

Lyon/Pleasant Ridge PTA Minutes

September 11, 2007

President Liz Price opened the meeting at 9:20 a.m.in the Pleasant Ridge gym.

In Attendance: Kevin Dorken, Matthew Rich, Brett Clark, Toby Pleszkun, Debbie Shefren, Liz Price, Kristen Borth, Robin Hinrichs, Miriam Biales, Maggie Wall, Chris Northwick, Amy Schneider, Stacey Saef, Gloria Pedrelli, Yuko Aimi, Tammy Burke, Pam Hartigan, Marcia Bellair, Rula Marziani, Meg Carpenter, Sandy Brennan, Liz Quilici, Kathleen Butler, Laura Olsen, Jen Farber, Natalie Weber, Breland Nelson, Lisa Dickholtz, Ana Cassorla, Gina Brunswick, Jen Roberts, Michelle Langenbach, Susie Feldstein, Sue Swaringen, Deb McMahan, Debbie Berg, Ali Ament, Mary Hershey, Daun Cloos, Dana Kapan, Avni Kausland, Sandy Ellis, Meg Kamajian, Carol Mavrakis, Linda Argeros, Karen Kikos, Dale Sands, Karen Anderson Papajohn, Kristina Hourihane, Dianna Gordon, Denise Gross, Matina Ingallinera, Virginia Thomas, Annie Harrington, C C Pujals, Lisa Zimbler, Gretchen Flowers

I. Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of the June 5, 2007 meeting were approved. Robin Hinrichs, PTA Secretary, reminded everyone that minutes are posted on the website usually within 10 days of the PTA meeting. Please check them there. In keeping with the PTA's "Be Green" focus this year we are not going to be distributing copies at meetings. You will also find forms to request funds and/or reimbursement on the website. Click on "about PTA" on the toolbar at the top of the PTA home page. Then click on the link "PTA member's commonly used forms" at the very bottom of the page.

II. Officer's Reports

President—(Publicity and Hospitality) Liz began the meeting with a moment of silence in memory of the 9/11 tragedy. She then graciously thanked all the PTA Board members who had worked hard this summer: Heather LeBeouf and Liz Quilici for the bagels and snacks the first day of school for teachers and parents, Rula Marziani and Meg Carpenter for the opening PTA luncheon for staff and PTA today; Pam Hartigan and Michelle Colletta for organizing and delivering the School supplies; Tammy Burke and Laura Shaw for organizing and delivering Spiritwear at the beginning of year and at both curriculum nights; Chris Northwick and Maggie Wall for recruiting room moms for all the classrooms and sending out a survey to the teachers to determine what assistance the teachers want from their room moms this

year, Sandy Brennan for all her work on the PTA database and finally; thank you to the Executive Board for all their help getting the new year going.

Liz made the following announcements:

- 1) October 3rd is National Walk to school day. PTA will be pushing as many kids as possible at Pleasant Ridge to walk or ride their bikes to school that day.
- 2) PTA gave all the teachers at both schools \$50.00 gift certificates from the Learning Post over the summer to get supplies for their classrooms.
- 3) Starting next month there will be a “parent ideas and input” section added to each PTA meeting to increase parent participation in PTA. .

1st Vice President—Kristen Borth said thank you to President Liz Price for all her hard work this summer for PTA. She announced that the Committee mailbox will be available at each meeting. Please check it for correspondence related to your committee. She also announced that Kellie Kopach will be sending out periodic PTA news Flashes by email this year. If you have information that you would like included for your event, please get the information to Kellie by the dates of the schedule. A copy of the dates the emails will be sent is on the table. If you don't get one, email Kellie or Kristen for another copy.

Treasurer—Miriam Biales went over the financial information. She noted that the \$93,000 currently in our checking account includes money to cover about \$40,000 of unpaid school supplies expenditures. These will be paid out in the next few weeks. Consequently, we actually have about \$53,000 on hand to use.

Liz Price then proposed the following changes to the draft budget provisionally approved in June: 1)to increase proposed spending for grants to \$12,000 for each of the 2 schools (\$24,000 total) and 2) to increase the donation to Parents in Partnership from \$1000-\$1500. These will voted on later in the meeting.

Liz explained that the PTA grants are given to teachers and other needs of the schools. If you want to help decide how to distribute the grant money, please join the parent grant committee at the next meeting, or contact Liz or Ellen Girard.

Liz also explained that Parents in Partnership is a district wide program that provides a day speakers about a variety of parenting issues. This year it will be November 10th at Attea. Mark Walther, the principal at Hoffman, is looking for 2 volunteers from each school to help pick speakers for the program. If you interested in helping, contact Liz.

In other business, if you have expenses for your event, please give Miriam at least 2 days notice, so she can write the checks to pay your vendors.

III. Teachers' Representative Reports

Toby Pleszkun reported that Pleasant Ridge is focusing on scheduling right now. After the NWEA testing is complete, all the schedules (i.e. band, gifted, chorus, etc.) will be in place. If you questions about why your child is not doing something, feel confident they will be soon. The 3rd graders have started their weather unit; the 4th graders are doing letter writing; (A few of the classes are writing friendly letters across America and waiting for responses from classes all over the country.); the 5th graders have begun their social studies curriculum. All of the classrooms are talking about the FISH program to promote a sense of community in classrooms and throughout the school. The TREE is also starting their first project. Pleasant Ridge is also in the midst of doing fall assessments. The NWEA is the first of 3 measurements taken over the course of the year. Each morning 4 classes take the test, and each child takes 3 tests: reading, math, and language arts. Parents will receive the scores in October right before the first teacher conference. At that time there will be an orientation meeting about NWEA scores if you are not familiar with the test. These tests are especially valuable because the teachers get the results right after the students take them. The results are also very individualized and can be used to directly inform instruction. Remember when you get the scores to focus on your child's own progress, not the percentiles. The next measurement used is the CBM (Curriculum Based Assessments). CBMs are not shared because they are not very useful without the district norms. The third test given is the ISAT, which will be taken in March. Dr. Rich reported that he got the scores from last spring last week. The district is presently deciding how and when to distribute them to parents.

Debbie Shefren reported fort Lyon School. The teachers want to thank PTA for the gift certificates from the Learning Post. She reported that teachers are busy getting to know their students. Lyon is also doing assessments: the ISLs and CBMs. Information about these should be coming home in the Lyon Life newsletter or via backpacks. Kindergarten classes have started their "All about me" unit to learn about the other kids in the class and their Gingerbread Man activity to learn about school. Students will be starting a new program this year entitled--Handwriting without tears. It is designed to help students start writing letters and words more effectively. Look for information from your teachers. The 1st graders are talking about school, friendships, and communities in their classrooms. They have also started their science unit on living things. The 2nd graders have already gone on their Grove field trips to discuss life cycles. The Fine Arts team is collaborating this year with teachers to do a unit on story telling. It focuses on the idea "What is your story?" and goes through a

variety of countries and cultures. They are starting with North and South America, and then will do Greece, some African cultures and some Asian cultures. The holiday program will be developed from this theme as well.

IV. Committee Chair Reports

Holiday Helper—Deb McMahon explained that the Holiday Helper program is designed to help the families in our cluster who are in need. The Northfield Food pantry and Glenview Youth services identify families in our cluster that have special needs for food and clothing around the holidays. Because we serve the whole family, we often have close to 350 kids for which to provide. Individuals, families, or groups of families can then adopt a family to provide holiday gifts, food and clothing for the holidays. This year we are making a few changes in the program. IN the past we have provided all clothing and food in December, but we have found that that means some kids have no winter coat until December. So this year we will be starting the collection process in October and will encourage the outerwear donations earlier for distribution in November and then gifts in December. Watch for information in the backpacks and newsletter. Get your kids involved!!!! Let them know that they are helping kids in their schools. Keep in mind this is done on a completely anonymous basis.

Volunteer Database—Sandy Brennan reported that we are on our 2nd year with a PTA database. This allows us to have one list of volunteers for a variety of events. All corrections to information from curriculum night will be finished before next months meeting. Anyone who needs something earlier let Sandy know. Sandy also asked that all committee chairs return their lists at the end of their event marking on it that actually helped so that PTA can thank volunteers at the end of the year.

Directory—Yuko Aimi stated that the Directory should be out at the end of November. She is going to try to add a cross reference to parents with different names from their children. If you have questions about your information, then call Yuko. There will be no email addresses added to the directory due to privacy concerns.

Room Parent Program—Chris Northwick reported for Lyon and Pleasant Ridge. She said, "Thank you" to all who volunteered to be room parents. They have room parents for all classes in both schools. Amy Schneider is still looking for art enrichment parents for 15 rooms. Room parents please tell Amy about anyone you think could help. Art Enrichment parents present information to the classes about an artist once a month. Lesson plans are available from Amy.

Pumpkinfest—Kathleen Butler reported that Pumpkinfest is scheduled for October 26th from 4:00-8:00 at Lyon. It will be the same vendor and same basic games and activities as last year: dancing heads, Haunted House, games, inflatables, and food. Most of the setup will be done Thursday afternoon and evening the 25th. Kathleen is looking for volunteers to help with set-up, manning booths and take down. She especially needs volunteers to put together the Haunted House. The dad that has supplied most of the props and headed it up the past few years will not be helping this year. The committee is also looking for teenagers that need points for service projects for school or church. If you or your teenagers want to help, have them contact PTA.

Cultural Enrichment—Gloria Pedrelli reported that the first cultural enrichment program at Lyon will be AcRock on September 12th at 10:00 and 1:15. It is an acappella rock and roll group that sings songs with a Character Counts theme.

Global Language—Ana Cassorla and Gina Brunswick announced that the Global Language program will begin the week of September 24th at both schools. Lyon will be doing T& TH cycles, and M & W cycles. 6 Spanish classes, 3 2nd year Spanish classes and 1 French class. There will be a Discovery teacher at the Lyon door from 7:50 a.m. and 8 a.m. for drop off. If you arrive after 8 a.m., bring your kids in. At Pleasant Ridge there are a total of 124 kids signed up for Spanish, French and Chinese. When the program is over, there will be a Discovery Language teacher out front until all the kids are picked up.

Fall Lyon/PR Book Fair—Susie Feldstein reported the book fair will be Nov. 14-15 at Lyon School. They are already signing up volunteers. Please contact Stacy Saef or Natalie Weber to sign up. Next Tuesday they will be meeting with Scholastic to plan out the fair.

School Supplies PTA Program—Pat Hartigan reported that 330 students at Pleasant Ridge ordered supplies. Because of the increased price and generous donations, PTA was able to give 30 kids free supplies. This year the supplies were delivered directly to the classroom. This seemed to work much better. Pat is already working on bids for next year. The PTA board will also be meeting later this month to discuss possibly streamlining/altering the PTA registration and supply/sportswear ordering process for next year.

Sportswear Program—Tammy Burke reported that spiritwear sales worked well this year. They sold \$800.00 out of inventory at the curriculum nights. Mr. Dorken noted that Lyon will have a renewed emphasis on school spirit this year. They will be

encouraging the students to wear school colors or school spiritwear on the 1st Friday of every month. You can buy spiritwear right now. An order will be placed at the end of September. Order forms will be in newsletter and are always available online.

Environmental—Tammy Burke talked about the “Take Baby Steps” program. This is a district wide program. It will start this year by selling reusable grocery bags. The bags will net \$2.00 per bag for green programs for the schools. Tammy, Marcia Bellair and Mary Hershey will be talking to the kids today and tomorrow to introduce the program. The idea is that we all can help solve big problems by taking little baby steps. The bag sale will be this month. Order forms should come home with kids today. Later in the year, they will do a water bottle sale, and a “bag the baggie” campaign to encourage reusable containers for lunches. Spiritwear will also include a “Get on the Green team” shirt. Tammy and Marcia are also going to try to organize a Green team club that will meet after school or at recess. For more information see: www.takebabysteps.org. The environmental team will also be encouraging kids to walk or ride bikes to school. There are bike racks at both schools: by the front door at Pleasant Ridge and by the back field at Lyon.

Brett Clark also reported that the district recycling bins are being taken out of the classroom because the company that has been picking up the recycling at no cost will no longer do so because the district doesn't produce enough waste paper. The schools only produce 15% of the amount they require for them to do it for free. At the September 17th School Board meeting, the Board will be discussing ways to pay to recycle paper and milk jugs for lunch. Anyone who wants to hear and/or comment should come to the meeting by about 8 p.m. PTA Council expressed their opinion on the importance of continuing the recycling at their meeting last week. If the Board cannot figure out how to pay for recycling, then they may approach PTA. Brett also announced that the District had already instituted a clean green cleaning program in July as required by state law. Now all the Cleaners now used in the schools are environmentally friendly.

PTA Benefit—Jen Farber announced that the benefit will be Feb. 3, 2008 at the Northbrook Hilton. We have a goal of raising \$45,000 for PTA. 80s Prom night is the theme. We have some committee chairs open. If you know anyone who would like to chair a part of the benefit, let Jen know. There will be a survey coming about the class gift program. Last year the class gifts were handled in a new way and the committee will be seeking feedback about whether this should be continued or revised. Jen also asked that if you know of any big ticket items that people might want to donate, let her know. The committee will be looking for some new items this year.

- V. **Guest Speaker**—Toby Pleszkun, Gifted and Enrichment Teacher, Pleasant Ridge,
Homework: What you and your child can expect please check out the PTA website for a full copy of her presentation.

VI. **Principals' Reports**

Lyon School—Kevin Dorken stated that Lyon School is off to a great start. They have had 4 great curriculum nights: the general one, a Spanish one, pre-kindergarten one and an extended day kindergarten one. He thanked parents for attending. As part of the Fine Arts teams' integration of stories into the curriculum, Mr. Dorken has been reading stories by Margaret Reed McDonald to all the classes. She will be the visiting author in April and was the inspiration for the storytelling unit. Mr. Dorken reported that the 2nd graders are taking NWEA tests now as part of a pilot program to test their usefulness. In 6 months or so the District will evaluate how to proceed with primary NWEA testing.

Pleasant Ridge—Dr. Matt Rich stated that he was pleased to see so many people here. Pleasant Ridge is doing well working around the construction. About 25% of the certified staff is new to their positions this year. This has been a lot of work, and a lot of fun. It means that more kids are having more experiences with more staff. Pleasant Ridge has begun their FISH program, a social program designed to build a better overall school community. Dr. Rich stated that his "green" goal for the year was to have 200 Pleasant Ridge newsletters received by parents online. He presently has about 25 families signed up. If you received the newsletter online last year, you still need to sign up again because the school does not have last year's list. You can sign up on the back table or by emailing Dr. Rich.

VII. **Unfinished/New Business**

Budget—A motion was made to approve the final 2007-2008 budget. Discussion was made about the possibility of raising a committee budget. Liz encouraged chairs to discuss their needs as they arise. The budget was seconded and approved.

Liz Price announced that National Character Counts Week is October 21st. The Northfield food Pantry will be doing a food drive as part of Character Counts celebration. (This is separate from our food drive for Holiday Helper.) Liz needs a volunteer from PTA to help the food pantry with this. See Liz if you are interested. Liz also announced that the PTA laptops can be borrowed if needed for your committee. See Liz if you need one.

Liz Price announced the following events:

Community Events—Whole Foods and REI will be doing a walk/bike event
September 16 & 17

Rotary Walk Sept 18

VIII. Announcements (Calendar Overview)

September 12 – Lyon Cultural Enrichment—AcRock at 10:00 a.m. and 1:15 p.m.

September 20 – PR School Pictures

September 24 – Global Language Program starts at both schools

October 2 – Lyon School Pictures

October 3—Walk to school day

October 9 – NEXT PTA MEETING 9:15 at Lyon School Guest speaker Jason
Rehfeldt, Psychologist at Lyon/Pleasant Ridge Schools, *Topic: Bullying What
you and your child need to know*

October 26 – Pumpkinfest 4:00—8:00 p.m. at Lyon

November 3 – GEF Benefit—At Pinstripes

November 10 - Parents In Partnership—8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Attea

November 14-15 Lyon/PR Fall Book Fair.

IX. Adjournment—Liz Price adjourned the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robin Hinrichs, PTA secretary