An Instruction Committee meeting of the Whole Board was held on Thursday, May 21, 2009 in the Board Room. Dr. Millard opened the meeting at 7:35 a.m. Committee members present were John C. Allen, IV, Jacques A. Conway, Terry Finnegan (arrived at 9:05 a.m.), Dr. Ralph H. Lee, Amy McCormack, Dr. Dietra D. Millard, and Sharon Patchak Layman. Also present were: Dr. Attila J. Weninger, Superintendent; Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Amy Hill, Director of Research and Assessment; Nathaniel L. Rouse, Principal; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

Visitors included Kay Foran, OPRFHS Community Relations and Communications Coordinator; Bill Grosser, John Costopoulos, Allison Hennings, John Condne, Science Allison Hennings: Students Dan Kowalczyk, Conor Kovats, Katie Kurtz, Danielle Zarbin, Donald Vogel, Division Head for Business/Media/Library Services; James Hunter, Faculty Senate Executive Committee Chair; and Chuck Feldman of the Oak Leaves.

**Approval of April Instruction Committee Minutes**

It was the consensus of the Instruction Committee members to accept the April 23, 2009 minutes, as presented.

**Percy Julian Symposium**

Mr. Grosser reported that the Percy Julian Symposium was in its tenth year. Its goal is to introduce Percy Julian to the community at large. Norm Teclaw now of the Institute of Science and Technology but formerly an OPRFHS teacher and John Condne who worked collaboratively on some ideas to combine the symposium with the teaching of TV, Film, and Newsscene. A five-minute video had been produced on the symposium and it was shared with the committee. Katie Kurtz and Danielle Zarbin were asked to help with this video. They researched information on Percy Julian, wrote the script, and did the voice over.

Ms. Hennings was proud to have 16 groups of students participate in symposium. The bar was raised this year by having the students doing original research centers.

Second place winners Dan Kowalczyk and Conor Kovats talked about their research about bacteria.

Mr. Costopoulos thanked Dr. Weninger for his suggestions for the symposium. There were presentations from Fenwick High School, Providence St. Mel High School, Lincoln Park High school and others, as well as OPRFHS, and Mr. Edgecombe was the MC.
The 16 judges came from local universities, patent law firms, etc. Kent Taylor, from the community, spoke on global warming. There was also a panel talking about different science careers. This was followed by an award ceremony. Students received certificates regardless of whether or not they were competitive. The top award was given to Clarence George of Lincoln Park High School. Winners received $2,600 in cash awards and numerous gift items. This was a tremendous improvement over previous events.

This symposium is open to all teachers; the Institute of Science and Technology just puts the symposium together. A goal is to have symposiums at sites other than OPRFHS. Nearly all OPRFHS students who participated in the symposium came from the biology or AP biology classes. Historically, the projects have been in every category, not necessarily just the class the student was taking. The symposium is publicized at the schools and Ms. Hennings is a teacher who eagerly promotes it. Many students are interested, but they do not make the final cut. There were no statistics for gender or race.

Dr. Lee expressed his appreciation to the entire faculty involved and especially to Mr. Teclaw who demonstrated more than anything else, the value of raw persistence. Dr. Lee understood what kind of work goes into something like this to keep it going.

Dr. Millard applauded the students who were participated in this.

School Library Per Capita Grant Report
The written report included the following information.

“The library is required by the rules of the State Library Grant administered by the Secretary of State to annually report to the Board of Education, in an area selected by the staff, on the library’s progress toward meeting the Illinois standards for school libraries as outlined in the Linking for Learning: The Illinois School Library Media Program Guidelines, 2nd ed. 2005. The library receives .75 per capita for each student enrolled on October 1.” The focus of the library learning team this year was an updating of the library mission statement and implementation goals. The revised mission/goal statement was attached. The library staff continues the process of identifying areas of strengths and weaknesses in developing a plan of action for next year.

This is an informational item only.”

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked how technology and research was being integrated into the curriculum and what the teacher access was. What is being introduced to the library? Mr. Vogel stated that the library continuously adds new databases and as a result has reduced the book collection in the last five years. The collection has gone from 55,000 volumes to 35,000 volumes. Library staff continues to explore different avenues with the Oak Park Public Library so as not to duplicate efforts. If students live in Oak Park, they may have a library card. The difficulty is that River Forest students would not have
that same privilege. Students also have the ability to log on to the databases from their homes.

Mr. Vogel replied that the third floor of the library is used primarily as a place for students to attend study hall. The number of classes that use the second floor has increased. Because everything is now web-based, one can go to labs to access the material and librarians traveled to the labs if that was where they were needed. The number of students using resources from home continues to increase.

**Update on RtI Planning**
The Committee members were informed of the conversations that the school has had regarding the State of Illinois’ mandate for Response to Intervention (RtI).

Dr. Paplaczyk stated that her personal interest is data. She researched 15 years of due process information in the State of Illinois for her doctorate. She wanted to find out what the biggest issues were. Parental objection to a special education placement was the number one objection. She had looked at the RtI model as a way to provide intervention sooner than is presently being done. When she was approached by Mr. Prale, Ms. Cada, and Mr. Rouse about being a part of a grant to identify an external coach on the implementation of RtI, she was very excited. Initially there was resistance to RtI two years ago. Last year a Learning Team of 10 to 12 people was formed to look at RtI and they found that there were not many models specific to high school settings. The State of Illinois is a leader in RtI and only one of four states that are mandating it across all school districts. At this point, no high school in Illinois has achieved full implementation.

Dr. Paplaczyk has attended the North Aspire Leadership Conference, which now emphasizes the rolling out RtI. She worked with Mr. Rouse and Mr. Prale on the restructuring plan. Her role, as an external coach, is to attend monthly trainings at West 40, which leaves with much work to do. Instructional Council is very important to rolling out RtI. Teams have been formed and all of the members have attended the training, including Debra Mittleman, the Outreach Coordinator, Joe Herbst, Counselor, Kay Moran, and others. The District needs to identify internal coaches whom she will train to bring RtI into the classrooms. She believes the training would occur through professional learning teams. The role of school psychologists will shift and the school will want to use those resources differently.

Dr. Paplaczyk highlighted the following from the written report: “RtI uses differentiated instructional strategies for all learners, provides all learners with scientific, research-based interventions, measures performance using progress monitoring and make educational decisions based on a student’s response to the intervention. Multiple tiers of increasingly intense scientific research-based interventions are then matched to student needs. RtI is divided into three/multi-tiered models:

- Tier I- foundation; all students; preventive; proactive; universal interventions (80%).
• Tier II- supplemental instruction and interventions in addition to core instruction; some students; at-risk; targeted group (15%).
• Tier III- intensive instructional interventions; individual students assessment-based, high intensity of longer duration; small groups (5%).

Before the implementation of RtI, the educational system waited for a student to fail before attempting more intensive instructional interventions. Current research indicates that early intervention is crucial to a student’s success. This creates success for all learners, identifies struggling learners early, requires data driven decision-making, and reduces the number of students referred for Special Education Services.”

Dr. Paplaczyk stated that OPRFHS is in the early stages of RtI; it will be a long, roll-out phase and it will take three to five years for completion. In addition, the tiered programs are constantly being restructured.

Mr. Rouse added that the historic reason for implementing RtI is due to the overpopulation of special education students in the state and this model will allow schools to do something differently in the mainstream courses prior to making recommendations for special education. When asked what resistance has been encountered in the school, Dr. Paplaczyk responded that initial reluctance that happened two years ago was a result of teachers not being fully informed. This year there have been cross-divisional discussions about RtI resulting in far less resistance than just a couple of years ago. The questions deal more with the logistics. She added that Ms. Mittleman would be a key component in bringing parents into this process.

The difference between Safe and Civil Schools and PBIS is that Safe and Civil Schools is the broader concept and may be more appropriate for a high school. Districts 90 and 97 have not fully implemented RtI yet. Mr. Prale will investigate whether any of the stimulus money can be allocated for RtI.

**Textbooks**
It was the consensus of the Instruction Committee members to recommend to the Board of Education that it approve the following textbooks at its regular May Board of Education meeting.

- The World Languages Division recommends the use of the following textbooks:
  - Radio Lina by A. De Giuli and C. M. Naddeo for the course 451: Italian 1-2
  - Maschere a Venezia by A. De Giuli and C. M. Naddeo and La Collana Longobarda by Maria Grazia Di Bernardo for the courses 453 : Italian 3-4 and 452: Italian 3-4A
  - Storia D’Amore by Cinzia Medaglia and Achim Seiffarth for the courses 454: Italian 5-6 and 455: Italian 5-6A
  - Los Baker van a Peru by Melissa Blasco, et al, for the course 477: Spanish 5-6
  - Two Children Seeking the Joy Bridge by Yuehua Liu and Chengzhi Chu for the course 447: Chinese 3-4
• The Music Department of the Fine and Applied Arts Division recommends the use of *Guitar Method, Grade 1* by Mel Bay for the course 810: Beginning Group Guitar.

• The Special Education Division recommends the use of the following textbooks:
  - *Tsotsi* by Athol Fugard for the course 1237: English Literature 1-2
  - *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy for the course 1337: American Literature 1-2
  - *Algebra 1* by James E. Schultz, et al, for the courses 2038, 2098, and 2118
  - *Geometry: Concepts and Skills*

• The English Division recommends the use of the following textbooks:
  - *Monster* by Walter Dean Myers and *The Pact: Three Young Men Make a Promise and Fulfill a Dream* by Sampson Davis, George Jenkins, and Rameck Hunt for the course 112: Essentials of English 1-2
  - *The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd for the course 113: English 1-2
- **Seventh Son** by Orson Scott Card for the courses 134: American Studies 1-2 and 129: American Literature Honors/AP Language and Composition 1-2
- **High Fidelity** by Nick Hornby, **Angela’s Ashes** by Frank McCourt, **The Lathe of Heaven** by Ursula K. LeGuin, **Oranges are Not the Only Fruit** by Jeanette Winterson, and **Devices and Desires** by PD James for the course 136: English Literature 1-2A
- **Brave New World** by Aldous Huxley and **Beowulf: Graphic Novel** adapted and illustrated by Gareth Hinds for 144: English Literature 1-2
- **Light in August** by William Faulkner, **The God of Small Things** by Arundhati Roy, and **Billy Budd** by Herman Melville for the course 145 AP College English: Literature and Composition 1-2
- **The Last True Story I’ll Ever Tell** by John Crawford, **The Bridge** by Gay Talese, **Bringing Down the House** by Ben Mezrich, and **Kindred** by Octavia E. Butler for the course 147: Contemporary Literature and Composition 1-2
- **Readings for Writers**, a created anthology of essays, for the course 150: Expository Writing
- **On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft** by Stephen King for the course 153/2: Journal Writing.
- **The Garies and Their Friends** by Frank J. Webb for 154/2: African American Literature
- **Blindness** by Jose’ Saramago for the course 164/2: Humanities A
- **Everything is Illuminated** by Jonathan Foer, **In Cold Blood** by Truman Capote, **The World According to Garp** by John Irving, and **The Diving Bell and the Butterfly** by Jean-Dominique Bauby for the course 170/2: LIT Novels Into Film
- **Fight Club** by Chuck Palahniuk for the course 171/2: LIT Popular Fiction
- **The Handmaid’s Tale** by Margaret Atwood, **The Martian Chronicles** by Ray Bradbury, and **Lilith’s Brood** by Octavia E. Butler for the course 174/2: LIT Science Fiction and 20th Century American Culture
- **Bleachers** by John Grisham, **Friday Night Lights** by H. G. Bissinger, and **The Best American Sports Writing of the Century** edited by David Halberstam for the course 175/2: LIT: Sports and Literature
- **Shakespeare After All** by Marjorie Garber for the course 177/2: LIT The Work of One Author
- **Catch-22** by Joseph Heller for the course 178/2: LIT: War and Literature
- **Top Girls** by Caryl Churchill, **The Bell Jar** by Sylvia Plath, **Mrs. Dalloway** by Virginia Woolf, and **Meridian** by Alice Walker for the course 1791/1792: LIT Women’s Visions, Women’s Voices
- For the 2009 – 2010 Summer Reading projects: **The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian** by Sherman Alexie for freshmen; **Tuesdays With Morrie** by Mitch Albom for sophomores; **The Bean**
Trees by Barbara Kingsolver for juniors, and The Sweet Hereafter by Russell Banks for seniors

- The History Division recommends the use of the following textbooks:
  - Traditions & Encounters: A Global Perspective on the Past by Jerry H. Bentley and Herbert F. Ziegler for the course 325: World History 1-2A
  - Sociology by John J. Macionis for the course 358/2: Sociology
  - The Ramayana by R. K. Narayan for the course 364/2: Asian Studies
  - The Blacker the Berry by Wallace Thurman for the course 366/2: African American History
  - Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam by John L. Esposito, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict by Charles D. Smith, and The Modern Middle East: A History by James L. Gelvin for the course 367/2: Modern Middle Eastern History A
  - Philosophy: The Quest for Truth by Louis P. Pojman and Lewis Vaughn for the course 368/2: Philosophy A
  - Chicago Days: 150 Defining Moments in the Life of a Great City edited by Stevenson Swanson for the course 375/2: The History of Chicago
  - Born in Blood & Fire: A Concise History of Latin America by John Charles Chasteen for the course 377/2: Latin American History

Ms. Hill stated that since the last Committee meeting and while working with the divisions and the bookstore, she became aware that there were texts with provisional approval that had not been fully approved by the Board of Education. Thus, this was the reason for the lengthy list.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if these books were evaluated after having used them in class. Did they live up to the expectation? Were they recommended to other classes? Do teams share the information? Why is a book being used? Is it because of problem solving, critical thinking, etc? Mr. Prale stated that teachers sometime have more general conversations about the class and what materials they use, but there is no report of a text accomplishing the goals. Ms. Patchak-Layman suggested that this would be appropriate for a mapping strategy to make sure “10” things were done, as one went back and one would put in place a concrete record of a student doing x, w, z. Curriculum mapping is more about courses as opposed to texts. Mr. Prale will bring this question to IC and send its response to the Instruction Committee members. Mr. Prale also noted that curriculum guides matched the standards for Illinois Learning Standards.

IC’s response is as follows:

A large number of approvals were taken to the Board at the recent Instruction Committee of the Whole meeting. A Board member has asked some questions:

1. Do division heads or teachers spend time assessing the effectiveness of the textbooks for meeting course goals?
2. What is the process? How often is assessment done?
3. Are the Illinois state learning standards mapped across the texts?

Division Heads indicated that state standards are incorporated into textbook selection and most publishers align the textbooks to the State standards. In addition, it would be helpful to review State loan books when they are being renewed. Amy has been asked to draft a policy for textbook adoption and review. Textbooks are generally used for five to seven years, during which time the effectiveness of the textbook is assessed. There has been investigation of buying versus renting or electronic downloading.

Dr. Millard asked if teachers were shying away from the use of standard textbooks. Ms. Hill stated there was a mix.

Restructuring Plan Update

Mr. Prale stated that OPRFHS is required to submit a restructuring plan according to state and federal guidelines. The purpose of the restructuring plan is to encourage the District to take intensive and far-reaching interventions to revamp the operational and governance of the school. The restructuring plan may include:

- Making fundamental reforms, such as significant changes in the school’s staffing and governance, to improve student academic achievement in the school; and
- Implementing measures designed that have substantial promise to improve student achievement and enable the school to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) as defined by the State’s accountability system; and
- Remaining consistent with state law.

The discussion of this plan started last winter and Mr. Prale incorporated ideas from the School Improvement Plan as well. He credited Ms. Biasiello, Mr. Rouse, Dr. Paplaczyk, and Mr. Vogel with providing material for the draft. The current draft was reviewed by a larger group of administrators and teachers and a West 40 RESPRO Consultant. It still needs to be brought forth to community SIP members. The District wants to honor the requirements of the State of Illinois and file a template at the end of the school year to make it useful. The six strategies, including the academic interventions, are reported on regularly, some at the end of each semester and others on an annual basis. RtI, technology, and the Outreach Coordinator are areas in which the school is working in order to provide evidence to make additional school improvement decisions.

A school that does not make AYP after six years may have more additional sanctions from the state. Mr. Prale is in contact with the other Districts, has reviewed plans from them, and has found our draft plan to be parallel to other plans. Mr. Prale has presented the plan to West 40, members of the faculty including the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, and he brought it to the Board of Education for input in order to make it a consensus document. The Board of Education will be asked for approval of this plan in the future.

While the deadline for the plan was February 2009, there is no penalty To OPRFHS, as long as it is in the works. Dr. Weninger wanted to make sure the SIP and the Restructuring Plan were connected, so part of the delay was purposeful. Mr. Rouse took
the lead on the SIP Plan and Mr. Costopoulos and Dr. Paplaczyk were involved with the RtI component; Mr. Vogel provided input on technology restructuring ideas.

Dr. Lee asked how the District would evaluate its progress. What is it that the District is going to measure after the plan has been executed? He felt the structuring of the evaluation of what is to be done has to come before doing the plan. Mr. Prale concurred and remarked that it was the 11th grade PSAE. Dr. Lee wondered if that would be helpful to the high school, because it does not tell what needed to be changed and he did not think the State would be helpful. Mr. Prale continued that it would be parent involvement, individual programs, and benchmarks assessments that would be the areas in which to generate that work. He also stated that the District would use the Student Domain document that was being developed to frame the assessments, as well.

Dr. Lee noted that the Student Domains document has about 72 separate sets of information, some of which were defined and some of which were just listed. To him, that was a laundry list of things that could be measured with enough time. That was a useful starting place, but he has not seen anything done with that starting place since last October. Mr. Prale viewed that document as a roadmap that asks one to look at a specific program that could support, in a larger effort, the AYP work. It is a good starting point. Ms. Hill stated that an update on the Student Domains document and the rolling out of the actual measurements would be presented at next month’s Instruction Committee meeting.

The six key strategies that the school will follow are:

- Expand academic interventions in reading and math
- Implementation of a District-wide Response to Intervention Model
- Development of District-wide Response to Intervention Coach Roles
- Increase and Improve Coordination of Community Outreach
- Reorganize Building Leadership to Focus on Student Welfare and Success
- Restructure Information/Instructional Technology Services

The administration was asked how the Collaborative Teaching Model (CTM) interventions would differ from what is currently being done. The response was that the curriculum would be adjusted this summer and that more attention would be paid to what classes in which students were enrolled. There would be a stronger connection with both the counselors and the deans beyond the classroom. In the area of math, the Algebra I and Algebra Block class teachers are looking for additional assessment models. In the CTM, success will be determined by GPA, rates of referral to ISS/OSS, reading levels; algebra classes will continue to use Mastery Manager.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked what research has indicated that the paths listed are the most appropriate and beneficial and that what is currently being done is being done so because of what. Ms. Patchak-Layman felt this was missing and she was troubled by this. She saw this report as an overview and she wondered if the full document was going to say the District was continuing with Agile Mind and the Collaborative Teaching Mind
because of certain factors and projecting that if it stayed on this path in 2011, it would have “x” percent rate of success for students in this class. What happens to the older students in the school? While most of these interventions were for freshman and sophomore level classes, what was the continuation of support for juniors and seniors? If the school determines that a student does not know the material, will it go back and work with this material or will the student pick it up in the next class because is a spiral.

Mr. Prale stated that the report was in the format required by the state. Mr. Prale stated that indices for some strategies had not yet been developed. Mr. Prale told Dr. Lee that the reports for Strategy 1 timeline would be Learning Support Reading, Collaborative Teaching, and Agile Mind at the end of each semester. He will provide Dr. Lee with the information that will be contained in those reports. Mr. Prale may also be able to present the Committee members with information disaggregated by ethnic groups if this information is readily available via Skyward.

Dr. Lee asked if there were parts of a plan that will have to happen, i.e., hiring. Dr. Weninger responded that the District would hire the Chief Informational Officer by July 1. The reason for restructuring the technology department is to be able to provide data reports regularly and expand the use of Skyward.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked how the District made the decision to use Agile Mind and the Collaborative Teaching Model. What decision was used to determine if the programs had been evaluated? What tool is in place to evaluate Agile Mind? How will the District decide to address these problems? Will the District have to modify this program or not based on this model. She assumed that the District was having incremental success and is continuing with this program instead of looking at other programs or other ways of delivering services at the school. What data was used to make that decision? Mr. Prale stated that the District is seeing changes in its teaching approaches through Agile Mind. Through conversations with the teachers, they believe that the success is incremental and they have reported on Agile Mind in each of these years; they feel it improves their teaching. The Collaborative Teaching Model saw significant grow in the first year, but not as much in the second year. Next year counselors will be more involved in the program.

Dr. Millard noted that this document is one that is in progress and the suggestion is that the document does not focus on the outcomes, i.e., there is not enough structuring to evaluate. Ms. Patchak-Layman responded she thought restructuring meant doing something different from what one was doing.

Dr. Weninger stated that the State has reconstituted a school such as one in Chicago that has always underachieved. OPRFHS has made instrumental gains. Data has been kept on Agile Mind for three years and one data point to look at is this year’s juniors. RtI is in its infancy. OPRFHS needs to be diligent, focused, and patient and he asked the Board of Education to allow it to continue to do the work it is doing. Ms. Patchak-Layman stated that patience is a definition that is different for an adult than for a student. When one is working with children, it takes on a different view and it is more urgent. Mr. Prale added
that what is in this report is not all that the District is doing. The 8 to 9 Program has now been extended to a 9-10 program. Ms. Patchak-Layman, referring to a conversation regarding SIP, stated that if the District is investing time to put these reports together, she suggested making it a living document that satisfies more than the requirement for the state.

Dr. Lee felt the District needed to look for better ways to show the public its success. If someone does something right and it is being successful, the District needs to let people know of that success.

Committee members were invited to send written questions to Mr. Prale.

Additional Instruction Matters for Committee Information/Deliberation
Dr. Millard announced that Dr. Weninger had been informed her a week ago about the HINI Virus. At the same time, the CDC lifted all regulations on schools where the virus was identified, as it was not nearly as virulent as was originally anticipated. She saw no need to report this to anyone at the time and she accepted full responsibility for not informing other Board of Education members. She cautioned all to be methodical in washing their hands and to be careful with skin-to-skin contact. She noted that over 30,000 had died last year from the regular flu. She said that the H1N1 virus was no more dangerous than the standard flu. She offered this advice as a physician and an infectious disease doctor. Dr. Lee appreciated Dr. Millard’s effort to quell the hysteria.

Ms. Hill informed Ms. Patchak-Layman that attendance on the PSAE May 7 make-up test day was 100 percent.

Ms. Kalmerton will explore the information for Ms. Patchak-Layman who had a question about a Freedom of Information Act request.

Ms. Patchak-Layman suggested setting up a procedure for automatically providing parents with test materials rather than having a parent make an individual request to see their students’ tests.

Adjournment
The Instruction Committee adjourned at 9:45 a.m. on Thursday, May 21, 2009.