

Belmont Wellness Coalition (BWC)
DFC Grant
Meeting Minutes (Virtual)

Monday, October 5, 2020 at 11:30 – 12:30 PM

BWC Members Present:

Lisa Gibalerio (Wayside), Sophia Suarez-Friedman (Wayside), Wendy Conroy (Chair, Sexuality Educator), Jennifer Gillette, (The Loved Child, parent), Kim Raubenheimer (parent, nutritionist), Anne Wang (EDC, Grant Evaluator), Mike Crowley (School Committee, parent, Belmont Media Center), Leah Lesser (parent), Veera Mylapore (parent), Elizabeth Dionne (Warrant Committee/TMM member, parent), Corinne Jackman (Belmont High School Nurse)

BWC Members Absent:

Melissa O'Connor (BHS SRO), Michelle Drolsbaugh (Minding Your Mind), Elizabeth Brown (parent, Public Health Evaluator), Sue Morris (Chair of the Youth Commission), Traci Doherty (parent, nurse), Stephanie Sunderland (Wayside), Rev. Joe Zarro (Clergy, parent), Beth Rumley (Nursing Director), Annie Gladfelter (BASEC), Pam Eagar (Town Meeting Member), Sara Masucci (Teacher), Julie Crockett (TMM, parent), Jonna Logan (Nurse, parent), Jane Fox (Public Health Professional, parent), Portia Thompson (Parent), Janice Darius (Assistant Superintendent), Wesley Chin (Director, Health Department), Diana Ekman (Assistant Director, Health Department), Jeff Hansell (Media Specialist), Patti Forte (parent), Kate Bowen (School Committee member, parent), Kristine Pugliese (CMS SRO), Barbara Bulfoni (Chenery PTO, parent), Julia Patriciu (parent), Analia Barrantes Karma (parent), Amy Kirsch (Belmont Helps, parent)

1. Welcome, Introductions, Check-Ins:

Lisa welcomed all to the meeting, asked for brief introductions, and noted that there is a full agenda.

Anne Wang - The evaluator for the Coalition via the Drug Free Community Grant (DFC). Anne helps compile data and analyzes the information gathered from the student focus groups. In addition, she leads the presentations regarding the Youth Service Risk Behavior (YSRB) data. The data from this survey informs the Coalition's strategic action plan and focuses our outreach to parents. She reminds us that the next YRBS is slated to be this coming year (spring 2021).

Leah Lesser - Parent of BHS student, communications and media relations for Emerson Hospital and YRBS and she would be happy to collaborate/share with the BWC's YRBS efforts.

Jennifer Gillette - Parent of three BHS students. Child Development Psychologist, and The Loved Child director, which has programming for parents from expectant parents to parents of tweens and teens. The newest program supports parents in the workplace.

Mike Crowley - School Committee Member, and parent of a BHS graduate. He has been interviewing Lisa for weekly segments on the pandemic, SEL, etc.

Veera Mylapore - Parent of BHS student, and software engineer at Atrius health.

Corinne Jackman - High School Nurse. (Lisa gave her a shout out for support on the weekly video segments.)

Kim Raubenheimer - Parent of Belmont middle school and high school students. Does volunteer-work at the schools, helped in developing a basic nutrition curriculum, and has a nutrition background.

Wendy Conroy - Coalition Chair, has a Master's in Public Health, and is currently a sexual educator.

Elizabeth Dionne - Parent of BHS student and BHS graduates.

2. BWC Updates:

a.) Have you checked out our website? <http://belmontwellness.org>

Please check it out if you have not yet done so! The weekly video segments, tip sheets, and meeting minutes will be stored on the website. Lisa is open to feedback on the website.

b.) Educational Videos with the BMC have resumed (see FB or website for links)

Lisa noted that the fall video series began a few weeks back with a two-part on Remote Learning and then part 2 of understanding SEL will be filmed tomorrow. Any topic ideas are appreciated and sharing the links would be helpful too.

c.) Forming a Parent (Support) Group

Veera, Sophia, and Lisa are in the planning process of forming a Parent Group that will be facilitated by Sophia and Lisa. It will be for parents with children in the Belmont School System and the primary goal is to talk about parenting teens, tweens, and young adults with various monthly topics and concerns that parents have in common (such as screen time, social media, mental health, substance use, academics and stress, identity formation, relationships, etc.). The group will likely meet once a month during the school year over zoom, and have a facebook group for parents to connect through as well.

Veera shared that she has noticed a need for support and resources to be shared among parents.

The flyer will be sent out with the meeting Minutes, and can be shared widely with Belmont parents. Leah suggested putting the parent group flyer in the school lunches. Corinne will reach out to Dustin, the food service coordinator. (Corinne shared in the chat that Dustin said he can include the flyers if they are dropped off to him.)

To Do: Complete flyer, photocopy flyer, send with Minutes, distribute widely, and drop off a bunch to Dustin.

Anne and Wendy suggested evaluating the parent group by numbers of people who join each month and sending an anonymous survey at the end of each session.

d.) Creation of SEL educational documents (draft was sent)

Summer work progressed concerning Social Emotional Learning (SEL). SEL is important for students' academic achievement, health and well-being, and substance use prevention. Two documents were created: one a parent overview of SEL concepts and then a document for teachers. We are hoping the School Department will make these available on their website as well as perhaps sending out over the list-serv. Email Lisa and Sophia with any feedback, and Lisa will now request that Janice send out to parents/staff.

e.) **Creation of student [SEL survey](#)** (draft was sent)

This summer a subgroup of us worked to create a survey (thanks Anne, Sophia and Wendy!) for 7-12th graders to measure their SEL competencies (well-being, grit, and sense of belonging) from [Panorama Education](#). Survey also includes back-to-school pandemic questions from Panorama and questions about stress from the YRBS. The purpose of the survey is to understand where students need more support from the school and BWC. The survey has been okayed by Janice, and **we are looking for feedback from you to make sure it includes everything it needs to, email Sophia with feedback** (we do not need feedback on the wording itself of the questions as they are from pre-existing surveys that are valid and reliable). Student volunteers will be giving feedback as well.

f.) **Creation of Coalition guidelines** (draft was sent)

We have created these guidelines based on other “best practices” of other coalitions. Lisa asked if there was any feedback on the draft? No feedback. We, as a Coalition, will vote to adopt the guidelines at an upcoming Coalition meeting.

g.) **Bringing a Social Justice/Racial Equity lens to the work we do**

Sophia: Focus on racial justice because Wayside Youth & Family Support Network and the Multi-Service Center have made it a focus for every program, so we want to incorporate it more at BWC. Focusing on race and racism at school is important for many reasons, for example the discipline rates between races. In Belmont, Black students are 10x more likely than White students to be disciplined, 6x more likely to get an in-school suspension, and 16x more likely to get an out-of-school suspension ([Student Discipline Data](#)). School discipline and suspensions are associated with poor academic performance, dropping out, being held back, and contact with the juvenile justice system.

Mike added that there are large disparities in educational outcomes as well.

Wendy suggests reaching out to the new METCO coordinator which Jen can help with, Mike sent contact of a teacher in BECA, and will send information for Betsy Lipson from Metco program through state.

Sophia created and sent out a tip sheet on “How to Raise Anti-Racist Kids” over the summer. Would like to partner with others in Belmont to work on racial equity in the schools, such as Belmont Against Racism, BECA, school subcommittee for racial equity (thank you Corinne and Mike for introductions).

Let Sophia know if you would like to be on a sub-committee for racial justice. Veera asked to join-thank you Veera!

3. Peer Leadership Updates:

Sophia: We have 18 BHS student volunteers and Sophia is the facilitator. They are getting community service hours for their participation. So far they have helped create a tip sheet on coping with stress, and they will be providing feedback on the SEL Survey as well as being involved with a virtual “focus group” on messaging around stress. Give your feedback on what we should call the group: <http://chacy.com/Mewlsh>

Anne suggests crafting some evaluation measures for the students’ involvement and making sure it is meeting their needs. Sophia is keeping track of their hours for community service.

4. Seeking Ideas for Fall 2020 Programming (virtual)

Lisa asked the group to think about any programming ideas they might have for the fall.

a. Parent Workshops

- ❖ PTO workshops? Evening/Zoom/topics?
- ❖ Collaboration with The Loved Child?
- ❖ Wendy has been noticing that parents need tangible coping skills for stress (DBT skills, SEL skills), possibly a workshop. Veera agrees with the need and would attend.
 - Corinne added the McLean has been teaching these skills to educators. Corinne will ask McLean if they can lead a workshop like this, and Wendy will send along other trainers.
 - Lisa noted that BWC does have some funding to pay for a trainer.
- ❖ Jennifer suggested an ongoing meeting for parents to grow and learn together in a cohesive, trusting group. Lisa and Sophia asked if this idea can be incorporated into the parent group.
 - Jennifer’s ideas: begin with an opening activity, provide information, offer break out rooms, reflection and discussion, sharing an optional reading ahead of time.
 - Wendy suggested starting with more of a workshop, and then asking if parents wanted to then go further and join the parent group.

b. Minding Your Mind (<https://mindingyourmind.org>)

- ❖ For middle school? High school? Students or parents? Lisa finds this helpful because it is relatable for students and poses substance use education from a lived perspective.

c. Other possibilities?

5. Closing Thoughts, New Business, etc.

We will meet again before December holidays.

To Do:

- Email Sophia sophia_suarez-friedman@waysideyouth.org your feedback on the [SEL Survey](#)
- Email Sophia if you want to join a subcommittee for racial justice
- Email Lisa if you have any feedback on the Coalition Guidelines
- Give your feedback on what we name the student volunteers <http://chacy.com/Mewlsh>

To Share:

- SEL Guides for Caregivers and Teachers
- Coalition website <http://belmontwellness.org/>
- Flyer for Parent Group