OAK PARK and RIVER FOREST HIGH SCHOOL
201 N. Scoville Ave., Oak Park, Illinois 60302

BOARD OF EDUCATION
INSTRUCTION COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
Thursday, December 13, 2007
7:30 a.m.
Board Room

A G E N D A

I. Call to Order Dr. Dietra Millard

II. Approval of Minutes Phil Prale

III. Discussion of Plan to Raise Student Achievement and Board Resolutions Phil Prale

IV. Review of Course Proposals Amy Hill

V. OPRFHS Opinion Survey on School Community Amy Hill

Copies to: Instruction Committee Members, Dr. Dietra Millard, Chair
Board Members
Administrators
Director of Community Relations and Communications
An Instruction Committee meeting of the Whole Board was held on Wednesday, August 15, 2007, in the Board Room. The meeting opened at 7:35 a.m. Committee members present were Jacques A. Conway, Dr. Ralph H. Lee, Dr. Dietra D. Millard, Sharon Patchak Layman (arrived at 7:40 a.m.), and John P. Rigas. Also present were: Dr. Attila J. Weninger, Superintendent; Jason Edgecombe, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources; Jack Lanenga, Assistant Superintendent for Operations; Phil Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Amy Hill, Director of Instruction (arrived at 7:58 a.m.); and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistance/Clerk of the Board.

Visitors included: Kay Foran, O.P.R.F.H.S. Director of Community Relations and Communications; James Paul Hunter, Faculty Senate Chair; Dale Craft and Monica Swope; O.P.R.F.H.S. faculty members; O.P.R.F.H.S. students Uche Anigbogu (senior), Jeremy Aregood (junior), Jonathan Cox (junior), Vidaur Durazo, (junior), Irene Izaguirre-Lopez, (senior) and Tabitha Watson (senior); and Terry Dean of the Wednesday Journal.

Approval of Instruction Committee Minutes

The Instruction Committee minutes of October 17, 2007, were approved, as presented.

Report on MSAN Student Conference

The following students Uche Anigbogu (senior), Jeremy Aregood (junior), Jonathan Cox (junior), Vidaur Durazo, (junior), Irene Izaguirre-Lopez, (senior) and Tabitha Watson (senior) participated in the 8th MSAN Student Leadership Conference in Arlington, Virginia, October 17-20, 2007. The chaperones were Jason Edgecombe, O.P.R.F.H.S. Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, and Monica Swope, O.P.R.F.H.S. faculty member. Ms. Swope reported that it had been a great experience.

The purpose of this conference is for the participants to engage in discussions about improving the effectiveness of their schools, interacting with and learning from their peers across the country, developing the spirit of involvement, the tools for gathering knowledge, and the leadership skills to initiate action in their communities.

O.P.R.F.H.S. students explored organizations, institutions, and universities unique to the D.C. metropolitan area while participating in educational and social activities. The students were chosen to attend the conference because of their leadership skills.

The conference agenda included the following:
1) Opening Plenary Session
2) Evening Tour of Washington DC
3) A tour of the Library of Congress/Congress
4) A Wakefield Evening Activity
5) An Ice-cream Social
6) College and Career Tours
7) Dinner Cruise and Dancing on the Spirit of Washington
8) A Closing Plenary

The students provide an overview of their experiences and a comparison of this conference to last year’s conference. Of particular import to the students at the Conference was the development, implementation and accountability of an action plan when they returned home.

The students also visited colleges, e.g., American University, University of Maryland, George Washington University, Howard University, George Mason University, etc., attended a day-long seminar at the Association of American Law Schools where the students were able to network with law professionals, visited the local law school, and networked with students throughout the United States and the Library of Congress.

While at the Library of Congress, Mr. Cox viewed archives regarding minorities; decorative, symbolic items; one of the first Bibles; and learned about folk music from different parts of the country. The group of students he was assigned attempted to meet with Senators at their offices; they spoke with personnel from Senator Obama and Congressman Davis’ offices about what it was like to work there. Mr. Cox felt the most interesting part of the conference was talking to diplomats in the State Department about their experiences outside of America; the students learned that the idea of minorities is different across the world. Mr. Cox found this conference an enriching experience. He noted that the conference may have been more rewarding if during the visits to the schools, information could have been learned about closing the achievement gap.

The students felt the hosting school did a great job of organizing and encouraging student networking. The relationships and friendships forged during the conference are in place for the future.

The students’ action plans were as follows:

1) Continuation and enhancement of the process put in place last year where teachers selected students who had trouble taking finals. A week prior to the finals, talk with them about their anxieties, test taking skills, etc. It is believed that freshmen can be helped in this manner;

2) The pairing of transfer students with current students in order to motivate the new students to participate in differing activities and to grow new friendships. Members of the J. Kyle Braid Club and the Athletic Club will participate in this activity as well.
3) The reaching out to eighth graders about what they can do to prepare themselves for high school, e.g., review study habits, talk about peer pressure, etc.

The students presented a slideshow of some of their activities while at the conference.

Mr. Edgecombe noted appreciation for the Board of Education's support of O.P.R.F.H.S.'s participation in this conference.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked how many students would participate in the implementation of the action plans. The response was the six students who attended the conference would do so with additional requests for help from J. Kyle Braid members and others, as necessary.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if there were any schools in Washington, D.C., that stood out as having a climate they would want at O.P.R.F.H.S. While nothing specific was noted, the students said it had been a great experience to meet with other students and they would continue to share their ideas and talk about the resolution of issues through the MSAN group on Face Book.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if they were working with psychology teachers to help document whether change was occurring because of the help being given to the freshman students. The response was that this could be a future consideration.

Mr. Conway asked to attend the next MSAN student meeting.

**Summer School**

Mr. Craft presented the Committee with the following written report as well as a budget summary of last year's Summer School Program (attached to the minutes of this meeting).

"The Oak Park and River Forest High School's summer program served 1168 students with combined paid registrations totaling 1630 opportunities for enrichment or remedial credit. There were 14 sections of Health, six of Art Foundations and Consumer Education, and four of Keyboarding. The English division presented nine offerings to help students improve their academic performance. The history division offered two general classes and four classes for remediation credit. The mathematics division ran fourteen sections of courses allowing students to fulfill a credit due to a failure or to advance their mathematics course work. Driver Education continues to be a popular offering and again was filled to capacity. We continued to offer enrichment courses in pottery, photography, computer animation and musical theater. The science division offered four stimulating field study opportunities in Tennessee, Florida, Costa Rica and Canada."
"An ongoing challenge is to have summer school classes reflect the same high quality curriculum as the regular school year. In light of this, an attempt was made to evaluate and improve the health education curriculum for the summer session. We were fortunate to have the district’s primary health teacher, Jeremy Colquhoun, work on standardizing the curriculum and offering a common exam based on district expectations. Jeremy also joined us as a teacher this summer and provided a vital link to the six other non-district teachers. Classroom observations of non-district teachers in other subject areas also challenged me to seek improvement in our Consumer Education offerings before the next summer school session.

"The summer school budget ended with a slight deficit of $235.71. We worked diligently to hold down expenses and cancelled several classes when enrollment did not justify another section. We piloted online registration with RevTrak on a limited basis and found the system to be a great convenience for the community. We plan to fully implement this process for next year’s registration.

"The Oak Park Youth Township Service again provided close to $3500 in funding for students in need through the Work/Study Volunteer Program. Thirty-five students participated in the program to subsidize the cost of either academic classes or sports camps. Altogether, these students performed over 750 hours of volunteer service for the benefit of the Oak Park and River Forest communities.

"In this transitional year for summer school leadership, I am grateful for the opportunity and was pleased in the general operation of summer school. Few problems arose regarding discipline, and overall, a positive atmosphere for teaching and learning was sustained, thanks to the combined efforts of the teachers, deans, and support staff. Many thanks go to Summer School Secretary, Linda Hayes, for taking care of the many details and especially registration. A special thanks goes to Lyn LeFevre for helping with the brochure during Linda’s emergency absence during the winter. Special recognition needs to go to Michael Averbach and Phil Prale for help in the transition and administrative wisdom."

Discussion ensued. Mr. Conway congratulated Mr. Craft on the outstanding job he did as the summer school director. Mr. Craft said that the directorship had been a positive experience for him, personally, and, hopefully, for the students. When asked, Mr. Craft stated that he would accept this position again, if offered.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked whether student grades were reviewed to see how well they did in summer school versus the same classes offered during the regular school year. If so, did they do better in summer school? While that data had not been tracked, Mr. Prale felt summer school might be an easier experience because summer school requires fewer hours.

Mr. Conway asked how summer school instructors were evaluated on their performance. Mr. Craft responded that when he took this assignment, he reviewed the health curriculum with the regular health teacher, Mr. Calhoun. His goal was to do an
evaluation of non-district teachers and he accomplished that goal for the teachers of health and consumer education. Monica Swope interned with him and she also did observations. The result of the observations was that the health teachers were competent teachers but that consumer education teachers were lacking. Next year, the health teachers will be invited back and he will attempt to replace two consumer education teachers. The fourteen sections of health offered in Summer School fulfilled all community requests.

When questioned about the behavior of students during the summer, Mr. Craft reported that there were one or two fights off campus, but nothing else.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if students were queried after having a make-up or remedial experience in summer school and doing well as to why they did well. Mr. Prale replied that conversations do take place with the freshman students, but not the math step up programs. The success rate is not tracked, but Mr. Prale felt that would be something to consider. When Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if regular teachers have an evaluation about their experiences or the materials covered, Mr. Prale responded that Debbie Neuman talks with math teachers about it.

**Requested Information**

Mr. Prale presented the Instruction Committee members with the following report:

“At the October Instruction Committee meeting, two board members asked for additional information regarding the distribution of student test scores in the area of reading. The attached graphs are a start to fulfilling the information request.

“For clarification of the graphs a few key points should be made. First the student information in these graphs pertains to current juniors, the graduating class of 2009. Second the graphs use linear regression analysis instead of scattergrams. This choice was made because for this analysis the linear regression is a preferred statistical model. A linear regression extracts the underlying tendency or pattern in a set of data points to the extent that the pattern is statistically underlying tendency or pattern in a set of data points to the extent that the pattern is statistically warranted. A scattergram does not describe the patterns adequately. It would render a cloud of data points that would be hard to interpret. It should be noted that by using a linear regression approach the sense of clustering that a scattergram would show is lost; since the number of data points is absent. However, what is gained is an exhibition of the slope or ratio of one variable to another variable. In this case, the relationship between WGPA and a standardized test score.

“The standardized test scores used were the ISAT, EXPLORE, and IACT scores as they compared with the WGPA for these students from the current junior class. Also, on the graphs race 1 is the designation for white students and race 2 is the designation for African American student. These graphics and the linear regressions are considered statistically significant at a high level. Furthermore, the correlation between the
EXPLORE and the IACT is high and a comparison of those graphs on the last two pages of this document shows a similar pattern with an important difference, a slight tendency towards convergence when the WGPA increases. This difference will need to be examined as we move forward.

"These graphs represent a continuing commitment to reviewing the effectiveness of our programs and learning how to improve instruction and achievement. We hope to bring additional information to future Instruction Committee meetings."

Discussion ensued. Dr. Lee observed that the data on thereof the four graphs suggests that if the school did nothing different, the gap would continue to increase. Only the fourth graph shows a tendency to converge rather than diverge. Mr. Prale noted that it was the most recent pattern. While there is a gap, there is a slight tendency to converge when the GPA gets above 3.0; then, there is a narrowing of those scores.

Dr. Lee asked if the school knew how to help those students who were on the cusp or above. Mr. Prale stated that the CRISIS trainer asked the faculty what the school did well. The answer to that question is that the school accelerates those students who already have a basis of skills. When the ACT scores of senior students were reviewed, those scores resembled the ACT scores of students who were always honors students. The school made them honor students.

Mr. Prale explained to Ms. Patchak-Layman that African-American students with an EXPLORE score of 19 or above were at the college-readiness level as freshman and would be at the upper end in the next graph. Mr. Rigas observed that an African American student could have an EXPLORE score of 19, not taking honors classes, and getting between B and C grades. If the same student were in an honors class, that student would be getting a B, which would have a higher weight; that would move the scale up. The standardized scores are an indicator of scores and he would expect them to be closer. Mr. Prale concurred that course selection affects GPA. He suggested that the school might want to think about weighting the grade of C. Mr. Rigas cautioned that the school did not want to do anything just to make the charts look better. Mr. Prale noted that the motivation could be to make the students feel good. Mr. Rigas concurred that course selection was critical and that savvy students/parents advocate for higher courses. The parents of students who are not savvy are not advocating for their students. Mr. Prale reported that two-thirds of the school’s students take honors courses, but he was not sure how many were committed to taking seven or eight and how well they did.

Dr. Lee asked if the discussion were that the weighted grading scale structure itself, with no other factors, was creating a part of the achievement gap. Mr. Prale responded that it was only if one read the achievement gap by GPA. The modal grade in an honors course is a B; the modal grade in a regular course is a C. Dr. Weninger stated that a weighted grading system counts for more in honors courses and exacerbates the gap. Dr. Lee interpreted that to mean that they must remember that one factor in the achievement gap is an artifice that is created by the system used, but the real causes do not lie in the artifice. Mr. Prale stated that many things came into play, e.g., counseling, courses, and
savvy parents. The school needs to be cognizant of what it can do better. Dr. Weninger added that grading philosophy, access to courses, instruction, rigor of classes, counseling to take higher courses is systematic and also part of the solution. Dr. Lee agreed that things must be looked at from many angles.

Mr. Prale noted that teachers are collecting reading data and the school will continue to monitor it.

Ms. Patchak-Layman, in looking at EXPLORE, asked about potential plans of action to help to remedy the situation. Where would these plans move the school? She wanted the school to error on the side of student potential. If students were doing well in the middle school, she wanted to see them put in honors classes. If students got high scores on the EXPLORE test, but did not do well in the classroom, she wanted them placed in honors courses, even if there were a disconnect. Mr. Prale will ask division heads to work with regular classes to built bridges to the honors classes.

Ms. Patchak-Layman noted that on the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) website there was a numerical model on ISAT and PSAE. How well the numbers went together was either a 62 or 72 percent. She wondered if the number that Dr. Spight had identified matched.

**Learning Team Summary for 2007-08**

Mr. Prale provided a summary of the structure and emphasis of each learning team. The information describes the professional development activities and plans for the eight late arrival days. At the end of the school year, he will prepare a report on the activities and outcomes of the learning teams. Mr. Prale continued that divisions attempted to link their work to a goal of the district and identify it as a divisional goal. This work occupies the entire building, including the deans, the counselors, and the administrative team.

Ms. Patchak-Layman commented that history has shown that there was not a lot of increased student learning at the school. In looking at the Measures and Outcomes Section, she asked if the teachers expected the goal to be better development of curriculum which would affect student learning by a certain percentage, e.g., 10 percent or 5 percent. Ms. Patchak-Layman did not believe the teachers were using information they already had. Instituting a standardized student writing program is a response to current unsatisfactory results. So when History set the goal, she assumed its conversations highlighted an area that would give students the ability to achieve at a higher level. Were they working with the English Department? Mr. Prale noted that four years ago, the History Division, while meeting with the English Division, saw its material as more discrete, and the English Division looks for literary analysis and self reflection. Ms. Patchak-Layman reflected that students have had writing in one place since third grade.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked what would be used as measurements of school climate. Mr. Prale suggested the asking of students. He continued that Mr. Collins, in the ED
Program, is the closest thing the school has to having a school-within-a-school. The students are very much into themselves and what they are trying to do. By using the Positive Behavior Intervention and Support Model (PBIS), the school hopes to more effectively target the 120 students in that program. Mr. Collins has committed to having conversations two to four times per quarter (regularly) with students and families. PBIS is a tracking system. Mr. Conway asked for frequent reporting of this effect on this program; he wanted to see patterns addressed. Mr. Prale noted that Mr. Collins had already adjusted his program based on September and October information. Mr. Prale continued that telephone conversations were very important as they allow him to build relationships with those families who are then not reluctant to talk with him. The students in this program are Special Education students. Dr. Lee wanted to see aspects of this program applied to students not in Special Education. He asked: What aspects work well enough and would be appropriate for the regular program? What can the school learn from this that can be applied to 700 or 800 students. Ms. Patchak-Layman stated that PBIS was implemented in all of the District 97 schools. There is already a cohort of students who have had PBIS for at least one or two years. For some students, it is what helps them to achieve. When the program is taken away from them, their support is gone.

Mr. Prale added that the Division Heads requested this chart to allow more transparency between divisions.

**Update on the Plan to Raise Student Achievement (the Plan)**

Dr. Weninger provided the Board of Education with an update on the Plan to Raise Student Achievement that included the following (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this program):

1) a cover memo,
2) an input/feedback calendar;
3) minority student target programs identification; and
4) a draft implementation chronology – three tiers.

Dr. Weninger reviewed this information with the Committee. He noted that the following discussions were occurring:

- Instructional Council discusses the Plan at each of its meetings;
- Faculty input is being sought in morning and afternoon meetings in December;
- Discussions with students are occurring during lunch periods;
- Conversations with each of the representatives of the parent groups has occurred;
- Community forums in November and December;
- Meetings with the Research Team who collaborated on the Learning Performance Report; and
- Meetings with DLT and BLT.
Dr. Weninger noted that the second document was the result of the conversation at the October Board of Education meeting asking for identification of those programs that would address minority student achievement, recognizing that even these programs will touch other students, i.e., non minority students.

The last document was part of the initial document. It will change as discussions with stakeholders are held. Some things have already been implemented, e.g. the transfer student/parent program and its expansion with the J. Kyle Braid Club members and the students who attended the MSAN Student Leadership Conference, as well as parents and staff involvement.

Dr. Weninger asked the Board of Education to delay the approval of the Plan to Raise Student Achievement until the regular January Board of Education meeting. He asked for this extension so as to be able to obtain more feedback from the stakeholders. Dr. Weninger continued that the Board of Education has slated time at each of the Instruction Committee meetings and the Board of Education meetings in December and January to discuss this proposal.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if Dr. Weninger intended to meet with representatives from the middle school. Dr. Weninger noted that he had met with the two superintendents and they will be working to implement his proposed articulation model. Mr. Prale, in his articulation efforts, will discuss the Plan initiatives as well. Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if middle school parents would have an opportunity to comment. Ms. Foran responded that information about dates and times as possible transitional activities had been sent to the middle school’s PTO List Servers. Ms. Patchak-Layman suggested sending a personal letter to the parents. Ms. Patchak-Layman also suggested scheduling a joint board meeting with Districts 90 and 97 so that 1) work with the other boards of education to have these plans in place; 2) explore the back and forth articulation; 3) make sure that District 90 and 97 boards were aware of the plan and they were able to give feedback. Dr. Weninger stated that this was the Board of Education’s decision to have a joint board meeting.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if Student Council could take the lead in getting student feedback, as a way to build its leadership skills, particularly on the student part of the plan, as opposed to the adults’ portion. Dr. Weninger noted that Student Council would be involved.

Dr. Lee felt a critical piece was missing; it was not a deficit on the part of the administration but on the part of the Board of Education. The deficit is a clear definition of where the Board of Education intends to head as opposed to sitting in a position that it does or does not agree with the administration’s direction. He wanted to see more educational leadership on the part of the Board in two areas. He proposed the following resolutions be approved at the next Board of Education meeting:

**Resolution 1:** Be it resolved, that this board considers the continuous narrowing of the academic achievement gap between black and white
students in this district to be its top priority, including priority over new initiatives to raise the academic achievement levels of the student body as a whole, provided that such prioritization does not substantially lower the academic achievement levels of any other group of students.

**Resolution 2:** Be it resolved, that this board considers the improvement of the reading skills of those students whose levels of academic achievement are lowest to be the primary and most intense focus of those approaches to be considered in raising student achievement.

Dr. Lee continued that the Board of Education had not taken a position on this and it would influence the planning. If the Board of Education believes that narrowing the achievement gap is a first priority, then the Board of Education needs to clarify that as it would behave differently. By having the Board of Education declare that narrowing the achievement gap is its first priority does not mean that it is going to stop spending money on honors programs. The school has already developed skill for dealing with that. The school is not good at meeting the needs of the lowest performing students. He believed the Board of Education must establish this as its first priority and clearly state to the public that it is now ready to undertake a problem of clearly focusing on the needs of the lowest performing students. While it has been said that narrowing the achievement gap was its number one priority, he did not know if it had been openly declared to the public; it is then a matter of changing educational policy which says the school does not focus on improving the reading skills of students, as that responsibility belongs to someone else. Actions have shown that the focus has not been on the needs of the lowest performing students. He suggested that the school consider the reading levels of students with the lowest abilities and achievement until the efforts are not worth it. He believes that the Board of Education should show leadership and specify policy direction.

Ms. Patchak-Layman wanted to have this conversation in the development of the District goals, so that there was an understanding of the Board of Education desires. She was glad for the discussion now but she would have preferred it at the onset of the Plan. Ms. Patchak-Layman wanted Special Education as part of the Plan, as Special Education students are also a part of the achievement gap; the school has an obligation to the students here and an external obligation to the State of Illinois and NCLB to make sure all students are achieving at their highest potential and not being left behind; special education students need extra consideration and planning. Dr. Lee’s proposals did not identify African-American or regular students, but students with the greatest need, even though there is a preponderance of African-American students with the greatest need; it did not, however, omit Special Education students.

Mr. Rigas felt the second proposal to be of an implementation/plan/strategy and less of a policy. Dr. Lee disagreed, noting that at the last Instruction Committee meeting, the administration made three specific recommendations to the Board of Education in that area. Discussion occurred, but no action was taken. Dr. Lee felt it was important for the Board of Education to take action. Mr. Prale noted that the recommendations were to the administration as well. Dr. Lee noted that while the standard procedures for 30 years had
been to accept the administration’s recommendation, having the Board of Education take action is a policy initiative. The school’s current policy is that it does not teach reading. While reading is spread across the curriculum and teachers take one-day workshops to make them experts at the teaching of reading, Dr. Lee asked how a competent reading professional would be identified. He wanted to either change that direction by approving an educational policy initiative or explain why it should not approve it. He did not believe this would interfere with the progress of what is taking place. Mr. Rigas asked if Dr. Lee felt the recommendations would not go forward. Dr. Lee preferred the Board of Education supporting or rejecting the recommendations, as opposing to just talking about them. He continued that some community members think the Board of Education has established closing the achievement gap as its highest priority, yet the Board of Education has not said that. He felt the Board of Education should say whether closing the achievement gap was its highest priority or not.

Ms. Patchak-Layman stated that the Board of Education’s purpose is to set school policy, e.g., set the direction, make changes, and introduce new ways of doing things based upon its reading of the problems, what the community says, and where the community wants to go. While she assumed closing the achievement gap was the school’s highest priority, it is also a priority of the state and of the nation. Her main concern over what has been presented in the Plan is that she did not know what would happen second semester with the current seniors in need of support to be the best learners as they leave the school. Dr. Lee assumed there would be no major changes for second semester, because a system cannot change that fast. Ms. Patchak-Layman wanted enough flexibility that when things are noticed, the school has the flexibility to do things. The school has committed more than 90 percent of its resources in the contracts signed, the classrooms built, and the major commitment of resources to change the major direction of the school. She did not look for things to happen overnight, except that the Board of Education can vote to head in a specific policy direction. How the system reacts can take more than months, in terms of long-term change, but it has to start with a specific direction.

As to why Dr. Lee proposed these resolutions to the policy committee, he stated that there is established procedure for changing policy in which documents are taken through first and second readings within a minimum of a two-month timeframe. Given the fact that the Board of Education hopes to do things more quickly, he wanted to take the necessary action to help the process move in the direction desired, as opposed to going through the elaborate procedure of writing a policy. Thus, Board of Education resolutions reflecting that would be appropriate.

Mr. Conway noted that he could support Resolution #1, but not Resolution #2, because it is more than just reading that causes the deficiency. Dr. Lee explained that this was why he chose to use the word primary. If the school believes other factors are more important than a student’s ability to read, the school should focus on those factors. There is nothing more serious than one’s reading ability. Mr. Conway stated that reading is on the Board of Education’s watch, but it is limited to what it can do. Dr. Lee stated that the school has taken the position that reading is not on its watch for 30 years.
Ms. Patchak-Layman said students were not limited by the amount of time they come to school; the school has flexibility to expand their day, to stagger their day, to offer them outside independent opportunities. Part of putting programs in place requires knowing the students’ needs by talking with them and finding out things such as whether the science teacher is also a reading specialist. If the goal were to improve reading, times during the day can be structured to do that and/or outsourcing can be used. When Mr. Conway noted there were limited funds for outsourcing, Ms. Patchak-Layman noted that the school needed to reassess where it wants to put its money.

Discussion ensued as to how to proceed. There was consensus to present these resolutions to the Board of Education for further discussion and approval at the November Board of Education meeting, even though only five members would be present. If the first resolution fails, the second one will be mute. It was noted that only five Board of Education members would be present at that meeting.

Dr. Weninger noted that the proposed Plan to Raise Student Achievement was presented in the way it was because raising student achievement is more than just raising reading skills, etc.; it is more systemic. Student discipline could be argued as more important than reading. While it may appear that this proposal is a shotgun approach, these are the things that are believed to raise student achievement, particularly for minority students. Behind that thinking in order to come down to what the school was going to do first, second, third, was getting input from a part of a wider group of participations and the Board of Education. With that input there would be reflection on bringing it all together. The process to get there is focused. He asked what would be the net effect of Resolution 1. Will it be a part of the policy manual or is it a resolution for the foreseeable future to guide the school’s work in terms of District goals. Dr. Lee stated that the intention is that the net effect to influence the foreseeable future, which means what happens between now and next June. While it could result in Board of Education policy, it did not have to do so. He was more concerned about having the Board of Education state its desire, as it has not done so. Dr. Lee told Dr. Weninger that while he had done an excellent job of presenting a very substantial bit of what influences student achievement in general, which is appropriate for his position, it was also appropriate for the Board of Education itself if it wishes to focus and concentrate its efforts on more than one part of what is proposed.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked how the Board of Education would proceed with the document presented. Would the Board of Education see the feedback from the groups noted so that they could make decisions based on that feedback? Dr. Weninger offered to provide a summary. Was this a rolling activity where there would be changes after each of the meetings or after the next couple of months? Dr. Weninger’s intention was not to compile all of the feedback and then in January make massive modifications. His intention was to take feedback along the way make modifications, and then inform the Board of Education of those modifications at each of its meetings. Ms. Patchak-Layman foresaw a problem when asking for community and faculty feedback. If changes are made, the first group to discuss this would not have the benefit of giving input on the changes. If it is a rolling process, how would he incorporate the totality of groups with different ways of proceeding? Dr. Weninger stated that he would not react to one group
or several groups but would bring input back to the Board of Education and the Board of Education will direct him on how to proceed. The Board of Education should set the direction. When he brings information to the Board of Education, he is looking for it to set the direction. Ms. Patchak-Layman reiterated that the Plan dated October 25 was the Plan everyone would see. Dr. Weninger confirmed that. He continued that while he was the author of the Plan, many people shared with him their ideas, but asked that their names be left out of it. Ms. Patchak-Layman asked to see a list of community and parents with whom he spoke. She also had difficulty with participatory decision-making, because there was no community input on the Plan. The other parts of the Plan should have been generated with more input from community, parents, and students. The Board of Education only has control over the high school and it is difficult for the community to be part of that. Dr. Lee asked if Ms. Patchak-Layman were reacting to the origin of the ideas. She replied that the community has input into this Plan, but there has not been open communication as yet. Dr. Lee noted that there had not been time for that but he assumed there would be. Dr. Weninger acknowledged that Ms. Patchak-Layman would have taken another approach to creating this Plan, but with the limited amount of time available and his understanding that the Board of Education’s goal was the achievement of minority students; his approach was to meet with numerous individuals and groups. While Ms. Patchak-Layman may feel the community was in a reaction role, he believed the Board of Education employed him and the administration to lead and to develop a plan to raise student achievement. The administration is soliciting feedback from people inside and outside of the building. If the Board of Education says to go back to ground zero that would be its decision. Ms. Patchak-Layman suggested going forward with the detail on the high school’s part of the Plan and then move on to the other parts of the Plan. She felt this was the most important work of the Board of Education and it has policy and financial ramifications. The conversation needs to happen before the setting of policy and making financial decisions, etc. Mr. Conway and Mr. Rigas were interested in the community’s input. After receipt of that input, the Board of Education has the opportunity to give direction. Ms. Patchak-Layman was cautious because the timeframe did not allow that kind of input.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked for a staff report on what would happen to the senior students, and suggested holding a senior seminar. She stressed that the school had to do something about those students; and suggested bringing forth the science careers that would be available to them. Dr. Weninger concurred but stated that there were scheduling, budgeting, and other things to make it impossible to react in the way she wanted. Ms. Patchak-Layman stated that if they were thought of as individual students and they wanted more help in reading, the school should provide that. Mr. Prale noted that the school provides that support; it helps them find the right fit of community or four-year colleges. He continued that the PSAE does nothing more than tell about one day of the students’ lives. The school continues to look for the best placements at all times. AYP tells the school how it is doing; that is the reason for the new science course recommendations. A cost benefit analysis would show that using those scores as a way to target students in their senior year would not have the benefit desired. Dr. Lee noted that it was the counselors, staff, and administration’s responsibility to react to the needs of the individual student, not the Board of Education. Ms. Patchak-Layman said that the
Board of Education can make sure that each piece of information goes somewhere. There is a systematic approach and there should be an individual approach; that is the part that the Board of Education plays. While Mr. Conway stated that there is an accounting on the students and the communities as well, Ms. Patchak-Layman stated that the school had to extend its hand. Mr. Rigas added that there were so many programs going on within and outside of the school; a hand is extended all of the time and Mr. Prale and Ms. Hill constantly try to bring new programs and they are always making adjustments. Mr. Lee noted that if there were a specific proposal, the Board of Education could act on it. Mr. Rigas noted that the difference is that there is a plan, a proposed, long-term attack on the achievement gap; that does not mean everything else stops. In the short term, there is a constant reviewing of the programs in the Plan.

Mr. Conway was principal-for-the-day in Chicago and was surprised to discover that the board at the John F. Kennedy High School has a policy that all seniors have to apply to at least three colleges. Those students always prepare for the next level so that when they apply for college, they know what is needed. This requires the counselors to sit with the students to work on this project. Counselors should be more involved in the students' lives. Dr. Weninger noted that with the addition of a College and Career Center, he would like counselors to have 7 to 10 session per year with small groups of students to identify their plans. This would start in their freshman year. Ms. Patchak-Layman felt this could be implemented now as it is not a big project and counselors are meeting with their students.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if there was an estimate of how much gain a student would make with the Plan. How would student achievement be measured? Dr. Weninger responded that there was no estimate. Ms. Patchak-Layman concluded that the basis of including these actions is some best practice for implementation. She asked if the Board of Education could see a bibliography of the research background.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked about the state's E-Plan which will expire in March 15. She asked how the work on this Plan would translate into the plan needed for the State. Mr. Prale noted that West 40 is RESPRO and it will develop a timeline for the SIP Committee. He will work with Doug Dirks to bring up to date. Membership on the committee includes community, students, administrators, etc. Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if community membership changed. It was noted that the school asks the parent groups to send representatives. He noted that faculty and staff members are also on the professional development committee.

Dr. Millard commented that the plan contains something for everybody. However, plans that have something for everyone can have a lack of focus. She wanted to see the Board of Education narrow the focus.

Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 10:29 a.m.
OAK PARK AND RIVER FOREST HIGH SCHOOL

MEMORANDUM

To: Instruction Committee of the Board of Education
From: Amy Hill
Date: December 13, 2007
Re: 2008 – 2009 Course Proposals

Pursuant to discussions with Instructional Council and the leadership teams, several course proposals presented to you in October have been revised, one proposal has been added, and two proposals have been removed.

Public Service Practicum and Business Community Relations, two new courses proposed by the Business Education Department, have been combined to create Business Community Service Internship as a single 1-semester course.

The course description of Web Site Development now references certification.

The Fine and Applied Arts Division revised the focus of its proposed new course, Musical Theatre Seminar.

The World Languages Division has added a proposal for Chinese 1-2 and has decided not to delete Spanish 9-10.

The Fine and Applied Arts Division has rescinded the proposal to add Chamber Singers.
OAK PARK AND RIVER FOREST HIGH SCHOOL

PROPOSAL FOR ADDITION OF A NEW COURSE

(Please Type All Information)

DATA

Division: Business Education
Department (if pertinent): Business Education
Course Title: Business Community Service Internship (BCS)
Length of Course: Semester
Credit Earned: 1 (general OPRFHS credit)
Prerequisite: Students who have passed the following Business Education courses are eligible for the BCS course because two weeks of the curriculum is an intensive study of Community Relations: Consumer Education, AP Economics, Sports and Entertainment Marketing, Small Business Management, Business Law, or Accounting and Investment Principles.

Textbook Title: none
Textbook Cost: none
Additional Equipment Costs: none
Additional Supplies Costs: none
Course will first be offered:
 Semester: Fall Year: 2008-2009

DESCRIPTION

Formal Course Description for Academic Catalog:
Business Community Service Internship (1 general OPRFHS elective, period 0 on schedule) is a course which combines academic instruction with experiential learning opportunities in the form of internship, field experiences and volunteer service projects in public sector agencies across the villages of Oak Park and River Forest. Students will experience all aspects of the agencies work including providing services, funding, outreach and building client base. Students will be expected to participate in 45 hours at the agency as well as attend a weekly 7:15 a.m. classroom session to debrief the experience, share insights and receive instruction. Students will be required to journal the experience and complete an end of the semester project. All agencies must be pre-approved by the Business Department.

UNITS

Course Units:
Business Ethics, Business Writing, Community Activism, Managing Community Issues and Concerns, Building Relationships of Trust, and the New Expectations of Today's Corporate Communities.

NEED

Reason For Course Proposal: District 200 Board of Education Goal #2 (2b and 2c) – IMPROVE SCHOOL CLIMATE

This course will instill an attitude of volunteerism among the students. This would greatly improve School Climate; not only within the school, but also the communities of Oak Park and River Forest.

2b. Improve the transition of incoming transfer students from non-community schools.
Students will find a place where they belong in a new school community of volunteerism.

2c. Increase the participation of students in co-curricular programs.
Students will find success in the classroom by working in groups which might motivate them to join an activity or group which also deals with groups.

Because of this volunteerism, this course would also enhance an already positive public relations atmosphere in the community. This would also allow OPRFHS to take advantage of the excellent working relationship the Business Education department has with a very socially responsible community.

HUMAN DIGNITY

Cultural Pluralism and Title IX Consideration:
The course is open to all students and promotes teamwork, which is essential to all races and genders.

Endorsing Signatures:
Division Curriculum Committee

Division Head: Date: 12/6/07
**OAK PARK AND RIVER FOREST HIGH SCHOOL**

**PROPOSAL FOR ADDITION OF A NEW COURSE**

(Please Type All Information)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Division: September 26, 2007</td>
<td>Textbook Title: Web Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department (if pertinent): Business Education</td>
<td>Textbook Cost: $25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course Title: Web Site Development (CIW)</td>
<td>Additional Equipment Costs: none</td>
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<tr>
<td>Length of Course: Semester</td>
<td>Additional Supplies Costs: none</td>
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<tr>
<td>Credit Earned: 1</td>
<td>Course will first be offered:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Student Fee (if any): ______</td>
<td>Semester: Fall Year: 2008-2009</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**DESCRIPTION**

Formal Course Description for Academic Catalog:

Are you interested in creating web sites and learning aspects of the Internet including search engines, newsgroups, email, and plug ins? Web Development 1 concentrates on creating web pages in various ways including using various GUI editors. Software packages will also be introduced like Dreamweaver, Flash, Cool 3D, GIF Animator, Photoshop, and Fireworks. A final project web site will be developed and published on the Internet. Take the CIW course, pass the certification exams, and be a step ahead of everyone else.

**UNITS**

Course Units:
- Creating Great Websites, Appreciating Website Design, Making it Cool with Multimedia, Working with Dynamic Content

**NEED**

Reason For Course Proposal:
- Students are entering OPRFHS with an immense ability in the area of computers. Unfortunately, many of these skills are not employable skills. This class is designed to complement the student's knowledge and enthusiasm of the computer with skills that are very employable in the future.

**HUMAN DIGNITY**

Cultural Pluralism and Title IX Consideration:
- The course is open to all students and promotes teamwork, which is essential to all races and genders.

**Other Pertinent Information:**

Endorsing Signatures:
- Division Curriculum Committee

Division Head:

Date: 12/6/07

Revised 09/03

COURSE PROPOSALS DUE TO ROOM 373 NO LATER THAN THURSDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2007
DATA

Division: _____ Fine and Applied Arts ________
Department (if pertinent): _____ Speech Arts ________
Course Title: ___ Musical Theatre Seminar ________
Length of Course: Semester ___ X ___ Year ________
Credit Earned: ______ One ________
Course Student Fee (if any): _______________________

Textbook Title: ___ N/A ________
Textbook Cost: ________________________
Additional Equipment Costs: ________________________
Additional Supplies Costs: ________________________
Course will first be offered: Semester ___1st and 2nd Semester ________
Year ________________________

DESCRIPTION

Formal Course Description for Academic Catalog:

This course is designed to explore the history of American musical theatre and its impact on popular culture. Students will study the development of the American musical from Vaudeville to current Broadway shows through historical and performance-based contexts. During the semester students will analyze the script, music, characters, choreography, and history of the current Spring Musical. We will also explore musical theatre auditioning techniques and cabaret performance.

UNITS

Course Units:
Unit One: The Development of the American Musical
Unit Two: The Spring Musical and its history
Unit Three: Musical theatre auditioning and cabaret performance

NEED

Reason For Course Proposal:

To truly make theatre co-curricular, OPRFHS must have the in-school curriculum to support the after-school activities. This class will teach students about the cultural impact musicals have had on American life as well as give students the opportunity to put the Spring Musical in a historical and academic context.

HUMAN DIGNITY

Cultural Pluralism and Title IX Consideration:

One of the most wonderful things about theatre is that it is present in just about all cultures. American theatre also has a history of commenting on social, political, and cultural aspects of society. Students can relate with new cultural concepts on a different level by connecting with a character they are playing or viewing a historical event live through the power of theatre.

Other Pertinent Information: The students at OPRF are constantly trying to find ways to express themselves through art. Musical Theatre is a very popular performance art and form of expression within the school community. Students have often commented on wanting another musical or getting more musical theatre opportunities. This class will give those students just the opportunities they are looking for and since the class changes every year, students will be able to take it more than once. All students enrolled in this class will participate in the Spring Musical in some aspect; students can be in the cast, work on one of the crew teams, or help with front of house activities such as publicity.

Endorsing Signatures:
Division Curriculum Committee
__________________________________________
Division Head: ___________________________

Date: 10/4/07
OAK PARK AND RIVER FOREST HIGH SCHOOL
PROPOSAL FOR ADDITION OF A NEW COURSE

DATA

<table>
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<th>DIVISION: World Languages Division</th>
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<tr>
<td>COURSE TITLE: Chinese 1-2</td>
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<tr>
<td>LENGTH OF COURSE: 2 Semesters 1 Year</td>
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<td>CREDIT EARNED: 2 Credits</td>
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<td>COURSE STUDENT FEE (IF ANY): None</td>
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| TEXTBOOK TITLE: Chinese Link       |
| TEXTBOOK COST: $51.47 / $44.97 (workbook) |
| ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT COSTS: None   |
| ADDITIONAL SUPPLIES COSTS: None    |
| COURSE WILL FIRST BE OFFERED:     |
| SEMESTER: 1 & 2  YEAR: 2008-09     |

DESCRIPTION

FORMAL COURSE DESCRIPTION FOR ACADEMIC CATALOG:
This first-year Chinese course is open to all students. Basic vocabulary and essentials of grammar are taught with emphasis on the development of the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The Chinese writing system and the standard Mandarin phonetic system of Pinyin are taught. Cultural materials and projects are an integral part of the course.

UNITS

COURSE UNITS:
Sample curriculum attached.

NEED

REASON FOR COURSE PROPOSAL:
The Chinese language is undeveloped at OPRFHS and there is rapidly growing interest by students and community members in offering this course. Chinese is spoken by about a quarter of the world's population and is one of the six working languages of the United Nations. The addition of Chinese would reflect the rising interest of China's economic growth and culture. (see attached)

HUMAN DIGNITY

CULTURAL PLURALISM AND TITLE IX CONSIDERATION:

OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION:

ENDORISING SIGNATURES
DIVISION CURRICULUM COMMITTEE:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mary L.</td>
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<td>Terri</td>
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<td>Anne</td>
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<td>Carol</td>
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DIVISION HEAD: C. Saleri

DATE: 11/12/07

Revised 09/03

COURSE PROPOSALS DUE TO ROOM 373 NO LATER THAN THURSDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2007
Organization of the Textbook

The textbook is divided into three main parts: Foundation, core lessons, and Appendices. The flexible design of the text allows instructors to use it in varying ways, depending on the number of contact hours per week and whether a school is on the semester or quarter system. Sample syllabi are available in the Instructor's Resource Manual.

Foundation:

The Foundation module provides fundamental knowledge about Chinese and learning Chinese that is useful for beginning students. It contains linguistic as well as cultural background material. Following are the major sections of the Foundation unit:

- **Introduction to Chinese**: This section briefly introduces some characteristics of Chinese language such as tones, the importance of word order, pictographic characters and its history and development.

- **Pinyin Foundation and Exercises**: Pinyin is the most widely used phonetic transliteration system to be introduced as a tool for representing the sounds of Chinese. This section introduces the Pinyin system as well as the structural components of Chinese syllables: initials, finals, and tones. There are many Pinyin exercises. Tongue twisters are introduced to show different aspects of rhythm and rhyme and the sounds of Chinese.

- **The Chinese Writing System**: This section discusses the formation of Chinese characters. It introduces the common components, radicals, and the structure of Chinese characters. Exercises are included.

- **Classroom Expressions and Exercises**: This section introduces the most useful and common phrases encountered in the Chinese classroom. Introducing these phrases early helps the instructors to limit use of English in the classroom. It also allows students to learn some phrases that they can make use of right away.

- **Abbreviations of Parts of Speech**: This section lists the abbreviations used later in the grammar notes and vocabulary sections.
Core Lessons:
The content of the 22 lessons is selected to meet the practical needs and interests of students. The focus of the content begins with individual, family, and school activities, then gradually expands to include wider social occasions and societal contact. Great care has been taken to clearly and systematically present and practice the core vocabulary and grammatical expressions of elementary Chinese.

The major sections of each lesson are described below:

- **Core Vocabulary**: Core vocabulary terms, which appear in the Language Link section, are introduced here. For each vocabulary item, traditional and simplified character forms are presented along with Pinyin pronunciation, grammatical function, and English meaning. This section also points out differences between Mainland China and Taiwan usage.

- **Language Link**: This section contains situations that incorporate the lesson’s core vocabulary and grammar points. It is accompanied by an art program that adds context and makes the lesson more interesting. Language Link serves as a model of the correct usage of the vocabulary and grammar points introduced in the lesson. Notes are provided to further explain the text. For most of the lessons, Language Link includes dialogues; for some selections it includes essays, diaries, e-mail, and letters. The length of Language Link is carefully controlled, and gradually increases to provide pedagogical sufficiency and challenge.

- **Grammar**: Core grammar points from Language Link are explained in this section. We adopt the pedagogical grammar approach to better fit with the communicative approach to language learning. Grammar explanations are supplemented with examples that use vocabulary items previously covered in the textbook. We have tried to avoid linguistic jargon, with the exception of such commonly used terms as *syntax, sentence, clause, subject, predicate, object, modifier*, etc. For review and consolidation, the communicative exercises of each lesson are designed to elicit the use of grammatical structures introduced in the lesson.

- **Supplementary Practice**: Each lesson has a Supplementary Practice section with themes, vocabulary, and grammar similar to those found in Language Link. This allows students to practice immediately what they have learned from their study of the main text. Care has been taken to use a different format from that found in Language Link. For example, if Language Link contains a dialogue, Supplementary Practice will include a prose format, and vice versa. The pedagogical purpose is to help students learn to use vocabulary and grammar structures in varying forms of communication.

- **Activities**: This section is designed primarily for classroom use. Listening, character, grammar, and communicative exercises are included throughout the text. Care has been taken to provide balance between structural drills and real-life communicative tasks. The exercises integrate with the grammar points to provide a systematic extension of usage skills from vocabulary-item level to sentence level and on to discourse-level narration and description. Since these exercises are for class meeting time, they are designed to be dynamic and interactive. Most involve interaction between instructor and students, student and student, or group and group. Communicative activities are based on situations designed to elicit the grammar points and vocabulary students have learned in the lesson and in prior lessons. Visual aids are provided to help set the context for the communicative activities. Our goal in providing classroom exercises is to help save instructor time, which makes the text convenient and efficient for instructors to use.
- **Culture Link:** This section contains three components:
  - **Culture Notes:** The topics of the **Culture Notes** are carefully chosen to relate to those of the core lessons. It is hoped that the **Culture Notes** will help students to better understand Chinese societies, as well as how language reflects culture. Authentic photos are provided to create a vivid and interesting learning experience. The discussion questions are designed to encourage students to discuss and compare cultural differences by helping them to be aware of the features of their own culture and to be more understanding and tolerant toward other cultures.
  - **Fun with Chinese:** This section introduces a common slang expression, an idiom, or a motto that either utilizes new vocabulary presented in the lesson or is closely related to the theme of the lesson. Drawings are included to help make this section more fun and eye-catching. Discussion questions are provided to offer another fun way to relate the common Chinese expressions to the theme of the lesson.
  - **Let's Go!** This section gives students an opportunity to interact with Chinese in an authentic context. It assists the students to connect themselves to authentic Chinese societies and communities. This section promotes students' motivation and helps them develop survival skills for life in authentic Chinese societies.
# CHINESE 1-2

**TEXTBOOKS: Chinese Link, Volume 1 – Textbook and Workbook**

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<tr>
<th>1&lt;sup&gt;ST&lt;/sup&gt; SEMESTER</th>
<th>2&lt;sup&gt;ND&lt;/sup&gt; QUARTER</th>
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<td>Asking and answering simple yes/no questions</td>
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<td>Finding out what someone owns</td>
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<td>Finding out who someone else is</td>
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<td>Adverb 都 和 都不，都不</td>
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<td>Measure word 个，根，只，本</td>
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<td>Questions 几个，几辆，几只，几本</td>
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<td><strong>CULTURE:</strong></td>
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<td>Basic Chinese greetings</td>
<td>Chinese forms of address</td>
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<td>Chinese names</td>
<td>Chinese families</td>
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<td>Chinese concept of “Native town”</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Chinese educational system</td>
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</table>
# CHINESE 1-2

**TEXTBOOKS:** *Chinese Link, Volume 1* – Textbook and Workbook

## 2nd Semester

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3rd Quarter</th>
<th>4th Quarter</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTERS IN TEXTBOOK:</strong> 7 - 8</td>
<td><strong>CHAPTERS IN TEXTBOOK:</strong> 9 - 10</td>
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<td>Online Chinese news discussions</td>
<td>Chinese Cultural project</td>
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<td>Chinese calligraphy</td>
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<td>Blackboard tests, quizzes, and discussion board</td>
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<td>Online chapter review</td>
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<td>Culture-grams Web Quest Project</td>
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<td>None</td>
<td>Art or Field Museum</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>FUNCTIONS:</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Asking someone’s address</td>
<td>Making a phone call</td>
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<tr>
<td>Telling them your address</td>
<td>Handling various phone situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describing a place</td>
<td>Asking what someone is doing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking/giving phone numbers</td>
<td>Explaining what you are doing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More yes and no questions</td>
<td>Giving times and dates in Chinese</td>
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<tr>
<td>Making and responding to a plan</td>
<td>Describing your daily schedule</td>
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<th><strong>GRAMMAR:</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>The use of verb 作</td>
<td>The progressive aspect of an action 在/正在</td>
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<tr>
<td>Word order for addresses</td>
<td>Summery of ways of asking questions</td>
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<td>Topic-comment sentences</td>
<td>How to tell time</td>
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<tr>
<td>The differences of 多少 and 几</td>
<td>Adverb 就 and 才</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affirmative-negative questions (“A 不 A” pattern)</td>
<td>Grammar summery on Chinese word order and measure words</td>
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<td>Tag question</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>CULTURE:</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Chinese houses – Si He Yuan</td>
<td>Cell phone in China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business cards in China</td>
<td>University life in China</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Why Chinese?

The rise of China presents new economic, political and social realities that demand greater U.S. engagement at every level. As the foundation of that engagement, we urgently need to raise the number of Americans who can demonstrate a functional proficiency in Chinese.

- China is an immense market for American goods and services, and a vital supplier to American manufacturers and consumers. U.S. trade with China exceeded $245 billion in 2004 (second only to trade with Canada and Mexico).
- China's political importance in the Asia-Pacific region is broadly acknowledged and, particularly since 9/11, its help has been sought on difficult issues like North Korea and terrorism. Collaboration with China is increasingly deemed essential for solving a range of global issues, from nuclear proliferation to the environment, from currency exchange to trade laws.
- As the most enduring world civilization, China has a major international cultural presence, in literature and cuisine, in music and film, dance and art, religion and philosophy, drawing on its tremendous heritage to enrich our present.
- An official language of the United Nations, Chinese is the most widely spoken first language in the world, extending beyond the People's Republic of China and Taiwan to Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, to the Philippines, and to Mongolia.
- Chinese will top English as the most-used language on the Internet by 2007, according to forecasts by the World Intellectual Property Organization.
- In the United States the Asian and Pacific Islander population is projected to grow 213 percent, from 10.7 million to 33.4 million, in the next 50 years, a substantial demographic shift. Their share of the nation's population will double, from 3.8 percent to 8 percent.
OAK PARK AND RIVER FOREST HIGH SCHOOL

MEMORANDUM

To: Board of Education Instruction Committee
From: Amy Hill
Date: December 13, 2007
Re: Spring 2007 Student Opinion Survey

On April 4, 2007 we administered an opinion survey to 2004 OPRFHS freshmen, sophomores, and seniors during a special administrative period, while juniors simultaneously registered for the ACT portion of the 2007 Prairie State Achievement Exam. The survey was the outgrowth of two developments during the fall of 2006: a professional development focus on improving civility in the hallways and classrooms at OPRFHS, and the planning for an all-school institute day to include all students and staff. While the survey was prompted by the staff discussions, the student planners on the all-school institute day committee embraced the notion of administering a student survey in advance of the institute day as a way to provide a focus for the day’s activities. A diverse student group generated the ideas for the survey items during one of the institute day planning sessions. As the administrator who led the planning committee, I developed the students’ ideas into statements and developed the format of the survey. We reviewed and revised the statements; we asked the Building Administrative Team and Instructional Council for input; and we finalized the survey with 67 items, including demographic questions.

The survey is attached to this memo; I have also attached hard copies of the PowerPoint presentation I and several students made to the full faculty during the September 7 Staff Development day and to the Citizens’ Council at its November 8 meeting.
OPRFHS OPINION SURVEY ON SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Over the course of this school year, the faculty and staff have spent several hours talking together about the ways we all interact within our school building. We have discussed hallway and classroom behaviors that may cause tension and undermine the sense of community in our school. We want to know more about students’ views. This survey attempts to measure student opinion about some issues that may interfere with students’ sense of community here at school. The survey items were developed with much input from a racially/ethnically diverse group of students in grades 10-12.

The survey is intended to be anonymous. Please read each statement carefully and answer honestly. Use the Scantron sheet to record your answers. Survey results will be shared with students later this month.

PART I. Listed below are a number of concerns about community and civility at OPRFHS. You are asked to consider the frequency of the issue (how often does it happen?) and/or the importance of the issue (how much does it matter?). Fill in the letter for each statement that most closely describes your opinion of the issue.

1. Rate the Frequency: Students pushing one another in hallways during passing periods
   A) A rare occurrence
   B) An occasional occurrence
   C) A common occurrence

2. Rate the Importance: Students pushing one another in hallways during passing periods
   A) Not a problem
   B) A minor problem
   C) A moderate problem
   D) A major problem

3. Rate the Frequency: Student use of profanity at OPRF
   A) A rare occurrence
   B) An occasional occurrence
   C) A common occurrence

4. Rate the Importance: Student use of profanity at OPRF
   A) Not a problem
   B) A minor problem
   C) A moderate problem
   D) A major problem

5. Rate the Frequency: Student use of insulting language at OPRF
   A) A rare occurrence
   B) An occasional occurrence
   C) A common occurrence

6. Rate the Importance: Student use of insulting language at OPRF
   A) Not a problem
   B) A minor problem
   C) A moderate problem
   D) A major problem
7. **Rate the Frequency:** Adult use of profanity at OPRF  
   A) A rare occurrence  
   B) An occasional occurrence  
   C) A common occurrence  

8. **Rate the Importance:** Adult use of profanity at OPRF  
   A) Not a problem  
   B) A minor problem  
   C) A moderate problem  
   D) A major problem  

9. **Rate the Frequency:** Adult use of insulting language at OPRF  
   A) A rare occurrence  
   B) An occasional occurrence  
   C) A common occurrence  

10. **Rate the Importance:** Adult use of insulting language at OPRF  
    A) Not a problem  
    B) A minor problem  
    C) A moderate problem  
    D) A major problem  

11. **Rate the Frequency:** OPRF coaches’ use of profanity during practices/games  
    A) A rare occurrence  
    B) An occasional occurrence  
    C) A common occurrence  

12. **Rate the Importance:** OPRF coaches’ use of profanity during practices/games  
    A) Not a problem  
    B) A minor problem  
    C) A moderate problem  
    D) A major problem  

13. **Rate the Frequency:** OPRF teachers complaining about students in front of other students  
    A) A rare occurrence  
    B) An occasional occurrence  
    C) A common occurrence  

14. **Rate the Importance:** OPRF teachers complaining about students in front of other students  
    A) Not a problem  
    B) A minor problem  
    C) A moderate problem  
    D) A major problem  

15. **Rate the Frequency:** Failure to teach the history, heritage, and contributions of racial and ethnic minority groups  
    A) A rare occurrence  
    B) An occasional occurrence  
    C) A common occurrence
16. **Rate the Importance:** Failure to teach the history, heritage, and contributions of racial and ethnic minority groups
   A) Not a problem
   B) A minor problem
   C) A moderate problem
   D) A major problem

17. **Rate the Frequency:** OPRF students choosing to sit in racially segregated groups in the lunchrooms
   A) A rare occurrence
   B) An occasional occurrence
   C) A common occurrence

18. **Rate the Importance:** OPRF students choosing to sit in racially segregated groups in the lunchrooms
   A) Not a problem
   B) A minor problem
   C) A moderate problem
   D) A major problem

19. **Rate the Frequency:** Students' public displays of affection in hallways at OPRF
   A) A rare occurrence
   B) An occasional occurrence
   C) A common occurrence

20. **Rate the Importance:** Students' public displays of affection in hallways at OPRF
   A) Not a problem
   B) A minor problem
   C) A moderate problem
   D) A major problem

21. **Rate the Frequency:** Lack of respect from student to student at OPRF
   A) A rare occurrence
   B) An occasional occurrence
   C) A common occurrence

22. **Rate the Importance:** Lack of respect from student to student at OPRF
   A) Not a problem
   B) A minor problem
   C) A moderate problem
   D) A major problem

23. **Rate the Frequency:** Lack of respect from student to adult at OPRF
   A) A rare occurrence
   B) An occasional occurrence
   C) A common occurrence

24. **Rate the Importance:** Lack of respect from student to adult at OPRF
   A) Not a problem
   B) A minor problem
   C) A moderate problem
   D) A major problem
25. **Rate the Frequency**: Lack of respect from adult to student at OPRF
   A) A rare occurrence
   B) An occasional occurrence
   C) A common occurrence

26. **Rate the Importance**: Lack of respect from adult to student at OPRF
   A) Not a problem
   B) A minor problem
   C) A moderate problem
   D) A major problem

27. **Rate the Frequency**: Prejudice/discrimination among students at OPRF
   A) A rare occurrence
   B) An occasional occurrence
   C) A common occurrence

28. **Rate the Importance**: Prejudice/discrimination among students at OPRF
   A) Not a problem
   B) A minor problem
   C) A moderate problem
   D) A major problem

29. **Rate the Frequency**: Prejudice/discrimination among adults at OPRF
   A) A rare occurrence
   B) An occasional occurrence
   C) A common occurrence

30. **Rate the Importance**: Prejudice/discrimination among adults at OPRF
   A) Not a problem
   B) A minor problem
   C) A moderate problem
   D) A major problem

31. **Rate the Importance**: Inconsistent enforcement of school “bag it” policy
   A) Not a problem
   B) A minor problem
   C) A moderate problem
   D) A major problem

32. **Rate the Importance**: Inconsistent practices regarding tardiness
   A) Not a problem
   B) A minor problem
   C) A moderate problem
   D) A major problem

33. **Rate the Importance**: Inconsistent enforcement of unexcused absence policy
   A) Not a problem
   B) A minor problem
   C) A moderate problem
   D) A major problem
34. **Rate the Importance**: Inconsistent practices regarding hallway passes
   A) Not a problem
   B) A minor problem
   C) A moderate problem
   D) A major problem

35. **Rate the Frequency**: Harassment of one student by one or more students at OPRF
   A) A rare occurrence
   B) An occasional occurrence
   C) A common occurrence

36. **Rate the Importance**: Harassment of one student by one or more students at OPRF
   A) Not a problem
   B) A minor problem
   C) A moderate problem
   D) A major problem

37. **Rate the Frequency**: Adults intervening to stop harassment at OPRF
   A) A rare occurrence
   B) An occasional occurrence
   C) A common occurrence

38. **Rate the Importance**: Failure of adults to intervene to stop harassment at OPRF
   A) Not a problem
   B) A minor problem
   C) A moderate problem
   D) A major problem

39. **Rate the Frequency**: Students intervening to stop harassment at OPRF
   A) A rare occurrence
   B) An occasional occurrence
   C) A common occurrence

40. **Rate the Importance**: Failure of students to intervene to stop harassment at OPRF
   A) Not a problem
   B) A minor problem
   C) A moderate problem
   D) A major problem

41. **Rate the Frequency**: Use of the word “ghetto” at OPRF to describe people or things
   A) A rare occurrence
   B) An occasional occurrence
   C) A common occurrence

42. **Rate the Importance**: Use of the word “ghetto” at OPRF to describe people or things
   A) Not a problem
   B) A minor problem
   C) A moderate problem
   D) A major problem
43. **Rate the Frequency**: Use of the word “gay” at OPRF to insult someone or something
   A) A rare occurrence
   B) An occasional occurrence
   C) A common occurrence

44. **Rate the Importance**: Use of the word “gay” at OPRF to insult someone or something
   A) Not a problem
   B) A minor problem
   C) A moderate problem
   D) A major problem

45. **Rate the Frequency**: Use of the word “retarded” at OPRF to insult someone or something
   A) A rare occurrence
   B) An occasional occurrence
   C) A common occurrence

46. **Rate the Importance**: Use of the word “retarded” at OPRF to insult someone or something
   A) A minor problem
   B) A moderate problem
   C) A major problem

47. **Rate the Frequency**: Use of the N-word by African American students at OPRF
   A) A rare occurrence
   B) An occasional occurrence
   C) A common occurrence

48. **Rate the Importance**: Use of the N-word by African American students at OPRF
   A) Not a problem
   B) A minor problem
   C) A moderate problem
   D) A major problem

49. **Rate the Frequency**: Use of the N-word by white students at OPRF
   A) A rare occurrence
   B) An occasional occurrence
   C) A common occurrence

50. **Rate the Importance**: Use of the N-word by white students at OPRF
   A) Not a problem
   B) A minor problem
   C) A moderate problem
   D) A major problem

51. **Rate the Frequency**: Use of racial/ethnic slurs at OPRF
   A) A rare occurrence
   B) An occasional occurrence
   C) A common occurrence
52. **Rate the Importance**: Use of racial/ethnic slurs at OPRF  
   A) Not a problem  
   B) A minor problem  
   C) A moderate problem  
   D) A major problem

53. **Rate the Frequency**: Stereotyping at OPRF based upon a person’s race or ethnicity  
   A) A rare occurrence  
   B) An occasional occurrence  
   C) A common occurrence

54. **Rate the Importance**: Stereotyping at OPRF based upon a person’s race or ethnicity  
   A) Not a problem  
   B) A minor problem  
   C) A moderate problem  
   D) A major problem

55. **Rate the Frequency**: Stereotyping at OPRF based upon a person’s appearance  
   A) A rare occurrence  
   B) An occasional occurrence  
   C) A common occurrence

56. **Rate the Importance**: Stereotyping at OPRF based upon a person’s appearance  
   A) Not a problem  
   B) A minor problem  
   C) A moderate problem  
   D) A major problem

57. **Rate the Frequency**: White students having advantages at OPRF because of their skin color  
   A) A rare occurrence  
   B) An occasional occurrence  
   C) A common occurrence

58. **Rate the Importance**: White students having advantages at OPRF because of their skin color  
   A) Not a problem  
   B) A minor problem  
   C) A moderate problem  
   D) A major problem

59. **Rate the Frequency**: Students of color having advantages at OPRF because of their skin color  
   A) A rare occurrence  
   B) An occasional occurrence  
   C) A common occurrence

60. **Rate the Importance**: Students of color having advantages at OPRF because of their skin color  
   A) Not a problem  
   B) A minor problem  
   C) A moderate problem  
   D) A major problem
61. **Rate the Importance**: Lack of opportunity at OPRF for honors and non-honors students to get to know one another
   A) Not a problem
   B) A minor problem
   C) A moderate problem
   D) A major problem

62. **Rate the Importance**: Academic levels (honors, non-honors, etc.) that create two segregated schools within OPRF
   A) Not a problem
   B) A minor problem
   C) A moderate problem
   D) A major problem

63. Indicate your grade level:
   A) Freshman
   B) Sophomore
   C) Senior

64. Indicate your sex:
   A) Female
   B) Male

**ANSWER EITHER 65 OR 66—NOT BOTH**

65. Indicate your race/ethnicity:
   A) White/European American
   B) Black/African American/African
   C) Native American
   D) Asian American/Pacific Islander
   E) Hispanic/Latin American

   OR

66. Indicate your race/ethnicity:
   A) Multiracial/Multiethnic

67. Indicate your sexual orientation:
   A) Heterosexual
   B) Homosexual
   C) Bisexual
School Climate Concerns

Summary of Student Opinion Survey Results
Spring 2007

Student Presenters

Justin Cain, Senior
Anahi Gasse, Senior
Regina Rosenbrock, Junior
Lakshmi Sundaresan, Senior
Laura Troyer-Joy, Junior
Purpose of the survey

- Prompted by cross-divisional civility discussions and follow-up conversations among PDC

- Root questions:
  - What are students’ concerns about our school climate/community?
  - To what extent do student and staff concerns coincide?
  - How might a student survey inform our efforts to improve school climate/community?

Survey development/administration

- 35 distinct items generated by diverse group of students involved in planning all-school institute

- Administered to freshmen, sophomores, and seniors present on April 4, 2007

- 2004 students participated
Participant Demographics
(Self-reported)

- Gender
  - 1006 girls
  - 960 boys

- Race/ethnicity
  - 1095 White
  - 443 African American
  - 26 Native American
  - 83 Asian/Pacific Islander
  - 99 Hispanic
  - 303 Multiracial/Multietnic

- Grade Level
  - 574 seniors
  - 712 sophomores
  - 759 freshmen

- Sexual Orientation
  - 1781 heterosexual
  - 42 homosexual
  - 61 bisexual

Survey Format

Items written as statements; most appeared twice:

- Students were first asked to rate the frequency of an event:
  a) Rare
  b) Occasional
  c) Common

- Students then asked to rate the importance of an event:
  a) Not a problem
  b) Minor problem
  c) Moderate problem
  d) Major problem
Format allowed comparisons of frequency/importance

- Items with corresponding frequency/importance ratings:
  - Adult use of profanity: relatively low frequency, relatively low importance
  - Student use of insulting language: relatively high frequency, relatively high importance

Some interesting combinations of frequency/importance ratings

- Issues rated relatively high for frequency but relatively low for importance:
  - Student use of profanity (80% rated common; 66% rated minor problem or not a problem)
  - Student public displays of affection (59% rated common; 77% rated minor problem or not a problem)


**Students’ primary concerns**

based upon ratings of “importance”

- Lingering prejudice and discrimination
- Disrespect among students

---

**Prejudice and Discrimination**

Top issues, based upon combined “moderate problem” and “major problem” responses*:

- Stereotyping on the basis of race/ethnicity (59%)
- Stereotyping on the basis of appearance (59%)
- Prejudice/discrimination among students (53%)
- Use of racial/ethnic slurs at OPRF (51%)
- White students having advantages because of their skin color (51%)

*Values are for the aggregate; same issues appear when data are disaggregated
### Race/ethnicity as a factor in student responses

% of students choosing moderate or major

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>African American</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use of “Gay” as insult</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White students’ advantages</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Ghetto” as an adjective</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failure to teach history, contributions of minority groups</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of respect adult to student</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inconsistencies re “bag it”</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>21%</td>
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### Race as a factor in student responses

- **Use of “N-word” by White students**
  - 62.5% of African American students rated it a moderate or major problem, compared to 43% of White students
  - 18% of African Americans and 5% of Whites rated it common

- **Use of “N-word” by African-American students**
  - 57.6% of White students rated it moderate or major, compared to 46.2% of African American students
  - Roughly ¾ of each group rated it common
Gender as a factor in student responses

Girls’ combined moderate/major responses were higher than boys’ responses on most issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Gay” as an insult</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stereotyping/appearance</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stereotyping/race-ethnicity</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student insulting language</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harrass. student-to-student</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>45%</td>
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In Sum:

- African American students and female students were more likely to perceive the survey items as important problems, compared to the general student body and to male students, respectively.
- Disaggregated responses indicate that our students’ perceptions and/or experiences differ on the basis of gender, race/ethnicity, and/or sexual orientation.
Second Area of Concern: (DIS)R-E-S-P-E-C-T

- Top issues, based upon combined moderate/major responses:
  - Use of the word “gay” as an insult (59%)
  - Lack of respect from student to adult (53%)
  - Student use of insulting language (52%)
  - Harassment from one student to another (51%)
  - Lack of respect from student to student (51%)

- Responses on these items varied less by race/ethnicity
  than by gender and/or sexual orientation

Extent of overlap between student and staff concerns:

- Caveat: Staff responses were not quantified
- General agreement about issues of disrespect:
  - Student-to-student
  - Student-to-adult
  - Insulting language among students
- Specific language concerns:
  - “Gay” as insult
  - N-word
  - “Retarded” as insult
Implications for School Climate Improvement

- Start where success is most likely—where staff and student concerns coincide: respect
- Items of high importance for staff and low importance for students (e.g., student use of profanity) will require strategic and systemic instruction
- Address prejudice/discrimination as distinct issues within the broader context of respect

Steps We’re Taking Now

- School-wide focus on improving school climate, from PDC up to BoE
- Increased adult presence in hallways
  - Supervisory
  - Block Clubs
- Increased potential for positive teacher-student interaction via study hall and tutoring supervisions
- New student club, Young Visionaries
- Pilot P.B.I.S. programs for transitions-level frosh and On-Campus students
Possible Next Steps

- Conduct focus group interviews with African American students and female students
- Agree upon one or two specific school-wide initiatives to enhance respect, and implement them
- Monitor impact of increased adult presence in hallways via school-wide survey, audit of disciplinary referrals, other means
- Monitor impact of P.B.I.S. pilot, and expand if appropriate

Comments? Questions?
TO: Board of Education

FROM: Attila J. Weninger

DATE: December 10, 2007

RE: Feedback/Input on Proposals to Raise Student Achievement

BACKGROUND
Attached, please find approximately 20+ documents related to the feedback and input received thus far on the proposals to raise student achievement. In each case, I have attempted to put date, time, place, group, and for student groups the compositions by race.

There are more groups meetings to come, and in the coming few weeks, we will begin to re-formulate the proposals into a more concrete, systematic, tiered, and prioritized plan.

We provide these now as an update to our efforts, and to give you a sense of the discussions, opinions, and perspectives that have arisen.

RECOMMENDATIONS
None at this time.
Miscellaneous Faculty Feedback
(emails, conversations, etc.)

- Homework
  - Determine value and purpose
  - Quantity
  - Quality
  - Weight
  - Extra credit
  - Make-up
- Consider smaller class sizes for underachieving students, supportive peer coaching in differentiating instruction, and possible team teaching
- Do not excuse/enable students in being “sloppy” and hold them accountable; we should expect much from students rather than little, and they will rise to that level
- Enforce a systematic and consistent tardy policy
Memo

To: Dr. Attila Weninger
From: Monica Swope
CC: 
Date: December 10, 2007
Re: Feedback on Achievement Plan

The following lists questions, feedback, and suggestions generated by the African American Faculty and Staff Advisory Council. If you have any questions and/or wish to respond to the items listed below, do not hesitate to contact me at ext.3348 or mswope@oprfhs.org:

Area One: The Community

Community Council:

- Community Council members should be selected from individuals who are community residents and have been involved with OPRFHS on several levels: long and short term resident, child/ren attends or attended the school, demonstrates activeness in several community organizations, and have experience with working with a diverse population.

- Community Council members should have in-school interaction at least four times a year (e.g., shadow a teacher, visit a classroom, or attend an extracurricular activity) to keep them up to date with daily activities in the school.

- Forge a relationship with business owners so that interns and paid jobs can be made available to students at OPRFHS.

Freshmen Mentoring Program:

- Targeting the class 2012, may be too late. What intervention programs will be available to current students?

Summer Program:

- Who will be targeted? Is the selection racially motivated?

African American Leadership Round Table:

- Faculty members (along with parents) should be involved.

Computer and Laptop for Every Student:

- This is an ambitious goal in which AAFSAC is in favor of, but there are concerns regarding the funds. Perhaps, the school should hire a professional grant writer to obtain the necessary resources for this project.
Area Two: The Parents

- The home visit program that groups 5-10 parents at one home is a great idea.

- For the teacher and administrator visits to homes, although this is a great idea, what contractual issues may arise? How will educators be compensated for their time?

- The inclusion of the parent panel sessions was accepted widely. Please make sure that topics and panelist will have something to offer to a variety of families represented at OPRFHS (i.e., homosexual, multi-ethnic, religious, secular, cross-grade, grandparents, foster parents, etc.).

- Please include a parent-to-parent mentor program.

- The devised plan is somewhat difficult for parents to read. Is it possible to make this document more accessible to parents?

- There needs to be a means to constantly follow-up on parent activities and to assure that these activities are consistent with OPRFHS' vision.

- For Board approved parent groups, such as APPLE, OPRF Alumni Association, Boosters, etc., clear expectations regarding student achievement must be made. We all need to be on the same page.

Area Three: The High School

Curriculum:

- There are major concerns about standardization. Will teachers be actively involved in determining the standards?

- There are major concerns about common assessments. Once again, will teachers be actively involved? What is your definition of common assessments?

- Many of our current courses are college-preparatory; we need more diversity with our curriculum. What about more vocational education programs. Also, we must dismantle the stigma that is associated with vocational education programs.

Open Access to Honors and Advance Placement:

- Many members of AAFSAC support this idea, since there have been fewer representation of African American students enrolled in these courses. However, we are also aware that some teachers who teach these courses may have limited experience with working with students of color and differentiated instruction. Our concerns are that we do not want African American students to be placed in environments that may prove to be more damaging (grade and self-esteem) than beneficial. Also, many African American students (although capable of doing honors work) choose the college-preparatory courses because they see more students who look like them and feel more successful. We are also concerned with the fact that some students may not be able to handle the rigor most found in advanced classes, because there are some skills deficits. How will these issues be addressed?

- The goal should not be all students taking honors courses, but rather, make our college-preparatory courses more rigorous so that the students enrolled in these classes are truly ready for college.
Mini-Chicago Student Achievement Network:

- Whose office will this come from?
- What schools will be involved? What will be the criteria for selection?

Stronger Partnership with Triton:

- Have we already established a contact?

Area Four: The Students

- Parent contracts? What will these entail?
- To help students to get more involved, perhaps frequent co-curricular fairs need to take place.
- There needs to be more opportunities for social activities, that appeal to a broader audience, to take place often (i.e., open gym programs or clubs that are not competitive—beyond basketball).

Overall Strengths:

- First time plan is put into print in this manner.
- Student-centered with achievement at the forefront.
- Variety of programs and ideas offered.
- Better articulation of the high school’s stance on achievement.
- It is great to focus on student achievement and not target a specific ethnic group.
- More opportunities for students to be challenged both academically and socially.

Overall Weaknesses:

- Faculty and staff needed to be included more in devising this plan
- Plan seems to be too general and exhibits little understanding of the needs that are specific for OPRFHS.
- There is very little indication of program evaluations. In the past, OPRFHS has implemented many programs that were never evaluated.
- Students should be consulted in devising the student component and need to be held more accountable, too.
- Great projection of projects for the future. What is going to be done now?
- There is a lot on this plan. Projects need to be prioritized.
- The packaging of the plan is not user friendly.
Initial reflections on feedback to date:
Few major themes are emerging;
Particularly African American community/faculty members have expressed their belief that adults must have courageous conversations about race and achievement first with each other before we can/will have chance of success and credibility on AA student achievement issues;

Plan is too big, too much, too diffuse, too much dressing, too little meat;

Debate emerging between those who believe in need for common curricular standards/assessments vs. those who charge this will have chilling effect on academic freedom/faculty creativity. [AW believes these objections lessen when people understand his specific vision of common standards/assessments – i.e. teachers of like courses determine together what those standards and assessments should be -- presumably also in reference to what will be tested at ‘meets/exceeds’ level]

Support for “four corners” approach – embrace belief that will take community, student, and family effort, as well.

Broader discussion:
Not clear yet what BoE resolutions will mean for development of plan and implementation of programs/initiatives;

DLT concurrence with focus on African American students. On most practical level, African American students are a federally mandated AYP “category.” We have to focus on this group, the great majority of whom are not meeting AYP;

Locally and ethically, there is concern that if we continue with broader, fuzzier “all student achievement” focus, we will bury the outcomes and impacts of programs on AA students who are most in need.

Questions:
Do we understand what the actual deficits are and how profound the deficits are of our under-achieving AA students?
• We now have better data to get to more concrete answers since we have testing continuum in place.
Will our community genuinely accept a shifting of focus, energy and dollars to programs targeting under-achieving African American students?
• Community already knows about and supports OPRF spending on host of programs/initiatives that benefit primarily minority students;
• Bigger challenge is to determine whether those programs are effective and if not how to reprioritize expenditures and efforts.
• Concern about white privilege and elitism undermining efforts to focus on underachieving African American students;
• Concern that parents of non-African American students – achieving and non-achieving – will support such focus so long as it does not diminish programs and success for their non-African American students.

Tasks ahead:
Identify priorities; attach dollars; develop timelines. Bear in mind that some things will take time but only indirect dollars – e.g. developing a workable definition of "institutional excellence."

One approach could be identifying 5/10 top reasons for deficits/underachievement and then prioritize efforts explicitly targeting those issues;

Another approach could be each DLT member selecting his/her top picks of interventions/efforts he/she thinks likely to produce greatest gains.

AW asks DLT to begin considering how to develop these lists into a formal plan for actual adoption and implementation.

###
We should have a specific initiative to identify the causes/reasons for lack of achievement, underachievement, inhibitors to achievement, etc.

Communicate the causes/reasons for underachievement to publics (students, parents, staff, community, etc.)

There are varying reasons why students underachieve, and OPRF study/research has found that there aren't necessarily emerging trends common to large groups of students; much of the underachievement is individual in nature.

Perhaps we need to consider that changing adult (parents, staff, etc.) behaviors and attitudes must be done before we can expect to change student attitudes and behaviors.
Buzz Café – November 13

- Contact Alumni as a group to solicit input/feedback
- Meet with underachieving students
- Work to raise achievement for "median" achieving students by strengthening the curriculum and the instruction for college prep/regular courses
- Involve students in discussions/professional development re: race and barriers to student achievement
- Mentors should be advocates for students who do not have parents as role models and therefore access to school information, resources, supports, etc.
- How will we 1. get advocates/mentors for students and how do we identify those students in need of mentors/advocates?
- How will we fund these initiatives?
Two Community Members

- Pilot program for Summer program in Summer ‘08
- 40-50 students
- Identify students who are “stumbling but trying and moving forward”
- Willing to help get it off the ground.
Research Team – November 13

- The plan and its proposals do not reflect the history of attempts made in the past to ensure the past doesn’t repeat itself
- It doesn’t show the investments made in the past
- It is troublesome, neutralizing, ahistorical, has a “gag order” feel to it, avoids history and race
- The plan needs to address the fact that we have two schools within this school: one for achieving students and one for underachieving/African-American students
- Work with the faculty to identify those barriers which inhibit achievement by African American students
- When looking for faculty/new hires, identify those with a persona of working with kids not just curricular experts/academicians
- Concentrate on recruitment efforts
- What is the measurement for excellence of faculty?
- We must evaluate and sustain efforts, not just put them into place; when efforts do not succeed, we must have the courage to eliminate them and begin anew
- We must have instructional investments and evidence-based assessments
November 7, 2007 – Citizens’ Council Input/Feedback Summary

- Set goals and measures so that each initiative and program has a target
- Personal Plan of Achievement/Personal Educational Contract: identify students in need at quarter not semester
- Summer Program: be sure to include co-curriculars (athletics and activities)
- Internship: do in junior year not senior year
- Community Service: put on front burner as it builds self-esteem; could be an umbrella for summer program and other pieces of the plan; consider it as a requirement for graduation; coordinate program with Villages, other governmental bodies, etc.
- Parent/Alumni Groups: reach out to them as they are groups already in existence, have history, have structure, have people who are involved and active in school
- Begin efforts with what we can control, i.e., parent and student components
- Replicate the “C” to play system in other areas so as to motivate students since it is so successful in athletics
- School-Parent Communication: if teachers could send curriculum to parents, and provide information, e.g., student being placed on study table, they could reinforce at home; with technology this is so much more plausible
Why do students underachieve?

- Students want to but they also don’t care to; they give up; they think they are dumb walking in the door
- Parents are under/not involved; low expectations from parents
  - Other parents didn’t achieve but want more for their children
- The ability level of classes students are in often dictate how they will perform/achieve or not
- Some of the special education behavior classes are too easy academically and have no incentive or motivation to work; as a result, students are not reaching their full potential or don’t even know what their full potential could be
- Why think about college and a future if it’s pointless; students won’t work if they think that
- Purpose of high school
  - Second chance, second level of knowledge from elementary/middle school
  - To learn about opportunities in college and the world of work
  - Find out what it is they want to do beyond high school
- If students have goals, then they have something to look forward to, something in their future, a future
- Teachers who care, ask; they reach out, even when missing assignments by students; they give students a second chance to learn, to earn some points, to do well
- What students doesn’t want to get good grades? Why wouldn’t a student want to earn good grades?
- Students do want to have motivation
- Goals: teachers need to help students find them

Co-curriculars

- When in a co-curricular activity/athletic, students see that school will payoff; they may not like school but like the co-curricular, but they know that both will help them
- “Co-curricular involvement pushes me to work in academics”
- Co-curricular involvement allows me to be good at something
- Underachieving/uncaring students need to find something they are good at, achieve at it, and then doing well in school will follow
- Failure at anything makes us feel bad; co-curriculars make us feel good about ourselves in areas beyond co-curriculars
- Competition motivates
- Co-curriculars helps motivate students to be at the same level as their peers, i.e., positive peer pressure

Safety and Support Team

- Many SST members go out of their way to establish relationships with students
- They are viewed positively by students

Miscellaneous

- There have to be expectations by parents of their children
- Students must develop small, doable goals which will help build self-confidence
- Teachers should not bribe students with rewards, e.g., food; that only lasts 5 minutes
  - Teachers should give students chances to earn self-worth/esteem/confidence, and to reach; don’t give them rewards which don’t ask them to work
J. Kyle Braid Students  
Thursday, December 6  
12 students (2 African American; 10 Caucasian)

Associate School Articulation  
- This is necessary; do it

Common Assessments  
- This will level the playing field for all students in courses

Co-Curricular Programs  
- Consider a counselor for the co-curricular programs, i.e., someone who will follow-up with academics with students who are in co-curriculars (implication is that all students in co-curriculars should be held to a minimal standard of academic achievement), much like colleges and universities do;  
  - Liaison to teachers and coaches, and to facilitate tutoring for students who need it  
  - Resource for students; hold students accountable  
- Current system of grade checks is too “distant”, i.e., a slip v. a person to follow-up  
- Teachers may respond to student-athletes who are struggling academically with a general person, i.e., counselor, who would be an advocate for both students and teachers  
- The importance of co-curricular programs in these students’ lives cannot be overstated; a required co-curricular activity for students is a good idea, keeping individual circumstances into consideration  
- Some students just “go through” school; a co-curricular program and personal contact with other co-curricular student would help them become more attached to school and people at school

Freshman Advisory Program  
- Some students just “go through” school; an advisory program would help them understand the purpose and value of high school and why it’s important to work at it and to be successful at it  
- Juniors and seniors can teach freshmen about school and its minefields/pitfalls and its value  
- Seminar class?

College-School Partnership  
- This would provide a goal for students early on in high school  
- Provides motivation, purpose and direction

College/Career Counselor  
- Students today see their counselors a very limited number of times  
- Students need and want relationships with their counselors  
- Somehow, there should be more time with counselors  
- There needs to be more information about colleges and requirements early on in high school; that required more contact between students and counselors  
- We have to be better at delivering these college and career services to students
Gospel Choir/BOSS  
Wednesday, December 5  
17 students (17 African American; 2 boys; 15 girls)

Course Load
- Agree with proposal that the norm should be 7 classes per semester  
- Move Study Halls from the cafeteria; not a learning/studying environment  
- Teachers must develop relationships with students in Study Halls, and if possible, help them with homework, content areas, etc.  
- Late Arrivals should be for seniors only; underclassmen should earn it; privilege

Study Center
- Positive proposal; good idea

Summer Program
- Keep current summer school and meld the two without taking away positives of the current one

Miscellaneous
- Teachers should strive as much as we do by working with, helping, striving to work with students  
- Go the extra mile; establish a direct relationship with students and parents  
- When students resist, don’t give up on them  
- Want it for the student even when the student says/shows he/she won’t/doesn’t want to succeed, work, etc.  
- Students shouldn’t let each other off the hook  
- Teachers shouldn’t let each other off the hook  
- Students shouldn’t let teachers off the hook  
- Teachers shouldn’t let students off the hook  
  - Strive for me; don’t let me fail  
  - Students may be saying “help me” with life issues in order to be helped to be successful with school issues  
  - Discover what problems there are with individual students  
  - Discover what interests underachieving students in order to motivate them to learn
Fine and Performing Arts Students
Wednesday, December 5
6 Students (2 African American; 4 Caucasian)

Personal Educational Contract
- Required for at-risk students
- Optional for student who may be doing OK but who need extra push
- Put into place an identification system at the quarter or semester
- Identify students who may be doing well but not necessarily getting A’s; they should be encouraged/asked to take courses at higher ability levels
- Negative peer pressure in Transitional and Foundations classes leads to feelings of negativity about school and low self-esteem
- Allow students to “take the challenge”; there are African American students who can and who want “out”
- If students are put into classes without friends, without those with whom they’ve been in lower ability classes for some time, then they will be “forced” to work, to pay attention, to succeed simply by the circumstances

Miscellaneous
- Some teachers give up; let students fail
- Teachers need to show caring by not allowing students to give up, to fail, to not do work, etc.
- There needs to be high expectations and rigor in Transitional and foundations classes
- Don’t keep students in tracks/ability groups (Transitional and Foundations classes); push them to get out/move out of these classes onto College Prep or higher
- Counselors need to establish relationships with students and identify their relative levels of maturity and social-emotional issues; they need to work with them to change
- OPRF should work closely with Associate Schools to identify students earlier who may be at risk of academic failure, not liking school, etc.

Freshman Year
- We need to change attitudes by students towards freshman year experience
- Use juniors and seniors as “guides” to help them; as mentors; do not use adults, inside or outside the school
  - Upperclassmen must show students that they care; more than just at official meetings; show them in the hallways, cafeteria, at events, when they are with their friends, reach out to freshmen
  - Show them that they “can”
  - Freshmen would feel more comfortable and secure beginning their high school careers and be more successful early
  - As a result, connections would be made beyond the guide and the freshman, i.e., guide to guide, freshman to freshman, etc.; a dynamic would be formed
  - Upperclassmen in honors courses should be connected to freshmen in Transitional classes; then, they must keep motivating them, daily, not just a one time interaction
  - No tutoring! It’s about relationships
  - Interaction must be sincere, willing to help, active, recognize and acknowledge them publicly
Club Council
Monday, November 26, 2007
7 Students (4 African American; 1 Indian; 2 Caucasian)

Every student to take at least one honors/AP course by the time he/she graduates from OPRF
• How can we encourage and facilitate a well-rounded student, i.e., one who takes the 5 academic core subjects and electives to become well-rounded?
• How do we help students acquire skills necessary for honors/AP classes?
  o We need to identify students’ skills, interests, aptitudes and build on them in order to prepare them for the rigor and challenges of honors/AP
  o We need to prepare them especially during freshman and sophomore years and in Transition and College Prep courses for junior/senior honors/AP courses
  o College Prep courses in particular may not be preparatory enough in order to access honors/AP courses
  o Academic rigor should be equal across all levels of courses
  o We should have the same grading scale across the school

• We should have an academic summer bridge program for students who aspire to move from Transition to College Prep and from College Prep to honors/AP
  o This should be encouraged for all underachieving students

Community Service
• For required: makes a person more thoughtful and “worldly”; may lead to greater personal achievement
• Not required: too much on a student’s plate; not enough time to complete; consider individual circumstances, e.g., course load, co-curriculars, family situations, work, etc.
• Structure over a 4 year period, X number of hours
• It helps to have it on college applications and resumes
• Will the obligatory nature of community service, if required, make it a burden, another task, and seem forced; will there be unwillingness to perform community service?

Freshman Mentoring Program
• School staff to staff it, not external volunteers
• Begin with freshman (Class of 2012), and provide a strong foundation for success

College/Career Center
• OPRF needs one
• Needs to be interactive and dynamic
• Needs to be another place of information, knowledgeable encouragement for students
• Supplemental to and for what counselors do yet be the hub of certain college/career search activities
• Needs to give special tips and help to students to advocate for self better in searches
• Needs to help calm and bring a reality to the college applications process
• Needs to help students find themselves and the college of right choice through the process

Miscellaneous
• Project Scholars: keep it but revise, revamp, and expand the program to all core areas
  o Needs to be more structured and actively helpful to students
- Concept good; functionality not good
  - Change it from a de facto study hall to more instruction on an individual basis

- Publicize and market programs such as Project Scholars better to parents and students, especially when parents are a captive audience even if/when they are not in the majority

- Review topics that are covered in informational sessions for parents and students
  - Highlight the unconventional programs and those to help underachieving students
  - Find ways in which the how of publicizing and marketing is much more effective

- Establish a culture of achievement that...
  - Is helpful at its core
  - Supports each other
  - Doesn’t allow each other to “settle” for less or just “settle” in in mediocrity or less than mediocrity
  - Brings each other up
  - Doesn’t create a culture of personal competition against each other
Club Council
Monday, December 3
6 Students (3 African American; 2 Caucasian; 1 Indian)

Summer Program
- Hours per day may be too long even when broken into segments
- Need definition; technicalities need to be worked out in greater detail
- It may have too much “school aura” attached to it
- Keep the job component as much as non-school as possible
- Will jobs be a motivator to do well in school?
- Should school be the priority for the summer program?
- The job component may be one of trial and error
- How do we motivate students who don’t have motivation from home?
  - How do underachieving students see the importance of school and acquire the desire to be at high school and to do the work expected/required?
- Flexibility: the program needs to be flexible, allowing for situations among students and making one part of the program or another optional

Technology
- Pilot the program with students first (possible senior this year)
- Focus on “text-based” classes (English, History, etc.)
- Begin small
- This is a workable idea
- A rental system shows trust in students who might otherwise not be trusted and not feel trusted

Evaluate Current Initiatives/Programs
- This must be a first step
- This must include professional development for marginal teachers, both tenured and non-tenured
Students of the Quarter
Monday, December 3
9 Students

Internship
• Junior and/or senior year
• Take the place of a class
• Semester long

Freshman Mentoring Program
• Success will be determined by student interaction with each other, e.g., PE leaders in class: freshmen look up to them and seek them out
• Make the program open/available to all classes for mentors
• Do not make peer tutoring a part of this; develop a separate peer tutoring program
• SALT
• It should be informal/casual; mentor should be a resource not a guardian
• Mentors need to relate to students, build trust, guide by side not sage on stage
• Mentors should invite students to co-curricular events and they themselves should be involved in something
• As a beginning/foreshadowing of things to come, have freshmen visit middle schools to orient 8th graders early on

Co-Curricular Programs
• Agreed with suggestion that every freshman and sophomore should be required to be in at least one co-curricular activity/athletic per year
  • Be flexible with the requirement and take into consideration each individual student’s situation
• How do we provide options for students who get cut from cut sports’ teams?
  • Coaches should direct/funnel students to other options
  • How do we communicate these other options to students?
    • Trapeze: incoming freshman issue
    • Letter/brochure home in mail addressed to student with information about activities and athletics; be sure that both coaches’ and team/club leaders’ directory information is in letter/brochure for each one
    • Presentation: small groups, visual, funny, engaging
    • Current freshman orientation program is too overwhelming; too much information
Closing The Achievement Gap

Social Problems

7th period

Mr. Soffer
Discipline between blacks and whites

- **African American Females**
  - Verbal Abuse
  - Fighting
  - Gross Misconduct
  - Truancy

- **African American Males**
  - Defiance
  - Aggressive Behavior
  - Fighting
  - Verbal Abuse

HATE FREE ZONE
- White Females
  - Smoking
  - Truancy
  - Failure to serve a detention
  - Drugs

- White Males
  - Smoking
  - Verbal Abuse
  - Fighting
  - Failure to serve a detention
  - Defiance
Reasons for Achievement Gap

- The lingering effects from centuries of racism
- Children living in broken homes suffer from family disorganization, alcoholism/drug abuse, inadequate health services, and violence
- Student-Teacher relationships
- Frequent moves from one school to another
- Lack of technology
- Lack of minority teachers
- Lack of parent involvement in their child's school work
Study Table

- If a student drops below a “c” in any class they will be required to obtain tutoring.
- Students will report to their class 30 minutes a day after or before school.
- Students will do the study tables until their grade improves.
Summer school requirements

- Summer school to be required for all incoming freshman
- The program must include the core class that the student scored the lowest in

Summer Preview
Dr. Weninger’s Summer Program

- We believe Dr. Weninger’s summer program would benefit better if....
- It were not mandatory for every summer
- It were not from 9am to 5pm each day
- It excluded or shortened the employment aspect
How does the ACT help solve the achievement gap?
Preparation
PreCollege Programs
Summer Camps
ACT 2007

- No Charge Recommended
- Teachers Volunteer
- Teach Students
- Study tips
Parents helping with Achievement Gap

- Be more involved with their children’s school work
- Discipline children more effectively
- Closer relationship with teachers
- More involved with EVERYTHING at the school
- Emphasize your children’s FUTURES
Teachers Helping Solve the Achievement Gap

- Weekly meetings
- ACT prep classes
- Teachers must inform parents personally about their students progress in the class
- Not by phone call, not by letter, but by personally meeting with them
Teacher Student Relationships

- Classrooms must be very diverse and the environment must make all races comfortable
- Raise class discussions about the different students backgrounds and life experience
- Teachers should be aware of how their students have done in the subject in the past
- Teachers should be allowed to give punishments as they see fit to avoid having to go to 272
Optional Internships

- Giving High School students real life experience
- Internships be awarded to students who have done extremely well in a elective class such as video game programming
- The internship should pertain to what they are planning on majoring in
- More classes based on what you could actually major in when you are in college
• Student that make poor grades despite significant effort.

Give us the best opportunity to learn

• May be very frustrated with school and homework

Children's Disabilities & Special Needs

• Recognizing that some kids learn and think differently than others
Active Learning

- Less Lecturing
- More opinion based projects

- Group work
- Group work
People generally remember...
(learning activities)

- 10% of what they read
- 20% of what they hear
- 30% of what they see
- 50% of what they see and hear
- 70% of what they say and write
- 90% of what they do.

People are able to...
(learning outcomes)

Define
List
Describe
Explain

Demonstrate
Apply
Practice

Analyze
Define
Create
Evaluate

Passive Learning
Active Learning
Learning by Doing
Any Questions....?
Faculty Feedback – Lunch Sessions
Wednesday, November 21, 2007
Lunch 1: 6
Lunch 2: 2
Lunch 3: 10
Total: 18

- Focus on students who are in College Prep/Regular courses
- Professional Growth and Development
  - Systemic, systematic, sustainable
- Common curriculum/assessment should not be a sticking point to moving forward with other proposals
- Priority: changing the way people think about achievement, ways to achieve, and who can achieve; change the mentality of achievement
- We have 2 schools within OPRF; change the belief about achievement and who can
- Focus on life preparation: college, military, world of work (careers), other post-secondary education
- Before we establish a culture of achievement, we need to define it and change attitudes
- Begin to teach students from where they are v. where they should be; take them from where they are to where they could be
- Do we teach to the curriculum or do we teach to kids?
- We prepare well those students who come to high school school-prepared, school-ready for college; we struggle with those students who are not school-prepared/ready, not motivated, disinterested; how do we do this?
- We need to identify and address students' issues: students who have hopes and dreams but no skills; by high school it may be too late; need to engage Associate Schools
  - Expectations need to be high at Associate Schools, too
  - At the same time, we can't blame Associate Schools; we need to work with what we have
- We need a coordinated effort of all our efforts/initiatives; pull efforts together
- We need to address students' social/emotional needs; they need to be addressed before and in order to get to academics and learning
- We're looking for an achievement czar, a point person to help/lead us
- We need to do more for the students who need more
- Academic goal: identify what students should know and be able to do, i.e., concepts/knowledge and skills
- Should we have a pull-out program for students who are skill deficient and place them into skill-driven classes
- Math: we have common curricula, common assessments, and data about kids; but haven't had a chance to analyze the data
  - Build into the schedule time to meet, ask and answer important questions
- We need research on achievement that is thorough, complete, and common sensical
- What have we lost with the 50 minute supervisory assignment? 50 minutes of professional work to work with students, data, develop and plan, etc.
- We have content and expertise, but do we have the art of teaching and do we teach students? i.e., do we teach curriculum or do we teach students?
  - e.g., we are good at content and critical thinking; but we need to be better at and good at teaching skills
- This needs to be addressed, discussed at the division level
- The plan has brought awareness and consciousness of the issues to the surface
  - It has brought the 4 corners (parents, students, school, community) together
  - Can we get each of the 4 to see that we support each other and that we are not in competition or conflict with each other?
  - Can we help each of the 4 corners see that there are connections among the 4 supports v. isolated and separated?
- We need to send a message to faculty that some of the solution is to coordinate what we are already doing and focus it all towards one end, and by doing so honor the work we’ve done and successes we’ve had through it
- Problem: we are afraid to talk about institutional racism; we are afraid of massive and sweeping institutional change; don’t be afraid that because some proposals may not survive, don’t give up on the overall plan
- Are there some things we could address/change now and do them, and plan for others more long term?
- OPRF HS faculty are very giving of themselves, their time, and they are committed
- There needs to be a consistency in the application of the existing rules and procedures
  - For struggling students, we should not have 7 different tardy policies as expectations for kids who are already struggling with issues that wouldn’t have them recall or be attuned to 7 different tardy policies, i.e., time management, organizational skills, etc.
- The plan does not have mention of the library or information skills, i.e., accessing, manipulating, organizing, filtering, etc., information
  - We need to teach students “information skepticism”
  - We need to teach students at the outset (freshman year) about how to manage and deal with information
  - Information Literacy curriculum
  - Freshman year; heterogeneously grouped
  - Semester long in order to accelerate learning beyond this semester
  - Speech class/component
  - Reading skills
  - Writing/Composition
  - Grammar
  - Organizational skills
  - Time management skills
  - Test-taking skills
  - Others?
  - We should review the concept of a “library commons”; centralize all computer labs (except World Languages) OR have a general, all-purpose Learning Center with some hubs in content areas for greater efficiency and user accessibility in content areas
- Technology: any computer must have software, maintenance, etc.
- We should update our technology and computer requirements
- We should look at flexible scheduling for faculty; investigate if and how this might work and works for other schools
- What impact will the Board’s new resolutions have on moving forward with these proposals?
  - Could they become divisive along racial lines?
  - Resolution One specifically addresses the issue that African American students are not achieving
• Is the student achievement issue/gap one of gender, SES, race, or all 3?
• Student achievement issue/gap is not only the school’s problem; it is the problem equally of all 4 corners (parents, students, staff, community)
• We need to look at homework (see Miscellaneous Faculty Feedback)
• Should we also look at ending first semester prior to winter break?
  o Identify issues, advantages, and disadvantages
• TESA: bring it back?; what is the model?
• We need to have cross-divisional ability grouping level meetings 2-3 times per year
• We need to re-think/re-look/re-vamp the annual schedule of professional development activities
• We should re-think the calendar and build in regular, lengthy, scheduled time for instructional and curricular work
• Should we investigate year round school?
Faculty Feedback – Lunch Sessions
Wednesday, November 21, 2007
Lunch 1: 6
Lunch 2: 2
Lunch 3: 10
Total: 18

- Focus on students who are in College Prep/Regular courses
- Professional Growth and Development
  - Systemic, systematic, sustainable
- Common curriculum/assessment should not be a sticking point to moving forward with other proposals
- Priority: changing the way people think about achievement, ways to achieve, and who can achieve; change the mentality of achievement
- We have 2 schools within OPRF; change the belief about achievement and who can
- Focus on life preparation: college, military, world of work (careers), other post-secondary education
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      v. isolated and separated?
  
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Faculty Feedback – Lunch Sessions
Tuesday, November 27, 2007
Lunch 1:  5
Lunch 2: 10
Lunch 3: 12
Total:  27

Transfer Students
- Expand to freshmen and students who are “in” discipline system.
  - Activity to consider: touch and go/teacher scavenger hunt to meet and greet faculty within the school and possibly to develop relationships with; 30 faculty each student; volunteer faculty who would send consistent, positive messages about school, academics, co-curriculars; external, small, appropriate rewards (food/treat); possible competition for most faculty contacted within X time.
- Investigate more fully the transfer student rate, i.e., at what points do they enter OPRF/grade levels and times of year, and where are they academically when they enter?

Conversations about Race
- Are faculty, white/black/Hispanic/Asian, uncomfortable talking about race vis-à-vis student achievement, student discipline, adult biases/views, etc.
- We have to find a common vocabulary for these conversations to allow us to talk about race without aggressiveness, bullheadedness, and without defensiveness
- Why are faculty uncomfortable talking about race?
  - They don’t want to hurt feelings
  - Political correctness
  - Don’t want to “ruin” what we have in Oak Park because we are so positively diverse, i.e., OP values diversity existing so by talking about issues related to it may stain that positive image we have
  - The gap relative to race has not been discussed/addressed school wide
  - We need to honestly and openly admit and talk about the African American achievement gap
  - There seems to be the want to talk about it, but we are afraid to
- We cannot begin to address the gap without...
  - Addressing race with and about each other as faculty
  - Talking about what we ourselves do

 Transitional Level Classes and Students Enrolled in them
- We should develop a common educational/academic vocabulary to talk about students and their academic ability groups, i.e., are there such students as “Trans Students” or are there students who take Trans classes?
- Students in Trans classes don’t/may not know why they are in high school or what it can gain them by succeeding, working at school, etc.
- We don’t provide students in Trans classes with reasons to move beyond those classes; we need to do this, i.e., put something in front of them to help motivate them to achieve beyond the Trans classes
- We are so busy/don’t have time to do anything but teach skills and to address deficiencies that we don’t truly make it a “transition” rather than a permanent placement
- If we look at maturity levels of incoming freshmen who are in Trans classes, some are not ready for high school; should we address that as part of our program for incoming students?
Miscellaneous
- Will anything get done? Is there skepticism about the proposals? Are people waiting for the proposals to be narrowed down, prioritized, and to become more “concrete” and how they might affect them individually?
- Are the inhibitors to achievement social/emotional, our own expectations (lack of them), lack of professional development re: teaching students with these deficiencies/needs? We also need professional development for teaching students in College Prep classes who might have normally been placed into Trans classes.
- Continue and expand the PBIS training/program
- Structure freshmen study halls so that they teach study skills, organizational skills, time management skills, etc.; this is an untapped resource
- Pedagogy, expectations, social/emotional needs

Internships/Community Service
- These two components may be good “bridges” from the academic world to real life and thus help make the classroom more real/more motivating for students

Assessment
- Don’t water down the curriculum by making assessments minimums
- If we open the doors to honors/AP classes, it will be recipe for failure
- OPRF once attempted to eliminate Trans level classes as part of a pilot in English; it fizzled out

Social Work Services
- This is an area of critical need
- Employ social workers who are trained to work in classrooms; who can provide social/emotional lessons for students and teachers; who can provide classroom-based interventions (by counselors, as well as by social workers)
- Have social workers work with faculty/divisions to help with social/emotional teaching

Advisory Period
- The re-development/re-institution of an Advisory Period would be a perfect place to deliver in an organized, systematic way the social/emotional skills
- It would facilitate relationships between teachers and students
- Group heterogeneously
- Structured, well-developed, well-planned curriculum; allow for personal relationships between students and teachers to develop
- Valuable time to build structures of support for achievement
- 3200/20 = 160 sections
- Utilize current supervisory period?
- Begin with freshmen/sophomores?

Students
- By using the term Minority Student Achievement Gap term, we reinforce the association of underachievement with minority students; this is a powerful stigma
- We cannot avoid the racial student achievement dynamic
- NCLB and AYP forces us to address the student achievement gap relative to race openly and directly
• Do we put the blame and responsibility for the gap on kids?
• Is there a dis-identification with good grades, academic achievement, school achievement by African American students? Underachieving students?
• We have to provide a motivation for/to students for them to acquire the value of education, i.e., high school and academic achievement
• We must understand the social emotional pieces of students who underachieve, and of the inhibitors to achievement, and their needs, etc.
• What is the multi-cultural role model of student achievement we should create for students?
Faculty – Lunch Meetings
Tuesday, December 4
Lunch 1: 6
Lunch 2: 15
Lunch 3: 20
Total: 41

Professional Development
- Institute Day conversations about whiteness and white privilege and recognizing that it exists and how to combat it
- Cross divisional learning teams related to instruction
  - Study groups and learning teams: discuss how instruction is delivered to cross racial/ethnic/cultural groups of students
- Professional development – the formal pieces – needs to be coordinated with a purpose
  - Explicit, organized, focused, with purpose
  - Define purpose of Professional Development Committee
- Determine how a professional development day will speak to school and how that relates to divisional time; how not to have them compete against each other
- Assess what our needs are re: professional development and then develop programs to meet those needs
- Structure of day:
  - General sessions have their place and value for some
  - Individual sessions with specific strategies; develop them; have place and value for some
- Need time to be trained and to collaborate with each other
  - During year
  - Scheduled
  - Regular
  - Summer
- Professional support employees need to be involved as we develop professional development program
  - Integrate them into the faculty professional development
  - Value them and their support; see their value
- How do we evaluate the formal and informal professional development activities?
- Review schedule and structure of professional development
  - Institute days, late arrival days, professional days, in-service days, etc.
  - Weekly carve out days; regular; every week; focused; directed; purpose; with flexibility for cross divisional opportunities once in a while
- Late arrival days may not meet the “timely” needs of Divisional Learning Teams as they try to work on their topics
- Peer observations should be part of the model
  - Peer coaching
    - For example: Agile Mind group in Math: meet every Monday morning; check progress of self and students; Agile Mind rep visits for more strategies periodically; all faculty and group are on the same page and this, then, provides opportunities for discussion, feedback, informal evaluation, etc.
- Skyward
  - Ability to click 1 button to email 1 student’s teacher to communicate (and sponsors and coaches); professional training on Skyward
• Professional development on instructional strategies
• Professional development on how to deal with a parent that is aggressive, pushy, manipulative, etc.
  o Help new teachers by developing protocols, words, and how to deal with parents
• Bring back workshop Discipline without Alienation – good practice and rubrics for new teachers
• Workshops on what may seem obvious, i.e., general procedures (fire drill, special education, etc.); need to remind and reinforce and review ourselves
• Need in-service on differentiated instruction
• Honest conversations about race and us
  o Listen to faculty, even first year teachers, and to their experiences; value them
  o Are we intentional enough with these conversations...with ourselves, with each other, with students?
  o Do we allow ourselves to be manipulated by events and then as a reaction, have those conversations?
  o Strike a balance between structured and spontaneous conversations
  o Develop a vocabulary by which we can have those conversations
  o Let students have those conversations spontaneously in classes and prepare faculty to have them and to facilitate them
  o Faculty: establish groups that trust each other in order to have meaningful conversations about race
    ▪ Allow the trust and dynamic to unfold
    ▪ Regularly scheduled time
    ▪ Provide articles/books ahead of time to read and lead
    ▪ Seriously review Devon’s curriculum for teachers
• Student feedback upon leaving/graduating OPRF would be good professional development
  o Exit interviews with selected students at different ability group levels; video them; show the videos to faculty, i.e., to let their experiences and words teach us
• Empower and value the PDC and establish the sacred time of PDC
• Construct the PDC so as to include everyone not just those who want to be a part of it
• Idea: 36 weeks, one day per week, 90 minutes, late arrival/early dismissal, professional development time, structured, focused, same group each week, departmental/divisional with creativity for cross divisional conversations/work

Define Institutional Excellence
• Define this and have the conversations about race (noted above) simultaneously
• We should define what we mean by curriculum (come to common understanding), what we mean by instruction
  o Are faculty defensive re: “instruction” because it addresses their delivery models and strategies?
• Define skill sets and patterns of success
• Write a narrative of excellence
• Determine standards of success
• NCLB is a reality – must incorporate its benchmarks in excellence
• Define the process by which we arrive at institutional excellence
PTO Achievement Plan Feedback – 11/27/07

Nine parents attended, as well as Principal D. Vogel; FSEC rep M. Grady; OPRF researcher C. Spight; Comm/Comm Relations Coordinator K. Foran

AW provided brief overview – four corners approach – cannot meet with success alone; Feedback/discussion process will continue through end of January; Waiting to see what themes emerge; Between January and end of year, expect continued refinement and prioritization of costs, timing
Hope parent groups will focus particular attention on Parent/Family section; AW asked what he believed were 3-5 most important aspects of Parent section particularly targeting AA/minority students who are under-achieving:

Expectations and accountability are critical. We need to be explicit and direct about what we need parents to do. Parents’ expectations should mirror school’s expectations in areas of student behavior, grades, attendance, homework, achievement. Being concrete and explicit gives parents knowledge and permission they need to hold themselves and students accountable

Need for parent outreach. Some parents of minority students are not comfortable coming to school. They do not believe their students or they themselves belong at OPRFHS. School must show itself to be more welcoming in more direct, personal, relational way. “If parents are feeling that the school is not for them, then we need to step outside and go to them.” Difficult logistics should not stand in way of outreach if that is what would be effective and right.

Post-secondary education – Need to help each student/family develop understanding of link between current effort/performance in high school and future possibilities and need to provide the support to then attain those goals. Affirm in concrete ways through deliberate exposure/information/education – we think you are capable. We will actively help families and students see the goal they are achieving for

Development of a personal plan for each student...

PTO members discussed need for rethinking college/post secondary info and preparedness process at high school level;
Expand Family to Family College connection to embrace all levels of post-secondary education;
Start process much earlier – at least during freshmen year, if not reaching back into middle school with information and tying of curriculum and individual student course selection/placement choices into long-range college/post-secondary goals;
OPRF does provide lots of info, but too little, too late, with too many hoops to jump through to find it. Focused on student, but especially in first years, families must be included in that education process;

Information needs to be more accessible and transparent earlier to parents, as well as students, re:
Four year planning
Future goals
Post secondary options
Career counseling/planning/interest assessment
Scholarships – not just for college but for college-prep summer programs,
ACT/SAT – importance of early tests as prep for these

Limited interface with families on these issues puts under-achieving students at particular disadvantage as many come from families with limited post-secondary/collegiate option/experience;

Limited interface with families on these issues example of overall “parents not welcome” feeling to high school – my students are welcome, but not me.

Support for interactive/educational programs targeting parents – e.g. Math Night, other subjects?, computer use, best practices, parent skills, what should my student be knowledgeable about in these areas at this point, etc...Parent University idea...

Need to make explicit to families of underachieving kids that achievement and success are seldom accidental or easy, whatever ability grouping of courses students are in – i.e. education and support for student academic success are a family effort and require lots of time and effort and sometimes re-prioritization of resources on both student’s and family’s part.

Observation that although 13 % of our students are “transfer,” that means 87 % are from our associate schools. Need to figure out how many of those students are underachieving, entering high school with skill deficiencies and coordinate closely with middle schools, students and families to redress these deficits from early years on

###
Counselor/Social Work Feedback
November 28

- Counselors support the PSS Model with the inclusion of 4 social workers, one for each PSS Team
- Counselors want/need more time with kids; provide one, two, or more generalists/counselors instead of a College/Career Counselor
  - Concern: a CC would take students away from time with counselors
- If there is to be a CC, then the career part needs emphasis, we must avoid having certain groups of students monopolize a CC’s time, identify the priority for a CC
- Change language in current plan from “responsible for” to “assists/supports” current counselors’ responsibilities for college counseling duties
PTO Feedback
November 27

Parent Section

- **PTO Liaison Program**
  - Current program, family-to-family connection, could be expanded and revised to fit the proposals’ goals and intent

- **Post-Secondary Education**
  - Begin talking about college and career direction early based on student interest; make resources for investigating colleges and careers more available to students for them to choose/select; freshman year
  - Make college and career search part of the 4 year Personal Plan
  - There are commercial college-preparation/preparedness programs available; OPRF should research for these
  - At freshman orientation, make college and career information readily available to students and parents; and in ways that make the info “stick”; include financial information
  - Start early (freshman year) setting college as the goal and developing a plan to get there; move up the current process
  - Publicize the college search process so it is transparent to parents
  - Utilize classroom teachers to connect with students to make college **real** for students, and to make college readiness **real** for students
  - What is the counselor’s role in all of this now?
  - Should we replicate the Math Night in other areas? The Math Night provides deep knowledge to parents about the school, divisions, curriculum, etc.
  - Make the 4 year plan more visible to parents and students, more transparent
  - How can we make Naviance more visible to parents and students; make it more interactive?

Miscellaneous

- How do we communicate to parents of underachieving parents the hard work it will take on their parts to help and to support their students’ achievement? It’s a family commitment that puts aside many other things and concentrates on the student
- Are there parenting skills we can communicate to parents of underachieving students without seeming to be condescending or arrogant?
- We need to establish a culture of achievement that is not one of elitism and competition, i.e., it benefits us all to have all students achieve, and other students won’t be hurt when that occurs
- How do we communicate and what is it that we can say about the purpose of high school? There seems to be a lack of understanding/acceptance on the part of underachieving students (and their parents?) about the purpose and goal of a high school education
- Parents support a strong articulation between OPRF and Associate Schools; we should communicate that articulation to parents
SUMMARY OF FACULTY DISCUSSION OF
PLAN TO RAISE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT
(Staff Development Day: November 9, 2007)

A. Define Institutional Excellence
Co-curricular involvement is an important aspect.
How are we defining “success”?  
Definition of excellence should not be limited to PSAE scores or other NCLB concerns.
Should include testing in some form, but also a sense of what is worth knowing.
Understand that there are a variety of career paths one can pursue
Citizenship qualities.
Our standards exceed state standards; state standards are not the benchmark of our success.
To focus on all student achievement may reduce feelings among African American students of being singled out.
Reading is important- do we need different measures for different groups of students? Ie TEAM students, regular, honors?
Are we consistent in our expectations- within levels? Across levels?
Is more actually expected of honor level students than regular level?

B. Curriculum
Remapping the curriculum should be a low priority (we have already done that in some divisions).
More departmental discussion of curriculum.
Disagree with moratorium on new course proposals. Rather see more rigorous approach to deciding which courses are adopted.
No moratorium on developing new courses—particularly electives for lower level students; need to develop more electives and courses for basic and college prep level
Focus on student achievement in new course proposals.
Electives should focus on student achievement and success.
High expectations for all is fine, but where’s the support . . . and the money?
Articulation between teachers is important, but standardization is not optimal.
“No” to standardized curriculum. Align goals but do not standardize.
A uniform curriculum and common assessments make more sense for courses that focus on skills, such as math, world languages.
Educate students in terms of their choices. Why do we ignore vocational programs?
How can we encourage parents to accept and respect our vocational programs?
Create alternative curriculum for students not going to college. Vocational training and credit is vital to a segment of our student population, and those opportunities are limited at present.
We need to become a comprehensive high school. Students who develop self-esteem in other areas probably do better in academic coursework.
We are really only college prep, although we say we are comprehensive. Non college prep must be part of plan.
Are we pursuing software geared toward standards to support a move in that direction?
Using compelling data e.g., EXPLORE, GPA, ACT benchmarks, may provide a perspective from which to evaluate existing curricula
A specific/curriculum would help new teachers understand expectations.
High school has built a reputation on curriculum rich elective program—should go on...enrichment for all students.
Take a look at curriculum that is focused toward a more objective, practical experience, rather than so focused on college preparation.
C. Instruction
What can the institution do to help teachers use their skills and tools to make a positive impact on students? Class size, class length, case loads
What [support] are we providing to reach these goals?
Some schools require teachers to observe other teachers from other departments to build understanding.
TESA was very successful; bring back TESA.
Field trips are useful and should be allowed.
RTI training.

B and C. Curriculum and Instruction
Too much of a mandate to offer only college prep/regular and honors/AP courses for juniors and seniors.
This directive is not embraced [by this group].
What schools have accomplished this goal of every student taking at least one AP?
Honors/AP courses need to be rigorous. Does requiring each student to take at least one honors/AP course set them up for failure? It may also stigmatize regular level classes and result in parental overrides.
Rethink the Honors/AP requirement. Encourage, don’t mandate unilaterally.
Some students (“special needs” students) will not be able to make it in an honors class. Where will the money come from [to implement]?
Not a natural transition and does not help the middle or underachieving students.
Open access to honors/AP classes brings quality of class down. (This is in place in French AP)
Will we lower standards in honors classes to accommodate students of a lower level?
Already very active effort to aggressively push kids into honors. Not every kid should be in honors. Needs proper supports. Maybe should improve college prep and basic classes instead.
“School within a school” concept good for struggling students, but must be carefully structured to avoid segregation. Counselors would need to schedule students so they have a variety in their classmates and do not rotate classes with the same group throughout the day. Avoid the stigma and the label “slow.”
This notion stigmatizes our general education courses, resulting in parental overrides and students not meeting class expectations.
Without tracking, will one teacher get a “piling on” effect of students with behavior problems, etc.
There are good reasons for the mix of honors and non-honors; e.g., modeling is a positive result.
Setting and maintaining high expectations for the “basic” student is important.
We want concrete items with specific target dates for accomplishment; supersede talk to get to action.
If we move to a model of uniformity, will there be professional development to assist in the movement?
What about common planning periods for teachers of similar courses.
Autonomy needs to be maintained—good and working for upper level courses; need to work on for college prep and basic classes; need to collaborate at lower instructional levels on standards.
Don’t like the idea of standardizing exams; content vs. skills—serious issue in literacy building’ serious issue in standard of evaluation.
Lots of divisions already state the objectives for a course…methodology needs to be left up to the teacher.
Need articulation between departments and cross-divisional discussions.
Curriculum guides would be helpful.
Libraries should be teaching research skills and information seeking behaviors more aggressively.

D. Professional Development
Establish rules at the beginning of the year.
Invite experts in their fields.
Publish schedules in advance.
Culture of professional development days needs to be changed. Impression is that they are not worthwhile.
Allow teachers to work on plans with other teachers and “give them space.”
Change many late arrival days to 2 full professional development days.
CRISS has been a positive for many teachers, especially in helping our basic students.
PBIS is a good way to share strategies. Everyone should be trained in PBIS.
Expand/strengthen new teacher mentoring program.
Learning teams should meet more than 9 times per year.
Teachers would like more time to talk about pedagogy; more discussion of best practices.
Mentoring needs direction. Should come from each department.
Learning teams—no continuity—teams are assigned that do not impact classroom instruction—too variable within departments.
All teachers should have some training in reading instruction (use professional development time).
Literacy coaching should be expanded.
We (the school) needs more open and honest talk about why “the gap” exists. Specifically, discussions about race and class. Some felt that this is what’s at the root of this entire problem and until it’s addressed directly change will not occur.

E. Assessment
Standardized tests can give us important information.
Grade inflation is a problem.
How do GPAs correlate with ACT/EXPLORE scores?
Need teacher training on testing programs.
Some groups discussed going back to previous arrangement for PSAE (students testing in P.E. areas).
Need to improve communication to students that PSAE is important.
A high stakes test is not a valid assessment.
Need more test prep for students.
Specifically define “common assessment.”
Mastery Manager not applicable to all subjects/core classes where assessments are more holistic.
“No” to common assessment.
Common assessment prompts fear and builds resentment among staff.
Will a common assessment hinder teachers’ creativity in the classroom?
Common assessment isn’t just pencil/paper tests; it’s teaching . . . teaching may suffer as a result.
Common assessment takes away from the individuality of teaching and diverse views of content.
The level of academic freedom would be curtailed.
We don’t want to encroach on quality of instruction or teachers.
Common assessment could make our jobs easier in terms of skills.
Common assessment vs. assessment for achievement.
Establishing common assessment requires time to meet with colleagues to talk about specific teaching ideas and what we want students to know in a particular subject.
Imposing common assessments has many negative outcomes; e.g., takes away professional independence, creates negative competition, threatens academic freedom, encourages dumbing down the tests; unfair comparison of different students and different classes; encourages teachers to do the minimum for students.
Teachers are concerned about how the term “culture of data-driven research, teaching, and learning” will be implemented.
There is a difference between skills taught and content actually learned.
Different concerns for different classes; standards should be based on skill set and not content.

F. Co-Curricular Program.
It is beneficial to have students involved in co-curricular activities.
Should hire the best people we can get and should not be limited by a need to hire coaches.
Coaching creates a unique relationship with students and is very valuable.
Coaching should be secondary to classroom instruction.

G. Associate School Articulation
Some divisions are reaching out to feeder school teachers to discuss issues.
Sharing about curriculum and students would be helpful (possible staff development day?)
We need to create a “we’re working together” model.
Determine which skill sets should be accomplished at each level.
Must articulate because gap exists before students enter high school.
Should happen monthly with ongoing curriculum mapping.
District 97 needs to reevaluate its lack of reading program—and we need to help them do so.

H. Freshman Transition
Freshman Day is already in the plan.
Freshman transition is highly useful.
Help students enter this school on an even playing field.
Advisories should focus on freshmen.
Get rid of large freshmen study halls.
Freshman [support] [seminar?] group was successful; can it be reinstated?
The achievement gap exists before the students arrive at the high school.
What are the specific standards to know if a student is at grade level or not?
8 – 9 Connection for at-risk students is a 6-week summer program, but not nearly enough. After first quarter, there is no more support for the families. No tracking once they are in freshman year.
Need time for freshman college prep teachers to group/meet together in cross-divisional meetings by grade/level.

I. Freshmen Mentoring Program
Freshman seminar should be reinstated. Good mentoring program for freshmen.

J. Review and Evaluation of Current Initiatives
No program holds for 3 or 4 years. We end programs rather than refine them.
Programs thrive because of good personnel. Faculty often are told to implement a program but do not get support and training.
Don’t let the exception make the rule: work with teachers to ensure accountability.
Project Scholar is respected.
Supervisory needs to be as accountable as classroom teachers.
There seems to be a lot of duplication of efforts.
Targeting same kids, over and over with programs
Sophomore/Junior/ Senior ‘study hall’ is promoting bad habits for those most in need.
Do we need a director of minority achievement- who has the big picture?

K. Review of Discipline System
Talk about common behaviors.
What is the institutional culture at OPRFHS?
What can adults do to reinforce a new school culture?
Returning to the hallways has given me more power, which I had given over to Security.
Is there an alternative to the consequence model? How do some teachers not send students through the discipline system?
Number of suspensions and expulsions dropped from last year due to shift to more intervention.
Saturday detention or after-school detention should replace in-school suspension. Send tutors to ISS. People are worried about the discipline system. [We need] more deans of discipline. Require community service

L. **Mini-IL Student Achievement Network**

M. **Parent/Student Outreach**
New supervisory means no time to make home phone calls. Propose a rotating supervisory system where 1 day a week could be devoted to home phone calls. Parental involvement is a key component. It will be hard to get parents “on board” with the plan. Parent “café” works well. Parent Education—Communicate school ‘navigation’ skills to all parents White parents viewed as advocates. Black parents viewed as troublemakers. Do we need a participation requirement- enhance connection to school.

N. **College and Career Center.**
Should be manned by a college registrar. We need to be a comprehensive school. Allow students to explore vocational interests. Important to counsel in non-university options. Support college/university partnership.

O. **Student Involvement and Feedback/Surveys/Focus Groups**
Do Illinois Youth Survey during PSAE window.

P. **PSS Teams**
Dean-counselor model seems more holistic. Current system “outsources” so much. Comprehensive dean-counselor allowed more contact with parents about the whole child. Hire more social workers. Group impressed with movement of the PSS system to a whole child model.

Q. **Advisory System**
A-period is only as good as the people who teach it. A-period serves as a constant and allows stability for a student. Freshman advisory – maybe 20 minutes during lunch. Even students not in crisis need a constant adult for 4 years. Great way to connect with students. Advisory is a way to get students of different levels into the same classroom. Build meaningful one-on-one relationships with students. Agreement that some sort of advisory should be established to create more contact with an adult in the building, an opportunity to develop a senior mentoring program, opportunity for PSS system to connect with students, and development of intramural activities. Advisories- DO NOT repeat past mistakes- reality check
R. Triton College Partnership

S. Career Center

T. College/University Partnership
Draw on the resources of the larger community.

U. Communications Advisory Committee
Draw on the resources of the larger community.

V. Study Center
Basic level students do not use the study halls.
Send tutors into In-School Suspension.
Tutoring—need to focus on one-on-one instruction to bring up kids who are remedial—best way to do it.

W. Student Recognition Programs

X. Community Service
Helps students get involved in a meaningful way and make connections with other adults and make new friends.
Chicago Public Schools use a model of service learning that comes from the classroom.
This would be a beneficial requirement that would benefit the school and the community.
Maybe a graduation requirement through the History Division?
Good idea, but is it feasible?

Y. Student leadership, Participation, and Input
OPRFHS [appears to be] two schools: elitist and those who don’t believe they belong. We need to make students feel a part of the school.
Asking same kids over and over to serve as role models/helpers- expand the pool

Z. School Day Time
Loss of lab period has hurt Science Division.
9-period day allowed 3 preps; therefore, more time to touch base with students.
School-wide tardy policy is needed.
Agreement that late arrival/early dismissal and study halls do not promote student achievement.
Contractual issues are involved in any movement to put lower achieving students in a longer school day.
Transition period for classes.
Increased FTE.
Limits co-curriculars, which are also linked to achievement.

AA. Transfer Student/Parent Program

BB. Summer Program

CC. Senior Year Internships
Conflicts with AP courses and internship duties.
Trade school options.
Internship programs give students more self-esteem.
DD. Technology
Laptop—low priority—computers mean nothing without appropriate software—find out who has one already and don’t buy them another.

EE. Parent Programs
Only the parents of students who already are doing well show up to parent programs.
An enormous amount of work is required to get parents to come to evening programs.
Suggest a lab to show parents how to use Skyward and Parent Access.
We need to do a better job of asking parents to volunteer.
Mandatory parent meetings work well in Driver’s Ed. Required meetings for all parents saves the embarrassment of being labeled the parent of an at-risk student.

FF. Homework

GG. Special Education
Students sometimes misdiagnosed. We need more discourse with Districts 90 and 97.

PRIORITIES:
Build meaningful one-on-one relationship with students.
Communicate options/programs
Money: This is a priority. They have a cost; we want to know.
Common Assessment: We don’t want to encroach on quality of instruction/teachers.

PRIORITIES:

1. Challenging attitudes. Determining what the problem attitudes are. We have a climate/culture study with data to pull out and then determine how to . . .

2. Specifically define what common assessment is. And we need to determine as soon as possible. What it means. Skills. How do we test students and still allow teachers to have some freedom in determining how they teach?

3. College and Career Center. Allowing students to explore vocational interests; and it’s not about dummying down curriculum.

4. Start real articulation with the middle schools.

5. We need to review what programs have been devised (example: tardy policy created by FSEC last year) and figure out how these can work.

6. We need to have good follow through across the board. There is “no bad guy.” We should all be “bad guys” in terms of trying to get things done. There is too much ambiguity in general with roles (rules?).

Specific suggestions made:
- Have first semester end before the holiday break
- Offer TESA and (JESA?) again. These were very popular
- Encourage more parent volunteers

Survey of Top Four Concerns
1. We need Board support of the Plan.
2. Common Assessments- No
3. Vocational Education is needed
4. Fieldtrips are useful and should be allowed

**Most important issues:**
- Review discipline
- Professional development
- College & Career Center
- Internship

Conclusions:
Plan is too broad—narrow the focus
Prioritize
Need to have more cross-divisional discussions
Need to discuss data and data-driven instruction