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## NEWS RELEASE

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# BAY HIGH FOCUS PROGRAM: A CREATORS SCHOOL

**The Bay, LPS, Businesses And Foundations Partner To Create An Educational Program Tailored To The Creators Of Tomorrow**

LINCOLN, NE – The Bay, a program of the nonprofit Rabble Mill, known for its unique approach to serving underserved youth, is partnering with Lincoln Public Schools and businesses to create the Bay High Focus Program, set to start classes in fall 2022. Beginning with a student body of approximately 100 high school juniors and seniors, Bay High provides creative, entrepreneurial-minded students with the tools, access and stewardship to be successful creators of tomorrow.

“We believe young people can only dream as big as they’ve seen. By fully leveraging our partners’ strengths, Bay High will provide the experiences, skills and network they need to not just gain a seat at the table, but to be ready for it,” said Mike Smith, co-founder/co-executive director of Rabble Mill, and founder of The Bay.

Bay High aims to provide students who are restricted by a lack of access, lack of opportunity and the confines of traditional education the skills they need for post-secondary education and a career.

“The community and the Lincoln Board of Education have tasked our staff with exploring more focus program offerings for our high school students,” said LPS Superintendent Steve Joel. “We feel the Bay High Focus Program is just one more avenue to engage another segment of our students and prepare them for tomorrow’s high-demand careers.”

Bay High's curriculum focus will be on content creation and emerging digital technology in four subject areas: including photography and videography, coding and development, design and digital asset creation and digital storytelling and podcasting. It will be rooted in hands-on, project-based initiatives that go beyond the classroom – reflecting the increasing demand for creativity in today's business environment, as well as new innovative ways of learning that connect best with Gen Z. In line with The Bay's engagement opportunities for young people, skateboarding, music and fashion will serve as associated creative disciplines.

"Our goal is to pipeline young people at The Bay who have this digital talent, and the business partners and college programs who need it, such as UNL's Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts and J-School," said Andrew Norman, Rabble Mill co-founder/co-executive director. He said Rabble Mill is currently fundraising for necessary space renovations at The Bay, as well as seeking additional community partners.

The Bay will "inspire learning in ways never before experienced in Lincoln Public Schools," said LPS Director of Strategic Initiatives and Focus Programs James Blake, who also will serve as principal of Bay High. "Great things happen when we find out what Lincoln businesses look for in future talent, and then bring in amazing teachers to co-create the vision with The Bay's resources and staff."

About 25 years after helping to seed what became the first LPS focus program, Cooper Foundation joined ALLO/Nelnet and Spreetail to provide the private investment necessary to launch Bay High. Additional partners include Ameritas, Archrival, BVH Architecture, Community Health Endowment of Lincoln, CompanyCam, The Skatepark Project, Union Bank & Trust, Woods Charitable Fund, and WRK Family Foundation.

"We believe in Rabble Mill and its revolutionary approach to working with young people that includes friendship, belonging and opportunities to grow personally and learn skills that leverage their own experiences, viewpoints and innate talents," said Cooper Foundation President Victoria Grasso. "Bay High, in partnership with Lincoln Public Schools, will carry that same creative ethos with a dynamic curriculum."

Students who will be entering grades 11 and 12 during the 2022-23 school year will be able to submit their application during the 2021-22 school year.

"This is the most diverse, colorful, empowered generation ever. We're excited to share and nurture their unique style, passions and talent through Bay High," said Smith.

"Kids used to skip school to come to The Bay. Now they'll just come to Bay High."

To learn more, donate, or (for potential students, teachers and parents) be notified about recruitment opportunities, visit [thebay.org/BayHigh](http://thebay.org/BayHigh).

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**ABOUT THE BAY:** The Bay is a program of Rabble Mill (501c3), whose mission is to work with Nebraska youth statewide toward achieving the belonging, purpose and upward mobility necessary to grow, achieve and reinvest in their community. Located at 2005 Y St. since 2012, The Bay is a one-of-a-kind community space, featuring the state's only public indoor skatepark, an all-ages music venue, digital art lab and Goldenrod Coffee. Through out-of-school enrichment, camps, events and more, The Bay creates opportunities for young people to fall in love with skateboarding, music and digital art, teaching transferable soft and hard skills along the way.

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