

Chenery PTO General Meeting
Thursday, October 12, 2017

Welcome and Introductions: Laurie Bufano and Barbara Bulfoni, Co-Presidents

Principal's Welcome: Michael McAllister, Principal

- Good to see parents, Good sign of engagement, please bring your friends!
- There will be more Phelan/Lovallo road shows in the coming weeks, so if you missed this presentation, watch for future dates.

Presentation/Approval of Minutes (May 2017): Laura VanderHart, Secretary

- Parent asked if we could have follow up on solar panels and technology
Barbara and Laurie will add to future agenda or send via email
- Minutes approved by voice vote

Treasurer's Report: Anna Freitag, Treasurer

- Planned 80K budget
- Annual Appeal goal is 30K, as of today we are at 60% of goal, 195 families donating, \$18K, Please contribute if you have not done so already
- Last year there was a surplus, which went to textbooks and technology
- Budget is much like last year
- Budget approved by voice vote

In brief: Laurie Bufano

2017—2018 In-School Enrichment Programs

- PTO Upper and Lower School Enrichment Coordinators are pulling together a fantastic slate of enrichment programs for the 2017—2018 school year. Nearly half of all PTO funds are used to support this programming. Your generous financial support of the PTO Annual Appeal makes it possible. Thank you!

Below is a tentative outline of programming planned:

Grade 5

- Simple Machines - January 2018
- Visit by Ben Franklin - June 2018

Grade 6

- Electricity - December 2017
- Mythmasters - April 2018

Grade 7

- Arabiqua - A program about Arab music and dance - mid-December 2017
- Museum of Science - Heat and Temperature workshop - February 2018

Grade 8

- Museum of Science - Motion, Speed & Velocity workshop - mid-December 2017
- Trial of Anthony Burns - interactive mock trial about the enforcement of the fugitive slave law in pre-Civil War America - May 2018
- Music of Social Change – program encouraging students to make connections between American history and the world we live in today - May 2018

Additionally, our **Author Programs** Coordinator is planning, in coordination with the Chenery Librarian, for several amazing visits. Details coming soon!

-PTO calendar is set for the year. It is posted on website. Some meeting dates have changed. Please check the website <http://www.belmont.k12.ma.us/cms/pto/AboutUs/Calendar.aspx>

-FBE President Christa Bauge introduced herself and encouraged people to get involved with the foundation.

-Barbara and Laurie are also in charge of Spelling Bee. They encouraged people to sign up soon for Nov. 4 event.

-Food allergy Consultant Kristin Nelson-Patel introduced herself. She can help with events to make them safe for all attendees.

Belmont High School Building Presentation

Special Guests: Superintendent John Phelan and High School Building Committee Chair Bill Lovallo

Bill and John talked about the progress so far and the next steps coming up. The presentation they gave is at the end of these minutes.

Bill Lovallo, Chair of the Belmont High School Building Committee

Has been working for 1.5 years already with volunteer committee of 15

Is a Chenery parent

After over a decade of submitting statement of interest to MSBA (Massachusetts School Building Authority), we are delighted to have funding.

Funding comes from sales tax, approx. 1 cent per dollar

After getting grant, Belmont had to complete 3 tasks:

- 1-Town Moderator created committee
- 2-Town meeting vote for feasibility study agreement
- 3-Schematic (working on now).

Recently, we hired an owner's project manager, Tom Gatzunis. He is very familiar with Belmont, has worked in the town before.

We hired design firm Perkins & Will. Brooke Trivas is our project director

Timeline is aggressive.

Focus now is on community engagement.

We need to make decision for schematic by April.

www.belmonthighschoolproject.org

Bill encouraged us to go click the box to keep us notified of meetings

Two upcoming meetings:

Saturday, Oct. 28 10am at high school, with tour

Tuesday, Dec. 12 7pm at high school, with tour

John Phelan, Superintendent of Belmont Public Schools

What is educational lens, vision?

What are operations and logistical challenges?

Visioning Sessions 1: In spring 2017, we held several visioning sessions with about 36 educators, parents, students with Frank Locker

Instructional Models, SEL, project-based

Flexible space, fluid and open, inspiring

Pond perspective—John and Bill saw as a challenge, most architects saw it as a benefit

Visioning Sessions 2: In September 2017, there were 3 expert talks. They will be available on Belmont Media Center.

How do we alleviate some challenges and turn them to opportunities?

Average class was 260 ten years ago, now is 360. Enrollment has grown by 100 every year for the past 6 years. New enrollment for district is 4531.

Have already put 6 mods at HS, 6 mods at MS, repurposed rooms in existing schools, will add 4 at Burbank next year.

Pros and Cons of Configurations

Visioning group voted for 7-12

7-12 50 votes

9-12 1 vote

8-12 4 votes

Parent Questions for John Phelan

Parent: Are we considering K-6 in 5 schools (including the Chenery)? I do not think putting 4-6 together is developmentally appropriate.

JP: The conversation about what happens to the K-6 students and the 5 buildings will be decided after decision about grade levels in HS is made. There are many options and implications.

Parent: Who decides and when?

JP: School Committee will decide early December.

Parent: When you approach this, do you start with the elementaries and what to do, or are you working backwards? Elementaries seem to be driving the constraints.

JP--New water mark is 360 students for long term. Visioning work is also feeding discussion of educational goals and approaches. Consider the whole district.

Parent: Is there research out there that looks at educational outcomes?

JP: Here are some examples: Duxbury 7-12, Billerica 7-12, Scituate 6-12.

MS needs to be small groups and teams. That is the research. In high school, do we want to keep departments or flatten out some? There is ideal and there is research-based. Needham and Arlington have a 6th grade school. It is working well.

Parent: Is district looking at financial impact of needing to hire more teachers?

JP: MSBA will be looking into it. It's good to be able to point to override, but we will need to hire more in 2020, or class sizes are going to be too high.

Parent: Do the general funding issues that we have in the town impact MSBA—like the pension funding?

JP: I don't think so. Town has AA A bond rating, and seems to be in line with other towns on that.

Parent: Have traffic studies been done?

JP: Yes, they are doing studies now. Jamie Shea (member of BHS building committee) added that her students at the high school are doing a research project. They will present to the Building Committee.

Parent: Has attention been paid to the sound of the space? My student had difficulties at Wellington because of the open design and the loudness of the space.

JP: We will design separate spaces for each age. Spaces will be organized differently.

Parent: Can you say anything at all about how students attending high school during the building project will be accommodated?

JP—Cannot say yet. I have been through building projects, but whether it's modulars, or construction next to current school, or other solutions, I don't know yet.

Bill Lovallo Final Comments

School Committee and Building Committee now have combined design meetings.

Listening to the voters is very important.

Building Committee will make recommendation to School Committee and Selectmen.

Jamie Shea added that there is also a survey on the website.

Parent: It's important to talk to your neighbors because they are not involved in schools and may not have children.

MSBA has a good website. It's interesting to see their science module. Our high school was built in the 60's and has not really had updates since then.

It's a very exciting time for Belmont. Auditoriums, Fine Arts facilities, Maker Spaces,

JP: I want to take some time to thank the PTOs and the FBE for all that you do.

Next coffee with the principal is Nov. 30, 8am

Next meeting is Dec. 6, 7pm.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm.