



## APT Meeting October 15<sup>th</sup> 9:15am – 10:30am

**Participants:** Dr. Michelle Shinn, Kate Rother, Tish Houston, Laura Schlemm, Beth Laufenberg, Cherie Singh, Paige Robbins, Ellen Trager, Maria Malloy, Brooke Kuehnle, Suzanne Sands, Consuelo Wilkinson, Molly O'Neil, Debbi Perlioni, Kristen Chun, Meredith Hayes, Carrie Cole, Micaiah Robinson, Amie Marks, Katie Frekko

**Guest Speaker:** Stephanie Miyamoto's 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Explore students Hollie Brohan and Ella Coleman shared different opinions regarding how much participation parents should have in their child's homework. Well done!!!

**Principal's Report:** Dr. Michelle Shinn

- Dr. Shinn highlighted a recent example at Sheridan of teacher collaboration creating a STEM type teaching experience for the 1<sup>st</sup> graders. Mrs. Newtown started the school year for the 1<sup>st</sup> graders back in September with the informational narrative text "Lego Man In Space – A True Story" by Mara Shaughnessy. The book is a true story of two boys who launched a Lego Man into space. The class discussion led to several questions about how to make a hot air balloon, how high could they rise, etc. Mrs. Newtown collaborated with Mrs. Puglisi, who also had a section of 1<sup>st</sup> graders at that same time, to create an experience whereby each 1<sup>st</sup> grader could make and launch their own hot air balloon to be able to answer their own questions. The teachers created a store and gave each student \$15 to purchase the materials needed to make their own hot air balloon. Each child had a chance to launch their balloon and measure how high it rose. The class is currently analyzing which balloons went the highest and why. This is a great example of the flexible schedule Dr. Shinn has created enabling inspirational learning directed by student's curiosity.

**President's Report:** Kate Rother

- District News: Highlights from the APT Executive Board - Sheridan has received their budget, which is in line with last year. The APT Exec Board is moving towards utilizing google docs for communication and electronic storage.
- Superintendent's Report – Michael Simeck – Mr. Simeck will be speaking at the next APT Board Meeting. Please plan to attend and let your friends know so that Sheridan has great representation at this meeting. Also, please email any questions you would like Mr. Simeck to discuss to Katerother@gmail.com.
- *Go Sheridan NYC Marathon Runners!* Dr. Shinn, Mrs. Duffy and Mrs. Schmidt are running in the Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> NYC Marathon. Please ask your child to tell you about the surprise the students are preparing to show their support for their teachers who are undertaking this significant achievement!
- Car Magnets – Yvonne Bruce and Suzanne Sands have designed and procured magnets for all Sheridan students. These will be distributed as a surprise (so please keep it secret from your child for now!) in the coming month.

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

- Visiting Author – Bill Buczinsky – Great job Wendy Darling and Tish Houston
- Beth Laufenberg – Thanks for getting Kristin Fitzgerald again to take a super 4<sup>th</sup> Grade group photo
- The White Family – 1<sup>st</sup> grade party
- The Laufenberg Family – 3<sup>rd</sup> grade party
- The Frekko Family – 3<sup>rd</sup> grade coffee
- The Robb Family – 4<sup>th</sup> grade coffee
- The Carris Family – Kindergarten coffee

## **District News: Highlights from the APT Executive Board**

### **Superintendent's Report – Michael Simeck**

- I just returned from a conference with a most interesting speaker. He is a neuroscientist who showed us a video of how technology is enabling a quadriplegic to communicate by thought, and even move himself. In addition, we were shown videos of people watching commercials while their attention levels were being monitored. In one instance, when viewers saw a commercial featuring Dr. Dre, their attention levels spiked when he lifted up his mask and revealed himself. This was of great interest to Dr. Dre's agent because it demonstrated that products get more attention when his client appears in commercials. We also looked at the commercial implications of a certain company discontinuing the use of William Shatner as its spokesman. A lot of people thought he was quirky and funny and good to keep around. The neuroscientist's wife joked that we shouldn't worry about school, but instead just focus on making money.
- So how does all this apply to learning? I asked the neuroscientist, "What are the leading indicators for success in school? We hear that if you're not reading at grade level by the end of 2nd grade, bad things will happen." He said that 92% of children not reading at grade level by the end of 2nd grade can be predicted in the first two weeks of kindergarten. He compared it to football. The game is on Week 8 and school begins on Week 5. Some kids are ready to play the game by Week 8, but a bunch are not. What makes kids ready to play?
- The most important Weeks are 1-5. This is when the emphasis for kids should be on nutrition, bedtime rituals, reading books, attending preschool, and sleep. Problems arise when activities cut into a child's sleeptime. Overwhelming stress due to lack of sleep, poor nutrition and monetary issues each can negatively affect a child's ability to perform in school. Finally, exercise is critical to learning. Children should be out playing with friends, coming home to eat dinner, playing with friends some more, reading a book and then going to bed.
- The neuroscientist concentrated on what the brain is focusing upon, and how long the brain sustains that attention. He told us that gender makes a difference. He said, "If you had a draft, who would you draft to make a successful school? First, never draft a boy. You're never going to win a game. Boys are incomplete girls." He was an entertaining speaker.
- So how do kids get involved in activities that they are passionate about? There are certain programs that are simply more engaging for kids. We can explore different products, online tools, etc.
- Interestingly, there is a big advantage to being bilingual. Studies have shown a three-year achievement difference between bilingual kids and children that speak only one language. Bilingual children have increased brain stimulation that affects their abilities in music and language.

*Question for Superintendent Simeck from Colette Mendelson: What is being done to stimulate a boy who tests high but isn't working to his ability? What can we do as a District to stimulate kids that fall into this category?*

*Answer from Mr. Simeck - A while back we interviewed a guy from another school district. He was responsible for K-2. He charged his staff with not diminishing a child's love of learning by the end of their time with that child. Boys start school with an especially high love of learning, but it often significantly diminishes by the end of 3rd grade. By the time they reach middle school, you can't blame the school for the disinterest. It's often the nature of children at that age. It's really difficult to measure how much a child wants to come to school. Instead we should ask how many times do boys get redirected? Boys are constantly redirected with words like "Don't" or "Stop." The higher the income, the less likely that your boys are going to be redirected at a high rate. What really gets boys going is reinforcement. We should avoid redirection, and instead emphasize reinforcement. As a District, we don't have a single male teacher in K-4. How do you measure the number of times boys are redirected v. reinforced? Both organizationally and systemically, we need to find ways for boys to be up moving and pursuing things that interest them. At Cherokee, for example, they are doing things that are very student-directed. The students are determining what they want to learn about. We should focus on student voice and choice, maintaining student motivation, and providing more rewards for risk-taking activities for boys.*

*Question from Colette Mendelson - What can be done when they're older?*

*Answer from Mr. Simeck - It's the same stuff. Adults are just overgrown kids.*

*Everyone wants to do things they find meaningful. This poses a really interesting and difficult challenge: how do we make kids want to be in school, rather than just go to school because they have to be there? We want the answer to work across K-12.*

#### **Treasurer's Report:** Amie Marks

- Please submit all receipts and reimbursement forms to Amie Marks via pdf to amie.marks@raymondjames.com or regular mail. Forms are available on the Sheridan APT website or contact Amie directly.
- Tax exempt letters are available on the APT web site. Please show these letters to retailers when purchasing on behalf of the school as the APT does not reimburse for tax.

#### **APT Committee Reports**

##### **Monster Bash:** Katie Frekko, Michelle Burns

- Halloween falls on a Friday this year. In order to take advantage of this unique timing, Sheridan is trying something new as first unveiled by Kate Rother back on Curriculum Night. This year students will celebrate the afternoon of Halloween at school and then go home to continue their Halloween celebration that evening. It will be a SPOOKTACULAR Halloween celebration! Come join the fun!

- *Schedule*

##### HALLOWEEN SCHEDULE

- 1:00 – 1:30 Halloween craft and game in classrooms
- 1:30 – 2:00 School-wide Halloween Parade in hallways
- 2:00 – 2:10 Students go to gym
- 2:10 – 2:30 Special Halloween assembly in gym hosted by Dads

- *Volunteering* – Parents can volunteer in one of three ways: (i) volunteer in the classroom via Room Parents and help with the game/craft; (ii) dress up along with other Dads/Parents and participate in the Special Halloween Assembly (email Kate Rother at katerother@gamil.com to join the group); and/or (iii) volunteer to help with the party via Volunteer Spot on the Sheridan APT web site.

- *Student costumes* - Students are invited to wear their costumes to school on the 31st as there will not be an opportunity to change during the day. Please adhere to the following guidelines when choosing a costume with your child(ren):
  - 1) Costumes should be comfortable and easy to navigate as the first 1/2 of the day will be a normal school day.
  - 2) Keep make-up to a minimum so it does not get uncomfortable or smear as there will not be an opportunity to reapply.
  - 3) No real or toy guns or weapons of any kind in keeping with school policy.
  - 4) Masks may not cover the child's entire face/head as students need to be able to be easily identified.
- *Parking* – Parents can park behind the school and along Spruce Ave. east of Sheridan Road from 1pm-2:30pm. Please note any cars along Spruce must be moved by 2:30pm so as not to disrupt the can pick up line at dismissal.

**Fine Arts / Visiting Author:** Tish Houston, Wendy Darling

- Bill Buczinsky visited Sheridan on October 3<sup>rd</sup> and provided a full day of teaching (and entertaining!) the students about the power of poetry to make writing fun. He will be coming back for a Poetry Evening on Thursday Feb. 5<sup>th</sup> from 6pm to 7:30pm. Please encourage your child to write poems and plan to bring them with on Feb. 5<sup>th</sup> to recite them before an audience at Bill's Open Mic Night. Students may also submit poems to Bill at: [bill@childs-voice-poetry.com](mailto:bill@childs-voice-poetry.com).
- Thank you to the Spirit of 67 and APT for supporting our Visiting Author!

**Yearbook:** Beth Laufenberg, Debbie Jensen, Tracy Barrett

- The fourth grade cover shoot is complete. Thanks to the wonderful Kristin Fitzgerald for photographing the students another year!
- A request has been sent out to Room Parents for the name and contact info of each class' Yearbook Volunteer. As soon as all classes have a designated Yearbook liaison, the team will send out an introduction, instructions & offer of training.

**Communications:** Suzanne Sands

- Please pass any additions, edits, updates, etc. for the APT web site to Suzanne Sands ([sandssuzanne@gmail.com](mailto:sandssuzanne@gmail.com)). She is also the contact for including APT information in the Friday Notes emailed home each week from Dr. Shinn's office.
- Suzanne is available to facilitate the printing of sandwich board signs communicating events and information on the boards in front of the school. Please contact her as soon as possible to avoid high shipping costs.
- Please send any pictures of the students at school and one school event to [sheridanapt11@gmail.com](mailto:sheridanapt11@gmail.com) for inclusion on the Sheridan APT website. These pictures will also be shared with the district for possible posting on the district web site.

**Food Service:** Molly O'Neil, Kate Rappel

- October is Bone and Joint Health Awareness month. This is a national effort designed to raise awareness of prevention, disease management and treatments as well as advances in a number of areas.

**Spirit 67:** Kimberly Carris, Brooke Kuehnle

- This Friday, Oct 17<sup>th</sup>, is the Spirit's annual luncheon to be held at Exmoor Country Club in Highland Park. Please support the Spirit through attendance or even just purchasing a raffle item/ticket. The money raised by the Spirit is used to fund such things including the wonderful Visiting Author program that just happened last month, a new climbing wall at DPM and many, many other worthwhile items/programs.
- 38% of Sheridan families have joined the Spirit. The goal is much higher participation. Please talk to your friends and mention that ANY donation amount will help the school reach this goal.
- The Spirit is sponsoring a new Family Game Night that will be held on January 30<sup>th</sup> at DPM for all District 67 families. Please mark your calendars and look out for more information to come.

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

- All faculty & staff information has been added to the online directory. Additionally, all homeroom teachers have been added for each student. If you find a mistake please contact Eileen Swartout or Anna McEvoy at LFapt67@gmail.com.
- TIP - How to Save Login Information for the Online Directory on your smart phone  
Go to: [www.myschoolanywhere.com/gomobile.html](http://www.myschoolanywhere.com/gomobile.html)

Or,

Remembering login information:

*iPhone*

- Click on Settings
- Click on Safari
- Click on Passwords and Autofill
- Turn on Names and Passwords

*Android*

- Open the browser you are using to access the application.
- Click on the menu on the bottom of your phone and select Settings
- Make sure that the Save Passwords option is set to "On"
- Print Directories will be distributed either the week of Oct. 20<sup>th</sup> or early the week of Oct. 27<sup>th</sup>. There will be an email sent to all APT Members letting them know once the directories are delivered to schools for distribution.
- If you have any feedback on the online directory please let the team know at LFapt67@gmail.com.
- It is not too late to join the APT. The District is at approximately 85% membership. All new members will receive access to online directory and the print directory.

**Parent Awareness:** Eileen Swartout

- October is Red Ribbon Month. Please check out the Sheridan APT web site for information on activities in the community.

**Community Service:** Carrie Cole, Sarah Lockhart

- So far, this year Sheridan's APT community service projects will be a Halloween candy drive. The other community service projects are still being decided on at the district executive level.
- The Halloween Candy Drive will be held from Monday Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup> – Friday Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>. There will be bins in the lobby of the school for the students to donate excess Halloween candy. The APT participates in this in partnership with the Girl Scouts of America.
- This is a transition year for Community Service as they evaluate programs and pursue long term partnerships with worthwhile philanthropic groups.

**Emotional Wellness:** Micaiah Robinson, Lana Raines

- Emotional Wellness is seeking additional teachers to join the Committee. They are also considering the creation of either a separate Sheridan EW website or linking to class websites where they would have a page. The Committee is analyzing potential use of either type of web site by parents, students, etc.
- Emotional Wellness will once again sponsor Sheridan “Family nights.” Last year, they hosted three Family Nights that included: a game night, a book night and a movie night. Generally these events support a worthy cause in addition to sponsoring an event geared toward the Sheridan community spending time together. For example, at last year’s game night, families brought and played games that were eventually donated to a local shelter. Parents also could attend presentations on such topic as negotiating the use of electronics at home.
- The Emotional Wellness Committee has become involved in organizing the school field trip to the Marriot Theatre in December and may completely assume responsibility in future years. Additionally, the Committee is considering a service project for the entire school. Ideas mentioned include Souls for Soles (donating shoes), donating to a food pantry or making/donating fleece blankets.

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

- Highlights from the September District 67 Board of Education were presented including the following listed below. The full Board Of Education meeting agendas, minutes and videos are available at: <http://www.lakeforestschools.org/board-of-education/district-67-boe/index.aspx>.

Board of Ed September 2014 Meeting Highlights

- Jennifer Hermes, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, presented the budget.
- Superintendent Michael Simeck reported:
  - Mr. Simeck stated there is a pleasant trend regarding enrollment in the district. We are 51 students fewer than last year, but there is no immediate impact on any programs.
  - He thanked the Spirit of 67 for the climbing wall donation at Deer Path Middle School. He enjoyed watching the staff come together for training on the equipment and is excited for the opportunities it will bring to all students at Deer Path.
  - Inspiration Block fits perfectly with the district’s mission and vision. He was impressed with the commitment of the Cherokee School staff.
  - He thanked Mrs. White and all of the teachers at Everett School for providing him with a tour of the new building improvements.
  - He welcomed Dr. Sapko as the Everett principal and commended her on a terrific start. The staff and community have warmly welcomed her.
  - He is very excited about the final mission and vision goals. There were 55 people (staff and community participants) assembled to review data of student achievement and a variety of strategies. He feels the tagline of “educating without boundaries, learning without limits” is language that all can appreciate.
- Cherokee School Principal, Kelly Jackson reviewed the Inspiration Block
- Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction, Technology and Assessment, Lauren Fagel presented the school 2015 -16 calendar
- Lesley Fisher, Board Member, Education Committee:
  - Staff is looking for ways to incorporate this type of learning beyond STEM class so more students can benefit.

- Grades 2 – 8 will continue to take the NWEA two times a year. Fall scores will allow for a baseline and Spring results will show growth.
- Grades 3 – 8 will take the PARC instead of the ISAT this year. Testing will occur in March and May. PARC is more closely aligned with the Common Core standards. It is a lengthier test.
- SB7 will be in effect during the 2016-7 school year. This will require that students' assessments will be a part of teacher evaluations.
- o Mindset, by Carol Dweck , will be the focus of this year's community conversation. LEAD will collaborate with the district to provide a variety of events and opportunities to discuss this book and its potential impact on our schools.