

**Appleton Citywide Parent Network Meeting**  
**October 6, 2014, 6:30 pm**  
**Ferber Elementary School**

**In Attendance:** Jill Georger (Houdini), Amber Cittadino (Badger), Steph Theimer Darling (Highlands), Jessica Desens (Highlands), Jessica Neemann (Highlands/Odyssey), John Cuff (North/Classical), Tober Moderson (Jefferson), Michelle Anderson (McKinley), Jenny Hintz (McKinley), Patti Clark-Stojke (West), Renee Brown (Badger), Matt Zimmerman (Foster), Lee Allinger (AASD), Ben Vogel (AASD), Greg Vander Heiden (Appleton Police Department), Pamela Franzke (Ferber/McKinley), Ginger Schaden (Berry).

**Meeting Overview:**

- There will usually be two parts to our meetings, 1 part is taking care of any Citywide Parent Network business, and the second part will be a topic of special interest.
- Our website is now up. [www.appletonparents.com](http://www.appletonparents.com). On our website, you can find the calendar, meeting notes, SPEAK grant information, and other valuable resources.

**Meeting Part 1: Discuss what topics might be “critical meeting topics” for the 2014-2015 school year.**

*Spent time collaborating on what new topics may be important, using the list from the 2013-2014 school year as a starting point. Covered in the last few years: technology, the lunch program, what is working at each school (for the parent groups), the new school report cards, and a few other topics.*

**Possible Topics for the 2014-2015 School Year:**

- Social Media
  - Does your school have a Facebook page?
  - What are some Facebook guidelines your school follows?
  - What type of things do you post?
  - How do you use social media to help boost parent involvement?
- Chromebooks
  - What guidelines to our students have regarding the Chromebooks?
  - What are the students doing on the Chromebooks...or able to do?
  - What type of things are students restricted to doing when using them?
- How does a parent group play a role in distributing info about other programs for kids? How can we help these types of fliers/information sheets to get to parents so they are aware and kids don't miss opportunities?

- What is a good method to share information? *Using our website was suggested as an idea.*
- How do we publicize our parent group successes?
- How do we best support teachers and staff? What do the teachers/staff find helpful/useful?
- How do we reduce the ratio of kids to playground supervisors at lunchtime? Do some schools organize their lunchtime schedule differently to avoid having so many kids playing outside at the same time?
- Concern raised that staff participation in our parent group might be limited because it currently does not count toward the required staff development hours.
- Concern raised that children at Highlands (“other schools” were mentioned, but not specified as to which schools) were charging children school bucks to take bathroom breaks during a time when a bathroom break was not scheduled. *Mr. Allinger has since followed up and resolved this issue.*
- How to better identify and fix places where bullying is occurring. Bullying still is reportedly occurring in places like at lunch recess, during bathroom breaks, and in other places where school staff may not be aware of it occurring.
- Snack inconsistencies across schools. Time limits for snacks or whether a snack is allowed or not is not consistent across the board in some schools.
- How to increase parent involvement. Some parent groups have minimal involvement of parents, and most of the work is done amongst a few parents.
- Lunchroom Issue: Unlimited extra fruits and vegetables are supposed to be allowed, according to Aramark, but Highlands is only allowing students to get one extra piece of either a fruit or a vegetable (except in the case of lunchroom helpers).
- Parent group turnover for officers....how to groom the “next crop” of really involved parents. How to make sure our parent groups have longevity.

**Meeting Part 2: ALICE Presentation, Ben Vogel (Assistant Superintendent of the North Cluster), and Sgt. Greg Vander Heiden (Appleton Police Department)**

- What is ALICE?
  - ALICE stands for Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate.
  - ALICE provides our teachers and staff with options if an armed intruder was to enter one of our buildings. Previously, our staff only had 1 option during a red lockdown (signifying imminent danger): to shut the lights off, lock the doors, and hide the students in a corner until police came.
  - Average response time of police is 5-6 minutes, so during that 5-6 minutes, staff is responsible for the safety of the students. Instead of just having 1 option, the staff now has other options.

- Staff and students are being empowered to survive as opposed to just locking down.
- Example: If there is an exit door right in or right outside a classroom, and the teacher knows the intruder is on the other side of the building, the teacher is empowered to flee and get out with the students instead of locking down.
- AASD has trained administrators in ALICE, and they are currently training teaching staff. In the near future, they will be sharing age-appropriate info with our students regarding this new information.
- Safety experts have shown that this method is much safer than what we were previously doing.
- AASD is seeking Citywide input on what is important for the parents to know before they start telling our kids. Teachers are already currently empowered to evacuate if need be.
- ALICE drills have already been run, so schools have been implementing pieces, but the whole process of ALICE has not yet been implemented.
- Concern was raised about kids already coming home and telling their parents because pieces of ALICE are already being implemented.
- Suggestion was given by a Citywide parent to have AASD use the phrase, “You may have already heard this already,” so as to not insult parents by acting like all parents have never heard of it.
- An idea was offered to consider investing in rope ladders someday to help with the evacuation process of schools more than 1 floor high.
- Schools and students are used to doing lockdown & intruder drills, but in the second semester, they will run scenario drills. The point will be to have staff thinking on their toes: Where are the exits? Where are the fire alarms? Just a general being aware of their surroundings.
- Officer Vander Heiden’s thoughts:
  - Allowing our children to be “sitting ducks” is not the best plan.
  - There are going to be a lot of questions plus positive and negative feedback on ALICE.
  - Suggestion by Citywide member: It was alluded to previously that there are some research and statistics as to why this method is better. Can we use that as a foundation to show why we changed?
    - Answer by Officer VanderHeiden: We can definitely do that, as this is a nationwide Department of Justice change in thinking, not just an Appleton change. Not everyone is changing at the same time. We are following Green Bay’s lead. The changes have to be specific to each district, but we are using the big points.

- Question was raised if guidance counselors could be available to the students if need be when they run the intruder drills.
- This intruder training may look different in each age group, because they do not want to scare the kids.
- One book that may be helpful to read (Mr. Vogel read it to his 1<sup>st</sup> graders): I'm not scared, I'm prepared.
- Question raised about the subs and paraprofessionals. It was answered that implementing ALICE with them, too, was part of the process.
- ALICE is an ongoing process. AASD is empowering teachers to be able to pull the fire alarm, use the intercom to do an announcement in plain language (no code words...so everyone will know exactly what is going on and where the intruder is), call 911, and bring the students to a rally point outside.
- Question was raised as to why you would pull the fire alarm, because that sound is a universal signal to kids meaning 1 thing: fire, and they might come out into the hallways. Point was also made that the intruder him/herself could pull the alarm.
- The first priority of a staff member would be to evacuate. If evacuation is not possible, they need to lockdown and pile things in front of the door. Intruders are not looking to have to break through a barricade.
- Concern was raised that if students were being led to a rally point outside, that a second shooter might be waiting outside. Answer by Officer Vander Heiden: historically, a second shooter has only been present in 2% of cases.
- Question was raised about what students should do once they get to a rally point...lay down? Question also raised that if teachers were empowered to get the children to keep running if the "safe rally place" isn't safe.
- Point that is being made to students: don't hold doors for other adults (to give means to entry to the school). The students are part of the alert process. They are to bring to alert any person who seems out of place in the building (no visitor tag, etc.) by letting an adult know.
- It was suggested that maybe we should reward the students who make these notifications.
- The site-based safety committee is responsible for rolling these procedures out. It is recommended that parents be on the school site-based safety committees, and parents can also be on the district site-based safety committee.
- Suggestion was made by a Citywide parent to give the scenarios the students will be role-playing out on paper to the parents ahead of time so as to not scare the students. Answer: AASD is currently putting together parent resources.

- Question: Parents will want to know how you are relaying this information? Will it be teacher specific?  
Answer: In November-December, counselors will go into each K-6 class. Subsequent years, this training with students will begin right in September. In grades 7-12, this instruction to students regarding ALICE will happen during their advisee period.
- The book, I'm not Scared, I'm Prepared...AASD is buying 60 copies. Each site will have 2.
- ALICE will be communicated fully to teachers in the next 3-4 weeks and relayed to parent groups in early November. The students and staff will begin training with scenarios in January..
- Suggestion was made by a Citywide parent to plan for a series of communications...to get it out to parents via other methods than just the parent groups, because those parents are usually already the involved parents. Putting it out at conferences was suggested. A worry was the letter about ALICE might get lost in the folders. Suggestion was made to have the letter come from the school's liaison officer, "Hello from Officer \_\_\_\_\_. Here's how you can help keep our kids safe....."
- Suggestion made by a parent to possibly have a no homework day, and the only homework that day would be to discuss ALICE with your parents.
- Principals will be the primary point of contact for ALICE, and guidance counselors will be helping with specifics.
- Concern was raised via email about principals possibly not being trained tactical officers and not fully qualified to train on something like this. Mr. Vogel offered to contact the person directly to discuss any concerns.
- In the case of the recent lockdown that occurred at a few AASD schools, it became clear that closure may be needed for the text message warnings. A possibility suggested was to refer parents to check for updates on the APD website. Parents felt anxious that they didn't know what was going on after the initial text message warnings.
- Summary of our conversations with Mr. Vogel and Officer Vander Heiden:
  - AASD will be getting something to parents soon.
  - The procedure of implementing ALICE will be ongoing.
  - Our meeting feedback was useful to help them develop a letter to send out to parents.

There is a public forum for 12 area state senate and representative candidates coming up on October 22 from 6:30-8:00 at Appleton Public Library for anyone interested. The topic of the forum is public education.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:00 pm.

Submitted by:  
Amber Cittadino

Citywide Parent Network Secretary