

**BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES  
CHENERY MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY ROOM  
OCTOBER 9, 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  
Ms. Mary Pederson, Human Resources Manager

Absent: Ms. Janice Darias, Assistant Superintendent

**RECEPTION**

Ms. Graham welcomed the 15 teachers who were being honored for achieving Professional Status. She read a short bio for each teacher and Ms. Mary Pederson, Human Resources Manager presented each one with a gift and Dr. Kingston presented each with a certificate of appreciation.

1. **OPENING BUSINESS**

1.1 Call to order  
Ms. Graham called the meeting to order at 7:30pm.

1.2 Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Graham led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Ms. Graham updated the Committee on events that have taken place since the last School Committee meeting.

- o 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Belmont Serves Day – October 8
- o Quilting project where participants made fleece baby blankets

- Cleaning of Clay Pit Pond area.
- Fence painting at Grove Street playground
- Operation American Soldiers sold handmade cards to be sent to military personnel
- New sign up program matching students with senior citizens who need help with things such as gardening and shopping
- Food drive which collected 2000 bags of food for the Belmont Food Pantry

Ms. Graham updated the Committee on the following upcoming events.

- Annual Belmont Public Library Book Sale – October 13 and 14
- Walk for Joey's Park – October 14
- One Book One Belmont – October 23
- Belmont High School College Fair – October 17
- Belmont Special Education Association Council first meeting of the year
- Butler Book Fair – October 18
- School Committee meeting with Glen Koocher of MASC to discuss approaches to the superintendent search – September 21

#### 1.6 Superintendent's Report

Dr. Kingston stated that he is concerned about class sizes at Wellington and in particular grades 3. He also has concerns about class sizes in grades 5 and 7 and Chenery. He has done some leveling and frozen enrollment at Wellington but the district needs to determine a long-term plan around what the community needs and wants as well as ways to achieve that.

Dr. Kingston informed the Committee that he will be creating an advisory group to review research on class sizes and suggest possible approaches for Belmont. The advisory group will be made up of a member from each of the PTO/PTA organizations in addition to other selected members. He hopes to have the group set up by November. The advisory group will help inform decisions regarding budgeting for FY14.

Dr. Kingston suggested that anyone interested could look at research on class size by going to the Brookings Institute website.

Dr. Kingston announced that the Foundation for Belmont Education (FBE) awarded Belmont High School an Innovation Grant of \$40,000 to support a program piloting the use of iPads in American Studies classes. He thanked the FBE Board members.

Dr. Kingston stated that as part of the ongoing planning that is being done for the budget preparation the administration will need to give a report on progress toward the 6 district wide goals that were created in April, 2011. The goals were set for 18 months and are scheduled to expire now. The District Leadership Council has drafted a report on the progress made for the district on those 6 goals. They will be reviewing the draft summary at their upcoming meeting this month and make a presentation to School Committee on October 30. The Leadership Council has also been working with the goals that were drafted by the School Committee last February and has been pairing them with the vision and values of the district as they understand them.

Dr. Kingston mentioned that the Emergency Call Procedures have been put in place. He stated that if school is open and parents feel the streets and sidewalks are not safe, they have every right to

keep their child home. This will not be counted as an unexcused absence as long as the parent calls to notify the school that their child will not be in school that day.

Dr. Kingston stated that Principal Richards has made corrections to the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) report. The report has been sent back to NEASC and will be returned to Belmont in December.

#### 1.7 Director of Finance, Business and Operations' Report

Mr. DiCologero explained the budget report for the first quarter of FY13. He has predicted the district will break even in the general fund. Some of the grant accounts show a negative balance because the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) was changing their system and as a result there was not opportunity to request grant funds for the September period.

### 2. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

2.1 There was no unfinished business.

### 3. MAJOR BUSINESS

#### 3.1 Approval of Ferry Beach Trip – Exhibit A

Ms. Graham explained that twelve fifth grade classes will be participating in the ecology education program which is sponsored by the Ferry Beach Ecology School in Saco, Maine. Half of the students will attend the camp from June 3 through June 5 and the other half will attend from June 5 through June 7. Teachers and parent volunteers will chaperone the trip.

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

**VOTED** unanimously to approve the fifth grade trip to Ferry Beach Ecology Camp from June 3 through June 5, 2012.

#### 3.2 Review of draft of Superintendent's Goals – Exhibit B

Ms. Graham explained that the Committee has a slightly revised copy of the Superintendent's evaluation which was accepted by the School Committee at the October 2 meeting.

Dr. Kingston presented his goals to the School Committee. He explained that Superintendents are on an annual evaluation cycle. He proposed what he felt would be reasonable goals for student learning and professional practice. He invited the School Committee members to have a one on one conversation with him regarding his goals. He also suggested a public discussion at the October 30 School Committee meeting.

### 4. REPORT OF SUBCOMMITTEES/LIAISONS

#### 4.1 Finance Subcommittee Report

Ms. Slap stated that the Finance Subcommittee will be meeting on October 16. They will be defining their budget calendar and looking at long-term data flow. Ms. Lougee stated that they will be analyzing fee data and structures in line with the FY14 budget.

#### 4.2 Policy Subcommittee Report

Ms. Graham updated the Committee on the recent work of the Policy Subcommittee. They met last week and discussed naming rights and fundraising. The group is studying how naming rights have been handled in the past and what might work best long term. Mr. Scharfman has been asked to request information from different organizations he has worked with as part of the Task Force on Athletics and Extracurricular Activities. He hopes to learn how and what they are doing to allow the School Committee to set policy that reflects actual practice.

Ms. Graham stated that the Policy Subcommittee is also reviewing the Medical Emergency Plan which was created by the district to be sure it is line with new legislation.

#### 4.3 Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee Report

Ms. Graham stated that the Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee met for the first time last week. Mr. Scharfman announced the names of the four members of the Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee. The members are Mr. Dan Scharfman, Ms. Laurie Graham, Ms. Janice Darias, and Ms. Pascha Griffiths. At their first meeting the group reviewed their charge and also reviewed material on how curriculum is planned and carried out. They will be meeting again in two weeks.

#### 4.4 Student Representative Report

Tomas Reimers updated the School Committee on events at Belmont High School.

Assistant Principal Smokler has started a Student Leadership Team. Principal Richards has come to Belmont High School with a vision of clarity. He has started a Twitter feed with updates on Belmont High School news. Students and parents seem to find it useful. Mr. Richards has also created a blog and has acquired a list of tutorials on how to use blogs in the classroom.

#### 4.5 Capital Budget Report

Ms. Lougee stated they will meet a week from Thursday.

#### 4.6 Warrant Committee Report

Ms. Slap stated Warrant Committee will meet tomorrow night.

#### 4.7 Wellington Building Committee Report

Ms. Graham provided the Wellington Building Committee Report. She stated that progress is being made on the punch list. The cement in the floor has been through several remediations. A cap has been put on the second floor balcony.

### 5. OTHER BUSINESS

#### 5.1 Consent Agenda

5.2 Personnel Items – Informational  
Personnel Status Updates – Exhibit C

5.3 Business Items – None

5.4 Approval of Minutes

There were no minutes to approve.

6. **FUTURE BUSINESS**

October 12, 2012  
School Committee Executive Session  
9:30 a.m – SAB Conference Room

October 15, 2012  
Policy Subcommittee Meeting  
11:30 a.m. – SAB Conference Room

October 16, 2012  
Finance Subcommittee Meeting  
8:00 a.m. – SAB Conference Room

October 23, 2012  
School Committee Meeting  
6:30 p.m. – Boston Elder Services

7. **ENCLOSURES**

Teachers recommended for Professional Status  
Superintendent's Goals

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

At 9:04 p.m. on a motion offered by Ms. Slap and seconded by Mr. Scharfman, it was

**VOTED** unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by

  
Daniel Scharfman, Secretary