

**BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES  
SHELBURNE COMMUNITY CENTER  
2730 WASHINGTON STREET, ROXBURY, MA  
OCTOBER 24, 2017**

Present: Dr. Lisa Fiore, Chair  
Ms. Susan Burgess-Cox, Secretary  
Mr. Thomas Caputo  
Ms. Andrea Prestwich  
Ms. Kate Bowen  
Mr. John Phelan, Superintendent  
Ms. Janice Darias, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction  
Ms. Diane Wiltshire, METCO Director

Absent: Mr. Murat Bicer

1. **OPENING BUSINESS**

1.1 Call to order

Dr. Fiore called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

1.2 Introductions

Members of the Administration, School Committee and meeting attendees introduced themselves and their connection to the Belmont Public Schools.

1.3 Chair's Report

Dr. Fiore thanked those attending for their participation in the METCO program and for coming out to meet with members of the School Committee.

1.4 Boston-Belmont Friends Group (Laura Hill & Paula Josephs & Jeannette Carroll)

Laura Hill, Jeannette Carroll and Paula Josephs provided an overview of the Boston/Belmont Friends Group in the Belmont Public Schools that began in 2014. The Group is hosting several events in Boston and Belmont to provide opportunities for families to meet and connect with one another including meet and greet events at Open Houses, a Parent's night out in Boston, a Bowling Event, the Martin Luther King Breakfast in Belmont and other student events. Several of these events are funded through donations from Belmont Against Racism (BAR).

1.5 Presentation of Donation from Belmont Against Racism (BAR)

Lorraine Kermond, a BAR Board Member, presented a donation of \$16,000 from BAR to support students at the Belmont Public Schools. This is funding from the Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast held in January 2017. Superintendent Phelan noted that another donation of \$13,629 plus this \$16,000 helps

provide transportation to students who attend events and activities after school hours. BAR provides additional funding and support to students throughout the year.

#### 1.6 Superintendent's Report = Exhibit B, Exhibit C

Superintendent Phelan provided an overview of the Belmont Public School's strategic plan. Focus areas for 2017-2018 include addressing the student achievement gap and continuing district-wide implementation of the Social Emotional Learning framework.

#### 1.7 METCO Update – Diane Wiltshire – Exhibit A

Ms. Wiltshire noted that the 2017 graduating class of METCO-program students at Belmont High School included 7 students accepted into 49 colleges and 1 student who received a full scholarship.

Ms. Wiltshire reported that this was the first time that the district has enrolled kindergarten students. Belmont welcomed 14 new students from the METCO-program at the elementary and high school level. This was the first year that there were no new METCO-program students entering the Chenery Middle School.

Ms. Wiltshire noted that late transportation services at Belmont High School will begin on November 6<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Wiltshire noted upcoming events such as the Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast on January 15, 2018 as well as Lobby Day for the METCO-program on March 18, 2018.

## 2. OPENING BUSINESS

### 2.1 School Opening Update

Superintendent Phelan noted that school openings went well for the 2017 -2018 school year. Enrollment in the Belmont Public Schools continues to grow resulting in a need to increase space and staff.

### 2.2 Enrollment

Superintendent Phelan discussed the space challenges facing the Belmont Public Schools and how the administration is addressing these issues using existing modular units at Belmont High School, the installation of modular units at the Chenery Middle School, and a funding request being presented to Belmont Town Meeting for modular units at the Burbank Elementary School. The increase in enrollment has resulted in the district hiring five teachers.

### 2.3 Strategic Plan – SEL/Achievement Gap

Assistant Superintendent Janice Darias provided an overview of the district's goal of closing the African-American/Black achievement gap. A climate survey provided to students, parents and teachers produced data demonstrating that a large number of African-American/Black students do not feel welcome in Belmont. The Foundation for Belmont Education (FBE) provided \$22,000 to fund trainings and materials for teachers and staff to address the African-American/Black achievement gap. The

District is engaged in offering ongoing professional development opportunities through a partnership with Initiatives for Developing Equity and Achievement for All Students (IDEAS) including courses on facilitating courageous conversations with students, understanding self-efficacy, challenging microaggressions and supporting culturally proficient classrooms.

2.4 BHS=BC Update – Exhibit C

Superintendent Phelan provided an update on the Belmont High School Building Project. The Belmont High School Building Committee (BHS-BC) was given the opportunity to explore the following grade configurations for a new school: 9-12, 8-12 and 7-12. The BHS-BC has held meetings throughout the past few months to provide families and community members with information on the project.

3. **FUTURE BUSINESS**

Upcoming Meetings:

November 14, 2017

Finance Subcommittee Meeting

SAB Conference Room – 7:30 a.m.

November 14, 2017

School Committee

CMS Large Community Room – 7:00 p.m.

4. **ENCLOSURES**

Directions to Shelburne Community Center  
Strategic Plan

5. **ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:33 p.m. on a motion offered by Ms. Bowen and seconded by Mr. Caputo, it was

**VOTED** unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by



Susan Burgess-Cox, Secretary