

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

Culture, Climate and Behavior Committee
May 3, 2018

A Culture, Climate and Behavior Committee (CCB) meeting was held on May 3, 2018. Chair Cassell called the meeting to order at 6:39 p.m. in the Board Room. Committee members present were: Jennifer Cassell, Greg Johnson, Naomi Hildner, Dr. Jackie Moore, Ralph Martire, Dr. Pruitt-Adams, Ryan Moore, Sara Dixon Spivy, Aliyah Young, Nathaniel Rouse, Laura Hardwicke, Wendy Daniels, Jonathan Weintraub, David Walksler, and Lee Wade. Also present was Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

Visitors: Lincoln Chandler, educational consultant; John Duffy, Karin Grimes, community members; and Holly Scott, student.

Public Comments

John Duffy noted that the central goal of the Strategic Plan was equity and referred to page 11 of the plan. It had a purposeful set of guidelines to reach racial equity. The plan pledges to create a budget and to spend substantial funds to fund the actions and programs that are needed to reach racial equity. He wanted to remind the Board of Education of that fact. IMAGINE is based on evidence and that same kind of evidence is being done by the hiring group. The evidence that says Restorative Justice, positive behavior and the SEL programs, will help students and end the disparities.

Minutes

Ms. Daniels moved to approve the minutes of the April 19 CCB meeting; seconded by Ms. Young. A voice vote resulted in motion carried.

The Committee continued its discussion of the recommendations, starting with the Community Voice and Connections Recommendations. Ms. Cassell asked the committee to limit the amount of time spent on each action step to 3 minutes.

Community Voice

Recommendation 1: Implement policies and practices to increase access for the community and to improve the community's exposure to OPRF programming.

Action Step 1. *Host town hall meetings on and off campus at least two times annually to discuss matters of importance (as determined by the Superintendent or Board of Education).* The committee was open to hosting town halls. Strategic Plan Goal 2 will be added to the alignment section.

Action Step 2. *Record meetings of importance (as determined by the Superintendent or Board of Education) and post the videos on OPRF's website.* The District already audio records its Board meetings and felt that it would be too restrictive if it were required to videotape meetings.

Student and Family Voice

Recommendation 1: Promote student participation in extracurricular activities by improving visibility and increasing the capacity of student activities to allow for greater participation.

Action Step 1: *Create a planning committee (comprised of the Student Activities Director, students, and club sponsor representatives) to design a festive, inclusive Student Activity Fair similar to those on college campuses. Student groups will be showcased through performances and exhibits. Interested students will be able to talk to group members.* The recommendation was to involve a diverse group of students on the planning committee. The expectation is that this will be like those on college campuses. Perhaps it could be held outdoors and/or open the west gym, have music, etc., and even on multiple days.

The administration would determine the priorities.

Action Step 2 -*Review current student clubs and activities, noting any overlap in scope of the groups, with the goal of encouraging collaboration of clubs with similar missions and decreasing student and sponsor fatigue.* The idea was to foster more collaboration between student groups, as some groups have similar missions and the same students attend all of those groups. It was also suggested to align some of the groups to have more diversity, both gender and race, perspective.

Action Step 3: *Create a diverse student advisory board that reports to the administration and Board of Education annually on improving student involvement.*

Action Step 4: *Showcase OPRF students on campus television monitors to make them more visible to the entire student body (e.g. show videos of choral performances, debate, plays, spoken word).* The intention was to put monitors in the north and south cafeterias.

Recommendation 2:

Action Step 1: *In conjunction with Imagine OPRF, redesign Welcome Center to create a more welcoming experience for students and visitors.* The idea of redesigning the welcome center to be more welcoming had been expressed to IMAGINE. The idea was to create a space to sit down, read materials, etc. A concern was raised about the removing the trap doors in order to keep visitors in a space until they have been checked in by security personnel. From a safety and support perspective, removing the doors would be problematic.

Action Step 2: *Have building leadership greet students during morning arrival at the three entrances.* The intent was to assign “greeters” in the morning to building and district leadership (the principal and could rotate) rather than leaving this solely to SST personnel. It could change the face of who is present in the morning. The “greeters” could also include Board members, teachers, etc., but it should be consistently the building leadership.

Action Step 3: *Require annual trainings on customer service and restorative practices for safety and security staff to ensure a safe and welcoming environment throughout the building.* Discussion ensued about customer service and restorative practices for SST staff. One person felt that all staff should have

this training so that there is consistency and continuity in the building. The thought was that SST should be the first group to have this training. Institute Day may be the time to have staff participate.

Recommendation 3: Increase opportunities for family-centered activities and programming.

Action Step 1: Review, and revise as needed, logistics for Family Visitation Day to provide earlier notice of the event and to assess whether having Visitation Day during the spring semester would provide more families with the opportunity to participate. Discussion ensued about the Family Visitation Day.

Mr. Rouse suggested having one day in the fall (juniors and seniors) and one in the spring (freshmen and sophomores), but if it were scheduled for only 1 day, it would be better to have it in the spring, because families would have a longer period to schedule their days off of work. The faculty was concerned about the disruption of 2 days in the learning environment. One member commented that the parent visitation day previously was a day of training and many teachers were absent from their classes. The school should be mindful of this in the future. Mr. Rouse will work with his team on a more appropriate day.

Action Step 2: Cultivate an engagement plan to grow families' access to and awareness of campus facilities and engagement opportunities. (e.g., use of Kettlestrings Café for small groups of cooking classes/demonstrations; family game nights; a "Speaker Series" on issues related to school, family, and adolescent development; community-wide book club). While a comment was made that this might not be needed because families were already engaged in the school, another comment was made that the point of the recommendation was to provide opportunities for families who are not engaged, such as cooking classes/demonstrations, family game nights, a Speaker Series", etc. The Kettlestrings Cafe would too small to accommodate cooking classes. Perhaps the outreach coordinator could assist. Motivational Mentor had a family game night, and it was a diverse group of over 100 people. The District must be intentional about welcoming the families.

Student Tardiness Recommendations

Action Step 1: Extend review of tardy data collected for periods 2-8, particularly for students with elevated numbers of tardies, and begin a review of excused absences data to identify any racial disparities. Discussion ensued about the word "extend." The areas of review have raised more questions and the use of the word "extend" does not limit any other exploration. A suggestion was also made to include attendance data along with tardies.

Action Step 1 and 2 are getting at the root cause. Action step 2 is talking about the data already presented and a conversation mainly at the faculty staff level. Action Step 1 speaks to reaching out to students for their perspectives. Action Step 1 must be completed first to get to Action Step 2. A suggestion was made to move Action Step 2 to Recommendation 2.

A suggestion was made to add a public report to be presented to the Board of Education with recommendations and the reasons behind the actions.

The District will review the data to figure out the causes by doing a survey, looking at the tardy data and determine what the drivers are and how they interact. That will be reported to the Board of Education.

District 90 found implicit bias was important and made it public when identified.

Discussion ensued about timing and ownership of the recommendations. Dr. Moore noted that the Board of Education would approve the recommendations and determine priorities, but it would not determine the ownership nor the timing of the recommendations, as that is in the superintendent's purview. These recommendations will be presented to the Board of Education at its Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting on May 15, and a request for approval will be made at the regular Board of Education in May. Dr. Pruitt-Adams invited the Committee to attend the COW meeting on May 15. The financial aspects will be discussed at that time.

Dr. Pruitt-Adams stated that the Strategic Plan, survey, dress code, etc., are on the docket next year, but some things like the student fair item would be difficult to do in the fall. Further discussion occurred about timing as Dr. Pruitt-Adams was concerned about how to communicate the outcomes.

Ms. Cassell noted that the committee would be renewed next year and if the current members were interested in continuing or if they had suggestions for new members to please let Ms. Kalmerton know.

Ms. Cassell was thanked for facilitating this committee as well as the other facilitators. The dedication and passion is a testament to getting through this with the timeline. Dr. Chandler was thanked for his association.

Ms. Cassell offered her sincere thanks to everyone as well for the participation.

Adjournment

At 7:59 p.m., Mr. Martire moved to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Weintraub. A voice vote resulted in motion carried.