

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

INSTRUCTION COMMITTEE MEETING
April 15, 2014

An Instruction Committee meeting was held on April 15, 2014. Dr. Gevinson called the meeting was called to order at 5:15 p.m. in the Board Room. Committee members present were Dr. Steve Gevinson, Dr. Jackie Moore, and Sharon Patchak-Layman (arrived at 6:07 p.m.). Also present were Dr. Steven T. Isoye, Superintendent; Amy Hill, Director of Assessment and Research; Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Nathaniel L. Rouse, Principal; Karin Sullivan, Director of Community Relations and Communications; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

Visitors: Board of Education members Tom Cofsky (arrived at 6:00 p.m.), and John Phelan (arrived at 6:17 p.m.).

Visitor Comment

None

Minutes

Dr. Gevinson moved to approve the Instruction Committee minutes of February 18 and March 11, 2014; seconded by Dr. Moore. A voice vote resulted in all ayes.

Update on Professional Development Planning

The Committee was provided with a preview of the developing plans for 2014-15 professional learning at the district. The preview highlighted the vision, goals, and major components that the administration anticipates will be part of the plan. However, the administration is still in the process of determining how best to meet the goals, and it continues to work to address recent feedback from the faculty. The presentation drew upon the work of both the Professional Development Committees at the building and district levels.

Professional development at the building level is spearheaded by Nate Rouse and Dr. Chala Holland and involves the faculty who lead TCTs and Learning Strands. The vision statement for professional learning was written by the District Professional Development Committee in 2012-13. That committee is chaired by the Director of Assessment and Research and includes the Principal, Assistant Principal for Instruction, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel Services, Chief Information Officer, and Director of Human Resources.

The vision for professional learning at OPRFHS is:

“At OPRFHS, we pursue continuous improvement in professional expertise so all staff grow in the skills and knowledge base necessary to better ensure each student has access to a superior education and is supported in reaching his/her full potential.”

The vision integrates the following characteristics of effective professional development:

- Sustained, rigorous, cumulative and coherent
- Results-driven, focusing on specific school improvement and student achievement goals
- Recognizes the impact of race on student achievement and the ways we conceptualize teaching, learning, and student support; and
- Intentionally planned alignment with adult learning principles.

A draft of the professional development goals for 2014-15 was presented as follows:

- Build a culture of collaboration regarding student engagement and learning
- Examine the impact of race on student achievement, and use tools and protocols to engage in conversations about race
- Enhance staff capacity to provide instruction and support services to each student based upon strengths and needs
- Enable educators to leverage technology to provide dynamic learning environments

Research on professional learning indicates a number of features that maximize its effectiveness, and the District strives to incorporate them in the planning. In addition, an examination of race is intentionally embedded across the components of professional development (PD). The framework for PD in the coming year will build upon existing strengths, including the intentionality of collaborative planning committees; the collaborative, cumulative, regular, and coherent flow provided by the team and learning strand structures; and the regular seeking of feedback to inform on-going programmatic planning.

A draft of the framework was also provided, recognizing that the practice of continuous improvement highlighted in the vision statement applies to the work as PD planners. In the coming year, a number of ways are anticipated to improve upon the good work already taking place. In particular, more sustained and coherent programming for non-certified staff is needed, feedback from faculty and staff regarding ways to increase the impact and effectiveness of professional learning time needs to be incorporated, and the initiatives at every level of the organization need to be balanced alongside Strategic Plan goals.

Several slides in the presentation provided a detailed overview, aligning draft goals with anticipated components, methods of delivery, and probable participants. Many of the details for the components are still in development, and the administration expects to come back to the Board of Education in May or June with a more detailed plan. It is also possible that as a result of collaborating with the faculty and staff as well as further administrative discussion, revisions will be made to some elements of the framework.

This matrix oversimplifies the connections among goals and components of the PD program. For example, while TCTs are aligned to a culture of collaboration, and Learning Strands are aligned to instruction and supports to meet students' strengths and needs, they also include an explicit examination of race. While the Racial Equity strand is aligned here to an examination of the impact of race, it also enhances the District's capacity to provide instruction and support to each student based upon strengths and needs.

In addition to TCTs being used as a vehicle for collaboration, the administration will expand the use of classroom walkthroughs as a basis for collaborative conversations about student engagement and teacher practice. The on-going work to examine the impact of race is one part of a strategy to develop a racially equitable school. While the overall goal of every aspect of our PD program is to enhance student outcomes, this goal speaks most directly to professional learning that addresses specific academic and social-emotional outcomes for students. For example, one topic for learning strands is literacy, and participants learn specific literacy strategies to enhance content-area reading and learning. The last slide put the alignment pieces into granular pieces. The framework includes the goal, the component, the delivery, and the audience. Discussion ensued.

When asked about whether PD had been evaluated and assessed, the administration responded that the faculty is surveyed on Institute Day as to the impact of professional development on the classroom. Teacher Learning Teams (TLTs) align student work with instructional activities to student outcomes to

determine if there were improvement of scores in core areas. Macros of correlation of teachers going through this training is not available at this time. Because of the TCT work, formative and summative assessments have been developed which have established a framework/venue for teachers to have more detailed conversations about specific lesson plans and different ways of sharing of student work in order to learn what things have worked, challenging people to do things differently. The racial equity lens lends an opportunity to be have more culturally-relevant material used in classrooms. Once curriculum mapping is complete, a consistent framework will be established and it will not have to be reinvented. It will be a portfolio from which other teachers can learn. Research shows that schools must be cautious about “value added measures” in order to attain student growth, as there are many contributing factors, both inside and outside of the schools. Discussion ensued about the Read 180 program as every teacher in that program does PD and curriculum work over the summer and coaching.

One member asked how PD could be more systemic, rather than everyone receiving the same training. Some teachers need to receive it in different ways in order to benefit.

Dr. Gevinson stated that, from a teacher’s standpoint, the plan was not collaborative; it was a PD plan for teachers designed by administrators. He remembered when teachers were the PD chairs. He did not understand the present configuration and asked if teachers were members of the PD Committee. Mr. Rouse, Ms. Hill, and Dr. Holland went to Faculty Senate and listened to the faculty’s questions and concerns about the current model and what they wanted to have in the future. The administration is working on ways to make sure the teacher voice is consistent with the plan. Ms. Hardin noted a faculty concern that they were not part of making the district- and building-level plans for the last few years. Faculty Senate had also asked for a more comprehensive PD plan and one has been received consistently for the last few years. For this plan to be a collaboration in order to make it systemic, more teacher input is needed. Teachers want to work cross-divisionally and outside of the building. Faculty want PD and they want the best use of their time. No one is looking for PD other than for student growth. The faculty meeting where Mr. Rouse and Ms. Holland attended was positive. Teachers are on the Building Professional Development Committee and they are on the TCTs. They participate in the same timeframe as the divisions. Ms. Hill is the convener of the different groups and Mr. Rouse, Dr. Holland, Mr. Prale participate in BLT. Dr. Halliman represents Special Education on the PD Committee and Mr. Carioscio looks to his team to develop PD for the entire building. Human Resources is in charge of looking at PD for staff. The District level is the clearing house for all areas of PD. Dr. Gevinson suggested having a mixed group with both teachers and administrators. He said collaboration and walkthroughs were not aligned.

Dr. Moore questioned what PD the faculty felt was not beneficial or inappropriate as implied on one slide where it was stated that the faculty should feel that the PD is beneficial and appropriate. The other aspect is about listening to the different factions. She asked how it was reconciled by both the teachers and the administration as being equal if faculty were not represented nor part of the team to do walkthroughs and make comments. Dr. Gevinson concurred. The administrators noted that they had received good feedback and that DLT will discuss this further. It was explained that walkthroughs are a systematic way for teachers to watch each other on a particular focus, i.e., literacy, etc. It is a way to frame a collaborative conversation that is best-practiced oriented. Teachers came forward to do the technology work. Some divisional work occurs based on teacher conversations. The teacher voice is imbedded in PD. Dr. Moore felt teacher feedback included things having to do with B&G, views on setting up their classrooms, technology, furniture, etc. Missteps would be less if the people doing the work were part of the conversation.

This topic will be revisited at the May at Instruction Committee meeting.

Parent Teacher Advisory Committee Update

Discussion ensued about a redundancy of having the same agenda item on two Board of Education committees. Dr. Gevinson requested this item on the Instruction Committee agenda because of both instructional- and policy-related issues. He believed that some of the PTAC subcommittees were formed as a result of a presentation on the new federal guidelines made at the Instruction Committee. He continued that discussions have occurred about having a combined meeting of both committees on a subject such as this, which brings up the issue about committee purview and the issue of committee structure. Dr. Moore noted that the broader issue was how this was being viewed and that it related to policy. She continued that two Board of Education members participate on PTAC, it is an open meeting, and, thus, other Board of Education members have a way to be informed and provide comments. This issue is similar to other issues to be resolved, i.e., FTE as it is both instructional and financial. Dr. Gevinson believed that once PTAC resolves the Code of Conduct in policy, he hoped an ad hoc task force would look at discipline over a long-term basis. Dr. Moore noted that the Policy Committee talked about how the Board of Education can discuss the issues of discipline, i.e. a retreat. She would want the two attorneys who presented on the federal guidelines at the Instruction Committee meeting as well as students to be present at that meeting.

The Parent Teacher Advisory Committee commenced subcommittees in the areas of Plasco, Period 1 Tardy Procedures, Unexcused Absence Drop Process, Restorative Justice and the use of Peace Circles, Advisory Period/Freshman Mentor Program, Community Service, Suspension Reduction Program, and Cell Phones. The subcommittees are completing their work and making presentations to the entire PTAC Committee. Ultimately, the committee will recommend changes to the Code of Conduct as well as recommendations about advisories, unauthorized absences, etc. Representatives from outside agencies have participated in the subcommittees.

Dr. Moore stated that it initially felt as if the discipline was being driven by the SIDS and their view on discipline, as opposed to a more school-wide positive strength-based look at how students are viewed. Additions were incorporated into a ready-made list. As a member of the PTAC committee and a Board of Education member, she felt it was better to listen, as this will be coming to the Board of Education.

Consideration of International Baccalaureate (IB) Program at OPRFHS

The Committee received a comprehensive report on the IB Diploma Program (DP), which included a general overview of the IB Program and the outcomes for students and what would it mean to introduce an IB Program at the high school. Research for this report included visiting Trinity High School in River Forest, Shaker Heights High School in Shaker Heights Ohio, Homewood-Flossmoor High School (HP) in Homewood Flossmoor, and Prosser Career Academy in Chicago to gain their insight into this program.

The site visits conclusions were:

- In each site visit, school staff emphasized the critical role of leadership in successful implementation of an IB program. The sustained interest and leadership of administration and staff at OPRFHS-D200 would be necessary to maintain a focus and a desire to implement IB over a period of 7 to 10 years.
- Each school was able to align IB implementation with the school and community context and vision and with IB philosophy and standards of curriculum fidelity and instructional coherence.

The IBDP started in the late 1960 as preparation for university-bound, internationally mobile students. While the first IB schools were private international schools, more recently public schools have been become IB recognized, to the extent that today nearly have of all IB schools

are identified as state-funded institutions. IB research about the effects of IB DP completion includes:

- Overall, 92% of the DP candidates graduating in 2005 enrolled in US postsecondary institutions at some time between May 2005 and November 2011, and 77% enrolled directly from high school (before January 31, 2006). By comparison, the national rate of postsecondary enrollment directly from high school was 69% in 2005 (US Department of Labor 2006).
- The rate of first-year retention of DP students enrolled at 4-year institutions was 98%, while the national rate was 75%.
- Overall, 74% of the DP candidates graduated within 4 years, while the comparative national rate was 38% in 2004. The overall 6-year graduation rate of the DP candidates was 87%, while the national rate of the 2005 cohort was 56%.
- a statistically significant effect on student social and academic engagement and a negligible effect on emotional engagement, as measured by the High School Survey of Student Engagement (HSSSE) published by the Center for Evaluation and Education Policy (CEEP) at Indiana University.

The impetus for this report began when District 97 first instituted the program in the middle schools. Many OPRFHS teachers live in the community and they were curious as to what might happen at the high school with regard to this program. Would it be implemented here? Community members have also asked this question.

For an IB program to be implemented, extensive IB preparation would be essential. Training is mandatory for all teachers and is highly recommended for all those who have a direct role in supporting the IB program. It would be anticipated that the annual cost would range from \$75,000 to \$90,000 or more annually for professional development, conference and travel.

IB may compete with Advanced Placement. Trinity discontinued its AP programming and is committed fully to the IB experience. Shaker Heights, Homewood Flossmoor and Prosser remain committed to active AP programs that include growth in enrollment and increases in score attainment. At Shaker Heights, overlapping scheduling occurs in some classes, which can create a significant workload for the teacher. Other schools are diligent at keeping IB and AP courses separate, in part to maintain the fidelity and integrity of each program. Administrators at HF and Prosser agree that IB development should not come at the expense of AP enrollment. At Prosser, staff suggested that IB seems to have spurred AP enrollment because IB preparation was made available to non-IB teachers, thus raising the overall quality of instruction and promoting intellectual and pedagogical growth. However, the critical aspect for both administrations was that both programs exist in their schools, while serving separate portions of the student population.

Assessments for IB exams cost nearly twice that of AP exams. At HF, the district covers the cost for all IB and AP exams taken by students in the IB DP. This decision was made to provide an incentive for students to take the program and to remove any barrier to students' engaging in the program fully.

Dr. Gevinson felt this was an excellent presentation of the facts gathered and asked how the Board of Education would decide whether to implement it at OPRFHS and when. Dr. Isoye noted that this would require further research. If the Board of Education were interested, it could ask the Transformational Teacher Learning implementation team to make a recommendation. The implementation team may want to form a subgroup. The current sixth graders at District 97 will enroll at OPRFHS in 2016-17. IB

accreditation is a 3-year process and that process would have to start soon in order to be ready to accommodate those students. The IB Program is for all students but it is not the same as the IBDP which is for juniors and seniors.

Dr. Moore was concerned that this program would lead to a path that would not have been sought if it were not a program at the middle school. Some of the conversation about IB when it was being implemented gave parents the misleading impression that their children would have this experience at the high school.

Ms. Patchak-Layman didn't see this as an all or nothing choice. IB has added the STEM portion, so it removes it from the gifted classification. IB has begun to recognize the hands on and STEM approach in the organizational format. There is a completeness within IB, i.e., senior projects, etc. It is not just about taking current classes; enough distinction and coordination exists within the practice of IB to make it look different than current programs. It is more prescriptive and coordinated. Mr. Prale noted that IB was a quality assurance program centered on high-level, rigorous teaching. High level assessments are graded offsite. The data from the National Clearinghouse was also somewhat persuasive. He felt there might be an opportunity for OPRFHS. Ms. Patchak-Layman noted that if 100 students from the middle schools wanted this program at the high school, it would be an ideal-sized cohort, giving them this opportunity and having access to the high school's facilities. Dr. Moore stated that the high school was already battling the image of three different schools and she did not see how a gifted-academy idea program for 100 to 150 students would help the District's vision and goals. Ms. Patchak-Layman countered that if there were requirements before opting in or deciding what to do, then a program could be crafted that would be elite, but if the program is looked at academically and different coordination existed, she felt it would be of interest to a broad section of students, as many students do not find their way at the high school. If they could, it would be beneficial. Dr. Moore agreed but parents would have to know how to advocate for the students.

Dr. Moore questioned how many community members actually commented about it. It was noted that District 90 is not doing the middle school program. Ms. Patchak-Layman had proposed this 10 program years ago as she believed it was a viable option. It is important for families to be able to feel that they have a say and a choice about what their students are a part of in an educational setting. Part of the appeal is that it is a program that you can read about and understand.

This report will be sent to the Board of Education as information.

New Business

None.

Adjournment

At 6:3 p.m., Dr. Gevinson moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Dr. Moore. A voice vote resulted in motion carried.