

October 27, 2016

The regular Board meeting of the Board of Education of the Oak Park and River Forest High School was held on Thursday, October 27, 2016, in the Board Room of the OPRFHS.

**Call to Order**

Vice President Moore called the meeting to order at 6:39 p.m. A roll call indicated the following Board of Education members were present: Fred Arkin, Jennifer Cassell, Thomas F. Cofsky, Dr. Steven Gevinson, Dr. Jackie Moore, and Sara Spivy. Also present were Dr. Gwen Walker Qualls, Director of Pupil Support Services; Brenda Horton, Director of Human Resources; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant Clerk of the Board.

**Closed Session**

At 6:40 p.m. on Thursday, October 27, 2016, Dr. Moore moved to enter closed session for the purpose of discussing the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the District or legal counsel for the District, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee or against legal counsel for the District to determine its validity. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1), as amended by PA.93—57; seconded by Ms. Dixon Spivy. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

At 7:36 p.m., the Board of Education resumed open session.

Joining the meeting were Michael Carioscio, Chief Information Officer; Amy Hill, Director of Assessment and Research; Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Karin Sullivan, Director of Communications and Community Relations; and Jackie Cofsky, Student Council Representative; Dr. Gwen Walker Qualls, Director of Special Services.

**Visitors**

Jonathan Silver, SID, Joe Petroski and Jennifer Jones Jason Dennis OPRFHS Assistant Principal; Mary Haley, League of Women Voters; Kevin Peppard, Frank Franklin Matt Kosterman, Lynn Kamenitsa, community members; BWP associates Ann Nolan, Sheila Harrison-Williams, Phil Ehrhardt; Debra Kadin of the *Chicago Tribune*, Michael Romain of the *Wednesday Journal*, Steve Schering of the *Oak Leaves*,

**Public  
Comments**

Mark Christenson, resident of River Forest and parent of two daughters, the oldest of which graduated in 2009 and his youngest is a freshman, stated that he was an attorney by trade, and a member The EEEEC and was involved in the writing of the report presented to the Board of Education on September 29. He felt strongly about the elimination of tracking in schools and how his own choices in school made a difference in his life. He encouraged the Board of Education members to read the Learning Community Performance Gap, the Blueprint Report and the Strategic Plan. He stated that the Board of Education should move from research to action and that the District should hire a superintendent of equity.

John Duffy read the following statement: “I am speaking for several reasons. First and foremost, I am here to request a formal response from the Board of Education regarding the proposals around racial equity that members of APPLE, the Suburban Unity Alliance and the Committee on Equity and Excellence in Education presented on September 29<sup>th</sup>.

“I am also here to acknowledge and thank the administration, faculty and staff for the numerous richly positive and hopeful programs underway in support of equity, but especially racial equity.

“More specifically, I want to stress the urgent need for our proposal for an official board sponsored inquiry into the long standing organization of curriculum tracking at OPRFHS. This is a need noted over and over again by members of this community for over 20 years. Our own internal studies, in particular the 2003 Learning Community Gap Report and the more recent Blueprint study urged a deliberate, critical examination of how curriculum and its organization contributes to two school cultures at OPRF.

“One year ago, key members of this board pointed to the need for such an inquiry. In January two members of the Instruction committee pledged their willingness to fully investigate the possible ways tracking may hinder racial equity in curriculum.

“Last Spring, dozens of people including members of this board read and participated in a critical historical look at tracking and what schools were doing now to significantly alter the way tracking harms all students, but especially students of color and low socioeconomic status.

“We read, studied and discussed *On the Same Track*. Furthermore, dozens of teachers and citizens read and discussed *Despite the Best Intentions* which found a similar disappointing legacy of tracking for students of color in a thorough compelling case study of a Midwest high school which could easily have been OPRFHS. And then at the late May meeting of this board, new members who had not weighed in on the tracking question suggested it might be time to do so.

“We still await a commitment, not to drastically rearrange the school, but to honestly and openly sponsor the kind of inquiry process we repeatedly urge our students to conduct when they confront the mysteries, problems, puzzles and disappointments our society, nation and world face.

“Tonight, Amy Hill will present an extensive data analysis and propose that certain academic measures become benchmarks for monitoring our progress toward the day when race is no longer a predictor of high school and postsecondary educational success.

“I urge you to not look at tonight’s report in isolation; place it next to the data presented last October, but especially include the data chart presented in the January update to the October report. This chart clearly shows an overwhelming correlation, even predictive capacity, of the track placement a student had their freshman year and their track placement senior year, GPA and other standards we have been using to measure success. It was this chart that screamed at any concerned and thoughtful person to say “what about tracking?” The question still remains. What we pray also exists is the courage of board members to have the will to honestly investigate that question.

“I will end as I began at the September board meeting quoting the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. A week before his assassination, he offered us a brilliant measure of moral leadership and counsels all of us again this evening. He eloquently said: “a genuine leader is not a searcher for consensus, but a molder of consensus.” Dr. King goes on further guiding us and our children saying: “Cowardice asks the question— is it safe? Expedience asks the question— is it politic? Vanity asks the question— is it popular? Conscience asks the question— is it right?”

Burcy Hines noted that the staff needs to be focused in that area and they need to look out for the students. Being in education for years, she is aware of students’ abilities when they enter the building and the District must have a specialist that focuses on the staff. The staff needs to be trained to understand what tracking is and its effect on the children.

George Bailey spoke about the culture of the high school. To him all of the studies come out of a traditional paradigm of rationalistic, positivistic thinking which does not leave room for intuitiveness. Something is lost in the quantitative studies. He called for expanding definitions as to what it takes to get a 2.7 GPA in order to know why this number is a gateway. What happened to those students who made it and what happened to those who did not make it? He saw nothing in the studies that was aimed at solving the problem, just reporting/describing the program. This research is called “social action” research. How can the whole community solve this problem? Boards come and go. He argued for looking at new models on the Carnegie website, captions like helping the high school to be better to make the community better. He asked to begin to broaden the definitions and practices on how to get to the three significant points and why. Can they be unpacked, especially the 2.7 as a market/indicator?

Kevin Peppard, resident of Oak Park, spoke of the \$3,200 check paid to Marcia Sutter which brings her total work to \$34,000. Why when the Board of Education had not approved her contract, was it still paying her? He said it was a matter for the auditors to review and poor internal control system. He talked about a piece that she had done for the high school was given to the YES Voters. He felt it was a matter for

the state's attorney as to whether public funds have been used to promote a referendum.

Dr. Carl Spight stated that the Oak Park and River Forest community has benefited from the student discipline report and key indicators report, although both reports begat as many questions as they answered and raised as many from the equity and social justice standpoint. In 1992/1993, he was a member, chair, and statistician for a Board-appointed study team. He was disappointed in the student discipline report and depressed to witness such a report. In 1991, African-American students represented 25.5% of the school population and represented 54% of the incidents of suspension. What is missing? Beyond the assessment of outcomes or consequences, where is the assessment of effort or investment in restorative practices, PSS Teams and the mentor academy, and the quality responses to the interventions. Where is the cost of opportunities to learn in second semester and the associated investments or efficiencies of intervention services? Where is the report of the theory of action that he hoped would inform the PPS Team and the Mentor Academy that will leave to thinking and redesign. He said the high school can do better in 2016, All Things That are Best for all.

**Status of FOIA Requests**

Ms. Kalmerton reported that 13 FOIA requests were received and 11 were resolved.

**Student Council Report**

Ms. Cofsky shared news of the first interclub meeting, in which 24 to 25 clubs participated. Many of them were clubs that were unknown and had trouble with marketing and fundraising. Student Council found clubs with similar ideas and suggested collaboration. Tau Gamma had canceled the spring dance because ticket sales were low and Student Council wanted more than one dance on the calendar. This was the impetus for this meeting. A dance mix and a fair will be combined this year. Ms. Topf may schedule another spring spirit week and this activity would conclude that week.

Student Council is working on the TOE assembly. While it values and cherishes the idea, only one out of four nominees can attend and there was concern that students may not stay engaged. Student Council is trying to think of ways to honor those who are deceased.

While students love Chromebooks, they would like printing stations for them around school so it would reduce time in the tutoring center.

**Superintendent Report**

The Superintendent's Report included:  
Physical education teacher Linda Carlson has been named the Midwest District Physical Education Teacher of the Year by the Illinois Association Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance. She'll be honored at the association's annual state convention.

Special education teacher Octavius Bellamy won the gold medal in the 97KG Veteran Freestyle Wrestling World Championship, held in Poland, where he dominated his opponent to a 10-0 victory.

For the 11th year in a row, OPRF has been awarded the Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting, the highest recognition for school district financial operations given by the Association of School Business Officials International (ASBO).

Science teachers Vincent Martinek and David Bernthal have been selected for the University of Chicago's Outstanding Educator Award. Each year the university invites first-year students to nominate an educator who has influenced, challenged, or helped them along the path toward intellectual growth.

The following students have been named 2017 National Merit Commended Students: Eugenio Arenas, Olivia Baldwin, Anishka Bandara, Elliot Brandt, Matt Clarkson, Charles Cole, Aidan Crosby, Jakob Enschede, Renee Gagliardo, Caroline Galo, Ovyu Ganesan, Catherine Garcia-Goetting, Teresa Gorman, Benjamin Hancock, William Hoffenkamp, Solomon Kimrey, Maria Kronic, Emily Monaghan, Riley Moran, Benjamin Paris, Adeline Steward-Nolan, Jonas Talandis, Renee Tristano, Ava Trogus, Hallie Voss, Rosalie Wakely, Meghan Ward, Ethan Weiss, Elena Whitney, Lila Wine, Michelle Wolford, Kyra Woytek.

Artwork by senior Alec Rasmussen was among the small selection of high school student work from the 2016 Illinois High School Art Exhibition chosen to be displayed at the 2016 Illinois Association of School Boards Joint Annual Conference in November.

OPRFHS's first Options Fair, a regional post-high school planning fair for students with disabilities, was a resounding success, with more than 500 people attending. Thanks go out to special education teacher Carolina Schoenbeck, who organized the fair as part of her sabbatical work this year.

A record number of OPRF students made Illinois Music Educators Association District I Band, Choir, Orchestra and Jazz--almost 70% of our students who auditioned.

- Band: Isabelle Carrillo, Montgomery Ellwanger, Gracie Farnham, Owen Frankel, Lily Klem, Gabriel Krauter, Ethan Resek, Emma Wojack, Kyra Woytek, Tyler Yokoo, Levi Raskin, Noah Sherman
- Orchestra: Jane Hanneman, Maia Huang, Amanda Kellman, Sophia Kreider, Olive Loentz
- Chorus: Lily Alter, Collette Donlin, Natalie Hester, Noah Kitsos, Spencer Lombardo, Selina McNeill, Patricia Meadors, Sagana Ondande, Emma Oxnevad, Natalie Passaro, Lucia Rodriguez-Nelson, Gabe Schonman, Meagan Shinker, Sophia Zinger

- Jazz Bands: Justin Banks, Frances Bassett-Dilley, Owen Frankel, Ethan Hess, Nicholas Hymnson, Aaron Kaufman-Levine, Joe Merkle, Rufus Parenti, Noah Sherman, Luca Zefran
- Vocal Jazz Ensemble: Noah Kitsos, Sophia Zinger

In the first public forum debates for the debate team, and out of more than 100 total competitors, Conor Johnson took third place in JV public forum/individual and Conor Johnson and Charlie Cole took second place in JV public forum/team.

Girl swimmers Natalie Ungaretti and Hanna Blankemeier combined forces to shatter the meet record in the 100 freestyle at the prestigious Trevian Relays Meet in early October. Natalie's time of 51:25 is the fastest in the state. Natalie and Hanna combined with Alex Gill and Samm Nielson to claim second place in the 200 freestyle relay. The relay team is currently ranked third in the state.

In its first sweep in years, girls' cross-country took first place in all levels in the tough Maine Event on Oct. 1. Notable performers were Gillian Lungren, who raced up a level when she could have won the freshman/sophomore race, and Mahal Schroeder, Caroline Gallo, and Hallie Voss, seniors who pushed their under classmates through.

Girls' tennis players Maria Kronic, Julia Krause, Hannah Keidan and Sophia Kreider all qualified for the state meet, which took place earlier this month.

## Consent

Dr. Moore moved to approve the following consent items:

- Check Disbursements and Financial Resolutions dated October 27, 2016
- Monthly Treasurer's Report
- Acceptance of Donations and/or Gifts
- Personnel Recommendations, including New Hires and Resignation/Retirement/Termination
- Board Member Attendance at Joint Conference November 18 and 19, 2016
- Board/Superintendent Agreements
- Open and Closed Session Minutes of June 13, 14, 20, 21, 30, July 14 and 28, August 1, 16, 17, and 25, 2016 and a declaration that the closed session audiotapes of March 2015 be destroyed:

seconded by Ms. Cassell. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

## Course Proposals and Academic Catalog Changes for 2017-18

Dr. Gevinson moved to approve the Course Proposals and Academic Catalog Changes for the 2017-18 school year, as presented; seconded by Ms. Dixon Spivy. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

These proposals were developed last spring and faculty members brought them to divisions and are reviewed by division heads and DLT, the Board of Education, and then both internal and external group of community. Took into account viewpoints that were

shared and make those adjustments. With regard to FTE, since so many of these proposals and so much of the academic program is both core academic and academic elective, it is hard to determine the effect on FTE. The requirement of freshmen to take a freshman study hall if not in performing arts is a mechanism to control costs.

A member expressed concern about the justification of keeping a course that did not change a situation, if the District still planned to have common assessments or goals. A request was made to look at the assessments to see how many students were meeting as the school should have about a year's worth of data.

One member was troubled about gearing classes for students going to Triton as it felt like further tracking to provide college credit for remedial classes. If the goal is to be college ready, they should be in classes with different students. Dr. Moore did not believe OPRFHS students should have a class that focused on minority students at Triton. She did not appreciate the books being used with the class. The administration responded that the curriculum mirrors Triton's syllabus. The District is recommending the books and can present them in a good way. One book is already in use in some classes and discussions have occurred with the division head and the teacher about its use.

This class prevents them having to take that a remedial class in college. Classes 099 and 101 are transferrable. OPRFHS is putting this together for students, but it might end up a Triton experience so that they would have a college course on their transcript. Enrollment in these classes now is 50 to 60 students. Referring back to the renaming page, that is the junior year class and aligned with 099, taking college and career literacy. This is a shift. This is a pair of those two courses and acknowledge that the 50+ students have not made up the differences in reading and readiness and this will give them the experience of what college might be in the English division. Dr. Moore did not understand why the school was offering support rather than separating those students. There is the suggestion that because it is Triton driven, students may expect to end up at Triton and that places limits on their expectations. She could not support it. The administration explained that if the Board of Education did not approve these courses, students would take Literacy 101, CCL or LIT classes. Experience has shown that 85 to 100 students attend Triton and take remedial reading, writing, and math classes. Currently, the only recognized dual-credit class in English for OPRF students is AP College English. By adopting RHT I 0 I :Freshman Rhetoric & Composition, the English Division ensures equity for students who are often underrepresented in honors courses. This new course will develop a relationship between the students and Triton by providing them the opportunity to take a Triton course while at OPRFHS. The administration recommends this as it an opportunity for all students to take one AP Class and have a college experience while still at the high school. Dr. Moore stated that if the desire to have dual credit is getting a participation certificate, it is calling it something else. If the District knows junior and senior students are in remedial reading and math classes, something has been missed as to what supports are needed by those students. Many college prep classes do not get dual credit. Her goal would be for the students to get dual

credit, they would be college ready. The administration concurred noting that Rhetoric & Composition 101 is a college class.

Discussion ensued about the programmatic impact of not having the health class during the summer. PE tends to run higher class sizes, so the administration did not feel it would have an effect on the school year. Health would be spread out more evening during the year. One ideas for replacing health in summer school is an AP boot camp (what is the mindset for AP classes that preps a student for school year work). More pieces will be developed and division heads have been charged to work with Dr. Walker Qualls to making a shift over the next 2 or 3 years about how to eliminate health. The administration will review the marketplace for teacher salary increases as well.

[OPRF IGA for ALOP Grant 2016](#)

Dr. Gevinson moved to approve the renewal of the Intergovernmental Agreement FY 2016 with West 40 regarding the Alternative Learning Opportunities Program (ALOP); seconded by Ms. Cassell. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Information was missing on Page 6 and the Board of Education asked for an update to be sent to it relative to objectives met and not met.

[Renewal of Medical, Life Insurance](#)

Ms. Dixon Spivy moved to renew the Medical, Dental and Life Insurance as [Dental, and](#) presented; seconded by Dr. Gevinson. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

OPRFHS had a favorable renewal. Combining all of the HMO, PPO and dental was a .6 increase overall in premium which amounts to about \$20,000. The high school's internal insurance committee company determined that premiums will be kept flat and it would pay the increase out of the health insurance fund balance, which is just over \$4 million. For the past six years, OPRFHS has had ongoing consistent claims; they were flat year to year.

[Supplemental Charter Transportation Services Contract](#)

Mr. Cofsky moved to award of supplemental charter transportation services contract to Chicagoland Transportation Solutions; seconded by Dr. Gevinson. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

First Student is the District's current transportation provider for field trip and extracurricular trips. The school bus industry continues to experience a national driver shortage that is affecting our athletic team's critical departure times between 3:15 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. in order to arrive in time to compete in areas that drive time is longer. At this time First Student is not able to provide transportation service to our athletic teams before 3:45 p.m. In order to provide safe and reliable transportation service to our athletic teams for the 3:15 to 3:30 p.m. timeframe, this contract is needed on a supplemental basis. The term is beginning November 1 through June 20, 2017 and it can be renewed for up to 4 years. Chicagoland Transportation is a broker; it subcontracts out to bus companies.



One member was concerned that the existing vendor was not meeting its obligation. He was concerned with a different model as when the high school is the primary customer, the provider can perform favorably. When a backup is needed, it is a different role. The Board of Education asked the following questions:

- 1) What experience of other school districts as a secondary service?
- 2) Safety is paramount in terms of driver qualifications,, how will that be monitored? What is the experience of the driver?

Note: the quality of equipment and drivers is much improved over the previous vendor.

[Approval of Climate, Culture, and Behavior Committee Members](#)

Dr. Gevinson moved to approve the members of the Climate, Culture, and Behavior Committee as of October 27, 2016, as presented; seconded Dr. Moore. A voice vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Due to some fluctuations in the membership of this committee, the request was made to appoint new committee members and reaffirm the sustaining members.

[Policy for First Reading](#)

Dr. Moore moved to approve 4:60, Operational Services, for first reading, with the modification that a reference is given to a fiscal year; seconded by Ms. Dixon Spivy. A voice vote resulted in motion carried.

**Notice to Remedy**

Dr. Moore moved to approve the Motion to approve the resolution authorizing issuance of notice to remedy of tenured teacher Danielle Dobias; seconded by Dr. Gevinson. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

**Revised Pay Rates for Testing Staff**

Dr. Moore moved to ratify the pay rate increases for testing staff; seconded by Ms. Cassell. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried. This is approximately a \$4,500 increase in the budget.

The Board of Education recessed at 9:12 pm. and resumed at 9:20 p.m.

**School Report Card & [School Profile](#)**

The Board of Education received a copy of the School Profile. The School Report Card was not yet available.

[Second Semester 2016 Student Discipline Report](#)

The Board of Education was reminded that based on Senate Bill 100, which was effective on September 16, 2016, all discipline codes have changed. As a result the discipline report will look different in the future. The Culture, Climate and Behavior Committee Meeting is meeting to explore ways in which to better enhance the supports for students in an effort to be less punitive and truly change behavior.

Data Warehouse was used to compile the Second Semester 2016 Student Discipline Report. Mr. Silver highlighted the following:

- Only 20% of infractions resulted in suspensions, 16 ISS and 3 OSS. More consequences are dean meeting, verbal warning to OSS and breaks down by the infraction.
- For the second semester of the 2015-2016 school year, 98% of the student body received no out-of-school suspensions. The remaining 2% of the student body received at least one day of suspension, while 68 students accounted for the 80 instances of out-of-school suspension.
- Table 3 broke down out-of-school suspension by ethnicity, special education status, and low income status. 56.2% of students suspended out of school were black, 11.2% Hispanic, 5% multiracial, and 27.5% white. 28.7% of students suspended out of school had IEP's while 71.3% did not. Finally, 58.7% of students below were low income while 41.3% were not. Mr. Chandler, an outside consultant, will help present data that speaks to race and gender and yet is still confidential.
- Table 4 showed that over 93% of the student body received no in-school suspensions. The remaining 6.7% of the student body received at least one day of suspension. In these cases, social workers visited with these students to engage in discussions about how to prevent reoccurrence of in-school suspensions.
- Table 5 broke down the in-school suspension by ethnicity, special education status, and low income status, which is determined by Free and Reduced Lunch. 1% of students who were placed in in-school suspension were Asian, 59.1% were black, 15.9% Hispanic, 4.7% multiracial, and 19.1% white. 36.1% of students placed in in-school suspension had IEP's while 63.9% did not. Finally, 45.3% of students below were low income while 54.7% were not.

Mr. Silver noted that students no longer receive an ISS for tardies; more conversations as opposed to consequences are occurring. At each quarter rather than each semester, the number of tardies is reset to zero. Resetting at the quarter allows students to get back into good standing instead of waiting 16 weeks. Recommended consequences for being tardy include Saturday detentions, attendance at the tutoring center, motivational mentoring, and more contact with SIDs. While an ISS is an option for failure-to-serve, thus far this year, it has not happened. One member noted that resetting could be good, but the District cannot lose track of the data because some students might get lost in that system. Any ISS is a consequence of someone who does not want to be in school and they are just losing more class time. Mr. Silver noted that the SIDs researched the Evanston Township High School tracking system.

Mr. Chandler is helping to evaluate the data and the District is looking at a way to track it. Since Senate Bill 1, only 2 OSS and 6 ISS have been issued for the entire semester. The community should be informed of that fact. The District is engaging students in deeper conversation to determine the root of the problems. OPRFHS provides support services for students in ISS. While in ISS, students can still tend to what they have to do. The District is looking at preventions, as opposed to interventions.

The additional PSS Team has allowed SIDs to do more home visits, monitor the halls as needed and have substantial conversations with the students. More collaboration is occurring because of Senate Bill 100. When asked if the SIDs were collecting data on home visits systematically, the response was that they have a shared list which speaks to how they handled the student. Conversations and interventions are being documented, although it is difficult to capture this data in Skyward. The District has started to use guidance tabs when meeting with the student, parent, or home visit, etc. Mr. Chandler, Mr. Rouse, Ms. Hoffmann and Ms. McKee are trying to determine how to find out what is and what is not working.

Note: OSS were reduced by 17% and ISS by 24% from first semester last year and first semester this year due to the notable support of the additional PSS Team.

### Summer School Report

The Board of Education received the Summer School Report presented by Dr. Gwen Walker Qualls.

Per a suggestion, Dr. Walker-Qualls will have a follow-up conversation with Ms. Hoffmann about how the summer school counselor can systematically share the experiences of students in summer school with their regular school counselors.

Dr. Walker-Qualls and Mr. Prale are working with the division heads on offering a graduation credit class during summer school that would replace health class. Dr. Walker Qualls hoped that this would be in place by the end of the year, as that is when she starts the hiring process for summer school. The fact that health will not be offered in the summer must be clearly and often articulated to incoming freshman families. Summer school teachers are generally younger teachers and only three OPRFHS teachers taught during the summer. The credit recovery class is taught mostly with in-house teachers, and the 8 to 9 connection teachers are both middle school and high school teachers. Dr. Walker Qualls noted that she has graduates assist students in the credit recovery classes. She also offered that most of the students in credit recovery classes are students in the school lunch program and that they did not know why they were in that course.

### **GPA and ACT: Key Indicators of Student Achievement**

Ms. Hill felt that the report focused exclusively on academic readiness, mindsets, key cognitive strategies. It is not meant not exclude other factors, but instead focus on what might help the District serve the students and where to put in early warning systems.

A study of GPA, ACT and post-secondary data for three graduating cohorts (2007, 2008, 2009) has helped us to identify three key indicators of post-secondary academic readiness:

- An unweighted GPA of 2.7 or higher
- An Academic Program Index<sup>1</sup> greater than 1.0
- An ACT composite score of 21 or higher.

When we look at our current students and most recent graduates through the lens of these three indicators, similar patterns appear across all the data sets.

- For each of the three benchmarks, roughly  $\frac{3}{4}$  of students in the Class of 2016 attained or surpassed the benchmark; 60% achieved all three, and 76% achieved at least two.
- Among students in the classes of 2016-2019, higher proportions of white and Asian students have achieved each of the benchmarks compared to Hispanic, multi-racial, and Black students.
- Among students in the classes of 2016-2019, higher proportions of girls than boys have achieved the benchmarks across all racial groups (except, in some cases, among Asian students).

To determine benchmarks and baselines, we looked at GPA, ACT, and post-secondary data for 2234 students in our graduating classes of 2007, 2008, and 2009. The analysis revealed that a 2.7 unweighted GPA and ACT composite of 21 were associated with a 50% likelihood of earning a post-secondary degree (2-year, 4-year, or certificate). A third variable in the study was the weighted GPA, specifically the presence of an Academic Program Index (API) greater than 1.0. API is a multiplier that is applied to a student's unweighted GPA to produce a "weighted" GPA. It is intended to provide an indication of the level of rigor in the overall course of study. The API ranges from 1.0 to 1.24. An API greater than 1.0 indicates that the student took one or more honors or AP course(s) and earned a grade of A or B. Compared to students who earned an API of 1.0, students with an API greater than 1.0 were more likely to earn a post-secondary degree; the increased likelihood ranged from 16-60%.

One member liked the new idea of trying to identify indicators of success or college readiness, as it will allow the District to target things more effectively.

Ms. Hill explained that she used ACT research as a model to identify CRB, which began by looking at 90,000 students' ACT scores and grades in the early semester of freshman year. Then it looked at the PLAN test given previously. It did not say 18 in English was benchmark. The benchmarks were scaled and differentiated by grade level. She has not done that analysis, so when she stated that the District wants to build a system that will identify second-semester freshman, that is an overreach. It will be possible to take a percentage and reach two benchmarks, etc., keeping at the forefront where to put resources.

Ms. Hill noted that the primary item that distinguishes 2-year and 4-year college is the GPA. However, habits, mindsets, behavior are also influencers. The percentage of students who matriculate to Triton and need to take remedial courses are part of the high percentage would go to Triton or a 2-year college. PSS Teams use an early warning system model which includes indicators of attendance, D and F grades, discipline infractions, etc. to identify students that need extra attention. Ms. Hill was uncertain if

this data would help identify any students earlier or change the counselors work. It was suggested that her work would inform the counselors' work. If counselors are using information to identify students not on track that is not reflected here. It gives the holistic picture of what students may need in order to be successful. Dr. Moore was concerned about achievement and racial disparity issues and stated that it was difficult to know what was going to be done to help the students in all of the grades. From these numbers, it is clear that the Board of Education does not need to look at the post-secondary information and this was a call to arms. Another member noted that 81% of white students live with two parents and only 33% of African-American students live with two parents. How does that information impact the support offered. One member asked if the extended Algebra classes and reading programs were working, as students continue to be in remedial programs.

Several members concurred that seeing the same data over the years continues to be depressing, upsetting, and aggregating. The research is known and CCB had a similar conversation about not spending time on data rather than determine what to do with the data such as looking at the best practices of other schools, detracking, etc. If something is working for other schools, what can OPRFHS take from that. Morton High School was just recognized in the state in taking AP courses. The administration needs to find other places, whether it was research or best practices, to see what the Board of Education can do. With EOS and increasing the number of students in AP courses, the answer to whether EOS will provide the technical resources once students come into the AP courses is unknown. How can the receive updates about what the District is doing, not where it is? What are the program evaluations and activities to address student outcomes? What is working? Dr. Pruitt noted that the administration will bring reports next month on how they will influence things in the future.

One member asked if the District should consider providing an all-school SAT prep class. Ms. Hill stated that she is exploring grant funding for students in the College Knowledge project. Forty-seven students will receive a \$300 voucher toward a test prep course (one costs \$290 and the other costs \$380). She has also increased the District's budget to support scholarships for FRE. It is a balance of where one puts the resources. Another exploration is having history teachers embed the SAT curriculum second semester.

Ms. Hill acknowledged that unpacking the 2.7 GPA would be worthy for the next set of questions, as that is the Most important predictor of student success.

Dr. Gevinson felt the Board of Education, the administration, and faculty should take a field trip to Evanston to explore detracking. He also supported forming a committee that focused on the tracking question. He felt that naming the interventions and determining how well they worked would be difficult. Spoken Word is an interesting, successful intervention. He remembered trying to assess whether participation in Spoken Word would help close the gap or raise ACT scores, and while that was not able to be accomplished, he believed it was one of the most successful programs put into the school

and a major benefit for its participants. It is frustrating not to have numbers showing the achievement. Sometimes the interventions hit one student at a time. In looking at Fig. 10, he saw the same numbers, but he believed it is true that in many ways the school has addressed the needs of students more effectively over time and that is not reflected in the numbers. Dr. Moore suggested asking if these students had increased attendance, less discipline issues, more resources, etc. Students involved in extracurricular do better. Students in Spoken Word are orderly and something is happening. There are ways to ask the questions, but it may be more nuanced.

Mr. Arkin supported looking at tracking and drilling down on what Evanston has done to understand it to see if it would work at OPRFHS. He also noted that if the Board of Education were to provide a SAT Prep program for every junior, he believed there may be groups that may ask to be involved, i.e., the Alumni Association and the Scholarship Foundation might support it.

Mr. Cofsky noted that his daughter is taking a couple of classes out of the normal track and they are the classes that she talks about and learns from and they learn from her. An impact is being made.

#### Levy Timeline

Mr. Altenburg presented the Timeline for the 2016 Levy, as follows:

#### FTE & Employee Profile

Ms. Horton presented the Faculty/Staff Report and Employee Profile Information for the 2016-17 school year.

Discussion has ensued about developing a recruiting strategy intended to target African-American teachers by reaching out to the education departments of various colleges and universities to develop a recruiting relationship to increase minority hiring. A suggestion was to include Illinois state schools as well in this relationship developing project and graduates of OPRFHS should be counseled on entering education, specifically African-American students. The District has a robust employment orientation and it then continues on with the work. One member noted that the District has had minority recruitment committees in the past consisting of administration, students, and teachers.

#### **District Reports**

Reports were provided on the Alumni Association, APPLAUSE, Boosters and Citizens' Council.

#### **Closed Session**

At 11:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 27, 2016, Dr. Moore moved to enter closed session for the purpose of discussing the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the District or legal counsel for the District, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee or against legal counsel for the District to determine its validity. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1), as amended by PA.93—57; seconded by Dr. Gevinson A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

At 11:19 p.m., the Board of Education resumed open session.

**Adjournment**

At 11:20 p.m., Ms. Spivy moved to adjourn the regular Board of Education meeting; seconded by Dr. Moore. A voice vote resulted in motion carried.

Dr. Jackie Moore  
Vice President

Sara Dixon Spivy  
Secretary