

Oak Park and River Forest High School
201 N. Scoville
Oak Park, IL 60302
An Instruction Committee of the Whole Board
May 19, 2011

An Instruction Committee meeting was held on Thursday, May 19, 2011, in the Board Room. Co-chair Finnegan opened the meeting at 11:25 a.m. Committee members present were Terry Finnegan, Dr. Ralph H. Lee, Amy Leafe McCormack, Dr. Dietra D. Millard, John Phelan and Sharon Patchak Layman. Also present were Dr. Steven T. Isoye, Superintendent; Michael Carioscio, Chief Information Officer; Amy Hill, Director of Assessment and Research; Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Nathaniel L. Rouse, Lauren M. Smith, Director of Human Resources; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of Board.

Visitors: Kay Foran, Community Relations and Communications Coordinator; James Paul Hunter, Faculty Senate Executive Committee Chair; Terry Dean of the *Wednesday Journal*; and Cindy Milojevic, Assistant Principal for Student Activities; Devon Alexander and Jessica Stovall, OPRFHS English teachers.

Approval of April 21, 2011 Instruction Committee Minutes

It was the consensus of the Instruction Committee members to accept the April 21, 2011 meeting minutes, as presented.

Textbooks

Ms. Hill presented a list of textbooks that will be brought forward to the Board of Education at its regular May 2011 meeting for approval.

Discussion ensued about the origin of the readability score used on the current approval request form. This is a score computed by Microsoft Word; it can be misleading when used with novels as the value of themes and nuances sometime eludes this score, calculating it lower than an expected grade level book.

In looking at portability and cost, the District is making different textbook publishers aware of its expectations for electronic options for some students, and asking what online support will be offered and which electronic readers are they using. All students will be assessed an instructional materials fee based on all of the materials provided. An opt-out model, for using an electronic textbook, has not been factored into the equation at this time. The District is experimenting with the use of online textbooks and the responses thus far have varied greatly. Dr. Isoye shared that when he chose to use a book on Kindle for an assignment, he found that the electronic version had no page numbers and it was difficult to track where the others with hard copies were. When looking at instructional materials Division Heads consider how the resources can best be used.

School Improvement Plan (SIP)

Mr. Rouse gave a status report on SIP. The current three areas of focus are Special Education, Math, and PBIS. The District is updating the indicators from last year and looking for ways to better measure the efficacy of the current model. Special Education Director Tina Halliman is

in charge of the PBIS team, Math Division Head Julie Frey is in charge of the Math Team, and English Division Head Dan Cohen is in charge of the English Team. Once these measurements are in place, a second report will be presented to the Board of Education. The District will be able to report to the State of Illinois that RtI has been implemented. At this time, persons responsible are doing the paperwork offsite, but it will be inputted into the electronic version to the state.

Mr. Rouse highlighted some areas that the District planned for next year:

- 1) Lunch periods will be included in the SIP in case the District were to close the campus during lunch hours as that could affect achievement;
- 2) Additional support for interventions will be pursued and opportunities broadened;
- 3) The meaning of “a student in good standing” will be determined using the District criteria;
- 4) The services of Plascotrac will be expanded to address tardies, unexcused absences, and/or students who are not serving detentions;
- 5) The ID usage requirement will be strengthened;
- 6) Students will scan in when attending cocurricular activities;
- 7) PBIS will be expanded next year; and
- 8) A reading specialist will be hired.

MSAN Report

Ms. Milojevic introduced the District’s sponsors of the MSAN Student Conference, English teachers Jessica Stovall and Devon Alexander. Each year the students return from this conference excited about a project they want to do. After this year’s conference, they decided to create a video, a documentary, on the achievement gap. Although not complete, a sampling of the video was shown. The entire video will include statistics provided by Ms. Hill, video dairies, voiceovers that will explain the achievement gap, interviews with alumni, hidden cameras in classrooms and lunchrooms, etc. It will take most of the summer to complete. Distribution, with the approval of the administration, will include first teachers and then students. The students who participated in the MSAN Student Conference were: Marcus Coleman, Maya Bernard, Christian Robinson, Forrest Jackson, Piere Trent, Lindsey Allen, and Deja Hudson.

One student was proud to provide an opportunity for people to listen to their stories and to hear about the daily struggles that students have. Mr. Alexander acknowledged that when students were asked to tell their stories, it opened up wounds for them. While weekly conversations with these students about their feelings have been beneficial, there is no institutional format to do so. All of these students will be involved in creating professional development and curriculum for students. The process will take time.

Adjournment

The Instruction Committee meeting adjourned at 12:16 p.m. on Thursday, May 19, 2011.