

Oak Park and River Forest High School

Parent Teacher Advisory Committee (PTAC)

Conference Room 201

Thursday, April 23, 2015; 3:30 – 5:00 pm

Present: Lauren Achurra (Faculty), Brian Beyers (SID), Qiana Carswell (Parent), Linda Francis (Parent), Steve Gevinson (BOE), Naomi Hildner (Faculty), Justin Maxwell (Student), Nate Rouse (Chair) Carolina Schoenbeck (Faculty), Alisa Walton (SID), Deloris Collins (Recorder)

Absent: Janel Bishop (SID), Stephen Jackson (Parent), Jonathon Silver (SID)

Visitors: Stephanie Crane (Student) and Ryan Borgdorff (Student)

Call to Order & Roll Call:

The Parent Teacher Advisory Committee (PTAC) meeting was held on Thursday, April 23, 2015 in Conference Room 201. Nate Rouse called the meeting to order at 3:35 pm.

Approval of Minutes:

A motion to approve the minutes of April 9, 2015 was made by Naomi Hildner. The motion was seconded by Lauren Achurra and approved by all.

Visitor Comments:

Ryan Borgdorff spoke of the concerns about the inequalities in the discipline system pertaining to race and the lack of diversity in AP classes. His class did their own research on the discipline statistics and focused on looking closely into why suspensions happen. He shared that their group found that in-school suspensions is not a solution for suspensions as students are not learning from the behavior.

Attendance Intervention Specialist:

The 2014-2015 1st Semester Discipline Report has been updated to reflect infractions from 1st semester of this year to 1st semester of last year. Failure to serve detentions are the highest offenses. The proposal to have someone to interface with students about their tardies was presented to the Board of Education at the April 23rd meeting. The proposal was not accepted. The Board was concerned about the numbers and missing data. It was shared that if we knew what specific data was needed that we probably already have it. As we go to a non-punitive system, we want to get to the root cause of why students have multiple tardies.

The attendance intervention specialist proposal was grouped with the PSS Team proposal. There were also proposals to the BOE for Special Education and non-instructional FTEs.

The Plasco System gives tardy passes to students and although the halls are clear, tardies have not gone down. It was questioned that based upon behavior, how would it be to have students who are serving an in-school suspension to be connected to a counselor or therapist as a way to move from a punitive discipline system. As a pilot, this model would give an opportunity to show the data via calls that would be made by the attendance specialist. There is much value to adding this component as we must start the conversations to change the way we assign in-school suspensions. If the position were to be approved, the assumption is that the detentions would decrease. The interventionist would be in-front of the behavior and could get the concerns to the SIDs and counselor quickly.

The Code of Conduct and the changes that have been made were discussed. Examples were given for how a person might have their consequences served. Additional concerns about attendance issues were brought forth. The question was asked what would cause a student to not go to their in-school suspension. Ms. Walton responded that many times the student simply does not want to serve the suspension.

It was stated that a Plan B is needed because we have not seen changes. It was questioned how do we revisit a range of issues to change the climate? How do we create opportunities for continuous improvement? A 5th PSS Team along with the attendance specialist is not budgeted. We project 115 new students for this year and enrollment is slated to continue to rise over the next years. Justin Maxwell talked about the workload inequity for counselors and the need for additional staff in this area.

The next steps for this committee is to give recommendations to the BOE. Nate will work on recommendations for academic dishonesty inclusion and will bring back to the committee. Nate spoke about having a pro-active process to deal with all the concerns so that next year it won't be the same questions as to why there is no change.

There will be a student lead discipline retreat on next Saturday at Malcolm College with 16 of our students. Nate will suggest to have a student retreat in the fall and kick-off the new school year. We could also coordinate with Thrive, realizing that we are a resource for them. Our hope is to be able to increase their sustainability.

Adjournment:

Naomi Hildner moved to adjourn the PTAC Meeting at 5:05 p.m. The move was seconded by Carolina Schoenbeck.