

**OAK PARK and RIVER FOREST HIGH SCHOOL  
201 N. Scoville Ave., Oak Park, Illinois 60302**

**BOARD OF EDUCATION  
INSTRUCTION COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING  
Thursday, March 18, 2010  
7:30 a.m.  
Board Room**

**A G E N D A**

- |      |  |                        |
|------|--|------------------------|
| I.   | Call to Order  | Dr. Ralph H. Lee       |
| II.  | Approval of Minutes  | Phil Prale             |
| III. | PSAE Plans   | Amy Hill               |
| IV.  | MSAN Update Mini Conference – Mentoring                                    | Phil Prale<br>Amy Hill |
| V.   | Sectioning Update  | Nathaniel Rouse        |
| VI.  | Additional Instructional Matters for Committee<br>Information/Deliberation | Dr. Ralph H. Lee       |

Copies to: Instruction Committee Members, Dr. Ralph H. Lee, Chair  
Board Members  
Administrators  
Director of Community Relations and Communications

**Oak Park and River Forest High School  
201 N. Scoville  
Oak Park, IL 60302  
120**

**An Instruction Committee of the Whole Board  
February 18, 2010**

An Instruction Committee meeting was held on Thursday, February 18, 2010, in the Board Room. Dr. Ralph H. Lee opened the meeting at 7:38 a.m. Committee members present were Jacques A. Conway, Terry Finnegan, Dr. Ralph H. Lee, Amy McCormack, 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 Assessment and Research; Nathaniel L. Rouse, Principal; Michael Carioscio, Chief Information Officer; Cheryl L. Witham, Chief Financial Officer; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

Visitors included Kay Foran, Community Relations and Communications Coordinator; James Paul Hunter, FSEC Chair; Debra Mittleman, OPRFHS Outreach Coordinator; Linda Cada, Director of Special Education, Tom Tarrant and Therese Brennock, OPRFHS faculty, and Terry Dean of the *Wednesday Journal*.

**Approval of January 2010 Instruction Committee Minutes**

It was the consensus of the Instruction Committee members to accept the January 21, 2010 minutes of that meeting, as presented.

**Outreach Coordinator**

Mr. Rouse introduced Debra Mittleman, OPRFHS's Outreach Coordinator. The Outreach Coordinator position was added last April. Ms. Mittleman will make a formal report at the end of the school year. Ms. Mittleman hosts monthly parent meetings to inform parents of the programs and services available to them, e.g., summer enrichment programs, grants and scholarships, support programs, math programs, the Percy Julian Symposium, etc. Being a parent herself and as the parents' first contact with the school, her goal is to make this large school more welcoming. The parents have been receptive and open to meeting with her.

Amy Hill used the results of the EXPLORE test to help determine which families should be contacted. While the list originally included over 400 names, the students who might benefit the most were targeted. Mr. Rouse noted that the School's Improvement Plan (SIP) prescribes targeting the lowest achieving students.

Dr. Lee asked if Ms. Mittleton had been required to initiate contact with a family based on the experience in the discipline system. Ms. Mittleman responded affirmatively as she works with the PSS Teams: some students struggle academically and some have discipline issues. Both counselors and deans will refer the names of students who need additional outreach.

Ms. Mittleton scheduled a parents meeting prior to the registering of parent/teacher conferences prior to the general population's ability to register. While the software company could not turn that feature on to let the parents register at the time, Ms. Mittleman gathered the

parents' best times and the next day signed them up and sent follow-up reminders. She also provided them with a list of key questions to ask the teachers. All of the parents showed up for their conferences.

Her vision for next year included continued working with the families in the database and working with the class of 2014. She sent out introductory letters to them, telling them about the Open House where she had a table and set up one-on-one appointments at that time.

Dr. Lee thanked her for her presentation.

### **Update on Behavior Interventionist Initiative**

Mr. Prale introduced Tom Tarrant, OPRFHS's Behavior Interventionist. In 2005, the Board of Education voted for the phase-in dollars to be used for specific interventions that could be tracked. One of the interventions was for a full-time Behavior Interventionist attached to the ED program. The premise was that if the District could address behavior before an incident occurred, students would spend more time in the classrooms. Mr. Prale complimented Mr. Tarrant on his efforts in this position.

Mr. Tarrant reported that he was the coordinator of the program's use of PBIS, a model which defines expected behaviors. The expectation cannot be that students know how to behave; the behaviors have to be defined, role modeled, and constantly reiterated. Students are rewarded for being on time, doing well academically with gift certificates, movies, pizza, etc. A matrix of the program was developed that clearly defines behaviors. If a student is told to be more respectful, that means:

#### **RESPECT**

Responsible for your own behaviors

Efforts is required to succeed

Self discipline

Being prepared for class

Energy

Concentrate on the task at hand, the work.

Timeliness.

PBIS has its own language and that too is modeled. The two languages students need to know and when to use them are: 1) language for the street; and 2) language for work or school.

Mr. Tarrant noted his varying responsibilities as follows: counseling; mediating disputes between teachers and students; being a liaison for the parent and the teachers; training others in PBIS techniques and collaborating on effective strategies with other teachers; contacting each parent at a minimum of two times per semester; making presentations at Board of Education meetings; assisting students transferring into the community; checking weekly progress reports and assigning study table if necessary; and assigning and monitoring independent courses for those students who are missing credits.

He noted his appreciation to the Deans and to the support staff. Mr. Tarrant will also set up a meeting with Ms. Mittleman to talk about parent conferences, homework, strategies for parent meetings, etc.

In terms of how data is collected, Mr. Tarrant stated that the District uses the SWIS system. The data collected only shows the troubled areas. In those areas different interventions are used, but since humans are constantly involved and evolving, sometimes the interventions are successful and sometimes they are not. Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if the interventions were documented and whether they were intentional and transferrable. Mr. Tarrant responded affirmatively noting that he would be happy to meet with her to have a fuller conversation about this. Believing that data was important, Ms. Patchak-Layman asked how teachers would know how to reinforce a student in mainstream math if they did not know the PBIS techniques and interventions that been successful. Mr. Tarrant stated that this year statistics are being kept in the mainstream classes. Ms. Cada added that each behavior intervention plan goes with the student and includes those that work most effectively with those students; although not all of the teachers have been trained in PBIS. A comparison was done using the SWIS data of this year and last year and discussion focused on where to look for improvements in the program.

Mr. Tarrant stressed that parental involvement and more academic parent meetings are the key to getting students to succeed in school. Many single parents must work and find it difficult to get their students to school. Many of the staff in the program play sports and are using that as a way to know these students on a different level. Mr. Tarrant was thanked for his report.

#### **Update on Learning Support Reading Classes**

Mr. Prale presented an update on the Learning Support Reading Classes. The goal of this program is to have students enrolled in this program show similar patterns of GPA and discipline involvement as the students enrolled in English 1-2. At this time, the results show that student are not accelerating, only maintaining, average growth.

Ms. Patchak-Layman reflected that this program was not showing accelerated GPA, but they had not looked at the reading scores. Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if the reading growth was scattered. The response was that after six months, students see six months growth with some individual students have one year's growth in just one semester. Individually it is possible for a student to have accelerated growth, but as a program, not enough information is available to affirm that as a fact.

Discussion ensued about exploring the idea of instituting a global reading program. Dr. Lee cautioned about moving in this direction as there was a significant cost for this. He wanted to know what types of information were needed in order to make a decision of that sort. Discussion ensued as to how data was being kept, either by content or discreet skills. Mr. Prale stated that discreet reading skills were not as yet broken out for the majority of OPRFHS students. The District does not collect skill scores, a ranking of student fluency, multi syllabic comprehension, etc. Ms. Patchak-Layman suggested that it was important information to have.

Mr. Rouse stated that RtI enables the District to create a progress monitoring tool to gauge skills; it is a matter of strengthening the skills of the teachers. It will impact the way students are addressed and how scores are reviewed. Mr. Prale's opinion was this would work if there was a basis for a larger plan. He will bring to a future Instruction Committee 1) a plan for rethinking the reading acceleration levels at the high school; 2) a review of existing projects or pilots; 3) what policy considerations would be necessary; 4) what measurements and benchmarks would be used; 5) what the staffing needs would be and the costs associated with it; and 7) what the anticipated outcomes would be.

### **Additional Deliberations**

Dr. Lee asked if the District should have a minimum set of reading skills in order to graduate. By the spring of the junior year it is known that some student reading levels are unacceptably low. The District has no idea when students walk across the stage at graduation if they will be able to earn a living. If a student has earned a certain number of credits, does the District not care to set minimum standards? He wanted the Board of Education to discuss that issue. It was reported that while no other schools in Illinois have addressed that fact, some other states such as New York and Ohio have done that.

Dr. Weninger noted that the high school's standard for graduation is 43 credits. The questions to ask are: What does it take to pass the class? Could a student with a third-grade reading level pass all of the classes at OPRFHS? How could a student pass his/her classes with that low of a reading level? What is the minimum standard expected for a diploma? Dr. Lee asked if a sixth or seventh grade reading level would allow one to pass all of the classes. He felt the District should know the answer to those questions.

Ms. McCormack wanted to focus the Board of Education's time, energy, and money on getting students to a higher reading level.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked about the District's definition of institutional excellence. Ms. Hill reported that she has met with the core academic division heads to see what progress they have made on indentifying their content specific knowledge (Domains 1 and 2). Science has agreed that it will use the Regional Office of Education's project of a regional assessment in biology and chemistry. English is looking at its curriculum guide as a starting point for indentifying skills. Things are in place in the core subject areas, e.g., history, math. Now with some of the hiring work completed, more attention will be delivered to this project. Mr. Prale informed Ms. Patchak-Layman that grading would become a part of the conversation.

### **Adjournment**

The Instruction Committee meeting adjourned at 9:02 a.m. on Thursday, February 18, 2010.

# *Oak Park and River Forest High School*

## *District 200*

201 North Scoville Avenue • Oak Park, IL 60302-2296

TO: Board of Education  
FROM: Amy Hill  
DATE: March 18, 2010  
RE: Plans for April Testing

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### **BACKGROUND**

On April 28-29, 2010, we will conduct standardized testing of our freshman, sophomore, and junior students.

### **SUMMARY OF TESTING ARRANGEMENTS**

#### Test Registration

- On Thursday, April 8, all juniors will register for the PSAE-ACT.
- That same day, all sophomores and seniors will complete the Illinois Youth Survey; all freshmen will complete a school climate and risk factor survey.

#### April 28-29 Testing

On Wednesday, April 28 and Thursday, April 29, we will conduct standardized testing of our freshmen, sophomores, and juniors.

- No classes will meet on these two days.
- Seniors will not attend on these two days.
- Testing will take place in classrooms.
- Faculty and staff will be assigned to proctor tests and/or to serve in supporting roles.

#### *Wednesday, April 28*

- Freshmen will take the pre-ACT PLAN test.
- Sophomores will take an instructional ACT.
- Juniors will take Day 1 of the PSAE (ACT Plus Writing).
- Student dismissal times will vary by class and according to the length of the test.
- Full-faculty staff development activities will occur from 1:00-3:04.

#### *Thursday, April 29*

- Freshmen will engage in a series of activities, including an overview of Naviance and career interest inventory; a panel discussion by seniors about making the most of the high school experience; and a presentation about internet safety.
- Sophomores will take practice WorkKeys Reading and Math tests.
- Juniors will take Day 2 of the PSAE (WorkKeys Reading and Math tests and ISBE science test).
- Tentative student dismissal time is 11:00.
- Divisional staff development activities will occur from 11:00-3:04.

#### *Other Logistics*

- Each grade level will test on a different floor and/or a different area of the building to minimize potential disruptions from variations in testing schedules.
- Students will be assigned to classrooms in groups of 25-30.
- Students testing with accommodations will test in locations least likely to be disrupted by the end of standard-time testing.
- Special Education faculty and staff will proctor students testing with accommodations.
- Off-campus juniors will test at OPRF with appropriate accommodations and supervision.

***Oak Park and River Forest High School  
District 200***

201 North Scoville Avenue • Oak Park, IL 60302-2296

TO: Board of Education  
FROM: Nate Rouse, Amy Hill, and Phil Prale  
DATE: March 18, 2010  
RE: MSAN Mini-Conference Update

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**BACKGROUND**

Earlier this month MSAN sponsored a two-day mini-conference focusing on building effective teacher mentoring and induction programs and building cultural proficiency among new teachers. OPRFHS sent a team of eight faculty and staff to the conference. The OPRFHS team was comprised of Dana Limberg, Devon Alexander, Jessica Stovall, Nimmi Weisman, Ignacio Ponce, Amy Hill, Nate Rouse, and Phil Prale.

**SUMMARY**

The mini-conference was titled *Professional Development and Induction: Supporting New Teachers to Build Instructional Practices and Relationships that Support Students of Color*. The event was organized and co-hosted by staff from three MSAN districts – Evanston Township High School District 202, Madison Metropolitan School District, and Columbia Public Schools, Columbia, MO.

The structure of the conference was to allow district and school teams time to work together and across districts to assess their current mentoring and induction plans and think of specific improvements to those plans. The keynote address was given by Dr. Kikanza Nuri Robins who spoke on the topic of building culturally proficient induction programs in school and district organizations. Dr. Kikanza Nuri stayed after her keynote for the entire duration of the conference, participating in the workshop presentations and the district planning portions of the agenda.

A highlight of the conference was a discussion titled *A Conversation with Young Teachers*, a panel discussion of teachers who reflected on their experiences with induction and cultural proficiency. Dana Limberg, an OPRF teacher in the History Division participated on the panel.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The team of faculty and staff who attended the conference will meet over the next several weeks to review the current OPRFHS mentor and induction program and propose revisions to the existing program.