



## **Cherokee APT Meeting Minutes – November 20, 2019**

### ***Cherokee School***

#### **Attendees:**

Tara Eggers, Maria Moore, Carolyn Hutchinson, Tony LoGiurato, Vanessa Karam, Annie Ignoffo, Mirela Dalton, Alissa McNicholas, Carrie Ringness, Kristin Vallaly, Cara Ruzila, Elizabeth Martin, Nicole Cooper, Gisela Orestano, Deanne Plattner, Gillian Goodfriend, Jenna Zilka, Colleen Berto, Ann Kiesling, Luke Livingston, Liz Freibrun, Karen Feeney, Jeff Flischel, Allie Metz, Nora Froelich, Brianna Meade

Meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m.

#### **Welcome: Carolyn Hutchinson**

#### **Student Highlight:**

3 third-grade students (Conner Feeney, Anders Johnson and Margaret Manley) presented on their Classroom City Unit.

#### **Special Guest:**

Mark Long - School Resource Officer for all LF schools. He's been a LF police officer for 10 years. He spends his days walking around and interacting with kids so he is a familiar face. Helps the kids feel comfortable to know him. He also teaches at the schools about stranger danger, drugs, street/train safety, etc.

Any cases that come up at the school, the principal works with Officer Long.

Cherokee had a lockdown drill yesterday and it went well. Students are prepped and it is discussed as to why they are doing it - "unsafe person in the building" is the terminology used.

#### **President's Report: Carolyn Hutchinson**

*~Progress, not perfection.~*

#### **Cherokee APT News:**

Since our last meeting, we've seen the Stand Up for Spirit event, the rest of our parent evenings socials, Visiting Author, conference meals for staff, Spookfest, the Thanksgiving

Food Drive, turkey feathers on a bulletin board, and Mandarin Fun Night. Thank you ALL so much for all you are doing to make Cherokee such a special place.

Coming up we have Donuts with Dad this Friday, the Holiday Cookie Walk for staff on Dec. 16, and a new bulletin board with those Lucky Stars that were sent home. (Don't forget to send those back.)

As a reminder, we don't meet in December, so we'll see you back here in January. We will probably be meeting across the hall since the Visiting Scientist workshops will be taking place in Rm 127 (like last year).

One thing I would like to draw your attention to is the sign-up to help spruce up and stock the staff bathrooms. You can find the sign-up in last week's Friday newsletter. Please sign up if you can. This is a wonderful way to show our staff how much we appreciate them.

Cherokee Garden update: Campbell Eggers (Tara Egger's daughter and former Cherokee student) would like to spearhead the writing of a Spirit grant for a Cherokee Garden as part of her Gold Star Award for Girl Scouts. I sent an email to staff and we have 4 teachers interested in helping out with grant and the garden. So, Campbell will meet with those 4 teachers after Thanksgiving break and then we'll get any interested parents involved.

A few other reminders:

- Please update your job descriptions as you go.
- Put that green circle APT logo on as much as possible.
- Remember to thank all parent volunteers that help with events.
- Check the Lost and Found after the meeting today.

### **District 67 APT News:**

Everyone should have received their yellow Student Directory. As for the online version, we are no longer using My School Anywhere. We are now using Membership Toolkit (MTK). An email was sent on October 30 to confirm your information and create a new account on Membership Toolkit. Please just email me if you have any questions or issues.

Executive APT Board nomination forms are out.

- Open positions:
  - APT Executive Board Vice President
  - APT Executive Board Recording Secretary
  - Cherokee APT President
  - Sheridan APT President
- Email or mail forms to Monica Yaun no later than Wednesday, January 8, 2020
- Nominees must have APT Board experience (Room Parents are considered to have had APT Board experience)

**Since we are almost to Thanksgiving, I just want to say how thankful I am for all of you and everything you do to help make Cherokee such a wonderful place.**

**Faculty Liaison's Report: Liz Freibrun**

Thank you for the conference meals - staff loved them!

Reminders to help sign up to decorate bathrooms AND donate items. Donations can go to Ms. Quinn and Mrs. Freibrun. There are 3 bathrooms. DPM has an Amazon wishlist in place and parents can purchase items and have them delivered directly to the school - might be a good idea for Cherokee!

Save the Date: Family Fun Night - January 30 from 5-6pm. Volunteers will be needed.

**Vice President/Recording Secretary's Report: Maria Moore**

The minutes from October 2019 were presented and no changes or corrections were made. A motion to approve the October 2019 minutes was made by Colleen Berto and seconded by Kristin Vallaly and passed unanimously.

**Treasurer's Report: Elizabeth Martin**

The APT budget was approved at last month's meeting. We have a few holiday events coming up so please continue to submit your receipts and check request forms to me.

**Communication Coordinator's Report: Cara Ruzila**

Continue to email me items that you would like to be posted to the facebook page and website. Continue to like and comment on facebook posts.

**Principal's Report: Luke Livingston**

*General Updates:*

- 11/19 - completed our first lockdown drill with police and it was a success.
- Earned an Exemplary Rating from the State of IL school report card. This is the highest rating you can earn and only 10% of schools gain this achievement. Not all LF schools received this rating, so this makes Cherokee stand out.
- Lake Forest Leader article on our Veterans Day assembly.
- Weather is getting colder, and we will go outside whenever possible. We look at the weather and 15 degrees is our marker. But if there is no wind and the sun is out (but below 15 degrees), we still may go outside.

*Student Updates:*

- Student Leadership Team had our first meeting and brainstormed kindness activities.
- Junior Coaches are a huge success with lunch/recess.

*Staff Updates:*

- Mr. Brown is the new social worker who has already started.
- Ms. Jackson has moved into the reading specialist role and Mrs. Bodine has started in the 4th grade.

- We are interviewing for our new TA position today after school. Mrs. Avery is leaving Cherokee.
- We are posting for a long-term substitute in 3rd grade as Mrs. Arndt will be going on maternity leave in April.

*Past Events:*

- Spookfest
- Veterans Day Assembly
- Kindness Days and Assembly
- HUGS Food Drive
- Mandarin Fun Night

*Upcoming Events:*

- 11/22 Donuts with Dad and Muffins with the Mayor
- 11/22 Report Cards go home
- December - MAP Testing (2nd, 3rd, 4th grades in reading/math)
- 12/20 Winter Sing
- 3/ 5 All-school field trip to The Princess and the Pea (Marriott Theater)

**Committee Reports/Announcements:**

**Back-to-School Picnic/Field Day: Lisa Weber, Kirstin Carruthers - nothing to report**

**Board of Ed: Ann Kiesling, Vanessa Karam**

The first Board of Ed meeting with Mr. Simeck and Communications Director Anne Whipple went very well. It was a 2 hour meeting and they answered all of the questions that were submitted. They were very honest and gave thought-filled answers. The questions and answers will be sent out to the Board in a separate email.

**Breakfasts: Anne Axus, Brianna Meade**

*Brief Summary of Current Month:*

- Met with Mr. Livingston to go over details of the event.
- Sent out flyers Nov 1
- Ordered donuts from Toms Pastry
- Ordered posters
- Made copies of conversation starters

*Brief Summary of Coming Month:*

- Collect flyers/money
- Send details to Mr. Livingston to add to newsletter
- Organize volunteers
- Order coffee and buy remaining items
- Set up Thursday Nov 21 after school
- Meet Mr. Livingston at 6:30am on Friday Nov 22. Finish prep and have event!

**Bulletin Board: Nora Froelich**

Created turkey bulletin board for turkey feathers

**Celebration Book Club: Ann Kiesling** - nothing to report

**Community Service: Cathy Montanari, Colleen Berto**

\*The 16th annual HUGS (Help Us Give Suppers) Thanksgiving Food Drive ran in schools from October 28th-November 7th. We collected for a longer time period this year and it does seem to have increased the donation amount - we have a lot of food!

\*We filled 537 bags and collected \$1,000 in cash and Jewel gift cards, which will be given directly to each of the four pantries receiving our food. (so \$250 to each) This is HUGE, truly. We used to do about 250 bags so you can see that we really knocked it out of the park this year.

\*Building reps had to make several runs to Gorton to deliver the food because bins were filling up mid-drive. We'd like to thank our building reps for all their hard work in the past few weeks and also thank the APT presidents, communication coordinators, principals, Lacy Fidler, and Janice Patterson for their help promoting the food drive. Paula Turelli from Mothers Trust Foundation was wonderful to work with in creating our new promotional materials. The new sandwich boards look great.

\*Sorting of the donations and creating the Thanksgiving meal bags took place last week in Room 216 at Gorton. [Signup.com](https://www.signup.com) was used to create an online sign up. Twenty families (52 people) are signed up to help this week and all slots to drive food to the pantries on Saturday, November 16th are filled.

**Evening Socials: Natasha Schnack** - nothing to report. Socials are done!

**Fine Arts/Visiting Author: Lindsay Gadbois, Alex Cherry** - nothing to report

**Food Service: Lisa Olson, Katie McCarney**

There is a school lunch survey that will be coming out soon to all schools - please share the good and bad. District to talk with current food service company to see if they can meet our needs or if we need to make some changes. Please reach out to Lisa or Katie with any concerns at Cherokee. Also, hoping to add foods that are grown in the Cherokee Garden to the lunchroom one day!

**Haunted Hallway: Anne Axus, Elizabeth Martin, Ali Dacy, Alissa McNicholas**

Haunted Hallway was a success!

**Helping Hands: Kim Walters**

We had 2 requests this month - One kindergarten wall display and the Veterans Day assembly pictures in the lobby. We were able to fill all slots.

We are adding more parents to our group as homeroom parents collect names and submit.

**Kindergarten: Alex Cherry, Julie Wade** - nothing to report

**LF-LB LDA: Danielle Burk**

*Brief Summary of Current Month – Activities:*

LDA had its last meeting on October 30, 2019. The group discussed:

1. Scheduled next meeting for December 18<sup>th</sup>
2. Looking for representative from Sheridan Elementary
3. Focused on 2019-2020 as a rebuilding year for the group. If anyone has any interest in joining or learning more information, please contact Kristin Vallaly.

**Mandarin: Nicole Cooper, Melissa Thoman**

*Brief Summary of Current Month – Activities:*

We just wrapped up a successful and fun Mandarin Fun Night on Monday, November 18! This event is open to all Cherokee families and siblings. We had a fantastic turn out with about 90 children participating in the activities. This is about the same number of attendees as last year. Activities included various Chinese games like Go and Chinese checkers, and crafts like origami and calligraphy on rice paper. Children received a map of China with the goal of getting 8 stamps in each region of the country. Mr. Livingston handed out prizes at the end of the night! We had many Cherokee alumni who are currently DPM Mandarin students back as volunteers. We are VERY grateful and appreciative to all the parents and students who volunteered for set up, clean up and running a station. We are also very thankful for Mr. David and the night crew for helping to set up and clean up the gym. Thank you, as it's always a team effort!

*Brief Summary of Coming Month – Plans:*

-There are no Mandarin APT events in December.

-We will remind Mandarin room helpers to coordinate holiday gifts for teachers

-January will be a busy month with Chinese New Year celebrations including a school wide assembly and classroom parties. We will meet with Mandarin teachers in December to confirm the date and begin planning.

**Membership/Directory: Shana Ward, Jenna Long**

Directory is officially finished for the year. All directories were distributed in October and the online directory is live. If anyone has any questions regarding the directory, they are welcome to reach out to Jenna Long or Shana Ward.

**New Families: Annie Kavanagh, Kate Hanson, Cyncy Schacher** - nothing to report

**Planters: Kim Walters**

Planters - we will be updating after Thanksgiving with a winter holiday theme.

**Publishing: Erica Iles, Stephanie Knauff, Carrie Ringness**

1st grade books are being sent home to volunteers to type and due back early

December. Final books will go home with children before winter break.

**Room Parents: Lacy Fidler** - nothing to report

**School Supplies: Kristin Vallaly** - nothing to report

**Spirit of 67 Board: Annie Ignoffo, Mirela Dalton**

We attended the monthly board meeting. Sent emails to non-donors. Online auction and ladies night was a big success!

Cherokee is behind the other schools in the crosstown competition. We need 36 families to donate to reach the 80% level which gets Cherokee \$1000.

We won with 87% last year.

**Spiritwear: Melissa Thoman, Audrey Margol** - nothing to report

**Spring Parent Survey: Kim Pfahl** - nothing to report

**Spookfest: Jocelyn Liu, Gisela Orestano, Cara Ruzila, Margareta Komlenac**

285 students attended and it was a great success!

**Staff Appreciation - Events: Gisela Orestano, Stephanie Knauff, Allie Metz, Tara Eggers**

We have begun organizing the upcoming Cookie Walk event that will be in December. An email will be sent to the parents with a sign up sheet after Thanksgiving to donate the cookies and gift cards for the staff. The boxes will be donated by local supermarkets. Also, every month we have been giving the staff little appreciation gifts (pretzels for Halloween, gum for Thanksgiving, etc).

**Staff Appreciation - Meals: Annie Ignoffo, Kristin Carruthers, Deanne Plattner**

Fall Conference Dinner and Breakfast were both hits. We fed about 42 staff at the lasagna dinner. We had 5 pans of regular lasagna and one of gluten free, plus salads and rolls. We also had packs of gum in a cute display, that little touch got big compliments. We also put the leftovers in individual takeout containers for easy heating and told teachers to take some home or reserve some for lunch the following day. The chafers that Deanne brought kept everything hot.

Breakfast was perfect as well, a more casual affair with teachers coming and going. It was set at around 7:45 and by noon teachers will still grazing. We served a crockpot of oatmeal with fixings, yogurts, berries, muffins, and other baked goods. We also set out some fun Starbucks creamers to go with the coffee. We had the perfect amount of food.

We are now on break until March!

**Social & Emotional Learning: Meredith Norman, Sarah Bass**

Reminder to sign up to decorate bathrooms and donate supplies.

Turn in your "lucky stars" for the new bulletin board.

**Visiting Scientist: Lisa Watters, Ali Dacy**

Coming in January

**Winterfest: Lisa Florjancic, Shermin Pelinski, Allie Metz, Sarah Bass**

Save the Date! February 7. Glow Night again with same vendors - was a hit last year!

**Yearbook: Kelly Pasquesi, Gillian Goodfriend, Annie Ignoffo, Erica Lump**

All classroom photographers were trained on how to use the new website and we are continuing to work on the yearbook layout.

**4th-Grade Celebration: Amy Pasquesi, Holly Lemon, Isabel Witte, Deanne Plattner, Lisa Florjancic** - nothing to report

**Guest Speaker: Superintendent Michael Simeck**

Mr. Simeck started his presentation by asking everyone to throw out attributes you would want your child to have when they are walking across the stage at LFHS graduation one day.....Here is the list:

curious, proud, confident, happy, independent, kind, healthy, open minded, leader, well-rounded, empathetic, nostalgic, prepared, excited, disciplined

Then, he asked everyone to put a checkmark by 5 you want for YOUR child. Then, we shared with a partner.

Mr. Simeck then asked, "How many of these can be measured by a standardized test?" The answer is zero to one.

His point being that standardized tests are only a very small piece of measuring a child.

If you want to know the great measure of a school - look to see if they have wonderful teachers, caring parents, share like values, etc.

THIS is the measure of a great place for your kids. The time we spend on SEL can look like its taking away from academic stuff, but when we spend time on social-emotional learning, everything else improves.

LF is a very giving community - starting with the people that live here but then it trickles down to the kids.

We are living in the district at a good time. We are in a time of steady and somewhat declining enrollment - but this gives more money for the district to use. Brand-new science labs at DPM (which the Board approved last night). More independence during the school day by allowing movement in the classrooms through small groups. Facilities are improving - new furniture, new lighting, ADA-compliant updates.

Co-teaching in the classroom by hiring additional staff and allowing smaller groups of teaching.

Mr. Simeck sent an email out for Family Reading Night. He encouraged us to spend time reading to and with our kids - no matter what age. Do you have a bedtime ritual? If not,



develop one. The reading habit and time spent together is priceless. It's not always about reading a book, but having quality time with an adult and a child. Adult is responsible for setting the ritual/tone.

There was an ongoing struggle with high humidity in the building at Cherokee. District spent \$400,000 to help address this issue at the beginning of the school year. Dehumidifiers should not be needed in the classrooms any longer - they were added noise/distraction. We think the issue has been addressed.

Mr. Livingston has a difficult job - because he followed Jeff McHugh. But, he's doing a great job so far this year!

Questions:

How are the Science Labs at LFHS?

Lacking. Facilities are lacking and in need of updates.

With declining enrollment, why are the class sizes large?

22 looks like a big class around here but on a regional scale, we have lower sizes. A lot of time goes into creating the classes each year to create a diverse range of learners. Balancing act of dividing classes up. 18-22 in K-3 and can go a little higher in older grades. Also, classroom space is an issue.

What are we doing as a District in regard to vaping, drugs, etc?

You, as a parent, are your child's most influential teacher. Consumable CBD is about to become very popular (legal in 1/2020) and will be in the form of a gummy. The doses are all over the place. Talk with your kids about how to navigate certain social situations. Officer Mark Long spends time in classrooms educating as well as some through SEL, but it is a partnership between school and parents.

Why is movement in the classroom encouraged?

Movement in classrooms is becoming more popular - especially in good schools. It's important to keep the kids busy and moving. The District has spent a lot of money to help train the staff to change teaching methods from the way we were taught (in rows facing forward all day). All teachers have been to training in NY for a week to learn these teaching methods.

Have there been any issues with Kindergarten class size due to the Mandarin Program only being offered at Cherokee?

Has not been an issue in many years. Certainly would address if it became a problem.

Finally, Mr. Simeck encouraged everyone to go into a dispensary with your spouse and see how all these illegal drugs will be distributed and marketed to your kids. Eye opening.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

**Next APT Meeting:**

January 15, 2020

Guest Speaker - Jenny Nasshan, Cherokee Learning Behavior Specialist, and other staff discussing inclusivity and co-teaching at Cherokee

Respectfully Submitted,

Maria Moore

Cherokee APT VP/Secretary