

The Board meeting of the Board of Education of the Oak Park and River Forest High School was held on Thursday evening, September 25, 2008, in the Board Room of the high school.

Call to Order President Jacques A Conway, called the meeting to order at 7:36 p.m. A roll call indicated that the following members were present: John C. Allen, IV, Jacques A. Conway, Dr. Ralph H. Lee, Dr. Dietra D. Millard, 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; Cindy Milojevic, Assistant Principal for Student Activities; Linda Cada, Director of Special Education; Dan Knickelbein, Wyanetta Johnson of APPLE; Isaac Sinnott & parents; Julie Foley, Nick, Lois and Alex Frisch, Chris Pateros-Nowak, Lexi and Paul Nowak, Brice, Suzanne and Jules Dubin, Gerolynne Rode, Elle, Krista, Bill and Ingrid Ferdinand, parents and students; Garrett Glass, Oak Park Arts Foundation president, Terry Dean of the *Wednesday Journal*; and Chris LaFortune of the *Oak Leaves*.

Changes to the Agenda None

Student Recognition The Board of Education recognized the following students for participation in the Oak Park Area Arts Council's Off-the-Wall Program on the south end of the south field as well as Garrett Glass, President of the OPAC and Camille Wilson-White:

Brendan Burke	Kasey Dionisio	Julianna Dubin
Drew Linne	Elle Ferdinand	Andrea Ivy
Lexi Nowak	Michael Thomas	Jessica Marrow
Amanda Moen	Sarah Abarbanel	Eric Irizarry
Tricia Richert	Emily Whitehead	

The Board of Education also recognized Alexandria Frisch, a freshman, for being selected as a Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Young Scholar. The mission of the foundation is to help young people of exceptional

promise reach their full potential through education. It provides high-achieving high school students with financial need, individualized services, such as tutoring, summer program tuition, computer equipment, and specialized instruction in other disciplines. Johns Hopkins University's Center for Talented Youth administers the Young Scholars' Program. The academic and behavioral conduct is reviewed each year for continuation in the program.

The Board of Education also recognized Isaac Sinnott, a senior, for displaying a true entrepreneurial spirit by becoming a one-man rain barrel maker. He constructs and sells environmentally friendly rain barrels through his own company, Let it Rain Barrels. He converts used and recycled food crates into rain barrels, which he describes as a relatively easy process, but spends many hours per week doing it. The idea originated when he looked for an inexpensive way to help his mom water their garden.

Board of Education Comments Ms. Patchak-Layman reported that a conversation was held on student excellence and achievement at the Instruction Committee and the Board of Education members expressed a sense an urgency to make sure that this was a top priority, and to be acted upon as soon as possible. The community understands this as well. She was disturbed after receiving a letter from a community member after reading in the *Wednesday Journal* that the high school had not made AYP, yet the school was continuing with lighting the stadium, although this was not a priority of the school As a parent of a sports student who wanted the best opportunity for achievement at the high school, this struck this parent as not part of the priority. Her concern was that when a priority is set, everything must be about moving in that direction, e.g., time, effort, and dollars. She hoped that we would make a better effort to both communicate both the community and assess priorities to make sure students are moving forward.

Mr. Conway expressed his sympathy to Coach Jim Nudera whose his nephew had died in Iraq recently serving his country.

Mr. Conway stated that several Board of Education members and staff were affected by the severe storms of late. Several were away from school because of the work they had to do on their own homes. He hoped that the staff and their supervisors would be concerned and would show some leeway with regard to the work they had to do in order to get their lives back in order. If any of those members did not have vacation or sick leave time, he asked the school to work with them and not dock them for their time away.

Visitor Comments Geri Rode, parent and resident of 1160 S. Clinton Avenue, Oak Park Avenue, Oak Park, addressed the Board of Education.

She spoke on behalf of students who were concerned over the inequity of grading scale of OPRFHS and why is it elevated for honors science classes and English classes. Parents have never received an explanation as to how an evaluated grading scale is justified based on best practices and educational research. Parents asked for a statement from the Board of Education and administration as to how OPRFHS justifies the elevated grading scale for honors courses. The parents asked for a process as to how this could be discussed with the entire Board of Education. Dr. Lee responded that it had been discussed at the Policy Committee meeting on September 16 and that upon receipt of information from Mr. Prale, he, as the Policy Committee chair, will respond to the concerned parents as to how things will be handled.

FOIA Requests Mr. Conway reported that four FOIA requests had been resolved.

Student Life Ryan Mullin reported on the following Student Council activities:

- 1) Homecoming: Homecoming starts on Friday, October 3 with a pep rally and a block party and on Saturday, October 4, there will be a pancake breakfast, football games and dance. The theme is Commotion in the Ocean. A new entertainment company has been hired that will give a concert-like atmosphere with lights and sound. The student body also voted for the Homecoming court that day. Next year the hope is that voting will take place online.
- 2) Activity Fair: This year the fair was held during the lunch periods in the corridors. Last year it was held in the cafeteria at the end of the day. Many clubs commented that this year's fair was too hectic, as students did not have enough time to both eat their lunch and explore the fair. Mr. Mullin suggested returning to the prior format, as it was a smaller space and more navigable.
- 3) Tradition of Excellence: Only one of the three chosen recipients for the Tradition of Excellence award was able to participate in the high school's activities, as the other two had scheduling conflicts. The Committee chose to go back and select another recipient for the award. Thus, Joe Cantafio was being recommended to the Board of Education for approval. Not only was Mr. Cantafio, a 1973 graduate, part of Jade 50, a rock and roll band, the voice of TV and radio commercials, and music director of Dick Clark's rock and roll band, but he also supported the Firemen during the 911 disaster and has entertained the troops in Iraq.

Mr. Conway suggested Student Council discuss the proposal of giving credit for orchestra and jazz participation and make a report to the Board of Education.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if Student Council had begun its discussion of graduation dress. Mr. Mullin responded that Student Council embarked on a 15-minute discussion about this a few weeks ago. He noted that faculty member Christine Daggett wanted to change the dress code. Mr. Mullin did not believe it would happen this year and more thoughtful discussion should occur. More people are talking about wanting to move in that direction, however. Further discussion will occur after Homecoming.

Principal's Report Mr. Rouse congratulated the students honored earlier in the evening on their accomplishments. He reported that the September 11 Open House was successful. He appreciated the number of parents who participated and the complimentary things said about the faculty. He was hopeful that even more parents would connect with the school next year. Mr. Rouse was excited about the homecoming activities, including the new entertainment company and light show.

Certification of Summer Graduates Non-Graduates Mr. Allen moved to certify the summer school graduates of 2008, as presented (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this and meeting); seconded by Dr. Millard. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Mr. Rouse reported that eighty-three students did not graduate with their class in June 2008. The summary of findings was as follows:

- 27 students returned under special education placement.
- 12 students graduated in August 2008.
- 15 students have withdrawn from District 200.
- 7 students have returned for a ninth semester of high school.
- 2 students were foreign exchange students and were not seeking a high school diploma.
- 20 students are in the process of attaining the required credit(s) through correspondence/online programs or other alternative programs.

Mr. Wilson, Assistant Principal for Student Services, noted his major concern was the group of students not currently enrolled in courses at OPRFHS and having yet to meet the graduation requirements. Counselors are making contact with these students and their parent(s) to determine what assistance is necessary. Often, setting a deadline will help ensure completion of the required course work.

Foreign Exchange Student Report Mr. Rouse reported that OPRFHS has six foreign exchange students, one from France, Spain, Finland, Thailand, and two from Germany.

APPLE

Ms. Wyanetta Johnson, chair of APPLE, reported that she had rested during the summer and that she was disappointed to read in the newspapers this week that the high school had not made AYP. She restated that the school must work as a team with the parents. She was concerned that some parents/community members were viewed by the high school as troublemakers. She assured the high school that they were not and they only wanted to help. In fact, many of the programs they started were being used in the high school today. She was concerned about the relationship some parents/community members have with the superintendent as compared to previous superintendents. She hoped that would improve.

Ms. Johnson noted that APPLE meets once a month. One of its purposes is to help close the achievement gap. She reiterated that the school and the parents must work in unison. She stated that the parents were tired of hearing what the school was going to do and still not closing the gap. Ms. Johnson offered to write a check for \$100,000 and have this school and/or anyone in the community match it. She guaranteed that in two months APPLE could close the gap, noting that a school on the south side of Chicago had been successful in that endeavor. She assured the Board of Education that APPLE's intent was for the betterment of the students in everything it did. Ms. Johnson also noted that she was looking for someone to take over the leadership of APPLE, as she would like to retire.

Superintendent's Report

With regard to Ryan Mullin's report on freshmen signing up for Activities, Dr. Weninger suggested perhaps incorporating the Activity Fair into the new Huskie Kickoff Day.

Dr. Weninger reported that the administration was waiting to hear whether it had been successful in its application of grants from either AT&T or the ISBE.

Dr. Weninger will be providing the Board with information from IASA regarding issues, both pro and con, on the proposed IL Constitutional Convention. He noted that the IASB has endorsed it.

Dr. Weninger reminded the Board of Education that its first workshop on race and student achievement would take place Thursday, November 13. John Allen and he have been working with Bill Gregory, one of the facilitators from last year, on the agenda.

All District Administrators and members of the FSEC will hold the first Leadership Roundtable at the end of October. Dr. Weninger stated that all were looking forward to the event and its potentially positive outcome.

Dr. Weninger reported that the first Parent Visitation Day was held September 23 and approximately ninety (90) parents visited classes and with administrators. Several very positive comments from parents were received and were forwarded to faculty.

Dr. Weninger reported that Jan Pate, Village Trustee and Vice President of the YMCA, and he were pulling together a representative group of community leaders to identify how they might survey middle school and high school students from Forest Park, Oak Park, and River Forest as a follow-up to the assets presentation last spring at the high school.

Dr. Weninger reminded the Board of Education members that the annual Triple I Conference in Chicago would take place November 21-23. Information will be sent via email regarding conference information in Friday's Board packet.

Dr. Weninger reported that he would attend a legislative breakfast with several area house and senate legislators on October 10.

Dr. Weninger reported that he and Mr. Edgecombe would be attending the annual AASPA Conference in Seattle, which provides sessions on personnel matters, including recruitment.

Dr. Weninger congratulated the Oak Park and River Forest Community Foundation for having been awarded the CommunityWorks Phase 3 Grant from the Grand Victoria Foundation. It will receive \$1 million for its CommunityWorks endowment and \$1 million for its operating endowment. The Foundation is now eligible for the \$2 million challenge grant over the next three years, as well. The CommunityWorks endowment grant is important for OPRF because Dr. Weninger played an important role as a member of the Advisory Committee, which created the framework for the application. The primary goals of the application are education and sustainability as stated in the goal statement: Ensuring the Success of all Young People through Quality Education and Achieving an Environmentally Sustainable community. OPRFHS is very excited about the prospects of the high school working with the Foundation and other community agencies in leveraging the grant towards this goal.

District Liaison & Community Reports Concert Tour Association—Ms. Patchak-Layman reported the Concert Tour Association was preparing for its Huskie Music event on Friday, September 26, 2008.

Faculty Senate—Mr. Hunter reported that the opening of school had been a pleasant one and that Mr. Rouse was doing an outstanding job. He commented on the discussion at the Instruction Committee meeting on September 18. He was excited about the discussion of AYP and the

fact that some of the faculty's ideas were beginning to percolate with the Board of Education. He was sorry that Ms. Rode had not been there to hear the discussion.

Mr. Hunter noted that Faculty Senate did not support the proposed Constitutional Convention and he was surprised at the IASB's support of it.

Mr. Conway, noting that there were a number of new faculty members, asked what kind of mentoring they received. Mr. Hunter responded that 1) new faculty experience good inclusion at the divisional level because each division has a formalized mentoring program, and 2) Faculty Senate was hosting a staff welcoming party that week.

Mr. Hunter also reported 1) the faculty was building more relationships with the students because of its supervisory responsibilities; 2) the faculty has also garnered a good deal of support for the professional development work and those issues important to the school community by division; and 3) it was beneficial for faculty members to meet at the beginning of the day, when they are rested, as it allows them to collaborate well.

Mr. Conway was happy to see more faculty members attending sporting events. Mr. Hunter stated that because the staff was young they were able to do attend those events, but that would change over time as their own personal responsibilities grew.

Consent Items

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked that Consent Items D. Approval of Monthly Treasurer's Report and E. Approval of 2008-09 Assurances for District Compliance be removed from the Consent Agenda.

Mr. Allen moved to approve the consent items as follows:

- Open Minutes of August 28, September 16 and 18, 2008 and the Closed Session Minutes of August 28 and September 18, 2008;
- Personnel Recommendations (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting);
- the Resolutions Ratifying and Confirming Execution of certain vouchers and payment of certain bills and expenses, fund transfers and list of bills for September 25 2008 (attached to and made part of the minutes of this meeting);
- the Resolution Authorizing Execution of Certain Vouchers for the Month of October (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting);
- the Check Disbursements dated September 25, 2008, (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting);

- Contracts for Independent Physical Therapist, Occupational Therapist, and
- additional Citizens' Council Members;

seconded by Dr. Lee. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Approval of Monthly Treasurer's Report and 2008-09 Assurance for District Compliance Dr. Lee moved to approve the Monthly Treasurer's Report and the 2008-09 Assurance for District Compliance; seconded by Dr. Millard. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Assurance for District Compliance Ms. Patchak-Layman wondered if what was happening nationally would impact the school's investments. Ms. Witham reported 1) no impairment to the school's investments had occurred; 2) she speaks with PMA almost daily; and 3) the school's funds are presently invested in CD's with local banks and in money market funds. The investments have been very conservative. Ms. Witham noted that the school would not be going out for bonds in the near future because the school which is at its debt limit and would need to pass a referendum in order to go out for more funding.

Ms. Patchak-Layman wanted assurance that the Assurance for District Compliance was just for procedures. That was confirmed to her. She was also informed that Mr. Rouse was involved in a principal mentoring program, as is required by law.

Policy 1140, Gifts To the District Mr. Allen moved to amend Policy 1140, Gifts to the District; seconded by Dr. Lee; a roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Policy 1150 Student Publicity & Media Relations Dr. Lee moved to amend Policy 1150, Student Publicity and Media Relations; seconded by Mr. Allen. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Policy 1230, School Attendance on Days of Religious Observances Dr. Lee moved to amend Policy 1230, School Attendance on Days of Religious Observances for Rirst Reading; seconded by Mr. Allen. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Policy 1250, Internet Safety Dr. Lee moved to amend Policy 1250, Internet Safety; seconded by Mr. Allen. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

**Policy 3610,
Automated
External
Defibrillator
Use**

Dr. Lee moved to amend Policy 3610, Automated External Defibrillator Use, seconded by Mr. Allen. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Ms. Patchak-Layman requested a defibrillator to be added to the fourth floor as soon as possible.

**Policy 5130,
Interscholastic
Athletics
Program**

Dr. Lee moved to approve Policy 5130, Interscholastic Athletics Program, for First Reading; seconded by Mr. Allen. A roll call vote resulted in all four ayes and one nay. Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay. Motion carried.

Ms. Patchak-Layman had voted not to amend Policy 5132, and as such, could not support this policy if only the eligible standards for IHSA and West Suburban Conference were the standards that the school has.

**Policy 5131,
Intramural
Athletics
Program**

Dr. Lee moved to approve Policy 5131, Intramural Athletics Program, for First Reading as discussed; seconded by Mr. Allen. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

**Policy 5133,
Student Smoking
and Tobacco
Use**

Dr. Lee moved to approve Policy 5133, Student Smoking and Tobacco Use, for first reading; seconded by Mr. Allen. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked how this policy would be implemented when students go off-campus for lunch and who would make sure there is compliance. The response was that when students are caught they will be consequence. There would be no difference from someone who comes to school in the morning. It is an honors system which students are expected to uphold. Off-site activities include games, events, etc. The school cannot enforce this in the community because it does not have enough personnel to do so.

**Policy 5134,
Student Attire**

Dr. Lee moved to approve Policy 5134, Student Attire, for first reading; seconded by Mr. Allen. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Ms. Patchak-Layman was informed that the Board of Education would have a chance to view the procedures for implementation of this policy when they were developed. Until then, the deans address situations with students on a discretionary basis. When a violation occurs, students are asked to change their dress appropriately and not to wear the articles of clothing again.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if Student Council would be reviewing this policy. Student Council, as well as the other stakeholders, would have a chance to review this policy and make comments prior to the next Policy Committee meeting.

Acceptance of Donations & Gifts

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

Hearing on FY 2009 Budget

At 8:50 p.m., a public hearing was held on the FY' 2009 Budget. Hearing no oral or written comments, the hearing was closed at 8:51 p.m.

Ms. Witham had reviewed the timeline for the approval of the budget.

Approval of the FY 2009 Budget

Dr. Lee moved to approve the FY 2009 Budget, as presented; seconded by Dr. Millard. A roll call vote resulted in four ayes and one nay. Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay. Motion carried.

Dr. Weninger stated that this comes before the Board of Education annually for approval. He commended the members of DLT on the contents of this document, as it represented many aspects of the District, not only the financial. He acknowledged the people who worked on the information in the document, e.g., DLT and BLT members.

Ms. Patchak-Layman observed two things: 1) under the Board of Education and Superintendent Goals and Indicators and Measurements of Success, only the Goals had been approved, not the Indicators and Measurements of Success as noted in the budget document; and 2) while six of the achievement initiatives were put into place in the fall, the Plan to Raise Student Achievement itself was not approved. She suggested including just the goals and removing the indicators of measurements of success from this document. Dr. Weninger suggested providing a cover memo explaining what she had described.

Because OPRFHS has a set amount of money it can collect on this because of statutory limitations, Ms. Patchak-Layman asked from where the other financing sources were coming. Ms. Witham verified that Ms. Patchak-Layman was discussing page 95 under the Bond and Interest Fund budget. Ms. Witham responded that it is from the Life Safety Fund for the roof project, etc. Ms. Witham stated that on the top lead schedule, on page 41, one can see all of the transfers to and from the various funds. Interest Income from the Bond and Interest Fund is transferred to the B&G Fund, making the net transfer into the Bond and

interest fund \$600,000, coming from the Life Safety Fund, minus the \$48,000 of interest income transferred to the O and M Fund.

Ms. Patchak-Layman was happy that the School Improvement Plan was part of the budget document as so many stakeholders were part of the committee that developed the Plan. She was also aware of the school's application for grant money to fund two reading coaches and a data manager. She reiterated her feelings that both of those positions should be included in the school's budget.

Ms. Patchak-Layman had concern about the school's fund balances. Though she realized the school's long-term plan was not to go out for a referendum before 2018, she hoped that there were enough people living in Oak Park to take advantage of that fact. She was wary of the school creating a burden for the present residents beyond what was necessary. She wanted to reassess how the school continued its programs, the dollars spent, and to look at outside indicators. Dr. Lee concurred with Ms. Patchak-Layman that the school should review what it is doing with respect to putting off the referendum until a date of 2022 or 2024, instead of trying to reduce the fund balances. However, he did not agree with relinquishing the money the school had. It was the Board of Education's job is to make the wisest use of the money.

AYP Report

Ms. Hill reported that at last week's Instruction Committee meeting, a full report of standardized test scores for the most recent graduates of 2008 and a summary of the PSAE scores for the 2009 graduates, current seniors was presented. Included in that was a discussion of the school's AYP status; it seemed relevant to bring this to a larger section of the community.

Percent of juniors test on state tests (State AYP Minimum Target: 95 percent).

OPRFHS made in the aggregate and in each subgroup by testing nearly 100 percent of its students on either the PSAE or the Illinois Alternate Assessment (Special Education students, per their IEPs). OPRFHS tests over 99 percent of its students and 100 percent of African-American students.

Percent of juniors meeting or exceeding state standards (State AYP Minimum Target: 62.7% or Safe Harbor).

OPRFHS made AYP in reading in the aggregate and in its White, Multiethnic, and Special Education subgroups. It did not make AYP in reading in the African-American and Low Income subgroups. A slightly greater number of African-American students met or exceeded standards compared to last year, however.

In math, OPRFHS made AYP in the White, Multiethnic, and Low Income subgroups, but not in the African-American and Special Education subgroups. While a greater portion of African-American students made AYP here, it is not a growth that is being celebrated because they are still not achieving at the rate they should be.

Attendance Rate (State AYP Minimum Target 90%)

At this time, the state had not indicated whether OPRFHS met AYP in this area, although internal records suggest that it did.

Graduation Rate (State AYP Minimum Target: 75%)

OPRFHS made AYP in this area.

The implications are that the school will need to submit a restructuring plan to the State of Illinois in January. The options for restructuring in the sixth year would include 1) reopening as a charting school, 2) replacing all relevant school staff, 3) contracting with outside staff, and 4) having the State of Illinois take over the management of the school. There were schools this year and two years ago, that had already achieved six years. She continued that many schools had not made AYP. The standard rises every year and next year the bar is that 70 percent of students must make AYP. As that bar rises, many more schools will fail to meet AYP. OPRFHS will comply with the letter of the law of NCLB and it will continue the work on behalf of all students to offer better opportunities to improve their academic achievement. It remains to be seen if the State of Illinois will be able to handle the number of schools that will reach the mark of not having met AYP.

Mr. Prale reported that notification is sent to every family and for those eligible supplemental educational services with approved providers will be offered. OPRFHS will work within the guidelines of the State of Illinois.

While OPRFHS made AYP in 2006, it only stopped the clock. A school has to make AYP two years in a row to start the clock over. Dr. Lee stated that the recommendation includes the phrase “accelerate student learning such that students entering our system several grade levels behind are able to make standards prior to graduating.” The use of that sentence suggests that a major part of the problem is the issue of students entering the OPRFHS system several grade levels behind. If that is a significant problem, OPRFHS should be able to document what percentage of students are several grade levels behind and just how many grade levels they are behind, i.e., describes the problem accurately and quantitatively. Is this possible? Ms. Hill stated that for reading, every student receives a reading assessment for grade level equivalency. It could be broken out as at, above and below grade level.

PSAE uses ACT as part of the test benchmark at the EXPLORE level and describe the percentage that are scoring below the level set by ACT that predicts those students who will meet the standards in their junior year. Dr. Weninger asked if that could be done in reading, could it also be done in math. Ms. Hill was unsure of an instrument that would do that but they could use the EXPLORE and predict if a student would make the standards in their junior year, given the current program.

Dr. Lee stated that if students came to the high school reading nine grades behind, one might say that the school would not expect a student to make up for a total lack of elementary school education in a four-year period. It would take more than four years for a person with that kind of a background to graduate. If a person came in only one year behind, it might be reasonable for the District to assume that making up a one-year deficit over a four-year period was a doable thing and that the high school should commit itself to doing that. These illustrate two extremes: 1) one that it is unreasonable to assume that the District can make up deficit; and 2) one that it is reasonable for the District to make up the deficit in four years. In order for the District to make real progress, it should be able to decide where it is reasonable to draw the line, e.g., one year behind, two years behind, or three years behind, etc. If the District knows the problem it is dealing with and can state explicitly what the problem is, it could probably solve the problem and perhaps adopt programs that might allow for fifth-year and sixth-year programs.

Regarding additional instruction to help students be at the reading level that the school desires for them by the time they graduate, Mr. Prale stated that if there are two students entering the ninth grade and one is reading at a grade level of 8.1 and another at a grade level of 5.4, even if the student with a reading level of 5.4 doubled his/her rate to 6.4 in the tenth grade, they would be both in the same classroom. The District needs and is committed to accelerating both students reading levels. Dr. Lee did not know how to accelerate a reading grade level of 5.2 to a reading grade level of 7, and then have that same increase four years in a row. More data is necessary to find out what would be realistic to do. Unless there is data to evaluate the various kinds of trials the District is making, he did not believe the District would get far. What the District is now doing gives no idea as to whether what it is doing is the best it can do. Mr. Prale stated that based on the scores of the state assessments he would agree, but not based on the scores from the high school's reading assessments. State assessments do not measure what is being asked for, but other programs would do that. The conclusion of that report is that those students added value in excess of their previous reading experience. Mr. Prale stated that the more data available, the more questions will be answered.

Dr. Weninger added that the second Board of Education goal was quantitative mass. If one reads this carefully and includes the indices identified, this is the beginning of doing just that. Part of the technology challenge is to deliver that kind of data. The District will share that data with the Board of Education, but more importantly, share it with the teacher. Ms. Hill is working with the teachers on utilizing Mastery Manager. Dr. Lee noted that he had wanted reassurance that is the goal.

Mr. Allen asked how other Illinois schools were doing. Because this information is so new, the District does not have that specific information yet. Dr. Weninger will provide that information to the Board of Education when it is available. Mr. Allen asked that the information be provided for last year as well. He also asked if middle schools had the same pressure to make AYP. The response was yes and that more middle schools across the state were making AYP. Mr. Prale stated that although some high schools have succeeded in making AYP two years in a row, they may do it in other ways, e.g., creating different classes of students, etc.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked in reference to the report, which of the goals and the initiatives in place would promote acceleration? Mr. Prale felt that the use of assessments for learning, which are formative assessments and teacher written, would have a significant effect. They are a classroom-based intervention. Mastery Manager will track the data and as the data is reviewed, the teacher will adjust his/her teaching methods. Ms. Patchak-Layman asked how many students at the school right now would have the opportunity to have this kind of process/intervention in place. Mr. Prale stated that as many students as possible but he felt that it would occur most often in the freshman classes. Division Heads have been asked to look at all of the courses and tell the administration where there are common assessments.

Dr. Weninger noted Ms. Hill's recommendation "For many years, our approach to improving student achievement and closing gaps in achievement indicators included targeting specific and often small groups of students for narrowly focused interventions (e.g., Algebra Block, Project Scholar, to name just two). When these sorts of efforts have been successful, the gains have typically been incremental and/or limited in scope rather than large scale... We must consider whether our approach to improving student achievement can accelerate student learning such that students entering our system several grade levels behind are able to meet standards prior to graduating." Initiatives were put into place several years ago that target small groups of students. What was done last year and this year is systemic in nature. The

District is applying a set of initiatives to a broader number of students and setting a foundation to build a larger scaffold e.g., the work on institutional excellence, identifying indices and benchmarks, developing quantitative mass measures of achievement, how it will be used, the work on collaborative teaching model in a broader group of freshmen, the broader habits of achievement of students, putting in place outreach programs for parents and students, etc. These are big foundational blocks and more systemic in nature. Some of those results have been implemented for this year's freshmen and in some ways for sophomores and juniors. The groundwork is being laid. The school actually has only two and three-quarter academic years, as the school has only until the month of April of the students' junior years, in which to make public gains. OPRFHS has a responsibility and with the six initiatives and four Board of Education goals, the District is taking the steps. It is as frustrating for the administration and the Board of Education members not to make AYP and not to see significant gains. However, this is a systematic approach and it may take a couple of years before seeing results. The District is laying the groundwork and it hopes that a deep foundation will produce results. However, this may take a couple of years. This discussion has to do only with the NCLB law, its consequences, and its enforcement. Dr. Weninger credited the Board of Education about its recent specific conversations and the development of the indices as to what the gap means to the District rather than as it is defined by NCLB. Dr. Lee did not want to be ruled by the NCLB. He felt it was a law that was motivated from the right place, but it has impractical aspects.

Ms. Patchak-Layman grappled with what things would promote acceleration. If the District has to promote acceleration, she assumed that students were making a year's growth. Ms. Hill stated that most students were growing beyond the expected rate of improvement. Ms. Patchak-Layman stated that at the Instruction Committee Meeting a statement was made that 54 percent of the students were growing beyond the expected rate of growth per the ACT and an additional 30 percent were in the range of expected growth. Thus, that would mean that the number of targeted students who were not making a year's growth would be 20 percent. Are there things that the District is doing as part of the goals and initiatives that are going to help them accelerate? Does the District do documentation at the end of the senior year to give the District an accumulate picture? Ms. Hill stated while the District does not have an exit exam or a standardized test, promising things were in place. However, acceleration is among the most difficult things to accomplish with a group of students. To a large extent, the District will find that it will find the strategies as a result of things coming together such as: 1) professional development time on late arrival days to look at student performance data, 2) discussion of the students not achieving and making

conclusions based on those discussions, 3) developing RtI, as teachers get better at the formal assessments, those strategies will be developed. She did not believe she could say that these 10 particular things that will accelerate student growth but they will develop over the course of two, three, or four years. Ms. Patchak-Layman felt that was too long a period. If a timeline is not placed on it, there is not an effort to say that we are going to get to this phase, e.g., 50% of the staff will be ready to go by second semester with acceleration model or another configuration, etc. She was uncomfortable with having no timeline.

Mr. Conway wished the Faculty Senate and Student Council representatives were still in attendance and those that were present when Dr. Lee and Dr. Weninger proposed addressing this issue. Many liberals in these communities took offense to addressing the issue of African-American student achievement because they felt were the resolutions were cheating other students. It is clear that African-American students, whose parents moved into this community for the District to educate their children, are not achieving. The days of parents/guardians bringing their students to OPRFHS and thinking that they will automatically get the education needed to be successful in this world no longer exists. There was a library full of people attacking the superintendent and Dr. Lee's proposal. It comes down to the fact that African-American students have not done well in this school for a number of years is not as important as other issues.

Mr. Conway is a parent of African-American students. It is interesting for him to have this conversation with his children and to hear their perspective as to why this is the case. He put no credence in the ISBE's criticism of OPRFHS, when Illinois ranks 48th in the country in the school funding. The State does not allocate enough resources. However, he does value the fact that there is a percentage of students in the building who are African-American and who are not achieving the grades necessary to be successful. He believed it was easy for this liberal community to blame OPRFHS as the cause for these students not achieving; it was easy to blame the administration and the teachers. In addition, complaining about the District spending time on the lights is another issue. From his being in this building for over 20 years, he has seen that some teachers do not have this priority. They feel the best students will learn and the others will have to make do. There are departments that do not have the best instruction. While much time is spent talking about the discipline system, how about the counseling system? What is it doing to help students who obviously are not having success in the classrooms? More worry occurs about whether they are wearing headphones, cell phones, hats, their dress, their arguments, etc. While there is an African-American staff to deal with these students, there is a *Code of Conduct*, etc., what about the academic success of

African-American students in the classroom. Where is the priority as to what happens when these students leave the school. It bothered him to see students who become adults and the success do not have and the schools they do not attend. He suggested last year that the Board of Education mandate that students apply to one, two, or three colleges. It would help them in their thinking that they could be successful. The Board of Education gets a list of colleges that the students attend. Many of those students get to those colleges without the guidance and support of the counselors. He wanted to have 1) a report from the counselors as to the number of contacts they have with students who are not having academic success; 2) conversations with the teachers who are not getting their points across; 3) conversations with those parents/guardians about how they can expect their children to achieve if they do not come to school with any books or go home with any books. The school is not responsible for that.

Mr. Conway hires tutors for his children because they are not receiving the necessary training and knowledge that they need because the teacher cannot impart the knowledge they need. Other parents cannot afford to hire tutors for math or science. The school has things in place, e.g., tutoring, etc., but it must start at home, carried on in the classroom with the teachers, and finalized by the students saying they want to be successful and do well in school. If those three parts do not work in harmony then 30 percent of the African-American students do not making AYP. He did not just fault the high school or the parents. He faulted them all. He would love to take OPRFHS students not doing well and send them to the schools that were doing well to see how well they would do or vice versa. He was venting because he comes from a real life perspective as to how badly not achieving academic success hurts these students in the end. He supported any programs the administration brings forth, but the parents or guardians must understand that just dropping these students off at the door will not guarantee their academic success. Those students who do not have the background, the structure, the support, do not do well. The high school can only do so much. From his experience as a parent and a community member, when there is a teacher who truly wants to make a difference, he/she will make a difference. Sometimes a teacher makes the difference when a student is not getting support at home. Some parents do not have the time or energy to help their children, as they are working to maintain a livelihood in this Village and the best they can do is to maintain a residence here.

Dr. Millard reflected that if 20 percent of the students are African-American, approximately 600, two-thirds, are not making AYP. The Board of Education owes it to every student at the school to help make AYP. She personally feels an obligation to any student not making

AYP. While she concurred with Mr. Conway and liked the emphasis, she feels an obligation to every student.

Mr. Allen asked how he could put emphasis on African-Americans when he could not mention it. Every time the Board of Education mentions African-American this or that, a whole segment of this community gets upsets. How can one solve the problem when one cannot mention that the problem is underachievement of African-American students? Mr. Conway asked how one could solve the problem when one cannot mention that the biggest problem.

Mr. Prale stated that the challenge is the District's performance with students. Parents send the District the best students they have. The challenge is the way the District works with those African-American and those white students. The District needs to be able to talk about the experiences of African-American students when they come in this building. The District needs to make those classrooms better experiences and, thus, impact on all of the students in those classrooms.

Dr. Lee stated that just because some members of the community object to the use of the term "African-American," it is incorrect to say that the "community" objected; only some people in the community objected. That means that the Board of Education must do a job that not every member of the community approved. That is the nature of the Board of Education's job. He would not say that the community says we cannot use the word African-American. The Board of Education has to learn to live with the fact that it will not please everyone.

Mr. Allen said that he, as a River Forest resident, paid a high political price when he voted for the resolutions. He lost much goodwill because some people had the impression that someone was being excluded. Because they felt excluded, there was a consequence. Mr. Conway stated that the problem is that the majority never wants to be in the position of the minority. However, the minority is always the minority in this society. There is no choice. Dr. Lee stated he wanted to believe that they were able to live with those consequences. Mr. Conway said he teaches his children to survive these consequences, because it is life.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked about the SIP Committee's formation, whether the Committee would be opened up to more people, if there would be Board of Education representation, and how the demographics would be considered. Mr. Prale responded that the committee is composed of a member from every division, every parent group, and members of the community, staff and students. As it is rolled out next year, an invitation will be extended to all existing

members and then further discussion can ensue about Board of Education representation. Ms. Patchak-Layman wanted to make sure OPRFHS has acceleration, because high school looks the same as they did 50 years ago and yet nothing else looks the same—elementary schools do not look the same as they were 50 years, as there is much more variety and activity in them now.

Approval of Tradition of Excellence Award Recipient

Dr. Millard moved to approve Joe Cantafio, as a Tradition of Excellence Award Recipient; seconded by Dr. Lee. A roll call vote resulted in four ayes and one nay. Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay.

Ms. Patchak-Layman noted that she did not support this recommendation, as it was not her definition of patriotism and the wrong time for this nominee to be brought forward. When asked what he did that was unpatriotic, Ms. Patchak-Layman replied that her definition was helping other people in other countries. She would have preferred a Peace Corp. worker as opposed to the activities of this nominee.

TIF Update

Since the last report of the TIF, Ms. Witham reported that two things had happened.

- 1) She spoke with the District's lawyer. The village was to have calculated what it thought it owed the school districts. Ray Heiss and the other district lawyer suggested that the high school provide its own calculation.
- 2) District 97 calculated what it felt it was due. District 97 asked to meet with some of their board members before the two districts meet with the village.

Dr. Weninger had received an email from Tom Barwin, manager of the Village of Oak Park, who reemphasized that the village intended to meet the obligation to both districts in a November timeline. He reiterated the financial difficulties the Village of Oak Park was having and he hoped that the Board of Education understood. Dr. Weninger informed him that the Board of Education had taken a “wait and see” attitude.

Closed Session

At 10:04 p.m., on September 25, 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; 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) and Collective negotiating matters between the District and its employees or their representatives or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2); seconded by Mr. Allen. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

At 11.11 p.m. on Thursday, September 25, 2008, the Board of Education reconvened its open session.

Adjournment

At 11:13 p.m. on Thursday, September 25, 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