

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

Policy, Evaluation, and Goals Meeting
Tuesday, August 13, 2013

A Policy Committee of the Whole Board of Education meeting was held on Tuesday, August 13, 2013. Dr. Moore called the meeting to order at 9:35 p.m. in the Board Room. Committee members present were Thomas F. Cofsky, Dr. Ralph H. Lee, Dr. Jackie Moore, Sharon Patchak-Layman, and John Phelan. Also present were Dr. Steven T. Isoye, Superintendent; Michael Carioscio, Chief Information Officer; Dr. Tina Halliman, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services; 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: Sheila Hardin, Faculty Senate Executive Committee Chair and Nancy Leavy, League of Women Voters

Calendar of Reports

No discussion.

Board of Education Goals

It was the consensus of the majority of the Policy Committee members after much discussion that the following goals would be adopted for the 2013-14 school year at the Special Board Meeting following this meeting.

1. Racial Equity
 - a. Identify and eliminate systemic inhibitors to academic success for students of color, including but not limited to those which discourage students from attempting higher level courses or penalize students for pursuing high levels of academic achievement.
 - b. Show evidence of any change in racial predictability in recent years.
2. Student Engagement and Achievement
 - a. Increase student achievement and engagement through quality classroom instruction and other enhanced learning opportunities.
 - b. Use best practices to provide that each section of the same course is structurally consistent in providing the same challenging curriculum and rigorous teaching expectations in every section of the same course.
 - c. Partner actively with families of students in academic and extra-curricular activities with the goal of providing a more comprehensive and coordinated system to support student achievement.
3. Learning Environment and School Culture
 - a. Manage resources to provide a safe, effective and efficient learning environment that encourages students to stay on campus and to participate in activities that promote student engagement before, during and after school.
 - b. Expand efforts to engage students in extra-curricular/athletic activities while encouraging such teams and activities to welcome students from under represented demographics.
4. Finance and Operations
 - a. Develop a compensation philosophy for all District employees.
 - b. Establish a system of performance based evaluations and compensation for administrators consistent with the District's compensation philosophy.

- c. Conduct a review of existing programs and initiatives to focus resources on those that are cost effective and achieve important goals.
 - d. Determine through the Finance Advisory Committee and Board deliberations whether adjustments are needed to the District's fund balance and if so, the most beneficial means to achieve such adjustments.
5. Governance
- a. Define the Board's role, focus the Board on its agreed responsibilities and review, revise and document Board processes and procedures.
 - b. Complete strategic planning with community, faculty, administration and Board input in order to set a long term, five-year vision for the District and annual sub-goals designed to execute the plan's overall vision.

Mr. Phelan and Dr. Isoye had reviewed last year's goals and the consensus at the previous meeting was to use them as this year's goals with some amendments. As such, Mr. Phelan had drafted goals based on that conversation and after a review of the chevron document.

In the discussion about the racial equity 1.a. goal, the administration had accessed its actions. One option would have been to tweak last year's goal and ask the administration to review the underlying causes of any placement disparities based on race, gender, national origin, economic status or other relevant characteristics. Were there any systematic inhibitors? The Committee was uncomfortable with deleting the original goal and suggested that exploring underlying causes could be an action step. Keeping the goal would allow the District to follow up on mobility and other inhibitors. One member suggested that the amount of time a student had to do a class could be an inhibitor. Is there something the District is doing with class structure that would help students meet the requirements of the ACT test. A suggestion was used to start the goal with "Identify and eliminate".

With regard to 1.b., a committee member asked for a renewed and vigorous effort. Dr. Isoye stated that DLT would discuss this based on the discussion of the chevrons and clarity that it has to brainstorm on what is possible. Dr. Lee asked if more resources needed to be devoted to accomplishing this goal. Mr. Phelan noted that the administration would report its actions to the Board of Education and it would determine what resources were necessary and then the Board of Education may support it.

With regard to goal to, Mr. Phelan had reworded the action steps based on where the district will go. In 2.b., much of the work is being done through mapping in certain areas and it is a process that needs to continue.

Number 2.c. was added as students come from families and the families play a role in education: It is important to keep families informed and engaged. Action steps might include decreasing discipline issues or increasing the number of teacher conferences. Even though the District has an outreach coordinator whose job it is to reach out and maintain contact with families, the District has a parental involvement policy, and the superintendent is to keep parents and guardians thoroughly informed and seek their input and then report to the Board of Education, it was the consensus of the committee to highlight goal this year. One member stated that parents feel informed, unwelcomed, or are not engaged in their students' education. Parents need to be part of the picture. Dr. Isoye noted that it would be helpful to get the Board's input as to what they were thinking and what Dr. Moore had learned at the Harvard Seminar discussion.

Goal No. 3 has many avenues in which to branch out further to be effective.

With regard to Finance and Operations, Goal 4, discussion ensued about having a compensation philosophy for all District employees and a compensation plan and evaluation of district administrators. The Finance Advisory Committee was added in the goal.

The goals will be available for Institute Day. The essence is to become a more functional board and to build trust with the community and district employees. The governance goal focuses on the Board of Education's role and responsibility. Ms. Hardin noted that the Board of Education defines the superintendent's responsibilities, not all employees. The administration was asked to define the responsibilities so that everyone understands their role.

Ms. Patchak-Layman noted that approximately 400 students have a GPA that is below 2.0. She suggested that the district work in an intentional way to move students to a 2.0 GPA or better. She acknowledged that the District was supporting students, i.e., math roster, reading, etc., but she did not think it was being done in a concerted and intentional way. However, 2.0 has become a caveat of success when the scores are released. It is the standard for being part of interscholastic sports. The District has global statistics and individual students, but she did not believe the District was marching them forward to get them to the 2.0. Dr. Isoye remarked that DELT has had a discussion about this as well. It has looked at students with multiple D's and F's to get qualitative and quantitative information. Ms. Patchak-Layman felt the goal of 2.0 was doable and achievable. Dr. Isoye noted that the District does ask itself what is it about the program and what it is about the student.

Dr. Lee noted that the community is not interested in how the Board of Education runs itself and he felt that 5.a. should be deleted. Mr. Phelan felt it was the direction of the Board of Education and the administration on how they conduct themselves. 5.a. resonated with Dr. Moore as she felt there was more to be done. The community only understood that the District has a high fund balance and long meetings. Mr. Cofsky concurred.

Board of Education Agreements

Discussion ensued about agreements #2 and #6 under the Superintendent expectations. It was clarified that "2. Direction to create work will only be given at Board meetings when a majority of the Board votes to give direction. Work means the creation of documents (i.e., anything not file cabinet ready) was be enacted when email requests came to the Superintendent, etc. No. 6, the whole Board of Education will vote to put an item on a future agenda before significant staff time is expended, referred to items already on the Board of Education's agenda and how much additional effort should be expended.

A Board-level topic is defined as a topic to which the Board of Education is being asked to take action. Other topics may be of interest. The Board of Education wanted to limit its scope of items.

The Board of Education will continue its practice of providing all Board of Education members information requested by one Board of Education member.

Committee Structure

Policy allows the Board of Education to appoint members of a committee but it does not delineate the size of the committee. The consensus was to try 3-person committees to see how they would work. The intent is to foster the goal/theme of trust and perhaps expedite the process. Mr. Phelan noted that effective September 2013, the 3-person committee structure would commence.

The expectations are as follows:

1. The committee chair creates the agenda in consultation with the assigned administrator.
2. Chairs set times of meetings in consultation with members and assigned administrator.

3. Board members not assigned to a committee may attend meetings but may not participate in discussions.
4. Committees vote to make recommendations to the full Board.
5. Both the committee's recommendation and vote are reported to the full Board.

Ms. Patchak-Layman pointed out that a 3-person committee puts barriers in place for Board of Education members to have one-on-one discussions, as two board members is a majority of that committee. She suggested increasing the size of the committee and adding staff and 2 community members. Many people have been involved with Strategic Planning and will be part of the implementation process and they would be good resources. Dr. Moore offered support for this suggestion. Mr. Phelan stated that the District had researched other districts using 3-member committees and found a transparency was added to the work as all conversations occur in open session. He suggested trying 3-member committees first and revisiting the structure if there are problems. He was unsure if the Board of Education wanted administrators restricted to the Open Meetings Act. He added that community members having the making decisions would undermine the checks and balances of the Board members' responsibilities, as they are the elected officials. The Finance Advisory Committee has been created for the short term and virtually all of the business is funneled through that committee. Mr. Phelan trusted the committee chairs and administrative liaisons to set times that were convenient for the public.

Contracts should be presented first to the committee and moved forward to the Board for approval. If the committee does not feel it is ready to move the contract forward, then it goes back to the committee. If something is moved forward, it is matter of trusting the committee to determine what should be brought forward. The intention of 3-member committee is to condense the time for discussion.

Agendas will be posted. Committee members will be asked to provide an overview of the meetings at the regular meeting. Questions can be emailed to the committee chair. Perhaps some discussion can occur at the regular meeting, but hopefully it will be less discussion.

Adjournment

Dr. Moore adjourned the meeting at 11:10 p.m.

Dr. Jackie Moore
Secretary