**Belmont Wellness Coalition (BWC)**

**Meeting Minutes (Virtual)**

**Monday, June 12, 2023 from 12:30 – 1:30 PM**

Lisa Gibalerio (Wayside), Maeve Kennelly (Wayside), Nadia Foster (EDC evaluator), Janice Darius (Assistant Superintendent), Leah Lesser (Parent, Emerson Marketing), Wendy Conroy (BWC Chair, Sexuality Educator), Elizabeth Dionne (Select Board, parent), Portia Thompson (Parent), Deirda Clermont (Metro Public Health Collab), Chon’tel Washington (DEI Director for Belmont PS), Melissa O’Connor (BHS SRO), Ellie Lesser (BHS Jr.)

1. **Welcome [Introductions, Check-Ins]** Members introduced themselves.

2. **Student Ambassador Updates**

- Teen Mental Health First Aid: Maeve reported that nine BHS students attended the training.

- Fall Initiatives: Maeve summarized fall initiatives including, recruitment, rebranding, a name change to “Student Mental Health Advocates”, *One Trusted Adult* initiative, YRBS data social norming campaign, etc.

3. **BWC Updates -** Lisa provided the following updates:

- **BWC and Kevin Hill, MD Vaping event** will be held on Monday, Oct. 23, 2023 at 7:00 PM - CMS Community Room (Please Save the Date!)

Chenery parents have expressed interest in receiving more information on the topic of vaping, Belmont youth and their caregivers will be invited. We will discuss the alluring aspects of vaping, the science behind addiction, and prevention strategies. This event will be in a hybrid model.

- **DEI Community Partners** potential event Fall. 2023 - This event would explore overwhelming stress that students experience through a racial equity lens. Partners would include the Belmont HRC (Human’s Rights Commission), BAR (Belmont Against Racism), and the Belmont Pan Asian Coalition (BPAC). We thought it would be helpful to explore overwhelming stress from a racial equity lens to better understand the layers of stress that Belmont youth are facing and how adults and the community can impact this area. Lisa will keep members posted on the details.

- **Health and Safety Task Force** – A Student Mentoring program will be explored.

Police Chief Jamie McIssac has ‘resurrected’ the Health and Safety Task Force which brings together members of the community from schools, town government officials, and other community members to discuss youth health and safety. There have been conversations of developing a student mentoring group to connect underclassmen with upperclassmen for information and guidance on classes, clubs, athletics, student life, etc.

Leah shared that the timing of this program could be helpful given the younger students coming up to BHS. She shared that there is an opportunity for National Honor Society students to help out with this and engage with students through this group.

Wendy shared that there are students who would succeed in this program, but they may not be National Honor Society members, so it should not be limited to just that group.

Nadia shared that utilizing just Honor Society students may not supply a diverse group of students.

Ellie shared the Belmontonian Club may also be another avenue for this program-as they focus on community service and school connectedness.

Lisa shared that these are great ideas and we will also reach out to other community members for their involvement, e.g., the Library (Hannah Lee), Youth Commission (Nicole Tripoli) and possibly youth programs at various churches.

- **DARE Board** – has funding to support youth centered programming.

Lisa shared that there is funding through the DARE program to use for prevention and education for youth.

- **BWC Newsletter** - Will be out next week. Please help us share the newsletter, i.e., publicize it via email, newsletters, etc.

**- Town Meeting (TM)** - Elizabeth noted that TM voted to set up a segregated opioid settlement fund to receive the Opioid money ($107,000). Town Administrator Patrice Garvin will look at the restrictions for the funds and come up with a plan on utilization - hopefully prevention and education. Elizabeth advocated for BWC being involved in the planning for this money.

Lisa shared that we would love to contribute to this conversation and work on some upstream prevention/education, related to this and other substances.

4. **Upcoming Event**Belmont Pride Parade Sat., June 17 at 1:00 Town Green

Maeve will be at the event on Saturday.

5. **Two Summer Sub-groups -**

Lisa suggested that we set up the summer subgroup meetings for the following groups:1. YRBS Megan and Mike
2. BWC Publicity/Recruitment Mike and Leah

6. **BWC Year in Review** (programming, video segments, Parenting Group)

Lisa noted highlights of the BWC’s accomplishments throughout this past year.

* **The creation of 2 additional educational Tip Sheets:**
1. Wilderness Therapy
2. Vaping 101
* **The creation of 11 Belmont Media Center Video Segments:**
1. Teens and Sleep
2. Managing Screen Time
3. How to Talk with Your Kids When They Make a Mistake
4. Managing Holiday Blues
5. New Year’s Resolutions
6. Vaping
7. Current Data re: Teen Mental Health
8. Upcoming YRBS
9. Understanding Fentanyl
10. Social Host Liability Law
11. Support for Launching your Teen
* **Provided 5 Community Workshops:**
1. Narcan Training 10/2022
2. Understanding Tween Mental Health 10/2022
3. Suicide Prevention 3/2023
4. Social Host Liability Law and Substance Misuse 5/2023
5. Teen Mental Health First Aid Training 5/2023
* **Hosted 8 Parenting Groups:**
1. Back to School Transition Issues including Bullying
2. Teaching Upstander Behavior
3. Managing Screen Time
4. Supporting Kids in Finding their Joy
5. Updates on Grade 7 and 8 transition to the upper new school with Karla Koza, Reconfiguration Director
6. How to Encourage Kids to Connect with Others in Person

As well as two ‘open agenda’ meetings, where parents could raise whatever challenges and concerns they were dealing with.

* **Social Media Posting of Numerous Educational Links on BWC Facebook Page**
* **Applied for two major federal grant applications**
* **Created and distributed content on SEL for families and staff**

7. The next BWC meeting in September will be, virtual, on:

**Mon., Sept. 11 at 12:30**

**BWC meetings will continue to be held on the second Monday of the month, at 12:30 over zoom, with the exception of Oct. 9 due to Indigenous Day.**

**Please mark your calendars for BWC meeting dates 2023/2024:**

Monday, Oct. 16 12:30 (the 9th is a holiday)

Monday, Nov. 13 12:30

Monday, Dec. 11 12:30

Monday, Jan. 8 12:30

Monday, Feb. 12 12:30

Monday, Mar. 11 12:30

Monday, April 8 12:30

Monday, May 13 12:30

Monday, June 10 12:30

8. **Thank You and Goodbye to both Janice and Nadia**

Lisa acknowledged both Nadia and Janice for their commitment to the BWC - (noting that this is their last meeting). There will be a change in our Evaluator which necessitates saying goodbye and expressing our appreciation to Nadia (who needed to leave the meeting early) for her efforts with the BWC over the past 18 months.

Lisa acknowledged Janice on her retirement and read from the BWC’s retirement card for Janice:

*“Thank you for these past several years of partnership -- a partnership that made it possible for us to execute our work. We have so appreciated that you carved out time (from a demanding schedule!) each month to attend our meetings, that you assisted in publicizing our events, and that you acknowledged the BWC’s mission and efforts at School Committee and School Department meetings. All of this was not taken for granted.*

*You dedicated your professional life to making a meaningful difference in the lives of countless children and their families. If after a long and wonderful retirement, that ends up being your epitaph – I absolutely can’t think of a better one. Thank you for all you have done for Belmont families and enjoy every minute of what lies ahead.”*

Janice thanked the BWC for their widespread efforts in the community. She will help with the transition to the new Assistant Superintendent as well as with the new grade 7 and 8 Principal. Wendy thanked Janice for her commitment to youth mental health, over the years.

Lisa and Maeve will be around this summer. Please reach out – and have a healthy and wonderful summer!

We meet again on **Mon., Sept. 11 at 12:30.**