

**LYNDALE COMMUNITY SCHOOL**  
**State of the School and PTO Meeting Minutes**  
November 10, 2015

**STATE OF THE SCHOOL TITLE 1 MEETING**

Title 1 of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) provides financial assistance to schools with high percentages of children from low-income families in an effort to ensure all children meet state academic standards. Schools receiving this support, referred to as Title 1 schools, are required to present three State of the School presentations a year to inform the community about the use of these funds.

Principal James and Assistant Principal Stauduhar presented information about the student body, our strengths and weaknesses, goals, and existing initiatives created to meet these goals.

**Student Body**

Total Students Enrolled	584
Free and Reduced Lunch Eligible	347
English Language Learners	229
Advanced Learners	50
Homeless or Highly Mobile	26
Special Education 66	66
Classrooms	25
Staff Members	75

**School Strengths**

- Strong family and community involvement (for example, 96% of families attend parent teacher conferences)
- Specific support programs in grades 4 and 5 to increase student achievement (Many students are close to proficiency, but not there yet. These supplemental programs and initiatives help students overcome this gap. Programs include LDA and Reading Partners.)
- School wide focus on the idea of perseverance
- School wide STEM project

**School Challenges**

- Increasing student proficiency levels in math, reading and science
- Intentionally targeting students who are partially proficient in tested subjects

**Goal Areas**

- Student Achievement
- Climate
- Family Engagement

**DISCIPLINE DATA**

	15/16 YTD
Referrals (students required to leave the classroom due to behavioral issues)	87
Suspensions	2

Last year at the same time there had been 36 referrals and 0 suspensions. The increase this year is due to a few students who are new to Lyndale and are taking some time to understand and adhere to the rules. While this was close to a daily occurrence early in the year it has become less frequent, implying that these few students are learning how to self-monitor themselves in the classroom.

Strengths

- Lyndale Community School discipline data is below district average for both referrals and suspensions.
- Teachers are implementing research-based classroom management practices.
- An on-site team of Lyndale staff is collecting and analyzing data in order to provide targeted services to specific students.

### **SCHOOL DESIGNATION: FOCUS**

The Minnesota Department of Education labels Title 1 Schools based on three years of the school's performance on the MCA tests in Proficiency (the number of students at or above proficiency), Growth (as seen via subsequent MCA tests) and Achievement Gap Reduction. Lyndale's score is currently 32.5 out of 75.

Lyndale's biggest challenge is the number of students reaching proficiency. While the school can show that students may develop 2 or 3 years worth in much less time, they are still not at proficiency. This is especially prevalent in minority students suggesting that language barriers may have a significant impact.

### **School Improvement Plan (SIP)**

The School Improvement Plan is designed to address the concerns revealed in the data above and focuses on three core areas: Student Achievement, School Climate and Family Engagement.

#### **Student Achievement**

Goal Areas:

- Reading
- Math

Strategies:

- Collaboration between class teachers and resource staff
- Professional Learning Communities for teachers to come together and plan lessons to meet student needs
- Weekly Professional Development Plan Learning Communities (PDPLC's, or simply team collaboration) teachers often meet after school.

#### **School Climate**

Goal Areas:

- Increase overall attendance from 90% to 95%
- Maintain effective behavioral strategies designed to minimize Out-of-Class referrals and suspensions

Strategies:

- Weekly attendance team meetings
- Research based practices: Responsive classroom, EnVOY
- Positive Behavior Plan
  - Celebrate perfect attendance
  - Button Day

#### **Family Engagement**

Goal Areas:

- Increase attendance at school wide events
- Greater completion of student and family surveys

Strategies:

- Language specific parent meetings
- Monthly Stay and Chat
- Frequent Classroom Newsletter
- Lyndale Reader's Club
- Language specific Robo-Calls

Complete information available at [http://lyndale.mpls.k12.mn.us/school\\_improvement\\_plan](http://lyndale.mpls.k12.mn.us/school_improvement_plan)

## **USE OF TITLE 1 FUNDS**

This year 7.5%, or \$399,138, of the school's budget comes from Title 1 funds. As a school wide Title 1 program, which means all students are able to benefit from Title 1 services. More than 65% of the funds are used for additional teaching staff, with other funds used for student enrichment projects, instructional materials and administrative costs (postage for report cards, etc.).

## **DISCUSSION**

After the presentation Principal James and Assistant Principle Stauduhar opened the room up for discussion.

One Lyndale parent, who used to be a public school teacher but not at Lyndale, mentioned concern that Curriculum Night is not more widely attended. Similar events at his school are an important opportunity for parents to meet teachers and learn what their student is doing in school. It was mentioned that the low participation rate might be due to language barriers, but a few native English speakers volunteered that they did not attend because the event sounds boring. Another parent mentioned that she appreciates the event as an opportunity to meet the parents of her student's classmates and is thus also disappointed at the low attendance. The ensuing discussion suggested that the event might need a name change, maybe Meet the Teacher Night, or, could integrate a social aspect might attract more families. Principal James mentioned that some parents interact with the school and their students' teachers in different ways, which is ok too. That said, she invites anyone to submit suggestions for retitling the event (send suggestions to [LyndalePTO@gmail.com](mailto:LyndalePTO@gmail.com)).

Another parent asked if the new STEM projects and partnerships are integrated only in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade class or if it is school wide. Ms. James explained that the all grades are working in partnership with the Science Museum of Minnesota to design carnival games that will be showcased to the community at Math and Science Night. An additional STEM project including Legos and robotics is available to 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders after school.

Because the carnival games will be displayed on Math and Science night, independent science projects are being moved to Arts Extravaganza Day, which may need a new name to be inclusive of a broader range of creativity.

**After the State of the School Meeting, a general PTO meeting was held.**

## **MURAL PROJECT**

Artist Greta McLain has been steadily gathering ideas for the murals that will be created and installed next summer. McLain will spend the first week of December working with Ms. Walker to include all Lyndale students in the design process. Additional events to engage the community will be held at the Somali Museum and during the La Posada 2015 celebration hosted by the Lyndale Neighborhood Association on December 5.

Lyndale is responsible for raising \$7000 to match the roughly \$50,000 State Arts Board grant. The PTO raised half of that last year and continues to work on raising the remainder.

## **TREASURER REPORT**

Due to money raised from the Carnival, the Tiki Party hosted by the Elliasen and Flynn families, Schnook Book Sales and other fundraising efforts, the PTO has roughly \$3500 in its account.

## **UPDATES**

- The **Spirit Wear** order was processed and t-shirts should be here by Thanksgiving break. If you did not order shirts but would like to have one, some will be available for purchase at Turkey Games, on Thursday, November 19<sup>th</sup>.
- The **Lyndale School Directory** was distributed this week to everyone who signed up to be in it. The PTO sends information to the people listed in the directory. If you are not in the directory but want the information please contact [lyndalepto@gmail.com](mailto:lyndalepto@gmail.com)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Turkey Games!** Thursday, November 19, 5:30 – 7:30  
Turkey Games have been an annual event at Lyndale for over 20 years. The family of Special Education Resource Teacher Ms. Howe owned a turkey farm and started this tradition by annually donating 20 turkeys for a school-wide game of Turkey Bingo. In addition to a turkey, winners receive all the fixings for a wonderful meal including a pan to cook the turkey in, stuffing, and other tasty stuff. In addition to Bingo there is a Turkey Waddle game in the Media Center (similar to a cake walk). It is a fun, free evening and we hope to see you there!
- **Dine Out Give Back! The Lowbrow**, 4244 Nicollet Avenue, Monday, November 23, 4 – 10 PM  
The Lowbrow will be donating 10% of all sales between 4 and 10 PM on Monday, November 23, to Lyndale. Take your friends and neighbors for a great meal and support Lyndale!
- **Stay and Chat Friday**, November 20, 8:25  
Due to the Thanksgiving holiday, Stay and Chat, usually held on the last week of the month, will be one week earlier on November 20. After dropping your student at school parents, families and caregivers are invited to stay and chat with Ms. James, Mr. Stuahar, and other Lyndale school community members.
- **Muffins for Moms** Thursday, December 3, 8:00 AM  
So much more than muffins! This kid-free event invites all moms and mom-like caregivers to a delightful breakfast followed by a Minnesota Sinfonia performance. Participants are asked to donate to the Giving Tree, which funds the Lyndale Foundation. Foundation money is largely used to support the band and orchestra, but can be spent at the discretion of the school and does not need district oversight or approval. All donations are tax-deductible. Donations are never required but if you are interested you may want to bring a checkbook.

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- The PTO is seeking a volunteer to coordinate Lyndale's night at the Twins game. This involves collaborating with Ramsey and Washburn, promoting the event, collecting reservations, and getting the tickets to participants. If interested email [LyndalePTO@gmail.com](mailto:LyndalePTO@gmail.com).
- Zion Church, located at 128 West 33<sup>rd</sup> Street, is a great neighbor to Lyndale. In addition to hosting Lyndale in the case of an emergency evacuation, they donate cold weather hats and mittens to students in need. On Wednesday, November 25 at 6:00 PM they are hosting their 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Lyndale Community Dinner. Lyndale families are invited to donate needed food items, volunteer to prepare the dinner, serve, clean up – or- just come enjoy a meal with your neighbors! More information at <http://zionchurchmpls.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/2015-November-Messenger.pdf>

**NEXT MEETING:** Tuesday, December 8. 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM. All are welcome!

Minutes prepared by Christine Daves, PTO Secretary and mom to Elliot (4<sup>th</sup> grade).