

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

INSTRUCTION COMMITTEE MEETING
May 17, 2016

An Instruction Committee meeting was held on May 17, 2016. Dr. Gevinson called the meeting was called to order at 4:34 p.m. in the Board Room. Committee members present were Fred Arkin, and Dr. Steve Gevinson, and Dr. Jackie Moore. Also present were Dr. Steven T. Isoye, Superintendent; Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Nathaniel L. Rouse, Principal; Sheila Hardin, Faculty Senate Executive Committee Chair; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

Visitors: Jennifer Cassell and Tom Cofsky, Board of Education members; Jason Dennis, Assistant Principal for Instruction

Public Comments

None

Minutes

Mr. Arkin moved to approve the minutes of the April 19, 2016 Instruction Committee meeting, as presented; seconded by Dr. Gevinson. A voice vote resulted in motion carried.

Provisional Textbook

The Instruction Committee unanimously recommended that the Board of Education approves the adoption of these instructional materials for the courses as presented at its regular Board of Education meeting.

Discussion occurred about having a conversation with ACT about the form used for instructional materials to ensure that a consciousness existed about culture and race. A question could be asked of students if they saw themselves in the text related to race and gender, as a metric for meeting a certain bar. Dr. Gevinson noted that the English Department had for decades looked carefully at multicultural literature and expanded the readings, but that had not included amending the form. He continued that Peter Kahn was hired to bring Black literature into the division in a more intentional way.

Test Prep

Amy presented a brief summary as to what it would take to provide test prep for students who qualified for free and reduced lunch. Dr. Gevinson stated that the process could be an opportunity to assess the adequacy of the current services in this area, especially as it related to successful programs, i.e., Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID). The AVID program's only focus is to assure that all of the students enrolled in the program were able to enroll in a four-year college. He was unsure of how lasting the results were of the test prep programs.

Ms. Hill stated that the best way to determine if test prep were beneficial would be the test score. However, other factors exist, i.e., courses are taken previously to the test, etc., that affect scores. However, a positive correlation between test prep classes and student scores on the ACT does exist. No clear distinction between one test prep program and another exists, as the student scores were similar with all of the programs that had been used. As this has been a discussion at APPLE, by Chicago Public Schools and this Committee previously, Mr. Arkin felt that if there were a significant value to it, then the District would want to make sure all students have access to it. Dr. Moore asked if the District were providing access to the test prep courses as a way to address the equity piece. Access is important, and

the Committee wanted to know how many students were taking advantage of it as opposed to going to outside sources. That would help determine the need. Dr. Gevinson asked if the Committee could have a comparison report at the June meeting.

Student Growth

The Instruction Committee unanimously recommended that the Update on Student Growth Workgroup report be moved to the full Board of Education at its regular meeting as an informational item.

In 2010, the State of Illinois passed the Performance Evaluation Reform Act, which mandates that public school districts design and implement teacher evaluation systems that incorporate measures of student growth. A process acceptable to faculty and administrators must be determined by the start of the 2016-2017 school year or the District will be required to adopt the state-recommended model as detailed in the administrative guidelines that accompany the law.

The faculty and administrator workgroup has operated with the goal of meeting the state requirement and determining a shared aim for the entire school and community: to continue our processes of instructional improvement and increase student achievement. To develop a student growth system that suits the local needs of our high school (students, faculty, and administration), a team of faculty and administrators has been researching the issue and meeting over the past 3 years school years to develop a process for incorporating student growth models into teacher evaluation processes in the 2016-2017 school year.

The committee has been a collaborative and shared experience. Sheila Hardin and Phil Prale co-lead the committee composed equally of faculty and administrators. The committee used a transparent set of agreements, planning and sharing materials as partners at every step of the process. Briefly, the process of measuring student growth involves choosing classroom assessments, defining the measurement model, determining baseline and target growth measures, and then setting growth thresholds. For the next two school years, student growth measures will comprise 25% of the summative ratings of teacher evaluations. Following that, the student growth portion will increase to 30%. Each aspect of the process invites the participation of both teachers and evaluators, and maintaining a workable and relevant process is essential to student growth models that add value to our instructional practices. The faculty and administrator workgroup has agreed to all elements required under the law to implement the teacher evaluation model. The belief is that the teacher evaluation system to which all parties have agreed includes a student growth model that is both workable and meaningful. As many as 50 people were able to view the document through the use of Google docs during this process of development. Teachers and administrators are embracing the trust that has developed.

This system was presented at the Faculty Senate meeting the day before, and will be included with the minutes. Time will also be devoted to it at the Institute Day on August 18.

The Committee asked for a copy of the document.

Dr. Gevinson asked if the District felt it was a good educational practice to evaluate teachers by student performance. The response was that the teacher evaluation is still driven by self-evaluation and observation. The District will try to make student growth a part of the self-evaluation and observation process. Student outcomes do matter and having teachers talk about that in a way that is reflected by course-alike teams is good. Ms. Hardin stated that the team tried to make it as meaningful as possible for teachers, so that it works in each division, i.e., Special Education classes will be different from Fresh Algebra classes, etc. Had it not been prescribed by law, student growth would not have been included in the evaluation process. The administration felt the process was a good idea, as conversations have occurred and anytime there is collaboration, it is worthwhile.

New Business

None

Adjournment

At 5:05 p.m., on May 17, 2016, Mr. Arkin moved to adjourn the Instruction Committee meeting; seconded by Dr. Moore. A voice vote resulted in motion carried.

Submitted by
Gail Kalmerton
Clerk of the Board