



## **Meeting Minutes (Virtual)**

### **Monday, Dec. 11, 12:30 – 1:30**

Lisa Gibalerio (Wayside), Maeve Kennelly (Wayside), Chantal Hoff (MXM Evaluator), Wendy Conroy (BWC Chair, Sexuality Educator), Rebecca Furth (International Public Health), Maya Escobar (Teen Services Librarian), Russ Kupperstein (BMS Principal), Portia Thompson (BRC, parent)

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

Members introduced themselves.

#### **2. 2023 YRBS Data Presentation and Discussion**

Lisa, Maeve and Wendy presented the 2023 YRBS data to BWC members. Following the data presentation, the following was discussed:

Becky noted:

- Intersection of mental health and substance use, hard to discuss one without the other
- Would be appropriate if services were being integrated into core curriculum for schools so students can learn earlier how to manage their mental health and emotions

Wendy commented:

- there is no health curriculum director, so no one oversees this information; it has been an unfilled union position and volunteers (like BWC) cannot even review the health/wellness syllabi
- issue has not been lack of interest, but lack of resources, McLean has great resources, John Mattleman has some great hands on resources
- Preventive care/education would mean getting the content into health curriculum at schools
- Belmont is missing a cohesive approach to health curriculum

Russ responded:

- Agrees that substance misuse prevention needs to include mental health support
- Strategies for emotional regulation, conflict, healthy self image, etc. start in middle school or earlier
- Some guidance counselors are trained in CBT/DBT- there is an opportunity here for PD to reach wider staff

Lisa noted:

- the ongoing challenge has been to make a meaningful difference (regarding mental health education, prevention, SEL, etc.) in schools/health curriculum, with limited capacity/resources

-we are aware that families, staff and students need more tools/education - but how best to reach these populations - given lack of capacity/resources?

- the DFC grant covers substance misuse prevention - and also - *the risk factors* of substance misuse, e.g., mental health, screen time, bullying, etc.

-McLean offers free workshops - Lisa will reach out to see if CBT, DBT, or SEL are among the offerings

Becky:

-great to offer PD, but without a cohesive curriculum, it is piecemeal-will we get the most effective results in impacting student mental health?

Russ:

-Relying on health curriculum allows an avenue to teach students skills they can use

-Building on the health curriculum means integrating into other areas as well

-BMS is potentially looking at piloting (in future school years) additional SEL curriculum to support mental health - e.g., *Owning Up Curriculum, Choose Love, Second Step*

-needs to be school wide/implementation for the entire building, for the entire year - foundational integration

-BMS staff went through the 2023 YRBS data and came to a similar conclusion that we need to meet students where they are with regard to mental health skills

All agreed that students/families need basic tools around MH and they need to be able to access quality, available care. The BWC created a Mental Health 101 resource sheet as well as other BWC resources and needs to disseminate these materials more frequently and as widely as possible.

Link to Mental Health Resource list: <https://bit.ly/3NpOcpd>

Mental Health 101 Tip Sheet: <https://bit.ly/3RnEG7p>

Portia acknowledged the BWC for all their efforts on behalf of families and youth in Belmont.

Regarding the YRBS data, the BWC intends to follow up with the School Committee in January and will convey the above messages to the School Dept.

The following agenda items were not covered, but would have been if time allowed:

### **3. BWC Updates:**

- *Student Mental Health Advocates* - ongoing meetings.
- *Upcoming Programming* -
  1. The BWC will present the YRBS data to the BHS and BMS PTSO/PTOs in a combined meeting to be held sometime in January.

2. BWC will also be presenting a workshop on Youth Mental Health and Stress to the LDS community on Jan. 30.

- *DARE Board* -

The BWC has met with members of the DARE Board. They remain willing to fund youth-centered speakers, but would like to do so with a “captive audience” in attendance. Lisa is working with Lucia Sullivan to arrange a grade wide assembly at either the CUE or BMS.

- *Opioid Task Force/Survey* -

Money is coming down to communities through the Mass. AG’s office. Belmont has formed a Task Force to discuss best uses and to create a plan for this funding.

**The Health Dept. created a survey to receive community input - please take the survey and provide your thoughts.**

Survey link: <https://bit.ly/3MxQB0V>

**4. Mark your calendars for upcoming BWC Meetings - all will be virtual:**

Mon., Feb. 12	at 12:30
Mon., March 11	at 12:30
Mon., April 8	at 12:30
Mon., May 13	at 12:30