

Oak Park River Forest League of Women Voters Eyewitness Report

Observed by Mary Haley

Date: February 28, 2019

Meeting Length: 1hr. 40 min

Meeting Name: District 200 School Board

Headline: Board Votes to Create New Position: Executive Director of Equity and Student Success

Events and Testimony: During Public Comments a number of community members spoke in support of the creation of the new Equity Director position. Speakers praised the board's work on equity and asked that the new director have the power and authority to act.

What Did the Board Decide: In an unanimous vote, the board created the new administrative position of Equity Director. Dr. Pruitt-Adams hopes to have the position filled by July 1 so the person is in place to implement the new equity policy the board is currently creating. Board member Craig Iseli underscored the need for whoever fills this role to have the authority to act.

What Else Did the Board Discuss: The board heard a presentation from the Oak Park-River Forest Community Foundation on its proposal to work with OPRFHS to raise private funds. These funds would help defray the cost of the IMAGINE work over the years. Antonio Martinez, President and CEO of the foundation, explained the foundation has been in existence for 60 years and has established partnerships with other community entities such as the Oak Park Public Library, the Oak Park Township and the Oak Park Park district. While OPRFHS could create its own fund, it generally takes eight to ten months to make it functional. The Community Foundation has all the necessary personnel and systems to begin work immediately on fundraising and investment.

The board also examined the summer 2020 construction work plan. Fred Preuss, Director of Building and Grounds, and Jeff Bergmann, Construction Supervisor, assured the board that the work plan covers necessary maintenance and does not overlap the IMAGINE work that is scheduled.