



## Cherokee APT Meeting Minutes – September 16, 2020

7:00PM

### **Attendees:**

Luke Livingston, Ann Kiesling, Gillian Goodfriend, Elizabeth Martin, Cara Ruzila, Tara Eggers, Maria Moore, Carolyn Hutchinson, Audrey Margol, Tony LoGiurato, Lacy Fidler, Annie Ignoffo, Mirela Dalton, Carrie Ringness, Brooke Tagliaferro, Nicole Cooper, Gisela Orestano, Deanne Plattner, Melissa Thoman, Nora Froelich, Natalie Windle, Kaci Spirito, Alex Cherry, Ann Marie Colletti, Michelle Kijek, Kathy Machak, Margareta Komlenac, Jessica White, Jennifer Mulloy, Margaret White, Kelly Pasquesi, Leslie Young, Karen Feeney, Susan Asby, Rich Dethorne, Candice Pelsner, Ellen Beltz, Patty Oey, Teresa Hutchinson, Krina Lessard, Amy Mobile

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

### **Welcome: Ann Kiesling**

### **Principal's Report: Luke Livingston**

#### ***General Updates:***

- Overall, very positive start to the school year. Families reaching out about noticeable improvement to remote learning part of the day.
- Garden was delivered and working on set up
- Teachers lounge is completed and looks amazing.
- Students should use google meet app as links are sent straight to students.
- Reminders as we move into full on hybrid learning:
- Complete the self-screener

#### ***Student Updates:***

- Hybrid:
  - Students are following routines and expectations and doing a great job
  - Coming home today and tomorrow is a one page document with QR code and student ID number for easy access to screener.

#### ***-AVA:***

- Supply pick-up for students in the AVA on Friday from 9am - 2pm at Cherokee.

**Staff Update:**

- 100% staffed for the year
- We have [several new staff members](#) for the 20-21 school year.
- Hired a nurse assistant to help with our observation room: Ashley Meyer.

**Past events:**

- Kindergarten Playdate 9.9.20
- Staggered Slow Rolling Start to the year
- New Family Orientation 8.27.20

**Upcoming Events:**

- APT Teacher Lunch on 9.18.20
- Boo Hoo Coffee 9.21.20 (Virtual)
- Picture Day 9.30.20
- Parent Information Night (Virtual) 10.1.20

**President's Report: Ann Kiesling**

**APT's Purpose:** To foster cooperative working relationships, to promote communication within the school community, and to enhance the education and enrichment of our children.

**APT's Vision:** To become a continuously self-renewing organization committed to our purpose and sensitive to the changing needs of our community.

Our Vision is never more critical than this unique school year – our needs have shifted and I am so appreciative to everyone on the Cherokee APT Board for your commitment to serving this year, as well as your flexibility and creativity as we serve the needs of our staff, students and families. To those of you in attendance that do not hold positions (yet), thank you for joining us to learn more about who we are and what we do.

Organizationally, the Cherokee APT is governed by an Executive APT Board. Former Cherokee mom, Kristen Lee, is our Executive APT President, and many of our Board roles have Exec Board Counterparts to help maintain consistency and community among our school APT boards.

Maintaining our sense of community this year will be my priority. Helen Keller said it well: "Alone, we can do so little; together, we can do so much." Our Cherokee Board is diverse; families that are new to the district and seasoned veterans, parents with children in all grades, and in different schools, including AVA. The potential for our population to continue to shift throughout the year is another reason I hope to build this unity among all of our families, staff and teachers.

### ***Goals for the Year:***

HAVE FUN!! We are all spread thin and have so much going on – not just physically but also emotionally. I will do my best to bring fun to our meetings and events and I would encourage you to do the same! I hope we don't realize the "work" because we're having so much fun!

#### **1) Active participation**

Have 100% of our Cheetah families be APT members. (The APT does not do any fundraising -- those \$35 family memberships fund all of our activities. So the more people who join, the bigger our budget!)

Have more parents come to our meetings (not just those on Board).

Get parents who aren't on the Board involved more in other school activities.

#### **2) Engaged APT Board**

Stay informed - read those Friday newsletters, read all the emails, come to the meetings.

Keep everyone else in the loop - submit monthly reports.

Manage your given budget and turn in your receipts within 30 days.

Update your Job Description – maybe adding a paragraph for "Pandemic Year", complete your Year-End Report, and suggest improvements.

#### **3) Strong communication and relationships**

Continue to store everything in our APT Google Drive to help future volunteers.

We do email parents directly from an APT mailchimp account. As some may remember, prior to last year, we sent emails to the Room Parent Coordinator, who forwarded them to Room Parents, who forwarded them to parents.

-Promote the Friday newsletters, our website, and our Facebook group / Instagram profile.

-Create a welcoming atmosphere where parents feel inspired to build relationships and get involved.

### **Guest Speakers for Cherokee APT Meetings this Year:**

At this time, the elementary presidents are collaborating on determining some ways we can utilize school administration and community resources as an entire group. For October, we are working on an Executive Functioning presentation for the K-4 set. We will also host Mr. Simeck, Dr. McHugh, and others throughout the year.

### ***Cherokee APT Reminders:***

The APT Exec team is currently requesting volunteers for an AVA APT Board. If you have interest in being involved, please reach out to Kristen Lee, our Executive APT President. I know our events may not be as frequent as previous years, but please do take pictures at our various APT events and send them to Cara Ruzila. We would especially love pictures showing our APT board members "in action" working at our events or completing their committee tasks!

Don't forget to let Cara Ruzila know if you want an APT event or committee work communicated/promoted on our website or social media.  
Finally, I do not want APT commitments to bring stress to your life; family and work come first. If you get overwhelmed, please reach out to me for reinforcements; we have plenty of parents who would love to step in and help.

***Community Announcements:***

A great way to stay up to date on community happenings is the Green Backpack section in the newsletter and the website. We partner with many local organizations to bring you information about what's happening around town!

Special Lake Forest Open Lands event Saturday, September 19 at 6:30pm. As some of you know, our Open Lands Association has a Fall event every year "Bagpipes and Bonfires" – this year, to build community and continue tradition, they are selecting several locations around Lake Forest where bagpipers will play "Amazing Grace." I am pleased to announce that Cherokee Park will be a location so consider stepping outside or coming to Cherokee (following current CDC guidelines – masks and social distancing) for this special event. <https://www.lfola.org/bagpipes-bonfire>

**Vice President/Recording Secretary's Report: Gillian Goodfriend**

The minutes from April 2019 were presented and no changes or corrections were made. A motion to approve the April 2019 minutes was made by Lacy Fidler, seconded by Kelly Pasquesi and passed unanimously.

Yellow APT folders were distributed to all committee members. Gillian went through the folder contents and gave an explanation for each item.

**Treasurer's Report: Elizabeth Martin**

In October we will have a budget to approve. Until then, we will be working with committees to determine any adjustments that need to be made to your budgets from last year.

Elizabeth showed the apt check request form (also online on our APT website) and reminded people to make a photocopy of their receipt.  
In addition, she reminded everyone to bring the tax exempt form when shopping. The APT cannot reimburse for sales tax.

Please mail or drop off in Elizabeth's mailbox your original receipt and the check request form within 30 days: 783 Cherokee Road.

Ann and Elizabeth will be working to finalize budget numbers.

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

***Brief Summary of Current Month – Activities:*** Informing Cherokee community about Cherokee APT events, building camaraderie, specific building events, etc. Departments continue to submit information they would like to distribute to the APT public.

Things for members to do:

“Like” the Cherokee APT page (if you friend the Cheetah that is not the same as following the page). When you see an APT post make sure to “Like” it and comment on it. The Facebook algorithm likes when posts are liked and commented on. The more you do this, the more Facebook thinks you want to see these posts.

Bookmark the Cherokee APT website. You can find forms, information, calendar of events, etc.

Email pictures to Cara for posting.

***Brief Summary of Coming Month - Plans:*** Continue informing the Cherokee community about Cherokee APT events, building camaraderie, specific building events, etc. Departments continue to submit information they would like to distribute to the APT public

Creating APT Instagram page this month - details to come.

**Committee Reports/Announcements:**

**Back-to-School Picnic/Field Day: Danielle Knighton, Janel Brown**

***Brief Summary of Current Month – Activities:*** Back-to-School Parade for hybrid learners at drop off on Monday, Sept. 21st. Flyer is being made for families to either make posters or decorate their cars during drop off. 2-4 signs will also be made to put up at drop off and pick-up areas.

**Board of Ed: Kelly Kelley, Vanessa Karam** - nothing to report

**Breakfasts: Anne Axus, Brianna Meade** - nothing to report

**Bulletin Board: Nora Froelich**

Supplies were dropped off at Cherokee and office staff helped decorate the bulletin board.

**Celebration Book Club: Kelly Pasquesi**

After talking with Amy Mobile, all 3 elementary schools are halting Celebration Book Club at this time.

Kelly will let us know if she finds out any more information about when and how we can start this up again.

**Community Service: Cathy Montanari, Alex Cherry** - nothing to report

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

-This year the directory will be reimagined virtually due to our ever-changing covid climate.

-Please look for the link from the APT next week to update personal information.

-The plan is for the directory to be available by the end of September.

**Evening Socials: Natasha Schnack** - nothing to report

**Fine Arts/Visiting Author: Elizabeth Martin, Alex Cherry** - nothing to report

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

Lisa and Katie are working with wellness teachers to incorporate nutrition information into wellness classes virtually or share on social media.

**Garden: Tara Eggers/Deanne Plattner**

Supplies for the garden have been ordered and delivered to Cherokee.

**Helping Hands: Tony Logiurato** - nothing to report

**Kindergarten: Alex Cherry, Kaci Spirito**

-Communicated with Luke to receive incoming Kindergarten numbers to order t-shirts

-Communicated with APT president to gather volunteers for sign and welcome bag distribution/collection (welcome bag included APT letter/important dates/district calendar, car magnet, t-shirt, Cherokee 101); copies were made at school

-Created and mapped routes for volunteers, pick up times and collections in emails

-Organized an incoming Kindergarten playdate using sign-up genius and drafted emails for Luke to communicate important information regarding the event to incoming families (playdate was cancelled due to weather)

-Organized a smaller playdate broken into two sections which lasted 30 minutes each on Cherokee playground. Sections were divided by morning and afternoon cohorts

-Bought balloons and hand sanitizer for said playdates

-Next month's coming events: Boo Hoo Coffee and possibly playground volunteers

**LF-LB LDA: Danielle Burk** - nothing to report

**Lost & Found: Ann Marie Colletti** - nothing to report

**Mandarin: Nicole Cooper, Melissa Thoman**

We have been in touch with Jing (Mandarin teacher) in an attempt to figure out what this year's events will look like. Unfortunately we will have to cancel a lot of Chinese events this year but we are thinking about doing something virtually. For this trimester, we are focused on Celebration of Confucius's day. Jing has been in communications with the Weiqi master in hopes to provide a Chinese Weiqi class for all Mandarin classes around September 28th.

Future events will be visited as they come about.

**New Families: Maria Moore, Cyncy Schacher**

We have welcomed 16 New Families so far this year. We worked to pair up each new family with a Cherokee Buddy Family and asked that they connect either virtually or in person before school started. We think that has been a success for the most part! We also created folders with Cherokee/Lake Forest information and delivered them with Cherokee t-shirts and signs the weekend before school started. We will continue to work with the school as new families arrive during the school year.

**Planters: Erica Lumpp**

New planters were purchased because last year's have been misplaced. Planters were decorated with flowers and back-to-school flags. Planters will be changed to a Fall theme by October 1st.

**Publishing: Carrie Ringness/Michelle Kijek - nothing to report**

**Room Parents: Kathy Machak**

- Met with Ann to discuss modifications to room parent role
- Assigning 1 parent per cohort
- Lack coverage for 6 cohorts
- Ann soliciting volunteers for 6 cohorts we are missing room parents
- Scheduling brief training for (likely) 10/2 in the AM
- Drafting first page for room parent manual for this year acknowledging things are different this year

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

**Social & Emotional Learning: Merideth Norman/Audrey Margol - nothing to report**

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

E-mails are being sent to families to encourage them to donate. Join the Spirit! Cross town competition is happening again this year. Cherokee won last year and we want to win again!

**Spookfest: Gisela Orestano, Margareta Komlenac** - nothing to report

**Haunted Hallway: Ali Dacy, Alissa McNicholas** - nothing to report

**Spiritwear: Melissa Thoman, Kelly Kelley**

The spiritwear committee worked remotely this summer to finalize choices for the 2020/2021 school year. After last year's successful pop-up Spring sale, consisting of the most frequently purchased items, we decided to continue to offer a wide variety of performance material pieces, both name brand and "generic", in efforts to offer various price points. Finally, we added face masks to the lineup to help promote safety and health, as well as school spirit.

Spiritwear orders were done strictly online this year with a deadline of September 13, 2020.

Orders are expected to arrive to Kiddles early October, and will likely be available for curbside pickup shortly after that.

**Staff Appreciation - Events: Gisela Orestano, Lacy Fidler, Elizabeth Martin, Tara Eggers** -

During these challenging circumstances we want to still remember to appreciate our teachers who are working long hours to make learning possible for our children. The Staff Appreciation Events committee are planning the following to celebrate our Cherokee teachers:

Starting in September- "Welcome Back Raffle" *A monthly raffle of gift cards for teachers/staff*

October- "Autumn Appreciation" *Teachers will provide Amazon wishlists for classroom items (a link to this will be emailed out in October)*

November- "We are Thankful for You" notes (more on this later in the year)

If you would like to donate to the monthly gift card raffle you can Venmo Lacy Fidler @ 309-826-5324. If we have a surplus of funds for gift cards we will add it to the staff appreciation events fund that will be used for small gifts for the teachers throughout the year.

**Staff Appreciation- Meals: Deanne Plattner, Fran Chana, Kristin Vallaly**

Committee members are organizing the first staff meal for this Friday, September 18th.

**Sustainability: Ann Marie Colletti** - nothing to report



**Visiting Scientist: Natalie Windle, Kim Pfahl - nothing to report**

**Winterfest: Jessica White, Maggie Topalian, Heather Pateros - nothing to report**

**Yearbook: Annie Ignoffo, Brooke Tagliaferro**

September 30th is picture day. Students will have pictures taken by cohort with covid precautions in place.

We are working with VIP to produce a yearbook to the best of our ability at this time. Discussions are in place to brainstorm ideas for yearbook pages across district schools for consistency.

This year's precautions include:

- Online registration and purchases (no paper envelopes on pictures day).
- No parents for classroom pictures.
- Asking parents to submit home photos to include in the yearbook.

**4th-Grade Celebration: Annie Kavanagh, Tara Eggers, Carolyn Hutchinson, Gisela Orestano - nothing to report**

**Faculty Liaison Report: Krina Lessard, Amy Mobile**

The Cherokee staff are so appreciative of the welcoming chalk drawings that the families created outside of the school. In addition, the staff is so thankful for the positive feedback from parents during this challenging time.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:25PM.

**Next APT Meeting:**

Wednesday, October 21

Respectfully Submitted,

Gillian Goodfriend  
Cherokee APT VP/Secretary