

The Board meeting of the Board of Education of the Oak Park and River Forest High School was held on Thursday evening, March 22, 2007, in the Board Room of the high school.

**Call to Order** President Dr. Barry S. Greenwald called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. A roll call vote indicated that the following members were present: Barbara P. Fernandez, Jacques A. Conway, Valerie J. Fisher, Dr. Barry S. Greenwald, Yasmin A. Ranney and John P. Rigas. Also present were: Dr. Susan J. Bridge, Superintendent/Principal; Jason Edgecombe, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources; Jack Lanenga, Assistant Superintendent of Operations; Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Amy Hill, Director of Instruction; James Paul Hunter, Faculty Senate Executive Committee Chair; Loie Davis, Student Council Board Liaison; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

**Visitors** The Board of Education welcomed the following visitors: Kay Foran, Director of Community Relations and Communications; Linda (and Dean) Cada, Director of Special Education; Richard Perna, Coordinator of Student Safety; Amy Razzino, Janel Bishop, Tony Bush and Jim Goodfellow, O.P.R.F.H.S. Deans of Discipline; Roseanne Tenuta, Doug Brown faculty members; Dr. Carl Spight, O.P.R.F.H.S. Institutional Researcher; Laura Pauli, Associate Vice President of Prudent Man Advisors, Inc. (PMA); Sherlynn Reid, RaeLynne Toperoff, Terry Burke, Joie Pierce, Wyanetta Johnson, Burcy Hines, Jill Zucker, Rebecca Bloch, Dr. Ralph H. Lee, Jim Donovan, Sharon Patchak-Layman, and Meg Reynolds, community members; Mallory Cybulski and Bethany Salmon of the *Trapeze*; Sheila Flattery of the League of Women Voters; Steve Ngo, university student; Terry Dean of the *Wednesday Journal* and Christopher LaFortune of the *Oak Leaves*.

**Superintendent's Report** Dr. Bridge congratulated the varsity wrestling team members who were state placers and their coaches as follows:

Ellis Coleman	sophomore	5 <sup>th</sup> place
Lillashawn Coleman	junior	2 <sup>nd</sup> place
Peter Kowalczyk	senior	2 <sup>nd</sup> place
Weldon Rogers	senior	4 <sup>th</sup> place
Mike Powell	head coach	
Paul Collins	assistant coach	
Jim Messer	assistant coach	

Ryan Ven Horst      assistant coach

Those students recommended for Student of the Quarter Awards;

Claire Bielanski	Business Education
Kristin Kwakwa	Physical Education
Anthony Grayson	Mathematics
Wyatt Johnson	World Languages
Hilda Lugo	History
Paul Murphy	Deans of Discipline
Neal O'Hara	Dean/ Counselors
Stefan Scherer-Emunds	Fine and Applied Arts
Paula Vesely	Science
Maura Waldron	English
Michael White	Special Education

Dr. Bridge congratulated the Fine & Performing Arts Division Head Bill Boulware on receiving Life-Time Achievement Award from the Oak Park Area Arts Council and recently receiving an award from the [NCECA National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts](#) as the Outstanding Ceramics teacher in the nation for 2006-07.

The two O.P.R.F.H.S. students who were honored with an Award of Merit in the 2006-07 youngARTSprogram, sponsored by the National Foundation for the Advancement in Art:

Joy Kahrohn Jones	Film/Video production
Tyler Reed Williams	Visual Arts

The Jazz Ensemble who won the first place trophy from the Mundelein Jazz Festival on March 10. They members are

<u>Saxes</u>	<u>Trumpets</u>	<u>Trombones</u>	<u>Drum Set</u>
Lucas Ellman	Ryan Motos	Bryant Smith	James Krivchenia
Gehring Miller	Nina Terebessy	Michael Velasquez	Zane Ranney
Corin James	Stefan Sherer-Emunds	Jeff Davis	
Jake Silverman	Zak Wainer	Todd Anderson	
Charlie Kahn	Jevin Lortie		
<u>Bass</u>	<u>Piano</u>	<u>Guitar</u>	
Tom Reynolds	Neal O'Hara	Ian Squires	
Ethan Phillion	Max Stolarski		

Under the leadership of Peter Kahn, Spoken Word, for the third time, was the runner up at the “*Louder Than a Bomb*” poetry slam competition. This is the largest competition in the world. The team members were:

Christian Harris	Adam Levin	Gehring Miller
Deja Taylor	Nova Venerable	Tabitha Watson
Gabrielle Worley		

**Board of Education Comments** Dr. Greenwald reported that one F.O.I.A. request had been resolved.

Mr. Conway was glad to be back at the Board table after returning from a trip to Africa where there was a celebration of Ghana's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The group that he travels with financially supports a hospital outside of the capital, the building of a new library, and an orphanage for those children who are now in facilities where many of them die of malaria and HIV. He also saw the caves in which slaves were once held before they were moved to different parts of the world. Mr. Conway noted his greater appreciation of water fountains and green spaces, things that are taken for granted in America.

Ms. Ranney congratulated Dr. Bridge for being selected to receive Concordia University's Distinguished Educational Leadership Award on March 23 to be held at the Oak Park Country Club. Dr. Bridge will also receive the Oak Park Educational Foundation's William Staszak Award on April 14 again at the Oak Park Country Club. Ms. Ranney told Dr. Bridge that she did the community and the high school proud.

Ms. Fernandez reported that she attended the March 3 O.P.R.F.H.S. showing of *Ragtime*, noting that it was very educational. From the title, one could guess that it was a musical with much dancing and singing, but its message regarding cultural differences was for all to see the challenges and difficulties that can be overcome by uniting. The play represented all ethnic groups and it was exciting to watch this exemplary acting.

**Visitor Comments** Jill Zucker, resident of 913 Jackson Street, River Forest, addressed the Board of Education.

Ms. Zucker, a resident for 25 years with two children who graduated from O.P.R.F.H.S., wondered if the Board of Education had given any consideration to 1) appointing an interim candidate given the candidates that had applied for the position of superintendent and 2) why a school of O.P.R.F.H.S.'s statute had not received more qualified candidates.

Terry Burke, parent and resident of 1180 N. Clinton, Oak Park, addressed the Board of Education.

Ms. Burke reported on the candidates' forum held at the Buzz Café. It had been reported the candidates said that only a few families were dissatisfied with the Special Education department and that most were extremely happy. While there are probably only two who will

come before the Board of Education and speak consistently, there are problems. At the community caucus behind closed doors, she heard them say that the department heads have yet to come around on accommodations. She felt that was a problem and not just for a couple of families. How can families be happy in Special Education when something as basic as accommodations is not routinely provided? She asked when this Board of Education would stand up to the department heads and enforce Special Education laws. Dr. Greenwald had said that at the University of Illinois its standards are that if notes are to be provided to a student with a learning disability, notes are to be provided. It is not something for which one should have to struggle to receive. Only a few parents come before the Board of Education and struggle publicly. The school intimidates many people with many kinds of retaliation, i.e., residency, inviting noncustodial parents to IEP meetings, etc. A more egregious version of retribution is that of outplacement. She distributed figures from the I.S.B.E. confirming that the number of students outplaced by O.P.R.F.H.S. in the 2005-06 school year was very high. Of the 518 students in Special Education, 97 were placed in a private facilities—that is 20 percent. It is costly for O.P.R.F.H.S., the taxpayers and for the families of the students outplaced at private facilities.

Last week, she learned at the Instruction Committee meeting that students with attendance problems are sent to Ombudsman. A friend from another district refused to believe that O.P.R.F.H.S. would do that. Ombudsman only has a couple of rooms and computers for the students. (It was noted that Ombudsman provides three hours of computer instruction and that H.A.R.B.O.R. Academy provides five hours of teacher instruction and employs a full-time social worker.) Noting that O.P.R.F.H.S. has excellent teachers, Ms. Burke felt that sending students to Ombudsman or other private day schools for attendance problems was outrageous and the issue needed addressing. She also accused O.P.R.F.H.S. of the over labeling African-American students with behavior problems as being emotionally disordered and confining them to the fourth floor (the On Campus Program) or sending them to an alternative school.

Ms. Burke continued that there have been instances in which O.P.R.F.H.S. sends African-American students to alternative schools without I.E.P.s. This is a breach of civil rights, human rights and Special Education laws. She felt that O.P.R.F.H.S. could do better and the Board of Education could enforce the law and quality education for all students. Ms. Burke distributed data on the number of Special Education students placed in 1) Special Education private facilities, 2) the number of Special Education students as reported on the I.S.B.E.'s Funding and Child Tracking System (FACTS) for the

last four years and 3) a breakdown of the Special Education students outplaced by race and disability for last year per Mark Wancket of the I.S.B.E. Ms. Burke concluded by stating that most students had not yet returned to the O.P.R.F.H.S. campus.

Peggy Vicars, former parent of O.P.R.F.H.S. students and resident of Oak Park, asked that the Clerk of the Board read the following letter:

“Dear Ms. Kalmerton:

“I respectfully request that this letter be provided to board members, and that it be read at the next board meeting. Peggy Vicars

“Dear Board Members:

“This letter is in reference to the “One View” essay by in the February 28, 2007 *Wednesday Journal*. As a parent of OPRF students, as a parent of OPRF special education students, as a taxpayer in Oak Park, and as a faculty member in the special education department of a school in a neighboring district, I want to say that I am puzzled about why the *Wednesday Journal* continues to print letters by a handful of unhappy individuals. The points made in the letter are old news, and the purpose of her comments can be nothing but spite. These complaints have been made by a handful of parents, who are desperate to find a way to cure their children’s disabilities.

“My three children have come through the special education department during Mrs. Cada’s tenure. She has always been responsive to communication from me and many other parents with whom I have spoken. Program evaluations have been done as needed, and changes have been made. Enough is enough. These mean spirited attacks may not stop, but they must be ignored.

“I am sorry that there is no cure out there for what ails the children of these anger filled taxpayers, but I do know that continuing to dwell on their anger is toxic for them and everyone who comes into contact with them.

“When my son crosses the stage in June, he will be carried on the shoulders of the many good people who have helped him during his years at OPRF. With Mrs. Cada as their leader, they have worked together to adapt and accommodate the curriculum so that my son will earn his diploma. I thank them all from the bottom of my heart, and I encourage the board to renew Mrs. Cada’s contract.

“Peggy Vicars, MSW, LCSW  
Mother of Conor, Daniel and John”

Ms. Wyanetta Johnson, resident of 727 S. Oak Park Avenue, Oak Park, addressed the Board of Education.

Ms. Johnson was appalled by an incident she witnessed at Whittier School the previous day where disrespect was shown to an African-American teacher and children in a classroom. They were talked down to and some physical force was used to manipulate the children. She offered to bring proof if anyone doubted this. She felt this attitude was part of the reason for the academic gap.

Ms. Johnson continued that O.P.R.F.H.S. needed a superintendent who knew how to close the gap, one who would help the students receiving F grades. She stated that the school had one candidate who was qualified, perhaps, overqualified and, perhaps, overlooked because she “looks like me.”

Joie Pierce, resident of Oak Park, addressed the Board of Education.

“I have written this letter to the *Wednesday Journal*, to the *Chicago Sun Times*, to *Neighbors*’ magazine, to the Pioneer Press, to the Regional Office for District 200 Board of Education. Since we have run the gamut of our first and second rounds in looking for a superintendent, what can we do for the third round? I say, let us give JoAnne Wooden Roberts a chance, especially since we have given so many others a chance to help our students. We, the people, want the same thing for our children, as everybody wants for their children. We are not here to discourage children. We want them to succeed and learn. Other principals, superintendents, and boards of education have laid claims as to what they can do, they have impressive backgrounds, and they have lauded their achievements. So has Dr. Roberts. Dr. Roberts has those credentials and has an impressive background, as do the other candidates, and lays claim to her achievements. She is not afraid to discuss race, to work with parents, students, staff, and she knows that there is more to schooling than just good or poor grades. I read a little bit about her and the other candidates. I am looking for what she has done on the achievement gap. What is the achievement gap? There are many areas of the achievement gap. How can we, as a people, close it? We know there is a woman who can close it because she has done it before. Superintendents and principals come and go. They got paid to do it, but they did not do it. They got frustrated, put a band-aid on the problem, and moved forward. We are left with the achievement gap. Let’s diagnosis the problem so that we can come up with a solution,

keeping in mind that it is not just the achievement gap but a myriad of problems and situations that have gotten us into this dilemma. I have some ideas on this, I have shared them with some of the superintendents and others in charge. However, they have not been used. I guess they got lost in the shuffle.

“Dr. Roberts has proven that she has closed the gap, as mentioned in one paper. Isn't that what we all want? We would get school improvement which produces student improvement and since we all share an investment in our students, schools and neighborhood they will then produce our society's improvement and with our help. They will be come our future leaders workers, managers, doctors, lawyers, etc.

“Along comes Dr. Roberts who says that she can help close the gap and become an asset with many other school-related issues. I believe her and I hope you will too. I ask that the Board of Education give her a strong chance. I ask that the Board of Education hire someone like her, even if it were temporary, as mentioned by another speaker. Let us give her a chance. She deserves the chance. O.P.R.F.H.S. needs to work with her.”

#### **Consent Items**

Mr. Rigas moved to approve the consent items as follows:

- The open minutes of February 19, 20, 21, 22, 26, March 7, 13 and 15, 2007;
- Personnel Recommendations (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting);
- Resolution Ratifying and Confirming Execution of certain vouchers and payment of certain bills and expenses, fund transfers and list of bills for March 22, 2007 (attached to and made part of the minutes of this meeting);
- Resolution Authorizing Execution of Certain Vouchers for the Month of March 2007 (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting);
- Check Disbursements for March 22, 2007 (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting);
- Approval of the Agreement for Renewal of Services with the Ombudsman Program for the 2007-08 School Year (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting);

- Amended Policy 5112, Waiver of School Fees and Charges, as presented;
- Amended Policy 5113, Student Accident Insurance, as presented;
- Amended Policy 5116, Ombudsman Program for Alternative Education, as presented;
- Amended Policy 5118, Special Education Tuition, as presented;
- Amended Policy 6135, Bookstore, as presented;
- The Services Agreement with Gatekeeper Administration LLC to provide certain review and recordkeeping services relating to O.P.R.F.H.S. 403(b) Tax Deferred Retirement Program, as presented (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting; and
- Acceptance of the proposed settlement for the Tax Rate Objections of \$2,364.68 for 2001 and \$3,191.03 for 2002;

seconded by Ms. Fisher. A roll call vote resulted in five ayes. Motion carried. Mr. Conway abstained.

**Gifts & Donations**

Ms. Fernandez moved to accept with gratitude the gifts and donations as presented (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting); seconded by Ms. Fisher. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

**Banking Request For Proposals**

Ms. Ranney moved to approve the Resolution to Participate in “The Fund” with banking and investment services provided by Harris Bank, PMA Financial Network, Inc. and the Liquid Asset Fund; seconded by Ms. Fernandez. A roll call vote resulted in five ayes. Motion carried. Dr. Millard was absent and Mr. Conway abstained.

Because O.P.R.F.H.S. has the opportunity to withdraw from the authority of the Cicero Township Treasurer’s Office, it is necessary for the District to establish new bank accounts and investment services. The District published and accepted Requests for Proposals for banking services. Eight responses were received. Harris Bank/PMA/Liquid Asset Fund of Illinois presented the least expensive and the most comprehensive proposal. The monthly banking services would cost approximately \$390 per month. Harris Bank’s comprehensive banking services includes online account information, monthly reconciliation services, imaging services and fraud prevention. The District will also receive investment services



and cash flow projections from PMA Financial Network, Inc., which specializes in services for Illinois school districts and is familiar with the cash flow challenges of schools.

Ms. Pauli of PMI was invited to provide further information and answer questions. Ms. Pauli shared a PowerPoint presentation with the Board of Education, which included the following information.

PMA has served the public sector for more than 20 years. It was founded as a bank credit rating agency in 1984 and has had Investment execution services since 1988. It is a comprehensive broker-dealer with investment advisory services. Bond insurance services are handled through PMA's Public Finance Group. PMA is a Midwest regional broker-dealer and investment advisor and services over 750 clients in the Midwest and has approximately \$7.6 billion of public assets under PMA administration, as of September 30, 2006.

The Illinois School District Liquid Asset Fund+ (ISDLAF+), as of September 30, 2007, has \$5.6 billion in investment assets. It is one of the largest intergovernmental agreements for school districts with over 510 members. It is the only Illinois public investment pool sponsored by the IASB, IASBO, and IASA. Its oversight is provided by a Board of Trustees.

One hundred percent of its focus is on public funds. The two parts of this focus are 1) investment services group which concentrations and investment products and services, and 2) the Capital Markets group, which concentrates on financial planning (5-year forecasting), investment banking and financial advice and public finance operations.

ISDLAF+ investment products include: 1) pooled multi-class money market products, i.e., AAAM rated by Standards and Poor's, Liquid class, full service banking with competitive yield and daily liquidity (checking account with Harris Bank), and MAX Class, a higher yielding option on liquid balances with daily liquidity. Max Class has no checking account connected with it and it takes two weeks to make a withdrawal; 2) US Treasury and Agency Securities (fixed income); 3) Certificates of Deposits (FDIC, Collateralized, Insured by Investment Grade Private Insurance Companies, and Savings Deposit Account); and 4) Investment Grade Commercial Paper of US Corporations.

ISDLAF+ investment services include: 1) Cash flow analysis and investment plan and competitive bidding platform; 2) Bond Proceeds

Management Program, Bank Credit Analysis, Investment Safekeeping, Banking and Cash Management Services and Direct Deposit of Property Tax and I.S.B.E. Collections

PMA's Cash Flow Management Program provides a cash flow analysis and an investment plan. O.P.R.F.H.S. will have access to detailed cash flow planning services at no additional charge, a customized investment plan for the short term (one year or less) and the long term (more than one year). This will maximize earning potential while ensuring that monthly obligations are met, establish and maintain adequate liquidity level versus a fixed rate level and provide administrative efficiency which allows for immediate investment.

PMA's Cash Flow Management Program also provides a competitive bidding platform via access to its national network of providers, the ability to negotiate better deals, handles all of the paperwork at the time of placement an maturity, and provides a consolidated monthly reporting of all investments.

Mr. Rigas learned that that there would be no compensating balances because all liquid balances would be in a money market fund. In reviewing fees, the stop payment fee, estimated at \$100 per month, reflects the number of items that O.P.R.F.H.S. has per month. Regarding account reconciliation, Ms. Witham informed Mr. Rigas that PMA would send O.P.R.F.H.S. all the cleared checks to be uploaded in O.P.R.F.H.S.'s own computer system. While Ms. Pauli will inquire as to what constitutes a CD fee, Ms. Witham suggested it might be the software maintenance to sort through check numbers, payees, etc. It is a more sophisticated method.

Ms. Witham responded to Dr. Greenwald's concern about whether local banks could compete by saying that all of the banks named have local connection. While agreeing, Dr. Greenwald said that some are more local and connected versus larger banks that have lost interest in local communities. Ms. Pauli stated that any local banks could be included. Ms. Witham stated that Park National Bank has now O.P.R.F.H.S.'s activity accounts.

**District Committees  
Liaison  
Representative  
Reports**

Faculty Senate—Mr. Hunter, keeping his remarks short due to the meeting's length, noted that the students were looking forward to the last nine weeks of school and he too looked forward to seeing the graduates in June.

Student Council—Ms. Davis reported that Student Council had made boxes for the cafeteria and other locations to collect books for Key

School, Student Council's adopted school. Fundraising plans had begun on a fashion show to benefit Key School as well. Local businesses will be asked to donate clothes and Student Council will hold model tryouts. Student also wants to have a formal dress drive. To date, five dresses have been received.

Alumni Association—Ms. Fernandez reported that the Alumni Association met on March 12 in the Student Activities Room and the discussion was about fundraising, an update on the scholarships, and the summer enrichment grants. MS. Fernandez reiterated how important it was that all teachers tell their students about this program and the types of programs that had been sponsored in the past, i.e., writing workshops, film, music camps, fine arts camps, courses in marine biology, conversation programs, foreign exchange programs, etc. As of March 12, thirteen students had applied for scholarship opportunities. Discussion at the Alumni meeting also included how to obtain more funds and how to build a budget by soliciting contributions from vendors who work in the Oak Park area, i.e., there are forty (40) vendors in the area who may consider contributing funds to the Alumni Association. The next meeting is April 9 at 7:00 p.m.

P.T.O.— In Dr. Millard's absence, Dr. Bridge reported that P.T.O. met the previous night in preparation for its decisions on allocations to the high school. Dr. Bridge noted that requests were to be received by Ms. Bowman in the Superintendent/Principal's Office.

Citizens' Council— In Dr. Millard's absence, Dr. Bridge reported that Citizens' Council met March 8, and that Mr. Perna, Coordinator of Student Safety, and Margo Bristol, Substance Abuse Counselor, gave an interesting presentation on student discipline, focusing on emerging issues for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, i.e., electronic devises, internet issues, etc.

A.P.P.L.E.—Dr. Bridge reported that A.P.P.L.E. had the District 97 and District 200 Board of Education candidates address its membership.

Concert Tour Association—Ms. Ranney reported that the Concert Tour Association had wrapped up its fundraiser and is now looking for new leadership because the president is doing much work and her daughter is graduating from O.P.R.F.H.S.

Early Childhood Collaboration—Ms. Fernandez reported that there were many upcoming events for families, teachers and caregivers

offered by the Collaboration for Early Childhood in April and May. A list of activities included:

Family Math Nights—Call 708-802-5446 for exact dates and times.

April 10, What Children Learn Through Blocks. Free. Call 848-9422 to pre-register.

April 22, Story Telling at Longfellow School. Free.

April 24, Kindergarten and Your Child. Free

April 30, Math Game Take It Night at Longfellow. \$5 fee.

April 30, May 7 and 15, Access to Equity. Free. Call 524-1050 ext. 136 to pre-register.

The Collaboration's next meeting is April 13, 2007, at 9:00 a.m. at Oak Park Public Library.

**Approval of Resolution Authorizing NOTICE OF DISMISSAL of Probationary Teachers**

Ms. Ranney moved to approve the Resolution Authorizing NOTICE OF DISMISSAL of Probationary Teachers (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting); seconded by Mr. Rigas. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Mr. Edgecombe explained that student enrollment was beginning to decline and the high school must reduce staff. Thus, the contract of twelve probationary teachers would not be renewed. Some, however, will be asked to return as soon as staffing needs for next year are finalized. Approving the resolution above will protect the District from overstaffing next year. He made it clear that the District was not releasing these teachers because of their performance.

**Approval of Probationary Teachers for Tenure**

Ms. Fernandez moved to approve tenured contracts for the 2007-08 school year to the individuals (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting); seconded by Mr. Conway. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

**Approval of Retirement Requests**

Ms. Fernandez moved to approve the retirement requests listed below; seconded by Ms. Ranney. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Deborah Bluminberg (June 2010)  
Christine Daggett (June 2010)  
Mary Ann DeBruin (June 2010)  
Sue Donoghue (June 2010)  
Fred Galluzzo (June 2010)  
Elaine Glenn (June 2010)  
Donald Hopkins (June 2010)  
Laura Kiedaisch (June 2010)

Donna Kottmann (June 2010)  
Bonnie Marks (June 2010)  
Shirley Redmond (June 2010)  
Patricia Staszak (June 2010)  
Roseanne Tenuta (June 2080)  
Richard Zabransky (June 2010)

**Plans of Personnel  
Currently on  
Leave**

Mr. Edgecombe reported that the individuals listed below have been on leave of absence for the 2006-07 school year. Their plans for next year are listed below:

Jamie Bender	Science	Continued Leave for 2007-08
Heidi Lynch	History	Return to Service
Elizabeth Nash	History	Continued Leave for 2007-08
Julie Patterson	World Languages/Spanish	Continued Leave for 2007-08
Craig Slocum	Mathematics	Return to Service

**Second Semester  
Class Size and  
Teacher Loads**

Mr. Lanenga presented this report, which included 1) second semester enrollment of 3114 as of March 1, 2007, 2) enrollment statistics by division/department (average class size excluding basics – 21.8); 3) average class size with historical data, and 4) individual teacher class statistics by division/department.

Ms. Ranney noted that in the course of holding Instruction Committee meetings and meeting individually with different divisions, there has been conversation about large class sizes. In looking at the report, large class sizes are not evident. She asked for clarification. Mr. Lanenga responded that the average class size in Science is 20.4. In honors classes, there may be only one or two sections. If you have 28 students who wish to enroll in that class, the District has the decision of sectioning 1 class with 28 students or 2 classes with 14 students. A class with only 14 students is too expensive to run. Mr. Prale added that 12 classes had 26 or more students enrolled. That many students in a 50-minute lab situation creates logistical and safety concerns; that is the issue that teachers were raising. Optimally, the District looks to schedule only 24 students in these classes, but there is often greater demand in AP physics, AP biology and chemistry. These are very difficult decisions for the District to make.

Mr. Conway asked if additional space were needed. Mr. Lanenga did not believe that additional space was necessary for next year, although this year it was necessary. Student halls were used this year as classrooms. These types of decisions are made by Mr. Lanenga, Mr. Prale and the Division Heads.

Mr. Conway learned from Mr. Lanenga that there were no plans to air-condition rooms that did not have air-conditioning at this time.

**Second Semester  
Discipline Report**

Mr. Edgecombe provided the following written report:

Introduction: First semester discipline statistics continue the sobering trend of African-American students being over-represented in the discipline system. The attached tables provide comparative first semester statistics for the three-year period covering 2004-2005, 2005-

2007, and 2006-2007. In addition, the tables will show, in the major consequence categories of In School Suspension (ISS) and Out of School Suspension (OSS), O.P.R.F.H.S. experienced overall increases of 25% and 58% respectively when compared with statistics from the same period during the 2005-2006 school year. Possible explanations were provided below. As in previous reports, the tables provide information regarding all disciplinary actions taken, examine the top three infractions by race/gender for the two primary racial groups (white and African-American), and race/gender cross tabulations involving ISS and OSS consequences. The development of this report has only been possible because of the ample competence of District Researcher, Dr. Carl Spight; Deans of Discipline Janel Bishop, Anthony Bush, James Goodfellow, and Amy Razzino; and Program Coordinator for Student Safety Richard Perna. The Deans of Discipline, Mr. Perna and Dr. Spight were on hand to provide further information.

Table 1 reflected the three types of statistics during first semester; the number of student infractions in the major consequence areas, the total number of discipline infractions, and the distribution of ISS/OSS consequences by racial group. As stated above ISS/OSS consequences increased 25.1% (259/207) and OSS consequence increased 58.2% (144/91) when compared with first semester 2005-06. Possible explanations for the increase lies in the collective recoding of an improvement in resolving incidents of school infractions by the Deans of Discipline and the District's lack of success in getting some students who returned from off-campus placements in the current year to adapt to behavioral norms. With the latter possible explanation, several of the students (8) who returned from off-campus placements in the fall have been consequence for acts of gross misconduct and have been assigned to an off campus placement. Of note, is the increase in the ASP/ASD Category, which can partially be attributed to the effort of the Deans of Discipline to proactively deal with school truancy by assigning ASDs rather than the verbal warnings of the past.

In the area of cumulative statistics in all reported infractions, first semester saw an overall increase of 14.5% (2639/2304) from 2005-06. The explanation given above for ISS/OSS infractions would also apply here as well. Table 1 also illustrates the number of ISS/OSS consequences given by racial group. Here there is an increase in the number of ISS/OSS consequences (88/55 and 21.8%.18.5%) given to white students compared with 2005-2006. With African-American students, the number of ISS/OSS consequences increased (248/216), but the percentage of all ISS/OSS consequences saw a decrease of 11 (61.4%/72.5%). The increase in number/percentage for both Hispanic students (25/13 and 6.2%/4.4%) and multi-racial students (29/13 and 7.2%/4.4%) bears watching in the future.

Table 2 examined the top three infractions by race for the District's largest racial groups (white and African-American students). While Verbal Abuse (2) appears for the first time for white females, the top three infractions for white males are somewhat repetitious of previous years—Gross misconduct (21) and Failure to Serve (15). For African-American students the categories of Gross Misconduct (83) and Defiance (27) are present for both females and males and represents a significant number of the top infractions committed by African-American students. It should be noted that an infraction of an existing Behavioral Contract is now classified as Gross Misconduct. In addition, for African-American females Verbal Abuse (10) is also an issue and for males, Failure to Serve (12) rounds out the top three infractions category.

Table 3 provides unduplicated information on ISS/OSS consequences by race and gender for all students who have violated expectations in these areas. At present, there is no statistical significance in the changing numbers over the three-year period.

Table 4 provides information recidivism within the group of students who have received an ISS/OSS consequence during first semester. Once again, recidivism is defined as receiving an ISS or OSS consequence on more than one occasion. While recidivist students represent less than 5% of all students, the Deans of Discipline can attest to the negative influence on the school environment resulting from the misbehavior on the part of a few students.

The reality of the attached statistics does not reduce our resolve to continue to see innovative means by which to actively engage parents in the process of getting students to conduct themselves appropriately. To this end, administrators and Deans of Discipline will continue to foster better relationships with parents via in-person and electronic communication, hold Division conversations about effective classroom management practices, hold Intervention Prevention Meetings with parents, teachers and social services employees, and complete the information of a Transfer Student Committee for transitioning transfer students more effectively in the school environment.

Mr. Perna was not sure he could draw any conclusions as to why the statistics were not better. The numbers were very disturbing. This is the first year he has been the co-chair on the Joint Committee on Student Discipline and Behavior dist and there was much discussion on cell phones, tardies, hallway behaviors, etc. He proposed that, in lieu of a report, the committee address the overrepresentation of African-American students in the discipline system only. He felt it would be

would be an important and useful way for that committee to spend its time.

Ms. Razzino reported that they had talked a lot about the average number of years of teaching experience and the fact that faculty is younger in age and perhaps they should receive more training they in classroom management. They get many questions about that. The DD give them the help individually but perhaps it should be given to all the teachers. Dr. Greenwald asked if this were an issue for professional development? Ms. Razzino responded affirmatively. Dr. Greenwald noted that the school is disturbed and unhappy and a way to do this better must be found. Both of the suggestions that have come forth certainly have merit and the Board of Education will consider charging them with achieving that piece of the goal. If there are other solutions or remedies, he asked for their suggestions.

Mr. Goodfellow suggested that the Board of Education consider examining the services of Room 308, i.e., the amount of people located in that area and the number of students per social worker. The staff in Room 308 barely has time to breathe because it is so busy. He has sensed, over the years, that the Board of Education wants to see students on behavioral contracts helped. With the number of students who have behavioral contracts, it is not possible for the staff in Room 308 to be able to see them. Previously there was a unique system in place. Now because of the high turnover in 308, there are less professional skills and less long-term relationships being built. There is an outstanding staff there now, but the number of them is small. He recommended supporting this area more.

Mr. Prale reported that Room 308 was a subset of Special Education. A few years ago when the school went through a major financial hardship, the Board of Education made the decision remove social workers from the teachers' group. The faculty has supported increasing help for Room 308 for a long time. All issues from AYP to discipline hinge on the fact that more money needs to be spent on that problem. Room 308 has 2 4/5 people for 3200 students. Mr. Hunter pointed out that many of these consequences were not always serious infractions, even though the numbers were high. Much intervention is reflected in these numbers.

Intervention prevention counts in the 2600 discipline contacts. Mr. Rigas did not believe that prevention should be recorded as a disciplinary consequence. While it should be recorded, how it is analyzed and recorded should be a different issue. It should be recorded in order to determine who might need more intervention. He also had a problem with the classification of gross misconduct.



Mr. Conway said that if a behavioral contract does help the student when you do not have the services for them. Who is the advocate for them? The Dean Counselor or the Deans of Discipline? Mr.

Goodfellow reported that they tell the student and the family that it takes a proactive intervention from all of us. Ms. Fisher asked if the increase had to do with the way things were handled this year. Mr. Goodfellow stated that this year the staff made a decision to give a three-hour ASD when there was a truancy of one class. This year teachers are going through record book and seeing what students were not here and they are sending that information to Deans of Discipline, who then assigns the students a ASD. It is an efficiency. Ms. Bishop added that each time a student is given an ASD and a phone call is made to the parent. That means that two records are made but only the detention is the punitive part.

Dr. Spight said that he does not see the stories on the ground. Only the numbers and he tries to make sure the numbers have validity with the record as reported. There is no mistaking that in school and out of school accounts for much of what is seen to be the troublesome aspects. He sees not just the numbers, but also the patterns. Recidivism has taken on his eye. For African-American females, it is growing. The white male recidivism rate is higher than the African-American male or female student is. Mainly it is the gross misconduct business that gives rise to that. Something about the white male behavior is different than before. Recidivism accounts for much of the gross. There are students who are repeaters at the rate of nine times.

Mr. Perna stated that one of the things recognized with some of the students is the use of electronic devices. What happens is that the students will go on line and contact one another. Many times parents are not aware of anything, because they have not been monitoring things on the computer. Mr. Goodfellow stated that two white males made 30 calls to a classroom phone in two days. An honest student told the teacher who was doing it.

Mr. Hunter noted that the Board of Education should get a sense of the complexity of the numbers. The environment in which schools occur is different now. Some of the numbers are crazy and the school needs to decide how to get students involved in their own education. However, it cannot be hard on people who are doing their jobs. Fewer social workers, higher caseloads, and problems at home, etc. make things more difficult. Dr. Greenwald noted that no one was saying the Deans of Discipline were not doing their job and he did not want it interpreted that way.

Mr. Prale said that the school has to ask from where to do these referrals come. Are the origins known? What development programs are being put in place? What are the infractions? What is not working? More information is needed before a response can be fashioned. He is now working with a group of teachers regarding PBIS (Positive Behavioral Instructional Strategies). There are resources to which O.P.R.F.H.S. can avail itself. The administrative team needs to respond and come up with a plan to support those working with these issues. Dr. Greenwald stated that this was an issue for every person who works in the school system. This discussion should continue in a committee meeting.

Dr. Greenwald thanked all for the work they do.

**Approval of  
Closed Session  
Minutes**

Ms. Ranney moved to approve the Closed Session minutes of February 19, 20, 21, 22, 26, March 7, 13, and 15, 2007; as presented, and declared that the closed session audiotapes of September 2005 be destroyed; seconded by Ms. Fisher. Motion carried.

**Amendment of  
Calendar for the  
2007-08 School  
Year**

Mr. Conway moved to approve the Amendment of the 2007-08 School Calendar, as presented (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting); seconded by Ms. Ranney. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

The Joint Calendar Committee for District 200 submitted the final recommended 2007-08 calendar for approval. The primary difference in the proposed calendar as compared to the previous submission approved at the March 2006 Board of Education meeting is the shift of the PSAT National Exam from October 10 to a Saturday. The amendment of the calendar should have no material effect on the calendars of Districts 90 and 97.

**Closed Session**

At 9:35 p.m., on Thursday, March 22, 2007, Mr. Conway moved to go into closed session for the purpose of discussing the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the District or legal counsel for the District, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee or against legal counsel for the District to determine its validity. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1), as amended by PA.93—57; Student disciplinary cases 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(10); Collective negotiating matters between the District and its employees or their representatives or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2); seconded by Ms. Fisher. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

The Board of Education reconvened its open session at 11:13 p.m., on Thursday, March 22, 2007.

**Student Discipline** Mr. Rigas moved to remove the held in abeyance and expel student EXP 12/09/04-20 as of March 22, 2007; seconded by Ms. Ranney. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Mr. Rigas moved to drop residency student RES 03/22/07-12 from the rolls of Oak Park and River Forest High School, due to non-residency and charge for tuition accrued in the amount of \$12,411.95; seconded by Ms. Fernandez. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Mr. Rigas moved to expel student EXP 3/22/07-30 as of March 22, 2007, for the remainder of the 2006-07 school year through the first semester of the 2007-08 school year but to hold the expulsion in abeyance contingent upon completion of enrollment and regular attendance at an alternative school for the remainder of the 2006-07 school year through the first semester of the 2007-08 school year, ongoing counseling and verification and maintenance of residency in the District; seconded by Ms. Ranney. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Mr. Rigas moved to expel student EXP 3/22/07-29 as of March 22, 2007 for the remainder of the 2006-07 school year through the first semester of the 2007-08 school year but to hold the expulsion in abeyance contingent upon completion of enrollment and regular attendance at an alternative school for the remainder of the 2006-07 school year through the first semester of the 2007-08 school year, satisfactory academic progress at alternative placement, ongoing counseling and verification and maintenance of residency in the district; seconded by Ms. Ranney. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Ms. Fisher moved to rescind the expulsion/exclusion of student EXP 1/11/07-23 through first semester of the 2007-08 school year and to remand back to the Special Education Division for placement with the written document to be drafted by legal counsel; seconded by Ms. Ranney. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

**Adjournment**

At 11:18 p.m. on Thursday, March 22, 2007, Ms. Ranney moved to adjourn the Board of Education meeting; seconded by Ms. Fisher. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Dr. Barry S. Greenwald  
President

Barbara P. Fernandez  
Secretary