



Belmont Family Engagement Network



Belmont School Committee
January 5, 2021

Belmont Family Engagement Network (BFEN)



What we'll cover with you tonight

- Who we are and how we came to be
- Our beliefs and vision for family engagement in BPS
- Our priorities
- Short term goals
- Q&A
- Join us!

Founding Group



Amanda Fernandez, co-founder



Jill Norton, co-founder



Jeff Liberty



Emily Rodriguez



Martha Loftus

Parents volunteering our 100+ years of combined experience in:

Public Education Policy

Community Engagement

School Leadership

District Improvement

Grassroots Advocacy

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Research

Strategic Planning

Classroom Educator

Teacher + Student Support

K-12 Boards

Systems-level Change Management

Education Non-profit Leadership

Business Planning

Our Beliefs: Supported by Research

- ✓ Families are **vital partners in school and district improvement**, as they know their children's needs best.
- ✓ **Networking and collaboration among community-based organizations and school-based family groups is necessary** to advocate effectively for the needs of all BPS students and to effect system-wide continuous improvement.

Sources: [Harvard Graduate School of Education](#); [The National PTA's Center for Family Engagement](#); [American Psychological Association](#); [Urban Education](#); [Carnegie Corporation of New York](#); [National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools](#)

Next Generation Family Engagement to Transform Education

Shift from...

Children learn only in school

Random acts of family engagement

Engagement of some families, particularly economically advantaged ones

Doing for and to families

Mismatched expectations, beliefs and practices held by teachers and families



To...

Children learn anywhere, anytime

Family engagement throughout learning pathway

Shared responsibility in ensuring all families can engage meaningfully in their children's education

Co-create opportunities for engagement with families

Changing mindsets and developing capacity to leverage families' strengths

BFEN's Unique Role

- District-wide focus
- Inclusive of all families in the Belmont Public Schools
- Bring parent voice to the district and School Committee in an organized, data driven and streamlined way
- Advise, share information and insights with district leaders

Our Priorities

- Advocate for families to serve as co-creators of Belmont's K-12 vision for teaching and learning
- Advocate for appropriate and adequate funding of the Belmont Public Schools
- Serve as a trusted resource
- Elevate racial justice and ensure integration of diversity, equity, and inclusion in all of our work

Main Activities

- Convene the community and provide the district and School Committee with actionable input
- Serve as liaisons between families and district leadership, in collaboration with other community groups
- Meet regularly with district leadership and School Committee to ensure decisions are informed by a diverse array of family voices

Short term

We will:

- Host a series of Community Conversations (January, March, and June 2020) focused on a vision of the future of BPS
- Hold regular meetings with BPS
- Build bridges across community groups



It Starts with You!

Join us on January 27th from 7pm-8:15pm

- Engage with other families and turn toward the future
- Envision ways families can be co-creators in our children's education journey in Belmont
- Work together to develop and generate excitement about the vision for education in Belmont that is inclusive of our collective input

Upcoming Events

Stay tuned for more conversations in March and June



Join Us!

Learn more at: www.belmontfen.org



Belmont Family Engagement Network

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**Serving as a liaison and central connection point between
public schools in Belmont, MA**

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Parents, caregivers, and other community-led groups



Questions/Feedback
