

**LYNDALE COMMUNITY SCHOOL**  
**PTO Meeting Minutes**  
October 13, 2015

## **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

### **CARNIVAL UPDATE**

The carnival, held Thursday, October 8, from 5:30 – 7:30, raised \$960, which is an increase of \$300 from the previous year. Proceeds will benefit the Teacher Reimbursement program that the PTO provides to help teachers defray out-of-pocket supply costs.

The event was well attended and successful in bringing the Lyndale School community together for a fun evening. Thoughts about the event and suggestions for next year include:

- **Food:** The event ran out of chips but had a lot of meat left over. The suggested donation of \$5 per person may be high for an entire family. It would be helpful to have some kid-friendlier food available, such as hotdogs, possibly at a lower suggested donation. The previous year included delicious soup provided by Youth Farm, which was unable to do so this year. That was a hearty, adult food that seemed to be missed.
- **Games:** It would be helpful to have signage regarding how many tickets each game cost, at the site of the game. A volunteer commented that she just went by what the previous volunteer had said, but did not know if she was charging the correct amount. There was also some confusion regarding how many tickets the dunk tank cost.
- **Wristbands:** This year students could purchase \$10 wristbands permitting unlimited use of the inflatables. Few students took advantage of this and volunteers were not aware of them causing some confusion.
- **Prizes:** Goldfish as prizes are fun for kids but create an obligation for families. Quickly finding goods needed to care for the fish is not always practical or possible. It was suggested that the goldfish might fit better as a raffle prize when included with a tank and all the supplies necessary for caring for them.
- **Raffle:** The raffle generated more income than last year, but a lot less than the value of the prizes.
  - Some of this may have been due to a change in traffic pattern. People used to enter the multi-purpose room from the central hall, versus the shorter hall leading to the playground. This may have reduced the number of participants.
  - Guests also suggested that the raffle, and the prizes, be promoted before the event and that families have the opportunity to purchase raffle tickets prior to the event.
  - Another suggestion was to have a 'passport' like the one provided for international night so families would know about all of the activities.
  - Silent auctions tend to generate more income, but limit the winners to those who can afford high bids. The raffle is nice because anyone, whether they purchased 1 ticket or 100 tickets, can win. Next year we might consider having a silent auction for a few items while keeping the majority of prizes in a raffle.
- **Staffing:** Principal James encouraged the PTO to request more school staff to help with the event. There were not as many parent volunteers as needed, so 5<sup>th</sup> graders were recruited to help, but they weren't as reliable as hoped. Ms. James specifically mentioned the need for school staff to be present at the cake-walk in the media center. The staff who were there were extremely helpful!

It was further discussed that there is not a lot time to plan the carnival because it happens so early in the year. It is possible that it could be swapped with another event, but any other event would then have the short planning time impacting it.

There was not as much traffic to the Science Museum activities and Mural Project as hoped. Like the raffle, they were not in heavy traffic areas.

**Big THANK YOU to Katie Diaz for planning and coordinating the event!** Thank you to all parent and family volunteers and to Lyndale staff who made this event a success!

## FUNDRAISING

- The backyard Tiki Party hosted at the home of Megan and Josh Eliason, was fun and generated \$860 for the PTO budget! **Thank you Megan and Josh!**
- Lyndale Community School is thrilled to be the beneficiary of **Lowbrow's** November 23 Dine Out/Give Back event! 10% of what is spent on food between 4:00 PM and 10:00 PM on November 23<sup>rd</sup> will be donated to Lyndale. The Lowbrow, 4244 Nicollet Ave S., is a family-friendly restaurant with delicious food! Eat local and benefit Lyndale!
- Principal James asked the PTO to consider fundraising options that are not so culturally specific (or consider other cultures to be specific to). A Somali Tea, Henna and sambusas event was suggested as something that would be more inclusive to Somali families and attractive to all families. One parent suggested that the PTO be specific about what money is being raised for and that it would be good to discuss it at a Somali parent meeting.
- Give to the Max Day is on November 12. Donations can be made any time between November 1 and November 12, with specific incentives for early donations. The PTO has not formally decided what money raised through this event will be earmarked for, but a suggestion of markers and other needed art supplies for Ms. Walker was well received. Watch email for more information about Give to the Max day.

## MURAL PROJECT

The mural project is on schedule. Ideas were collected from the community at Nicollet Open Streets and the Carnival. More community feedback will be collected at a community event on December 5 and possibly something held at the Somali Museum (yet to be scheduled).

Based on collected information, the artist, Greta McLain, will start to design the mural. The week following Thanksgiving she will be at Lyndale working with Ms. Walker to include all students in the process. After the mural is designed it will be drawn onto a canvas-like material that students and community members will paint. After the painting the panels will be adhered to the walls.

Ms. McLain uses photographs in her design process. She invites community members to share any photographs they have which represent the community. Feel free to email images and comments to [LyndalePTO@gmail.com](mailto:LyndalePTO@gmail.com). For more information and to see Greta's work visit <http://www.gretamclain.com>.

## TREASURER UPDATE

PTO Treasurer Megan Eliason was happy to report that with the carnival and the Tiki Party, the PTO has roughly \$4000. This money will be used for the teacher reimbursement program, events, and other specific needs.

## PRINCIPAL JAMES

Principal James explained that the district agreed to fund 4 kindergarten teachers if we had the students to fill that many classrooms. Lyndale anticipated needing that teacher so kept the four from last year. This meant the school had to pay for one of the teachers out of pocket with the understanding that the district would reimburse Lyndale if the school needed the 4<sup>th</sup> teacher. With 99 kindergartners this year, Lyndale does need 4 kindergarten teachers but the district has run into financial issues and the school has not been reimbursed. Hopefully this will be sorted out quickly and Lyndale will receive the money. If not, Ms. James would expect the district to provide more support at the end of the year when the school budget has been depleted. Because Lyndale has been fiscally responsible there is no reason to think that the school should face any long-term negative impact.

## SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE

Lyndale has started the process to apply for a Minnesota School of Excellence designation from the Minnesota Elementary School Principals' Association. The process, being led by Assistant Principal Studuhar, starts with providing MESPA a letter of intent submitted now, then a self-study over the winter, followed with an application submitted at the end of the school year. The association reviews applications over the summer and awards schools at the beginning of the 2016/17 school year.

While the award does not benefit the school monetarily, it does publically acknowledge and promotes the quality of Lyndale.

For more information see <http://www.mespa.net/SOE>

### **CONFERENCES**

Lyndale Community School has 98% attendance rate for parent teacher conferences. (Way to go families!) Assistant Principal Studuhar pointed out how organized the school is with finding and scheduling translators to accommodate all families. (He also coordinated the food trucks coming to campus the first night of conferences – thank you Mr. Studuhar!)

### **LYNDALE TOURS**

Families seeking school options for the 2016/17 academic year are starting to plan school visits. Parent/Guardian tour guides are needed for taking prospective parents/families on tour. Training is provided.

Lyndale has not hosted an open house in a number of years even though most schools do. Lyndale has found that families prefer to visit the school while the students are there to see how it really runs. In addition to tours, families have hosted morning 'teas' for prospective parents to meet Lyndale families.

It was suggested that Lyndale create bookmarks that could be distributed during these tours. Sara Weingartner is going to draw something up.

### **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

The next Pleasant Pathway walking school bus is scheduled for November 6; however, due to a conference for ESL teachers the school will not have enough staff to oversee the walk safely. 9 volunteers are needed for the day. (4 attendees volunteered on the spot!) If you are interested please email [LyndalePTO@gmail.com](mailto:LyndalePTO@gmail.com). In the case of weather that is under 30 degrees, the event will be canceled.

### **MISC. UPDATES**

- "Lyndale Readers" is the new name of the "100 Book Club".
- The school directory will be printed next week.
- The City of Minneapolis is working with Lyndale to find space for an additional bike rack. Current considerations are to move the current racks over to make room for a 3<sup>rd</sup> rack in that area.

**NEXT MEETING:** Tuesday, November 10. 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).