

**BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
CHENERY MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY ROOM
NOVEMBER 10, 2015**

Present: Ms. Laurie Slap, Chair
Ms. Susan Burgess-Cox
Mr. Thomas Caputo
Dr. Lisa Fiore, Secretary
Ms. Laurie Graham
Ms. Elyse Shuster
Mr. John Phelan, Superintendent
Ms. Janice Darias, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction
Mr. Anthony DiCologero, Director of Business, Finance and Operations

1. **OPENING BUSINESS**

1.1 Call to order

Ms. Slap called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. She then stated that the School Committee would enter Executive Session and return to Open Session at 7:00 p.m.

1.2 Executive Session for the purpose of discussing contract negotiations with union personnel given that a discussion in Open Session may have a detrimental impact on the School Committee's bargaining position.

1.3 Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Slap led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.4 Citizens' Concerns

There were no citizens' concerns.

1.5 Adjustments to the Agenda

There were no adjustments to the agenda.

1.6 Chair's Report

Ms. Slap thanked the members of Belmont Against Racism (BAR) for their donation of \$6000 to help fund transportation for students who remain at school after-school activities. She announced that the Butler Fun Run raised \$18,000. The recent ski sale raised \$4,000 for the high school ski team. Ms. Slap thanked the Friends of the Belmont Library for their donation of 1,238 books that were chosen by teachers for use in their classrooms and school libraries.

Ms. Burgess-Cox updated the School Committee on her attendance at the MASC/MASS Joint Conference, which she attended with Superintendent Phelan.

1.7 Student Representative Report

Members of the Belmont High School Student Representatives updated the School Committee on recent events at the high school such as the recent Blackout Bounce. They also announced the upcoming Rodeo Dance. The annual Haunted House took place at the high school and the proceeds were donated to the Make-A-Wish program.

1.8 Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Phelan updated the School Committee on the Veterans' Day inspired events that had taken place earlier in the day, which culminated with a wonderful lunch at the VFW, and included all of the veterans. He also updated the School Committee on a recent meeting of the Space Task Force. They are working on enrollment trends and will be presenting to the School Committee at a future meeting. He explained to the School Committee an Access Agreement submitted by the people working on the Ice Rink/Recreation Center Proposal. The Access Agreement would allow members of Belmont Youth Hockey Association to access Town property to take measurements and gather information in order to prepare a more detailed proposal for the School Committee and other Town organizations. The School Committee will vote on the agreement at a future meeting.

2. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business.

3. **MAJOR BUSINESS**

3.1 Technology Plan - Exhibit A

Mr. Steve Mazzola, Director of Technology, provided an update on the work and planning of the Technology Department for the next three years. He explained that in year 1 (2015-2016) the Technology Department will continue improvements to the Student Information System and ensure the department is prepared to support the district's goal of advancing social/emotional learning. They will also continue to develop systems and protocols in support of the protection of student information. In 2016-2017, the Technology Department will continue to train staff members, who will then be able to assist teachers in their technology integration efforts. They will also budget and sequence a multi-year program for the implementation of hardware capacity within classrooms, as well as implement a plan to purchase and install SMARTboards in the remaining classrooms without boards. In 2017-2018, the Technology Department will work on expanding the Digital Citizenship program on the secondary level. They will also work to identify ways to increase access to mobile computing devices at all levels as well as expand the wireless infrastructure to support increased mobile device use.

3.1.5 Vote on Disposal of Technology Property – Exhibit B

Mr. Mazzola explained that the Technology Department has items that are no longer functional or out of date and are ready to be disposed of. The School Committee is required to declare the items as surplus vote their approval to dispose of the items.

On a motion offered by Ms. Burgess-Cox and seconded by Mr. Caputo, it was

VOTED unanimously to dispose of the surplus items listed in Exhibit B.

3.2 Special Education Update – Exhibit C

Mr. Ken Kramer, Director of Student Services, and Ms. Mary Jane Weinstein, Assistant Director of Student Services, presented the School Committee with an update on the Special Education Program in Belmont. Ms. Weinstein began by providing an overview of the preschool program, which is designed for children ages 3-5 who have deficits in development areas. Students are generally referred by pediatricians, Early Intervention Programs, area preschools, or parents. The students are evaluated by Belmont staff consisting of Speech/Language Pathologists trained in Early Language Development, an Occupational Therapist trained in sensory integration, and a Physical Therapist trained in mobility assessment. Children are then referred for services based on the results of the evaluations.

Mr. Kramer explained the Socio-Emotional Support Program, which supports students from K-12 with behavioral and emotional disabilities. The program is multi-graded and individually tailored to each student with his/her level of instruction and assignments. Program staff at each level include Special Education teachers and one or more program assistants, as well as a Counselor or School Psychologist who provides consultation to staff and parents as well as counseling for students.

The ASD/Intensive Inclusion Support Program for student with Autism and related disorders supports students whose development prevents them from taking part in the general education curriculum independently across the content areas. These students may have difficulty interacting with staff and students and, as a result, different types of supports are provided in and out of the classroom. The program supports the academic, social, and emotional development of the students. The student's IEP Team assesses and the growth of the student on an on-going basis and modifications are made to programming to ensure success for the student.

The Academic Support/Learning Center Program provides series to students whose academic needs require support that is not available within the regular education classroom. Each Academic Support/Learning Center is based in a classroom that consists of small groups setting, low teacher/student ration and flexible scheduling. The program is grade based but can be multi-graded depending on student needs.

3.3 Student Services Context Update – Exhibit D

Superintendent Phelan discussed some of the increases related to Special Education and the effect those increases have had on the budget. The enrollment district-wide has increased 10 percent in the last five years. The number of English Language Learners (ELL) has increased by 175 percent. Superintendent Phelan explained that the state is looking at trying to change the foundation budget formula (Chapter 70) to find more funding for towns that have these kinds of pressures in their district.

3.4 Quarter 1 Report – Exhibit E

Mr. DiCologero provided a 1st Quarter budget report that covers the months of July, August, and September. He stated that he is projecting a year end deficit of \$105,000. He is hoping not to have to institute a budget freeze this year. Ms. Slap reiterated that the School Department and School Committee do not expect to end the fiscal year with a deficit and will be watching closely over the 2nd quarter to see if any adjustments will be needed.

4. **SUBCOMMITTEE/LIAISON UPDATES (as needed)**

4.1 Finance Subcommittee

The Finance Subcommittee will meet on November 24.

4.2 Policy and Procedure Subcommittee

There was no report from the Policy and Procedure Subcommittee.

4.3 Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee

The Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee will meet on December 11 and December 21.

4.4 Capital Budget Committee

The Capital Budget Committee will meet on November 12 to discuss major Capital projects.

4.5 Warrant Committee

The Warrant Committee has been focusing on pension plans and preparing a report to be presented at Town Meeting.

4.6 Wellington Building Committee

Gerry Boyle, Director of Facilities, is in the process of closing out financial issues in order to receive reimbursement from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA). There are still some issues with noise and sidewalk repairs that are being addressed.

4.7 Financial Task Force

There was no update from the Financial Task Force.

4.8 Community Path Update

The Community Path Committee members are working on putting the RFP into a format that can be submitted to the Board of Selectmen.

4.9 Library Long Range Planning Committee

The Library Long Range Planning Committee has had three meetings and is planning a meeting for November 17th which will be for the public.

6. **OTHER BUSINESS**

6.1 Consent Agenda - none

6.2 Personnel Items - none

6.3 Business Items – None

6.4 Approval of Minutes

- o September 29, 2015

On a motion offered by Ms. Burgess-Cox and seconded by Mr. Caputo, it was

VOTED 5-0-1 with one abstention to approve the minutes of September 29, 2015 as amended.

- o October 6, 2015

On a motion offered by Ms. Burgess-Cox and seconded by Ms. Shuster, it was

VOTED 5-0-1 with one abstention to approve the minutes of October 20, 2015 as amended.

- o October 6, 2015

On a motion offered by Ms. Graham and seconded by Ms. Burgess-Cox, it was

VOTED unanimously to approve the minutes of October 20, 2015.

7. **FUTURE BUSINESS**

Upcoming Meetings:

November 17, 2015
Finance Subcommittee Meeting
SAB Conference Room – 7:30 a.m.

December 1, 2015
Finance Subcommittee Meeting
SAB Conference Room – 7:30 a.m.

December 1, 2015
School Committee Meeting
CMS Large Community Room

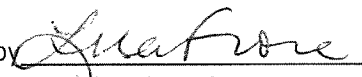
8. **ENCLOSURES**

November 1, 2015 Enrollment
November 1, 2015 Enrollment indicating changes
Town of Belmont Policy & Procedures for Health Insurance under the
Federal Affordable Care Act
Strategic Plan

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion offered by Laurie Graham and seconded by Tom Caputo, it was

Respectfully submitted by



Dr. Lisa Fiore, Secretary