LPS Science Focus Program, Milton Lifetime Achievement Award for Mathematics  
**STUDENTS**  
**Lincoln Southwest**, top honors, Nebraska State Championship Power Drive Program  
**Zachery Thurber**, East High, Ike Friedman Student Leader  
**Ben Plowman**, Lincoln High, state winner, Nebraska Academy of Sciences, Junior Academy of Sciences State Fair  
**Diana Lu**, East High, U.S. Presidential Scholar; **Stephanie M. Walz**, Southeast High, semifinalist State History Day top honors, students from the LPS Science Focus Program (Zoo School)  
 Stock Market Game: **Lincoln East**, first, Nebraska high schools; **Scott Middle**, third, middle schools  
**Kyle Karthaus**, East High, first, Wonders of Plastics International Essay Contest  
 Science Olympiad: **East High**, first, high schools; **Southeast High**, second; **Lincoln High**, fourth; **Lux Middle**, first, middle schools  
**Jeremy Moore**, Culler Middle, National Award Winner in Mathematics  
**Bailey Heafer**, Lincoln High, Youth Advocate of the Year finalist, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids  
**Alexander Lin**, East High, Emerson Scholar, Interlochen Arts Academy  
**Adam Schwimmer**, Irving Middle; **Curtis Mackie**, Park Middle, William and Dorothy Bevan Scholars, Duke Talent Program

**Lux Middle**, advanced to Global Finals, Destination Imagination competition  
**Zachary K. Wolfe, Mai Linh N. Nguyen**, Southeast High, Horatio Alger Scholars  
**Sierra Nielson**, Southeast High, Knights of Ak-Sar-Ben Ike Friedman Student Leader  
**Keaton Kiewra**, East High, first, Nebraska Chess Championship  
 Lincoln Evening Optimist Awards: **Culler Middle, Heba Al-Mugotir, Skyler Douglas**, Dawes Middle, **Will Monroe, America Reid**: Goodrich Middle, **Sequoia Berens**, Irving Middle, **Quoc T. Nhan**; **Lux Middle, Aaron Bulow, Kyle Way**; **Mickle Middle, Michaela Michal, Mickey Koss**; **Pound Middle, Meghan Leonard**  
**Maxey Elementary Chess Club**, two state championships.  
**Lux Middle**, first and second, Nebraska Regional Middle School Science Bowl  
**Northeast High**, top honors, Academic Decathlon regionals  
**Southwest High** Dance Team, Universal Dance Association's Spirit of America Competition, first, Large Varsity Jazz Division; third, Large Varsity Pom Division; **East High** Dance Team, second, Small Varsity Jazz  
**Lincoln High**, first, one-act-play competition  
**Northeast High**, first, Nebraska State Fair Quizbowl; second, Norris Quizbowl, Creighton Prep Quizbowl and Seward Young Women's Quizbowl  
**East High**, first, overall winner Class A State Speech Contest; **Lincoln Southwest**, sixth.  
**East High**, first, Nebraska South District Forensics (eight students qualified for nationals)  
**Southwest High**, top honors, TEAMS (Tests of Engineering Aptitude, Mathematics and Science), University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
**SCHOOLS**  
**Clinton Elementary**, finalist, 21st Century Schools of Distinction Award  
**Goodrich Middle**, "12 Under 12 Project," challenge to reach academic proficiency goals before 2014 target date for No Child Left Behind



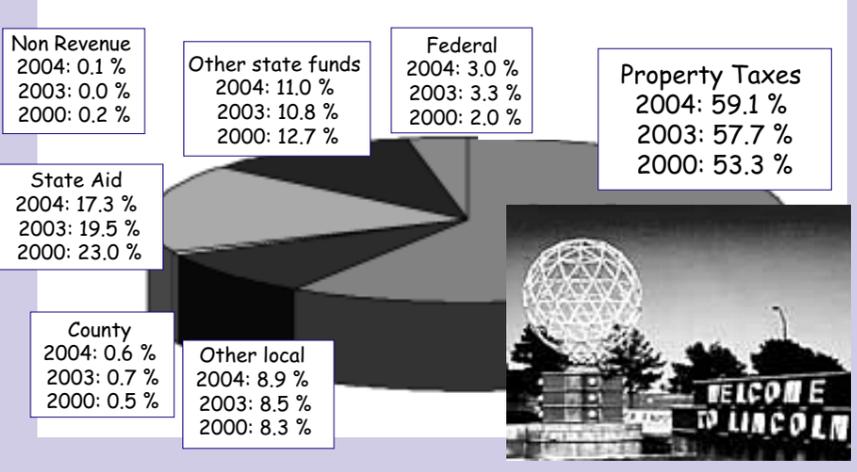
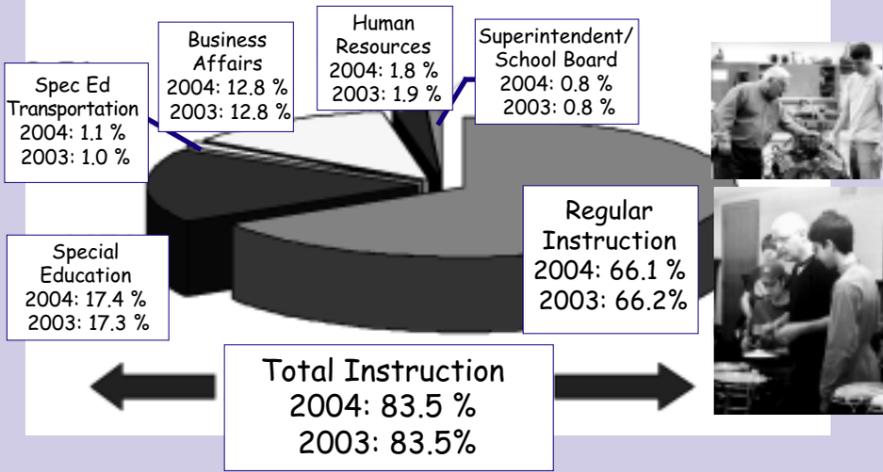
# Lincoln Public Schools General Fund Budget

## Where money goes

## Where money comes from

More than 80 percent of the LPS General Fund Budget supports instruction – when you add up both regular instruction and special education. That number has stayed pretty steady for LPS. Below, the top numbers listed in each department illustrate the percentages for the 2004-2005 General Fund Budget, and the bottom numbers illustrate the percentages for 2003-2004.

Almost 60 percent of the proposed \$241 million LPS General Fund Budget for 2004-2005 will come from local property taxes – a number that has increased as state aid has decreased. Below, the first percentages represent the 2004-2005 school year, the second set of percentages represent the 2003-04 school year, and the third percentages represent the 2000-2001 school year.



# LPS tackles serious budget decisions

Finding good news in the Lincoln Public Schools budget recently is like looking for that proverbial needle in the haystack.

LPS students continue to excel in the classroom, improve in achievement scores and receive quality teaching.

However, behind the scenes it is not business as usual.

- Despite a predicted 2004-2005 General Fund Budget of about \$241 million – a number difficult to grasp – this is the first time in recent history that LPS will **spend fewer dollars** than in the previous school year when the General Fund Budget tallied \$244 million.

- There likely will be 100 **fewer certificated positions** at LPS this year, a number that includes teachers, nurses, social workers and others.

The reasons for the reductions at LPS are many, a combination of state budget cuts, growth in student numbers and salary increases for the thousands of school employees.

“I couldn’t say there are any real big surprises here, but this year there is no doubt we have a serious budget,” according to Ed Zimmer, president of the Lincoln Board of Education.

Yet Zimmer does see good news in the way LPS continues to handle a difficult economy and school budget situation. Over the past years budget reductions have been kept as far away from the classroom as possible.

“Do all these cuts make a difference?” he asked. “You bet. Will the public notice it? We hope not. That’s what we work so hard to accomplish.”

Perhaps one of our messages to the public, Zimmer said, “should be asking everyone to be kind to our teachers and employees. They will be working harder than they ever have before.”

He is cautiously optimistic: “We’re in good hands. We have great fiscal people who are working hard to make this work. Everyone needs to keep a good thought.”

- Here’s a thumbnail of what happened in **2003-2004**:

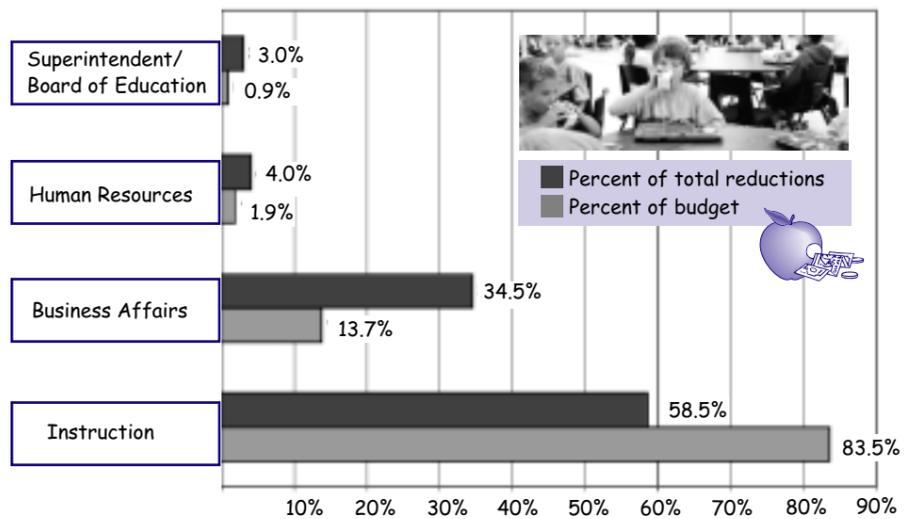
- ✓ The 2003-2004 LPS General Fund Budget added up to **\$243.7 million**, a 4.3 percent increase over 2002-2003.

- ✓ The 2003-2004 budget allocated more than **83 percent of funds to instruction**. Increases covered a variety of factors at LPS: Negotiated increases in teacher salaries; operating costs for Lincoln North Star High School; and an increase of additional students, including those who speak languages other than English, those who have special needs, and those who are living in poverty.

- ✓ **Budget reductions** were made across the district. Some positions were eliminated. District-level administrative costs and funds for teacher recruiting were reduced. Reductions were made in intramurals and high school athletics. Resource officers were eliminated in middle and high schools.

## LPS Budget Reductions, 1998-1999 to 2003-2004

Over the past five years Lincoln Public Schools officials have tried to keep budget reductions as far from the classroom as possible. For instance, instruction adds up to 83.5 percent of the total budget, yet only 58.5 percent of reductions were taken from that department between 1998-1999 and 2003-2004. In comparison, Business Affairs adds up to 13.7 percent of the budget, and 34.5 percent of reductions were made there. Human Resources, with 1.9 percent of the budget, took 4 percent of reductions. The Board of Education/Superintendent’s Office makes up 1 percent of the budget and absorbed 3 percent of the reductions.



## How to make a difference and get involved in schools

How can you get involved with public education in Lincoln?

- Check the Lincoln Public Schools web – <http://www.lps.org> – for information about schools, jobs, employees, test scores, instruction, budgets and more.

- Watch the education public access channel 21.

- Check posted information in neighborhood schools.

- Sign up to become a volunteer at

a school, participate in the Ventures in Partnerships program, or mentor a student through TeamMates. For VIP call 436-1950. For TeamMates call 436-1990.

- All sorts of information is available at LPS District Offices, 5901 O St.

- Attend a meeting of the Lincoln Board of Education. Regular board meetings are held twice each month – 7 p.m. the second Tuesday of each month; 8 a.m. the fourth Tuesday of each month – at LPS District Offices, 5901 O St.

For more information, contact:

- ✓ Marilyn Moore, associate superintendent for instruction, 436-1625, [mmoore@lps.org](mailto:mmoore@lps.org)

- ✓ Dennis Van Horn, associate superintendent for business affairs, 436-1635, [dvhorn@lps.org](mailto:dvhorn@lps.org)

- ✓ Nancy Biggs, associate superintendent for human resources, 436-1575, [nbiggs@lps.org](mailto:nbiggs@lps.org)

- ✓ LPS District Offices, 436-1000
- ✓ LPS Communications, 436-1610



**Meet E. Susan Gourley**

- The new Lincoln Public Schools Superintendent is E. Susan Gourley: 436-1601, [sgourley@lps.org](mailto:sgourley@lps.org).

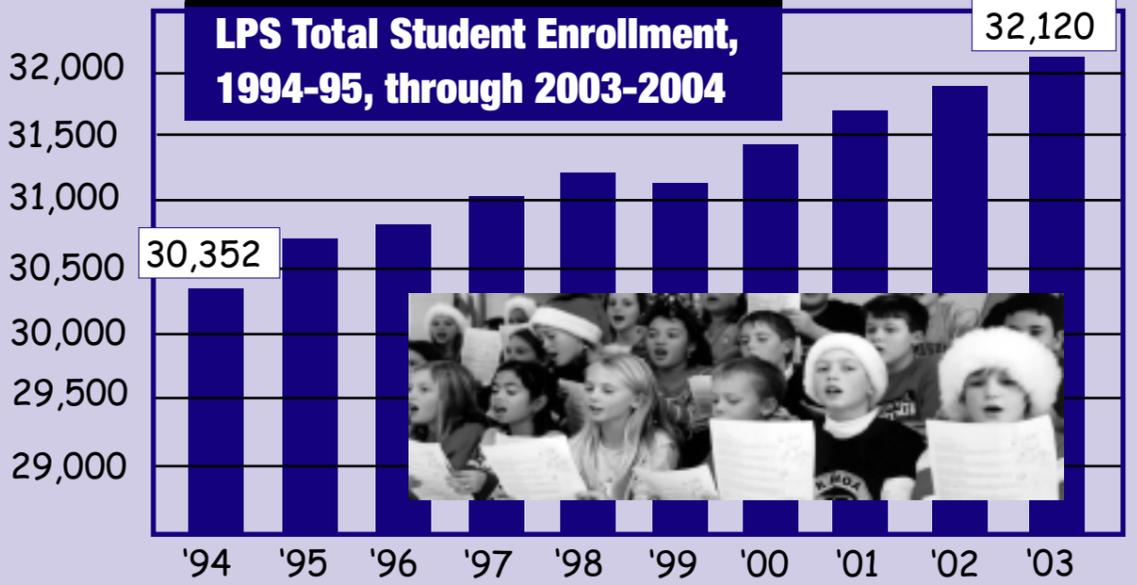
This is a special issue of Free Times, which is published monthly during the school year. For more information contact Cathy Townsley, 436-1610, or Mary Kay Roth, 436-1609, Lincoln Public Schools, P.O. Box 82889, Lincoln, NE 68501-2889. Free Times is published to allow non-profit groups and organizations to distribute information to LPS elementary and middle school students. However, LPS does not endorse or advocate the programs advertised in this publication.

Lincoln Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, marital status, disability, or age in admission or access to, or treatment of employment, in its programs and activities. These people have been designated to handle inquiries regarding complaints, grievance procedures or the application of these policies of nondiscrimination: Associate Superintendent for Human Resources at LPS (402/436-1675); or Director of Student Services at LPS (402/436-1650), both at 5901 O St., Lincoln, NE 68510.

If parents, employees and students do not feel their complaints regarding Title IX, Title VI, Section 504 have met with resolution at the local level, they can appeal their grievances to the regional Department of Education: Office for Civil Rights, 8930 Ward Parkway, Suite 2037, Kansas City, MO 64114; phone 816-268-0550, fax: 816-823-1404; TDD: 800-437-0833. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Rebecca Hasty, Nontraditional/Equity Programs Specialist, Career & Technical Education, Nebraska Department of Education, P. O. Box 94987, Lincoln, NE 68509-4987; 471-4823; or e-mail, [rhasty@nde.state.ne.us](mailto:rhasty@nde.state.ne.us).



In the past decade attendance at Lincoln Public Schools has increased from 30,352 students in 1994-1995 - to 32,120 students in the past 2003-2004 school year. Officials at LPS project a student enrollment of 34,197 students for this district (including preschool, early childhood, and kindergarten through 12th grades), by the 2008-2009 school year.



## Predicted growth daunting at Lincoln Public Schools

Graphs at Lincoln Public Schools chart everything from budgets to tax levies to student enrollment.

But many school officials believe this year's most important chart is the one predicting numbers of new kindergartners expected to arrive in the school district over the next five years.

Numbers are daunting.

Kindergarten enrollment for the 2004-2005 school year is expected to top 2,500 wee ones - compared to 2,387 the previous year - and then continue to climb dramatically. By the 2007-2008 school year, a total of 2,738 kindergartners are expected to skip through our doors.

Lincoln is a growing community, ever-changing, with families joining our

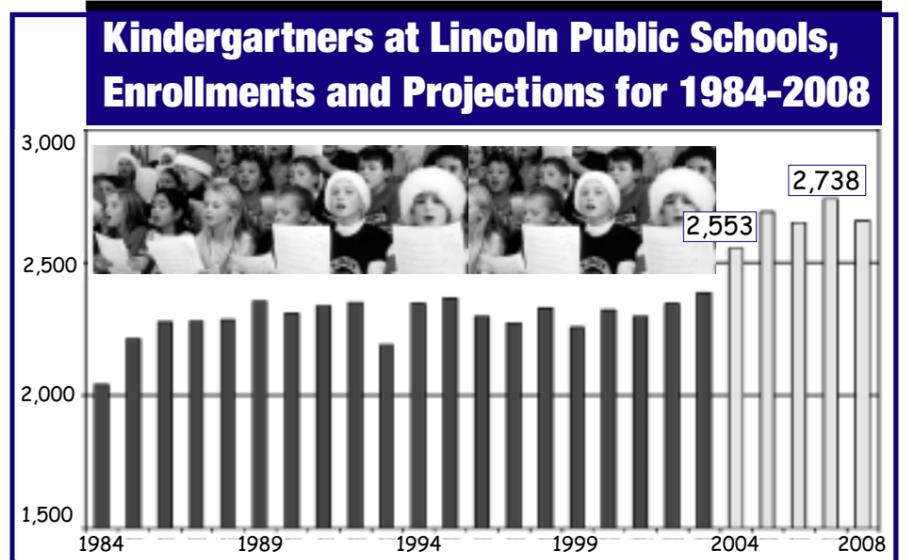
community from around the country and around the globe.

In the last few decades attendance at Lincoln Public Schools has increased from 24,682 students in 1983-1984 - to 30,020 students in 1993-1994 - to 32,120 students in 2003-2004.

LPS is predicting that 340 more students will attend LPS in this new school year.

That means textbooks and school supplies will cost more. There will be an increase in the number of students who speak languages other than English, students who have special needs, students who are living in poverty.

Those kindergartners are only the tip of the iceberg.



## Lincoln Board of Education serves as decision maker for our schools

The seven members of the Lincoln Board of Education are elected by district to set policy for Lincoln's public schools. They are elected to four-year terms and serve without pay.

Regular board meetings are held twice each month - 7 p.m. the second Tuesday of each month, and 8 a.m. on the fourth Tuesday - at Lincoln Public Schools District Offices, 5901 O St.

Time is reserved at the beginning of each meeting for comments related to items on the board agenda. Time is reserved at the end for general comments.

Meetings are cablecast live on channel 21. Morning meetings are shown again the same evening. Evening meetings are rebroadcast at 7 p.m. Friday evenings the week they happen.

The decisions made by elected officials can drastically affect education for the community's students - the future of Lincoln.

Please let decision makers know about your priorities and concerns.

You can reach members of the Lincoln Board of Education via telephone, e-mail and regular mail.

			
<b>Kathy Danek,</b> district 1, 464-8549, kdanek@lps.org	<b>Doug Evans,</b> district 2, 423-6758, devans@lps.org	<b>James Garver,</b> district 3, 770-8828, jgarver@lps.org	<b>Ed Zimmer,</b> Board President district 4, 435-0301, ezimmer@lps.org
			<b>Mail letters to:</b> Written comments to all School Board members may be sent to: Superintendent of Schools, Lincoln Public Schools, P.O. Box 82889, Lincoln, NE 68501-2889.
<b>Lillie Larsen,</b> district 6, 488-7038, llarsen@lps.org	<b>Don Mayhew,</b> district 7, 421-1491, dmayhew@lps.org	<b>Keith Prettyman,</b> district 5, 423-3350, kpretty@lps.org	

**LINCOLN BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Kathy Danek	James Garver	Keith Prettyman
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E. Susan Gourley, Superintendent

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## A letter from our School Board: Leading for Learning

Each year we review the statistics of Lincoln Public Schools - numbers of students, test scores, dollars spent - and recount some of the honors and achievements of our students and teachers. This year also marks the completion of nearly two decades of service by Superintendent Phil Schoo and the smooth transition to the leadership of Dr. E. Susan Gourley. Schoo's retirement and Gourley's hiring are reminders of the importance of individuals in the enterprise of public education.

Schoo came to a good school district in 1985, and as Lincoln grew and changed, so did Lincoln Public Schools, meeting the needs of more students - from increasingly varied backgrounds. Schoo's years saw the building of Humann, Roper, Campbell, Maxey and Cavett Elementary Schools, Lux and Scott Middle Schools,

and Southwest and North Star High Schools, as well as the rebuilding of Huntington Elementary, and additions and improvements to almost every school in the district. Midway through Schoo's years with LPS, reading scores were declining, for a host of reasons. But Schoo and the district firmly held and firmly stated the belief that "ALL Children Can Learn." And learn they did, with new curriculum, programs, continual honing of teaching skills, and lots of hard work by teachers and students.

This was not the work of one man, as a successful school district reflects a focused effort by everyone from custodians and bus drivers to teachers and School Board members. But the superintendent has the key role in leading the whole staff to carry out the community's mission, as expressed by the

Board. Schoo could say confidently at one of his retirement celebrations, "In 10 years I want you to look back and say: 'In 2004 Lincoln was a good school district. But we're even better now.'"

The quality of Schoo's leadership shone brightly in his final year, from his thoughtful retirement announcement with ample time for the Board to seek and hire his successor, to his unwavering focus on a successful transition to Gourley. From a son of Michigan to a daughter of Oregon, the post of LPS Superintendent has passed from one dedicated, experienced, forceful educator to another. The Board sought and found a superintendent with a track record of focusing on student achievement, sound fiscal management, and connecting with the community. Schoo's vision of a continually improving district is in good hands.

The challenges for and potential of Lincoln Public Schools are worthy of Gourley's and all of our best efforts. We must use the community's resources wisely, and seek support for the facilities and programs needed to serve a growing Lincoln. We must foster our lowest performing students to reach their full potential, while continuing to challenge our most successful learners. And we must adapt to rapid social, political, and legal changes, so that in 10 years, when Schoo looks back he can say, "She did it, LPS is better," and Gourley can reply, "Yes, Lincoln did it."

*Ed Zimmer*

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