



APT Meeting November 19th 9:15am – 10:30am

Participants: Dr. Michelle Shinn, Kate Rother, Tish Houston, Laura Schlemm, Beth Laufenberg, Cherie Singh, Suzanne Sands, Consuelo Wilkinson, Molly O’Neil, Amie Marks, Katie Frekko, Missy Hektor, Sonya Henricks, Jessica Balmelli, Eileen Swartout, Yvonne Bruce, Becky Nagel, Lana Raines, Sarah Lockhart, Kristin McCain, Jessica Muller, Rae Alvarez

Guest Speaker/Student Presenters #1: Mrs. Brasky’s (a.k.a. Ms. McGinnis) class presented their “HA HA SO strategies”, which are scenarios on how to successfully approach a bully. Great job, class!

Guest Speaker/Student Presenters #2: Mrs. Donoval’s class presented the characteristics of “What makes a Wonder Woman” and then presented a Wonder Woman award to their teaching assistant, Ms. Tomaso. Congratulations!

Principal’s Report: Dr. Michelle Shinn

- Dr. Shinn mentioned that the teachers are current having conferences using flexible conference times to accommodate all schedules. The teachers are being creative with their conferences. For example, some grades are inviting the students to attend/lead the conference and some grades are having parents come in to observe class as part of their conference.
- As winter (especially the cold weather!) has arrived early, PLEASE send students with appropriate clothing as the students will go outside as often as the weather cooperates. Outdoor recess is a good break and energy booster for all.
- The staff and teachers met last Friday when the students were off from school. One topic discussed was safety, especially in the common areas of Sheridan. These areas include hallways, bathrooms, lunch room, etc. The group discussed strategies to increase safety in these areas and will be rolling out new methods in the coming weeks. If you are a parent lunch volunteer, please be aware that there might be new, more formal roles that you will be asked to perform in order to help the lunch time routine run more smoothly and increase safety for all. Please comply with all new instructions.
- FYI - Representatives from the Chicago Public Schools’ system were at Sheridan and other district school today observing various math classes.
- Please be aware that assessment time will be coming in the Spring. Please try to plan any time your child might be out of the school around assessment time in order to help the teachers coordinate the various testing schedules. The PARCC assessment will be given to 3rd and 4th graders on different days during March 9th – April 3rd. The NWEA will be given to 2nd – 4th graders during April. More details will be posted on the school’s website.

Family Reading Night: Mrs. Schlemm

- Tomorrow, November 20th, is Family Reading Night, an annual statewide event held the third Thursday in November to encourage families to spend quality time reading together. Please help Sheridan celebrate this event by spending a quiet evening reading with your family. Each student will be bringing home a paper rock where you can record the book your family read together. Please cut these out (or feel free to use a real rock), record your book, and return these to school.

Thank you for encouraging your child(ren) to read!

President's Report: Kate Rother

- Unfortunately Mr. Simeck had to reschedule, but he will be speaking at Sheridan's February 18th APT meeting. Please email any questions you would like Mr. Simeck to discuss to Katerother@gmail.com.
- *Congratulations Sheridan NYC Marathon Runners!* Dr. Shinn, Mrs. Duffy and Mrs. Schmidt all completed the Nov. 1st NYC Marathon, Congratulations! The student's all signed banners that were hung outside the school the week before the race. Also, the students gave all three runners a Sheridan clap-out prior to the race. Pictures and information from the race are displayed on the lobby bulletin board. Congratulations on this outstanding achievement!
- Gratitude Turkey – Thank you to Mrs. Burke's Kindergarten class for helping to make and color the wonderful Gratitude turkey displayed in Sheridan's lobby. All students are encouraged to return the turkey feathers that were emailed with words and pictures depicting what they are thankful for.

Gratitude (a.k.a Super Hero Corner!)

- Halloween – Katie Frekko and Michelle Burns!
- H.U.G.S. food drive – Carrie Cole, Sarah Lockhart, and Kristin Chun!
- The Nagel Family – Kindergarten grade party!
- The Scully Family – 4th grade party!
- The Hender Family – 2nd grade party!
- The Strothman Family – 1st grade Morehead party!

Superintendent's Report – Michael Simeck

Mr. Simeck recently returned from a conference where leaders from Silicon Valley spoke to a group of school superintendents. Following are some highlights he shared.

- Ken Goldberg, a professor at the University of California at Berkeley, spoke about how robotics gets a bad name because it is seen as appealing to only a certain group of kids. In reality, robotics is cross-disciplinary because it combines science with art, culture and imagination. It can appeal to both science people, theater people, etc. These are the crossdisciplinary teams that everyone wants to join.
- He called robotics the "gateway drug" of science and engineering. He believes there will be all kinds of programming and robotics jobs in the future, as robots take over more and more of the mundane tasks of everyday life, as in "The Jetsons." He used the Roomba as an illustrative example. No matter how bad your Roomba is now, it will only get better in the future. Such is the case with robots. They will be able to handle numerous tasks of the future including programming, repairs, and perhaps even surgery and the alleviation of communicable diseases such as Ebola.
- We also heard from the head of M.I.T.'s teacher development section, which covers all training in math and science. He spoke about shifting away from kids consuming media. He explained that before age four, children use media for a ton of educational purposes, but it plummets after that. He said the shift should be from consumption to creation.
- A leader from Intel Corporation spoke to us about Maker Faires. Think of them like "a garage tinkerer meets a school fair meets a county fair meets a state fair." All of these "Makers" come together to show what they have made and share what they have learned. For example, at one of these faires someone created a Potato Cannon Gatling Gun. It was piece of PVC pipe that was

stuffed with a potato. When an accelerant was added, it shot the potato as far as three football fields, creating an explosion with lots of fire. Tons of middle schools are holding these faires. They are extremely engaging.

- Girls can be shut out of robotics because they are frequently turned off by the super-competitive nature of robotics competitions. At LFHS, the girls started their own robotics club just for girls. Every member went on to receive a science scholarship at her university.
- The team aspect is very engaging and allows kids to find out how to do many kinds of things and help many types of people. For instance, they asked, “Why are Braille readers so expensive (\$1000)?” They found a way to make one for less than \$500. Information now is democratized. You can order motors off Ebay for almost nothing. With 3D printing, you can create a Braille reader prototype for under \$1000.
- With these Faires, you’re really learning as you go. It is hard for schools to do this well because there are no standards or rubrics to guide them. How can there be accountability? Still, the process is the biggest gain for these kids.
- We also heard from a leader at Apple who runs all of their education systems. He was one of the first 40 employees that worked with Steve Jobs. When Jobs would ask him to do something difficult and fast, he would say, “Steve, I believe in miracles, but I don’t believe in scheduling them.” He told us that the classroom of tomorrow has to be creative, relevant, and challenging. Apple is focusing more and more on creating a personal learning environment, differentiating instruction. In the same way that the Roomba won’t be worse in the future, differentiated education will only get better. Just like our current NWEA MAP tests adjust to students’ levels, such fine-tuned instruction will only increase over time.
- The lead designer of Pixar showed us how a ton of math goes into making a cartoon. This is an example of challenge-based learning. Rather than have students become frustrated or bored, we want to find the sweet spot of challenge and skill. Kids want to be challenged, and that comes through differentiation.
- Back to the Maker Faires, another interesting aspect of these events are the “Plusing Sections.” Schools bring in an idea and everyone beats it up. It’s OK that the idea isn’t good or fully formed. This allows others to “plus” the idea by asking, “How can we do this better?” In our schools, the only place where we do this right now is in writing.
- A lot of girls are involved in Maker Faires. There is 40% participation by girls because it’s an exhibition and not a competition. Girls are undersold on their interest and incredible ability to do this kind of stuff. We’ll be talking about this as an administrative team.
- All of this technology provides an awful lot of opportunity to really engage kids, especially in middle school where passion for learning can die. Everything from the Lego League at the elementary school to the Robotics Team in high school can keep kids engaged and stimulated. We want to maintain this all the way through our school system. Every child at DPM should be able to use the lab on the 7/8 side of the building. It should be available for all of our classes and our entire student body. We’re working on not shutting out the Band/Orchestra/Chorus students whose schedules prevent them from fully utilizing this lab.

APT Committee Reports

Community Service: Sarah Lockhart, Carrie Cole

- The Community Service Committee just completed running two back-to-back food drives including: (i) coordinating with the Girl Scouts to collect candy post-Halloween that will be shared with different charities and sent to the US troops; and, (ii) working with H.U.G.S. to collect and sort the necessary food items for Thanksgiving meals to be given to those in need. Mrs. Schlemm’s 4th

graders helped communicate both events to the rest of the school by visiting all the classrooms to explain the purpose of the food/candy drives and who would be benefiting. It was a wonderful community effort by the entire Sheridan community.

Staff Holiday Cookie Boxes: Jessica Muller, Wendy Darling

- The Sheridan annual cookie drive for teachers is coming up. In addition to cookies this year, the Committee is also looking for donations of ribbons for the boxes.
- Cookie donations were a bit low in cookies last year, so the Committee would like to get as many people as possible involved. You can sign up through volunteerspot on the Sheridan APT website to donate cookies, ribbon, and volunteer to help fill the boxes. Even if you're not a baker, they are accepting store purchased cookies as well.
- Cookie drop off is at Wendy Darling's house on December 10th after noon. Please encourage all to participate in order to help show the Sheridan Staff and bus drivers how much they are appreciated.

Fine Arts / Visiting Author: Tish Houston, Wendy Darling

- Sheridan has two upcoming Fine Arts assemblies. The first is Tsukasa Taiko, a drum performing group recommended by Sheridan's own music teacher, Mrs. Gillan, which will perform on January 21st. The second is the Theatrebam theatre company performing School House Rock Live! On April 14th.
- Thank you to the Spirit of 67 and APT for supporting Fine Arts programs for our children!

Spirit 67: Kimberly Carris, Brooke Kuehnle

- This Spirit's Oct 17th annual luncheon was a huge success. Thank you to all who helped organize and participate in this important event.
- Only 39% of district families have joined the Spirit. The Committee is working hard to encourage the other 69% to participate. Please talk to your friends and mention that ANY donation amount will help the district increase this participation percentage. Showing a high amount of participation across the district helps the Spirit Committee when they solicit donations from corporate donors.
- The Friendship Bench that is new to Sheridan this year was funded by a Spirit of 67 grants. This is one of many grants the Spirit provides. Please support the Spirit!

Board of Ed Liaisons: Brooke Kuehnle, Holly Matson, Suzanne Sands

- All of the elementary schools' BofEd Liaisons' Committees met with Mr. Simeck and administrators on Oct. 10th. Following are questions submitted from all school and Mr. Simeck's answers in red.
 - 1) The DPM math resource center seems to have more eighth grade tutors than high school tutors this year. As a group (there are exceptions) they are less patient and less focused on helping the students who drop in. It's such an important resource for younger DPM students. Do we have someone who supervises the program and assesses the ability of a tutor to effectively work with the younger students? **The high school is the one who provides us with the students to run this program. If there are no students who volunteer, then this may not be a program we can run in the future. Yes we do have a teacher who supervises this program. We have shared your concerns.**
 - 2) We recently moved to Lake Forest. My fifth grader received a lot of support with acclimating to school--academically and socially. My seventh grade son didn't receive much support at all and has made very few friends and isn't doing as well as our fifth grader. What's in place to help new students entering the 6th, 7th and 8th grades so they feel comfortable and happy at their

new school? DPM is currently working to improve their process of helping older students acclimate to the school. Parents should contact their homeroom teacher or school personnel if they see their child is struggling. We can always provide support.

- 3) Superintendent Simeck has talked about how kids with attention deficit issues or learning challenges often have creative aptitudes and determination that allows them to experience wonderful success after school. I wonder if that message can be delivered to the students so those who question their intelligence and ability can rest assured that they too have great potential and can appreciate their unique style of learning and who they are. This year, as a district, we will be studying Carol Dweck's book *Mindset* and offering discussion times for both staff and parents. The more, as a school community, we can focus on growth, the more that message will/can be consistent across all stakeholders – and ultimately the message will impact our students. Author Carol Dweck will be speaking in the district next year on August 21, 2015, for both the community and the staff. The attached link is to an article from her this month in HBR. <http://hbr.org/2014/11/how-companies-can-profit-from-a-growth-mindset/ar/1>
- 4) Afternoon pick up still seems to be disorganized. Is it possible to have a 3:35 pick up time for 5th and 6th grade and 3:45 pick up time for 7th and 8th graders? Also, the high school has a traffic system down for cars getting back onto McKinley. Can DPM borrow that practice to help move traffic onto Deerpath after school? DPM has been closely monitoring the traffic this year and working with LF police. The traffic lights have been adjusted for longer periods during the release times. Principals are outside at dismissal time every day and report that the parking lot is generally clear 12-15 minutes after school lets out. We will pass on suggestions to the building principals that were generated in our meeting (better process/logistics communication, etc.)
- 5) Three questions around the same topic that were answered below together:
 - (i) A parent reached out to us to say: I think that the Explore/Quest is beneficial to students and is a valuable program for the district. Dr. Weimer indicated that the program might not continue. Please ask about the future of the program.
 - (ii) Dr. Wiemer acknowledged at a recent Explore meeting that the Quest/Explore programs at DPM were under consideration for elimination. I am deeply troubled by this and have a few questions.
 - Why hasn't there been a parent meeting and opportunity for public discussion about this topic? Given all the unfortunate things that have happened in our District in the recent years as a result of lack of transparency it seems we should have learned that full transparency is the best course of action. Why hasn't this come up during the public portion of the Board of Ed meetings as this is an important topic? Please consider having such meetings and discussion ASAP as Dr. Wiemer indicated the decision would be made during this 2014-2015 school year. Please also consider full transparency going forward.
 - Why would you even consider elimination (or even change) of these strong programs that have produced top students for several years? These programs are working well, so why tinker with something that is not broken? There are so many areas within the District that need high level attention rather than this program that is working well. Friends in other Chicago area communities look at our gifted program as one to emulate and actually other districts have copied it. Please do not harm something that is working well within the District.
 - Not every child learns at the same pace. Any child that is falling behind within our District is instantly given special pull out groups (sometimes 2x/day!) and even one-on-

one tutoring at the District's expense. Why should these children be treated better than the children who are excelling at subjects, but are bored and deserve a challenge? Children that are in the high end of their class deserve the same advantage of a pull-out situation where they can flourish as children that are behind and need special attention. I do not believe there should be discrimination among our children. In keeping with our Mission, how are you going to ensure that the top students get the same time and attention (in small, quiet settings with their peers) that these other students receive?

(iii) Hearing rumors that at DPM, Explore is being consolidated with Core on the 7/8 side. Is that true and if so, why has there been no discussion around this with parents?

To address all questions above....

All D67 programs and services evolve to reflect best practices, remain current and provide the best options for our students. Special Education programming, Core curriculum, Explore and Quest programming does... and should evolve. Per our mission, our job is to make sure all kids have access to rigor and challenge and that all students are GROWING including the students who are in Explore and Quest. When we looked last year we did find that Core and Explore have become more similar. What we do know is that we need to keep all kids growing, challenged, and learning. We will continue to study all of our offerings and programs to make sure they serve our students in the best possible way. Our goal is to raise the floor not lower the ceiling. We have no plans to eliminate resources for students.

6) How do we keep Emotional Wellness on the forefront for our school districts?

EW structures that are currently in place throughout the district:

- **Administrative Level:** Ingrid Wiemer, Director of Student Services; Emilie Correa, Emotional Wellness Coordinator (.5 position); Lynn Moore, Charmm'd Foundation (EW Mentor/Coach)
- **Building Level:** 2 EW Mentors per building; 2 EW Parent Representatives per building; Building Principal; EW Committee Members; EW Budget provided by each building
- **Community Partnerships:** APT & Spirit of 67; Charmm'd ; LEAD; SPEAK-UP; CROYA; WHAC; D65 & D115
- **Meetings:** Monthly EW Building Meetings; Quarterly EW District & Mentor Meetings; Bi-Annual EW Building 1/2 Day Workshops; Summer EW Mentor Workshop
- **Programming:** Social Emotional Learning (Advisory); WEB (Where Everybody Belongs) (Currently not under the EW job description, but arguably should be); Character Trait Education; Coordination of Family Nights (Family Reading Night, Family Game Night, Family Movie Night, DJ Move & Dance); Chat n' Chew Book Talks; Hosting Hot Topic Chats for Parents (Appropriate Use of Technology, Parenting, LEAD)
- Staff EW Activity Fair (DPM); EW Spirit Wear for Staff (promoting unity); EW Service Projects for Staff and Students; Staff Wellness Offerings at DPM Yoga, Running Club, Fit Center Work Outs, Book Club, Knitting, Golf Outing, Walking, Zumba, Cooking classes, Ice Fishing; Coordination of Professional Development Opportunities; Development of Shared Service Opportunities between D67, D65, & D115; Collaboration with WHAC, Charmm'd, LEAD, and SPEAK-UP to bring in EW motivational speakers
- **Assessment:** School Wide Behavior Survey (SWBS); EW Goals set at the beginning of the year by each building; EW Pre-Assessments/Post-Assessments; Data driven EW initiatives; Post Evaluations (monitor progress & help EW determine goals for coming year); Quadrant 4 - Evaluations for teachers, alignment of SEL standards
- **Hiring Practices:** Ensuring that new hires are student centered, Emotional Wellness oriented, team players
- **Professional Development Opportunities:** Charmm'd (workshops, lunch & learns,

conferences); D67 time, Staff Meetings, CII Time; Institute Days, Late Start Days

- 7) Is there a way to help the student athletes make positive choices? i.e. random drug testing?
We believe the adults in children's lives are the best assets to help kids make positive choices. This discussion about making appropriate choices is a part of many of our school conversations/programs. Family conversations are also very important. Additionally, the majority of research suggests that drug-testing policies don't lead to a significant decrease in student drug use.
- 8) Please explain the recent decision by the district to do away with the charity drives. So much good comes from such a small endeavor on our part - why take this away?
The district did not make a decision to do away with charity drives. The APT determines the drives they support. From a district-wide perspective we have infused a great deal of community service into the schools and support more service efforts than ever before! Additionally, the district supports the APT Community Service Committee in their district-wide drives. The APT Community Service Committee annually selects recipients and the district supports their efforts. The APT is currently conducting the Halloween Candy drive in conjunction with the Girl Scouts and the APT has just announced that they would like to support HUGS again this year. That drive will take place in November. Drives for 2015 are also being planned by the APT.
- 9) Are there boundaries/expectations set for high school coaches who run feeder sports programs? Yes. Are they compensated? Yes, by the organizations that sponsor the programs. Are the programs guided by the district or is it just using the district's name? The ones that use LFHS are but some use the name Lake Forest – they usually are not our programs. Lots of complaints about the high school baseball coach this year running a middle school summer baseball program and attempting to use his position as the Varsity coach to persuade kids to play for his program. We passed this info along to the Athletic Department. In the future, parents should contact the sponsoring organization with any specific concerns about the coach/program.

- Following are some highlights from the District 67 BofEd meeting held on Oct 28th. All Board Of Education meeting agendas, minutes and videos are available at: <http://www.lakeforestschoools.org/board-of-education/district-67-boe/index.aspx>.

Superintendent's Report by Michael Simeck:

- Mr. Simeck stated how the industry is more savvy and sophisticated than ever before. Technology, of course, has played a major role in information sharing. Periodicals (such as Creativity in the Common Core, Using Assessments in Feedback for Learning, Resilience in Learning, Mastery in Learning, etc.) are in abundance and are a wonderful source of information.
- To further understand our progress relative to Mission and Vision, Mr. Simeck has met with numerous groups of participants (parents, community members, APT leaders). How do we measure our success? What do we measure? The most recent (and most interesting) meeting took place on 10/27 at CROYA. The group included roughly 40 students from grades 7-12. This was a broad group not just in age but in academic performance as well. Topics discussed revolved around social/emotional wellness- what works and what doesn't work? One student stated, "We have opportunities and possibilities". Several students mentioned that MAP testing "totally stresses us out...we never see results...don't know what we get wrong."

Reports/Discussions

- DPM Schedule Presentation- Tom Cardamone & Renee DeVore discussed the shift in scheduling. A teacher group representing various grades and subjects participated in a series of discussions in order to develop their master schedule. The attributes of this new schedule include concepts such as choice; personalization/flexibility; professional collaboration/development; consistency; opportunity (to take fine arts...music kids haven't had time in schedule currently. Side note: roughly 70% of 5/6 graders are in band, orchestra, chorus. The number drops significantly in 7/8 due to fine arts restriction). Workshops with this group took place on 10/20 & 22 where teachers brought draft schedules to include ELOs (Extended Learning Opportunities). Next steps include 11/4- Review Feedback; 11/5 Parent meeting to share progress; 11/12- provide staff with next round of scheduling options. This will be implemented for 15/16 school year. They don't need union approval which is different than LFHS.
- Approval of Superintendent Simeck's Multi-Year Contract. We are in the 3rd year; a new 5 year contract will be issued. Vote was 6-1 and passed. Mrs. Clemmenson was the only no, stating that she had a difficult time with the timing of the vote without having the strategic plan completed- "seems premature".

APT Directory/Membership: Eileen Swartout, Janet Burt, Megan Cartwright

- All APT Members should have received their print directories.
- It is not too late to join and receive access to the on-line directory and receive a print directory.
- If anyone has a question they can call Eileen Swartout or Anna McEvoy or email them at LFapt67@gmail.com.
- By October 29th all directories were distributed to the schools with the request that they be given to students by Monday, November 3rd.

Celebration Book Club: Kristen Chun, Consuelo Wilkinson

- On November 24th, a "Gift of Reading on Behalf of Your Teacher" letter will be distributed to all Sheridan Families. The Committee requests all families consider donating a book to the IRC in honor of their child(ren)'s teacher. The donated book becomes a lasting tribute that remains in the Sheridan library for current and future students to enjoy. Orders must be submitted by Friday, December 12th.
- Please take a look at Celebration Book Club's wall of pictures in the Sheridan Lobby where you can see smiling birthday students holding their donated books.

The Meals for Teachers Committee: Kelly Huguenard and Becky Nagel

- The Meals for Teachers Committee solicited Sheridan parents to sign up to bring various food items as a contribution for the Fall Teacher Luncheon. This is routinely done in the Fall and Spring at the time of Parent/Teacher Conferences to provide a meal and show gratitude to Sheridan Teachers and Staff. All donated food items should be brought to the Teachers' Lounge by 10am on Monday, November 24th.

Parent Awareness: Shannon Maguire, Eileen Swartout

- Please see <http://lfdist67apt.weebly.com/parent-awareness.html> for specific information.
- JumpStart! Parent Dinner will be held on Fri Dec 12 8-9:30pm. This dinner program is intended for parents of children in preschool, kindergarten and lower elementary grades. Come hear about LEAD and ways parents can get support in creating healthy environments for their children.

- What's Next For Me? Changing Times, Changing Bodies will be held Saturday, January 31 at LF Hospital. This class will provide accurate and concise information and assist parents in guiding their daughter through puberty and beyond.