



## NORTH CAROLINA SCHOOLS TO WATCH MODEL SCHOOL—VISITOR'S GUIDE

### East Lincoln Middle School



#### Designated in 2004; Redesignated 2007

East Lincoln Middle School • Lincoln County Schools •  
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### 2007-08 School Statistics

(Source: 2007 NC School Report Card.)

Community: Rural  
Enrollment: 642  
Grade Levels: 6-8  
School Schedule: Traditional

#### Student Demographics

85% White  
11% African American  
3% Hispanic  
<1% Asian

29% Free/Reduced Lunch  
2% English Learners

2005 AYP: School of Excellence  
Met 20 of 21 performance targets

2006 AYP: School of Progress  
Met 21 of 21 performance targets

2007 AYP: School of Distinction  
Met 17 of 19 performance targets

(Visit <http://www.ncschoolreportcard.org> to view this school's data for prior years.)

### School Characteristics and Replicable Practices

East Lincoln Middle School is located in the foothills of the mountains in western North Carolina. This school serves about 650 6th-8th graders. East Lincoln Middle School is located in the foothills of North Carolina about 40 miles north of Charlotte. The school has a broad range of socio-economic diversity. The school has been in existence for many years, but was reconstituted when a new middle school was opened several years ago. The school has an exceedingly warm and inviting culture that makes it an exceptionally nurturing--yet high-performing school.

#### Academic Excellence

- The success of each and every child is of paramount importance to the entire faculty and staff.
- There is a very strong use of Lexiles to assist in reading.
- There are several literacy initiatives in place, Balanced Literacy, Corrective Reading, and SRI—all at the initiation of the staff.
- The principal and AP for curriculum are unquestionably strong and effective instructional leaders.

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### **Academic Excellence** *(continued)*

- A multitude of assessment strategies is evident. Students participate in the creation of rubrics, and understand what quality work looks like.
- The staff provides professional development not only for each other, but also for neighboring schools and districts.

### **Developmental Responsiveness**

- Diverse instructional strategies are embedded into everyday classroom practice.
- Students are not allowed to fall between the cracks. The Department of Juvenile Justice is part of a wrap-around of services that help keep at-risk youth from getting into the court system to begin with. There is also a very strong Community In Schools (CIS) program that has both an in-school and after-school component.
- The curriculum is challenging, relevant, and taken seriously. A commitment is made to infuse diverse cultures and perspectives into class activities. For example, Kindertransport and literature selections from the Civil Rights movement of the 1960's formed the basis for discussion.
- There is a strong and vocal student council, whose input is valued and acted upon.
- There are very strong business, family, and community partnerships evident.
- Students participate in a large number of sports, clubs, and activities-many of which are open to all interested students.

### **Social Equity**

- The school, while demonstrating very high expectations, is tremendously supportive of all students.
- There is access to higher-level classes and activities like yearbook and morning announcements for all.
- Suspension rates are low, and discipline does not seem to be an issue.
- The school celebrates and rewards academic and character growth and achievement.
- Parents love the school, as does the community in general. One parent commented, "My child's not excited about going to high school because he loves it here, and I'm sad because I'm not going to be a part of the PTO next year!"
- While there are two levels of math classes, there is access to the more challenging classes, and an AMPS accelerated math class that students can attend.

### **Organizational Support**

- The organization of the school is intentionally inclusive.
- The school is a community of practice where presenting at conferences and taking on student teachers is standard operating procedure. It is a hub of professional development.
- Not only do key people possess the collective will to overcome barriers, the staff would also not tolerate anyone who got in the way of their students' success.
- Everyone on the staff knows and articulates the vision of the school. Their motto, "Earning wings for life," is broadly understood and accepted.