

Lyon/Pleasant Ridge PTA Minutes
November 10, 2006

President Chris Northwick opened the meeting at 9:15 a.m. in the Lyon School Multipurpose Room.

In Attendance: Kevin Dorken, Matthew Rich, Debbie Shefren, Kate Barnett, Chris Northwick, Liz Price, Robin Hinrichs, Dee Dee Gross, Lisa Dickholtz, Yuko Aimi, Vicki Schurer, Kathleen Butler, Kay Laurie, Kristen Borth, Jen Farber, Michelle Allison, Jeanne Freeman, Susie Feldstein, Stacey Saef, Sandy Brennan, Kellie Kopach, Meg Carpenter, Maggie Wall, Eileen Grant, Amy Schneider, Dianna Gordon, Bridget Cienkus, Tammy Burke, Pam Hartigan, Beth Schmidt, Sue Swaringen, Mimi Bommarito, Tammy Burke, Jakki Thomas, Heather McEllistrem

I. Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of the October 10, 2006 meeting were approved.

II. Officer's Reports

Treasurer—Dee Dee Gross presented the monthly financial report (see attached). She reported that Pumpkinfest had netted a \$4501.00 profit (see line 13). The updated totals for Spirit wear and School Supplies are also included on lines 22-24 and 17-20 respectively.

Dee Dee also outlined basic procedures for all committee chairpersons. 1) Review the amounts listed on the revenue and expense lines for your committee. 2) Go over them with Dee Dee or Chris if you have any questions. 3) Cash all checks from the PTA and turn all receipts promptly. 4) If you think that you will exceed your budget, this will need to be approved by the PTA. Discuss this with Dee Dee and/or Chris beforehand. Dee Dee also reported that she will have written procedures for committee chairs available at the next meeting.

Chris Northwick reported that because of the positive financial reports given at The District 34 School Board Monday, there will be no spring referendum. Chris proposed that the \$2000 that PTA allocated for Referendum Support in the budget (line 67) be reallocated to the PTA grant fund. This motion was passed.

President—Chris Northwick welcomed everyone to the meeting Chris said thank you to Yuko Aimi for finishing the directory. The directories were distributed last week. There are extra directories that may be purchased in the school offices for \$2.00 apiece.

Chris thanked Vicki Schurer and Kathleen Butler for managing a successful Pumpkinfest. This event is not designed as a fund raising activity, PTA netted \$4500.00 and everyone had a good time.

Chris also made the following announcements:

- 1) Mimi Bommarito, the chairperson of the Pleasant Ridge spirit wear and school supplies committees, will be moving out of state around the holidays due to family issues. Consequently, we are looking for 2 volunteers to take her 2 positions starting in January. We preferably need someone in the next month, because the planning for next year starts with a meeting with the suppliers in the next few weeks. Liz Price passed around a sign up sheet for volunteers.
- 2) Monday's School Board meeting about finances and class size was videotaped and will be shown on GVTV. Brett Clark will send out notices to notify parents when it will be shown. The complete reports that were presented are also available in PDF format on the District Website.
It is also possible that more School Board meetings will be taped in 2007.
Anyone who would be interested in assisting with the videotaping, contact Brett at the District office for more information.
- 3) Chris showed a flyer about Tick Tock day care. (This business was recommended by a PTA member, it is not affiliated nor endorsed by the PTA.) This is a business in Northfield that offers hourly day care. It also offers discounts if you are dropping off your kids to volunteer for school activities. For more information, see www.ticktock.com.
- 4) PTA starting selling Lyon and Pleasant Ridge magnetic bumper stickers at Pumpkinfest. A big order has just gone in, and we will be selling more in the future.

1st Vice President—Liz Price thanked everyone for their comments about the agenda. She encouraged committee chairs to email her anytime between meetings in you want to be included on the next agenda. She also asked all committee chairs to check their mailboxes.

III. Teacher's Representative Reports

Debbie Shefren— Ms. Shefren reported on events at Lyon School. The kindergarten students are presently studying night and day. Today they are having pajama day as part of their study. The first graders just went to the Lincoln Park Zoo as part of their study of animals. They are presently completing reading and research. The 2nd graders are working with the fine arts team on folk tales. This study of folk tales will be integrated into the upcoming holiday program next month.

Kate Barnett—Ms. Barnett reported that the students at Pleasant Ridge are very busy. The 4th graders are involved in a "top secret" project. The team will be meeting with the room moms today to discuss it. The project will involve writing a business letter, doing some interviewing and working on a job. The teachers are excited about this project, but the kids don't know about it yet. The reading unit right now is focused on the rainforest, so the children are especially excited about the rainforest theme for the book fair. The 4th grade students are also planning to

do a Rube Goldberg science project on simple machines. They will be designing contraptions to move marble from one place to another using 3 simple machines.

IV. Committee Chair Reports

PTA Grant Committee—Kay Laurie thanked the committee who reviewed that grant applications: Chris Northwick, Liz Price, Kristin Borth, Lisa Dickholtz, Jen Farber, and Robin Hinrichs. She stated that more grant applications would be accepted in January. Contact Kay if you would like to volunteer to review these applications. Members of the committee met with teachers at both schools to explain the grant application process. Grant applications were accepted until October 24th. A total of \$45,000 in grant applications was received. These were then reviewed according to a matrix approach. Each grant was rated from 1-4 on seven criteria—the number of students served; possibility that if successful program could be expanded to more students later; adherence to the district strategic plan; innovation; amount of direct student impact, principal/building rating, and parent input. These scores were then combined and given an over all rank.

This system was used to allow for an objective way to determine priorities. The principals noted that they also tried to include all aspects of education (i.e. ELL, special Ed and fine arts,) even when they did not impact all children.

Some items were recommended for full funding and some were recommended for partial funding. This allowed the committee to include as many teachers as possible. Hopefully, the items that were recommended for partial funding will be given more funding later. There were so many wonderful ideas.

The items were then divided into recommended fall grants and possible spring grants. None of the things for recommended for spring funding are guaranteed. We need to have a successful benefit to have more money to allocate in the spring. Kay then went over the items that were recommended for fall grants (See information attached at the end of the minutes).

Questions were entertained. There were questions whether the district could fund the equipment requests. Kevin Dorken stated that most of the equipment money for the schools has been trimmed in recent years, and there is not money available for these items. Dr. Rich also related that the equipment items in this list are directly related to student instruction.

A motion was unanimously passed to approve \$18,970 for the grants recommended by the committee for fall funding. Kay Laurie and Chris Northwick will discuss out how to notify teachers that grants have approved.

Chris noted that looking at the budget that we now have \$26,000 worth of grants that we need to raise money to fund.

Fall Lyon/ Pleasant Ridge Book Fair—Susie Feldstein and Stacy Saef have been working very hard for the book fair which is scheduled for November 15-16. She reported that the students will be surprised with the decorations and activities

planned for next week. Tuesday volunteer forms were sent home and the committee has many volunteers scheduled to help. Susie still needs help to set up the books between noon and 2 on Tuesday, and help with the teacher preview from 4-6 p.m. At that time, she needs helpers to run cash registers for the teachers and to build the rainforest in the front hall. All the teachers who come to the preview will be able to buy 4 books and get the 5th one free. Volunteers who work at this time will get the same offer. The 1 for Books project has started. Students can earn a dollar. A certificate will be posted on the school tree and the money will be donated to the Debra Gelfand fund. Scholastic will also donate 1 book to disadvantaged kids for each dollar we collect. There are 2 special events for the book fair this year. 1) The Pizza night on Wednesday. 6-7:30. 2) A "Grand evening" on Thursday. This new event will include 13 groups of 5th graders performing pantomimes of children's stories from 6-8. The "grand person" will also receive a flower and a cassette with instructions on how to record a book for their child.

To encourage participation, each classroom at Lyon school is playing a bingo game. The winner will win a book. On Tuesday every child at Lyon and Pleasant Ridge will be given a banana hand-delivered by a gorilla. These will have a sticker on them advertising the book fair. Susie still needs a volunteer to be the gorilla for Lyon after 1 p.m. for grades K 1, 2. A volunteer is also needed to man the booth on Thursday 6-8.

Benefit—Jen Farber related that the benefit planning has started. They have chosen a date and a site, and have begun planning the auction. After exploring options, Jen announced that the benefit will be held at the Northbrook Hilton on March 3, 2007. The committee stated the Hilton offers the date, space and things we need. Kellie Kopach gave a description of the Theme— The Lyon/PR PTA presents 007 An Evening of Intrigue A benefit Licensed to Thrill! The benefit will include a live and silent auction, Casino Royale inspired décor and a shaken-not-stirred Martini bar. The focus will be on each guest having a critical mission and that is to support education and raise money—Operation Education.

The committee is trying to revamp the auction and incorporate new raffle and auction items. Jen Farber then made 2 proposals. 1) Jen proposed the purchase of Auction Pay software to make the benefit auction process more efficient. Westbrook/GG and Honking and Hoffman PTA clusters have also recently signed on to use this software for their benefits. The software will expedite the auction sales and checkout, simplify the auction booklet preparation, provide for online ticket sales and assignment of auction numbers, and a process for sending out thank you notes for donations. One of the benefits of this software is that they provide instruction and support. They can get us auction items that we could not get for ourselves, and the representative will actually come to the event and assist. Close out after the auction can actually occur in 30 minutes. The PTA will have a one year approval on use of the service. If after this year's event we change our minds, then we can get out of the contract with no penalty.

Jen explained that the PTA would sign a 5 year contract with the company. The software itself will cost an average of approximately \$550 for 5 years, and the PTA

will be charged an additional 2% on all credit card receipts. We presently pay 1.7% for credit card transactions. (It will increase to 3.7 %.)

A motion was passed unanimously to purchase the new software.

Jen then proposed that the increased costs be offset by a \$5.00 increase in the ticket price for the benefit (from \$60-65). Discussion ensued whether the increase would prevent some people from attending the benefit. Options were discussed to allow everyone to attend—allowing people to sponsor someone else’s ticket, allowing reduced admission, etc. These ideas will be considered further by the committee. A second motion passed to increase the benefit ticket price to \$65.00 by majority vote (5 opposed).

Jen Farber announced that the next Benefit planning meeting will be on December 6th. Details about time and location will be forthcoming. Also Kellie Kopach noted that the Lyon/PR news flash that is coming out today includes a questionnaire about the benefit. Please fill it out to assist the committee with their planning.

Pumpkinfest—Vicki Schurer reported that Pumpkinfest was a success. She and Kathleen Butler are already beginning planning for next year. Anyone who has input let them know.

Parent Education and Park District Happenings—Lisa Dickholtz encouraged everyone to attend the Parents in Partnership workshops this Saturday, November 11, 2006 at Attea Middle School.

Holiday Helper—Deb McMahon reported that the holiday candy collection ended today. The candy has been picked up and delivered to the Northfield Food Pantry. More than 80 families have been invited to participate in the Holiday Helper program this year. The Holiday food will begin next week and run through December 16th. The classroom specific guidelines will be in your child’s Friday folder, the school newsletters and the PTA website. Please follow the guidelines. The family/child sponsorship guidelines will come out in the next couple of weeks. People can partner with family/friends, neighbors, etc. to sponsor a family or a child. Please contact Deb McMahon, Jennifer Wirtz, or Mairead Smileak if you have any questions or comments about the program.

School Board Meeting Report The November 6th School Board meeting focused on a discussion of school finances and class size.

Spring Lyon/Pleasant Ridge Book Fair—Jeanne Freeman related that the Spring Lyon/Pleasant Ridge book Fair will be May 23-24 in conjunction with Literature Alive. Pleasant Ridge will also have a visit from author Dan Gutman at the same time. Jeanne then proposed that the vendor for the Book Fair be changed from Scholastic Books to Anderson Bookfairs. Dr. Rich and Ms. Riskin, the Pleasant Ridge librarian, recommended them. They will offer the following advantages: more current selections, less gadgets, and more of the books that the 3-5 grade

students want. They will also take care of overnight restocking and financials. The librarians will have an unrestricted choice of books. Jen proposed that we try this for one year.

A motion was unanimously passed to change the vendor for the Spring Lyon/Pleasant Ridge Book Fair to Anderson Bookfairs.

Room Parent Update—Maggie Wall reported that the Lyon room parents had met and discussed guidelines for collecting money for class activities and teacher gifts. They concluded that they could not make any changes for this year. They will be meeting again and making some suggestions for dollar amounts for a midyear gift for teachers. They will also try to make standard collection recommendations for next year, including a recommendation about end of the year teacher gifts. They also suggested that a letter be sent out to parents with suggestions about gifts for teachers at winter holidays. The letter will encourage cards and homemade gifts from children, but will leave this to the parents' discretion.

Ways and Means—Cheryl Kasner sent a report thanking everyone for turning in their Dominick's Back to School coupons and Box Tops. Lyon School will be receiving \$178.00 from the Dominick's program and \$107 for the first installment of the Box Tops program. Please continue to turn in Box Tops for Education in the box by the front desk at Lyon School.

V. **Guest Speaker**—Phil Collins, District 34 Assistant Superintendent spoke about standardized testing and class size issues that affect students in District 34.

VI. Principal's Report

Lyon School—Kevin Dorken reported that Lyon will have two identical holiday programs this year. The morning kindergartners will perform in the morning and the afternoon kindergartners will perform in the afternoon; however, all 1st and 2nd graders will perform at both programs. Parents can choose which program to attend. Lyon will then evaluate how this affects program attendance and the usual overcrowding that occurs on these days.

Pleasant Ridge School—Dr. Matthew Rich thanked people who came to facility meeting on November 9th. At the meeting the District and the architects discussed the plans for the new addition to Pleasant Ridge and how its construction will impact instruction and class size. For those who missed the meeting, he brought one of the blueprints for additions for people to see. Hopefully these plans will be approved by the Board in January and go to the Village for approval soon after. Dr. Rich also thanked the room parents for all their imaginative ideas for the Halloween parties. The kids had a great time, and the parties followed the new district party guidelines.

VIII. Announcements—(Calendar Overview)

Robin Hinrichs announced the following upcoming PTA Events:

December 12—Next PTA Meeting

November 11—Parents in Partnership Workshops at Attea
November 15-16—Lyon/Pleasant Ridge Fall Book Fair
March 3, 2007--PTA Benefit

VII. Adjournment

Chris Northwick adjourned the meeting at 11:20.

Fall 2006 Grant Recommendations

***partial funding now**

iPods and accessories- \$1855 – purchase 8 iPod Nanos and docking stations for use in music class “listening lounge” to reinforce music concepts – can also be used for podcasting. Benefits all Lyon children.

Tumble Books - \$399 – Online collection of animated talking picture books - used to help teach kids to read - integration of technology into classrooms for reading. Benefits all Lyon children

Bus Transportation - \$ 477 – provide bus transportation to and from Sunset Ridge Park for parents to participate in Lyon literacy nights

***Life Fitness Materials - \$925 total \$750 for fall \$175 for spring**
propose to purchase several new items of fitness equipment (instant pulse monitors, exercise tubing, etc) and a 1 year subscription to Brain Pop for use during Lyon PE. Benefits all Lyon children

***One 3-D US map kits for one grade level - \$945 total \$315 for fall \$630 for spring**– 3D relief maps will provide students with a unique opportunity to feel the differences in the earth’s surface – these maps would replace existing broken/battered relief maps. Benefits one grade level of PR

Reading Books - \$ 778 – purchase big books and matching sets of 6 little books to be used with ELL students. Benefits PR ELL students.

Math manipulatives - \$3000 – propose to purchase 12 replacement math kits (2 per classroom) and one set each of base ten blocks and pattern blocks for the fourth grade classes. Benefits PR Fourth grade children.

7 Listening Centers - \$1400 – to be used for students to listen to books/educational material on tape or CD in a quiet contained area. This will benefit Special Ed as well as third grade PR students.

Gym Stereo Replacement system - \$1500 – replace failing system that was installed with a PTA grant in 1988. Benefits all PR Students.

Oral Motor Therapy - \$788 – instructional aids and tools used to develop students speaking skills and help develop their ability to articulate clearly. This would benefit a particular subset of Special Ed children at PR but can be used by all speech students.

When a Child writes booklets - \$365 – take home booklet for families to use to help understand child writing development. Benefits Lyon kindergarten children.

Third Grade touch math - \$825 – math manipulatives to help teach math to 3rd graders. Will benefit 3rd grade Special Ed students.

***Framing - \$400 total \$200 for fall and \$200 for spring** - framing to display student artwork as well as school and teacher accomplishments or awards. Benefits all PR children and staff.

***Frames for artwork - \$400 total \$300 for fall and \$100 for spring** – propose to purchase 20 frames for displaying student artwork in front hallway of school. Benefits all Lyon children.

Music stereo system - \$600 – purchase new stereo system for music room – current system is broken and works only 50% of the time. Benefits all PR students.

Second Grade Academic Games - \$829 – instructional games and aids to be used by second grade classes to reinforce math curriculum in a fun way. Benefits second grade Lyon students.

Reading Mastery - \$819 – instructional materials for a segment of special Ed students - explicit phonics program to be used to develop reading skills for these children. Benefits segment of Lyon special Ed students.

***Horseshoe Tables - \$1500 for 6 tables (\$2000 for 36 chairs in spring)** tables to facilitate guided reading for third grade

Art Enrichment Resource Books – \$200- part of the roll out for the new Art Enrichment program for both schools

***Art Classroom CD's - \$100 now \$100 for spring** – purchase up to date/current music for movies to be played during art class. Benefits all PR students.

Kids Color Mobile Book organizers - \$1970 – mobile book carts used for organizing leveled reading books in classrooms. Benefits Lyon First grade children

Total for Fall Grants: \$18,970 (\$17,000 plus \$2,000 additional due to referendum postponement)

Potential 2007 Spring Grants

Integrated Student Digital Portfolios -\$15,000 – propose to purchase 45 digital cameras for students to use to create a digital photo book of their learning experiences throughout the year. Benefits all PR children.

Document camera - \$578 - to be used to project images of objects for learning – new age overhead projector. Benefits all Lyon children.

Poster Printer - \$ 2144 poster printer for teachers to use to make permanent classroom exhibits from original artwork or documents such as concept webs, maps, poems charts and diagrams. Benefits all Lyon children.

Sound amplification system for Tree 3rd and 5th grades - \$2400 – purchase microphone system currently used in 4th grade Tree for adjoining Tree classrooms. Benefits 77 students at PR.

***Two additional 3-D US map kits - \$630**– Two additional two 3D relief maps will provide students with a unique opportunity to feel the differences in the earth's surface – these maps would replace existing broken/battered relief maps. Benefits all PR children.

***Life Fitness Materials - \$175 for spring \$925 total** propose to purchase several new items of fitness equipment (instant pulse monitors, exercise tubing, etc) and a 1 year subscription to Brain Pop for use during Lyon PE. Benefits all Lyon children

Language for Learning - \$1978 – is a structured program with activities and lesson that provide students with practice in vocabulary development word and sentence variety, word knowledge development and basic language concepts. Benefits ELL learners and a small segment of Lyon children.

Reading Pen - \$510 - specialized instructional aid to be used to “read books” to students that are having difficulty with comprehension. Benefits Tree Special Ed students.

Everything you need to teach money - \$160 – money manipulatives to help teach currency to 3rd graders. Will benefit 3rd grade Special Ed students

Everything you need to Teach Time- \$250 – math manipulatives to help teach time to 3rd graders. Will benefit 3rd grade Special Ed children.

***Framing - \$200 for spring \$400 total** - framing to display student artwork as well as school and teacher accomplishments or awards. Benefits all PR children and staff.

***Frames for artwork - \$100 for spring \$400 total** – propose to purchase 20 frames for displaying student artwork in front hallway of school. Benefits all Lyon children.

***Horseshoe Tables - \$2000 for 36 chairs in spring** to facilitate guided reading for third grade

***Art Classroom CD's - \$100 for spring \$200 total** – purchase up to date/current music for movies to be played during art class. Benefits all PR students.

PR Building Framing needs - \$100 for spring framing to display school and teacher accomplishments or awards. Benefits all PR

Overhead projector - \$161 – purchase new overhead for broken one in third grade classroom. (may be purchased thru District)

Total for potential Spring Grants: \$26,486