

Oak Park and River Forest High School

Parent Teacher Advisory Committee (PTAC)

Conference Room 201

Thursday, April 9, 2015; 3:30 – 5:00 pm

Present: Lauren Achurra (Faculty), Janel Bishop (SID), Aleta Clardy (Parent), Linda Francis (Parent), Steve Gevinson (BOE), Naomi Hildner (Faculty), Stephen Jackson (Parent), Carolina Schoenbeck (Faculty), Jonathon Silver (SID), Alisa Walton (SID), Deloris Collins (Recorder)

Absent: Brian Beyers (SID), Qiana Carswell (Parent), Justin Maxwell (Student), Nate Rouse (Chair)

Visitors: Sharon Patchak-Layman, Karin Grimes

Call to Order & Roll Call:

The Parent Teacher Advisory Committee (PTAC) meeting was held on Thursday, April 9, 2015 in Conference Room 201. Janel Bishop called the meeting to order at 3:35 pm.

Approval of Minutes:

A motion to approve the minutes of March 26, 2015 was made by Janel Bishop. The motion was seconded by Carolina Schoenbeck and approved by all.

Visitor Comments:

Karin Grimes is a member of the community and indicated that she is retired and wants to be more knowledgeable about the school.

Attendance Intervention Specialist:

The proposal for an attendance intervention specialist was shared with the committee. They were asked to review the proposal. The recommendation for the position will go forward thru the BoE Policy Committee meeting in mid-April. Discussion ensued around the need for an attendance specialist and the position responsibilities outlined in the proposal. Among other responsibilities, this person would also focus on the cause of why students are not in class, intervene early when a class is missed and look at patterns of students missing classes, all in non-punitive ways. The background needed for this non administrative position would be someone with many skillsets (analytical, counseling, confidentiality of work, love of kids). Discussion around if the position should be for a non-affiliated class versus a certified position.

It was voiced that if this proposal could connect to the PSST proposal or the strategic learning proposal, so that it does not stand alone, it would be good. A recommendation from PTAC alone is not as strong as being part of a comprehensive plan. The service model for the PSST was shared. The 5th PSS Team is needed, as well as the attendance position, as this person would help some of our kids with the most needs. It was questioned if the SID in the new PSS Team could also be the attendance specialist. It was answered that if we do that, there would not be a SID for the new team. The goal is to have a person to address only attendance/truancy issues as soon as they arise to keep the student on track. It was shared that this could also be a different way to show how the Code of Conduct is written. Before attendance issues get to the consequence level, the attendance person would be having conversations with the student and parent immediately. This would set a different tone with the student to help change their behavior. Other restorative justice practices could be introduced as they can identify where harm has been done. The statistics show that the Code of Conduct does not change behaviors but having this attendance specialist to intervene is something that can be measured.

The conversation was tabled for additional discussion about the Code of Conduct for restorative justice and qualifications for attendance specialist proposal.

It was recommended by Carolina Schoenbeck to approve the proposal as written and not be specific in job grouping, to be presented at the upcoming BOE Policy Committee Meeting. All were in agreement with the exception of Mr. Gevinson who was hesitant to support due to the lack of financial attachment. The entire committee was encouraged to attend the policy meeting to be held on Tuesday, April 14 in the evening.

Restorative Justice

Stephen Jackson shared with the committee a restorative justice framework and talked about a desire to have a restorative justice matrix infused with our current code to address other types of ways kids can talk about and learn from their mistakes. Another member indicated that as a new person to the school, she has read the student planner and code of conduct and feels that this committee should be moving toward a restorative justice model where there is learning from behaviors as opposed to being punitive. She stated that the handbook looks bad to a new parent looking at it and trying to understand. Steve Gevinson responded that the handbook does work for most kids but we need to have something for those students who are disruptive to the learning environment and because of inequities. Ms. Patchak-Layman shared a CRS Report with the committee and referred the website for their review. The website is: fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RA3126.pdf.

Adjournment:

Jonathon Silver moved to adjourn the PTAC Meeting at 5:30 p.m. The move was seconded by Naomi Hildner.