

January 28, 2016

A special meeting of the Board of Education of the Oak Park and River Forest High School was held on Thursday, January 28, 2016, in the Board Room of the high school.

Call to Order

President Weissglass called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. A roll call indicated the following members were present: Fred Arkin, Jennifer Cassell, Thomas F. Cofsky, Dr. Steve Gevinson, Dr. Jackie Moore, Sara Dixon Spivy, and Jeff Weissglass. Also in attendance was Dr. Steven T. Isoye, Superintendent; Tod Altenburg, Chief School Business Official; David Ruhland, Director of Human Resources; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

Closed Session

At 6:34 p.m., Mr. Weissglass 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; Collective negotiating matters between the District and its employees or their representatives or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(2); and Litigation, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the particular District has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the District finds that an action is probable or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recorded and entered into the closed meeting minutes 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11); seconded by Ms. Cassell. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

At 7:33 p.m., the Board of Education resumed its open session.

Joining the meeting were Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction; Amy Hill, Director of Assessment and Learning; Dr. Gwen Walker-Qualls, Director of Pupil Support Services; and Sheila Hardin, Faculty Senate Representative.

Visitors

OPRFHS Faculty and Staff Karin Sullivan, Jonathan Silver, and Jackie Charette-BassiriRad; students Simone Scott, Grace Kaminski, Darrell Sanders, Cameron Bergau, Lindsay Moore-Fields, Kayla York, Justin Maxwell; community members Karen Anderson, John Duffy, Rebecca Morrow-Nye, Mary Bird, Mark Fields, Wyanetta Johnson, Burcey Hines; filmmaker Steven James and crew.

Public Comments

John Duffy spoke about the great effort schools had made to meet the needs of the students of color, and yet failed in that accomplishment. He was very involved in the 1980's and mid-1990s. He studied 16 African-American and White citizens and parents who had responded to a historic problem, the second generation/integration, and the question of how schools had failed to meet the promise of brown. At OPRFHS and District 97, parents, students, and teachers

participated in a strategic plan process. He served on Transformational Teaching and Learning task force. The Strategic Plan prioritized racial equity in the education of the children. He was pleased to see that the Board of Education's Instruction Committee was coming to grips with second generation/integration. He asked whether the organization of AP, Honors, College Prep and Transition courses, did, in fact, aggregated the achievement gap and, therefore, reduced overall achievement. He proposed that this community and stakeholders participate in a "One Book, One OPRFHS" discussion by reading *On the Same Track: How Schools Can Join the Twenty-First-Century Struggle against Resegregation* by Carol Corbett Burris. Evanston High School has been wrestling with racial inequity, and it has fully engaged the question as to whether tracking predicted outcomes. He left a copy of the book for the Board of Education.

Karen Anderson, a 25-year resident of Oak Park, had attended most of the pool meetings and had gone from being disappointed to hopeful to disappointed to hopeful again. She had attended the Long-term Facilities Planning meeting at which Legat Architects gave the attendees the opportunity to play architect and assigned them a large blueprint, telling them to dream big. Ten students presented ideas for the school. They talked about rooms with modular furniture for studying, quiet time, socializing, and how the school could be used for the students. They also talked about how they did not like the cafeteria, ranking it below average, and wanted more tables and chairs. Could the pool be moved to the cafeteria? While it may be expensive to move the kitchen and lockers, it would save the parking garage and green space. This may be a suggestion the adults had not recognized.

Rebecca Morrow Nye reflected that the pool proposal that had spawned a petition for a referendum has several flaws: 1) the pool proposed was too large and too expensive (April 24, 2014, Board of Education packet presented an Olympic-sized pool at over \$34.3 million). That size pool would require a huge building. 2) The School Code of Illinois requires that if a new pool or natatorium is built for PE instruction, a referendum would be required for 100% of that funding; 3) the parking garage would need to be demolished. She supported rebuilding one pool in the field house and pursuing the idea of building of a 25-meter pool suitable for swim team competitions somewhere else in the village.

A number of senior students asked the Board of Education to amend the graduation dress code so that it was gender neutral. They requested that the suit option be amended to include women's business attire or offer the option of caps and gowns. Mr. Rouse and Student Council agreed with these sentiments.

Status of FOIA Requests

Ms. Kalmerton reported that three FOIA requests had been received and two were resolved.

Student Council

Ms. Grimes reported that March is charity month, and Student Council is working to get that started early. The events will include Mr. OPRFHS, Pack the Potbelly (performances by student bands, poets, etc. with Potbelly will donate a percentage of the sales), Pie in the Face of Teachers, and Crush. Student Council will also have a table to recruit new members at the 8th-grade open house, etc., and it will participate in other activities, as well.

Faculty Senate Report

Ms. Hardin reported that second semester had started. Faculty Senate's agenda includes student growth for evaluation, the regular committees on which it participates, i.e., PTAC, working with the administration, etc. Ms. Hill will bring achievement information forward to the Senate.

Superintendent Report

Dr. Isoye reported the following:

Last weekend, OPRF competed in the first regional Ethics Bowl tournament, held at the University of Chicago. One of the three participating teams finished second after being edged by Lab School in the final round. Congratulations to Noah Banholzer, Sarah Kreider, Grace Liao, Elizabeth Perkins, and Lauren Pritz.

Kudos to the Jazz Ensemble for placing number one in Illinois and second overall at this weekend's regional Purdue Jazz Festival. Thirty-four bands competed from five states around the Midwest. In addition, Grae Abbott received an outstanding soloist award of the day. Members of the ensemble are: Max Lazarus, Scott Kiefer, Emilio Amaya, Aaron Kaufman-Levine, Antwon Billups, Lucas Quilling, Henry Griffin, Cole Sheridan, Faith Pilditch, Aidan Flanigan, Julian Miranda, Edward Brenneman, Ethan Hess, Jane Jozefowicz, Mary Martin, Russell Alger, Grae Abbott, Noah Sherman, Owen Frankel, Ajun Rawal, Charlie Reichert-Powell, and Joe Merkle.

Congratulations to the Speech Team on its most recent performance, where it captured the third place team trophy at Hersey Mid-Winter Freeze Speech Tournament. The following three OPRF students were first-place tournament champions: Gabriel Girson for humorous interpretation, Ellie Bourgikos for informative speaking, and Max Freeman for original oratory.

Dr. Isoye reported that the Japanese exchange students are here, staying in homestays, attending the JapanFest,

Global Glimpse

Ms. Jamelyn Lederhouse, Manager of Chicago Programs at Global Glimpse provides travel experiences. She thanked the Board of Education for having the opportunity to share background on the organization and key updates as to what the company is doing at OPRFHS. Global Glimpse is an innovative educational nonprofit that works to inspire America's next generation to become responsible global citizens through after school programming and immersion in the developing world. Since 2008, Global Glimpse has served 2700 students and 260 educators across 45 public school in San Francisco Bay area and New York.

Students and educators have 18-day experiences. This year, Global Glimpse launched in Chicago with 10 high schools and this year 900 students from Chicago will participate. They will learn different perspectives with people from different backgrounds that will help them prepare for college and career. There are 3 components of the program: global education, service learning, and leadership development. She shared the 2015 Impact Report and thanked the Board of Education for the opportunity to partner with OPRFHS. Mr. Weissglass noted that it was exciting to be partnering with it.

Chicago Voyce

Jonathan Silver introduced the students and the Chicago Voyce Facilitator, Jose Sanchez. The Board of Education had talked about student leadership and had encouraged students, from the beginning, to tell their own story. These students have been working since last year to be able to talk about school climate. Mr. Sanchez helped plan a student event last October. The following students were introduced: Darrell Sanders, Cameron Bergau, Lindsay Moore-Fields, Kayla York, and Justin Maxwell.

Mr. Justin noted that SAPP Stood for Students Against Punitive Practices. The purpose is to change the educational system and make the discipline system beneficial. He and the other students were recommended by their deans to attend a presentation a Chicago Public School event held at Malcolm-X College. About 50 students participated in the event hosted by OPRFHS. Students received lots of teacher and administrative support from Dr. Isoye, Mr. Silver, the rest of the SIDs, etc.

SAPP is a student-layered organization created to incorporate the student voice into the school's current disciplinary system. It wants to reduce penalties and to find more long-term alternatives to promote student success without forcing heavy discipline, to give students a sense of welcome, address whatever recurring problems they encounter. Attendance is a problem at OPRFHS, and that has to be addressed. Five percent of the 3,400 enrollment students miss first-period class. The data can be broken down by gender, ethnicity, grade, academics, and economics. Using data from 2011-12, they found that students who do not participate in extracurricular activities have lower GPA than those students who do participate. Engaging students in extracurricular activities has been highlighted in recent years, and participation has increased.

OPRFHS students gained insight into how OPRFHS could replicate the Restorative Justice practices implemented at the Chicago Public Schools and want to implement them at OPRFHS. Data shows that black students have the highest number of disciplinary infractions both In-School and Out-of-School. As such the students wanted to implement the students' voice into the discipline system. Some students had expressed that the current discipline system assigns penalties according to a system, as opposed to considering their personal situations and struggles, i.e., equity opposed to equality. With the present system, students feel as though they are being placed into a system as opposed to

the system being built around their personal needs. How can the District expect students to want to be here, if the District is not investing in building their self-esteem?

One student reiterated that the turnout for the September event was disappointing in that only about 50 people attended when over 200 were expected. However, with the input of those who did attend, the students created a “root-cause tree” which showed that the roots are the causes, the main problem is the trunk, and the leaves are the symptoms of the cause. One identified cause was the lack of student input which is linked to relationships between students, teachers, and staff. Other identified causes were: race, lack of points of view, lack of transportation, and lack of knowledge. Thus, the main problems were the attendance policy and the achievement gap. The symptoms are inconsistent, biased expectations that teachers and staff might hold. The school cannot hold everyone to the same educational level of the diversity in their stories, backgrounds and origins. Another symptom was a student being behind in his/her school work, which then leads to the student dropping the class, and subsequently leads to further setbacks in his/her educational life. SAPP is about improving punitive practices. Students must have a voice to improve the system.

Because its turnout was less than desired, a plan was modeled to increase student attendance, i.e., a two-period in-school field trip. The first one would be periods 1-3 and the second one would be periods 6-8. The belief was that attendance would also be increased if students were able to select which assembly they wanted to attend, and what classes they would miss. SAPP would improve their methods to reach out to students about this event.

One student noted that many times in the educational system, students are underrepresented in a system that was created for them. SAPP wants to give students a place to identify those problems, to systemically destroy those issues for future generations, and to build trust, i.e., faith in the system, and trust that one will be successful. If one has friends or family members that are or have been through this process in other places, this process can guide them. Hopefully, this will spread to other educational systems, so those students do not have to go through these things.

A quote by Nelson Mandela was read: “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” Even though its SAPP’s mission is to give students a voice and create a safe environment for them, we want to change the world and changing these students’ minds will help to change the world.

Mr. Sanchez reported that Chicago VOYCE was founded in 2011 to address the dropout crisis at the district and state levels. It was found that student-adult relationships were missing. The students were speaking their own views. The Chicago Public Schools review of its code of conduct and subsequently passed new student discipline laws, providing leadership, advocacy, and empowerment

trainings. Education should be about empowering young people and giving them the tools needed in order to transfer to college and professional lives.

Mr. Weissglass thanked the students for their report. He was very impressed with the data they had presented, the analysis of the systems, and the causes. He appreciated the student's voice.

The following items were removed from the Consent Items

- E. Motivational Mentorship Position;
- K. Policy 7:185;
- L-5. Policy 5:100 Staff Development Program.

Consent Agenda

Mr. Weissglass moved to approve the following consent items:

- A. Check Disbursements and Financial Resolutions dated January 28, 2016
- B. Monthly Treasurer's Report
- C. Donations and Gifts
- D. Personnel Recommendations (including New Hires, Resignation, Retirement, Leave)
- F. NIIPC Commodities RFP
- G. NIIPC Selected Commercial Foods RFP
- H. Video Archive Storage System
- I. Projector Product and Installation RFP
- J. Authorization to Prepare FY 2016-17 Budget
- L. Policies for Second Reading and Amendment
 - 1. Policy 2:150 Committees
 - 2. Policy 2:200 Types of School Board Meetings
 - 3. Policy 4:170 Safety
 - 4. Policy 5:90 Abused and Neglected Children Child Reporting
 - 6. Policy 6:15 School Accountability
 - 7. Policy 6:50 School Wellness
 - 8. Policy 6:60 Curriculum Content
 - 9. Policy 6:160 English Learners
 - 10. Policy 6:310 High School Credit for Non-District Experiences
 - 11. Policy 6:315 High School Credit for Students in Grade 7 or 8 (NEW)
 - 12. Policy 6:320 High School Credit for Proficiency
- M. Open and Closed Session Minutes of December 8 and 17, 2015, and January 14 and 19, 2016, and a declaration that the closed session audiotapes of June 2014 be destroyed.

seconded by Dr. Moore. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Motivational Mentorship

Mr. Weissglass moved to approve the 1.0 FTE job position of Motivational Mentor; seconded by Mr. Arkin. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Cofsky applauded the work of Steven Jackson and believed that mentorship was critical for schools to do. Last year the Board of Education added 37 resources aimed toward student growth at a significant investment of incremental resources and he questioned why they could not be involved in the mentorship activities. It was noted that the program engages some of the students who struggle most in the school. This partnership was originally through the Oak Park Township, and the key person is no longer there or working with the high school. An internal person worked with the program and came in on his own time at different times during the day to check in with the students. The Board of Education wanted to consider hiring its own employee, rather than having the Oak Park Township do a search. While the Board of Education has said in the last few years that all of the FTE requests should be brought to the Board of Education at one time, generally in March, the District believes that this service should be continued and enhanced and begun this year. The advantage of this person not being a teacher, counselor, social worker, etc., is that they have the ability to develop different relationships with these students who are not connected in the school. The salary would range from \$35,000 to \$50,000, prorated.

Dr. Gevinson supported the position but felt it should go to the Finance Committee because the report did not have the finance information. Mr. Arkin noted that this position was lost 4 months ago, and while he understands the financial concerns, he felt it was an important decision as there has been a 50% drop in attendance in this program since Mr. Jackson's departure. He supported this position and he wanted to have a conversation about a broader mentoring program, including the Leadership and Launch program, and include staff members, community members, etc. This, however, would be, a first step in a broader conversation. Ms. Spivy stated that Mr. Jackson often went into classrooms in order to offer support to students and teachers, but another person with a different role will not be able to do that. Ms. Cassell, while concerned about the process, felt the Board of Education needed to support the goal of equity. Dr. Moore was frustrated with the processes and decision-making and suggested flagging things until everything was complete.

Policy 7:185

Mr. Weissglass moved to approve Policy 7:185, Teen Dating Violence Prohibited, for First Reading, seconded by Ms. Cassell. Concern was raised that not all high school students are teens and the suggestion was made to strike "13 to 19 years of age" and remove "Teen" from the title. Between now and the February Board of Education meeting, legal counsel will be sought as to this change. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

Policy 5:100

Mr. Weissglass moved to approve Policy 5:100 Staff Development Program, for first reading; seconded by Dr. Moore. A roll call vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

The administration is cognizant of instructional time when it makes decisions on plans for professional development; it is always part of the conversation.

**Certification of
Mid-Year
Graduates**

Mr. Weiss moved to certify the Mid-Year Graduates, as presented; seconded by Dr. Gevinson. A voice vote resulted in motion carried.

**Board of Ed
Meeting Dates &
Times for
Calendar Year
2016**

Mr. Weissglass moved to approve the regular Board of Education meeting dates and times for the calendar year 2016, as presented; seconded by Ms. Spivy. A voice vote resulted in motion carried.

**Resolution to
Prepare
Amended
FY 2015 Budget**

Mr. Weissglass moved to approve the resolution to prepare the FY 15 Amended Budget; seconded by Dr. Moore. This process will allow the District to true-up any unplanned expenditures, etc. such as Launch and Learn pilot, the LTFP work, new goggles in the science department, etc. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Cofsky did not support the work of amending the budget. Presently 4 budgetary cycles exist: 1) Preliminary (not required), 2) Tentative (August), 3) Final (September) and 4) Amended Budget. An amendment of the budget is only required if the expenditures exceeds 10%. The District has never had that experience. The intent of the budget is about planning and accountability. The Board of Education needs to be held accountable. If the budget needed amending, it would trigger a serious discussion. Mr. Altenburg noted his conversation with members of ACT as to preplanning and accountability.

DLT had discussed this and started doing some preliminary research on the the process to determine if a shift should be made. DLT recommends continuing the budget cycle as is and working with the budget leaders to see if making a change would be detrimental to the budgetary process. Mr. Altenburg noted that the budget variance report would be a good indicator of direction and standing in terms of budget versus actual expenditures. He surveyed 20 schools. Twelve of the 13 schools that responded do not do an amended budget anymore, unless there is a 10% overage, i.e., construction or emergency life safety work. Dr. Isoye noted that FAC recommended narrowing the variance. As such the administration needs to get direction as to the Board of Education's tolerance. Mr. Altenburg noted that the state budget form has a line for contingencies and in a previous district he earmarked \$250,000 for contingencies, which would give the Board of Education some flexibility. Generally, the variance is 2 to 4 percent and usually because of the number of special education students receiving services, IDEA and federal grants have guidelines for amending the budget, etc. It takes Mr. Altenburg approximately 40 hours to amend the budget.

Some Board of Education members felt that the administration should be given the time to research how this would affect the budgetary process.

This topic will be reviewed again in August. A roll call vote resulted in 4 ayes and 3 nays. Ms. Cassell, Dr. Gevinson, Dr. Moore and Mr. Weissglass voted yea. Motion carried.

Student Discipline

None

Achievement Topic Update

Ms. Hill asked for comments/questions on the Achievement Topic Update report. The point of the follow-up is to start with some of the students' experiences at the very beginning of the high school, some of which are the high school's own practices and some of which are a combination of practices of student choices that might or might not contribute to a student's success. She looked at how students are placed, how they get into the freshman relationships or connections between them, their initial involvements, etc.

Ms. Hill clarified that the data showed that overrides did not vary by race. She also noted that she believed in the research regarding stereotype threats and that they should be considered as a possible influence on students' test scores and their overall performance. With regard to overrides, the question was asked that if a family asks for an override for English, is the District counting the students once or is it counting the courses? How would that change the numbers? The data showed that while some families did go in strong, some tried for one course instead of across the board. Other questions to consider: With regard to growth patterns and achievement and attendance, who is dropping out of honors and AP classes? Who are the transition students? Are they truly transitional?

Dr. Gevinson questioned the percentage of English students in transition classes because it seemed like the percentage was 10%, not 5%, or 146 students. This question needs to be explored further.

Ms. Cassell noted that the EXPLORE test was the primary data point for course placement. Did the Board of Education want to continue that practice or look at the GPA, as research has shown that it is a greater indicator of success? How will course placement for incoming freshman be affected by the compromised EXPLORE test? Ms. Hill reported that the RtI coordinator and the division heads, decided to minimize the effect of the EXPLORE test. They are cognizant of and making adjustments to give it the right amount of influence in the course recommendations. Also, this is the last year the EXPLORE test will be used. The District is exploring other options in addition to math. Dr. Moore noted that it was a snapshot of a day in the life.

Mr. Arkin asked to see how students move through the program from transitions to college prep and college prep to honors. He too felt that if students were not in the right setting, had attendance issues or had executive functioning issues; they could be held back, and it would have nothing to do with learning.

Ms. Spivy asked to see how students were engaged in the mentoring program and how that affected their grades

Student Discipline

The Student Discipline report had been presented to the Instruction Committee meeting. The report is a comparison of first-semester discipline data from this year to first semester of last year. Note: In the first semester of this year there were 373 infractions as opposed to the 1873 last year. Some of these 373 offenses include repeat offenders. Conversations continue about supporting students and finding alternative ways to teach and to provide support for them. The Student Intervention Directors (SIDS), social workers and counselors have had more time to meet with the students proactively. The District is working on the coding of infractions more specifically in order to address them.

An example of progressive discipline is when a student gets detentions and does not serve them. After a certain number are accumulated, they turn into an ISS.

Students are aware that they have suspensions because 1) notice is given at the bottom of their passes from the HERO machine, and 2) SIDS personally inform the students of such. Detention time can be halved if the time is served in the Tutoring Center. Previously students had to give their passes to the teachers, but now they keep them. A suggestion was made to increase the awareness of detention obligations by texting the parents and/or the students.

Because the District is able to process information differently, it is now able to have an up-to-the-day dashboard.

Dr. Moore hoped the bigger issues would be brought out with the work of PTAC and looking at the system. When she gets a parking ticket, it is not a little piece of paper. Teenagers need a bigger reminder. She asked what the District was going to do about implementing Restorative Justice practices and a non-punitive discipline system. Will the data help people understand what difference it will make to students engagement? It was suggested that a dashboard might be able to provide more information differently to the Board of Education.

Mr. Arkin interpreted the reports as the failures to serve were students who had not served their tardies. He believed this was a fraction of the actual tardies being recorded. He wondered if the system created a discipline issue by itself and the Board of Education should discuss this.

Dr. Gevinson asked for longitudinal lines for both in-school and out-of-school suspensions. He noted that Evanston High School gave a presentation on Restorative Justice and one of its charts on discipline was the number of unique students receiving suspensions which had decreased significantly.

Student Discipline

None

District Fees

The report to the Finance Committee was presented to the full Board of Education. Last year the former Board of Education had several discussions about fees, specifically the instructional material fee (IMF) charged to students. The conversation raised some philosophical questions that are necessary guideposts for the future work of the administration and future Boards of Education.

The Board of Education discussed two questions: 1) should fees be charged, and 2) with regard to waivers, should the fee-paying families cover the waiver portion or should it be covered by the general fund and paid for by all of the taxpayers? Follow-up questions were asked: Should a public school be charging fees? What will the costs be if the school is using online resources? Will there be RFP for new textbooks/courses? The use of online textbooks could amount to savings of only about \$10, as publishers will protect their intellectual intelligence, and some books will not have online access. Last year, Board member Patchak-Layman asked about differentiating fees based on family income on a sliding scale. Only IMSA has a sliding scale. School districts are allowed to assess fees for current students. There is no direct language about setting fees in the School Code; however, the School Code does have information regarding the waiver of fees. A school district charging fees is supported by case law.

The administration brought forward the question of adding a technology fee and whether to have an IMF. Dr. Isoye asked them to consider whether current users pay the entire fee as opposed to having the fees paid by all of the taxpayers. It is a philosophical question. Dr. Isoye had provided Board of Education policies relative to student waivers, the bookstore and food service. Due to a major nutritional change and federal guidelines, the Food Service policy was overhauled and the language about self-sustaining did not get carried over. However, it's a practice has been ongoing. School Code references were provided as well. The breakdown of fees were provided in the second document. In addition, a graph was included that gave the minimum and the maximum and how each scenario would impact the projection modeling. The administration wants direction from the Board of Education with regard to the recommendation to go for 1:1 and, thus, it is also asking for the Board of Education's direction on whether to charge a technology fee, as well as direction on the additional FTE. FTE requests will come forward in March, and this will be included.

Technology Fee

Mr. Carioscio provided the key assumptions in a pro forma analysis to give an outline of what a technology fee might be with some parameters set forth.

- Average cost of a Chromebook that will last 4 years and with some accessories (e.g. case) is approximately \$400 with the range being \$300-\$500
- District will subsidize 50% of equipment cost; 100% of support costs
- Free and reduced percentage from October 2015 numbers

- 3% shrink (shrink is damaged, lost and stolen), implemented similarly to Districts 90 and 97

District 90 does not charge a fee, but does charge for the device. District 97 charges \$35, an insurance fee, which basically offsets repairs and so forth. A survey of other districts showed nothing being charged to hundreds of dollars being charged in addition to the cost of the device.

The financials that were included in the presentation showed that with \$50 per year technology fee, the yearly net cost for the district would be \$150,000, with an offset from the District of approximately \$80,000, which would represent a the number of devices that are usually updated in the labs, etc.

Mr. Altenburg reported that in the 2010-2011 school year, a committee brought forth the recommendation to address the dissolution of the state loan funds for textbooks. The committee collected relevant data, initiated discussions within academic divisions and analyzed alternative methods of distributing instructional materials for all students in an equitable and cost efficient manner. Both Phil Prale and Jackie Charrette-BassiRad participated on that committee. Before that time, the state provided money to school districts so that they could purchase textbooks. That practice was stopped, and the District had to look at different ways to purchase instructional materials. In his written material, he listed the guiding principles that the committee considered. The main considerations were to: maintain affordability for all families, establish a rotation of purchasing of new materials, and sustain a fair and equitable process that did not limit student access to rigorous courses just based on their income level or what they could afford. Ultimately, the committee recommended moving forward with an IMF fee, which was adopted and its intent was to cover the costs of books and materials over a five-year cycle. That fee is calculated annually based on the formula, based on an average of a five-year purchase plan of materials in that way that would maintain a \$320 rate. Also, a five-year rolling fee was done to cover the costs of the bookstore, since it was supposed to be self-sustaining and includes salaries and benefits. The IMF fee accomplished what it was designed to do.

Ms. Charette-BassiriRad spoke about the bookstore experience when it acted like a college bookstore with student waivers, payment plans, and state-loaned books. While the State of Illinois no longer gives any money for books, it had given an average of \$34 per student once every three years, which is not much when buying a physics or psychology book that could cost \$120. Five years ago, a student could spend up to \$700 for textbooks, and that amount would be unknown until the books were paid for at the register. The bookstore did buy the books back from the families at a reduced price, as they were considered used. Presently every paying student is covering the cost of all the books and the bookstore overhead, including approximately \$35,000 in credit card fees per year. The IMF fee is \$320 per year, and payment plans are \$40 per month. She

talked about the waiver process used previously and how difficult it was having conversations about how the school could help those families who could not afford the cost of textbooks. The fee covers things for specialty classes such as art and English classes, anything that has a consumable, i.e., workbook, novel, science notebooks, etc. Teachers receive the materials in their classrooms and hand them to their students. Book theft has lessened because every book is identified to a student and all students have their materials when they are needed. With this system, everyone has the same version, making it easier for students to follow along with their teachers.

Discussion ensued. Mr. Cofsky, having given much thought to the idea of charging a technology fee, likened books as the technology of the past and Chromebooks as the future and part of how education is delivered. So charging a fee did not make sense to him. He rationalized charging a fee because every student gets a desk for free so why not a Chromebook. He appreciated the good thought that went into the IMF and that it would take some financial work to unbundle it. He also asked if reductions could only be given on Free Lunch. Discussion ensued about the possibility of offering a sliding scale to those families who are just above the Free and Reduced qualification, and it was reported that no other high school districts do that. A sliding scale would also require significant OPRFHS staff resources and a question was raised as to who would be qualified to make a determination if someone were eligible.

A decision must be made in February or March about implementing this fee so that parents are aware. One member asked for data about the purpose and success that students are having with 1:1. How much time is spent determining what to do with a family who cannot pay? If the school asks to see a copy of a family's tax return, it has to know what it is looking at. Some families are living paycheck to paycheck, and if they have multiple students, fees are significant. There was a concern too that the Bookstore was involved in activities/responsibilities that were not about textbooks and students' funding of those costs as well. Dr. Moore did not believe there should be a technology fee.

Ms. Spivy had been surprised at the amount of fees being charged as she had assumed the school was free, but it is not. She congratulated Ms. Charette-BassiriRad on her work 10 years ago to change the scenario in the bookstore. However, while on the face of it, it might look fair and certainly did not discourage a student with financial difficulties at home from taking a really expensive photography class, the cost is still high, especially if adding a technology fee. With regard to asking staff to ascertain whether a family qualified for Free and Reduced, she was concerned that the District would be put in the position of prosecuting parents and saying that they lied to the school. Troubling to her was even how the District determines who falls into the waiver category and who falls into a payment plan. She was confused as to why there were separate applications for waivers, one for Food Service and one for the bookstore. She felt it should be an automatic process. It was explained that once

someone qualified for free lunch, he/she did not have to prove anything else and only 10% of the people who applied were audited. The numbers kept increasing. Having two applications was the only way to control the abuse of the system. Ms. Spivy asked about whether the district might get some private funding. She found the conversation troubling because education is supposed to be free.

Dr. Gevinson felt that a partial investment in the Chromebook would make students feel more responsible for it. From the comparison chart provided about what other schools charge, it seemed that OPRFHS fell somewhere in the middle in the amount of fees it charges. If the school does away with fees, the consequence will be that the fund balance will drop \$7 to \$8 million by 2021.

Mr. Weissglass did not have a philosophical view, but he did know that the question of fees has been asked for many years, and the practice has been tested in the courts. When it is said that a free public education is provided, it is an illegal phrase. He believed that across the country charging fees was consistent with providing a free and appropriate public education. The high school collects \$1.4 million a year in IMF and registration fees, which is a big piece of the budget. He felt more analysis should occur in what other schools in the chart are charging. He too agreed to a technology fee, as it provided a sense of ownership and potentially led to better care of the devices. He suggested allowing students to get one free because of loss or damage but after that, they would be charged for the device, as opposed to everybody getting charged. That would be a way to build in some incentive to take care of the devices. The big issues are where to draw the line on waivers and how are waivers determined. In doing college visits, he found that some schools offer free tuition for families up to a certain income level. He spoke of a retail store where the paying customers cover any losses. That is the price of doing business. Perhaps the school should adopt a commercial analogy. On the other hand, providing a waiver is also good and is potentially more appropriate for all of the taxpayers to support it. He felt no urgency to abandon fees, and he personally wanted to focus more on where the waiver line is, soften the line, and decide who should cover the cost of waivers.

Ms. Spivy felt that it was problematic that the Bookstore had to be self-sustaining. Other options would be available if the Board of Education was willing to get rid of that parameter. Mr. Arkin was comfortable with a technology fee as that would show an investment by the student.

It was the consensus of the Board of Education members to remand this discussion back to the PEG committee to help determine how this will work.

PTAC Update

The Culture, Climate, and Behavior Committee (formerly known as PTAC) is a statutory committee. Its charge has been refined and now includes:

- 1) Recommend detailed 3-year action step plan for Strategic Plan Equity Action Step 2: Create a school community where all students feel

- welcome and experience a sense of belonging.
- 2) Recommend detailed 3-year action step plan for Strategic Plan Supportive Learning Environment Action Step 4: Establish fair and just processes and practices that set clear, meaningful expectations to create a safe environment while recognizing the humanity of all students and adults.
 - 3) Review and suggest appropriate changes to the Code of Conduct.
 - 4) Recommend procedures for the application of the Code of Conduct

This will be a 15-month committee. The membership of the committee will be formally at the February BOE.

Mid-Year Update on Board of Education Goals Dr. Isoye noted that the District was on par with its goals, and they are mostly ongoing. One member asked how the District communicates to parents with regard to placement testing, and the response was that Division Heads communicate the process at Freshman Parent Night to which the majority of parents attend, again at Open House in February where parents and students meet with their counselors, during transition meetings, and through an online PowerPoint. Recommendations are based on the level of reading or math support, if any, as well as other factors. It was suggested that this is communicated on Facebook as well. One member noted that the remediation rates of OPRFHS at Triton were higher than state averages.

The Board of Education was appreciative of the update.

Implementation Pilots Dr. Moore reported on the two implementation pilots that reported out at the Instruction Committee, furniture and Leadership and Launch. Students who participated in Global Leadership Summit put together a plan for use of the second-floor library space and information was provided as to the effectiveness of the new furniture in the classrooms. Leadership and Launch provided information about its current status, noting that the students originally assigned to freshman were continuing. Next month, a desire to expand this program will be presented to the committee for consideration. Dr. Isoye thanked Faculty Senate for agreeing to the Memorandum of Understanding so that this pilot could occur.

Stipends The stipend report was presented to the Instruction Committee to provide the current state of stipends. The Board of Education will approve the stipends in March. A suggestion was made to put the number of students in another column to the front page. Participation is a determining factor as to whether a club or activity continues or is discontinued.

Pool Update It was reported that Dr. Isoye, Mr. Altenburg, Ms. Sullivan, Mr. Arkin and Mr. Weissglass were meeting on ways to move pool project forward. Their work included:

- 1) Organize the information that had been considered so that it was more user-friendly.

- 2) Create new opportunities for community input, as the message being heard, is that there should be a 2-way conversation.
- 3) Continue to work on finding a parking solution.
- 4) Pause and look at the alternatives raised in the last month or so and asking which are viable and dig more deeply, i.e., The Park District feasibility study.

Closed Session

The Board of Education resumed closed session at 11:34 p.m. and resumed open session at 11:50 p.m.

Adjournment

At 11:51 p.m. on January 28, 2016, Mr. Weissglass moved to adjourn the Special Board Meeting; seconded by Dr. Moore. A voice vote resulted in all ayes. Motion carried.

John Weissglass
President

Sara Dixon Spivy
Secretary