

**Belmont School Committee Retreat
Remote Meeting via Google Meet
August 15, 2022**

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BELMONT, MA**

DATE: September 14, 2022
TIME: 2:06 PM

Present: Meg Moriarty, School Committee Chair
Kate Bowen
Amy Checkoway, Secretary
Mike Crowley
Jeffrey Liberty

Absent: Jamal Carlos Saeh

Call to Order

Moriarty called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm.

School Committee and Subcommittee roles and priorities for the 2022-2023 school year

The School Committee members continued to review subcommittee plans and priorities for the 2022-23 school year.

In terms of the policy subcommittee's plan for 2022-23, Bowen has written up a summary of the proposal to engage with MASC on a comprehensive update of SC policies. This will be brought up an upcoming SC meeting for a vote. There was general support for this plan. Liberty asked for attention to socialization of any changes so that there is public awareness of updates.

In terms of signing the district warrants, Bowen has agreed to be a single signer to authorize the district to make payments, with the goal of making this process more efficient. She has asked for a searchable .pdf format so that she can review and sign remotely. Moriarty will serve as the backup. The warrants can be part of consent agenda approval at regular SC meetings. Bowen expressed the need to follow up with the district to confirm the approval process so that the district can issue checks in a timely fashion. It will be important to plan for the best way for Bowen to bring anything relevant to the full SC or an appropriate subcommittee.

There was discussion of the finance subcommittee being put on pause for 2022-23 with the plan to have the full SC consider/take on finance/budget matters at full SC meetings and for a couple liaisons to the district (Saeh and Crowley) to listen to or preview issues or presentations in advance. The liaisons will not represent the entire SC, and this plan is in the interest of efficiency and ensuring that all SC members are engaged in the budget process. If there are sticking points, it will be important to talk about these in full SC meetings. Checkoway suggested revisiting this mid-year to see how it is working. Saeh and Crowley will discuss if it will be helpful to designate a primary and back up liaison or handle this role another way. There was some discussion about how to handle meetings with the warrant committee's education

subcommittee, and acknowledgement that this will need to be figured out with the warrant committee including which SC member will attend any separate meetings.

In terms of the curriculum and instruction subcommittee, there was similar discussion of the concept of liaisons to help preview presentations. Or alternatively perhaps there can be a couple meetings throughout the year and otherwise liaisons can be used to provide desired input prior to full SC meetings. Bowen suggested that review of school improvement plans could be reason for this subcommittee to meet. This can get confirmed either way at the joint planning meeting with district leadership on August 30.

There was discussion about the SC's priority of using data to inform decision making and other actions, especially data about student outcomes. This may be a goal to also consider for the Superintendent as part of the evaluation process.

In terms of the equity subcommittee, the plan is to keep this subcommittee and consider how this subcommittee should interact with policy (given that there is also a policy subcommittee). This can be further discussed on August 30.

A new subcommittee will focus on the superintendent's evaluation. The hope is that many of the priorities of the SC are reflected in the superintendent's goals, and vice versa, and to have more structure, clarity, and focus on this process throughout the cycle. The SC will also likely have some different goals this year in terms of our own efficiency and governance. This subcommittee can make a recommendation about the length of the evaluation cycle as well, and set a calendar for the year. The hope is that in future years, discussion of goals can start earlier (in the spring) versus the late summer/early fall.

Town committee liaison roles were also reviewed, including some new liaison roles. It will be helpful to tie the SC's role on these committees to goals and our core scope so that everyone can have clarity about the amount of time/commitment available and our appropriate role.

There was discussion about how to make SC meetings more efficient, including shortening presentations and moving some presentations that do not require SC input or votes to other district communications/forums, if meetings are getting too long.

Adjourn

Moriarty adjourned the meeting at 7:57 PM

Respectfully Submitted by:



Amy Checkoway