

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

**Policy, Evaluation and Goals (PEG) Committee  
Thursday, October 14, 2010  
Minutes  
Board Room**

A Policy, Evaluation and Goals Committee meeting was held on Thursday, October 14, 2010, in the Board Room. Co-chair Dr. Millard opened the meeting at 10:46 a.m. Committee members present were John C. Allen, Terry Finnegan, Dr. Ralph H. Lee, Amy McCormack, Dr. Dietra D. Millard, and Sharon Patchak-Layman. Also present were: Steven T. Isoye, Superintendent; Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Nathaniel L. Rouse, Principal; Lauren M. Smith, Director of Human Resources; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

Visitors: Kay Foran, Communications and Community Relations Coordinator; James Paul Hunter, Faculty Senate Executive Committee Chair; Dr. Allan Alson of SchoolExec Connect.

**Minutes**

It was the consensus of the Policy Committee members to accept the minutes of the September 16, 2010 meeting, as presented.

**Policy 3535, Cafeteria and Bookstore**

The Board of Education had some discussion previously about possibility increasing the pay of Food Service employees. The budget for the cafeteria is in compliance with Policy 3535. Should the Board of Education want to recommend any changes regarding pay, it may require a review and/or change of this policy. Ms. Smith provided comparative information from other districts relative to these rates and the District's range of salaries for these positions. The Board of Education should also consider that an increase in the number of students qualifying for the Free and Reduced Lunch Program would be a cost factor to the high school. Generally, Food Service employees who are hired as servers and cashiers start at minimum wage and receive salary increases based on longevity. Monetary increases are given rather than percent increases. In order for Food Service to be self sustaining, as the policy dictates, one must consider 1) salaries, 2) the contract with District 97, and 3) anticipated food costs. Last year, Food Service had a surplus of just \$1,000.

Ms. Patchak-Layman placed value on the adults working in Food Service and she did not want personnel and the minimum wage to be the pivotal factors when considering a pay raise. In her mind, \$10 per hour would be more appropriate for new employees, noting that babysitters sometimes receive more than that per hour. She also did not want students to suffer by increasing the meal cost or serve less healthy food in order to be self sustaining.

Ms. Smith stated that the Human Resources Department receives a requisition form for each position in the building, other than students, and it goes through a process of approval. Information regarding student workers is being gathered as to who and how they are hired.

Dr. Lee preferred to have this discussion with both the Director of Food Service, Ms. Piekarski, and the Chief Financial Officer, Ms. Witham, present. He also wanted to see a proposal before further discussion occurred. Mr. Finnegan suggested leaving the policy as is and the salary work to the administrators; they knew the Board of Education's desire and it was inappropriate for the Board of Education to discuss the logistics of it. Dr. Millard was unsure if \$10 per hour would allow Food Service to be self-sustaining and self-sustaining was appropriate to continue until more information was received. Ms. McCormack felt that if the District was not violating the policy, it should stand. While politically she was on the same page with minimum wage, she asked how the District could live within CPI if it does not make tough choices.

Ms. Patchak-Layman remembered that three Board of Education members begrudgingly approved the personnel recommendations because of the salaries being offered to the cashiers; the salaries cannot be increased until the policy is changed.

Dr. Millard proposed retaining the policy as is and informing the Chief Financial Officer and Director of Human Resources that the Board of Education would like to take into consideration its concern in future hiring and the types of limitations to put in place. Mr. Isoye noted that sustainability can be done in any model, but if expenditures go up, so must revenue. Mr. Finnegan concurred with Dr. Millard and he appreciated the methodology that when something no longer fits the policy, the policy must be changed.

Mr. Allen had not intended to change the policy. He wanted to give some Food Service employees more while maintaining self-sustainability. He asked that the District review the wages and give more, if possible.

Ms. Patchak-Layman agreed that more information was necessary and suggested tabling this discussion at this time. She raised the issue of salaries to be more respectful to humans and their jobs. If with additional information, it is impossible to raise salaries, the Board of Education must reconsider this policy.

#### **Curriculum/Instruction Policy Discussion**

Because there is no self-contained curriculum policy, parts are reflected in Policies 20, 100, 104, 2120, 3700, 4370, 5125, 6130, and 6134, the Committee discussed whether the Board of Education should have a specific policy on curriculum.

Ms. Patchak-Layman brought this forward because the Board of Education is the policymaker for the school and what happens in the school should reflect the policies. She asked how the Board of Education could make a change in curriculum, e.g., introduce, or eliminate a program, etc., noting that three Board of Education members have suggested adding a writing course. How would the community interact with the school? Nothing in the policies gives that direction regarding curriculum, either theoretically or specifically. Many other school districts have self-contained curriculum policies.

Dr. Lee felt the Board of Education should define what it wants in curriculum, i.e., encompassing all it wants to happen in a student's four years. Enrolling in a string of courses and receiving grades for them is not the same as having an adequate education. He wanted policies that would rule out de facto policies, such as the District does not teach reading, etc... He wanted to see reading across all curriculums, not just Special Education.

Mr. Finnegan wanted ninth graders to understand it is the goal of the District for them to have the ability to enter a four-year university. He wanted to see other districts' policies on curriculum. Again, the Board of Education's role is the strategic picture. He supported an overarching statement which will allow the professionals to bring initiatives that will satisfy the Board of Education's goals.

Dr. Millard interpreted this as being the requirements for graduation and what a diploma meant. She wanted to know what the expectations would be for a curriculum policy and how would that be accomplished.

Ms. McCormack suggested that any Board of Education could bring a draft policy to start a conversation.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if this work needed to be done. Mr. Isoye stated that the discussion began with Ms. Patchak-Layman and Dr. Millard as an opportunity for Dr. Alson to talk about governance. He viewed the discussions about curriculum, instruction, and graduation to be weighty.

Mr. Prale noted that curriculum is a moving and permeable topic; assessment can come from different angles. The District should know what it wants to talk about; graduation requirements are a specific discussion. Ms. McCormack concurred, noting that course proposals allow the larger community to give input. Mr. Rouse asked how a curriculum policy would govern or alter what is currently being done. Is there a feeling that the District is not asking the community to be part of curriculum and instruction? Mr. Prale felt the District was attentive to the process. While the Philosophy of Grading Policy is thin, more can be added if necessary. He continued that if the work being done is positive for the community, then he did not know what more was needed. If the Board of Education wanted to put all students in honor classes in order for them to experience that rigor because it was the desire of the larger community, Ms. Patchak-Layman asked where that would happen. Where would that change be made in policy?

Mr. Hunter stated that the purpose of the Board of Education is to create policy, not to be involved in the day-to-day operations. He felt some Board of Education members wanted to be administrators.

Dr. Lee wanted the Board of Education to have a mechanism for changing those policies which are accepted but do not appear e.g., reading, etc. The idea of a "super policy" is not questioned. He believed that if there were an auditing process of how the District spends money, it would find that more money is spent on meeting the needs of students with above average academic ability than on those students with lower-academic ability. He believed the District believes that students with behavior problems and lower test scores should not be in the same classrooms with

students with higher test scores. Mr. Finnegan felt the term “belief system” would better used rather than “super policy.”

### **Planning of November Board of Education Retreat**

Discussion ensued about what the Board of Education members wanted to cover at its November 23 retreat. Comments were made that while the Board of Education has had high level discussions, more respect should be shown for the process and the institution and the Board of Education should not feel like it had to overanalyze every aspect of a conversation, how will the members remind themselves of the efficiency goals and parameters that are set. Others appreciated an expanded conversation, as the benefit is that it brings added value.

Dr. Lee felt the Board of Education continued to review the same territory because it had not agreed on the basic structural foundation on which to build. He asked if the Board of Education wanted a strategic plan, as the discussion earlier was indicative of that. Dr. Alson concluded that the Board of Education wanted to talk about efficiency and governance issues and consider whether a strategic plan should be embarked on and what the precursors to that would be.

The Board of Education members were assigned to read the last chapter of the book *Leading for Equity* which was written by a Harvard professor about the Montgomery Public School System. It takes real life cases and analyzes them, from resource to time management. Mr. Alson stated that Harvard University added a doctoral program in Education Administration, a collaboration between its Business School, the Kennedy School of Government, and the Education School, as it relies on case management. Dr. Lee commented that respected the Montgomery Public School System more than almost any other district on problem solving.

The Board of Education members were invited to contact either Mr. Alson or Dr. Hanson prior to the retreat about any further suggestions.

### **Adjournment**

The Policy Evaluation and Goals Committee adjourned at 12:26 p.m.