

August 21, 2008

A special meeting of the Board of Education of the Oak Park and River Forest High School was held on Thursday, August 21, 2008, in the Board Room of the high school.

**Call to Order** President Conway called the meeting to order at 10:50 a.m. A roll call indicated the following members were present: Jacques A. Conway, Valerie J. Fisher (departed at 11:20 a.m.), Dr. Ralph H. Lee, Sharon Patchak-Layman, and John P. Rigas (departed at 11:10 a.m.). Also present were Dr. Attila J. Weninger, Superintendent, Jason Edgecombe, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources; Nathaniel L. Rouse, Principal; Cheryl L. Witham, Chief Financial Officer; Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/ Clerk of the Board of Education.

**Visitors** Kay Foran, Communications/Community Relations Coordinator

**Visitor Comments** None

**Personnel Recommendations** Ms. Fisher moved to approve the personnel recommendations as presented (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting); seconded by Mr. Rigas. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried

**Appointment To Citizens' Council** Mr. Rigas moved to appoint Dr. Barry S. Greenwald to a 2-year appointment to Citizens' Council beginning September 2008; seconded Ms. Fisher. A roll call vote resulted in four yeas and one nay. Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay.

**Approval of Vendor Distribution List** Mr. Rigas moved to approve the Vendor Distribution List dated August 21, 2008, as presented (attached to and made a part of the minutes of the meeting); seconded by Ms. Fisher. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Ms. Witham reported that the work done by John Kasadra had been performed in the 2007-08 school year, but had not been paid during that timeframe. It will be accrued back to the 2007-08 school year.

Ms. Witham also noted that the activity checks on pages one and two of the Distribution List came from a separate student activities account and their only revenue is generated by these clubs and activities.

**Approval of Resolution to Display the 2008-09 Tentative Budget**

Mr. Rigas moved to approve the resolution to place the Tentative Budget for the 2008-09 school year on display for thirty (30) days; (attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting); seconded by Dr. Lee. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

**Dates for Continued Discussions on Race and Student Achievement**

It was the consensus of the majority of the Board of Education members to continue this discussion at its August 28, 2008 meeting.

**Closed Session**

Ms. Fisher moved to go into closed session at 10:52 a.m. on Thursday, August 21, 2008, 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); Litigation, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the particular District has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the District finds that an action is probable or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recorded and entered into the closed meeting minutes. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11); seconded by Dr. Lee. A roll call vote resulted in four ayes. Motion carried. Mr. Rigas was absent for this vote.

The Board of Education resumed its open session 11:06 a.m.

**Discussion of District Goals**

Dr. Weninger had presented the Board of Education with a recap of the discussion of the goals at the meeting on Tuesday. The agreed upon goals were as follows:

**1. Student Achievement**

- a. developing a long term plan to raise student achievement, which would include
  - i. implementation and evaluation of the six (6) Fall 2008 initiatives approved by the Board in February 2008; and
  - ii. updating the proposals submitted to the Board in October 2007;
- b. incorporating Board discussions on race and student achievement; and

- c. incorporating student participation in our co-curricular program

## **2. Quantitative Mass Achievement Measures**

- a. The District will
  - i. describe, as precisely as possible, what the District means by “student academic achievement;”
  - ii. describe, as precisely as possible, what the District means by “racial academic achievement gap;”
  - iii. define quantitative mass indicators of both i. and ii.;
  - iv. describe the specific limitations of these indicators regarding the validity of their use; and
  - v. describe the specific formal processes by which we will improve both the definitions and the use of those definitions over time.

## **3. Recruitment and Employment Program with Emphasis on Minority Hires and Retention of Employees**

## **4. Develop and Implement a “Green” School Initiative**

The Board of Education had directed the Superintendent to develop goal statements for the Thursday, August 21 Special Board Meeting. They are as follows:

### **Goal 1. Student Achievement**

The District will develop a multi-year plan to raise student academic achievement for all students, with special emphasis/focus on underachieving African American students, utilizing X indices of achievement; developing and implementing effective instructional strategies by teachers through professional development; incorporating the Board of Education-approved six (6) Fall 2008 initiatives and the October 2007 proposals; increasing and tracking student co-curricular participation; and conducting separate Board, Administration, and Faculty professional development strands on race and student achievement.

### **Goal 2. Quantitative Mass Achievement Measures**

The District will describe, as precisely as possible, what it means by “student academic achievement” and “racial academic achievement gap;” define quantitative mass indicators of student academic achievement and the racial academic achievement gap; describe the specific limitations of the quantitative mass indicators regarding the validity of their use; and describe the specific formal processes by which it will use and improve these definitions over time.

**Goal 3. Recruitment and Retention of Minority Administrative and Certified Staff**

- A. The District will complete the development and implementation of a formal program for the recruitment of Administrators and Faculty with an emphasis on the recruitment of minority candidates. With its implementation, the District will establish an annual goal of employing minority candidates as 20% of all Administrators and Faculty employees.
- B. The District will develop and implement a plan for the retention of minority Administrators and Faculty.

**“Goal 4. Green School Initiative**

“The District will develop and begin to implement a comprehensive “Green School” plan encompassing the following areas: indoor cleaning chemicals and supplies; Food Service; outdoor grounds chemicals and supplies; Integrated Pest Management (IPM); paper recycling; paper consumption; and energy.

“Green school indicators, put in reasonable targets in each of those areas and some we are already doing them. More difficult one will be the paper consumption and be able to do fairly well. The recruitment and retention is straightforward. Target goal annually of 20% minority, develop plan for retention of those faculty members. That includes completing a formal program.

“These conversations will continue at the Instruction Committee meetings.”

Regarding student achievement, Dr. Weninger asked the Board of Education how many and which indices it wanted to see. He hoped to have a final list compiled by the Thursday, August 28, 2008 Board of Education meeting. With the Board of Education’s permission, Dr. Weninger will provide a timeline for reporting on whichever indices were chosen at the Thursday, August 28, Board of Education meeting.

It was also the consensus of the Board of Education to have a discussion on the goals for the 2007-08 school year at the regular August Board of Education meeting.

Discussion ensued about the goal of having 20 percent minorities. Ms. Sharon Patchak-Layman felt that goal must be based on what is in place on the overall staffing. It should be in relationship to the current staff. Thus, increasing minority staff by 20 per cent, increases the overall percentage of minority hires so that eventually it would reflect the student population. She did not know if that had been discussed in that way. Mr. Edgecombe

assumed the annual goal of hiring 20 percent minorities would eventually get the District to the point where the teachers would mirror the student population but that it will still take a while to get a teaching staff that is 40 percent minority which is what the student population is.

**Adjournment**

At 11:20 a.m. on Thursday, August 21, 2008, the meeting adjourned due to a lack of a quorum.

Jacques A. Conway  
President

Dr. Ralph H. Lee  
Secretary