

The Board meeting of the Board of Education of the Oak Park and River Forest High School was held on Thursday evening, April 30, 2009, in the Board Room.

Call to Order President Conway called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. A roll call indicated that the following members were present: John C. Allen, IV, Jacques A. Conway, Valerie J. Fisher, Dr. Ralph H. Lee, Dr. Dietra D. Millard, Sharon Patchak-Layman, and John P. Rigas. Also present were: Dr. Attila J. Weninger, Superintendent and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

Closed Session At 7:09 p.m., on April 30, 2009, Dr. Lee moved to go into closed session for the purpose of discussing the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the District or legal counsel for the District, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee or against legal counsel for the District to determine its validity. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1), as amended by PA. 93—57; seconded by Mr. Allen. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

At 7:35 p.m. on Thursday, April 30, 2009, the Board of Education reconvened its open session.

Call to Order President Conway called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. The following Board of Education members were present: John C. Allen, IV, Jacques A. Conway, Valerie J. Fisher, Dr. Ralph H. Lee, Dr. Dietra D. Millard, Sharon Patchak-Layman, and John P. Rigas. Also present were: Dr. Attila J. Weninger, Superintendent; Jason Edgecombe, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources; Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Amy Hill, Director of Assessment and Research, Nathaniel L. Rouse, Principal, Cheryl L. Witham, Chief Financial Officer; James Paul Hunter, Faculty Senate Executive Committee Chair; Liz Turcza, Student Council Board of Education Liaison; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

Visitors The Board of Education welcomed the following visitors: Terry Finnegan and Amy Leafe McCormack, Board of Education members-elect; Kay Foran, OPRFHS Communications and Community Relations Coordinator; Judie Wilson, League of Women Voters; Ray Johnson Village of Oak Park Trustee; Beth Isaacs and Donna D’Oro Anderson of PING; Debbie Neuman, OPRFHS Math Division Head; Patti Warren, Joyce Gjada, Sue Ferrier, Joe Kostal, Peter Kahn, Christine Mondragon, Jason Dennis, Francis Arriaga, James Giovannetti John Bokum, OPRFHS faculty members; Asia Calcagno,

Brandon Daniels, Grace Fondow, Paul Frierson, Rebecca Johnson, Kelley Reuter, Megan White Michael Fernandopulle Jordan Allen, Noelle Berry, Milton McKinney, students; Karen Dale, Terrie Rayburn, Patty Hinch, Kathleen Brandt White, Sue Foran, Merry Beth Kowalczyk, M. and Pam Daniels, Community members, Terry Dean of the *Wednesday Journal*.

The Board of Education honored the following students for achievement in specific areas.

- Golden Apple Scholar – Megan White
- Illinois Science Teachers Association Outstanding Science Student Award – Michael Fernandopulle
- Louder than a Bomb Invitational Nike Slam – Jordan Allen, Noelle Berry, Milton McKinney
- Louder than a Bomb Chicago All Star Team –Asia Calcagno
- Louder than a Bomb Chicago Teen Poetry Slam - 2nd Place – Asia Calcagno, Brandon Daniels, Grace Fondow, Paul Frierson, Rebecca Johnson, Kelley Reuter, Keenan Smith

Public Comments Ray Johnson, resident and Village of Oak Park Trustee, addressed the Board of Education.

He thanked Mr. Conway and Dr. Millard for showing their commitment once again to the high school by running for the Board of Education for a second term.

Mr. Johnson thanked Mr. Rigas and Ms. Fisher for their service, acknowledging their many hours of dedication to the high school and the Village of Oak Park. Their voices would be missed at this table. He also looked forward to working with Mr. Rigas on Harlem Avenue when assumed the office president of River Forest.

Christine Mondragon, OPRFHS faculty member, read the following statement to the Board of Education.

“We, the members of the mathematics division at OPRFHS, wish to impress upon the BoE our passionate commitment for the work involved in improving student achievement, closing the achievement gap, and improving student learning across all levels. Our focus has and will continue to be our students. As involved stakeholders, we would like to share the following concern with the Board.

“We are disappointed and troubled by the failure in the hiring process of a math division chair that resulted in the decision to instead hire an external interim for next year. Given the importance of mathematics concerning NCLB and minority achievement, this hiring decision

should have been a top priority. Because of the objective nature and relative ease of assessment, we know more about effective pedagogy in mathematics than any other subject. Having an exceptional math chair that could in turn ensure that math instruction at OPRF is based on empirically derived best practices could arguably do more to improve the educational experience at OPRF than any other department. As a result of this failure in the hiring process, we are now left looking for a retired chair, someone who will only be able to work part time, and is possibly not current on the best practices in the field.

“It is unnerving to have such a critical position be left with this result. Education is a field rare to others in that retirement is announced years in advance. There is no excuse as to why the process was started so late leaving us without the option to reopen the search as needed at a later date. There were several other flaws in the process. To the credit of the hiring process, many stakeholders are involved on a committee. However, this mainly serves to slow the process and add expense for substitutes during the interview periods for the following reason – of the 10 members of the hiring committee, only 1 is also a member of the final hiring committee. None of the other final decision makers participate or even observe any other part of the process including rounds of interviews and a forum with the division.

“This district deserves more than a part time fill-in for next year. As concerned stakeholders, we request to be involved in the appointment of an interim, a fall posting for the position, the expansion of the candidate search to recruit quality minority candidates, and the reconsideration of a part time retiree to serve as interim. We also strongly urge the Board to evaluate the hiring process, as next year we will have nearly 30 retirees in the district, including 5 open division chairs. While we will do our best as a division to continue to serve our students as ably as possible, OPRF cannot afford to repeat this catastrophic failure with even greater magnitude next year. Thank you for your time and attention.”

Board of Education

Dr. Millard thanked all of those involved in the Board of Education elections. The Board of Education faces many challenges and it will embrace any and all involvement of the community members.

Comments

Mr. Allen read with dismay an editorial in the *Wednesday Journal* singling out one new Board of Education member and the entire Village of River Forest inappropriately. He felt the article was racist to the white citizens of River Forest. District 90 has two Board of Education who are African-American members, which represents 28 percent of its Board of Education. He felt the minority population of River Forest was far less

than that. There are three African-American members on the District 200 Board of Education, two of whom live in River Forest and one of whom was elected with the person singled out. The remaining River Forest Board of Education member was honorably mentioned for the work he had done on the achievement gap. River Forest has continuously proven that it is just as committed as anyone else for fixing the African-American gap. The real reason the residents were singled out was that they are rich and white; that is unfair and categorically wrong. It was an embarrassment to these communities for the *Wednesday Journal* to have put something like that in print.

Ms. Patchak-Layman reported that information was received this week about students who were not tested because of a mistake in ordering the correct number of tests. She would have appreciated an earlier update of the situation. She was concerned about the ramifications of having the makeup day for these tests on Monday, as Mondays were already confusing with the alternate schedule. She was worried about the students' abilities to be prepared. She suggested having the tests on Tuesday in an effort to make it easier and more normal for students.

Ms. Patchak-Layman stated that a recent court case has stated that tests are now the property of the students and their parents if they signed a receipt. She suggested giving parents/students a blanket permission slip for use throughout the year.

Regarding the selection of the math division head, she stated that this was symptomatic of spot decision making within an institution. This decision, and others that have come before the Board of Education, have been done in isolation without a plan, without reference to the vision or the shared interest in the community. As an item comes before the Board of Education on which to make a decision, it is decided upon without the rest of the pieces of information or a comprehensive plan. The Board of Education has no idea of what dollar amount is being sought on cost containment within the school; this is a problem. The leadership has not come forward to make sure that the decisions reflect the desires of the entire community. She hoped that the Board of Education would be able to put some of the pieces in place as it goes forward and looks at the goals for next year.

Mr. Conway publicly congratulated the newly elected Board of Education members, Terry Finnegan and Amy McCormack. He appreciated their dedication.

Mr. Conway also thanked the Mr. Edgecombe, Ms. Witham, and Mr. Lanenga for the work they had done on the B&G negotiations.

Mr. Conway stated that the online registration for sports camps puts those students who do not have computer access at an unfair disadvantage. Many homes do not have computer access and this made the teacher conferences not as accessible as well. He too had difficulty registering and he felt personal contact and the opportunity for people to come into the school and write out a check to register their students for sports camp was important. If this is not possible, he feared that the registration numbers would be lower this year.

FOIA Requests

Mr. Conway reported that 15 FOIA requests had been received and all had been resolved.

Agenda Changes

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked that the portion of Consent Item A, specifically “a declaration that the Audiotapes of the September 2007 closed session destroyed and a declaration that the closed session minutes from January 1, 1989 through April 23, 2009, remain closed” and that Consent Item O, Contract with Early Childhood Care and Education” be pulled from the Consent Agenda.

Student Life

Student Council—Liz Turcza was welcomed to the table as the new Student Council Board of Education Liaison. Ms. Turcza, a junior, loves the school, has two older siblings, and looks forward to being a part of the Board of Education.

Ms. Turcza reported that Lucas Meyer won the Mr. OPRFHS contest. That event was paired with Air Band and raised \$100 for Operation Smile, a charity that helps repair cleft palates of people in third world countries. Student Council is focusing on Going Green and working more closely with the Recycling Club. There has been a greater effort to gather plastic bottles in addition to paper.

Student Council will continue its goal this year to increase opportunities to work with other clubs next year.

Principal Report

Mr. Rouse congratulated faculty member Peter Kahn and the students who participated in the Louder than a Bomb competition.

Mr. Rouse reported on the precautions that the school was undertaking relative to the HI NI virus, e.g., updating the website and getting the latest information, etc.

Mr. Rouse reported on the Presidential Marine Band and Silent Drill Team was scheduled to present on May 12, 2009.

Mr. Rouse reported that Prom was Friday, May 15, 2009.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Weninger reported that that OPRFHS was working on three grants: two with the Workforce Investment Act and one for Stimulus Money with Steckman Studio to provide an African-American Drumming Program for girls.

Dr. Weninger introduced Ms. Donna Anderson and Ms. Beth Isaacs, parents and co-chairs of Providing Instruments for the Next Generation (PING!) who then informed the Board of Education about the organization. The Board of Education received materials about the history PING!, its evolution from beginning at one school and expanding to ten, its mission, and its beliefs.

The mission of PING! is 1) to provide instruments to Oak Park and River Forest School Districts 90, 97, and 200 low-income students to support their participation in their schools' Music Education Program; 2) to provide enrichment opportunities and mentoring programs to enable students in the PING! Program to fully develop their musical talents; and 3) to advocate for high quality music education in the public schools.

PING! believes that 1) music is an integral part of the child's educational experience; 2) all children deserve equal access to musical opportunities in the public schools; 3) early engagement and ongoing support sow the seeds for life-long appreciation of music and the arts; and 4) parental involvement is the key to student success.

For over ten years, PING has provided instruments to low-income children in the community. It began by people donating instruments. Enrollment now has grown to over 100 students for each of the past four years, which represents about 10 percent of all students participating in the elementary school instrumental music programs. In 2007, it expanded to include high school students.

They reviewed some of the highlights, the benefits, and the tangible differences of the following enrichment programs:

- 1) Private lessons and mentoring for middle school students paired with a high school student who plays the same instrument.
- 2) Full scholarships to summer music camps
- 3) Music workshops for fourth and fifth grade students; and
- 4) Support for PING! high school students.

Citizens' Council—Dr. Weninger noted that the new Board of Education would be surveyed about how Citizens' Council could help it going forward and the results of that survey will be discussed at the regular May Board of Education meeting.

District Liaison &

Faculty Senate—Mr. Hunter thanked his colleagues for their appearance earlier. He enjoyed his relationship as chair and as a faculty member with

Board of Education members and he appreciates it when Board of Education members contact Faculty Senate with their concerns. Both Mr. Rigas and Ms. Fisher modeled the decorum from which all members of the Board of Education could learn. They understood that they were not school administrators but the stewards of the finances and were to help develop policies that would shape the school's mission and performance. He thanked both of them for their leadership and the time and energy that they put into their high school tenure. He congratulated Mr. Conway, Dr. Millard, Ms. McCormack, and Mr. Finnegan on the recent elections.

Last week the Board of Education members spent over 10 hours on committee meetings, a record. Some of the time would be better spent by using the administration, faculty, and staff to get their work done. He asked them to lean on their resources so that their meetings could be more profitable and productive.

Mr. Hunter said that Faculty Senate was grateful to have the issue of the B&G contract resolved.

Consent Items

Mr. Rigas moved to approve the consent items as follows:

- Open Minutes of March 17, 19, and 26, April 9, 16, 20, 21, and 23, 2009 and the closed session minutes of March 17, 19, 26, April 9, 16, 20, and 23, 2009;
- Personnel Recommendations (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting);
- Approval of the Check Disbursements and Financial Resolutions dated April 30, 2009 (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting);
- Resolutions Ratifying and Confirming Execution of Certain Vouchers and Payment of Certain Bills and Expenses;
- Resolution Authorizing Execution of Certain Vouchers for the month of April;
- Check Disbursements and Financial Resolutions dated April 30, 2009;
- Monthly February 2009 Treasurer's Report;
- Approval of IHSA Annual Membership;
- Approval of Milk Roll Over Bid;
- Approval of RFP for Distributor of Food Products and Miscellaneous;
- Non-Food Supplies;
- Approval of RFP for Bread;
- Approval to Accept the Food Service Lunch Prices;
- Approval of Elevator Upgrade Bid;
- Award of Spring Athletic Uniforms Bid;
- Approval of Renewal of the Field Trip/Charter Bus Contract;
- Approval of the Triton Evening Education Program Contract ;
- Textbooks *Little Books of Big Ideas: Pre-calculus; the Power of Functions; Calculus Concepts 1-2A*, for the Mathematics Division; *Food*

for Today, for the Fine and Performing Arts Division; *C'est a' toi!*, *La Catrina: El Ultimo Secreto*, *Spanish Mini-stories for Look, I Can Talk!* for the World Languages Division; *Conceptual Physics*, *Earth Comm: Earth System Science in the Community*, *Miller & Levine Biology*, *Foundations Series: Miller & Levine Biology*; *Modern Chemistry*; *Living in the Environment*; *Investigations in Environmental Science: Units 1, 2, and 3*; *Earth: An Introduction to Physical Geology* for the Science Division.

seconded by Dr. Lee. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

**Collaboration of
Early Childhood
Care and Education**

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked how the contract with the Collaboration of Early Childhood Care and Education (Collaboration) would interface with the contract with the River Forest Community Center. She asked if the RFCC was open to the recommendations in this contract. Mr. Edgecombe will research this question for Ms. Patchak-Layman.

Dr. Millard stated that the Board of Education is working on African-American issues and the more opportunities available to younger children, the better prepared they will be for all stages of their life. She suggested that the Board of Education consider increasing its support of the Collaboration in next year's budget \$1,000 to \$16,000, and continue to raise the support until it ultimately gets to \$20,000 per year.

Mr. Rigas moved to approve the Agreement for Consulting Services with the Collaboration of Early Childhood Care and Education; seconded by Dr. Millard. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

**Consent Agenda
Item A**

Ms. Patchak-Layman objected to the Board of Education's declaration that the closed session minutes from January 1, 1989 through April 23, 2009 remain closed, as it had not fulfilled its semiannual obligation to review all of the minutes and make the determination that the minutes remain closed. She suggested tabling this action until the Board of Education does this review. She also felt the minutes should be pulled to see if there was a need to keep the tapes for a period longer than 18 months. When asked if she was suggesting that the Board of Education sit and review 20 years worth of minutes, she responded that it could be broken down in five-year segments.

Ms. Fisher suggested that the Board of Education has some very important things on its plate and after spending ten to twelve hours on committee meetings, she felt that the Board of Education needed to consider what it wanted to focus on in light of all the things it faced today. Twenty years of minutes would not rise to the level of something very important. She also suggested that some of the exceptions of the Opening Meetings Act, e.g., student discipline or personnel would not

be released, as it would be a matter of confidentiality. One does not need to know the reason why the issues were discussed in closed session in the first place. As a practical matter and a matter of substance, the reason for a closed session was germane to the minutes. Ms. Fisher continued that now the only people capable of reviewing the minutes and making corrections were those who were at the meetings. She encouraged the Board of Education to prioritize.

Mr. Rigas asked, given the nature of closed session, when would one release closed session minutes to the public. Minutes regarding negotiations would never be released. Dr. Weninger noted that rarely are closed session minutes released primarily because they involve people, negotiations, and student discipline. The only instances where he has seen their release is when all of the parties involved were deceased and even in this case, it would be a rare instance.

One thing Dr. Lee had not heard pointed out was the essential difference between what happens in closed and open meetings. There is an important difference between the two. In open meetings, actions are taken. In closed meetings, Board of Education members talk. He was not willing to go through 20 years of talk that no longer mattered. It did not matter to him and it would not be a good use of this Board of Education's time to determine if the talk was accurately recorded. He would vote to destroy the tapes. He had yet to see an instance where it mattered who said what.

Dr. Millard asked that the Policy Committee review the policy.

**Approval of
Destruction
Of Audiotapes and
Declaration to
Keep Minutes
Closed**

Mr. Allen moved to approve the Destruction of the Audiotapes of September 2007 and declared that the closed session minutes of January 1, 1989 through April 23, 2009, shall remain closed; seconded by Mr. Rigas. A roll call vote resulted in six ayes and one nay. Motion carried. Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay.

**Hearing on
Amended Budget**

At 8:57 p.m. on Thursday, April 30 2009, Mr. Rigas called the Public Hearing to order. Hearing no oral comments and receiving no written comments, he closed the hearing at 8:58 p.m.

**Acceptance of
Gifts & Donations**

Ms. Fisher moved to accept with gratitude the gifts and donations as presented (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting); seconded by Dr. Millard. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

RFP for

Dr. Millard moved to approve the RFP with Crowe Horwath and direct the

Audit Services

staff to negotiate a three-year contract for audit services according to the RFP specifications for the amount of \$123,200 (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting); seconded by Mr. Allen. A roll call vote resulted in six ayes. Motion carried. Ms. Fisher was absent from this vote.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked for an explanation as to prior relationships with the other two firms. Ms. Witham stated that Andy Mace used to work with Virchow Krause as an audit partner until he was released. Mr. Mace then joined another firm. When working with Mr. Mace, OPRFHS experienced issues relative to deadlines and accuracy.

Mr. Rigas stated that every firm brings something different to the table and he concurred with the staff's recommendation. OPRFHS is fortunate to have a very professional and highly functional staff. Many governments and school districts do not have this level of professional experience and therefore need more assistance. The risk with Crowe Horwath is that there may be a higher turnover rate at the staff level, but OPRFHS does not need that kind of assistance, it would prefer to have the help at the higher level.

Ms. Patchak-Layman was appreciative of the fact that Cooper and Miller was willing to look at Board of Education minutes to follow the District works on an ongoing basis in order to know what is happening in the District and to be proactive. Ms. Patchak-Layman was informed that this was standard operating procedures for all accounting firms and that the District would make sure that the Board of Education was kept up to date.

Authorization to Commence 2009 Audit

Dr. Millard moved to authorize Cheryl Witham, Chief Financial Officer, to commence with the audit for Fiscal Year 2009 with the Audit firm approved by the Board of Education; seconded by Dr. Lee. A roll call vote resulted in six ayes. Motion carried. Ms. Fisher was absent from this vote.

Adoption of Amended Budget

Dr. Lee moved to adopt the amended budget for the 2008-09 school year, as presented. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Ms. Witham clarified some items regarding support services, operations, and an increase in the Operations and Maintenance Fund and Life Safety for Ms. Patchak-Layman.

Release of Non-Certified Staff

Dr. Lee moved to approve the Resolution Authorizing Notice of Dismissal/Reduction (Non-Certified Staff); seconded by Dr. Millard. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

NonAgenda Items

None

Approval of Superintendent Compensation for The 2009-10 School Year

Mr. Allen moved to approve a 1 ½ percent salary increase for the Superintendent for the 2009-10 school year; seconded by Mr. Rigas. A roll call vote resulted in six ayes and one nay. Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay. Motion carried.

Ms. Patchak-Layman did not agree with the amount of the compensation as it should have a relationship to the performance of the job and she did not believe Dr. Weninger warranted at 1 ½ percent increase in salary.

Mr. Allen and Dr. Lee felt Dr. Weninger had done a great job and they respected the effort that Dr. Weninger had expended.

Approval of State Representative Request for Names of Graduating Seniors

Mr. Allen moved to approve State Representative Graham’s request for the names of graduating seniors in order to provide them with congratulatory certificates; seconded by Ms. Fisher. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Acknowledgement of April 7, 2009 Board of Education Election Results

Dr. Lee moved to acknowledge the newly-elected Board of Education members Dr. Dietra D. Millard, Amy Leafe McCormack, Terry Finnegan, and Jacques A. Conway; seconded Ms. Fisher. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

The Cook County Clerk’s office, after having completed a canvass of all votes cast for the high school Board of Education Oak Park and River Forest 200, certified that the listed candidates received the following vote totals.

Candidates	Votes
Dietra D. Millard	4,577
Amy Leafe McCormack	4,840
Rosa L. Higgs	2,635
Terry Finnegan	4,215
George Bailey	3186
Victor Guarino	3,607
Jacques A. Conway	4,113

Recognition of Departing Board of Education Members

Dr. Weninger, as the least senior administrative team member, wanted Ms. Fisher and Mr. Rigas to know that there were many accolades of service that both of them had provided the district. It is interesting for him to have come from four other schools and to watch the strength, expertise, support, and commitment to the staff and to the school. The school will feel a tremendous loss with their leaving. Both Mr. Rigas and Ms. Fisher are remarkable people and are indeed what makes this community the best.

Dr. Millard stated that her introduction to both Ms. Fisher and Mr. Rigas was when she was a candidate for the Board of Education. That opposition has turned into a rewarding relationship and solid friendship and she had no way of thanking them for mentoring those to sit on the Board of Education. She will continue to talk to them in the near future to get their opinions. She will miss them, but expect to see them around.

Mr. Lee stated that both Mr. Rigas and Ms. Fisher had earned his respect at a depth that he never anticipated. He was lead to believe when campaigning that Ms. Fisher and Mr. Rigas would be his enemies, but he found that was not the case. He considered it an honor to have served with them.

Mr. Allen, like Dr. Lee, respected both Ms. Fisher and Mr. Rigas and enjoyed working with the two of them. He had never expected to go back to high school, but he stated that both of them had made his term as a Board of Education member enjoyable. Ms. Fisher taught him much about the school's history and how things worked. Mr. Rigas showed him how one can be concerned and care about the school. For everything the school does, the two of them were committed to the school. He was appreciative to all four of them, Ms. Fisher, Mr. Rigas, Mr. Conway, and Dr. Millard, during his neophyte years as a school board member. He thanked them and would always appreciate what they had done for the new Board of Education members and for him personally.

Ms. Patchak-Layman thanked the retiring Board of Education members for their service. While she and they may not have agreed on many things, the conversations and the differing points of view often build a foundation. While there were disagreements on the some of the particulars, both she and they care about the same things.

Mr. Conway stated that he first met John Rigas when he was asked to join them on a campaign trail as part of a slate. He felt somewhat uneasy because he did not know either Mr. Rigas or Paul Wolfman. He found Mr. Rigas to be as steady as they go; his facial expressions and his words are always on an even keel, but his passion for this school goes way beyond that. Mr. Rigas' commitment to this community is tremendous. The ultimate compliment Mr. Conway received from Mr. Rigas was when Mr. Rigas was running for the president of Village of River Forest and he had asked Mr. Conway to join his ticket. Mr. Conway appreciated Mr. Rigas' work and energy. He thanked him for his service.

Mr. Conway stated that Ms. Fisher's heart was for the District; it is incomparable. The last day that candidate petitions were due in the last elections, she literally said that she would go to get signatures to run for the Board of Education again; she was so concerned. He assured her it would be O.K. Her love for this school is like a mother's love for her child. OPRFHS should have something named for her after 12 years of service. He thanked her for always being his first resource, no matter her own personal obligations. He wished her well.

Ms. Fisher stated that working on a continual improvement model is something that is hard to do and yet that is what everyone does. It has been an amazing lesson to see how the people in the high school roll up their sleeves, keep them rolled up, and continue to improve. She wants to express her gratitude to everyone in the community, e.g., to the students, to the wonderful faculty, to the administration, and yes to the school board. She served on a variety of boards and all of them had good will and worked to the betterment of the District. She was completely in awe of what they do every day and thanked them for that experience. It had been extremely rewarding. From a 12-year perspective, the opportunity this board has taken to work on the achievement gap is awesome. She appreciated the Board of Education members who have lead that charge. She believed the Board of Education will step in and contribute to that process and OPRFHS will continue on its path upwards. It has been incredibly rewarding.

Mr. Rigas read the following statement: "For the past eight years I have the privilege and honor to represent the school board. Many people know that I have a great passion and love I have for this OPRFHS. The reasons for my passion are fairly obvious as I graduated from the now famous class of 1977 and have had three children pass through these halls. What I have found though, is that there are many other people who are as passionate about this school as I am. It is this passion and love for this institution by those who work in this building each and every day that makes this a unique place. I hope this passion continues and is never ending.

"When I embarked on joining the Board, I only knew Carlotta Lucchesi and Paul Wolfman and a few faculty and staff. Since that time, I have had the opportunity to work side by side with 15 different board members, two superintendents, many administrators, and faculty members. Establishing these relationships and friendships with so many people is one of the most rewarding parts of this job. It is unlikely that I would have had the opportunity to not only meet, but to get to know you for the hard work and desire to make a difference and for putting up with me over the years. Your friendship, knowledge, and wisdom are all things I will take with me and makes me a richer person than when I

began this journey. However, there are two people, who if left unmentioned, would result in a great neglect on my part. First is Valerie, who has given 12 long years to this community. No one should be asked to give that much of his or her life to this work. Valerie has institutional knowledge no one else on this board contains and is often looked at as the voice of reason on the Board and truly tries to build consensus. She always wants to have a 7-0 vote and he had to convince her that it was not possible. I am glad I am leaving at this same time you are. The second person is the wonderful person to my left, Gail Kalmerton, Gail is the super glue that holds this board together and makes each of our jobs easier than you can ever imagine. Gail, I want to thank you personally for your hard work and effort on behalf of this Board. You are truly the ultimate professional.

“To Terry and Amy, as you join this board, my advice is free, simple and may be without any value at all. However, here it is: Listen, learn and participate with passion, but remain open to all sides of an issue. We often have a predetermined view on an issue that may have resulted from not knowing all the facts. Be cautious as we are often given “facts” from friends or others that do not reflect all the facts. You will be asked to make hard decisions and this is the toughest part of this job. Dig deep for the courage to make those tough decisions that may not be popular. However, most of all, my advice is to have fun and enjoy your work.

“I now become one of your constituents and expect great things from this Board of Education in the future. The good news is I know the next Board of Education can accomplish great things along with all the faculty and staff of this school. While I go on to new and different challenges, I offer my help should you ever need it. I wish all of you the best.”

**Adjournment
Sine Die**

At 9:36 p.m. on Thursday, April 30, 2009, Ms. Fisher moved to adjourn the Board of Education meeting; seconded by Mr. Rigas. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Jacques A. Conway
President

Dr. Ralph H. Lee
Secretary