

**Oak Park and River Forest High School
201 North Scoville Avenue
Oak Park, IL 60302**

**POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
January 18, 2007**

A Policy Committee meeting was held on Thursday, January 18, 2007, in the Board Room of the Oak Park and River Forest High School. Dr. Millard called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m. Committee members present were Jacques A. Conway, Barbara P. Fernandez, Valerie J. Fisher, Dr. Barry S. Greenwald, Dr. Dietra D. Millard, and Yasmin A. Ranney (departed at 9:21 a.m.). Also present were Susan J. Bridge, Superintendent/Principal; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

Visitors included: Kay Foran, Director of Community Relations and Communications; Richard Perna, Coordinator of Student Safety; and Leigh Remack, F.S.E.C. Representative.

Acceptance of December 14, 2006 Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

Ms. Fernandez moved to accept the Policy Committee minutes of December 14, 2006, as presented; seconded by Mr. Conway. A voice vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Discussion of Discipline Procedures

Mr. Perna presented two internal documents, prepared by the Deans of Discipline, on procedures that the Deans of Discipline, the School Resource Officer and security use to do a search—a non-assertive search and/or a non-intrusive search. These documents are revised annually and precaution is used to insure that all old copies are retrieved and destroyed so that only the current copy of the updated procedures is used.

One document, titled Search Procedures, explained what constituted reasonable cause for school officials versus what constituted probable cause for a police officer to conduct a search. A school official including the School Resource Officer (SRO) acting on behalf of the school need only to have reasonable suspicion that an infraction of school rules has occurred to conduct a search. The school official or SRO must be able to articulate the reason(s) for the belief that the student is involved or might be involved in the violation of a school rule. A police officer must have probable cause that a crime has been committed and that the person arrested committed the offense. Probable cause means there is a high degree of certainty. Reasonable suspicion requires a lesser degree of certainty.

Also included were the guidelines for doing a locker search and a search of personal property.

Committee members were concerned as to when parents were notified of any discipline action. Parent notification occurs once the student has been interviewed by school personnel and/or the SRO. In cases where a criminal offense has occurred, parents are notified after the student has been arrested and en route to the police station. In addition to the Dean of Discipline contacting the parents, the police will contact the parents. One committee member questioned why the school would wait to call the parent until after the student left the building. Mr. Perna explained that if the parent were in the building sooner, it could be disruptive and detrimental to the investigation.

Committee members were interested in having the school's proactive measures shared with the community. It was suggested that they be included in the parent newsletter and discussed in detail with incoming parent groups. Mr. Perna explained that the Deans of Discipline do address these issues with middle school students. They explain the present *Code of Conduct* and go through safety issues as well. The students are very responsive to these presentations. Parents receive the *Code of Conduct* before their children receive it and are advised to review it with their children.

Consideration of Policies for Second Reading and Action

Policy 5110, Student Rights and Responsibilities

It was the consensus of the Policy Committee members to recommend that the Board of Education amend Policy 5110, Student Rights and Responsibilities, at its regular January Board of Education meeting.

Policy 5111, Student Freedom of Expression

It was the consensus of the Policy Committee members to recommend that the Board of Education delete Policy 5111, Student Freedom of Expression, at its regular January Board of Education meeting. Again, this policy is being deleted due to the fact that the language of the policy is replicated in Policy 5110, Student Rights and Responsibilities.

Policy 5112, Waiver of School Fees and Charges

Policy Committee members felt that Policy 5112, Waiver of School Fees and Charges, had been too streamlined and should include fees and charges that are waived. However, due to Ms. Witham's absence and pending questions regarding this policy, it was the consensus of the Committee to table this policy until it received Ms. Witham's input.

Policy 5113, Student Accident Insurance

The Policy Committee members had further questions regarding Policy 5113, Student Accident Insurance, relative to the expectation that the school provide mandatory versus optional supplemental insurance for school-sponsored or non-school sponsored club and activity trips, field trips, foreign exchange trips, etc. It was again the Policy Committee members' decision to wait for Ms. Witham's counsel on this policy.

Ms. Fisher was worried about the groups that have a nexus to the school and are, therefore, a possible form of risk. As a lawyer, Ms. Fisher had concern about this issue. She felt the school would be at liability if a lawsuit were pursued, even though the group was not sanctioned by the school. Dr. Bridge was concerned as to how that would be controlled.

Consideration of Policies for First Reading

In its continuing review of the Policy Book, the Committee reviewed the following policies.

Policy 5116, Ombudsman Program for Alternative Education

It was the consensus of the Policy Committee members to recommend that the Board of Education approve Policy 5116, Ombudsman Program for Alternative Education, for first reading at its regular January Board of Education meeting with the following amendments:

Include dashes between "out" and "of" and "of" and "District" in the sixth line of the policy, delete the word "through", and make the word "school" possessive in the last line.

Dr. Greenwald reminded the administration to get regular attendance updates from both H.A.R.B.O.R. Academy and Ombudsman on the O.P.R.F.H.S. students placed in these facilities. He felt that there should be a higher attendance standard for students attending these alternative schools. However, when he was assured that student attendance was being monitored, he was comfortable with leaving attendance rate at a minimum of 85 percent. He stressed that these students had received a second chance and they need to perform appropriately.

Policy 5118, Special Education Tuition

It was the consensus of the Policy Committee members to recommend that the Board of Education approve Policy 5118, Special Education Tuition, for first reading and action, at its regular January Board of Education meeting, as presented.

Policy 6135, Bookstore

It was the consensus of the Policy Committee members to recommend that the Board of Education approve Policy 6135, Bookstore, for first reading and action at its regular January Board of Education meeting with the following enhancement:

Delete the last paragraph starting with "The Bookstore will follow the schedule of curriculum" and ending with "...procedures in support of this policy." Even though this was an effort to keep textbooks in circulation for at least five years, it was acknowledged that publishers often change editions and it is necessary to have the latest edition.

Adjournment

The Policy Committee adjourned at 10:00 a.m.