

**Oak Park River Forest High School
201 N. Scoville
Oak Park, IL 60302**

**Strategic Plan Steering Committee Minutes
October 17, 2012**

Dr. Isoye opened the Strategic Plan Steering Committee meeting at 7:00 p.m., on October 17, 2012 in the Staff Café of the OPRFHS, 201 N. Scoville, Oak Park, Illinois.

Members:

Nina Allen, Thrive Counseling Center	Dana Limberg, OPRFHS
Dr. Allan Alson, Facilitator	Sophia Lloyd, OPRF Community Foundation
Jan Arnold, Park District of Oak Park	Pat Maunsell, Facilitator
Marge Balchunas, OPRFHS	Melanie McQueen, Parent
Dee Brennan, Oak Park Public Library	John Messina, APPLAUSE
Mary Jo Burns, Ascension School	Kerry Nelson, PTO/P4SS
Leah Carlin, OPRFHS	Carolyn Newberry-Schwartz, Collaboration for Early Childhood
Dick Chappell, River Forest Community Center	Sharon Patchak-Layman, OPRFHS
Aleta Clardy, Community Member	Jan Pate, YMCA
Anthony Clark, Community Member	Regina Peterson, OPRF Scholarship Foundation.
Dr. Edward Condon, River Forest Elementary Schools	Phil Prale, OPRFHS
JP Coughlin, OPRFHS	Janice Pyrcce, Citizens' Council
John Duffy, Community Member	Bobbie Raymond, Alumni Association
Valerie Fisher, OPRFHS	Dr. Albert Roberts, OP Elementary Schools
Joyce Gajda, OPRFHS	Latroy Robinson, Student
Kathryn Gargiulo, OPRFHS	Nathaniel Rouse, OPRFHS
Nancy Guarino, Community Member	Anna Schaidler, Roosevelt PTO
Dr. Tina Halliman, OPRFHS	Steve Schwartz, OPRFHS
Sheila Hardin, OPRFHS	Carollina Song, Gwendolyn Brooks PTO
Nancy Heezen, OPRFHS	John Stelzer, OPRFHS
Burcy Hines, APPLE	Jessica Stovall, OPRFHS
Maria Hoyer, Community Member	Karin Sullivan, OPRFHS
James Paul Hunter, OPRFHS	Drew Swope, Student
Dr. Steve Isoye, OPRFHS	Rick Tanksley, Oak Park Police Department
Stephanie Jackson, Community Member	Jane Townsley, Parent
Mary Johnson, Student	Mark Trinkka, Hephzibah
Kris Johnson, OPRFHS	Jason Tyszko, Community Member
Grace Kavinsky, Student	Alysa Wallace, OPRFHS
Ray Kennelly, Dominican University	Brenda Jones Watkins, Triton College
Kathy Kern, Parenthesis	Kimberly Werner, Supported Education Association
Larry Landfair, Community Member	Cathy Yen, BOOSTERS

Members not present: James Paul Hunter, John Stelzer, Kris Johnson, and Steve Schwartz of OPRFHS, Aleta Clardy, and Stephanie Jackson, community members; Jan Arnold, Park District of Oak Park; Brenda Jones Watkins of Triton College.

Visitors included Ronald Clark, Community Member; Larry Gartski of District 90, and Lia Madonia-Garcia of the River Forest Community Center; and Vernecia Davis intern at the University of Illinois.

Housekeeping

Dr. Alson reminded the following meeting norms:

- 1) Be actively involved
- 2) Be full present – No cellphones or email
- 3) Respect one another's opinion
- 4) Monitor Your Own Air Time
- 5) Do not interrupt
- 6) No sidebar conversations
- 7) No "bird-walking"
- 8) Act as a collective body
- 9) Keep an open mind

Committee members were reminded to continue to sit at the same tables at every meeting and to respond to Ms. Kalmerton about whether their email addresses could be shared with other committee members.

Introductions

Committee members attending for the first time were introduced. They too shared some of their hopes for what this committee could accomplish. Others shared some of their thoughts since the last meeting.

Comments included:

- Stakeholder development was necessary;
- Awareness that the committee members will not have the level of knowledge they would like to have; trust is needed in this process;
- How can a practical 5-year plan be developed at the same time the committee is looking to see education in 2025;
- One opinion was withheld until a sense of how this will move forward was known;
- Hopeful that this process will be effective and there will be assessment so that there will be sense of continuity, renewal and growth;
- Prepare students for future jobs;
- Hope to see change;
- Go from the helicopter view to specifics; and
- Incorporate equity into the school

Dr. Alson and the committee thanked Ms. Kalmerton for her work in preparation for these meetings.

Dr. Alson asked members to keep track of their own ideas using the following categories: ideas, questions, and concerns. These would be shared later with the group.

Dr. Alson outlined future meeting agendas. By the end of November, the Committee will have analyzed all of the data having been collected, and then asked to determine a list of OPRFHS core values that could drive a five-year strategic plan. He asked the committee to begin thinking about words or phrases, i.e., integrity, equity, collaboration, etc., as to what the core values should be and what process will be used to determine consensus. The core values will inform a mission statement. The current mission statement was included in the packet and the Committee members were asked to familiarize themselves with it, as they will be asked to consider whether it needed to be changed. They will also be asked how a new mission statement would be built if nothing were in place. An example of a mission statement would be "all students are prepared for success in college and career," etc. An example of a vision statement would be that within five years, OPRFHS would be at "x" place, students are achieving at "x" level, technology will be used at "x" level, etc.

Dr. Alson hoped that the goal statements would be developed by January, as they will drive the deeper work. Dr. Alson thus asked the committee members to keep a list of possible goals to be considered.

Dr. Alson and Ms. Maunsell will be facilitating the 90-minute focus groups of no more than 30 people. It is hoped that the participants will be diverse with regard to race, gender, veteran faculty, new faculty, high achieving, middle and struggling students, etc. Separate focus groups for freshmen and seniors will be held. The schedule is below.

Community

Saturday, November 17—10:00 to 11:30 am—Board Room

Monday, November 19—5:00 to 6:30 pm—Board Room

Saturday, December 1—10:00 to 11:30 am—Board Room

Faculty

Monday, November 5—after school—Board Room

Monday, November 19—Lunches & after school—Board Room

Students and Staff

Monday, October 29—Lunches and 7th period

Monday, November 5—Lunches and 7th period

The Steering Committee then brainstormed on questions they would like asked at the focus groups. Discussion ensued. The purpose of the identified focus groups is to bring topics for further study. Note: the Village of Oak Park is conducting focus groups during this same time. Discussion ensued about the logistics of the focus groups. The postcard asks people to respond for space planning purposes only. The District has done its best to safeguard getting the information out as uniformly as possible.

Discussion ensued regarding surveys, as they will provide a rich vein of information. Faculty, staff, parents, and students will be sent surveys. Every household in Oak Park and River Forest will receive a postcard inviting them to take the survey and the dates of the focus groups. While a unique code will be included, additional codes can be requested if more than one person in the household wishes to respond. School Performance, an outside firm, has been recruited to assist with the preparation of the survey. A paper version will also be made available. The responses will be anonymous and real time. Preliminary results will be presented at the November 19 meeting.

Ms. Hines asked how diversity could be ensured. Discussion ensued and Ms. Hines suggested that the District take a proactive approach. Ms. Lloyd concurred and volunteered her time to do so. A further discussion may occur with Dr. Isoye, Mr. Prale, and Ms. Sullivan about this. Dr. Duffy suggested additional, non-educational facilitators be recruited to lead the focus groups.

The Committee was then asked to consider the following questions about the data Ms. Hill would be presenting regarding the current state of the District.

What did we learn?

What questions do we have?

What more do we want to learn?

Dr. Alson noted that a committee member had asked whether data comparing OPRFHS to other schools would be presented, i.e., teacher salaries, other achievement data, etc. While that data will not be presented, the ISBE has a website that does provide the demographics of every high school and elementary school, except for finances. The website is at www.iirc.niu.edu. Committee members were encouraged to review that information.

The first chart was titled Percent of Students Enrolled in College the Fall Immediately Following Graduation from High School. The data represented nearly 6,000 OPRFHS graduates over the 8-year span. The percentages are lower than final transcript numbers from internal data sources and the reason is unknown at this time. The National Student Clearing House participating post-secondary institutions comprise about 93% of student enrollments, nationally. Some OPRFHS students attended institutions that do not participate, including schools overseas.

The next slide was titled Percent of Students Enrolled in College the Fall Immediately following Graduation from High School by Institutional Level. The largest implication is that two-thirds of OPRFHS graduates attend 4-year colleges immediately following high school graduation, and roughly one-sixth attend 2-year institutions. It is difficult to find comparable national stats of students attending college immediately after high school, but it appears that 63% of all students who go to college attend 4 year and 37% attend 2-year colleges. At OPRFHS, it is 80% and 20% respectively.

The next slide was titled Percent of Students Enrolled in College at Any Time during the First Year after High School. The percentage of students increases roughly 4% when looking at enrollments at any time in the first year after.

The next slide showed the percentage of students enrolled in college at any time during the first 2 years after high school, and the average for OPRHFS is 89%. Of 87% of the 2011 graduates who entered college in the first year after high school, 92% returned for a second year. This translates to 80% of 2011 graduates who persist into the second year. It is worth remembering that an additional 4-5% of students start college in their second year out of high school and they were not represented in this graph.

The percent of students enrolled in college the first year after high school who returned for a second year (freshman to sophomore persistence) by institutional level data was presented. It was important to note that in year 2, the persistence rates differ by the type of institution. Students who started at a 2-year college were less likely to return in year 2, as compared to students who started at a 4-year college. The questions then become: 1) Do 2-year college students who do not return earn certificates that provide employability. Or, do they transfer to 4-year institutions? Those questions remain unresolved.

The percent of graduates who completed a degree within 6 years averaged 60% across the classes of 2004 and 2005. Comparable national data is difficult to obtain. In 2011, roughly 30% of people 25 and older held bachelor's degrees. Degree completion also varies by institutional level. Roughly, 29% of OPRFHS 2004 graduates who began at a two-year college earned a degree within 6 years. Roughly, 78% of 2004 graduates who began at a four-year college earned a degree within 6 years. The gap does not appear to be explained by students transferring to four-year institutions, except in a small percentage of cases.

While the majority of graduates matriculate to four-year colleges/universities, the single most common institution of enrollment for OPRFHS graduates immediately after high school is Triton College. Approximately 12 percent of OPRFHS graduates go to Triton.

With regard to the graduate rates, Ms. Hill stated that the graduation rate is divided by the number of students who earned a degree by the number of first time ninth graders who began four years earlier, plus transfer in, minus transfers out/deaths. Ms. Hill noted that she was working on disaggregating OPRFHS data by race. She also noted that information regarding online university data was too recent for reporting. OPRFHS students start college in numbers that are in proportion to its racial demographics. The discrepancy lies in degree obtainment.

Questions/information wanted by committee members included:

- 1) Information about students from low income.

- 2) Implicit value that attending a four-year college equals success.
- 3) How can the high school increase the number of students finishing their degrees?
- 4) What is the percentage of students enrolled in remedial courses at the college level? How can they help the District learn how to prepare them for college?
- 5) Do counselors inform students of the fact that they will not go to college. Do students know that they will not be a college graduate?
- 6) How did the students who graduate accomplish that degree? Did they feel prepared? What resources did they take advantage of at 4-year and 2-year schools? What was their success?
- 7) What happened in the 6-year span that they did not complete college?
- 8) What public high schools compare to OPRFHS, economically, demographically, etc.? It was noted that districts involved with the Minority Student Achievement Network might have similarities with regard to social, economic, and race.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.