

**Official Minutes of the  
Oak Park Board of Education District 97,  
970 Madison Street, Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois**

**Special Joint Meeting November 19, 2014  
Held at Oak Park River Forest High School  
201 N. Scoville, Oak Park, Illinois**

This is a special joint board meeting of the Board of Education of Oak Park Elementary School District 97, the Board of Education of Oak Park and River Forest High School District 200, the Board of Trustees of the Village of Oak Park and the Collaboration of Early Childhood Care and Education Governing Board

Member Felton called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Sacks, Felton, O'Connor (7:19 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.), Spatz, and Brisben  
Absent: Traczyk, and Gates  
Also Present: Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations Therese O'Neill,  
and Board Secretary Sheryl Marinier

Members of the District 200 Board in attendance: President John Phelan, Vice President Jeff Weissglass, Thomas Cofsky, Sharon Patchak-Layman, Steve Gavinson, Superintendent Dr. Steven Isoye and Clerk of the Board Gail Kalmerton

Members of the Village Board in attendance: Peter Barber (left at 8:12 p.m.), Colette Lueck, Andrea Ott, Bob Tucker, Village Clerk Theresa Powell, and Village Manager Cara Pavlicek

Members of the Collaboration for Early Childhood Development Board in attendance: President Carollina Song, Vice President Ann Courter, Treasurer David Weindling, Founder Eric Gershenson, and Executive Director Carolyn Newberry Schwartz

**REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

The agenda for the meeting was reviewed. Bob Tucker moved, seconded by Andrea Ott to approve the agenda. The motion was carried.

**GOVERNING BOARD REPORT**

**Future Meeting Dates and Planned Topics for Discussion**

It was reported that the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) Governing Board meets three times a year, with the next meeting scheduled in February, 2015. Future topics include a financial review, project updates, with a focus on a few specific projects.

**Administrative Report**

Therese O'Neill reported on the process for paying expenses under the IGA.

**COLLABORATION ANNUAL REPORT**

The members of the Collaboration Board in attendance were introduced.

**FINANCIAL – AUDIT UPDATE**

David Weindling reported that an audit was conducted; although a couple changes were recommended for future reporting, the audit found no exception. Additionally, he reported that the nonprofit tax filing has been completed, and that the current budget goes through October, 2015.

## FINANCIAL – AUDIT UPDATE (Continued)

Weindling reported that the 2013-14 budget ended with a large net revenue. He attributed the balance to the Collaborations efforts to be administratively frugal, and noted that some items that were identified for implementation during the first year were deferred. Additionally, he noted that the creation of the database has been identified as an asset and the \$32,000 associated with this item no longer falls into the expense accounts; \$37,000 was allocated for work to be performed by Chapin Hall that will need to be expended this coming year, and several large donations were received. Weindling reported that some of the Website work scheduled for 2013 was not completed; some of the work was done pro-bono, and reserves (staff insurance, etc.) were built in and not used. Weissglass pointed out the fact that the budget and the project year were not in sync, which would also cause a discrepancy in expenditures.

Newberry Schwartz reported that the budget was projected far into the future and there were problems with some of the projections. The Collaboration is working to monitor where the money is and the best way to monitor the use of the revenue. It was agreed that the Village Manager and Superintendents of District 97 and 200 will meet to discuss ideas on how to spend the revenue.

Additionally, Newberry Schwartz noted that there were no unanticipated expenses and none perceived in the future. She noted that the organization is looking at using more than one database and making improvements, as data collection is becoming more than what was expected.

### **Report on Progress**

Carollina Song, chair of the CEC Board, noted that the parent support program, implemented via a contract with Parenthesis Family Center, has touched over 450 families in the community, and 43 families are enrolled and actively engaged in the home visitation program. A committee has been formed to monitor progress on the Unified Early Childhood Database. Additionally, the Collaboration is prepared to formalize the parameters for the brand identify for the parent support programs.

Song reported that there has been activity pertaining to the Developmental Screening and Referral system. Shannon Ellison, the Developmental Screening Coordinator, has secured the involvement of 18 child care centers and preschools, one community agency, and one medical practice in this pilot program. A preferred screening tool has been identified, and the Collaboration worked with District 97 to enable sites to have web-based access to that screening tool.

Song noted that the State of Illinois has created a Family Child Care provider credential. A group of nine Oak Park providers will participate in a pilot for the credential this year. The State of Illinois has also revamped its Quality Improvement Rating System for preschools and child care centers, which is now called ExceleRate. Additionally, Song noted that Chapin Hall continues to work on the early childhood database.

Members of the Collaboration are continuing their work to strengthen the organizational capacity. At the last board meeting, plans were discussed for a second annual board fundraising appeal, and the first formal board retreat will be held on Saturday, January 10, 2015. Additionally, a new Grant Writer has been hired.

Song reported that the Developmental Screening and Referral system has been the subject of a white paper which has been distributed regionally as far away as East St. Louis. The new Family Child Care provider credential was created by a state committee chaired by Diana Rosenbrock, the Professional Development Coordinator, and another Collaboration board member was also involved in that effort.

### **Report on Progress (Continued)**

Executive Director, Carolyn Newberry Schwartz, participates in Erikson Institute's Envisioning Change Improving Education and Developmental Outcomes of Young African American Students initiative, and presented the Collaboration model to that group in December, 2013. She also continues to participate in the Consortium for Community Systems as part of the Race to the Top, as well as on the Illinois Early Learning Council.

### **SPECIAL FOCUS – PILOT DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING**

Shannon Ellison and Charice Phillips shared a presentation on Developmental Screening: What, Why, Who and How. They noted the importance of vision and hearing screenings for children ages 3-5 years of age at preschools and child care centers, and to ensure that every child birth to age five receives periodic developmental screenings. Once the children in need of services are identified, it is important that they actually receive the services identified in their assessments. They noted that the Collaboration is working on providing information about the referral process and services to all providers with an expectation that they will direct the parents to the Collaboration for guidance.

Ellison reported that in 2013, the program was expanded to include River Forest, and noted that all Oak Park and River Forest preschool programs are offered the opportunity to participate in the vision and hearing screening program. This year, program participation increased from 30 programs to 35 and the number of children to be screened this year is anticipated to reach approximately 1,400, which is an increase of about 200 children.

The developmental screening process was defined as a quick check of a child's developmental skills and milestones. 17 percent of children have a developmental or behavioral disability such as autism, mental retardation, or Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). In addition, many children have delays in language or other areas. When a developmental delay is not recognized early, children must wait to get the help they need. This can make it hard for them to learn when they start school. Many times, delays are overlooked or missed by parents, physicians and educators. Using a valid and reliable screening tool significantly increases the accurate identification of developmental delays. Screening early means improved outcomes for the children.

The Physicians Network of the Collaboration was formed in 2008 to promote use of developmental screening tools in local pediatric and family practice offices. New referral forms have been developed and adopted that support the release of information under FERPA and HIPPA. Information about referral procedures to the Early Intervention system, Early Childhood Special Education, and private service providers has been published in a Referral and Services Directory.

The Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) is a web based questionnaire and data management tool that is completed by parents and reviewed by providers. The results are discussed with the family and all parties gain insight into an individual child's development. The assessment has two tools, the ASQ-3 which hits 21 age intervals, with 30 questions covering five areas of development: communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving, personal social and includes questions that look at the quality of skills. The ASQ:SE is an 8 age interval assessment with between 19 and 33 questions covering several areas of behavior: self-regulation, compliance, communication, adaptive, autonomy, affect and interaction with people. The assessment includes open-ended questions related to eating, sleeping and toileting as well as parent concerns and what the parent enjoys about the child.

### **SPECIAL FOCUS – PILOT DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING (Continued)**

The ASQ pilot project is represented by 20 early childhood providers who participated in 15 hours of training and a monthly allotment of coaching and mentoring hours. The children in this project are screened twice a year, resulting in 900 ASQ-3S and 700 ASQ-3 assessments being administered.

Next steps were identified as;

- Invite additional (eventually all) programs and medical practices to participate in the ASQ Online Enterprise by July, 2015
- Increase public awareness and education around the importance of developmental screening, and continue to support providers to evaluate screening results to determine the most appropriate agency for referral when further assessment is deemed needed. This will ensure that children are evaluated for eligibility for appropriate support services in a timely fashion

Newberry Schwartz noted that because of this process, children needing services are getting them sooner. Districts 97 and 200 have been asked to share aggregated numbers, and the hope is that children who begin school with IEPs, will not need to stay in these programs as long as they have in the past.

It was reported that River Forest District 90 was invited to participate in the screening program; unfortunately they are just beginning another initiative. They will be invited to participate again in the future. The Collaboration will be making a presentation to the Oak Park Village Board and hoping that a resolution supporting the work will be adopted.

### **CALL TO THE BOARD – ISSUES, CONCERNS, AND TOPICS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS**

Member Brisben asked if there was anything on the radar that could under mind the efforts of the Collaboration and stop them from reaching their goals. Newberry Schwartz expressed the need to track threats and take a proactive response. She noted that there is legislation that could restrict the data sharing between the Collaboration, Village and school districts. Currently, a group is communicating with legislators and watching Senate Bill 16. She is meeting with the Governor's Office next week to align programs with them and tap into their training. She noted that the state is discussing ways to integrate the Collaboration's program into their own. She reported that, because of their innovative efforts, the name of the Collaboration has been submitted to the White House for recognition. Additionally, she noted concern about low-income single parents who cannot maintain housing in Oak Park and move away. It was suggested that affordable house could be a future discussion of IGOV.

Song noted the importance of the home visitation program and the need to measure quality, not just case loads. She expressed a concern that there may not be enough services for all the children who need them. Additionally, she noted that technical issues with complicated data are a concern.

President Spatz noted that the efforts of the Collaboration are very different from most communities. He noted that Oak Park is ahead of the other communities and is gaining attention for its accomplishments in this area. He expressed the need to keep up this pace. He explained that it is difficult to get numbers from the state regarding the children born in the town, making the data collection process more difficult.

Newberry Schwartz reported that the Kindergarten Readiness Test (KRT) will be used to assess the success of the program. Chapin Hall is excited to work with Oak Park because they share

**CALL TO THE BOARD – ISSUES, CONCERNS, AND TOPICS FOR FUTURE**

**AGENDAS (Continued)**

data on every child from Pre-Kindergarten to third grade. The process will eventually be extended through eighth grade.

It was reported that the next two meetings of the IGA Governing Board will be held on February 25, 2015 and May 6, 2015.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Wendy Giardina, an Oak Park resident and parent of children in District 97, expressed pride in being an Oak Park resident. She expressed gratitude to the Collaboration and the board members suggesting that early intervention also works to stop crime, etc.

Gratitude was extended to District 200 for hosting this event.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to conduct, member Felton declared the meeting adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board will be held on Tuesday, December 2, 2014 beginning at 7 p.m. at the Administration building located at 970 Madison Street, Oak Park, Illinois.

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Board President

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Board Secretary