

**OAK PARK and RIVER FOREST HIGH SCHOOL
201 N. Scoville Ave., Oak Park, Illinois 60302**

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
INSTRUCTION COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
Thursday, September 20, 2007
7:30 a.m.
Board Room**

A G E N D A

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|------|----------------------------|--------------------|
| I. | Call to Order | Dr. Dietra Millard |
| II. | Approval of Minutes | Philip M. Prale |
| III. | Student Travel Experiences | Cindy Milojevic |
| IV. | Standardized Test Report | Amy Hill |
| V. | Research Report | Philip M. Prale |

Docket

1. New Course Proposals
2. Updates on Initiatives

Copies to: Instruction Committee Members, Dr. Dietra Millard, Chair
Board Members
Administrators
Director of Community Relations and Communications

**Oak Park and River Forest High School
201 N. Scoville
Oak Park, IL 60302**

**An Instruction Committee of the Whole Board
June 21, 2007**

An Instruction Committee meeting of the Whole Board was held on Thursday, June 21, 2007, in the Board Room. The meeting opened at 7:36 a.m. Committee members present were John C. Allen, Jacques A. Conway, Valerie J. Fisher, Dr. Ralph H. Lee, Dr. Dietra D. Millard, Sharon Patchak Layman and John Rigas. Also present were: Dr. Susan J. Bridge, Superintendent/Principal; Jason Edgecombe, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources; Jack Lanenga, Assistant Superintendent for Operations; Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Amy Hill, Director of Instruction; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistance/Clerk of the Board.

Visitors included: Kay Foran, O.P.R.F.H.S. Director of Community Relations and Communications; Rich Perna, Coordinator of Student Safety; Julie Fuentes, O.P.R.F.H.S. Counselor; Monica Swope, O.P.R.F.H.S. faculty member; James Paul Hunter, Faculty Senate Chair; Terry Burke, Wyanetta Johnson, Burcy Hines, and GERALYNNE RODE, community members; and Terry Dean of the *Wednesday Journal*.

Approval of Instruction Committee Minutes

The Instruction Committee Minutes of May 10, 2007, were accepted, as presented.

Visitor Comment

Geralynne Rode, parent and resident of 1160 S. Clinton Avenue in Oak Park addressed the Instruction Committee meeting regarding her concern about the Science Division's grading scale. It was her understanding that the grading scale was inconsistent with scales used in other departments within the school. Her son, a junior, took the honors biology class and experienced some frustration in the course. In conversations with students who wanted to take a more difficult and rigorous science course, the students found the science department's grading scale to be punitive and demoralizing. They see no reason why they should take an honors class, which is more challenging, and be punished or discouraged for doing so. She thought the science department would want to encourage students to go on the honors track. Ms. Rode suggested that numerous studies have shown that students who take more rigorous course loads do better in college, are able to better face the demands of college, and are able to complete four years of college with the degree. Her experience in working with bright elementary students taking honors chemistry is that they end up being discouraged and dropping out of the honors track. That concerned her. While she told that other schools used this variant honors grading scale, she only found Hinsdale Central using it and using it for social studies, history, and language arts, as well as science, not solely one curriculum. In her conversations with the ASCI, she was told that the previous division head put this grading scale into effect

because there was the perception that there were too many A's and B's. She felt that the school was putting obstacles ahead of the students and raising the bar too high. She did not feel it was equitable. The school should be encouraging students to take more science classes, rather than discouraging them.

When asked if she had met with Ms. Foley, the Science Department Chair, Ms. Rode responded affirmatively. Ms. Foley said she had inherited this problem and had written a letter to Mr. Prale about it. After three phone discussions with Mr. Prale, Ms. Rode learned that the grading scale for honors would be in effect next year. Ms. Rode stated that Mr. Prale gave the reason for this was that too high of a percentage of A, B, and C grades were given. The perception was that there was grade inflation in the science department. The fact that a number of students dropped out the first semester because the course was too demanding alarmed Ms. Rode.

Mr. Prale clarified that teachers were allowed to make their own grading scales; their perception was that some grade inflation occurred. The science division teachers, almost unanimously, adopted this practice. There may be some other teachers in other departments who have implemented the same grading scale. Teachers are required to be explicit about their activities and their grading scale in the course syllabus, which both students and parents receive.

Dr. Lee noted that an important point was being overlooked. He asked about the District policies and discovered that the Board of Education delegated the teacher with the authority to use his/her professional judgment to assess a student's progress. It is not just the faculty member's privilege, but also a responsibility to exercise his/her best professional judgment in assessing a student's progress, i.e., assigning a grade. Teachers do not have the right to delegate that responsibility to a division head, to a committee of the division, or anyone else. Teachers have that responsibility as an individual and must inform the parents at the beginning of the semester of their individual policies. To Dr. Lee, the teacher then also has the responsibility of defending a policy that he/she created for his/her own class. If questioned why the cutoff score was 92, it is not an acceptable response to say that the division committee decided to do so. It is not the committee or the division head that has the responsibility. Only the school board has the right to set District policies. He supports a group of teachers who want to express an opinion, but to give the reason that there were too many A's and B's was indefensible. Dr. Lee asked for feedback from the staff and the Board of Education to see if this were correct. He suggested there might be the need for a clarification of the grading policies for the school district.

Mr. Prale responded that what Dr. Lee said was fundamentally correct. However, teachers had a discussion for more than the reasons identified for wanting to move to a grading scale. One teacher has not chosen to use that grading scale, thus invoking his autonomy. All teachers have the ability to apply their own scales. The scale would be subject to the teacher's internal activities and grading practices. He concurred that teachers have the responsibility and they must be held accountable.

Mr. Rigas made two points: 1) there was a student who was not achieving at the level expected and received a B instead of A. The district values achievement based on standard scores, which probably has to do with either a student's skill or the instruction. Achievement, however, is a different topic. 2) If students are dropping out because they are not getting A's, they are getting bad advice from either home or from the school. College admissions would rather see students taking higher level classes and getting a B over getting an A in an easier-level class. Dr. Lee stated that when he taught honors courses, his grading scale was 84 and above for an A, a grade of 54 was the cutoff for D's and F's. He was never criticized for having too many A's and B's. He lowered the grading scale because he tended to make the exam more complex than other teachers do. What he sought was different from what other teachers sought. He exercised his right to set his grading scale. If a group decided to use a different grading scale, he would have disagreed and used his own.

Mr. Allen asked Ms. Rode if the division head indicated that she wanted to change the grading scale. Ms. Rode was unsure. Ms. Rode stated that there is no indication on the website or handbook that this grading scale is different. No awareness of this difference is cited until students get the syllabus in honors class. Parents are saying to her that their children are dropping out of honors classes. She wondered why students would be discouraged from the honors track in science. A grade of C does not contribute to the in the weighted grade point average index. Students in honors science classes using the higher scale need at least a score of 83 for that. Do colleges look at the courses students take? Yes. However, they also look at the GPA. Some Board of Education members disagreed. Ms. Rode again asked why students were being discouraged from taking honors' classes. Was it being made by more difficult so that they have a smaller class size? She hoped not. She asked why this grading scale was not published.

Mr. Allen, assuming there are differences between regular and honors class, asked what was gained by making a harder grading scale. What was the advantage? From the teachers' viewpoint, it was a better alignment of grades with the results on standardized tests. That is the reason for the discussion, not matching the standardized tests. Teachers felt it was a way to discuss grade inflation; how could it be addressed by like-minded teachers. What is the motivation for student to do his/her best work in science and not to get a better grade? Regarding the grade point average impact, it is better to get an A in a regular class, than a B with the addition to the WGPA index of .01. Students strategically take honors classes. The point might be when the grades and the grading scale come into play when students are deciding which classes to take. What is more critical is what goes into the grade. How are tests constructed? Is the test appropriate for the content being taught? Ms. Foley has an opportunity to raise those questions.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if students were allowed the choice of the teacher. Mr. Prale responded not unless it was a situation of a singleton class. In those situations the student is selecting a teacher by selecting a class. Ms. Patchak-Layman did not understand the teacher's individual rights when students do not get to choose the teacher. That is not similar to college level practice. The idea of individual teachers having their own grading system is fine if students have the opportunity to choose the teacher. Mr. Prale

responded that teacher autonomy was encouraged, to ensure that their values were student centered. This is a discussion for the future. Ms. Foley will address this directly in the division's goals. The Board of Education is aware of the situation, the Science Division is aware and there a number of parents have parallel concerns. Dr. Millard stated that the challenge is to get the students to learn. It is a concern that students are dropping rank and that the GPA determines rank. It is a bigger issue than just the grading scale.

Ms. Rode stated that the grade is important in honors class because students are recommended to continue. Because her son got a B and not an A, he was not recommended for honors chemistry. Ms. Hill had told her that a sophomore compares his/her scores to the benchmarks for college readiness. The best way to prepare for college is to take a rigorous course of study during the four years of high school.

Mr. Prale stated that the Philosophy of Grading Committee was chaired by him and the superintendent and there was representation from each division. Mr. Prale affirmed for Ms. Fisher that each semester Mr. Lanenga generated a report showing statistically the various grades in the various divisions. Science's strategy to mutually devise a different grading scale was a result of the Philosophy of Grading Committee and that report.

It was the consensus of the Instruction Committee members that the Philosophy of Grading Committee would be asked to address this issue. It would also be asked to incorporate parents into its membership for this discussion.

Mr. Allen thanked those parents for who brought this issue to the Board of Education's attention.

Professional Development Activities Report

A portion of the Mr. Prale's written report on Professional Development 2006-2007 Activities follows below:

"The 2006-2007 Professional Development Committee (PDC) was composed of one representative from each division and two representatives from Instructional Council. The committee determined the following goals for the 06-07 school year to involve faculty in decision making, evaluation, and debriefing on professional development programs and activities:

- Build awareness for all staff about Response to Intervention (RTI) as part of working with special needs students. This includes informing about changes in Special Education law, reporting, and accommodation requirements.
- Develop teacher expertise in using classroom data for generating relevant classroom based questions and reports.
- Use divisional time to develop teacher led learning teams to improve classroom performance.

- Continue the dialogue among faculty, staff, and students about diversity and difference and how the school can promote stronger, supportive, appropriate relationships throughout the school and community including attention to the issues of bullying and harassment.
- Continue work on evidence-based efforts to narrow disparities in achievement.

“Full Faculty Activities

“Opening of School and Close of School Celebrations – This year we began and ended the school year with a gathering of the entire faculty and staff to celebrate our work and our shared experiences across the school community. These events focused on establishing common goals for the year, building morale and mutual respect throughout the school, and creating an authentic spirit of school improvement. Both events were met with support and gratitude from the entire staff.

“On September 8, 2006 the faculty and teaching assistants attended three presentations organized and led by members of the Special Education Division. The three presentations covered information on ADD/ADHD (this biennial presentation is required by school code), an introduction to RTI, and a discussion of procedures to assist general education teachers attending staffings for Special Education students and families.

“On November 10, 2006 members of the PDC led a series of cross-divisional discussions that focused on identifying points of consensus regarding school climate discussions. The information collected was used to frame later discussions regarding school climate and how student and adult behaviors contribute to the school climate. On this day, Dr. Marc Loafman from the Oak Park Department of Public Health also presented to the entire faculty and staff on prevention of the spread of Avian flu.

“On January 22, 2007 the faculty participated in an Institute Day that focused on three areas: 1) Follow up on school climate discussion; 2) Follow up on general education teachers attending Special Education staffing; 3) Introduction to Outlook e-mail system.

“On February 16, 2007 the entire faculty and staff attended a presentation by employees of the State of Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) on the duties of mandated reporters. This presentation was scheduled at the direction of the Superintendent in response to community criticism that OPRFHS employees had not been exposed to this kind of training in years. This summer the DCFS website will have a training video that new employees can access to convey the appropriate information.

“On April 26, 2007, an All School Institute Day focused on the topic of school climate. Students, faculty, and staff attended a large group event in the field house, shared lunch, and then gathered in smaller groups to share observations, ideas, concerns, and questions. Information collected in the later sessions can be used in follow up activities in the coming school year.

“Individual Divisional Learning Team Results

“This school year each division organized learning teams that were asked to set goals, meet during the eight late arrival mornings (or more as needed), and issue a report summarizing the work of the team. The learning team model of professional development provides teachers with time to improve teaching skills and materials and to assess the impact of their work on student performance. Division heads were responsible for monitoring the teams and ensuring that the work of these teams aligned with the goals of the district and aimed to improve the quality of instruction for students. Several divisions organized teams according to specific courses. Course teams that worked best developed a key person who organized and recorded the work of the team. Course teams, particularly core course teams, benefit from the right person in this key role, a strong core of teachers, a strong curriculum for the course, and a good chemistry among the teachers on the team. Several divisions, although not all, formed course teams.

“Learning teams took place at all levels of the school organization. IC learning teams created a handbook for division heads and recommended a joint review of the faculty professional growth/evaluation program. BAT reviewed the course request and sectioning process and developed a new spreadsheet for tracking section information. Dean-Counselor and Dean of Discipline teams examined the ways to improve communication via parent and faculty meetings and through the use of the school’s webpage and the Naviance software package. In all, 60 teams were formed averaging four teachers on a team. Included as an appendix to this report are examples of learning team reports taken from each division. Mr. Prale reported that the annual Professional Development Activities Report had grown over the past couple of years. In terms of the faculty, the administration has shifted to holding celebrations at the beginning and at the end of the year i.e., the beginning- and end-of-the year breakfasts, which has resulted in good feedback from faculty and staff. Climate discussions continued, including conversations about race and how that factored into school climate. In February, the Department of Children and Family Services made a presentation. The individual learning teams, a complex system, continue and have had positive results. These will continue next year. Presented were each of the division goals. In response to Dr. Millard’s question as to whether the learning teams were cross-divisional, Mr. Prale stated that the structure is along the divisions. Faculty members are tied to the memberships of their divisions, which is advocated for in school structure as being the best. The first year of the Learning Teams were cross-divisional, but there was some confusion with that structure.” The individual divisional reports were also attached.

Dr. Lee commented that the report was an excellent description of activities that have taken place during the past year.

Ms. Patchak-Layman noted the anecdotal information from the learning activity teams showed improvement among minority students. She wondered what effect activities had on this improvement. Of note, the Spanish, Agile Mind and Poetry Learning Team reports contained that information. Ms. Patchak-Layman wanted Learning Teams to use

student-related questions in the future. For example, if the writing assignments were too short, why?

Dr. Bridge noted that this was the first year that most of the staff development time was being spent in this way. She hoped that the Board of Education would be open to continuing to identify areas where better practices could be developed. Next year more assessments were anticipated. She hoped the Board of Education would say to the faculty that this was purposeful staff development and it does have the student at its center. Dr. Millard added that every report did state that goal in the first paragraph. While the impact may not be seen, the goal was to try to impact student achievement. The teachers' focus as to what they can do relates to achievement. Ms. Patchak-Layman stated that the conversation is really about goals and the professional development calendar for next year. She hoped that next year there would be a way for the Board of Education to introduce questions and give directions.

Ms. Johnson added that she was tired of the same promises she has heard since the end of the 1980's. She stated that if the school board would work with more parents and were respectful of their needs, the gap would be resolved. Many programs cannot work in this school. When she speaks out about the children, it seems to be taken negatively. The African-American students have the same feelings as the adults. What will work? The community needs to come together. She admitted to being wrong about Dr. Weninger. She believed that the school would get a surprise and may do better than it ever did in the past. She believed Dr. Weninger would pull this community and school together. She had originally objected to his not knowing how to close the achievement gap. She is angry at the ways things are developing at O.P.R.F.H.S. She then added that Gail Kalmerton has done a good job, she listens to her and allows her to vent and never takes sides. She is a good listener.

Dr. Lee wanted a consolidated report about everything the District knows about the achievement gap, what it does not know, what the District would like to know, and what resources it would take to find out the things it does not know, as well as a comparison by year.

A question was asked as to how the administration follows up on Special Education legislation and how is that information put into practice. The response was that a PBIS workshop (a workshop on instructional or classroom academic interventions) occurred. Staff has also attended RTI Conferences in May of 2006 and 2007. Regarding the 8 to 9 program, the District is pushing forward where necessary. A large number of students are doing O.K. The District's challenge is to know how to take the learning and push it into the classroom where it can be measured. The District wants to identify the students who will benefit the most and then have the teachers use those learning strategies.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked about accommodation requirements. Where Special Education law is reviewed and overviews and instructions are given as to how the law reads, what is the follow up to see that it is being followed. Mr. Prale reported that parents gets a survey at the end of the IEP sessions to determine whether parents were

dissatisfied with the interaction or the services being received. Ms. Burke reported that she did not receive a survey at the end of her staffing.

Dr. Millard asked what the District was doing for individual matters and faculty members to assist them, i.e., teacher sabbaticals, seminars, conferences, initiatives, etc. Mr. Prale noted that there were teacher grant programs to support attending national conferences or area workshops, etc.

Ms. Patchak-Layman shared that District 97 wanted shared institute days with District 200 and asked if that were part of that discussion. Mr. Prale stated that Districts 200 and 90 have not been able to coordinate their calendars. The focus is now on January 2009. Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if there were opportunities for divisions to work with District 97 divisions. Mr. Prale responded that while the Fine Arts Learning Team has had more articulation with the middle schools, District 97 is on a different time schedule. The high school has late arrivals. Dr. Millard urged that the high school continue to try to coordinate its calendar with District 97.

Report on the Initiatives

Mr. Prale presented the Committee members with the following written report.

“Introduction

This report identifies and summarizes current outcomes for some of our programs that focus on gaps that exist in our learning community. Included in this report are updates on the Algebra Block/Agile Mind Program, the Minority Achievement Committee (M.A.C. Scholars), College Prep Scholars, the 8 to 9 Connection, the Learning Support Reading classes, and SOLO. Since this report continues from the report made in February on these programs, descriptive summaries have been omitted. Dr. Carl Spight provided data staging and analysis.

Algebra 1-2 Block/Agile Mind Program

“Preliminary data from the Algebra I Block/Agile Mind program suggest some improvements on the overall algebra program. Data sets reviewed include the end of spring semester grades (for school years ending in June 2007, June 2006, and June 2005) and the semester 2, June 2007 Algebra I final exam scores.

“Using the June 2007 final exam scores and the grade distribution data from that year, a correlation was established between the data sets, suggesting that grades for Algebra I Block and Algebra I classes correlate to the standards measured on the final exam. In other words, the grades are a fair representation of what students learned.

“Looking then to the overall distribution of grades in regular level algebra courses (Algebra I Block and Algebra I) over the past three years, the following pattern is observed.

	A/B Grades (%)	C Grades (%)	D/F Grades (%)	Total # of Grades
June 2005	42.1	32.5	25.4	209
June 2006	40.2	34.7	25.1	219
June 2007	40.2	34.2	23.1	286

“The impact of the Algebra I Block/Agile Mind program seems to be an increase in the number of students enrolled in regular algebra at the ninth grade level without a significant shift in the distribution of grades within the program. Reviewing the number of enrollments at the other levels of the algebra program, it seems that since the implementation of the Algebra I Block/Agile Mind program, student enrollments have shifted towards the regular algebra program with approximately 20 students moving from the basic level algebra courses into Algebra I or Algebra I Block and approximately 15 students moving into regular algebra from the honors level algebra program. This in part accounts for the increase in the 2007 enrollments in the regular algebra program.

“We still need to analyze the performance of these students on standardized tests; the analysis will be made available as soon as the scores are delivered to the high school. If the results are available before the board meeting, I will forward the analysis to the Board.”

The discussion that ensued regarding this portion of the report included Mr. Prale thanking Ms. Hill for her work with the Mastery Manager program. The administration thinks that Algebra is a gateway course that leads to success in Algebra II, and correlates with college resource. More students are taking Algebra and there is no difference in the distribution of grades. Interesting patterns of results appeared when comparing the distribution of grades of African American and White students. In the Algebra I classes that meet five times per week, the distribution of grades does not significantly vary when disaggregated by race. However, in the Algebra Block sections, there is a difference. The modal grade for White students is B or C and the modal grade for African-American students is C or D. What would it take to erase the gap in that modality? It would take affecting the performance of 12 students. The administration feels it can address this directly by working more directly with the teacher and the division head. By creating a test that standardizes curriculum, by having a program that addresses the gap, and by giving teachers the time to review their practices, the District hopes to successfully address these issues.

Minority Achievement Committee (M.A.C.) Scholars

“A review of the performance data for students involved in this program, either as mentors or as potential scholars, showed that when compared with African American male students as an aggregate, these students performed better in all areas in which we measure academic success. These areas include the number of A and B grades earned, the number of honors classes attempted, and the overall weighted grade-point average. In short, these students exhibited promising results as a group of leaders and role models in the school.

“Caution should be noted when determining a causal relationship from these data. It is possible that the sponsors of the program selected well, identifying outstanding students for the program. The selection effort included identifying upper classmen who serve as mentors and lower classmen who have the potential to elevate their performance to the level of their mentors. It could be that the program activities lent a supportive environment for students who already had potential for high achievement. However, the correlation of students participating in the MAC Scholar program and their higher level of achievement should be noted. The recommendation is to continue support of these students and this program, while remaining cognizant of the need to determine any specific effect of the program. The district should be supportive of high achieving students in all areas and for that reason this program deserves continued support”

Mr. Prale added at the table that the District found that the Mac Scholar students achieved towards the top end of the performance range.

College Prep Scholars

“These students were compared with the larger set of non-honors taking students in the freshman class. The data for these students show that the College Prep Scholar students, for the most part, resemble non-honors taking freshmen students. Areas in which the comparisons are evident include the number of A and B grades earned and the number of D and F earned. College Prep Scholar students were identified as being on the academic margin between the basic and regular levels, and who with appropriate support could achieve, as would other regular level students. In that way, the program and the teacher in that program have succeeded with these students.

“As noted above the district needs to analyze the performance of these students on standardized tests; the analysis will be made available as soon as the scores are delivered to the high school.”

At the table, Mr. Prale noted that he wished for more students in this program. The students are pushed into regular level classes and a teacher is assigned to work with them. These students are achieving at the mean. The College Prep Program is a “bump-up” program. Currently there are 12 minority students in the program.

8 to 9 Connection Program

“The overall data regarding the students in this program is still not promising. Individual students from this program have succeeded in the school, attending class regularly and passing most or all classes. However, analysis of the attendance patterns for these students shows subsets of students with distinct behavior patterns. One group of students attends regularly and succeeds; other students have low rates of unexcused absences and tardiness and/or some contact with the discipline system; a third group has a much higher rate of poor attendance and behavior incidents. The third group needs a stronger learning

context for their lives at the high school. Either this group needs stronger tracking and intervention from the academic or the pupil support services areas of the building. Until those interventions come forth and demonstrate effectiveness, these students will continue to struggle in our school.

“A current recommendation is to make changes in the summer program, including smaller classes and the addition of student leaders in the program. Also, approximately thirty-six students who enter basic level freshman courses will participate in a collaborative teaching and learning model that will include coordinated curriculum, literacy training, and PBIS strategies for intervening in and preventing behavior problems.”

At the table, Mr. Prale stated the District struggles with this program. Three years ago, a number of freshman students were challenging to their teachers and to their Deans of Discipline. Many of them had mandatory summer school. In collaboration with District 97, District 200 moved mandatory summer school to this building and provided two teachers, as does District 97. In past years, students had 90 minutes of reading, math and study skills. This year the program has four sections with student aides and four groups of nine students move every 45 minutes. Social workers are teaching social skills. These students continue to be a challenge. District 200 receives the list of students from District 97.

Mr. Rigas acknowledged that this program has the highest number of at-risk incoming freshmen and asked if the parents were involved. Mr. Prale reported that it has a parent component that ran six nights over the summer. Thirty-seven students are enrolled in the program. Mr. Rigas said this would be the place where the District must work diligently with the parents. He asked if this was where there needs to be an adult mentor, a student mentor, such as with the Mac Scholars Program, etc., a cross pollinating between that and some other programs. Mr. Prale responded that the subtext is connecting these students. There are student mentors—three juniors and one graduated senior—who enjoy the work. Does there need to a parent-mentoring program? Ms. Patchak-Layman stated that the work still must be accomplished even without the parents’ help, i.e., calling the student in the morning, going and getting them, etc. The District needs to find out what help the students need. Dr. Millard felt that parents were a key factor in the process. Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if the school was as welcoming as it could be. Mr. Prale noted that the District was inviting them to meetings, which included a tour of the building with Dr. Weninger. The school works hand-in-hand with Family Services on this program, as well.

Wyannetta Johnson said that A.P.P.L.E. would have no trouble working with these students. She also said that A.P.P.L.E. has the best turnout of parents of any other parent group in the high school. A.P.P.L.E. gives the school the information and the school uses it, i.e., tutoring during the study hall. She stated that the school must work with A.P.P.L.E. She, herself, felt isolated. Young parents have not learned to be great moms and dads. She knew the work of Family Services, but the same problems exist. When

people look alike, it is easier for them to relate; these parents have to feel comfortable. She asked the school to give A.P.P.L.E. the challenge.

Learning Support Reading

“These students were compared with the larger set of non-honors taking students in the freshman class. The data for these students show that the Learning Support Reading students, for the most part, differ from non-honors taking freshmen students in important ways. These students earn fewer A and B grades and earn more D and F grades. The weighted grade point average for these students is comparable with the larger group of students. This program has had less success with these students in the area of grades earned, but the net effect of the freshman year is comparable.

“As noted above the district needs to analyze the performance of these students on standardized tests; the analysis will be made available as soon as the scores are delivered to the high school.”

Mr. Prale stated that this program was similar to the College Prep Scholar model. Students receive extra minutes instead of an extra study hall. While it is beneficial, the PLAN scores were not as good as hoped.

SOLO

“The SOLO program underwent a number of changes this year. A math teacher and an applied arts teacher were scheduled into the program on a daily basis. The period for the program was changed, and the dean-counselors were engaged more fully for program placement and support. The number of students in the program peaked at twenty-two in late April. Some of the students participated in SOLO on a part-time basis, rotating out of the program for additional classes per their individual needs.

“The goal of SOLO is to provide students who might not otherwise attend school an opportunity to earn credits and graduate from the high school. This year, eight students graduated from SOLO, three at the end of the fall semester and five at the end of the spring semester. SOLO is expected to have between fifteen and twenty students enrolled for the fall 2007 semester.”

There are 15 to 20 students in the SOLO program. More teachers have been provided and the students love math teacher, Neal Weisman. This program has been successful. If the program has more than 22 students, more resources would be needed, i.e., teachers and space.

Discussion ensued about the report. Mr. Rigas asked about the level of students when they enter high school. Where achievement is the desired effect, a comparison is needed of current student levels from where they were. Mr. Prale agreed. He stated that next year the District would have EXPLORE Test scores at the 8th grade level and PLAN Test

scores at the 9th grade level. The District will be able to break out the PLAN scores by which students and areas of the program.

Mr. Rigas continued that while the Board of Education gets much information throughout the year, it is in different bits and pieces. The Board of Education needs to see an aggregate of those reports into a single report. Meeting AYP is only one measurement of achievement. He asked what for the other measuring points, besides AYP and ACT scores. Progress was not seen until the last two or three years. A comprehensive report is needed. Mr. Prale agreed it would be an interesting exercise. He had one caveat as he looked at the math data last week. When the data for the 289 students was taken together, it looked O.K. However, when Dr. Spight brought more data forward and dug deeper, another picture appeared. Mr. Rigas wanted the District to disaggregate data by feeder schools, including private schools.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if teachers know anecdotal information about students and whether that correlated with the data. Relationships are key. Mr. Prale responded that while the District is waiting until all numbers are received before making any adjustments.

Dr. Lee asked what “block” meant in the school setting. Mr. Prale responded that all freshmen were required to enroll in study halls, or a music program, or be in Academic Strategies. Block Algebra students are in the 40th to 60th percentile on the standardized test. They receive a double period of math instead of the study hall. When asked whether block teachers acted as mentors in other areas, Mr. Prale stated that it was less of a factor than in College Prep, as there was more computer instruction. Advisors can be dean counselors, coaches, etc.

Dr. Lee wanted to see indications of what worked and what did not work, i.e., literacy report. How well are students doing in terms of literacy? Where do the black students stand compared to white students and the average with that criterion? If that cannot be quantified, one must acknowledge not knowing the differences. It is important to say what is and is not known, as compared to what was done in the past. Is there a way to measure progress? If reading were considered an important part of student achievement, would it not make sense to say this is where Black students are in respect to reading skills and where they were before? Alternatively, if there were no way to determine that, there is no way to assess progress. Mr. Prale stated that the District has tracked reading for four years and a 2006 report details the activities. The Agile Mind Program’s progress is in the following report on the initiatives.

Dr. Lee asked when the Board of Education could expect to see that report, i.e., the entire issue of closing the gap, i.e., reading, math, etc., a report on whatever available components, and indications of current status versus what caused the realization of a problem. Mr. Prale said that he could provide a report, including the state report, which gives a picture of juniors who meets the state standards, and a disaggregation of the state data sometime after the opening of the next school year. Ms. Hill added that the District also publishes a state report of the recent grading class and does disaggregate ACT and

SAT Scores. While it does not demonstrate growth, it is snapshot. The more comprehensive report that would track 700 or 800 students and the District does not have that data readily available. Mr. Prale stated that the Board of Education wanted reports on the individual program implemented. The ACT report shows progress. He could match scores together for the last three or four years, including the Gates MacGinitie test scores, and look at “slices” of time.

Code of Conduct and Student Behavior Contract

Mr. Edgecombe explained that, typically, at the end of the year, the Board of Education is provided with information about changes in the Code of Conduct. The changes were listed below. Language adjustments were made for clarification purposes and disciplinary adjustments were made to be more appropriate for the infraction.

In addition, at the Board of Education’s request, the Administration reviewed and revised the behavioral contract to ensure that students were held accountable and that it mirrored changes in the Code of Conduct.

Mr. Edgecombe explained that these were procedural changes, not policy changes. Discussion ensued. Mr. Rigas stated that the Code of Conduct did not constitute policy and his concern was about having policies that carry the weight of municipal law. Ms. Patchak-Layman felt this gave guidance to the administration on how they were to respond to the policy and the way the Board of Education interprets the policy. This is independent action in terms of administrative rule, but it is the action of the Board of Education that makes policy. Dr. Millard did not see this as a distinct policy. The Board of Education sets policies relative to the health and safety of the school.

After a discussion of the procedures, the Board of Education signaled that it had no objection to the procedural issues.

Ms. Fisher stated that the Code of Conduct was developed as a response to a community concern that there was not an equitable distribution of consequences by the dean counselor division. Ultimately, the administration developed a code to address that inequity.

“The proposed changes for the Code of Conduct matrix were as follows:

Infraction	Proposed Changes	1 st Offense	2 nd Offense	3 rd Offense	4 th Offense
Possession of Cell Phone	Violation of Cell Phone Policy	From A to B			
Possession of Weapon	Add: ## (Police notification is mandated)				
Filing a False Report	From Class III				

	to Class II				
Leaving School w/o Permission	Remove				
Truancy	1 st offense starts at B	B	B	C	Cη
Violation of Student Behavioral Contract		From E-F to C-F	E-F C-F	E-F C-F	F

The following infractions were recommended being changed from Class III to Class IV:

- Arson/Bomb Threat/False Alarm/False 911 Call ## \$
- Battery
- Distribution/Intent to Deliver an Illegal Substance ##
- Mob Action
- Possession of Fireworks
- Possession of Illegal Substance ##
- Possession of Controlled Substance ##
- Possession of Weapon ++”

Dr. Lee asked for an orientation session on the Code of Conduct. He suggested this could be at a future meeting and felt it would be appropriate to have the new superintendent and principal involved.

Discussion ensued regarding the infractions recommended. The Instruction Committee members did not want such a harsh reprimand for the first violation of either the Cell Phone or Truancy policy. The Instruction Committee members also wanted more flexibility when a student violated a behavioral contract.

Ms. Patchak-Layman stated that the school needed an opportunity for continuing learning and they should be reflected in the Code of Conduct, i.e., anger management vehicles, etc. Mr. Perna stated that any time a student is placed on a behavioral contract it is because they have violated a Class III infraction. The behavioral contract lists the interventions that will occur. In addition, any Class II violation means an intervention for the student. The PSS Team (Deans of Discipline and Counselors) continually discusses students’ behavior. Ms. Patchak-Layman continued that when someone is guilty of having a moving violation, one of the consequences could be to watch a four-hour video. To her, that was learning the facts and figuring out new behaviors. She felt there was a comparable activity for in school suspensions and after school detentions.

It was the consensus of the Instruction Committee members to amend the following recommendations.

Infraction	Proposed Changes	1st Offense	2nd Offense	3rd Offense	4th Offense
Possession of Cell Phone	Violation of Cell Phone Policy	A	B	C	D

Truancy	1 st offense starts at B	A	B	C	C
Violation of Student Behavioral Contract		C-F	C-F	C-F	F

Dr. Bridge stated that the District interacts with students and on behalf of faculty in ways other than the Code of Conduct. Many venues are used to help students avoid getting into the discipline systems. The District is pursuing PBIS, so that it is more informed about interactions that will keep student behavior from escalating to a punitive level. The District is trying to create a process that is more consistent and fair when a child is brought into the discipline system. It was been a long journey and it would be hard for a new Board of Education member to come up to speed. These recommendations are the result of yearlong discussions and are historic. Mr. Edgecombe added that the Code of Conduct has responded to the issue of inconsistencies across dean counselors. It is a fair conversation to have, however, about whether the consequences from the start are appropriate and whether enough is being done in the intervention area to keep students from being repeat offenders. He expressed the concern that as the intervention discussion continued, he hoped it would not die under its own weight. The issue of discipline takes a tremendous amount of time, i.e., counseling or meting out consequences so that the child does not appear before the Board of Education.

Dr. Millard suggested that this was an issue for next year.

Ms. Fisher responded to Ms. Patchak-Layman’s issue regarding a small piece of the Code of Conduct that was being reviewed by the administrators in charge of that, but it has implications of a much larger issue. The hardest thing a Board of Education member has to do is to consider whether to expel a student from the institution. It is gut wrenching. Ten years ago when a student was expelled, they were expelled. No further education was offered to them. O.P.R.F.H.S. has ultimately developed alternative schooling, and O.P.R.F.H.S. pays for that education. Another prong of the expulsion involves counseling. The Board of Education takes very seriously the individual student’s needs and what will become of them. This Code has undergone many alterations over the years. The reason that the cell phone consequence had a stricter consequence was because previously cell phones were not allowed in the building. The Code of Conduct has one bottom line purpose and that is to provide security and safety of the 3,000 students, most of who behave themselves, in order for them to be educated in a secure environment. If someone has a weapon, that must be dealt with seriously.

Mr. Edgecombe explained that the recommendation was to remove “leaving school without permission because it is synonymous with truancy.

Dr. Millard asked for reports on cell phone usage in the building soon after school starts.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked how one would classify a first offense. Was it 12 calendar months? Was it year to year? She was informed that a first offense was in any school

year. At the end of the school year, it is wiped out. Verbal offense warnings must be in written form.

Appropriate Attire

The Instruction Committee members were presented with the language to be included in the Student Handbook regarding appropriate attire. The Committee members discussed the definition of appropriate attire. Mr. Prale stated that if a student's dress were disruptive to the educational setting that would be the criteria that would allow teachers or administrators to act. This language is to be used as guidelines only; they are not rules or regulations. These will be provided to parents and students.

Dr. Millard reiterated that these were guidelines and on anything immodest and indiscriminate, gave any individual faculty member the ability to call the student on it. The idea is to establish some guidelines as to what is acceptable and what is not. She stated that one should try to focus on the affect that any of this has on any of the classrooms; that is what these guidelines are intended to reveal.

Alternative Programs

Mr. Perna presented the Instruction Committee members with the following report on alternative programs.

"HARBOR Academy (Helping Adolescents Reflect on Building Opportunities for Renewal). Harbor is a West 40 Regional Safe Schools High School located at 6525 North Avenue in Oak Park. Classes are from 9:30-3:00 with their school calendar mirroring that of O.P.R.F.H.S. This program serves students who are in good standing as well as those students who have been expelled held in abeyance. Students in good standing who attend Harbor Academy are considered "Pilot" students in contrast to expelled students. Special Education students may attend Harbor Academy, but the school's total Special Education enrollment cannot exceed 10%. It is generally not the practice of the district to assign Special Education students to Harbor Academy. Students are accepted on a case-by-case basis and are eligible to earn up to seven credits a semester including elective credits. Harbor currently employs four full-time teachers, a full-time social worker, an Administrative Assistant and a Site Director. The ratio of students to staff is no more than 10 students to one adult. The facility was just recently improved to include two additional classrooms and a state-of-the-art fitness center. The current facility can accommodate up to 50 students.

"Ombudsman. The North Central Association of Schools (NCA) and the Southern Association of Schools accredit Ombudsman. Classes are held at 3326 N. Harlem, Chicago. Students enroll in one of three 3-hour sessions. The curriculum is computer-based with the student progressing at his or her own pace with the guidance of an accredited teacher. Academic emphasis is on reading/language arts, mathematics, science concepts, and social studies. This program accepts students in good standing as

well as those students expelled held in abeyance. Special Education students are not assigned to the Ombudsman program.

“Enrollment Data. During the second semester of the 2006-2007 school year there were 31 students receiving an education at our two off-campus alternative schools:

- 19 students attended Harbor Academy; 2 expelled students held in abeyance will return to O.P.R.F.H.S. in good standing for first semester; 5 pilot students will continue their education at Harbor; 2 students expelled held in abeyance will continue their education at Harbor first semester; 6 students graduated (4 pilot students and 2 expelled students); 2 pilot students were remanded to Special Education for services; 1 pilot student was dropped for lack of academic progress; 1 expelled student held in abeyance was transferred to Ombudsman due to safety concerns.
- 12 students attended Ombudsman; 1 pilot student completed graduation requirements; 1 student expelled held in abeyance completed graduation requirements; 3 pilot students will continue their education at Ombudsman; 2 expelled students held in abeyance will continue their education at Ombudsman; 2 pilot students were dropped for lack of academic progress; 1 pilot student withdrew from the district; 2 expelled students held in abeyance were expelled for violation of the held in abeyance contract.

“Conclusion. The students attending both alternative programs are unique individuals with unique needs. Most students are placed at an alternative school as a result of having major discipline issues and/or attendance problems and, as a result, may exhibit educational deficiencies. The success of students being educated at an alternative school has to do with many factors. Some students do quite well and request to stay at the alternative school rather than return to **O.P.R.F.H.S.** Many of these students have indicated that they like the smaller class size, the smaller school environment, or feel that they need to be removed from a negative influence that, at the home school, was a barrier to learning while other students feel quite the opposite and can’t wait to return. Some of these students feel the education/curriculum is not challenging, they miss their friends, or they generally object to the over-all change.

“Implementation of Recommendations from Semester I Report

1. A short survey instrument (see attached) has been developed and sent to the homes of students attending both alternative placements. The survey will measure the satisfaction level of both the students and parents regarding the curriculum, instruction, support services, physical environment, and matriculation process. The results of the survey will be analyzed over the summer and will be included in a future alternative school report.
2. The school’s Institutional Researcher has been provided with the ID numbers of the students that have returned to O.P.R.F.H.S. from an alternative placement at the end of each semester. I have requested that a report be developed that will reflect, in part, the impact the alternative programs have on student achievement.
3. The results of the survey instrument, anecdotal information, and the report developed by the Institutional Researcher will provide information regarding student transition

from alternative placement back to O.P.R.F.H.S. The results of the analysis of this information will be included in a future alternative school report.”

Ms. Fisher and Dr. Millard appreciated the addition of the survey.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked the administration to address the fact that the educational curriculum at alternative schools was not challenging. She asked what the checks and balances in terms of the curriculum were. Mr. Edgecombe responded that there were none at Ombudsman. Students are not going to these programs for academic purposes; it is an opportunity for them to get credits for graduation. Any student who is an academically capable will have less than they want at an alternative school. Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if there were an opportunity for any conversation in that regard. She was informed that Ombudsman was a corporation. HARBOR Academy is a smaller institution and has limited resources. Mr. Perna remembered only having Ombudsman years ago and then HARBOR was opened. Ombudsman has changed in the ten years that he worked with them. It has broadened its curriculum base and now has more components. It is also more sophisticated about finding the entry level of students. It is more open to certain things, such as agreeing to report student attendance weekly. Ms. Patchak-Layman did not want to see students penalized educationally, stating that a wide range of challenging curriculum can be completed via computers. Senior Board of Education members suggested Ms. Patchak-Layman visit both alternative schools to see the quality of those schools.

Textbook Approval

Ms. Fisher recommended approval of textbook, *Authentic Happiness*, for the History Division, at the regular June Board of Education meeting.

Dr. Millard recommended approval of the textbook, *Emotional Intelligence*, for the History Division, *at the regular June Board of Education meeting*.

Mr. Conway recommended approval of the textbook, *Psychology: Themes & Variations*, 7th Edition, for the History Division, at the regular June Board of Education meeting.

Ms. Fisher noted that when Policy 20 is amended the Board of Education members will no longer review textbooks; they will only approve the superintendent’s recommendation of the textbooks.

Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 10:57 a.m.

**Oak Park and River Forest High School
201 N. Scoville
Oak Park, IL 60302**

**An Instruction Committee of the Whole Board
August 15, 2007**

An Instruction Committee meeting of the Whole Board was held on Thursday, August 15, 2007, in the Board Room. The meeting opened at 8:18 a.m. Committee members present were John C. Allen, Valerie J. Fisher, Dr. Ralph H. Lee, Dr. Dietra D. Millard, and Sharon Patchak Layman. Also present were: Dr. Attila J. Weninger, Superintendent; Jason Edgecombe, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources; Don Vogel, Interim Principal, Cheryl Witham, Chief Financial Officer; Phil Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Jack Lanenga, Assistant Superintendent for Operations; Amy Hill, Director of Instruction; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistance/Clerk of the Board.

Visitors included: Kay Foran, O.P.R.F.H.S. Director of Community Relations and Communications; James Paul Hunter, Faculty Senate Chair; Terry Burke, Wyanetta Johnson, Burcy Hines, and Geralynne Rode, community members; and Terry Dean of the *Wednesday Journal* and Bridget Kennedy of the Oak Leaves.

Approval of Instruction Committee Minutes

The approval of the June 21, 2007, Instruction Committee Minutes was delayed until the September meeting.

Instruction Committee Calendar

Dr. Millard announced that she was working with Mr. Prale to create an Instruction Committee calendar so that Board of Education members would have advance notice when specific reports would be presented.

Report on Minority Student Achievement Network National Conference

Ms. Hill had submitted the following written report:

“The Minority Student Achievement Network held its 9th Annual Conference, “Opening Doors and Raising the Roof: Building Equitable Classrooms,” in Eugene, Oregon from Sunday, June 24 to Wednesday, June 27. Representatives from all 25-member districts enjoyed a well-organized and thought-provoking event, hosted by the Eugene School District. Dr. Attila J. Weninger, Jacques Conway, Amy Hill, Devon Alexander, Tiffany Allison, Michael Byars, Ryan Mulvaney, and Sarah Rosas attended on behalf of Oak Park and River Forest High School.

“The conference began on Sunday, June 24 with a pre-conference on best practices. Susan Castillo, Oregon Superintendent of Public Instruction, opened the session. The first keynote speaker, Dr. Pedro Noguera, described specific ways schools can level the educational playing field. Dr. Robert Marzano focused on standards-based formative assessment and systematic ways to ensure effective instruction in all classrooms. The day concluded with a presentation by students from the Eugene School District. That evening, the MSAN Governing Board and member districts’ School Board representatives met over dinner.

“Dr. George Russell, Superintendent of the Eugene School District, welcomed participants to the conference on Monday, June 25. Art Rainwater, Superintendent of Madison Metropolitan School District, and Dr. Gloria Ladsen-Billings, Interim MSAN Director, made opening remarks. Over that day and the next, keynote speakers and concurrent sessions offered opportunities to think and learn about effective strategies to improve the performance of public schools with regard to minority student achievement. Dr. Beverly Tatum delivered a stirring address on the historical and sociological context of student achievement gaps. Dr. Renee Rodriguez spoke about the obligation of every educator to effectively teach all students. Jamie Almanzan and Dr. Carolyn Ash addressed the common concerns of African American and Latino students and the need for “courageous conversations” to bring to light and counteract individual and institutional racial discrimination that contributes to unequal educational opportunities.

“Concurrent sessions focused on promising initiatives from MSAN member districts and the philosophical foundations of effective gap-closing strategies. OPRF participants attended concurrent sessions on successful academic support programs for students of color, race and school achievement, mathematics instruction, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), culturally relevant pedagogy, expanding access to rigorous coursework, and data-informed decision making, among others. In one concurrent session, OPRF History teacher Monica Swope presented the results of a joint effort (with Evanston Township High School) to improve the teaching of US History. On Wednesday, June 27, the MSAN Research Practitioner’s Council met and discussed a number of on-going projects, including progress in the new partnership with the Wisconsin Center for Educational Research.

“Upcoming MSAN events include the annual Student Conference in Arlington, Virginia, October 18-20; RPC and Governing Board meetings on October 24-25; and a mini-conference on adolescent literacy on November 8-9. The 10th Annual MSAN Conference will be held in June, 2008, hosted by the Madison Metropolitan School District.”

O.P.R.F.H.S. will participate in the mini-conference on adolescent literacy in November. The District 200 team felt the national conference was valuable. Much time was spent debriefing and on honest conversations about race. Devon Alexander is working on a series of seminars for O.P.R.F.H.S. teachers to address the dynamics of race in the community and how that affects the classroom. Discussion ensued about how a conversation about race would occur in the school. Ms. Hill explained that one way would be to invite experts on diversity training in the school to address everyone. The

discussion might entail areas both inside and outside the school. Last year, O.P.R.F.H.S. hosted events that aired some teacher concerns about school climate. The all-school institute day had a focus on race and the dynamics of race; the support staff also participated.

Dr. Lee asked if documentation existed showing what MSAN knows for certain, i.e., a list of things it discovered over the years of its existence. He could not find anything detailing with certainty regarding the achievement gap. Mr. Prale stated that three years ago, the Research Practitioner's Team put together a series of statements with citations. Each citation referenced to a specific research finding. A subgroup within the MSAN structure was charged with taking that document back to their schools for discussion. O.P.R.F.H.S. had that discussion in December 2005. Dr. George Bailey worked with the division heads to prepare them for those discussions. Ms. Hill stated that the Research Practitioner's Council would begin collaboration with the Wisconsin Educational Research Center in Madison in an effort to get the kind of research to which Dr. Lee referred. Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if there were a list of activities implemented at the high school because of those statements. Mr. Prale responded that work to remedy gaps in school performance had begun before O.P.R.F.H.S. joined MSAN, so it was hard to know if there were a causal relationship between MSAN and specific program effectiveness. O.P.R.F.H.S. has the Mac Scholar Program, the 8 to 9 Program, both of which were partly a result of its involvement in MSAN, because MSAN energized some teachers to participate in the programs. Ms. Patchak-Layman was concerned about just doing more research and not having action plans that travel with it. Ms. Hill stated that other examples of programs related to MSAN were Agile Mind and Algebra Block. O.P.R.F.H.S. collaborated with Evanston Township High School to develop a relationship regarding these programs.

Ms. Patchak-Layman understood that O.P.R.F.H.S. and E.T.H.S. were the only districts that were not K-12 within MSAN, making them unique. She asked what kinds of things come out of O.P.R.F.H.S.'s participation in MSAN. Dr. Weninger responded that there was a connection to the Center for Educational Research. MSAN recently came underneath that organization, as it is the largest educational research center in the country. It is not only a partnership but also the address of MSAN, i.e., the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and its new director lives in Madison. The Center's resources will be readily available to MSAN. Dr. Weninger continued that while the MSAN pre-conference sessions were powerful, the most powerful portion of the conference was the conversation about race within O.P.R.F.H.S. Discussion ensued about taking the eight O.P.R.F.H.S. members who had attended the conference and attempting to replicate something similar on Institute Day. Monica Swope had participated in a similar conversation and she was at MSAN as a presenter on one of the topics.

While districts are limited to eight people as part of the team, a District could send up to four more with additional registration fees. District 97 actually had more than eight persons at the summer conference.

Preliminary 2007 PSAE Results and Preliminary AYP Status

Ms. Hill had presented the following written report on PSAE Results and AYP Status:

“On July 25 the Illinois State Board of Education released preliminary results for the 2007 Prairie State Achievement Examination given last April to all public high school juniors. Schools were allowed to make any necessary corrections to their student data files and were asked to do so by Wednesday, August 8 in order to insure the accuracy of calculations of Adequate Yearly Progress. We had few corrections and were easily able to complete them in advance of the deadline.

“In order to achieve Adequate Yearly Progress in 2007, Illinois public high schools were required to test at least 95% of all students, as well as 95% of students in each subgroup numbering 45 or more. OPRF successfully tested almost 99% of the junior class and made AYP in the area of participation. In order to make AYP in the area of student performance, we were required to have 55% or more of students in all subgroups meet or exceed standards in reading and mathematics.

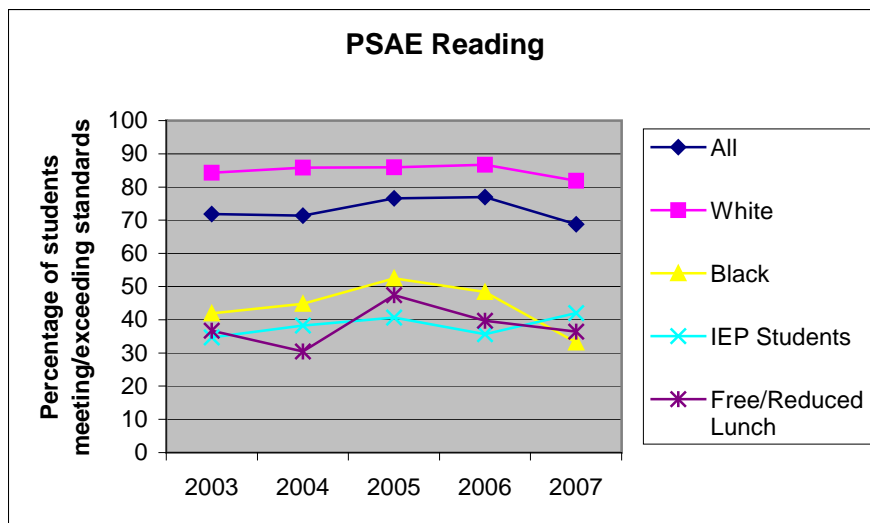
“Internal analysis, corroborated by the preliminary AYP status report released by ISBE, indicates that we did not make AYP in 2007. The proportion of OPRF juniors meeting or exceeding standards, on the whole, was well above 55%, and results for Special Education students allowed us to make AYP in reading for that group through Safe Harbor. However, we did not make AYP in mathematics for Special Education students, and we did not achieve AYP in reading or math for our African American or Low Income students.

“The specific ways in which AYP is determined contributed to the school and district *meeting* AYP standards in 2006 and *not meeting* AYP standards in the current results. This experience has emerged in other area districts. Brief contacts with other districts have shown a similar pattern of results; of eleven districts that have shared preliminary information only two have indicated that the district made AYP. In the situation for District 200, our initial review of available data shows patterns in results that may be related to how AYP is calculated. While ACT and Workkeys (PSAE, Day Two) scores are scaled and normed to establish a baseline school or district effectiveness, subgroup performance results may be subject to statistical fluctuations that appear in the subgroups’ percentages of students who meet/exceed standards. One reason for shifting percentages may be that the factors affecting a subgroup’s performance may not mirror factors affecting the larger group that establishes the baseline standard. In addition, since school subgroups are frequently significantly smaller, the performance of a relatively small number of students may determine whether or not that group meets AYP standards. For example, a subgroup of 100 students can show a drop of three percentage points if three more students do not meet or exceed standards. A small shift in the number of students meeting standards combined with the increasing percentage needed to meet AYP shows up in these preliminary results.

“However, the inherent problems in how AYP is and has been calculated are not essential to drawing significance from the 2007 preliminary AYP results. More important is how the AYP results obligate the administration, faculty, and staff to implement systemic changes for improving the performance of students, faculty, administration, and staff and to assess and report on the effectiveness of those attempts. Systemic changes that have been implemented include incorporating Agile Mind into the Algebra I courses, creating a behavior specialist position for the ED program, providing CRISS training across the curriculum, organizing a collaborative teaching model for transition level freshman students, and training in PBIS intervention strategies for administrators and teacher leaders. Also, district administrators are expanding a pilot, started in the Math Division last spring, to evaluate core curricular programs and assess how course results align with standardized test results. During the school year, the administration will be reporting on these programs to the board and the school community.”

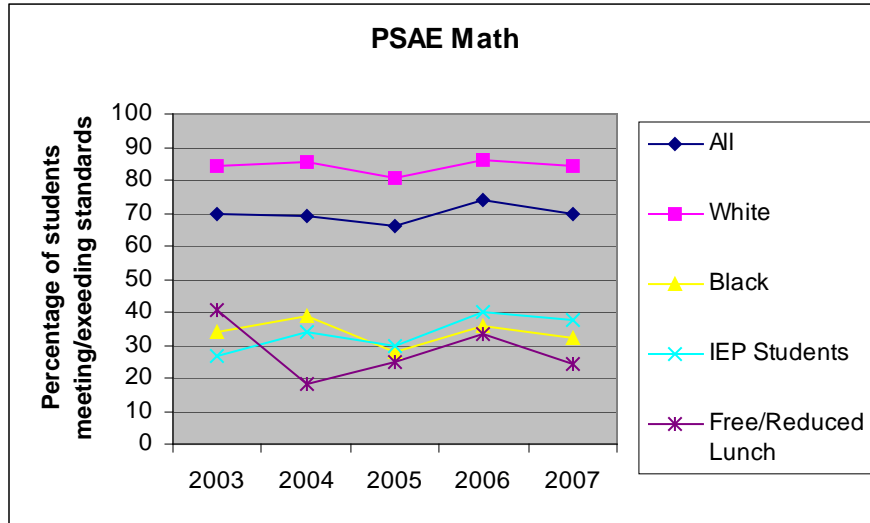
PSAE Reading Performance, 2003-2007

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
All	71.9	71.4	76.6	77	68.8
White	84.3	85.8	85.9	86.7	81.9
Black	41.9	44.8	52.5	48.4	33.1
IEP Students	34.7	38.2	40.7	35.6	42
Free/Reduced Lunch	36.7	30.4	47.4	39.7	36.4



PSAE Math Performance, 2003-2007

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
All	69.7	69	65.8	74.1	70
White	84.4	85.2	80.4	86.3	84.4
Black	34.1	38.5	27.8	35.8	32
IEP Students	26.5	34.2	29.7	40	37.7
Free/Reduced Lunch	40.8	17.9	24.6	33.3	24.2



O.P.R.F.H.S. will not make AYP. O.P.R.F.H.S. continues to see the same patterns it has been seeing for a number of years in the African-American, Special Education, and the economically disadvantaged subgroups.

Ms. Hill noted that the overall numbers were deeply disappointing. Serious effort has been given to mathematics and reading and it was discouraging to see this gap increase on this measure.

Discussion ensued.

Dr. Lee asked if Safe Harbor were an exception to the rule. Ms. Hill responded that it was the state's acknowledgement that if there were an underperforming subgroup and the bar were raised seven percent rather than 10, the school could make AYP by using the Safe Harbor rule. It is an acknowledgement that a higher number may be too much to expect in a given school in certain areas. State law dictates these numbers. By 2014, all schools must have 100% of their students meeting or exceeding standards.

Dr. Lee then asked if O.P.R.F.H.S. had the ability to disaggregate the data to determine where the problem lies. What percentage of the black students accounts for missing the bar? Dr. Weninger noted that the 100% standard is the federal guideline; states determine the specific percentages of students who must meet and exceed each year leading up to 2014. Schools and districts must meet AYP not only for the total group of juniors, but also for each subgroup (a subgroup exists if there are at least 45 students in it). O.P.R.F.H.S. knows what percentage of the African-American students in last year's class did and did not meet AYP. Thirty-three percent of the African-American students who took the test met or exceeded standards in reading, meaning 67 percent did not meet or exceed standards. When Ms. Hill receives the data electronically, she will mine it further in an effort to better prepare to serve these students.

Ms. Hill noted that one of the problems with the data is the fact that it is a comparison of one cohort of students to another cohort of students from one year to the next.

Dr. Lee agreed that testing in the junior year tells the situation from the previous years. He asked what the District knew about the incoming students' reading abilities. He was informed that Oak Park and River Forest eighth grade students take the EXPLORE test, a pre-ACT tests that aligns with ACT and provides a predictor as to whether they will meet or exceed standards. O.P.R.F.H.S. administers a reading abilities test to freshmen at the beginning of their freshman year. If a student falls at or below the 40th percentile, that student is assigned courses designed to aid in reading, which accounts for about one-third of the schedule. Dr. Lee asked if thought had been given to these students spending 50 to 60 percent of their time on this. Ms. Hill responded that it had not during her tenure as an administrator. Ms. Hill noted that the counter argument to that would be the education of the whole child, i.e., the value of the arts, etc. Many schools failing to make AYP are restructuring these students' days.

Mr. Allen asked for the graduation rate of white students. Ms. Hill will provide that answer to him. Mr. Allen continued that O.P.R.F.H.S. was still graduating 84 or 85% of the students—they are learning something. Ms. Hill noted that the law does not allow for using growth models for assigning AYP status to a school. Dr. Weninger noted that there was no intent on the federal government's part to use growth models, just the standardized test. Texas schools are teaching strictly to the test. He continued that the testing system is a cohort model and schools are judged on that basis. It does not take into account a student's personal growth. It is a false comparison. He also stated that the effect of the initiatives is not yet reflected. It begs the question, if O.P.R.F.H.S. were to devote a preponderance of its time to reading and math would the scores increase. Test scores may increase because of the increased attention to drilling essential skills. However, one must then ask, what is the value of a comprehensive high school education? Scores for all subgroups moved downward, not just for African American students. Dr. Weninger wanted to look beyond 2003 to see if there were a direction or trend in each of the subgroups. He was looking for more than just class-to-class. This discussion is a longitudinal-based analysis of the data.

Dr. Weninger stated that the Prairie State Achievement Exam is comprised of several different tests, not all written by same testing company. The first day is comprised of the ACT. It is a general knowledge test designed for college admissions; areas tested include English, math reading, writing, and science. The second day's testing is not written with the same protocols in mind and the score from the Day 2 testing is combined with the ACT test scores to create the PSAE score and corresponding performance level. Two different performance tests are somehow statistically combined to produce a number. Many students blow off the second day. The state determines the testing schedule, i.e., day, time, testing order, etc. For Dr. Weninger, part of the issue is how to motivate these students on both days.

Ms. Patchak-Layman noted that she was very upset with the scores and what was going on at the high school. She compared the recent scores of this cohort to their eighth grade

scores. She stated that for almost every measure, the high school dropped the ball from the ISAT testing. While 68 percent of the students at the high school met or exceeded standards for all students in reading, 77 percent met or exceeded the standards in their eighth grade year. Ninety-two percent of the white students coming from the Oak Park elementary school met or exceeded the standards, yet only 82 percent met or exceeded at the high school. For African-American students, 50 percent met or exceeded in eighth grade, now only 43 percent. For the economically disadvantaged, 52 percent met or exceeded in eighth grade, and now only 36 percent. In Math, 33 percent of the African American students in eighth grade met or exceeded the standards, and it dropped to 32 percent. There are measures to look at, i.e., standardized testing. There are some similarities from the eighth grade testing to the second grade testing. Parents from Oak Park are expecting their students to achieve. The elementary schools are trending up, more and more students are meeting or exceeding the standards, and the high school's numbers are longitudinally flat. Her concern was that the elementary students were more prepared, yet when they get to the high school, something happens. They seem to diverge from the trajectory of meeting or exceeding. That is of great concern to her and the members of the community. This is a call to action. She is very disappointed that the high school is continuing to try this and continue with it. One cannot have this discrepancy and find them totally changed when they come to the high school. This is a cry and an alarm. When the trend for the last eight years is flat, that is not a lot of movement and the students are coming in at a higher level than they had been.

Dr. Millard noted that while not knowing the standards of the eighth grade, she knew the high school raises the bar very high. It is the superintendent's charge and the primary goal of the district to eliminate the achievement gap. Dr. Millard understood the statistics, but the high school must also look at the students as individuals.

Ms. Patchak-Layman stated that her statements matched anecdotal information she hears from students. Dr. Millard cautioned her about anecdotal information and was worried more about the individual students than the individual numbers. Ms. Patchak-Layman concurred but noted that these can be looked in group fashion. Every school in the state of Illinois, including Whitney Young, which has similar demographics, should be O.P.R.F.H.S.'s model. She asserted that Whitney Young had about the same number of low-income students and everyone met or exceeded the standards. There are examples in the Chicago area of students taking the same test. The same cohorts are meeting and exceeding standards and those are the examples that should be in front of us. Dr. Millard indicated that they were self-selected at Whitney Young and Ms. Patchak-Layman noted that they were self-selected at Oak Park. Ms. Patchak-Layman stated that was a community issue.

Dr. Lee wanted to pursue the comparing of the same cohorts. Would it be possible to figure out what the standards were three years earlier to compare apples with apples and then make some adjustment so that a valid comparison of those cohorts could be made. Ms. Hill noted that it was possible. Dr. Lee felt once that question was answered, a comparison could be made, on nationwide basis, as to whether it was normal for eleventh graders to focus their attention elsewhere as compared to eighth graders. He remembered

eleventh graders directing their attention in different directions from the attention of the eighth graders and to the academic detriment of the eleventh graders.

Ms. Hill felt the best strategy for measuring student growth over time was to use a consistent set of measures. The ACT test is given to juniors on the first day of PSAE testing. O.P.R.F.H.S. plans to continue to use the EXPLORE Test for incoming eighth graders, the PLAN Test for freshmen, and the pre-ACT for sophomores. Each of these tests shares a common set of learning objectives, which would allow us to measure students' growth on those objectives over time.

Dr. Lee asked if it were possible to give a similar test that would measure the same educational goals, i.e., inferences from the EXPLORE, PLAN and ACT tests, in the eighth grade and the eleventh grade to see the differences. The District could then work on a system that would do a detailed analysis on every goal to determine who is and who is not making it.

Dr. Weninger stated that ACT has had the EPAS system for a number of years. The EXPLORE and PLAN tests while not the same as the ACT, have been able to statistically predict how one would do on the ACT. They can predict with accuracy if a student has a score of 13 in Explore reading what the score would be on the PLAN Test and the ACT Test if nothing more happened other than just growing older. The school can look at that data, predict what the student might do in the junior year, and then focus its efforts on those students. The school could look to individual teachers and tell them this is what the student needs to do.

Dr. Weninger agreed with Ms. Patchak-Layman about these scores being a call to action. He too was disappointed with the results. While not trying to explain away the scores, the administration was trying to understand what they are and what they meant. One of the things to consider is that the national mobility rate in high schools is 14%. He wanted to compare the PSAE performance of students who graduated from Districts 90 and 97 with the performance of transfer students. An influx of hundreds of transfer students would impact overall performance a great deal. He refused to push any panic button. The District needed to identify the students, determine their motivation, and their needs. PSAE performance is not the sum total of this school. The District is concerned; it is a call to action to go about systemically changing and addressing the problem. A system is needed quickly, but it cannot be rushed. The District has already implemented many things and it is a much larger conversation.

To Ms. Patchak-Layman, a systematic change is status quo. The need to intensify and move off the page that says the school has disparity between groups of students in the school is not a systematic change. When one sees a flat line for six or seven years, there is not time to say, "we do not have the time." Much bigger initiatives are needed. Changes are needed to shake things up so that students have a chance to move forward and get off a flat line. Dr. Millard concurred in general, but there are differences of opinion as to how to do that.

Ms. Fisher asked if there was a comparison of apples to apples with specificity as to the students' scores in the eighth grade compared to their scores in high school. She had understood that eighth grade students took different tests and the line was drawn at different places for meeting/exceeding. Ms. Hill noted that a fair amount of discussion occurred last year about the cut scores changing (cut scores determine the level). A cut score of 154 or 155 determines who does or does not meet the standards. They fluctuate yearly. Last year, the state changed the math cut score, and a greater proportion of students met or exceeded standards. Marc Pickus at District 97 can provide her with more information on that. Ms. Fisher asked if there were a way to accurately compare eighth grade performance per junior performance to get a legitimate performance comparison. Ms. Hill responded that there was currently no way to make the comparison based solely upon the data from ISAT and PSAT. Dr. Weninger stated that there would be some degree of reliability if everyone bought into using the EXPLORE and the PLAN Tests, as a measurement of the growth, and differentiating between those who attended Oak Park and River Forest elementary schools and those who had not. Ms. Fisher asked if this would take several years to track. Because District 200 administered the EXPLORE Test last year, it could see one year for incoming freshmen. Ms. Fisher felt that would be useful.

Dr. Lee asked if these test scores converted into older fashioned lingo as he was accustomed to talking about someone who reads at the sixth grade or ninth grade level. Dr. Weninger stated that they would be happy to put together a workshop for him, i.e., an example of the ACT and other assessment groups can predict what score one would have on the ACT to meet standards if the cut score was such and such. Dr. Lee asked if a ninth grade student reading at a fourth-grade level was mandated by law to be out of the high school in four years, even if the student never got above the eighth-grade level. Where would the most productive forum be to enter that discussion? He suggested telling the parents of a student reading at the fourth grade level that their child would not graduate in four years and then putting that child in a special program where in the first year the focus would be on reading and math. While it may take longer to receive all of the necessary graduation credits, there would be a guarantee that the child would leave with the skills needed to survive in the world. Dr. Weninger stated that the only requirement is that students cannot drop out of high school until they are 17 years old. The school sets graduation requirements. Ms. Patchak-Layman stated that this would suggest that every student have an IEP, documenting his/her status when entering the high school, the goals, and the kinds of accommodations and support necessary to move to whatever bar is set, chronologically to content or related bar. Dr. Lee assumed that the amount of resources necessary to do something like that would depend on just how specific one would get with each student. To have a highly detailed curriculum for every student would, quite possibly, exceed the resources available. The job would then be how far would the present resources go in doing that. There are degrees of specificity and not everything would have to be absolutely specific. Right now, students are lumped into huge categories. What resources would be needed to lump them into smaller groups?

Ms. Patchak-Layman felt it was important to have a better understanding of students coming in to the high school, looking at their needs and instead of assigning them to

existing courses, and developing courses to suit the needs of incoming students. The syllabus of the course or content should more closely match the incoming student. When looking at the students, look at their learning styles, how they receive information, their environment. If there were many students with dyslexia, the school would match a program that would play to their strengths, allow for their intellectual curiosity, and work on the skills needing support.

Dr. Millard asked Dr. Weninger and Ms. Hill to address these issues at a future meeting. Dr. Weninger, assuming that the Board of Education would discuss and ratify the District goals at its regular August meeting, said that the DLT would provide the Board of Education with a plan, both in the short term and in the long-term, not only achievement gap, in October. He disagreed that the term “systematic” meant “status quo.” The plan will consist of looking at everything and moving forward. It will involve both DLT and BLT members.

Dr. Lee wanted the District to consider things for the years going forward. While some things require two to three years preparation, it is appropriate to philosophically talk about it in the first place, i.e., the argument for educating the whole child. Some parts of the child are more important at one time than at other times. Reading and math are more important part for the ninth grader than any other single item. Thinking about educating the whole child when the child cannot read is a mistake.

Ms. Patchak-Layman felt there was a need for a community part. Just having plans coming from administration, without community input, to see how far they would go and in what direction, would make any plan incomplete. She asked how community input could be sought. In the short term, if the priority is to move this forward and this is a catalyst for it and should be, the community needs to be part of this conversation. Dr. Millard asked if she were suggesting open forums or something further. Ms. Patchak-Layman suggested a town hall meeting to discuss this specifically. It should be a community-wide discussion and effort to move this school forward. This is a discussion about the importance of this high school and it needs to be a much broader plan with discussion with the community. Dr. Millard asked if Ms. Patchak-Layman could tell her what the community would say. Ms. Patchak-Layman noted that the community wants to talk about the school. Some groups are already meeting to talk about the achievement gap. She recently had two emails from two community members about the achievement gap. Ms. Patchak-Layman asked for public, community input and communication around this issue. This must be a requirement. Dr. Millard suggested that Dr. Weninger give the Board of Education his input first.

Ms. Fisher noted that when she was chair of the Parent Human Relations Advisory Council (PHRAC), it was the first group that heard about the MAC Scholars program. It is an example of a groups talking about the achievement gap. It was similar to Citizens’ Council, but it was less formal, and not appointed by the Board of Education. She did not want to see the desire to be encompassing slow down what was being done in the building. She hoped that Dr. Weninger would continue with internal conversations, as sometimes when things are broadened, it takes longer.

Reflecting on District 97's Strategic Plan, Ms. Fisher noted that there were 21 people in the audience and everyone was a presenter. Ms. Patchak-Layman replied that the Board of Education members are the trustees of the community and they must find out what the community desires, take its pulse and bring that forward. When asked if Ms. Patchak-Layman were talking about a strategic planning process for educational and instructional aspects of the school or dealing with academic achievement, Ms. Patchak-Layman stated that the school could still have conversations to talk about this with the public.

Dr. Lee asked if there were an ongoing strategic planning process put into place by previous boards. He suggested that O.P.R.F.H.S. start an ongoing strategic planning process that determines the means for community input on an ongoing basis, in such a way that would not be so burdensome that all of the time was used for the process, allowing nothing else to be accomplished. He wanted to see the Board of Education engaged in a routine, ongoing planning process, structured in a way that it could make a distinction between long- and short-range planning and to make the community understand that the community's role would be very limited, i.e., two minutes at the podium, but more meaningful in the long-term.

Ms. Patchak-Layman stated that it was a parallel process and that the short-term feeds into the long-term. The process has been completed at District 97. Many people understand the process. The vanguard is the hiring of the firm.

Ms. Fisher stated that it made sense to discuss whether the Board of Education felt it should embark on a strategic planning process, what it would look like, and the value it would have. However, she felt the discussion would be too soon at this point.

Dr. Weninger stated that the Board of Education had employed him to do these things. He wanted to hold off on the discussion about a strategic plan process until after the report in October. The administration will put together a short- and a long-term plan to address the achievement issue. He asked Board members to wait until after the report before deciding to add something else. Dr. Lee concurred with Dr. Weninger's suggestion. The Board of Education owed it to him and the rest of the administration to hear what they have in mind. He has seen the strategic planning process be so big that it immobilized an organization from doing anything. He believed that long-range strategic planning is important and the Board of Education should wait until October, November or December before moving in that direction.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked if there would be an opportunity for the community to be involved before October. Dr. Weninger stated that there was little time to do a plan and the other necessary things germane to running the school. Part of the plan will involve moving forward with community involvement; i.e., quarterly schoolhouse meetings to get input/feedback, etc. However, having community involvement before October, he could not do. Dr. Lee noted that there were other scheduled opportunities, i.e., public comment at Board of Education meetings.

Ms. Fisher added, on the ongoing strategic planning, that the high school does that in terms of finances.

Thus, it was the consensus to wait until October for the District's plan, and the possible discussion of a long-range strategic planning process would take place at a regular Board of Education meeting.

Preliminary ACT Score Report

Ms. Hill did note that when the ACT was first given to all juniors as part of the PSAE, a drop in ACT scores was anticipated because prior to 2001, not all juniors had taken the test. However, the drop was not as dramatic as anticipated. Since that time, the composite scores have been increasing. In 2003, 683 O.P.R.F.H.S. students took the test and the composite score was 22.9 versus the state's score of 20.2. In 2007, 769 O.P.R.F.H.S. students took the test and their composite was 23.8, compared to the state average composite of 20.5. Thus, there is a slow upwards trend on ACT scores. A complete report will be given in September.

Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 10:07 a.m.

OAK PARK AND RIVER FOREST HIGH SCHOOL

SUMMARY
OF
2006-2007
STANDARDIZED
TEST RESULTS

ACT and SAT for the Class of 2007
PSAE for the Class of 2008

September, 2007

Submitted by:
Amy Hill
Director of Assessment and Research

This report summarizes and provides analysis of ACT and SAT results for the graduating class of 2007 as well as final 2007 PSAE results for the class of 2008, our current seniors. Aggregate ACT and SAT results show increases compared to 2006, while disaggregated data indicate continued performance gaps within our learning community. Final data for the 2007 PSAE confirm our preliminary analysis in that we made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in reading for White students and among Special Education students and in math for White students. We did not make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in reading for African American or Low-Income students; we also did not make AYP in math for African American, Low-Income, or Special Education students.

ACT Results

Taking the long view, aggregate composite and subject-area ACT scores for OPRF graduating classes have steadily increased since 2002, which marked the first class in which nearly all of our students took the ACT as part of the state-mandated PSAE in their junior year. Among 2007 grads, we successfully tested 801 students, representing nearly 99% of the class. Scores for these students reflect increases relative to 2006 in all subject areas and in the composite average, which has surpassed the pre-PSAE composite in each of the past two years (23.1 in 2006 and 23.4 in 2007). We have also seen increases since 2003 in the proportions of our students achieving College Readiness Benchmarks¹ (or better); 41% of the class of 2007 met the benchmarks in all four areas (English, Math, Reading, and Science), compared to 21% of Illinois graduates.

Disaggregated results show that school-wide gains in recent years are reflected disproportionately across student subgroups, with some troubling results:

- The ACT score gap between White and African American students has actually widened in both reading and math since 2004, years in which we ostensibly were focused on improving literacy and numeracy for African American students.
- Though upwards of 85% of our students take their core academic courses in the college preparatory and/or honors tracks, as many as 53% of 2007 grads did not achieve the minimum ACT score(s) in required to have a high probability of success in specific freshman-level college courses.
- African American students are far less likely than their white peers to achieve the College Readiness Benchmark scores, particularly in math and science; results for the class of 2007 indicate that African American girls were the group least likely to score at or above that level in math and science.

While ACT scores are just one measure of a school's performance, we have for many years used them to reflect our strengths and weaknesses as an educational institution. Given the centrality of the ACT in the college admissions process and in our state's system of school accountability, we are obligated to look more closely at the factors that contribute to differential test score outcomes predictable by race and to continue to intervene as early as possible with targeted academic support for struggling students.

¹ "Benchmarks are the minimum ACT test scores required for students to have a high probability of success in credit-bearing college courses...Students who meet a Benchmark have approximately a 50% chance of earning a B or better and approximately a 75% chance of earning a C or better in the corresponding college course or courses." *Issues in College Readiness*. ACT, 2005

SAT Results

Among the class of 2007, 279 students—roughly one-third of the class—took the SAT. Our students' combined average score was 1840, compared to a state combined average of 1793 and a national average of 1511. Of the twelve OPRF SAT-takers who identified themselves as African American, the combined average of 1565 exceeded the national average but fell below that of our 212 self-identified White students, whose combined average was 1876. These data are confounded by the fact that over 10% of the total number of OPRF students who took the SAT chose not to specifically identify with one of the racial/ethnic categories provided.

PSAE Results

OPRF students outperformed their peers across Illinois on the 2007 PSAE. Statewide, slightly more than half of all juniors met or exceeded standards in reading, math, and science, compared to roughly two-thirds of OPRF juniors. However, these aggregate numbers for OPRF represent declines in reading and math compared to 2006; the percent of students meeting and exceeding in reading fell across most groups (with the exception of Asian/Pacific Islanders and Special Education students) and in the aggregate, the proportion of meets/exceeds in reading (66.5%) was the lowest since the inception of the PSAE.

As reported preliminarily in August, the aggregate performance of our students was not sufficient for the school as a whole to make Adequate Yearly Progress, because too few African American, low-income, and special education students met or exceeded standards in reading and/or math. 2007 marked the second year of declines in reading performance in the aggregate, as well as for girls, African American students, multiracial/multiethnic students, and low-income students. This effect was most pronounced among African American students, among whom there was a 52.5 % rate of meeting and exceeding in 2005 and a 30.9 % rate in 2007. While the numbers in math are also down from 2006, the declines are not as dramatic as those in reading.

In science, an area for which we are not required to make AYP, the aggregate meets/exceeds rate (68%) was down slightly compared to last year but was within the range of meets/exceeds percentages from the previous four years. Compared to 2006, African American students' rate of meeting/exceeding increased nearly seven percentage points as did the rate for low-income students. Special education students experienced a 2.6 percentage point increase compared to 2006.

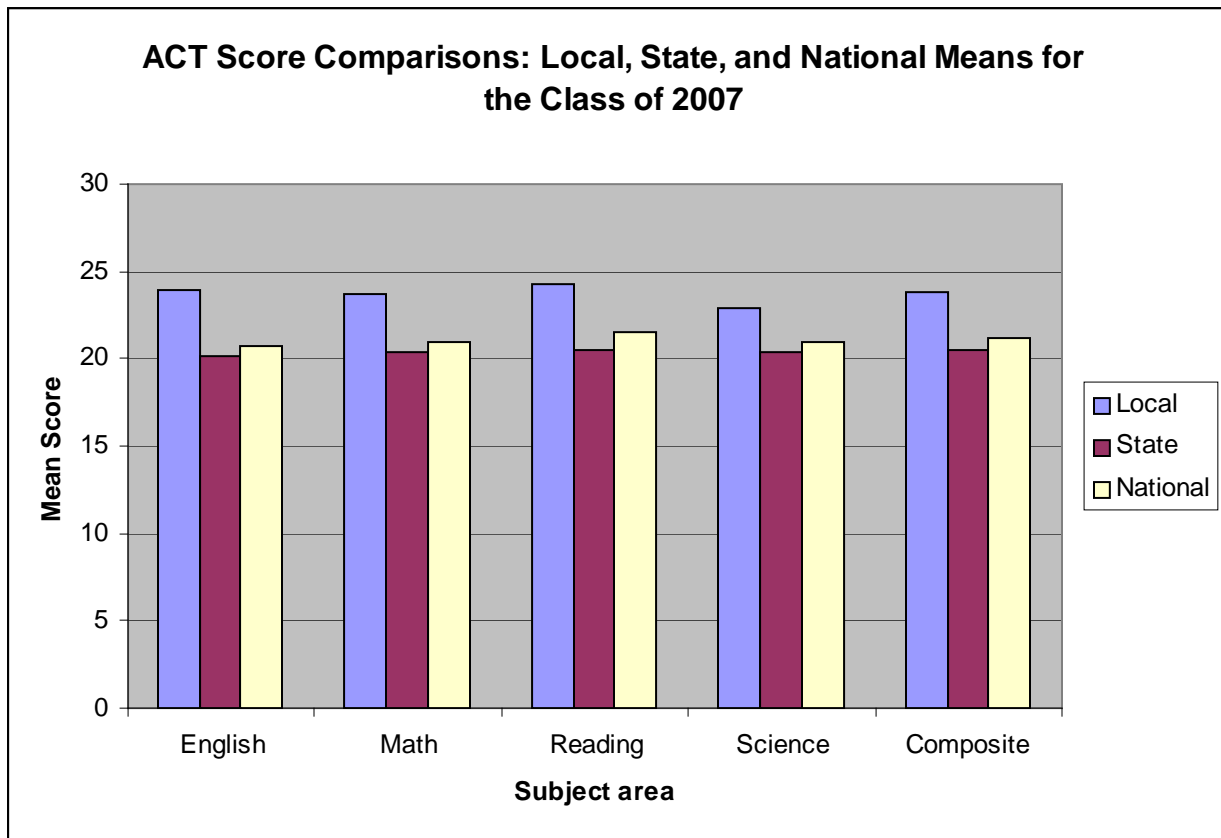
Conclusions

To the extent that these standardized test results measure the success of the institution, we must redouble our efforts to provide specific, substantial support for all struggling students, and particularly for struggling African American, low-income, and special education students. Taken together, the ACT and PSAE reading results, in particular, are cause for concern. We must closely examine not just our literacy initiatives but the role of literacy instruction across all academic disciplines and all course levels, particularly transitions and college prep. Additionally, if we are legitimately to claim the label of "college prep" for the courses taught in that track, we must be certain that students following that course of study experience the level of rigor in materials and instruction that will adequately prepare them for success in their entry-level academic college courses.

**CLASS OF 2007
 SUMMARY OF ACT RESULTS**

MEAN AGGREGATE PERFORMANCE

	Participants	English	Math	Reading	Science	Composite
LOCAL	801 ²	23.5	23.2	23.9	22.6	23.4
	759 ³	23.9	23.7	24.3	22.9	23.8
STATE	140,483 ³	20.2	20.4	20.5	20.4	20.5
NATIONAL	1,300,599 ³	20.7	21	21.5	21	21.2

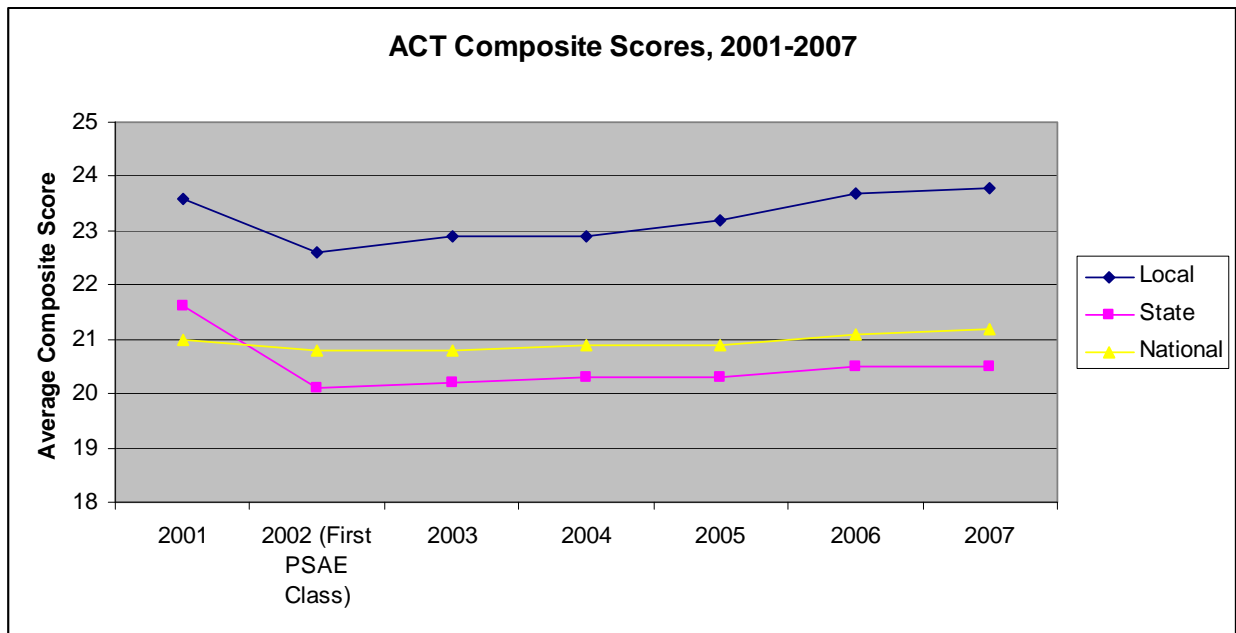


² Includes students who tested with accommodations.

³ Excludes students who tested with accommodations.

ACT COMPOSITE SCORES, 2001-2007⁴

	Local	State	National
2001	23.6	21.6	21
2002⁵	22.6	20.1	20.8
2003	22.9	20.2	20.8
2004	22.9	20.3	20.9
2005	23.2	20.3	20.9
2006	23.7	20.5	21.1
2007	23.8	20.5	21.2

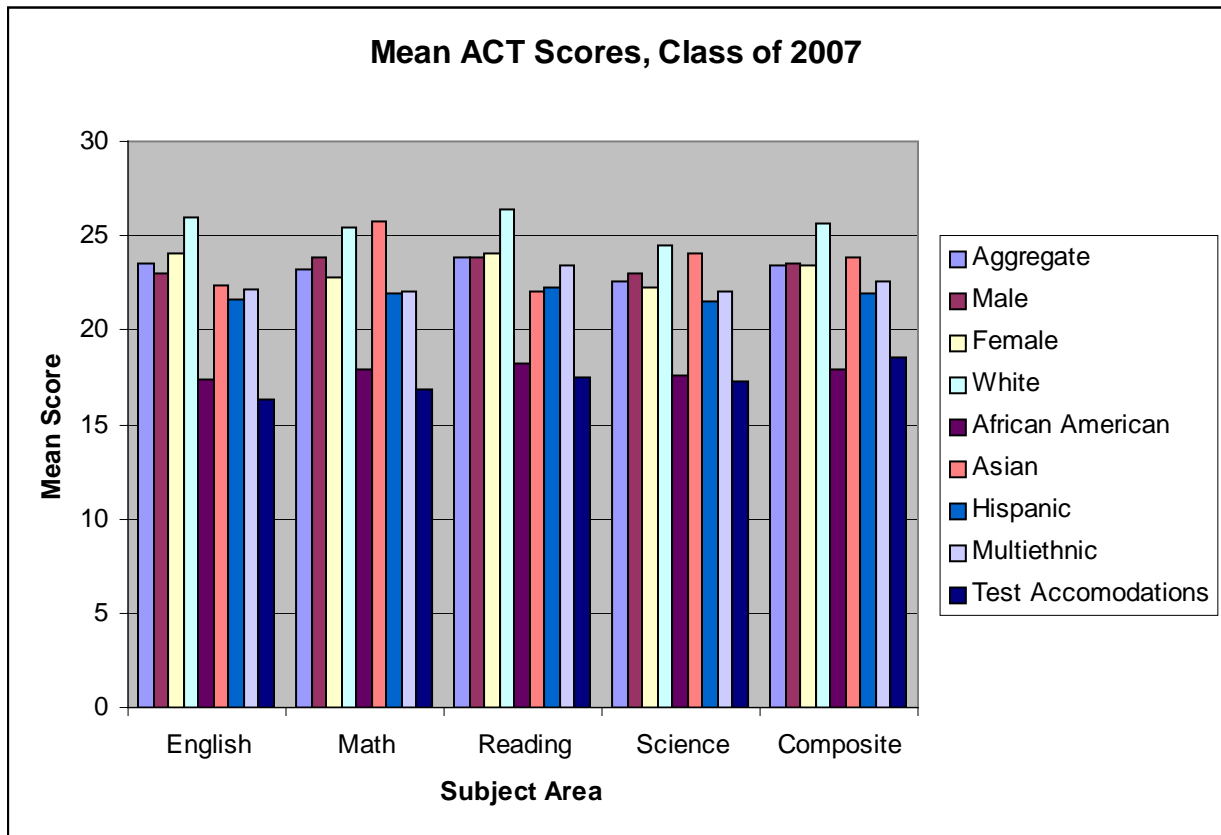


⁴ Data do not include scores for students who tested with accommodations.

⁵ 2002 was the first Illinois graduating class in which most students took the ACT as part of the state-mandated PSAE.

**MEAN SCORES DISAGGREGATED BY GENDER, RACE/ETHNICITY,
AND TESTING ACCOMODATION STATUS**

	Participants	English	Math	Reading	Science	Composite
MALES	396	23	23.8	23.8	23	23.5
FEMALES	405	24.1	22.8	24.1	22.3	23.4
WHITE	509	26	25.4	26.4	24.5	25.7
AFRICAN AMERICAN	185	17.4	17.9	18.2	17.6	17.9
ASIAN	24	22.4	25.8	22.1	24.1	23.8
HISPANIC	35	21.6	21.9	22.3	21.5	21.9
MULTI-ETHNIC	40	22.2	22.1	23.4	22	22.6
TESTING ACCOMODATIONS	42	16.6	16.8	17.8	17.6	17.4

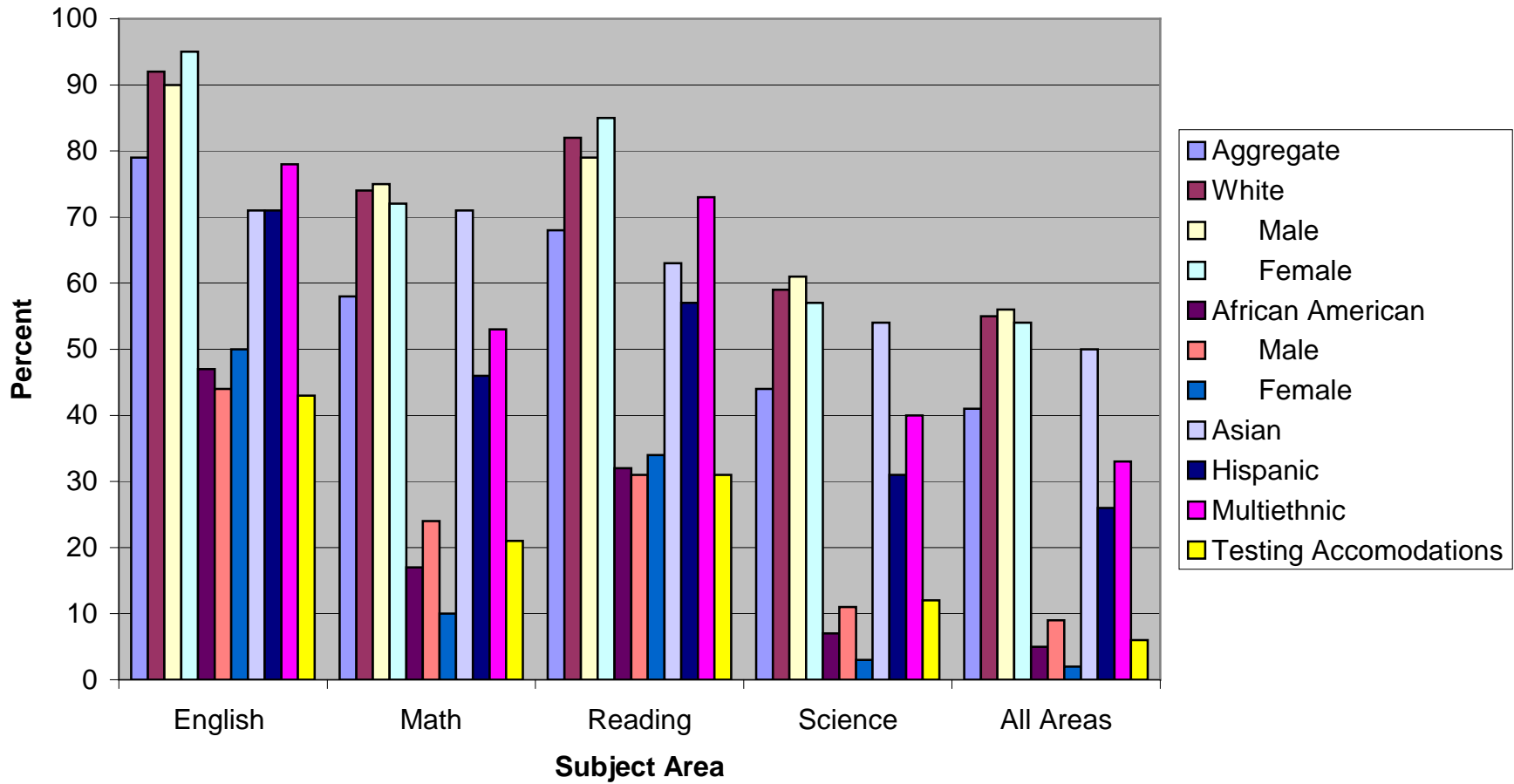


**COLLEGE READINESS:
 PERCENT OF STUDENTS MEETING ACT BENCHMARKS**

(specific benchmark for each subject area noted in parentheses)

	Number of Participants	Percentage of Students Achieving Each Benchmark				
		English (18)	Math (22)	Reading (21)	Science (24)	All Areas
Aggregate	801	79	58	68	44	41
White	509	92	74	82	59	55
Male	230	90	75	79	61	56
Female	240	95	72	85	57	54
African American	185	47	17	32	7	5
Male	87	44	24	31	11	9
Female	98	50	10	34	3	2
Asian	24	71	71	63	54	50
Male	12	58	58	58	50	50
Female	12	83	83	67	58	50
Hispanic	35	71	46	57	31	26
Male	19	68	53	53	32	21
Female	16	75	38	63	31	31
Multiethnic	40	78	53	73	40	33
Male	18	72	56	72	50	44
Female	22	82	50	73	32	23
Testing Accomodations	42	43	21	31	12	6

Percent Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks, Class of 2007



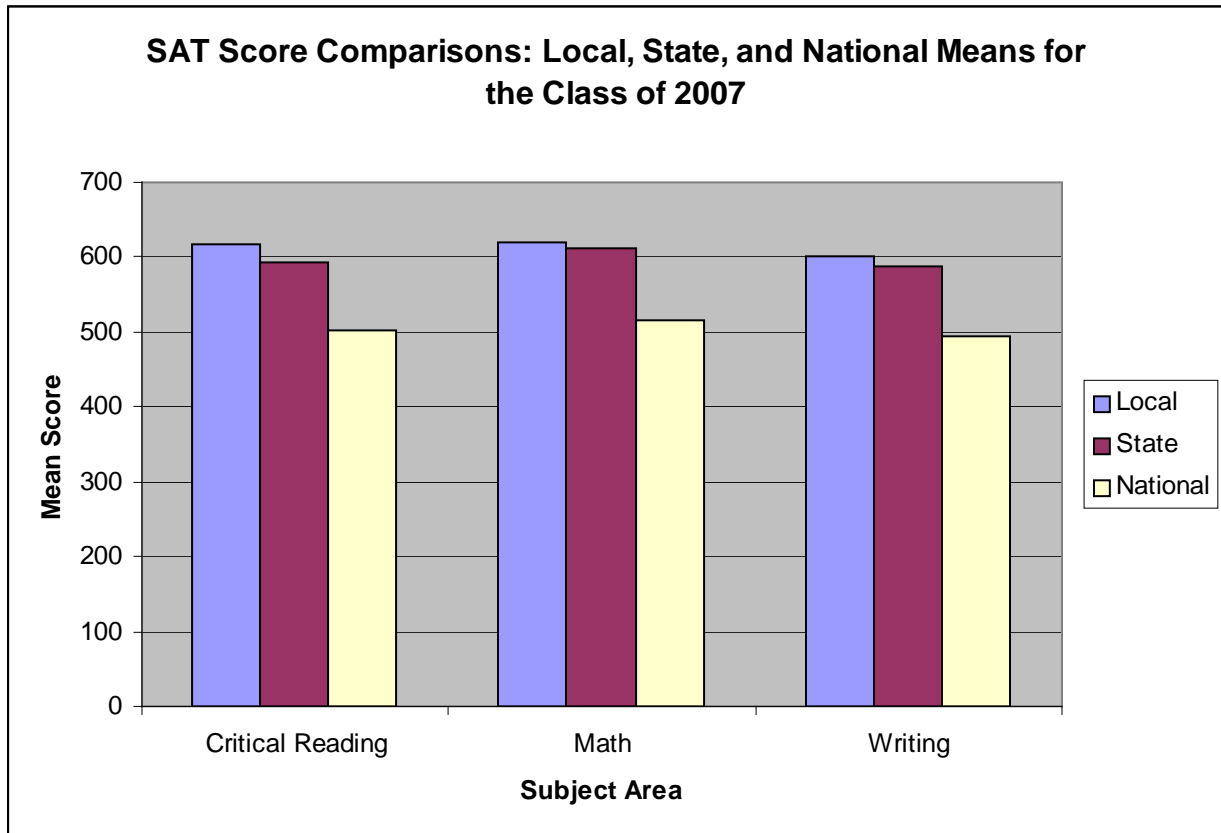
ACT SCORES: FIVE-YEAR TRENDS, 2003-2007

TOTAL	2002 - 2003	2003- 2004	2004- 2005	2005- 2006 ⁶	2006- 2007 ⁶
RESPONDENTS					
Local	680	652	716	737	801
State	134,505	132,525	135,967	137,399	140,483
National	1,175,059	1,171,460	1,186,251	1,206,455	1,300,599
ENGLISH					
Local	22.7	22.8	23.3	23.2	23.5
State	19.6	19.7	19.9	20.2	20.2
National	20.3	20.4	20.4	20.6	20.7
MATH					
Local	22.9	22.7	23.1	22.7	23.2
State	20.2	20.2	20.2	20.3	20.4
National	20.6	20.7	20.7	20.8	21
READING					
Local	23.3	23.4	23.6	23.8	23.9
State	20.4	20.5	20.3	20.6	20.5
National	21.2	21.3	21.3	21.4	21.5
SCIENCE					
Local	22.1	22.0	22.4	22.2	22.6
State	20.1	20.2	20.4	20.4	20.4
National	20.8	20.9	20.9	20.9	20.9
COMPOSITE					
Local	22.9	22.9	23.2	23.1	23.4
State	20.2	20.3	20.3	20.5	20.5
National	20.8	20.9	20.9	21.1	21.2

⁶ Local data include scores of students who tested with accommodations.

SUMMARY OF SAT I RESULTS CLASS OF 2007

		Participants	Critical Reading	Math	Writing
LOCAL	Male	137	619	638	597
	Female	142	617	603	606
	Total	279	618	620	602
STATE	Male	5,199	597	631	585
	Female	5,813	592	593	592
	Total	11,030	594	611	588
NATIONAL	Male	690,500	504	533	489
	Female	798,030	502	499	500
	Total	1,494,531	502	515	494



SAT I SCORES: FIVE-YEAR TRENDS, 2003-2007

YEAR	VERBAL/CRITICAL READING			MATH			WRITING ⁷		
	Local	State	National	Local	State	National	Local	State	National
2002-2003	603	583	507	605	596	519			
2003-2004	597	585	508	603	597	518			
2004-2005	617	594	508	620	606	520			
2005-2006	607	591	503	612	609	502	612	586	497
2006-2007	618	594	502	620	611	515	602	588	494

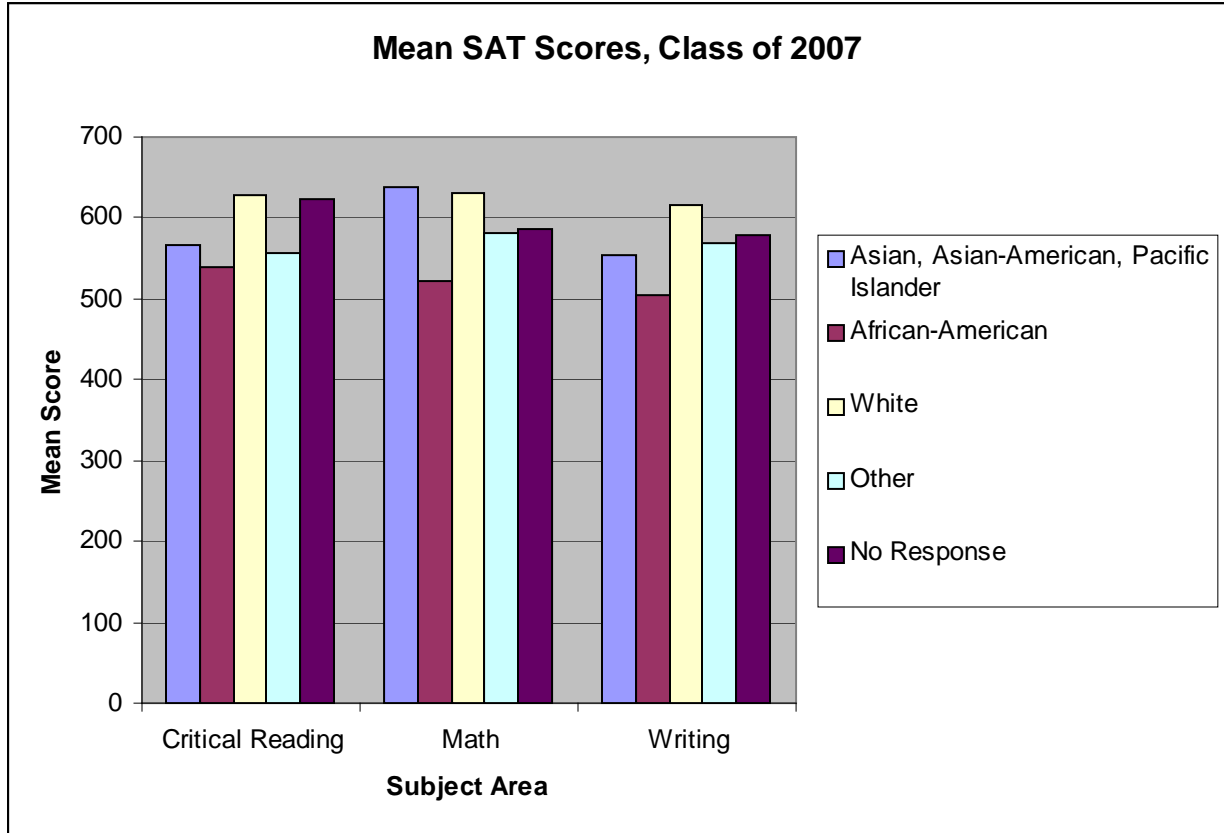
CLASS OF 2007

SAT I SCORES: DISAGGREGATION BY ETHNIC GROUPS

SELF-REPORTED ETHNICITY	Respondents	Critical Reading	Math	Writing
SAT I Test Takers Who Described Themselves As:				
Asian, Asian-American, or Pacific Islander	12	567	638	553
African-American or Black	12	538	523	504
Mexican or Mexican American	4	N/A	N/A	N/A
Puerto Rican	1	N/A	N/A	N/A
Other Hispanic, Latino, or Latin American	4	N/A	N/A	N/A
White	212	629	631	616
Other	13	556	582	568
No Response	21	624	586	579

Mean scores were reported only when there were five or more respondents or test takers.

⁷ The Writing test was introduced in 2007.



SAT I: FIVE-YEAR TRENDS, 2003-2007, DISAGGREGATED BY ETHNICITY

Ethnic Group	2002-2003				2003-2004				2004-2005				2005-2006					2006-2007				
	N ⁸	V	M	Com	N	V	M	Com	N	V	M	Com	N	CR	M	W	Com	N	CR	M	W	Com
Native American ⁹	2	--	--	--	0	--	--	--	1	--	--	--	0	--	--	--	--	0	--	--	--	--
Asian-American ¹⁰	10	577	651	1228	10	538	584	1122	15	544	603	1147	12	595	618	583	1796	12	567	638	553	1758
African-American ¹¹	26	538	522	1060	17	555	543	1098	28	538	537	1075	25	520	527	511	1558	12	538	523	504	1565
Hispanic/Latino ¹²	10	608	574	1182	11	596	562	1158	7	--	--	--	8	649	564	613	1826	4	--	--	--	--
Caucasian/White	174	609	618	1227	171	600	613	1213	178	636	635	1271	191	615	625	612	1852	212	629	631	616	1876
Other	12	647	647	1294	11	615	581	1196	13	592	619	1211	9	598	586	586	1770	13	556	582	568	1706
No Response	65	612	595	1207	53	608	608	1216	40	634	630	1264	17	662	638	643	1943	21	624	586	579	1789

⁸ Number of participants

⁹ Beginning in 2004-2005, SAT changed this designation to American Indian or Alaskan Native.

¹⁰ Beginning in 2004-2005, SAT changed this designation to Asian, Asian-American, or Pacific Islander.

¹¹ Beginning in 2004-2005, SAT changed this designation to African American or Black

¹² Beginning in 2004-2005, SAT subdivided this designation into three groups: Mexican or Mexican American; Puerto Rican; and Latin American, South American, Central American, or Other Hispanic or Latino.

PSAE, CLASS OF 2008
PERFORMANCE LEVEL DISTRIBUTION
Percentage¹³ and Number of Students Who Tested at Each Level¹⁴

	School				State			
	Warning	Below	Meets	Exceeds	Warning	Below	Meets	Exceeds
Reading (N = 758)	5.2 % (39)	28.2% (210)	43.1% (321)	23.4% (174)	8.4%	37.5%	43.1%	10.9%
Math (N = 758)	5.6% (42)	26.6% (198)	46.9% (349)	20.8% (155)	9.8%	37.54%	42.8%	9.9%
Science (N = 758)	5.6% (42)	26.3% (196)	43.3% (322)	24.7% (184)	8.7%	40.3%	40.4%	10.7%

DISAGGREGATION BY SUBGROUP
GENDER, RACE, INCOME LEVEL, AND LEARNING ACCOMMODATIONS
Percentage of students achieving each level

Group (number of students)	Reading Level				Math Level				Science Level			
	Warning	Below	Meets	Exceeds	Warning	Below	Meets	Exceeds	Warning	Below	Meets	Exceeds
All Students (758)	5.2	28.2	43.1	23.4	5.6	26.6	46.9	20.8	5.6	26.3	43.3	24.7
Female (362)	2.2	27.8	47.2	22.8	3.9	28.7	50.3	17.1	2.0	29.2	49.2	19.7
Male (396)	8	28.6	39.4	24	7.2	24.7	43.8	24.2	9	23.7	37.9	29.4
White (461)	2	16.7	47.8	33.5	1.1	14.8	54.6	29.5	1.5	16.1	46.9	35.5
Black (196)	13.1	56	28.8	2.1	17.8	52.4	26.2	3.7	17.8	48.2	30.9	3.1
Asian (29)	7.1	17.9	46.4	28.6	3.6	14.3	39.3	42.9	0	21.4	35.7	42.9
Hispanic (29)	3.6	39.3	42.9	14.3	3.6	35.7	60.7	0	3.6	32.1	60.7	3.6
Multiracial/ethnic (39)	5.1	23.1	56.4	15.4	2.6	38.5	53.8	5.1	0	33.3	56.4	10.3
American Indian/Alaskan Native (4)	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Low Income (80)	14.7	56	26.7	2.7	18.7	60	18.7	2.7	17.3	57.3	24	1.3
Not Low Income (678)	4.2	25.1	45	25.7	4.2	22.9	50.1	22.9	4.3	22.9	45.4	27.4
IEP (129)	17.5	46.7	25	10.8	20.8	44.2	28.3	6.7	25	38.3	26.7	10
Non-IEP (629)	2.9	24.7	46.6	25.8	2.7	23.2	50.5	23.6	1.9	24	46.5	27.6

*No results are reported for subgroups with fewer than 10 students

¹³ Includes students who enrolled after May 1 of their sophomore year.

¹⁴ Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100.

PSAE: FIVE-YEAR TRENDS 2003-2007
PERCENTAGE OF OPRFHS JUNIORS MEETING OR EXCEEDING STATE
STANDARDS
DISAGGREGATED BY GENDER, RACE, INCOME LEVEL, AND LEARNING ACCOMMODATIONS

READING					
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
All Juniors	71.9	71.4	76.6	75	66.5
Females	78.6	74.3	81.3	77.9	70
Males	66.1	68.4	71.1	75	63.4
White	84.3	85.8	85.9	86	81.3
Black	41.9	44.8	52.5	46.1	30.9
Hispanic	71.5	65.9	61.8	75.8	57.2
Asian/Pacific Islander	82.4	60	85.7	61.9	75
Multiracial/ethnic	*	*	82	76.9	71.8
Students with IEPs	34.7	38.2	40.7	31	35.8
Free/Reduced Lunch	36.7	30.4	47.4	37.3	29.4

MATH					
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
All Juniors	69.7	69	65.8	71.8	67.7
Females	71.8	65.6	67.2	71.1	67.4
Males	67.8	72.4	64.3	72.6	68
White	84.4	85.2	80.4	85.3	84.1
Black	34.1	38.5	27.8	33.2	29.9
Hispanic	60.7	59.1	58.8	72.7	60.7
Asian/Pacific Islander	76.5	68	81	80.9	82.2
Multiracial/ethnic	*	*	64	74.3	58.9
Students with IEPs	26.5	34.2	29.7	35.3	35
Free/Reduced Lunch	40.8	17.9	24.6	30.6	21.4

SCIENCE					
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
All Juniors	67.7	67.9	68.5	69.7	68
Females	70	64.2	70.1	67	68.9
Males	65.8	71.5	66.6	72.3	67.3
White	83.2	85.1	82.8	85.1	82.4
Black	31.6	36.9	29.7	27.5	34
Hispanic	61.3	59.1	58.8	69.7	64.3
Asian/Pacific Islander	64.7	56	85.7	66.7	78.6
Multiracial/ethnic	*	*	72	69.2	66.7
Students with IEPs	28.6	30.3	27.5	34.1	36.7
Free/Reduced Lunch	36.7	25	26.4	18.7	25.3

September 14, 2007

To: Instruction Committee of the Board of Education
From: Phil Prale
Re: Achievement update concerning select student groups

Overview

At an earlier Board of Education meeting a board member suggested using existing standardized test and achievement related data to create a framework for tracking student progress through their experiences in the high school. Picking up on that suggestion, Amy Hill, Dr. Carl Spight, and I have collected and organized information related to several groups of students of varying sizes and demographics. Over a series of meetings we identified areas of inquiry where we thought the available information would produce an analysis of behavior patterns and/or factors that could be linked to achievement outcomes. The behaviors and factors could then be further explored for opportunities to change school practices, address the need for improving instruction, or present interventions for supporting student achievement.

Available Information

We decided to review student test scores for the class scheduled to graduate in 2009. For this school year those students are eleventh graders or juniors. Available test information for these students included the ISAT scores given by District 97, placement tests given by the high school in advance of a students' registering for ninth grade courses, an EXPLORE test, given in October 2006, and an instructional ACT (IACT) test given in April 2007. Linking names and scores for both ISAT and EXLPORE tests yielded 427 students with matched scores. Additional information for those students used for this review included course taking patterns, weighted grade point average (WGPA), grades earned in specific courses, and attendance and discipline information. For purposes of predicting whether a student would meet expectations on the PSAE as a junior, we used the college readiness benchmarks identified by the ACT. For the math and reading tests the college readiness subscore is identified as 22 on the math subtest and 21 on the reading subtest. Students who reach college readiness benchmarks are likely to meet or exceed standards on the PSAE exam given towards the end of the students' junior year at the high school.

Analysis

(This analysis is significantly abbreviated and summarizes several days of work and conversations among the staff in the office of curriculum, instruction, and assessment.)

Setting aside the challenges faced in identifying appropriate and useful scores and information sets, we started this investigation with two group of students, one white and one African American, from the class of 2009 who met expectations on their 8th grade District 97 ISAT math and reading scores and may or may not have reached the college readiness benchmarks in reading and math as shown on the IACT. It turns out that 108 students were included in the sample of students who met standards on the 8th grade ISAT, 74 white students and 34 African American students. This represented the

approximate proportion of white and African American students in the school. The 108 students appeared from the analysis displayed in Table 1 printed in the appendix to this report.

We then considered how many of the 108 students went on to meet college readiness benchmarks by the end of sophomore year. For the 108 students, half reached the college readiness benchmarks on both the math and reading subtests in the IACT given towards the end of their sophomore year. The 54 students are shown in Table 2 printed in the appendix to this report. However, of the 54 students who reached college readiness benchmarks, 45 were white and 9 were African American. Stated as a percentage, 61% of white students who met standards as 8th graders met college readiness benchmarks as sophomores, but only 27% of African American students met the same standard as sophomores. This pattern is strongly statistically significant.

This gap in performance led us to examine the courses the students took when they came to the high school and the results from their experiences as 9th and 10th graders. We looked at WGPA, 8th grade ISAT scale scores, 9th grade placement tests, and results on the EXPLORE test subscores in math and reading. While this information mapped the performance gap and confirmed existing and known patterns, it did not suggest any specific intervention.

However, as part of the analysis of the 54 students and their course taking patterns, we found that students who enrolled in the honors math and English programs were more likely to reach the college readiness benchmarks than students enrolled in the college preparatory curriculum and that the differences we found were statistically significant. Stated as percentages, half of the white students who met 8th grade ISAT standards and took college preparatory math and English went on to reach college readiness benchmarks. However, only one-quarter of African American students who met 8th grade ISAT standards and took college preparatory math and English went on to reach college readiness benchmarks. The significant lower percentages of students reaching college readiness benchmarks as a result of taking courses in the college preparatory program prompted us to focus more closely on the math area of the 9th grade curriculum, the Algebra 1-2 course.

We understood that though the Algebra 1-2 course enrolls students from the regular academic track of incoming freshmen students, not all of those students succeeded in reaching college readiness benchmarks. We sought to understand why students might or might not succeed in reaching college readiness benchmarks when coming through the college preparatory program. Dr. Spight created a new sample of students, drawing from all races and all achievement levels, who took the Algebra 1-2 course and for whom we had 8th grade ISAT, EXPLORE, and IACT test scores. These criteria yielded 130 students who varied by race and by test score; it should be noted that this information set extends beyond those students who met standards on the 8th grade ISAT score and looks instead to the overall Algebra 1-2 course experience as it relates to reaching college readiness benchmarks on the IACT.

We found that of the sample 130 students who took Algebra 1-2, 57 (44%) met college readiness benchmarks on the IACT as sophomores. When looking at specific subgroups we found that 41 (52%) of the white students in the sample reached college readiness benchmarks on the IACT and 11 (27%) of the African American students reached college readiness benchmarks by the end of sophomore year. It should be noted that a similar pattern of performance is demonstrated on the reading subscores for students enrolled in other college preparatory courses. This information and drill down of student performance linked over three years and two districts demonstrates the need to continue to improve the academic courses for students in the regular academic program.

Recommendations

This review of the available performance information shifted to a focus on the math program. Continuing review should be made of all areas of the school curriculum. Though a fuller plan for addressing achievement is due in the near future, at this time and based on the review of this information the following recommendations are made:

- Enhance the information services environment to make identifying the students who are not on track to reach college readiness benchmarks as early as possible.
- Work with District 97 to prepare as many students as possible for entry into the Intermediate Algebra math program when they enter 9th grade. Algebra proficiency by the end of 8th grade may be a key to all students reaching college readiness by the end of 11th grade. The first articulation meeting for this school year has already been scheduled for October 3, 2007. Districts 97 and 90 have already committed to attending the meeting and we are in the process of inviting the private schools that send students to the high school after they complete 8th grade.
- Report on the success of the Algebra Block/Agile Mind Program. The first students who received this intervention are current sophomores, Class of 2010. They will take an IACT this spring, which will provide a comparison with the Class of 2009 data we reviewed for this report.
- Review the way the current Algebra 1-2 course is targeted and taught. Right now, the Algebra course does not appear to ensure success for all students, white or African American, on the PSAE. That program needs to yield more benefits to all students who come through that course.
- Look more closely at the 9 African American students who as sophomores reached college readiness benchmarks and are projected to meet and exceed state standards on the PSAE scheduled for this school year. The success of those students might hold insights for improving the college preparatory program here at the high school. A preliminary analysis is included in the appendix to this report as Table 3 and Table 4.

Assistance for this report was provided by Dr. Carl Spight and Amy Hill.

Appendix of tables.

**TABLE 1:
CROSSTAB FOR ISAT MATH AND READING PERFORMANCE BY RACE.**

ISAT Reading Performance * ISAT Math Performance * RACE Crosstabulation

Count			ISAT Math Performance					Total
RACE			B	E	M	W		
1	ISAT Reading Performance	B		13		4	4	21
		E	1	1	62	21		85
		M		22	54	74	2	152
		W					1	1
	Total		1	36	116	99	7	259
2	ISAT Reading Performance	B		20		3	11	34
		E		1	4	4		9
		M		32	6	34	3	75
		W		1				1
	Total		54	10	41	14	119	
4	ISAT Reading Performance	B		1				1
		E			4			4
		M		1	3	4		8
	Total		2	7	4		13	
5	ISAT Reading Performance	B				1		1
		E		1		3		4
		M		2		4		6
	Total		3		8		11	
6	ISAT Reading Performance	B		2				2
		E			8	2		10
		M		3	6	4		13
	Total		5	14	6		25	

**TABLE 2:
CROSSTAB FOR ISAT MATH AND READING PERFORMANCE BY RACE FOR THE SUBSET OF STUDENTS WHO MEET THE BAR FOR COLLEGE READINESS AS MEASURED BY THE INSTRUCTIONAL ACT.**

ISAT Reading Performance * ISAT Math Performance * RACE Crosstabulation

Count			ISAT Math Performance			Total	
RACE			B	E	M		
1	ISAT Reading Performance	B			1	1	
		E	1	1	59	18	79
		M		9	47	45	101
	Total	1	10	106	64	181	
2	ISAT Reading Performance	B			2	2	
		E		1	3	4	8
		M		3	4	9	16
	Total		4	7	15	26	
4	ISAT Reading Performance	E			4	4	
		M			3	1	4
	Total			7	1	8	
5	ISAT Reading Performance	E				2	2
		M				1	1
	Total				3	3	
6	ISAT Reading Performance	E			7	2	9
		M		2	6	3	11
	Total		2	13	5	20	

a. OVERBAR = Y

TABLE 3:

THE NINE AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDENTS WITH DIST97 8TH GRADE ISAT MATH-READING PERFORMANCES OF MEETS-MEETS AND WHO ARE OVER THE COLLEGE READINESS BAR ON THE INSTRUCTIONAL ISAT:

STUDENT CASE	READISAT	MATHISAT	MT_PL	MATHEXP	READEXP	WGPA06	WGPA07	NUMHONR	MATHACT	READACT
A	161	169	12	17	15	3.264	2.912	4	24	22
B	168	169	21	17	22	1.273	1.651	2	26	25
C	167	182	22	19	16	3.445	3.512	12	24	25
D	163	165	11	19	22	1.900	1.818	0	22	22
E	163	170	13	16	15	2.000	2.238	0	24	23
F	165	166	17	15	17	1.200	1.400	0	23	22
G	171	184	20	18	17	2.756	3.300	10	26	28
H	170	181	19	22	19	2.100	2.091	0	24	24
I	168	173	27	17	20	3.268	3.156	12	24	25

TABLE 4:

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THOSE NINE STUDENTS:

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
ISAT Reading Scale Score	9	161	171	166.22	3.420
ISAT Math Scale Score	9	165	184	173.22	7.242
Math Explore Scale Score	9	15	22	17.78	2.048
Reading Explore Scale Score	9	15	22	18.11	2.759
Cum GPA Method 4 Jun 06	9	1.200	3.445	2.35622	.859619
Cum GPA Methd 4	9	1.400	3.512	2.45311	.780728
MT_PL	9	11	27	18.00	5.268
mathACT	9	22	26	24.11	1.269
readingACT	9	22	28	24.00	2.000
NUMHONR	9	0	12	4.44	5.363
Valid N (listwise)	9				