

November 20, 2014

The regular Board meeting of the Board of Education of the Oak Park and River Forest High School was held on Thursday, Date, in the Board Room of the OPRFHS.

Call to Order

President Phelan called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. A roll call indicated the following Board of Education members were present: Thomas F. Cofsky, Dr. Steven Gevinson, Dr. Ralph H. Lee, Dr. Jackie Moore, Sharon Patchak Layman, John Phelan, and Jeff Weissglass. Also present were Dr. Steven T. Isoye, Superintendent; David Ruhland, Director of Human Resources; Tod Altenburg, Chief School Business Official; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant Clerk of the Board.

Closed Session

At 6:35 p.m. on Thursday, November 20, 2014, Mr. Phelan moved to enter closed session for the purpose of discussing 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); Discussion of lawfully closed meeting minutes, whether for purposes of approval by the body of the minutes or semi-annual review of the minutes as mandated by Section 2.06 5 ILCS 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(21); seconded by Dr. Lee. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

At 7:00 p.m., the Board of Education resumed open session.

Visitors

Joining the meeting were Michael Carioscio, Chief Information Officer; Amy Hill, Director of Assessment and Research; Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Karin Sullivan, Director of Communications and Community Relations; Joey Cofsky and Annika Holdeboer, Student Council Liaison Representatives; and Sheila Hardin, Faculty Senate Executive Committee Chair; Janel Bishop, Michael Byers, Alisha Walton, and Jonathan Silver, Student Interventionist Directors; Jason Edgecombe Jr., B&G Representative; Kevin Peppard, community member; Camille Kuthrell and Tom McMullen of the Hay Group; Rebecca Bibbs of the Oak Leaves and Terry Dean of the Wednesday Journal.

**Public
Comments**

Julie Griffin, president of APPLAUSE!, introduced the students who played music for the Board of Education, as an introduction to Prisms of Winter on December 11, starting at 7:30 p.m., with pre-groups beginning to play at 6:45 p.m. Over 600 students will participate.

Justin Maxwell, 938 North Blvd., Oak Park, student, asked the Board of Education to schedule its meetings on Friday nights so that students could attend. Thursdays conflict with their studying.

John Bokum, resident of 629 S. Home, Oak Park, thanked the Board of Education for rebating the tax dollars and he urged the Board of Education to freeze or rebate the levy this year. He also informed the Board of Education of the annual Festival of Trees and invited them to a party at Holly Court on November 21, 2014. The money raised at this event is used to support scholarships in Oak Park and River Forest.

FOIA Requests Ms. Kalmerton reported that 6 FOIA request had been received and resolved.

Student Council Student Council representatives reported the following:

1. Members are volunteering at the Food Pantry
2. Currently it is making blankets for the local homeless shelter
3. The Class of 1954 had requested student input as to what was needed as they had raised \$1200 for a class gift. Student Council will survey students.

Faculty Report Ms. Hardin remarked that the school year was going well.

Superintendent's Report Dr. Isoye reported the following:

OPRFHS celebrate Students of the Quarter at a family breakfast. They were:

Ella Saunders	Ariella Kahan-Harth
Diego Firpo	Madeleine Plummer
Quentin Diaz	Lloyd Yates
Cristian Turriago	Cierra Booker
Matthew Smith	Thomas Schoedel
Cullen Benson	Nolan Wight

Senior Emily Gilbert was selected from a group of more than 3,000 applicants to be part of NASA's 100-person social media team at its December 4 launch of the Orion spacecraft at the Kennedy Space Center. She will meet with NASA engineers, technicians, and other team members and view the launch pad and actual launch. To read and see pictures of Emily's adventure, follow her on Twitter [@Embembert](#).

Out of thousands of students in the Chicago suburban area who auditioned to participate in the All-District Illinois Music Educators' festivals, more than two dozen OPRF students were chosen. Congratulations to all students, who will perform at the District 1 Jazz Festival and the District 1 Senior Festival.

At the Speech Team's first tournament of the season, sophomore Rebecca Galkin received the first place medal in Oratorical Declamation in the JV/Novice division. At the recent Prospect Speechpalooza Tournament, members of the Novice/JV Speech Team captured several top awards.

Dr. Isoye reported that senior Taylor Arends was a state finalist for the Wendy's High School Heisman Award, which honors well-rounded young men and women who excel in learning, performing, and leading in the classroom, on the field and in the community.

Dr. Isoye offered congratulations to the following student-athletes, who in a ceremony last week signed letters of intent for their chosen colleges.

- Larry Early, wrestling, University of Minnesota
- Adam Lemke-Bell, football, Northwestern University
- Alex Madrigal, wrestling, Old Dominion University
- Patrick Rumoro, baseball, University of Louisville
- Symone Speech, volleyball, Georgetown University

- Lloyd Yates, football, Northwestern University

Dr. Isoye reported on other athletic updates:

- Girls Tennis – Placed 18th at the IHSA state tournament as a team.
- Boys Soccer – Won the IHSA regional tournament.
- Field Hockey – The team reached the Elite 8 in state.
- Girls Volleyball beat Trinity to win the IHSA regional championship.
- Sophomore Irwin Loud placed 11th in the IHSA State Cross Country Championship this past weekend, with a time of 14:39 for 3 miles. In addition, 2011 alum Malachy Schrobilgen won his second consecutive Big Ten Cross Country Championship.
- The Girls’ Swim team has several pieces of great news:
 - The medley relay team of Samantha Neilson, Alexandra Gill, Elsie Connell, and Emma Smith recently broke a 20-year-old OPRF freshman record.
 - At the West Suburban Conference Meet, Hanna Blankemeier set a new OPRF freshman/sophomore and school record in the 50 yard freestyle. In addition, the medley relay team of Hanna Blankemeier, Genna Curry, Samantha Neilson, and Chloe Guhlstorff set a new West Suburban Silver Conference record.
 - Finally, four of the girls have qualified for the state meet this weekend at Evanston Township High School.

The following items were removed from consent agenda:

- B. Policies for Amendment:
 1. Policy 7:20, Harassment of Students Prohibited
 2. Policy 7:180, Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment (renamed and rewritten) (current)
 3. Policy 7:240, Conduct Code for Participants in Extracurricular Activities
 4. Policy 7:340, Student Records
- D. Open and Closed Session Minutes of October 23, 2014 and November 10, 2014 and a declaration that the closed session audiotapes of April 2013 be destroyed and that a declaration that the closed session minutes from January 1, 1989 through November 1, 2014 remain closed.

Consent Items

Mr. Phelan moved to approve the following consent items:

- Check Disbursements and Financial resolutions dated November 20, 2014
- Monthly Treasurer’s Report
- Monthly Financial Reports
- Personnel Recommendations, including New Hires and Resignations

seconded by Dr. Moore. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Minutes

Mr. Phelan moved to approve the Open and Closed Session Minutes of October 23, 2014 and November 10, 2014 and a declaration that the closed session audiotapes of April 2013 be destroyed and that a declaration that the closed session minutes from January 1, 1989 through November 1, 2014

remain closed; seconded by Dr. Gevinson. A voice vote resulted motion carried.

Policies

Mr. Phelan moved to amend the following policies:

1. Policy 7:20, Harassment of Students Prohibited
2. Policy 7:180, Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment (renamed and rewritten) (current)
3. Policy 7:240, Conduct Code for Participants in Extracurricular Activities
4. Policy 7:340, Student Records

seconded by Dr. Lee. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Discussion ensued about how information contained in Policy 7:180 would be distributed, other than through the policy manual. Whole policies are included in the Student Handbook and procedures will be included in the administrative procedures, which when done, will be posted to the website as a separate document. ISBE requires that the school provide the Student Handbook to students via a hard copy.

**Buildings and
Grounds
Memorandum
Of Agreement**

Mr. Phelan moved to approve the Buildings and Grounds Memorandum of Agreement regarding a Performance Evaluation Process; seconded by Mr. Cofsky. A roll call vote resulted in 6 ayes and 1 nay. Motion carried. Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay.

Ms. Patchak-Layman wanted employees to receive recognition as they reached each performance area, as opposed to having overall rankings and numbers, in order to help employees isolate areas in need of improvement. Mr. Phelan commended the implementation of a performance-based document.

**Board Member
Request for
Information**

Ms. Patchak-Layman moved to approve her request to have the administration provide information relative to the levy and the fund balance; seconded by Dr. Lee.

This process follows the Board of Education's agreements that information requested by an individual Board of Education member that is not "file-cabinet" ready, needs to be approved by the full Board of Education.

The reasons for not supporting the request were 1) it would entail significant PMA and administrative work, 2) the spreadsheets were proprietary to PMA, and 3) the Finance Advisory Committee (FAC) had already explored various possibilities before a decision had been made on the Levy in December. Some members would not consider approving a levy significantly lower than the 2013 Levy and/or failing to abate debt service.

A roll call vote resulted in 4 nays and 3 ayes. Dr. Lee, Dr. Moore, and Ms. Patchak-Layman voted aye. Motion failed.

Update on Hay

Ms. Kuthrell and Mr. McMullen of the Hay Group discussed the interview

Group

process, as well as their recommendations, with regard to a philosophy of compensation for the District. A PowerPoint presentation was provided and highlighted.

The key stakeholder discussions included speaking with the Board of Education members and leading four focus groups with the following administration, non-affiliated, support services, and faculty. The focus group topics included:

- How would you describe the objectives of the OPRF compensation program?
- What works well in the current compensation program?
- What needs to be improved?
- Who should OPRF compare its pay to? What level of pay? Why?
- Should pay be linked to performance?
- Is there clarity in roles and accountabilities?
- Are there other topics related to compensation that we haven't touched?

The key themes of the responses included:

- The compensation and benefits program at District 200 is seen as competitive.
- The community places a high value on education and District 200's performance ranks high relative to comparable school.
- Few issues in attraction and retention of good talent.
- There is concern about the District's ability to sustain compensation levels in the long run. Compensation should be affordable for tax payers.
- A need for a clear compensation philosophy that provides guidance on compensation principles, policy, expectations, performance measures and administration.
- Need for better linkage between job accountabilities and compensation opportunities.
- Managers have limited understanding of staff members' work -- not much involvement as long as the work gets done.
- Need for improvement in performance management processes (i.e., measures, goal setting, feedback, appraisal) and linkage to pay (i.e., merit pay and promotions).
- Lack of communication and clarity around compensation and benefits
- Recruitment for Administration roles is more challenging than for other job categories.
- Non-Affiliated Staff feel undervalued.

In summary, the recommendations included:

1. Clarify compensation philosophy
2. Clarify and evaluate roles and accountabilities
3. Develop market-based compensation structures
4. Develop compensation administration guidelines
5. Refine/develop performance management processes
6. Develop initial and ongoing compensation communication processes

7. Institute a calendar and cadence for ongoing management of compensation program
8. Other

It provides a strong communication message to staff as to District 200's beliefs and principles. It guides the design and administration of the compensation program.

The District 200 compensation program will reinforce the staff's focus on achieving the institution's objectives by aligning staff compensation with those achievements. For the staff, the compensation program will:

1. Clarify compensation philosophy
2. Clarify and evaluate roles and accountabilities
3. Develop market-based compensation structures: Process
4. Develop compensation administrative guidelines. Pay position within range.
5. Review and refinement of performance management guidelines
6. Develop compensation communication process
7. Institute a calendar/cadence for ongoing management of compensation program
8. Other

A multiyear implementation plan was recommended and it was outlined as follows:

1. Establish the foundation (2014-15)
2. Performance Management Processes (2015-16)
3. Align Performance Management and Compensation Programs (2016-17)

Next steps would include embedding the process in the evaluation first, then introducing the concepts to the bargaining units, improving the communication aspects and more robustness in calendaring.

Discussion ensued about the culture of schools in using titles to delineate authority and compensation levels. Typically, an organization would have a correlation between titles and levels or grades but that does not mean it is the only criteria. A job description is a snapshot in time. Tenure is also another aspect and the question to be asked would be what is required for the person in the job to be successful. A target pay opportunity would be set that is more equivalent with a 5 to 7 year market; that is the reason for having a range of salary rather than price points.

The District would benchmark itself against like institutions and an extensive conversation would be had as to whom the District would compare itself. In those instances where some people are well paid and others are not, the District could increase its market comparativeness even before this plan is fully implemented. Such a philosophy could help the District in a number of areas. The Hay Group has seen a shift in boards of education and chief executive officers dealing with strategic human resources issues: It is not under compensation strategy but human capacity. In labor cost ratio analysis, it is

legitimate to look at the upper/lower quartile range vs. operating expenditures and revenue. It dictates staffing levels and how one sets target competitive issues. Tools are needed to recognize one level of a job from another. The clarity of the role definitions is murky. Does a job change warrant a higher grade? Career paths are more clearly identified in larger organizations, but in smaller organization, it is usually about moving around rather than moving up. This will give data to allow improvement in those areas.

At one time the philosophy was that administrators should be paid more than teachers. How would the discussion occur if the Board of Education wanted to explore that philosophy? It would start with answering the questions: What is the work? What is the knowledge? What is the managerial breadth of these jobs? What are the problem solving and complexity of the jobs? While the faculty is not in this scope, exploration will take place as to if the administrative jobs at OPRFHS are equal to or bigger or smaller and why? An analysis will provide a sense of key stakeholders that incumbents be the leaders of those jobs in relationship to the outside world and then pay rates will be developed.

Mr. Phelan felt this could be of tremendous value to the District by just separating out the positions, defining the roles, and people knowing their responsibilities. He was encouraged and thankful for the Hay Group connection.

Madison Street TIF Amendment

Mr. Phelan added this agenda item after learning about a Joint Review Board meeting that occurred the previous week. The Downtown Oak Park TIF (DTOP) that was resolved by with a settlement agreement which outlined the following: 1) no more monies would be spent on TIF development within the DTOP; 2) The VOP could pay off its then current debts on an ongoing basis; 3) any additional money would be distributed as surplus distribution. The dispute arose as a result of a contract in 2002, when the TIF was being extended and some of the governing bodies who would receive those tax funds developed an agreement with the VOP that would have provided for a gradually shrinking TIF District and an alleged violation of that. Another TIF, the Madison Street TIF, was put into existence to develop Madison and almost from its outset there were some threats from the District 97's Board of Education about not being on board with the development. A letter to settle potential litigation provided for surplus distributions from Madison Street TIF. If a surplus distribution is made to one taxing body, commensurate distributions must be made to the other taxing bodies on the rates in which they receive money from taxpayers. District 97 alone entered into a letter with the Village of Oak Park (VOP) that provided for surplus distributions of certain percentages over time and starting in 2011, 100% surplus distribution. When 2011 came, Madison St was not developed as it could be and it still needed a great deal of help. As a result of that, some negotiations took place between the VOP and District 97 concerning how to resolve contractual claim based on that letter. Recently agreed, they reached an agreement that provided for District 97 not enforcing the letter in exchange for the VOP providing them an administration building elsewhere on Madison Street. Typically, the business officials from each of the taxing bodies are required to meet annually. District 97 and the VOP voted to amend to allow the VOP to have money to develop Madison Street and District

97 would get some value for the promise it had when the TIF started. The vote of the business officials was 8 to 1 in favor. OPRFHS's Chief School Business Official was the only one who voted against it. Mr. Phelan was concerned about that because of his work over the last several years to develop a cooperative attitude for taxing bodies, especially in the context of where the District is having meetings to lower the Levy and reduce the fund balance, and to the extent that the other taxing bodies were interested in cooperating. It had seemed reasonable to Mr. Phelan. He did not blame Mr. Altenburg for not supporting the amendment because he was new to the District and did not of the developments that had occurred. Mr. Phelan asked the Board of Education what position it would take if it had the opportunity to cooperate with the VOP and District 97. The Joint Review Board made a recommendation that will be heard by the Village on December 8. Mr. Phelan will attend that meeting and share the views discussed at this meeting.

Ms. Patchak-Layman added that this was an intervening agreement in 2007 between District 97 and the VOP because of an amendment of the original settlement agreement. In the original agreement, agreed to by all taxing bodies, 100% of the TIF funds would be distributed to them by 2010. That distribution was delayed for two years with the 2007 amendment, so that District 97 would receive over \$2.7 million to cover a shortfall in its budget. She was on the District 97 Board of Education at the time this agreement was negotiated through the Oak Park Council of Governments and the other taxing bodies. For 2 years, taxing bodies had agreed to allow District 97 to use their distributions in order to help it with its financial crisis. It was called the leaseback. The Village transferred those funds by buying District 97's administrative building. The VOP collected its \$2.7 million due to the extension of the TIF. It was at that point that all taxing point should have gotten 100% of distribution. Much conversation occurred at that time about what would happen with the TIF; the VOP agreed and a document was signed by both District 97 and the VOP to uphold, in particular, that all of the taxing bodies would get 25% distribution and 100% distribution. This was well documented in the agreement before the other taxing bodies and the VOP. It is a continuing conversation because for the last 18 months, the VOP has been holding this 100% distribution and not fulfilling the obligations of the contract it had with District 97. It is not just District 97 and the VOP coming to an agreement, but all of the other taxing bodies involved as well. District 97 filed the original lawsuit and it became a conversation through the Oak Park Council of Governments and involved Carolyn Newberry Schwartz as president of District 97. All of the taxing bodies had spreadsheets with the possibilities from ending the Downtown Oak Park TIF and helping District 97 with its shortfall to paying out one TIF versus another TIF in terms of being able to have the dollars. It was understood that the VOP did not have dollars to give District 97 the money for bus transportation to help with diversity and transportation under the VOP's goals, which had done previously for 2 years. Thus, it became a question of what other areas was there is a possibility of finance, i.e., delaying the distribution of the Madison Street TIF for 2 years to be able to make District 97 whole.

Mr. Phelan noted that when he joined the OPRFHS Board of Education, District 200 was seen as an outlier. It had an enormous fund balance and had sued the VOP

to resolve the TIF. The resolution of that was a win/win and a beginning of the District becoming a part of the community of taxing bodies. When that occurred, it was an about face. The direction has been to gather trust to the benefit of the communities. While he acknowledged that Ms. Patchak-Layman had voted against that resolution, he believed OPRFHS should support District 97 and VOP moving forward. Because the vote of the Joint Review Board was 8 to 1 to allow the amendment, it was unclear as to how OPRFHS would affect what happens other than a statement of support on December 8 when the VOP votes. Money would be distributed if District 97 were to enforce its rights to a distribution of the TIF to OPRFHS—\$500,000 beginning 2011 until 2018. However, OPRFHS has no control over that.

Mr. Weissglass stated that Mr. Altenburg voted no because TIFs are for economic development and while a District 97 building did not look like that on its face, a building swap was occurring. District 97 will move into a building that the VOP has been trying to develop for years, the old Volvo dealership building. In turn, the VOP will develop District 97's building which may have more opportunities for development. Mr. Altenburg affirmed that fundamentally TIFs stimulate economic growth and he had not had the background, the conversation with the Board of Education, or the information that lead up to that.

It was the consensus of the majority of the Board of Education members to support this amendment. However, Ms. Patchak-Layman did not support the amendment. It is a question of whether the building needs to be replaced and not just rehabbed. Within TIF law, one is prohibited from putting in a municipal building that is for offices, storage, and conferences. She concluded that a school building fell into that category, as it is not economic development and it is not covered by the law. Therefore, dollars generated by the TIF should not be used for an administrative building. The state and the law did not want municipalities to gather money to build municipal administrative buildings and administrative buildings in schools falls into the framework. While it may not be stated word for word, the intent is there. District 97 would, through the distribution of the TIF, have enough money to be able to do what it wants to do in terms of rehabbing its building or moving to another location. Also, more taxing bodies are involved, the VOP would gain 15%, as would the county, Triton, etc. Everyone has services they are providing and they should receive those the dollars to be able to provide those services. At this Joint Review Board, the executive directors of the Library, the parks, and the Township, attended the meeting instead of their chief financial officers.

**World Languages
Division**

The Instruction Committee recommended that the World Languages Division update be forwarded to the full Board of Education as an informational item.

Claudia Sahagun, Division Head for World Languages and Marci DiVerdi, presented information regarding their work in promoting language education, cultural awareness, and involvement in classroom based technology efforts to the Instruction Committee.

Teachers in the World Languages Division have been significant users of the available instructional technologies. In addition to the International Communications Center, two dedicated computer classrooms for world

language students, the teachers in that division utilize Chromebooks in more classrooms than any other division, except for Special Education.

Last year a placement test for incoming ninth grade students was implemented. OPRFHS plans to give a placement test again this year.

The overall trend within the division has been steady. Over the last five years, enrollment across both semesters has been as high as 4,921, and as low as 4,746, averaging 4,823.

The divisional leadership will be exploring the recently announced ISBE “Seal of Bilitearcy” initiative as the implementation and guidance rules are developed. This may be brought forward to the Board of Education for approval sometime in the future after discussions with

Teachers stepped up and provided a student who wanted to study Arabic an independent study.

Discipline Report

The Instruction Committee recommended that the 2013-14 Second Semester Discipline Report be forwarded to the full Board of Education as an informational item.

The following summarizes information from the first set of tables:

- The total number of infractions increased by 27% from 1st semester.
- Class III infractions account for 84% of total infractions committed by students.
- Freshman students incurred a higher percentage of infractions than all other classes 2nd semester,
- whereas it was the sophomore students who had the highest percentage 1st semester
- The number of offenses committed in each category increased from 1st semester to 2nd semester, with the exception of Class II infractions. The highest proportional gain occurred for Class V.
- Offenses, though this is the category where the least number of offenses were committed by far.

Other tables highlighted the following:

- Offenses by Gender and Race
- Offenses by Special Education and Race
- Summary of Consequences by Race, Grade and Gender
- In-School Suspensions by Gender and Race
- Out of School Suspensions by Gender and Race
- Compilation of All Suspensions by Class Infractions, Year of Graduation and Race

Information was also provided on recidivism in the discipline data.

Mr. Rouse spoke about the exemplary behavior of students at the latest Tradition of Excellence Assembly. He felt a shift was occurring with the atmosphere of the building. School spirit has been high. The majority of the

discipline infractions are less physical and less aggressive in nature. The school will continue to work on tardies and failure-to-serve detentions. Statistics regarding tardies was as follows over a concurrent 10 school day period. This includes data for the late Wednesdays:

- 1st period – 95 per day average
- 2nd period – 116 per day average
- 4th period – 5 per day average
- 5th period – 7 per day average
- 6th period – 8.6 per day average

A request was made to have the Plastco and Failure-to-Serve Detentions taken out of this report. Research shows that changes to student schedules and the sleep needs of students might affect tardies and some members felt it was worthy of discussion.

Discussion ensued about how this information can be used to mitigate these circumstances. It will be a discussion point at the Student Discipline Retreat as well as the Code of Conduct and the culture of discipline. Regarding the Code of Conduct, the data will be pulled out that coherently shows racial disparities, as it goes to some of the areas that are not about tardiness.

One member wanted to concentrate on a proactive, practical way of influencing the way students live their lives and influence the way in which students make decisions. This member did not believe the Code of Conduct was useful in helping that desire. The student Code of Conduct is something that was developed meticulously over many years. The District is so accustomed to dealing with measurable infractions, it almost obscures the goal of influencing student behavior.

Another member stated that some districts have early warning systems for students at risk who are then targeted for support and intervention. Research shows that patterns of tardiness show up as early as preschool and if intervention does not occur, they become life-long patterns. Research also shows that certain behaviors are mapped with academic performance and the things that can be put in place to stave off things early. The Illinois Youth Survey might also be used to inform.

One member noted that the policy on bullying lists the interventions, etc. that can take place. While addressing bullying is involved in the continuum of undesired behaviors, there are interventions, i.e., social worker, restorative measures, skill building, school psychologist, counseling, and community based services, etc. Students need to be taught the personal and interpersonal skills needed in society to serve, to build, and to restore relationships among students and families, as well as to reduce the likelihood of future disruptions by balancing accountability and understanding students' behavioral health needs. Because these things are already in place, a suggestion was made to include a column within the discipline report to indicate how often students are in health services, etc. Another member noted that the structure of the Strategic Plan's work is critical and the lists in policies are like the Code of Conduct. A culture has to be built to make it happen. The structure of the Strategic Plan and the work done by implementation teams will help the

District shift its culture. Engaging students in their own learning is the best way to reduce behavior problems.

2015-16 School Year Calendar

The Instruction Committee recommended that the preview of the 2015-16 School Calendar be forwarded to the full Board of Education as an informational item. The Committee raised questions regarding the early start of the school year in August, the placement of the Veteran's Day observance, and the manner in which pupil contact days were counted, as opposed to instructional days. The calendar has been shared with FSEC faculty committee and with representatives from Districts 90 and 97. It outlines start and end of school dates for staff and students, and winter and spring breaks and legal holidays. Winter break is aligned with Districts 90 and 97.

Discussion ensued about when Veteran's Day is honored. District 97 honors it on Monday or Friday of the week. From a family perspective with children in both districts, it means one has to shuffle on two consecutive days.

Discussion also ensued about the starting date. At this point, District 97 has not decided when it will start. District 90 will start one week later than OPRFHS. One member reflected that OPRFHS was starting 3 weeks before Labor Day. Scheduling finals before winter break had the unintended consequence of starting the school year earlier and ending earlier. Concern was raised about the weather, as it can be cold in May and very hot in August. Graduation would be held on Memorial Day weekend. In addition, student summer programs and camps have not shifted to this schedule. It also is disruptive to family summer programs and vacations. A suggestion was made to consider having finals before winter break, and then returning to do special projects on the same work before second semester starts. It too might solve issues with regard to teachers having to grade papers over winter break. A suggestion was made to consider the quarter system, similar to the one used at the Lab School. While one member expressed concern about the unequal number of instructional days in first and second semesters, only semester courses are affected, not yearlong courses. The District is working on recognizing the shorter time frame for first the courses. Courses have a sequence, required readings, and 4 cortexes each semester. More discussions with division heads will occur about communicating to their teachers that they have flexibility. One member was intrigued with considering quarters or trimesters.

Board of Education members were reminded that PARCC Testing would occur next year, interrupting my days in the spring.

Board of Education members were asked to send their preferences to Ms. Kalmerton before Thanksgiving as to when they would like Veterans Day honored 1) on November 11, 2) adjacent to a weekend, or 3) be in school. Mr. Weissglass noted his preference to align with District 97.

PARCC Testing

The Instruction Committee recommended that the report on PARCC testing be forwarded to the full Board of Education. The Committee had raised questions regarding possible reactions from the Illinois State Board of Education if the District did not proceed with this testing, the preliminary plans

for testing arrangements, the projected benefits and detriments to the testing system, the effect of testing on the regular instructional program, and possible ways for District representatives to register their opinions regarding the change in testing for this school year.

Dr. Gevinson wanted the Board of Education to consider whether it should object to this test because of the imposition on the District. He listed the pros and cons to this testing.

<u>Pros</u>	<u>Cons</u>
No penalty will be incurred if The test is given.	No incentive to do well. Could be detrimental to self-esteem, Expensive Big loss of class time The test has not been normed It will not gauge growth Many states have dropped out, perhaps only 9 states are now giving it, While a victory to get the state to administer the ACT and to pay for it, it is being administered 6 weeks early and that is detrimental to students as it is too early.

It was noted that the superintendents submitted a written objection to the state superintendent and OPRFHS had participated in that letter last spring about PARCC Testing and distribution of the ACT because of their huge concerns. The District will have to act earlier in March and the testing has been scaled back to English and Algebra II. More information has been received as to options for paper or pencil. The assessment will happen. Schools with block scheduling will take the test in December.

Discussion ensued about the YouTube of an Evanston Township High School board meeting where deep objections were raised regarding norming. ACT and PARCC are rolling out new and untested testing. It will be a learning curve and the District is learning daily some of the specifics of the PARCC benefits this year. Norming has to start somewhere, just as it did with the ACT. There are no opt-in assessment opportunities. This is the baseline year for PARCC testing to identify attainment goals of authorization of ESEA; shifting accountability is related to the NCLB waiver.

One member concurred that frustration is that everything described on ACT is reflective for students and it does have some attachment to students. Only 9 out of 50 states are participating in the PARCC. If one plans to spend one's life in Illinois, it may have meaning but beyond that it is a question. It was noted that a large number of other states are giving the Smarter Balance test and going to a newer system.

Dr. Gevinson was not suggesting that OPRFHS opt out of the test nor that the administrators send proper challenges, but that the Board of Education should make a statement to the constituents about what it thinks about this test, either through a letter or another means. He did not know what positives would come

from students taking the test. One member suggested waiting until after the District has experience with it. Another member suggested that a citizen could write an opinion letter and publish it. A couple of members might want to sign on to it. A coalition of other boards might be an option. It was suggested that Dr. Gevinson write up a resolution for the Board of Education to review and to talk with Evanston Township High School about it.

Illinois Youth Survey The PEG Committee recommended sharing the Illinois Youth Survey Report with the entire Board of Education, combined with a presentation about what the District does and interpretations of the information. While the substance abuse coordinator was available for the PEG Committee, she did not report because of time constraints. IMPACT was asked for its feedback and a formal presentation will be given in the future. One member desired to understand the programmatic responses and supports that the District provides and to put the data side by side.

Discussion ensued about to whom this would be distributed. While several members felt that it should be distributed to parents and to students, one member was uncomfortable giving it to students. Several members felt it would be helpful for those students who were feeling uneasy about something to know that they were not isolated and that other students felt the same way. One member believed that the school should be respectful of the feelings/perspectives of the parents. For example, the statistics show that a large percentage of OPRFHS uses one substance or another. Would that drive some students to feel they are not in the mainstream if they did not participate in that activity? Parents do have the opportunity to opt-out of this survey. Because the comments are public, a suggestion was made to have guided discussions about it to help students understand it better.

Noted was the fact that Kris Ogden Raino apologized at the PEG Committee meeting for sending the report out to the public before the Board of Education had received it.

Strategic Plan Dr. Isoye reported on the progress of the Strategic Plan. The Oversight Committee met for the first time and heard presentations from the various implementation teams. The purpose of the Oversight Committee is to hear ideas, identify redundancies, problem solve issues, and vet the ideas as they are ready to move to the Board of Education. The Committee will meet throughout the year. The Implementation Team leaders were not prepared to move any ideas forward at this time. Implementation Team co-chairs have also requested opportunities to meet as a leadership group to discuss progress. Professional development time will be requested, as holding meetings before or after school has made it difficult for teams to delve deeply enough into their work. This will necessitate a cost for substitutes. Dr. Isoye supported this expenditure. Dr. Isoye provided a diagram of the workflow. They plan to bring things forward to the Board of Education in December and to present at the January Institute Day to faculty and staff.

PEG receives Strategic Plan updates because of the Board of Education goals. The PEG Committee members wanted to meet with the Implementation Teams so that they could express enthusiasm for their work.

Concern was expressed the number of meetings being held and the communication flow, as the intent of this idea was to foster shared leadership, innovation, and implementation with everyone in the building, and the Board of Education had yet to receive any ideas. PEG had asked that teams present something as a practice before they came to the Board of Education. Another member felt the process was too slow and too clean for innovation and it did not live up to the Board of Education's intent of having people bring ideas to the Board of Education for approval and then being accountable for them. The ideas did not have to come to the Board of Education in a perfect form. The administration stated that, depending on the scope of the work, some ideas were already happening and were not going through the implementation teams, i.e., teachers taking CTIP and moving carts around, etc. Broader ideas will come to the Board of Education. Faculty and staff are still excited.

Discussion ensued about how the flow of work. Dr. Isoye noted that whatever came forward, it would have to be assigned to an administrator. One member was cautious about structuring something that an administrator has to oversee as that would be considered a top-down approach. When asked what constituted an idea for the Strategic Plan versus a day to day idea, the response was that ideas for the Strategic Plan are bigger in nature and broader than for the individual classroom. While one member stated that the people who created the idea would take ownership and develop the details, i.e., assessment, accountability, cost, and implementation, another member stated that the District does not have a structure for that process and suggested starting a Strategic Plan innovation fund and treating it like a venture capital fund, using simple guidelines. What the Board of Education had said was that it wanted innovation and that Dr. Isoye was to implement that, which he has been doing. Should a different process be developed?

Adjournment

At 11:25 a.m., November 20, 2014, Mr. Phelan moved to adjourn the Board of Education meeting; seconded by Dr. Moore. A voice vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

John Phelan
President

Dr. Jackie Moore
Secretary

Submitted by Gail Kalmerton
Clerk of the Board