



# Oak Park Elementary School District 97

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**TO: Members, Board of Education  
Dr. Carol Kelley, Superintendent**

**FROM: District 97 Policy Review Team**

**RE: Policy Review and Discussion**

**DATE: June 12, 2018**

The district's policy review team (Keecia Broy, Bob Spatz and Chris Jasculca) is presenting the following information to the Board of Education tonight for review/discussion:

- Proposed changes/updates to policies and an exhibit that were provided by the Policy Reference Education Subscription Service (PRESS) in its May-June 2018 Update Memo.
- Proposed revisions to policy 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities) that would feature the inclusion of the language about gender identity that District 200 recently added to its own version of the policy.
- Update on the proposed anti-fraud policy.

The board is being asked to conduct a first reading of these policies and the exhibit this evening. A second reading and approval/adoption of the information from PRESS is scheduled to take place during the board meeting on July 17, 2018, while a second reading and approval/adoption of the proposed changes to policy 7:10 will be among the items discussed tonight as part of the overall conversation about the revisions.

## **Proposed Changes to Policies from PRESS**

The policy review team reviewed/discussed the proposed changes to the policies and exhibit that were featured in the May-June 2018 Update Memo provided by PRESS. Below is a summary of the changes from this update, as well as the team's recommendations. As a reminder, any revisions that were limited to footnotes that correspond with the policies are not being presented this evening because they do not require board action.

- **Policy 2:105 (Ethics and Gift Ban)** – PRESS recommends that policies 2:100 (Board Member Conflict of Interest) and 4:60 (Purchases and Contracts) be added to the cross references. The team recommends that the board approve/adopt these additions.
- **Policy 2:170 (Procurement of Architectural, Engineering, and Land Surveying Services)** – PRESS recommends that minor style updates be made to the legal references. The team recommends that the board approve/adopt these updates.
- **Exhibit for policy 3:40 (Superintendent)** – PRESS recommends adding this new exhibit, which is “intended to serve as a resource to educate and guide the board through the superintendent employment contract negotiation process, encouraging both the board and superintendent to hire their own attorneys.” The team recommends that the board approve/adopt this exhibit and send it to PRESS for inclusion in Section 3 of the district's policy manual.
- **Policy 4:140 (Waiver of Student Fees)** – PRESS recommends that minor style updates be made to the policy. The team recommends that the board approve/adopt these updates.

- **Policy 6:10 (Educational Philosophy and Objectives)** – PRESS recommends that minor continuous improvement updates be made to the policy. The team recommends that the board approve/adopt these updates.
- **Policy 6:30 (Organization of Instruction)** – PRESS recommends that minor continuous improvement updates be made to the policy. The team recommends that the board approve/adopt these updates.
- **Policy 6:60 (Curriculum Content)** – PRESS recommends that the policy and legal references be updated in response to a change in the law requiring that at least one unit of cursive writing being offered to students prior to the completion of fifth grade. The team recommends that the board approve/adopt these updates.

Please note, if the district decides to offer the unit of cursive writing at a specific grade level across all eight elementary schools, the policy does allow for the use/inclusion of optional language to reflect that.

- **Policy 6:120 (Education of Children with Disabilities)** – PRESS recommends that minor style updates be made to the policy. The team recommends that the board approve/adopt these updates.
- **Policy 6:130 (Program for the Gifted)** – PRESS recommends that the cross references be updated in response to the passage of the Accelerated Placement Act. The team recommends that the board approve/adopt these updates.
- **Policy 6:135 (Accelerated Placement Program)** – PRESS recommends adding this new policy in response to the passage of the Accelerated Placement Act, which was signed into law by Governor Rauner on August 25, 2017. According to our board attorney, the new law amends Section 14A of the Illinois School Code, 105 ILCS 5/14 to now include a definition of the term “accelerated placement” and a requirement that school districts “have non-discriminatory gifted, talented and accelerated programs.” It also obligates school districts to “develop a policy that allows for accelerated placement of eligible students.”

The team recommends that the board approve/adopt this policy and send it to PRESS for inclusion in Section 6 of the district’s policy manual.

- **Policy 6:190 (Extracurricular and Co-Curricular Activities)** – PRESS recommends that minor continuous improvement updates be made to the policy. The team recommends that the board approve/adopt these updates.
- **Policy 6:230 (Library Media Program)** – PRESS recommends that minor style changes be made to the policy. The team recommends that the board approve/adopt these changes.
- **Policy 6:240 (Field Trips)** – PRESS recommends that the policy and cross references be updated. These updates include adding a reference to policy 4:140 (Waiver of Student Fees) to the policy text, and adding policies 4:140 and 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities) to the cross references. The team recommends that the board approve/adopt these changes.
- **Policy 6:250 (Community Resource Persons and Volunteers)** – PRESS recommends that the policy, legal references and cross references be updated. These updates include:
  - Adding language to the policy stating that community resource people and volunteers can “assist in times of violence or other traumatic incidents within the District by providing crisis intervention services to lessen the effects of emotional trauma on staff, students, and the

community, provided the volunteer meets the qualifications established by the Ill. School Crisis Assistance Team Steering Committee.”

- Citing the Failure to Report Hazing, the Sex Offender Registration Act, the Sex Offender Community Notification Law, and the Murderer and Violet Offender Against Youth Community Notification Law in the legal references.
- Adding policy 4:175 (Convicted Child Sex Offender; Screening; Notifications) to the cross references.

The team recommends that the board approve/adopt these updates.

- **Policy 7:50 (Equal Educational Opportunities)** – PRESS recommends that the policy, legal references and cross references be updated in response to the passage of the Accelerated Placement Act. The most notable update is the recommendation that the language featured in the subsection titled “Age” be changed from:

**To be eligible for admission, a child must be 5 years old on or before September 1 of that school term. A child entering first grade must be 6 years of age on or before September 1 of that school term. A child with exceptional needs who qualifies for special education services is eligible for admission at 3 years of age.**

**Parents/guardians may request early admission for a child. The Superintendent or designee shall assess the child's readiness to attend school and make the decision accordingly.**

to:

**To be eligible for admission, a child must be five years old on or before September 1 of that school term. A child entering first grade must be six years of age on or before September 1 of that school term. Based upon an assessment of a child’s readiness to attend school, the District may permit him or her to attend school prior to these dates. A child will also be allowed to attend first grade based upon an assessment of his or her readiness if he or she attended a non-public preschool, continued his or her education at that school through kindergarten, was taught in kindergarten by an appropriately licensed teacher, and will be six years old on or before December 31. A child with exceptional needs who qualifies for special education services is eligible for admission at three years of age. Early entrance to kindergarten or first grade may also be available through Board policy 6:135, *Accelerated Placement Program*.**

The team recommends that the board approve/adopt these updates.

- **Policy 8:25 (Advertising and Distributing Materials in Schools Provided by NonSchool Related Entities)** – PRESS recommends that minor style updates be made to the legal references and cross references. The team recommends that the board approve/adopt these updates.

#### **Proposed Revisions to Policy 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities)**

During its meeting on May 24, 2018, the District 200 Board of Education approved the addition of language to its version of policy 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities) that is meant to further highlight its affirmation and support of transgender and gender nonconforming students. More specifically, it approved the inclusion of the following two sentences in the subsection of the policy that is titled “Sex Equity.”

**Students shall be treated and supported in a manner consistent with their gender identity. This shall include but not be limited to; students having access to gendered facilities, including restrooms and locker rooms that correspond to their gender identity.**

As was the case in District 200 prior to May 24, the current version of policy 7:10 here in District 97 includes language that affirms our commitment to preserving and protecting the rights and opportunities for students regardless of gender identity. We have worked with the Illinois Safe Schools Alliance to train our faculty and staff on ways we can maintain a welcoming and nurturing learning environment for everyone we serve. We also created and implemented administrative procedures and have a variety of practices in place that are helping us better support the accommodation of our transgender and gender nonconforming students. Some of those practices include:

- Listing gender identity among the protected statuses in a number of our policies.
- Allowing transgender and gender nonconforming students to use the restroom and locker room of the gender with which they identify. This practice has been in place since the fall of 2013.
- Supporting the wishes and needs of our transgender and gender nonconforming students when it comes to issues such as pronoun use and dress code.
- Honoring requests for name changes that are related to internal school or district operations (how a child's name appears in our student information system, report cards, IDs, etc.). As for situations where information is shared in an official capacity with outside entities such as the state or another school district (e.g., if a child transferred to another school district, is getting ready to move to high school, etc.), we follow the direction provided on the Illinois Association of School Board's website.
- Following the policy and procedures the Illinois Elementary School Association (IESA) has established and enforces in terms of transgender students' participation on athletic teams.

With that said, our team believes the board should consider/discuss the possibility of adding the same two sentences or making similar revisions to our version of policy 7:10. By doing so, we would align it more closely with the one used by District 200. It would also be more in line with our practices regarding the use of restrooms and locker rooms.

As for our existing procedures, which were created and implemented in the fall of 2016, we suggest that the administration consider reviewing them to determine what updates/revisions, if any, might need to be made to them.

### **Update on the Anti-Fraud Policy**

During the board meeting on April 10, 2018, we reported that PRESS was developing language related to the issue of fraud that it planned to incorporate into policy 4:80 (Accounting and Audits). As a result, we decided to table our work on the anti-fraud policy until we could review this information and determine the need for a standalone policy, decide if the language would effectively address our goals/practices regarding this issue, etc.

We want to let you know that the proposed changes to policy 4:80 that we referenced on April 10 were included in the May-June update issued by PRESS, as were corresponding revisions to the accompanying administrative procedures. We sent both documents to the secretary for FORC, and requested that the committee review/discuss them during its meeting on June 19. We have also included the policy and procedures in tonight's packet of materials, and ask that board members please email their initial comments, questions or input about the documents to Chris and Bob prior to June 19 so they can ensure that the feedback is made available to FORC for its meeting/discussion.