

Superintendent's Evaluation 2012-2013
Dr. Tom Kingston

Summative Findings:

The process that the School Committee has engaged in to evaluate the Superintendent within the newly adopted Educator Appraisal system has been to review the rubrics established for all educators, as well as the self-assessment and artifacts that Dr. Kingston provided. Each School Committee member evaluated the Superintendent based on the four Assessment Standards: Instructional Leadership, Management and Operations, Family and Community Engagement and Professional Culture. We also evaluated Dr. Kingston on his Student Achievement, Professional and District Wide Goals (note that the latter was an additional goal this year).

Each ranking was assigned a value and an average "ranking" was derived.

At the end of this document are the full, attributable comments from five of the School Committee members. As our newly appointed School Committee member, Lisa Fiore, just took office last week her assessment was not included but we all look forward to her review, evaluation and input during the rest of this year.

Also included at the end of this report is a spread sheet with evaluation ranking for each Standard and Goal.

In addition, staff and family comments were solicited. I have included these as partial quotes or summations without attribution. Twelve comments were received

In summation:

Standards:

Dr. Kingston received a Proficient Assessment (3) in two out of four of the standards assessed and an overall assessment of 3.0.

The School Committee members felt that his experience in matters of Instructional Leadership, Management and Operations, Family and Community Engagement and Professional Culture provided the district with steady, increasingly articulated leadership. He has aligned with district goals and guided much of the long-term planning – in tandem with Leadership Council and School Committee -- in the areas of finance and curriculum and continued to pilot and implement innovations that go beyond technology.

Dr, Kingston has continued in his second year to define the goals and vision of the School Department and to understand and meet the expectations of the community.

Dr. Kingston has overseen the day to day operations of the School system including another successful budget process for this fiscal year and has persevered in collaborative discussions and conversations with David Kale, Town Administrator and members of the Board of Selectmen and the Warrant Committee.

He has been a visible presence in the community, not just by attending various PTA and PTO meetings but many plays, concerts and other celebratory events and Town/School department head meetings

Dr. Kingston has also led the district in adopting the new Educator Appraisal system and worked collaboratively with the BEA to implement this process and has continued to support the Professional Learning Team structure that was in place when he arrived.

Areas of improvement and focus that School Committee members suggest for this year include, but are not limited to:

- Further articulation of the shared instructional vision as well as ways to engage the community in understanding what expectations are and how to meet them;
- Increased mechanisms for general communication with the community. Beyond blogs – how else to communicate effectively and in a timely manner. Address a perception of impatience and frustration;
- Review of pilot programs and innovation to provide on-going assessment as to whether these are meeting our needs;
- Addressing staff morale;
- Continue to address the need for balance in student lives: high expectations vs. stress, especially but not limited to Belmont High School.

Goals:

The School Committee felt that Dr. Kingston Met or Made Significant Progress on his Student Achievement, Professional and District-Wide Goals with an overall rating of 2.3 out of 3.

The implementation of the Educator Evaluation System was a significant achievement this year. Providing rubrics, encouraging self-assessment and individual staff goals is aligned with goals and assessment we expect of our students.

We have benefited by his participation in the Superintendents Induction Program as well as his in-district mentoring of personnel and the hiring of several key building administrators and curriculum directors.

Long-term planning that will provide adequate, predictable, sustainable funding is one that continues to be a major issue facing our school leaders. Developing an eight-pronged set of modeling groups to gather data, investigate particular long-range planning areas of discussion such as Special Education, Enrollment and Additional Revenue Sources will provide our community with the groundwork for meeting the needs of the community.

School Committee Assessments

Belmont Public School
Superintendent's Evaluation
School Year 2012-2013

Superintendent: Thomas S. Kingston

School Committee Member: Laurie Graham

Overall Assessment: Unsatisfactory Needs Improvement **Proficient** Exemplary

Assessments Against Standards:

Standard I: Instructional Leadership:

The education leader promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by cultivating a shared vision that makes powerful teaching and learning the central focus of schooling.

Unsatisfactory Needs Improvement **Proficient** Exemplary

Comment:

In his second year as Interim Superintendent, Dr. Kingston has helped the Leadership Council and the School Committee to move the goals and objectives from the articulation phase into implementation.

He has also worked with district leadership to not only adopt the Common Core Standards but to make sure that instruction is aligned with the standards and to continue exploring innovative practices and teaching.

Dr. Kingston's support for the Professional Learning Team (PLT) model of professional development has further empowered staff to engage in the exploration of the kind of innovative practices that enhance the educational experience for all students and which provide the infrastructure for continued improvement.

And finally, Dr. Kingston's guidance in implementing the new Educator Appraisal system through a collaborative process with Leadership Counsel and staff has ensured a smooth transition to effective, meaningful evaluations of all educators.

Standard II: Management and Operations:

The education leader promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by ensuring a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment, using resources to implement appropriate curriculum, staffing, and scheduling.

Unsatisfactory Needs Improvement **Proficient** Exemplary

Comment:

Dr. Kingston's experience as a seasoned administrator has served this community well as he has faced challenges and issues, both expected and not necessarily foreseen. With increases in enrollment at Wellington, he implemented a diversion of students to other schools (for the short term) and created a study group under the direction of Principal Janet Carey that looked at district wide enrollment levels and available space and made recommendations for addressing this continuing issue.

Ongoing matters of concern regarding safety of students and staff were addressed throughout the year (and continue into this school year.)

Dr, Kingston's understanding of Massachusetts school law, policies and procedures has been an enormous asset as our district addresses legislative mandates while ensuring that the educational goals are always kept foremost in the operations of the system.

Standard III: Family and Community Engagement:

The education leader promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff through effective partnerships with families, community organizations, and other stakeholders that support the mission of the school and district.

Unsatisfactory **Needs Improvement/Proficient** Exemplary

Comment:

One of the strengths of Dr. Kingston's time as superintendent has been his engagement with community organizations - PTA/PTOs, the Foundation for Belmont Education, the Belmont Special Education Advisory Council, the Rotary for example. He frequently attends plays, concerts, art shows and other celebratory events as a way of showing support for students and staff that goes beyond the classroom.

His collaborative manner of working and communicating with Belmont's general government (the Board of Selectmen, Town Administrator David Kale and the Warrant Committee) has provided a second year of stability as all areas of town government continue to face the fiscal realities of constrained budgets and unmet needs.

Though Dr. Kingston continues with his blog as a means of communication and responds to direct emails, I do note that there are some families who have not felt there has been adequate response time nor perhaps the desired response. I imagine that this is true in many districts and might be an issue of context and perception but it is an area of potential improvement.

Standard IV: Professional Culture:

The education leader promotes success for all students by nurturing and sustaining a school culture of reflective practice, high expectations, and continuous learning for staff.

Unsatisfactory Needs Improvement **Proficient** Exemplary

Comment:

One of the strengths of the Belmont Public Schools has been the work the Leadership Council and Curriculum Directors through on-going curriculum review, building management and support of staff. This past year Dr. Kingston filled three key positions (one in mid-year) and those selections have served the district well.

As I mentioned elsewhere, Dr. Kingston's continued support for the incredibly important work that the PLTs perform as the Research & Development branch of the Belmont Public Schools positions us to be proactive and forward-thinking as our community faces the very real challenges of meeting the 21st Century expectations for all learners.

Of concern however is that there does seem to be an issue of lower morale among at least some segment of the staff. I am not sure what the cause of this is. However just as we want to support a balance between expectations and realities and high-achievement and stress for our students, so to do we want this for staff.

Assessments Against Performance Goals (Designate one of three judgments for each goal.)

Student Achievement Goal:

In concert with administrators, the joint administrative/Belmont Education Association advisory team, and educators throughout the district, I shall oversee the faithful implementation of a new, comprehensive educator evaluation system that implements the state's model with the first phase of implementation completed by June 2013.

(Reference: Superintendent's Rubric: I (D) 1, 2, 3, & 4)

Needs Improvement

Progressing

Met Goal

Comment: This past year has seen a successful and collaborative implementation of the Educator Evaluation system with input from stakeholders at the administrator and faculty levels. Though this is a roll-out process with additional indicators included in subsequent years, I think that Dr. Kingston has met his goal for this first phase.

Professional Practice Goal:

As a coach within the New Superintendent's Induction Program, the Superintendent will continue to acquire knowledge about leadership development, team building, and strategic planning. He aims to inform—from monthly content sessions and the practical work of coaching individuals new to district leadership—the Belmont Public Schools' effective leadership practices and programming, in particular for the development of district leadership, hiring and mentoring of new administrators, and long-range strategic planning. (Reference: Superintendent's Rubric I (E) 3; II (B) 1, 2)

Needs Improvement

Progressing

Met Goal

Comment: Through his experience with NSIP as well as his own years as a Superintendent, Dr. Kingston has brought leadership in his hiring of several key positions. His continued strategic planning efforts with staff, school leaders (including School Committee members), town officials and parents positions us to be in a position to investigate, consider and meet the very real needs of the Belmont Public School System. I have included Progressing as my rating as much of this work is ongoing now through modeling groups.

District-Wide Goals:

Implementation of District-Wide Goals, as represented by the District Strategic Plan.

Needs Improvement

Progressing

Met Goal

Comment: This is, almost by definition, a work in progress as some goals will be achievable in the future but not actually met in 2012-2013. Important to note though that a District Strategic Plan is one that is tied to a vision and represents input from all stakeholders. Many goals were met and I look forward to progress achieving more this year.

Signature of School Committee Member: Laurie Graham

Date: October 2, 2013

Belmont Public School
Superintendent's Evaluation
School Year 2012-2013

Superintendent: Thomas S. Kingston

School Committee Member: Anne Lougée

Overall Assessment: Unsatisfactory Needs Improvement **Proficient** Exemplary

Assessments Against Standards:

Standard I: Instructional Leadership:

The education leader promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by cultivating a shared vision that makes powerful teaching and learning the central focus of schooling.

Unsatisfactory Needs Improvement **Proficient** Exemplary

Comment: During the past year Dr. Kingston worked with the School Committee to help advance the goals and objectives process. The articulation of the professional development and preparation for lifelong learning aspects of those goals and objectives were substantive advances in the District's focus on teaching and learning.

In addition, Dr. Kingston not only worked diligently to implement the Common Core, but worked to explain the Common Core principles and application to the community at-large.

Furthermore, Dr. Kingston was deeply involved with the Professional Learning Team (PLT) process of experimentation within the faculty, and the communication about lessons learned on innovations in learning and teaching between individual staff, between schools, between grade levels, and within the community.

Dr. Kingston provided both the pedagogical and administrative basis for each of these three initiatives, which will generate benefits not only at each grade level but which will generate accumulated benefits as our students move through the District under the new regimens created by each initiative.

Standard II: Management and Operations:

The education leader promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by ensuring a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment, using resources to implement appropriate curriculum, staffing, and scheduling.

Unsatisfactory Needs Improvement **Proficient** Exemplary

Comment: Following the horrendous events in Sandy Hook, CT, in December 2012, Dr. Kingston ensured that the district conduct a comprehensive review of facilities and practices for the well-being and safety of every student and professional. Ensuring safety in this respect included a combination of responses involving both what technology we use and what procedures we practice.

Additionally, when student enrollment at the Wellington exceeded expectations Dr. Kingston was able to recognize and respond to both the short-term and long-term implications.

In the immediate term, Dr. Kingston diverted incoming K-4 students to non-Wellington elementary schools with more capacity. In the longer-term, he appointed Principal Janet Carey to lead a group to study enrollment issues and to provide initial recommendations that long-term planning groups will take into account the geographic distribution of Belmont's school-age students, the cyclical nature of the ebbs and flows of student enrollments, and the longer-term structural changes in the District's underlying school-age population.

Finally, Dr. Kingston's attention to management and operations should be appreciated with his activities involving the installation of solar energy at the Wellington and the conversion from oil to gas heating at Belmont High. Devoting time and attention to continue to move these projects forward, for both budget and curricular reasons, shows a willingness and ability to see beyond the exigent problems of today to address the potentials of tomorrow.

Standard III: Family and Community Engagement:

The education leader promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff through effective partnerships with families, community organizations, and other stakeholders that support the mission of the school and district.

Unsatisfactory Needs Improvement **Proficient** Exemplary

Comment: Dr. Kingston met with each school's PTO/PTA group and regularly attended meetings of the Foundation for Belmont Education. In addition, he attended many if not all of the parent learning programs throughout the year. Without knowing the actual subscriber rate of his blog, I personally found it to be an effective means of communicating events and ideas to the community. In addition to the Sandy Hook devastation, this past academic year was one of personal loss to the School Committee and beyond. I found Dr. Kingston to be a strong and soothing leader as we worked through our grief.

While the success of the collaborative FY2014 budget process with the three primary arms of Belmont's local government (School Committee, Board of Selectmen, Town Meeting through the Warrant Committee) certainly cannot be laid entirely at Dr. Kingston's feet, the staff-to-staff communication between the BPS (Dr. Kingston) and the Town (Town Administrator David Kale) certainly enabled and facilitated that collaboration between the citizen bodies to occur. In times of the types of fiscal constraint we currently face (and will likely face for the foreseeable future), the leadership from both the BPS and Town chief executives to ensure collaboration rather than competition for budget dollars was commendable.

One final aspect of Dr. Kingston's activities should be noted in that it may well go unremarked upon, though I believe it to be truly significant. The mission of the school and district extends beyond the classroom. I believe that one fundamentally beneficial aspect of Dr. Kingston's pursuit of effective partnerships with families in Belmont is his enthusiastic attendance of various performances at the different grade levels with his wife. Having the Superintendent attending extracurricular events – whether it is a play by the middle-schoolers, a concert by the high schoolers, or an athletic event -- sends a strong message that we value and strive to prepare all of our students for lifelong learning through activities in the classroom and beyond.

Standard IV: Professional Culture:

The education leader promotes success for all students by nurturing and sustaining a school culture of reflective practice, high expectations, and continuous learning for staff.

Unsatisfactory Needs Improvement **Proficient** Exemplary

Comment:

The continued emphasis on the PLTs is one activity in the Belmont Public Schools that emphasizes that what we do today may not be sufficient for tomorrow and that continuous experimentation and learning at the faculty level is needed at all grade levels.

One aspect of sustaining a school culture that challenged Dr. Kingston in this past year was the requirement that he replace three upper level leadership positions (Wellington principal, Fine & Performing Arts curriculum director, and Belmont High principal). Maintaining a continuum of consistent expectations and practice throughout the entire K-12 experience is critical in any school district. In a district such as Belmont, however, with the vital role played by the Leadership Council as an institution, to replace three of the key players, particularly at a time of substantive internal reflection and district-wide goal-setting and strategic planning (affecting curriculum, basic educational approaches such as the emphasis on AP classes, lifelong learning, and emotional as well as physical health) was a daunting job. Dr. Kingston's personnel selections were a plus to the School District.

One area of improvement needed in the BPS, as led by senior management such as Dr. Kingston at the Superintendent level, is an assessment of the needed balance between meeting high expectations at the student level and the recognition of the stress and emotional costs imposed upon students and staff associated with those high expectations. I look forward to a continuing discussion about and reflection upon the trade-offs between high achievement and emotional costs as those trade-offs may be identified at the high school level and District-wide.

Assessments Against Performance Goals (Designate one of three judgments for each goal.)

Student Achievement Goal:

In concert with administrators, the joint administrative/Belmont Education Association advisory team, and educators throughout the district, I shall oversee the faithful implementation of a new, comprehensive educator evaluation system that implements the state's model with the first phase of implementation completed by June 2013.

(Reference: Superintendent's Rubric: I (D) 1, 2, 3, & 4)

Needs Improvement

Progressing

Met Goal

Comment:

Dr. Kingston oversaw the successful implementation of the Educator Appraisal System in the Belmont Public Schools. The system – involving increased observation of classroom instruction by principals and curriculum directors – resulted in increased discussion about successful instruction, areas for improvement, and ways to coach teachers. Dr. Kingston's work in the past year has been particularly significant in cultivating a shared vision.

Professional Practice Goal:

As a coach within the New Superintendent's Induction Program, the Superintendent will continue to acquire knowledge about leadership development, team building, and

strategic planning. He aims to inform—from monthly content sessions and the practical work of coaching individuals new to district leadership—the Belmont Public Schools’ effective leadership practices and programming, in particular for the development of district leadership, hiring and mentoring of new administrators, and long-range strategic planning. (Reference: Superintendent’s Rubric I (E) 3; II (B) 1, 2)

Needs Improvement

Progressing

Met Goal

Comment:

Dr. Kingston’s participation in the New Superintendent’s Induction Program (NSIP) continues to be a great benefit to Belmont, as he is able to bring back valuable training tools to the district. Specifically, he was able to provide valuable support to teachers and district leaders as they piloted innovation and innovative instructional models. Additionally, his development of 8 advisory groups, in concert with the Town administration’s advisory groups, for the shared purpose of advancing long-term planning is notable. Despite his status as a seasoned administrator, Dr. Kingston’s participation in NSIP enables him to keep abreast of developments in the field as well as issues facing other districts.

District-Wide Goals:

Implementation of District-Wide Goals, as represented by the District Strategic Plan.

Needs Improvement

Progressing

Met Goal

Comment:

While the District Strategic Plan is a continuously evolving document, Dr. Kingston successfully worked with the School Committee to articulate achievable goals and objectives, along with identifying measurable metrics which can be used to review and assess progress toward achieving those goals and objectives. As described above, the ability to maintain consistent progress toward the implementation of the Strategic Plan, despite needing to replace three key leadership staff, was a plus for the BPS.

Signature of School Committee Member: Anne Lougée

Date: October 1, 2013

Belmont Public School
Superintendent's Evaluation
School Year 2012-2013

Superintendent: Thomas S. Kingston

School Committee Member: [Laurie R. Slap](#)

Overall Assessment: Unsatisfactory Needs Improvement **Proficient** Exemplary

NOTE: The standards in the rubric are extremely high.

Assessments Against Standards:

Standard I: Instructional Leadership:

The education leader promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by cultivating a shared vision that makes powerful teaching and learning the central focus of schooling.

Unsatisfactory Needs Improvement **Proficient** Exemplary

Comment:

Dr. Kingston has done an excellent job steering the District Leadership Council's efforts to develop a strategic vision for the district that they all seem to embrace. He is overseeing the next steps to share this vision with the entire community. He has also done an excellent job overseeing the adoption of the Common Core and empowering his staff to strengthen teaching and learning and explore innovative practices wherever feasible.

Standard II: Management and Operations:

The education leader promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by ensuring a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment, using resources to implement appropriate curriculum, staffing, and scheduling.

Unsatisfactory Needs Improvement **Proficient** Exemplary

Comment:

Dr. Kingston has encouraged his staff to explore innovative instruction. He has shown great perseverance in pushing forward long-term planning efforts in coordination with other Town leaders. I would rate as exemplary his ethical behavior (II-D-2) and management of fiscal systems (II-E-1).

Standard III: Family and Community Engagement:

The education leader promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff through effective partnerships with families, community organizations, and other stakeholders that support the mission of the school and district.



Unsatisfactory Needs Improvement Proficient Exemplary

Comment:

Dr. Kingston has become a respected and trusted figure in the Belmont community. I would rate as exemplary his community and business engagement (III-A-2). He has continued excellent work nourishing productive and collegial relationships with Town government leaders and community organizations that strengthen support for the mission of the schools.

Standard IV: Professional Culture:

The education leader promotes success for all students by nurturing and sustaining a school culture of reflective practice, high expectations, and continuous learning for staff.

Unsatisfactory Needs Improvement Proficient Exemplary

Comment:

Dr. Kingston continually displays a strong commitment to high standards (IV-A-1). He, along with Assistant Superintendent Darias, has solidified and strengthened the PLT culture of continuous learning for staff (IV-D-1). His advocacy for the successful implementation of the new educator evaluation system further nurtures and sustains a school culture of reflective practice, high expectations, and continuous learning for staff.

But as Dr. Kingston noted in his self-assessment, the challenge remains to improve the reported “low” morale of district professionals.

Assessments Against Performance Goals (Designate one of three judgments for each goal.)

Student Achievement Goal:

In concert with administrators, the joint administrative/Belmont Education Association advisory team, and educators throughout the district, I shall oversee the faithful implementation of a new, comprehensive educator evaluation system that implements the state’s model with the first phase of implementation completed by June 2013.
(Reference: Superintendent’s Rubric: I (D) 1, 2, 3, & 4)

Needs Improvement

Progressing

Met Goal

Comment:

Dr. Kingston oversaw the smooth and successful rollout of this most valuable tool.

Professional Practice Goal:

As a coach within the New Superintendent’s Induction Program, the Superintendent will continue to acquire knowledge about leadership development, team building, and strategic planning. He aims to inform—from monthly content sessions and the practical work of coaching individuals new to district leadership—the Belmont Public Schools’ effective leadership practices and programming, in particular for the development of

district leadership, hiring and mentoring of new administrators, and long-range strategic planning. (Reference: Superintendent's Rubric I (E) 3; II (B) 1, 2)

Needs Improvement

Progressing

Met Goal

Comment:

Dr. Kingston has hired and mentored strong new administrators. He has shown great perseverance in pushing forward long-range strategic planning efforts within the School Department, with the School Committee, and with other Town leaders.

District-Wide Goals:

Implementation of District-Wide Goals, as represented by the District Strategic Plan.

Needs Improvement

Progressing

Met Goal

Comment:

Many of these initiatives seem to have a time horizon greater than one year. Successful completion of most of those achievable in Year 1.

Signature of School Committee Member: Laurie R. Slap

Date: October 1, 2013

Belmont Public School
Superintendent's Evaluation
School Year 2012-2013

Superintendent: Thomas S. Kingston

School Committee Member: Kevin Cunningham

Overall Assessment: Unsatisfactory Needs Improvement ***Proficient Exemplary

Dr. Kingston is a remarkable leader, and our district has been fortunate indeed to have had his services for so long in an "interim" capacity. He leads with quiet competence, is notably knowledgeable in the legal/legislative/pragmatic dimensions of his role, and is committed to excellence in pedagogy. He has aligned with the district goals, and with the School Committee goals of respectful collaboration and long-term planning, and he has helped maintain a productive balance working for excellence and innovation even as we have been constrained in terms of resources. He notably has not tried to "dramatize" the district constraints, but has worked calmly to help town and schools work together to meet these needs.

The tenor of the school district under his leadership has shifted, I believe, from a sense of divisiveness and crisis to one of workability in trying times, and of forward thinking.

Assessments Against Standards:

Standard I: Instructional Leadership:

The education leader promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by cultivating a shared vision that makes powerful teaching and learning the central focus of schooling.

Unsatisfactory Needs Improvement Proficient ***Exemplary

Comment:

The core of Dr. Kingston's success has been to provide support and assistance to established teams and individuals so that they can perform at their best. He has not imposed directives from above but has instead skillfully facilitated work that enabled individuals and teams to focus on – and execute – what's important. He shepherded the visioning process by the Leadership Council and the School Committee – he did not dictate it. He advanced the implementation of the new appraisal system – he did not decree it. He quietly encouraged innovation, both educational and financial – he did not tell the district which specific innovations to implement. Meanwhile he has run interference on the issues that would otherwise burden staff members (all the legal/legislative work, dealing with meddlers, etc.)

Such intervention – deft but firm input just when it's needed – is a remarkable skill, and one especially appropriate to the Belmont system, where we have a highly-skilled staff who are best served by encouragement and facilitation rather than prodding and lecturing. As an aside (or is it an aside?), it also provides an interesting pedagogical model: leadership/instruction as focused thoughtful facilitation – i.e., he models a profound approach to teaching.

Dr. Kingston's success would not be possible without the receptivity of the staff he oversees, and it presumes great effort by others such as the Assistant Superintendent and various curricular leaders. It is difficult to separate his own contribution from those he supervises (for instance, how much can the recovery of "Level I" status be attributed to him?), but perhaps that is the nature of this kind of leadership in a high-performing system.

Standard II: Management and Operations:

The education leader promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by ensuring a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment, using resources to implement appropriate curriculum, staffing, and scheduling.

Unsatisfactory Needs Improvement ***Proficient Exemplary

Comment:

Dr. Kingston knows the ins and outs of running a school district, including the standard questions of security, staffing, etc. These areas require a delicate balance on a number of fronts: balancing the best solutions with economic realities; balancing true solutions with the political need to “show some action” even when such action might be questionable; balancing best learning environment and teacher loads with the realities of increasing enrollment, etc.

Dr. Kingston has struck such balances adeptly, though necessarily not to everyone’s satisfaction. That’s only to be expected.

His awareness of – and judgment with respect to – laws and policies that impact the schools is exemplary.

Standard III: Family and Community Engagement:

The education leader promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff through effective partnerships with families, community organizations, and other stakeholders that support the mission of the school and district.

Unsatisfactory Needs Improvement ***Proficient Exemplary

Comment:

This area has always struck me as Dr. Kingston’s weakest point, though I’m not sure why. He deals well with all the usual organizations, he has started the conversations with community organizations about establishing strategic partnerships, he strongly supports emotional/social supports and resources for cultural diversity in the schools, he began his blog and regularly communicates widely with the community, he talks well with most parents, and he is certainly aware of how much community involvement helps make the Belmont schools what they are. Yet there is a way that the parent community is not at the core of what he does as superintendent. Perhaps it needn’t be.

I have seen him be impatient only a few times, and it has been at times when people who do not seem to have a full understanding of the system try to dictate terms as to how the schools “should” be operated. Perhaps it is mere exasperation on his part, though I can certainly understand his response to these people who believe they “know better.” All that said, it produces an impression that Dr. Kingston is at odds with some subsets of parents, which is probably not the best result.

(Still, better to “appear” at odds with a few “outside” people than be out of sync with people who are day-to-day involved with the system? I think his focus is correct. And some people are committed to being at odds with people anyway, so Dr. Kingston probably can’t help it if he runs into such people. What’s remarkable is how few of them there really are, which is partially attributable to the spirit the district exudes under his leadership.)

Standard IV: Professional Culture:

The education leader promotes success for all students by nurturing and sustaining a school culture of reflective practice, high expectations, and continuous learning for staff.

Unsatisfactory Needs Improvement ***Proficient Exemplary

Comment:

Here again, Dr. Kingston's skill is in supporting what works and quietly letting go of what does not. He is a great proponent of the Professional Learning Teams, having discerned immediately that they are the core of instructional innovation as well as professional satisfaction from practitioners. And he is a champion of the evaluation system, not for reasons of "accountability" or to "weed out the bad teachers," but because it is a lever to get systematic self-discovery and professional development from the staff, to their betterment.

He is an excellent communicator, and incorporates everyone's input in discussions.

Assessments Against Performance Goals (Designate one of three judgments for each goal.)

Student Achievement Goal:

In concert with administrators, the joint administrative/Belmont Education Association advisory team, and educators throughout the district, I shall oversee the faithful implementation of a new, comprehensive educator evaluation system that implements the state's model with the first phase of implementation completed by June 2013. (Reference: Superintendent's Rubric: I (D) 1, 2, 3, & 4)

Needs Improvement
Comment:

Progressing

***Met Goal

From the outset, Dr. Kingston has seen the implementation of the educator evaluation system as a core task, and has been persistent – relentless – in getting it in place, and he has succeeded (naturally with the help of many others) in seeing it done. Sometimes I have even wondered why it loomed so high in his estimation, and I think it has to do with the idea that systems can drive behavior: that the practices and processes involved in the evaluation system would themselves provide excuses for more profound discussions among colleagues and professional growth for teachers. I also suspect that, as Interim Superintendent, he believed he only had a limited time to succeed in this realm, so he worked hard to get it going.

Professional Practice Goal:

As a coach within the New Superintendent's Induction Program, the Superintendent will continue to acquire knowledge about leadership development, team building, and strategic planning. He aims to inform—from monthly content sessions and the practical work of coaching individuals new to district leadership—the Belmont Public Schools' effective leadership practices and programming, in particular for the development of district leadership, hiring and mentoring of new administrators, and long-range strategic planning. (Reference: Superintendent's Rubric I (E) 3; II (B) 1, 2)

Needs Improvement

***Progressing

Met Goal

Comment:

Naturally this goal as stated is an ongoing effort, but I marked this "Progressing" for another reason: it is not clear to me how the NSIP experience is being carried over to our district, either

“how” or “to what extent.” I assume this is because Dr. Kingston’s approach is subtle (I mean he impacts things with a light touch rather than in a “dramatic” way), but it’s difficult to see from out here what body of knowledge is actually being transferred – this is, what we will see still present even after he leaves. He himself is certainly an excellent model of the NSIP system at work, but has he left us with new systems, structures, knowledge? I just cannot say.

District-Wide Goals:

Implementation of District-Wide Goals, as represented by the District Strategic Plan.

Needs Improvement

***Progressing

Met Goal

Comment:

As a multi-year strategic plan, the implementation of district-wide goals can be described as reaching milestones rather than “finishing” things. That said, Dr. Kingston has overseen the completion of various goals that help further the district plan, from the grounding of the strategic plan on his “statements of action,” to the successful launch of the evaluation system and successful resurrection of the curriculum review cycle.

I would like to acknowledge especially his handling of the BHS NEASC review. While on the one hand taking all steps necessary to improve the school’s fitness, he also took up the gauntlet to challenge – respectfully – NEASC and its direction. He saw the issue in its larger framework and took steps to produce a change at the state/regional level. Since this is where fundamental changes must occur (not merely at NEASC but also at the State and Federal levels), it was encouraging to see him work in concert with other leaders to try to make a difference. This in contrast to those who would merely bemoan “the way things are” and hope vaguely for change at these higher levels without actually taking any steps to effect that change.

While he has supported long-term planning his whole tenure, it was only in the current academic year that he has finally taken ownership of this area. It could have probably happened earlier.

Signature of School Committee Member: ___Kevin M. Cunningham___

Date: ___6 October 2013___

Belmont Public School
Superintendent’s Evaluation
School Year 2012-2013

Superintendent: Thomas S. Kingston

School Committee Member: Elyse Shuster

Overall Assessment: Unsatisfactory Needs Improvement **Proficient** Exemplary

Assessments Against Standards:

Standard I: Instructional Leadership:

The education leader promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by cultivating a shared vision that makes powerful teaching and learning the central focus of schooling.

Unsatisfactory Needs Improvement **Proficient** Exemplary

Comment:

New vision/mission statement and new initiatives. Dr. Kingston is clearly committed to very high standards all around.

Standard II: Management and Operations:

The education leader promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by ensuring a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment, using resources to implement appropriate curriculum, staffing, and scheduling.

Unsatisfactory Needs Improvement Proficient **Exemplary**

Comment:

Seems to do the best he can with limited resources. Certainly very adept at management of a complex set of regulations while keeping educational goals at the forefront.

Standard III: Family and Community Engagement:

The education leader promotes the learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff through effective partnerships with families, community organizations, and other stakeholders that support the mission of the school and district.

Unsatisfactory **Needs Improvement** Proficient Exemplary

Comment:

With all due respect, my observation over the past 6 months has been that in dealing with families and some individuals, Dr. Kingston often appears impatient, condescending in tone, and not always polite. In my personal interactions, he is always delightful.

Standard IV: Professional Culture:

The education leader promotes success for all students by nurturing and sustaining a school culture of reflective practice, high expectations, and continuous learning for staff.

Unsatisfactory Needs Improvement --- Proficient Exemplary

Comment:

Based upon responses to the survey by the Leadership Council, it seems that while for the most part the professional culture in the district is positive, there was some element of the staff that did not feel that this was the case, especially in the realm of employee morale.

Assessments Against Performance Goals (Designate one of three judgments for each goal.)

Student Achievement Goal:

In concert with administrators, the joint administrative/Belmont Education Association advisory team, and educators throughout the district, I shall oversee the faithful implementation of a new, comprehensive educator evaluation system that implements the state's model with the first phase of implementation completed by June 2013. (Reference: Superintendent's Rubric: I (D) 1, 2, 3, & 4)

Needs Improvement Progressing Met Goal

Comment: On target to meet his goals by June

Professional Practice Goal:

As a coach within the New Superintendent's Induction Program, the Superintendent will continue to acquire knowledge about leadership development, team building, and strategic planning. He aims to inform—from monthly content sessions and the practical work of coaching individuals new to district leadership—the Belmont Public Schools' effective leadership practices and programming, in particular for the development of district leadership, hiring and mentoring of new administrators, and long-range strategic planning. (Reference: Superintendent's Rubric I (E) 3; II (B) 1, 2)

Needs Improvement Progressing Met Goal

Comment:

District-Wide Goals:

Implementation of District-Wide Goals, as represented by the District Strategic Plan.
Needs Improvement Progressing Met Goal

Comment:

Signature of School Committee Member: Elyse Shuster

Date: September 30, 2013

Staff and Community Comments:

1. "I think it's ... important to note that the tone of the emails that I (and other parents) received from Dr. Kingston, as well as his demeanor at the meeting with parents, was often off-putting and certainly did not create an environment conducive to establishing a good rapport with parents. I hope that Dr. Kingston has been as successful as he states he has been in many of the areas he writes about in his self-evaluation. Unfortunately, I do not believe "Family and Community Engagement" is an area of strength for him",
2. "Although I cannot really speak to Superintendent Kingston's work in other areas, my personal experience over the past year in the area of "Family and Community Engagement" has proven Superintendent Kingston's approach to be ineffective and frustrating."
3. "There has once again been a discernible increase in civil discourse, especially in regards to budget discussions".
4. "In my estimation, Tom Kingston is a thoughtful and knowledgeable educational leader who has created an environment of determination and trust into a school district and community that sorely needed it. He is a sincere and compassionate person who is willing to listen and consider all opinions and viewpoints before making decisions. He makes time to meet with individual teachers who have concerns..."
5. "I was very disheartened by the treatment that parents and students [at BHS] received".
6. "With regard to the superintendent's evaluation process – I think Dr. Kingston has been doing a great job. I don't suppose you can convince him to stay one more year."
7. "Mid-term reports don't help! By the time parents get them it's too late! What is needed is an on-line system where parents can log in and check academic progress of their kids in each subject."
8. Ongoing concerns about the security system at the Chenery, including after 3:30 access and buzzer system monitoring.
9. "I'd like to mention that I felt Dr. Kingston's welcome speech to staff at the beginning of the year was inspiring, insightful and motivating. He clearly put a lot of time, energy and passion into the presentation and it was a wonderful way to start the year. ... I'd like to thank him for showing our staff the respect of creating a truly moving speech out of a moment that could have been merely a formality.
10. "I appreciate Dr. Kingston's visible support of activities outside of class. My family and I have seen him at many performances and events and we appreciate that"
11. " I also don't find him to be engaged in the community – for example, it would be wonderful if he attended some of the community gatherings at the school, such as the pasta dinner at Chenery or the ice cream social every year at the beginning of the year at Wellington. This I think would enable him to get to know our community deeper and be seen in a more positive, welcoming, engaged light."
12. "Our family believes that the Superintendent has done an excellent job. We would certainly love to have him continue – we think his work with town officials has added a degree of credibility to difficult budgetary discussions"

Superintendent Evaluation School Year 2011-2012			
	Goals		
	Assesment Values		
	Met Goal=3	Needs Improvement=1	
	Progressing=2		
	Student Achievement Goal		
	Assessment	School Committee Member	
	3	Cunningham	
	3	Graham	
	2	Lougée	
	2	Shuster	
	3	Slap	
13	Subtotal	2.6 Average	
	Professional Practice Goal		
	Assessment	School Committee Member	
	2	Cunningham	
	2	Graham	
	2	Lougée	
	2	Shuster	
	3	Slap	
11	Subtotal	2.2 Average	
	District- Wide Goal		
	2	Cunningham	
	2	Graham	
	2	Lougée	
	2	Shuster	
	2	Slap	
10	Subtotal	2 Average	
			Total Averages
			2.6 Student
			2.2 Professional
			2 District-Wide
			2.3 Overall
	2.3	Overall Assessment	

