

BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION SUBCOMMITTEE
MINUTES
REMOTE MEETING
MARCH 1, 2022

**RECEIVED
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BELMONT, MA**

Present: Meghan Moriarty, School Committee
Amy Checkoway, School Committee
Ralph Jones, School Committee

DATE: September 14, 2022
TIME: 2:12 PM

Superintendent John Phelan
Assistant Superintendent Janice Darias
Chenery Principal Karla Koza
Math Director Jonathan Golden

Call to Order

Checkoway called the subcommittee meeting to order at 2:30 pm.

Designation of Subcommittee Chair and Secretary

Checkoway nominated Member Moriarty to serve as the Chair of this subcommittee moving forward, Jones seconded, and the vote to approve was 3-0. Moriarty nominated Member Checkoway to serve as the Secretary moving forward, Jones seconded, and the vote to approve was 3-0.

MCAS Math Scores/Math Coaches

The following presentation was prepared and posted to inform this and the following agenda item: [Middle School Math and Math MCAS Scores.pdf \(belmont.k12.ma.us\)](#). As the School Committee member who had requested this meeting, Ralph Jones began the meeting by noting that he had reviewed the slides and did not think it was necessary to go through the full presentation today. He noted disparities in MCAS scores and a significant proportion of students who are doing very well, especially prior to the pandemic. He is concerned about those who are bored and those who need additional support.

Assistant Superintendent Darias noted that the district has not had dedicated math support staff before this year to help students who need support reaching grade level benchmarks. The district has had a great group of reading specialists that help students meet benchmarks in that content area. Federal funds have been used to hire two math specialists for elementary school students. Ideally there would be at least one per school (four total). Right now, one specialist serves two schools and the other serves three. Normally, the district would start with the

youngest students and work up in terms of grade level support; however, given the 4th grade scores, this year the math specialists are working with 3rd and 4th graders. The district is also about to purchase an universal screener that will go through eighth grade, which is an online assessment with corresponding personalized instructional tool to provide data in both ELA and math. This will also give the district the ability to screen students in middle school for the first time; the hope is to pilot the assessment this year and fully implement it next year.

As an example, Darias showed the grade 5 MCAS scores and noted the number of students who met and exceeded expectations was down in 2021: 71% in 2019 versus 58% in 2021.

Subcommittee members acknowledged the need for continuing and potentially expanding supports for students who are struggling and interest in opportunities for students who need further challenge. Community interest in these issues, especially from the Belmont Math Parents, was noted, as well as the importance of a clear process for decision making moving forward that is informed by different perspectives and stakeholders.

CMS Math Program


Details about the current CMS math program are included on the slides. There was not much specific discussion by the subcommittee about the CMS program during this meeting.

Moriarty took some questions and comments from the public beginning at 3:15 pm, which focused on support for continuing the Challenger program next year, the need for accelerated options for middle and high school students, and the need for additional supports for students who are struggling. The Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent engaged in some of back-and-forth in the discussion with the public as well.

Further discussion about these topics will take place at the upcoming March 23rd School Committee meeting.

Adjourn

Moriarty adjourned the meeting at 3:45 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by: 
Amy Checkoway