

Park Middle School

Lincoln Public Schools • 855 S. 8th Street • Lincoln, NE 68508 • (402) 436-1212



November 10, 2015

Dear Park Parents and Guardians:

Lincoln Public Schools – and all staff members at Park Middle School – are dedicated to providing all students with the educational foundation necessary to succeed in future career, college and life. To ensure your student’s success, we have set high standards that are reflected in what is taught in each of our schools and classrooms. Our school district is also committed to keeping our parents and community informed of important issues affecting our schools. While LPS has long held high expectations for our students, our success is also measured through federal education legislation called the *No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)*. Like many school districts in Nebraska, LPS did not meet what are called the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) goals for the 2014-2015 school year as required by NCLB. These reports measure our school district’s performance in terms of the percentage of students who are at or above state-defined academic standard goals in major academic areas. For our schools to meet AYP this year, **100 percent of students** – regardless of special needs, English language mastery, or other life-impacting circumstances – must have met proficiency standards.

Similarly, 100 percent of Park Middle School students must have met proficiency standards in order for our school to meet AYP goals for 2014-2015. Unfortunately, because that did not occur, we have been identified by the Nebraska Department of Education as being in Year 4 of School Improvement which involves planning for restructuring. This status is given as a result of not meeting state goals for five consecutive years. In 2014-2015, the following sub-groups of students did not meet proficiency standards in Reading and/or Math:

Reading: *All students, Asian, Black or African American, White, Students eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch, Special Education students, English Language Learners*

Math: *All students, Black or African American, Students eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch, Special Education students, English Language Learners*

By comparison, across the LPS district, the following sub-groups of middle school students did not meet proficiency standards:

Reading: All Students, African American, White, Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch Program, Special Education Students, and English Language Learners

Math: All Students, Asian, African American, White, 2 or More Races, Special Education Students, Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch Program, and English Language Learners

Because of our School Improvement status, and because Park is a school that receives federal funds through Title I—the oldest and largest source of federal education funding to assist schools with high rates of poverty, our school is required to develop a plan for restructuring in the next school year if we do not meet AYP again, and we must include teachers and parents in the development of this plan. We will notify you of an upcoming parent meeting at which we will describe the academic and administrative changes we feel are appropriate as part of our plan, and invite your input at that time.

**Park Middle School is dedicated to providing the highest quality education
and empowering all students to succeed in a culturally diverse community, nation, and world.**

Park Middle School

Lincoln Public Schools • 855 S. 8th Street • Lincoln, NE 68508 • (402) 436-1212



In the meantime, we invite you to review our school's proficiency and that of all LPS schools on the Nebraska Department of Education website (<http://www.education.ne.gov/>). The link can be found titled 'State of the Schools Report.' We are also required to provide the option of School Choice transfer for students who live in our attendance area, which is the option to choose and enroll in another LPS school that has not been identified for improvement. The only such school available for transfer at the middle school level is Lefler Middle School. Though Lefler, like all other LPS middle schools, did not meet Annual Yearly Progress, it is the only school not yet identified in School Improvement, as it is in its first year of receiving Title I funds. Transportation to Lefler may also be an option. If you are interested in the School Choice transfer option, please contact our school office for more information.

Finally, we also have tutoring services available for qualifying students. All parents received information about how to utilize this service in September, and first semester enrollment for tutoring has now completed. Second semester enrollment will begin January 11th. To qualify for tutoring, your student must also qualify for the free or reduced meals program in addition to living in the Park attendance area.

LPS does not support an antiquated system that most educators and elected officials – as well as the U.S. Department of Education – admit is not working. At the same time, we are not dismissing our mission to ensure every child succeed and flourish in school. As educators we are fully committed to all students reaching their full potential and we are proud of the significant academic progress our students are making – as evidenced in increasing achievement scores district-wide, and our high school graduation rate.

Thank you for your continued support of your student and our schools. If you have questions about the federal requirements described herein or our students' proficiency, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ryan Zabawa". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "R" at the beginning.

Ryan Zabawa
Principal
Park Middle School

**Park Middle School is dedicated to providing the highest quality education
and empowering all students to succeed in a culturally diverse community, nation, and world.**
