

Lyndale Community School
PTO Meeting Minutes
Monday, January 14, 2014

PTO MISSION

PTO President Carrie Swanson requested input regarding how PTO funds are used. Principal James explained that as a Title 1 school, Lyndale is fortunate to have basic needs met by district or government funds. She explained the following sources that fund Lyndale:

- **Title 1** is a federal program funding schools with high numbers of low-income students. Title 1 funds purchased instruments when the Lyndale band program was established.

- **The Lyndale Foundation** is built by donations and provides funds that can be spent at the discretion of Ms. James, versus district or Title 1 monies that must meet specific criteria to be accessed. The Foundation provides water at PTO meetings, coffee for the 'Stay & Chats', Turkey Bingo turkeys, etc.

- **The PTO** earns money from fundraising events, Box Tops for Education, and the Target Red Card program. This year the PTO donated \$150 to each teacher to help purchase classroom supplies, sponsored childcare during PTO meetings and other events, purchased water for PTO meetings, and provided coffee for the Stay & Chats.

Attendees suggested the following ideas for how PTO funding could benefit the school:

- Install a Peace Garden
- Build Little Free Libraries
- Teacher Development (funding training/conference attendance by request)
- Teacher Requests (example: cake for a student teacher's last day)
- Teacher Appreciation (meal, gift, classroom funding)
- Translation Services (for printed material)
- PTO Outreach (efforts to engage more parents, social events)
- PTO Development (effectiveness training)
- Re-energizing 34th Street Garden (work with neighbor who started the garden)
- Student-made Artwork for Garden
- Replace Garden Signage

Fieldtrip scholarships were also suggested. Principal James pointed out that school funds already cover students who cannot afford fieldtrip fees. The PTO might, however, consider funding the more expensive 5th Grade fieldtrip.

PTO OUTREACH/LYNDALE COMMUNITY BUILDING

There is interest in having more participants in the PTO. Suggestions for promoting participation included having a presence (information table) at all school events. Kendra Popov volunteered to look into coordinating social events that could be promoted to all Lyndale families.

This prompted discussion about making events inclusive by recognizing cultural and religious preferences which might impact participation. Having a diverse board will inform the PTO how to best accomplish this.

Some English-speaking parents would like an opportunity to practice Spanish with Spanish speaking parents.

FUNDRAISING

Box Tops for Education pays Lyndale for each box top turned in, but money can also be raised by shopping online. Families (and friends of families, families of friends, etc.) can set up a simple log-in at btfe.com. A click on 'Shop & Earn' brings the viewer to a page with over 400 online stores (including Target, Gap, Best Buy, Walmart, Travelocity, Factory Outlet Store, etc.) Clicking on the store takes you directly to the store's website, but results in 1 - 30 box tops for Lyndale for every \$10 you spend.

Information about a similar program, School Mall, will be sent home with students next week. School Mall allots points to Lyndale every time a purchase is made. The school can use those points to purchase supplies. School Mall also provides gifts for students and teachers based on the amount raised.

PTO VOLUNTEER POSITIONS FILLED

- Vice President - Essa Hassan
- Treasurer(s) - Anisa Hajimumin, Billy Diaz
- Carnival Chair - Katie Diaz
- Social Outreach - Kendra Popov

VOLUNTEERING

Karen Larsen, first grade teacher, is looking for volunteers to help on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. Contact Karen Larsen at karen.larsen@mpls.k12.mn.us

Spanish speaking parents expressed interest in volunteering if they would be of assistance as Spanish speakers. Principal James is going to ask teachers what needs might exist for Spanish speaking parents.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Communications Committee has sent out the second monthly eBulletin to Lyndale families. 45% of recipients opened the email, which is a successful rate for electronic communications.

Sara Weingartner produced a lovely new promotional brochure for Lyndale. It was not folded in the way that was intended however and the school will be talking to the printer about fixing it.

Ms. James thanked Karin Bultman for creating and sending the bulletin and Sara Weingartner for her work with the brochure.

The communications committee expressed interest in having a PTO presence at neighborhood events.

SHARE YOUR IDEAS/EXPERIENCES AS MPS BUILDS STRATEGIC PLAN

Minneapolis Public Schools is seeking parent and family input to their strategic plan. Please share your thoughts by taking a survey at http://www.mpls.k12.mn.us/strategic_plan The deadline to complete the survey is January 24th.

HEAD LICE - WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Spanish and English pamphlets about head lice are available in the Nurse Vonachen's office.

(This was made available in response to a parent request, there has not been a lice outbreak.)

RAMSEY MIDDLE SCHOOL EVENTS

January 21, 6:00 PM: Information Session including school overview and question/answer time.

February 6, 5:30 PM: Multi-cultural Potluck Dinner

REMINDERS

No school Friday, January 17 or Monday, January 20th.

Report cards will be sent home on January 30th.

The Fourth Grade Showcase will be held in the afternoon on January 31st.

NEXT PTO MEETING: Tuesday, February 11, 6:00 PM (free childcare provided)

Meetings for the remainder of the school year will be held in the evening.

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