

**OAK PARK AND RIVER FOREST HIGH SCHOOL**  
**201 N. Scoville**  
**Oak Park, IL 60302**

**Finance Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**April 14, 2015**

A Finance Committee meeting was held on April 14, 2015. Mr. Cofsky called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m. in the Board Room. Committee members present were Thomas F. Cofsky, Dr. Ralph H. Lee, and Jeff Weissglass. Also present were Dr. Steven T. Isoye, Superintendent; Tod Altenburg, Chief Financial Officer; Michael Carioscio, Chief Financial Officer; David Ruhland, Director of Human Resources; Dr. Gwendolyn Walker Qualls, Interim Director for Pupil Support Services; Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

Visitors included Sharon Patchak Layman, Board of Education member; Jennifer Hoffmann, Assistant Principal for Student Services; Ronald Johnson, Director of Purchasing and Transportation; Therese Brennock, Meghan Cahill, Linda Carlson, Julie Fuentes, Jacqueline Hanson, Joe Herbst, Kris Johnson, Estaben Medina, Peter Nixon, Caroline Schoenbeck, Jonathan Silver, Alisa Walton, Robert Zummallen, faculty and staff members; Mary Bird, Karin Danganan, Katheryn, Ken Cozette, Mary Keegan, Amy Morton, and Caroline Stankovich, community members; Steve Miller of PMA; and Tom McMullen of the Hay Group.

**Minutes**

Mr. Cofsky moved to approve the Finance Committee minutes of March 16, 2015, as amended; seconded by Dr. Lee. A voice vote resulted in motion carried.

**Public Comment**

Mr. Weissglass noted that no decisions/actions were to be made at this meeting.

Linda Carlson, an OPRFHS 21-year PE teacher read the following statement: “Quiet, alert and with apprehension, thirty-six freshmen girls walk into their first Physical Education class of high school. They are overwhelmed navigating the building on their first day of school, maneuvering the crowded hallways, and are on high alert to figure out where they fit into the all-important social hierarchy. Their excitement and apprehension is palpable as I begin to introduce their required PE class –Self-defense...beyond the physical – defending the emotional and mental well-being of teenage girls.

“As we explore the curriculum, I’m honored as these young girls begin peeling back the layers of their 14-year-old facades. They begin to share and relate to each other and me as we discover, we are more similar in experience than different.

“I’m saddened to know that these 14 year old girls are already carrying heavy stories. This semester I had 14 year olds girls reveal to me for the FIRST time...that they are survivors. Here are the numbers:

- 3 raped
- 3 molested
- 2 revealed they are struggling with eating disorders
- 3 reported dating abuse
- 2 reported being abuse in their home
- 2 were participating in self-harming behavior
- And 5 other student reported general social emotional issues

“And those were only from my 3 freshmen classes. I had upperclassmen that have come back to me this semester to disclose and seek help because they are rape survivors, dating abuse victims and eating disorder survivors.

“I could not teach this class or deal with these students without the support of the youth therapist, counselors and Student Intervention Directors (SIDs). In fact, I’m drowning and I need help! During the first week of class the girls are introduced to the youth therapist and SIDS in our classroom so they know where to go if they need someone. Students leave those days believing they have a right to feel safe in this school and that there are people here who care.

“However, the problem is that while our youth therapists, SIDS and counselors are triaging, there are more students who need them so they can’t devote their attention to our neediest kids. These kids need more than emergency room care... they need ongoing care.

“I have had students who no longer feel comfortable sharing their issues with adults because a youth therapist is here one year but gone the next. The students shut down and can’t get the ongoing support. These therapists can’t come early and stay late because they have second jobs to attend. They simply can’t support themselves on their salary. There is far too much turnover with our youth therapist. They need to be OPRF employees.

“Adding a fifth PSS Team and hiring our youth therapist as faculty aligns with Board goals that include:

- Building ‘trusting relationships,’
- making ‘all students feel welcome and experience a sense of belonging,’
- helping ‘every student to feel known and supported by at least one adult in the school community,’ and
- providing ‘social-emotional and academic supports’ to help students experience ‘academic challenge and successes’

“Students won’t disclose or seek help until they feel safe and have built a trusting relationship with someone. It’s an enormous step to share personal violence and pain. We can’t afford to re-traumatize these survivors by removing the therapist who is an anchor for them.”

Amy Morton, parent of OPRFHS students, spoke in support of a 5<sup>th</sup> PSS Team. If a typical class size is 25, a counselor with a caseload of 250 students was equivalent to having 10 classes. A counselor with a caseload of 325 would not be able to know his/her students well and be able to help them. The PSS Team helps students make good choice.

Mary Bird, parent of a senior, asked the Board of Education to concentrate on how to reduce the number of students who are not prepared after leaving OPRFHS by lowering class size, implementing programs that impact access and equity, and, most importantly, support the counselors as they are the student’s first contact. Every student has social-emotional needs on some level and the Board of Education can enhance school climate greatly by building relationships. The counselors’ management caseloads should be such that they are able to meet the needs of the students.

Joe Herbst, OPRFHS Counselor, read the following statement:

“I would like to start by reading this quote taken directly from page nine of the OPRFHS Student Handbook: “The Pupil Support Services (PSS) team enhances the school’s ability to work with students on behaviors that undermine their academic success. The PSS team provides a formal, consistent opportunity for key staff members to share vital information that supports student success.”

“The Pupil Support Services team, comprised of three counselors, a student intervention director, and a youth therapist form a small-school environment for the students we serve. Each PSS team is housed in a distinct location of our building to enhance team member communication and student contact. When students come to room 207 to see me, they know they have the support of a student intervention director and a youth therapist as well. This dynamic allows for multiple points of interaction with the whole child. Whether the student arrives for an academic reason, attendance issue, behavioral concern, or social-emotional crisis, that student has three adults designated as his or her own personal first responders.

“Rather than add an additional PSS team as proposed by Student Services, the District Leadership Team (DLT) advises for the addition of one counselor next year, followed by an additional counselor in 2016-2017 and a third counselor two years later, in 2018-2019. The DLT seeks a “phased in approach” to adding counselors, tracking the “enrollment trend” rather than student need. The DLT rationale states its support of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) recommended maximum caseload of 250 students per counselor, finding the ratio to be “based on sound practice and research.” Yet, the DLT recommendation to add one counselor next year will still leave us in excess of ASCA’s recommended ratio. Furthermore, the decision to add a counselor rather than a team reflects a lack of understanding of our delivery system in two ways. First, to phase in three counselors over the next four years means that counselor caseloads would be redistributed for three out of the next four years of high school. A phased-in approach is clearly not good for families. Second, a phased-in approach fractures relationships with students and begins to foster inequity within the delivery system itself. Let me use my team as an example. If one counselor is added only to my team, our small-school in room 207 will increase from servicing 830 students to 1093 students overnight. The other three teams will experience no change. Our team will be left with two options. Option #1 would be for my team’s student intervention director and youth therapist to absorb the needs of the additional students, 262 more students than the other three teams and a significant imbalance. Option #2 would be for the additional counselor’s caseload to be equally divided amongst the four teams, 65 new students for each of the student intervention directors and youth therapists. Consequently, 195 of the new counselor’s students would be outsourced to student intervention directors and youth therapists who serve on entirely different PSS teams. These teams are located in entirely different locations of the building, have entirely different conversations about students, and collaborate together at entirely different PSS meetings. No longer will the PSS team be comprised of the people who have the most interaction with the student. No longer will all students have access to the same level of service, quality of care, and measurement of protection. The displaced students will encounter an inequitable experience in which they no longer have the same small-school experience, which sabotages the philosophy underpinning the PSS model as well as the goals of our Board of Education. I urge the Board to consider the ramifications of such an approach and reconsider the original PSS team proposal as written.”

Jacqueline Hanson, OPRFHS counselor, made the following comments: “The time afforded us by the addition of a 5th PSS Team would give counselors the ability to roll out more opportunities for students. Some options already discussed include but are not limited to the following programming ideas:

1. Increase proactive, individual grade-level meetings from 2 per year for all students
2. Expand current group, grade-level curriculum presentations/workshops to one per semester for all grade levels
  - a. Add a meeting with students at the end of senior year, using our established relationship with them to address topics relating to transitioning to college safely and successfully.
  - b. Implement group meetings for students to take the Learning Style and Interest Inventories in Naviance, our college and career planning software; right now students only take the Personality Test, “Do What You Are.”

- c. Move the Goal-Setting portion of our fall sophomore lesson to spring of freshman year so that we can build on the goals and monitor and adapt them as the student goes through high school.
- 3. Develop more small groups targeted to the academic, personal/social, and college/career needs of our diverse student body.
- 4. Create a plan for increasing student participation in co- and extra-curricular activities.
- 5. Add a mini-college fair for in-state colleges commonly attended by our students to the Senior College Information Night parent presentation.
- 6. For the last two years counselors have brought a select group of African-American Juniors to the Black Student Leadership Conference at the College of DuPage in February. We'd like to build on the energy and excitement students feel after the Conference by following up with college preparation and readiness workshops to keep the momentum going strong through college application season and beyond;
  - a. My strong hope is that OPRFHS will have more successful programs to present at upcoming MSAN conferences; OPRFHS needs to be a leader among peer MSAN schools, and I believe the counselors can play a pivotal role in making this happen.
- 7. Implement Check-and-Connect systems with our most at-risk students who need more attention and hands-on assistance regularly.
- 8. Join with our youth therapists to offer more social-emotional and academic skill-development groups, before, during, and after school.
- 9. If the student-led advisory proposal is approved to begin next year, the counselors will be able to create a developmentally-appropriate, proactive counseling curriculum to address issues that affect students at this school, including substance use and abuse, conflict resolution, social intelligence, grit, teen pregnancy, positive relationship building, to name a few.

“My colleagues and I are salivating to implement these proactive, holistic concepts. We will be able to start work this coming fall if the 5th PSS Team is approved.”

Jonathan Silver, OPRFHS Student Intervention Director, read the following statement: “Good evening. Oak Park and River Forest High School is the only place I have ever worked. It is the only home I know. I taught here for 5 years. 3 years ago I had the opportunity of a lifetime and with the help and support of colleagues and the community, I embarked upon a different career path, one that thankfully kept me in this building. I am now a student intervention director. Not a day goes by where I stop and wish I were still in the classroom. This is my calling. This is my passion. People thought I was crazy for leaving the classroom. If that's the case, I wish to remain crazy all of the time.

“I am sure there are certain people who are not pleased I am speaking here tonight. If my wife knew about it I would probably not be here. But this isn't about me, about her, or about any of the other adults in the room, frankly. This is about our students. All I have heard from incoming board members, outgoing board members, is that we have an achievement gap and that we have discipline issues. Yet here we are with a perfect opportunity to directly and resoundingly attack those issues, and we balk. Why do we balk? Are we truly invested in closing these gaps, or are we just providing lip service to a community that wants to hear it?

“I deliberated over anecdotes and job responsibilities to throw at you in my short time up here, and I balked at that. I am invested in providing those stories, but rather than provide lip service, I just want to speak from the heart. You have heard the reasons as to why we need more counselors to better serve students. I firmly believe that an additional Student Intervention Director would actually lower suspensions. Contrary to recently growing perception, we typically do not suspend students.

“Unfortunately, that is pretty much the only thing that comes across in our semester discipline report, but that is akin to selecting a random page from a novel and letting it stand to represent its entirety.

“In closing, I stand before you to speak from the heart. On a daily basis, I have to look out for the needs of my students, while assuaging the needs of parents, colleagues, administrators, faculty, and community members. Tonight I only look out for the needs of my students and only look to assuage their needs. I will put in 100% on a daily basis each and every day for the rest of my career, whether my caseload is 800 students, 1000 students, or 1500 students. The question becomes how many lives will my 100% impact. I thank you for your time and god bless our students.”

Estaban Medina, OPRFHS Counselor, made the following statement: “Hello, my name is Estaban Medina. I am one of the counselors who feels fortunate every day to be in the school and community that is OPRF. Every day I get to work alongside professionals who work tirelessly to help students be successful on many levels in this building.

“At my previous school, the PSS team concept was just an idea, nowhere near implementation. To work within a well-established, supportive and effective model, such as ours here at OPRF has been eye opening, educational and enlightening. Where I used to work, we each carried a caseload of over 360 students, and our work with students looked entirely different than it does here. The implementation of many non-counseling activities fell to the counseling division, which meant less time to work with students directly. Most of the services we provided were done only in a group format, which never fully allowed for the relationship building that is integral to a student’s transition and success in high school. Our work was done in isolation because of the extraneous demands. With only one dean on the other side of the building addressing all disciplinary concerns, there was rarely time for us to communicate. We often found out of a student’s actions and their disciplinary consequences days after the fact.

“Things are very different here. Walking into OPRF my first year was like walking into a different world and I learned a lot in that first year. I learned that we have a day at the start of the year set aside just for the incoming freshmen where we counselors get to spend the entire day with them. I learned that when transfer students joins us, I get to sit with them and their families and talk about more than just what courses they were taking. We get to talk about their interests, their goals, and their hopes. I learned that we get to meet with our students individually throughout the year on more than one occasion - all of them. I learned that I get to hand my seniors their diploma at graduation. I learned that because of all of these interactions I am able to have with them that my students know I am someone they can turn to with any question, regardless of the magnitude. If they lose their locker combination or can’t remember where their locker is, they know they can ask me. If they forget where their 3rd period class is, they can ask me. If they are anxious because their best friend in the whole world doesn’t have the same lunch period, they can talk to me. If he is having a bad day because he got into an argument with a parent, or if she is sad because she just found out the boy she liked just asked someone else to prom, they can talk to me. And, they do.

“I also learned that the student services division operated under a PSS model, and that our spaces were strategically planned to facilitate our collaboration with our SID and our youth therapist to better serve our students. We meet weekly to discuss our students who demonstrate the need for more. We are able to share different ideas and insights so the discussion becomes more about how to proactively help our students rather than reactively consequence our students. I learned that by being able to work closely with my team’s SID and youth therapist, our students find out they have even more people in this building to turn to when they have need. I also learned how different the role of the SID is here compared to where I came from and even from my own misconceptions. I have seen some of our toughest kids bond with my SID, Alisa Walton, because she takes the time to get to know them, their circumstances, and their needs. So even if a consequence is necessary, the student walks out knowing they were compassionately

heard and understand why there is a consequence. If a student is asked to leave class and see our SID, I know when it happens, not days later, and can intervene before it gets worse.

“I have been able to see how effective the PSS model has been in working with students. I have seen how this structure has created an environment where students have more adults in this building to turn to when they need support. I worry about the impact that will be had as our current caseload sizes continue to rise. I also worry about the implementation of a plan that hinders the development of these relationships with students and creates an obstacle to the collaborative approach we take in working with our students. Thank you.”

Meghan Cahill, OPRFHS Counselor, read the following statement: “As a five-year member of the counseling division, I left my department chair position in student services at another district because returning to my destination high school was my final career goal. Just as it was when I left as an intern, OPRF continues to value student services as I have never seen elsewhere in a large comprehensive high school. From the minute students arrive, they are with their counselor and PSS team members, getting to know their go-to personnel in a sea of transition and vast opportunities. Our offices are a hub where students seek us out to get things done. I have had the privilege of working on every social emotional need from the most significant life threatening crisis to the departure of Zayn from One Direction in the last 24 hours.

“No two days look the same. We have streamlined our registration procedures this school year to preserve individual time with students. Despite the extraordinary benefit of class sizes at an all-time low, we are concerned that our individual time with students and families is in jeopardy as caseloads continue to rise and approach their all-time high. The data from comparative districts indicate lower caseloads yield more individual time with students and an enhanced counseling curriculum. It is the intention and tenor of this proposal to maintain our current level of high quality individual service, while continuing to expand smaller workshops to specific diversified populations in need (i.e. first generation college students, support for minority students in AP/honors program, and non-cognitive skills development), to name a few.

“The supportive learning environment board goal advocates for “a learning environment where every student feels known and supported by at least one adult in the school community.” From the moment they meet us as incoming freshmen, we are that first person, and from there the relationship building begins. This is a thoughtful proposal that underpins significant board goals, one we trust will come to the table and be given full consideration.”

Kris Johnson, OPRFHS Counselor, read the following statement: “Thank you for the opportunity to speak. My name is Kris Johnson and I am in my eleventh year as a counselor here at Oak Park and River Forest High School.

“Several weeks ago, Alisa Walton (my Student Intervention Director) and I worked with a young man on our caseload whom we both have a strong relationship with. He appeared in my office one morning, and was very agitated and hostile—totally out of character for him. As soon as he walked out of my office, I walked into Alisa’s office to tell her what had occurred. He had been with her right before me and her experience was the same. At that moment, our work as a PSS team began. I was already getting emails from his teachers and began communicating with them. Our team’s youth therapist was pulled in as was the school’s Behavioral Interventionist. His SPED case manager wanted to know what he could do to support the student. Events took a rapid turn for the worse, unfortunately, and the school resource officer was brought in. This young man’s behaviors were so out of character for him that we pulled in the school nurse to evaluate him. At that point, due to the escalating situation, an ambulance was called and the

student was taken to the Emergency Room of Oak Park Hospital, with the Behavior Interventionist travelling with him. The student was subsequently hospitalized.

“In an instant, my PSS Team rapidly expanded to meet the needs of this student. It grew from Alisa Walton, the youth therapist, and myself to include the case manager, the Behavior Interventionist, and our SRO and school nurse. After arriving at the hospital, it expanded again to include the school liaison and the student’s therapist at the hospital. A DCFS social worker was added to this growing team. On the night this young man was hospitalized, Dr. Gwen Walker-Qualls sent an email up-date at 10:30 PM—after just getting off the phone with his mother. All modes of communication helped to connect this expanded team—email, phone calls, text messages, in-person meetings—as we wrapped this young man with support. The PSS team expanded rapidly to include people outside of the walls of OPRF in an effort to provide much needed, comprehensive services as quickly as possible. The PSS team in both its in-house and expanded format is pivotal in the support and services that we deliver to our students. In the eleven years that we have used this model, our ability to mobilize services is efficient, impressive, and needed more than ever.

“While not every student at OPRF needs the kind of service that this young man did (who by the way, continues to need support), every student deserves it. I estimate that over the course of a week and a half working intensely with this student and my team, I clocked about 25 hours of service. I currently carry the highest counselor caseload at 284 students. Over the course of 180 school days, if I spent 25 hours of time with each of my students, I would need a work day of 39.44 hours. If I gave this level of service to HALF of my caseload, I would need a work day of 19.72. If I gave this kind of service to a quarter of my caseload—that is 71 students—I would need a work day of 9.86 hours per day. This is one kid and one situation. Not every student demands this level of service, but surely every kid—EVERY KID—deserves it. PSS teams and the work we do every day insure that immediate, strategic wrap-around services can go into place as soon as they are needed.”

Pete Nixon, OPRFHS Counselor, read the following statement: “Working in a high school, I hear a lot of four-letter words, and not just those that earned a glowering glance from your grandmother, the sort of look that made your parents flinch. No, our four-letter words include pool, levy, and park as in car, Oak Park, state exam, and green space. Prom. Feed. Meal. Rave – as in shout and in dance. Dope -- old and new meanings -- as in “what a dope” versus as in “Dude, that’s so dope.” Suit as in clothing and sadly, more frequently as in law. Test, pass/fail. Duke, Yale, debt, fees. Plan as in Four-Year-Plan, IEP, 504. Film, fame. Fair-play. Frequently cited four-letter words.

“According to an article in this morning’s Wall Street Journal, many a college student’s four-year plan now needs to include a therapist found well in advance of his or her arrival. Also in the news today was how the caddy to the new Master’s Golf Champion, Jordan Spieth, got the job because of his rapport with the winner as much as any masterful knowledge of golf. It was how the golfer felt in his caddy’s presence that seemed to make the difference. Arguably, the same could be said of the aspiring collegian to the therapist. Or the local teen to the OPRF counselor.

“But do we as an institution sufficiently invest in the culture that makes these valuable relationships possible? Do we hire with confidence to fully meet these targets? Four-letter words abound. We talk of male and mail as in I am a male with ever increasing email and voicemail. We speak of race as in footrace and as in skin color. Base as in chemistry and in ball. Bill as in payment and in legislation.

“What then is our duty, our legacy the next generation? What is the cost – another four-letter-word – of not providing our students, our kids, our community the supports necessary for them to flourish with a growing EQ to match their intellect? Why must we as a society presume that a college matriculant needs to bank a therapist as soon as their initial housing deposit clears?

“What should the community take as the crux of what is important to this administration and this school board? We hear the compelling needs. Yet, can we give those needs a habitat for growth? More four-letter words. Joke. Lead. Work. Week. As in 55-65 hours weekly akin to our faculty colleagues. What do we, as the adults in the room, settle for in a school that remains an essential linchpin of this community?”

“How does this moment call upon us? Can we demonstrate what we value by our actions – the measure by which others will judge us?”

“Time is another four-letter-word that may be the most equitable and unforgiving resource of them all? Tick-tock as in clock. Talk as in speak. Flim. Flam. Bond as in money and as in rapport. As enrollment and responsibilities increase, what do we have to show for the discussions about relationships that have spawned decades?”

“What price do we pay as a community if we don’t align our dimes with our core values? Do we allow for cultivation of the connections that we often trumpet as setting OPRF apart from its peers? From where I sit, as is often the case, this is a teachable moment, an opportunity for us to show by our actions what we as an institution value. How are we modeling what is best for kids if we fail to invest in the quiet moments that often cultivate character and resilience out of difficult moments, out the public eye? This is the domain that allows for the moments that teach compassion, grit, and perseverance. A public good.

“How do kids know that we care? We work to cultivate hope in our youthful charges. We earn -- a key four letter word -- their trust. They want to come to see us because as one student told me today, they like the “vibe.” Another four-letter word. Yet it isn’t just a matter of luck. Speed counseling is a youth therapist, right up there with multi-tasking. Or as my uncle once said, there can be no “quality time” without time. And finally, one of my four-letter favorites is ‘done.’”

Katrin Tiernan, OPRFHS parent, spoke in support of more counselors. When her family arrived at OPRFHS, she had never experiences counseling service like this before. She came from UK. Without Ms. Johnson’s assistance and knowledge, her family would have been completely lost, particularly with college assistance.

Karin Danganan, parent of a junior and an 8<sup>th</sup> grader, spoke of her experience with the counseling system, especially her experience with Ms. Johnson, noting that she was “wonderful and stressed.” She continued that her niece lost her mother the last semester of her junior year and her counselor had helped her through that period. When evaluating where she would go to college, one of the criteria that was evaluated was that of the advisory ratio. All of the discussion and challenges about the achievement gap, show the importance of adult members in order to successfully complete academic careers. When families do not know the resources, they fall through the cracks. Mentoring is very important and no better place to invest.

Ken Cozette, parent of 2 daughters, thanked the committee for its work. He was there for them and for Ms. Johnson. He spoke of his daughter’s challenges and how fortunate they were to have IEP’s and their counselor. His daughters had been afraid and there was lots of hand holding by their counselor. He had a heartfelt appreciation of the program.

Caroline Stankovich, parent of senior, graduate, and alum, spoke in support of the counseling division expressing appreciation for her children’s counselor, Peter Nixon, for his direction and motivation of her

children. She spoke of the stellar service, the long hours worked, and that she felt the counselors were the jewel of the high school.

Mary Keegan, parent, spoke of her child who started his/her education at a private school but moved to a public school because her medical issues could not be supported. She expressed her appreciation to her child's counselor Julie Fuentes. She spoke of the fabulous opportunities offered at the school, including the counseling services. The counselors are competent, caring responsible, creative and flexible. She gave unwavering support for the program that distinguishes OPRFHS as a wonderful place for students.

### **Life Safety Amendment**

The Finance Committee unanimously voted to recommend the Life Safety Amendment, as presented, to the Board of Education for approval at its regular April meeting. The following project will be funded with Life Safety Funds.

1. Replacement of galvanized steel plumbing piping main runs which provide domestic hot & cold water to branch piping throughout the 1967 building.
2. Replacement of Air Handling Unit (AHU) X1 mechanical equipment which serves the 1910 building.
3. Replacement of Air Handling Unit (AHU) X2 mechanical equipment which serves the 1913 building.
4. Replacement of Air Handling Unit (AHU) S8 mechanical equipment which serves the 1924 building.

Benefits from the approved work include:

- Piping replacement will improve the quality of water;
- New AHU mechanical equipment will improve indoor air quality.

This items will take some of the things off the long-term maintenance plan because they will be done under the Life Safety Plans, accelerating into this year's budget.

### **Residency Investigation Services Contract Renewal**

The Finance Committee unanimously voted to recommend that the contract with R.E. Walsh and Associates not be moved forward to the Board of Education for approval at its regular April meeting because it was less than the \$25,000 threshold needed Board of Education approval. The contracted employees of R.E. Walsh and Associates assist the District's two staff residency officers during peak times of the residency verification process as well as work during the District's residency verification days. The contract term is beginning July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016 at a contractual cost of \$88.50 per hour or approximately \$15,487. The anticipated hours is 175 hours total. This has a bid exemption for professional services. Probably the last time this will be presented to the Board of Education as it is under the \$25,000 threshold for bringing to the Board of Education. Ms. Hoffmann will determine where and how these people will be used in the process. While the District has been happy with their services, it has streamlined the process and not offered and not offered as many hours to register.

### **Jostens Yearbook Contract Extension**

The Finance Committee unanimously voted to recommend the contract extension with Jostens move forward to the Board of Education for approval at its regular April meeting. The contract term is July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016 with a cost of \$47,376.

### **Hay Group Presentation**

The Finance Committee received an update from the Hay Group on its development of a compensation philosophy for the District to apply in establishing compensation ranges for positions, onboarding new

hires, promotions within the organization, and compensation adjustments tied to performance-based approach.

Over 60 administrative and non-affiliated job responsibilities were reviewed, a job content-based grade levels using the most widely used proprietary job evaluation methodology and aligned with local and regional markets. The job levels were validated with District 200 leadership in April and they will serve as the foundation for the market analysis and recommended compensation structures going forward. Hay Group felt the levels of management and the job titles, i.e., assistant principals and administrative assistants, etc., at OPRFHS were consistent. One potential issue had to do with FLSA relations as to whether people can earn overtime, etc.? The market survey included 16 of the 20 schools in the Northwest Personnel Association. The initial observations were that administrative pay is competitive and that OPRFHS was tracking slightly less to the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile as job size increases to most senior level jobs and that pay for non-affiliated jobs was very competitive, although NWPAA survey information was not sufficient for the non-affiliated group. For those positions that fall outside of the target salary range, Hay Group will provide managerial guidelines. The midpoint of the salary range serves as the basis for external market comparison and is associated with experience and performance standards. Experience and performance will influence individual pay within the range.

The salary adjustment process will take 1 to 2 years, generally. The Hay Group stated that salary increase budgets should be based on 1) institution affordability, compensation strategy and Human Resources/staffing priorities, 2) actual salary competitiveness against target compensation markets, and 3) actual movement in market pay and/or market movement projections via NWPAA, Hay Group and other market surveys. Additional compensation guidelines were provided for hiring range, promotion, demotion, base salaries outside of range, compression and equity adjustments.

The key activities needed to maintain the integrity of the compensation program included: 1) revisit appropriateness of compensation philosophy and pay program design given institution strategy and economic realities, 2) review job evaluations/grades periodically to keep current, 3) assess external competitiveness against target markets, 4) ensure compensation administration/salary increase guidelines are still appropriate, and 5) ensure adequate internal guidelines/policies and communications of pay program are in place.

The next steps are to 1) finalize the recommendations for job evaluations, compensation structures, compensation administration and performance management programs and present them at the May 19 Finance Committee and May 28 Board of Education meetings; 2) Determine strategy for rollout/implementation; and 3) Consider annual total remuneration statement for each employee.

The Committee members provided feedback on the report. One suggestion was to include a total remuneration statement for employees to help them understand the full value from the organization, including non-financial rewards.

Mr. Cofsky acknowledged that progress was being made and it was exciting. No performance management practices yet this year but that will mature and it will become a component. Typically, one would establish performance management practice first and then link that to pay.

### **Educational Technology Equipment Purchase**

The Finance Committee unanimously voted to recommend that CDW be awarded the purchase outlined in the RFP be moved forward to the Board of Education for approval at its regular April meeting. The total amount of the RFQ is \$735,650.60, but it did not need to bid this because it is a professional service. The largest portion of the purchase is for devices for PARCC, based upon the current information about the

state's plans for PARCC testing next year. The other is for renewal of equipment. This is 9% below what was budgeted.

### **2014-15 Amended Budget**

The Finance Committee unanimously recommended the Board of Education receive a copy of the amended budget for FY 2014-15 which reflected actual amounts that were unknown when the budget was approved. The amended budget will be placed on display for 30 days beginning April 24, 2015 in the Business Office of the high school. The net change in the budget is an \$800,000 reduction of the fund balance.

### **Instructional Support FTE and Programs**

The Committee was provided with a summary of all of the proposals that were received, reflecting an increase of 17.9 FTE, as well as an estimated incremental cost for each proposal. The incremental cost/FTE for each faculty position reflects MA-Step 5 level (unless otherwise noted), including benefits, which equates to approximately \$92,500. The summary is as follows:

- 1) Fifth PSS Team a) Student Intervention Director (1) \$142,500 b) Counselors (3 @ \$92,500) \$277,500 c) Youth Therapist (1) \$ 65,000 d) Secretary (1) \$ 48,500
- 2) 2) Youth Therapists & Substance Abuse Counselor (5) \$180,000 (Contract Differential)
- 3) 3) Attendance Interventionist (1) \$ 60,000
- 4) 4) Special Education a) School Social Worker (1 @ MA+60/Step 5) \$101,500 b) School Psychologist (1 @ MA+60/Step5) \$101,500 c) Program Chair (1) \$ 92,500 d) Registered Nurse (.5 Contracted) \$ 26,000
- 5) 5) Strategic Plan Implementation Teams a) Supportive Learning Environment (1) \$ 92,500 b) Teaching & Learning (1) \$ 92,500 c) Transformational Leadership (.4) \$ 37,000

DLT reviewed each proposal submitted, balanced the merits of each proposal against its financial implications in order to arrive at the following recommendations and provided its rationale for each.

- |    |                                     |           |
|----|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1) | Fifth PSS Team                      |           |
|    | b) Counselor (1)                    | \$ 92,500 |
| 4) | Special Education                   |           |
|    | b) School Psychologist (1)          | \$101,500 |
|    | c) Program Chair (.5)               | \$ 46,250 |
|    | Division Head (.5)                  | \$ 46,250 |
|    | d) School Nurse (Part time)         | \$ 26,500 |
| 5) | Strategic Plan Implementation Teams |           |
|    | c) Transformational Leadership (.4) | \$ 37,000 |

The Committee members provided the following feedback.

- 1) OPRFHS has a financial model and the Board of Education was charged with the projected model; deviating from that can be a long-term risk situation if the rate of expenditures is so great that the District goes into a deep dive and puts the District at risk.
- 2) Counselors and support staff are important. Administration has advised that while classroom FTEs were incorporated into financial model in connection with enrollment growth, support services were not. The question is how support services can be incorporated into the financial model with respect to growth.
- 3) Funds will needed to be earmarked for the Strategic Plan's implementation team proposals/projects as well.
- 4) A better process is required for having conversations about needs, rather than by lobbying the Board of Education.

- 5) A fuller conversation about the need for individual counselors versus a team was necessary, as it is not just purely a financial conversation.

Mr. Miller provided an updated 5-year projection model which included the reduced levy, .08 CPI versus the projected 2.5, FTE and an updated graph of that model. It was suggested this information be super imposed to show the change that will occur. The Committee members were reminded that this recommendation and proposals did not include additional FTE that may be needed to special education students.

Mr. Cofsky appreciated Ms. Johnson for being a great counselor to his children. He also noted that the proposal from the counselors was well done, including national metrics and comparative data to local districts. He questioned whether a similar approach with metrics (national and comparative districts) would be used in assessing staffing needs of other populations such as teachers.

Dr. Walker-Qualls noted that the comprehensive report on Special Education would be forthcoming and it supported the recommendation. Since taking the position, her charge was to deal with off campus placement. She presented a proposal that would keep students in-house and save the District \$250,000.

The Finance Committee unanimously recommended that this be given to the full Board of Education but further work yet needed to be done to provide a comparative picture, and to start with the DLT recommendation, factoring in the other potential needs in the dialogue.

#### **Board of Education Budget for FY 2016**

The Finance Committee unanimously recommended that the Board of Education Budget for FY 2016 be moved forward as presented to the full Board of Education for approval at its regular April meeting. This budget represents a 4.5% decrease from last year or \$11,427.

#### **CPA Reclassification Recommendation**

The Finance Committee members unanimously recommended that the Reclassification Committee's recommendation that the position of Mailroom/Switchboard Operator be moved from a Grade 4 to a Grade 3 position be moved forward to the full Board of Education for approval at its regular April meeting. As such, a salary adjustment will be made effective as of February 3, 2015 which was when the application was made which reflected a \$.76/ hour increase.

#### **Monthly Treasurer's Report**

The Finance Committee unanimously recommended the Monthly Treasurer's Report be moved forward to the Board of Education for approval at its regular April meeting.

#### **Monthly Financials**

The Finance Committee unanimously recommended the Monthly Financials be moved forward to the Board of Education for approval at its regular April meeting.

#### **Additional Finance Matters for Committee Information/Deliberation**

Long term Planning will be deferred to the full Board of Education.

#### **Adjournment**

At 7:19 p.m., Dr. Lee moved to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Weissglass. A voice vote resulted in motion carried.

Submitted by  
Gail Kalmerton  
Clerk of the Board of Education