

## **Belmont Wellness Coalition (BWC)**

### **Meeting Minutes (Virtual)**

**Tuesday, November 30, 2021 at 10:30- 11:30 AM**

#### **BWC Members Present:**

Lisa Gibalerio (Wayside), Sophia Suarez-Friedman (Wayside), Wendy Conroy (Chair, Sexuality Educator), Anne Wang (EDC, Grant Evaluator), Rachel Van Der Voort (Wayside, parent), Leah Lesser (parent), Hannah Lee (Youth Adult Services at Belmont Library), Mike Crowley (School Committee, parent, Belmont Media Center), Rachel Bruno (parent, PTO member, psychologist)

#### **BWC Members Absent:**

Jonathan Mack (Fitness Director at Waverley Oaks Athletic Club), Megan Palmer (parent, Elementary School Teacher), Michelle Drolsbaugh (Minding Your Mind), David DeStefano (Belmont Fire Chief), Hannah Lee (Youth Adult Services at Belmont Library), Chris Jablonski (Minister UU Church); Elizabeth Dionne (Warrant Committee/TMM member, parent), Jennifer Gillette, (The Loved Child, parent), Kim Raubenheimer (parent, nutritionist), Veera Mylapore (parent), Melissa O'Connor (BHS SRO), Elizabeth Brown (parent, Public Health Evaluator), Traci Doherty (parent, nurse), Stephanie Sunderland (Wayside), Rev. Joe Zarro (Clergy, parent), Beth Rumley (Nursing Director), Annie Gladfelter (BASEC), Pam Eagar (Town Meeting Member), Julie Crockett (TMM, parent), Portia Thompson (Parent), Janice Darius (Assistant Superintendent), Wesley Chin (Director, Health Department), Diana Ekman (Assistant Director, Health Department), Jeff Hansell (Media Specialist), Kate Bowen (School Committee member, parent), Amy Kirsch (Belmont Helps, parent)

#### **1. Welcome [Introductions, Check-Ins]**

Lisa welcomed attendees to the meeting and requested brief introductions.

#### **2. YRBS Data**

**Question raised and discussed:** In light of the omission of Latinx data, how should the YRBS slide deck be adjusted going forward? Anne posed the question of how the data was asked about on the survey given that race and ethnicity are asked in separate questions. Option 1.) race and ethnicity chart - Latinx only (which means they have identified as Latinx or Latinx white. If a student responded as Black Latinx, then they would be represented as Black.) or Option 2.) Latinx as part of multiracial category or Option 3.) present race and ethnicity separately. Also need to break out by Non-Hispanic/Latinx White, which would make more sense to do if combining the race and ethnicity categories.

**Decision:** Combine race and ethnicity categories. Break out Non-Hispanic/Latinx White and Hispanic/Latinx only.

**In the future:** Consider updating how the question is asked and letting students self-identify more. Take into account Arab American identity.

### 3. **Discuss: YRBS Data Follow Up Document**

Leah asked about the extent to which the students are involved in follow-up steps to the YRBS data. Lisa noted that while the students have useful insights and suggestions for “next steps”, they are not clear on what is in the BWC’s purview to execute and what is in the domain of the School Department (it’s worth noting that most of their suggestions fall under the School Department’s purview). Leah spoke to the experience of students in the school and the overall lack of connection that many students seem to feel.

Mike noted that he and other SC members are in meetings and are highlighting the need to support students in various ways, e.g., the potential for additional personnel such as social workers and guidance counselors.

Sophia shared her screen of a *draft* document that Lisa, Sophia and Wendy have been working on. This document outlines potential actions (next steps) that the School Department could consider putting in place in light of the mental health findings from the 2021 YRBS data.

Sophia took the BWC through the draft document. Hannah suggested adding the Library as a resource, Wendy suggested a communication loop back for teachers who refer students to counselors (i.e., hearing from a counselor that a student was in fact seen), and Lisa suggested including the ICAP option (a mental health plan for students) as a MH resource that parents can have in place for kids.

The need for a Suicide Response Plan was explored (e.g., is there such a plan already in place? does it need to be updated?). Hannah offered a MH education resource and Mike will ask the SD if there is a Suicide Response Plan in place. He will also ask for more details on the School Department’s relationship with McLean as well as what the bullying protocols look like at CMS and BHS. Members offered additional resources to put on the document, e.g., include the middle and high school SROs and additional topics to address - including: bullying, working collaboratively with the Health Department as well as with the Select Board.

The meeting ended here at 11:36.

### 4. **BWC Winter Programming**

#### [Additional YRBS Data Presentations:](#)

- Select Board      Monday, Dec. 6 at 8:00 PM - virtual
- BHS PTSO        Thursday, Dec. 9 at 7:00 PM – virtual
- CMS PTO         Wednesday, Jan. 12 at 7:00 PM - virtual

### 5. **BWC Updates:**

- a.) [Monthly Parenting Group](#)

Monthly parenting groups have been going well. In October, we explored and identified strategies related to ADHD and in November we discussed issues and identified strategies relating to Substance Misuse prevention.

Next Meeting: **Wed, Dec. 15, 7:00 – 8:00 PM (virtual)** Topic: *Autonomy/Freedom and Setting Limits*

b.) [Student Ambassador Updates](#)

The BWC Student Ambassadors met in October to give feedback on the YRBS data and share what the needs of students are in relation to mental health and substance misuse. They will meet again on Friday 12/3 to talk about ideas to address those needs - both what the BWC can do and suggestions for the School Department. They will also hang up posters with the *Coping Skills W2B2* campaign done in 2020-2021 by BWC and Coalitions in surrounding communities.

**6. Closing Thoughts, New Business, other Updates**

Links to weekly video segments can be found on BWC website: [belmontwellness.org](http://belmontwellness.org)

Next BWC Meeting in January: Lisa will send a doodle.