

October 23, 2008

The Board meeting of the Board of Education of the Oak Park and River Forest High School was held on Thursday evening, October 23, 2008, in the Board Room of the high school.

Call to Order Vice President Millard called the meeting to order at 7:39 p.m. A roll call indicated that the following members were present: John C. Allen, IV, Dr. Ralph H. Lee, Dr. Dietra D. Millard, Sharon Patchak-Layman, and John P. Rigas. Also present were: Dr. Attila J. Weninger, Superintendent; Jason Edgecombe, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources; Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Nathaniel L. Rouse, Principal; Cheryl L. Witham, Chief Financial Officer; 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; Elizabeth Fox, OPRFHS faculty member; Cary McLean of Citizens' Council, Burcy Hines of APPLE; Angelika Kuehn, Ruth Foley, Marge Gockel, and Jean Erickson of the League of Women Voters; Monte Lewis and Rebekah Levin, community members, Michael Brower, Dan Scherer Edmonds, Emma Lewis, and Meg Luther, students; 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 being selected by Columbia University Scholastic Press Association as a 2007-08 TRAPEZE STAFF Gold Medalist and congratulated their sponsor Elizabeth Fox:

Rachel Avcioglu	Emma Lewis	Dan Scherer-Emunds
Michelle Brower	Meg Luther	Max Settle-Winick
Charlie Carbery	Clare Kelly	Kim White
Emma Heidorn	Jeff Kirshman	
Harry Huggins	Erinn McKune	

Board of Education Comments Ms. Patchak-Layman stated that her conversation with Ms. Milojevic about co-curricular activities was appreciated and she hoped that Ms. Milojevic would be present to the Board of Education; the District has co-curricular activities as a goal and many nuances should be considered.

Ms. Layman reported that the Strategic Management of Human Capital in Education project (SMHC) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Sponsored by the Consortium for Policy Research was offering an invitational conference to teams of educational leaders from the largest one-hundred school districts in the country, most of which were urban schools.

The goal of SMHC is to improve student achievement by restructuring HR systems; to recruit top teachers, principals, and central office talent; and performance-manage those individuals so the most effective instruction is deployed in all classrooms. OPRFHS might explore this venue.

Ms. Patchak-Layman was pleased to see the representatives from the League of Women Voters at this meeting. She noted that the Board of Education elections would be held in April and that petitions could start being circulated October 28. She hoped that the Board of Education would be able to work with the League, e.g., do presentations, etc. Ms. Gockel stated that the League of Women Voters would be doing a candidate fair prior to the election.

Ms. Patchak-Layman stated that the Board of Education has begun discussing things such as educational audit. While one method previously discussed was the Baldrige Method, she presented yet another model written about in the *School Board Journal*, which referenced a North Carolina School District that went through the audit procedures for educational and instructional issues.

Ms. Patchak-Layman also hoped for a broader participation on the School Improvement Team, the group assigned to submit a plan to the State of Illinois because the District had not made AYP. She hoped the participation would be extended to a larger group. She felt the discussion of how to move students forward would take much involvement by many people and the more people involved, the better the school would be.

Another concern she had was about the conversation on institutional excellence held at the Instruction Committee meeting. She hoped for a broader discussion and for the draft to be shared with the general community. She suggested that those participating in the business/community forum scheduled for the following day might be interested in reviewing the document.

She was also concerned about the current information relative to the District's goals, as she believed the community's demographics should be reflected in the classrooms at the school. The fact that classes

should not be segregated by race or gender is not now part of the definition of institutional excellence, i.e., what would the learning environment look like?

Included in the packet was a copy of the *School Profile*, which lists all of the classes OPRFHS offers. Ms. Patchak-Layman was concerned as to how it related to institutional excellence. She read from the document the following, “OPRFHS groups students according to ability. Ability grouping helps teachers adapt the course content, materials of instruction, and teaching methods to the aptitudes, abilities, and needs of the students. Students are placed in ability groups for specific subjects according to their proficiency in particular academic areas.” The statement about ability grouping does not read as if it is student centered, but rather teacher-centered.

Visitor Comments Lorraine Vasquez, 409 S. Maple Avenue, Oak Park, IL, addressed the Board of Education.

Ms. Vasquez addressed the Board of Education about an outstanding bill for tuition that she has for her daughter’s tuition. Ms. Vasquez paid \$11,000 to her attorney, but the high school asked for an additional \$2,000. She pleaded with the Board of Education to accept her offer of \$11,000 as final payment. She reiterated that she had addressed the Board of Education in May but had heard nothing in response other than another bill being sent for the past due tuition.

Ms. Vasquez was informed that this would be discussed in closed session and that she would hear something the following day.

FOIA Requests Dr. Millard reported that there was one FOIA request and it was resolved.

Student Life Ryan Mullin thanked the Board of Education for approving the request to honor Joe Cantafio with the Tradition of Excellence Award this year.

Mr. Mullin reported the following:

- Over 1800 tickets were sold for the Homecoming dance, making it a huge success;
- Students were pleased with the light show;
- Next year Student Council would return to hand-counting the votes for Homecoming king and queen versus providing online voting, as some students found that their ID’s had been stolen and could not vote.

- All ages participated in the block party on Friday night of Homecoming weekend, making it a huge success. This was a good replacement activity for the parade.
- Huskiepalooza was scheduled for Friday, October 24. Activities would include local bands performing, dodge ball, various games, etc.
- Student Council's next goal is recycling. It is exploring how other schools recycle. Student Council is teaming with the Environmental Club on this project. November 15 is National Recycling Day.
- A mock presidential election among students will be held next week to see who would win the presidential election if OPRFHS were America.
- Student Council had not engaged in any further conversation about graduation dress. Mr. Rouse had spoken with some Student Council members and he was scheduled to meet with the Huskies Activities Council. A decision to change the graduation dress for this year's graduation must be made by December.

Principal's Report

Mr. Rouse reported "the Inaugural Homecoming Block Party was a huge success! On Friday, October 4, students, staff, parents, and community members filled the school. The event was highlighted by the boys' soccer team on the main field, with the second annual Powder Puff game under the lights on the Lake St. Field. The senior girls prevailed in a hard fought battle against the junior girls 20-12. In addition, a carnival-like atmosphere in the mall area was fostered by the games and prizes for children of all ages. The evening concluded with the Jesse White Tumblers performing in the Field House at the concluding spirit assembly." Mr. Rouse noted a special "thank you" to the Booster Club for its generosity and support of this event.

Mr. Rouse also reported that on Wednesday, October 16 and Thursday, October 17, OPRFHS hosted its annual Parent Teacher Conferences. As of October 8, 3,364 conferences had been set up for Wednesday and 5,143 conferences for Thursday. Approximately 8,507 conferences were set up by 1,584 parents; a number similar to that of last year.

While Mr. Rouse was pleased with the number of parents who attended, one of the difficulties the District has is that there is only a certain number of slots available for conferences with teachers. He asked teachers whether they had seen the parents who most needed to be seen. The response was that they had not. There is more work to be done in getting parents to meet with the teachers. He hoped that the opportunity to register on line would be a more successful opportunity for parents. Dr. Weninger noted that the District does plan to hire this

year a community outreach coordinator for students/parents who might need additional help. The first round of applicants for this position was unsatisfactory and the District was going to repost the position. Mr. Prale stated that survey results showed that the highest number of parents who come to the parent/teacher conferences are those of freshman students and the number decreases every class thereafter. Typically, the highest number of parents to attend is those of honors and accelerated students, followed by the parents of regular education students, and followed then by the parents of basic and transitional level classes. He could not say why one set of parents behaves one way or another.

This year teachers sent the names of students to their counselors to encourage these parents to schedule slots for counseling. At its next meeting, PTO will reach out to the parents that are not accessing Skyward and try to get them more involved.

October 1 Data Housing Report & School Year Statistics

Mr. Lanenga had prepared the October 1 Data Housing Report and School Year Statistics, which included the following:

- Official all-school enrollment (3,167 with 88 receiving services outside of the building)
- Ethnic/racial distribution of student population with historical data
- Historical enrollment by class and by year
- Associate Student enrollment for freshmen
- Division Enrollments and Class Size
- Average Class size by year, semester one
- Registrations by Student Per Year
- Division/Department Student Enrollment Totals & Percentages by Year
- Division/Department Program Enrollments, Sections, and F.T.E. 2007-08 to 2008-09

The official class size of 22.8 is based on all regular education classes, excluding performance classes, Physical Education, Driver Education, Special Education/Academy Strategies/Project Scholar, Support Reading/SOLO, ELL, musical performance groups and activities.

Students this year averaged 5.01 registrations versus last year's average of 4.94.

Mr. Rouse explained that the District now has more personnel to help with the residency process. Normally, it takes three to five days to process an enrollment application; however, when there is a crunch (perhaps sixty to eighty students waiting to enroll) at the beginning of

the school year, it is a slower process. While some may find this to be a frustrating process, the District does try to get students into the school as quickly as possible as well as being responsible to the taxpayers.

Student Transfer/ Withdrawal Report 2007-08 Mr. Rouse presented the Student Transfer/Withdrawal Report 2007-08 as follows:

		<i>Freshman</i>	<i>Sophomore</i>	<i>Junior</i>	<i>Senior</i>	<i>Totals</i>
Transfers	<i>Out of District</i>	12	49	66	33	160
Administrative Withdrawals	<i>Residency</i>	0	6	7	7	20
	<i>Expulsions</i>	0	0	0	0	0
	<i>Illness</i>	0	0	1		1
Subtotal						21
Student/Family Withdrawals	<i>Refusal to attend</i>	0	5	10	13	28
	<i>G.E.D.</i>	0	0	0	5	5
	<i>Evening High School</i>	0	0	0	15	15
Subtotal						48
Total Transfers & Withdrawals						229

Notes: A student who withdrew, reentered, and remains in school is not considered withdrawn.

A student who withdrew more than once over the course of his/her high school career is considered as having withdrawn only once for the reason associated with the withdrawal.

Student Family/Withdrawal Rate 2007-2008 (Dropouts): 0.015 (Number of withdrawals (48) divided by the total number of students enrolled (3,176)).

Mr. Prale stated that the GED program is offered through Triton Community College. The program for Triton Evening School held at the high school offers mostly recreational classes. In response to a question from Ms. Patchak-Layman about the dropout rate relative to the graduation rate, Dr. Weninger stated that the State uses a convoluted formula to determine the dropout rate, this report is only a snapshot. Mr. Rigas stated that students may leave the high school after their sophomore year, and the school does not know why. However, when an official request for records is received from another school, the student is marked as a transfer. The school receives no verification that a student has completed a GED program, as that information is not reported to the high school. Mr. Rigas stated that this report reflects what happened last year and the State Report Card says what happened to the original 750 freshman students, similar to how colleges determine how many of their freshman students graduate.

Dr. Weninger clarified that the *School Profile* is created specifically for colleges and universities to inform them about the school in a very compact way.

Ms. Patchak-Layman felt that the ethnic codes listed for the monthly student enrollment were disproportionate in terms of the District's population. She remembered being told that the school was not disproportionate in terms of Special Education and the general statistics for the African-American population. Mr. Prale stated that OPRFHS was not identified by the State of Illinois as being disproportionate, as many other districts were. While he understands that people can interpret these numbers differently, he had referred to what the State of Illinois said. Ms. Patchak-Layman continued that in looking at these numbers and the desired direction for the student body, being disproportionate should be something investigated and changed for the school and the students. In regular education in all other locations, it is lopsided, e.g., eighteen African-American and only six white students leaving the school. Mr. Prale said that Ms. Patchak-Layman was looking at a page that identifies students who have particular learning needs and specific situations that are individual in nature. He cautioned the District not to do anything than the best for each individual student per his/her learning needs per the IEP.

Mr. Rigas felt this was a dangerous and slippery slope. The District could say its goal was to be proportional, and then tell people who have disabilities that they cannot get special help because it would throw the District off its goal. The District knows that disproportionately is a fact in this building, something that the District is addressing. When one gets into special needs and says that the District needs to get special education in proportion, he, as a parent, would have a problem being told that he could not get help because he was the wrong color. Mr. Prale noted that in one area the school has data focus to improve its performance, i.e., Special Education "All Other Locations." Sixty-one students were placed off-campus. The District has made a decided effort to bring those students back to the campus; the school has been successful in lowering the number of students placed at off campus sites. In fact, it is as low as it has been in the last five years. Mr. Rouse added that because the State has identified a disproportionate number of students in Special Education across the state, it has mandated that all school districts submit, by January 1, a Response-to-Intervention (RtI) plan, which was embedded in the School Improvement Plan (SIP). As such, regular education students must name the intervention strategies used in the classroom prior to making contact with Special Education. The District is working behind-the-scenes in professional development at this time. Teachers are current in providing these strategies and the

school is now codifying them, collecting them, and housing them at the school.

Dr. Millard asked if some students were placed at another location by their own choice. Mr. Prale was unsure without knowing the student, and Ms. Witham felt it could be due to a medical situation.

Superintendent's

Dr. Weninger reported that Columbia University Scholastic Press Association awarded OPRFHS Trapeze staff 2007-2008 gold medals. Judges from around the country critiqued hundreds of school newspapers in editing, writing, coverage, advertising, and graphic presentations. The Trapeze staff earned 924 out of 1,000 points.

Dr. Weninger reported that OPRFHS has been recognized again as one of the top 100 schools in the country in speech and debate activities by the National Forensic League. This is the fifth year in a row that it has achieved this honor. OPRFHS ranks 47 out of 2,700 schools, based on student participation in speech-related activities.

OPRFHS has earned the SchoolSearch 2008 Bright A+ Award for academic excellence in education. It is one of 60 schools out of 871 school districts, which puts it in the top 5 percent. The award is based on objective factors that rate those districts whose students' academic performance ranks in the upper 5 percent of Illinois school districts based on the 2007 School Report Card Data.

Dr. Weninger reported that OPRFHS had forty students who qualified for the Illinois Music Education Association or IMEA All-District band, choir, jazz, and orchestra. They will participate in the District I festival in mid-November and hope to earn all state honors.

Dr. Weninger congratulated Jose Sosa, a PE teacher and the varsity boys' cross country coach, for being voted into the Illinois Track and Cross Country Coaches Association. He also reported that Glenn Cothorn, a former teacher and coach at OPRF, was also voted into this hall of fame.

Dr. Weninger congratulated the OPRFHS freshman cross-country team that defeated York to win the Western Suburban Conference Cross Country Championship, and for the first time in team history, went undefeated.

Dr. Weninger reminded the Board of Education that OPRFHS participated in an awareness program of forty developmental assets for young people led by Jan Pate, Village Trustee, and Vice President of the YMCA. This year, Ms. Pate reported there was approximately

\$1,000 remaining from that campaign and she asked for ideas about how to use it. A meeting of stakeholders was convened from school districts in Forest Park, River Forest, and Oak Park, as well as representatives from the Villages, Townships, and Park Districts, to discuss the possibility of surveying students regarding their engagement with the forty developmental assets. This week Dr. Weninger met with Jan Pate and Sophia Lloyd, Executive Director of the Oak Park and River Forest Community Foundation, regarding the implementation of such a survey and the role that the Community Foundation might play in it. Because of that meeting, this initiative will become part of the CommunityWorks of the Foundation. In addition, the assets will be used to assist the District's own efforts in Defining Institutional Excellence, as the District identifies students' habits of achievement.

Both Dr. Weninger and Mr. Edgecombe attended the American Association of School Personnel Administrators' (AASPA) national conference, at which they made connections and had discussions with several districts, working on the recruitment and retention of minority certified staff. Two ideas will be explored this year. In addition, information in two other areas may be of help to the District: 1) in the area of certified employee absences and substitutes, and 2) in the area of developing a leadership succession program. The latter is particularly timely and important because of the number of administrators and division heads who will be retiring in the next two to three years.

Citizens' Council Report— Dr. Weninger reported that the co-chairs of the Citizens' Council wanted to have a closer relationship with the Board of Education. Thus, at every Board of Education meeting, one of the co-chairs will provide a report to the Board of Education on its past month's discussion.

Ms. McLean presented an overview of the agendas for the year and reiterated the purpose of Citizens' Council:

- 1) To encourage community and parent awareness of the high school and understanding of school issues and needs;
- 2) To provide for an interchange of ideas among members of the Council and to provide a forum for discussing community concerns with the OPRFHS administration;
- 3) To be available to the Board of Education for the purpose of advice, discussion, and study; and
- 4) To be available to the administration in regards to any issue which they might care to bring to the Council for consideration.

The membership of Citizens' Council is forty-three and, generally, about thirty people attend the meetings. Citizens' Council had wanted to coordinate its

agendas with the Board of Education goals. Ms. McLean attempted to reach out to different organizations in the community, such as senior citizens' homes, the Oak Park Township, etc., to get members from different areas of the community, but it was difficult. Thus, the membership comes mostly from parents or former parents.

Ms. McLean asked what Citizens' Council could do for the Board of Education. She wanted whatever information was presented to Citizens' Council to have a broader audience. She did not want it to stop with just the membership of Citizens' Council. She wanted to know how to help the Board of Education and how to distribute the information on a broader basis.

The agenda for next month will be on the election of school board members and the membership will be made aware that four seats will be open.

Ms. Patchak-Layman wondered when further conversation would take place on the subjects of grading scales and graduation dress. Ms. McLean felt it was premature to talk about the graduation dress before Student Council had that discussion. She reiterated that it was not the role of Citizens' Council to conclude, but only to bring awareness to an issue. This is a balancing act. Mr. Prale had discussions with the number of Instructional Council, both collectively and individually, so the discussion had not stopped at the April Citizens' Council meeting. Ms. Patchak-Layman felt it was a rolling conversation. Ms. McLean responded that Dr. Weninger's schedule had not allowed him to be at the last two Citizens' Council meetings and that he might address it in his report at its November meeting.

Because Citizens' Council will be making its own report, Mr. Allen will no longer report on its activities.

Mr. Rigas read in a newspaper article that the high school was starting a facilities committee. Mr. Dean, the author of the article that appeared in the *Wednesday Journal*, explained that when he was profiling Mr. Lanenga, he had spoken about the committee. Dr. Weninger clarified that it was not a new committee.

District Liaison & Community Reports Faculty Senate—Mr. Hunter stated that the day-to-day activities were going well. He thanked Ms. Witham for the great job she had done overseeing the financial resources of this district, her fiscal leadership, and educational support, as it was appreciated by the faculty.

Because of his lengthy tenure at the Board of Education table, he was disturbed because he felt the school community believes that OPRFHS students are teacher-proof, meaning no matter what teachers do in the classroom students will be successful, and when they are not, it is

exclusively the fault of the teacher. He does not hear Board of Education members talking about the twenty-eight semifinalists in various National Merit competitions or the thirty-nine commended students or the successes in the building. He found that disillusioning. The teachers' response, involvement, and support of the initiatives have been substantial, but he never hears about these efforts or appreciation of it by the Board of Education. Teachers have also taken on a great deal of professional growth and development and have focused their energies on dealing with the communities' issues of educating students. He was very worried, as there is much new leadership in this building. He had more experience in the building than most of the administrators collectively at the table.

Mr. Hunter reiterated that he was worried that people were so used to bashing the teachers that there was no appreciation for the work done by the faculty in the building. He was worried about the community and the Board of Education members who do not know the difference between being a board member and an administrator. When talking about all of the tasks in front of the community, some of the conversations have been disheartening. He asked how the school would replace twenty people in this building over the course of the next two years with a leadership staff that has little experience in the building and would not rely on those with more experience. He was worried, as he did not see the Board of Education focusing on the issues that affect the District, but rather the minor issues.

The Faculty Senate believes that the Constitutional Convention (ConCon) is a bad idea. If people feel there is a problem with the elected officials, they should vote them out of office. No other remedy is necessary. When pensioners of school districts and school board associations say they are in favor of ConCon, it makes him unhappy. It means they do not have enough faith in their elected representatives and they should vote them out of office. To open up the constitutional gateway would be irresponsible.

He looked forward to the Board of Education's invitation to visit with Faculty Senate. He also looked forward to crafting a dialogue between the Board of Education members that is positive, beneficial, and that will lead to better work by Board of Education members and better work in the District. He hoped in the future to hear positive things said about the high school and suggested asking the negative questions outside of the Board of Education's conversation at the table, so that there can be more clarity. Some of the issues might just be addressed in personal conversations.

Dr. Millard thanked him for his perspective.

Consent Items

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

- Open Minutes of September 25 and October 14, 2008 and the Closed Session Minutes of September 25 and October 14, 2008;
- Personnel Recommendations (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting);
- the Resolution Authorizing Execution of Certain Vouchers for the Month of November (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting);
- the Check Disbursements dated October 23, 2008, (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting);
- Monthly Treasurer’s Report;
- FY 2006-07 Audit Report and Comprehensive Annual Financial Report;
- Medical and Dental Insurance Renewals;
- Life and LTD Insurance Renewals;
- FY ’09 Application for the Illinois School Library Grant;
- Coca-Cola Bottling Company Contract; and
- Renewal of Securatex Security Contract;

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

**Policy 5130,
Interscholastic
Athletics
Program**

Dr. Lee moved to amend Policy 5130, Interscholastic Athletics Program, as presented; seconded by Mr. Rigas. A roll call vote resulted in four ayes and one nay. Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay. Motion carried.

**Policy 5131,
Intramural
Athletics
Program**

Dr. Lee moved to amend Policy 5131, Intramural Athletics Program; seconded by Mr. Rigas. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

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

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

**Policy 5134,
Student Attire**

Dr. Lee moved to amend Policy 5134, Student Attire, as presented; seconded by Mr. Allen. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Mr. Edgecombe responded to Ms. Patchak-Layman’s inquiry regarding when the Board of Education might see the procedures for this policy, by saying that while they were not codified in writing, they were

communicated to the student body via the *Code of Conduct* and posted on website.

Acceptance of Donations & Gifts

Mr. Rigas 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.

2008-09 Certified Employee Seniority List

Mr. Edgecombe, per *The School Code of Illinois*, provided the list of certified faculty by earned seniority. This information is of importance to the Board of Education in the event it determines that a reduction of certified faculty is in the best interest of the District. In such an event, identified individuals would receive notice as specified by *The Code*. Mr. Edgecombe provided two lists- 1) seniority information on a District-wide basis and 2) seniority by Division/Department or Program.

Employee Personnel Information and Profiles for 2008-2009

Mr. Edgecombe presented the Employee Personnel Information and Profiles for 2008-2009 is based on October 1, 2008 data. "The full-time equivalent (FTE) designation on the attached documents represents the percentage of contractual service for all employee groups. For Certified staff, the FTE statistic includes all certified teachers, supervisors, coordinators, counselors, deans and the portion of Division Head responsibilities devoted to classroom teaching.

"For Non-Certified employees the FTE statistic includes individuals who are in Buildings and Grounds, the Classified Personnel Association, Food Service, the Non-Affiliated Group and the Safety and Support Team.

"For Administration, the FTE statistics include District Level Administrators, Building Level Administrators, and the portion of Division Head responsibilities devoted to Administration.

"For 2007-2008, the ending FTE for Certified Staff was 224.0. As of October 1 of the current school year, the FTE for the Certified Staff is 225.1 a difference of 1.1 FTE. The increase in Certified FTE is attributed to additional sections in Business Education, Driver Education, History, Science, and World Languages.

"In the Non-Certified Employee Groups, the ending FTE for 2007-2008 was 188.08. As of October 1 of the current school year, the FTE is 188.64 a difference of .56 FTE. While the Daycare employees and the Director of Student Activities are no longer reflected in this category the African American Parent Outreach Coordinator, the Network

Manager, and two one-to-one Teaching Assistants in Special Education have been added.

“In the Administrative category, the ending FTE 2007-2008 was 14.1. As of October 1 of the current school year, the FTE is 15.6 a difference of 1.5. The increase in the Administrative category results from the move of the Director of Student Activities (1.0) to the position of Assistant Principal and the increase of the Assistant Principal for Student Services from .5 to 1.0.

He included three documents: 1) 2009 Fiscal Year Certified/Non-Certified Semester I FTE Report; 2) Profile of Certified employees; and 3) Profile of Non-Certified employees (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting).

Mr. Edgecombe noted that 34 percent of the faculty lives within the district.

Q: How have percentages of minority teachers changed from last year?

A: During Mr. Edgecombe’s tenure, the percentage has ranged between 27 and 31. This year it was 29. While more minority teachers were hired, some left the District. Ms. Patchak-Layman reflected that this was a category in which the Board of Education had anticipated a change, as the goal was to increase minority representation. Mr. Edgecombe stated that the goal of hiring 20 percent minorities was met, in fact the number was over 30 percent, but the District cannot control who leaves, which ultimately makes a difference in the complexion of the faculty. Several teachers were lost to other administrative opportunities, and that is a testament to the training they received at OPRFHS. It is also a reflection of the scarcity of minority candidates within the country.

Dr. Weninger stated that the recruitment/retention of faculty members is a goal of the Board of Education. This year the District hired 30 percent minorities and it continues to work on the goal. The Patton School District in Missouri, outside of St. Louis, promoted its successes relative to minority hires, etc. OPRFHS’s number was fifty percent higher than that of Patton. This is a concern for all districts throughout the country. This is not where the District wants to be, but it is the reason why it is a Board of Education goal. Ms. Patchak-Layman hoped that the conversations about retention would include the broader school climate as to whether minority staff felt there was room for movement and whether the school has a climate that is

accepting of minority staff and has the ability to change based on their expertise.

**Probationary
Faculty list
2008-09**

Mr. Edgecombe presented the Probationary Faculty list for 2008-09 (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting); as *The School Code of Illinois* requires new teachers to the District to remain in probationary status for a period of four (4) consecutive full-time years of service. As of October 1, the District employs 77 non-tenured faculty members, which represents 71.2 FTE or 31.6 percent of total certified faculty. By Division/Department, the untenured individuals were listed.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked what challenges did this pose for Human Resources in terms of 1) having a high percentage of non-tenured teachers, and 2) the changes at the school over the last number of years. Where were the educational programs for them? Mr. Edgecombe stated that from an HR viewpoint, the biggest challenge is to have appropriate mentors to help new teachers become acclimated to the school environment. In many respects, this is an issue for the division heads and department chairs, as they determine who the mentors will be. He felt that the challenges were: 1) trying to ensure that there remains integrity in the curriculum being developed for the students; and 2) retaining the traditional aspects of the institution that represent who OPRFHS is as a school district. Ms. Patchak-Layman asked for examples of the traditions of the District.

Dr. Weninger first echoed Mr. Edgecombe's statement and then replied to Mr. Hunter's comment about the faculty not being relied upon, as he felt this was the area where tenured faculty could be of great help, e.g., assisting in the mentoring program, supporting participation even more deeply in the professional learning teams, and helping new teachers to become more ensconced in the school's curriculum and the initiatives for student achievement. In terms of tradition, Ms. Patchak-Layman mentioned her conversation with Ms. Milojevic about student activities. The tradition of students being involved in co-curricular activities and athletics is growing. Also, the tradition of the kinds of students from this District who go on to achieve in the Tradition of Excellence is another example, as are the student writings in the History Department, the Foreign Exchange Programs, etc. Those are examples of the deep programmatic traditions that the District would like tenured faculty to induct the younger faculty in as they come on board and for them to participate in these traditions deeply. Ms. Patchak-Layman asked whether the faculty was involved in co-curricular activities. Dr. Weninger stated that because there was an understanding that students involved in co-curricular are more apt to be successful, it is incumbent on the teachers to make sure those programs are viable. Mr. Edgecombe

stated that new teachers are told about being involved in the life of the school beyond the classroom doors and the relationship with the larger body of students; that is an important part to being a faculty member in this District. That school spirit cannot be replaced by other individuals. As teachers are asked to be more involved with the families and the students, Ms. Patchak-Layman asked where the play came in, i.e., being part of the tradition but wanting them to have a more active role in the outreach of students. Mr. Edgecombe responded that there was no easy answer to that question, as faculty members also have personal lives and families that need attention. There is a balancing point that each person must determine for himself or herself. The District lets teachers know the ideal, but it also lets them make their own decisions.

Mr. Hunter added that there is a reason that teachers receive a key to the building. In 90 percent of the schools in Illinois, teachers do not go to their schools at any other time other than the school day. When searching to replace Dr. Bridge, one of the members of the search team said one of the most impressive things in this high school was the fact that teachers did not talk about doing another business on the side; the levels of the expectations were so high at OPRFHS that teachers had to be around the school other than just during the regular school day. Those are the traditions that should be discussed. Dr. Millard commented that Board of Education members have the responsibility to make this an environment one that people want to come to; it is more than hiring the superintendent, it is the policies set and the work the Board of Education does. The Board of Education needs to think about that in the comments made at this table. It is beyond traditions; it is a matter of expectations and accountability. The Board of Education needs to acknowledge what the faculty does and help it.

**Renewal of
EAP Contract**

Mr. Allen moved to approve the renewal of the EAP contract with WorkPlace Solutions for FY 2009, as presented; seconded by Mr. Rigas. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Mr. Edgecombe noted that there was a 5 percent increase in cost (\$21 vs. \$20 per FTE), as well as the request for a two-year contractual arrangement, as opposed to the traditional one-year arrangement. This was the first increase in costs since the District established a relationship with WorkPlace Solutions during the 2000-01 school year. He also reported that the employee level of satisfaction with the services of WorkPlace Solutions remains high.

IASB Resolutions

Dr. Lee moved to permit Ms. Patchak-Layman to attend the IASB as a delegate and to vote her positions on the IASB's Resolutions; seconded by Mr. Rigas. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

The Board of Education members had noted their sentiment on the following issues:

Board Member Travel. While Mr. Allen presumed that this resolution affected the entire state, District 200 Board of Education members did not need to be reimbursed for their travel.

Unit Districts. Ms. Patchak-Layman favored encouraging legislators to put pressure on school districts to form unit districts. Dr. Lee opposed the State telling the districts what to do, but did not oppose the discussion locally. Ms. Fisher stated that to do so in this area would be very expensive to the taxpayers.

Dr. Weninger stated that over 90 percent of the school districts agree to the resolutions as presented which the IASB then presents to the state legislators. As members of the IASB, OPRFHS is asked to weigh in on these resolutions. This document will be given on behalf of OPRFHS and the IASB would base their recommendations on the membership vote and give them to the state legislators. It has no direct affect on what OPRFHS does; the IASB uses it for its action group.

Mr. Rigas felt that this would have zero effect on anything this District does and further discussion would not be a good use of the District's time. As such, the motion was made above to allow Ms. Patchak-Layman to carry forward her positions on the recommendations.

Discussion of Board Goals

Dr. Millard reported that a question was raised at the Instruction Committee as to when the Board of Education would address the issues of goals and achievement indicators. The Board of Education had not decided in what format it would address these issues. Dr. Millard named the Board of Education's four goals: 1) student achievement, 2) measurement of student achievement; 3) recruitment and retention of minority staff; and 4) initiatives for environmental improvements. Discussion had occurred about assigning each of the goals to one of the committees. In a casual discussion Dr. Millard had with another Board of Education member, there was a suggestion to organize a fourth committee that would alternate or combine with the Policy Committee. After significant discussion relative to timing, content, and operation of the committee, it was the consensus of the majority of the Board of Education to hold a Policy, Evaluation, and Goals (PEG) Committee in November and March, instead of just a regular Policy Committee meeting in order to 1) discuss policy (if there were policies that needed expediting); 2) formulate a mechanism/document for evaluating the superintendent; and 3) develop a strategy for setting goals for the next year. In November and March, the PEG Committee would meet to

discuss the evaluation instrument; in January and June, it would meet to discuss the goals.

By agreeing to the above, the Board of Education heeded Dr. Weninger's suggestion that reporting on the goals more frequently would be unrealistic. Dr. Weninger understood that the Board of Education had approved the goals in August and that the administration was to develop the indicators, which had been presented with the goals. If the Board of Education wanted to change direction and work on the indicators, he would not continue to work on the goals. The administration believed that the indicators proposed would be used to determine whether the goals were going to be successful and to change that now would be a disconnect. Dr. Millard simply wanted to use this time to discuss the goals.

Dr. Lee had misunderstood that the issue of the indicators had been settled. He had thought that the Board of Education was being causal about the indicators and that would eventually talk about them. He had not remembered the Board of Education responding to the indicators. Dr. Millard reiterated that this might be a time for the Board of Education to give feedback on the indicators developed by the administration.

Ms. Fisher acknowledged the work that had been done by the Superintendent, Mr. Prale, and Ms. Hill, per the Board of Education's direction, as it was substantive and organized; she did not want to make a change in direction.

The Board of Education members concurred that the timeline for the development of the goals and budget were not in alignment. Because some of the results of some of the programs instituted may not be known until the end of the year or even up to four years later, Mr. Rigas suggested staying the course, as Dr. Weninger had described in the document below.

“Last year, the Board approved six initiatives targeted at minority student achievement for 2008-2009. In addition, the Board approved in August a set of four goals for the District, the Board, and the Superintendent. Finally, we had already been engaged in and begun a number of initiatives (27) to raise student achievement.

“Over the past two months, I have become increasingly concerned about the number of activities in which staff members are engaged and their workload, as well as the addition of activities as a result of Board discussion from Board meeting to Board meeting. As a result, I

thought it best to provide a clearer picture of where we are currently regarding goals, programs, initiatives, and activities.”

Dr. Weninger included two documents, which represented a summary of the District, Board, Superintendent, and school goals, programs, and initiatives for 2008-2009. These items actively drive much of the daily, weekly, and longer-term work. He presented them for three reasons.

1. to show the Board, the staff, and the community the efforts in which the District is actively engaged to improve OPRFHS;
2. to begin the identification of how the 52 items listed related to each other, i.e., overlap, interrelate, supplement, complement, etc., each other; and
3. to help bring awareness to the priorities.

Dr. Weninger had stated that a vast majority of the goals, programs, initiatives, and activities were directly or indirectly related to student achievement, while less than a handful were not.

Dr. Lee noted his severe disappointment in the way in which the Board of Education had planned both the development of the goals, the lack of development of the indicators, the enormously short period of time allowed for their development, and the haphazard way of going about the process of the evaluation of the Superintendent. He was not happy with the evaluation instrument for the Superintendent that had been prepared.

Dr. Lee looked for a sense of organization/agreement on the process in which the Board of Education arrived at its goals and an instrument for the evaluation of the superintendent. He still did not have a sense that the Board of Education had a common understanding of the process and the timelines. He felt everything the Board of Education had done was on a spur-of-the moment basis and he did not think that was changing. While he might not have been listening well enough, he did not feel that the Board of Education had agreed on a concise set of steps in the organization of the determination of the goals, the indicators, or the establishment of the process for the superintendent evaluation. He wanted the Board of Education to work monthly on this until it had adopted the procedures for goal setting and the evaluation process itself. Mr. Rigas concurred.

Mr. Hunter had counseled the Board of Education that it met too often. He suggested the Board of Education construct a docket. Dr. Millard thanked him for his comment.

The goals have financial implications. Ms. Patchak-Layman felt the goal discussion had to begin in January relative to personnel issues, i.e., how would one start looking at goals based on data available and determine if there were areas that needed a different orientation in the following year in order to get it into the budget cycle. Dr. Lee stated that Ms. Sharon Patchak-Layman implied a type of thing of which he did not intend when she talked about how the goals would affect the budget, how many teachers will be used, etc. Personally, he thought that was going too far. He was talking about the goals in a general sense, a theoretical approach, some sense of an organization, the process used to arrive at goals, and the process for arriving at the superintendent evaluation. Everything the Board of Education has done has been done impulsively.

Mr. Rigas stated that developing a timeline was not possible because the minimum one could do was wait until January. That will not affect hiring people who are hired in January; the District cannot wait to do staffing in February. That granular level is unrealistic.

Ms. Sharon Patchak-Layman disagreed and gave the example that the District wanted a full-time person to work with Mastery Manager, to structure exams, to understand student achievement in the classroom, etc., and had included that desire in the School Improvement Plan Grant application. The District did not receive the grant and the school is not hiring for that position. However, if the District uses the Mastery Manager Program in a limited number of classes, it could make a great difference in terms of academic achievement for the students. Yet, she cannot make that decision until that information comes forward. She was not talking about moving 15 people from here to there, etc. The Board of Education has asked for an evaluation on various programs and she expects to make the decisions on the disposition of those programs. Those are all budget questions. Mr. Rigas said that Dr. Weninger, Mr. Prale, and Mr. Rouse do that kind of review all of the time. That is not the Board of Education's job; it is the job of the administrators. Ms. Patchak-Layman disagreed. She felt the goal was to improve student achievement and the crux was the indicators and measures of success, and that was where the conversation existed. What does the District want to do and where does it want to move forward? Dr. Millard inquired as to what the Board of Education's responsibility was in this. Is it her job to bring Mastery Manager to the District? No, it is the responsibility of Dr. Weninger and Mr. Prale to tell the Board of Education that in spite of the fact that the District was not awarded the grant, they felt the need to have this position and to bring a proposal. It is not her responsibility, as a Board of Education member, to look at the minutia and the details and she disagreed with Ms. Patchak-Layman strongly as to what the role of the Board of Education member is and

what is the role of the administrator. Ms. Patchak-Layman responded that she was looking at this as the data that comes before the Board of Education.

Dr. Lee felt that the level of Board of Education oversight Ms. Patchak-Layman had described constituted becoming engaged in administration, as opposed to policy setting. He was speaking of spending time on determining policy direction; when a policy direction can be specific as to the dollars in next year's budget, it means one is interfering with administration. A six-month gap with money following policy is not policy direction; it is stepping into the place of administrators.

Having worked in four districts, Dr. Weninger reflected on what may happen in terms of governance. The board asks the superintendent to present it with examples of evaluation instruments. Then, the superintendent is charged with developing that instrument in coordination with the board president. It is then discussed with the board. Mr. Rigas said that is what this Board of Education did previously but had not found any instruments that were inspiring. Ms. Patchak-Layman added that not all boards and districts work that way. Dr. Millard understood that if Board of Education members were intended to serve as part of a policy organization, which is what they are elected to do, that does not mean doing the legwork. It would however, not preclude an individual Board of Education member from giving input.

It was at this point that there was consensus on forming the PEG Committee.

Closed Session

At 10:20 p.m., on October 23, 2008, Mr. Rigas 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); seconded by Dr. Lee A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

At 11:24 p.m. on Thursday, October 23, 2008, the Board of Education reconvened its open session.

Adjournment

At 11:25 p.m. on Thursday, October 23, 2008, Dr. Lee moved to adjourn the Board of Education meeting; seconded by Mr. Rigas. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Dr. Dietra D. Millard
Vice President

Dr. Ralph H. Lee
Secretary