

**201 N. Scoville Avenue
Oak Park, IL 60302**

**Policy, Evaluation and Goals (PEG) Committee
Tuesday, January 15, 2013
Board Room**

A Policy, Evaluation and Goals Committee meeting was held on Tuesday, January 15, 2013 in the Board Room. Mr. Phelan opened the meeting at 6:36 p.m. A roll call included the following members: Terry Finnegan, Valerie J. Fisher; Dr. Ralph H. Lee; Dr. Dietra D. Millard, Terry Finnegan, Sharon Patchak-Layman, and John Phelan. Also present were Dr. Steven T. Isoye, Superintendent; Michael Carioscio, Chief Information Officer; Amy Hill, Director of Assessment and Research; Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Lauren M. Smith, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources; Karin Sullivan, Community Relations and Communications Director; Cheryl Witham, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations and Treasurer; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

Visitors: James Paul Hunter, Faculty Senate Executive Chair; Ronald Johnson, Director of Purchasing; Dr. Allan Alson, educational consultant; Mary Jo Haley of the League of Women Voters; Jackie Moore, John B. Bokum, Melanie McQueen, and Steve Gevinson, community members.

Strategic Plan Update

Dr. Alson provided the Board of Education with an update on the Strategic Plan progress, including the results of the survey, the focus groups, and the work of the Steering Committee. He thanked the Steering Committee members for participating almost every other Monday night and in a full day retreat on Saturday, January 12, 2013. He thanked the students, teachers, parents, and community members for participating in the focus groups and completing the survey. He thanked the staff members who participated on the Steering Committee, as well as those employees who contribute to every meeting—Ms. Kalmerton, Joe Troiani and the Technology staff, Buildings and Grounds, and Food Service. Dr. Alson felt that the Steering Committee members, by working with small groups, had gotten to know one another and had felt comfortable engaging in conversation and asking questions. Ms. Fisher attested to the fact that this process has worked well. Dr. Alson reported that Dr. Isoye updated the faculty on the Strategic Plan progress at the January 7 Institute Day.

The Steering Committee devoted much time to learning the current state of the District through data compiled and presented by Amy Hill and Cheryl Witham. The committee studied data on student achievement, finance and facilities, school climate, the survey, and the focus group data. The members were asked to think about what were they learning from it and what the implications were for the high school's future when they were reviewing the data. Dr. Alson and Pat Maunsell, his partner, felt certain themes had emerged from the groups' discussions. Steering Committee members had reviewed the value statements from OPRFHS's mission statement and the value statements from other districts' strategic plans. The committee narrowed down which ones best applied to OPRFHS. Through the study process and the narrowing of values, five key categories were developed. He believed these categories captured the main thrust of OPRFHS' future work and that the goal statements would emerge from the following five categories.

- 1) Holistic community education (a seamless education that takes place in a community, i.e., what is needed to build the connections and articulation from home, early childhood, K-8, after school programs and other community supports).
- 2) Equity, while embedded in all categories, it is separate category.

- 3) Supportive learning environment (at OPRFHS what is it about the learning environment that helps students succeed, i.e., tutoring, mental health assistance, non-cognitive variables that help students feel attached and part of a community.)
- 4) Transformational teaching, learning, and leadership can be defined as forward thinking. (Teaching, learning and leadership seen in 2013 may be different in five years. Trends would lean toward student-centered learning, more project-based learning, collaborative learning, or state policy demands in terms of assessment and common core standards could drive it.)
- 5) Facilities and finance

Dr. Isoye reported that extension of the survey deadline had allowed approximately 150 more community members to respond. He credited Deb Mittleman for encouraging people to take the survey. Either people could respond using the online version or by requesting paper copies, which people did and completed. While the average bars did not move much with the additional responses, there was a shift in the demographics, which might allow a different analysis upon the disaggregation of the groups. In addition, the student responses now more closely mirrored the demographics of the school.

Dr. Isoye explained that the preliminary results had shown a larger number of parents participating. School Perceptions had originally counted the number of staff members with children at the high school to two categories—staff members and parents. This report counts them as falling into only the staff category.

Focus Groups

Dr. Alson reported that 18 focus groups were held and approximately 200 people participated. The number of groups and the categories were as follows: 6 student groups, 4 faculty groups, 2 administrator groups, 3 staff groups, and 3 community groups. He highlighted summaries using the five categories.

Equity: There was strong agreement about expectations and that an achievement gaps exist and that is a problem. What is needed is a better understanding of diversity and issues within OPRFHS as well as an effort to address inequities that exist including the current tracking systems.

Holistic Community Education: There is a belief that there is a strong commitment and engagement in education across by all stakeholder groups and there are differences in academic and social preparation by the elementary districts and by individual schools within those schools.

Transformational Teaching, Learning, and Leadership: There is a belief that there is an inconsistency in instructional delivery, quality, rigor, and expectations held for students. However, there is support for instructional improvement through coaching and professional development.

Support Learning Environment: These is the need for greater personalization and relationship building within and across all stakeholder groups

Facilities and Finance: The alignment for resources to support equity is needed. The District will be challenged and will need to be prepared for enrollment growth and that technology needs to be consistently upgraded throughout the school.

The major themes throughout all of the focus groups were equity, communications (both within the school and between the school and the community), academic expectations and support, the need for consistent instructional leadership throughout OPRFHS and a seamless quality of connections throughout all entities, i.e., early childhood, the elementary districts, etc.

Dr. Alson then addressed next steps. The Steering Committee worked on value statements for each of the five categories, honed in on goal statements for the five categories, and they were asked to prioritize their interest in participating in the four separate task forces. The goal is to have a draft mission statement, a draft vision statement, a draft set of values, and a draft set of goals related to these five categories by February 11. The plan included presenting them to the Board of Education in March and asking the Board of Education to indicate a commitment to them, with final approval in May or June. Dr. Alson explained that ultimately the Strategic Plan might be somewhat more precise and granular than the current Board of Education goals with benchmarks and deliverables for moving forward in the next few years. An example in the plan or explicit action that he thought might/could be included would be that all stakeholder groups would be involved around equity. The Board of Education goals are at a high level of governance. Dr. Alson suggested that while the goals created by the Steering Committee may look similar to the Board of Education's goals, they may be more closely monitored or have a greater sense of urgency.

A Finance and Facilities Task Force will not be created because the school already has such a committee studying this issue. However, it will be asked how many Steering Committee members might participate. Co-leaders will be created and the charge will be to create action plans between February 11 and March 18. The Steering Committee will evaluate the task forces' ideas in March, April, and May. The Steering Committee will approve the plans, after which will be the editing of the plan. The Board of Education will receive a copy of the plan at its June Committee meeting and approve it at its regular June Board of Education meeting. The expectation should be that the administration is forming strategies to implement these action plans over the next five years. Because much time will have been spent on the creation of this plan, it is important that the Board of Education evaluate, monitor, and drive the work so that it not shelved.

Questions were raised about 1) whether the District had started to implement some of the ideas being discussed during the Steering Committee process or if it were waiting until the plan was completed to begin new items; 2) if it were beginning to implement some of the ideas, how would those actions be delineated from actions already in place; and 3) how does the budget timeline fit with the completion of the Strategic Plan proposal and any direction relative to the plan? Dr. Isoye responded that the Board of Education had set goals for this year. The Board of Education will receive a midyear report on the progress of these goals and satellite things at the regular January meeting. The Steering Committee's work had not altered the District's work of the goals and the projects from past years. Dr. Isoye felt the Strategic Plan would provide direction if there were any overlaps. He did not foresee any abrupt changes to the District's present work. Dr. Alson added that the Steering Committee task forces should learn more about the District's current initiatives, e.g., reading, professional development activities, tutoring center, etc., so that items are not duplicated. Dr. Alson suggested creating Strategic Plan categorical line items in the budget for next year with dollars affixed to it; this would indicate commitment going forward with refinement of it in May or June, when the final report is received.

Ms. Fisher also thanked the Steering Committee participants for their time commitment to this process. Ms. Patchak-Layman commended that the smaller working groups were mixed with people from venues but all have an interest education. Everyone was interested in the conversations that had occurred on Saturday and they continued to discuss this even past the cutoff time. People were ready to talk about how to do and talk about how one gets to the mission, goals and actions. They have many suggestions as to how things have to improve and they are anxious to start talking about them. Dr. Alson acknowledged that the energy level on Saturday stayed high throughout the six hours they met. People left charged after studying data for weeks. The challenge will be to sustain and bring home a plan that is good and feels right for this community. Ms. Patchak-Layman added that the meeting drew visitors and media to hear the conversations.

Adjournment

Mr. Finnegan moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:14 p.m.; seconded by Ms. Fisher. A voice vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Amy McCormack
Secretary