

# LEADING THE WAY: P-3 EDUCATION IN COLORADO

## WHO:

**MICHELLE MALVEY**, *Principal of Lincoln Elementary School*

## WHERE: Thompson School District

This is the 17th largest school district in Colorado, encompassing 362 square miles, and is the largest employer in Loveland and Berthoud. It is a pre-K through 12th grade district with 13 early childhood centers, one K-8 school, 20 elementary schools, five middle schools, five high schools and two charter schools.



MICHELLE MALVEY

Lincoln Elementary School's vision is to engage children and enrich the world. Education at Lincoln focuses on Project Based Learning (PBL). This approach allows students to work together to gain knowledge and skills by investigating and responding to real-world problems and challenges.

## GOALS:

### *Creating Alignment.*

In the Thompson School District, there is a separate administrator for early childhood within the elementary school. One way Michelle and her team are working to align the early childhood classes with the rest of her elementary school is by having pre-K teachers and K teachers visit each other's classrooms. This gives teachers an opportunity to have a better understanding of where their students are headed and where their students have been. It also helps teachers to plan vertically across grade levels for smoother transitions.

## LESSONS LEARNED:

Networking and connections with other people have been really helpful in the ongoing work to align the early childhood program with the rest of the school. To support the connection between the early childhood program and the rest of the school, Michelle recognizes the importance of also evaluating the early childhood programs. In addition, engaging with families of our early childhood program is critical, even if they won't be continuing into our elementary school.

“ We all have a strong passion for connecting the work. The desire is there, and we are carrying momentum from last year (AY 2015-2016). ”

## NEXT STEPS:

Michelle and her team plan to invite families from the early childhood program to events hosted by the elementary school to help them become a part of the larger school community.