

December 18, 2014

The regular Board meeting of the Board of Education of the Oak Park and River Forest High School was held on Thursday, Date, in the Board Room of the OPRFHS.

**Call to Order**

President Phelan called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. A roll call indicated the following Board of Education members were present: Thomas F. Cofsky, Dr. Steven Gevinson, Dr. Ralph H. Lee, Dr. Jackie Moore, Sharon Patchak Layman, John Phelan, and Jeff Weissglass. Also present were Dr. Steven T. Isoye, Superintendent; Nathaniel L. Rouse, Principal; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant Clerk of the Board.

**Closed Session**

At 6:36 p.m. on Thursday, December 18, 2014, Mr. Phelan moved to enter 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; Collective negotiating matters between the District and its employees or their representatives or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2); and Collective negotiating matters between the District and its employees or their representatives or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2); seconded by Dr. Lee. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

At 7:38 p.m., the Board of Education resumed open session.

Joining the meeting were Michael Carioscio, Chief Information Officer; Amy Hill, Director of Assessment and Research; Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Dr. Gwen Walker-Qualls, Interim Director of Pupil Personnel; Karin Sullivan, Director of Communications and Community Relations; Joey Cofsky and Annika Holdeboer, Student Council Liaison Representative; and Sheila Hardin, Faculty Senate Executive Committee Chair.

**Visitors**

OPRFHS Faculty and Staff members Ron Johnson, Jason Dennis, Avi Lessing, Andrea Newman, Toni Biasiello, and Dana Lindberg; Mary, John Bokum, Gil Cabacungan, Barry Epstein, Sue Harkin, Stephen Jackson, Barb Langer, Kevin Peppard, Sara Spivy, and Virginia Thomas, community members; Mary Haley, League of Women Voters; Bill Sullivan, OPYBS; Terry O'Grady of Pekron; and Jade Browning and Naomi Lechty, OPRFHS students.

## **Public Hearing**

At 7:40 p.m., Mr. Phelan called the public hearing on the 2014 Tax Levy to order and asked if there were any oral or written comments.

Barry Epstein, a non-resident of Oak Park and a CPA financial analyst, highlighted points in the document he had distributed, noting that the proposed 18.32% property tax levy increase was unwarranted. He noted that the community was blessed with a successful and prosperous school district and a very large cache of cash, approximately \$130 million, spread across in several funds. He presented his review of the District's finances. He addressed the District's proposed look-back provision as defined in the Illinois Department of Revenue's PTELL Technical Manual. He suggested that the District's most recent data justified a reduction, not an increase in the tax levy as the District's goal should be to reduce its cash balance down to the state-recommended 3 to 6 month cushion.

Dr. Barb Langer read a statement that objected to the District raising its tax levy by 18.32%. She felt District 200 should vote no to any tax increase, repeal the 2002 referendum and refund the cash balance to taxpayers, less the state recommended cushion, cease from misrepresenting its true financial status, abandon the premise that automatically paying teachers and administrators more each year translates into improved learning, eliminate redundant administrative jobs, and adopt an attitude of thrift.

John Bokum, resident of 629 S. Home, 37-year resident, was now paying \$14,000 in real estate taxes. He compared that to his taxes on his home in Santa Fe, which were \$2,400 after 35 years. He needs to appeal his taxes every year. He hoped the Board of Education would freeze the Levy or rebate up to 10%.

Hearing no further comments, at 8:00 p.m., Mr. Phelan closed the hearing.

## **Strategic Plan**

Dr. Isoye reported that the leaders of the Strategic Plan Implementation Teams are faculty and staff members. He acknowledged that these members were volunteering their time to this effort in addition to their regular duties. The Strategic Plan has six goals. Four of the teams will make presentations this evening as to what they are working on at this time. Mr. Phelan thanked all of the leaders for the time and effort they were expending and the Board of Education wanted to empower them to change the school as they know how. He appreciated their thoughts.

### Facilities and Finance

Mr. Johnson reported that initially the focus was to grow the membership to represent different areas of the building, as they started with only 4.

Currently, the team has 11 members. This team will support the other 5 teams, i.e., looking at classroom space, technology, layouts, etc. It started with a program to evaluate classroom furniture, so that no matter how many students were enrolled, it would support collaborative teaching and all types of teaching and learning styles. Long-term, the focus would be to have flexible furniture throughout the entire building. Next, it is looking to consult with an architect to evaluate the current use of the building and determine if it is being used efficiently, which could mean moving departments, classrooms, etc.

#### Transformational Leadership Team

Mr. Dennis stated that this team has been meeting every Tuesday since October. The members are Kyle Farley, Lee Williams, Jocelyn Hanson, Tom Kirchner, Kristen McKee, Jennifer Hoffmann, and David Ruhland. The team felt that there is a tremendous amount of untapped potential residing in the student body and the District must identify, develop, and empower student leaders to transform the school. The recommendation is to have a student-lead advisory period, composed of seniors, juniors, sophomores and freshman. Juniors and seniors would be charged with creating a supportive community focused on the academic and social emotional needs in the room. The best leaders of each advisory be enrolled in a leadership course at the school to hone their leadership skills. The advisory period could assist with other initiatives and needs in the school, i.e., as well as dedicated tutoring with other teachers, Peace Circles, etc. Also, 2 types of actions exist in relationship to school leadership 1) those that challenge leadership (Board of Education goals, and 2) those that support leadership i.e., professional development, etc. The Team felt the District should further assess the effectiveness of school leadership and provide for growth and development based on that assessment.

#### Social Emotion Learning

Mr. Lessing reported that in one of his classes he had asked students to reflect on the year and to identify how they knew each other. Some students knew one another since kindergarten. Those relationships impact the learning environment. One student said they were still learning about each other. What Mr. Lessing appreciated about the opportunity of being on a Learning Team was getting to know the Board of Education. He thanked Mr. Phelan for inviting the faculty to come forward to solve problems: it was a huge invitation for him personally. He reminisced about how he had gotten to know each of Board of Education members through different venues. If anything happens at the school, it will be through the relationships that people make. He also thanked Ms. Hill and Mr. Dennis as they were in the English Department in 2007 talking about social emotional learning and how to implement it on a school level. Last year, he proposed to Mr. Rouse a collaboration

with the University of Illinois and Illinois State University, Ethnography, where students do participatory action research and talk back to the university about their findings. A day's release time was given to 12 teachers to work together and the result was that Ty Williams proposed a human rights group. Both Ty Williams and Pete Hostrawser were part of the group and both said they did not even know of or believe in social emotional a year ago and now they are working on it together. The members of this team are:

Lauren Achurra  
Janel Bishop  
Meghan Cahill  
Kirsten Cartier  
Kristen Finkbeiner  
Naomi Hildner  
Peter Hostrawser  
Stephen Jackson  
Peter Kahn, Peter  
Erni Leuschel  
Tia Marr

Amy McGrail  
Andrea Neuman  
Carolyn Ojikutu  
Ignacio Ponce  
Gisele Ramilo  
Kathleen Rice  
Rahasad Singletary  
Christopher Thieme  
Lisa Vincent  
Tyrone Williams

The Board of Education goals are centered on making and sustaining relationships and a sense of belonging to be a school community of trust based on effective communication and positive social emotional experiences. Social emotional learning is happening in every classroom every day but it might not always be positive. That is the ground from which all students learn. When talking about social emotional learning, it is about students' ability to be self-aware, socially aware, and socially intuitive, to understand context, to maintain positive relationships, to have focused attention, resiliency and resistance. The State of Illinois was first state to have SEL goals since 2004. Also, CASTLE, Collaborative Academic and Social Emotional Learning Collaborative, found a connection between academic excellence and SEL. Brain research is definitive: Students need direct training and reflection and resilience in relationship building just as they do in reading, writing, and arithmetic. Many programs address social emotional learning in positive ways, however, they need to be more deeply embedded in the institutional everyday fabric of the school. It cannot be achieved by asking for respect the first day of class, a syllabus, an assembly, etc. Teachers do not train for that. If one attends a workshop or goes to a seminar, only 20% of the people change their behavior. However, if one is coached, 80% of people change. The good news it is an incredible moment in educational innovation and now is the how, talent and tools to bring about more connections, stronger relationships and collaborative classrooms. The tools that should be implemented into every day work

that would impact all students, and especially those that are most marginalized are:

- 1) Mindfulness, meditation, introduced to schools across the nation.
- 2) Participatory Action Research where students explore where they come from, empathy, listening and voice.
- 3) Shared leadership in class. Teaching communication directly – person to person. If every student connects with every other student in a class of 25, it has exponential growth.
- 4) Ground of Help. It is about creating positive experiences. The lost art of getting to know each other. It is important for us to know who we are and for the students to know who they are.

The 4-year pilot outlined below would grow every year and every year evaluated, and a decision would be made as to whether it should continue. It is a low stakes investment with high stakes reward.

- 1) Create an SEL coordinator faculty position who would be in charge of training 100 teachers in the next four years in SEL, which could be integrated into the curriculum program with math, science, English or stand-alone exercises to build connections within a class. It could lead programs for in-service or staff development days, help build Restorative Justice in connection with SIDS, PEACE circles and lead trainings of groups of teachers.
- 2) In year 2, make the “feelings class” or Experiments in Reading Literature in the World, a yearlong-leadership class where first semester students would train in communication, participatory action research, story-telling and mindfulness. Second semester, they would work with younger students, tutoring, mentoring, leading class discussions where student voice would be prominent
- 3) In year 3, a senior studios program, which is a 3-course program with English, History and Service Learning combined. The afternoon is used for internships in Oak Park or in the city and, thus, 75 students would be trained in true student leadership core.
- 4) A larger investment could be made in year 4 in terms of the school day with an advisory. One hundred teachers would have been trained in SEL and if the desire was to have a comprehensive program, it could be run out of that and students would be trained in leadership.

#### Transformational Teaching and Learning

Ms. Biasiello and Ms. Lindberg presented. The members of this Team are: Mark Collins, Heather Cody, Bill Young, Matt McMurray, Jamie Winchell, Nate Rouse, and Matt Kirkpatrick. The Team determined that transformational teaching and learning was about creating structures that improve morale to make students and staff feel like they belong. The question was raised as to how can the classroom experience be improved? One idea involved teacher-to-teacher observations. Teachers

know what is best for the students, and teachers are constantly improving their own practices via individual professional development workshops, educational workshops, individual readings over the summer, etc. Teachers are often doing best practices and experimenting. One tries things to see if they work or have a positive impact on student learning. If they are working, getting that information and strategies out to other teachers is important. This model encourages teachers to learn from each other and share through observations. One such program was TESTA, which has had good reviews. Observations are valuable. Institutionalizing it is important. This idea includes the expectation that the administration would encourage and support this work.

Several Board of Education members were impressed with their presentations. The Board of Education needs to determine how to operationalize and get the ideas heard, structured, etc. The Board of Education will work off line to help them understand its needs, i.e., summary of the idea, what resources are necessary, how would one measure success, when would success be measured, etc. As well as what should be institutionalized, etc. They were encouraged by what they had heard, the passion, etc. These ideas reflect the spirit of relationship building and learning of the stakeholders in the building. The process does not feel bureaucratic and expectations on both sides are understood. The fact that every group has an idea of something specific was encouraging. The proposals are touching on areas that are hugely important and could make dramatic changes and the Board of Education would want to support as best it can. It is a tremendous start. One member was greatly appreciative of the breadth of ideas across each of the teams. Another member felt that after a long time, the Strategic Plan was taking on real character. This is the strategic framework, where the doing has to happen. Places of overlap were the connection between SEL and student advisory. Furniture solutions are important and good for teacher observation work, etc. Some of the ideas have financial cost connected to them and others do not. It is a matter of re-orienting, evaluating space and using technology, etc. Much of the work can go forward without additional resources.

Thirty minutes has been allotted on the January Institute Day to bring these ideas to the employees of the District and they will participate in a survey as to their insight about the recommendations. In addition, an oversight committee has been set up to hear the ideas. Another strategy is to build a website for the internal and external community to learn about the Strategic Plan, listing the members of the committee, space to submit an idea which will be forwarded to every member of the implementation teams. Whichever team is responsible for exploring the idea will be added to the website. The Implementation Teams are looking at the Board of Education goals and building off those, building

new ideas, and determining what ideas should be put together that should be supported financially. The questions on the survey are open-ended and built on the work of the individual teams.

**Public  
Comments**

Naomi Lechty and Jade Browning, students, advocated for increasing the number of sections of Photography Class which had been whittled away from 3, to 2, and now 1. Many students wanting to take Photo 2 have been denied because it only has one section. Without that class, one cannot be on the yearbook staff. They presented a petition of 150 student signatures that supported having 2 classes. The teachers and the classes offered emotional support. Current students wanted younger students to have the same opportunities as they, because this class greatly impacted their lives.

**FOIA Requests**

Ms. Kalmerton reported that 3 FOIA request had been received and resolved.

**Faculty Report**

Ms. Hardin noted that first semester was winding down. Her colleagues who reported on their implementation Teams, reminded her that the Teams are an example of a joint committee endeavor between the staff, the administration and the Board of Education. Other joint committees exist as well for insurance, stipends, professional development and the calendar and all of these take time, trust, and relationship building. She felt that the faculty and the administration were not always commended for those efforts and she wanted to appreciate them for starting in the place of yes. She appreciated the time and effort made by the faculty and staff for the best possible outcomes for the students.

**Superintendent's  
Report**

Dr. Isoye reported the following:

- 1) More than two hundred seniors—or roughly 25% of the class of 2015—were named 2015-2016 State Scholars for outstanding academic achievement. To qualify, students had to perform in the top half of their high school class at the end of junior year and/or score in the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile on the ACT or SAT.
- 2) Wrestling Coach Mike Powell was chosen as a 2015 inductee to the National Wrestling Hall of Fame and will be inducted in early June.
- 3) Several students took top honors in the Illinois Music Educators Association competition for original composition. First place awards went to Evan Thompson for jazz improvisation and Reiny Rolock for keyboard solo. Stephanie Carlin won second in vocal ensemble, and Reiny Rolock took third in instrumental-solo to chamber ensemble.
- 4) In addition, twelve students have been chosen to perform at the IMEA's All-State Festival. Thousands of high school musicians auditioned, with only the top 5% advancing to the all-state

level. *Kudos to* Gabe Girson, Anna Holden, Sage Pope, Rory Schrobilgen, Thomas Barlow, David Messina, Fiona Ryan, Mathias Pergams, Jacob Schaider, Mary Martin, Max Lazarus, and Evan Thompson.

- 5) OPRF was awarded \$20,000 in money for students to study abroad next summer! The award comes from the Council on International Educational Exchange. Freshmen, sophomores, and juniors are eligible to apply for experiences in 13 different countries.
- 6) This is finals week, January 5 is an Institute day, and January 6 is the first day back for students.

Dr. Isoye wished all faculty and staff members a restful holiday break.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked for additional background information on the photography class.

The following items were removed from consent agenda:

- G. Construction Bids
- J. Summer School Dates and Salaries for FY 2015
- L. Open and Closed Session Minutes

#### **Consent Items**

Mr. Phelan moved to approve the following consent items:

- Monthly Treasurer's Report
- Monthly Financial Reports
- Personnel Recommendations, including
- Gifts and Donations
- TREMCO Roofing Contract
- Valor Asbestos Contract
- Policies for First Reading
  1. Policy 2:140, Communications to and From the Board
  2. Policy 2:140-E, Exhibit – Guidance for Board Member Communications, including Email Use
  3. Policy 4:110, Transportation
  4. Policy 4:120, Food Services
  5. Policy 4:150, Facility Management and Building Programs
  6. Policy 5:10, Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment
  7. Policy 5:220, Substitute Teachers 12/17/2014 3:40 PM
  8. Policy 5:250, Leaves of Absence
  9. Policy 6:20, School Year Calendar and Day
  10. Policy 6:110, Programs for Students at Risk of Academic Failure and/or Dropping Out of School and Graduation Incentive Program
  11. Policy 6:300, Graduation Requirements
  12. Policy 7:50, School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non District Schools

13. Policy 7:100, Health an Eye Examinations; Immunizations; and Exclusion of Students

**Construction Bids** Mr. Phelan moved to approve the bid packages for the 2015 Summer Capital Improvements Work, as presented; seconded by Dr. Gevinson.

Discussion ensued about what outreach had been done to solicit minority-owned businesses. Henry Bros. reported that while it has a detailed list of the bidders and the identities are proprietary. Airport Electric, however, is a Women-Owned Business (WBE).

The building management personnel were applauded on their pro-activity and creativity that will allow the District to have a new full ten-year warranty to replace and renovate specific areas of the roof that currently do not comply with TREMCO's specifications and managing the scheduling the work to get the best value for the dollars spent.

**Summer School** Mr. Phelan moved to approve the 2015 Summer School Dates, Stipends, and Budget with the recommendation of no increase to the tuition cost per section or the stipend amount; seconded by Dr. Lee. Discussion ensued.

As expressed at the Finance Committee, one member did not believe that the budget reflected the true cost of an individual student because not all of the dollars needed for the program were included in the budget, i.e., support activities, etc., and the District should allot more dollars for that program as opposed to taking money from tuition paying-students. The administration stated that the District does not discriminate and credit recovery classes are open to all students. In addition, the District receives funds from various resources such as the Oak Park Township, and, possibly, the Alumni Association. The District has reached out to neighboring universities to help with support as well. This benefit is not just for one group.

A roll call vote resulted in six ayes and one nay. Motion carried. Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay.

**Minutes** Mr. Phelan moved to approve the open and closed session minutes of November 20, 2014, and to declare that the closed session audiotapes of May 2013 be destroyed; seconded by Mr. Weissglass. A voice vote resulted motion carried. Ms. Patchak-Layman objected to the destruction of the closed session audiotapes.

**Levy** Mr. Phelan moved to adopt the 2014 Tax Levy, as presented; seconded by Dr. Gevinson.

Last year the Board of Education voted to drop the 2012 levy by \$10 million. This year, Finance Advisory Committee's Option 5, called for another \$10 million reduction from the 2012 rate, which would result in \$22 million fewer tax dollars received over the course of 10 years and at the end of the 10 years, the fund balance would be \$77 million. Given what has happened in the last year and the CBA, the end-of-year audit, and pensions, it appears the model is working and the District is on track as to what was anticipated. The long term impact of this year's levy, for a second year plus \$250,000 is on track with FAC's recommendation. What allows the District to do this is a provision in the Tax Code that allows one to reduce the levy and then return to the highest levy in the last 2 years.

Mr. Weissglass moved to amend the motion and for the Board of Education to adopt a 2014 tax levy in the amount of \$54,700,807; seconded by Mr. Cofsky.

Note: the FAC designated \$20 million for capital or other major one-time expenditures. At that time, \$20 million was the medium amount of the then existing estimate for a long-course pool. FAC had discussed other capital investments and non-capital investments as well, i.e., the Strategic Plan, etc.

While the Board of Education could approve the full amount this year, it would be able to go down \$10 million next year, albeit complicated. When the District goes back to the 2012 Levy rate, tax bills will fluctuate.

Last year Dr. Gevinson voted against the reduction in order to consider other educational expenses and he still had concerns as the ideas from the Strategic Plan Implementation Teams will need resources. He also noted that the Read 180 Program had been highly successful. It is a program that has six sections for 54 transitional level students with double periods. These sections each have two teachers and an aide (4.8 FTE) and the school pays approximately \$20,000 for the use of the program. The total cost is approximately \$600,000. College Level English Prep Classes with students whose abilities range in reading levels from 35% to 85%, including 26 students with IEPs or more students that if screened could be diagnosed. This is a difficult situation for teachers. The CP or College Level Program is in crisis. If the District chose to implement something like the Read 180 program for students in these classes, they might be successful enough to move up to the CP level. It could be very expensive. He contrasted that with building an expensive pool versus advocating for a basic program. He wanted to address the issues of educational quality and equity at the District.

Mr. Cofsky supported the amendment to the motion because he supported the FAC's recommendation to get the fund balance to 100% or less in 2 to 4 years. The original levy did not do that. The Board of Education needs to recognize uncertainty in a number of areas. The \$20 million coincided with an earlier pool estimate but it earmarked these funds whether building a pool or not. He also echoed comments about advocacy for the students. One of the positives is that of stabilizing long-term expenses. It is about balancing and managing the resources. In addition to this, there is a continuation of the debt service abatement. It is part of the Levy discussion and he wanted to recognize that this includes another \$2.5 million in taxes is not being imposed.

Dr. Moore supported the amendment after being on the Finance Advisory Committee, as well as stabilization. She concurred with Dr. Gevinson with the needs for mid-level courses and for them to reflect what college prep means. Some of the research says it is not a money issue, it is an issue that will require a paradigm and culture shift, i.e., respect, accountability, walking the walk, and recognizing that every class is not reflecting the same thing. While a valuable discussion, some schools are working with budgets far smaller than that of OPRFHS. She supported the amendment and agreed with the things that need to be done and that they were not mutually exclusive.

Ms. Patchak-Layman felt the Levy should be \$34 million lower in order to speed up the reduction of the fund balance to 100% within a 2 to 4 year time period. When FAC looked at the pool option, it did not imagine the cost would be between \$35 and \$45 million. The pool discussions have included going for a referendum. She did not believe a referendum would pass because of the excessive fund balance. The Board of Education should make sure the money goes back to the community. Then when the conversation comes forward, the Board of Education can say it did its due diligence and it is not holding an excessive fund balance. She would not support the amendment.

Dr. Lee too had not supported the \$10 million decrease in the levy because of the reasons Dr. Gevinson outlined, as well as things not yet considered. He would vote for the amendment primarily because it will lower the fund balance, but not in what should be done. He believed the Board of Education still had the option of maintaining a higher tax level, if needed. Next year, he will tell the Board of Education from the podium that it is time to go up to the 2012 taxing level in order to preserve the District's ability to do that.

Mr. Phelan supported the amended motion because of the issue of balance and trust. A couple of years ago, the Board of Education found itself having a significant fund balance and many of them sensed that it

create an imbalance in the community, a distrust of the District, and problems. From his point of view, getting to the right balance was not an easy thing to do. He graduated from OPRFHS 30 years ago and he wanted his grandchildren to graduate from it as well. This was about finding a way to chart a course of long-term health. While agreeing with Dr. Gevinson, it was not a matter of letting go of the money, but a matter of the District should not have had it in the first place. Not following the advice of the FAC, even if it were to take a large give back right away, would be reckless.

Mr. Phelan moved to adopt a 2014 tax levy in the amount of \$54,700,807; seconded by Dr. Gevinson. A roll call vote resulted in six ayes and one nay. Motion carried. Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay.

**Resolution of Abatement:**

Mr. Phelan moved to approve the Resolution abating the working cash fund of Consolidated High School District Number 200, Cook County, Illinois, and abating the taxes heretofore levied for the year 2014 to pay debt service on General Obligation Limited Tax School Bonds, Series 2005, and General Obligation Limited Tax School Bonds, series 2009, of said School District; seconded by Dr. Moore.

FAC had recommended this action. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

**Change in January 2015 Regular Meeting Date**

Mr. Phelan moved to change the regular Board of Education meeting date from January 22 to January 29, 2015; seconded by Dr. Moore. A voice resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

The reason for this action was that Dr. Isoye would be participating in the professional development that the Board of Education had approved previously.

**Calendars For 2015-16 and 2016-17**

Mr. Phelan moved to approve the 2015-2016 proposed calendar and accept the 2016-17 draft calendar, as presented; seconded by Dr. Moore. Discussion ensued. This is the external calendar that will be submitted to the state. The internal calendar committee will begin meeting mid-March and will consider the commencement date.

Mr. Weissglass urged that a decision be made as early as possible about commencement as people will need to know that information. He also did not support the 2015-16 calendar because school starts 3 weeks before Labor Day. He suggested further discussion with the chair of the calendar committee. Ms. Patchak-Layman concurred, noting that 2 weeks would be the outer limit. A suggestion was made to expand professional development into a whole week going into second semester so there is not an imbalance.

A roll call vote resulted in 5 ayes and 2 nays. Motion carried. Mr. Weissglass and Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay.

**Buildings and  
Grounds  
Memorandum of  
Understanding**

Mr. Phelan moved to approve the Buildings and Grounds Letter of Agreement (Tier II Wage Rates); seconded by Dr. Lee. A roll call vote resulted in 5 ayes and two nays. Motion carried. Mr. Cofsky and Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay.

Ms. Patchak-Layman felt that wages and salaries are activities that are bargained and they should not come forward in MOU.

**Safety & Security  
Team Contract**

Mr. Phelan moved that the Board of Education endorse, through its ratification vote, the Tentative Agreement, as presented by the administrative bargaining team; seconded by Dr. Lee: A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

**Student Discipline  
Debrief**

Dr. Isoye reported that the PEG Committee had requested that the full Board of Education debrief the Student Discipline Retreat held on December 6 at the Oak Park Public Library and potential next steps. Comments included:

- 1) Clear ideas bubbled from the top;
- 2) Momentum should not be lost;
- 3) Excellent meeting, nice exchange, and excellent first step. The Strategic Plan Implementation Teams should be informed of the report.
- 4) Important discussion if it goes beyond discussion. The discussion happened in the wake of some Parent Teacher Advisory Committee recommendations, yet they did not emerge in the discussion.
- 5) Was the discussion about a Code of Conduct rather than a Code of Respect? Why are the rules and regulations not more welcoming and in align with the culture the Board of Education is trying to create.
- 6) Many Strategic Plan discussions dovetailed with many of the ideas presented. As the Board of Education determines how to operationally implement the ideas, i.e., a forum with implementation teams that want to address them or, perhaps, Board of Education committees could address them.
- 7) How can the action steps be discerned? Should they be tied to the Strategic Plan? How are people being welcomed at the building?
- 8) School climate philosophy and a statement about creating a healthy, safe school environment.
- 9) Support the emerging concepts already happening, i.e., Peace Circles, mentoring, teacher mentoring/observations, etc.

- 10) Rethink how data is used and make it actionable on the issues being discussed. More conversations is necessary.
- 11) Revisit consequences for tardies and failure-to-serve detentions.
- 12) Fundamental issue is to continually delve into racial dynamics with an open mind.
- 13) Involve some student leader team, i.e., student leader advisory, as discussed.

Discussion ensued about having a student led retreat to talk about school climate, respect and the understanding of the rules and expectations. Consultants have local resources to help with a student lead discussion.

Discussion ensued about having the principal and/or other administrators greeting students as they entered school in the morning, as opposed to just security guards. Doing so would change the face of the school. It is about messaging, relationship building.

In terms of PTAC, the Code of Conduct was changed last year so that students would not be dropped from a class of unexcused absences as opposed to being assigned to a study hall. Did that change make a difference in the teachers' relationships with students?

Dr. Lee noted that if detentions were not changing behavior for a major portion of the student body, then they did not work. What could be used instead of detentions? Mr. Phelan stressed that if change were to occur it would be because of the willingness of those involved to work together. He hoped the Board of Education had been open and people would feel comfortable sharing their ideas. How will a student lead retreat advance the District? Will a student lead retreat be an expansion of the focus group discussions that happened with facilitators and include more students? Dr. Moore trusted the students to identify how to do this; it could be an assembly, town hall meeting, etc.

Dr. Isoye too wanted clarification as to what he heard from the Board of Education versus just one person. The Board of Education must say it wants this type of event. He too felt more conversation with the resources about their plans was need to take place. He too was concerned as the original want was to discuss the Code of Conduct, but he did not hear that. He heard from the retreat itself that this a direction that may be desirous of the Board of Education's direction, so he would need to see the resources available and individually talk with Board of Education members about what they are thinking, framing and then get direction. Mr. Phelan, acknowledging that there was a consensus that people want student voices heard, noted that the depth of exploring what that looked like had not occurred and he wanted an offline conversation about what he envisioned. Dr. Isoye reiterated speaking to the Board of Education

members individually to see if they were aligned or giving this to the implementation teams. Dr. Gevinson favored putting together this forum, which would be facilitated effectively by outside resources, and having Strategic Plan people present so that they could digest and process what will come through this event and incorporate it into their work. Dr. Moore hoped that the student voice would not be framed in such a way that the student leadership part would be lost. Mentors, teachers, and students can identify ways to gather students together to talk openly and honestly. She hoped it would occur before April. Dr. Isoye asked for more direction other than student voice. Dr. Moore trusted the student body to speak to more direction for an event. Examples of student leadership occur across the country and the District has the ability to tap into those resources and to have conversations and to look at some other models. The Board of Education does not have to decide what it will look like as the students will make the decision as to how to make this happen if they are given the space and guidelines. Dr. Moore will share links to resources. The student voice is to address school climate, Strategic Plan community, respect; it is not a deadline to change the Code of Conduct.

Dr. Lee believed the Code of Conduct was an important part of the overall problem. It is highly specific set of offenses for which there are a highly specific set of punishments and that defines how things are handled. He suggested devoting 10 minutes of time at each Board of Education meeting to discuss areas the Board of Education would like to address. He was comfortable with Dr. Isoye's synthesizing of information from the individual Board of Education members.

Ms. Patchak-Layman did not believe that everything should go to an Implementation Team. The Board of Education should be responsible for having policies that show its intent and understanding of where the Board of Education wants to go with discipline and education, making sure that students are having success at school, and that its philosophy and discipline is being carried out correctly.

### **Swimming Pool**

Mr. Weissglass reviewed the PowerPoint presentation in the packet relative to the status of the pool committee. The Committee originally considered the following sites and narrowed it down to 2: the garage and baseball field sites. He then presented the challenges to each of the sites. With regard to the garage site it was the loss of parking for employees and events, the impact on neighborhoods, and the design and cost to include parking. With regard to the baseball field, it was about finding appropriate space for any sport (baseball, softball or tennis), the impact on others to the site to be used, the loss of connection to the school, and travel time and logistics. To offset the loss of parking, exploration of off-campus parking, and off-campus facility and partner (Park District and Triton) was explored. Tennis, perhaps, would be the most movable and

conversations were occurring with Triton about tennis and having a state of the art facility that would meet the needs of the District.

Working with conceptual drawings, and square footage estimates, and contingencies and escalators were included which have been confirmed by Henry Bros. The cost estimates of the garage site for a long-course pool (50 meters by 25 yards) were presented:

# of Spots	With Connecting Corridor	Free Standing
118	\$48.8M	\$47.6M
158	\$54.6M	\$53.4M
191	\$64.4M	\$63.2M
0	\$37.5	\$36.3M

The cost estimates of the baseball field site were \$35.5 million with connecting corridor or \$34.3 million for a free-standing building, but that did not include moving any sport offsite.

The space where the current pools exist could be used to repurpose for strategic plan, enrollment, PE, and/or athletic needs. The cost of potential repurposing is \$5.1 million per pool and \$6.5 million if an additional second floor over east pool and weight room is included. The alternative would be the close the pool space. The cost to abandon the pools would be between \$50,000 to \$75,000 to drain them, shore them up, etc. While the cost needs to be considered, the District would have 1 to 2 years to develop a plan.

A recommendation will be made January 13 to the Board of Education at a special meeting.

Discussion ensued about financing and whether the District should use a portion from the fund balance, go for a referendum or use DSEB. Using DSEB would mean that the District would not have any monies available to it should something happen. Legal counsel has said that the District would not have to go for a referendum if the new building were connected to the old building. If the District went for a referendum, it would only have 3 to 3.5 months to provide the community with a clear and accurate message about the referendum. The next time the Board of Education could go for a referendum would be next year. Some members felt that the public should be asked and others wanted to consider that the Board of Education members were elected to make decisions and that it decided not to collect \$22 million in taxes over 10 years.

Questions were raised as to how much time was devoted to pool time in a swimming class. It was noted that the PE wanted 30 minutes in the pool.

The Pool Site Committee had not considered whether the DSEB would be sold to the March date if the District were ready to build in March. It would be a question that would have to come to the Board of Education.

Dr. Gevinson favored going for a referendum, but if it failed, he suggested looking at a smaller pool and thus tennis might be able to stay on campus. It was noted that the average per square foot costs were used from across the country.

Follow up had occurred with the Park District of Oak Park about collaborating with it, and the District felt there were not enough opportunities because 1) it would need a gymnasium, 2) it would need a warm body pool, and 3) its bonding capacity was at its maximum. Water temperature is a big issue.

**History Division  
Update**

Mr. Prale reported that the History Division shared information about the use of graphic novels in the World History program and individual work.

Dr. Gevinson had 3 concerns: 1) one of the proudest examples of student work in History was *Interpretations*, which is no longer being published. He felt it should be reconceived; 2) teachers should be hired from the outside to replace Dr. Steve Goldberg and Jessica Young, who will be retiring, so that their programs can continue; 3) curricular changes need to be considered by the entire division: he encouraged full deliberation and participation on the decision being made. He did not believe in wholesale changes.

**Adjournment**

At 11:24 p.m., on December 18, 2014, Mr. Phelan moved to adjourn the Board of Education meeting; seconded by Dr. Moore. A voice vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

John Phelan  
President

Dr. Jackie Moore  
Secretary

Submitted by Gail Kalmerton  
Clerk of the Board