

The Board meeting of the Board of Education of the Oak Park and River Forest High School was held on Thursday evening, August 28, 2008, in the Board Room of the high school.

**Call to Order** President Jacques A Conway, called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m. A roll call indicated that the following members were present: John C. Allen, IV, Jacques A. Conway, Valerie J. Fisher, Dr. Ralph H. Lee, and Sharon Patchak-Layman. Also present were: Dr. Attila J. Weninger, Superintendent; Jason Edgecombe, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources; Amy Hill, Director of Assessment and Research; Jack Lanenga, Assistant Superintendent of Operations; Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Nathaniel L. Rouse, Principal; James Paul Hunter, Faculty Senate Executive Committee Chair; Ryan Mullin, Student Council Board of Education Liaison; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

**Visitors** The Board of Education welcomed the following visitors: Kay Foran, Community Relations and Communications Coordinator; Bill Boulware, OPRFHS Fine and Performing Arts Division Head; Patt Cheney, parent and Executive Director of the Illinois High School Theatre Festival, Glen Garlisch, visiting school board member; Tina Reynolds, Mr. & Mrs. Gary Cain, parents; Megan Cheney, Collette Millard, Asa Cain, Jazmine Reynolds, students; Terry Dean of the *Wednesday Journal*; and Bridget Kennedy of the *Oak Leaves*.

**Changes to the Agenda** Ms. Patchak-Layman asked that Consent Items G. Approval of the Kronos Contract, and H. Approval of Skyward Timekeeping Software Agreement, be pulled from the consent agenda.

**Recognitions** The following students were selected to be a part of this year's All-State Product of "Hair Spray" at the Illinois High School Theatre Festival:

Asa Cain, cast member  
Megan Cheney, technical crew  
Collette Millard, technical crew  
Jazmine Reynolds, cast member

Rachel Foran won first place at the Danny Davis Art Competition in Video Forum.

In addition, Bill Boulware and Sandy Campbell were acknowledged for their support of Rachel Foran's work. Patt Cheney was honored

for her support of the students who participated in the Illinois High School Theatre Festival.

**FOIA Requests**

Mr. Conway reported that there were two FOIA requests and they were resolved.

**Board Member Comments**

Ms. Patchak-Layman commented on two items: 1) the start of school year; and 2) finances.

1) Two days before the start of school there was a change in the Project Scholar Support because it had been over-enrolled and another section was not added. The students who had the best or very good grade-point averages were removed from the program and independent study halls were added to their schedules. The *Academic Catalogue* states that one of the outcomes of Project Scholar students was to have excellent results in school in their classes. She felt this was a contradiction and that the scheduling of students was not based on their needs.

She also felt that allowing early and late arrivals negated the District's work on academic achievement. The reason given for allowing early and late arrivals, even for sophomores, was to allow them to participate in after-school activities, and to do their homework in study halls.

2) Ms. Patchak-Layman also felt that the Board of Education should find money within the Tentative Budget to fund the positions of two (2) coaches of reading and one (1) assessment of mastery manager to work on assessments. The District had applied for an SIP Grant to, among other things, fund these positions. She felt that because these positions were noted in the School Improvement Plan that they were worthy of a budgetary adjustment and she had been encouraged when she received an email stating that the District's expenditures were less than expected. She did not want to rely on state grant money for these positions.

She also wanted the district to look at a loan program for books, as the cost of books for students is prohibitive to some families.

Mr. Conway commended the administration for the efficiency last week in getting students through the obstacle course of the registration process, taking their pictures, getting their books, etc. His son, a freshman, said that the freshman day was a great time for him. He also thanked Bridget Kennedy for writing a story about registration, as parents were waiting in line at the school's door to

register. There were only fifteen (15) students who did not register who were expected to do so. He also wished Bridget Kennedy, well as she was leaving the *Oak Leaves*.

**Visitor Comments** There were no visitor comments.

**Student Life** Ryan Mullin reported the following:

- 1) This was his fourth year on Student Council; he is a member of the baseball team; Best Buddies; and is in the process of looking at colleges.
- 2) Student Council is working on
  - a. a theme for Homecoming and a new sound system for the Field House;
  - b. Spirit week; and
  - c. a block party.
- 3) Originally, four recipients were chosen for the Tradition of Excellence Award, but because of scheduling issues, another person may be chosen as a recipient.
- 4) Student Council's yearlong project is recycling, since people are not recycling. By the next Board of Education meeting, Student Council will have posters and promoting new ideas on this issue.

Ms. Patchak-Layman commented that students had addressed the Board of Education about graduation dress and an idea that came up was for Student Council to assist in the discussion of it. Mr. Mullin reported Student Council would consider that as the officers had been informed that this topic would be among their responsibilities, as the representatives of the student body. He, too, had heard the student speakers at the last Board of Education meeting.

**Principal's Report** Mr. Rouse reported that the beginning of the school year had been a wonderful start to his tenure at the District. Feedback on the Freshman Day was that the freshmen were enthusiastic. The District offered them a "by-themselves" day with one-hundred fifty (150) upperclassmen mentors. The students departed with fewer anxieties.

The Freshman Parent Orientation was that same evening. He was optimistic to get more parents each year.

Mr. Rouse also reported that while there are usually about 150 transfer students, freshmen to seniors, this year there were only 100. Enrollment is projected to be about 3,200 students this year.

Charged with the task of developing tardy procedures, Mr. Rouse, in his focus groups with faculty and students, found that inconsistency

on the part of the teachers was an issue. He developed the procedures and they will be implemented beginning Wednesday, September 3.

**Post Secondary Plans**

Mr. Mark T. Wilson, Assistant Principal for Student Services prepared the Post Secondary Plans for the Class of 2008. The transcripts for the Class of 2008 indicates that 91 percent of OPRFHS graduates planned to attend college: 73 percent to four-year colleges and 17 percent to junior colleges. The majority of students are attending college in Illinois with Triton College and the University of Illinois at Urbana continuing as the top choices. A total of 665 final transcripts have been sent to 241 colleges and universities.

	4-year Colleges	Junior Colleges	Military	Career Choice	Other
Boys	36.4% 266	9.3% 68	.5% 4	1.6% 12	2.7% 20
Girls	36.8% 269	8.5% 62	0% 0	1.5% 11	2.6% 19
Total	73.2% 535	17.8% 130	.5% 4	3.1% 23	5.3% 39

**Superintendent’s Report**

Dr. Weninger congratulated Bridget Kennedy on her position with *Chicago Magazine* and the conscientious reporting she did on the District.

Dr. Weninger thanked the Oak Park and River Forest Township governments and Township Youth Services for awarding twenty-four (24) scholarships to OPRFHS students to attend summer school this year. In return, students volunteered up to 20 hours in the community and earned up to \$100 each towards the cost of the classes or sports camp. The District appreciates this generous support of its students. Dr. Weninger thanked the following agencies that provided both educational and fun volunteer opportunities: Hemingway Foundation, River Forest Police Department, Animal Care League, Accolade Adult Day Service, River Forest Public Library, Oak Park Public Library, Oak Park Park District, Hephzibah Children’s Association, River Forest United Methodist Church – PADS Program, Wonder Works, and Rush Oak Park Hospital.

Dr. Weninger reported that PING (Providing Instruments for the Next Generation) was celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary on Sunday, October 56 at Pleasant Home, from 11 a.m.–2 p.m. There will be a brunch and music, including pianist Jeremy Kahn and musicians from the Lyric Opera and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. The District

congratulates PING and thanks it for its incredible and lasting work on behalf of the community's young people.

Dr. Weninger reported that the Collaboration for Early Childhood Care and Education and OPRFHS have worked this past year and summer to implement the internship program proposed last year. Three childcare centers and a parent child center have been identified as sites for the internships. There will be a three-hour pre-service training session. The District is excited that this program is taking off, and the hope for it is to grow greatly in the future.

Dr. Weninger provided Board of Education members with handouts on several key changes that the IHSA would institute this year.

Dr. Weninger reported that the District is continuing with the Plan Commission process regarding the application to install lights in the stadium. The final part of the presentation will take place on Thursday, September 18, at 7 p.m. in the Village Hall. Future hearing dates will also be established at that meeting by the Planning Commission.

Dr. Weninger reported that he was working with Sheila Hardin from the Faculty Senate in developing the Leadership Workshop/ Forum/Roundtable for Faculty Senate Executive members and District administrators, including Division Heads. It is hoped that one session will occur in late October and one in the spring, both of which would be facilitated by an external professional.

Dr. Weninger reported that Nate Rouse, Janel Bishop, Mark Wilson, and he would travel to Harvard University on Friday, September 5 to attend an Achievement Gap Initiative Parent Leaders Workshop. The purpose of the workshop is to share and to learn about practices that strengthen the connection between home and/or community and school.

Dr. Weninger reported that the administration's connection with the parent/alumni groups was changing. District Leadership Team (DLT) members and Building Leadership Team (BLT) members will split the responsibility of being liaisons to these groups. Written notification of the assignments to the groups will be sent.

Boosters—Mr. Allen reported that parents of students in athletics were required to attend a meeting where the rules and regulations were explained. The Booster Club solicited membership at that meeting.

Alumni Association—Ms. Fisher provided a copy of the September Alumni Association meeting and asked if another Board of Education member could attend in her stead. Ms. Fisher provided the agenda to Ms. Kalmerton.

Faculty Senate—Mr. Hunter reported that the opening of school had gone well. He was happy that Mr. Conway’s child had a good time on Freshman Day, as it was representative of the sentiment of the day. He complimented Mr. Rouse and the other administrators on seamless first couple of days. He also congratulated Ms. Kennedy on her new endeavor.

**Update on Board of Education Goals** Dr. Weninger provided the Board of Education with an update on the 2007-08 District Goals (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting).

**District Liaison & Community Reports** Faculty Senate—Mr. Hunter reiterated that the work the Booster Club does is wonderful and benefits all of the students in the building. Regarding the light controversy, the local media did an injustice in how they covered it.

**Consent Items** Ms. Fisher moved to approve the consent items as follows:

- Open Minutes of June 17, 19, 26, July 17, and August 18, and 21, 2008 and the Closed Session Minutes of June 17, 19, 26, July 17, and August 21, 2008;
- Personnel Recommendations (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting);
- the Resolution Ratifying and Confirming Execution of certain vouchers and payment of certain bills and expenses, fund transfers and list of bills for June 2008 (attached to and made part of the minutes of this meeting);
- the Resolution Authorizing Execution of Certain Vouchers for the Month of June (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting);
- the Check Disbursements dated August 28, 2008, (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting);
- the Monthly Financial Reports;
- the Monthly Treasurer’s Report; and
- Approval of the Resolution to Establish Tort Liability Fund and Transfer Initial Fund Balance.

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

**Approval of Kronos' Contract**

Ms. Patchak-Layman remarked that after leaving the Finance Committee meeting and the information received about the Kronos' contract, she felt the District should think first about doing a human resource procedural audit. Results of this can be procedures and coordination and a target or focus. She suggested rather than going into a contract for timekeeping without looking at the coordination between human resources and finance, the Board of Education should table the contract until it has an opportunity of having a procedural audit. A number of different human relations procedural questions have occurred over the past year, and she felt the contract should be tabled. She also noted that this and the contract for the Skyward module were related.

Dr. Lee felt pulling this off the agenda would be improper, unless the Board of Education had a special concern about it. In that absence, he assumed the administration had taken into account the absence of an audit and was recommending this based on its consideration of everything to be considered. He asked if there were a special reason for the suggested audit. He would not agree to having a routine audit of all contracts each time one was up for review or renewal.

Ms. Patchak-Layman noted that this would be tied into the combination of activities that happen between the Finance Department and the Human Relations Department, as it impacts both areas. She considered this because this type of activity would only be recommended after determining the procedures and assuring that this activity would fit with the things desired. In addition, by not purchasing this, the District would free up the dollars for other activities. She noted that there has not been a procedural audit to her knowledge.

Dr. Lee moved to approve the Kronos' Contract, as presented (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting); seconded by Ms. Fisher. A roll call vote resulted in four ayes and one nay. Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay. Motion carried.

**Approval of Skyward Timekeeping Software Agreement**

Dr. Lee moved to approve the Skyward Timekeeping Software Agreement, as presented (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting); seconded by Ms. Fisher. A roll call vote resulted in four ayes and one nay. Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay. Motion carried.

**Policy 5132, Activity Programs**

Dr. Lee moved to amend Policy 5132, Activity Programs, as presented; seconded by Ms. Fisher. A roll call vote resulted in four ayes and one nay. Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay. Motion carried.

**Policy 1150  
Student  
Publicity &  
Media Relations**

Dr. Lee moved to approve Policy 1150, Student Publicity and Media Relations, for first reading; seconded by Ms. Fisher. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

**Policy 3610,  
Automated  
External  
Defibrillator  
Use**

Dr. Lee moved to approve Policy 3610, Automated External Defibrillator Use, for first reading; seconded by Ms. Fisher. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

**Acceptance of  
Donations &  
Gifts**

Mr. Allen moved to accept with gratitude the gifts, as presented (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting); seconded by Ms Fisher. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

**Advanced Placement  
(AP) Exam 2008  
Report**

Mr. Fred Galluzzo, Counselor, provided the annual Advanced Placement (AP) Exam 2008 Report as follows.

“Our preparation for the 2008 AP Exam administration was a bit more complex and sophisticated because we looked to improve on our 2007 AP exam experience. Areas where we sought improvement included overall logistics and seating for exam settings, providing accommodated testing for Special Ed students, and general communication with teachers and students. These areas presented challenges during the 2007 testing, and we made adjustments that resolved gaps and expedited efforts. We have developed efficient templates that can be reused, assuming no dramatic change in the number of exams given.

“In the fall of 2007, while the number of students in all AP courses reached over 1800, students ordered approximately 1550 exams. This gap between potential and actual examinees is substantial and while the number of students enrolled in AP courses has increased the number of exams taken by students in 2008 represents a decline from the number of exams taken by students 2007. At this time, we are not sure why students sign up for a course and do not sign up for an exam, and we will talk with students to try to learn the reasons for this pattern.

“The final totals indicate 743 students (similar to 2007) took 1501 exams for which scores have been reported to us as of this date. Our percentage of “qualifying scores” (scores of 5, 4, or 3) is 85%; much better than the national average. We continue to provide strong instruction and preparation for the vast majority of students taking



these exams. However, this group of students has remained static in character for some years now.

“To address the issues that surfaced in 2007 and that were addressed this past year, we offered a series of meetings for AP teachers where teachers received necessary information and discussed questions or problems they may have encountered. The bookstore personnel efficiently collected exam payments and logged registrations for exams. Building and Grounds personnel were unmatched at assembling and disassembling testing locations. Finally, a cadre of exam proctors provided exemplary testing conditions for all students.

“For 2009, we plan to use more electronic communication using email to keep information current regarding the testing timeline and other matters. Questions regarding test participation need to be brought through the AP faculty and counseling corps and need to be addressed by the Instructional Council. We have not reached our capacity for AP participation and feel that many more students can take one or more AP courses and exams successfully.”

Mr. Prale noted that OPRFHS had a high percentage of 3’s, 4’s, and 5’s on these tests. He noted that more students taking this test would bring these numbers down, but he did not think that was a bad reflection on the District; just that more students were taking the test. Having more students take the test, however, creates even more challenges with space, proctoring, etc. Last year had the most number of special education students taking the tests and the number of tests given. Each year, approximately eight more students take the tests with 15 to 20 more tests being given.

**Discussion of  
2007-08 District  
Goals**

Dr. Lee noted that the District’s 2007-08 Goals called for a number of reports and he was unsure of which ones were received and which ones were not. He understood that some reports could not have been compiled until after June 30. Mr. Conway noted that what was in the past was in the past and he was excited about the future goals. Ms. Patchak-Layman was interested to see if there were items not completed from last year’s goals that should be included in next year’s goals. The majority of the Board of Education members were accepting of Dr. Weninger’s suggestion to email them a list of the reports that were completed and those that were not.

**Discussion of  
2008-09 District  
Goals**

Dr. Weninger presented the 2008-09 District Goals to the Board of Education members for their review. The main themes of the goals were 1) Student Achievement; 2) Quantitative Mass Achievement Measures; 3) Improvement and retention of Minority Administrative and Certified Staff; and 4) Green school initiative. Dr. Weninger

provided indicators/measures of success for each of these goals as well (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting).

The descriptors of the goals are as follows. Dr. Weninger noted that the goals are in order of importance to the Board of Education.

**Goal I. Student Achievement**

The District will develop a multi-year plan to raise student academic achievement for all students, with special emphasis/focus on underachieving African American students, utilizing X indices of achievement; identifying and implementing effective instructional strategies by teachers through professional development; incorporating the Board approved six (6) Fall 2008 initiatives; increasing and tracking student co-curricular participation; and conducting separate Board, Administration, and Faculty professional development strands on race and student achievement.

**Goal 2. Quantitative Mass Achievement Measures**

The District will describe, as precisely as possible, what it means by “student academic achievement” and “racial academic achievement gap;” define quantitative mass indicators of student academic achievement and the racial academic achievement gap; describe the specific limitations of the quantitative mass indicators regarding the validity of their use; and describe the specific formal processes by which we will use and improve these definitions over time.

**Goal 3. Recruitment and Retention of Minority Administrative and Certified Staff**

- A. The District will complete the development and implementation of a formal program for the recruitment of Administrators and Faculty with an emphasis on the recruitment of minority candidates. With its implementation, the District will establish an annual goal of employing minority candidates as 35% of all Administrators and Faculty employees.
- B. The District will develop and implement a plan for the retention of minority Administrators and Faculty.

**Goal 4. Green School Initiative**

The District will develop and begin to implement a comprehensive “Green School” plan encompassing the following areas: indoor cleaning chemicals and supplies; Food Service; outdoor grounds chemicals and supplies; Integrated Pest Management (IPM); paper recycling; paper consumption; and energy.

Dr. Weninger noted that the indicators were what the District thought was doable under each of the four goals. The District will develop a

timeline by which it will develop a multi-year plan by February 1 with the other areas in place by the end of 2009. The District has increased minority hires from 20 percent to 35 percent and the recruitment handbook will be completed by December 1. A retention handbook for certified employees also needs to be developed. He was happy to hear that Student Council was concentrating its efforts on being a “green” school. He noted that the Board of Education has begun its conversations on race and student achievement and Mr. Prale and Mr. Rouse were working on such a program for certified staff. Dr. Weninger was confident that these were four doable and realistic goal with the indices indicated.

Dr. Lee, regarding the Goal #2, asked for an idea as to the extent to which the ongoing product would be discussed at the Instruction Committee, as opposed to seeing reports December 1, March 1 and June 1, as suggested in the goal. Mr. Allen stated that the development of this goal would not be developed solely in the Instruction Committee. It will not be the administrators solely who will define the definitions, but a merger of what the Board of Education has worked on as well. Thus, the Board of Education will be part of the development. Dr. Weninger concurred.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked what would be the specific indicators of student success and achievement. Would it be to increase student grades by a letter grade or increase the number of students by 20 percent that meet AYP? Dr. Weninger responded that it would be to identify and implement instructional strategies and best practices this year and assess if they were successful the following year.

Ms. Patchak-Layman felt this was a plan to plan and she saw nothing in terms of student achievement. Dr. Weninger responded that Goal No. 2 is a comprehensive plan that works parallel with defining institutional excellence. A criticism he has heard is that the District did not have an educational plan. This year’s work relative to Goal No. 2 relates to that. Goal No. 1 puts programs in place and the District will identify those best practices both inside and outside the school to raise student achievement. That is not a plan; it is something the District is doing. However, there is no quantitative measurement. Ms. Patchak-Layman was troubled by not having a quantitative measurement.

It was the consensus of the Board of Education members to adopt only the Goals, not the indicators.

**Approval of  
2008-09 District**

Ms. Fisher moved to approve the 2008-09 District Goals as presented; seconded by Mr. Allen. A roll call vote resulted in four ayes and one

**Goals**

nay. Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay. Motion carried.

At this point, Ms. Patchak-Layman noted that Goal No. 1 was inaccurate, as the Board of Education had not approved the October 2007 Plan as stated in Goal 1. Discussion ensued. Dr. Weninger remembered that a Board of Education member absent from this meeting, had asked that this specifically be included in the goals.

Mr. Allen asked to suspend the motion. Ms. Patchak-Layman moved to amend the 2008-09 District Goals as previously approved with the following adjustment:

Goal 1, Student Achievement, Line 4: Delete the words “and the October 2007 proposal” beginning on line four.

This was seconded by Mr. Allen. A roll call vote resulted in three ayes and two nays. Ms. Fisher and Mr. Conway voted nay. Motion carried.

Ms. Fisher felt uncomfortable voting affirmatively against a Board of Education member’s specific request for this to be included, especially when he/she was not present.

**Discussion  
On Race and  
Student  
Achievement**

Mr. Allen noted that he wanted to invite Bill Gregory to facilitate the future Board of Education discussions on race and student achievement. Mr. Gregory had facilitated the first of these meetings. The Board of Education members were supportive of Mr. Gregory facilitating these meetings with some compensation paid to him.

After reviewing their calendars, the Board of Education members choose the following dates for two future meetings.

October 14 at 7:30 p.m. and November 13 at 7:30 pm.

**Closed Session**

At 8:45 p.m., on August 28, 2008, Mr. Conway moved to go into closed session for the purpose 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. Allen. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

At 9:10 p.m. on Thursday, August 28, 2008, the Board of Education reconvened its open session.

**Student Discipline** Mr. Allen moved to assess tuition charges for student RES 8/28/08-01 in the amount of \$27,219.23 for the 77 days enrolled as a student during the 2006-2007 school year and for the entire 2007-2008 school year, due to non-residency; seconded by Dr. Lee. A roll call vote resulted in four ayes and one nay. Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay. Motion carried

**Adjournment** At 9:15 p.m. on Thursday, August 28, 2008, Mr. Allen moved to adjourn the Board of Education meeting; seconded by Dr. Lee. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Jacques A. Conway  
President

Dr. Ralph H. Lee  
Secretary