

## Lincoln

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principal David Bloom.

School-board president Elma "Mooch" Gay said she's recently noticed Lincoln's and other schools' improvement plans have more components and a narrowed focus on what they want to accomplish. "The plans are getting better."

Mr. Bloom told the audience he and the staff are using several tools to raise scores and improve education.

This year, Lincoln is using an online computer program called Project Achieve that allows kids to practice taking tests and learn skills covered on standardized tests.

"We're trying to work smarter with the time we have," Mr. Bloom said.

Interventions, such as tutoring and learning in small groups, during the day and before and after school, also are making a difference in students' learning. About 12 after-school programs are being used this year, he said.

While intervention programs are important, many people at the meeting said they were concerned about parental involvement and students' attitude toward learning and being at school.

J.J. Moran of Rock Island, a mentor in the HOSTS mentoring program at both Hawthorne-Irving and Lincoln elementary schools, said he sees kids' positive attitudes while coaching them. However, he said, they must carry those attitudes into the classroom.

"If that's done, you will see a miraculous turnaround in two years," he said. "We've got to change the mentality."

Superintendent David Markward said many parents have busy lives, sometimes holding two or three jobs to make ends meet. In some households, par-

ents don't have time to volunteer at school.

"There are other ways to be involved with your children," he said. Asking the student about homework can help parents learn what's happening at school.

Mr. Bloom said he rewards parents with "Lincoln Loot" when they volunteer at the school. They can collect play money and use it to buy items at periodic auctions during the year.

Board member Linda Dothard said she believes the attitude of the community — not just of the neighborhoods in the Warning and Watch List schools — must be positive, and people should start working together to make education a priority.

"The community needs to work together," she said. "This situation affects everyone."

Ms. Dothard urged people like herself who want to see immediate change to have patience and wait for the positive results from the school's programs. "They're going to come off the list."

Milan resident Clarice Williams said that, after hearing what administrators and teachers had to say about improving education at Lincoln, she was going home "with this feeling that you've got a handle on it."

The remaining meetings for the public, all beginning at 7 p.m., are:

■ Tuesday — Grant Intensive Basic, 800 11th Ave.

■ Feb. 27 — Hawthorne-Irving, 930 14th St.

■ March 6 — Rock Island High, 1400 25th Ave.

■ March 13 — Edison Junior High, 4141 9th St.

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# Lincoln <sup>Argos</sup> following model plan

## 30 people attend first school meeting

By Robin J. Youngblood  
Staff writer

ROCK ISLAND — More than 30 people met at Lincoln Elementary School Thursday night to learn what it means for schools to be on an Early Academic Warning or Watch list.

Lincoln is one of five Rock Island schools on those lists because less than half its students haven't met state academic standards or made sufficient progress on recent standardized tests. Meetings are being held at each of the schools in the next month.

At Lincoln, 69.7 percent of its students did not meet standards of the Illinois Standards Achievement Test in 2002. In 2001, 55.6 percent of its students did not meet the standards.

## At Lincoln School, 69 percent of students did not meet state testing standards in 2002, up from 55 percent in 2001.

The test scores have become more important since the signing of the federal No Child Left Behind Act, which requires that all students meet state math and reading standards by 2013-2014. The legislation holds districts accountable for those scores. If students don't make progress every year, the state board of education can exercise several options.

The state board judges schools not only by their students' test scores, but also by their school improvement plans, which detail learning strategies the school plans to use in the upcoming school year.

Each plan includes teaching strategies developed by using students' test scores to determine which skills need attention; using intervention methods with students who are falling back or already behind in their studies; and methods proven to teach reading and writing, said Jay Marino, assistant superintendent of curriculum.

"We have an extensive offering of interventions," he said.

The Illinois State Board of Education recently chose Lincoln's improvement plan for the 2003-2004 school year as a "model" for other schools to use, said