

Lyndale Community School

PTO Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2014

WELCOME

PTO President Carrie Swanson welcomed families.

5th GRADE AUDOBON FIELD TRIP FUNDRAISER

5th grade parent Randy Niemiec announced that in order to raise funding for the 5th grade 3-day field trip to Audubon Center of the North Woods, students will be raking leaves again this year. Cost is \$35 for a regular sized yard, \$45 for a large yard, and \$10 for bags. The 5th grade class is looking for parents to volunteer with transportation between raking sites – and of course all volunteers are invited to help rake! To volunteer or have your yard raked (or make a donation) please email Meg Hoyt-Niemiec at myhoyt@hotmail.com

Another parent suggested that the 5th graders integrate other fundraising activities such as selling candy.

STATE OF THE SCHOOL TITLE 1 MEETING

Of Lyndale's 587 students:

- 52% speak English as a second language (44% Somali and 8% Spanish)
- 73% are eligible for free or reduced lunch
- 12% have special education needs
- 5% are homeless or highly mobile

Lyndale offers unique programming including orchestra, band, choir, and a variety of theater programs.

Lyndale partners with many organizations including Reading Corp, Math Corp, Experience Corp, Generation Next, Youth Farm, Arboretum, High Point Center for Printmaking, Blaidell YMCA, the Minnesota Sinfonia, and others.

Accolades

- During the 2013/2014 academic year, only 1 student was expelled. While the district is trying to reduce the number of suspensions, Lyndale is happy that it is not a big concern at Lyndale.
- Lyndale has fully implemented the Positive School-Wide Engagement Plan and established an Instructional Leadership Team.
- Lyndale students are comparable to the district proficiency average.
- All groups (Black, White and Hispanic) in the category of "Proficient and Growing" are outperforming the district in the areas of Reading and Math.

Class Test Scores

- 3rd Graders
 - Math: 60% meets or exceeds standards; district-wide, 50% of 3rd graders meet or exceeds standards
 - Reading: 49% meets or exceeds standards; district-wide, 42% of 3rd graders meet or exceeds standards
- 4th Graders
 - Math: 52% meets or exceeds standards; district-wide, 52% of 4th graders meet or exceeds standards
 - Reading: 30% meets or exceeds standards; district-wide, 48% of 4th graders meet or exceeds standards
- 5th Graders
 - Math: 48% meets or exceeds standards; district-wide, 48% of 5th graders meet or exceeds standards
 - Reading: 39% meets or exceeds standards; district-wide, 48% of 5th graders meet or exceeds standards
 - Science: 37% meets or exceeds standards; district-wide, 35% of 5th graders meet or exceeds standards

District-Wide Goals

Acceleration 2020: Increase proficiencies by 5% for all students; increase proficiencies for students of color by 8%. (The higher goal set for students of color is part of the district's initiatives for closing the achievement gap. To achieve this more assistance will be given to the students who need it most, which should decrease the achievement gap. The efforts of external partners, such as Reading Corp and Math Corp, will be focused on this concern.)

School Designation

The Minnesota Department of Education evaluates all schools MCA test scores in three ways: proficiency, growth, and achievement gap reduction. Here are the Lyndale scores for the past two years.

	2013/2014	2012/2013
Proficiency	20 points	12 points
Growth	26 points	13 points
Achievement gap reduction	26 points	12 points
Total	72 points (out of 75 possible)	37 points (out of 75 possible)

Due to lower scoring during the 2012/2013 year Lyndale continues to be designated as a 'Focus School'. In order to change designation the school must maintain higher numbers for two consecutive years.

While Lyndale does well with efforts to close the achievement gap and with student growth and development, we struggle with proficiency. In other words, a student may show measurable growth of 2 or 3 years in just one year, but still might not be at proficiency.

Lyndale Goals

- Increase proficiency in reading and math for all students.
- Maintain and implement positive school-wide engagement plan.
- Maintain communication and activities that engage families.
- Increase attendance so 70% of students attend 95% of the time (missing 8 days or less).

For more detailed information on Lyndale's School Improvement Plan and Family Involvement, please request a copy for the school or visit the website at lyndale.mpls.k12.mn.us

BRIEF CARNIVAL RECAP

PTO President Carrie Swanson thanked everyone who helped make the carnival a success. Attendees said the dunk tank was "awesome" and "marvelous"! There were a few comments that the fish were not as popular.

COMMUNICATIONS AND BI-LAWS UPDATE

Bridget Gernander followed-up on Essa Hassan's recommendation last spring that the PTO establish bi-laws to articulate the mission of PTO and the roles of its participants. Mrs. Gernander reviewed what other schools used and created a document specific to the Lyndale PTO. Copies will be emailed to PTO members (hopefully with a summary in Spanish and Somali) so attendees can vote to approve or amend the bi-laws in November. The most significant issues addressed in document are financial guidelines and the addition of a Co-Chair President position.

ADD ARABIC AT WASHBURN

Randy Niemiec brought to the attention of the PTO that a coalition of parents are preparing to talk to Washburn High School about adding Arabic to their language program. Currently, it is offered at Lyndale and Ramsey Middle School, but students have no options for continuing studies at Washburn. Ramsey recently increased its commitment to the Arabic language program by increasing the hours of the position. If you would like to sign a petition you can go to <http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/support-the-arabic-language-at-washburn> or contact Randy Niemiec.

PEACE OFFICER AT PLEASANT PATHWAYS

A Lyndale parent expressed concern about having an armed officer at school the morning of Pleasant Pathways (when buses drop students off at Pleasant and 38th and kids walk the remainder of the way). The concern focused on the presence of a firearm conveying a potentially dangerous environment. The

parent who voiced the concern was not present at the meeting. Attendees commented that having the officer there also reinforces the idea the police are part of the community. One parent, who was walking the pathway with the officer, pointed out that the he was a little brusque with instructing kids to stay off the grass and such. Invoking a feeling of community may work better if a more friendly approach is embraced.

DON'T FORGET:

Mark your calendar for Turkey Games on Thursday, November 20!

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, November 11, 6:00 p.m.

Prepared by Christine Daves, PTO Secretary and mom to Elliot (3rd grade).