

**BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
CHENERY MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY ROOM
FEBRUARY 7, 2017**

Present:

Dr. Lisa Fiore, Chair
Ms. Susan Burgess-Cox, Secretary
Mr. Murat Bicer
Mr. Thomas Caputo
Ms. Andrea Prestwich
Ms. Elyse Shuster
Mr. John Phelan, Superintendent
Ms. Janice Darias, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction
Mr. Anthony DiCologero

1. OPENING BUSINESS

1.1 Call to order

Dr. Fiore called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

1.2 Pledge of Allegiance

Dr. Fiore led the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.3 Citizens' Concerns

Two community members spoke and expressed their support for later school start times stating studies that have been done showing lack of sleep affects teens in a negative way.

Several faculty members spoke regarding the possibility of an increase in stipends for extra-compensatory assignments.

1.4 Adjustments to the Agenda

There were no adjustments to the agenda.

1.5 Chair's Report

Dr. Fiore reminded the School Committee of the upcoming Foundation for Belmont Education (FBE) Dinner on March 18th at Belmont Hill School. She stated tickets could be purchased on the Belmont Public Schools website.

Dr. Fiore announced the confirmation of Betsy Devos as Secretary of Education. She suggested anyone interested in information on how this may impact the Belmont Public Schools can check on Network for Public Education or the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education websites.

1.6 Student Representative Report

High School students James Kitch, Rachel Jansen, and Owen Loveluck provided an update on the survey students have created on homework amounts. They will present the survey results at a faculty meeting in May of June. They also spoke about the recent homecoming game and dance and the upcoming school musical scheduled for April.

1.7 Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Phelan noted the following three out of state trip proposals in the School Committee packets which have all been approved:

- Grade 5 Environmental Camp
- Grade 8 Washington D.C. Trip
- High School UNICEF Trip

Superintendent Phelan spoke about his recent meetings with the Space Task Force Steering Committee and announced he will be doing presentations on enrollment at each of the elementary schools in the near future. He also updated the School Committee on the water testing at the hockey rink, stating that half of the results have come in and once all the results have come in he will send out a notification to all parents.

Superintendent Phelan state he had been at the State House along with Chenery Principal Michael McAllister, Butler Principal Danielle Betancourt, and Burbank Principal Tricia Clifford for the Blue Ribbon Award Ceremony. The Butler School was a recipient of the Blue Ribbon Award and the Burbank School was chosen as an accommodation school.

2. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

3. MAJOR BUSINESS

3.1 2017-18 BHS Program of Studies Vote – Exhibit A

After explaining the School Committee had reviewed the 2017-18 BHS Program of Studies at the January 24th meeting, she asked for a motion to accept the document.

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

VOTED unanimously to accept the 2017-18 BHS Program of Studies.

3.2 Technology Update – Exhibit B

Mr. Steve Mazzola, Director of Technology, Mr. Dan Richards, Belmont High School Principal, and Ms. Deb McDevitt, Director Social Studies presented an overview of new initiatives being undertaken to help improve teaching. He spoke about the BHS 1:1 Program which supports critical thinking, collaboration, communication and creativity. This is the first year iPads have been provided to all students. The presenters discussed the impact this technology has had on teaching and learning such as student-centered classrooms, expanded collaboration and problem solving, increased formative assessment and increased opportunities for authentic summative assessments. The addition of iPads has also allowed for better differentiated instruction and the ability to find resources and keep students organized. Teachers who have responded to a technology questionnaire report they are comfortable or very comfortable using technology in the classroom. It was also noted 97% of responding teachers report using iPads, iPods, or tablet computers in their classrooms. There are some areas where additional work is needed such as planning time, curriculum development, how to facilitate work which requires a significant amount of typing. There are plans to continue professional development for teachers and to monitor and adjust the program based on survey and focus group data.

3.3 Burbank Update – Exhibit C

Dr. Tricia Clifford, Burbank Principal provided an update on the Burbank School. She began by noting enrollment has increased by 46 students since 2010 which has had an impact in many ways. She went on to explain some new initiatives that were part of the School Improvement Plan. They included the completion of the Open Circle Program, Burbank SEL Steering Committee and Small Group Instruction.

The Open Circle Program is a social and emotional learning program which delivers interactive in-person professional development for all school staff. It helps develop children's social and emotional skills such as managing emotions, empathy, positive relationships and problem solving. The Burbank SEL Steering Committee is focusing on surveying the staff about any proposed changes to the Habits of Success assemblies. The Small Group Instruction is a two-year PLT formed in the fall of 2015. The group investigates different instructional practices to improve Reading Workshop, Mathematics Workshop and they also focus on small group instruction across the content areas in grade K-4.

3.4 FY18 Budget Presentation – Exhibit D

Superintendent Phelan provided an overview of the FY18 draft 1 budget. He spoke on the Belmont's per pupil spending with other towns comparable to Belmont. Belmont has consistently spent less than the state average.

Superintendent Phelan touched on the increase in enrollment and its impact on classes. He noted that 42% of classes in Belmont Public Schools are within the range of the School Committee standard for class size. He stated enrollment increases by approximately 100 students per year.

Superintendent Phelan provided an overview of the Belmont High School building project which included information on where the district is in the process. An education facilitator has been hired to help with the visioning process when building a new school.

Superintendent Phelan went on to explain the plans for any additional positions in FY18 as well as the addition of a bus due to the increase in enrollment. He also spoke on budget planning for additional classroom and technology materials.

The total general fund school budget for FY18 is \$53,136,735 which is an increase of \$3,010,152 over FY17. Superintendent Phelan explained the various pressures on the budget.

3.5 Start Times Presentation – Exhibit E

Ms. Andrea Prestwich presented information on the correlation between adolescents sleep needs and school start times. She explained adolescents begin feeling sleepy at approximately 11:00 p.m. or later. This means waking up at 6:00 a.m. does not provide enough sleep since adolescents require 8-9.5 hours of sleep each night. Research shows that sleep deprivation in teens can lead to obesity, diabetes, stress and other health issues. Ms. Prestwich explained studies show that if school starts later students will sleep longer and get better quality sleep.

School Committee members discussed the information and Dr. Fiore suggested they take time to digest the information and discuss the next steps for creating a Start Times Task Force at a future meeting.

4. SUBCOMMITTEE/LIAISON UPDATES (as needed)

4.1 Finance Subcommittee

The Finance Subcommittee met earlier in the day and discussed how to handle the circuit breaker account funds as well as stabilization funds.

4.2 Policy and Procedure Subcommittee

The Policy and Procedure Subcommittee met yesterday and discussed changes being considered to the school calendar.

4.3 Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee

There was no report from the Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee.

4.4 Capital Budget Committee

The Capital Budget Committee will meet on February 9th to discuss the process for capital budget requests.

4.5 Warrant Committee

The Warrant Committee will meet on February 8th.

4.6 Belmont High School Building Committee

The Belmont High School Building Committee is in the process of interviewing for the Owner Project Manager (OPM) position. Once finalists have been chosen the names will be sent to the State for approval.

4.7 Space Task Force

There was no report from the Space Task Force.

4.8 Community Path Update

There was no report from the Community Path Committee.

4.9 Library Long Range Planning Committee

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

5. **OTHER BUSINESS**

5.1 Consent Agenda

Disposal of Surplus Property Vote – Exhibit F

Superintendent Phelan explained the school district has had a piano for many years that is no longer of use due to its age. An anonymous member of the community donated funding for the purchase of a new piano and Parents of Music Students (POMS) has raised money for a second piano so the current piano has become surplus.

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

VOTED unanimously to approve the disposal of the Belmont High School piano.

5.2 Personnel Items – None

5.3 Business Items – None

5.4 Approval of Minutes

❖ **January 24, 2017**

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

VOTED unanimously to approve the January 24, 2017 minutes as amended.

6. **FUTURE BUSINESS**

None

7. **ENCLOSURES**

- ❖ Strategic Plan
- ❖ Out of State Field Trip: Environmental Camp (Grade 5)
- ❖ Out of State Field Trip: Washington D.C. (Grade 8)

- ❖ Out of State Field Trip: UNICEF – Washington D.C.
- ❖ February 1, 2017 Enrollment
- ❖ February 1, 2017 Enrollment indicating changes

8. **ADJOURN**

At 9:40 p.m., on a motion offered by Ms. Shuster and seconded by Mr. Caputo, it was

VOTED unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by 
Ms. Susan Burgess-Cox, Secretary