

Lyon/Pleasant Ridge PTA Minutes
June 5, 2007

President Chris Northwick opened the meeting at 9:15 a.m. in the Pleasant Ridge Library.

In Attendance: Kevin Dorken, Matthew Rich, Chris Northwick, Liz Price, Robin Hinrichs, Dee Dee Gross, Miriam Biales, Kristen Borth, Breland Nelson, Marcia Bellair, Amy Schneider, Kathleen Kuzminski, Kelly Saylor, Debbie Shefren, Sandy Brennan, Cheryl Kasner, Kathleen Butler, Eileen Grant, Pam Hartigan, Bridget Cienkus, Ana Cassorla, Gina Brunswick, Jen Roberts, Kay Laurie, Rula Marziani, Susie Feldstein, Natalie Weber, Karen Friedman, Kristi Carroll

I. Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of the May 11, 2007 meeting were approved.

II. Officer's Reports

President—Chris Northwick thanked the executive board and committee chairs for their hard work this year. She especially congratulated Breland Nelson and Jeanne Freeman for a fabulous Book Fair, and Susie Feldstein for her help with the Dan Gutman author visit.

Chris announced that the “Weird School raffle” that was held in conjunction with the Book Fair raised \$350.00 for the Debra Gelfand fund as well as increasing excitement about Dan Gutman’s visit.

Chris also announced that each school building in the District will undergo some safety enhancements over the summer. Lyon will have a new entrance that requires everyone to enter and sign-in, in the office before gaining access to the building itself. There will also be a keycard system established at all the schools. As part of these changes, the District has instituted a district-wide safety and security advisory committee to discuss procedures that will make these upgrades the most effective for staff, students, and the community. Chris and the principals stated that there will be changes that may impact visitor procedures, including tracking of visitors in the schools, different badge requirements, etc. Look for more information in the summer newsletters for both schools. Visitors are still very welcome at both schools. Just be aware of the changes in procedures.

Chris reported that at Lyon there is presently a Local School Council (“LSC”) election. For the first time, we have 3 people vying for a spot on LSC.

Participants include the Principals at both schools, 2 teacher representatives from each school, parents from each school and 2 PTA Board members. The Local School Council this year focused on the diversity in our school cluster. The byproduct of that was the 1st International Night held this May. Next year the initial focus will be working with students with disabilities, including how to create educational pieces around that topic. Character Counts will also be discussed with the intent of creating a program to make it a more viable part of the curriculum. Today is the deadline for voting. IF you are a Lyon parent, there

are still ballots available. Results of the election should be available in a day or two.

1st Vice President—Liz Price asked committee chairs to check their mailboxes one last time to end the year.

Treasurer—Dee Dee Gross presented the monthly financial report (see attached). She has received a lot of expenses from people during the last month. Thank you. There are still grant expenses outstanding. The final totals will be reported June 30th. This year we approved a budget to pay out some of our reserves into grants, so we expected to end the year in the red. According to the budget, we expected to be at -\$30,000 at the end of the year. However, expenses have come in under budget and revenues have been higher than expected. Consequently, we should end the year closer to -\$15,000. This would allow us to increase our Fall Grant totals by \$15,000.

III. Teacher's Representative Reports

Debbie Shefren—Lyon would like to thank PTA for all their help this year, especially for the Walter Wick assembly and the grant money. The teachers are looking forward to utilizing the grants. She also thanked PTA for Teacher Appreciation Week activities. She announced that Field day is this Friday June 8th. One of the 2nd grade classes is also doing a podcast that will be online soon. The Glenview Public Library has been visiting the classrooms to tell the kids about the summer reading program. Other Lyon events include: the Kindergarten ice cream social that was held last week, and the 1st and 2nd grade year end picnics that will be held next week.

Kathleen Kuzminski and Kelly Saylor—Ms. Kuzminski thanked the PTA for all its help this year. Then Ms. Kuzminski and Ms. Saylor had some of their students demonstrate the PR Buddy Reading Program that was sponsored by the PTA. This program allowed the students in Ms. Kuzminski's 3rd grade class to pair with Mrs. Saylor's 5th grade class in reading and recording responses about some Dan Gutman books. They indentified "burning questions" about the text and then participated in a first ever blog with Dan Gutman to get the answers to their questions. Eventually, they invited the whole school to submit questions and coached other students on blogging. This activity improved their reading and thinking skills as well as increased interest in Mr. Gutman's author visit that was part of the Lyon/PR Spring book fair.

IV. Committee Chair Reports

Lyon/PR spring Book Fair—Breland Nelson reported that the Spring Book Fair had Gross sales of \$18,000 up from \$12,500 last year. New this year, the PTA gave gift certificates to all PR staff, certified and non-certified and to all students on free and reduced lunch. Also, 96 books were given out on the wish list. PTA paid for the gift certificate and wish list books out of the gross and still made approximately \$2500-\$3000. Breland thinks the excitement of having a really good author (Dan Gutman) facilitated most of the extra sales at the book fair. She

suggested trying Anderson as the vendor again next year. Anderson maintains they cater to a schools needs even more so, when they know what a school can sell during a bookfair. The Lyon/PR Spring Book fair is the largest book fair that Anderson supplies. Furthermore, Breland stated the most significant difference between Scholastic and Anderson is that Anderson is a small, but very literary organization. Anderson supplies significantly more titles than does Scholastic but without a real depth of inventory. While the lack of more copies presented some issues, Breland believes this can be resolved next year with additional planning. Breland also said thanks to all the volunteers made the book fair possible.

School Board Meeting Report Kristin Borth reported that the school board met on May 14, 2006 and June 4, 2007. Two new members, John Hincamp and Julie Shechtman, were sworn in at the May meeting. Scott Martin was installed as President and Sue Ellen Bohac Galligan was installed as Vice President. The school Board reported some of the results of the parents survey that was conducted this spring (more results are listed on the District website; www.glenview34.org). The survey reported that 96% of parents think that the district provides a quality education for our children.

The Board also gave the year end financial report which included a \$3 million surplus for the year. This was due in part to higher revenue received and to the military housing being gone from the District for 2 years during construction. After next year, however, the military children will return in even larger numbers. We will also be having K-2 class size reduction next year and maybe the next year at intermediate schools. Both of these will impact school expenses. The return of military families and their students is an issue to the Westbrook/Glen Grove cluster because it is already experiencing overcrowding. To rectify this the District may look at changing boundaries for the cluster groupings.

The Board is considering continuing a citizen financial advisory committee – making it a “standing committee” to focus on the aforementioned issues. The Board has also been talking to GBS students about their experiences at the middle schools and how the District can better prepare students for GBS. Two things that came out of these discussions are the need for better study skills and practice with final exams.

Art Enrichment—Amy Schneider has been the Art Enrichment coordinator for Lyon School this year. She will be coordinator at both schools next year. At Lyon she developed a new way to present material that was available to the parents and more integrated into the regular curriculum at Lyon. It was well received by parents, teachers and students. Amy will expand this program to Pleasant Ridge next year. Amy and Mary Hershey will also be developing a dedicated art Enrichment website for the program. The website will provide information about the artists, letters to send home to parents and other resources. Amy is presently preparing a survey for this year’s Lyon Art Enrichment parents about what worked, what didn’t, etc. Then Amy asked for a volunteer to help match the volunteers on the PTA database for next year. Breland Nelson volunteered to help. Amy also announced that she has made a proposal for a change in the place

for the art closet at Lyon for next year because they need more space. If there is no space available; however, things will be reorganized in the space they have.

Pumpkinfest—Kathleen Butler reported that Pumpkinfest will be Friday October 26th. This is a day off from school, which helps with set-up and attendance. The event will be held from 4-8 p.m. We will be using the same vendor as last year, including the “dancing head” room that was so popular last year. The committee will begin working hard at the end of summer.

Global Language—Chris Northwick said a big thank you to Ana Cassorla, Denise Tener, and Gina Brunswick for heading Global Language this year. They took over the management of the whole program, including hiring and paying the teachers, evaluating the program and finally locating, evaluating and hiring an outside company to run it next year

V. Principals' Reports

Chris congratulated Dr. Rich and Mr. Dorken on a great 1st year as principals.

Lyon School—Kevin Dorken reported that Lyon was involved in end of the year activities. Next year there will be a number of new Lyon staff members. Most of the additions to the staff at Lyon will be due to class size reduction. This year there were 6 sections of Kindergarten; next year there will be 7. This year there were 7 sections of 1st grade—next year there will be 8. And this year there were 6 sections of 2nd grade, but next year there will be 9 due to this year's large 1st grade cohort. Every room will have 17-19 kids. The challenge at Lyon will be that every room in the school will be used. The ELL and other special services that have had a full size classroom will have small side rooms and new places will need to be found for some things now stored in the small side rooms. Mr. Dorken has already hired some new staff. Lindsey Smail will be joining the 1st grade team. She has graduated from Marquette and has taught in Wisconsin. There will be 3 new 2nd grade teachers: Sarah Kuhns who is an experienced teacher coming from Milwaukee; Rosie Rapaport who will be a new teacher; and Katie Cardella who will be in the 2nd year of the clinical program. Each of the new teachers will have an experienced Lyon teacher as a mentor. Mr. Dorken also reported that they are looking for small planning blocks for the 2nd grade team to be able to discuss individual class issues in groups of 4 or 5, but the team will also continue to meet all together for curriculum planning.

Because of the increased numbers of classes and teachers needed for K-2 next year, Mr. Dorken stated that the District is trying to share more staff across schools. Lyon will need a half-time position for the seventh section of kindergarten. This position may be shared with another school. Staffing for it will be determined this summer. With the increase in numbers of classrooms at Lyon, Lyon will also get an increase allocation for Fine Arts and other special services. As a part of this, Lisa Hoye will begin teaching drama at Pleasant Ridge and at Lyon in the fall. Further part time staff increases in PE, Special Ed, art, and music will be determined over the summer. Mr. Dorken also related

that there will be a new ELL teacher in the fall, but her position has not yet been finalized.

Construction of the new Lyon school office will begin the week after school ends. For the summer, the office will be located in the LRC. The office should be finished before the kids come in the fall, but the office staff will continue in the LRC if necessary.

Pleasant Ridge School—Dr. Matthew Rich expressed thanks to all who helped with the book fair, Literature Alive, Open House extravaganza. He reported that the shuttle buses from Lyon and from Sunset Ridge Park were great additions. He and Shelley Riskin are beginning to look for an author for Literature Alive for next year. They are down to 3 possibilities and hope to pick someone this summer. They will then try to incorporate some of the author's books into next year's curriculum. He expressed pleasure that the book fairs this year had sold \$50,000 worth of books, which ended up in the hands of students and teachers.

He also expressed thanks to PTA for teacher appreciation week and to the PTA Board for all its work. He stated that Pleasant Ridge is the only District 34 primary or intermediate school that still has a stage and that staff is starting to think about how they can more effectively use it next year. Dr. Jones and Lisa Hoyer are trying to figure out what the school would need to make it into a little theater for the cluster. PTA should expect a significant grant request next fall to help fund the project. Dr. Rich also discussed the book FISH by Stephen Lundin that the staff has been using this year. It explores opportunities about how you can work with others, including how to play, to get along, and to be present with each other. The staff is working on ways to incorporate this into the curriculum next year and Dr. Rich encouraged parents to read it as well.

Dr. Rich then reported that the end of this year is going to be a big time of transition for Pleasant Ridge staff this year: a few people are retiring. Some are moving on to other jobs in the District or other places in their lives, and some have decided to accept new challenges at Pleasant Ridge. The staff for next year as of now looks like this:

3rd Grade Team – Robyn Campisano, Wendy DiBiaso, Jenny Lund (currently a 4th grade teacher), Kristin Juozaitis (currently 3rd grade-TREE teacher), Kelly Saylor (currently 5th) and a new teacher--Jenny Preuss—3rd grade TREE. Jenny is a recent graduate of Augustana and a former GBS graduate. Jenny brings to us a variety of foreign travel experiences including work in Kenya and some that she will be doing this summer in Nicaragua. Jenny was an elementary education major with a minor in mathematics.

4th Grade Team – Kate Barnett, Colleen Heilwagen, Jan Hinton (TREE), & Lyndsey Levin and a new teacher, Kathryn Hilton. Kathryn was a former associate here at Pleasant Ridge School. Her youngest child is finishing his 5th grade year here at Pleasant Ridge. Kathryn has spent the last year as a Language Arts Teacher on the Springman 6th grade team. NOTE: As of now, there are only 5, not 6, sections of 4th grade; however, if Pleasant Ridge acquires 2-3 more students over the summer, a new section will be opened.

5th Grade Team – Katie Beck, Judy Johnson, Kathy Pattengale (TREE), and 3 new teachers: Sarah Weale, Maria Hong, and Krista Gullberg.

Sarah Weale has been the Secular teacher for a 3rd-4th grade multiage classroom at Akiba-Schecter Day School this year in Hyde Park. Prior to this, Sarah was a long-term substitute teacher for 4th grade in St. Louis, Missouri. A North Carolina native, Sarah did her undergraduate work at NC State, earning a BA in English. She did her Master's program at Washington University in St. Louis in Education.

Maria Hong has been the 7th grade Math teacher at Kipp Ascend Charter School in Chicago this school year. She is a native of the Detroit suburbs, and did her undergraduate studies at Michigan State University. At MSU she had an elementary education major with a minor in language arts. Maria completed a unique year-long student teaching internship at the 5th grade level in Holt, Michigan. Maria is fluent in Korean.

Krista Gullberg is a recent graduate of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Krista was an elementary education major who also has unique foreign travel experiences. Krista studied at the Accademia Italiana, in Florence, Italy for a semester. Krista has experience working with special needs students and some Spanish language skills.

Resource Personnel – Emily Fifield (ELL), Eva Ginis (SW), Jean Kennedy (Special Ed Resource), Toby Pleszkun (currently 3rd will be the Gifted teacher) Pam Rawa (Special Ed Resource), Jason Rehfeldt (Psychologist), & Deanna Sainati (Special Ed Resource), and 2 new teachers Sabina Beyer (ELL) and Maureen O'Malley (Speech Language Pathologist). One more Special Education resource teacher still needs to be hired.

Sabina Beyer has been a bilingual Spanish K, 1, & 2 teacher during the past four years in Mount Prospect. She has a master's degree in reading. Sabina's children attend the Henking/Hoffman cluster.

Maureen O'Malley is a recent graduate of the University of Iowa in speech and language. She has a strong diagnostic background, having done significant clinical work through the university. Maureen's school based experiences were honed in Schaumburg School District, as she worked with students K-6th. She also had an internship at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago.

Encore – Elissa Astorino (Art/Drama), Andrew Babcock (Orchestra), Chris Evens (Music/Drama), Lisa Hoye (Drama PR-Lyon), Dave Jones (PE/Drama), Katie Konieczka (Tech), Kate Leckenby (PE/Drama), Shelley Riskin (LRC)

Still to hire: 1 band teacher

Front Office – Sue Prokopowicz, Jill Stoller, Kate Pickard (Health), Nancy Brown (SSA), and Karen Brehart (receptionist from Lyon will be moving over to Pleasant Ridge)

The following Pleasant Ridge staff members are retiring this year: Mrs. Anderson, Gifted/Enrichment teacher; Jan Fuchs, Special Ed Associate; Linda Commons ELL teacher; and Joan Woodward, Associate.

Dr. Rich also reported that the construction fence for the new addition will go up June 15th. The goal is for the new wing to be operational for the 2008-2009 school year. Most of the construction should be done by the end of the 2007-2008 school year; however there will be some construction next summer because the old office will be turning into an instrumental music room. There will also be some changes in configurations with the addition, probably including changing the current 3rd grade--TREE wing.

VI. Unfinished/New Business

Bylaws—Chris Northwick has been appointed the chair of the bylaws committee. She will present the updated bylaws in September after they have been approved by the state PTA Board.

Environmental—Marcia Bellair and Linda Williams will be working on a variety of new environmental ideas over the summer and they will be present them at the meeting in September

VII. Adjournment--Chris Northwick adjourned the final meeting of the 2006-2007 PTA Board at 10:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Hinrichs, PTA secretary