

Oak Park and River Forest High School
201 N. Scoville
Oak Park, IL 60302
An Instruction Committee of the Whole Board
March 17, 2011

An Instruction Committee meeting was held on Thursday, March 17, 2011, in the Board Room. Co-chair Finnegan opened the meeting at 7:37 a.m. Committee members present were John Allen, Terry Finnegan, Dr. Ralph H. Lee, Amy Leafe McCormack, Dr. Dietra D. Millard, and Sharon Patchak Layman. Also present were Dr. Steven T. Isoye, Superintendent; Michael Carioscio, Chief Information Officer; Amy Hill, Director of Assessment and Research; Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Nathaniel L. Rouse, Lauren M. Smith, Director of Human Resources; Cheryl L. Witham, Chief Financial Officer; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of Board.

Visitors: Kay Foran, Community Relations and Communications Coordinator; James Paul Hunter, Faculty Senate Executive Committee Chair, Ann Carlson, Judith Lopez, Amber Hooper, OPRFHS Librarians, Dan Cohen, English Division Head; Devon Alexander, Francisco Arriaga, Jamie Hanson, Christiana Smith, and JP Coughlin, faculty members; and John Phelan, community members.

Approval of February 14, 2011 Instruction Committee Minutes

It was the consensus of the Instruction Committee members to accept the February 14, 2011 meeting minutes, as presented.

CCAR Update

Teachers who participated in the Courageous Conversations About Race (CCAR) testified as to how this process had helped them in their classrooms. JP Coughlin, a Special Education Teacher who works primarily with the African-American population, said, "CCAR gave me the tools to think differently and to build relationships differently to the betterment of my relationships with both the students and parents." Jamie Hanson, a sociology and AP psychology teacher, thanked the Board of Education for participating in the Beyond Diversity workshop. Having a passion for social justice, she said, "CCAR allowed me the time to talk with other people with the same language and reflect on my classes: it is been a great support." Christina Smith, a biology teacher and participated in the CCAR cohort for three years, said, "CCAR allowed me to see myself and the school structure. As a white woman, CCAR gave me the tools to build relationships and use the language that makes the classes more equitable." She also felt CCAR helped her to advocate harder for her students. She has a clearer understanding that families do not know how to navigate the system and she tries to help in that regard.

Dan Cohen, English Division Head and veteran in working with the Pacific Educational Group (PEG), had spoken at MSAN's mini conference as well as at OPRFHS before he was employed here. Because of having had ten days of professional development from PEG, he is better able to take control of things that he can control, e.g., disparities, language, income, etc., what one does in the hallways, in the institution, etc. The CCAR process pushes/forces to make the invisible visible all of the time: it is a consciousness of color. PEG requires that the District look at its policies and resumes with equity lenses. It has affected his every relationship and his communication with

parents. He stated that in order to incorporate students into this training, the District will need utilize good leadership to organize, set clear goals, and determine how and why they will be used.

Mr. Alexander spoke from the perspective of what OPRFHS has done for the past two years. In 2009-10, CCAR delved into the content knowledge and equipped the staff with the language. In 2010-11, the District developed a solid foundation in content knowledge, practice, and modeling. Already there have been approximately twenty (20) meetings this year where the participants practiced using protocols. It was because of his educational background on race and race integration theory and the role that race plays at OPRFHS that a proposal was first made to engage with PEG/CCAR. Mr. Alexander cautioned against a less than comprehensive approach to understanding, which is happening in many schools, as it typically does more harm than good. PEG teaches a systemic and personal way to understand race in education. The two- to three- year next phase will be to develop the racial cultural lens.

Next year PEG has the ability to facilitate the conversations with the District's leadership to establish an equity plan, a major foundation for moving forward. DLT talks about teacher placement, the hiring process, guidelines, policies, etc. These are subjects that are not covered in the CCAR sessions that have occurred. After next year, the leadership will be able to take this institution to the next level. It will be able to see where the barriers and openings are in order to provide a good learning experience for all students. It was believed that the cohorts would be included in the lead training seminars as well, as it is included in the costs, e.g. substitute fees, etc. Part of the work with PEG is the opportunity to look at evaluative measures such as equity walk-throughs (in the Welcome Center, Student Center, how students are sitting, interactions of conversations, etc.), division heads, administration, classrooms, etc. Ms. Patchak-Layman added that they will look at whether a group is necessary or unnecessary. At times it is important for the same racial groups to be together. It gives an opportunity to ask why something is occurring. When asked how the District's systematic change would impact the day-to-day spending, Mr. Alexander's perspective was that it was the District's job to see how this develops: the program is researched based.

Participants who might attend the summit in San Francisco would be Mr. Alexander, Mr. Rouse, Mr. Prale, Ms. Hill, Mr. Cohen, and/or cohort participants. It was suggested that more than one person share rooms at the conference as a cost saving measure so that more people could attend. The Board of Education took note that the cost was \$76,000 for next year. The Board of Education will not be asked to vote on this item separately; it will be included as part of the general budget. This is an information only item. Dr. Isoye added that MSAN is looking at instructional practices and it is not a direct overlap of PEG. One works on instruction and the other on race. It is the integration of both of these that is important.

Library Program Update

The library is required by the rules of the Illinois School District Library Grant administered by the Secretary of State to report to the Board of Education, in an area selected by the staff, on the library's progress toward meeting the Illinois standards for school libraries as outlined in the Linking for Learning: The Illinois School Library Media Program Guidelines, 2nd ed. 2005. The library receives \$0.75 per capita for each student enrolled on October 1.

A focus of the library team this year has been to expand the presence and impact of the library through electronic media. A copy of the presentation regarding library electronic media was attached. Ms. Hooper reviewed the presentation with the committee members.

The OPRFHS Library now has a brand presence on the web. It is reaching out to teachers and students and more teachers and students are coming to the library, it provides consistent lesson instruction for teachers and students, and the librarians transformed their roles this year into being academic technology coaches. Students are participating in website evaluations and are receiving the training and tools they need to conduct research on their own.

The District is looking to provide additional opportunities for students to access these resources, even if they do not have Internet access at home. A survey will be conducted in the future as to what the students' resources are. The Oak Park Library, the River Forest Library and the District's library have created a vertical team to plan and support each. It has met twice thus far to share and promote services. Another committee of libraries in which OPRFHS participates is the Silver Gold Consortium (Hinsdale, Downers Grove, Proviso, etc.) is meeting and discussing the inclusion of eBooks to the schools' libraries.

Update on District Scorecard

Mr. Carioscio gave a PowerPoint presentation on the format of a District scorecard. The difference between a scorecard and a dashboard is that the scorecard has long-term data while the dashboard's data is more volatile or changeable. The purpose of the presentation was to generate discussion on what types of reporting might comprise a scorecard, to speak to the request to develop possible scorecard content, and to provide examples of progress made. Data validation and cleanup is on-going, but the examples given were the result from in-house reporting tools.

The following are examples of reports generated from several different reporting tools. This accounts for the differences in appearance. Standardization of appearance will come in time.

- Attendance
- Discipline
- GPA
- ACT
- Grade Distribution by Race
- Other Reports

Dr. Lee asked what data would be provided for the public to view and answer their questions. While the question of the achievement gap could be addressed in a series of reports by the administration, the Board of Education would have to agree on what would be considered progress in closing the gap.

While the suggestion was made to include substance abuse statistics in the discipline report, that information would not be "fact-based."

Ms. Patchak-Layman wanted to see how the information related to each other. If a program were instituted, she wanted to be able to see if and how effective it was. The District must understand where its data is and how to input the right data in order to get the desired reports.

With regard to discipline, one has to determine if it represents multiple incidents, a combination of incidents, or a separate incident, etc.

The Board of Education asked for additional data to be included in the Board of Education's scorecard:

- Board of Education Goals
- DIP
- Grade distribution by race 2008
- Percentages of the grades, A's, B's, C's, broken down by race
- Racial demographics
- Relation of demographic set to GPA/ACT or Grades
- Class size information
- Budget breakouts
- After graduation reports (in process)
- A comparison of OPRFHS to the National Standards
- The dollars matched to extra-curricular activities.
- The educational outcome of out-of-school placements of special education students
- How are academics supported by all of the school's categories? Is the money well spent?

While the state has been discussing implementing a K-12 data system, there has been nothing about it of late. The state may incorporate only the things it is testing.

Additional Items

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked to have put on the docket for a discussion at another time, how technology interfaces with instruction and the outcomes OPRFHS has had with it. Mr. Carioscio stated that the Instruction Committee would receive a report in April.

Adjournment

The Instruction Committee meeting adjourned at 9:24 a.m. on Thursday, March 17, 2011.