

The regular Board meeting of the Board of Education of the Oak Park and River Forest High School was held on Thursday evening, February 25, 2010, in the Board Room.

Call to Order President Protempore and Vice President Lee called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The following Board of Education members were present: John C. Allen, IV, Jacques A. Conway (arrived at 10:20 p.m.), Terry Finnegan, Dr. Ralph H. Lee, Amy Leafe McCormack, Dr. Dietra D. Millard, and Sharon Patchak-Layman. Also present were: Dr. Attila J. Weninger, Superintendent; Jason Edgecombe, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources; Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, Nathaniel L. Rouse, Principal; Cheryl L. Witham, Chief Financial Officer; James Paul Hunter, Faculty Senate Executive Committee Chair; Elizabeth Turcek, Student Council Liaison Representative; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

Student Recognition The Board of Education members recognized the following students for their achievement individual achievements at the Illinois Music Educators Association State Convention and their coaches Elaine Hlavach, Pat Pearson, and Anthony Svejda.

John Hazinski – 3rd Jazz Piano in All-State Honors Jazz Band
Ethan Pillion – 2nd Jazz Bass in All-State Honors Jazz Band
Daniel Coffman – 2nd Classical Trombone in All-State Honors Orchestra
Lucas Kahn – 4th Jazz Trombone in All-State Honors Jazz Band
Kiyoshi Hayashi – top 10 Violinist in All-State Honors Orchestra
Suyon Lim – top 10 Violinist in All-State Honors Orchestra
Ben Mildenhall – Principal Violinist in All-State Honors Orchestra
Liaht Slobokin – Principal Violinist in All-State Orchestra (top 10 overall)
Darcy Hargadon – top 10 Violist in All-State Honors Orchestra
Sarah Coffman – top 10 Cellist in All-State Honors Orchestra
Sarah Stumbras – 8th bassist in All-State Honors Orchestra
Abigail Lyons – 2nd Oboe in All-State Orchestra (6th overall)
Kelsey Shinnors – 9th Clarinet in All-State Honors Band
Grace Mizen – 4th Oboe in All-State Honors Band (4th overall)
Spencer Brown – 1st in All-State Honors Orchestra
McLean Peterson – All-State Chorus
MacKenzie Harris – All-State Honors Chorus

Visitors The Board of Education welcomed the following visitors: Kay Foran, OPRFHS Communications and Community Relations Coordinator; Ginger Brent, Francisco Arriaga, Mike Dorme, John Condne, Mark Collins, Doug Belpedio, Allison Myers, Lisa, Toni Biasiello, OPRFHS faculty members; Iris Saavedra, co-chair of Citizens' Council; John Hazinski, Darcy Hargadon, and Sarah Stumbras, MacKenzie Harris, and Ethan Pillion, students and community members Jillian Kelly, Margi Abutaub,

Sheila Haennicke, Paul and Jan Harris, Tom Hazinski, Becky Peterson, Cathy Baumann, Kim Allen, Laura Sullivan, Linda Belpedio, community members.

Changes to the Agenda

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked that Consent Items H. Student Fees, and I. Movement of Funds be removed from the Consent Agenda.

Mr. Allen asked that XI. C. Approval of Division Head Compensation, be deleted from the agenda.

Status of FOIA Requests

Dr. Lee reported that there were two FOIA requests and they were resolved.

Board of Education Comments

Dr. Lee noted that OPRFHS had filed a lawsuit with Circuit Court against the Village of Oak Park. This contract dispute is about the Village's obligation to pay the schools; it is not a personnel issue. It is about enforcing an Intergovernmental Agreement reached by the Village of Oak Park and OPRFHS and the terms cannot be changed by any of the parties. The District believes the Village is over due in paying both District 97 and District 200. The details and concerns are delineated in the complaint and letter. If anyone has any further questions about the details of the letter, Dr. Lee asked them to contact Chief Financial Officer, Ms. Witham. The District believes it necessary to get the courts to weigh in with an objective view of the decision. This does not impact OPRFHS's desire to work amicably with the Village on others areas in the community.

Mr. Finnegan complimented the administration on the success of the hiring process, which included a parent, a student, teachers from the division seeking a leader, and teachers from other divisions.

Dr. Millard reiterated the timeline of the superintendent search process. The Board of Education should receive potential candidate names from School Exec Connect in a closed session on March 9. During March, the Board of Education will interview candidates and select two or three for the confidential committee to interview. The committee will then give feedback to the Board of Education. The Board of Education plans to announce the name of the new superintendent at its April 29 Board of Education meeting.

Visitor Comments

Cathy Bauman, resident of 178 N. Scoville, Oak Park, addressed the Board of Education.

Ms. Bauman wanted to address the welfare of students. Students are smoking in front of her house every day. If she feels they are doing drugs, she calls the police. She wanted to address the welfare of the students. She felt the high school could make an impact on these students if it were patrolling the alley every half hour. She suggested the Board of Education consider again why

there is an open campus. While the number of the students exhibiting this behavior is small, it is a dire situation.

Margi Abutaub, resident of 812 S. Kenilworth, Oak Park, also addressed the Board of Education on this issue. She spoke of her family's personal story with her son's drug use and the effects it had on the family. While she and her husband had done everything they could to mitigate the situation, e.g., tutors, grounding, counselors, etc., it had not been as effective as it needed to be; it was an emotional task with no change in behavior. She was disappointed that OPRFHS was not a safe and secure environment. The policy of open campus gave him a choice to go to class or to get high. The availability of drugs within the school and the ease of being able to leave the school are unfathomable. Her son has been in a private boarding school for eight months and it has been difficult both emotionally and financially. She asked the Board of Education to look at this situation; there is a direct correlation between open campus and drug use.

Julian Kelley, parent and resident of 546 Elmwood Avenue, Oak Park, addressed the Board of Education. She used a direct quote from the *Chicago Magazine* "Smoke Park and Reefer Forest High School. She had been unaware of the prevalent use of drugs. Her freshman learned to find drugs within the first month of school. Freshmen are not allowed to leave for lunch, yet he did and got high. He was caught and suspended for eight days, deservedly. He also deserved to be in a safe environment at OPRFHS. Her concern was about people entering the high school who look like students and then sell drugs in the bathrooms. She asked that students be required to wear lanyards, are not allowed to leave school during the day, and to use dogs to do random drug checks. She sang the praises of the educators as they had kept in close contact with her. She asked the Board of Education to do something about this immediately or she would send her written journey of this painful situation to Leslie Stahl at *60 Minutes* to be part of a Sunday night feature.

Doug Belpedio, a teacher and OPRFHS resident of 1005 N. Linden, Oak Park, addressed the Board of Education. He acknowledged the neighbors' courage in coming before the Board of Education. As a teacher with OPRFHS for 26 years who had not made any other requests, he asked that the Board of Education consider his request for a sabbatical leave to explore after-school reading programs in high schools using scores study skill curriculum and set up community service projects. His application had been rejected because it lacked sufficient detail and there was no course of appeal. He explained the details of the request and noted that he had followed the procedures prescribed. Dr. Weninger was unable to take further action because a committee had taken the action. He spoke about the success the reading program he had voluntarily started at OPRFHS. He also said that approving his sabbatical could save money for OPRFHS because while he was gone he would only be paid one-half of his salary and it was an opportunity to give a part-time African-American male a full-time job in his department.

Student Council

Ms. Tureck reported 1) seniors will vote on graduation attire from March 8-12, 2010. The options were the traditional white dress and dark suit or

caps and gowns; 2) Student Council is sponsoring a Relay for Life Team in an effort to support a staff member who has been diagnosed with cancer; and 3) Students were choosing a theme for prom, “Alice in Wonderland” or “Star Wars.”

Ms. Turcek understood the pain expressed by the parents earlier as she too had a friend who was sent to rehab. Even with the support that OPRFHS provided to her friend, it was not successful. While there is no clear solution, she wanted to help.

Principal Report

Mr. Rouse presented the following report:

He informed the Board of Education that it was Black History Month and he extended his personal thanks to the families that attended the 15th Annual NAAPID Dinner February 22. NAAPID stands for National African American Parent Involvement Day, which takes place nationally on the second Monday in February; it is a call of action for African-American parents to get more involved with the school. Students from Gospel Choir, the dance troop, and Spoken Word Clubs performed. The food service department provided a wonderful array of soul food.

Mr. Rouse continued that the “D” in NAAPID stands for day not dinner, and he believed that the District was cheating itself, the students, and the community by not fulfilling the true meaning of the event. In other words, the call to action requires our parents to take their students to school, attend classes, and celebrate the day with a culminating experience, such as a social, town hall meeting, or dinner. The District has omitted the most important part, which is coming to school during the Day! His challenge to the community is to become more involved with this day in the coming years so that OPRFHS is truly representing NAAPID.

OPRFHS also hosted its tenth annual Black Professional’s Day, where twelve professionals spoke to the students about their professions and the education and discipline they needed to get to where they are today. A highlight of the day was former Chicago Bear Offensive Lineman Revie Sorry and his message to our students. Mr. Sorry was so moved by the day that he wanted to open the lines of communication between the OPRFHS and his non-for profit organization that works with student athletes who need financial assistance to attend the college of their choice.

Mr. Rouse thanked all of the students that came to the Comcast game Friday night for making it an unforgettable night. Besides the fact that the varsity basketball team beat the third ranked team in the state, student fan behavior and sportsmanship were outstanding.

He offered good luck to the T.E.A.M. Basketball squad as they competed in the “Battle the Eagles of Leyden High School.” For the past two years, OPRFHS has won. There will be a condensed schedule tomorrow to accommodate the basketball game.

He offered thoughts and prayers to the family of OPRF student and varsity basketball player Mortell Flowers on the passing of his mother, who was very involved with the team and so many of its members knew her well.

**Certification of
2010 Graduates**

Mr. Allen moved to certify the January 22, 2010 Graduates, as presented; (attached to and made a part of the minutes of the meeting); seconded by Dr. Millard. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

District Reports

Citizens’ Council—Iris Zaldivar reported on the February 14 Citizens’ Council discussion was on drug use, which will continue March 11. They will talk about the breadth and depth of what the community can do to support the school and the parents. Programs for the community and parents need to be created to address the issue. The Board of Education will receive any recommendations. Citizens’ Council feels compelled to get the community involved.

Booster—The Booster Dinner/Dance Auction is May 1, 2010.

Faculty Senate—Mr. Hunter stated that it was a very busy time with registrations, sectioning, and hiring. He noted that the Spoken Word students won their first round at the Louder than a Bomb competition. Mr. Peter Kahn, sponsor of the Spoken Word Club, was featured in the *Chicago Magazine* this week.

Board Comments

Mr. Allen, responding to the visitor comments, noted that the Board of Education has heard, understood, and is concerned about the issue of substance abuse. In fact, one of its goals recognizes this problem. This global issue has not been solved by any city, state, or country. He supported closing the campus. The District has talked with the police about using dogs in the building. The school is addressing the issue. He encouraged the parent to send her letter to *60 Minutes*, copying the District. The Board of Education will still do whatever is best for the community. The Board of Education wants to know who is selling drugs. Dr. Lee added that almost monthly the Board of Education deals with discipline cases about the use and sale of drugs. Most recently, someone reported a case and the student ended up with severe discipline consequences. While the members are the Board of Education is aware of the problem, he did not believe they would all agree on its solution.

Mr. Rouse also thanked the visitors for their comments. He continued that the District would have to reallocate its space and resources if it closed the campus in order to serve 3200 students lunch over three periods. He vowed to

do everything he could to aggressively address this issue. He encouraged them to attend the Citizens' Council meeting to hear that discussion.

Ms. Patchak-Layman suggested that another option available to community members would be to make suggestions for policy changes.

Another important part would be incorporation of student involvement.

Superintendent's

Dr. Weninger reported the following:

1. Enrollment: 3,277 all students; 3,189 housed; 177 higher than the lowest projection and 16 higher than the highest projection; 477 Special Education; 56 Out Of District Special education; 533 Total Special Education; 32 Regular Education Out-of-District.
2. The Oak Park Park District, through its two state organizations, awarded a Community Service Award to OPRF for its work with the annual Frank Lloyd Wright Run and cooperation between the two bodies in terms of space here at the high school. The District is most appreciative to Gary Balling, Executive Director, and especially to Donna Diederich, who does the scheduling; Robert Zummallen, Director of Buildings and Grounds; and John Stelzer, Athletic Director. This is a wonderful example of a successful partnership within this community.
3. Booster Club Dinner/Dance/Auction is scheduled for Saturday, May 1, at Concordia University. Boosters are actively engaged in preparations for the event, which benefits OPRF athletics, activities, and academics. We are most grateful for their long standing and continued support of the high school in all three areas, and for their strong support of the high school in many other areas.
4. The day after the regular January Board meeting, a group of OPRF administrators and faculty attended a STEM Summit at Niles Township High School District 219. STEM is an acronym for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. It is an approach that integrates these areas into teaching and learning, and that provides concepts for building facilities in these areas to match the philosophy and content. The purpose of the Summit was to bring together high school educators from across the Chicago area; college and university professors and partners such as those from IIT, Northwestern ; robotics engineers and architects; and scientists from Fermi to share knowledge, explore possibilities, and support current and future opportunities in student research. The current facility plan in science as envisioned by Bill Grosser, Science Division Head, is in part a wonderful example of leadership in this burgeoning and exciting area. Recently, Bill and a small group of faculty spent an entire day at Niles watching the teaching and learning.

5. Twenty-four days until Spring, and 29 days until the end of the third quarter and the beginning of Spring Break.
6. The forum at Citizens' Council on March 11 will be composed of a panel of community members. Substance abuse is something the District wants to raise to the community. In 2007, he insisted that a self-reported survey of alcohol and drug use was made public. The high school is working with its policies on drugs; dog searches are allowable under the policy. The high school needs to do more, it does have a moral responsibility; how much it will do will depend on the desire of the committee. He will forward to these parents everything the District does do in this regard during his tenure.

Consent Items

Mr. Allen moved to approve the consent items as follows:

- Check Disbursements and Financial Resolutions dated February 25, 2010 (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting);
- Monthly November Financials;
- Treasurer's Report;
- Athletic Uniforms Bid;
- Contract with Enernoc for Demand Response Programs;
- Allied Waste Bid; and
- PTAB Resolution;

seconded by Mr. Finnegan. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

**2010-2011
Student Fees**

Mr. Allen moved to approve the Student Fees for the 2010-2011 school year, as presented; seconded by Dr. Millard. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

The cost of the fees would hold steady for next year with the exception of a \$5 increase to the Pay to Play Fee.

**Movement of funds
held at US Bank to
Community Bank**

Mr. Finnegan moved to approve the Resolution to Establish Student Activity and Convenience Accounts from US Bank to Community Bank; seconded by Dr. Millard. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

The recommendation last month to move the student activity and convenience accounts from US Bank, formerly Park National Bank, to Community Bank, as US Bank is no longer a community bank, was made by a Board of Education member last month.

Policy 4370

Dr. Millard moved to approve Policy 4370, Mandated Reporting Responsibilities, as presented; seconded by Mr. Finnegan. A roll call vote resulted in five ayes. Motion carried. Ms. McCormack was absent from this vote.

Policy 5117

Dr. Millard moved to approve Policy 5117, Residency and Tuition, as presented seconded by Dr. Lee. A roll call vote resulted in five ayes and one nay. Motion carried. Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay.

With the Board of Education’s permission, Ms. Patchak-Layman will provide the PEG Committee members with her suggestions for this policy in written form prior to the next PEG meeting. Dr. Weninger will check with legal counsel on her suggestion to follow *The School Code of Illinois* and replace the word “duty” with “power.” Mr. Allen supported Ms. Patchak-Layman’s change of wording.

Policy 4119

Mr. Allen moved to adopt Policy 4119, Nepotism, as presented; seconded by Mr. Finnegan. A roll call vote resulted in five ayes and one nay. Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay. Motion carried.

Ms. Patchak-Layman reported that while the majority of the Board of Education members wanted to have a less encompassing policy, she did not want to have any familial relationships. She would not support the adoption of this policy until she believed there was an open and transparent hiring process.

Policy 5136

Mr. Finnegan moved to amend Policy 5136, Student Travel, as presented; seconded by Dr. Lee. A roll call vote resulted in four ayes. Motion carried. Ms. McCormack and Mr. Allen were absent from this vote

**Summer
Construction
Update &
Approval of
Life Safety
Amendment #20**

Mr. Finnegan moved to approve the Life Safety Amendment, as presented; seconded by Dr. Millard. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Because of the scope of the construction work to this summer, the high school will not be able to host the annual book sale for the Friends of the Library. As an alternative, Ms. Patchak-Layman proposed setting up a tent on the stadium field and tying it into the construction costs. While Mr. Finnegan supported that suggestion, Dr. Lee had discussed this with the president of the Library and the head of the book fair. The amount of time necessary would be a constant, exclusive use of the space for five weeks. Dr. Weninger said that he would explore with the Friends of the Library any other possibilities, but he did not believe a tent on the stadium field would suffice. Dr. Millard applauded them for trying to find a solution.

Each year OPRFHS uses Life Safety Funds for projects allowed under this funding by the ISBE. This year many building improvement projects will be accomplished and some will use these funds and require approval by the State with the submission of the attached Request for Authorization—Certification of Need for Fire Prevention and SaFety Funds.

The projects that will be completed with these funds include:

1. Air handler replacement for the Field House;
2. Air handler replacement in the Attic area of the 1913-1924 building areas;
3. New Unit Ventilators to provide heating, air conditioning, and mechanical ventilation to many areas of the 1907-1924 building areas;
4. Domestic water plumbing piping replacement of the main lines in the basement;
5. (4) Science Lab renovations;
6. Pool pump and heater replacements. Grout repair of pool tile;
7. (87) VAV mechanical unit replacements in 1907-1924 building areas;
8. New ceilings and lighting where required to accommodate VAV mechanical replacement; and
9. Various exterior masonry repairs of sealant and grout.

**Approval of
Wight Contract**

Mr. Finnegan moved to approve the Wight Contract as presented; seconded by Ms. McCormack. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

**Personnel
Recommendations**

Dr. Lee moved to approve the personnel recommendations, as presented (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting); seconded by Ms. McCormack. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Ms. Patchak-Layman noted her disappointment at the lack of Board of Education involvement in this hiring process, especially with the position of Human Resources. She did not know if the Board of Education's goals would be carried forward, as she was not personally able to ask questions of the candidates. Both Dr. Lee and Mr. Allen were not disappointed and disagreed with Ms. Patchak-Layman, as they felt that they trusted the people involved in the hiring process. They congratulated the staff on an exceptional job and noted that four out of the five hires were minority ones.

**Sabbatical Leave
Application**

Dr. Lee moved to approve a sabbatical leave for 2010-2011 for Elizabeth Farley; seconded by Mr. Finnegan. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Dicussion ensued about Mr. Belpedio's request for the Board of Education to consider his application for a sabbatical leave. Board of Education members were informed of the process of approval which included a workshop explaining the process to the applicants, what was required in the application,

who to go to for additional help and review, and examples of acceptable and unacceptable applications. The committee to approve the applications is composed of three DLT members, two Division Heads, and two faculty members.

There was a suggestion to refer the subject of the sabbatical leave application process to the Human Resources Committee so that the Board of Education could review the procedures and the timing. It was noted that because this is a contractual issue, the Administration must follow the steps that had been prescribed in the Faculty Senate Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Allen moved to approve the open and closed session minutes of January 28, February 3, 9, and 16, 2010 and declared that the Audiotapes of the closed sessions of June 2008 be destroyed; seconded by Mr. Finnegan. A roll all vote resulted in all five ayes and one nay. Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay. Motion carried.

Board Member Participation at Conference

Mr. Allen moved to approve Mr. Conway's attendance at the COSEBOC meeting in Washington D.C., April 22-24, 2010, per Policy 3552, Reimbursement of Board of Education Member Expenses; seconded by Dr. Millard. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

The Board of Education authorized all expenses to be covered with appropriate receipts submitted.

Additional Discussion Items

Baldrige—Dr. Millard reported that Mr. Bloom of Blueprint Education Group made another presentation at the February PEG Committee meeting. He will send a proposal for additional meetings to be held in May and June to be presented at the March PEG Committee meeting.

Closed Session

At 9:43 p.m., on Thursday, February 25, 2010, Mr. Allen moved to go into closed session to discuss collective negotiating matters between the District and its employees or their representatives or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2); the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the District or legal counsel for the District, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee or against legal counsel for the District to determine its validity. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1), as amended by PA. 93—57; and Litigation, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the particular District has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the District finds that an action is probably or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recorded and entered into the closed meeting minutes 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11) seconded by Mr. Finnegan. A roll call vote resulted in all yes. Motion carried.

At 12:58 a.m. on Friday, February 26, 2010, the Board of Education resumed its open session.

Adjournment

At 12:59 a.m. on Friday, February 26, 2010, Dr. Millard moved to adjourn the Board of Education meeting; seconded by Ms. Patchak-Layman. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Dr. Ralph H. Lee
President Protempore & Vice President

John C. Allen, IV
Secretary