

**BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
CHENERY MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY ROOM
AUGUST 22, 2012**

Present: Ms. Laurie Graham, Chair
Mr. Daniel Scharfman, Secretary
Ms. Laurie Slap
Mr. Kevin Cunningham
Ms. Anne Lougée
Ms. Pascha Griffiths
Dr. Thomas Kingston, Interim Superintendent
Ms. Janice Darias, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Anthony DiCologero, Director of Business, Finance and Operations
Belmont Public Schools Leadership Council

1. **Call to order**

Ms. Graham called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. She noted that while this was a Leadership Council retreat meeting, the School Committee was present in full and would be discussing general matters of district planning.

2. **Discussion of "Creating Innovators"**

Dr. Kingston introduced a structured discussion of Creating Innovators by Tony Wagner, a book that all present had been asked to read in preparation for the retreat. Dr. Kingston provided a structured format for discussing aspects of the book that stood out as important to attendees. Attendees broke into small groups and followed this format.

Returning to the full group, attendees offered observations from their prior discussions. These included how to apply the book's broad findings to Belmont in particular, how to meet the high expectations of Belmont residents for current achievement while changing to foster greater innovation, and whether the book's suggestions are applicable to all students.

Dr. Kingston indicated that these observations would become part of a long-term conversations leading to district strategic planning.

3. **Reports on work done during the retreat**

Dr. Kingston, noting that the Leadership Council had already been meeting for a day and a half, asked teams of leaders to summarize the work that had been done. These included:

- Mike McAllister presented preliminary suggestions for renewal of the district's mission, vision, and motto, as well as how to communicate the deep sense of mission to all members of the district and the public in Belmont. He suggested that Belmont's current documents could be summarized and consolidated to be more powerful communication tools.

- Deb Darlington, Janice Darias, and Jim Davis presented plans for implementation of the new Educator Evaluation System, which are ready for the start of school. This makes Belmont one of the state leaders in implementation of the new mandates. They noted that one of the biggest changes will be new roles for building leadership in observing and coaching teaching staff more at more frequent intervals.
- Janet Carey, Kristen St. George, and Lindsay Rinder presented work done on defining effective teaching. They noted that one of the biggest changes will be new roles for building and instructional leaders as they observe and coach teaching staff at more frequent intervals.

Dr. Kingston provided an opportunity for the School Committee to ask for clarifications and provide feedback to the Leadership Council. Questions and ideas were focused in two areas:

- Generating a sense of enthusiasm for the new educator evaluation tools which were widely acknowledged to be exciting and effective for improving education.
- Plans for the School Committee's anticipated formation of a "curriculum subcommittee" and any insights the Leadership Council might have as the School Committee charges such a subcommittee.

4. **Adjourn**

At 3:55pm, by a vote of 6-0-0, the School Committee voted to adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted by



Daniel Scharfman, Secretary