

**Belmont School Committee Retreat  
Homer Building Gallery 3rd Floor 19 Moore Street, Belmont MA  
August 10, 2022**

**RECEIVED  
TOWN CLERK  
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: September 14, 2022  
TIME: 2:10 PM

Present: Meg Moriarty, School Committee Chair  
Kate Bowen  
Amy Checkoway, Secretary  
Mike Crowley  
Jeffrey Liberty  
Jamal Saeh (remote)  
Jim Pender, Legal Counsel

Call to Order

Moriarty called the meeting to Order at 12:13 PM.

Move to Executive Session

Moriarty moved to go into Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to litigation and to reconvene in open session, Bowen seconded, and the vote to approve was 6-0.

Move to Reconvene in Open Session

Moriarty moved to reconvene in Open Session after a 5 minute break, Bowen seconded, and the vote to approve was 6-0.

Call to Order

Moriarty called the Open session to order at 1:35 PM.

Moriarty framed the purpose of this retreat was to continue the discussion about SC subcommittee assignments; subcommittee charges; and SC goals for the 2022-2023 school year. At the retreat on July 20, 2022, the SC voted to approve the pausing of the Finance Subcommittee in an effort to prioritize the budget work at the full SC level. It was clarified that finance would be a "Major Business" item on the agendas at every full SC meeting, typically scheduled on Tuesday evenings. Discussed was the idea of having two SC members, as designated liaisons to the Administration who would be charged with listening/clarifying and helping to manage discussions at the full SC meetings, bringing clarity on matters that may be vague or unclear/confusing. They would not be authorized to make decisions. School Committee members agreed that there may need to be additional full SC meetings, dedicated solely to budgeting during the season.

After some discussion about the charge of the Equity Subcommittee and agreeing that equity must be a priority of all SC work, the majority of the committee advocated to retain the existing Equity SC and to re-examine the charge of that committee along with the DEI Director and the Superintendent.

Also at the previous retreat, the SC discussed pausing the Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee as its charge of previewing presentations on curriculum prior to full SC meetings was not seen as an efficient use of members' time. Rather, Kate Bowen suggested designating SC members as liaisons available to Admin for reviewing such presentations and providing feedback, but not with the authority of decision-makers.

Turning to a discussion of goals and policy, the SC came to agreement on having the goal of doing a full review of the Belmont School Committee Policies and contracting with MASC Policy Services both to fully review and convert to the NEPN classification system, beginning in the fall of 2022. The SC also aspires to commit to more efficient meetings that prioritize major business items tied to district and SC goals. They provided some ideas including limiting presentations by the Superintendent similar to other districts including Cambridge and limiting presentations by other groups to 5 minutes with background documents being sent at least 48 hours in advance to the SC. Members felt that meetings should be no longer than 3 hours and that special topics may be presented/discussed at special meetings of the Superintendent or addressed at parent coffees, etc.; agendas should be more transparent; public comment could be captured more efficiently between meetings; consent agenda should be used more often.

Members agreed to having one more retreat (remote, 1 hour) next week for additional discussion prior to meeting with the Administration on August 30th.

Adjourn

Moriarty adjourned the meeting at 2:30 PM

Respectfully Submitted by:

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Amy Checkoway". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Amy Checkoway