

# NC ACCESS BEST PRACTICES



Office of Charter Schools  
**NC ACCESS PROGRAM**  
NC Department of Public Instruction

Marketing and Recruitment

Community Engagement

## Partnerships for Teacher Development

### Implementation Description

[Lincoln Charter School](#) (LCS) is a K-12 school with two campuses located in Western North Carolina. As they recruit a more educationally disadvantaged student population, the school leadership understands these students often have different needs than their peers. A significant aspect of meeting their needs involves training teachers to adjust their professional practice to reflect the needs of their students. Therefore, the school established a Professional Development (PD) plan to build staff's skills in reaching a more diverse student population. Specifically, the LCS administrative team collaborated with UNC-Charlotte's [Urban Education Collaborative](#) and the state-wide [New Teacher Support Program \(NTSP\)](#) to support teachers' professional growth and ensure culturally responsive instruction.

In partnership with UNC-C's instructional strategists, the administrative team at LCS provided PD on topics, such as culturally responsive teaching strategies and engaging boys of color. Studies have shown that culturally responsive classrooms can have a particularly positive impact on male students of color, who are often subjected to unconscious biases in education (Wright, 2019). The strategists also performed classroom observations, reviewed lesson plans, and provided guidance for how to better meet the needs of Educationally Disadvantaged (ED) students. During virtual learning, teachers received support for increasing student engagement, which was a challenge for many during COVID-19 (Manca

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### About This School

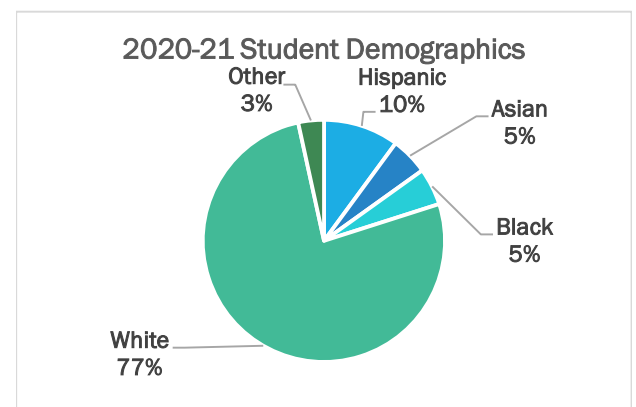
#### [Lincoln Charter School](#)

The mission of Lincoln Charter School is to facilitate the development of college ready individuals through emphasis on rigorous academics and our community expectations: honesty, respect, empathy, responsibility, service and preparedness. Lincoln Charter's Class of 2020 cohort graduation rate was almost 100%. These graduates accumulated over 625 acceptances, were offered over \$13.8 million in merit aid, logged over 18,000 service hours during their time at Lincoln Charter and more than 1 in 10 are entering post-secondary studies as first-generation college students. Lincoln Charter is the largest brick and mortar charter school in NC with campuses in Lincolnton and Denver serving over 2,200 K-12 students during the 2020-2021 school year. The Lincolnton campus is currently under construction. Once completed, this project will add over 50 new classrooms and complete over 80,000 sq/ft of new buildings.

**Year School Opened:** 1998-99

**Grant Awarded:** 2020-21

**Initial Grade Levels Served:** K-12



**% ED Student Population:** 18%

**Urbanicity:** Rural / Lincolnton & Denver, NC

**Persons in Poverty (Lincoln County):** 10.3%

& Meluzzi, 2020). UNC-C's Dr. Tehia Glass provided training sessions for over 20 LCS teachers who were then able to obtain their culturally responsive teaching certification. During the summer of 2021, fifteen to twenty of Lincoln Charter's teachers will continue this training by participating in a session focused on engaging boys of color led by Dr. Lewis of the Urban Education Collaborative at UNC-C.

Additionally, NC ACCESS funds provided the opportunity for LCS's teachers to work with two Instructional Coaches (IC) with UNC-C's New Teacher Support Program. The school requested diverse leadership in the selection of these coaches so they could better represent the student population they seek to serve. Studies have shown that it is important for schools with a diverse student population to have leadership that also reflects that diversity (TFA Editorial Team, 2017). By participating in the NSTP program, LCS teachers were able to engage in PD sessions offered through the program every other month, attend an annual conference, and receive individualized coaching, which is "important for beginners to have systematic, intense mentoring...in classroom coaching" (Scherer, 2021). While the IC's first priority was the needs of the 15-20 beginning teachers, all LCS teachers were able to benefit from their expertise. The coaches participated in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and grade level meetings, assisting with strategic assignments. Research has shown that PLCs can improve both the quality of instruction as well as the overall school culture (Serviss, 2021). Under the direction of Lincoln Charter Schools, Dr. Glass of UNC-C's Urban Education Collaborative also collaborated with the NTSP to ensure that all content was intentionally well-integrated throughout the culturally responsive instruction and the new teacher support network.

## Results

At the time of publication, Dr. Chance Lewis, Director of the Urban Education Collaborative, is in the process of conducting an external evaluation of Lincoln Charter's initiatives, providing insights and recommendations to ensure Lincoln's future professional growth opportunities benefit the ED population.

In 2020, the New Teacher Support Program provided Lincoln's staff with 361 hours of instructional coaching. A general overview of the touchpoints can be found [here](#). The school is also awaiting a report from NTSP that will contain both qualitative and quantitative data from the year as well as guidance for the future.

## Challenges

Although the Coronavirus pandemic necessitated modifications to the professional development planned for the 2020-21 academic year, the school was able to work with their UNC-C partners to ensure the content was delivered both virtually and face-to-face.

## Future Modifications

The professional development sessions received a positive response from staff members as evidenced by their desire to learn more. Approximately twenty teachers registered for an equity in education summer PD event led by Dr. Chance Lewis. Additionally, Lincoln Charter plans to provide targeted PD offerings based on the results and suggestions from Dr. Lewis's evaluation.

## Critical Components

### Getting Started

School leadership highlighted their collaboration with UNC-C as an essential element in providing effective training for teachers. They also emphasized the importance of providing meaningful professional development and coaching based on staff member's needs and goals.

### Ongoing Supports

Partners of the school, Urban Education Collaborative and the New Teacher Support Program, are conducting external reviews to provide the school with feedback and data to guide their next steps as a teaching staff.

## Equity Connections

Culturally responsive teaching benefits students who have been historically marginalized through traditional educational methods, including students experiencing poverty (Krasnof, 2016). LCS researched and arranged PD for their staff members to become adept in culturally responsive pedagogy in order to reach diverse populations and students in poverty.

## Research

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