

BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES
REMOTE MEETING
AUGUST 13, 2020

Present: Ms. Amy Checkoway
Mr. Michael Crowley
Ms. Tara Donner
Ms. Evelyn Gomez
Mr. John Phelan, Superintendent
Ms. Janice Darias, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Anthony DiCologero, Director of Finance, Business and Operations
Mr. Michael McAllister, Director of Human Capital

Absent: Ms. Andrea Prestwich, Chair
Ms. Catherine Bowen, Secretary

1. Opening Business

1.1 Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m.

2. Impact of School Opening of FY21 Budget

Superintendent Phelan provided an overview of the estimated additional costs for opening school under each model (remote and hybrid) and impacts on the FY21 budget. He shared a spreadsheet created by Anthony DiCologero, Director of Finance, Business and Operations. The spreadsheet explained some of the potential school department needs and the cost of those needs by month.

Some of the needs for a remote opening include the following:

- Possible furlough of some staff who may not be utilized in remote setting
- Additional Technology Integration Specialist
- Supply kits, student subscriptions and software
- Loss of bus fees
- Full day kindergarten – enrollment, loss of fees
- Facilities air flow assessment
- Outside space (large tents) for each school
- Food service impact to budget (loss of revenue)

Some of the needs for a hybrid opening include the following:

- Possible furlough of some staff who may not be utilized in a remote setting
- 30.0 Plus long term substitute (or longer) teachers (estimated number only)
- 12.0 long-term subs to be in buildings to be trained and prepared to cover sick and/or quarantined staff (estimated number only)
- 0.4 nurse

- Additional Technology Integration Specialist
- 6.0 team of remote only educators (estimated number only)
- Supply kits, student subscriptions and software
- Additional buses to transport students and reduction of fees associated with anticipated non-riders
- Full day kindergarten – enrollment, loss of fees
- Facilities work to be done in short term to remedy any rooms that can be utilized for teaching/working space when occupied
- Outside space (large tents) for each school
- Food service impact to budget (loss of revenue) Continued PPE
- Continued high level of cleaning that may necessitate an increase in staff and or overtime

It may be possible for parent volunteers to be utilized in the classroom as volunteer aides, either in a remote or hybrid setting. One issue may be having additional people in a classroom if it is a hybrid setting. This would need to be determined after checking public health information.

The School Administration is looking further at the budget impact on the coming school year and working with all funding sources in mind. The CARES Act for schools has been expended. An additional revenue stream from the state results in an additional \$225 per student. The money needs to be spent on COVID-19 support and expended by December 2020. That money will be used to purchase home kits for students, address COVID related facilities issues and purchase additional PPE.

There is a concern that some staff may need to take a leave under both hybrid and remote models, due to family obligations. There are leave acts in place by the federal government for families impacted by COVID-19. There are an estimated thirty staff in Belmont that may need to take leave under a hybrid option. Administrators are working with the BEA on these issues.

School administrators are discussing transportation. If school opens in a remote setting, parents will need to be reimbursed for bus fees. Negotiations will take place with bus companies using guidance from the state. The goal is to determine what bus companies need to stay in business and keep their employees, and further consider what the district is able to contribute. Buses may be used for Meet and Greet sessions and/or the distribution of meals.


The Food Service Program has been supplying meals to students through the summer. The School Department is being reimbursed by the federal government for the meals. It will still need to be determined how to continue this in a remote setting.

3. Full Day Kindergarten Fees

Discussion has taken place over the last few years about challenges and concerns related to the full day kindergarten fees. If the district could to fund full day kindergarten for a year, the state would begin to reimburse the district fully for each kindergarten student going forward. Belmont has never been able to afford this option. Superintendent Phelan is hoping for a way to create a bridge to pay full day kindergarten fees for the coming year so families will not be forced to pay fees, given the uncertainty of how much of the year will be remote versus hybrid. . If students decide not to go to kindergarten this year at all, the Town will lose reimbursement for those students next year. It would take approximately \$400,000 to create this bridge.

4. Adjourn

*On a motion offered by Amy Checkoway and seconded by Tara Donner, the School Committee
VOTED unanimously on a roll call vote to adjourn the meeting at 3:00 p.m.*

Respectfully Submitted by 
Amy Checkoway