

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

Culture, Climate and Behavior Committee
September 21, 2017

A Culture, Climate and Behavior Committee (CCB) meeting was held on September 21, 2017. Chair Cassell called the meeting to order at 6:35 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, and Gina Harris. Also present was Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

Visitors: Lincoln Chandler, consultant; Karin Grimes and Carole L. Wadley, community members

Public Comments

None

Introduction and Welcome

Ms. Cassell stated that the only assigned role of the small groups is the notetaker. The public is welcome to listen to any of the groups' discussion, but not participate in that discussion. Any questions regarding the work of this committee should be sent to Ms. Kalmerton. Board members are not voting members of the small or large group. Ultimately, the full Board of Education will discuss what will be shared with it. Committee members were reminded to do the Open Meetings Action Training. And, due to the Open Meetings Act, no conversation can occur outside of the work groups. In addition, the small group participants may be assigned work and those will responsibilities will be sent out when appropriate.

Small Group Work

The notes from the small group work are below.

Community Voice and Connections

Ms. Daniels provided the notes of the Community Voice and Connections.

1. Let's add SAY and the E-Team (subset of P4SS) to the list of resources. The focus of the E-Team is on students of color. Their efforts help to build a sense of belonging among students of color.
2. Provide more feedback to the community from the board.
3. Many of the recommendations on the list for this committee are already being done, but perhaps we should communicate better regarding how programs come about and the purpose for each.
4. Get the students' input on the programs. How effective is each one? Is it working? If not, why are we still using it?
5. Why were the Town Hall meetings not well attended by people of color? This is also the case at Booster Kick-Off, Open House, etc.
6. Ideas about lack of representation.

7. Some of those of lower economic status: it's enough to be here, busy, single parents perhaps with childcare challenges, may be working 2 jobs...
8. Other Challenges that don't convey a feeling of being welcome:
9. Summer school - many parents can't get on the computer at noon when registration opens
10. Parent Visitation Day - can't take the day off.
11. Perhaps we can look at the purpose for mtg. What do we all have in common?
12. How do we get more men involved? Maybe a Father/ Daughter Dance.
13. Other outreach ideas:
14. Outreach to churches, and church small groups, Grandparents Day, survey around community voice to determine levels of active engagement vs passive engagement. How can we connect better? Parent Workshops on Software such as Excel, Word, typing, navigating social media, web browsing
15. Additional methods of communication: posters, flyers, brochures available at businesses and in business windows.
16. NAAPID Dinner: More AA businesses invited
17. Is the school's partnership with the Township effective? What exactly does the Township offer to families, schools, students?

Faculty & Staff Voice and Innovation

1. What does research tell us about our topic? We aren't sure yet of the research, but we discussed how to gather research from our staff that might be actionable:
 - o What does any data we gathered tell us...what do we still need gather data on?
 - o Opinions about the school overall---gathering data from a wide variety of staff--from all staff. Developing a safe space for everyone, because we don't know what we don't know.
 - o Need to avoid differentiation from different staff--thinking of us all as one group. Ensuring that we are actively considering who all of our staff are to ensure that we gather all of their voices.
 - o Innovation can come out of getting different voices & recognition of staff as they are.
 - o Age should not be ignored in this conversation.
 - o We need to gather information in different ways to ensure that a plurality of voices is heard.
 - o We should start with the 5Essentials survey to gather information about this topic.
 - o What do we currently do now that helps to push this conversation forward?
 - o Lincoln agreed to look for research, possibly out of Stanford, to help feed this conversation.
 - o We should set up ways for regular feedback...perhaps also bring security guards and other professionals into these conversations and asking them to present.
2. Restorative practices should be looked into; we need PD in our building for this effort. Other evidenced based practices as well. This whole process begins with listening skills--listening to one another. Another part of this is that we need to help everyone understand that hearing an opinion doesn't necessarily mean that the opinion is followed thru on...but knowing that your voice is respected is a necessary first step. Part of this is presuming positive intentions. Also, a big part of this is realizing that most change is incremental, especially adaptive change. We talked

about other schools as well, and where we might go to get positive examples of good practices. We should also find some way to create space for students to work with staff to gather feedback.

Actions:

1. Gina: looking into restorative practices
2. Naomi: will talk with students she knows about what questions we might want to ask staff (not teachers) about their experiences and perceptions of climate and culture
3. Sheila: following up with Lincoln on research about school climate and will talk with other staff to see if they can attend these meetings
4. Greg: do research to identify other schools that are successfully engaged in restorative practices; “RJ geeks” in the building?

Student Tardiness Working Group

Present: Jennifer Cassell, Laura Hardwicke, Aaliyah Young, Lincoln Chandler

1. Discussion ensued around practical concerns with the HERO system.
 - o HERO machines don’t always work. Security guards carry machines with them, but sometimes the machines have problems (paper runs out, screens freeze).
 - o Students have to find a security guard to give them a HERO pass if they are late, which means they miss even more class time.
2. Discussion ensued about the history of how OPRF came to treat tardiness as a disciplinary issue (it became a basis of discipline starting in 2008)
 - o The group agreed that it would be helpful to learn the history and discussed whether Mr. Weintraub would be in the best position to provide that history and an explanation of the consequences students receive for being tardy.
3. Discussion ensued about the consistency with which the tardy policy is enforced.
 - o Some teachers don’t care and allow students to enter the classroom after the bell; others make students get a pass if they are late by a few seconds.
 - o Students have expressed the opinion that African American students often are singled out for being tardy.
 - o Excused tardies (parents calling in absences) versus unexcused.
4. Discussion ensued about how other public high schools handle student tardiness.
 - o Niles Township makes students scan their IDs when they enter a classroom, that allows them to track student tardiness without making students track down security guards and lose instructional time.
 - o Do schools use positive reinforcement rather than punitive measures?
5. Discussion ensued about what barriers exist for students making it to class on time.
 - o It’s a large building, with narrow stairways and crowded building. Can we set up lanes/arrows to help direct flow of student traffic? Should we open more doors or doors at the corners of the building at the start of school (is it a problem that students must walk to the main entrance?)
6. Especially at the beginning of the year, some students have trouble finding their way to their classrooms. Classroom layout is confusing (what wayfinding tools can we use to address this?).
 - o Hallway clocks can help, but not all of the timers work. Make the numbers bigger.
 - o Some students need encouragement to get to class on time; have security staff, SIDs, and

- teachers encourage students get to class during the day by talking to them in the hallways (and not just telling them to put on their IDs).
- o Consistently dismiss gym classes early enough so they have time to change for their next class, particularly for swim classes. This disproportionately affects girls, especially African American females.
- 7. Discussion ensued about what the data shows about student tardiness.
 - o Vast majority of tardies occur during first period (60 percent); and particularly on late arrival Wednesdays.
 - . Does this mean we should consider differentiated interventions (how we assist/address students who are late to Period 1 versus Periods 2-8)?
- 8. Discussion ensued about next steps for the student tardiness working group.
 - o Research whether some schools use positive reinforcement rather than punitive measures to address student tardiness.
 - o Ask Mr. Weintraub whether he knows what resources we can use to research best practices.
 - o Find out more from Mr. Weintraub about what interventions are currently in place for students who are chronically tardy.
 - o Are we being proactive or merely reactive?
 - o What triggers intervention?
 - o What assistance do we give to these students (for example, if students are suffering from mental illness or disorder, can they receive a 504 plan that addresses tardiness)?
 - o Consider breaking down our work into specific focus areas:
 - o Is discipline the right way to address student tardiness?
- 9. How can we use the data to provide interventions?
- 10. Interventions for those late to first period may look different than for other periods.
- 11. How do the tardies breakdown by class (are underclassmen overrepresented in the tardy data)?
- 12. Tasks for small group members:
 - o All members: Review the last semester's discipline report (posted on CCB webpage) and research positive reinforcement interventions.
 - o If we have questions about the data or want Lincoln to take a deeper dive into some of the data points, reach out to him via Gail.
 - o Jennifer: Reach out to Niles Township to find out more about swiping student IDs.
 - o Mr. Weintraub: Research history of OPRF policies regarding tardiness. Educate this working group regarding if and how the PSS teams' Early Warning System addresses student tardiness.

Student and Family Voice and Belonging Group: 9-21-17

Members Present: Dr. Jackie Moore, Naomi Hildner, Ryan Moore, Nathaniel Rouse

Observer

1. Reviewed the Three Recommendations from 2016-17 CCB.
2. Naomi and Nathaniel briefed the small group on the rationale for the recommendations from last year.
3. Group Focused on Parent Visitation Day (PVD)?
4. What role do counselors play in PVD?

5. Is there a way that Parent Groups can be utilized to call parents to invite?
6. Ryan Moore provided the student perspective regarding the need to publicize this day. Is it too late to publicize for families?
7. Ms. Hildner suggested the potential for teachers to put PVD on the syllabus.
8. Ms. Hildner suggested teachers utilize skyward to message parents
9. Can we look for a day 2nd Semester to have a PVD?

Welcoming Committee:

1. Can SAFE students provide information on what they think about staff members attempting to Welcome students as they enter the school?
2. Ryan feels that we should have more adults doing this. Relieves stress and promotes safe spaces.
3. Can we utilize Student Ambassadors?
4. Ms. Hildner asked how can we set up additional greeters “welcome weeks” Can we schedule those for all 3 doors? (Scoville, Erie, South)
5. Dr. Moore asked Ryan Moore to reach out to SAFE students to determine what they believe this should look like....
6. At the Welcome Center Ms. Hildner reported that the audio was “Wear your ID” which feels punitive. Is there a way to be certain that we say “Good Morning” first?
7. Prior to getting volunteers, can we work with faculty and staff to make more of these connections? Parent Volunteers may be beneficial as well.
8. We will begin pilot in October w/ Admin....
9. Goals. This should happen Daily at the 3 doors.
10. We need suggestions on measuring the impact of this initiative on student climate and culture
11. Dr. Moore will look back through the presentations from SAFE last year and student council re: student response and experiences we want students to have.
12. More follow up on October 19th.
13. A question was raised if we could talk to Morning Greeters as well as Safety and Support to make sure that we say *Good Morning* prior to communicating any directives to students.
14. Ms. Hildner asked if we could speak to teachers who either on supervisory duty or have first period free to assist us.
15. Dr. Moore noted that teachers on supervisory do not greet her when she walks in the doors. She enters door 5 and 6.
16. Do we obtain any feedback from Parent Visitation Day? If so....what do we do with the feedback from PVD?
17. Dr. Moore will talk to Mr. Silver regarding attending the next SAFE meeting and food.

Plan for October 19th...feedback from SAFE and Welcome opportunities. We will then discuss topics that we may want to consider holding evening meetings with the community on.

The full committee resumed at 7:56 p.m.

Committee members were reminded that they could share information by sending it to Ms. Kalmerton who would then post it on the website.

Parking Lot Review

At the last meeting the following items were posted to the Parking Lot. Discussion ensued.

1. Dress Code. Students felt that the dress code focused on girls and thus the “rape culture.” When girls are asked “What are you wearing?”, it sends the wrong message. Enforcement of the dress code is consistent. This may be a topic for the student voice group.
2. Why are classes having to do with minorities only electives. Students do not know there is an Asian history course or a Middle Eastern history course, etc. Only courses about European history are required. Students wanted histories of different ethnic groups to be required study.

While OPRFHS had an electives fair during lunch time that has not existed for 2 years. Should this be reconstituted? Another suggestion was to print the academic catalog, rather than just offering it online, so that parents know what is available. Another member felt this was less about the fact that they were elective courses but it was important to frame the conversation properly that educators recognize the Eurocentric view of history. It is important to know what is and is not required to graduate. One student did not take electives because colleges like to see AP classes on a transcript. Mr. Johnson hoped to speak to more students about course offerings.

3. The Faculty and Staff Voice group could discuss security guard behavior. Dr. Pruitt-Adams asked to be informed about that conversation because the Board of Education had mandated training for this group on being more welcoming and approachable and had been completed before July 1. Has there been a shift in the behavior? Another member suggested that the Student Voice Committee also take up that discussion.

Adjournment

At 8:15 p.m., Dr. Jackie Moore moved to adjourn; seconded by Ms. Hardin. A voice vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.