

Lyon/Pleasant Ridge PTA Minutes

October 9, 2007

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

In Attendance: Kevin Dorken, Matthew Rich, Debbie Shefren, Katie Konieczka, Liz Price, Kristen Borth, Robin Hinrichs, Miriam Biales, Susan Desmond, Michelle Colletta, Ellen Girard, Chris Northwick, Laura Olsen, Amy Schneider, Stacey Saef, Ana Cassorla, Susie Feldstein, Deb McMahan, Sandy Brennan, Kathleen Butler, Natalie Weber, Karen Friedman, Gina Brunswick, Meg Carpenter, Matina Ingallingra, Marie Woltman, Lisa Hague, Marsha Merdinger, Terry Hianik, Amy Avalis, Wendy Ban, Jennifer Massarelli, C. C. Pujals, Gretchen Flowers, Colleen Mockiman, Joyce Heneghan

I. Approval of the Minutes

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

II. Officer's Reports

Treasurer—Miriam Biales distributed the financial statements. She noted that the Net Worth report was significantly less than last month's because we paid out almost \$37,000 for the school supplies. The YTD figures also reflect bills paid for cultural enrichment, Parents in Partnership, the benefit, and Pumpkifest. Some of our reserves were also moved from the money market account into short term CDs to allow PTA to earn more interest on the money kept in those accounts.

President—Liz Price circulated 3 sign-up sheets for volunteers: 1) The Encore team at Pleasant Ridge is looking for volunteers to copy their weekly newsletter and art teacher Elissa Astirino is looking for help hanging the students' art work. (Artwork is hung about once a month. 2) Robyn Campisano and the Pleasant Ridge playground committee are looking for 2 parents to help plan a new playground for Pleasant Ridge. Their first meeting is at the District office on October 11th. 3) The PTA grant committee is looking for volunteers to review grant requests. Liz Price also announced that if anyone has time after meeting today, they still need volunteers to help with hearing and vision screening.

Liz said "Thank you" to Mary Hershey, Tammy Burke and The Green Team. They sold 6700 reusable garbage bags district wide and 3000 bags at Lyon & Pleasant Ridge alone. This was not intended as a fundraiser, but as an awareness initiative. It was a huge success. "Please Turn off your engines" signs have also been placed at both schools by PR parent Virginia Thomas. Our other Green initiatives include

always trying to double-side copies we make for handouts. Liz also thanked everyone who helped with “Walk to school day” at Pleasant Ridge. That day the bike rack was overflowing and kids walked and rode from as far as Swainwood. We will be looking for ways to expand this program during the year.

1st Vice President—Kristin Borth asked all board members to check their mail boxes.

III. Teachers’ Representative Reports

Debbie Shefren reported that everyone is working hard at Lyon School. The Kindergarteners have been on field trips to the Grove and the Glenview Library. They are starting a unit on Lois Ehert. The 1st graders are working on plants and animals. They have been talking about harvesting apples and will be going to the Lincoln Park Zoo as part of this unit. They have also begun their writer’s workshop program. The 2nd graders are studying Life cycles of plants and animals. They have been to the Grove and will be going to the Botanic Gardens. All the students have been to the Library and the teachers are encouraging everyone to get a card for the Glenview Library.

Katie Konieczka—The 3rd Grade students at Pleasant Ridge have begun their Native American unit. They have been to the Grove and will be going to the Mitchell Museum soon. The 4th grade students are also going on a series of field trips. They will be visiting Wagner Farm to learn about the products grown on Illinois farms. Then they will go to the Grove for a presentation about the school house and Kennicott House. At the beginning of November, they will have a simple machine in-house field trip. The 5th grade is working on a unit on live organisms. TREE has started its first project. These projects will be presented in November. All the Pleasant Ridge students are working in the Library. The 3rd grade is reviewing the Alexandria catalog. The 4th grade will be going to the Glenview Library to participate in the Survival Island Game to learn more about how to find things in a library. They are also having mystery book talks, and learning to pick “just right” books. The 5th grade is learning to use the library for research projects. Battle of the Books will be kicking off soon for 4th -5th grade. Look for information. A PE “report on fitness” will be coming home. It will include scores on aerobic capacity, flexibility, muscle strength, and endurance. The kids will be encouraged to work on these areas and PE will see how the kids improve throughout the year.

IV. Committee Chair Report

Pumpkinfest—Kathleen Butler reminded us that Pumpkinfest is October 26th from 4-8 p.m. at Lyon School. Set up will begin after school on Thursday. The committee is looking for Dads to help set up the Haunted House on the evening of the 25th. They

are also looking for volunteers to help clean up right after Pumpkinfest on Friday night. Tom Scherer has graciously agreed to be in charge of the Haunted House this year. If there are any other Dads who would be interested in helping, let us know.

Lyon/PR Fall Book Fair—Stacy Saef reported that the Lyon/PR Fall Book Fair will be November 14th & 15th. The School will be decorated for a Blizzard! The hours will be 9 a.m. -8 p.m. both days. There will be a family event both nights. Wednesday is the traditional Pizza night from 6-8 p.m. while Thursday will be Grandpersons' night. The Pleasant Ridge Encore team will be presenting "transformation" skits. There will be 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade slots. Stacy circulated a sign-up sheet for volunteers. She will need volunteers for decorations for both schools, the One for Books program, setting up, taking down, and volunteering during the event. The schools will be decorated on Friday November 9th. The Book Fair set-up will be November 13th at 1 p.m. Anyone who helps set-up will be eligible for a special "Buy 4 books, get the 5th one free" offer. Teacher previews will be set for Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning. Lyon school parents can come and pick up children during recess to shop. During family events there will be a cozy reading corner in the Library to enjoy books with your kids or leave kids supervised while you shop. We will be once again giving gift certificates to all Lyon School staff, Pleasant Ridge teachers and all students on free and reduced lunch at Lyon.

Holiday Helper—Deb McMahon reported that she expects the list of families we will serve to be back by October 22nd. She will be trying to sign-up people to sponsor kids and families earlier than in the past to allow for November outerwear distribution. We usually serve 65-80 families. All of these families are in our cluster, but their identities remain anonymous.

Benefit—Kristin Borth reported for Jen Farber. She asked that everyone start to think about possible donations for the benefit. If anyone has a vacation home, or a boat they could share for a weekend, these make good big ticket items for the silent auction

Volunteer Database—Sandy Brennan is still receiving forms for volunteers. She will be putting out a revised email to room moms and Event chairs. If you need a volunteer list for an event, talk to Sandy.

Directory—The directory is in process and should be coming out soon.

Art Enrichment—Amy Schneider reported that last year she developed ready made 60 minute lessons plans for Art Enrichment with all the necessary supplies. Over the

summer she did a survey with last year's volunteers about the new materials. Everyone liked them, but the one problem was with the accessibility of the materials. With the help of Mary Hershey, Amy has started an Art Enrichment website. All the materials will be on the website, complete with example craft ideas. They are linked from the Lyon/PR PTA website and are in PDF format. The only things that will be left at school are the posters, which are in the art enrichment closets. Amy is still looking for Art Enrichment volunteers for 14 classrooms (probably 8 or 9 by the end of the meeting). Orientation for volunteers will be October 24th & 25th. There will be 4 orientation sessions: 2 at Lyon and 2 at PR.; 2 in the morning and 2 in the afternoon. Emails will go out with instructions about art enrichment this week.

Global Language—Ana Cassorla reported that classes at both schools have gotten off to good start. There have been a couple of minor glitches, but Discovery Language has been responsive to these. She asked parents to please give PTA feedback about the program. It is the first time PTA has outsourced a program. Let us know, what you think about how it's working.

V. Guest Speaker—Jason Rehfeldt, Ph.D. , psychologist at Lyon and Pleasant Ridge Schools presented *Bullying—what you and your kids should know*

VI. Principals' Reports

Kevin Dorken—The new Lyon school office is up and running, but they are still working on some things. He explained that the reason the office was moved was to improve school safety. The District wants everyone who enters the school to go through the office. The student drop-off area (the old door) can still be used before school. For Global Language when kids are dropped off between 7:50-8:00, Discovery Language mans the door and parents can pull up and drop-off kids. If you arrive after 8:00am, you have to bring kids to the office because the door will be closed. The same thing happens when school starts. The student drop-off area is open from 8:40 - 8:55. The student drop off doors will close at 8:55am. If you arrive after that time, your child must sign-in at the main office and get a tardy pass. The office will soon have an operational buzzer system. This will mean that anyone who comes to the office will have to be buzzed into the office. The staff will have remote high-tech buzzers that will allow them to buzz people in even if the staff is on the phone or at the copy machine. Kids will be able to come straight from class to the health office, but will have to be buzzed back into school. Mr. Dorken stated that the environmental awareness projects that started in our cluster have snowballed throughout the District. The School Board has started to implement a series of environmental friendly policies and is discussing more. Watch for information from

the Board and for more things coming from the Take babysteps program later in the year.

Dr. Matt Rich—Dr. Rich reported that the Pleasant Ridge students are also getting interested in environmental issues. They all enjoyed Walk to School day and will be doing more things throughout the year. Dr. Rich updated PTA on the progress of the new construction. Both Pleasant Ridge and Glen Grove will be getting new playgrounds. They will get the same playground so the playground committee will be working on a plan that will work at both schools. The construction has had little impact on everyday school. Next week, however, they will be tarring the roof and the smell will probably permeate the area. The good news is that next week there are only 3 days of school. The construction is ahead of schedule: the building is almost ready to be closed in, the roof is almost done; the windows are coming in; and electrical work has begun. The furniture committee headed by Mrs. Lund is beginning to pick out furniture, but the school will not decide exactly what classrooms it will go in until April or May. Just as at Lyon, Pleasant Ridge will have a new office for improved security. The office area will also include an improved health coordinator's office, a bathroom, and a conference room. The area where the old office is will become the instrumental music room. The school office will likely move to the new office space in May to allow for the new construction of the instrumental music room. Pleasant Ridge is also beginning to prepare for Literature Alive and the Spring Book Fair. Dr. Rich asked for 2 parents to help with this 1) to help with Publicity of the author visit (Mrs. Heilwagen is heading this committee) and 2) someone to help the Scheduling committee which arranges a schedule for the whole day (Lisa Hoye is in charge of that committee). Dr. Rich also announced 2 other upcoming school events: 1) NWEA parent seminar Wednesday October 10th at 7 p.m. If you are not knowledgeable about what NWEA is, what data is taken, how it is used, or how to interpret it, you should come. 2) Bring your Dad (Or Dad-like figure) to breakfast. This will be October 24th at 7:15 a.m. It is the first event sponsored by the Dad's group in an effort to bring more Dads into the school.

VII. Unfinished/New Business

Liz Price announced the upcoming NSSSED workshops. These are open to all parents and are held at the New Trier West campus (see www.nssed-aps.org for more info):
October 16th 9:30 a.m. Research based Reading Programs –Christine Igoe
November 13th 7:30 p.m. A Father's Perspective on Raising a Child with special Needs

VIII. Announcements (Calendar Overview)

October 26--Pumpkinfest—4-8 p.m. at Lyon School

November 3—GEF Benefit--Pinstripes

November 10--Parents in Partnership workshops at Attea 8:30-12:30

November 13—PTA meeting--9:15 a.m. at Pleasant Ridge School--Speaker Paul Nevin, Psychologist with Heartlight Psychological services—*Teaching our Children to manage stress*

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

IX. Adjournment—Liz Price adjourned the meeting at 11:07 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robin Hinrichs, PTA secretary