

**NAME** Melissa Cuddy  
St. Paul, MN

**Years taught at LILA**

This is my third year teaching at LILA; I've taught both second and third grades.

**Please list high school and colleges attended and diplomas or degrees earned.**

<b>Name of School</b>	<b>Diploma/Degree Received</b>	<b>Year Received</b>
College of St. Benedict	B.A. Elementary Education	2003

**Please describe your experience or skills working with youth, youth issues, and parenting:**

My experience working with youth and families ranges from teaching in a childcare center to working in direct care at an adolescent crisis shelter. I've been a nanny and a tutor and, in the summers, I moonlight as a camp counselor at a high school theatre camp in Illinois. You might say that I've worn many hats!

I began my teaching career as a Spanish specialist in a fine arts middle school. Shortly thereafter, I was hired to teach kindergarten in a struggling charter school in downtown St. Paul. A year later, I came to LILA excited but wary, but my worries were quelled as I learned that this school is not only the "little immersion school that could," but a charter school run with integrity and great heart. I was hooked!

In search of more experience living and working in a Spanish-speaking country, I left LILA to serve in Guatemala as a Peace Corps volunteer from January 2007 to March 2009. While in Guatemala, I worked as a teacher trainer in a rural community health program and facilitated workshops on HIV/AIDS and girls' self-esteem.

Now, I am loving being back as a third-grade teacher here at LILA! It's been rewarding to return to a school that has grown and achieved so much, and yet still holds a place in my heart.

**Community Involvement:**

- St. Joan of Arc Church
- Twin Cities Gospel Choir

**School Involvement**

- Third grade teacher and team member
- Sunshine Committee member
- Assessment Committee member

**What are the primary strengths, skills, or expertise you would bring to your position on the Lakes International School Board?**

Most importantly, as a member of the Lakes International School Board, I would bring a commitment to the school's mission. Both personally and professionally, I value honesty and open-mindedness. I am someone who will speak up to help problem-solve and promote honest dialogue. I'm willing to work hard and commit time and energy to

helping the school succeed. I live and love the experience of being a teacher in this dynamic environment every day and have an understanding of what it takes from students, families, the community, and staff to make LILA the place it has become.

**Please describe why you are interested in serving as a School Board member:**

As soon I walked through the doors, it was apparent that LILA is a unique school. Ever since that day, I've told people about this school and how it is alive with the buzz of something different! The involvement of teachers and families in this community is what brought me back here after volunteering for two years in the Peace Corps. Reflecting on that time, I cannot stop thinking about how lucky we are to be in this place where we have so much. I'm inspired by the amazing things that go on here every day and am thankful for the support and integrity of those around me. I'm thrilled to be a part of it, and I'd be proud to serve on the Board of Directors.