

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

**INSTRUCTION COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Tuesday, November 12, 2013**

An Instruction Committee meeting was held on Tuesday, November 12, 2013. Dr. Gevinson called the meeting was called to order at 7:12 p.m. in the Board Room. Committee members present were Dr. Steve Gevinson and Sharon Patchak-Layman. Also present were Dr. Steven T. Isoye, Superintendent; Amy Hill, Director of Assessment and Research (arrived at 7:51 p.m.); 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: Dr. Ralph Lee, John Phelan, and Tom Cofsky, District 200 Board of Education members; Aleta Clardy, Wyanetta Johnson, John Duffy, and Gay Campbell, community members; and Terry Dean of the *Wednesday Journal*.

**Minutes**

Dr. Gevinson moved to approve the minutes of October 15, 2013; seconded by Ms. Patchak Layman. A voice vote resulted in motion carried.

**Update on Reading Program**

Mr. Prale highlighted the information contained in the packet on the District's reading program. He noted the following.

- All ninth graders were administered the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) 3 times in order to determine how well they were performing in the aggregate. This test is a research-based, computer-based adaptive exam. In the first test, 572 or 75% of the 770 ninth grade students tested in the Advanced or Proficient range. By the end of the school year, 648 or 85% of those tested achieved at that same range. This suggested that most students enter the high school with strong reading and literacy skills have improved their overall reading performance.
- Students taking Literary Support (LS) receive an additional period of literacy instruction designed to support content area reading and comprehension and to develop specific executive functioning skills that have been determined to support student success. The class size is approximately 12 to 14. Last year, the 56 ninth-graders enrolled in LS9 took at least one SRI. Twenty eight or 50% scored in the Advanced or Proficient range with a strong majority in the Proficient range. At year's end, 45 or 80% of those tested received SRI scores in this range. These students are making up a full year of reading plus. They could be starting in the 780's and the District is seeing significant increase in achievement. This would be a Tier Two Intervention. Four sections have this class. These students also take Essentials of English.
- Students taking Elements of Reading (Tier Three Intervention) have significant reading needs and are recommended to have a double period of reading instruction. Last year and at the end of first semester, the students enrolled in this course and scoring in the Proficient range were rescheduled into the English 1-2 classes and provided additional support as needed. Of the 54 students who continued in the Elements of Reading program, 11 of them or 21% scored in the Strategic range on their first SRI test. By year's end, 5 students or 9% of those tested scored in the Proficient range and 20 students or 37% scored in the Strategic Range. The Elements of Reading class is considered a Tier 3 Intervention, as these students receive a double period intervention. These students are significantly below grade level but are improving in reading and adding an average

of 160 Lexile pts. Data show that 27 students are having significant improvement and 27 are not. Those who are not increasing at this rate receive additional literacy and reading support.

The objective is for students to be reading at the 50% percentile, 1045 Lexile, when they graduate. Ideally, the Lexile range would be 1100 to 1415. A ninth grader accomplishing at the 1045 Lexile level or above and progressing at an appropriate rate would be at an accomplished level of reading through high school. The 50% percentile is considered a mid-range national norm, meaning a student can understand appropriate informational text and literature for the ninth grade. OPRFHS staff question whether the 1045 is an appropriate number or is it too high or too low for OPRFHS since 75% of the students are already at the 1045 level or above. Should that number be 1180 or should it be the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile level? This is being explored.

A question was raised about the norming and percentile as compared to the EXPLORE percentiles. The response was that EXPLORE is on a 25 point scale. Students that have scores between 13 and 15 would be considered for the Elements of Reading course. Students with scores between 16 and 18 would be considered for Literacy Support. However, students take an SRI in September and the results are reviewed by the Assistant Principal of Instruction, the RtI Specialist, and the English Division Head who make the placement. Students in the Elements of Reading class may take the SRI 5 times in a year. Students in English 1A and 1 may take it three times. Often much movement in classes occurs at the beginning of the semester to ensure that students are appropriately placed.

No auditory component is included in the Read 180 Reading Program. The program has three phases: 1) students work independently on a terminal, 2) students read independently, and 3) students work in small group situations with teacher interaction which includes the use of vocabulary and use of reading strategies. Some students work well independently with computer instruction. Research says that students who independently engage in leisure reading activities incorporate that vocabulary and understanding of context, and increase their vocabulary at a strong rate. That is why Read 180 is a full 96 minutes in length in order to complete the phases in fidelity. The hope is that these skills will transfer to other core classes. Ms. McKee, the reading program coordinator, is working with the Administrative Curriculum Team (ACT) about breaking down the Lexile scores.

One member asked who was responsible for the 130 students who originally had a double period and progressed to a single period. Students receive additional support in other classes depending upon the class. Because that does not occur across the board, it is critical to have interventions in every general education classroom. Literacy coaching is essential. Conversations across the school and within professional development activities are about every teaching working with the students' needs. Teachers must have as much information as possible about the students and they must have the skills with which to respond.

What support is given to the 19 students who are not special education as they do not have the same support? The response was that this is a systematic approach versus an individual approach. The most immediate responsibilities fall to the Principal, the Assistant Principal for Instruction and the reading program coordinator as reading accounts for 25% of their goals for this year. The objective is to provide reading support for these students in all classes. These students are often referred to the PSS Teams and Ms. McKee and Ms. Jennifer Hoffman, Assistant Principal for Student Services, attend those meetings.

The cost of the Read 180 program includes a startup cost, an annual licensing fee, and support materials.

What supports are given to students who progress from one level to a higher level?

Elements of Reading to English 1 with Literacy Support  
Literacy Support to English 1 without Support

The English 1 Team and the TCTs talk about interventions and student data.

A question was raised about the numbers on the bottom of page 3. These numbers have to do with how students are counted in the Elements of Reading Program and their movement in and out of class. These goals were stated a year ago for the Board of Education. The majority of students in Elements of Reading and Learning Support are accelerating. Reading fluency of 120 words per minute is a new measure; the District is trying to incorporate additional ways to measure growth.

What is the difference between ambitious growth and one year's growth? Anticipated growth is 50 Lexile points and ambitious growth is 100. The program is looking for ambitious growth for the students and half of the students in the program are accomplishing that goal.

Ms. Clardy testified that the graduated program did work based on her own son's experience.

Sophomores can take either Literacy Support 10, Reading 3/4 if Special Education, or Reading Connections. The interventions are multi-tiered for sophomore and junior years as well. Discussion ensued about students holding proficiency. The aggregate on the Prairie State holds to around 85% as the number of students who attain reading standards. These students have yet to take the PSAT. So sophomores have three options for the kinds of interventions that can be provided. The challenge is to find the one that best meets their needs.

Mr. Duffy felt that remediation was important but heeding what happens with the reading skills students have gained is also important.

Dr. Gevinson stated that the reading report is far more developed and ambitious than it had been. The Instruction Committee agreed to send this report to the full Board of Education at its regular November meeting.

### **Discipline Report**

The Committee received the annual student discipline report for second semester of the 2012-13 school year. OPRFHS has changed its practice of collecting data three times during the last year and a half. One was a change in the range of discipline consequences; one was the addition of Student Interventionist Directors, and one a consolidation in the number of codes available. The Code of Conduct is a living document and as the culture changes, it will change.

Why are second semester numbers higher than first the semester's numbers? An unintended consequence of attempting to gain back instructional time was that some of the consequences first semester were not stringent enough to deter repeat behavior; that was corrected. At midyear report to the Board of Education included the level of concerns within the building about the suspension reduction program. More referrals/consequences were issued in the second semester. This year students only have one opportunity to buy back suspension days in specified areas. In looking at last year's numbers, the District found no instances of students repeating the same offense multiple times. However, the same student could be in the discipline system in multiple areas. The SIDs do tend to deal with the same students but with different levels of consequences/infractions. The District offers support groups for girls (FREE) and for males (MUREE) who exhibit violent or bullying-type behaviors. The school also provides counseling and educational awareness. Resource Managers and outside resources such as Thrive are accessed to assist these students. When a suggestion was made to put all of the students in a room exhibiting a particular behavior to talk about the incentives that would change that behavior, it was noted that the Strategic Planning process suggested bringing the Restorative Justice Program to the school in order to provide a common language for teachers in order to have conversations in the classroom. Through this program, students are helped to understand how their behaviors affect the classroom and the school. It

has been used throughout entire communities and there seemed to be an interest in doing PEACE Circles within Oak Park and the Township. The administration noted that Restorative Justice has not been used with entities of 3,200 students or 250 teachers. However, the OPRFHS's Parent Teacher Advisory Committee has spoken about a program called Safe and Civil Schools, a program that starts with changing adult behavior in order to establish positive relationships with students and address student behavior within the building. All adults in the building are aligned about positive behavior and interventions for students. The Board of Education and the administration has spoken about its work with the Pacific Education Group: Courageous Conversations About Race. During the last two years, 70 faculty and staff members were provided professional development training on developing a lens about racial equity and learning about micro aggressions. A myriad of things exist to address developing more meaningful, professional relationships, creating a racial equity lens, and developing data on inequities. The Safe and Civil Schools program builds upon character and incentives for students.

The suspension/reduction program allows those students who have been assigned an out-of-school suspension to return to the building earlier. Students may buy back up to 5 of the assigned OSS days if they agree to counseling. An analysis will then be conducted to determine what the status of the students' grades before the consequence and what they are after the consequence to see if their grades had increased and compare that to last year's experience when there was no buy back. Are student behavior adjustments being sustained? Anecdotes this semester says fewer students repeated the same offense.

One member reflected that the discipline system had changed dramatically over the past 27 years and asked for clarification as to some of those changes. Mr. Rouse stated that African American males have dominated the discipline system throughout the years. However, expulsion rates are now lower. The school is looking at a variety of things for comparison and one will be whether or students are accessing the tutoring that OPRFHS offers.

Discussion ensued about instituting an advisory program, as it has been successful on all levels of student performance, including the discipline side. The District recognizes that social/emotional support is an important part of the equation as it has an impact on a student's ability to learn. Dr. Gevinson stated that holistic education and working with the community was essential to the Strategic Plan and he hoped the District could find a way to work more effectively with the community on an advisory program, a mentoring program, etc. to provide students with the support they need.

Discussion ensued about how and who supported these students. The administration noted that there are multiple opportunities for these students to be supported by teachers, administrators, coaches, counselors, deans, etc. One member felt that each student should have intensive wraparound services.

Mr. Rouse noted that SIDs were now to connect discipline issues with attendance and grades. It was thought that students last year who had Class IV infractions, the most egregious infractions would have had poor grades. However, it was surprising to find the great number of A's, B's, and C's, versus D's and F's for those 59 students. The problem is then their connectivity to the school. More data will be forthcoming.

This year's changes to the Code of Conduct will be tracked by comparing last year's class to this years to see if the more severe consequences had an influence on deterring them. It was also noted that it would be difficult to track this information year after year because of the way the Code has changed. This year's report says it would monitor recidivism. This report will be moved forward to the entire Board of Education and consider including recidivism numbers.

## **Course Proposals**

Mr. Prale noted that the course proposals for the 2014-15 school year had been reviewed by the Board of Education, various parent, student, and community groups. To date, no other comments have been received. A summary of the proposals by area was included in the packet. In addition to the original proposals, Mr. Prale noted the following:

- The History Division to change the name of Introductory Psychology to Psychology.
- The Science Division offered the deletion of 509, 5097, 5099: Biological Science and incorporating additional support and enriched instruction in biology. Biology 513 will add additional support and enriched instruction to reinforce rigorous science instruction for some sections.

The Board of Education will be asked to approve these course proposals at its regular November Board of Education meeting.

#### Comments/Questions

- 1) While a biology transition's level course will be eliminated, one will remain, Physical Science.
- 2) Additional professional development will be offered as a result in the increased number of students in Biology.
- 3) While exciting to hear, it was also sad that OPRFHS has not had that experience previously even though there has been much literature about it both publically and professionally. This method is not new in the school, but this is an opportunity to change biology.
- 4) Reading across the curriculum has been in the school for decades and to eliminate transitions level biology without anything more than literacy coaching is a lot to expect from teachers.
- 5) Students will not be able to get dual credit with Triton College in the Family and Consumer Sciences classes. ICCB rules vary from course to course. Both Mr. Prale and a dean at Triton will take time to review courses for the future. OPRFHS is limited by some policy pieces at Triton and that has to be revisited.
- 6) Other community colleges have broader interpretation of the state law. Students have gotten to a standard on ACT or have passed the COMPASS test. OPRFHS will probably not do the junior testing in the spring and test Functions and Trigonometry students in December.
- 7) Consider students in the beginning of the sophomore and junior years so that the classes can be dual credit either here or at Triton.

#### Additional Information

Previously when a Board of Education member asked a question, the question and the response was sent to the full Board of Education. With this new system, will that practice continue? Dr. Isoye suggested that the request be sent to the Board of Education and copy Dr. Isoye.

#### Adjournment

Dr. Gevinson moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m.; seconded by Ms. Patchak-Layman. A voice vote resulted in motion carried.

Gail Kalmerton  
Clerk of the Board