

YSD | Lincoln School

# Lincoln Boasts A Rich History

BY PRINCIPAL PAUL STRUCK  
Lincoln Elementary School

Lincoln Elementary School has a rich history. The first phase of Lincoln's current location at 815 Locust Street was completed in 1882 to take the place of the White School. The old Lincoln School was given a "poor" rating due to the wood structure, inadequate lighting and obsolete equipment. It was razed and the new Lincoln School was erected on the site of historic Forester's Park. Forester's Park was located on Locust Street between Ninth and Tenth Streets.

During the 1950's, the city and school board initiated a move toward updating the local schools. The local school board saw public support quickly falling in line behind a district bonding program for the construction of new buildings. This made it possible to abandon the old Webster and Lincoln schools. The Parent-Teacher Association was reorganized for the primary purpose of publicizing the plan and promoting a favorable vote on the bond issue.

In school board minutes from 1950, "Forester's Park was the only logical and sensible location for the new proposed Lincoln School. If the building were set back 40 feet from the corner, that would leave the hill and one entire side for park purposes." The park had terraced seating and a stone-pillared band platform. The local PTA convinced the voters that this was the right location for the new school.

### Past Lincoln School Principals:

- Della Reich .....1930-67
- Bob Walser .....1967-98
- Paul Struck .....1998-present

The first addition to the red-brick school was built in 1951 and contained 14 classrooms. The basement contained a furnace room and an apartment for the janitor. The janitor's apartment included a bedroom, a combination dining-kitchen room and a bathroom with a tub and shower. In 1967, another addition was constructed that included four classrooms and a gymnasium which also served as a cafeteria. In 1974, shower rooms, toilets and a kitchen were added to the all-purpose gym. A third addition of an entry and offices was added to the original structure in 1983, and four more classrooms were added in 1987.

To meet federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines and the growing need for additional special-education services and technological advances, a new plan was created to bring the school up-to-date. In March 2011, the new addition was completed. Construction included a new library, computer lab, multi-purpose room and a music room. A room to conduct testing and special-education services and an office for the school counselor were also part of the new construction. An elevator was added as part of the project and all the restrooms were designed and re-constructed to be in compliance with the ADA rules. We are happy to say that our school is currently handicapped accessible to all our students, staff, parents and visitors.

All of the additions to the original school of 1951 have been constructed to meet the growing responsibilities that are part of public schools' curriculum and instruction. The gymnasium serves as the setting for a district-adopted K-5 physical education program. It also serves as a cafeteria for our school's daily breakfast and lunch program. The gym provides an environment to conduct school and community-wide assemblies and special events. The music classroom serves as the setting for our music educators to provide a K-



Student council members pose in front of the new benches installed this summer on the front lawn of Lincoln School. They are proud to be Lincoln Leaders. COURTESY PHOTO

5 music curriculum and to provide small-group band and orchestra lessons to our fourth and fifth grade students.

All our K-5 students visit our new library once a week to listen to our librarian read a story or portions of a book to them. Then, with the assistance of the librarian and classroom teacher, each student is given the opportunity to check out one or two books from the thousands of books that are part of the library inventory. Classrooms are also given the opportunity to visit our computer lab which contains more than 25 desk top computers. Under the supervision of their classroom teacher, students are excited to browse the worldwide web to access information for school-related topics of interest. The computers are also used by students to practice and refine their reading, writing, math, geography, social studies and science skills.

Yankton's Title I program was initiated during the 1965-66 school year. For most of its history, Title I services at Lincoln School were provided in the south hallway of the second floor. Today, Title I services are provided in the Title I room, located on the first floor of our school. There, students receive individualized special instruction to improve their reading and writing skills as part of our Reading Recovery program.

In 1973, the federal government mandated that each public school district provide "appropriate" special-education services to each qualified student residing within the district. In order to meet the educational goals of each Individual Education Plan, these services must be provided within the "least restrictive environment." When appropriate, these services can be provided within the Resource Room at Lincoln School. At the present time, two special education teachers and five paraprofessionals work collaboratively with each K-5 classroom teacher to meet the goals and objectives of each IEP.

Other specialized services, which include physical and occupational therapy, are provided by visiting specialists who use our gym and facilities to serve the specialized needs of students. A speech and language clinician serves students who qualify for such services at Lincoln School. Students visit her office anywhere from one to four times per week to receive specialized instruction. Our school counselor serves two schools and provides bi-monthly classroom instruction to each Junior Kindergarten-fifth grade classroom. She also provides individualized and small-group guidance instruction to students who seek her guidance and support.

As I noted in the first part of this history, the local PTA was reorganized to promote the construction of a new Lincoln School in the early 1950s. Lincoln's PTA continues to be an active and proud supporter of our school. Numerous playground and school projects have been planned, financed and installed by our parent volunteers. Many school-related projects which include assemblies, carnivals, Bingo Night, visiting authors, games for classroom during inside-recess and countless other acts of generosity and kindness have been part of Lincoln's rich history of cooperation between parents and teachers. Members of our local PTA have always recognized and lived out the motto that "Educating everyone takes everyone."

As you have read through this brief history of our school, you can't help but notice that our school district has been a leader in meeting the growing needs of our students and their families. With our community's financial support, we hope to continue to make the appropriate changes that will help us meet the needs of all students.

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A look at Yankton's Webster Elementary School in the fall of 2014. COURTESY PHOTO

# Webster School Has Been An Innovator

From Webster Elementary School

In 1876, the original Webster School was constructed at 510 Pine Street. The main goal of the building was to meet the educational needs of the students on the east side of Yankton. The brick building cost approximately \$5,000 and had four classrooms: two on the main floor and two in the basement. Only those students in grades 1-3 attended this school. In the May School Board minutes, it was documented that a fence was erected to divide the boys and the girls from the building to the outhouses. Later, the building was evacuated due to a lack of fire safety measures, lighting and overcrowding.

During the 1902 school year, it was documented that some of the first teachers received \$45 per month or \$405 per year for their salary. In 1918, the salary increased to \$1,200 per year. By the time 1942 rolled around, teachers were paid approximately \$3250 per year.

In 1906, the school board allocated money to certain grades to purchase school supplies. The first/second graders received 15 cents while the third/fourth graders received 25 cents. In 1921, different grade levels were furnished with certain school supplies. The first/second graders received pencils, the first through fourth graders received paper

and crayons and the upper grades received ink. All grades were given exam papers.

The current Webster School on East Seventh Street was built in 1950. It had eight classrooms and could hold a capacity of 240 students. During the next 24 years, more rooms were added, including four more classrooms, an all-purpose room and a kitchen. In 1983, the school received a new entrance and office area. The final addition came in 1990, when four more classrooms were added on to the west end of the building.

Although structurally there have not been major projects since 1990, Webster School has gone through many other changes in the last 20 years. Through the spring of 1996, it housed two sections of each grade level (kindergarten-sixth grade). In the fall of 1996, the sixth graders moved into the new Yankton Middle School to join the seventh and eighth graders. Beginning in the fall

of 2003, Webster School's enrollment declined as it became a one-section school of kindergarten-fourth grade and two sections of fifth grade. But since that year, enrollment has only increased. In the fall of 2004, the Yankton School District began to provide early childhood services to our youngest learners by adding two sections of Jr. Kindergarten. Since implementing the initial early

### Past Webster School Principals:

- Mildred Newton
- Elsie DeCamp
- Ruth Klemme
- David Mendel
- Wendell McNeely
- Bob Walser
- Peg Wetherell
- Bruce Blumer
- Paul Struck
- Jerome Klimisch
- Kevin Dick
- Carey Mitzel
- Melanie Ryken

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