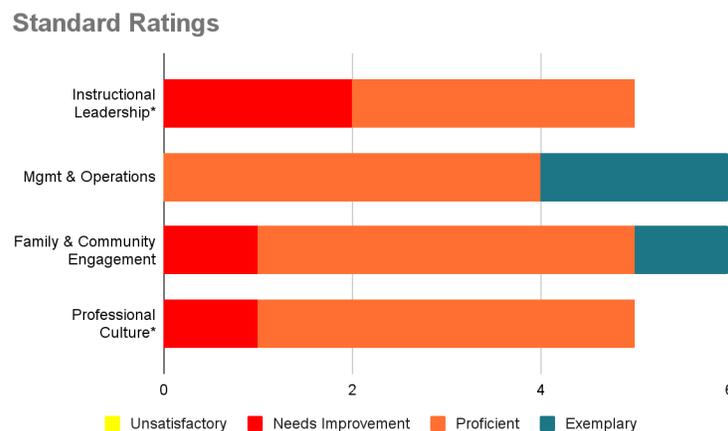


Superintendent Summary Evaluation Report, 2021-22

Overall Rating: Superintendent Phelan received an **overall rating of Proficient** from five of the six School Committee members for his performance during the 2021-22 school year. One member wrote, “I recognize the ongoing and increased challenges serving as a Superintendent (this year) and the continuous hard work and care that Supt Phelan contributes to the Belmont Public Schools. I am grateful for his leadership and (his) sincere care for (the) students.”

Standards: Superintendent Phelan’s overall rating was informed by individual ratings on four standards. These four standards are: Instructional Leadership; Management and Operations; Family and Community Engagement; and Professional Culture. While the **mode for each of these standards was Proficient**, there was a range in the ratings provided by School Committee members as seen in the chart below (* indicates two Standards were rated by only five of the six School Committee members):



Standard 1: Instructional Leadership. Proficient (3); Needs Improvement (2); Not Rated (1)

Superintendent Phelan was recognized as a leader who “consistently advocates for resources to support the academic and social emotional well-being of students.” He was “commended” for his work during the school year to create safe in-person learning conditions for all students and staff despite the unpredictability of the school year with spikes in COVID cases. However, members noted a lack of “concrete data and evidence” made assessing the Superintendent’s performance on the Indicators of Instructional Leadership difficult. Only five of the six School Committee members provided a rating of this Standard. Members wish to have more evidence of the district’s approach to the use of data to inform practice and adjustments and to what extent data-driven decision making is a priority.

Standard 2: Management and Operations. Proficient (4); Exemplary (2)

Superintendent Phelan was commended for stewarding a “thorough, collaborative” budget process “driven by a clear set of values and student priorities.” He “focused attention on

supporting school and student/family concerns as they arose, which was frequent.” Overall, there was consensus that the Superintendent is very strong on this Standard.

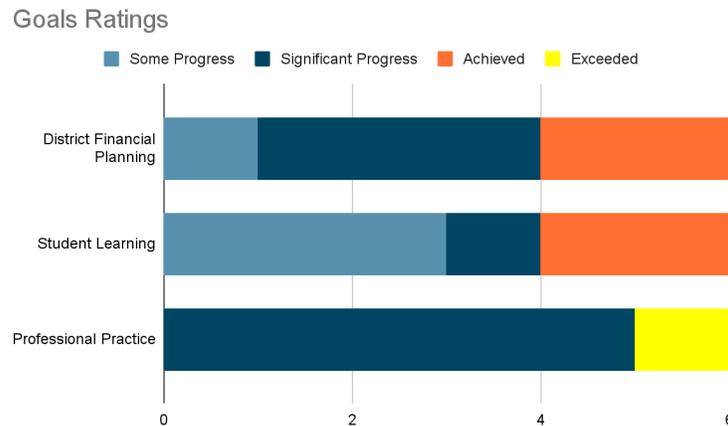
Standard 3: Family and Community Engagement. Needs Improvement (1); Proficient (3); Exemplary (1)

Superintendent Phelan spent considerable time on family and community communications and extensive time responding to and meeting with families and community members this year. One member stated that “measured on volume alone, his effort is nothing short of exemplary.” During the budget process, he spent significant time meeting with and responding to the Warrant Committee, Select Board, and the community at large. Given the volume and demand on his time, members of the School Committee would like to see Superintendent Phelan “delegate routine communication to other members of the cabinet” and “find more efficient ways of communicating with the community.” School Committee members would welcome a strategic communication plan.

Standard 4: Professional Culture. Needs Improvement (1); Proficient (4); Not Rated (1)

Superintendent Phelan was commended for his leadership and management of the collective bargaining process and discussions leading up to the safe opening of schools this year. One member noted his “willingness to respond to and resolve conflicts and build consensus among stakeholders with divergent views.” School Committee members also noted the considerable progress made on the equity audit and district diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) goals this year. There is some desire to see professional development for all staff as a bigger priority to “nurture a culture of continuous learning.” While five School Committee members provided a rating and feedback for this Standard, one member did not, instead noting the need for feedback from building-based leadership and staff.

Goals. School Committee members and Superintendent Phelan set three goals together for the 2021-22 school year: (1) District Financial Planning; (2) Student Learning; and (3) Professional Practice.



Goal 1: District Improvement - Effective Strategic Financial Planning. Some Progress (1); Significant Progress (3); Achieved (2)

A School Committee member summed up three major milestones of the district improvement goal: “1) development of a one-year budget for the FY23 that directs resources toward key areas of need and is fiscally responsible in light of Belmont’s fiscal challenges, 2) execution of a process to re-allocate select resources mid-year to better address student needs in FY22, and 3) significant adjustments to the initial FY23 budget in response to stakeholder input and concerns.”

Area for growth: In order to “deliver timely budget and financial data to the [Warrant Committee]” and to alleviate concerns about data being presented after the decision-making, the School Committee recommends a more data-informed process that provides “timely data to support financial decisions.” Going into next year, the School Committee would like to see a more strategic process that includes data and analysis of student performance, needs, and outcomes of new/existing initiatives beyond framing needs based on what administrators say/request.

Goal 2: Student Learning. Some Progress (3); Significant Progress (1); Achieved (2)

There was a large range of ratings provided by School Committee members for Goal 2: Student Learning. While one member felt that the “Supt provided consistent advocacy and narratives for positions to meet student needs during the year,” all School Committee members identified a lack of data on student performance and other relevant metrics, making it more difficult for the School Committee to advocate for resources to support student needs. For example, School Committee members wished for data that made it possible to determine the degree to which all students experienced a positive transition back to the 2021-22 school year. Members pointed out the lack of urgency with which MCAS data and Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) data

was shared. One member felt that, while the superintendent clearly attended to this goal during the year and provided principals with support, is it “difficult to assess progress on some of the indicators based on the information available to the School Committee.”

Areas for growth: The School Committee would like to see a more strategic process for implementing new initiatives based on timely data. They wish to see assessment of the impact(s) of the use of resources and district-wide initiatives in student outcomes.

Goal 3: Professional Practice. Significant Progress (5); Exceeded (1)

Superintendent Phelan received the most consistent ratings for this goal. School Committee members acknowledged all of his hard work that has gone into Goal 3: Professional Practice, noting specific milestones, including the completion of the equity audit, communication of the analysis of the equity audit with the full community, and Superintendent Phelan’s dedication to his own professional growth in this area.

Areas for growth: The School Committee understands there is still work to be done to complete this goal, specifically defining clear takeaways from the audit and a strategic plan that includes clear goals, milestones, and outcomes for the work as soon as next year.

*Respectfully summarized by Meg Moriarty, Belmont School Committee
June 12, 2022*