

Lincoln Options

# Opus

*A community dedicated  
to learning, kindness  
& celebration!*



March 2014

## Calendar

### March

- 10-14 – Observation Week  
8:40 a.m. – Noon
- 11 – OCC Meeting 6:30 p.m.
- 14 – Early Release (district-wide)  
12:32 pm dismissal, No Half  
Day Kindergarten
- 14 – Lottery registrations due by  
3:00 p.m.
- 16 – Lottery
- 20 – Books, Bears + Blankets @  
6:30 p.m. in the Library
- 22 – **Auction**
- 25 – OCC Meeting 6:30 p.m.
- 25-28 – Conference Week,  
12:32 p.m. dismissal, No  
Half Day Kindergarten

### April

- 2 - District Late Start, No AM bus
- 7-11 – **Spring Break**
- 15– OCC Meeting 6:30 p.m.
- 19 – Full-Day Kind Lottery
- 25 – Early Release,  
12:32 dismissal
- 29– OCC Meeting 6:30 p.m.

### *Highlights In This Issue:*

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*Observation Week is March 10 - March 14  
from 8:40 to noon!*

All classrooms are open to the community during Observation Week. New families will get a first-hand glimpse of how the Options classrooms operate, and current families can preview the curriculum for their child's upcoming school year. Observations are not intended to be made for class placement purposes. All observers are required to check in at the office.



*Samba practice in the gym, preparing for the Procession!*

## Greetings from the Options Community Council President

Hi Lincoln Community,

It was great to see so many families at the recent Lincoln Science Fair. The projects were creative, meticulous and informative, and all were great examples of the quality work our students produce every day. I am always amazed by the support that our families provide for our children and for each other. The "Compliment Pages" at each exhibit were full of thoughtful, encouraging words and observations. Hats off to Paul Rocks and to all of our budding scientists!

Even though there are still several big community events in store for this spring, like the Auction, our Culminating Movers & Shakers Event and Camp Elderberry, it has come time to start thinking about next year. We are looking ahead to the parents or family members interested in supporting students, teachers and staff as a member of the Lincoln Options Community Council next year (our version of a PTA or PTO). A list of all open positions is included in this edition of the Opus on page 3. If you are interested or just curious about these positions the names of the current position holder and a link to the description of the position are included as well. Please consider helping out our community as a member of the 2014-2015 Options Community Council.

Cheers,  
*Rob Campbell*  
*OCC President*

## *Open Council Positions for 2014-2015 School Year:*

- President (currently Rob Campbell), duties found in handbook at Section VI. E. 1.
- Treasurer (currently Brian Crain and Angel de Jesus), duties found in handbook at Section VI. E. 3.
- Communications Chair (currently Melissa Minjares and Beth Wilson), duties found in handbook at Section VI. E. 6.
- Resource Committee Chair (currently Bradley Naragon), duties found in handbook at Section VI. E. 8.
- External Issues Committee Chair (currently James Schneider), duties found in handbook at Section VI. E. 10.
- Garden Chair (currently Aaron Coby), duties found in handbook at Section VI. E. 18.

## *Your Council Needs You!*

What is the Options Community Council? The Options Community Council (OCC) is the governing body of the Options Program at Lincoln School. The Council also acts as the board of directors of the Options organization. Options is the non-profit organization created to support the education of children in accordance with the Options philosophy, overview, goals and curriculum. Everyone is invited to participate in and to support the council. Council meetings occur on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the Lincoln library.

**We have several open positions for the 2014-2015 school year, including President, Treasurer, Communications Chair, Resource Committee Chair, External Issues Chair and Garden Chair.**

The descriptions for each of these positions can be found in the [Lincoln Options Handbook](#). You can also contact the parent currently in a role for more info, or contact Rob Campbell for info on any of the positions. **In addition to these positions we also need a new Opus Editor and someone to manage the [lincolnoptions.org](http://lincolnoptions.org) site.**

There will be a nomination box in the school office if individuals want to nominate themselves or others, or interest can be expressed directly to Rob, Marcela or any other council member. Most of these jobs can be shared. The Treasurer position does require some background with accounting, and the Opus Editor and [lincolnoptions.org](http://lincolnoptions.org) management position would be best filled by someone with some experience in editing or publishing, however all interested parties should certainly inquire and all volunteers are welcomed. Having these positions filled before the end of this school year will allow for a smoother transition into next year.

Thank you! ***This is a nice way to support the school community even if you are unable to volunteer during the school day.***

## Key Dates for 5th Graders

- Washington Middle School will hold their 5th Grade parent night on March 25th at 6:00 p.m. in the WMS gym.

- Washington Middle School will visit Lincoln's 5th Grade students on March 28 at 10:30 to present information about the Washington program and 6th Grade transition. WMS registration forms will be sent home with students to be completed and returned to the Lincoln office.

- Reeves Middle School will visit Lincoln students on March 21 at 1:00 to present information about the Reeves program and 6th Grade transition. RMS registration forms will be sent home with students to be completed and returned to the Lincoln office.

On May 1, from 6-7:30 RMS will host a parent night; and on June 10 at 10:00 Lincoln 5th Grade students are invited to tour RMS. Lincoln families are responsible for providing transportation to and from RMS for this visit.

- Jefferson Middle School Parent Night on April 15 at 6:00 p.m. at JMS. Enrollment form due April 22 (return to Lincoln office).

- Student visitation to Jefferson on June 3 during the regular school day at 1:45. (Parents are responsible for providing transportation to Jefferson on this day.)

## The Lincoln Options Auction is on March 22!

**The Lincoln Options Auction is Saturday, March 22!**

This is a great opportunity for you to join in and help raise money for the programs that make Lincoln so special. The money from the auction funds the Spanish program, the organic gardens, field trips and classroom budgets! Here are several ways you can help...

1. Consider a donation of artwork/handcrafts you may have in your home or a service you can provide (babysitting, cooking, etc). Call Jeannine Kempees for more info.
2. Talk with a business you frequent and ask for a donation (many businesses have already donated; you can find a list of them at [lincolnoptions.org](http://lincolnoptions.org) on the auction page).
3. Sign up outside your classroom to help at the auction.
4. Help your teacher with a classroom project.
5. **COME TO THE AUCTION!** Find amazing donations to buy and support our school.

If you want a sneak peek at the wonderful offerings check out the draft catalog at [www.lincolnoptions.org](http://www.lincolnoptions.org).

The auction starts at 4:00 p.m. with a family-style dinner for \$6 each. There is childcare available in the school during the auction.

The silent auction in the gym closes in two sections, at 5:45 and 6:15. The live auction begins at 6:30.

**See you there!**  
**The Auction Committee**



## *The Science Fair and the Development of a Self-Directed Learner*

### *by Paul Rocks*

The gym is clean, projects are home, and families have their weekends free, all good signs of another successful science fair at Lincoln Options.

Each year I find myself reflecting about the science fair. This year we had just about one hundred students participate, and a very good turnout from the community. Because the projects were set up Wednesday morning, most of the classes were able to view the wide variety of experiments, models and demonstrations.

This is the second year that all the 5th grade students completed a project. To assess their projects the 5th grade students were given a self-evaluation to complete. After reading through the evaluations, I am beginning to see a pattern, one that I also see as a parent of an Options' alumnus. **Our students know themselves as learners.** Below are some comments students made about their projects. When it came to thinking about their science fair project some students said:

*I could have explained it with more detail.*

*I learned how to test and evaluate, compare and contrast. I also learned that sticking our fingers in water for 45 minutes is not that bad if you have a friend with you.*

*There is always room for improving.*



## *Self-Directed Learner, continued*

The students were also asked to think about how the experience with the science fair will prepare them for their “Mover & Shaker” project:

*Try to improve in being clear and specific.*

*I'll research a lot more and focus to get the job done.*

*I will be more enthusiastic! I will look at other projects.*

*Be more precise, work slowly and include detail.*

*I want to do more writing about my project.*

*I will work very, very hard and take more time to do a project of my “mover and shaker.”*

*I will approach it way better in quality and time put into it.*

*I will approach the project with not rushing it so. It will be neat and organized.*

*Always check with my parents first before I glue stuff on.*

As a parent of an eight grader (please don't let her know I writing this) I reflect on how the Options program shaped her life as a learner and community member. I believe there are many tangible and intangible ways the program supported her development as a human being. One gift she received from Options is a way of knowing herself as a learner, to know what her strengths and weaknesses are, to set goals, to self-reflect and to have a sense of what it means to do quality work. I see this trait in many of our alumni: when given meaningful experiences, and a structure of inquiry, they develop into self-directed learners.



## *Links for More Info on Standards-Based Testing*

- K-12 Learning Standards: <http://www.k12.wa.us/CurriculumInstruct/learningstandards.aspx>
- State Testing Overview: <http://www.k12.wa.us/assessment/StateTesting/default.aspx>
- OSD Assessment Services: <http://osd.wednet.edu/departments/assessment>
- Common Core Standards: <http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards>
- Smarter Balanced Assessment: <http://www.smarterbalanced.org/smarter-balanced-assessments/>
- No Child Left Behind Overview: <http://febp.newamerica.net/background-analysis/no-child-left-behind-overview>
- OSPI Testing FAQ: <http://www.k12.wa.us/assessment/StateTesting/FAQ.aspx>
- Options Handbook: [http://www.lincolnoptions.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/Options\\_Handbook\\_2012.pdf-II](http://www.lincolnoptions.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/Options_Handbook_2012.pdf-II)

## *Lincoln Options + Testing: A Community Café Discussion*

On **March 13<sup>th</sup> from 6:30-8:30pm**, the Options Community Council will host a school-wide **community café discussion** on the topic of standards-based testing in the Lincoln Gym.

The practice of standards-based testing, and the debate around it, has been happening for decades. It came to the forefront of the discussion with "No Child Left Behind" legislation, which tied state assessments to federal accountability. In 2011, Washington joined 44 other states in adopting the Common Core State Standards. This shift has renewed the debate again.

The OCC Assessment Workgroup has begun to evaluate the role of standards-based testing for students at Lincoln. We also want to examine the role of alternative education at a time when the effectiveness of public schooling is increasingly being judged by students' performance on these tests. This is especially true in the context of the Options Program philosophy, which states as one of its goals that children will be guided to achieve their full potential without pressure to compete or to measure up to imposed criteria. We need input from the Lincoln community to help guide us as we examine these questions.

In order to provide you with some background information prior to our community meeting, we have included links to several sources of information so that you can familiarize yourself with the issue.

We hope that you will come to discuss this topic with the rest of the Lincoln Community at the community café on **Thursday, March 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.** In the meantime, contact the Assessment Workgroup through Annie Maclay at [anniemaclay@gmail.com](mailto:anniemaclay@gmail.com) with your thoughts or questions.



## From the Lincoln Library

by Donna Dannenmiller, Teacher-Librarian and Michelle Anthony PhD

### Parents Can Help With... Reading Comprehension and Decoding Strategies!

In the primary grades (K-3) a child learns to "really read." Parents have a tremendous role in supporting their developing reader. Here are some tips to help your reader grow.

#### TRYING TO FIND A "JUST RIGHT BOOK" FOR YOUR DEVELOPING READER:

There are two reading levels...*the independent reading level* (the level of books they can successfully read and comprehend completely on their own) and their *instructional reading level* (the level books they can read with support with guidance from you or a teacher). One way for a child to find their "just right book"/ independent reading level book, is to read a full page of text. If they miss/don't know 4-5 words on the page, they should choose an easier book. This is often referred to as "**The Five Finger Rule.**" If your child tries to read at their frustration level (missing five or more words on a page) minimal or new learning is not likely to happen. Remember, confidence-building comes with reading with fluency, and ease!

#### PLAY SOME SIGHT WORD/PHONICS GAMES/STRATEGIES TO BUILD

#### DECODING SKILLS: DOES IT LOOK RIGHT... SOUND RIGHT... MAKE SENSE?

When a child comes across a word that they do not recognize the **best strategy** to teach is the **READ-ON STRATEGY**. In other words, read on to the end of the sentence, using the context of the sentence to figure out what would make sense. Then go back and see if that guess makes sense and has the same phonetic match. (For example: "*The ra---n comes out at night to look for food.*" The child skips the unknown word and reads to the end of the sentence. From the context, the child guesses that the word is "raccoon." Going back to the word, itself, the child checks the letter sounds (phonics) to see that the guess was correct.

**I Spy Games** - After reading a page of words, have your child count all the "the" words on the page or "and" words. Challenge them to: "*Find the word that is the opposite of happy.*" "*Find a number or color word.*" "*Find a feeling word.*" These strategies help them focus on the print.

**If your child misreads a word:** Ask yourself... Does it matter? If saying "house" instead of "home" or misreading a character's name won't change the meaning of the story, **let it go.**

#### STUDENTS THAT ARE READING WORD-BY WORD SHOULD BE FINGER POINTING UNDER EACH WORD AS THEY READ, TO EMPHASIZE ONE-TO-ONE WORD CORRESPONDENCE:

Beginning readers use their finger to focus on reading one word at a time by putting their finger under each word, as they are reading it. As your child's fluency develops, and they start reading in word "chunks" (several words in chunk groupings), finger pointing is no longer needed.



## From the Lincoln Library, *continued* *Reading Comprehension + Decoding Strategies*

### **SOMETIMES MY CHILD HAS A GREAT INTEREST IN READING A BOOK A LITTLE ABOVE THEIR READING LEVEL:**

"Great interest" is a big motivator. There are many benefits to children choosing their own books, even those above their ideal reading level. However, for beginning or take-off readers, I never give them a book "cold-turkey" to read independently, for the first time. First I take them through a picture walk through the book, with much discussion about what is happening in the illustrations. Then, I read it to them once, twice, three times, etc. until they get the big picture of what the book is all about, and become familiar with the new vocabulary. They, usually, can't totally memorize it in one or even several readings (although "memorization" IS one of the important beginning stages of learning to read). They can gain great confidence in learning to read a challenging, beloved book, if you provide the scaffolding.

### *Instead of Simply Telling Your Child to "Sound it Out":*

**Say nothing:** Give your child a chance to figure it out.

**Say:** *"Look at the picture for a clue."*

**Say:** *"Skip the word and read to the end of the sentence. Make a guess...what makes sense? Go back and get the first sound to see if your guess matches the letter sound of the word."*

**Say:** *"The author chose a different word. Look at the first letter and see if you can get it now."*

**Say:** *"Chunk it."* Are there smaller words in the bigger ones (e.g. 'going' has the word 'go' in it)?

**Say:** *"Let's reread."* Before you tell your child the word, see if he/she can re-read the sentence and get it with a "running start."

**Say:** *"Close your eyes. Now look again."* Have them close their eyes, open them and see if their brain can just 'get' the word as a sight word without trying to sound it out.

**Look at word families:** If your child knows 'at,' they will more easily be able to identify 'hat.'

**Tell them the word:** You do not want to hinder the comprehension of a story by belaboring a single word. Instead, give your child the word and have them re-read the sentence so that the word sticks in their mind for the next time they encounter it.

## Pete Seeger (1919-2014) by Michael Dempster

Pete Seeger is connected to your children. At two assemblies recently, we shared together our appreciation of this precious and unique human being, a real mover and shaker.

What was it that connects him to us at our school? I think the key is that he held uncompromising respect for life. Speaking up for respect for workers, joining in the movement for civil rights in our land, campaigning for peace, promoting respect for the Earth... He was passionate about people and the planet, and he spread this passion far and wide with great energy in song.

Pete didn't write a lot of songs himself, but he brought us hundreds of songs from near and far, many of which we sing with your children at assemblies. *We Shall Overcome, This Land is Your Land, Magic Penny, Last Night I Had the Strangest Dream, Guantanamera, Keep Your Eyes on the Prize, Fox Went Out on a Chilly Night, Well May the World Go, The Garden Song, Wonderful Friends...* They are songs about love, justice, respect, peace, nature and beauty. For us at this school, we believe that these things are every bit as appropriate to promote in the education of children as academic study, so we sing about and celebrate them on a regular basis.



Pete said recently, "I feel like an old grandpa, with thousands of musical children all over the country." We told children at our recent tribute to Pete Seeger that he was referring to us all. We are all, in a way, heirs of this loving man. Thank you, sir, and rest in peace Pete Seeger.

## News to Note:

- **A Camp Fire Club for K-3rd grade children is up and running at Lincoln!** For the 2014-2015 school year, the club will be for youth 3 years old through 5th grade! This Club meets weekly to explore the outdoors, exercise creativity, learn about community service, and gain a sense of belonging while having fun.

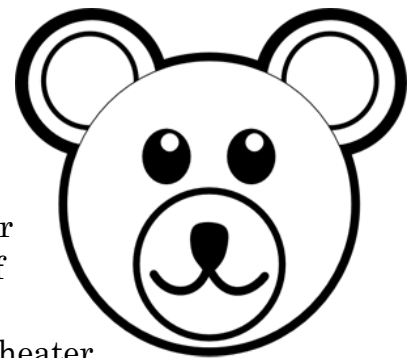
Come to an informational meeting and Club visit, and learn about Camp Fire and the Club Program. Bring the kids! There will be an activity for the children while families get to know one another, and discuss opportunities to volunteer and specific interest areas. After the informational portion, youth may participate in a shortened Club meeting.

### *Lincoln Cafeteria*

*March 19th 6:00-7:00 p.m., April 16th 6:00-7:00 p.m., and May 21st 6:00-7:00 p.m. Please RSVP to Christa at [deandchrista@yahoo.com](mailto:deandchrista@yahoo.com) or [360-870-5514](tel:360-870-5514) v/txt.*

If you cannot make one of the scheduled meetings, please contact Christa or Camp Fire to request the information. Camp Fire Orca - [253-597-6234](tel:253-597-6234) or [kbouta@campfireorca.org](mailto:kbouta@campfireorca.org). Also visit us at [www.campfireorca.org](http://www.campfireorca.org) and on Facebook: [Camp Fire Orca](#).

- Please note the **NEW DATE for Books, Bears and Blankets... Lincoln's Family Literacy Night!** Mark your calendar for **Thursday, March 20th 6:30-8 p.m.** in the Lincoln library. Kids can wear their pajamas and bring a small, soft toy to cuddle. Parents bring a cozy blanket to sit on and/or pillows to lean against while reading with their children. Timberland Regional Library staff will give a brief presentation on the importance of family literacy. A few parents can volunteer to be part of an impromptu reader's theater entertainment. **WHOO HOO! EVERY CHILD GOES HOME WITH A FREE BOOK!**



- **If you have an item for the Opus please forward it to [opuseditor@gmail.com](mailto:opuseditor@gmail.com).** The deadline for submissions is the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month for the next month's issue. Questions? Feedback? Suggestions for improvement? Contact us via email. Thanks!



## News to Note, continued:

- **We're looking for a new Opus Editor for the 2014-2015 school year. We also need a new [lincolnoptions.org](http://lincolnoptions.org) manager.** (This can be the same person.) If you have interest in helping your school community outside of school hours, this might be the volunteer job for you! Our website is hosted via Wordpress, and the newsletter can be done with simple publishing tools on your home computer. Contact Beth Wilson for more info: [opuseditor@gmail.com](mailto:opuseditor@gmail.com).
- **Quick POLL:** This year we offer the Opus in PDF format (emailed to families and posted on the [lincolnoptions.org](http://lincolnoptions.org) site). A hard copy version is also printed for each family household and for school staff. Additional "costs" for a hard copy include approximately two reams of paper/month and two additional hours of volunteer time. Our Communications Committee wants to know: ***Do you like the addition of a hard copy Opus each month or do you prefer an all-digital format?***

We'd also like your constructive feedback about the format, types of information included in the Opus, etc. Your feedback will help shape the format of this primary communication tool for our school in the 2014-2015 school year. Please jot your notes below and return to Wendy in the school office, or take our online poll on the [lincolnoptions.org](http://lincolnoptions.org) site (right sidebar link). Thank you!

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## Opus Feedback: Digital and/or Hard Copy?

1. Do you have a preference for a digital or hard copy version of the Opus?
2. Is the Opus a communication tool you use to learn more about what's happening at Lincoln? Why or why not?
3. Do you have constructive feedback about the format, types of information included in the Opus, etc.? Your feedback will help shape the Opus format in the next school year.

***Return to the office!***