

Senator Luann Ridgeway
Capitol Report
September 26, 2008

Lakewood Elementary 50th Anniversary

Lakewood Elementary is a testament to the power of citizen involvement and a shining example of how dedication to a worthy cause can really pay off.

The North Kansas City School Board had planned to close the elementary school – regardless of the fact that it is one of the top performing schools in the entire state! Representative Jerry Nolte and I were proud to help the parents, teachers, children and area residents in the successful fight to keep their neighborhood school open.

This is at least the second time that closure of Lakewood Elementary has been stopped. This school has been saved only because there were those willing to take a stand and let their voices be heard loud and clear. Special thanks are due to PTA leader Julie Hensley and her husband Marty and all the parents who proudly fought for their school. Rep. Jerry Nolte and I agree that efforts to fight closure would have been futile were it not for the broad based and vocal parental support for the school, which is why Jerry and I are helping to sponsor a Lakewood Celebration.

Now, the “Little School that Could” is celebrating 50 years of educational excellence by hosting an event for the whole community. I encourage everyone to come support this remarkable school and celebrate a local victory. Here are the details being distributed by celebration organizers:

Fifty Year Anniversary Celebration!
Lakewood Elementary Lives to See its 50th Year

LIVE Radio Disney's Rockin' Recess Show
High School Musical 3 Premiere Show

September 27, 2–4 p.m. @ Lakewood
4624 N. Norton, Kansas City, MO

February 16, 2008, the *Kansas City Star* printed an article that advised the Lakewood Elementary students, parents and surrounding neighborhoods that their school was slated to be closed. Proud parents and community members young and old came to the rescue. The school district held a public meeting that was attended by former students, neighborhood residents and the local media. After 50 days of debate and discussion, the school board decided to not close the school.

The school enrollment levels were higher than expected by the district this year and it appears that the neighborhood is an attractive option for affordable homes closer to working centers and transit lines. This was the second time in the last 20 years that the neighborhood saved the school. Like the Little Red Engine, we believe optimism is a great lesson to teach our kids.

Lakewood would like to invite **everyone** to a celebration of 50 years of bringing quality education to the community. It is also a "*Thank You*" to **all** of those who helped us save our school so that it could live to see 50.

Along with the Radio Disney Rockin' Recess, we will have a bounce house, KCMO Fire Trucks, KCMO Police Mascot McGruff and the Winnetonka Dance Team.

Free hot dogs, chips and soft drinks for all the kids.

Senator Luann Ridgeway
17th Senatorial District
(573) 751-2547