

Kansas Online Learning Program students thrive with Little Lincoln

Premier childhood curriculum combines online and offline activities to engage, stimulate students

LOST SPRINGS, Kan. – When asked about what his school is like, [Kansas Online Learning Program](#) first grader Blaise Jirak uses words like awesome, cool, and fun. When he talks about his books, assignments, and projects, his eyes grow wide and his interest is instantly piqued.

Blaise is not enrolled in a typical elementary school curriculum. He is enrolled in the innovative and engaging [Little Lincoln](#) program, one of the nation’s premier elementary curricula, developed and distributed by the [National Network of Digital Schools](#).

An interactive and engaging standards-based curriculum, Little Lincoln features rich multimedia and online components with comprehensive offline activities to engage and stimulate young learners. The Little Lincoln curriculum uses original content, books, songs, games, videos, and activities to teach math, reading, writing, science, social studies, and visual arts to students in early kindergarten through second grade.

“Little Lincoln is a dynamic curriculum that engages the minds and imaginations of young students and starts them off on a solid path to becoming lifelong learners,” said Kellie Hamilton, Elementary Curriculum Director for NNDS. “By combining online and hands-on components, Little Lincoln provides elementary students with stimulating, effective lessons and activities, and prepares them for the 21st century classroom.”

Using a computer and textbooks provided by KOLP, Blaise logs into class every day via a secure website. There, he listens to audio stories that incorporate the daily learning objectives and watches teacher videos that further explain and model those objectives.

In addition to the online component of Little Lincoln, Blaise is given significant offline resources as well, including supplies and four boxes of printed materials, one for each nine week season.

“At the beginning of school I got this big box of fun stuff, and I like to use it,” said Blaise. “There’s a globe ball; it helps me learn about the world and I can spot the states. They gave me a bunch of art [supplies] that I can do artwork with. And they gave me cool books about the Midlandians. I like Beaker because she [teaches] science.” (Midlandians are the characters featured in the Little Lincoln lessons and curriculum).

Other supplies in the student kits include activity books, sight word books, materials for science experiments, and much more. Each kit includes materials relevant to the student’s grade level.

“I’ve seen first-hand Little Lincoln’s success among our students,” said Vicki Jirak, KOLP. “Little Lincoln has a great mix of online and offline materials so the students do not get tired of being on the computer all day, and the guide books provide parents with clear understanding and applications of the lessons being taught.

“The engaging and exciting curriculum combined with the dedicated and caring staff here at KOLP is what makes the program unique. We work hard to make sure that all children succeed in our program.”

Jirak said that in addition to the guidance provided by the curriculum, the school’s Student Learning Advocates build strong relationships with the program’s families through weekly phone calls and school sponsored activities. (Note: Vickie Jirak is the aunt of Blaise Jirak.)

To learn more about the Kansas Online Learning Program, visit their website at www.kansasonlinelearning.org.

About **Kansas Online Learning Program**: Kansas Online Learning Program (KOLP) is an online public school program open to all full time kindergarten through 12th grade students living anywhere in Kansas. The program is provided through Centre School District and is tuition free for Kansas families, with only minimal student fees. New for the 2011-2012 school year is the Adult Learner Initiative. For more information, visit www.kansasonlinelearning.org.

About the **National Network of Digital Schools**: The National Network of Digital Schools (NNDS) is a 501(c)3 non-profit management foundation, dedicated to providing the highest quality K-12 online curriculum and comprehensive management services to traditional brick and mortar schools, charter schools and cyber schools focused on expanding educational opportunities for students. As a community foundation, NNDS also lends financial support to educational initiatives that expand opportunities for young people. NNDS is the developer and distributor of the [Lincoln Interactive](#) curriculum, which features more than 250 classes for students in early kindergarten through 12th grade and includes the Little Lincoln Program for pre-K through second grade and the Cutting Edge Science program for middle and high school students.

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