

Oak Park and River Forest High School

Parent Teacher Advisory Committee (PTAC)

Thursday, February 26, 2015

Present: Brian Beyers (SID), Janel Bishop (SID), Aleta Clardy (Parent), Steve Gevinson (BOE), Naomi Hildner (Faculty), Stephen Jackson (Faculty), Carolina Schoenbeck (Faculty), Jonathan Silver (SID), Alisa Walton (SID), and Deloris Collins (Recorder)

Guest: Sharon Patchek-Layman (BOE)

The 1st meeting of PTAC for the 2014-15 school year was chaired by Jonathan Silver in the absence of Nate Rouse. Introductions were made by all in attendance.

The Code of Conduct will be the focus of this year's committee work by defining what restorative justice practices are and also by adding restorative justice to the code of conduct. This committee's work has been moving toward less punitive means. Pupil Support Service (PSS) teams meet to discuss behavior and supportive measures on a weekly basis. The teams are made up of a SID, Counselors, and a therapist.

The Suspension Reduction Program (SRP) was also explained. This program allows for students who have committed certain infractions (Jeopardizing my Education) to cut their suspensions in half. Peer mediation and motivational mentorship are other programs that assist with helping students make better choices for themselves.

It was shared that 70% of offenses are due to tardies and that failure to serve detentions are still the highest offense. Janel Bishop indicated that the SIDs spend a great deal of time with students who have tardies that go unserved. Steve Gevinson spoke of the collaborative teaching model which is a system that looks at discipline. This system was successful and was used when he was a teacher here and he asked if we could further discuss it.

Naomi Hildner inquired as to who is writing discipline referrals and if a teacher reporting data report could be made available. She spoke about a self-assessment component and if students question why they are in certain situations. The students do talk about what is going on with other students. Conversations are also taking place with teachers and students and they process what has happened. The SIDs intervene with students daily to assist and lead them to make better choices.

In taking a look at the changes that were implemented thru this committees' work, there were many ideas and recommendations that came out of this group's work last year. Due to the finalizing of the Strategic Plan and deeper ongoing conversations regarding the discipline retreat, it was explained that a hold off was needed on the recommendations that were put forth. The entire PTAC report was given to the BOE for their review.

The committee was expanded last year to look at several areas to improve overall discipline. The committee was divided into small work groups that were charged with looking at and discussing topics dealing directly and indirectly with discipline. All committee members were also asked to look at the Code of Conduct as this portion must be approved by the BOE each year.

Aleta Clardy indicated that she was on PTAC last year. She spoke of the amount of work that went into doing the research and making the recommendations for last year's expanded committee. She felt disheartened that none of the recommendations that were presented were acted upon. Ms. Bishop summarized the recommendations that went to the BOE from the May 13, 2014 report. Ms. Bishop acknowledged that all the work that was done did take a big amount of time to do and that it is not just "brushed-off". She stated that some of the recommendations take more time to happen. She mentioned that the Attendance Policy was working well and although the Peace Circles did not happen this year, they are still being discussed.

A copy of last year's BOE report and the 2nd Semester 2013-14 discipline report will be forwarded to all.

All members were informed that they must be trained in order to participate on this committee. The Open Meetings Act link with instructions will be forwarded to everyone.

All members were thanked for coming to the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 4:25 p.m.