

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

Culture, Climate and Behavior Committee
October 8, 2018

A Culture, Climate and Behavior Committee (CCB) meeting was held on October 8, 2018. Chair Cassell called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. in the Board Room. Committee members present were: Benson, Carioscio, Cassell, Daniels, Hardwicke, Harris, Hildner, Jones, Leach, Miller, Moore, Pruitt-Adams, Rouse, Sherman, Wade, Walksler, Williams, and Wilson. Also present was Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

Visitors: John Duffy

Public Comments

Mr. Duffy, representing CEEE, asked the members to review his statement in full at a later time. He raised two concerns/questions with the committee. 1) evaluations of initiatives and 2) hiring procedures. The hiring procedures are being “reimagined” as to how more teachers of color can be hired and retained. Lots of agreement is had on benchmarks. He then talked about having a rigorous qualitative and quantitative evaluation process on what is happening in the hiring process. He asked how many people have reviewed the Hanover Research paper on the website on evaluation. He asked that the Committee consider amending its mission because there is no instructional committee in the District. Dr. Pruitt-Adams noted that the District does have an instructional committee, and ADA falls under instruction for all administrators, and program evaluation was brought to the Board in August.

Approval Minutes

Dr. Pruitt-Adams moved to approve the minutes of the May 3, 2018 meeting; seconded by Mr. Walksler. A voice vote resulted in all ayes.

Introduction of Members

Due to the lack of a quorum at the last meeting, members introduced themselves and their relationship to the District.

CCB Recommendations/Timeline/District Owners

Dr. Pruitt-Adams explained that CCB evolved from the Parent Teacher Advisory Committee which is required by the state and is charged to review disciplinary procedures annually. Two years ago, the focus of this committee was changed, and the name was changed to the CCB as it was thought it better to look at the whole student. Hopefully, in the future, “behavior” can be removed because it has a negative connotation.

During the 2017-18 Committee, the voice was given to the community, students, and faculty. In May 2018, the Board charged the superintendent and administration to take the multitude of recommendations and identify an owner and timeframe for their completion. Initially, there was concern about the number of recommendations, but she was pleased to say that most were addressed. Only Student and Family Voice and Belonging were not completed. They will take place in the ensuing year due to a variety of issues.

Dr. Pruitt-Adams reviewed the CCB's general recommendations that were posted to the agenda.

Recommendation 1: Ensure that OPRF's culture and climate are safe and welcoming for all students and that student discipline rates are not predictable by race.

Action Step 1: Make CCB a standing board committee (comprised of staff, students, and Board of Education and community members) that regularly convenes to:

- Review and revise the student code as needed, in compliance with the statutorily-required work of PTAC. This was done at the end of the year.
- Study OPRF outcomes and make recommendations on interventions with the goal of eliminating race as a predictor of discipline infractions. At the last Board meeting, a report was given.
- Develop and approve metrics relevant to programs recommended via CCB and approved by the Board. This is in the process; and
- Assess the efficacy of the administration and Board of Education in implementing and managing those programs; and
- Provide quarterly accountability report to the Board of Education. The first quarterly update to the Board is scheduled for the October Board of Education meeting

Action Step 2: District administration will share with CCB a quarterly status report of all ongoing CCB recommendations, followed by a report of information to the Board of Education.

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Recommendation 2: Have a dress code that supports students' self-expression and treats all students equitably.

Action Step 1: Implement a revised dress code, provide training and education on the code to Staff and students and families, and review infraction data for evidence of any impact. On Institute Day, training was provided for the staff. Since dress code is not being policed, the building is more relaxed. Students and staff testified to that feeling as well; the conversation is less biased, and it is a more positive environment. OPRFHS is ahead of the curve on this issue. A question was raised as to how to address those who were opposed to the policy.

Faculty and Staff Voice and Innovation Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Implement school-wide restorative practices.

Action Step 1: Retain a restorative justice professional to complete an inventory and evaluation of restorative practices currently happening within the district and to build a working definition of restorative justice practices. A professional is being identified, but the District is identifying a definition of Restorative Justice.

Action Step 2: Concurrently with Action Step 1, assemble a volunteer cohort of interested staff to work with the aforementioned restorative justice professional to develop specific restorative justice initiatives (e.g., student-teacher mediation, peace circles) for implementation during the 2018-19 school year. All of the administrators and SST have been trained in Restorative Justice Practices. This will continue. This will be opened up to other staff who are interested as five additional spots are available for

training in October. Additional training for SST are scheduled. A subset will start to work on training to use in the rest of the building.

Recommendation 2: Recruit and retain diverse staff and offer additional support to make employees feel welcome and included.

Action Step 1: Conduct an inventory of OPRF's recruitment and staff orientation policies and procedures to support staff inclusion and review best practices from MSAN, peer districts, or other sources regarding racially conscious hiring protocols, with the goal of increasing and retaining staff of color. This document has been termed "talent management." A piece about onboarding, mentoring and outlines the hiring practices, the interviewing of candidates, etc. Training was given by Humanix which goes through how one can screen the first group of candidates.

Action Step 2: Request entrance and exit interviews/surveys with all OPRF staff. Exit interviews have been implemented and entrance surveys will be developed.

Community Voice and Connections Recommendations

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 or off campus at least two times annually to discuss matters of importance (as determined by the Superintendent or Board of Education). Screenings for America To Me have been posted. Conversations about how to continue that discussions are occurring. January 8 will be a Tri-Equity Convening and include representatives from the Boards of D200, D97, and D90 about data. October 30 is a town hall meeting on IMAGINE.

Action Step 2: Record meetings of importance (as determined by the Superintendent or Board of Education) and post the recordings on OPRF's website. All Board of Education meetings are recorded via audio and effort is being made to videotape them.

Student and Family Voice and Belonging Recommendations

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

The first two actions could not be done because the Director of Student Activities was on maternity leave.

Action Step 3: Create a diverse student advisory board that reports to the administration and Board of Education annually on improving student involvement. The administration is reaching out to the leaders of the student advisory groups. A suggestion was made to survey first-year students, sophomores and juniors about their interests and then align them to the student activities and have the sponsor, etc., reach out to them. They could be their mentors. This could be used for transfer students as well.

Action Step 4: Add television monitors to the north and south cafeterias showcasing OPRF students to make them more visible to the entire student body (e.g., show videos of choral performances, debate, plays, Spoken Word). New monitors have been added, and more are coming.

Recommendation 2: Create a welcoming environment for all students, staff, and families.

Action Step 1: In conjunction with Imagine OPRF, redesign Welcome Center to create a more welcoming experience for students and visitors.

Action Step 2: Have district leadership greet students during morning arrival at the three entrances. This is being done. Dr. Pruitt-Adams rotates from one door to another. The goal is for students to know who the administration is. Students and staff testified that this was working.

Action Step 3: Require annual training on customer service for staff to ensure a safe and welcoming environment throughout the building. The first round of training was completed.

Student Tardiness Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Research the root causes of student tardiness.

Action Step 1: Administer an annual culture and climate survey to all students, parents, and staff no later than the fall semester of 2018, per last year's approved CCB recommendation, and incorporate questions into the survey inquiring about the reasons for student tardiness or direct questions to focus groups, or both. This was from the 2016 recommendations. The tardy data was shared through administrators' academy, and the district is digging deeper into this data. Be mindful of the questions in the survey to get the real root of the tardy.

Recommendation 2: Address racial disparities in OPRF's student tardy data, which shows that African American students are overrepresented in the "late to class" and "five or more" tardy categories.

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.

The administration took out the piece where it was subjective, and the teachers could change that, and the HERO machines can give passes and temporary IDs immediately. The first-period tardies were consistent along racial lines. However, in the following periods, the African-American students were overly represented in tardies. All of the variables are being considered.

Action Step 2: Administration and staff review of tardy data to surface potential drivers for the racial discrepancies observed for periods 2-8 (e.g., staff unconscious bias, inconsistent enforcement or understanding of the policy, navigation from class to class) and develop, and present to the Board of Education, a holistic proposal with specific strategies to ensure equitable enforcement of the current policy, or propose a better policy.

Next Steps

Ms. Cassell referred to the CCB webpage to be used as a resource for the membership. The plan for the year is to focus on data and creating data, metrics, and measurements to see if things are working. Mr. Chandler will help guide that work. Ms. Kalmerton will accept questions/thoughts on this from the membership to prepare for the November meeting.

Parking Lot

A suggestion was to have more peace circles.

Adjournment

At 6:59 p.m., Ms. Daniels moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Ms. Hildner. A voice vote resulted in the motion carried.

Submitted by Gail Kalmerton
Clerk of the Board