

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

**Policy, Evaluation and Goals (PEG) Committee
Thursday, May 19, 2011
Minutes
Board Room**

A Policy, Evaluation and Goals Committee meeting was held on Thursday, May 19, 2011, in the Board Room. Co-chair Millard opened the meeting 7:35 a.m. Committee members present were Jacques A. Conway (departed at 10:29 a.m.), Terry Finnegan, Dr. Ralph H. Lee, Amy McCormack, Dr. Dietra D. Millard, Sharon Patchak-Layman, and John Phelan. Also present were: Dr. Steven T. Isoye, Superintendent; Michael Carioscio, Chief Information Officer; Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Nathaniel L. Rouse, Principal; Lauren M. Smith, Director of Human Resources; and Cheryl L. Witham, Chief Financial Officer; Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

Visitors: Kay Foran, Communications and Community Relations Coordinator; James Paul Hunter, Faculty Senate Executive Committee Chair; Janel Bishop and Jason Dennis, Jeremiah Wiencek, John Stelzer, Linda Puckett Mary Jo Sjostrum. Nancy McGinnis, Therese Brennock, Cindy Milojevic, Michael Baer, Nikki Paplaczkyk, Francisco Arriaga, Micheline Piekarski, Robert Zummallen, Devon Alexander, Jessica Stovall, and Elizabeth O'Keefe, Bill Young OPRFHS faculty and staff; John Rigas, president of the Village of River Forest; Karen Daniel, Lisa and Greg Lowry, Bobbie Raymond, Monica Sheehan, Julie Rano, Mimi Skapek, Chris Rano-Ogden, Wyanetta Johnson, Kelly O'Connor, Sheila Carson, Connie Coleman Sue Foran, community members; Bill Dwyer of the *Oak Leaves*, Debra Kadin of *Patch.com*; Terry Dean of the *Wednesday Journal*; and Todd Bloom and Nathan Eklund of Blueprint Education Organization.

Minutes

It was the consensus of the Policy Committee members to accept the minutes of the March 17, 2011 meeting, as amended.

Organizational Assessment

The administration presented the initial organizational needs assessment from the Blueprint Education Group and its executive summary highlighting consistent themes for the Board, District, and school growth and improvement. This review and related Blueprint recommendations are the outgrowth of in-depth interviews with more than 60 representative teachers, administrators, community members, Board members, support staff, leaders from other area educational institutions, and students conducted during fall 2010 and concluding in early winter of 2011. The former superintendent hired Blueprint to facilitate a Baldrige Organizational Assessment at the high school, helping to identify well-performing areas, those in need of improvement, and how to address the areas of need. Because its proposed spring 2010 launch coincided with the Board's and the administration's involvement in an extensive leadership transition process, including the hiring of three new Division heads, a Special Education Director, an Assistant Principal for Student Services, a Human Resources Director, and a new Superintendent, it was apparent that neither the scope nor

the timing was feasible for a credible Baldrige review, given the institutional priorities and requirements. After Dr. Isoye was hired, he proposed that Blueprint undertake a stream-lined, self-assessment process with a quicker turnaround time to inform and benefit the new leadership. The Board of Education accepted the modification to the initial contract and the analysis of focusing on areas perceived to be and identified as need change and improvement.

Blueprint helped to identify themes that could inhibit professional growth and erode institutional education excellence. They were:

- To create a school-wide shared vision and purpose;
- To address inconsistencies in quality, focus, expectations and accountability; and
- To align OPRFHS's vision, resources, and commitment with rhetoric, especially in areas related to disparate academic outcomes linked to students' race.

Blueprint singled out one of OPRFHS's core strengths as being: OPRFHS enjoys a rare degree of community investment and interest. This investment from the community is pervasive and is a real asset as the school moves forward. The people who were solicited for their input expressed their optimism and concerns for the school as well as a sense of gratitude for the opportunity to be involved in this discussion. Blueprint stated that its report was "only the beginning of what would inherently be a complicated and perhaps even intense process of authentically and strategically facing the concerns shared by the school and the community." Blueprint was optimistic because of the commitment expressed by the stakeholders to partner with the school to affect meaningful change.

Mr. Bloom explained that Blueprint used an organizational network for collecting information and communicating back, as part of the framework of the organizational assessment, i.e., communication and engagement, accountability, stakeholder relationships, collection and use of data.

In order to condense the findings and focus on primary areas for improvement, the District Leadership Team (DLT) identified main themes and Blueprint identified key recommendations for the District to consider. The themes identified and Blueprint's recommendations were as follows:

Theme 1: Communication and Engagement

- Articulation of the vision to close the achievement gap to all stakeholders;
- Better communication with all stakeholders its services and opportunities for all students.

Blueprint recommended strengthening the degree to which students and parents are connected to the school, as it is clear that the achievement gap has more to do with engagement gaps. The District already has the structure and staff to do this and it this needs deepening. A common refrain expressed was that this conversation has occurred for x number of years and the commitment has to be beyond the mission statement: it must be a daily practice with all of the students.

Theme 2: Accountability:

- Parents, students, staff, faculty, the Board of Education, and District leadership must all hold fast to long-term District goals pertaining to student engagement and performance; and

- too many critical elements of student engagement are not held to a high enough degree of accountability.

Blueprint noted that it will take a commitment from all involved to truly engage in the academic desires of the community and school, and that all administrators, teachers, counselors, Board of Education members, etc. must hold fast to the long-term District goals pertaining to student engagement and performance. There was a perception that if a certain population of students or a certain type of student within the school was not sufficiently engaged, the degree to which the school was holding responsibility parties accountable was inconsistent.

Theme 3: Stakeholder Relationships

- OPRF needs to improve the means and degree to which various members of the OPRF community are engaged in relationships with one another centered on student learning.
- Improving relationships amongst the adults – parents, staff, faculty, and administration - is central to improving the working, teaching, and learning conditions at the school.

While a celebrated point of OPRFHS is that there is tremendous academic freedom and opportunities for students and staff, it needs to be leveraged against what makes OPRFHS a unique place and that certified staff has a sense of measurement and improvement and accountability towards academic outcomes. Most of that accountability exists systematically and in how the school is run, but it needs to be followed more rigorously.

There are many stakeholders who care deeply about OPRFHS. It was striking that people, e.g., school board members, alumni, faculty, etc., have something beyond a surface level devotion to the school. However, there are discrepancies in how various communities within the community feel engaged with and by the school, especially when it pertained to student outcomes. The staff and community within the building also need tending to in the ways that all employees are able to work with and for one another. That is central to any improvement process that would be engaged. While the process of education should be a collaborate experience, it can be an independent experience at OPRFHS.

Theme 4: Collection and Use of Data

- The collection and use of data needs to be improved. In addition to academic performance data, OPRF can improve its use of data concerning student engagement, school culture, and teacher effectiveness.

Blueprint recommended collecting and strategically using the data that identifies school culture and climate (employee and student) trends, respond rigorously to the needs of those learners who are struggling and use student data more effectively in guiding curriculum and staff decisions.

Data-driven or evidence-based management is about adults using their information. Students need to be a part of this as they need to own their own learning and success. It is not just about adults using data but also having the understanding that data is right for the students in order for them to reach their aspirations.

Discussion ensued.

Dr. Lee viewed this plan as being similar to renovating a house and that he felt the work by Blueprint was an excellent beginning to renovating the house. He agreed too with the strengths of the institution as they were listed, with the exception of progress being made in literacy and curriculum development that addressed core student learning needs and gaps in achievement. Dr. Isoye noted that he had provided that wording because while all of this was unfinished business, in his short tenure at OPRFHS, the District has addressed pockets of students, e.g., the 8 to 9 Transition Program, etc. Dr. Isoye also appreciated the work of Blueprint. Mr. Finnegan too thanked the representatives of Blueprint for their fluidity in changing from a straight Baldrige assessment to this hybrid format. The Board of Education will review this and decide which of its suggestions to tackle.

When asked if other stakeholders had been involved would the results have been the same, Blueprint responded that while any individual would have his/her own bias, they were confident that the same results would have been similar. The recommendations/next steps were borne out during the interview process, i.e., information gathering. It is likely that the suggestions were from the collective work throughout the District and with different Boards of Education. The discussion of substance abuse did not rise to the level of a major theme. Had the interviews occurred later in the year, it may have been a point of conversation. While this provides a broad perspective of faculty and staff, it is not an exhaustive list. The bulk of the report talks about a context for change. So whatever changes would be made, e.g., the reading program, the substance abuse issue, etc., the District was encouraged to think wisely about the implementations and to think rigorously and intentionally about the organizational context, the sense of readiness, and the rigorousness.

Mr. Phelan complimented the Board of Education on this study and was struck by the accurateness of it. For one to solve a problem, one must recognize it. The Board of Education should follow this advice from these experts about being cautious and focus on academic solutions to cultural problems. He asked the Blueprint representatives to elaborate on why there was no reference to a closed campus in this report. Mr. Eklund reported that while the subject was not brought up often enough to be put in the report, when it was brought up, it was worded strongly. He summarized the comments as being, "If the school is truly focused on positive and pro social outcomes for students, how does having an open campus would contribute to that? How does it support student learning? The report talks about the engagement of students and what increased engagement would look like.

Dr. Millard appreciated Blueprint's involvement with the District. Blueprint noted that they were open to continued contact about any of this information. Mr. Eklund thanked the Board of Education and Ms. Kalmerton for scheduling the interviews, and he wished the Board of Education good skill and wisdom.

Closed Campus Discussion

The first item under this topic was to allow public comment. Dr. Millard reminded everyone to limit their comments to two minutes.

Therese Brennock made the following statement: "I am speaking to you today as a faculty member of this high school. I just happen to live in River Forest and I am a former 1977 graduate of OPRFHS. I come to you today to tell you that as the Emotional Development Program Chair I

conduct the hospital discharge staffings for the district and have done so for over 20 years. I am a 30 year employee with expertise in working with emotionally challenged young adults.

“I am deeply concerned and frightened at the number of initial and repeated hospitalizations for students not only in my program, but in the honors level courses here at the high school. I have asked Mary Ellen Sjoström to accompany me, because she sees and is privy to all of the medical information involving substance use and mental health. I fear that if we don’t close the campus we are going to see continued substance use, suicide, and homicide related cases here in our own backyard.

“Ninety percent of the hospitalizations have some overlapping issue with substance use, which the student engaged in here during the lunch hour. Students almost always report that they left campus to get high and/or to purchase drugs prior to hospitalization. Theft issues involving our student are almost always connected to users or dealers in and outside of the building. Students returning from hospitalizations report they are afraid of what they might do during their lunch hour – meaning relapse - or other dangerous risk-taking behaviors if they are able to leave campus.

“I contacted Rosecrance, which is the premier treatment center in Rockford for substance users. Claudia Evenson is our liaison. I spoke with her on Tuesday. Claudia has kept track of direct referrals from the high school, but not students referred through other avenues. She manages the satellite offices in Naperville, Oak Brook and Chicago. Claudia will start tracking all contacts from this high school. Claudia said the trend across the area is to close campus during the lunch hour. She has even offered to come and speak to the Board on this topic.

“We are recently seeing more and more students who present in a brain injured manner due to the dangerous substances such as K2 Spice found in marijuana. Requests for private day and residential schools have and will continue to drive up costs if we continue to keep our doors open during the lunch hours. Please don’t allow us to continue to play into this outdated ‘laissez-faire’ way of managing our students. They need structure and support more now than ever!”

Bobbie Raymond, 141 S. Scoville, Oak Park, stated that in the 1990’s, she and two other River Forest women asked the high school to close the campus for mostly security reasons. At that time, she had researched this subject for over one year. She read a letter that had been sent by the New Trier Dean of Students to the parents in 1996: “The New Trier faculty and administration do not endorse or promote a student’s leaving campus during his/her assigned lunch period. In their professional judgment, all students need to be in school to attend their classes, to be on time, and to meet their out-of-class responsibilities.” This statement was repeated over and over again with all of the high schools she had contacted at that time. She found it surprisingly easy to do this research. She graduated from OPRFHS in 1955, when the high school was totally closed, and a smaller cafeteria was able to serve everyone in a short period of time. Her reasons for wanting to close the campus, supported again by the newspapers and others, are for security reasons and for providing a safe environment for students all day long. It would require both a significant upgrading of security in the building and an organized way to check the students going in and out of the building. After the decision had been made to close the campus for freshmen, it was the District’s intention to close the campus for an additional class every year. She stated that sophomores in a closed campus need to be included and more consideration should be given as to how to handle juniors and seniors. New

Trier, at this time, has a closed campus for freshmen and sophomores. Juniors and seniors may leave campus with parental permission during their assigned lunch periods.

Lisa Lowry, a resident of Oak Park, supported closed campus as it was a deterrent on drug and alcohol use. Some faculty would feel more supportive if they were not doing so much policing in their classrooms.

Greg Lowry, 739 Woodbine, Oak Park, reported that OPRFHS stands alone in this conference with regard to the openness of the campus. He assumed that OPRFHS had different evidence than other schools to make this decision. He did not know of any argument for keeping the campus open for the instructional setting. Open campus creates a “weird day;” students are not on the parents’ watch nor are they on the school’s watch. It is a lot to expect that they will make good decisions. To the best of his knowledge, no catastrophic incidents had occurred and that is OPRFHS’ good fortune.

Julie Rano, mother of an incoming freshman next year, has 30 years of experience as a child advocate, community work in offering opportunities for children, educational reform, and is the Assistant Principal at Morton High School. She favored a closed campus and cited the benefits on the achievement gap at OPRFHS. Having followed the achievement gap for 15 years and seeing the heartfelt hope for change, she has tried to find those aspects that would create an environment where no gap would exist. One document written seven years ago on culture and climate stated that the best way to reduce achievement gap was to provide the safest environment. She was involved in a District that started three new charter schools, two high schools and one grammar school, and at no point did any of the schools suggest an open campus because it flies in the face of all of the attempts to change the achievement gap. Citing a Policy Students Education research brief out of Idaho University, she stated that 70% of the respondents claimed a closed campus was a high priority. School-aged children experience more violence and a perceived sense of threat between the hours of 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; that is when schools are seen as the most permeable.

Wyanetta Johnson, 30-year resident of Oak Park, did not favor closing the school because of the disruptive nature it would cause within the school. She asked what kinds of training the teachers would receive. Parents should be able to decide if they want their children to have an open campus, students need fresh air. What activities will be provided? She stated that it would cost more money to train policeman and that African-American kids fight. She called for everyone to 1) join together, 2) hold students accountable, and 3) stop blaming this school.

Chris Rano-Ogden, a resident of River Forest, and mother to two OPRFHS students stated that the high school was a place where they thrive, where their friends were, where their interests lie, and it was the center of their lives. She rejected the notion that they would be “locked up” in the building. This is a place they love and they love the people in it. She asked to change the mindset that a closed campus was punishment. Because some students must care for their brothers and sisters after school, they have no other time during the day to participate in activities.

Mimi Skapek, 210 N. Elmwood, Oak Park, heard the results of the Illinois Youth Survey at a Citizens’ Council meeting over one year ago, as it related to substance abuse by OPRFHS students. Three points stuck with her and they were the reason that she became involved in the issue at hand.

- 1) Addressing this issue would mean changing the culture both inside and outside the school;
- 2) Parents need to take ownership to affect change; and
- 3) A closed campus.

The first two points are underway; a culture change is occurring and parents are stepping up. Her own view of a closed campus fluctuated from first wanting an open campus to now wanting a closed campus. After a year of studying the issue, the benefit of a closed campus is clear, as it is one component of reducing the opportunity for students to use drugs and alcohol during the school day. Because students will continue to use drugs freely inside the building, the culture and the security of the school need to be addressed. She felt that respect for the physical structure and the staff and the faculty could be improved, resulting in increased school spirit and respect for everyone. She wanted to build the culture within the building by giving students the activities that would provide them the break they need during the day. At the very least, she suggested addressing the lack of security as ultimately it increases the school's liability. Having teachers checking ID's takes away from the classroom experience. OPRFHS should know who should and should not be in the building. This issue is bigger than drugs; it is an issue of security and school culture.

Karen Daniel, 605 S. Grove, Oak Park, has a sophomore son who is in honors classes and she supports an open campus. She believed the school should have a mechanism for addressing those students with drug problems and the neighborhood issue should be addressed by the policy. Students leave the building to have a break and to get exercise. She pointed out that students are also unsupervised before and after school. The big picture issues have to be addressed, not a change in the lunch hour. If the District closes the campus, she suggested the following:

- Include the students in the process of closing the campus so that they do not feel alienated;
- Have a parental permission form for a student to leave campus; and
- Start school an hour later.

Michael Byer, an OPRFHS Special Education teacher, supported a closed campus because he feared that many students, because of not knowing what to do with themselves, would get involved with the wrong group.

John Rigas, 221 Keystone, River Forest, a former OPRFHS Board of Education member, a 1977 graduate, and former parent, has a passion for the high school. From his viewpoint, closing the campus was not a difficult decision. The decisions to remove an administrator in the middle of a semester, to remove a student from school, to make budget decisions, to reduce class periods from 9 to 8, to limit academic opportunities, to install lights, etc., were difficult. He listed his reasoning for closing the campus as follows:

- 1) The community, faculty, and police strongly support closing the campus;
- 2) It is the school's responsibility to help students practice making life decisions;
- 3) Any hybrid plan will be more expensive and may ultimately affect the taxpayers;
- 4) Leaving school should not be a reward; students do not have the option of coming to class;
- 5) In 1974, 1,100 more students than today attended OPRFHS and ate lunch here.
- 6) None of the reasons for continuing to have an open campus provide any academic achievement. The consultant from Blueprint noted that the District needed to identify reasons for academic achievement.

The benefits of a closed campus are clear: 1) student safety, 2) school liability, 3) reduced illegal activity, 4) fewer class cutting opportunities, and 5) fewer tardies when they do return to class. While Mr. Rigas did not believe this would solve the problem in the community, it is one of many steps to do and it will provide additional educational opportunities. He also felt this was the Board of Education's decision to make, not the administration's decision. In his present role as president of the Village of River Forest, he is involved with things in Springfield and Washington DC about how things affect governments and schools. He struggles with how this is a difficult decision for the Board of Education to make.

Jessica Klaus Greenberg, an OPRFHS valedictorian in 1992, a good kid, has good family, and a history teacher at OPRFHS for six years, spoke passionately for closing the campus. She spoke of a personal family experience where one had tried an illegal substance. She feels that many of her students are under the influence after lunch periods. What is the experience of students who are not under the influence? That is becoming the new normal. She was speaking for parents of good students who were not at the meeting and for her personal family. Her grandmother and her mother attended OPRFHS as well as other family members, some who experimented with heroine during the school day. While all teenagers are faced with making choices every day, the District can eliminate some opportunities for them to make bad choices. When questioned as to what the process was for students who appeared under the influence in her class, she responded that sending a student to be tested is a delicate issue because it causes a disturbance in class, it is a breach of her relationship with the student or the family, and/or often the claims are unsubstantiated. Previously, she could smell marijuana on a student, but that is not always the case now. She perceives a student being under the influence because he/she is not on task, has poor behavior, etc.

The Board of Education entered into its discussion.

Dr. Isoye reviewed the information that was included in the packet. He noted that any email received by the Board of Education with a disclaimer that it could not be copied because it was for official use only was omitted. Dr. Isoye reported that a letter addressed to him by a neighbor was in support of a closed campus. Information was provided to the Board of Education as to the steps that would have to be taken with the following models and estimated costs of a) the current model, b) a modified model, and c) a closed model. The menu of items in need of address included security, doors, a redeployment of current safety and support staff and the relocating the 80 faculty members in the hallways to be near the doors during passing periods. The District is exploring a door monitoring system which will utilize a camera system, electronic beeping, alerts to a central location that a door has been opened, etc. Because the District does not have a sprinkling system throughout the building, a door-locking system is not a viable option. The only areas that have sprinklers within the building are the storage areas. Even with sprinklers, a five-second delay would occur before an alarm would sound. It would also need local authority approval. Presently, no one can enter the building from the outside without a key. A stronger campaign will be made next year to wear IDs.

Mr. Conway stressed the importance of making a decision as any delay would cause the administration more stress. With respect for the students and the administration, he hoped for a decision to be made at next week's meeting.

Mr. Phelan was concerned about safety as well. Should a student be attacked or should someone come into the building to do violence, the District would want students to have the ability to get away as such, it was critical to look at other options. The Board of Education has the ability to identify the options it wants and it is critical to understand how a student will be identified and held accountable if he/she leaves the building without authorization. Students have to be identified and held accountable. And while the Board of Education would allow the administration to determine how they would know who is and who is not in the building, Mr. Phelan stated that the options considered as to what to do was important in assessing whether a middle ground option was viable. He supported a closed campus if it was for the benefit of students. A closed campus is the easiest option. Tracking all students having the privilege or behavior issues will be difficult.

Because students do not have to wait for school buses, legal counsel has advised that the District's liability with regard to students coming to school and returning home is limited. Courts have been ruling in favor school districts. The Board of Education could require parental permission for a student to leave campus, even under the current system.

Mr. Finnegan reiterated that this initiative started with Citizens Council over a year ago. He will be asking people to step up and do something both in and outside of the building. The modified model is the more expensive option. The report from Blueprint Education Group emphasizes working together and improving the culture. Effort must be expended every year and a change will take huge manpower and resources, which will take money from the instructional area for students. The District must determine how to tie this into the achievement gap. He intended to ask people for their help and this will include their time. He did not want this to be only the problem of the school: it was everyone's problem.

Dr. Lee felt the Board of Education needed to consider status quo for the next few years as a stop gap measure while the District decides what it will do in the long term. He felt any decision about making a change in the necessary physical, staffing and training preparations to be ready for September would be difficult, not knowing what is available in terms of technology and its costs. He agreed that the Board of Education needed to make a decision soon. He had not heard any discussion that negated the assumption that one size must fit all. He believed the District could evolve to meet the needs of individual students. His feelings have adjusted in the last two months and he believes that some students need not to have only a closed campus but another system as well. He proposed a system that makes a commitment to honor the wishes of each parent for his/her student(s) as to whether they should be in a closed or open environment. He suggested starting with the model used at Evanston Township High School. The issue of drug abuse, like the issue of the achievement gap, started long before OPRFHS was aware of it. Had the Blueprint Education Group started its report six months later, substance abuse would have been the main topic.

Discussion ensued about the lunch rooms currently and how they would change under any of these scenarios. Ms. Patchak-Layman noted that currently, students can leave because they do or do not like the lunchroom. If they are not allowed to leave, the cafeterias take on a difference importance. How does that translate into what the District can offer? Would students be allowed to eat in classrooms and have a smaller lunchtime experience? Could the cafeterias be partitioned? When the cafeteria is the end result, what can the District do to expand the options? Because cafeterias have high decibels of noise, there is a heightened amount of internal response to that noise. It can

be a mental health issue. Open campus has been used because it creates a healthy environment. Mr. Rouse stated that OPRFHS is a public high school and, as such, has cafeterias. Choosing to eat in classrooms where students are learning could be disruptive and increase the cleaning time of those classrooms. Partitioning the cafeterias would have to be explored. The District now has guidelines as to where students can eat their lunches.

Mr. Phalen too wanted to vote as soon as possible: the parents have been working hard to come up with solutions. What made this a difficult decision for him was the opportunity may be lost to include options that have been identified as helpful to achieving a solution to the major problem. What are the limitations on the decision points the Board of Education could require, e.g., hiring a substance assistant coordinator, opting in for voluntary drug testing, parental permission, etc.? Students will have an incentive to behave properly by giving them the opportunity to meet all decision points. Mr. Rouse did not know the limitations on what could be created, but it was a segway into PBIS as it is a program for all students, not just juniors and seniors. The District wants to find ways to affect students more positively. The District must maintain a threshold of tardies, C-pass to play, cocurricular activities, unexcused absences. Mr. Phalen understood that the tracking of juniors and seniors was a logistical issue and he suggested that there may other options to consider.

Ms. McCormack felt the mindset of privilege being on the outside of the school had to be changed. While she favored closing the campus, she was moved by the opportunity of instituting PBIS, etc. The report from Blueprint supported many of her thoughts. This is a culture of haves and have nots. There are perceptions of inequities and a hybrid system based on grades and discipline. The District has a minority population that struggles with discipline and academics, often not across the board, but a high percentage. A modified perception of privilege might have an impact on equity and it should be considered. This could be used as a bonding opportunity for all students if they bought into it. The Board of Education learned that student GPAs are higher and absences are fewer if students are involved in co-curriculars. She suggested broadening the intramural offerings (flag football, basketball nets, improving the mall, etc., setting up Tasty Dog Fridays by the stadium, etc.). Because students love to be with adults and they go to the adults' classrooms, she suggested offering opportunities during the lunch hour to interact with faculty in more social and fun ways in an attempt to change the cultural component. Because the Board of Education has to decide what is best for students, she could not think of one reason for allowing a student to leave the campus was best from the achievement perspective.

Dr. Isoye noted that the administration debated whether parents would be able to sign their students out for lunch in a closed campus scenario. The administration favored allowing a student to leave campus only for a medical reason substantiated by a doctor's note. The administration also made the assumption that because attendance was being taken in every class, it was unnecessary to know where students were located during lunch.

Dr. Millard believed that many students will not favor the campus being closed and many parents have faith in their students. Parenting needs to start when the child is borne and it is important for the parent to show them how to respond in any environment. She felt the Board of Education could make a decision, assess it, and then modify it if necessary. The ETHS model morphed over 15 years and OPRFHS could do the same. The District needs to investigate where students eat lunch and keep them engaged during that time. Dr. Millard applauded all of the work of the community,

noting that what is important is student safety and creating an engaging environment within the building.

PEG Committee members made several suggestions:

- 1) Closing the campus with the right for juniors and seniors to earn an open lunch period with parental approval on file and in current good standing. A task force would develop the good standing criteria, but it would not include GPA;
- 2) Eliminate the option of status quo; and
- 3) All parents would be involved in the process of determining if they want their students to leave.

It was the consensus of the PEG Committee members to eliminate the option of status quo for next year. Mr. Conway asked that the District petition the Village of Oak Park to put in no loitering ordinance around the campus for several blocks and in the alleys. If caught, people would be issued a “P” ticket requiring a court appearance of both the student and the parent. Parents would then have to deal with not only the school but the courts.

PEG members indicated their thoughts about implementing either a totally closed campus or a modified closed campus. Ms. McCormack and Dr. Millard both leaned toward closing the campus, with Dr. Millard preferring that seniors with parental permission be allowed to leave campus and that the administration be allowed to make the decision points. Mr. Finnegan, Mr. Phelan, and Dr. Lee leaned toward a modified version, i.e., open to juniors and seniors with parental permission and subject to be overwritten by Board of Education policies. Ms. Patchak-Layman, wanting more parental involvement, as was highlighted in the Blueprint report, felt sophomores should be able to sign out, the campus should be open for juniors and seniors with parents would be able to petition the District to keep their students on campus. An issue will be that of knowing which student is in violation of their status in real time. Will the District be able to solve that issue before the regular meeting when this will be brought to a vote? Ms. Patchak-Layman asked to see what changes would be made to the Code of Conduct if a change were made.

Dr. Isoye suggested that the Board of Education consider 1) closing the campus or 2) having a modified version of an open campus. If the Board of Education focuses on the details, it will move away from the bigger picture. Mr. Phelan suggested an alternative of voting on modifications in June and if the modifications did not get the votes necessary to pass, then the District would go to a closed campus. Discussion ensued about the factors to be considered in a modified version: academic standing, health factors, etc. In Dr. Lee’s experience there were few reasons why a student would not be allowed to attend OPRFHS, e.g., selling drugs, deliberating doing physical damage to another student, or theft, etc. Was the Board of Education willing to go that route if the student did not accept the decision? Dr. Millard reiterated that the Board of Education must show its faith in the administration to attend to the details.

Ms. Patchak-Layman wanted to be specific about the reasons for making a change and to ensure that whatever decision was made is the right one. Would a condition be that students are fully engaged after lunch? If so, she wanted an outcome that would support that reason. Would the posting of no loitering signs decrease students milling about in the alleys? What outcome would be aligned with

changing the status of sophomore students? The administration must determine how tardies, academic standing, parental permission, etc. would be part of the plan in all of this.

Dr. Lee noted that the survey of schools included in the packet relating to how effective the closing of their campuses had been had not shown any measurable improvement. With regard to measurables, Mr. Finnegan was unsure if the District will know if this has been successful and he will not hold to that standard. Dr. Lee suggested that the school has a baseline about behavioral aspects of the students this past year and can compare them to the prior year. The administration can compare that to the change implemented, e.g., tardies, truancies, fighting, theft, etc.

Ms. Johnson noted that 75 parents had called her that morning, 95% of them being African-American. If the school closes the school, it will only be a band aid. What happens if someone is involved in a fight during the lunchroom? Will the school take the blame? Parents should never be left out of the decision-making process. Students feel mistreated because there are those that are privileged.

Ms. Skapek interpreted the survey of different high schools to mean that the current administrators were hired after the change to close the campus was implemented and they did not have the information. She also noted that Thrive and a researcher from the University of Illinois were coming to the school in the fall to work on a communication plan to understand the experiences at OPRFHS and to determine a baseline. An IYS will be administered in 2012 and in 2014 and that information can also be used to determine if a change had occurred. Mr. Finnegan complimented Ms. Skapek for her rationale and tremendous help throughout this process. He suggested that she be part of a future task force to monitor information. He did not anticipate any change in the numbers with the next survey. Ms. Skapek stated that the survey is not the only means of evaluating the decision, it is just another component.

Organizational Charts

Dr. Isoye shared the proposed the District's organizational charts. He will further illustrate who does whose evaluation. The principal will evaluate the Division Heads. This was an informational item.

Philosophy of Compensation

Dr. Isoye provided the basis for the discussions had with the analysis of administrative compensation. He asked the Committee members what additional information they would need in order to have a fuller conversation. Due to the lateness of the day, it was the consensus of the Committee members to hold this discussion for a future PEG Committee meeting. Should any Committee members have ideas prior to that time, they should be sent to Dr. Isoye. Dr. Lee suggested having a relationship between the salaries OPRFHS pays and the percentage the EAV that is dedicated to the high school education as compared to the percentage of the EAV dedicated to the same group of schools with which OPRFHS compares itself. Oak Park and River Forest schools devote a higher percentage of EAV to elementary and secondary education than do any other district in northeastern Illinois. That will eventually affect the salaries that are paid.

Adjournment

The Policy Evaluation and Goals Committee adjourned at 11:16 a.m.