

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

Culture, Climate and Behavior Committee
November 2, 2017

A Culture, Climate and Behavior Committee (CCB) meeting was held on November 2, 2017. Chair Cassell called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m. in the Board Room. Committee members present were: Jennifer Cassell, Greg Johnson, Dr. Jackie Moore, Sheila Hardin, Naomi Hildner, Aliyah Young, Ryan Moore, Naomi Leach, Dr. Joylynn Pruitt-Adams, Nathaniel Rouse, Sara Dixon Spivy, Laura Hardwicke, Andrea Riles, Wendy Daniels, Lee Williams, Gina Harris, Dave Walksler and Lee Wade. Also present was Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

Visitors: Latonia Brown, OPRFHS staff; Lincoln Chandler, consultant; and Karin Grimes, community member.

Minutes

No Action was taken.

Visitor Comments

Karen Grimes, an Oak Park resident, noted that her concern was about not getting to the reasons for the tardies and attendance problems. She noted that the Board of education had just hired a new SID. It had been the recommendation to rotate the SIDS one day a week to interview students, while the other SIDs would cover his/her responsibilities for the day. She asked if that recommendation from the PTAC Committee had happened.

Introductions and Welcome

Lee Wade, Driver Education teacher, and David Walksler, interim director of campus security, were welcomed as new members to the committee. Everyone introduced themselves to the new members.

Minutes

No action is taken.

Family Outreach

Latonia Jackson, outreach coordinator, while having this position for four years, had worked at the school for 20 years; she loved her families. Her job responsibilities surrounding parent connection had changed from year to year, depending on the student and family needs. She holds 8 to 9 workshops and informational sessions each year. The two in the beginning of the school year is about protocols, responding to questions regarding operating hours of the tutoring center, the mentoring program, social worker services, family access to technology, etc. She coordinates a 100 Black Men night and a college prep night where students are helped to develop resumes, hold mock interviews, and given advice on how to approach college representatives and employers, etc. At other events, she hands out a survey with a list of questions about what parents want to know about. If there is enough interest, she will accommodate that interest. Childcare services and translators are available at all of her events.

In addition, Ms. Jackson does outreach each day and the service changes from day to day. Students are referred to her both internally by SIDS and externally by outside social workers, etc. Ms. Jackson is a resource to families.

Second semester Ms. Jackson receives of the list of seniors who are as yet undecided about their post-secondary plans. She then plans a discovery night with representatives of Triton, OPRFHS counselors, DELT members, Youth Network Interventionists and OPRFHS graduates to help them with college essay writing, etc. Whichever route the students want to take post-high school, the high school assists.

With regard to recordkeeping, the first year she tracked everything but found that it was too tedious and burdensome by the second year. She created an end-of-year report broken down by email tracks, event sign-ins, surveys, etc. Most of her reports are narrative, however.

Ms. Jackson also oversees Gospel Choir and college tours. On Tuesday, she mentors girls in the FREE program. When counselors refer to students to her, she asks the students to join the choir and the FREE program.

Ms. Jackson has observed that once someone helps someone else, they will be sought out if they need help again.

Ms. Jackson was thanked for her presentation and the work she does.

Motivational Mentorship

Ms. Riles introduced the Motivational Mentorship Program to the Committee, as she is the program coordinator. She is also an OPRFHS graduate and is excited to be in this position. Ms. Riles responsibility is to make sure that these students have a voice, a safe space fell that they belong and are connected to the school.

Ms. Riles continued that Motivational Mentorship is not just for students of color as some white students enter the space. However, Motivational Mentorship was built by students of color. It targets academics and SEL issues. These students cannot focus on academics if they cannot handle social-emotional issues.

Students meet during lunch on Fridays, through drop-ins before- and after-school student group sessions, and study hall time. While the conversations are guided, they are transparent and appropriate. They talk about the following:

Mass Incarceration	Social Media
Unfair treatment at OPRFHS	Stereotypes
College/Future Plans - Post/Secondary Education	Insecurities
Violence/Gun Violence in Community	Domestic Abuse
Racism/ Race Relations	Politics
Working Opportunities/Jobs	“Healthy” Relationships
Hair Discrimination	Pettiness/Throwing Shade
“Whiteness”	School
Sexism/Homophobia	Embrace your Race - Pride
Sex/Sexually Transmitted Diseases	Self- Esteem/Respect
Substance Abuse	Problem Solving
School/Grades	How and When to say “No”
Family Matters/Problems	Pop Culture
Stress	Humility
Health/Sickness	Accountability
Religion/Spirituality	Leadership
Bullying	Identity
	Guidance

This is an opportunity for students to have an open dialogue. If the conversation becomes heated, they try to guide it so that everyone can respect each other's conversation. The agreements are:

Treat everyone with dignity	Participate positively in motivational mentorship activities
Offer support to those who need it the most	Honor the space
Use language that does not offend others	Honor agreements of confidentiality
Understand the liberation of learning	Speak words to empower
Listen to and honor multiple perspectives	

The Mantra is "I was put on this Earth to achieve my greatest self, to live out my purpose, and to do it fearlessly." -Steve Maraboli

In addition, guest speakers are invited to share their success stories and experiences. Stories from an NFL captain were found to be empowering. Marlene Dillon, author of *I'm Proud to be Me*, spoke on how to embrace oneself and turn passion into dollars.

Ms. Riles noted that they reference the "danger of silence." If they see something, they should say something. One of their agreements is to honor the space and be allowed to be called out.

Activities have included:

- 1) Twenty girls attended a conference on enlightenment about what it means to be a young lady.
- 2) Social Justice
- 3) November is the Give-Back Club and Motivational Mentorship was accepting donations. It had partnered with OPRF Food Pantry. Ten students at a time will be serving. This is about what it means to serve and volunteer.
- 4) College and career workshops
- 5) Laser Tag as a fun activity in Batavia
- 6) Family night is scheduled for December 5 and open to everyone.
- 7) Huskie Scholar Academy, as Ms. Riles helps to oversee the student part.

As a conclusion, Ms. Riles showed a video where students had quotes about Motivational Mentorship.

At the first meeting, students are asked what they want to talk about. Motivational Mentorship has an open door policy and has conversations about what the students need.

When asked what support could be provided to grow the participation, Ms. Riles stated there was a push for freshman and sophomores to join via a competition for bringing a friend. Upperclassmen are being used to bring more students into this program.

Ms. Hardin spoke from her teacher perspective and said that Ms. Riles was someone she uses as a resource and asks her to meet with students because they not be connecting. She was starting to take notice of freshmen who have said they are not participating. This is a great resource for classroom teachers.

Presently, 50 female and 22 male students have joined the Motivational Mentorship program, including many football players. This program is about empowering students. She also regularly interacts with the Outreach Coordinator and SIDS.

While Ms. Riles was not an expert on Restorative Justice, she was open to learning more. Motivational Mentoring does use peace circles for situations that the students do not want to go to the SID to gain a better understanding of the situation. Ms. Riles was thanked for her report.

At 7:15, Mr. Chandler asked the members to think about using smart goals when they were working in their committees and developing their proposals. A Proposal Guide was distributed. The Committee then broke into its small groups. Ms. Hardwicke had offered a written paper on “Small Group Suggestions,” which she shared, as it contained some specific suggestions based on conversations throughout the years in both P4SS and the River Forest District 90 Equity Committee

Student Tardiness Working Group - Meeting date: 11/02/2017

Present: Jennifer Cassell, Laura Hardwicke, Aaliyah Young, Jonathan Weintraub, Lincoln Chandler (first part of meeting only)

- Discussion ensued around the history of tardy management at OPRF
 - Mr. Weintraub reviewed historical records that showed OPRF joined other schools with more than 2500 students who moved to the Plasco/HERO system
 - When OPRF switched to HERO tardiness decreased from 8000 to 5000 incidents in a semester
 - HERO is just a software system
 - One possible recommendation would be to switch to a system of allowing students to swipe IDs in each classroom similar to what Niles Township has
 - This is a technical fix
 - Problem for students who lose their IDs
 - Over the last year, OPRF made a decision to reset the tardiness triggers that led to student detention. It used to be that tardies were tabulated every semester to trigger student detention. Now every quarter students’ tardy numbers reset to zero.
 - This school year, OPRF no longer issues in-school suspension as a punishment for tardiness.
- Discussion ensued around how OPRF should treat students who are late to first period versus students who are late to 2-8 period class
 - General consensus that maybe punitive measures for the students who are late to first period doesn’t work
 - We need a better understanding of why students are tardy
- Discussion ensued about how SIDS and PSS teams become alerted to the fact that one of their students is chronically tardy.
 - Teachers are often first to notice the problem; some teachers alert the SIDS/PSS teams who then can intervene
- Discussion ensued about unexcused vs. excused absences
 - Data shows that this breaks down along racial lines and causes a discipline disparity problem (i.e. white parents call and excuse their student being late for class while black parents don’t so the black students will receive a tardy or unexcused absence)
- Discussion ensued about the need for faculty and staff professional development
 - Needs to be consistent application of the tardy policy
 - Issue of classroom management; what are teachers doing to set classroom expectations and making students want to come to their class on time
- Discussion ensued about possible recommendations
 - School wide PBIS around tardiness
 - positive messaging/public service announcement video on getting to class on time (the group watched short video produced by students at a high school in Wisconsin)
 - positive rewards for students who are on time. Examples discussed included:

- no tardies for a certain period of time, a coupon for a free cookie in the cafeteria
 - all students with no tardies for a certain period of time have their names placed in a raffle for prizes such as free tickets to school-sponsored events or other prizes
- Pilot project for crowded hallways
 - Placing tape/signs to direct traffic into lanes in certain busy hallways and monitor video to see if it helps with hallway congestion and helps teach students to stay to the right
- Earlier triggers for chronically tardy students to determine cause and address the behavior
 - Parental notification
 - SID intervention
 - SIDS currently alerted to chronically tardy students if notified by a teacher/parent or after the student has received a certain number of detentions (varies based on each SID)
- Tasks for small group members:
 - Ms. Young (with an assist from Mr. Weintraub): interview students about student tardiness and create questionnaire (causes of student tardiness and effective interventions)
 - Ms. Hardwicke: Draft recommendation related to school-wide PBIS (positive messaging and positive rewards)
 - Mr. Weintraub: Draft recommendation related to pilot project for crowded hallways
 - Ms. Cassell: Ask Mr. Chandler about data for students who are late to the first period, where do they live in the district; Draft other recommendations discussed in the group over last two meetings but not assigned above

Community Outreach.

Present: Melanie McQueen, APPLE, Wendy Daniels, Community Council

LeAndrew Wade, OPRFHS Faculty, Sara Dixon Spivy, D200 School Board Vice President, Dr. Jackie Moore, D200 School Board President, Dr. Joylynn Pruitt-Adams, D200 Superintendent

Dr. Pruitt-Adams opened the discussion by introducing Mr. Wade to our group and by giving an overview of our work to date. Correspondence from the D97 Diversity Committee (DivCo) and CROAR was shared. DivCo specifically asked that we part of equity work and be a community voice. CROAR is a taxing body that will donate \$1000 to the Village of Oak Park for training on anti-racism. Although this is not a Village initiative they are looking to staff up to 16 members, Alisa Pentato and Steve Krazinski are leading.

November 14th is a community forum, Race Talk. There will be 3 additional sessions, Spring 2018, Fall 2018 and Spring 2019. Speaker Dr. David Stovall will facilitate the forum encouraging community suggestions, concerns, and offering positive solutions to the intersection of race and education. APPLE will assist with registration so that OPRFHS can follow-up with the attendees.

Daniels gave an update on the Equity Committee of Community Council and the Parent Café. The Equity Committee will have a seat at the table to discuss with the community what work is going on, then rotate the table to talk to another group. The Equity Committee would see what is being duplicated and ask for collaboration or add something that isn't being worked on. The Community of Congregations would also like to partner with D200. The Pastor from Unity Temple is will to sponsor the Equity Committee here at OPRFHS.

Ms. Dixon Spivy asked how we could include families that are too busy but want to participate. Facebook Live and other live stream social media options were tossed around. Dr. Pruitt-Adams suggested utilizing News Scene for the getting the message out. Spivy also noted the meeting format for subject matter in comparison to D97 meetings. Daniels suggested that the social media/messaging should also be educational in addition to be informational. A fun way to start would be the popular 72 questions. Wade asked if we are the community voice and how we can complete our task. Dr. Pruitt-Adams referred to our guidelines as written in the instruction of our final presentation. The team took parts to work on with Dr. Pruitt-Adams being absent during the report do to her medical leave. Dr. Pruitt-Adams agreed to work on the report, in that would be research on what other schools are doing that works.

Upcoming school events are Parent Connection 8-9, Youth Network Council (Jason Dennis), District Equity Leadership Team, Family Night, Sexual Misconduct Dec 5th partnership with APPLE.

Faculty and Staff Voice and Innovation Meeting Notes 11/2/17

- Work based on previous discussions:
- Work to get other staff members involved in the discussion.
- Spoke with Safety and Support, (Dave Walksler) barriers with positional/shift characteristics.
- Food Service, investigation, and observation that food service employees are the most removed from the progressive cultural work of the institution. Will continue discussion regarding how to improve involvement.
- Focus on finding ways to create opportunities for students to speak with staff regarding culture and climate
- Research on restorative justice in other local institutions

The meeting resumed at 8:31 p.m.

Parking Lot

Members were reminded that instead of having a meeting on November 14, they were invited to attend the Intersection on Race and Education at 7:30 p.m. in the South Cafe on this date. Dr. David Stovall, an African-American Studies professor at UIC and also a teacher of high school classes, was scheduled to be the keynote speaker.

Committee members were reminded to complete the OMA training if they had not already and to send the certificates to Ms. Kalmerton.

Committee members were also reminded to look at the link on Culture, Climate and Behavior webpage for a variety of pertinent articles and reports.

Ms. McQueen spoke to APPLE's AIM High Night where Dr. Moore would speak. It was about pledging and the best universities.

Committee members were reminded to turn in their meeting notes and that the next meeting would be on December 19.

Adjournment

At 8:35 p.m., Dr. Moore moved to adjourn; seconded by Ms. Dixon Spivy. A voice vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.