

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

Culture, Climate, and Behavior Committee
October 8, 2019

A Culture, Climate, and Behavior Committee (CCB) meeting was held on October 8, 2019. Chair Gina Harris called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. in the Board Room. Committee members present were Talib Becktemba Goss, Wendy Daniels, Linda Frances, Gina G. Harris, Megumi Hoshi, Greg Johnson, Cheryl Jones-McLeod, Kebreab Henry, Carrie Kamm, Frances Kraft, Ralph Martire, Melanie McQueen, Dr. Jackie Moore, Livia Nitsche, Kyla Pereles, Dr. Joylynn Pruitt, Roxana Sanders, and Felicia Starks-Turner, as well as Gail Kalmerton, Clerk of the Board.

Visitors

Also present were OPRFHS Faculty and Staff members Christopher Thieme, Michael Carioscio, and Cyndi Sidor; Lincoln Chandler, Educational Consultant; and Burcy Hines and John Duffy, community members.

Public Comment

Ms. Hines, a representative of CEEE, APPLE and a community member, provided the CCB members data relative to the number of people of color hired this school year. She noted that 54% of the teachers hired this year were teachers of color, with 33.3% Black and 12% Latino. She noted that both APPLE and CEEE were satisfied with what the school was doing. She was thankful for Mr. Johnson, Ms. Sanders, Dr. Pruitt-Adams and all of the other staff involved for helping the District to this point. The concern has always been that the students need to see people like themselves. She noted that they would continue to fight for this cause.

John Duffy, Chair of CEEE, noting that many of the CCB members were new, highlighted the data on hiring. He reiterated the faith, goodwill and intention that the administration brought to this endeavor. He also wanted to draw their attention to the issue of curriculum. Mr. Martire said ‘we’ lacked institutional memory. He noted that curriculum evaluations had been happening for two years. The design that is being used draws on a study that the administration and outside consultants concluded in 2003, which was paid for with state funding. Almost the last sentence of that report was a recommendation to evaluate the curriculum with regard to equity in order to make serious changes so that all have access. Some community members now disagree with a change. He encouraged everyone to attend the presentation at Julian Middle School on the proposed freshman curriculum changes, as this is an ongoing conversation. He thanked the Superintendent, the Board of Education and the faculty for moving this forward to this point. He noted that a serious, first-class evaluation procedure was being built into the project.

[Approval of Minutes of September 10, 2019](#)

Mr. Martire moved to approve the minutes of the September 10, 2019 Culture, Climate and Behavior Committee; seconded by Ms. McQueen. A voice vote resulted in motion carried.

Restorative Practices Circle

The meeting started with a Restorative Practices Circle where Ms. Harris asked the members to consider what it looks like if the committee embodies a culture of equity. What should it be doing if this committee is an example?

The responses included:

- 1) Racial equity, center the conversation on honest dialogue and being willing to listen and provide a safe space. There is not one definition, but it is remembering to keep the issue of race as a part of the conversation.
- 2) Personal relationships and working on equity, building on equity, and getting to know each other.
- 3) “N” word
- 4) Assume good intentions, being a model in the community, meeting people where they are.
- 5) Hold people accountable. This knowledge needs to be shared and done so with love. Call out inequity.
- 6) Relational trust. Words, actions, contributions, debit/credit, either give or take away. Deep levels of self-reflection are needed. Hold one another accountable on how they are doing on their own plus/delta in showing up together.
- 7) Willingness is the most important thing.
- 8) Equal opportunity and being fair. It starts with oneself.
- 9) Hold oneself and others accountable. Be open and respectful. Do not take things personally.
- 10) It is important that this is a place where people can voice their concerns and respect who that is coming to and the fact that all are coming with different arenas.
- 11) This group embodies individuals with action and compassion with the work of equity. As a group, it must honor the different lived experiences regardless of how old or young they are. Young people’s experiences must be valued.
- 12) This requires courage in order to take action. The members must recognize inequity outside of these walls, use that knowledge/learning, and take action. Trust is important. The members must be ambassadors. They need to trust the intentions. This work is on the frontier.
- 13) Embodying equity is a balancing and honoring the process, and not to lose sight of being outcome driven. A positive change is needed and each must hold oneself accountable to make sure it is happening.
- 14) Referring to the Strategic Plan goals, a reminder is needed to address everything from a racial equity lens factor. Are there any groups that are negatively impacted?
- 15) Safe spaces need to be created in order to say what needs to be said.
- 16) Courage is needed to make change.
- 17) Individuals as well as the group needs to be courageously vulnerable and open to various experiences. This responsibility is to show up in a space that represents faculty and students. The intent is to be open, brave, courageous, and vulnerable.
- 18) Committee members mainly think ideologically on similar lines. If a culture of equity is embodied that does not mean that the committee members should all have the same view, but they are people who can make a difference in Oak Park. All of the people outside of the school, (parents, relatives, business associates, etc.) have to understand even if it is coming from a place that is misguided. They are someone to shepherd. Hopefully, the ideological divide can be broached and equity can be made to be something that is not threatening. Everyone needs to hold himself or herself accountable to change the system.
- 19) Embodying a culture of equity does not mean all are the same. Members are here because they feel similar things, people need to respect that in themselves. This too is an example when out in the marketplace representing CCB, the ideas, principles, and being an ambassador for the work being done. When someone says something that the members might not like, rather than be on the attack, invite conversation in a kind merciful, and gracious way. The desire is for people to come over to this side and not push them further in the opposite direction.
- 20) When equity is invited, othering is not happening.

Strategic Plan Update

The CCB is now the accountability committee. Each month give a specific priority area.

a. Priority 3, [Transformative Leadership](#)

Ms. Sanders provided a report on what the administration has done to increase minority in the 2019-20 school year.

2019-2020 NEW HIRE DEMOGRAPHICS *

The chart below lists demographic information for our new hires for the 2019-2020 school year by employee category:

Employee Category	Asian/ Pacific Islander				Black				Latinex				White				Total
	Male	Female	Total	% of Total	Male	Female	Total	% of Total	Male	Female	Total	% of Total	Male	Female	Total	% of Total	
Administrators	0	0	0	0%	1	1	2	67%	0	0	0	0%	0	1	1	33%	3
Certified	1	1	2	10%	2	4	6	30%	0	1	1	5%	8	3	11	55%	20
Non-Affiliated	0	0	0	0%	0	1	1	50%	0	0	0	0%	0	1	1	50%	2
Food Service	0	0	0	0%	0	2	2	40%	0	3	3	60%	0	0	0	0%	5
Buidings and Grounds	0	0	0	0%	3	0	3	43%	1	1	2	29%	2	0	2	29%	7
Safety and Support	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0
Classified Personnel	0	0	0	0%	4	6	10	77%	0	1	1	8%	2	0	2	15%	13
Total	1	1	2	4%	10	14	24	48%	1	6	7	14%	12	5	17	34%	50

*This summary presents a snapshot of new hire demographics as of October 8, 2019.

As you can see from the chart, minorities comprise 66% of all our new hires and 45% of faculty new hires.

For the 2018-2019 school year, minorities represented 54% of all our new hires and 37.5% of faculty new hires.

It was noted that 38% of all employees are non-white and 25% of teachers are non-white. The goal is to increase the hiring of non-whites by 35% by 2024 in the Strategic Plan. What is the plan to increase the number of non-white teachers in AP Honors courses? Dr. Pruitt-Adams noted that the hiring of non-white teachers will be intentional for all areas, but it will depend on the certification and the applicant pool when these positions become available.

A student noted that the Racial Equity Policy would help a certain group of people based on their race. What is the threshold where that policy is no longer in place? There was a feeling that was an unfair advantage. Dr. Pruitt-Adams noted that there was no threshold or limit. The goal is to hire more non-white teachers but that does not preclude the District from only hiring minorities. The administration feels it is its responsibility to correct that inequity. The goal is to hire highly qualified staff.

Mr. Martire affirmed that research shows that all students served by a more diversified faculty perform at a higher level. District 200 has been dived into this initiative. It is not just the lack of minority teachers. It is about building an academic experience and an excellent culture for all students.

What is the percent that the District would need to reach each year to accomplish the Strategic Plan goal of 35%? The response was that it is not an exact science. It depends on who retires. This coming year only one teacher is retiring, so it is not predictable. The number will be a floating number. The demography of the people moving will affect the number. The question was asked, are the objectives accomplishable? The more the committee learns about what tactics are used to bring in more faculty of color will be important.

Priority 4, Facilities

Mr. Carioscio stated that the facilities report is a compilation of previous presentations to the Board of Education and some new information. He provided the goals, timeline, construction impact and next steps. Project 1 work will be substantially completed by summer of 2022 with possibly some spill over into the summer of 2023.

Timeline - Phasing and Sequencing Option 1.5

Summer 2020	School Year 2020-2021	Summer 2021	Summer 2022	Summer 2023
South Cafeteria/SRC	South Cafeteria/SRC	South Cafeteria/SRC		
All gender toilet rooms		Special Education (Part 1)	Special Education (Part 2)	
Test classrooms (4-5 rooms)		Main Entrance/Student Commons		
Driver's Ed		Classroom renovations	Classroom renovations	
		HLS	HLS	HLS
Mailroom/Duplicating				
Capital Improvements			Capital Improvements	Capital Improvements

Construction impact on school operations will be:

- No South Cafeteria from June 2020 until January 2022 (lunch period scheduling issues).
- Driver Education for summer 2020
- Summer school for summer 2021, 2022, and possibly 2023
- Summer Musical for summer 2021 and 2022.

The potential changes implied by the design will include:

- Food in the building (learning star/student resource center, student commons area.
- Cafeteria, Student Resource Center,
- Passes security, supervision
- Security in off hours

A suggestion was made to garner student insight on the issues that arise to find out what they need.

The Board of Education will receive reports on the preliminary “operational impact” of the school and building functions during construction; the current design presentation in November, and the update on timeline and Budget in December.

Finance

Ms. Sidor presented information regarding finance per the Strategic Plan. Her responsibility in the Strategic Plan is to have a balanced budget by September. Her presentation included breakdowns of budgeted revenues and expenditures by source.

Property Tax Relief Grant

- Abate \$5,803,938 - 2020 •
 - Early payment of \$3,754,030
 - Evidence Based Funding – 2019

- Evidence Based Funding \$3,754,030 – 2020
 - \$7,508,060 - \$5,803,938 = \$1,704,122

Difference between Budgeted Expenditures and Revenues

Expenditures	\$82,997,083
Revenues	\$81,294,976
Difference	\$1,702,107

If the Property Tax Relief Grant funds would have been paid in the same fiscal year as the abatement, the budget would be balanced.

A slide showed the tax extension history of all funds from 2011 to present. The District utilized \$29.5 million in fund balance reserves to cover deficits created by levy decreased in 2013-2014 tax years. Since the 2013 tax year, the District has extended \$42 million less than it was entitled to under tax cap law.

Considerations for deciding how much of a levy to take include:

- 1) CPI 1.9%
- 2) TIF (Tax Increment Financing) Expirations
- 3) New Property
- 4) Property Tax Relief Grant
- 5) Future Abatements
- 6) Future Construction Projects

If the District continues to deficit spend, it will have to go out for referendum to pay for construction. Community members have formed a foundation titled The IMAGINE Foundation and its goal is to do private fundraising for construction work. It hopes to raise \$50 million. The Board of Education has not made a decision on the levy yet.

Any other questions regarding finances should be sent to Ms. Kalmerton.

CCB Dashboard Background

Mr. Chandler reported that last year a list of metrics was developed for a CCB dashboard, which were 1) regularly tracked metrics for an interactive dashboard items; familiar to the District with the goal of getting them into one place. 2) Add other data that is not necessarily tracked and add it in the right way, i.e. faculty work. The goal for the fall is to take things like faculty/staff demographics and determine how to best show and share that information.

Data Dashboard Introduction

Mr. Johnson and Mr. Thieme spoke about the dashboard’s metrics, the work that had already been completed and what is yet to be completed and the timeline. Slides showing the student and staff metrics was included in the packet. All of the metrics are disaggregated by race unless otherwise noted. A presentation on the dashboard-landing page will be made in November. Discussion ensued. It was noted that a student being late to school five times and late to class was an internal indicator for the school. Narratives will be included in the dashboard. A blocked message may say, “sample size will be too small” if security was an issue.

ECRA dashboard is the opportunity to tell the story—“who we are, where we are, and where we want to go.” Next month the committee will look at that website.

Discussion ensued about providing information as to where people may go to ask more questions. The dashboard will be front facing in December.

Additional Comment Activity

Please provide any further comments to Ms. Kalmerton or use the post it notes.

Plus/Delta

When asked the questions about what went well and what should be changed, the responses included:

- 1) Starting in circle was a plus and normalizing that practice with adults and students
- 2) Add times to the agenda
- 3) Put in step-by-step comments as the meeting flows.
- 4) More diversity in the committee is good.
- 5) The students are amazing, insightful, and they bring much quality to this discussion.

Ms. McQueen stated that on November 5 APPLE would make a presentation at the CCB meeting. MCM: November 5 APPLE 5th presentation CCB meeting and include students come and share with the parents what we are doing and what that looks like.

Adjournment

At 8:06 p.m., Mr. Martire moved to adjourn; seconded by Ms. Francis. A voice vote resulted in motion carried.

Submitted by Gail Kalmerton
Clerk of the Board