

November 6, 2012

A special meeting of the Board of Education of the Oak Park and River Forest High School was held on Tuesday, November 6, 2012 in the Board Room of the high school.

- Call to Order** President Protempore and Vice President Phelan called the meeting to order at 6:55 p.m. A roll call indicated the following members were present: Terry Finnegan (arrived at telephonically at 7:30 p.m. and in person at 8:00 p.m.), Valerie J. Fisher; Dr. Ralph H. Lee; Amy McCormack, Sharon Patchak-Layman, and John Phelan. Also in attendance were Dr. Steven T. Isoye, Superintendent; Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Dr. Tina Halliman, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Support Services; Nathaniel L. Rouse, Principal; Lauren M. Smith, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources; Michael C. Carioscio, Chief Information Officer Karin Sullivan, Communications and Community Relations Coordinator; Cheryl L. Witham, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations and Treasurer; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.
- Visitors** Mary Jo Haley, League of Women Voters and Caroline Roselli, Attorney.
- Check Distribution List** Mr. Phelan moved to approve the Check Distribution List dated November 6, 2012, as presented; seconded by Dr. Lee. A roll call vote resulted in five ayes. Mr. Finnegan was absent from this vote. Motion carried.
- Health & Dental Insurance** Mr. Phelan moved to approve the renewal of health, dental, and life insurance, as; presented; seconded by Dr. Lee. A roll call vote resulted in five ayes. Motion carried. Mr. Finnegan was absent from this vote.
- Sunbelt Staffing** Mr. Phelan moved to approve the contract for Sunbelt staffing as presented; seconded by Dr. Lee. A roll call vote resulted in five ayes. Motion carried. Mr. Finnegan was absent from this vote.
- Closed Session** At 6:59 p.m. on Tuesday, November 6, 2012, Dr. Lee moved to enter closed session for the purpose of 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 and Student disciplinary cases 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(10); seconded by Ms. McCormack. A roll call vote resulted in five ayes. Motion carried. Mr. Finnegan was absent from this vote.
- At 7:21 p.m. on Tuesday, November 6, 2012, the Board of Education recessed the closed session. Open session resumed at 7:41 p.m.
- Student Discipline** Mr. Phelan moved to withdraw Student RES 11-06-12-3 due to non-residency for the 2012-13 school year; seconded by Ms. Fisher. A roll call vote resulted in four ayes and one nay. Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay. Mr. Finnegan abstained. Motion carried.

Mr. Phelan moved to charge Student RES 11-06-12-3, due 110% of the per capita tuition rate of \$20,233.71; seconded by Ms. Fisher. A roll call vote resulted in 3 ayes and 2 nays and 1 abstain. Ms. McCormack and Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay. Mr. Finnegan abstained. Motion failed.

Change of Agenda

Mr. Phelan moved to combine VIII and IX on the agenda; seconded by Ms. Fisher. A voice vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Superintendent Contract

Mr. Phelan moved to approve the Superintendent Contract for the term of 2013-18; seconded by Ms. Fisher. Discussion ensued.

Ms. Patchak-Layman asked Dr. Isoye 1) why he wanted to continue the current position, 2) what did he want to bring to the organization over the next five years, and 3) how would the students benefit from his leadership during this time. Dr. Isoye thought OPRFHS to be a “fantastic place.” He felt fortunate to be part of a community that supported so many opportunities for families, and a community where both the parents and community members wanted to be involved with the school. Faculty, staff, and administrators are committed to doing their best for the students.

The work that is being accomplished in this school is occurring because everyone wants to see the future success of students. The District is calling the question to the stakeholders, which includes the Board of Education, the administrators, the faculty, the staff, and the parents, as to what they believe schools should look like in the future. Future discussions will be interesting; they will determine how bold the community, parents, students, and staff might be in determining how bold the District might be. He foresaw great steps being taken. His charge will be to help align the goals and the actions, turn them into reality test whether their ideas are tangible. Embarking on this commitment means not knowing what this commitment will look like. It is difficult to say what commitments the community will make. The next five years are very important. It will be important for the Board of Education to revisit constantly the Strategic Plan. Realizing that issues always arise, his job will be to advise the Board, under very rare circumstances. The fact that the Board of Education believes in this work is important for this entire school community.

What does this mean for students? The District has used the data to learn how to support students struggling in reading and in math. Now the District must determine why students do well. The District is expanding the blending of learning and technology in the classroom. Discussions will occur as to what classrooms will look like in the future, exploring one-to-one computing, bringing your own device (BYOD), how it would affect teaching, and what classrooms would look like. If they would look different, what does that mean in terms of long term facility planning? Conversations are occurring about the budget and that is about longevity, having an investment in time to do things, so that the school is not on a continuous cycle of looking at what might have to be cut, and go back to the community to ask for more money.

Dr. Isoye saw this as being a unique period. Everything is pointing to substantial changes if the stakeholders in the community want to do so about the way things are accomplished. The District is not doing anything wrong, but societies are different, opportunities are different. In this global society, things are very different in terms of accessing information and communication around the world. A place of learning is where everyone is learning,

everyone has to evolve, and everyone has to think of ways to engage students and work with students. Perhaps this is not being envisioned by everyone. Part of the District's work is to take some risks and to have fun with the students.

Dr. Isoye excitedly awaited the vote. He was honored that the Board of Education was calling the motion and he looked forward to continuing the next five years. It felt that while it was a great time to be in the District, it was not easy. He was proud of his great team, the faculty, parents, and the students.

Mr. Phelan noted that it was his experience that smart people speak well and really smart people listen well. Dr. Isoye's comments were evidence to Mr. Phelan that he was a really smart person. Reflecting on Dr. Isoye's listening and responding to those questions, Mr. Phelan noted that Dr. Isoye is always finding new ways to listen, e.g., the strategic plan, the administrative team, things being done throughout the halls, events, etc. Mr. Phelan had tremendous confidence in Dr. Isoye's ability to lead OPRFHS for the next five years. Mr. Phelan noted that the administrative team felt the same. Mr. Phelan liked the feeling in the community because Dr. Isoye had laid much of the groundwork to allow the strategic plan to succeed in a quiet and thoughtful way.

Ms. Fisher felt that Dr. Isoye was doing a wonderful job in providing leadership to the District at a time when so many things were occurring and changing, i.e., spearheading the strategic plan, which has not been done since the mid 1990's, much outreach, much time spent in meetings, etc. She saw his relish for it. To her it was clear that he wanted input from the community. All of the people involved with the Strategic Plan were giving big amounts of their time to participate and that is a microcosm of Dr. Isoye's approach to the District. She saw this as a time of change and making progress.

Mr. Finnegan concurred with the comments and supported the continued leadership.

Ms. Patchak-Layman had originally requested that this be two votes, one for approving employment and the other for approving the contract. While she supported Dr. Isoye's continued work at the District, she was unhappy with the contract. She supported Dr. Isoye continuing in the district, but she was disappointed that the goals included in the contract did not layout a destination. She wanted SMART goals reflecting the school's direction and student growth. The number one question is the disparity in achievement between minority and white students. She wanted a numerical goal that would say that within five years, the District would reduce this disparity, the Board of Education is serious, the superintendent is serious, and the District will move forward. To put things in a contract that it is being worked on has a nebulous feel to it. Having an indicator that says a report will be provided is inadequate. More action was needed. The District has had the same goal for many years with other superintendents and the District has not moved forward in the way the community and the students deserve. The difficulty is with the goals in the contract. It was suggested that she put forward an alternative contract to be voted on in this meeting. She knew the other Board of Education members were happy with this contract but she was not. She was not happy three years ago because of some of the benefit provisions in the contract or the goals. If the Board of Education wants everyone to have SMART goals, then it should start with the superintendent. The

contract should state this is where the District should be in five years and this is how it will get there. She wanted the goal to say that the District is going to minimize the discrepancy and disparities between white and minorities. She was sorry the Board of Education had put the questions together because she did not want there to be any question in the communities' minds that she believed Dr. Isoye could do the job, but both he and the Board of Education need to have SMART goals. Lawyers have advised that if SMART goals are incorporated in the contract and the Superintendent cannot fulfill the obligation by 1 or 2 percent, the Board of Education could not rehire him. If the goal were missed by 1% or 2%, she would be very happy. She wanted to see a 50% reduction in the disparity between white and minority students within 5 years. Whether it is part of the strategic plan or not, she felt it should be the Board of Education's personal goal and part of the superintendent's contract.

Ms. McCormack stated that while what Ms. Patchak-Layman said is correct in terms of the direction of the high school, the negotiated contract is fair and it requires much of the Superintendent. This is a difficult job and the Superintendent has difficult parameters to meet. She felt fortunate that Dr. Isoye was willing to stay for another five years and she hoped the community felt the same. She would be proud to leave the Board of Education knowing that she had approved a contract like this and that Dr. Isoye would be leading the District in the future.

Dr. Lee agreed with the spirit of Ms. Patchak-Layman's statement. Whether the goal she mentioned was a five-year goal or a one-year goal, the District is not in a position to do either at this point because the District has set a structure where the goals are one year at a time and it cannot do what she suggested within one year. It is reasonable for a five-year goal, but there is not a framework for a five-year goal. He was prepared between now and next year to work with the Board of Education to develop a means for having SMART goals that can be go beyond one year. One year is too short a time to deal with something that important. He would vote for the employment and the contract as it written now. If Ms. Patchak-Layman brings up this point in a year and there had been no changes, he would not just go along with it. He would vote for the contract and he intended to work in achieving more of what Ms. Patchak-Layman described next year.

Ms. Fisher noted that Dr. Lee's position was fair. The Superintendent has indicated and has shown by his past actions over the past several years that he is more than happy to work with the Board of Education, to be flexible, and to implement ideas that the Board of Education brings forward. She did not see where that would not continue to happen. Contracts are a negotiated structure under which the Board of Education agrees and the Superintendent agrees to be employed by the District. Many hours were spent negotiating it. She too felt this was a fair contract. While both sides may have wanted to see different provisions, the nature of a contract is to give and take. Approval of the contract in this case indicates approval of the Superintendent. It is not possible to indicate approval of the superintendent if a person does not support the contract. The contract allows the District an opportunity to join together. She was happy to approve the contract and she looked forward to working with Dr. Isoye in the future.

A motion was made to call the question to stop the debate. A voice vote resulted in motion carried.

A roll call vote on the motion to approve the contracted resulted in five ayes and one nay. Ms. Patchak-Layman voted nay. Motion carried.

Adjournment

At 8:15 p.m. on Tuesday, November 6, 2012, Ms. McCormack moved to adjourn this Special Board Meeting; seconded by Ms. Fisher. A voice vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Amy McCormack
Secretary

By Gail Kalmerton
Clerk of the Board