

OAK PARK AND RIVER FOREST HIGH SCHOOL
201 North Scoville Avenue
Oak Park, IL 60302

INSTRUCTION COMMITTEE MEETING
Thursday, September 12, 2013

An Instruction Committee meeting was held on Thursday, September 12, 2013. Dr. Gevinson called the meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m. in the Board Room. Committee members present were Dr. Steve Gevinson, Dr. Jackie Moore, and Sharon Patchak-Layman. Also present were Dr. Steven T. Isoye, Superintendent; Amy Hill, Director of Assessment and Research; Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Nathaniel L. Rouse, Principal; Karin Sullivan, Director of Community Relations and Communications; Sheila Hardin, Faculty Senate Executive Committee; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

Visitors: Board of Education members Dr. Ralph Lee and Thomas F. Cofsky; Mr. Altenburg, Chief Financial Officer; Julie Frey, OPRFHS Math Division Head; and Terry Dean of the *Wednesday Journal*.

Visitor Comment

Dr. Lee asked for an explanation of how the committees would work. Dr. Isoye explained that the committees would first review reports and then determine if they should be forwarded to the full Board of Education for further discussion or action with less discussion.

Development of Future Committee Dates

It was the consensus of the Instruction Committee members to schedule its meetings in the future on the Tuesday the week before the regular monthly Board of Education meeting at 6:30 p.m. One member stressed abiding by the Open Meetings Act with regard to convenience and accessibility for the public. Another member commented that the public relies on the newspapers and minutes of the meetings for information and the time set should work for the committee members. It was also noted that if there were an issue of particular issue to the public an alternative time could be scheduled. The first meeting will be Tuesday, October 15 at 6:30 p.m.

Student Achievement Data

Ms. Hill referred to the Student Achievement Indicators Executive Summary for current students and recent graduates in the packet. This year's narrative had been condensed from last year and took two perspectives: attainment and growth. Last year, 839 students graduated and there were matched EXPLORE/ACT scores for 675 of those students, and the growth data incorporates that information. The information available was disaggregated by race and gender. Discussion ensued.

The number of AP tests taken increased and the number of "5" scores had decreased. This was within normal bounds and in line with recent years.

Figure 22 shows ACT college readiness outcomes for 2013 graduates by their EXPLORE readiness level and by race. A suggestion was made to look more deeply at the data for students who were nearly on track on the EXPLORE test to identify possible reasons some were able to get on track by the time they took the ACT while others were not. The District could look at the courses from this group, but it would be unable to talk with these students. A similar analysis of current seniors would allow us to talk to the students. A difference in the data set is that the analysis of graduates looks at students' highest ACT score. In many cases, the PSAE or the ACT taken in the spring is the student's first test and may not be his/her highest score.

Another suggestion was to look at state and/or national benchmarks to get a better sense of how students were doing in a larger scope and take away the stigma of racial comparisons. Comparing students in the building may not serve the high school well as it is sometimes perceived as pitting one group's needs and interests against another's. It would be helpful to note benchmarks outside of the building with regard to policy and planning. Ms. Hill is mindful of the Board of Education's goals to show evidence of racial predictability. She could add the National and State scores for EXPLORE, PLAN and reading disaggregated by race. Ms. Hill felt the District would have to more strongly focus on growth. The PSAE analysis and the college readiness benchmarks did not include disaggregation for state and national. Ms. Hill stated that part of the District's work will be to determine how to accelerate growth.

Figure 19, 20 and 21 used composite scores. Figure 19 represented 134 students. A question was raised about whether the students represented in Figure 19 were put into classes that would have allowed them to reach the ACT meets category. Does the high school need a second tier of analysis to make sure the 21 within that group were in a class sequence that would have allowed them a better opportunity to meet ACT college readiness? The administration responded that many of these students were targeted for intensive intervention in reading and math because they demonstrated the need for intensive intervention. It would be possible to review the data and see what interventions were provided for students who came in off track, e.g., one with current seniors or one that would mine data backwards for graduates. While either analysis could be fruitful, they would take significant time to explore and the Board of Education would need to decide which one would be most desirable.

A suggestion was made to put together a compendium of reports which could include information on a student such as reading scores, math scores, report card, ACT and EXPLORE scores, Special Education, etc. Would this information be pertinent to the class and the outcomes for students? How do Tier II or III reading program students' scores on the macro tests change over time both in reading and in the composite? The composite is a better overall score, but reading is specifically aligned to programs and interventions. The reading program was instituted to accelerate student growth. Ms. Hill will try to get data for one cohort of students who have gone from their freshman to junior years in order to see a longer view so that the District can say that these were the outcomes/measurables for students with one or more years of interventions.

One member felt the stories of those students would be more interesting than the interventions. Why did some succeed? Why did some fail? Why did some students fall off track, when they had been on track to succeed? At one time US News & Report did a ranking showing that OPRFHS did well when it came to schools in the state with high percentages of minority students and relatively high percentages of free and reduced lunches. A comparison of MSAN districts that have similar demographics and are being successful might be useful.

One member asked what if the District knew the benchmarks or was it backtracking with regard to interventions. The administration responded that progress monitoring does occur and each student has an ambitious goal for his/her growth and then a tracked, tiered set of goals. Those involved in the reading program are aware of those goals. The District knows what it will ask at the end, so the pieces of information help staff put things together. Not every student has matched test scores at the macro level; other levers would have to be used in progress monitoring. How does the District make itself knowledgeable? How does it know when something is working? Would quantitative and qualitative information allow the District to know the stories and whether the programs were effective? Ms. Hill reported that the goal was to increase student achievement by 10% in this group. If 70 were proficient, 7 would be added. That goal was attained.

Dr. Moore felt the Board of Education should have a higher level of discussion of its wants and then pair that with what the District wanted in order to avoid a duplication of efforts. One member suggested that

this was not an analysis and that the next discussion should be what kind of analysis the Board of Education wanted and if the District had the right raw data. What raw data will allow to the District to determine if more information can be attained, i.e., how many students are receiving dual credit from Triton, how many students were graduating from college in five years, etc.

The whole Committee recommended moving this report forward to the Board of Education at its regular September meeting, acknowledging the need for future analysis and to ask for agreement on or additions to the analysis. Ms. Hill will adjust the report for the larger Board of Education to ask for a recommendation regarding which analysis has the highest priority for further understanding student achievement outcomes. Those were:

- Look at the stories behind the 21 students in Figure 19 as case studies. What were their stories, their trajectories to going from off-track to on-track? Consider race as a lens.
- Look at the stories of the students in Figure 22, those who were off track and stayed off track. Sort of as case studies. What were their stories, their trajectories to staying from off-track? Consider race as a lens.
- Consider what are the appropriate comparisons? And the appropriate data to use? National? State? Regionals? Collar county? Internal?
- Is there an interest in creating a compendium of information and reports collected? The goal is to create a sense of putting all the information together. What would that accomplish or look like?
- Consider the difference between program review (quantitative attainment snapshots are useful in this case) and the (qualitative) analysis of how students' stories contribute to the understanding of the life of the students and families inside the building?

Discussion ensued about the need/desirability to compare the 50 students discussed previously. Where would the learning be reflected in the data? One member reflected that the Board of Education had felt that the 50/50 comparison was unnecessary because of the incorrect proportions. Another felt it was part of the analysis. Where does all of this fit together?

Common Core State Standards

Mr. Prale referenced the information about Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in the packet, including District 200's status with regard to the standards. Internally, this is a subject that is talked about regularly. He noted that this is not a national curriculum, and while it is not restrictive, it is a set of targets against which students will be measured.

Dr. Gevinson noted that the report was an excellent picture of the District's status and that the story would evolve as the testing requirements will have a significant impact. As to whether CCSS would have an impact on sequencing, Mr. Prale replied that much discussion among math teachers and publishers have occurred about the integration of the standards into their textbooks. There may be a way to structure both, having an integrated option. CCSS are skill and process with some content standards. The sequencing is suggested but it is not mandatory or restricted and that is a way of framing it as proficiency targets and not a national curriculum. Ms. Patchak-Layman noted that states who have rigid requirements in publishing would lead the way. Is that a factor in why this is a national standard and in this creates a standard within the publishing industry? The response was that OPRFHS teachers have been asked to read, to discuss, and to understand the CCSS in divisional discussions. At the time the Board of Education approved textbooks, teachers were asked if the textbooks were meeting their needs. If the textbooks were not sufficient, they were not purchased, keeping within the district's seven-year rotation of textbooks. Note: publishers are consolidating.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if there were a variable in terms of student outcomes in classes that offered an integrated curriculum. Did those students have better outcomes, or were students in those programs simply opting for other experiences and how can the District help students enroll in the class sequences that is best for them. Mr. Prale spoke of the courses of study that offered an integrated approach, American and World Studies, Models of Physics, Chemistry, and in the coming years, Biology. Math had considered an integrated approach but decided to remain with the same sequencing. CCSS has spurred discussion about the number of levels and moving more students into College Prep and advanced levels sooner. Ms. Hardin stated that there is vertical discussion about integration in Algebra, Geometry and Algebra II. Math sometimes tries an integrated approach and did so with the transitional level 8 to 10 years ago, but it was not successful. Integration can mean something different in math. Counselors have the discretion to talk with students about their learning styles and find the appropriate course sequence knowing that students in models of physics or biology have the option/opportunity through the sequence to do advance science work and independent research. Positive results have been reported with both approaches.

Future meetings

Future agenda items were suggested: What is the District doing in terms of tutoring? What is occurring with dual credit?

Adjournment

Dr. Gevinson adjourned the meeting at 5:10 p.m.

By Gail Kalmerton
Clerk of the Board