

February 24, 2011

The regular Board meeting of the Board of Education of the Oak Park and River Forest High School was held on Thursday evening, February 24, 2011, in the Board Room.

Call to Order President Millard called the meeting to order at 7:11 p.m. The following Board of Education members were present: John C. Allen, IV, Jacques A. Conway, Terry Finnegan, Dr. Ralph H. Lee, Dr. Dietra D. Millard, Amy McCormack, and Sharon Patchak-Layman. Also present were: Dr. Steven T. Isoye, Superintendent; Michael Carioscio, Chief Technology Officer; Amy Hill, Director of Assessment and Research; Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction; Lauren M. Smith, Director of Human Resources; Cheryl L. Witham, Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer; James Paul Hunter, FSEC Executive Committee Chair; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

Visitors The Board of Education welcomed the following visitors: Kay Foran, Communications and Community Relations Coordinator; Jeremiah Wiencek, Assistant Principal for Student Services; Cindy Milojevic, Assistant Principal of Student Activities; Dr. Tina Halliman, Director of Special Education; Tim Keeley, OPRFHS Purchasing Coordinator; David Zimmerman of the *Trapeze*; Peggy Swanson of the League of Voters, Robert Wroble of Legat Architects; Al and Jean Berggen, John Grinser, Mamie Andry, Joan & John Krenzer, Peter Miller and Pam Whitehead, community members; Dan Davis, social worker intern; John Bokum, John Phelan, and Maggie Skiver, Board of Education candidates; Terry Dean of the *Wednesday Journal*; Bill Dwyer of the *Pioneer Press*, and Jim Jaworski of the *Chicago Tribune*.

Changes to the Agenda Changes included: Consent Item D. Approval of Special Education Bus Bid and E. Approval of Field Trip & Activity Bus Bid were moved to the Finance portion of the agenda.

Public Comments Mr. Al Berggen of 155 N. Elmwood, Oak Park, addressed the Board of Education on the subject of closed campus. He felt that the privilege of open closed was being abused and should be taken away. Eleven of the fourteen (14) schools in the West Suburban Conference have closed campuses. In Mr. Berggen's opinion, the 2010 Illinois Youth Survey statistics showed that substance abuse was not just a neighborhood issue. He felt the solution was to close the campus, shorten the lunch periods to 25 minutes, eliminating the amount of time in which students had to buy drugs. He also felt additional lookouts should be added within the community before and after school. He suggested starting in September and measuring the effectiveness over the next four years.

Mr. John Bokum of 629 S. Home, Oak Park addressed the Board of Education on closed campus. He was appreciative of the meetings held about closed campus and he was involved in the coffees that were started a year ago in May about this subject. He agreed that the time to act was now.

Pam Whitehead of 228 N. Elmwood, Oak Park, addressed the Board of Education. She has lived in this neighborhood for nine year and was a soccer coach. It was disturbing to her to see students smoking with no effort being made on the part of the parents, police, or the high school to keep them safe from their habits.

Peter Miller of 228 N. Elmwood, Oak Park, addressed the Board of Education because he is a health educator with the University of Chicago Lab Schools and he had put in the health curriculum for it. From the numbers in the Illinois Youth Survey, it seemed nothing short of negligence to continue to provide opportunities to use drugs. To him, it seemed like not closing the campus would continue to provide those opportunities. When Dr. Millard asked him if the University of Chicago Lab School campus was closed, his response was negative.

Dr. Millard noted that the Board of Education was gathering information and appreciated their comments.

Status of FOIA Requests

Dr. Millard reported that one FOIA request had been received and resolved.

Board of Education

Dr. Lee stated that while many in Oak Park and River Forest felt that closing the campus is the best solution, he did not believe that the problem had been defined. Some would say that the problem was 1) drug abuse by teenagers in the Oak Park and River Forest community or 2) a problem in terms of what happens in the teenager's houses and the insecurity of those living near the high school. Those in south Oak Park are not affected the same way as those living around the high school. He felt it was a mistake to assume that the issues of what happens in the alleys are the same as the drug abuse by teenagers in Oak Park & River Forest. He had not heard proposals to separate those two issue or alternatives to closing the campus. He believed there were ways to deal with the issues of students in the alleys around the school without affecting the population of 3,000 students. He said a line will have to be drawn between this being a community-wide problem of teenagers with substance abuse and the national problem. He wanted to discuss the problems that need solving, but the solutions to those two problems will have to be different solutions. It does not make sense to propose one solution for different problems, even though there is a relationship.

Ms. Patchak-Layman thanked the presenters and noted that as the Board of Education gathered more information the problem will be defined and solutions found in order for students to have the best experience.

Ms. Patchak-Layman attended the successful Black Professional Day. The students were receptive to the adults who voluntarily shared both their work and personal experiences. Each year, the program gets better and better. She also attended the NAAPID dinner on Tuesday night where students successfully performed. Both the parents and the District showed their appreciation to the very talented students.

Ms. Patchak-Layman remarked on a conversation at the Instruction Committee meeting about the subject of reading and a reading program. In that discussion, the Board of Education learned about the number of students who were not reading at grade level and the types of programs the District wants to implement. Coincidentally, the *Chicago Tribune* had a story about the Urban College Prep School: OPRFHS students and Urban College Prep School students had similarities with regard to reading scores. At the end of the article, it stated that all of its students went to four-year colleges and that

their ACT scores ranged from 17 to 18, mirroring the scores of OPRFHS students classified as low-income. She felt the District was missing the wraparound supports for these students. She suggested adapting and offering that program to students so that they know that the District wants them to go to four-year colleges. The District should have a mantra that students have an opportunity and a choice.

Ms. Patchak-Layman was happy to see that an instructional materials fee was not on agenda for approval at this meeting because of the conversation that occurred at the Finance Committee meeting. She hoped that the District would 1) look at other models rather than averaging the amount among all students, 2) look at the five-year rental agreement, and 3) attempt to bring fees down due to the economic environment.

Ms. Patchak-Layman also wanted to explore shared services, e.g., operation and maintenance services, purchasing, bus schedules, bus contracts, etc. Better effort should be made to share with the two feeder school districts. There is much interest at Governors' level about consolidation and sharing and it would be good to be in the lead rather than having it mandated.

Mr. Allen thanked the neighbors for voicing their opinions and he agreed with them that the campus should be closed. As more information is gathered, it bolsters his viewpoint. The police are tired of responding. The high school needs to do its part as people are making a business of the students. Nothing, however, will be a cure all: those who are determined to do bad things will find a way to do it.

Mr. Conway stated that it was good to see citizens' take part in governance. He awaits the onslaught of citizens who came forward to talk about lighting the stadium or outsourcing B&G to come forward again to look at the academic achievement of students, understanding that these students are unprepared to be successful because they were not able to achieve the success they needed.

Mr. Conway continued that at Urban Chicago Prep, teachers motivate students by telling them, beginning the first day, that they will go to college. Students need wrap around services. Until there is a cavalcade of faculty and citizens who will do this, this conversation will be repeated for years to come. Closed campus will not stop students from smoking, but it will stop them from legally leaving the building. This is not a college campus; it is a high school with certain expectations. After 22 years experience as police officer, he knows that many parents are aware of their children smoking cigarettes and marijuana. The District has to set a climate that academics is the number one focus in the building. The District has resources to take these students to a high level.

Dr. Millard was happy everyone had come forward and had stated their opinions. She believed there would be a multi-factorial solutions because if the parents, community, etc., are not involved, there will not be sufficient impact.

Dr. Millard received an envelope addressed to her with her return address regarding a bus contract. It was shared anonymously. She urged all to be transparent and she asked whoever wrote the letter to come forward.

Principal Report

Assistant Principal for Student Services read the following report, as Mr. Rouse was not in attendance.

“Good Evening and Happy African American History Month! Mr. Rouse is attending a National Principal Conference in San Francisco.

“I’d like to begin by extending our thanks to the families that attended our 16th Annual NAAPID Dinner Tuesday evening. For those of you not aware, NAAPID stands for National African American Parent Involvement Day. NAAPID takes place on a National level the 2nd Monday in February, and is a call for action to AA parents to get more involved with the school. The event was filled with wonderful student performances from our very own gospel choir, dance troop, and spoken word clubs. Ms. Piekarski and our food service once again did not disappoint and provided a wonderful array of delicious soul food.

Our keynote speaker for the evening was Dr. Jelani Mendara, professor of Human Development and Social Policy from Northwestern University who spoke about the effects of parenting on child mental health, school achievement, and behavior.

Our hope is to challenge our community to become more involved with this day in the coming years so that we truly are representing what NAAPID is all about.

In addition to NAAPID, we also hosted our 11th annual Black Professional’s Day, in which we had a panel of twelve (12) professionals come in to talk about their professions and the education and discipline needed to get where they are today.

“In student news, best of luck to our TEAM Basketball squad as they Battle the Eagles of Leyden High School tomorrow. There will be a condensed schedule to accommodate the basketball game during the early afternoon.

“Additionally, the counselors have held individual academic planning meetings for all our current sophomores and juniors and are in the process of meeting with our current freshman. They are reviewing the students’ four-year plans, discussing plans and goals, and choosing courses for the 2011-2012 school year. Most incoming ninth graders’ classes were chosen within group sessions on the evenings of February 8, 9, and 10. We would like to remind any incoming ninth grade families missing enrollment forms, to please complete and turn in as soon as possible. The course selection process will conclude on March 11.”

Certification of Mid-Year Graduates

Mr. Allen moved to certify the January 2011 Graduates, as presented (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting); seconded by Ms. Patchak-Layman. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

District Reports

Citizens’ Council— Citizens’ Council met February 10 and Mr. Finnegan noted that next year’s slate of officers was nominated. In addition, Dr. Isoye reported on the historic nature of the snow days and new Division Heads were introduced. A question and answer session ensued.

Superintendent Report

BOOSTER—Ms. McCormack reported that the Boosters sold \$4500 in Huskie Wear and “Teach Me How to Huskie” T-shirts during the rescheduled Open House on February 7. It is also planning its annual dinner auction in April at Concordia University and its theme is “Teach Me How to Huskie.”

Alumni Association— Ms. McCormack reported that the Alumni Association was accepting applications for summer enrichment programs in a variety of areas. Last year, the Alumni Association distributed funds for fifty-seven (57) such programs.

ED-RED—Dr. Lee reported that the last ED-RED meeting was a review of the legislative work in Springfield.

Dr. Isoye reported on the history of closing the school for snow days. In 1930, 1939, 1967, 1979, and now 2011 the school had snow days. The three superintendents of 90, 97, and 200 worked closely with each other to determine the best course of action as well as with the Village of Oak Park and the Village of River Forest to gauge the clean up and the safety of students going to and coming from the schools.

Dr. Isoye stated that Robert Zummallen, Director of Buildings and Grounds, remained in the building from the start of his Tuesday workday (around 7 a.m.) through the night and up until Wednesday afternoon before he went home.

Dr. Isoye recognized other key players who worked behind the scenes to ensure that we have school.

- Head Groundsman Elvin Zapata with his Ground crew of Elimelec Cordero and Carlos Vega.
- Lead Engineer Rick Vavrik with Engineers John Ridenour and Jim Christenson
- Head Custodian Steve Doble
- Assistant Head Custodian Toni Hagins
- Custodians Donnie Davis, Robert Collins, Charlie Smith Jr., and Marty Rubio
- Security personnel James Ariola, Kimberly Gasow, Joseph Beard, Brian Holloway, and David Walkser.

Dr. Isoye congratulated everyone for successfully changing the date of the 8th grade open house, which was rescheduled due to the blizzard. This was a great opportunity for parents and 8th grade students to learn about the many opportunities at OPRFHS. He found this was a great place to see everything in one place and he appreciated the breadth of opportunities made available by the faculty and staff for students.

Dr. Isoye congratulated the Business Office, lead by Cheryl Witham, for being awarded the Association of School Business Officials International’s Meritorious Budget Award for 2010-2011. This is the second time in a row the business office has been honored with this distinction.

Dr. Isoye attended a presentation at Boeing in partnership with the Naval Academy as they discussed minority recruitment and retention within the Academy. Representatives from the Chicago Public Schools, a few suburban superintendents, and IMSA were invited.

Dr. Isoye recently had an open lunch meeting with faculty members. Faculty are invited to join him during their lunch period for a conversation about the school.

Dr. Isoye attended the annual meeting of the Community Foundation where students Stephanie Strahler, Kate McCole, Haley Hammond, and Katie Williams were honored with the 2010 Youth Excellence in Philanthropy Award.

Dr. Isoye thanked those who attended the community forum, especially the neighbors, along with parents and community leaders interested in the drug conversation occurring in the community. Everyone's input is necessary as information is gathered to make decisions in the future.

Dr. Isoye attended a meeting with area superintendents where they discussed Diane Ravitch's current book, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System*. They were fortunate to have a phone conference call with the author during the meeting. He also saw her speak at the AASA Conference that he recently attended on the same topic. Other notable Education Gurus included Michael Fullan on Motion Leadership (the skinny on leadership), Doug Reeves, on focus leadership, Alan November on technology in the classroom. Also speaking was Darrell Scott, the father of Rachael Scott. Rachael was the first student killed at Columbine. He almost lost his son that day, but as the gun was pointed at him, the fire alarm went off and the shooter was distracted. He talked about how schools need to work with students about understanding others, respect, and kindness. He discussed his work in the memory of his daughter. This was an incredible story with a huge message for all students and adults.

Consent Items

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

- the Check Disbursements and Financial Resolutions dated February 24, 2011;
- the Treasurer's Report for January 2011;
- the Monthly Financials for January 2011;
- Approval of PTAB Resolution;
- Approval of Architectural Services Contract;
- Approval of Office Supply Contract Extension; and
- Approval of Student Fees 2011-12

seconded by Mr. Finnegan. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Policy 3310

Dr. Millard moved to approve Policy 3310, Contracts/Purchasing, for First Reading, as presented; seconded by Mr. Allen. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes.

Policy 3820

Dr. Millard moved to approve Policy 3820, Energy Management, for First Reading, as presented; seconded by Mr. Allen. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Policy 4105

Mr. Allen moved to approve Policy 4105, Equal Opportunity, and Minority Recruitment, for First Reading; seconded by Dr. Lee. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

- Policy 4122** Mr. Allen moved to amend Policy 4122, Substitute Teachers, as presented; seconded by Mr. Conway. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.
- Gifts & Donations** Mr. Finnegan moved to accept with gratitude the gifts and donations as presented (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting); seconded by Dr. Millard. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.
- Construction Management Contract** Because the contract had not yet been completed, this agenda item was removed and will be brought back at a future Board of Education meeting.
- Special Education Bus Bid** Dr. Lee moved to accept the RFP from Illinois Central for the District's Special Education transportation services; seconded by Mr. Finnegan. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.
- Field Trip and Activity Bus Bid** Mr. Finnegan moved to accept the bid with Illinois Central for the District's Field Trip/extracurricular transportation services during FY 2011-12; seconded by Mr. Conway. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.
- Mr. Finnegan, referencing the envelope mentioned by Dr. Millard earlier and received by all Board of Education members, stated that anyone who expected a proper reading of it was talking in the wrong district and the wrong country for this behavior. He thanked everyone in the Business Office for the work that was done to recheck and verify the work. He apologized for the extra time it took and said that the behavior of providing information in a cowardly manner was a way to be struck off any list in this school. Mr. Allen concurred.
- Ms. Patchak-Layman reported that the IASB and NEOLA both presented at the PEG Committee as to the policy services they offer as the Board of Education is contemplating an external review of its policy manual. This will be discussed at the Board of Education retreat as well.
- Personnel Recommendations** Dr. Lee moved to approve the personnel recommendations, as presented; seconded by Ms. McCormack. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.
- Sabbatical Leave** Dr. Millard moved to approve the Sabbatical Leave Request of Avi Lessing for the 2011-12 school year; seconded by Ms. McCormack. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.
- DVR Intergovernmental Agreement** Mr. Allen moved to approve the changes for the Des Plaines Valley Education for Employment Regional Delivery System (DVR) Intergovernmental Agreement, as presented; seconded by Mr. Allen. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.
- Mr. Isoye explained that DVR looks at grant opportunities, e.g., Perkins Grant, etc. It wants to include Triton College as an official member. DVR also would like to have officers serve two terms instead of one term. The last part of the changes is about evaluations and are asking schools to provide reporting data, as many of the grants require it.

The Administrative Council is made up of different representatives of the school, Sara Roodhouse, Amy Hill, etc. DVR has a staff, which includes a full time director and administrative assistant. It all runs through administrative council and ideas flow from both directions. The current discussion is about programs for staff, i.e., the School College Partnership Workshop, which is held annually in October and is an opportunity for member districts and Triton to hear presentations of mutual interest.

Minutes

Mr. Finnegan moved to approve the open and closed session minutes of January 27, February 8, and February 15, 2011 and declared that the Audiotapes of the closed sessions in May 2009 be destroyed; seconded by Dr. Lee. A roll call vote resulted in ayes and one nay. Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay. Motion carried.

Non-agenda Items

Dr. Millard announced the February 26, 2011 Board of Education retreat, beginning at 8:00 a.m. in the Board room.

Closed Session

At 8:29 p.m., on Thursday, February 24, 2011, Mr. Allen moved to go into closed session to discuss Litigation, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the particular District has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the District finds that an action is probably or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recorded and entered into the closed meeting minutes 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11) and Collective negotiating matters between the District and its employees or their representatives or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees. The placement of individual students in special education programs and other matters relating to individual students 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11) 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2); seconded by Mr. Finnegan. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

At 10:19 p.m. on Thursday, February 24, 2011, the Board of Education resumed its open session.

B&G Letters of Agreement

Dr. Millard moved to approve the Buildings & Grounds Letters of Agreement as presented; seconded by Ms. McCormack. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Adjournment

At 10:25 p.m. on Thursday, February 24, 2011, Dr. Millard moved to adjourn the Board of Education meeting; seconded by Ms. McCormack. A roll call vote resulted in six ayes. Motion carried.

Dr. Dietra D. Millard
President

Terry Finnegan
Secretary