

Lyon/Pleasant Ridge PTA Minutes

March 11, 2008

President Liz Price opened the meeting at 9:15a.m. in the Lyon School Learning and Resource center.

In Attendance: Kevin Dorken, Matthew Rich, Brett Clark, Shelley Riskin, Tracy Murdoch, Liz Price, Kristen Borth, Robin Hinrichs, Miriam Biales, Chris Northwick, Laura Olsen, Ana Cassorla, Jen Roberts, Sue Swaringen, Sandy Brennan, Karen Friedman, Deb McMahon, Gloria Pedrelli, Marcia Bellair, Tammy Burke, Pam Hartigan, Ellen Girard, Karen Anderson, Kristin Miller, Linda Argeros

I. Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of the February 12, 2008 meeting were approved.

II. Officer's Reports

Treasurer—Miriam Biales reported that the net worth statement shows that we had \$119,000.00 at the end of February. This has decreased \$25,000 in the last 2 weeks because of paid out expenses for the benefit. The Benefit generated \$40,000 in net profit – this will decrease slightly as final expenses are paid. In the next month, PTA will begin the budgeting process for next year, estimating expenses and revenues for each line item. Committee chairmen should review the funds allotted for their committee this year. If revisions need to be made in next year's expenses and/or revenue, let Liz know.

President—Liz Price announced that the School Board did vote to reduce the class size cap for grades 3-5 at their meeting last week. This was done in light of school district's financial strength. The class size cap for grades 3-5 for 2008-2009 will be 24 students per class. This is down from 26 for grades 3 and 4 and 28 for grade 5. This means that most classes will have approximately 22 students.

Liz also announced that PTA is working hard on developing a slate of new officers for 2008-2009. If anyone knows someone who would like to be involved in PTA next year, let Liz know.

Liz then discussed the Mayors Agreement on Environmental Matters. This is a letter that originated in the western U.S. and states that local municipalities will do their best to make local policies that protect the environment. PTA Council, which includes all the District 34 PTAs asked each PTA to send a letter to Glenview Village President Kerry Cummings requesting that Glenview sign onto this agreement. After discussing this with the PTA executive Board, Liz signed onto the letter. If you would like to see a copy of the letter

that the PTAs sent, Liz can email it to you. In other environmental matters, Liz announced that The Green Team has gotten an opportunity to purchase more reusable grocery bags. Noting the success of the fall sale, the executive board approved the purchase of an additional 300 bags. These will be advertised throughout the District and will be available for sale at the Lyon/PR Spring Book Fair.

Finally, Liz announced that after reviewing the revenue made from the PTA benefit, the executive has authorized releasing \$15,000 for spring grants. Requests for proposals will be given to the staff at both schools next week.

1st Vice President—Kristin Borth asked all committee chairs to please check their mail.

III. Teachers' Representative Reports

Lyon School—Tracy Murdoch showed us a presentation of how technology is being used at Lyon School. She showed examples of Podcasts, PowerPoint presentations, Comic Book form, Flicker photo albums, "how to book slideshows", and teaching with a smart board. She emphasized that technology is integrated into the District curriculum and is being used to facilitate and enhance the children's learning. Examples of most of these techniques are visible on the Website: <http://ly.glenview34.org/> and parents are encouraged to use the website to see what their children are doing.

Pleasant Ridge—Shelley Riskin thanked PTA for supporting the library. She read results of a study that stated that students thrive when they have a good library that is integrated into their regular school curriculum. She then told us how the students are utilizing the library's facilities. The 3rd graders are presently learning about biographies through studies of famous people. They learn where to find the books in the library, and how to use encyclopedias to get information. They then created posters about their person. The posters are presently displayed around the school. Ms. Riskin noted that she has created independent reading lists for each grade level that are appropriate for kids. The lists are referenced by lexile score and are posted on the website by grades level. The 3rd graders also recently voted for Monarch Award winners. The book, *If I Had a car*, won at Pleasant Ridge. The state winner has not been announced yet. The 4th graders have been working on planets. They reviewed print media, online data bases, and some websites for their research. Because this field is always changing the students need to know where to find up-to-date information. They also started learning about citations. In their independent books unit, they are focused on realistic fiction. The 5th grade is studying ecosystems and biozones. They reviewed print and online databases. They also worked on colonial America and did a grade wide book study. Their independent reading genre is fantasy, and they are beginning to choose their books. TREE just finished doing literature circles. Their theme was disasters. To prepare for this the library needed to update resources. The students then read and discussed the issue. Many Pleasant Ridge 4th ad 5th graders also participated in the Battle of

the Books. One 4th grade team made the honor roll for the District. The library is also beginning to gear up for Literature Alive. There will be an author visit and a Poetry café.

IV. Committee Chair Reports

Jump Rope for Heart—Liz Price thanked everyone who helped with Jump Rope for Heart at Pleasant Ridge. The final tally is not yet in, but the students raised in excess of \$48,000.

International Night—Sue Swaringen reported that International Night will be May 2 at Pleasant Ridge. The committee is meeting with principal this week to set the theme and begin planning the event. Letters with information and requests for volunteers to sponsor rooms for a country or provide general assistance will be coming home right after that. If you want to help, call or email Sue or Susie Feldstein.

Lyon/PR PTA Spring Book Fair—Liz Price reported that this year's book fair will be 2 day extravaganza, May 21 and 22. There is no theme yet, but the theme will dovetail with Kevin O'Malley's author visit. If you want to know more, look for his book *Once upon a Cool Motorcycle Dude*. Sandy Brennan will be helping recruit volunteers. If you did not sign up to help earlier in the year, let Sandy know.

Cultural Enrichment—Gloria Pedrelli reported that Lyon has 2 assemblies scheduled this spring. Ricky Recycle is coming during Earth week in April, and the Jesse White tumblers will be here in June at field day.

Fifth Grade Picnic—Liz Price reported that Cindy Rourke, the new chair of the 5th grade picnic has met with Pam Hartigan and Tammy Burke who organized last year's picnic. Cindy has started working with Ellie Walsh and Katie Dietrich on ideas for this year. Last year the committee was able to get most of the food and supplies for the picnic donated by families and local businesses. If anyone knows of a company that would donate food or sponsor other supplies, let them know. A couple of suggestions were made and will be passed on to the committee.

Grant Committee—Ellen Girard reported that the grant committee is starting again. Approximately \$15,000 has been allocated for Spring Grants. A call for proposals will go out to school staff next week. The proposals will be evaluated by the principals, the PTA executive committee, and a parent committee. Their recommendations will be voted on at the May meeting. Ellen went over the criteria used for determining grant rating. These include: 1) Number of kids impacted 2) Could the Grant later be expanded to more students for broader impact 3) Does the Grant support the District's strategic plan

4) Educator (Principal) priority (1-4) ; 5) Innovation (0-1) and 6) Parent priority. Anyone who wants to be part of the parent rating, see Ellen Girard.

Nominating Committee—Liz Price reported that she is working on next year's slate. We still need to fill positions for Assistant Treasurer, Global Language. NSSSED liaison, Art Enrichment, Parent education, Pumpkinfest, and a Lead person for the benefit. There is a team in place to run many of the benefit subcommittees. We just need someone to take the lead.

Environmental--Marcia Bellair reported that waste free lunch has begun every Wednesday at Pleasant Ridge. The students are gathering their milk jugs and other recycling and depositing it in a bag that a parent then takes home to recycle. Hopefully, this will develop the habit of recycling that will continue next year when there may be a District wide recycling program. Once the kids reach their recycling goal, they can earn a Rock and Roll lunch period. There are three "rock and Roll" lunches scheduled. The first is Thursday March 20th. Other green ideas include 1) a "Ban the Baggie day" for St. Patrick's Day. The students will count the number of snacks brought to school in baggies on Friday the 14th and then how far they can reduce that number on Monday; 2) an April sneaker collection drive. The old sneakers will be donated to be recycled into playground materials 3) May is projected for bike safety awareness time. Students will be encouraged to check the safety of their bikes and bike to school. Some April or May walk/bike to school days will also be announced. Watch for details. The Planet Protector Team has begun at Pleasant Ridge. It meets twice a month during recess. 35 kids came to the first meeting. The next meeting is this Friday.

V. Principals' Reports

Lyon School—Kevin Dorken reported that around this time of year the school starts working simultaneously on activities for the end of this year and planning for the next year. The District has begun screening candidates for new teaching positions. Mr. Dorken stated that most of the Lyon staff will probably stay the same. He should know more about potential changes next month. He also noted that the District has just published the Summer School calendar. It is available on the District website, and will come home with students soon. This year there will be more academic enrichment classes offered at summer school. There will still be a couple of creative classes, but more of the elective courses will be academic oriented. If you are interested in Summer School, sign your children up early. If individual classes don't fill up by a certain time they will be canceled. Summer school operates on a break-

even budget, so they only hold classes that have a minimum of students. Mr. Dorken also announced that Lyon has started the trial plastic bottle recycling program funded by the PTA. It is going well.

Pleasant Ridge—Dr. Matt Rich reported that Pleasant Ridge is also beginning to discuss personnel issues for next year. With the new class size caps for grades 3-5, Pleasant Ridge will be adding 2 sections of 3rd grade for a total of 8 sections, keeping 6 sections of fourth grade and adding one section of 5th grade for a total of 7 sections. There may be some internal changes with teachers moving from grade to grade, but additional personnel will need to be hired. Dr. Rick will update PTA on that in the next few months. Dr. Rich will also be taking the teachers on tours of the new addition in April. The staff will then begin deciding how the space will be utilized. The staff is also looking into how to expand the stage into instructional space for drama. Dr. Rich, Mrs. Hoye, Dr. Jones, and Brett Clark are trying to determine how best to convert the space into a little theater. They will be applying for a grant from the PTA and GEF this spring and may again in the fall to develop the space. Dr. Rich announced the following upcoming events at Pleasant Ridge—1) There will be a renewed focus on core curriculum that will end with NWEA and CBM tests in May. Pleasant Ridge is almost finished with ISATs. There are about 10 kids who need to finish make up tests. 2) Incoming 3rd grade parent orientation will be in April 8th and will include a showing of the FISH video, 3) The PR talent show is scheduled for April 25th at the end of TV turn off week. This date was picked after a PTA request last year for more school activities during TV turn off week. 4) Literature Alive with author Kevin O'Malley, Bill Bryzinski's Poetry Café, and maybe a Lyon school night with a storyteller.

Dr. Rich announced that despite news reports to the contrary the School Board has not voted on the rescheduling on snow days at the end of the year. The Board is scheduled to vote on that March 17.th

VI. Unfinished/New Business

Liz Price announced that Pam Hartigan and Michelle Colletta have been working on switching school supply companies for next year. All school supply ordering will be done online. The system should be much easier. The supplies will be ordered online, paid for online, and will come to school boxed, labeled, and ready to go. Information about this will be coming home soon. Please tell other parents about this change. The biggest effect that it will have on parents is that there will be a firm deadline for ordering supplies. After a certain date, you will be able to pay more and have supplies shipped directly to your house, but they will not be part of the PTA order.

Be aware PTA is considering other changes as well. 1) We may decide to cease taking spiritwear orders with spring registration, and instead make a large order during the first few weeks of school. 2) PTA registration may also go online, but this has not been fully determined. If we do this, we will set up computers at walk-in days at the end of summer. 3) Brett Clark, from the District Office, also noted that District registration may be going online. If so, they may have computers available for PTA registration at the same time.

Finally, Liz Price announced that in the next month, Kristin Borth will be thinking about meeting dates and event dates for next year. Look for a survey to voice your opinion on scheduling for next year.

VII. Announcements (Calendar Overview)

March 13 - Kindergarten Registration at Lyon 4:30-7

April 8 - Next PTA meeting at 9:15 at Pleasant Ridge School

April 8 - Orientation for parents of Incoming 3rd grade students—7 p.m. Pleasant Ridge

April 25 - Pleasant Ridge Talent show

May 2 - 2nd grade program 10:00 and 1:30 at Lyon

May 2 - International Night at Pleasant Ridge School

May 7 - Pleasant Ridge Spring Concerts

May 21 and 22 - Lyon/PR Spring Book Fair and Literature Alive

VIII. Adjournment—Liz Price adjourned the meeting at 10:25 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robin Hinrichs, PTA secretary