

Lyon/Pleasant Ridge PTA Minutes

November 13, 2007

President Liz Price opened the meeting at 9:15a.m. in the Pleasant Ridge Library.

In Attendance: Kevin Dorken, Matthew Rich, Dave Jones, Sue Raben, Liz Price, Kristen Borth, Robin Hinrichs, Miriam Biales, Laura Olsen, Stacey Saef, Susan Desmond, Gloria Pedrelli, Cheryl Kasner, Pam Hartigan, Tammy Burke, Ellen Girard, Karen Kikos, Kristin Daus, Karen Friedman, Gina Bronswick, Jen Roberts, Sabrina Briggs, Kathleen Butler

I. Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of the October 9, 2007 meeting were approved.

II. Officer's Reports

Treasurer—Miriam Biales gave the monthly financial report. The net worth statement has changed since last month. \$20,000 of the GSB money market account has been invested into 2 CDS: a \$10,000, 3 month CD and a \$10,000, 7 month CD. The executive committee will continually try to assess the amount of money we have on hand in an effort to get the best interest we reasonably can. The biggest changes in this month's budget comparison are: 1) Pumpkinfest (budget line 17) \$3088 profit. 2) Environmental \$4543 profit on the reusable bags (budget line 52). There are still a couple of expenses that have yet to clear, but there should be about \$4300 profit from the bag sale. All profits go into the PTA general funds, but in this case because the environmental committee earned so much, we will try to fund environmental ideas that the committee proposes.

President—Liz Price thanked Kathleen Butler for a wonderful Pumpkinfest, and members who attended the Parents in Partnership workshops. She also thanked everyone who brought food for Character Counts food drive. In all 6400 cans of food were given to the Northfield Food Pantry. Liz reminded everyone that there will be more requests for food coming home in the backpacks. There will be a holiday food drive both for the Food Pantry and the Holiday Helper Program. Check your child's backpack for what your child should bring. Each grade will have special food items to bring. Liz Price also announced that this evening the NSEED Association of Parents and Staff is hosting a workshop at New Trier High School entitled "A Father's Perspective on Raising a Child with Special Needs".

1st Vice President—Kristen Borth asked committee chairs to check the mail box before leaving.

III. Teachers' Representative Reports

Pleasant Ridge--Dave Jones talked about the importance of extracurricular activities at Pleasant Ridge. He highlighted activities such as the Airplane contest, Japanese garden, and the Talent Show. Dr. Jones stated that he sees these events as a time for kids to take charge, working toward leadership and utilizing their creativity. They also allow the kids to invest more in their school and feel more committed to Pleasant Ridge. Dr. Jones introduced his newest idea—forming a Little Theater at Pleasant Ridge. Dr. Jones has worked with Oakton Community College in the past doing children's productions. He believes that theater and PE go well together. The body control necessary in theater is the same as the body control necessary to succeed in sports. Pleasant Ridge is hoping to establish a functional theater space when the renovation of Pleasant Ridge is complete. Now whenever PR has a talent show it costs about \$1,000 to rent lights. With a fully functioning theater, all the students at PR can participate in theater productions. The half of the kids who don't want to be on stage can learn to do the backstage stuff. This will give everyone a chance to participate in a way that makes everyone look good. Liz Price then explained that PTA is considering making the Little Theater project a focal point of the benefit. She noted that PR is the only primary or intermediate school in the District that still has a stage.

Lyon School—Sue Raben reported that Lyon School is very busy. They are preparing for the book fair. They had an assembly yesterday. It was a performance of a shadow puppeteer. He will be spending the next two days helping some the kids make puppets. The school's focus this year is on storytelling. The 1st graders are visiting the Grove to learn about stories of old Glenview. They are then interviewing their parents, grandparents, etc. to develop their family story. The 2nd graders are going to the Chicago Botanic Gardens to end their study of plants. Some classes are beginning to study the research process to learn to how to present their information. Kindergarten has pajama day tomorrow, and next week they will have a friendship feast to celebrate Thanksgiving. Ms. Raben passed out a sheet about Net Trekker a Google type search engine that promotes safe internet surfing for kids. It is available to all Lyon and Pleasant Ridge households. The winter program will have a global focus. It will be a "Celebration of the Elements" similar to the celebration at opening of Olympics, including, Earth, Air, Fire. Some classes are writing stories. The 1st graders are creating shadow puppets. The 1st and 2nd graders are making African textiles in Art for backgrounds, and some classes are making a

Dragon and creating an Asian Dragon dance. PE said thank you for lines for busses and the four-square court paid for by PTA.

IV. Committee Chair Reports

Pumpkinfest Recap—Kathleen Butler reported that Pumpkinfest had a good turnout. The crowd was not as big as last year. Pumpkinfest made about \$3000. We also got a rebate for jump equipment that was not working initially and a discount for next year if we use this vendor again. This year PTA is putting some money from each event toward the Gelfand Fund. We raised \$300 from Pumpkinfest for Gelfand. So Pumpkinfest actually earned about \$400 more than appears on the budget.

Lyon/PR PTA Book Fair—Stacy Saef reported that both schools are ready for the Book Fair today. Teacher preview is tonight. The Book Fair is open to the Public 8am-8pm Wednesday and Thursday. If you haven't registered for the Pizza Night, still come. Thursday we will have Grandpersons' Night and drama performances from Pleasant Ridge students. If you still want to volunteer, please sign –up especially for the evenings. The One for Books program money allows each kid to contribute a dollar. This money will go to Debra Gelfand Fund. Scholastic will also donate a dollar to one of their charities for each dollar we collect for the Gelfand Fund. New at the Book Fair this year—The “Penguin Palace” will be in the LRC. This is a place to read quietly with your kids, or possibly to leave your kids to read while you shop.

Benefit—Liz Price reported that the Benefit will be February 2, 2008. The committee is presently trying to finalize auction ideas and business solicitations. They are still looking for big ticket items for donations. If you have anything you want to donate, let the committee know. Liz gave some possible examples: selling yourself to host a party or make a meal, donating sports tickets, boats or vacation destinations.

Holiday Helper—Deb McMahon said thank you to everyone who volunteered a sponsor a family. All the families that PTA initially signed-up for have been taken, but we may get more. If you are still interested, contact the committee. There will be a wrapping party on Dec 8th at 9 a.m. at Lyon School in the gym. If you would like to help, then contact Deb. This Friday after school the committee will be distributing the outerwear at Lyon. This new system of collecting outerwear first seems to be working out very well. The committee will reevaluate this in January to see whether to continue it.

School Supplies—Pam Hartigan reported that PTA is discussing changing the vendor for the school supplies. The new vendor would allow parents to individually go to a

website and order and pay for all your kids' school supplies in grades K-5 at one time directly from the company with a credit card. PTA will try to set up kiosks at some school events in case some parents don't have internet access. The school supplies would still be delivered to your children's classrooms for the first day of school. The ordering would begin earlier and have a definite final deadline determined by the company. If you miss the deadline, you could design your own packet, and for \$7 or \$8 more they would be delivered to your home. PTA could still order some extra supplies for families who move into the cluster during the summer and order scholarship supplies. PTA would still have to decide how to handle donations for supplies for needy students. More information will be coming as the committee makes its recommendations.

Cultural Enrichment—Gloria Pedrelli reported that yesterday Lyon had a group that did shadow puppets and African stories. One of the performers is helping the 1st graders to make shadow puppets that will be used in the winter program. In December a dance group will be working with the kids. This will also be included in the holiday program. Finally on December 21st Chris Fascione will be performing. Cheryl Kasner reported that the Imagination Theater came and did a program about internet safety last week at Pleasant Ridge, and Dr. Cool and Pride came to present a program about bullying in October. Both were well received. In December Justin Roberts and Liam will be coming to work with the kids on the basics on songwriting.

Reusable Bags—Tammy Burke said thank you to Liz Price and Miriam Biales for fielding questions and counting money for the reusable bag sale. Distribution will happen in the first 2 weeks in December. The Green Team will have a night to pick bags up at both schools. Those that are not picked up will be put in backpacks. Tammy announced that at the School Board meeting on Monday the District is discussing hiring a person who can look at energy usage and finding ways to save the District money. If the District manages to save money, then they will use that to pay for a recycling program. Tammy invited PTA members to come and give their opinion to the School Board. She also announced that we will have a bag to collect and recycle all the water bottles sold at PTA events this year. The Green Team will be kicking off "Earth Year" in January and Ricky Recycle will be coming both schools in April. If you have other ideas about you would like the Green Team to pursue talk to Tammy.

PTA Grants – Ellen Girard reported that \$12,000 was made available for grants. After meeting with the teachers and explaining the process, we received about \$13,000 worth of proposals. Ellen noted that professional staff in both buildings could apply for either GEF or PTA for grant money. PTA executive committee met

with both principals to review the grants. The grants were rated numerically according to how they reflected the following priorities: 1) Number of kids impacted (1-4); 2) Could the Grant later be expanded to more students for broader impact,(1-4); 3) Does the Grant support the District's strategic plan (1-4); 4) Educator priority (1-4); and 5) Innovation (0-1). Then a committee of parents rated each of the grants (1-4). Once PTA collected all the data, the committee recommends funding the highest rated grants that fall within the budget. This fall the committee recommended funding a total of \$12,000 in grants including: Ellen asked for a motion to approve the funding of the grants. The motion was seconded and the grants were approved by the PTA members present and will be funded.

- V. **Guest Speaker**—Dr. Paul Nevin from Heartlight Psychological Services—*Teaching our Children how to Manage Stress*. See the PTA website for his presentation.

VI. **Principals' Reports**

Kevin Dorken—discussed the District's new emphasis on teacher collaboration. Starting in January, the intermediate schools will have a 2 hour teacher collaboration time after school twice monthly. The District education committee has decided to adopt the philosophy of "professional learning communities" ("PLC) to structure this collaboration. The "professional learning community" model was developed by Richard P. DuFour, a former Stevenson High Principal who now trains educators all over the country. The teachers at Lyon and Pleasant Ridge went to a 2 day workshop with Dr. DuFour in October and will be attending a second workshop, December 13-14. The schools will then begin implementing PLC's in January. The fundamental idea behind PLC's is that schools are full of excellent professionals who essentially work as "independent contractors" – each teaching their own class. PLC's pool the best techniques of all teachers in an effort to create best practices amongst the team of teachers, in a specific grade or subject area. This provides a better learning experience for ALL students. Both Lyon and PR will begin incorporating team goals and team assessments over the following months. There will be more information on this program in the coming months and if you have any questions bring them to the Principal's coffee next week.

Dr. Matt Rich—Dr. Rich reminded everyone to remember the Book Fair Blizzard today and tomorrow. Last year Pleasant Ridge had 5th grade drama productions at the Book Fair; this year all grades will participate. Come and see them tomorrow night. Dr. Rich reiterated that Pleasant Ridge is starting to work on a plan for a new stage. The school has a number of the kids who really want to do sound, lights and scenery

work for productions. More information will be forthcoming as the plans are completed. Pleasant Ridge is using Thanksgiving as a time to discuss the theme of character and sharing with others. Also look for an article on holiday stress in the next newsletter.

VII. Unfinished/New Business

VIII. Announcements (Calendar Overview)

November 14th -15th -- Lyon/PR Fall Book Fair at Lyon School

November 20th —Principal Coffee at 9:30 in the Pleasant Ridge Library

December 8th -- Holiday Gift Wrapping at Lyon

December 11th —PTA meeting at Lyon School 9:15 a.m.

Holiday Luncheon following meeting

IX. Adjournment—Liz Price adjourned the meeting at 10:58 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robin Hinrichs, PTA secretary