

**BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
SHELBURNE COMMUNITY CENTER
2730 WASHINGTON STREET, ROXBURY, MA
OCTOBER 29, 2019**

Present: Ms. Susan Burgess-Cox, Chair
Ms. Andrea Prestwich, Secretary
Ms. Kate Bowen
Ms. Amy Checkoway
Mr. Michael Crowley
Ms. Tara Donner
Mr. John Phelan, Superintendent

Also Present: Ms. Rosa Innis, METCO Director
Ms. Kathryn Bonfiglio, B.A.R.
Ms. Paul Josephs, B.A.R.
Ms. Lorraine Kermond, B.A.R.

1. OPENING BUSINESS

1.1 Call to order

Susan Burgess-Cox called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

1.2 Introductions

Informal introductions were made by members of the school committee, school administration, METCO, and Belmont Against Racism and the Boston-Belmont Friends Group.

1.3 Chairs' Report

There was no Chairs' report.

1.4 Presentation of Donation from B.A.R.

Kathryn Bonfiglio, President of Belmont Against Racism, (B.A.R.) along with Paula Josephs and Lorraine Kermond. B.A.R. members presented a check for \$10,000 to Superintendent Phelan to support METCO. METCO funds are used for many things, including taxis for students who attend after-school events (e.g. athletics), parent symposia, snacks at various events, trip scholarships, the Urban Improv, WiFi on the middle school bus, funding for teachers to go to conferences, and events outside of school, (e.g. restorative justice events). The primary BAR fund raising event is the MLK breakfast.

Paul Josephs and Lorraine Kermond an overview of the Boston-Belmont Friends Group. The goal of this group is to get families together, and help integrate Boston kids in Belmont schools. One focus is of the group is to support Boston kids so that they can participate in after school

activities. An evening of bowling is the group's biggest event, usually in March. Last year 150 people attended. BAR supports the bowling event.

2. MAJOR BUSINESS

2.1 METCO Update

Ms. Innes gave an update on the METCO program in Belmont. There are 17 new students this year and a total of 101 students throughout the district. This breaks down into 44 elementary, 23 middle and 34 high school students.

This year the METCO focus has been on making students feel welcome, the math gap, and community building. There is now a lunch buddies group and a teacher-mentor program at Wellington. There is a girls group at Chenery. At the high school the Black in Belmont group has been re-branded as "Being Me" to make it more inclusive. This group is hoping to find a community service project. There is restorative justice training at the high school with a focus on how to handle misconduct.

There is now WiFi on the middle school bus. Chenery students need WiFi to do homework and also spend a lot of time on the bus. This enables them to spend the commuting time productively. Burbank has a bus box.

There is a new High School bus starting 10/4/19. It will stop at major train stations to pick up students. It is hoped this will ease the commute for high school students who otherwise need to use public transportation with 2-3 changes, with very little margin for error.

Closing the math gap: Chenery now has on-line subscription to math enhancement. Chenery teachers have been trained in culturally responsive teaching in mathematics.

2.2 Superintendents Report

Superintendent Phelan gave a brief update on the new building and the new grade configuration. In addition he emphasized the district's priority of social and emotional learning and creating a culture where the kids feel known, safe and valued. As part of this effort, all teachers will participate in a half day of Professional Development devoted to culturally responsive training. The district is starting affinity groups for teachers of color.

3. FUTURE BUSINESS

November 5, 2019

Finance Subcommittee/Warrant Committee Education Subcommittee Joint Meeting
SAB Conference Room – 8:00 a.m.

November 12, 2019

School Committee Meeting
CMS Community Room – 7:00 p.m.

4. ADJOURN

At 7:22 p.m. on a motion offered by Andrea Prestwich and seconded by Kate Bowen, it was **VOTED** unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted by Andrea Prestwich
Andrea Prestwich, Secretary