

*Oak Park and River Forest High School, District 200
201 N. Scoville Ave.
Oak Park, IL 60302*

MEMORANDUM

TO: Culture, Climate, and Behavior Committee members

FROM: Joylynn Pruitt-Adams, Superintendent and Jennifer Cassell, CCB Chairperson

DATE: September 6, 2017

RE: CCB Work Group Assignments

Introduction

In order to build off our efforts during the 2016-17 school year, we will be breaking the CCB Committee into smaller work groups which will focus on four discreet assignments. The bulk of the small group work will take place during the Fall Semester and will culminate in each small group presenting to the full CCB Committee during our regularly scheduled meeting on January 18.

Work Group Assignments

The four small groups will work to address the following issues:

- Student Tardiness
- Student and Family Voice and Belonging
- Faculty and Staff Voice and Innovation
- Community Voice and Connections

Open Meetings Act and Process Considerations

Because CCB must comply with the Open Meetings Act, we must set a few ground rules for this group work. First, each group must have a designated individual to take notes during the small group meetings and must submit those meeting minute notes via e-mail to Gail Kalmerton (gkalmerton@oprfs.org) within a week of the meeting. Those notes will be made available to the public. Second, there may not be any group work or communications, whether in-person or electronic, outside of the regularly scheduled CCB meetings. As such, we recommend that before the end of each meeting, each group assign tasks to be completed by members individually prior to the next meeting.

The small group meetings will be held on September 21, October 19, November 14, and December 19. We will open each meeting as a full committee and will break into small groups after public comment. Each small group meeting will be open to the public. Though the public is welcome to sit and listen to any small group discussion, out of respect for the limited meeting time, we ask that members of the public refrain from participating in the group discussions.

By September 13, all CCB members will submit via e-mail to Jennifer Cassell (jcassell@oprfs.org), their preference for which small group they would like to participate in ranked 1-4. We will make every effort to place each member in their preferred group while also being mindful of ensuring that we have a mix of stakeholders represented in each small group.

Group Presentations

As explained above, each group will make a presentation to the full CCB committee in January. We anticipate that each presentation will last no more than 15 minutes with approximately 5 minutes for questions. The presentations need not be formal slideshow presentations, but rather a summary or talking points about each group's research, discussion, and specific suggestions addressing the group's designated topic. The full CCB committee will take the information shared by each group and spend the Spring Semester considering and vetting their suggestions as recommendations that CCB will present to the Board of Education for approval in May 2018.

Framework for Small Group Work Assignments

Though the end product for each topic may look different, each group is asked to use the following framework to arrive at their recommendations.

Given your group's research and discussion, name specific practices, strategies, or programs OPRF can implement within the next three years related to your group's issue that will positively impact the school's culture and climate, reduce racial disparities in student discipline, and/or increase students' and families' sense of belonging at OPRF and the expectation of excellence for all students.

To facilitate the work of each small group, we offer the following list of issues for each group to consider, discuss, and potentially address before the full CCB committee during their presentations:

- What does research reveal about best practices to address this issue?
- What examples to address this issue have positively impacted other schools' culture and climate according to evidence-based research and available data?
- What initiatives are currently in place at OPRF to address this issue?
- Who would be responsible for implementing the recommended practices, strategies, or programs?
- What training would be necessary for OPRF staff, faculty, administration, and Board of Education to successfully implement these practices, strategies, or programs?
- Which rules of conduct and/or school policies and procedures will need to be modified, adopted, or rescinded in order to effectuate these practices, strategies, or programs?
- What measurements can we use to monitor the effectiveness of these practices, strategies, or programs?
- Where would the recommended practices, strategies, or programs fall within OPRF's Strategic Plan?

Student Tardiness

Introduction

Consequences related to student tardiness comprise the largest number of disciplinary infractions received by OPRF students. Black students accounted for about half of all infractions, including those related to tardiness and failure to serve detention, despite being less than one quarter of the student body. This small group should discuss programs, strategies, and practices that OPRF can implement to reduce and address student tardiness.

CCB's Draft Recommendations Background

During the 2016-2017 school year, CCB wrote the following draft recommendation:

- **Assessment of practices, policies, and tools related to tardy management.**
Objective: Assessment- To determine whether HERO is a barrier to a restorative justice philosophy and whether its strengths outweigh the weakness of requiring continued removal from class for a student to get a tardy slip.
Description: The Administration will assess strengths and weaknesses of HERO system, and research other available systems for tracking and consequence tardies. The Administration will then make a recommendation to the Board concerning use or replacement of HERO.
Resources Needed: Assignment of personnel to complete task.
Metrics: Completion of task.

Strategic Plan Alignment to 2017-2018 Priorities

- Goal 3 – Supportive Learning Environment: OPRF High School will create learning environments that support the unique strengths and needs of each individual and will provide a system of supports to meet the evolving needs of all students.
 - Strategy 1. By June 2018, determine the effectiveness of current social-emotional learning (SEL) programs and establish targets for annual improvement.

Student and Family Voice and Belonging

Introduction

A recurring theme that emerged from CCB's work last year, as well as in the strategic plan, is the need for students and families to feel a sense of belonging and an expectation of excellence.

This small group should discuss programs, strategies, and practices that OPRF can implement to maintain a welcoming environment for students and families, including, but not limited to, improving their sense of belonging and setting an expectation of excellence in classroom environments and student activities.

CCB's Draft Recommendations Background

During the 2016-2017 school year, CCB wrote the following draft recommendations:

- **Create and adhere to schedule of adult volunteers to act as school-day welcoming greeters.**
Objective: Voice- To set the tone for each student's day by welcoming her or him into the building and emphasizing that her or his presence in the building is valued.
Description: Station individuals to serve as welcoming greeters at the school's front entrance at the start of each school day. These individuals will serve in addition to any security personnel stationed at the front entrance. The greeters' role will be to say hello to students, acknowledge and welcome them, and set a positive tone for each school day.
Resources Needed: Daily commitment of time by volunteers (Administration, Board members, and other volunteers such as parents, Faculty, staff, sports teams or clubs).
Metrics: Results of survey given in 2017 and annually thereafter to assess school climate and culture.
- **Promote student voice by soliciting regular feedback from students concerning the school's climate.**
Objective: Voice- To increase student input in issues affecting school climate, and the dress code.
Description: A student group such as SAFE (Students Advocating for Equity) will make regular reports to the Board to provide regular feedback on OPRFHS's climate including issues about dress code. This group will be representative of a broad range of students within the high school to get a broad assessment of the inclusivity of the current school climate.
Resources Needed: A Faculty or administrative liaison to help facilitate the group, student volunteers, ongoing support such as Chicago VOYCE trainings, funding.
Metrics: Progress in improving the school climate for all students.
- **Engage student and family voice to improve equity across all demographics through town halls, assemblies, family visitation days, and regular mechanisms for providing feedback to the Administration and Board of Education.**
Objective: Voice- To increase family and community engagement.

Description: The school will conduct regular town halls to discuss topical equity issues within the school. This will provide an opportunity for students, family members, and community members to engage the District in a meaningful dialogue to encourage creative and organic solutions. The school will provide regular mechanisms for feedback from family and students, such as comment cards on Parent Visiting Day. The school will hold regular assemblies for students on equity including panel discussions on topical issues within the school. The school will have a minimum of one family visitation day in the Fall and Spring semester. The school will host family events that are social in nature to encourage further engagement, and may encourage parent groups, sports teams, and clubs to co-host.

Resources Needed: Assigned administrators to organize and publicize events, print and distribute comment cards, and collect and analyze feedback.

Metrics: Progress in reducing student, family, and community perception of inequity across all demographics. Progress in increasing dialogue between students, family members, community members and the District.

Strategic Plan Alignment to 2017-2018 Priorities

- Goal 3 – Supportive Learning Environment: OPRF High School will create learning environments that support the unique strengths and needs of each individual and will provide a system of supports to meet the evolving needs of all students.
 - Strategy 1. By June 2018, determine the effectiveness of current social-emotional learning (SEL) programs and establish targets for annual improvement.

Faculty and Staff Voice and Innovation

Introduction

Faculty and staff input, innovation, and buy-in are keys to the success of any efforts to improve school culture and climate. During CCB's discussions and the course of feedback from the faculty regarding CCB's draft recommendations, a need emerged to have a safe, effective mechanism for faculty and staff to have their voices heard regarding implementing best practices systemically and in a pedagogically sound manner.

This small group should discuss programs, strategies, and practices that OPRF can implement to solicit, implement, and recognize faculty and staff input and innovative ideas that improve OPRF's climate and culture and instructional practices to make all students feel welcomed and supported and experience an expectation of excellence.

CCB's Draft Recommendations Background

During the 2016-2017 school year, CCB wrote the following draft recommendations:

- **Potential creation of ombudsperson to provide “whistleblower protection” to those reporting issues affecting culture and climate.**

Objective: Voice- For individuals reporting issues negatively affecting culture and climate to feel safe from bullying or harassment.

Description: Feasibility study regarding the creation of a position which will allow for anonymous reporting of issues negatively affecting culture and climate, provided there is no legal requirement to divulge information. This will be evaluated by district counsel as part of the feasibility study. Development of clear process where those individuals making a report will receive a timely response to concerns raised.

Resources Needed: Job description, possibly funding.

Metrics: Improvement in culture and climate as evidenced by survey and focus group data, as well as increase in reporting.

Strategic Plan Alignment to 2017 – 2018 Priorities

- Goal 5 – Transformational Leadership: OPRF High School will hold all leaders to high expectations in responsibilities, policies, practices, and professional development and will create opportunities that affirm and support effective teaching, learning, and leadership.
 - Strategy 4. Encourage innovation at all levels in the institution.

Community Voice and Connections

Introduction

OPRF can leverage the wealth of knowledge and resources in the Oak Park and River Forest communities to work collaboratively toward continuous improvement in the school's culture and climate. OPRF can forge these connections to share best practices and to hold itself accountable to the community.

This small group should discuss programs, strategies, and practices that OPRF can implement to connect its culture and climate improvement work to external community organizations and conversations. Community partners to consider include, but are not limited to, District 97, District 90, Oak Park Public Library, River Forest Public Library, Village of Oak Park, Village of River Forest, Oak Park Township, Park District of Oak Park, River Forest Park District, Triton College, and the Collaboration for Early Childhood.

CCB's Draft Recommendations Background

- **Engage student and family voice to improve equity across all demographics through town halls, assemblies, family visitation days, and regular mechanisms for providing feedback to the Administration and Board of Education.**

Objective: Voice- To increase family and community engagement.

Description: The school will conduct regular town halls to discuss topical equity issues within the school. This will provide an opportunity for students, family members, and community members to engage the District in a meaningful dialogue to encourage creative and organic solutions. The school will provide regular mechanisms for feedback from family and students, such as comment cards on Parent Visiting Day. The school will hold regular assemblies for students on equity including panel discussions on topical issues within the school. The school will have a minimum of one family visitation day in the Fall and Spring semester. The school will host family events that are social in nature to encourage further engagement, and may encourage parent groups, sports teams, and clubs to co-host.

Resources Needed: Assigned administrators to organize and publicize events, print and distribute comment cards, and collect and analyze feedback.

Metrics: Progress in reducing student, family, and community perception of inequity across all demographics. Progress in increasing dialogue between students, family members, community members and the District.

Strategic Plan Alignment to 2017 – 2018 Priorities

- Goal 1 – Holistic Community Education: OPRF High School will collaborate effectively with other educational institutions and social service organizations, resulting in a high-quality continuum of learning and seamless transitions for students from birth to post-secondary education and career paths.

- Strategy 1. By June 30, 2018, identify the current state of effectiveness of OPRF transitional programs, and set targets for annual improvement.
- Board Goal 5 – Improve Board Effectiveness through community outreach, professional development and self-evaluation.