

OAK PARK AND RIVER FOREST HIGH SCHOOL
201 N. Scoville
Oak Park, IL 60302

Strategic Plan Operations Committee (SPOC)
November 10, 2015

A Strategic Plan Operations Committee meeting was held on November 10, 2015. Chair Dr. Moore called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Board Room. Committee members present were Dr. Jackie Moore, Tom Cofsky, and Jennifer Cassell. Also present were Dr. Steven T. Isoye, Superintendent; Philip M. Prale, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction; Tod Altenburg, Chief School Business Officer; Amy Hill, Director Assessment and Research; and Gail Kalmerton, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

Visitors included Board of Education members Fred Arkin and Sara Spivy.

Public Comments

None

Minutes

Mr. Cofsky moved to approve the SPOC minutes of October 13, 2015, as presented; seconded by Ms. Cassell. A voice vote resulted in motion carried.

Discussions with Implementation Team Leaders

Dr. Moore had conversations with some Implementation Leaders to determine what in the process needed to be improved upon and/or revisited, as well as determine the ongoing roles of the Strategic Plan's Implementation Teams. She reported the following from her conversations:

- 1) A couple of leaders were unsure as to the process to bring a proposal forward. They also felt the process needed to be streamlined. A suggestion was to give the proposals to the Implementation Team members in advance of meeting with the author so that questions could be posed before actually meeting with the author.
- 2) The charge of the Implementation Teams beyond the Strategic Plan titles was a question.
- 3) Some teams had been more fruitful in terms of germinating ideas, i.e., the purchase of furniture, the SEL coach, and the mentoring program, etc. because those ideas were already in existence and the Implementation Team was the process to use.

Dr. Isoye referred to the flow chart that was provided to the Implementation Team leaders, which highlighted last year's process. He acknowledged a lack of understanding as to the role of the SPOC and the framework for expectations in reporting to the staff and to the Board of Education. In the technology presentation at the earlier Instruction Committee meeting, the question was asked how meaningful data would be provided in a non-cumbersome way. Dr. Isoye's charge at the beginning of last year was to set up Implementation Teams that were to receive and vet ideas, and then make into pilots. The composition of those teams included all groups of employees. Some of the teams met monthly, some occasionally, and one had a full day workshop. Those ideas were linked to Board of Education goals, action steps, and, subsequently, a Strategic Plan

goal, i.e., Holistic, Equity, Transformational Teaching and Learning, Supportive Learning Environment, and Financial and Facilities. Faculty and staff expressed their interest in participating in these teams. Anyone was allowed to bring any idea to an Implementation Team via the incremental resources worksheet, developed by the Finance Committee. When an Implementation Team felt it had an idea worthy to bring forward, it was presented to the Oversight Committee, which was composed of faculty and staff from each of the bargaining groups. The Board of Education then asked that those ideas that had not gone through this process be brought forward. Some of those ideas came forward to the Board of Education in the November-December timeframe by the Implementation Team leaders. Still more have yet to come forward. The Board of Education sent the ideas that had come forward to the Policy Evaluation and Goals Committee for oversight. Then, toward the end of the year, the SPOC was implemented, and its charged was to put a strong focus on the development of ideas.

Discussion ensued about how other districts might implement their strategic plans, document their progress, use data for transformation, provide Board of Education feedback, innovate and allocate the necessary resources. The Board of Education's goal was to look at shared leadership, transparency and communications. Unfortunately, momentum was lost when the responsibility Oversight Committee was transferred from the Policy Evaluate and Goals Committee to the SPOC, and the time needed for the Implementation Teams to start. If a proposal came forward in the November/December timeframe, and if it involved students, staff had to determine FTE, financial resources, how many pilots were possible, how they would be assessed, and how would students sign up for them, i.e., the students who signed up for the leadership course did so during their study halls. The administration questioned how the proposal would build on itself in 5 years, i.e., the longer-term as opposed to a shorter-term perspective. At the Joint Board Meeting with the River Forest taxing bodies, reports from both Triton and the Library focused on their strategic plans, i.e., where they expected to be in five years as opposed to the high school's focus on individual activities. The original Strategic Plan Committee had 80 participants who lead to the Board of Education making a decision to have implementation teams who worked toward the SP's goals.

One committee member felt the current pilots should be working to perform the broader goals of the Strategic Plan; the results should be able to forecast whether they are on track to succeed. The bigger question is whether everything being proposed will move the District toward the goals of the Strategic Plan.

A question was asked if an idea needed to go through the Implementation team and/or be a pilot. Was the Board of Education's decision to add counselors or other staff a part of the Strategic Plan? The response was that it depended on the idea, as some will go through the normal vetting process. This discussion is about bringing proposals in an alternative way to this committee. Dr. Moore noted that the District needs to see if the freshman mentoring pilot is working and that needs to be done by asking questions that are relevant to the goals in order to determine what the District wants to accomplish in five years. The onus of that information gathering or reporting seems to be the shoulders of the staff members without their having the resources, technical support, coaching, etc. How does the Board of Education make sure it gets reliable information? The administrative response was that it was from the Chromebooks to the pilots to the Implementation Teams to the work the District is doing. Questions about the Strategic Plan should regularly be asked.

Dr. Moore noted that the Implementation Team leaders she spoke with wanted the Board of Education's 1) support for writing a proposal, 2) understanding of their involvement, and 3) a more direct connection between the staff and the Board of Education. A suggestion was made to have a group meet after school to have a shared discussion. Dr. Isoye has observed that much of this work is adopted by the Board of Education, and as such can see the end, i.e., what is needed in the 5-year timeframe. Last year it was about bringing ideas to get fast results; the question is how to combine that with a strategic timeframe. Dr. Moore stated that the SPOC is to have the pilots inform the process and then, more generally as things come forward, determine how to look at the reporting and metrics. Historically, this is in the fourth year of the 5-year Strategic Plan. Part of the journey included the Board of Education that was elected 2.5 years ago being asked to adopt it when it had not had the opportunity to review thoroughly.

Dr. Moore reported that two data experts were being considered to work with data and to formulate the questions. She felt a systematic approach to delivering information was needed to determining programs, justifying what is being accomplished and determining if the process can be more streamlined and more accessible.

A suggestion was to have more special committee meetings as it is important to understand the Strategic Plan both inside and outside of the building.

Dr. Isoye noted that the Board of Education had not earmarked money for "unknowns" in the budget, so as this committee makes its decisions, it should be aware that the District may have to amend the budget in order to support these proposals. One member noted that it was important to identify the critical questions, set priorities, and determine available resources. Time is also a resource, as the leaders are already spending time after-school and on weekends, and they want reassurance that there is buy-in from the Board of Education. Dr. Moore felt that expanding the conversation regarding measurements, goals, expectations, etc., would give people a better sense of what is relative and that the report should tell the story of the desired results.

Implementation Team leaders may be asked to attend the next SPOC meeting.

Adjournment

At 7:24 p.m., Dr. Moore moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Mr. Cofsky. A voice vote resulted in motion carried.

Submitted by Gail Kalmerton
Clerk of the Board