

**BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
CHENERY MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY ROOM
APRIL 25, 2017**

Present:

Dr. Lisa Fiore, Chair
Ms. Susan Burgess-Cox, Secretary
Mr. Murat Bicer
Ms. Kate Bowen
Ms. Andrea Prestwich
Ms. Janice Darias, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction
Mr. Anthony DiCologero

Absent:

Mr. John Phelan, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Thomas Caputo

1. OPENING BUSINESS

1.1 Call to order

Dr. Fiore called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1.2 Pledge of Allegiance

Dr. Fiore led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.3 Citizens' Concerns

A parent of a Butler and Chenery student expressed her concern that parents are unsure when and how the decision will be made regarding placing modular classrooms at Butler and/or Burbank. Dr. Fiore explained that Superintendent Phelan, who was not in attendance, would address this issue at an upcoming meeting. Assistant Superintendent Darias stated that there will be presentations for community members to learn and ask questions regarding the modular in the near future.

1.4 Adjustments to the Agenda

There were no adjustments to the agenda.

1.5 Chair's Report

Chair Fiore did not have a report due to the scheduled budget hearing and advised viewers to see the BPS website for information on activities and events.

1.6 Student Representative Report

There was no student representative in attendance

1.7 Assistant Superintendent's Report

Assistant Superintendent Darias announced the winners of this year's Outstanding Teacher Awards:

Meaghan Clow, Wellington Elementary School, Grade 3
Kathryn Doyle, Winn Brook Elementary School, Kindergarten
Cliff Gallant, Burbank Elementary School, Grade 4
Daniel Moresco, Belmont High School, Mathematics
Jennifer Pressey, Butler Elementary School, Grade 1
Dorothy Pulizzi, Chenery Middle School, Grade 5

Assistant Superintendent Darias invited everyone to visit the Foundation for Belmont Education (FBE) website to learn more about each teacher. The FBE has a new award this year in honor of S. Warren Farrell for his many years of leadership in the Belmont Public Schools as a parent and former School Committee member. John McLellan, Chenery Music Teacher, is the recipient of this award. Ms. Darias thanked the FBE and Belmont Savings Bank for their work in organizing this award. An award ceremony will be held at the Chenery Middle School on May 2nd.

Assistant Superintendent Darias updated the School Committee on the Belmont High School Building Project. There will be meetings with educational consultant Frank Locker on May 4th and May 5th to think about the configuration of the new building and how teaching and learning should impact the design. Members of the community, educators, and students will all take part in the meetings. On the evening of May 4th, Mr. Locker will meet with the School Committee, Board of Selectmen, and Belmont High School Building Committee.

2. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

3. MAJOR BUSINESS

3.1 Budget Hearing and Vote

Mr. DiCologero noted that the FY18 Draft 2 Budget includes: one additional regular education school bus due to increased enrollment; federal grants budgeted in FY18 as level funded from FY17; contractual increases for staff allocated to grants; and user fees will remain the same. The FY18 Draft 2 General Fund Budget of \$52,969,484 is an increase of \$2,842,901 over the FY17 General Fund Budget. The first draft of the FY18 Budget was presented to the School Committee on February 7, 2017. The General Fund total at the time was \$53,136,735. At a joint meeting of the School Committee, Board of Selectmen and Warrant Committee on February 13, 2017, the FY18 Draft 2 Budget was developed with a new General Fund total of \$52,969,484. This budget was presented at the February 28, 2017 School Committee meeting. No changes to the budget have been made since that time.

The Administration recommended that the School Committee vote to approve the FY18 Draft 2 General Fund Budget of \$52,969,484 and a total budget of \$60,003,414, that includes state and federal grants, and revolving fees. This budget will be presented for approval at Town Meeting in June 2017.

On a motion offered by Ms. Prestwich and seconded by Mr. Bicer, it was

VOTED unanimously to approve the 2017-2018 School Department Budget.

3.2 Achievement Gap Update – Exhibit A

Assistant Superintendent Darias, Deb McDevitt, Lindsey Rinder and Patty Soliozy presented the current findings, goals and a plan to address student achievement gaps in Belmont. Superintendent Darias noted that this is a key initiative in the Department’s 2016-2017 strategic plan. The Administration established an Achievement Gap Task Force that has utilized state and local data, focus groups and survey results to gather information and develop an effective plan. The group decided to focus on African-American/Black Students in Belmont as the data showed that the schools are not doing enough to welcome, value and validate African-American/Black students resulting in academic achievement gaps. The plan has a long-term goal of shifting our culture to enable all African-American/Black students to achieve results comparable to their peers. Assistant Superintendent Darias provided each School Committee member with a copy of the November 2016 Educational Leadership magazine that contains articles on unconscious bias, discipline disparities and systemic inequity.

3.3 Trip Proposals:

2018 China Trip Proposal – Exhibit B-1

2018 Peru Trip Proposal – Exhibit B-2

Assistant Superintendent Darias reminded the School Committee that this is the time of year when international trip proposals are presented to the School Committee for approval. There are two trips planned for the 2017-18 school year. The trip to China will be the third time students have travelled to that country. Students attending are taking advanced Chinese language classes or World History. They will travel during the week of April vacation in 2018. Students traveling to Peru will visit Machu Picchu as well as doing service projects over the course of the trip. Assistant Superintendent Darias explained the trips are organized through ACIS (China trip) and EF Tours (Peru). Scholarship money is available for students who need financial assistance.

3.4 FY17 Third Quarter Budget Update – Exhibit C

Mr. DiCologero provided an update on the FY2017 budget as of March 31, 2017. An update in December projected a general fund deficit of \$31,000. At this time, the School Department is projecting a general fund year-end deficit of approximately \$70,000. Mr. DiCologero went on to explain the School Department plans to use current Circuit Breaker funds allocated in FY2017 to address this deficit.

3.5 Vote on Last Day of School

Assistant Superintendent Darias explained there were three snow days this school year resulting in a projection of June 21st as the last day of school. It will be a full day for staff and early release for all students.

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

VOTED unanimously to approve June 21, 2017 as the last day of school.

4. SUBCOMMITTEE/LIAISON UPDATES (as needed)

4.1 Finance Subcommittee

The Finance Subcommittee met earlier in the day to discuss the Quarter 3 budget update and review the fee schedule for building rentals.

4.2 Policy & Procedure Subcommittee

There was no report from the Policy & Procedure Subcommittee.

4.3 Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee

The Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee will schedule a meeting to consider changes to the Senior Thesis project.

4.4 Capital Budget Committee

The Capital Budget Committee met on April 13, 2017 to discuss proposals presented by all town departments and will meet again on April 28, 2017 at 8:30 AM.

4.5 Warrant Committee

The Warrant Committee will meet on Wednesday, April 26, 2017.

4.6 Belmont High School Building Committee

There was no report from the High School Building Committee.

4.7 Community Path Update

There was no report from the Community Path Committee.

4.8 Library Long Range Planning Committee

There was no report from the Library Long Range Planning Committee.

5. **OTHER BUSINESS**

5.1 Consent Agenda – None

5.2 Personnel Items – None

5.3 Business Items – None

5.4 Approval of Minutes

❖ April 11, 2017

On a motion offered by Mr. Bicer and seconded by Ms. Prestwich, it was

VOTED unanimously to approve the April 11, 2017 minutes.

6. **FUTURE BUSINESS**

None


7. **ENCLOSURES**

❖ Strategic Plan

8. **ADJOURN**

At 8:24 p.m. on a motion offered by Ms. Burgess-Cox and seconded by Mr. Bicer, it was

VOTED unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by 
Ms. Susan Burgess-Cox, Secretary