

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

Policy Evaluation and Goals Committee
 January 21, 2015

A Policy Evaluation and Goals Committee meeting was held on January 21, 2015. Dr. Moore called the meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. in the Board Room. Committee members present were Dr. Jackie Moore, Thomas S. Cofsky, and Sharon Patchak-Layman. Also present were Dr. Steven T. Isoye, Superintendent; David Ruhland, Director of Human Resources; Nathaniel L. Rouse, Principal; Sheila Hardin, Faculty Senate Executive Committee Chair; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

Visitors: Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction; and Jonathan Silver, Student Interventionist Director

Visitor Comment

None

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Patchak-Layman moved to approve the minutes of the December 9, 2014 Policy Evaluation and Goals Committee, as presented; seconded by Dr. Moore. A voice vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Policies for First Reading

The Policy Committee reviewed the following policies for first reading. The Committee unanimously recommended that these policies be moved to the Board of Education for approval of first reading at its January Board of Education meeting, if the questions regarding Policies 4:45 and 6:340 could be resolved.

Action and Policy	Explanation
4:45 Insufficient Checks and Debt Recovery	Language under insufficient fund checks has been modified to give more flexibility in how fees are handled. For delinquent debt recovery there is information about the Illinois Office of Comptroller's Office of Debt Recovery Program. The administration recommended the amendment of PRESS which was to keep only the first sentence in that section of the policy as OPRFHS does not use that program. Exploration would continue about the efficacy of the comptroller's program.
5:185 Family and Medical Leave	Several modifications 1) a sentence was added regarding an employee's ability to use FMLA, 2) multiple definitions were replaced with a reference to "federal rules," 3) eligibility was reviewed by our attorney and is aligned with our collective bargaining agreements, and 4) under certification required language about "complete and sufficient" was added.
6:340 Student Testing and Assessment Program	Cross references and legal references, along with language in regards to PARCC have been updated. New 3 is more informative and is not stating the district's responsibility or desire to track achievement of students beyond PARCC. Questions arose about removing the old 3 and Dr. Isoye will contact IASB to get resolve. Pending that research, if it seems like the District can add in the old 3 and not have any more deliberation, then it will move forward to the Board of Education. If not, it will be remanded back to Policy. Does the old 3 show up anywhere else in the policies? Which

	policies would reference the tracking of all students? Dr. Isoye that other policies on state assessment were in the pipeline to bring forward.
7:270 Administering Medicines to Students	A few edits for clarification. Largest edit is in regards to Undesignated Epinephrine Auto-Injectors. Based on feedback from the nurses, the District should keep the option as presented.

Student Discipline Retreat

Mr. Richard Gray will present at the January 29, 2015 Board of Education meeting. Committee members were asked for feedback on the information in the packet so that Mr. Gray could address those issues in his presentation. Questions/comments that arose included:

- 1) Are culture and discipline philosophy meant to be interchangeable? One member noted that critical action was needed on student voice and engagement. The most critical piece is what are students being asked to define—culture or discipline philosophy?
- 2) What are black, student-specific programs? They include a lockdown on February 20, supervised by faculty and staff, to talk about topics mentioned at the discipline retreat and at Black Professionals’ Day.
- 3) What can the school do to engage more students? Why are they not more involved? Are they babysitting, working, or just do not feel engaged?
- 4) While the school has some exploratory phases of restorative principles and practices, it has no intentional program set up across the school. How can this be expanded and in what timeframe? Which students and teachers are participating in Peace Circles? One member reflected that these comments suggest something more uniform and standardized instead of saying if it works bring it to scale. In one person’s mind, piloting was about teachers/groups doing this individually.
- 5) What was the positive student feedback on his/her experiences?
- 6) Which issues are most critical from a timing standpoint? What is the prioritization?

Discussion ensued about the format of the presentation. A suggestion was made to start with presentation made at the retreat, the notes from the small group sessions, and a reference as to how they transferred to the action plan. Why were some things noted at the retreat but not in the presentation? Were they outliers? While many things are going on in the District, the Board of Education lacks knowledge as to where the activity ends up and if that is something that can move into this activity, i.e., the study projects of students who attended MSAN’s student conferences, the District’s own racial equity groups, DELT, etc. Perhaps a student leadership team could be commenced. Where would this fall within the Strategic Plan’s Implementation Teams or is this a silo happening at the same time? The administration noted that the Strategic Plan’s Oversight Committee is finding some things to be challenging and has scheduled an all-day retreat to brainstorm on how to smooth out the process. The Committee struggles with the question of when something is an Implementation Committee issue and when is it not. An example used was the difference between culture and climate. Many external people and students have the perception that OPRFHS is 2 schools. Is that a broad question or a specific question? A suggestion was to use a recommended organization that does student leadership to help build student discussions and put the question in the students’ voice and interest. Students are aware of the issues, have ideas about solving them and the Board of Education should consider getting more information from the consultant as to how best to achieve that information.

Absence Code of Conduct

The report regarding the absence change in the Code of Conduct first semester provided in the packet was in response to requests from Board of Education members. It was explained that F=fail, P=Pass, and N=No credit. If a student gets an F, he/she will not get credit for the class and that will impact his/her GPA. An N does not factor into the GPA. Incompletes are given generally because of medical reasons, etc., but if the work is not completed within six weeks, an incomplete will convert to an F. If a student has NP or NF, he/she would need to retake the class if it is required for graduation. If it is an elective class, it would not have to be retaken. It was suggested that a legend be included in the report to the Board of Education.

The Parent Teacher Advisory Committee (PTAC) changed the policy from 2013-14 in an effort to cut down on lost instruction. In the past when a student received 4 unexcused absences, they could then appeal to the SID, the counselor, and the teacher and a plan would be worked out to keep the student in class. They were only dropped from the class if they continued to be absent. When they were dropped, they were assigned to study halls, and often did not report. PTAC recommended that when a student reaches 6 unexcused absences, he/she receives an N grade but is not dropped from the class. An appeal is automatically evoked at the end of the semester. The result of that change is as follows:

- 96 NP/NF grades were given (students who withdrew were omitted).
- 36 NP/NF grades were reversed (37.5%).
- 48 were given NF (50%) grades. Please note that in these instances keeping the NF benefitted the student because the NF grade does NOT factor into the GPA.
- 12 were given NP grades (12.5%).

It is working on a way to collect data on an ongoing basis to see if this process is effective. As a member of PTAC, Dr. Moore recalled the teachers welcoming the ability to be part of the decision as to whether a student was allowed to stay in class. When the process included 4 unexcused absences, teachers did advocate for the student staying in class.

Generally the 64 students who received NP/NF grades had only 1 or 2. Many times the parents did not call the student out on that day; if it were a parent mistake, it was removed. Students that continue to miss class are put into credit recovery classes.

PSS Teams look for those places/similarities that a red flags and take proactive measures. The amount of time that counselors spend doing this work does cut into the time they spend with other students on general counseling.

A question was asked about whether students whose aspirations were to attain a certain grade but were not, were opting for the N grade. While this has not been the reaction, a concern exists about the students who are so disengaged getting the N grade and the impact they have on the rest of the class. One member felt that more emphasis should be placed on why a student is desperate to be out of class and determine if the reasons are social emotional or are because of other disengagements.

It was the consensus of the committee that this would not go to the full Board of Education at this time. It will be discussed again in the February PEG meeting. Dr. Moore will meet with Dr.

Isoye and Mr. Rouse about PTAC and next steps. One member asked that this committee have input into the composition of the next PTAC.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.