

**Oak Park and River Forest High School  
201 North Scoville Avenue  
Oak Park, IL 60302**

**POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING  
June 21, 2007**

A Policy Committee meeting was held on Thursday, June 21, 2007, in the Board Room of the Oak Park and River Forest High School. Dr. Lee called the meeting to order at 11:50 a.m. Committee members present were Jacques A. Conway, Valerie J. Fisher, Sharon Patchak-Layman; and Dr. Ralph H. Lee. Also present were Susan J. Bridge, Superintendent/Principal; Jason Edgecombe, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources; Cheryl L. Witham, Chief Financial Officer; Jack Lanenga, Assistant Superintendent for Operations; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

Visitors included Kay Foran, Director of Community Relations and Communications; James Paul Hunter, F.S.E.C. Chair; Wyanetta Johnson and Burcy Hines, community members; Dr. Carl Spight, O.P.R.F.H.S. Institutional Researcher; and Terry Dean of the *Wednesday Journal*.

**Acceptance of the May 8, 2007 Policy Committee Minutes**

It was the consensus of the Policy Committee members to accept the minutes of the May 8, 2007 Policy Committee as presented.

**Policy 5127, Alternative Credit**

Amendment of Policy 5127, Alternative Credit, was being proposed for second reading and action to allow for the modification of the date by which courses must be completed in order to satisfy graduation requirements via correspondence or online courses. The revised date would be May 1 of the senior year.

It was the consensus of the Policy Committee members that all of the Board of Education members be given an opportunity to add their input on Policy 5127, Alternative Credit, at the regular June Board of Education meeting. The policy will be presented for second reading and action.

The discussion would include the accreditation type of the school giving the credit, why a course must have sixty (60) instructional hours in order to be accepted by O.P.R.F.H.S., and whether or not there would be a stipulation as to the minimum letter grade that would be accepted, i.e., a "C."

One Carnegie Unit equals 60 hours. O.P.R.F.H.S. gives credit for any grade above an "F" for its own offerings; thus, it was suggested that there should not be a different standard for alternative credits.

## **Policy 5152, Prohibition of Electronic and Cellular Paging Devices**

It also was the consensus of the Policy Committee members that all Board of Education members be given an opportunity for input on Policy 5152, Prohibition of Electronic and Cellular Paging Devices, at the regular June Board of Education meeting.

Significant discussion ensued about this policy. Ms. Patchak-Layman suggested that the second sentence of the first paragraph end after the word “sight,” deleting the following words “in the student’s assigned locker, book bag, or purse during the hours of school operation.”

Mr. Conway did not want to see cell phones anywhere on a student’s person. He noted that coaches and choir directors do not allow cell phones at their events. In response to Ms. Fisher’s concern as to whether it was beneficial for students to have cell phones at the school in the case of an emergency, Mr. Conway stated that students had sufficient access to phones in an emergency. That should not be an excuse to allow students to have cell phones in the building. Each classroom has a telephone and a policy as to who makes emergency calls.

Dr. Bridge stated that if the Board of Education allowed cell phones in the building for the reasons parents have expressed, i.e., access during lunch hours, she still believed there was no reason for cell phones to be in the hallways or in classrooms. If a student has an emergency, the student would have access to a school phone. O.P.R.F.H.S. will be opening itself up at a time when other schools that have had policies that are more liberal are tightening them. She continued to be concerned for the ongoing security and safety of the O.P.R.F.H.S. environment.

Ms. Fisher wanted additional input from staff.

Dr. Lee stated that if the Board of Education approves the policy, as presented, the effectiveness of the policy will be known within a short period of time after the start of school—six to eight weeks. If the policy is found to be too burdensome on the school, the Board of Education may change the policy. Significant publicity must accompany this change so that the community is aware of new consequences if students use a cell phone improperly. Ms. Fisher noted that there would be a change in the Code of Conduct, as well, if a change to the policy were made.

## **Adjournment**

The Policy Committee adjourned at 12:26 p.m.