

**BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
CHENERY MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY ROOM
NOVEMBER 29, 2016**

Present:

Dr. Lisa Fiore, Chair
Ms. Susan Burgess-Cox, Secretary
Mr. Thomas Caputo
Ms. Andrea Prestwich
Ms. Elyse Shuster
Mr. John Phelan, Superintendent
Ms. Janice Darias, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction
Mr. Anthony DiCologero

Absent:

Mr. Murat Bicer

Also in Attendance:

Ms. Mary Pederson, Human Resources Director

1. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

1.1 The School Committee entered Executive Session at 5:15 p.m. for the purpose of conducting strategy with respect to contract negotiations with union personnel given that a discussion in Open Session may have a detrimental impact on the School Committee's bargaining position.

2. **OPENING BUSINESS**

2.1 Call to order

Dr. Fiore called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. explaining the School Committee had been in Executive Session and would now begin Open Session.

2.2 Pledge of Allegiance

Dr. Fiore led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2.3 Citizens' Concerns

There were no citizens' concerns.

2.4 Adjustments to the Agenda

There were no adjustments to the agenda.

2.5 Chair's Report

Dr. Fiore updated the School Committee on recent and upcoming events in the schools and Town. She noted the Belmont High School Honor Roll was available on the BPS website and announced the Foundation for Belmont Education Star Awards is now open.

2.6 Student Representative Report

James Kitch and Rachel Jansen, members of the Belmont High Student Advisory Council updated the School Committee on some upcoming events at BHS. James discussed plans for a survey which will collect information on how much homework students say they get each night compared with how much homework teachers think students are doing each night. Feedback from the survey will be presented at a faculty meeting in May or June.

Rachel Jansen discussed plans for a teacher to follow a student for a day to see what a typical day is like for a BHS student. She also noted the recent Pep Rally was a great success.

2.7 Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Phelan announced the Best Buddies Program at Chenery would be honored in a ceremony tomorrow for all the work they have done over the years. He also announced that he has reached out to teachers to be part of a Space Task Force Steering Committee. The Belmont High School Building Committee has completed the first module required by MSBA and is now entering into the second module which involves the hiring of a Project Manager and Architect.

3. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

4. MAJOR BUSINESS

4.1 Curriculum Cycle Review - Exhibit A

Mr. Darias explained that the seven year curriculum cycle began in 1992-92. This curriculum review supports the Belmont Public Schools Strategic Plan and School Improvement Plans. Curriculum development is divided into the following areas:

- English Language Arts and Reading
- Visual and Performing Arts
- Mathematics
- Physical Education
- Science, Health and Technology
- Social Studies

The Curriculum Director is responsible for managing the review cycle and the Steering Committee weighs in on decisions regarding the content area. There are four phases in the Curriculum Review Cycle:

- Phase 1: Introduction of new plan of action outlining recommended changes and improvements.
- Phase 2: Development of recommended curriculum changes and instructional improvements.
- Phase 3: Implementation of the Plan of Action across the content area; data collection and internal review.
- Phase 4: Evaluation of the effectiveness of the Plan of Action and the creation of a new Plan of Action for continuous improvement.

4.2 Performing Arts Review – Exhibit B

Arto Asadoorian, Director of Visual and Performing Arts, presented an overview of the 2016-2023 Visual and Performing Arts Plan of Action. During the spring of 2016, the VPA invited a group of four arts educators from other school districts to help evaluate the Belmont program. The visiting team observed classes, met with building principals and central office administrators. They also had conversations with teachers with the objective of learning all that they could about the arts programs, curriculum and instructional models and provide commendations and recommendations. The visiting team then created two reports – one for Visual Art and one for Music and Theater Arts. Mr. Asadoorian went on to explain each of the strategic goals and how the VPA plans to implement each goal.

4.3 2017-18 School Calendar Presentation – Exhibit C

Ms. Darias provided an overview of the 2017-18 school calendar explaining the three changes from last year's calendar. First, is an additional early release day for the middle school to allow time for parent/teacher conferences. Second, the first districtwide early release day will happen in October rather than September to allow students more time to settle in before having a day off. Finally, Veterans' Day will fall on a Saturday and state law states it is celebrated on the Saturday. Although Belmont schools would be closed on Monday if the holiday had fallen on a Sunday, it will not impact the calendar this year by falling on a Saturday. The School Committee discussed pros and cons of starting school prior to Labor Day.

4.4 Policy Report out – Exhibit D

Ms. Burgess Cox explained the changes in the following School Committee policies:

Opioid Use:

The changes made to the current policies include adding an education component to the health and wellness policy, citations to the new law, and language about filing copies with DESE, and providing copies to families and students.

Transgender Rights:

Minor changes will be made to the current *Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination* policy to include legal references and language changes to encompass all protected classes.

Meal Charging Policy and Procedures:

State and Federal law and DESE require districts to have a policy and procedure for collecting unpaid meal fees. Minor changes to the current *Student Fees, Fines and Charges* policy were made to include references to the regulations governing the collection of fees for the National School Lunch Program and National School Breakfast Program. The policy also includes text changes to reflect compliance with the governing laws and regulations.

Domestic Violence:

The Domestic Violence Leave Act requires all employers with 50 or more employees to provide leave to victims of domestic violence. The changes to the current *Leaves and Absences* policy include legal references and language changes to encompass all types of leave.

5. SUBCOMMITTEE/LIAISON UPDATES (as needed)

5.1 Finance Subcommittee

The Finance Subcommittee discussed the budgeting process that the Administration has had with building principals. They also had discussions about the fact that there is no longer a full day Kindergarten grant and how best to deal with that. There was a discussion about the possibility of additional staffing which may be required in relation to the Chenery modulars.

5.2 Policy & Procedure Subcommittee

There was no report from the Policy and Procedure Subcommittee other than the Policy report-out.

5.3 Curriculum & Instruction Subcommittee

There was no report from the Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee.

5.4 Capital Budget Committee

The Capital Budget Committee met on November 10th and discussed capital projects for the public library and high school.

5.5 Warrant Committee

The Warrant Committee will meet next week.

5.6 Belmont High School Building Committee

The High School Building Committee has completed Modular 1 for the MSBA and signed a Feasibility Study Agreement. The next step will be the hiring of a Project Manager and Architect.

5.7 Community Path Update

There was no report from the Community Path Committee.

5.8 Library Long Range Planning Committee

There was no report from the Library Long Range Planning Committee.

6. **OTHER BUSINESS**

6.1 Consent Agenda

6.2 Personnel Items – None

6.3 Business Items – None

6.4 Approval of Minutes

September 27, 2016

October 11, 2016

October 19, 2016

October 25, 2016

November 15, 2016

The School Committee did not vote on the minutes of September 27, 2016 because there was no quorum at the meeting. The minutes will be considered notes from a working group session.

On a motion offered by Mr. Caputo and seconded by Ms. Prestwich, it was

VOTED 4-1-1 to approve the minutes of October 11, 2016.

On a motion offered by Mr. Caputo and seconded by Ms. Shuster, it was

VOTED 4-0-1 to approve the minutes of October 19, 2016.

On a motion offered by Ms. Shuster and seconded by Mr. Caputo, it was

VOTED 4-0-1 to approve the minutes of October 25, 2016.

On a motion offered by Mr. Caputo and seconded by Dr. Fiore, it was

VOTED 4-0-1 to approve the minutes of November 15, 2016.

7. **FUTURE BUSINESS**

Upcoming Meetings:

December 13, 2016

Finance Subcommittee Meeting

SAB Conference Room – 7:30 a.m.

December 13, 2016

School Committee Meeting

CMS Large Community Room – 7:00 p.m.

December 20, 2016

Finance Subcommittee Meeting

SAB Conference Room – 7:30 a.m.

December 20, 2016

School Committee Executive Session

CMS Large Community Room – 7:00 p.m.

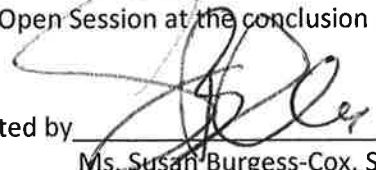
8. **ENCLOSURES**

Strategic Plan

9. **ADJOURN**

At 8:30 p.m. on a roll call vote, the School Committee re-entered Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining with union personnel given that a discussion in Open Session may have a detrimental impact on the School Committee's bargaining position. Ms. Fiore announced they would not go back into Open Session at the conclusion of Executive Session.

Respectfully submitted by


Ms. Susan Burgess-Cox, Secretary