

OAK PARK AND RIVER FOREST HIGH SCHOOL
201 North Scoville Avenue
Oak Park, IL 60302

Joint Policy Evaluation and Goals and Instruction Committee Meeting

April 14, 2015

Minutes

A Joint Policy Evaluation and Goals Committee and Instruction Committee meeting was held on April 14, 2015. Dr. Moore called the Joint Policy Evaluation and Goals Committee and Instruction Committee meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Board Room. PEG Committee members present were Dr. Jackie Moore, Thomas F. Cofsky, and Sharon Patchak-Layman. Instruction Committee members present were Dr. Jackie Moore and Sharon Patchak-Layman. Also present were Dr. Steven T. Isoye, Superintendent; Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction; Tod Altenburg, Chief School Business Official; Michael Carioscio, Chief Information Officer; David Ruhland, Director of Human Resources; Sheila Hardin, Faculty Senate Executive Committee Chair; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

Visitors included Philip Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; John Phelan, Ralph Lee, Sharon Patchak-Layman, Board of Education members; Matt Kirkpatrick, Science Division Head, Allison Hennings, Tom Kennedy, Christina Smith, Ryan VenHorst, Ben Cain, Kyle Farley, and Kevin McCarron, Science teachers; Jonathan Silver and Michael Byers, OPRFHS SIDs; Aleta Clarity; Bonnie Breyer, Josh Zucker, Ryan Borgdorff, Ireland Flannery, Oskar Mueller, Liam Cribbin, Connor Grimes; students; Fred Arkin, Vickie Casson, Aleta Clardy, and Sara Spivy, community members; and Michael Romain of the *Wednesday Journal*.

Public Comments

None

Approval of Instruction Committee Minutes

Mr. Cofsky moved to approve the Policy, Evaluation, and Goals Committee minutes of March 16, 2015, as presented; seconded by Ms. Patchak-Layman. A voice vote resulted in motion carried.

Approval of Policy Committee Minutes

Dr. Moore moved to approve the Instruction Committee minutes of March 16, 2015, as presented; seconded by Ms. Patchak-Layman. A voice vote resulted in motion carried.

Racial Inequity in the Disciplinary System

Students Ireland Flannery, Oskar Mueller, Liam Cribbin, and Connor Grimes presented a report: The School to Prison Pipeline: Examining Racial Inequities within the OPRFHS Disciplinary System. The AP class in which they were in, studied biases and justice through books such as *The Crucible*, *The Things They Carried*, and *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*. The class studied three topics: 1) lack of racial diversity in staff, 2) the racial divide in higher level classes, and 3) the racial disparities in the school's disciplinary system and decided to dig deeper in to the school's disciplinary system.

The students found that racial disparities are not uncommon in other schools with similar demographics. Races are institutionally separated into different social and academic levels. The UCLA student concluded that African-Americans receive more infractions than whites and other races, and in some instances more infractions than all of the other races combined. Racial disparities and inequalities' appear

not only in the OPRFHS classroom, but on athletic teams, during lunch periods and in detention rooms. While black students make up 25.5% of the school, they are receiving over half of all subjective punishments, according to last year's school's discipline report. The students noted an inconsistency throughout the security system. A poll of their class showed that most of the white students have never or have rarely been stopped in the halls for not wearing their IDs, while many students of other races are stopped often. Therefore, these students wanted further implementation of the Restorative Justice Program, as it essentially means teaching the student who misbehaved what was done wrong and offers that student a chance to repair the harm that he/she caused. They felt that Restorative Justice Program would reduce the overall number of infractions and it could be combined with an enhanced professional system to help combat the bias that teachers may subconsciously carry with them.

Lack of Racial Diversity in the Classroom and Amongst Faculty

Students Bonnie Breyer, Josh Zucker, and Ryan Borgdorff presented a report on OPRFHS's lack of racially diverse learning environments. The AP class in which these students were in, had investigated the disparities in the racial diversity of classes at OPRFHS. After researching several instances of this issue at other schools across the country, they decided that addressing this issue should become a high priority at OPRFHS. In most schools, honors classes are dominated by white students, which makes enrolling higher level classes difficult or uncomfortable for black students and other minorities. At a high school in New Jersey, an African-American girl was denied access to the advanced-level math class. She had qualifying grades and test scores, but she lacked the teacher recommendations required to join the class. OPRFHS has the same issue. The achievement gap (highlighted by the racial disparity between the honors and lower level classes) is clearly visible. Even though OPRFHS is a diverse school, most honors and AP classes are filled with white students, leaving minorities to fight for academic appreciation in less rigorous courses.

Their AP class started its investigation by reading articles about white privilege, in addition to reading the autobiography of Frederick Douglass and discussing the origins of racial inequalities in the United States. They then accessed information regarding the racial makeups of various classes, both honors and transition, at OPRFHS. The conclusion they drew from this data and from the data on teacher diversity acquired from the Human Resources Department at OPRFHS was that the racial makeup of the faculty and of the classes at OPRFHS are not proportional to the racial makeup of the school. Discussions occurred with some of the administrators. They generated some possible preliminary measures to take to further the process of diversifying classes, while understanding that the solution is a more widespread adaptation than they could hope to achieve in a few weeks.

- 1) Ensure that teachers of classes at all levels be equipped to support students of all racial and cultural backgrounds. As such, the hiring committees should be made as diverse as possible and hold discussions about the goals of hiring.
- 2) Alter and expand the class recommendation system. Include a more comprehensive recommendation system that would include not only test scores, but also conversations between teachers, students, and parents, and more narrative reports that convey a student's actual ability to succeed in an academic environment. A more in-depth recommendation system would allow students to understand their placement, resulting in less parent overrides and potentially in students challenging themselves in the future rather than just accepting a simple class recommendation.
- 3) Evaluate class placements by students, with the support of teachers and parents, in order to succeed potentially in a higher level class.
- 4) Increase awareness among students and teachers with an institute day for all faculty and students to have a school-wide discussion on race and racial equality.

Update from Science and Technology Division

There was unanimous support to move the report from the Science and Technology Division to the full Board of Education at its regular April meeting as an informational item. The Science and Technology Division provided information about the courses and initiatives that support the division's mission statement. The initiatives taken on by science and technology faculty included:

- Biology Enriched courses: science teachers team with literacy coaches to enrich the course for 9th graders who enter OPRFHS at reading and/or writing levels below grade.
- Project Physics: a revised curriculum uses projects, field trips, and real world problems to build Engagement in science for students with limited interest in this content area.
- Investigative Research, Design, and Innovation (IRDI): students produce research projects qualified to participate in the Junior Science and Humanities Symposia at Loyola University.
- Geometry In Construction: math and technology teachers collaborate to teach application of math and science to construct actual building projects.
- Extracurricular STEM Projects: after-school mentoring of students interested in hands-on science projects.
- Business and University Partnerships: teachers are collaborating with Northrop Grumman, the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), NASA, and Triton College to bring real-world learning experiences to our students.

Also discussed were the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), which are the new set of learning standards for science institute by Illinois for the 2015-2016 school year.

Science initiatives include an extracurricular VEX Robotics team for fall 2015 and writing integrated curricular sequences for math, science and engineer courses. Students would experience connected and complementary instruction in each of these core classes. To accomplish these goals and continue the work outlined in various courses, the division requires updated multipurpose classroom spaces to accommodate innovative ideas in instruction and increased student participation in hands-on applications of learning.

Next Steps on Classroom Technology Integration Plan (CTIP)

There was unanimous support for the CTIP Phase II recommendations to be moved forward to the Board of Education for approval at its regular April meeting. Those recommendations were: device decision for Chromebooks, the timing would be January 2016 for 400 to 500 students with a budget of \$200,000 (500 devices @\$400/device), which was included in the 2015-16 budget, and professional development for CTIP. Mr. Carioscio reviewed the CTIP classroom impact, its organizational readiness and the interaction of PARCC and CTIP. He also provided a platform/device evaluation, the CTIP budget impact and professional development.

Approximately 2,434 students and 25 teachers had been impacted by CTIP. The ISTE Student Standards approached communication and collaboration, research and information fluency, critical thinking, problem solving, and decision-making. The ISTE Teacher Standards approach facilitates and inspires student learning and creativity, design and develop digital-age learning experiences, assessments and model digital-age work and learning. Future consideration for ISTE Student Standards were critical thinking, problem solving and decision-making, digital citizenship, and technology operations and concepts. Future consideration for ISTE Teacher Standards were design and develop digital-age learning experiences and assessments, promote model digital citizenship and responsibility, and engage in professional growth and leadership.

Surveys indicated that the areas of celebration were technology access and that students and teachers have good foundational skills. Areas of future focus are professional development, digital citizenship, and creation versus consumption.

With regard to test results, 98% of freshmen took their ELA Performance-Based Assessment, 96% of Algebra 1-2 students took their PBA, minimal technical difficulty—Chromebooks worked well; students were comfortable with the platform, but some spaces were too small.

More time is needed for technology professional development in digital citizenship and creation versus consumption. PD needs to be job-embedded and ongoing. The PD committees are working on how to best fulfil the PD needs.

A chart showing the comparison usage of devices was included. By far, Chromebook usage dominates. The trend is going with Chromebooks. OPRFHS feels that Chromebooks are best for it. The Platform/Device evaluation sum score was 24.05 for Chromebook and 19.23 for IPAD. The components of the evaluation included:

- 1) How easy was it to create content on the device?
- 2) How easy was the device to use?
- 3) What were the key device features?
- 4) How well did the device fit into the environment?
- 5) How easy was the device to manage and support?

IPADs are not shareable devices. IPads cost \$849 and Chromebooks cost of \$400. While a detailed analysis yet needs to be completed, an anticipated .5 to 1.5 additional FTE for increased device support would be needed for full 1:1 usage.

The Administration recommends the purchase of Chromebooks. Students have demonstrated adaptability in learning the Chromebooks. With an IPAD, they cannot be shared. Chromebooks can be utilized in many situations. The District will continue to IPADS in assistive technology area and with reading programs. The role is to pick the right device so that students can benefit. Timing is to move forward with next step. January 2016 allow students to take devices home. The Budget would be \$200,000.

In order for teachers to get into the pilot they must have a plan as to what they intend to do. The District has lunch and learns, website techs, and is looking at different ways to provide training. One member was concerned about the skill level of teachers with technology, i.e., websites, blogs, assignments, texting to send assignments. Ms. Patchak-Layman felt a communication component with families was needed, a range of parental expectations, what happens in the classroom, etc.

Second Semester Discipline Report

There was unanimous support for moving forward to the Board of Education the 2014-15 first semester student discipline report as an informational item at its regular April meeting. Tables were provided that showed the following:

- The total number of infractions decreased by 7% from second semester of the 2013-2014 school year.
- Class III infractions account for 88% of total infractions committed by students.
- Sophomore students incurred a higher percentage of infractions than all other classes first semester, just as they did when they were the freshman class during second semester last school year.
- The number of offenses committed in each category decreased from second semester last school year to first semester this year, with the exception of Class I infractions. The highest proportional

decrease occurred for Class V offenses, where there were 7 offenses committed second semester last school year, while not a single offense in this category occurred first semester this school year.

Discussion ensued. The Board of Education had asked that the District look at student grades, craft a model, remove failure to serve consequences, and provide narratives that spoke to restorative justice in order to change student behavior positively. One member noted that the Parent Teacher Advisory Committee was going to recommend the hiring of an attendance interventionist coordinator who would intervene with students on attendance issues.

Parent Teacher Advisory Committee Report

There was unanimous support for moving the Parent Teacher Advisory Committee report forward to the full Board of Education as an informational item at its regular April meeting. Illinois School Code and Board Policy 2:150 requires the formation of a Parent/Teacher Advisory Committee to assist in the development of student discipline policy and procedure. An email was sent out to the faculty/staff asking for a member from each division to participate on this committee. Selections were made based on who responded to the email request first per division. Counselors and Student Intervention Directors (SIDS) were also asked to recommend parents and students on their caseloads for this committee. Community members who have direct involvement with the high school were also asked to participate. The committee members are: Lauren Achurra (Faculty), Brian Beyers (SID), Janel Bishop (SID), Qiana Carswell (Parent), Aleta Clardy, (Parent), Linda Francis (Parent), Steve Gevinson (BOE), Naomi Hildner (Faculty), Stephen Jackson (Parent), Justin Maxwell (Student), Nate Rouse (Chair), Carolina Schoenbeck (Faculty), Jonathan Silver (SID) and Alisa Walton (SID). Included in the report were the agendas and minutes of the meetings. A request was made to add a Student Interventionist Director. A summary report of the recommendations for the 2015-16 Code of Conduct will be provided in May.

Update on VOYCE

The District is looking to have a student-led discussion at the beginning of May. Ms. Sullivan will craft the communication to the community.

New Business

None

Adjournment

At 8:50 p.m., Dr. Moore moved to adjourn the PEG Committee Meeting; seconded by Mr. Cofsky. A voice vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

At 8:51 p.m., Dr. Moore moved to adjourn the Instruction Committee Meeting; seconded by Ms. Patchak-Layman. A voice vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Submitted by Gail Kalmerton
Clerk of the Board