

Oak Park River Forest High School Board
October 27, 2016
Mary Haley, Observer

Present: Jackie Moore-Vice-President, Tom Cofsky, Steve Gevinson, Sara Dixon Spivy, Jennifer Cassell and Fred Arkin

Absent: Jeff Weissglass

Dr. Moore called the meeting to order at 7:42.

Public Comments: Four people responded to the latest school report card, noting that the same inequities in achievement exist now as in past reports. The time has come to move beyond reporting problems to solving problems. Some suggestions were to move away from tracking, to give counselors more guidance in placement rather than tracking and to change the focus on research from solely quantitative research to other types of information.

Consent Items: All items were passed unanimously.

Action Items: Philip Prale, ASCI, answered board questions regarding course proposals and changes for 2017-2018. Because it is difficult to predict the level of student interest in elective courses, it is hard to predict the effect these courses will have on FTEs (Full time equivalents.) The English department is developing common assessments for all freshman English classes.

Dr. Moore objected to the curriculum and textbook selections for Rhetoric and Composition 099, a class developed by Triton College. She felt that the texts display a bias in their depiction of the African-American experience. She also questioned why OPRFHS students are being enrolled in a Triton course. Mr. Prale agreed with her concerns about the texts, but noted that other materials will also be used. Enrollment in a 099 level course is a way to prepare students to begin their college studies in 100 level classes. Students who enter Triton at the 099 level tend to do less well than students who had the opportunity to earn college credits while still in high school.

Tod Altenburg, Chief School Business Official, reported that insurance costs for next year will rise by .6%.

Discussion: Mr. Rouse, OPRFHS principal, provided commentary on the Second Semester 2016 Discipline Report. There was a 17% reduction from the previous year in out of school suspensions and a 24% reduction in in school suspensions. Mr. Rouse credits the use of means other than suspensions to deal with infractions. Mediation, parent and teacher conferences social work referrals and motivational mentorship work are among the methods utilized. Having the 5th PSS team available has allowed staff to establish deeper connections with students.

There have been no in school suspensions for tardies in the 2016-2017 school year because the matter is being handled differently. Home visits, conversation and time with teachers in the tutoring center are being used instead.

Dr. Gwen Walker-Qualls, Director of Pupil Personnel Services, reported on the evaluation of the 2016 summer school program. The number of students enrolled increased slightly. Online offerings were available for students taking credit recovery classes. OPRFHS graduates were hired to provide tutoring and support with credit recovery classes. Among the recommendations made for improving the summer school program were incorporating Executive Functioning skills into the credit recovery and the special education classes, improving support for summer school students and working with the technology department to provide support for these students.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00.

If you want further information about this meeting, you can visit <http://www.oprfhs.org/about/Administration.cfm>