

OAK PARK AND RIVER FOREST HIGH SCHOOL
201 N. Scoville
Oak Park, IL 60302

Strategic Plan Operations Committee (SPOC)
May 18, 2015

A Strategic Plan Operations Committee meeting was held on May 18, 2015. Chair Dr. Moore called the meeting to order at 8:03 p.m. in the Board Room. Committee members present were Dr. Jackie Moore, Tom Cofsky, and Jennifer Cassell. Also present were Dr. Steven T. Isoye, Superintendent; Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction; Tod Altenburg, Chief School Business Officer; Gwen Walker Quales, Interim Director of Pupil Support Services; Sheila Hardin, Faculty Senate Executive Committee Chair; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

Visitors included Board of Education members Fred Arkin and Sara Spivy, OPRFHS faculty members Avi Lessing, Andrea Neuman, and Therese Brennock; and Steven Jackson, Oak Park Youth Township.

Public Comments

None

Minutes

Mr. Cofsky moved to approve the Strategic Plan Operations Committee minutes of April 14, 2015, as presented; seconded by Ms. Cassell. A voice vote resulted in motion carried.

SEL Coach Proposal

The Strategic Plan Operations Committee unanimously recommended that the proposal for a non-evaluative SEL Coach to support faculty and staff in furthering their understanding and application of SEL competencies (self-awareness, relationship building, empathy, decision making, etc.) in their daily practice be moved to the Board of Education for approval at its regular May meeting. This is the second review of the proposal as it was originally provided to the Board of Education as an informational item at its April 23, 2015 meeting.

Ms. Neuman, co-chair of the SEL Implementation Team, having learned the SEL competencies on her own, supported this proposal. She referred to the proposal, the Q&A, letters in support of the proposal, and differing viewpoints in the committee's packet.

Mr. Lessing, also director of the Starfish project, spoke about how stories for that project had been brought into the classrooms based upon interviews. He aligned that process of getting to know someone with the mission and vision of the Strategic Plan, i.e., relationship building, etc.

The proposal was created in the spirit of innovation, hiring a .4 release SEL coach to work with 25 teachers in year one in order to build capacities. Every teacher has engaged in this work and, thus, the intent is to engage students across grade levels, tracks, and subject matter. The requirements for this coach were listed on page 1 of the proposal. Mr. Lessing noted his interest in this position and noted that others in the building were qualified, as everyone trains holistically for this work. If the program were continued next year, 2 people could be hired and then others could become trainers. The SEL coach will offer and model skills and work with classroom teachers. The coach will offer much research-based information on mindfulness, social emotional support, etc. At the beginning and at the end of the year, significant time will be required for the interviewing of teachers and students. How to measure the effect of this coaching is an open question, but there is some connectedness to the Danielson model. The purpose is to build community in the classrooms to lessen the amount of interruptions.

Suggested ideas to help monitor the success of this program included:

- 1) Have teachers identify and define what a disengaged student looks like and his/her behaviors.
- 2) Have teachers identify and define what an engaged student looks like and their behaviors.
- 3) Track how many students access their teachers during the teacher's office hours for additional work/help.
- 4) Have students define their expectations or needs at the beginning of the year.
- 5) Track the number of detentions issued.
- 6) Track the number of students being referred for discipline.
- 7) Track how conflicts are resolved, i.e., with teachers and/or students, SIDs, and/or counselors, versus students being asked to leave the classroom.

Research shows that both teachers and students can play a role.

CommUnity Mentoring Plan

The Strategic Plan Operation Committee unanimously recommended that the CommUnity Mentoring Plan be moved forward to the Board of Education as an informational item only at its regular June meeting because its budget is less than the \$25000 threshold that would require Board of Education approval. The Supportive Learning Environment Implementation Team developed this proposal to create a sense of belonging for students who do not feel connected to the school, for a variety of reasons, through a focused and deliberate mentoring of students who might otherwise not receive active positive school-based supports. Steven Jackson, a social worker who works for the Oak Park Township, currently runs a motivational mentoring program. Mentoring could include a simple check-in with a student. This program supports the Board of Education's goal of having one-to-one connections with students. A program coordinator will be given a stipend and be assigned an administrator for oversight, assist in identifying students, assist in assigning students to the voluntary mentors within the building, collect data, and help set budgets, etc. Teachers may provide referrals to the coordinator as well.

Adjournment

At 9:00 p.m., Ms. Cassell moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Dr. Moore. A voice vote resulted in motion carried.

Submitted by Gail Kalmerton
Clerk of the Board