

February 23, 2012

The regular Board meeting of the Board of Education of the Oak Park and River Forest High School was held on Thursday, February 23, 2012, in the Board Room of the OPRFHS.

### **Call to Order**

President Millard called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m. The following Board of Education members were present: Valerie J. Fisher, Terry Finnegan, Dr. Ralph H. Lee, Amy Leafe McCormack, Sharon Patchak-Layman, Dr. Dietra D. Millard, and John Phelan. Also present were Dr. Steven T. Isoye, Superintendent; Dr. Tina Halliman, Director of Special Education; Lauren M. Smith, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources; Nathaniel L. Rouse, Principal; Cheryl L. Witham, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

At 6:37 p.m., on Thursday, February 23, 2012, Dr. Millard moved to enter closed session for the purposes of discussing the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the District or legal counsel for the District, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee or against legal counsel for the District to determine its validity. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1), as amended by PA.93—57; Student disciplinary cases 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(10); Litigation, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the particular District has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the District finds that an action is probable or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recorded and entered into the closed meeting minutes. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11); seconded by Mr. Phelan. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

At 7:26 p.m., the Board of Education reconvened its open session.

Joining the meeting were: Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Nathaniel L. Rouse, Principal; Michael Carioscio, Chief Information Officer; Amy Hill, Director of Assessment and Research; and James Paul Hunter Faculty Senate Executive Committee Chair.

### **Visitors**

The Board of Education welcomed the following visitors: Kay Foran, Communications and Community Relations Coordinator; Division Heads Daniel Cohen (English), Julie Frey (Math); Special Education Program Chair Nikki Paplaczky; RtI Coordinator Kristin McGee; Assistant Principal Chala Holland; faculty members Daphne LeCesne and Naomi Hildner; community members Grace Angelos, Linda Bachelder, Ann Berens, Mary Bird, Jim Blaha, John Bokum, Jr., Judy Brennan, Mara Bujnowski, C. Cerni, Laura Dee, John Duffy, John Filosa, John & Lisa Grimes, L. Hardwicke, Patty Henek, Jennifer Hoke, Sheree Johnson, Barb Langer, Kinyata McGree-Swope, Melanie McQueen, Jean Meister, Linda Miller, Jan O'Connor, Terrie Rayburn (Parents 4 Student Success), Cathaleen Roach, Vicki Rohner, Anna Scharder, Judy Shelstad, Maggie Skiver, Peter Slattery, Linda Speracino, Roma Steinke, Molly Uhlir, Phyllis Waldell, and Amy Weisberg; and Scott Pellock of Entel.

## Public Comments

Cathaleen Roach, 103 Gale Avenue, River Forest, urged the Board of Education and Administrators not to put off until the newly announced Strategic Plan, which could and should be put into practice today.

She previously submitted to the Board of Education a laundry list of ideas, called “Putting the ‘act’ into our A.C.T. plan.” She hoped their ideas would make a measureable difference immediately.

She did not identify the situation at the high school as primarily a “teacher” problem. Her children had positive experiences. A parents’ group learned that the District uses the Mastery Manager computer program and while many teachers use and love it, the school does not mandate its use. Approximately 96 percent of the OPRFHS students applied to 2- and 4-year colleges, but only 44 percent were deemed college-ready in all four subjects. There were disturbingly large disparities between college-readiness numbers, which are tied to ACT scores, when separated out by race or ethnicity. The IIRC reports that the college-readiness numbers for the middle group of students has completely flat-lined, and even slightly declined in 3 of the 4 subjects over the past 5 years. While some might argue that it is not the high school’s culture to insist that its best practices be consistent and available to all students, is it the culture to accept five uninterrupted years of these college readiness numbers? If so, she felt that needed to change.

She urged the Board of Education and administration to implement the Initiative and A.C.T. Plan right away. The items included:

- 1) Having all Division Chairs inventory the current quantity and quality of homework assigned, at every track level;
- 2) Having all administrators take a practice ACT test with Writing and work backwards to figure out what can be done *today* to increase scores.

She noted that Maggie Skiver offered her support of the initiative. Last April, Ms. Skiver ran for the OPRFHS Board of Education and received 3,257 votes on the single issue of “put the ‘college’ back into the ‘college prep’ platform.” She concluded that there are 1,600 juniors and seniors next year, and another 1,600 right behind them who counted on the school to move things in the right direction.

Jim Blaha, resident of 143 Keystone, River Forest, father of 5 children, 3 OPRFHS graduates and 2 currently attending, stated that he was a big supporter of the high school. He was thankful that each of his children had the opportunity to attend OPRFHS; it was a gift. Over the past 10 to 15 years as a parent of high school children, he was concerned about the stress and anxiety that the students experience. He felt that the group in which Ms. Roach was involved had an idea to help with that issue. He felt the school had a teacher lottery—some are rigorous and some are known for giving an easy A. That has a significant impact for the entire year. A rigorous teacher in an Honors class could assign 1 ½ to 2 hours of homework per night. Completing that homework cannot be achieved if the student has three or four honors classes. One teacher told his child that if he/she were getting an A in his/her class, he/she would be struggling in his/her other classes. How much homework is fair? He asked that the administration be watchful of this.

Linda Speracim, resident of 915 Williams in River Forest, spoke about her freshman and sophomore daughters’ experiences with homework. One daughter

had one to two hours of homework every night. One daughter was constantly doing homework and getting D's and F's on the exams because she focused on the homework rather than what she needed to know. The other daughter had the same course with a different teacher and barely did any homework at all. She observed that College Prep students were not challenged enough and Honors students were overwhelmed.

Phyllis Walden, resident of 327 S. Lombard, Oak Park, parent of two OPRFHS graduates, thanked Ms. Roach for her research and initiative. She also thanked OPRFHS for taking the time and interest to consider this initiative. She continued that everyone has stories and that everyone cares about the children. She advocated for the middle group of students, as they need more challenge in order to be able to compete with others globally. Most of the people she works with are fluent in two or three different languages. The initiatives proposed that evening were about consistency and expectations. If the mantra is that OPRFHS provides the same high expectations and rigor for everyone, it becomes part of the structure. Only then, can the community be transformed.

Roma Steinke, resident of 310 Gale, River Forest, spoke about her children's experience with consistency. One daughter was in honors but had dropped down to a lower level biology class and was very happy. Ms. Steinke was surprised at how helpful the teacher was with her grades and that her daughter hardly looked at her book the entire time she was in that class. She also addressed consistency in the Honors level and/or the College Prep level courses. Both of her daughters took Honors English as freshmen. The discrepancy of work involved was significant. One daughter was assigned many books to read, although they were not discussed. The other spent much time doing grammar in the computer room. She asked how it was possible that both were in Honors English and yet had such diverse experiences. She felt implementing a standard for these courses would be helpful.

John Duffy, 604 Gunderson, Oak Park representing the Oak Park and River Forest Committee on Equity and Excellence in Education, spoke in response to the Commentary on the Teacher Supports Best Practice Initiative. He thanked Ms. Roach's group for putting the issues on the table. He stated that "we" are in the third generation of integrated schools in which these stories are occurring. With all due respect, he stated her views brought a set of views that are not universal views, i.e., how one gets to high expectations for everyone. OPRFHS needs to represent all parts of the community. The goals must be shared. District 97 was disparaged for how it approached things, but he suggested that its strategic planning process of the 90's was the epitome of American democracy. While it did not accomplish all the goals, it was a model of which to be proud. The *Wednesday Journal* editorialized this point just a few weeks ago. It is a statement of faith, not a risk, and a statement that the process is trusted. He shared the following points concerning the proposal.

- The assumption that the 4 or 5 tracks of curriculum at OPRHFS is a given that should be reformed by creating intra-track equality in terms of demands on students in reading, writing, homework, etc. is not supported in literature on equity. Professional organizations from the National Association of School Psychologists to the National Council for Teachers of English have called for an end to tracking because of a range of problematic impacts it fosters.

Tracking, with its systemic and historic inequities, cannot be called best practice.

- The concept of best practice in education is tied to competing beliefs, values, and priorities that are usually tied to privilege, power, influence or the lack thereof, and/or challenges to those interests maintaining such dominance.
- Best practices are more about privileged advocacy than about working from knowledge based on substantive, supportive research. For example, the new emphasis on adopting Common Core State Standards and the school turnaround model of dismissing teachers, firing all staff and closing schools, a kind of educational version of destroying the village to save it, has no research base at this time that supports such practices as best. Charter schools are the same.
- For readings on best practice, he suggested Oak Park resident and Professor Arthur Hyde's review of Best Practice for K-12 schools. It speaks to calling for major changes in school tracking that traditionally isolates students by their supposed ability level, whether in lower tracks and Special Education.
- Other ideas about best practice that many believe are essential for educating African American children often are ignored by school leaders and policy makers. For example, much of what scholars and practitioners have learned about what is called culturally responsive teaching, and what is known about positive learning opportunities for African American and Latino children may not have an extensive research base that meets the clinical experimental guidelines the Federal government now demands. However, the literature still provides considerable evidence about the conditions and contexts within which children of color find greater academic and social success in schools.

Dr. Barb Langer, resident of River Forest, read the following statement:

“At your January 19, 2012 meeting, I asked that you please work with the OPPD to enclose the 50-meter park district pools for year-round use so that not only the high school but also the entire community would have affordable facilities to swim every day.

“I also told you that a Park District (in Kearns Utah) enclosed its 50-meter pool last year in a permanent Sprung Instant structure for about \$2 million. (She referred to page 27 of a handout, available also at [www.kopfc.com/share/index.html](http://www.kopfc.com/share/index.html).)

“That is about one-quarter of the cost that the OPPD says it would cost to enclose the pool at Ridgeland Commons. Moreover, the Sprung enclosure is free of the poor air quality, mold, mildew, and high maintenance costs that the OPPD said would make any such enclosure impractical.

“The OPPD has repeatedly denied our request to use low cost, high durability Sprung Instant structures to enclose park district pools, the ice rink, clubhouses, or other facilities for affordable, daily, year round use by the public.

“So, we turn to you to do so under the authority of your policy manual, which states:

‘The school shares responsibility with the larger community to...not accept non-educational tasks unless they are clearly required to fulfill its primary

educational role or they cannot be cared for with reasonable facility by other appropriate agencies.’

“We believe the present dire need for affordable, daily, year-round public swimming facilities by the entire community meets your policy requirements.

“We ask that, under Policy 20 I.F. ‘to provide adequate physical facilities’ and per the oaths you each swore to ‘respect taxpayer interests by serving as a faithful protector of the school districts assets’, that you immediately use a small fraction of the \$100 million you have of our tax money to build or renovate an affordable, public, year round fitness facility to meet the community’s needs for daily aquatics and perhaps other appropriate exercise activities.

“We also ask that, until you make such a facility available to the public, you open the existing high school pools to the public for year-round daily use at no cost or at very low daily cost during all time slots that you currently extend to a private organization called TOPS.

“Consequently, we also request that you please immediately terminate the apparently inappropriate and exclusive use rights that you have hitherto extended to TOPS at the public’s expense and to the public’s detriment.

“Moreover, we request that you please respond to our FOIA request to divulge the details of your business and financial relationships with TOPS and explain why you placed their private interest before the public’s overwhelming need.”

She offered documented expertise to represent the public’s interest in providing affordable, year-round, daily public swimming to everyone in Oak Park and River Forest.

Terrie Rayburn, resident of Oak Park and chair of Parents 4 Success, was happy to see so many people attending this meeting, as she has sat through meetings where many parents spoke about pools and feeder fees but when it came to student achievement, parents were silent. While she felt people were waiting for the high school to take the lead, she did not feel this it was solely the high school’s issue. She applauded Ms. Roach who reached out to a number of people; it is not relevant as to whether they agree or disagree. The community has to come together. She was fortunate that her son found wrestling. She was struck by the *Sports Illustrated* article about Mike Powell, the wrestling coach, and she was grateful to him as he recruits everyone and restlessly pursues students until they are willing to try. The community has to recruit and pursue students until they are willing to try. Students have to believe that if they stick through high school for four years, they will be able to get into a college and be prepared. She spoke about how much fun she was having in being a part of the wrestling parent group and the fact that her son expected her to be part of it. She wanted the parent community to see what it could do; she did not believe the problems would be solved without the teachers. She hoped that the audience would come back to the meetings, get involved, and stay involved.

Melanie McQueen, resident of 101 Washington in Oak Park, compared her concerns about the school to that of her daughter’s concern. One concern was that

of teacher absences. The mom asked the daughter to track daily attendance first semester and found that there were between 7 and 10 teacher absences, including a day of testing. One test was not administered correctly and it had to be retaken. She also noted that her daughter had qualified for free tutoring, but later found out that the funding was unavailable. She wanted to know the next steps.

**Board of Education  
Comments**

Ms. Patchak-Layman thanked the community for attending the meeting and expressing the same concerns she has had. At the first October meeting after being elected, she remarked that the high school's ACT scores were static and allowed no follow up for the students. She felt the students who either did poorly on the test or were African-American would have felt that opportunities in science were off limits to them. She attended the most recent NAAPID dinner and heard speaker, Philip Jackson, founder of the Blackstar Project. Many of his comments were about parental involvement and being co-active with their children. Ms. Patchak-Layman made a plug for parental volunteering during the day as it had worked well in District 97. Less parental involvement occurs as students become older. She felt this needed to be pursued in order to find avenues for parents to be active in school during the school day and a way to have the community present and offer that bridge. She saw the movie *The Interrupter* that reminded her of the efforts of the parent group APPLE in the 1990's that offered tutoring services during the day and a place for students to go. The movie showed a way for parents to be active in a program.

Ms. McCormack stated that much of what she read and what she had heard resonated with her. While much of what is being talked about is appropriate for strategic planning, she was concerned about waiting for a plan. She wanted to "Just Do It." She felt many of the suggested ideas carried no risk, e.g., administrators and faculty taking the ACT, completing college applications, etc. She was also concerned about the students who were being suspended from classes because it was difficult to make up the work. In addition, college applications contain very difficult questions. The District espoused that all students should apply and attend a four-year university. While some of the suggestions or best practices expressed may not be embraced, everyone can learn from one another. This needs to be approached, not from a defensive standpoint, but from one of excitement. The school needs to learn from those who are doing exceptionally well. She wanted to hear more about why there was a difference in the amount of homework from one class to another.

Dr. Millard stated that while the Board of Education can and has done many things, it cannot do it all. She demanded the public's and the faculty's time to help with these issues.

Dr. Lee offered to help establish a venue for discussion of sustained broad-based public education policy issues at OPRFHS, as it not a discussion that can occur in one or two brief discussions. While he did not have an answer, he was willing to help.

Another concern raised was about how music is placed in the curriculum and grades.

At Dr. Millard’s request, Dr. Isoye responded to the next steps. He thanked the community for their comments and passion, as they are necessary in order for the work to occur at the Board of Education and administrative levels. He pointed out that the Assistant Principal for Curriculum and Instruction and the Division Heads attended this meeting as they too wanted to hear what the parents had to say. He recapped the pieces he heard that evening.

Amount of homework	Literature
Rigor of homework	Pools
Challenge of College Prep	Motivation (student engagement)
Democratic process	Parent involvement
necessity	Teacher absences
De-tracking	Grading practices
Equity	Tutoring
Best practices	

The District is working on many of these things. With the help of the Board of Education, the administration will focus on the pivotal issues. The key piece will be not to wait for the strategic plan. Things are happening in the building; the school is not just repeatedly doing the same thing. The next step is to digest all of the information, review what currently takes place, and move into the strategic plan. The community supports the high school. OPRFHS has many excellent faculty and staff members and they are too challenged by the stories, just as is the public. Education is about working with people and that is the human element. The high school has to adapt to change sometimes daily and sometimes course-to-course. It continually has to adapt to the students. Perhaps by doing simple things the expectation gap will close. The Board of Education’s number one goal is looking at racial equity. The public and the high school will be challenged if racial equity is to improve. Dr. Isoye closed with a question posted by Dr. Allan Alson, an educational consultant, who said, “Imagine the day when the top 100 students in the graduating class represent the demographics of your school. What would that mean? What does one believe? Is someone willing to look at that?” There is much work to do and there are many moving pieces. It is a very exciting time.

## **Superintendent Report**

Dr. Isoye updated the Board of Education about the events that had occurred after the Board of Education heard the concerns of many parents regarding the condition of the swimming pool. The District has met with the pool consultant the Park District used and awaits a proposal and cost for services regarding a pool study. Included in the study would be: 1) evaluation of the existing pools, 2) renovation of the pools, 3) rebuilding on site, and 4) exploration of potential off-site ideas. The District also reached out to another pool expert and it has received interest from a third. The District hopes to have completed proposals for this study and a recommendation to the Board of Education in March.

Dr. Isoye also reported that on January 24 a meeting was hosted by the Park District of Oak Park at Ridgeland Commons. Invited were some administrators from District 200, Amy McCormack, Dee Millard people from the YMCA, other Park Board members and administrators, and Joe Connell of the Millennium Swim team.

Prior to the last Board of Education meeting, approximately 55 people, including a citizens’ committee and Park District Board members attended a meeting at the Park

District of Oak Park about the Ridgeland Common Project. Robert Zummallen attended for OPRFHS. Gary Balling, Executive Director of the Park District, gave a brief background on how the project started in 2007 with impact studies. The public had not wanted a tax increase to do the renovation work. The meeting documents are available on <http://oakparkparks.com>.

Dr. Langer contacted the Board of Education and his office about a concept for shared services and indoor facilities used in another community. Dr. Millard and he agreed to set up a meeting for her to share information with District staff. In this time of information gathering, the District believes it should have as much information as possible about potential ideas with regard to the future of the pools.

Dr. Isoye also gave a website update. There are two phases to the website design and launch. The intranet site, which is used as an internal communication tool, has been launched and has been met with appreciation. The beta test of the process was to launch a new site internally and monitor it for the next step, which is that of an external launch. Mr. Carioscio and Ms. Foran have collected information regarding potential vendors that was vetted through a faculty, staff, and community committee that has been a part of the entire process. Mr. Carioscio and Ms. Foran will make a vendor recommendation to begin the development and eventual change to the website. Once the Board of Education approves the vendor, the District will work with the company to have a better understanding of the timeframe.

Dr. Isoye reported on a concern as to whether the District was receiving all of the emails sent to the administrators, faculty, and the Board of Education. The current SPAM filter has services that rate websites. For an unknown reason one of these services put Comcast and Gmail domains on a blocked list. Because of this, some emails were placed in a quarantine list. Every morning an email is sent to each user so that they may view a list of filtered emails. This includes the email's address, date, and subject. From this, any email can be unjunked and viewed. The internal community is asked to check this daily. Board of Education members must check their individual accounts for emails that have been sent to them individually. If he or the Clerk of the Board of Education of Education has been included on the email, it will be redirected to the entire Board of Education.

Dr. Isoye thanked the parents for attending and sharing their passion for OPRHFS. He heard stories of concern that will need to be explored but he asked them to remember that there are success stories. OPRFHS has many excellent faculty and staff members who work on the behalf of our students. The Districts knows it needs to continue to do more. He believed that if there were a will to transform, mostly likely the District would have to look at and study very different ways than what may be traditional at the high school. Racial equity is one lens to be used.

Dr. Millard reported that Joe O'Connell took the charge to put together the groups in the community about the pools. She asked that if anyone had an interest in participating to send that interest to Ms. Kalmerton. Dr. Millard continued that the Park District's pools are not the high school's pools and the Board of Education cannot demand that they serve the high school students. She had not received a report from Mr. O'Connell as it was not the high school's meeting.



**Math Division  
Division Update**

Ms. Frey provided an update on the Math Division. The points she highlighted were:

- Extended Algebra course was created for targeted incoming ninth graders. Students will enroll in Algebra 1-2 and in Extended Algebra, which will provide an additional daily period designed to reinforce essential student knowledge and skills.
- The goal of Extended Algebra is that students will successfully enter and complete Advanced Algebra as juniors.
- The Math Division is now using weekly common formative assessments.
- Formative assessments give teachers, students, and parents a weekly snapshot of student mastery toward each learning target.
- Formative assessment allows for teachers and students to adjust their teaching and learning.
- The Math Division is aligning its targets with the Common Core.
- Students are taught to:
  - Construct viable arguments and analyze the reasoning of others.
  - Model with mathematics.
  - use appropriate tools strategically.
  - Attend to precision.
  - Look for and make use of structure.
  - Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.
  - Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
- The Math Division practices inquiry-based learning, constructivism, cooperative learning, experimentation, hands-on and is student-centered.

With the changes that have occurred this year, the classroom climate has shifted dramatically. It is much more student centered, more collaborative, has less lecture time and increased participation. After an analysis of math outcomes for students and various pathways, it was found that students were not hitting the benchmarks for college readiness. Using the PSAT and tracking backwards, it was found that the Algebra Block system was not a good pathway for students to achieve. That experience was revamped. This effort was championed by a group of teachers who brought the proposal forward.

**Presentation  
of Student Fees  
2012-13**

It was the consensus of the Board of Education to approve the student fees for the 2012-13 school year as noted below under the Action portion of the agenda.

- Freshmen \$50
- Sophomores \$220
- Juniors \$35
- Seniors \$70
- Pay to Play \$55

This represents no increase from last year.

**Request for  
Authorization to  
Purchase  
Electricity and**

It was the consensus of the Board of Education to approve the following under the Action portion of the agenda the authorization to allow the Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations to execute up to a 24-month future fixed agreement not to exceed the fixed energy rate of .03945; total rate of \$.05150 for electricity

**Purchase Electric and Natural Gas**

and to execute a variable index agreement for July 2012 through June 2015. Then convert the index agreement to a fixed rate of \$.398 therm for July 2012 through June 2013 for Natural Gas under the Action portion of the agenda.

Scott Pellock, of Entel, had informed the Board of Education of the opportunity to save even more money on energy at this time. He congratulated the school on its energy usage as it was well below that of a facility of this size and in this area. He continued that natural gas was at a 20-year support level and oil was trading about 550% higher than its normal trading range of 40 to 50% higher than natural gas. Natural gas prices are deflated, oil prices are inflated, and the convergence of both is only a matter of time. Because prices are so depressed, producers are reducing the number of wells, taking 8% of the natural gas off the market, prices will begin to increase. Many utility companies are talking about shutting down their coal-fired plants to generate electricity. As they go off line, they too will use natural gas and that will cause a rise in the prices of both natural gas and electricity.

**Presentation of SKOR Agreement**

The Board of Education reviewed an E-commerce agreement with SKOR. On March 21, 2011, the Board of Education had approved the authority to start e-commerce as an additional source of revenue in order to help reduce the families cost of the Instructional Materials Fee. This company will enable the Bookstore to serve the alumni market. This online solution will not interfere with the Bookstore’s support of the Booster Club in selling its merchandise to walk-in customers because different products would be selected. Ms. Haas is researching this with Boosters. The Board of Education was provided with an example of the Skor’s website at [www.ivcc.customfanshop.com](http://www.ivcc.customfanshop.com).

The Board of Education asked that an attorney review the contract with special attention given to “duty to defend” and Section 7, confidentiality. What are the experiences of other schools in terms of support for the website. Do they receive calls about the website?

**Presentation of Landscape Bid**

It was the consensus of the Board of Education to approve the award of the landscape bid to the lowest bidder, McAdam Landscaping, at its regular March 8 Board of Education meeting for the term April 1, 2012 to October 31, 2013, with the option of up to three additional one-year extensions).

Discussion ensued about sharing these types of services with the Park District. It was noted that had not been a discussion before receiving these bids. The District is most concerned about its fields, the striping of the fields, and its need for attention at particular times. A contract allows the District to exercise its rights. Discussions with the Park District can occur in the future.

**Update on Reading Program Semester I Progress**

Kristin McKee, RtI Reading Program Coordinator, and Chala Holland, Assistant Principal for Instruction, provided an progress overview of Semester I of the Reading Program utilizing the Read 180 Core Reading curriculum and intensive teacher professional development, reading interventions and supportive evaluation and alignment, and ongoing program and student monitoring to better ensure positive outcomes for identified students accessing the program. New progress monitoring tools such as Scholastic Reading Inventory and Aimsweb Reading Curriculum Based Measurement were introduced.

All freshmen took the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) in the fall and they will be reassessed during the spring to gauge growth. By the end of the year, two SRI data sets will be available for all freshmen to compare. That data will be used further to assess whether the core curriculum provided to the freshmen supports improvements in the levels of reading proficiency. Much emphasis is being placed on the freshman year because the belief is that it is a crucial foundational year for learning and is instrumental in better ensuring student success for the duration of high school. In the future, students will be assessed three times a year to allow for potential instructional adjustments and embedded supports during the school year.

Students enrolled in Elements of Reading, where Read 180 is a key component of the curriculum, are assessed more regularly throughout the year. This year, the students enrolled in Elements of Reading took the SRI three times (August, October and January). They will be reassessed again at the end of the year, along with the rest of the freshman class. The majority of students enrolled in Elements of Reading have experienced a significant amount of growth (Appendix A and B).

Ms. McKee reported that the Reading Program consists of several moving parts. There are intensive Tier 3 interventions, such as Elements of Reading, but there are also Tier 2 components to the reading program. Included in the recommendations for next steps is an increase of Tier 1 supports through more intentional work to infuse literacy instruction across the content areas and a refinement of Tier 2 interventions to support content area reading and targeted literacy skills.

The *Reading Supports Descriptions* (Appendix C) represents some of the work that took place this year to clearly define each of the supports, clarify the student profile for each support, and to articulate the assessments/data used to place the students in a support. Some of the findings have caused the staff to work to communicate clearly the purpose of each of the supports, to plan and work on course curriculum development, and to identify appropriate instructional materials for the supports. An effort was made to build in more teacher support also.

Elements of Reading is the most intensive reading support offered at the high school and with the adoption of a new research-based curriculum, a significant amount of progress monitoring, program evaluation and teacher professional development has occurred this year.

A key responsibility of designing a reading program is to embed clear entrance and exit criteria for students in the program. Some student movement has occurred this year due to reaching reading benchmarks and exiting out of Elements of Reading and into a reading support class (Literacy Support Resource), student transitions from special education self-contained reading classes to Elements of Reading, and the enrollment of transfer students new to the district (Appendix D).

Baseline reading data taken at the start of the year revealed that 73% of students in Elements of Reading were reading well below grade level on the SRI and 59% of the students were reading at a rate that was substantially below grade level expectations. The extreme need of the students presented a challenge to the team of talented and dedicated teachers. Some students require small group, targeted instruction in basic phonics and fluency while others need reading strategies and vocabulary development to get them to grade level reading. Teachers needed to learn and implement the

comprehensive Read180 curriculum, and supplemental interventions and programs to address the needs of all learners. Another concern is that students who have reached the 9<sup>th</sup> grade and are unable to read are often disengaged, very frustrated, and embarrassed about their reading abilities. Often students act out or withdraw which creates even more barriers in the learning process.

The District recognizing that the act of learning and the spaces in which learning takes place is connected to how students construct their academic identity. While the process of creating a culture of learning in each of the classes and working with students to create a positive self-identity has been an area of growth for the students, it has its challenges. Because of the structure of the course and ongoing progress monitoring, students are able to see the beneficial progress of their work (Appendix A and B). Celebrating student growth, while also providing explicit feedback regarding areas for further growth collaborated with support, has contributed to positive academic and social emotional development outcomes for many students.

The District recommended continuing the work proposed last year or going with the recommendations based on the summary of this year's findings.

- The Elements of Reading program should continue to be a comprehensive Tier 3 reading intervention for the most struggling readers. Continued professional development and coaching of teachers should occur through weekly meetings facilitated by RtI/Reading Program Coordinator, TCT team meetings and outside conferences and networking opportunities with Scholastic Read180.
  - Co-teaching (shifting FTE)
  - Continued professional development to meet the needs of all learners in the program
  - Renewal and supplemental materials to support the Read180 program
- The Literacy Support Resource (LSR) is a course intended to focus on supporting reading across the content areas (Appendix C). In 2012-2013 school year, LSR will be implemented for identified students in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. It was recommended that the District consider a support for students the 11<sup>th</sup> grade as well.
- For the 2012-2013, the purpose, student profile and assessment tools for each of the literacy interventions and supports have been clarified and defined and the following is being requested for next year:
  - Instructional materials (submitted for DLT budget approval)
  - Summer curriculum planning funds for curriculum writing
- It was recommended to increase the use of literacy coaches for each of the core content areas to further the work of infusing literacy instruction across the core content areas in the general education and special education courses.

- It was recommended to offer professional development in the following areas:
  - For teachers of Elements of Reading and Essentials of English
  - Division and course specific literacy to support the infusion of literacy across the content areas
  - Reading and coaching support for identified teachers in the core content areas to serve as literacy support resources and/or literacy coaches within their content area
  - The use of reading assessment data to monitor and improve student outcomes and inform instruction through teaching and learning
  - The implementation of a Literacy PD strand for teachers to engage in year-long learning and classroom application
  - Summer curriculum planning funds for curriculum writing and literacy infusion for all 9<sup>th</sup> grade courses

An overview of Tiered Reading Interventions and Supports for 2012-2013 was provided.

Level	Class/Resource	Tier	Grade(s)
Special Education	Elements of Reading	3	9
Special Education	Reading 3/4	3	10-12
Transition	Elements of Reading	3	9
College Prep	Literacy Support Resource	2	9
College Prep	Literacy Support Resource	2	10
College Prep	Literacy Coaching	1	9-12
Honors			
AP			

Dr. Lee was very happy because this was the first time in his experience that the District was taking an approach that determines what is and what is not working. He was also happy with the report on the Math Division. He was appreciative to the Superintendent who decided to do this as opposed to waiting to implement it before a 5-year plan was completed. When asked how it might be possible to tie what is discovered to the NCLB statistics, Ms. Holland responded that she hoped to see growth in the reading area. Students coming in with low reading levels, students on the bubble, College Prep and Honors students could all benefit from additional reading support and learning of strategies. She hopes to see some carryover when they are tested, but said it would take time. In connection with NCLB, one of the things to be focused on next year is that students often connect the learning space, course, to their academic identify. They know when they are struggling. The District has to work with them on behaviors that they have developed over time by creating a positive cultural and academic community. These are primarily students of color. The District can help them to build positive academic identifies and track that their growth. Entrance and exit criteria needs to be in place. She hoped not to only help them through a comprehensive reading program but also with their social/emotional growth. Ms. McGee added that she was encouraged but not satisfied. It has to be an articulated program, intentional, and tied to the rigor of the course. Providing one year of support to the students and then pulling that away does not work. The support has to continue and it has to have a general release. Students are excited when they

grow. Some students have become real students and no longer need reading support next year. Her role is to help those students in that transition.

In responding to questions about the coordination occurring between regular classroom teachers in terms of the reading and what those teachers may be learning about the students, Ms. McKee stated teachers meet weekly and share strategies. English is the focus this year. When the program is expanded, more articulation will take place with history and science. The LSR goal is to have more collaboration. Ms. McKee added that attendance has been great and all of the students passed at semester. She has been made a part of the PSS Teams.

Ms. LeCesne and Dr. Paplaczuk supported the District's use of school psychology interns who are being trained in data collection at the university level. These interns receive a stipend, fully reimbursable by the state, and they must fulfill a certain number of hours before they can graduate. Dr. Isoye stated that he, Ms. Smith, and Ms. Witham have had that discussion and they will work with the universities and the granting offices to see how to move this forward.

Ms. McKee noted that special education teachers were addressing skill development through assistive technology. They are building strengths and that is why this is a difficult course; reading is a skill but it is also content exploration. Dr. Paplaczuk added that while some adaptive technology is being used by non-Special Education students, some of the technology is very specific with very specific criteria for students with reading and learning disabilities.

Mr. Cohen commended the four teachers who had received the curriculum just days before the class started. They are doing a great job with great support.

**Review of Modified  
Closed Campus  
Report**

The Board of Education approved a Modified Closed Campus (MCC) for the 2011-12 school year on May 26, 2011. It approved that juniors and seniors in good standing, as defined by the administration and who obtained parent permission, would be allowed to leave campus at lunch. The District's plan was to work with students, staff, and faculty to create a lunchtime environment that supported the educational goals of the high school and promoted the social, emotional, and physical health of students. As a result, Mr. Rouse presented an update on the MCC. He reported the following:

- 1) First semester the MCC Committee met bimonthly to trouble shoot and addresses the concerns of the students. Progress has been made in identifying additional places for students to go during lunch:
  - a. a 33-seat Studio Study Area in the Student Gallery that currently allows juniors/seniors having a pass an opportunity to study independently during lunch.
  - b. The Little Theatre for studying
  - c. A computer lab is open during lunch periods starting second semester.
  - d. The west gym is scheduled for "Fun Fridays," allowing freshman/sophomores to play basketball.
- 2) Second semester the MCC Committee's focus was to identify potential furniture for the Student Lobby area and to work with Legat Architects to determine the long-term solutions to solve space, study, and activity concerns. February 24, Friday students will visit with Legat Architect at its offices and will participate in

- a Charrette (architectural brainstorming session) to see how the space could be used differently.
- 3) Ideas for activities for freshman and sophomores to be held on good weather days in the spring are being suggested. Those ideas may lead to some form of a band shelter adjacent to the freshman/sophomore cafeteria.
  - 4) In addition, absences, tardies, failing grades, and disciplinary infractions have decreased. These items are the criteria used to determine whether a student has off campus privileges.

Mr. Rouse included costs associated with MCC implementation in the report.

The administration's recommendation was to support the continuance of the current MCC model and allow juniors and seniors the opportunity for an open campus similar to this school year. The District believes that it has been effective at managing the MCC environment and students have responded positively. Moving to a model where only one class could obtain the privilege would mean changing the period structure and adding a lunch period to the school day. It would be disruptive as there would be four to six more bells during the day and it would impact the academic schedule. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Phelan was interested to hear that the incentive to go off campus was effective. Some Board of Education members asked to hear from students directly about their experiences. Mr. Rouse affirmed that students do want to express their thoughts about the process. When asked if there would be a reason to expand off campus privileges, Mr. Rouse stated that there are 3,200 students, 2 cafeterias, and 2 thresholds. Offering half of the students the privilege of open campus allows the high school to manage the inside of the school and outside campus environments. If more students have that option, the District may not be as effective in managing the environments. Mr. Rouse stated that concerns about students' ability to go to other areas to develop their unique activities have waned, as other opportunities have arisen. The evaluation of opportunities continues. Ms. Patchak-Layman asked for documentation, as parents would like to know what has occurred and whether students are able to meet and play their instruments.

Dr. Isoye stated that the District is building its budget and asked the Board of Education for direction in this regard. The administration is satisfied with the results being seen at this time. Dr. Lee and Mr. Finnegan agreed with the administration's recommendation to adhere to the current model. Ms. Fisher and Dr. Millard felt that complete information would be needed before any changes were made.

Mr. Phelan was interested in knowing how much of the statistics were a result of the new rules or were they the result of the incentives being created by those who wanted to go off campus. If it were the incentives, then expanding those incentives would be beneficial. If it were the result of the new rules that is one answer. If it were the results of having incentives, he asked how that could be expanded.

### **Tri-Board Meeting**

Dr. Isoye asked the Board of Education for its comments about the topics and the format of the Tri-board meeting held January 9, 2012 with Districts 90 and 97, noting that the other boards would be asked for their comments as well. The responses included:

- 1) Breaking up into smaller groups for a small brainstorming portion of the meeting was valuable in terms of being able to see each other's perspective.
- 2) The topics were appropriate, could be expanded upon, but other topics would be appropriate as well.
- 3) The format of breaking into chat groups may not be as productive for other discussions, e.g., student behavior problems.
- 4) The community came to hear the discussion and the format was disrespectful to it as they were unable to hear 45 minutes of the discussion. A suggestion included setting the room up differently so that people could walk around and listen to the conversation.
- 5) Academic achievement should always be the topic and other topics are ancillary.
- 6) The experience was appreciated, i.e., lecture portion, the results of the survey being shared, the use of the clickers, etc.

Ms. Foran stated that she and her 2 counterparts at District 90 and 97 have met once after the meeting and conferenced called and had email communications to focus on the predominant themes heard that evening. All of the boards affirmed via the survey results and discussion that they had a mutual and growing reliance on online communications and presence. The boards underlined the importance of using these tools to increase direct, personal engagement and involvement in our schools. Collectively, they identified the most important communications goal on which the three districts could collaborate as communicating the value of our schools to taxpayers and to more fully engage the community in ownership and understanding about the schools. There was agreement on the following:

- Not all three districts need to collaborate on every item. The districts should be strategic and purposeful in planning collaborations that meet a real need.
- All plans need to respect and complement each district's existing policies, goals, strategic planning efforts.

District 200 focused on Board Goal 3, building and sustaining a positive school culture, and Goal 2, increasing student engagement and achievement. While there are three separate districts, they share an overarching mission of educating the community's children and they do share those students over time. The districts need to help clarify and strengthen their presence and relationship in the community's eyes by the following:

- Provide greater website access/visibility of the other districts' on the OPRFHS website. Both elementary districts' long-term plans will include more visible online linkage to the high school's site. In the meantime, OPRFHS is being intentional about including important Districts 97 and 90 information in OPRF Communications, e.g. the District 97 kindergarten registration link on front of its website and in the weekly HuskiEmails, etc.
- Explore a "one-stop shopping" community schools' page that includes readily accessible information about all of the districts and the communities, including contact information and protocols for key staff and procedures, such as enrollment.



- Hold annual town hall meetings. Each elementary district superintendent will meet with Dr. Isoye separately to discuss concerns germane to each community. District 90 would a meeting to focus on articulation between the Districts.
- Develop a bi-annual joint “State of the Schools” communication piece, including updates on demographic and achievement stats, initiatives, finances, goals, etc. This would be formally unveiled at a joint media event.
- Explore a joint project involving shared student experiences, e.g. a community service projects students in which all three districts participate, etc., as a way of visibly drawing positive attention to the good work all districts do on behalf of their children—something that will keep the communities vibrant and desirable destinations.

Mr. Carioscio stated that the key word was alignment and the Districts were working on sharing information as well as having a list of shared products. The goal is to provide a seamless alignment when a student moves from one school to the next. Transition is a perennial concern. There is work to do in the policy arena relative to data sharing and consideration of what is to be provided to students in terms of email access. The Board of Education asked to see available option sin this regard. Mr. Carioscio is now aware of District 90’s concern about the TI calculator, he is aware of the environment, and he is implementing that environment in math. He meets monthly with his counterparts on the working list proposed at the Tri-board meeting.

**Consent Items**

Dr. Lee moved to approve the consent items as follows:

- Approval of the Check Disbursements and Financial Resolutions dated February 23, 2012;
- Approval of Monthly Financial Reports; and
- Approval of Monthly Treasurer Reports;

seconded by Ms. Fisher. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

**Personnel Recommendations**

Dr. Millard moved to approve the personnel recommendations, as presented;

1. New Hires
2. Stipends
3. Retirements
4. Leaves of Absence

seconded by Mr. Phelan. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

**Approval of Student Fees for 2012-13**

Ms. Fisher moved to approve the Student Fees for 2012-13, as presented; seconded by Dr. Lee. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

The fees remain the same as last year.

**Approval of Authorization to Purchase Electricity**

Dr. Millard moved to authorize the Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations to execute up to a 24-month future fixed agreement not to exceed the fixed energy rate of .03945; total rate of \$.05150 for electricity and to execute a

**and Natural Gas** variable index agreement for July 2012 through June 2015. Then convert the index agreement to a fixed rate of \$.398 therm for July 2012 through June 2013 for Natural Gas; seconded by Mr. Phelan. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

**Athletic Uniforms  
Fall/Winter** Dr. Millard moved to award the Athletic Uniforms as follows: seconded by Mr. Finnegan. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

- The Boys Soccer Away Jersey as well as the Boys Basketball, Wrestling, Girls Cross-Country, Girls Tennis, Girls Lacrosse and Girls Volleyball products to BSN Sports/Salkeld Sports;
- The Boys Cross Country products to Boathouse Sports; and
- The Boys Soccer Home Jerseys and Football products to Advantage Team Sales.

**PTAB Resolutions** Dr. Millard moved to approve the PTAB Resolution, as presented; seconded by Mr. Finnegan. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

**Approval of Bus  
Contract** Dr. Millard moved to approve the bus contract as presented; seconded by Dr. Lee. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

**Minutes** Dr. Lee moved to approved the Open and Closed Session Minutes of January 19, 24, and 31, and February 9, 2012, and a declaration that the Closed Session Audiotapes of April 2010 be destroyed; seconded by Mr. Finnegan. A roll call vote resulted in six ayes. Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay. Motion carried.

**Additional Discussion** It was the consensus of the Board of Education to move the Instruction portion of its agenda to the beginning of the agenda.

**Closed Session** At 11:15 p.m., on Thursday, February 23, 2012, Dr. Millard moved to reconvene its earlier closed session; seconded by Mr. Finnegan. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

The Board of Education reconvened its open session at 1:15 a.m. on Friday, February 24, 2012.

**Adjournment** At 1:16 a.m. on Friday, February 24, 2012, Mr. Phelan moved to adjourn the Board of Education meeting; seconded by Dr. Lee. A voice vote resulted in motion carried.

Dr. Dietra D. Millard  
President

Amy McCormack  
Secretary