



# Oak Park Elementary School District 97

260 Madison ▪ Oak Park ▪ Illinois ▪ 60301 ▪ ph: 708.524.3000 ▪ fax: 708.524.3019 ▪ www.op97.org

---

**TO:** Members, Board of Education  
**FROM:** Dr. Carol Kelley, Superintendent  
**SUBJECT:** Approval of New Position and Reassignment of Administrators  
**DATE:** July 18, 2017  
**Type of Report:** Proposal

**Preview of purpose and content of report:**

The Board of Education is being asked to approve the creation of a new position (Senior Director of Equity) and the reassignment of two administrators.

**Budgetary Impact:** Net savings of \$49,180 (see memo for explanation)

**District goals aligned with report:** If approved, these recommended changes will have a direct impact not only on the advancement of the district’s vision, but also each of the strategic goals that correspond with and support our efforts in this area.

-----  
For the past year, the administration has sought to advance the shared vision for our district that was created with the help of our community and reflects a collective and overarching goal for our schools and students. This vision is to:

***Create a positive learning environment for all District 97 students that is equitable, inclusive and focused on the whole child.***

Our ability to make progress toward the achievement of our vision requires embracing a more learning-centric approach to our work whereby we engage in activities that are more evaluative and self-reflective in nature in order to improve our day-to-day practices and operations. With this in mind, we made several key organizational moves at the start of the 2016-2017 school year to align the overall structure our central office team more closely with our strategic initiatives, while also establishing an environment in which everyone is invested and has a voice in our vision work (please refer to the Appendix).

While these moves greatly benefited the district, especially in relation to the accomplishment of our goals, I believe we can further strengthen the organizational clarity around our vision. In other words, while we have a “clear, compelling vision,” we must provide people with the support they need to successfully implement and execute our short- and long-term plans. That is why I am asking the Board of Education to support adding a senior director of equity position to the superintendent’s cabinet team. This position would work with our faculty and staff to successfully execute the professional practices, targeted strategies and development tactics that support our goal of helping every student become confident and persistent achievers. This position would also be responsible for ensuring that all expectations and deadlines that correspond with our goals in the areas of equity and inclusion are clearly communicated to members of the cabinet team, and that issues that require the superintendent’s attention are dealt with in a timely way.

Specifically, the senior director of equity would assume the following responsibilities:

- Provide leadership and strategic direction for internal and external communications, presentations, speeches and correspondence that build upon our community's understanding of and commitment to embracing our vision and our goals of equity and inclusivity for every child.
- Serve as the district's representative on committees, councils, etc. that work specifically on issues related to equity. These groups would include, but not be limited to, Minority Student Achievement Network (MSAN), Diversity Council, PTO Diversity Committee.
- Integrate our commitment to equity into all aspects of the district's work (communications, human resources, business, technology, and teaching and learning).
- Monitor and champion our progress on the measures related to equity (e.g., reduction in achievement gap between excellence targets and students level of attainment). Ensure that our schools and teachers have the resources and support in place in order to successfully execute plans related to equity.
- Provide leadership and strategic direction around professional practices, such as:
  - *Teachers organizing instruction around standards and communicating clear expectations to students*
  - *Ensuring students' continuous growth and development*
  - *Classroom discussion*
  - *Principals leading dialogue around high expectations, effective instruction, assessment, and demonstrations of student work samples that meet rigorous standards*

In order to maintain the current momentum of the work on our vision, and effectively build upon those efforts moving forward, I am asking the board to support the appointment of Dr. Carrie Kamm to the position of senior director of equity. Carrie began her tenure in District 97 back in 2014 as a director of curriculum and instruction, and currently serves as our director of organizational learning. She has been a member of the core vision planning team from the beginning. She has been helping our principals design systems and structures that are supporting the work of our school leadership teams and professional learning communities. She has also been coordinating the professional development experiences for our instructional staff. A large part of her role last year included overseeing the work of our instructional coaches and helping to lead the implementation of our Multi-Tiered System of Supports—two key levers in our efforts to promote equity across our district.

Prior to joining our district, Carrie served as a mentor-resident coach for the Academy for Urban School Leadership's Chicago Teacher Residency program. Her work with this organization centered around preparing teachers to teach in turnaround schools, and was focused primarily on helping educators in the areas of cultural competence, instructional strategies, and creating positive, cognitively demanding learning environments for students. Carrie earned her bachelor's degree in Interdisciplinary Studies from the University of Pittsburgh, her master's degree in Elementary Education from Northwestern University, and her doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction from Loyola University in Chicago. She also earned her National Board Certification as a middle childhood generalist.

If Carrie does move into this new role, she will continue to oversee the work of our instructional coaches, professional learning, and the district's MTSS. However, we will need to find a replacement for her current position. With this in mind, I am recommending that Ms. Emily Fenske replace Carrie as our director of organizational learning.

Emily has worked in the district since August 2015 as our student data administrator. She holds a master's degree in Education Policy and Management from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, where she focused on systems and strategy management, school reform and applied data analysis. Emily is a proud District 97 alumna from Irving Elementary and Julian Middle School.

Since joining District 97, Emily has helped principals, teacher leaders and coaches engage in productive conversations with their teacher teams about data and student work. Some of her other accomplishments have included the following:

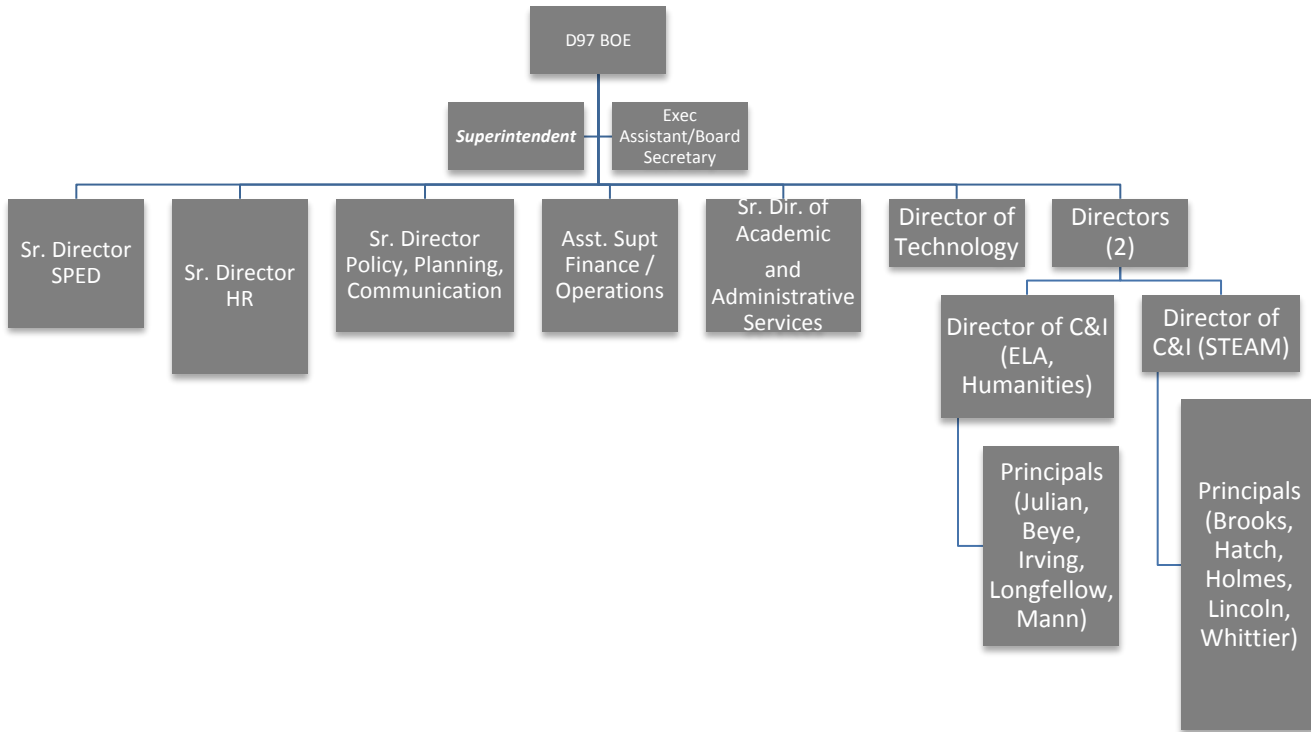
- Emily assisted the district in administering the Education for the Future Survey (EFF) to obtain student feedback on the aspects of a positive learning environment. In addition, she analyzed our results and created reports for school and district leaders and staff.
- Emily was an integral member of the district's metrics team. She developed and reported on the baseline data by subgroup for the community sessions last year. She also conducted a conversation with the Board of Education on our data; and she updated the metrics based on end of year data.
- Emily led benchmark data discussions with Ad Leadership last school year, and she regularly participated in monthly school improvement team discussions. She designed and facilitated the end of year (EOY) data retreat, and is currently working with Dr. Warke on designing our beginning of year (BOY) data retreat for fall 2017.

As a result of the technical skills and talent Emily brings to the district, we will be able to eliminate an \$80,000 consultant's service fees. As well, her talent allows us to have a cadence of meetings organized around data conversations, which was not the norm prior to July 2015.

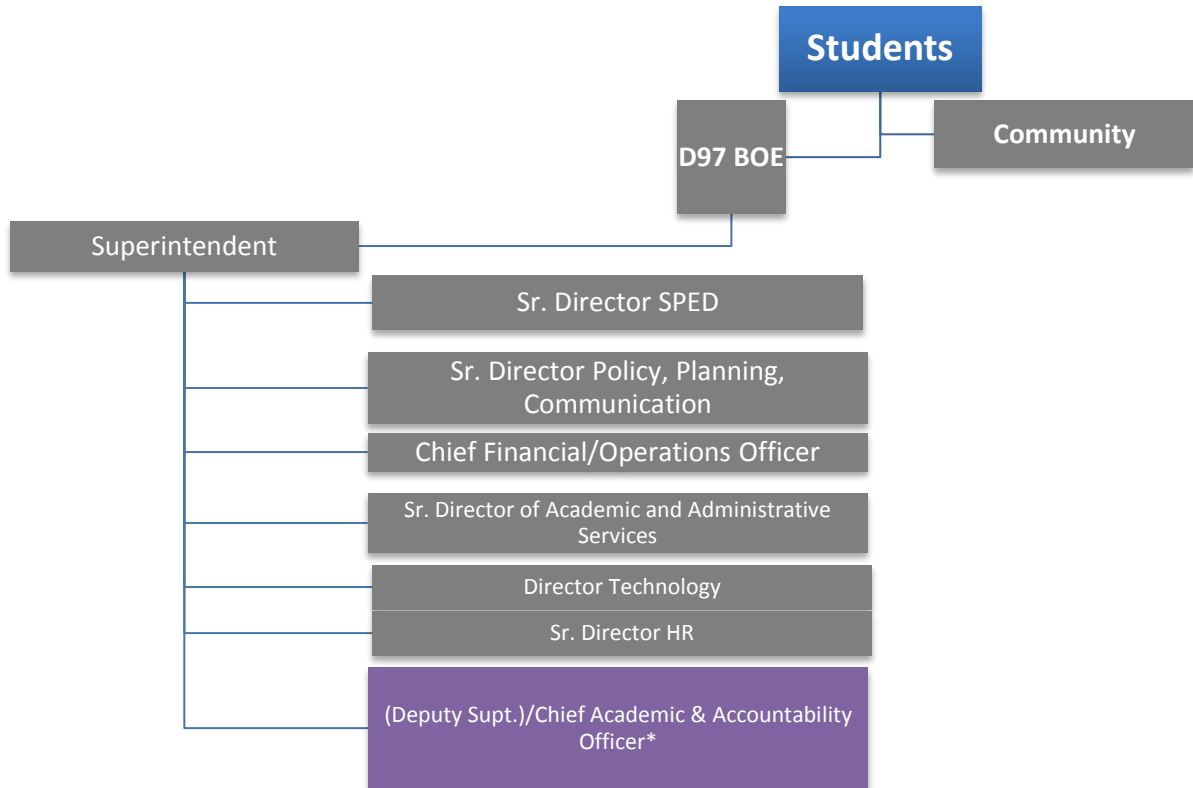
With the elimination of the consulting fees, the net savings of these two changes will be \$49,180. These changes will go into effect on July 1, 2017, and a replacement for Ms. Fenske will be posted following the July 18th Board meeting.

# APPENDIX: **TWO YEAR HISTORY** OF D97 CENTRAL OFFICE ORGANIZATION

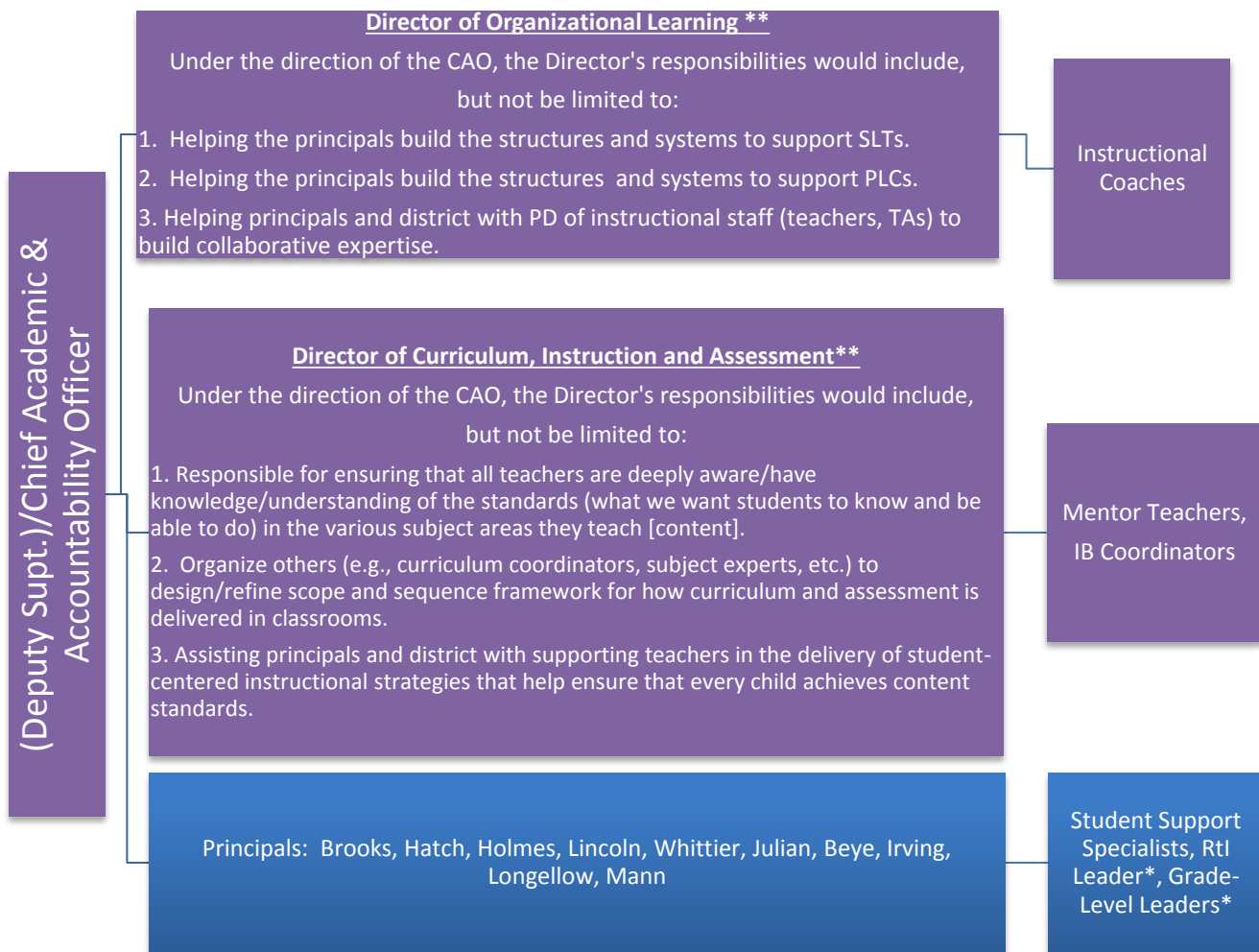
## Central Office Organizational Structure - **2015-2016:**



## Central Office Organizational Structure - **2016-2017:**



\* **Rationale for CAO:** Single-point of leadership will help ensure coherent and consistent delivery of quality instructional practices across all schools; additionally, a single individual will help oversee the implementation of the “vision-action” plans for the schools and district.



**\*\*Note:** Under the direction of the CAO, the two directors would need to coordinate their work. For example, the Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment might be responsible for the design of formative assessments around CCSS, but the Director of Organizational Learning would assist the SLTs in the use of the formative results informing instruction. Thus, professional development becomes job embedded, and staff members are continuously learning via their reflective practices (e.g., use of various forms of data and selecting instructional and classroom management strategies to address the diverse learning needs of all students).