

Belmont Public Schools
Continued “Return-to-Learning” Fall 2020

Belmont School Committee
October 27, 2020

Agenda

- Discussion of Belmont High School Hybrid Task Force (Vote)
- Facilities Update
- Special Education and English Language Education Services Updates
- Appointment of School Committee Member to Structural Change Impact Group (Vote)

School Priorities

- Health and Safety
- Social Emotional Well-being
- Academic Engagement

How are Sped / EL students faring with the start of school?

- There is the same spectrum of success and challenge experienced by special education students as there is experienced by the general education students.
- Many are doing very well, even excelling.
- Others are experiencing challenges, some of which are severe and have warranted further services and supports.

What is the status of IEP meetings?

- Since the start of school, teams have been arranging IEP meetings that did not occur during closure last spring.
- These are being scheduled in order of due dates, starting with any that could not take place in the Spring and working forward to those that have come or are coming due this Fall.
- Due to the ongoing pandemic, the district has a strong preference for all meetings to be conducted over Google Meet or on the telephone until further notice.

What is the status of assessment?

- We have begun the process of working our way through our backlog of evaluations.
- Unfortunately, due to the volume of evaluations left over from last Spring, this will take many months to work through.
- In an effort to work through the backlog as quickly as possible, we have implemented a variety of different measures as follows:

Measures to Address Assessment

- We are actively recruiting contract evaluators in all areas of expertise to help with the testing that needs to be completed. This has not proven to be as successful as we would have hoped as many outside clinicians and agencies are not interested in doing any kinds of assessments if they need to be completed in person.
- We are exploring options to remotely evaluate where possible, although the reliability of these approaches requires us to be very cautious with these models. We can only use them in cases where the information gained, and the case involved, best lends itself to these types of assessments.

Measures to Address Assessment (continued)

- Teams have been advised to review both Initial and Re-evaluation cases pending to see if there are any that could be addressed with data we may already have on hand.
- In some cases, we may have an outside evaluation provided by parents that could be utilized, and/or data provided by a variety of internal progress monitoring reports that can be used as the foundational information needed for an eligibility or re-eligibility determination in lieu of in-person assessments.
- While many cases require a level of diagnostic objective testing that this approach may not allow, we do not want to rule out the possibility that we can move forward with certain cases where enough information already exists.

Measures to Address Assessment (continued)

- Teams have been advised to review re-evaluation referrals in the context of necessity.
- There is no legal obligation for the district to re-evaluate a student in cases where neither the school district nor the parents have any questions about continued eligibility.
- In these cases, the Team and the parents can decide not to test, and simply recommend that testing be completed at the next 3 year cycle due date, or any other time in between.

What is the status of service delivery now?

- Services and supports are being provided as delineated by the student's IEP, although the service delivery model and time frame may have been modified to allow for remote vs in-person delivery within the context of the school's current daily/weekly schedule.
- This means that every service listed on the grid page will be provided.
- Those services, however, might be provided differently than they would be if school were back to a full time regular schedule with typical in-person instruction.

Service Delivery (continued)

- Students might also be receiving some services remotely and others in-person regardless of which instructional model is being used at a student's school.
- Services that are more challenging to provide effectively remotely are prioritized for in-person services.

Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC)

<https://www.belmont.k12.ma.us/bps/Partners/Belmont-SEPAC>

Tim Flood and Naomie Dorilas, SEPAC co-chairs

English Language Screening

- The English Language Education Department carried out 122 required English language screenings in-person during the last two weeks of August.
- In-person screening has continued to happen during hybrid and by appointment since school reopened in September.
- New registrations are still coming in, and screening is generally happening within two week of a new student's first day.
- We have a current backlog of 33 ELE screenings, and we are waiting on school records for an additional 17 students who are transferring from other US districts.

English Language Education Services

- All required English Language Education services are provided to all English Learners PK-12, regardless of instructional mode
- Co-served English Learners in K-12 and Foundational English Learners in 5-12 received in-person services throughout Phase 2
- In Phase 3, we will work to schedule additional in-person services, consistent with the student's level of service, for English Learners in grades K-8

English Language Education Students and Families

Successes

- Robust, aligned English Language curriculum being delivered remotely and/or in-person
- Strong turn-out for family engagement programming
- Positive classroom communities

Challenges

- Communication barriers
- Complicated service schedules
- Remote attendance challenges for our youngest students

ELE Family Supports

Interactive Support

- Two-way translated texting with Talking Points
- English Language Parent Advisory Council (ELPAC)
- Multilingual Parent Support Group (2/wk) and WhatsApp group run by Donna Stanton

Resources

- Translated district communications via SchoolMessenger platform
- Multilingual Parent Support Guides written by Belmont parent-educators in six languages

English Language Parent Advisory Council (ELPAC)

- Next meeting: 7:00 PM on Wednesday, November 18th
- [English Language Education webpage](#)
- Yujin Kim, parent of two ELs

Appointment of School Committee to Structural Change Impact Group (VOTE)

Structural Change Impact Group

Members:	12
Appointment:	Select Board Member School Committee Member 2 Warrant Committee Members Capital Budget Committee Member Energy Committee Member (or designee) By-law Review Committee Member (or designee) Vision 21 Committee Member (or designee) 4 Town Residents
Length of Term:	18 Months
Charge Approved:	September 17, 2020

Purpose: The purpose of the Structural Change Impact Group is to investigate and recommend a list of key structural changes for the Town of Belmont, which may impact its economic condition, the structural deficit challenges the Town faces, on the Town operational approach to delivering services to the community.

Finish
