

**Ad-Hoc Dashboard/Benchmark Committee**  
**970 Madison Street, Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**7:30 P.M. October 28, 2013**

**1. Call to Order / Roll Call**

Chairwoman Rupa Datta called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

**In Attendance:** Rupa Datta, Bob Spatz, Dr. Al Roberts, Harla Hutchinson, Dr. Felicia Starks Turner, Jim O’Conner, Amber Stitzel Pareja, Denis Roarty, Gudelia Lopez, Rebecca Kaegi, Lou Anne Johannesson (secretary)

**Also in Attendance:** Kathy Hymson, FORC Committee Liaison

**2. Welcome and Participant Introductions**

Chairwoman Datta asked all members to introduce themselves and share their various backgrounds with the use of Data. All the citizen committee members expressed interest in student data being used properly; in a way that makes sense. Dr. Roberts remarked that the committee has the potential of making something very special; a dashboard that depicts learning not testing. He stated that this is a great opportunity.

**3. Committee Charge and Board Expectations (Spatz)**

Member Spatz discussed the journey that led to the establishment of this Ad-Hoc Dash Board/Benchmarks Committee. He described the three facts were “hammered home” at an ISBE data workshop that he attended. First would be the use of data to compare to yourself, and asking: Is there growth? Secondly, Comparing the District to published benchmarks. The third step is to compare the District to a peer group. He further stated that after completing the process of those trainings, the board realized that it did not have the in-house expertise it needed to manage and collect data. ECRA was hired to, among other things, develop a dashboard. However, their “canned” reports might not express the needs and interests of the Oak Park community. He suggested that the plan that was formulated entailed using ECRA’s database with our data as a jump start.

He explained that this new committee consists of five voting members from the public who will make recommendations, not actions, and will report back to the Board.

Member Spatz reviewed the charge set forth from the Board:

He stated that the committee needs to make sure metrics are available to the public. (i.e. growth of student body). He stated that the dashboard is not to be used as an administrative tool, but to inform the community. He explained that the administration has their own tools, included the new data coaches. Chairwoman Datta expressed the need to identify what the Board’s priorities are. She explained that those need to be clarified first to determine what areas the committee will focus on. Dr. Robert’s stated that if the priorities are not specific, is it the committee’s role to

flesh them out. Member Spatz suggested that the first step of data analysis would be regarding the general health of the district. He gave examples:

- How the new International Bachelorette program is doing
- What is the effect of full-day kindergarten on upper grades
- How new financial investments are impacting instruction

He expressed the need to a baseline. He remarked that the district does not work in isolation; it has to deal with districts 200 and 90. Standards must align, they do not have data from district 200, but similar metrics need to be collected by them and the Collaboration for Early Childhood. He stated that the Community Foundation needs to be included as well. He said that the Board will give the committee some more detail on its stated priorities but the committee will have to come up with the baseline. Dr. Roberts stated that the district has internally collected a lot of data specifically on:

- K.I.D.S. pilot program
- MAP testing

He stated that the district directs instruction with data. Member Lopez stated this process is not just about metrics but what the district wants to change as a matter of course; what it chooses to evaluate for new things to occur.

Member Kaegi asked that once the dashboard is in place, does the committee decide what is available. This began a discussion. Chairman Datta stated that it will be minimal at the start, and that a lot of what is ultimately shared will be dependent on achieving optimal synergy with the rest of the community.

#### **4. Local Data and Dashboard Context**

##### **A. District 97 current and prior activities (D97 staff/Spatz)**

Chairwoman Datta suggested the questions on this topic are:

- Where are we in the District 97 evolution?
- What efforts in the larger community need to be learned and reported back on?
- What needs tabs kept on it?

Member Spatz suggested to answer the first question, the committee should invite ECRA to report at a future meeting. Chairwoman Datta asked if, aside from what staff are doing to inform their work, is there a plan as to how data will be shown to parents and the community. Dr. Roberts answered that there is a new report card beginning this trimester and asked Harla Hutchinson to add to that. Member Hutchinson stated that the district has lots of pieces of information but there are no current plans for sharing beyond individual student results with parents. Dr. Roberts stated that there is a plan to have more common assessments with the IB and common core. He suggested that in addition to ECRA, some of the data coaches come present to

the committee moves forward to demonstrate some of the sophistication they have brought in. Member Spatz stated that knowing what information is currently shared with parents will assist in identifying a path forward.

#### B. Other Oak Park efforts

Member O'Conner reported on the Oak Park-River Forest Community Foundation's project and their cradle to career initiative. They have chosen some measures and to move forward want more. The stakeholders include:

- Districts
- Township
- Village
- Collaboration for Early Childhood
- Anyone with an interest in kids/education

O'Conner expressed his excitement for this group. Member O'Connor and Lisa Schwartz from District 97 and all three Superintendents are on the advisory committee. He feels there will be great success by all districts being at the table. He mentioned the ISBE report card being released at the end of the month and is something worth reviewing. Dr. Roberts raised two concerns. One being how unique Oak Park is, and that comparative data would not be the best tool. Secondly he has concerns about eighth grade self-reporting. He clarified his remarks later, writing, "I would like to clarify the remarks I made during our meeting on Monday regarding the use of surveys. I do believe our students can, and should have the opportunity to share their thoughts, ideas and concerns, and have no problem using surveys to accomplish this important task. However, I believe we need to view the design and administration of these instruments with a critical eye, and press for validity and reliability whenever possible. I only say this because, in the 44 years I have served in education, state-generated surveys have rarely provided an effective means of collecting feedback from students. While some students take their participation in such activities very seriously, others view it as a break from having to do classwork. In addition, the questions and language used in these surveys tend to lose something in translation. These may have been among the contributing factors that led the Illinois State Board of Education to decide not to fully release the data from last year's 5Essentials Survey out of concern that doing so would "undermine [the survey's] long-term use by administrators to help them make decisions on how best to improve school climate." In my opinion, school districts, municipalities, etc. tend to get better results when they use their own instruments for collecting feedback. Not only can they tailor these instruments to address the specific needs/issues of their community, they also have the ability to establish and implement a more targeted approach/process for soliciting and monitoring participation from their stakeholders. Lastly, I think it is important to recognize that even our brightest students are still in the process of maturing socially and emotionally, and developing their view of the world. That is why we must have realistic expectations when engaging them in the survey process."

Member Lopez asked what the ISBE report card is looking at. A lengthy discussion followed. Following the discussion Chairwoman Datta suggested a primary beginning task would be doing

some information gathering and to monitor other groups dashboards. Member Lopez stated that the new Park District's dashboard is limited; Boston is a good example. Chairwoman Datta suggested developing a valid reliable way to report to parents where kids are at on this dashboard. Dr. Roberts wants to be cognizant of corruption of data. Member Stitzel Pareja Stated that it's still predictability that should be measured, particularly with kids on the border. Member Lopez questioned the point of college readiness being studied at the elementary school level, and wondered if that was not best suited for a high school district to try to determine.

## **5. Committee Work Plan and Timeline**

Chairwoman Datta stated that the first focus should be on domains and the construct to look at. Also, what areas the committee thinks the board should be measuring; general categories of constructs; what indicators/outcomes and methodologies to use. Then, after that, the focus can shift to the dashboard and how to present it in a feasible way, make decisions on what will be displayed. Member Kaegi asked what we value as a district. That is the first question even if it is not easily measured. Chairwoman Datta agreed that things not easily measured might still have value to the district. Member Datta asked administration members of the committee to bring back information in November on current measurements. Dr. Roberts suggested inviting members of the other board committees to future meeting to prompt ideas, in particular C.L.A.I.M. who is helping write legislation on data sharing along with local elected officials. Chairwoman data would like to be able to share something concrete at a February board meeting. She asked Ms. Johannesson to send a Doodle to set a date for the next meeting.

## **6. Fine Print/Administrative Details**

All members of the committee have been asked to complete the Open Meeting Act on-line course and submit their certificates of completion to Ms. Johannesson.

## **7. Information gathering assignments**

Member Stitzel Pareja will attend the Community Foundation meeting along with Member O'Connor. She asked what level of information the committee will be looking for. Chairwoman Datta suggested simple graphs and tables. Dr. Roberts will arrange for ECRA to come to a meeting. Member Spatz will collect board priorities and mission statements. Member Hutchinson will report on current internal data collection.

## **8. Public Comment**

A member of the community volunteered his services to the committee.

## **9. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:13 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Lou Anne Johannesson  
Secretary

