

**MINUTES
JOINT MEETING**

**Board of Trustees
Village of Oak Park**

**President and Board of Education
Oak Park Elementary School District #97**

**President and Board of Education
Oak Park-River Forest High School District #200**

**President and Members
Collaboration for early Childhood Care and Education**

**Oak Park and River Forest High School
2nd Floor Library
November 19 2014**

Present

Village of Oak Park: Cara Pavlicek, Village Manager; Village President Anan Abu-Taleb; Trustees Peter Barber, Colette Lueck; Andrea Ott, Bob Tucker, and Village Clerk Teresa Powell.

Elementary School District #97: Dr. Albert Roberts, Superintendent; Bob Spatz, Board of Education President; members, Jim O'Connor (arrived at 7:20 p.m.), Denise Sacks, Graham Brisben, and Board Secretary Sheryl Mariner.

High School District #200: Dr. Steven T. Isoye, Superintendent; Board of Education president John Phelan, members Thomas F. Cofsky, Sharon Patchak-Layman, and Jeff Weissglass and Clerk of the Board Gail Kalmerton.

Collaboration for Early Childhood Care and Education: Amy Felton, President, Carolyn Newberry Schwartz, Executive Director; President Carolina Song; Members Ann Courter, David Weindling and Founder Eric Gershenson.

Visitors: Therese O'Neil of District 97, Diana Rosenbrock, David Boulanger, Shannon Ellison, Charise Phillips of Little Beginnings, Wendy Giardina, Gail Shelton, and Susan Breitonstein

Call to Order

At 7:02 p.m. the meeting was called to order.

Roll

Village of Oak Park President Abu-Taleb called the meeting of the Village Board to order; Village Clerk Therese Powell called the roll, and a quorum was declared.

OPRFHS District #200 President Phelan called District #200 meeting to order; Clerk Kalmerton called the roll and a quorum declared.

Oak Park Elementary District 97 President Bob Spatz called the District #97 meeting to order; Secretary Mariner called the roll and a quorum declared. Joint Board Meeting 7:02 p.m.

Review and Approval of the Agenda

Amy Felton, president of the Governing Board, welcome everyone. A motion was made to approve the agenda as presented by Mr. Tucker; seconded Ms. Ott. A voice vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Future Meeting Dates and Planned Topics for Discussion

The topic of discussion for the Governing Board meeting in February will be the budget. Note: A financial review and project update is given at each of these intergovernmental meetings.

Administrative Report

Therese O'Neill of District 97 reviewed the process for receiving funds from the 3 entities. The Collaboration forwards invoices by May 1 and September 1 of each fiscal year and Ms. O'Neill submits them to the entities. Those payments are to be deposited into Community Bank prior to January 1 and July 1. Once those payments are received into the individual accounts, they are transferred to the Collaboration's account.

Collaboration Annual Report

The following information was highlighted:

- 1) In the packet was the audit conducted by Sassetti, LLC, budget versus actuals, and the balance sheet at the end of October.
- 2) No deficiencies were noted in the audit. A recommendation was made to change how revenue and expenses were recognized. Recently the 9090 non-for-profit tax filing was completed with the state and federal agencies.
- 3) Through the end of October, revenues received were \$12,500 in foundational grants and \$15,000 in donations (Oak Park Runners Club Race).
- 4) The expenses are mostly on track. No money has been spent on the database as yet, due to the timing of the invoice.
- 5) The Collaboration ended the year 2014 with larger than expected net revenue because of a) operational and administrative efficiencies; b) pro bono and professional advice from people on its board and outside of the board in the legal realm; c) lower costs and efficiencies, i.e., insurance, effect use of the space, d) implementation of programs (ramping up and prioritizing) everyone is working at a furious pace. The volume and quality of response, not every hire was made when expected and not every contract was closed when expected. e) delays in 2014, i.e., web redesign, hiring of a grant writer, marketing work, etc.; f) Accounting changes did not reflect cash flow but budget versus actual, i.e., pledges, foundations were not recognized in the first year. Funds are to be recognized when pledged, not when received.
- 6) The balance sheet shows a heavier cash position than what actually is. Again, it is a matter of timing of invoicing.
- 7) The database is an asset for the community and ECC and will be depreciated over time, no longer an expense. A deficit could be realized in the coming year when things are implemented.
- 8) The Collaboration is holding to a certain level of caseload before hiring new staff.

Dr. Isoye and Ms. Pavlicek will report to the governing board in February on reserve policies.

No unexpected expenses occurred. The Collaboration is building a unified database with data from many sources. The data programs are efficiently and accurately recording the data, and more databases are needed. The Collaboration spent \$3,500 on the public preschool database, Lighter Touch.

Report on Progress 2013-2014

A written report addressed in the packet on the important and significant progress made in establishing an integrated early childhood system of high quality services and programs during the first year of the Collaboration's contract with the Districts 97 and 200 and the Village of Oak Park. Highlighted were:

- 1) The parent support program implemented with Parenthesis has touched over 54 families.
- 2) 45 families are enrolled in the Parents as Teachers Program, which is a national program
- 3) Between 75 and 100 families are expected this year for the home visitation caseload. Research has shown that visitations coupled with high quality preschool leads to kindergarten readiness.
- 4) A working group has been formed of board members and the executive director to monitor the implementation of the program and ensure that it is high quality and, and actively tracking caseloads.
- 5) Pro-bono help is engaged.
- 6) Over 450 families are involved in workshops and parenting coaching, and receive information and referrals for needed services and support.
- 7) The State of Illinois revamped its Quality Improvement Rating System for preschools, child care centers and family child care homes, now called ExceleRate. The state is investing in a public campaign to make parents aware of it and it is creating an incentive for providers to participate in quality improvement activities.
- 8) Chapin Hall was selected to design and build a Unified Early Childhood Database. A color coded data model showing the various data sets involved was included in the packet. The preliminary benchmarks should be ready to share by early summer.
- 9) A grant writer was hired.

In addition, Diana Rosenbrock, chaired the new Family Child Care Provider Credential created by a state committee. Ms. Newberry Schwarz participates in Erikson Institute's Envisioning Change, Improving Education and Developmental Outcomes of Young African American Students and presented the Collaboration model in December. She also participates in the Consortium for Community Systems as part of Race to the Top, Early Learning Challenge Grant work and serves on the Illinois Early Learning Council. Eric Gershenson participated in a panel and described the Collaboration's work at the Governor's Birth to Third Grade Symposium in April 2014.

Discussion ensued. The numbers under Parenthesis were new numbers. This is new money and it is not replacing existing sources of funding. With Lighter Touch it is hard to capture everyone, but they have a high success rate of getting the parent name, child name, and birthdate. The Collaboration was complimented on its remarkable data tracking. It is making sure that at risk children ages 1 to 3 get support, ensuring that the services are where they are needed most; and developing the measures to increase quality.

Ms. Rosenbrock meets with District 97 pre-kindergarten monthly to coordinate outreach and referral. The Collaboration has an agreement that District 97 to hold spots open for referrals which often made by word of mouth. All use the same screening tool to rank and weigh children the same way. Homeless students are automatically enrolled and low-income children get priority. There is an initiative to focus on tardiness in publically funded preschools as there is a correlation between being late for preschool and being late forever.

Mr. Phelan too echoed pride for the program. This program is being watched to see how it works and if it can be a model for others to address the educational issues of society. He had great faith in the people running this.

Special Focus – Pilot Developmental Screen

A PowerPoint presentation was shared titled Developmental Screening: What, Why, Who and How. The developmental screening strategy includes vision and hearing screening for children ages 3 to 5 at preschools and child care centers, ensuring every child birth to age five receives periodic developmental screening. A quick check of child's developmental skills and milestones are: 1) first words, 2) smiling, 3) following directions, 4) playing with peers, 5) pretend play, 6) and calming oneself. The screening

program was expanded to include River Forest in 2013. The number of children to be screened this year is anticipated to reach approximately 1,400, an increase of about 200. Seventeen percent of children have a developmental or behavioral disability such as autism, mental retardation, or ADHD. Many children have delays in language or other areas. When a developmental delay is not recognized early, it can make it hard for them to learn when they start school. Many times delays are overlooked or missed by parents, physicians and educators. Intervening early means improved outcomes for children. In 2006, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommended standardized, validated screening tests at 9, 18, 24, and 30 month visits. Because that is not widely implemented, fellowships are provided for new doctors to help practices incorporate validated screening tools into office workflow. The physicians' network of the Collaboration was formed in 2008 to promote the use of developmental screening tools to local pediatric and family practice offices and share experiences with the screening and referral system. HIPPA and SHERPA limits flow of information, however. Data is being collected as to how assessments or services are being paid; mostly it is through insurance or private parent pay.

Cherise Philips of Little Beginnings spoke about how the children of her center have benefited from the help of the Collaboration with the use of the ASQ screening tools. The training and support that has been provided has allowed the center to receive a higher rating and thus a higher reimbursement from the state, which is used to increase staff salaries and buy equipment.

The Collaboration's benchmark is to be able to say that the percentage of students being screened and receiving services is growing. It looks to Districts 90 and 97 to give aggregate numbers of kindergarten and first graders with IEPs. The object is for the children not to stay in those programs for as long. This a piece that continues to be examined.

Mr. Phelan reflected that an increasing percentage of students screened are from River Forest. He asked how successful the efforts have been to encourage River Forest to participate. Ms. Newberry Schwartz noted that the focus was to engage and involve providers first. District 90 was asked to participate in Population EDI or Development Institute, but the timing was not good and it questioned the relevancy to River Forest. However, Ms. Newberry-Schwartz will be making a presentation to the Trustees of the Village of River Forest about the work the Collaboration is doing to nurture the relationship. Ms. Pavlicek noted that the responsibility to expand the IGA falls on the elective bodies and it is incumbent on them to work that plan forward so that it is a true partnership.

Call to Board

What are the 2 or 3 risks, obstacles, challenges or threats that would undermine the collaboration from reaching its goals? The response was that threats are tracked carefully and take proactive measures are taken. It is important to get good information about the children. Senate Bill 16 has ramifications within Oak Park and River Forest and it is important to make sure people have the information they need to make good decisions. The Collaboration works to position itself. Ms. Newberry Schwartz is meeting with the Governor's Office and the Federal Home Visiting Program. It is aligning its program, tapping into training and databases (free services) and we complete reports for them. They are now talking about how to integrate Oak Park. The White House has asked for names of communities who are doing things for preschool and that may offer an ability to leverage. The Home Visitation Program will take about 1 year with the ramp up of families to take a really deep look at the measures of quality and not just the case loads. Not all of the data is as good as hoped and adjustments are being made. While there are not enough services to go around, children still need to be identified.

Ms. Lueck stated that as the Collaboration is able to describe the children's strengths and needs that information will be used to inform programming at District 97 and District 200. Bob Spatz serves on the Illinois Data Research and Evaluation Committee and from that he knows what the Collaboration is doing is very different from what most communities other are doing. The Collaboration is trying to reach all

families community wide and it is gaining attention for what is being accomplished. A danger to be faced is that of finding the balance of being impressed with the accomplishment and not being satisfied with the work that has been done. While fragmentation makes this work hard to do, the Collaboration is decades ahead of others.

Ms. Ott stated that the real value is how it will impact people over the course of time. Has the Collaboration considered what will be reported? Ms. Newberry Schwartz stated that the market for it will be the Children's assessment/ASQSE, a screening, and KTRT. The reason Chaplin Hall was so excited about working with the Collaboration is that it will be able to watch these students. Imagine looking at the children through eighth grade and then expanding that unit to the high school.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if there were any sense of mobility. One of the 3 families in subsidized housing left because the housing was too high. It was unclear if the Collaboration could ask centers to survey the families as to how long they had lived in Oak Park or how long the children have been involved. It is a broader policy discussion for Oak Park. The discussion is occurring in IGOV.

Ms. Felton noted that because the IGA was created if something is not working or something needs to be revisited, the Board was open to helping in that area.

Issues, Concerns and Topics for Future Agendas

The next meetings are scheduled for February 25 and May 6, 2015.

Public Comments

Wendy Gardina, resident of 527 N. Elmwood, Oak Park, represented Parenthesis. She has two children at District 97, is a 14-year resident, and her husband grew up in this area. The Collaboration is what makes her proud to live here; it is important for all students in Oak Park. A recent New York Time article states that early childhood intervention is the only intervention that works.

Ms. Ott moved to adjourn its meeting; seconded by Mr. Tucker. A voice vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Mr. Spatz moved to adjourn the District 97 meeting; seconded by Ms. Sacks. A voice vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

At 8:42 p.m., Mr. Phelan moved to adjourn the District 20 meeting; seconded by Mr. Weissglass. A voice vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

John Phelan
President