

Lyndale Community School
PTO Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 8, 2014

GUEST

Kristen Berg Thompson, a consultant working for the school district, asked attendees for their opinions about communication received from the MPS. The district is doing this project in order to capitalize on efforts to communicate with parents and the community.

TREASURER/FINANCIAL UPDATE

Carrie Swanson will be the second signer on the PTO checking account.

COMMUNICATION

David Weingartner displayed the banners designed by the talented Sara Weingartner. One is a general Lyndale banner while the other says PTO. The banners will be used for events and displayed in the school. Each banner cost \$32 to print and discussion ensued about printing others to display around the building, potentially in each grade's pod. Sara Weingartner was not present to volunteer for that.

One of the banners will be used this coming Friday, April 11, for the Lyndale Neighborhood Association's Open House which will be held from 6:00 PM - 8:30 PM at Lyndale Community School.

STAFF APPRECIATION LUNCH

A staff appreciation event has come up in a number of PTO meetings. It was decided that the PTO would host a lunch, much like they did last year. Lunches work well because teachers and staff are not required to extend their work day and are able to take a lunch with them back to the classroom if they are short on time.

It was suggested that we check in with Amy Britton so see if D'Amico & Sons would be available to support the event in any way.

INTERNATIONAL NIGHT SUMMARY

International night was a great success! The PTO spent \$1207.07 (a correction from the \$1060 that was presented at the PTO meeting) to cover food and performers. Ticket sales and donations totaled \$1270. Proceeds will benefit other PTO events. The dancers, drummers, and Somali artifacts, on loan from the Somali Artifact and Cultural Museum <<http://somalimuseum.com/>>. Recommendations for next year include:

- Order more food.
- Offer more vegetarian options.
- Have Somali artifacts in a space with more visibility.

It was also suggested that events be mentioned at Curriculum Night. Most Lyndale events culminate with some type of raffle or show, such as the performers at International night. Because of this, most activities close about 20 minutes prior to the end time of the event. Having participants expect that activities will last to the end of the posted event time is stressful to the people working activities. It was also discussed more signs with the schedules posted would be helpful.

PHIL ROONEY/YOUTH FARM

Phil Rooney, the Lyndale Neighborhood Program Director for Youth Farm, talked to the PTO about the organization's mission and programs.

Youth Farm maintains four farms in Minneapolis. Through its Summer Program and School Year Program, Youth Farm engages kids in farm/growing activities and cooking. Programming serves youth ages 9 through 18 and offers an intern program for ages 19 - 24. In addition to growing and cooking, the program focuses on building leadership skills and community involvement.

Mr. Rooney teaches an after-school class at Lyndale and works in the garden during recess on Mondays when kids might join him. The hoop house, at the east end of the playground, extends their growing time by two months. Mr. Rooney also offers taste testing to Lyndale kids a few times throughout the school year.

The organization focuses on sending the produce they grow home with the kids who participate. Registration is now open for their summer program which is 8 weeks long, 6-hours a day, and completely free, but limited to kids living in the local community. Kids work the farm in the morning, prepare and share a healthy group lunch, and do an activity in the afternoon. Registration is not available online but parents can call or email Phil Rooney for registration papers ([612-990-9261](tel:612-990-9261), phil@youthfarmmn.org). Kids should be able to participate in at least 6 out of the 8 weeks.

Youth farm was included in the mini wellness grant that PTO members recently applied for. The grant requested new stop sign paddles for the walking school bus, large drinking water containers for events, and hoses for youth farm.

Money to remodel the kitchen at Lyndale has been approved by the School Board and should happen in fiscal year 2015. Hopefully, it will include a salad bar and can use food grown in the Youth Farm garden.

WORDS FROM MS. JAMES & MR. ARREDONDO

A survey went out to 2nd grade parents regarding preferences for having 3 third grade classes with associate instructors, versus 4 classes with instructors with less training. Families preferred having the larger classes. Other changes to staff include the following:

- One fifth grade class will be added.
- Increasing special education staffing from 1 to 1.9 positions
- Physical Education staffing is increasing by .5
- Special Resource Teacher .9 position
- Arabic teaching position increasing from .4 to .5
- Band and orchestra teaching increases from 2 days a week to a .5 position
- .5 District supplied Instructional Specialist who will participate in teaching observation and coaching

School vacancies for the 2014-2015 school year, at this time, are:

- 5th grade teacher
- 4th grade teacher
- 3rd grade teacher
- Special Education Resource (.9 position)
- English as a Second Language (.5 position)
- Instructional Specialist (.5 position) (hired by district)

WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?

One participant recommended a lunch or gift certificate for the engineers. She was in the office for an hour one day when 4 kids vomited requiring the engineers to clean up over and over. That deserves special recognition! All attendees were supportive.

Next PTO Meeting: 2nd Tuesday in May, 6:00 PM

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