

**Oak Park and River Forest High School**  
**201 N. Scoville**  
**Oak Park, IL 60302**  
**An Instruction Committee of the Whole Board**  
**May 17, 2010**

An Instruction Committee meeting was held on Monday, May 17, 2010, in the Board Room. Dr. Ralph H. Lee opened the meeting at 7:43 a.m. Committee members present were Jacques A. Conway (departed at 8:30 a.m.), Terry Finnegan, Dr. Ralph H. Lee, Amy McCormack, Dr. Dietra D. Millard, and Sharon Patchak Layman. Also present were Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Amy Hill, Director of Assessment and Research; Nathaniel L. Rouse, Principal; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

Visitors: James Paul Hunter, FSEC Chair; Don Vogel, OPRFHS Division Head for Business Education/Library; and Devon Alexander, OPRFHS Faculty.

**Approval of April 22, 2010 Instruction Committee Minutes**

It was the consensus of the Instruction Committee members to accept the April 22, 2010 meeting minutes, as presented.

**School Library per Capita Annual Report**

As part of the Illinois Secretary of State/State Librarian/Per Capita Grant Program, the Library is required each year to report to the Board of Education on the progress made during the year to meet the local goals identified in the grant. The 2009-2010 goal was to complete the information literacy section of the OPRFHS Indices of Achievement document based on the Illinois Learning Standards as a part of the larger school effort to map achievement for all students.

Mr. Vogel reported that the Librarians chose to use the I-SAIL standards as the basis for Library/Information Literacy Curriculum Delivery, developed by the Illinois School Library Media Association and aligned with the Illinois Learning Standards.

The recommendations for next year included:

1. Collaborate with teachers to develop assignments tied to a specific information literacy standard/goal.
2. Review teacher assignments that require library resources to determine the scope and range of the assignments in relation to the identified information literary standards.
3. Develop a data collection system to assure that all students have a wide range of library experiences which address the information literacy standards.

When asked how Google or Wikipedia had affected the school's environment, Mr. Vogel reported that it was a challenge to find the right information within so much information available. Students learn about accessing databases and librarians review continually how they can teach students to do research with the existing databases. The Library is tracking where it gets its clientele and will then determine where the gaps exist. The District has not broken down the curriculum or expectations by grade level because students do not come to the library by class

level; they come by course. Mr. Vogel continued that ten years ago, District 97 did away with its library coordinator; both junior highs work independently. Since then, District 97 did away with of its subscriptions to databases except for World Book. Mr. Vogel met with the Oak Park and River Forest Public Libraries in April to overcome the contractual difficulties of sharing databases in order to contain costs. Business managers of governmental agencies have been asked to see if a master contract can be developed, but that process will take time.

When asked about educating the freshman class to a universal language, Mr. Vogel said that effort was not successful because the Librarians worked within the freshman biology classes to introduce them to the network, but 147 students did not take biology.

Mr. Prale acknowledged Mr. Vogel's retirement at the end of the year and his contribution to the school over the years.

### **Learning Environment Initiatives Update** Courageous Conversations About Race (CCAR)

Mr. Alexander and Mr. Rouse provided information relative to the District's approach to the CCAR.

Relative to the Race Facilitator Development Program, Mr. Rouse proposed a similar structure for next year, adding more individuals. He cautioned that there was a delicate balance in continuing with the original people and adding new people because of the level of experience that the original people have received. In addition, a new division head, with whom Mr. Rouse had worked previously, will help the District go in a deeper direction, e.g., the SEA training. Mr. Rouse recommended that the Board of Education attend the Beyond Diversity Training, which would enable the administration and the Board of Education to have an equal footing. The Pacific Education Group (PEG) is willing to work with the District on this.

Dr. Lee wanted clarification as to when Board of Education members were to be in attendance for a particular event or workshop, as he had not seen any information or invitations relative to these. And, if and when they are invited, what is their role? Are they observers? Are they participants?

Discussion ensued about the format in which PEG provided the Beyond Diversity Training. It was recommended that the optimum way to take this course was to have the administration and Board of Education involved, not the faculty and staff at this time, as these individuals are the initial contacts. To overcome a fear that the District was not invested in this process, the administration was invited to participate in the training this year. This fear would also be calmed by having the Board of Education take this training.

PEG offers the Beyond Diversity Training on a much larger venue with participants from a variety of areas. Ms. Patchak-Layman attended one of these and found value in that format. She viewed this as a personal journey. She also asked that if there were a way to take that personal journey into a public setting for the Board of Education.

At the Instruction Committee's request, Mr. Rouse will develop a framework for next year, and inquire of PEG dates and costs of the Beyond Diversity Training. While it was suggested that

other districts in this community might be interested in participating, Mr. Alexander recommended that it would be more beneficial for the District to pursue its own training. Ms. Patchak-Layman noted that from her research PEG charged \$4,000 per day if an organization was not part of a multi-year partnership. Or, in a larger venue, it was \$395 per person.

#### Plascotrac

Mr. Rouse provided a status report on the Plascotrac pilot, a tardy detention system. The report was favorable and students were becoming accustomed to the expectation of being timely. Few suggestions about adding time to passing periods have been received.

Mr. Hunter added that the faculty was happy and engaged with this system and that Ms. Bishop, the other deans, and Mr. Rouse did a great job of explaining it to the faculty and getting people to support it.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if it were possible to get the composite of semester tardies and if the District was tracking tardies to see when the most occurred. She wondered how much instruction time was being lost by students having to get a pass. Mr. Rouse stated that information would be provided in the discipline report that is issued in March and August of each year.

When asked if the District would remove the consequence because the students have been trained, the response was that the District is following its protocol and the consequences have always been in effect.

#### Student ID's

Mr. Rouse asked the Committee members to approve the procedures for students ID's to begin in the fall. The Board of Education will approve the changes to the *Code of Conduct*.

There was consensus to put the issue of closed campus on the Instruction Committee agenda in the fall. Dr. Lee suggested holding a hearing first and then have specific proposals presented to the Board of Education so that it could make decisions on policy with a timeline irrespective of the goals.

Ms. Patchak-Layman stated that in order to have a school in which students are known and in which relationships are in place to help students, conversation must occur. The cost for implementing this change is approximately \$3,000 for lanyards and Mr. Rouse asked that the conversation be continued with the administration.

#### **RtI Update**

In the written material, Mr. Rouse provided an update as to where the District stood relative to its implementation of Response to Intervention (RtI), a means of addressing student achievement. Mr. Rouse noted that by eliminating something else, the initiative funding would pay for the two release periods for the newly appointed RtI coordinators to talk with teachers about its implementation. Parental involvement will occur at a later date. In response to a question, Mr. Rouse stated that PBIS had not been implemented across the entire school. No other discussion ensued.

### **Project Lead the Way Proposal**

Although there was some hesitation, it was the consensus of the majority of the Instruction Committee members to approve the Project Lead the Way (PLTW) agreement at its regular May Board of Education meeting so long as the Board of Education had the ability to have additional review as the program develops.

Mr. Prale noted that Dr. Weninger had originally brought this program to the District almost 2 ½ years ago, but nothing was done at that time. As a result of staff changes, site visits, etc., significant interest from high schools has grown. This program is not about adding courses; it is about having capstone area student internships with businesses in the community. Currently approximately 100 to 120 students are participating in the courses offered, e.g., technical drawing, etc. The expectation is for 150 to 200 students to participate in the courses in the future with the increased population coming from other academic electives.

Dr. Weninger noted that there would be very positive unintended consequences in focusing on engineering and sciences. While there will be an impact on English and History electives, the school will offer a program that is positive and will expose students to other paths. This program is for all students.

Mr. Hunter was disappointed that this had been brought to this Committee, because Mr. Prale had promised to bring it to Instructional Council and to Faculty Senate before presenting it to the Board of Education. The last time this was talked about was in March at the Facilities Advisory Committee (FAC) because it is a “land grab.” Mr. Hunter’s concern was in the way this was being handled. It seemed that administrators were competing against each other and less than 100 students were presently involved in the technology program. He did not believe there were enough registrations to drive the program because the registrations would be coming from electives already filled. The investment is \$500,000 in technology. Mr. Hunter wanted to know what the members of the other divisions would say about this program and what the implications would be on room allocation. He thought the Instruction Committee was to talk more about a reading program. Mr. Grosser has the following of two people, Mr. Prale has avoided talking about this, and Mr. Hunter has been put in the position of having to defend against something that might be positive.

Mr. Prale reported that he had never been asked to talk with Faculty Senate about this program, even when he had been invited to speak to it about other issues two weeks ago. When this was discussed two years ago, the counselors were in the room. This idea is about changing existing courses and that will come through course proposal process. Mr. Hunter cautioned that if the Board of Education approves the contract, this program will proceed and the District will have to fund the program and register students in it. A twenty percent increase in Applied Technology only means twenty students. This contract becomes the “hammer” for a program that has not been vetted.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked how this fit into the bigger plan and how this would affect the other sections. She asked if medical jobs had been considered. Mr. Prale stated that Mr. Grosser has talked about plans for robotics and not just substituting these classes for other classes. Mr. Prale disagreed that this was a “hammer” as the space to be used is the space for the Woods Program. If

this program develops, then other science space would be swapped for it. No additional space is being allocated to it. The question at this time is whether to engage this curriculum.

Dr. Weninger stated that the administration is asking the Board of Education to approve strong leadership in an area that has sat dormant for many years. Mr. Grosser has involved the teachers from Applied Technology and they are very excited about it. The program also aligns with STEM, a strong initiative in the Science arena.

Mr. Prale clarified that if the DVR grants are not received, then the program will not go forward. While this sounded fine, Ms. Patchak-Layman asked how this worked with the music department needs and the language labs needs; each department has a wish list. This is only one part of the puzzle. She also asked where students would learn critical learning and get hands-on experience.

Mr. Prale noted that a contract is required because it is a Standard Operating Procedure for PTLW. Dr. Weninger noted that this was intellectual property and PTLW wants a guarantee that the high school will implement its program and be faithful to its curriculum, software, etc. Because of the articulated credit, PLTW wants to insure fidelity.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if the students who need to move forward at a faster pace in math will be part of this program with additional support. Mr. Prale will provide this answer after this meeting.

### **Adjournment**

The Instruction Committee meeting adjourned at 9:38 a.m. on Monday, May 17, 2010.