

**BELMONT SCHOOL COMMITTEE FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES**  
**REMOTE MEETING**  
**JULY 2, 2020**

Present: Ms. Andrea Prestwich, Chair  
Ms. Catherine Bowen, Secretary  
Ms. Amy Checkoway  
Mr. Michael Crowley  
Ms. Tara Donner  
Ms. Evelyn Gomez  
Mr. John Phelan, Superintendent  
Ms. Janice Darias, Assistant Superintendent  
Mr. Anthony DiCologero, Director of Finance, Business and Operations  
Mr. Michael McAllister, Director of Human Capital

Andrea Prestwich left the meeting at 9:50 a.m.

**1. Opening Business**

1.1 Call to order

Andrea Prestwich called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

**2. FY20 Budget Closeout**

Tony DiCologero, Director of Finance, Business and Operations provided an update on the third quarter financials noting the School Department will be giving \$350,000 back to the Town. The money will go to free cash for 2020-21. Money was saved during the three months schools were closed. The School Department has been able to purchase what is needed for next year to help address student and staff safety. As the types of learning for next year are discussed, it is important to determine what Art, Physical Education, etc. will need to remedy their remote learning. The Committee acknowledged the importance of these programs in the remote learning environment.

The air filtration systems in the buildings are being checked. School Committee members had questions regarding who will be responsible for keeping pencils, rulers and other items clean for students and staff; will parents purchase for their students or will items be sanitized? Superintendent Phelan will check with the Principals. The Committee discussed the newly released DESE guidance, including temperature checks and self-reporting protocols, and supporting the needs of vulnerable student populations in re-opening. Rooms have been identified for nurses to use once schools open, to support isolation cases based on guidance from State, Department Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and CDC.

Some parents are concerned if schools open in the fall and then pivot to remote learning, they will not be reimbursed for Full-day Kindergarten. Some parents have been reluctant to sign up so the deadline for Full-day Kindergarten registration has been postponed until August. The Committee discussed whether the same decisions made in the previous Spring would be implemented in the coming year.

Superintendent Phelan will meet with Principals in July to come up with a set of expectations. Parents need to be informed of what Full-day Kindergarten means so they can evaluate what the tuition means.

### 3. **FY21 Budget Review**

There were four teaching positions at Chenery and a .5 position at Belmont High School that were not hired due to budget constraints. As planning takes place for a possible in-person school opening for fall, those positions would have been valuable in order to reduce class size. The School Department did receive money from the CARES Act which will fund two Technology Integration Specialists. If more funding were available, the priority would be to hire an additional Technology Integration Specialist and a .4 Nurse. There is also a need for funding for Professional Development.

Principals are measuring classrooms for the possibility of a normal school schedule under the DESE COVID-19 guidance. They will see what room set up looks like taking into account a three to six foot distance between students. Once a determination is made regarding the need for additional resources such as space and staff, a report will be sent to the State on what additional needs are required to open schools in the fall.


### 4. **Financial Task Force II Update**

The School Committee will meet with the Financial Task Force II on July 9. There is a general agreement of the need for an override. There are questions about the need to replenish the out-of-district tuition reserves, the State recommended balance and the FTF1 guideline. There is some interest in bringing down the override number. There is also interest in the creation of another town committee to re-examine town services and town government to see if there are things that can be done differently to improve financial outcomes, including regionalization of some services.

The Committee discussed the best ways to message support for the override as well as the best way to explain budget needs to the Warrant Committee. Kate Bowen suggested School Committee members read some of the Modeling Group Reports, which were created in 2014.

### 5. **Adjourn**

The School Committee **VOTED** unanimously on a roll call vote to adjourn the meeting at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted by   
Catherine Bowen, Secretary