

Lyndale Community School
PTO Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, November 12, 2013 (11.12.13)

CARNIVAL SUMMARY

The 2013 Lyndale School Fall Carnival earned \$529.11, reflecting an increase of \$130 over last year. This is about \$130 higher than last year. Total expenses were \$1600 and revenue was just over \$2100.

The carnival provides an opportunity for Lyndale families to meet and interact while generating financial support for the school. PTO President Carrie Swanson said that the mission and goal of the event is not set in stone and is open for discussion and leadership. Audience members commented that the social component of the event is very important but that fundraising opportunities could be added without compromising the social value or reducing event access. Fundraising ideas included selling raffle tickets prior to the event, having a silent auction component, or selling tickets to an event (for example, an child/parent art project class).

Mrs. Swanson suggested that a task force be formed to discuss the event and plan it throughout the year. She also requested that people voice their opinions about food with those planning the event. Historically, catering has been the event's largest expense and event planners have not had feedback or input from those with dietary restrictions. If that is you, please give the planners your suggestions!

In the brief conversation that followed audience members brainstormed having a vendor provide the catering, but it was pointed out that it could get expensive. Some companies work with schools to provide lower-cost services for events such as this. Fat Lorenzo's is known for this and has recently formed a board allowing schools to apply for such services. There was some discussion about having volunteers prepare food in the school's kitchen which may be permitted if a food service professional was hired to supervise.

If you are interested in being part of the 2014 Lyndale School Fall Carnival task force, please contact Carrie Swanson at lyndalepto@gmail.com

COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE – NEW!

The new Communication Committee, headed by Karin Bultman and Megan Elliasen, surveyed Lyndale families about the school's communication practices. The survey was sent home with every student, and it could be completed online. The survey was conducted October 1 – October 8. 89 families responded (42% responded online, 58% responded via paper copy).

General results showed that families are pleased with the school's communication efforts. Most people welcome electronic communications and are open to receiving them more frequently, especially if it includes information about events, forms, updates, or anything that is time-sensitive. In addition to digital communications (web, email, Facebook), families welcome flyers that are sent home with students but commented that it wasn't the most reliable system. A number of people requested that everything sent out be sent in English and Spanish.

The survey also asked about the PTO. Comments included that it can be hard to hear at meetings and that people are not sure how to sign up to attend. (People can just show up, no need to RSVP.) The majority of responders stated that evening meetings work much better than morning meetings. Participants also stated that they would like more information about specific volunteer opportunities. (See below!)

Current committee members include: Megan Elliason, Karen Bultman, Bridgette Gernander, Sara Weingartner, and Jenny Borden. The committee would like more members – like you! If interested contact Megan Elliason 612-824-3111, melliasen@yahoo.com.

STATE OF THE SCHOOL PARENT MEETING NUMBER III

Because more than 50% of students receive free or reduced price lunches, Lyndale Community School is labeled a Title 1 school. As a Title 1 school Lyndale receives additional money from the district. Title 1 funds allotted to Lyndale for the 2013 – 2014 school year are \$291,195. As our student population fluctuates, so does this funding from year to year.

As a Title 1 school, Principal James is federally mandated to present information about these funds and school progress to Lyndale families. She explained that funds are currently used to supplement the High Five Program; fund a Spanish Bilingual Program Assistant, an Advanced Differentiation Specialist, Somali Bilingual Program Assistant, and an Intermediate Math Specialist. The remaining \$106,195 is split between funding the band/orchestra, catering for family events, extended time for teachers and staff, books and technology, field trips, and postage.

Lyndale has 597 students. 51% are English Language Learners; 69% receive free or reduced price lunch; and 3% are homeless or highly mobile. Reducing the achievement gap is one Lyndale's goals this year. Addition goals for the next year include:

- Increase students proficient in math from 44% to 50%.
- Increase students proficient in reading from 37% to 57%.
- Increase 5th grade proficiency in science from 29% to 39%.
- Increase class engagement.
- Maintain overall positive school climate and high academic learning culture.
- Increase attendance for students who attend school 95% (miss 8 days or less), from 66% to 80%

See the complete report at <http://mpssir.com/SelectReport.aspx>

LYNDALE FOUNDATION

The Lyndale Foundation is a non-profit organization responsible for managing financial donations made to the school. When former Principal Ozzie Brooks James retired, Lyndale received a number of donations. When donations are collected by the district certain restrictions are placed on how such money can be used. By setting up the Lyndale Foundation the school is able to access and use the money how it sees fit. The foundation has approximately \$20,000 in funds.

\$4000 has been requested to fully fund the band/orchestra. Right now all the instruments are being used and there is a waitlist of students wanting to participate. The PTO voted to approve the Lyndale Foundation supporting the band with \$4000 to cover more instruments, training resources, and supplies.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- **Hearing Test Assistance**
School Nurse, Sharon Vonachen, needs an adult or two to escort first graders to and from their hearing screening. This involves keeping students occupied with books while waiting for their turn so they do not disturb other's tests. Hearing screenings will happen on December 4, 2013, starting at 9:00 AM and running through the early afternoon. Contact: Sharon Vonachen, Sharon.Vonachen@mpls.k12.mn.us
- **Classroom Reading Helpers**
First grade teacher Karen Larson is looking for classroom volunteers to help kids with reading. Contact: Karen Larson, Karen.Larson@mpls.k12.mn.us
- **introduce kids to real food!**
Students were offered a sample of Moroccan Bean Salad on Friday, November 8. The district will offer another food sample to students in February. If you are interested in helping distribute

the samples please contact Assistant Principal Aaron Arrendondo,
Aaron.Arrendondo@mpls.k12.mn.us.

- **Box Tops Counting**

Adrienne Bisping manages the collection and submissions of Box Tops. She recently submitted \$550 worth! She is planning on having a set time each month for people to get together and count the box tops prior to submitting them. If you are available to help please contact her at adiemadet@yahoo.com.

Some schools earn \$20,000 annually from box tops. If Lyndale wants to increase the amount raised Adrienne suggested having more classroom competitions and acknowledging teachers for their students participation. She also recommended keeping an eye out during grocery store sample days. If samples come in packaging with box tops, ask if you can take it.

Don't forget the 2014 Fall Carnival Task Force and the Communications Committee request for volunteers (listed above).

ODDS AND ENDS

- **November is good manners month!**

Please remember to keep up on school events and monthly themes in the Lyndale Community School Handbook you received in the beginning of the year. Thank you! Have a great day!

- **Lyndale Community School Directories**

Directories will be sent home this week. Only families who submitted information for the directory will receive one. If you missed the submission but still want to get one, you can get in an addendum which will be distributed in January. Contact Bridget Gernander, bridget_cathleen@yahoo.com.

- **Next PTO Meeting**

The PTO does not meet in December. The next meeting will be Tuesday, January 14 at 6:00 in the Multi-Purpose room. Free childcare is provided in the gym. Everyone is welcome! If interested, bring a snack to share! You do not need to register or RSVP. For more information contact Carrie Swanson at lyndalepto@gmail.com.

Prepared by Christine Daves, PTO Secretary and mom to Elliot (2nd grade).