

**BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
CHENERY MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY ROOM
DECEMBER 18, 2012**

Present: Mr. Kevin Cunningham
Ms. Anne Lougée
Ms. Pascha Griffiths
Mr. Daniel Scharfman, Secretary
Dr. Thomas Kingston, Interim Superintendent
Ms. Janice Darias, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Anthony DiColohero, Director of Business, Finance and Operations

Absent: Ms. Laurie Graham, Chair
Ms. Laurie Slap

1. **OPENING BUSINESS**

1.1 Call to order

Mr. Scharfman called the meeting to order at 7:38 p.m.

1.2 Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Scharfman led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Scharfman read a statement from the School Committee regarding the tragedy in Newtown, CT and asked for a moment of silence to honor the victims.

Dr. Kingston announced the passing of Dan Downey, Computer Systems Specialist and husband of Laurie Graham, School Committee Chair. He stated that Dan made wonderful contributions to the Belmont Public Schools.

Dr. Kingston stated that he has been in communication with Ms. Graham and her family and they are grateful for the care that people have shown them.

Dr. Kingston announced that Dan Downey's memorial service would be held on December 29 at 1:00 p.m. in the Unitarian Church on Concord Avenue. Dr. Kingston asked everyone to observe a moment of silence in memory of Dan.

1.3 Citizens' Concerns

There were no citizens' concerns.

1.4 Adjustments to the Agenda

There were no adjustments to the agenda.

1.5 Chairman's Report

Mr. Scharfman noted the following events:

- Winter break – December 21 – January 2
- Memorial Service for Newtown, CT victims at Skip Viglirolo Hockey Rink 6:30 p.m. December 19th, before the boys' hockey game
- Belmont Festival Orchestras performance at Beech Street Center – December 29
- Martin Luther King Breakfast – January 22

1.6 Superintendent's Report

Dr. Kingston noted that there has been a great deal of concern over the tragedy in Newtown CT. He stated that all school districts are re-examining their safety procedures. While Belmont's procedures are under continuous review, he believes that it is time to conduct a full review of the Belmont Public Schools Emergency Manual which may be out of date in some sections.

Dr. Kingston stated that he had asked the principals to address parents and staff this week and he thanked the principals for the thoughtful messages that were sent out. He has met with Police Chief Richard McLaughlin and Assistant Police Chief James Maclsaac and discussed what steps to take regarding safety in the schools and also discussed the need to conduct a coordinated review of security.

Dr. Kingston announced that he is forming a school security advisory group. The group will include public safety officers, Police Chief Richard McLaughlin, Fire Chief David Frizzell, Director of Technology Steve Mazzola, Supervisory of Buildings and Grounds Fred Domenici, Finance Director Tony DiCologero, and Principals. The group will study physical facilities, practices and protocols. Dr. Kingston noted that Belmont has already been increasing safety measures in many ways such as installing automatic locks and video cameras at Chenery Middle School.

Dr. Kingston encouraged the public to forward comments and suggestions to him which he will then forward on to the advisory group. He noted that there is consideration on the part of the Board of Selectmen to fund a School Resource Officer at Belmont High School. He stated that he is receptive to the idea.

Dr. Kingston introduced Amy Spangler, Wellington Principal. Ms. Spangler thanked Dr. Kingston and the School Committee for welcoming her and stated that in the 12 days that she has been on the job, she has spent time meeting staff and students at Wellington. She also stated that she is working hard to get to know the Wellington families.

Dr. Kingston stated that he has registered his concerns regarding the recent NEASC Report with officials at NEASC. He noted that Dan Richards, Principal of Belmont High School had a conversation with the Executive Director of NEASC and she has committed to issuing a revised version of the Belmont NEASC Report. Dr. Kingston stated that he will be meeting with her on January 7 to discuss his concerns.

Dr. Kingston stated that he had a recent teleconference with members of the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) to discuss what is needed for the next Statement of Interest that Belmont will submit for the renovation of Belmont High School.

1.7 Director of Finance, Business and Operations' Report

Mr. DiCologero stated that he is continuing the work on the FY 14 budget. The Leadership Council has submitted their budget requests and the School Department has received some initial revenue information from the town.

Mr. Scharfman noted that the Board of Selectmen and School Committee met on December to discuss budget preparation. He stated the shared intention to make the budget process more public later in the season when there is more certainty about revenue.

Mr. Cunningham stated that there is more focus this year on enrollment and how it fits into the planning and development of the town.

2. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

2.1 There was no unfinished business.

3. **MAJOR BUSINESS**

3.1 Student Representatives

Mr. Scharfman invited the following Student Representatives to the table: Maddie Devine, Leah Meyer, Sam Schwartz, and Bobby Stafford. The students thanked Dr. Kingston for his comments on safety. They discussed issues that they feel are important to Belmont High School such as lower class size and maintaining classes such as AP classes, as well as the opportunity to take a full load of 7 classes rather than the current maximum of 6. The students also spoke about their hopes to have the library mezzanine re-opened as a study area.

Mr. Scharfman thanked the students for coming.

3.2 PLT Report – Science Students: What are they thinking? – Exhibit A

The following teachers presented the PLT report:

Rebecca Green
Shoba Reginald
Niki Nitchie
Jon Marks
Vanessa Bullard
Joanne Marks

The teachers explained how they used their PLT to help students write better lab reports and explanatory writing. They collected work in their classrooms and identified common areas of concern. They developed a 2-year plan to teach experimental design, critical thinking, and scientific writing

They developed a 2-grade plan to teach experimental design. For explanatory writing, they developed a template to use in both 7th and 8th grades, which will identify common goals and language.

4. **SUBCOMMITTEE/LIAISON UPDATES (as needed)**

4.1 Finance Subcommittee

Mr. Cunningham stated that the Finance Subcommittee met earlier in the day with the Warrant Committee Education Subcommittee. The group discussed out-of-district placement costs. Mr. Cunningham stated that he has been studying the financial systems that are used by the Belmont Public Schools.

Mr. DiCologero noted that no student names are included in the out-of-district placement information.

4.2 Policy Subcommittee

There was no Policy Subcommittee update.

4.3 Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee

Mr. Scharfman stated that the members of the Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee are: Dan Scharfman, Pascha Griffiths, Laurie Graham and Janice Darias. The group continues to find additional items to review. Mr. Scharfman announced that space has been created on Edline to post Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee documents.

4.4 Student Representative

Student representatives provided updates at the start of the meeting.

4.5 Capital Budget Committee

There was no update from the Capital Budget Committee

4.6 Warrant Committee

Mr. Scharfman stated that the topic of discussion at the most recent Warrant Committee Meeting was a preliminary revenue projection.

4.7 Wellington Building Committee

Dr. Kingston noted that the Wellington Building Committee is still pursuing a permanent certificate of occupancy and working on resolving some issues with the Planning Board.

5. **OTHER BUSINESS**

- 5.1 Consent Agenda
- 5.2 Personnel Items – Informational
- 5.3 Business Items – None
- 5.4 Approval of Minutes

December 4, 2012

On a motion offered by Ms. Lougee and seconded by Mr. Cunningham it was,

VOTED unanimously to approve the minutes of December 4, 2012 as amended.

6. **FUTURE BUSINESS**

Upcoming Meetings:

January 8, 2012
School Committee Meeting
CMS Large Community Room – 7:30 p.m.

7. **ENCLOSURES**

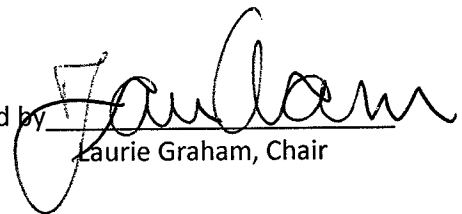
Professional Learning Teams – 2012-2013

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

At 9:30 p.m. on a motion offered by Ms. Lougee and seconded by Ms. Griffiths it was,

VOTED unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by



Laurie Graham, Chair