

March 25, 2010

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

Call to Order President Protempore and Vice President Lee called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m. The following Board of Education members were present: John C. Allen, IV, Jacques A. Conway, Dr. Ralph H. Lee, Amy Leafe McCormack, Dr. Dietra D. Millard, and Sharon Patchak-Layman (arrived at 7:41 p.m.). 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 at University of Illinois' German Day Competition:

First Place – Skit

Peter Hanneman
Abby Lyons
Wali Mbekeani

Kurt Grahnke
Colin Krueger
Linnea Peterson-Bunker

First Place -Advertisement

Liz Donahue
Paul Deziel
Kurt Grahnke
Natalie House

Lauren Sloniger
Peter Hanneman
Tom Zyer

Second Place- Poetry

Paul Deziel

3rd Place-Poetry

Audrey Roen

Third Place-City Guide

Magdalena Rothberger

Christopher Calhoun

Second Place - Impressions of America Essay

Marcel Beisser

Second Place - Culture Essay

Linnea Peterson-Bunker

Visitors

The Board of Education welcomed the following visitors: Kay Foran, OPRFHS Communications and Community Relations Coordinator; Janel Bishop, Tia Marr, Jim Goodfellow, Jason Dennis, Aaron Podolner, J.P. Coughlin, Andrea Newman, Meghan Kennedy, Therese Brennock, Nikki Paplaczyk, Faun Donatucci, Carol Ewald, OPRFHS faculty members; Jacob Grimm, *Trapeze Reporter*, Mimi Skapek, Kris Raino-Ogden of Citizens' Council; Wali Mbekeani, Lumumba Mbekeani, Christopher Calhoun family, Dan, Jenny & Audrey Roen, Liz, Leslie and Mike Donahue, Paula Podolner, John Hazinski, Catherine Czzen, Scott & Colin Krueger, students and community members; Pat

Cermak, James Nagle, and LeeAnne Meyers-Smith of Wight & Company, Terry Dean of the *Wednesday Journal*.

Changes to the Agenda

None

Status of FOIA Requests

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

Board of Education Comments

Dr. Millard reported that the Board of Education had initially interviewed six semi-finalists for the Superintendent position and narrowed that down to three. The Board of Education made a unanimous choice of finalist and will proceed to vet and negotiate over the next month before any official announcement can be made to identify the person. The Board of Education will announce the person at its regular April 29 Board of Education meeting. She thanked the Board of Education, representatives of the administration, the faculty, and the community for the Village of Oak Park.

Visitor Comments

None

Student Council Report

Ms. Turczek reported:

- 1) the vote of the senior class was 71% in favor of the traditional graduation dress versus 21% in favor of caps & gowns. She felt the student body's wishes were accurately represented;
- 2) *Alice in Wonderland* will be the theme of the Prom.
- 3) In May, the following Student Council Officers will be installed:
 - Emily Hendrix- President
 - Emily Gullo-Vice President
 - Amanda Gleason- Public Relations
 - Sam Frigo- Treasurer/Secretary
 - Leah Walters- Public Service Coordinator
 - Katrina Vogel-Board Representative

2010 Class Size Report

Mr. Carioscio reported that the report was of a typical pattern and included 1) second semester enrollment figures; 2) enrollment statistics by division/department; and 3) average class size with historical data.

Student Discipline Report

Mr. Rouse introduced Janel Bishop, Assistant Principal for Student Services, who authored the report. A new tardy procedure was implemented this year so that when students received tardies, teachers issue detentions rather than discipline referrals, as had been the practice in the past. In addition, teachers gave detention slips, but they were not asked to monitor the detention area. While this was easier for students and teachers, the recordkeeping was more cumbersome. The tables included in the report show there was a decrease in

Class I, Class II and Class III infractions and an increase in Class IV infractions committed by students when comparing the numbers for first semester of last year to first semester of this year. Ms. Bishop highlighted additional findings.

- 54% (1554 out of 2879) of all infractions committed are for failing to serve a detention issued by either a teacher or a dean.
- Of the 2879 total infractions committed by students, 2695 or 94% of them were Class II infractions. Last year Class II infractions made up approximately 92% of all infractions committed.
- African-American males continue to be involved in disproportionately more discipline infractions than students from all other groups.
- There was a decrease in all violence-related infractions (fighting, battery and mob action).
- There has been a significant increase in theft and drug-related infractions (electronics).
- Of the 2879 infractions, 923 or 32% were committed by Special Education students, who represent approximately 15% of the total housed student population.
- Sophomore students have had the highest involvement in the discipline system.

Dr. Millard suggested students engrave their names on their electronic devices to deter theft.

Ms. Bishop noted that the Oak Park Youth Township personnel are in the building during the week and are actively involved in the battle of substance abuse.

When asked, Ms. Bishop felt that the effect would be positive if the District closed the campus and students work their ID's externally. The building is welcoming and open to the public seven days per week; it is possible for people to get past the front desk without registering. Discussions are ensuing about changing the position of the Welcome Center and making it front and center. Mr. Rouse acknowledged the great work that the Deans and Ms. Bishop do, noting that they were charged with making sure that OPRFHS was a safe learning environment.

Ms. Bishop suggested the high school have building-wide classroom management training in place. While Deans try to help teachers, in this building unlike other buildings, Deans are Faculty Senate members. It can be difficult telling a colleague, a seasoned teacher, that he/she is struggling.

Mr. Dennis added that all efforts to improve academic performance are helpful because when students do well in class they feel better and stay out of trouble. The PSS Team and the Counselors work in tandem on the whole student and academics are part of the discussion. Unfortunately, Deans have caseloads of over 800 students and that is very stressful. Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if academic activities could be added to this report, e.g., what academic support would the student receive when assigned ISS or OSS.

Mr. Goodfellow added that the Deans do much preventive work.

Principal Report

Mr. Rouse congratulated student council and its officers for their tireless efforts in the reauthorization of the annual graduation dress vote.

Mr. Rouse also congratulated the BOSS Student Organization for its “You’ve Got Talent Showcase” this month, instead of having a Heritage Morp to make its event more inclusive for all students. Over 250 students, parents, and community members watched fifteen student acts ranging from jabba walkers, solo pianists, violinists, rap duos, acappella singers, and dance troops. He especially thanked Mark Vance, the BOSS Faculty Sponsor, Debra Mittleman, the Parent Outreach Coordinator, and Asa Cain, President of BOSS, for their efforts.

Mr. Rouse also noted that the TEAM Basketball students and the wrestlers would be celebrated at the April 16 Spirit Assembly.

District Reports

Citizens’ Council– In February a subcommittee of Citizens’ Council was formed. They met with the school and among itself about working through the Citizens’ Council charter to reach out to the community to address the issues of the high school relative to substance abuse.

They discovered the following.

- 1) Alcohol and drug use is prevalent, with alcohol and marijuana being the drugs of choice.
- 2) Oak Park and River Forest are central locations for the dealing of drugs; this filters down to students.
- 3) Administrators and community leaders concur that substance abuse is a top concern.
- 4) OPRFHS has a reputation for being an easy place to get and use drugs.
- 5) Parents, community members, and Citizens’ Council members have differing views about how seriousness the problem is.
- 6) Some believe this is a rite of passage and others have no tolerance.
- 7) More parent and community awareness as well as distinct effort from the school and the community is needed to deal with this issue.
- 8) Citizens’ Council is an advisory organization formed with the purpose of providing a forum for school and community concerns. It is available to

address school needs and offer advice to both the administration and Board of Education.

Citizens' Council will host a forum in the spring for all parents and community groups to facilitate the awareness of the substance abuse issue and include some of the speakers who were on the panel held in February. Parents and students will be asked to share their experiences. Board of Education members are invited to attend and/or participate. The subcommittee will provide questions and a Q&A session would follow. They anticipated a follow-up roundtable meeting that would allow further discussions and an effort to work collaboratively with the school and the community to define an action plan to start next fall.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked what data substantiated these claims as she observed that the discipline report had not indicated much alcohol and/or drug use. It was reported that data was received from the Illinois Youth Survey, the police departments, etc., and that all nine expulsions were for drug offenses; theft supports drug abuse. Police have larger numbers outside of the school. The discipline report only shows the students caught. Mr. Conway added that substance abuse affects the learning ability of students and it is a family secret. Parents feel ashamed and defeated because they have lost control. Parents need to know they are supported. He felt there was an epidemic and the adults must find a healing for it quickly.

Mr. Rouse stated that Margo Bristol, the Substance Abuse Counselor, does a great job of providing data. This is not about law enforcement but about providing proactive support to educate the students. When the subcommittee reviewed all of the pamphlets, they could find on the subjects, the focus of all of the pamphlets was to the parents, not the students.

Dr. Lee affirmed to the subcommittee that the Board of Education supported this endeavor.

Huskie Boosters—Mr. Conway reminded the Board of Education that the Booster's dinner/dance was May 1, 2010.

APPLE—The April 6 APPLE meeting was canceled.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Weninger thanked the Citizens' Council members for the work they did with regard to substance abuse and he hoped the momentum gained would not stop beyond the forum.

Consent Items

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked that Item VIII. E. be removed from the Consent Agenda.

Ms. McCormack moved to approve the consent items as follows:

- Check Disbursements and Financial Resolutions dated March 25, 2010 (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting);
- Monthly November Financials;
- Treasurer's Report;
- NIIPC Rollover Bids;
- Photography Bid;
- R& D Bus Contract;
- Commencement of the 2010 Audit;
- Ombudsman Alternative Education Services Agreement;
- Printing Services Contract;
- Athletic Trainer Contract; and
- Paper Bid;

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

Renewal of IHSA Membership

Ms. Patchak-Layman noted that the Board of Education has discussed the scheduling of athletic competition on religious holidays. She wanted to send a letter to the IHSA with this form that it needed to give more consideration to religious holidays. Mr. Rouse reported that both he and John Stelzer had both spoken with the representative members of the respective conferences to which the District belongs, adding that dates for competition are set two years in advance. North Shore schools not only do not participate in competitions on specific religious holidays, they also have non-attendance days on these days. OPRFHS is unable to make that adjustment. Should OPRFHS choose not to participate in the competitions, it would forfeit the games. Mr. Stelzer does advise families about these conflicts.

Dr. Millard did not want to eliminate the opportunity for student participation, but she did suggest writing a letter to IHSA registering a complaint that District 200 has to be mindful of the holidays.

Ms. McCormack moved to renew membership in the Illinois High School Association (IHSA) and to abide by IHSA's Constitution, By-Laws, Terms and Conditions, and Administrative Procedures, Guidelines and Policies of the Association for the period July 1, 2010, through June 30, 2011; seconded by Mr. Allen. A roll call resulted in five ayes and one nay. Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay. Motion carried.

Policy 4370

Dr. Millard moved to amend Policy 4370, Mandatory Reporting Responsibilities, as presented; seconded by Mr. Conway. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Policy 1105

Dr. Millard moved to approve Policy 1105, Corporate Sponsorship, for First Reading; seconded by Mr. Conway. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

- Policy 1200** Dr. Lee moved to approve Policy 1200, Board of Education, for First Reading; seconded by Mr. Allen. A roll call vote resulted in all five ayes and one nay. Mr. Conway voted nay. Motion carried.
- Policy 1330** Dr. Millard moved to approve Policy 1330, Tobacco Prohibition, for First Reading; seconded by Dr. Lee. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.
- Policy 1410** Dr. Lee moved to approve Policy 1410, Rental of Facilities, for First Reading; seconded by Mr. Allen. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.
- Policy 1420** Dr. Lee moved to approve Policy 1420, Citizens' Council, for First Reading as presented; seconded by Mr. Conway. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.
- Policy 2120** Dr. Millard moved to approve Policy 2120, Superintendent; seconded by Dr. Lee. A roll call vote resulted in five ayes and one nay. Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay. Motion carried.
- Policy 5117** Policy 5117, Residency and Tuition, was remanded back to the PEG Committee for discussion at its meeting in April.
- Summer Construction** Dr. Lee moved to give authorization for the Superintendent and the Chief Financial Officer to accept bids for summer 2010 construction projects as presented; seconded by Mr. Conway. A roll call vote resulted in five ayes and one nay. Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay. Motion carried.

The items to be rebid are:

HVAC, Electrical, Plumbing, Demo/Asbestos, General Carpentry

The bids that will be accepted are:

Painting, flooring, Science casework, Steel, Masonry, Roofing

Dr. Weninger explained that there were three reasons why the bids exceeded the estimates: 1) The scope of the work did not take into account what the contractors took into account, e.g., when the HVAC boxes are replaced the entire ceiling down must come down, not just a portion of it as had been estimated; 2) the scope of work in terms of complexity in replacing plumbing, work in the basement, and the long stretches of replacing the pipe; and 3) the scope of the work scheduled in a short timeframe and forecasting the amount of overtime to complete the work.

Dr. Weninger noted that the work for the science lab was competitive. The plan for the Life Safety work had been completed several years ago. The State indicated that while the Life Safety Plan submitted to it and approved could not be amended, it did say that if the architect signed off on the plan as being complete, the District could complete that work beyond the Life Safety due date. Dr. Weninger asked the Board of Education to recognize that by postponing the work scheduled for this summer, it would be more costly to do later. While the administration recognizes that the bids come in beyond the estimates, it is also true that the District does not want to expend at a future rate. The HVAC work will enhance the teaching and learning environment. Postponing some of the plumbing work over the next five years will reduce the total by \$700,000.

Ms. Patchak-Layman objected to approving this request because there were conversations about moving the Welcome Center, other things in Science Division, and she believed other divisions wanted to enhance their instructional environment. She felt that pulling in reserves for this work might limit other activities and she did not have the information to make a decision. She asked if these dollars should be used for safety and security. Ms. Witham reminded her that part of the reason the Board of Education recommended a Facility Advisory Committee was to help with the balancing of the Life Safety and the curriculum work. Presentations have been made about science, technology, etc., and this recommendation is on track to do that work. Four science labs and offices will be completed this year and the District is continuing to talk about additional plans for science. Dr. Millard trusted the Facility Advisory Committee, Buildings and Grounds, and Ms. Witham to make sure funds were available for emergencies.

Ms. Patchak-Layman did not know if the discussion about air conditioning would have occurred if the Board of Education knew this would be the cost, as air conditioning is not as much a priority. Dr. Weninger responded that the District must replace the air handlers for rooms that have not had it for forty years; this opportunity may not happen again for many years. He concurred that it was a difficult call, but this was the administration recommendation.

Mr. Allen asked for an explanation from Wight as to why there was a \$2 million discrepancy from what was budgeted for this work. Ms. Meyers-Smith assured the Board of Education that Wight would do everything in its power to not make sure a miss like that would not happen again. Mr. Nagle explained that the work was underestimated because this is a vintage building. To do the related mechanical work in this building was thought to be just opening a hole in the wall or ceiling and then patching it. But it was discovered that the whole ceiling needed replacement after the lighting was installed. As new projects are reviewed that will be included.

Ms. Meyers-Smith added that when the contractors saw the work, they put a different value on it. She also said that this was the only occurrence of this on any other summer projects.

Mr. Allen asked how the contractors determined a ceiling could not be repaired. Mr. Nagle stated that the drawings reflected the scope of the work. The way the bids came in related to each other and reflected that the contractors had a good understanding what was expected. In preparing for the scope of the work and upon reflection of the specifications and the words, etc., contractors have to evaluate their risk as far as how much collateral work they would have to do in order to do specific work. With regard to the replacement of the HVAC box, the demolition contractor has to take out the existing work, which cannot be defined until the ceilings are removed. The work extending beyond what was initially factored in reflected the actual complexity and the schedule. Contractors take the risk that they can do the job in a certain amount of time and they determined that it would take longer and be more difficult. Mr. Allen continued that he was a certified specifications writer and landscaper. As such, he did an inspection, saw the work, and estimated the cost. When did someone realized that instead of patching the ceilings needed replacement? Mr. Nagle responded that the vast majority of the discrepancy is due to the complexity and the schedule. This is an aggressive amount of work to complete during the summer and the contractor is responsible for the schedule, making sure they have can accommodate long hours or additional shifts. Wight did not account for that factor adequately.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if the bids were about 33% higher than anticipated because of the District's fund balances. Mr. Nagle stated that six or seven bidders were clustered together and he did not think that the District's fund balance was a factor in the bidding.

Dr. Millard added that while Wight had served OPRFHS capability in past years, this was a big mistake and it would make her pause at having it do future projects. She was sad and disappointed.

Ms. Patchak-Layman added that the District took on this much work because it was told that the pricing would be favorable and now the District is in a double bind. Some things were never part of the original plan but added just because of the premise of low bidding. The District was told it needs its fund balances to get to 2018 and that fact is continually discusses. Using this money now for this project is a problem.

Mr. Allen's father is an architect and he learned that an architect's job is to protect the client. He noted that as Wight went forward, the District was relying on it to protect it.

Personnel Recommendations	Mr. Conway 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.
Retirement Requests	Mr. Conway moved to approve the retirement requests as presented; (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting); seconded by Dr. Millard. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.
Release of Probationary Non-Tenured Staff	Mr. Conway moved to approve the release of probationary non-tenured staff, as presented; seconded by Mr. Allen. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.
Instruction	Ms. Patchak-Layman asked for an update on scheduling, FTE, and teacher aides for next year. Mr. Prale reported that scheduling had not yet begun. Division Heads will begin to prepare teacher assignments for the coming year. Regarding teacher aides, the transition staffings with special education and the annual reviews are completed and he did not anticipate adding any teacher aides next year. The evaluations of faculty and teacher assistants must be completed by May 15 and the evaluations of support staff must be completed by May 30. Mr. Prale reported that Ms. Halliman, the Director of Special Education-designee, and Ms. Cada, were beginning to discuss transitions.
Approval of Minutes	Dr. Lee moved to approve the open and closed session minutes of February 18, 22, 25, March 4, 9, 15, 16, 17, and 18, 2010 and a Declaration that the audiotapes of the closed sessions dated July 2008 be destroyed; seconded by Mr. Allen. A roll all vote resulted in all five ayes and one nay. Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay. Motion carried.
Additional Discussion Items	Ms. Patchak-Layman reported that a graduate student had filmed the saga of the trip to Washington DC on the part of Community Bank; it was being shown at the high school on March 26, 2010. Ms. Patchak-Layman also noted that Bridgett Hoolihan Kennedy, a former <i>Oak Leaves</i> reporter who covered the high school, authored a book titled “The Chicago South Side Irish Parade” and was donating an autographed copy of it to the high school.
Closed Session	At 9:46 p.m., on Thursday, March 25, 2010, Ms. Patchak-Layman 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. Conway. A roll call vote resulted in all yes. Motion carried.

At 12:58 a.m. on Thursday, March 25, 2010, the Board of Education resumed its open session.

Adjournment

At 12:59 a.m. on Thursday, March 25, 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 and Vice President

John C. Allen, IV
Secretary