

## Oak Park and River Forest High School

### **Parent Teacher Advisory Committee (PTAC)**

#### **Conference Room 201**

**Thursday, March 26, 2015; 3:30 – 5:00 pm**

**Present:** Lauren Achurra (Faculty), Brian Beyers (SID), Janel Bishop (SID), Qiana Carswell (Parent), Aleta Clardy (Parent), Linda Francis (Parent), Naomi Hildner (Faculty), Stephen Jackson (Parent), Nate Rouse (Chair), Carolina Schoenbeck (Faculty) Jonathan Silver (SID), Alisa Walton (SID), Deloris Collins (Recorder)

**Absent:** Steve Gevinson (BOE), Justin Maxwell (Student)

**Visitors:** Sharon Patchak-Layman

#### **Call to Order & Roll Call:**

The Parent Teacher Advisory Committee (PTAC) meeting was held on Thursday, March 26, 2015 in Conference Room 201. Nate Rouse called the meeting to order at 3:35 pm.

#### **Approval of Minutes:**

A motion to approve the minutes of March 19, 2015 was made by Carolina Schoenbeck. The motion was seconded by Linda Francis and approved by all

#### **Visitor Comments:**

None

#### **1<sup>st</sup> Semester Discipline Report (Draft):**

The 1<sup>st</sup> semester discipline report for the 2014-15 school year was reviewed. There were no Level 5 infractions and no expulsions for this semester. Total infractions decreased by 7% from last year's numbers. It was highlighted from the report that 80% of referrals were attributed to failure to serve detentions and that a disproportionate amount (54%) were African American students. Mr. Silver will check to pull out the numbers, minus the failure to serve detentions. The report revealed that students with IEPs accounted for 28% of 1<sup>st</sup> semester offenses. African American students in this category received 60% of the offenses. Thru the Suspension Reduction Program, 145 days were saved by students attending counseling and other services.

It was questioned how do we deal with students who are given discipline infractions versus other Caucasian classmates who are not given infractions for the same behavior in the classroom. Have we looked at the discipline numbers versus a national norm for comparisons and where we sit with similar high schools. A member responded that the

proximity to Chicago borders and the number of students attending this school have us at a better place with fighting, drugs, gangs as we don't have as many. The text-to-tip hotline featured on the back of the IDs has gotten some results. The SIDs respond to all the concerns that come over this hotline. Anonymous tips also come thru the line. Drugs are a police matter and if those reporting this issue divulge their name, this information is shared with the police. As we look at the race of who is being in the discipline statistics and they are Caucasian, we do investigate, regardless of race. There are many things that impact the way that African American kids act. There are not enough activities and not enough safe spaces. Some spaces are not welcoming or friendly for kids to just hang out. We have worked to increase our clubs and activities by 5% over the past few years, however all kids don't want to be part of a club. Some of the behaviors start early in elementary school, it was questioned if we could address District 97 so that leadership would work together to tackle some of the issues. The 8-9 Connection Program targets and syncs the kids before they get to the high school. Freshman Seminar was a program that also addressed some of these issues.

### **Code of Conduct:**

It was questioned if there is a sense as to how successful in changing behaviors and trends that are seen by the SIDs have we been. In-school suspension for not serving detentions is a problem and this detention does not decrease the behavior.

It was suggested that if there was an attendance person, someone to meet with parents and to call and talk to the parents to get the kids in class. This person would intervene on attendance issues only and come up with solutions on how to stop the behavior. The root cause of some of the discipline stats we have is attendance. There are large equity issues between parents who know the culture and the system versus parents who don't know how to advocate effectively for their students. An attendance dean was requested a few years ago but others thought that this person would only be giving consequences.

A recommendation was made to hire a full time attendance intervention specialist. It was questioned what are the benefits of this person versus having a counselor who can provide a holistic approach to the student. It was answered that counselors don't address attendance. The PSS team works with the SIDs however all attendance issues interface with the parents. This attendance intervention specialist would be the point person that the students go to before there is a problem. The Tardy Procedures state that after 21 tardys the students meet with their SID, however the SIDs meet with students many times prior to this point. It was shared that there is a proposal for an additional PSS team that's going forward in April to the BOE.

### **Next Steps:**

Mr. Rouse will write up the recommendation to give to the BOE. He solicited the committee to have a person to present the work that we have been discussing during the

Board's Policy or Instruction Meetings in April. The committee asked Ms. Clardy to spearhead this presentation.

**Adjournment:**

Mr. Rouse moved to adjourn the PTAC Meeting at 5:12 p.m. The move was seconded by Ms. Clardy and Ms. Walton.