

**BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
CHENERY MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY ROOM
December 20, 2011**

Present: Ms. Laurie Graham, Chair
Ms. Rebecca Vose, Secretary
Ms. Laurie Slap
Mr. Dan Scharfman
Mr. Kevin Cunningham
Ms. Anne Lougée
Dr. Thomas Kingston, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Janice Darias, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction
Mr. Anthony DiCologero, Director of Finance, Business and Operations

1. OPENING BUSINESS

1.1 Call to Order

Ms. Graham called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Community Room of the Chenery Middle School.

2. EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 6:35 p.m. on a motion offered by Mr. Scharfman and seconded by Ms. Vose, it was

VOTED unanimously (6-0) on a roll call vote to enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussing Collective Bargaining with union personnel given that a discussion in Open Session may have a detrimental impact on the School Committee's bargaining position.

The Committee announced that they would return to Open Session at the conclusion of the Executive Session.

3. OPENING BUSINESS

3.1 The School Committee returned to Open Session at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Room of the Chenery Middle School. Ms. Graham announced an adjustment to the agenda to move the presentation of the Professional Learning Team to the first item on the agenda.

3.2 Professional Learning Team Presentation

In the first in a series of presentations to be held monthly during workshop meetings, three second grade teachers from the Burbank School shared highlights of their work in their professional learning team (PLT) last year. The teachers were Katie Williams, Jamie Huguet, and Karen Curran, and the focus of their PLT was improving students' learning in the areas of geography and map-reading skills in the social studies curriculum. Their presentation included the results of the pre- and post-assessments for each of the three social studies units, as well as the sharing of the binders of instructional materials they developed as part of their action research in the PLT. In addition, they shared how the model had supported their professional development and gave them the time and support to focus on an area that they had identified as needing improvement. The School Committee asked questions about their work, and thanked them for their presentation.

3.3 Superintendent's Report

Dr. Kingston thanked the teachers for their PLT presentation, and noted that continued support for the PLT professional development model is one of the budget assumptions included in the draft document of budget priorities on the agenda for discussion later in the meeting.

Dr. Kingston called the School Committee's attention to the list of grants awarded in the first cycle of Learning Excellence Grants by the Foundation for Belmont Education. In this cycle, the FBE approved seventeen grants for funding, totaling \$32,385. Dr. Kingston thanked the Foundation for its continued support of the Belmont Public Schools.

3.4 Chairman's Report

Ms. Graham reminded the School Committee of the annual Martin Luther King Community Breakfast sponsored by Belmont Against Racism and the Belmont Public Schools. It will be held on Monday, January 16, 2012, 8:30-11:00 a.m. in the Belmont High School Cafeteria. Registration information is on the Belmont Against Racism web site.

4. MAJOR BUSINESS

4.1 Approval of Student Health and Wellness Policy (Second Reading) – Exhibit A

Ms. Graham introduced the policy, noting that the policy must be approved by January 1, 2012 to comply with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Dr. Kingston noted that additional time has been granted to all districts, if needed.

Mr. Scharfman noted two grammatical errors to be corrected.

On a motion offered by Mr. Scharfman and seconded by Ms. Vose, it was

VOTED unanimously (6-0) to approve Policy 5004, Student Health and Wellness, Exhibit A dated 12-20-11.

4.2 Approval of Dedication of Buildings Policy (Second Reading) – Exhibit B

Ms. Graham noted that there were two documents in the packet: the policy, which is presented for approval, and the procedures, which are still in draft form.

On a motion offered by Mr. Scharfman and seconded by Ms. Slap, it was

VOTED unanimously (6-0) to approve Policy 7003, Dedication of Buildings and Facilities, Exhibit B dated 12-20-11.

Ms. Graham invited the members of the School Committee to email her if they have suggestions for the procedures related to this policy.

4.3. Butler Playground Update

Dr. Kingston updated the School Committee on the progress of the playground at the Butler School. The School Department is working closely with the Butler Playground Committee to establish the timeline for preparing the ground and purchasing the equipment. The funding is in place to take down the old playground, and the work will be completed during the vacation next week. The Butler Playground Committee is raising funds for the equipment. While it is a two-year process, they hope to have enough funds to purchase the initial phase in April or May 2012.

4.4 Discussion of Budget Priorities

Dr. Kingston asked Mr. DiCologero to update the School Committee on the process of developing the FY13 Budget. Mr. DiCologero explained that he has completed the work of "rolling forward" the salary lines of the budget. He explained that he, Dr. Kingston, and Ms. Darias are meeting to examine the non-salary accounts. The process is on track to present the budget to the School Committee on January 10, 2012, and to the Warrant Committee on January 11, 2012.

Mr. DiCologero explained the formatting of the Budget Narratives, which will give an overview of the program, and will also include a "score card" to outline the cost of the program, both in FY12 and for FY13.

Dr. Kingston presented Draft 2 of the theory/principles/assumptions of the FY13 Budget. They were drafted following the School Committee workshop meeting on December 16, 2011, and represent the views and ideas discussed at that meeting. Draft 1 was reviewed by the Finance Subcommittee today, and Draft 2 includes that conversation. He asked the full School Committee to discuss the document and share comments during the meeting and in the coming weeks.

Dr. Kingston reviewed the three assumptions outlined in the document. He anticipates using this document as the preface of the budget document to be presented on January 10, 2012. Mr. Cunningham asked about establishing a subcommittee to focus on curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Ms. Graham agreed and added that it could also include the work suggested by Mr. Scharfman to create a "dashboard" of performance indicators. They decided to draft the charge of the subcommittee first, before creating the subcommittee and assigning members to it.

Ms. Graham thanked the Finance Subcommittee, Dr. Kingston, and Mr. DiCologero for their work. She asked Mr. DiCologero to send the example narrative to the School Committee. Mr. Cunningham explained that the Finance Subcommittee will be meeting on January 5, 2012 to preview the presentation, to be followed by a School Committee workshop meeting on January 6, 2012, to review the budget presentation as well.

4.5 Update on the Task Force on Extracurricular Activities

Mr. Scharfman gave an update on the Task Force on Extracurricular Activities. They are developing recommendations for the FY13 budget. The task force will meet on January 5, 2012 to finalize the recommendations. Mr. Scharfman asked if the forum, to share the recommendations with the public and get their feedback, could be before or during the January 17 meeting. It was agreed that the forum would take place for an hour (7:00-8:00 p.m.) before the School Committee meeting, which would begin a half hour later than usual (at 8:00 p.m.).

5. FUTURE BUSINESS

Upcoming Meetings:

January 3, 2012
CMS Large Community Room
7:30 p.m.

6. ADJOURNMENT

At 9:05 p.m. on a motion offered by Ms. Vose and seconded by Ms. Slap, it was

VOTED unanimously (6-0) to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by



Rebecca Vose, Secretary