

**BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES  
CHENERY MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY ROOM  
DECEMBER 12, 2017**

Present: Dr. Lisa Fiore, Chair  
Ms. Susan Burgess-Cox, Secretary  
Ms. Kate Bowen  
Mr. Thomas Caputo  
Mr. Murat Bicer  
Ms. Andrea Prestwich  
Mr. John Phelan, Superintendent  
Ms. Janice Darias, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction  
Mr. Anthony DiCologero, Director of Finance, Business and Operations

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

There were no citizens' concerns.

1.4 Adjustments to the Agenda

Dr. Fiore announce the School Committee would address any citizens' concerns after covering the major business portion of the meeting in order to accommodate the Board of Selectmen and Belmont High School Building Committee members in attendance. She also stated the Belmont High District Grade Configuration Presentation – Exhibit B would take place before the Grade 5 Trip Changes – Exhibit B.

1.5 Chair's Report

Dr. Fiore announced today is the last day before winter break to order STAR Awards.

Dr. Fiore announced some upcoming music and coffeehouse events.

1.6 Student Representative Report

There was no student representative in attendance.

## 1.7 Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Phelan thanked Tony DiCologero, Director of Business, Finance, and Operations for hosting the Vocational Options Work Group. This group was assembled to study the best options for vocational education for Belmont students given Belmont's exit from Minuteman. They will meet for the next few months and present their findings to the School Committee at a meeting in April.

Superintendent Phelan thanked the Foundation for Belmont Education (FBE) for handing out \$58,325 worth of grants to educators. Classrooms have received chrome books, robotics kits and many other educational tools that would not have been purchased without help from the FBE.

Superintendent Phelan reminded everyone there may be a need on occasion to cancel school due to inclement weather. The Department of Public Works (DPW) and Facilities Department work very hard to try to prepare the roads and parking areas for school. In spite of this, sometimes it is in the best interest of safety to cancel school or delay the opening by an hour or two. Parents can find information on school closings by watching or listening to news broadcasts or checking the Belmont Public Schools website. Families will also receive robocalls announcing school cancellations. Thanks in advance to the DPW, Facilities Department, Police Department, and Fire Department for all they do to help student arrive at school safely.

## 2. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

## 3. MAJOR BUSINESS

### 3.1 District Configuration Presentation – Exhibit B

Superintendent Phelan and Assistant Superintendent Darias presented portions of the district grade configuration process and where it currently stands. The Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) has approved the following grade configuration options - 9-12, 8-12, 7-12. Based on previous visioning meetings held with parents, educators, members of the Belmont High School Building Committee, and members of the design team, one of the options will be chosen at the joint meeting of the School Committee, Board of Selectmen and Belmont High School Building Committee (BHSBC) on January 23, 2018. The building project will directly impact grades 7-12 and indirectly impact grades Pre K – 6 depending on the final option. Superintendent Phelan provided a summary of pros and cons for each option and discussed the results of a survey taken by staff on their choices for the different grade configuration options. He also presented research information on grade groupings and how it may or may not affect a students' achievement trajectory.

The next meeting on grade configuration will be January 9<sup>th</sup> in the Belmont High School Auditorium where the School Committee will host a community forum on the topic and ask for feedback from the community.

### 3.2 Grade 5 Trip Changes – Exhibit A

Chenery Middle School Principal Michael McAllister announced his decision to end the Grade 5 out-of-state field trip to Ecology Camp as of this year. The field trip has been a tradition for more than

twenty years. It was aligned with the Grade 5 science curriculum. Principal McAllister and Science Director Elizabeth Baker worked together to investigate a location for upcoming trips. They reviewed several different camp locations and surveyed students on their interest. Based on the overall negative results of their “after action review” process, and the complicating factors traveling with such a large number of students, they determined it was in everyone’s best interest to request permission to end the Grade 5 out-of-district overnight field trip to Ecology Camp. Principal McAllister took questions and comments from the School Committee.

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

4.1 Finance Subcommittee

The Finance Subcommittee met earlier in the day and discussed Special Education budget planning, the next iteration of special education funding options, and how LABBB credits could be applied. They also began a discussion of the FY19 budget process.

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 20<sup>th</sup> to review the Belmont High School 2018-19 Program of Studies.

4.4 Capital Budget Committee

There was no report from the Capital Budget Committee.

4.5 Warrant Committee

The Warrant Committee will meet on December 13<sup>th</sup> to discuss the FY19 budget.

4.6 Belmont High School Building Committee

There was no additional report from the Belmont High School Building Committee.

4.7 Community Path Committee

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

5.2 Personnel Items - none

5.3 Business Items – None

5.4 Approval of Minutes

November 16, 2017

November 28, 2017

Dr. Fiore suggested voting on the minutes of November 16, 2017 at the next meeting and the School Committee agreed.

On a motion offered by Murat Bicer and seconded by Andrea Prestwich, it was

**VOTED** 5-0-1 to approve the minutes of November 28, 2017.

6. **FUTURE BUSINESS**

Upcoming Meetings:

January 9, 2017

Finance Subcommittee Meeting

SAB Conference Room – 7:30 a.m.

January 9, 2017

Joint School Committee, Board of Selectmen, BHSBC Meeting and Community Forum

BHS Auditorium – 6:30 p.m.

7. **ENCLOSURES**

Enrollment Presentation Slides

Strategic Plan

Important Dates for School Committee

8. **ADJOURN**

Dr. Fiore announced although the meeting had been posted with an Executive Session at the conclusion, the School Committee would not be entering Executive Session.

On a motion offered by Murat Bicer, and seconded by Tom Caputo, it was

**VOTED** unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by



Susan Burgess-Cox, Secretary