

# MINUTES

## Belmont Academy Governing Board

### Workshop Meeting: Vision & Planning

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Date | time: 3/6/2019 10:00 AM | Meeting called to order by: Luke Sparks, Chairman

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#### In Attendance

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##### Governing Board:

Luke Sparks, Chairman – present  
Will Myers, Secretary -- not present  
Jay Poole, board member – present  
Shellie Young, board member – present  
Luke Sparks, board member – present  
Katie Tyler, board member – present  
Jessica Klanderud, board member – present  
Jonny Handy, Treasurer – present

##### Belmont Academy:

Lawton Unrau, CEO  
Ron Barker, Principal

A Quorum was present

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#### Agenda

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##### General Business:

1. Call meeting to order and take attendance
2. Confirm public notice for meeting established  
Public notice of the meeting was confirmed

##### Workshop Meeting Minutes:

Mr. Sparks opened the meeting and handed the floor to Mr. Poole as the chair of the Vision and Planning Committee meeting.

Mr. Poole provided an explanation regarding the transferability of FGC courses, after having completed some research. Some research was also done by Mr. Poole regarding AP courses and he shared those results. A discussion followed regarding the most suitable approach for high school students to take DE or AP course work.

Colleges want to know what challenges the upper level students are doing in order challenge themselves in the upper grades.

Mr. Unrau shared some research results he acquired directly from FGC regarding transferability of DE coursework.

Mr. Sparks asked if AP courses would still be available to those that wanted the AP in addition or in lieu of Dual Enrollment courses. A discussion followed regarding how Belmont would staff for limited student engagement with AP. Per Mr. Poole said the committee recommends that AP courses are offered as electives with a high pass rate.

Mr. Barker added that AP courses are still beneficial in the long run even when the student does not pass the AP test as it supports their post-secondary education. Mr. Barker agrees with the committee that both programs are important. Mr. Barker mentioned that vocational training is another important component.

Mrs. Tyler pointed out that pushing too many students through the AP programs does not work well. Mr. Poole said that we need to limit Belmont's scope to be to the most benefit of the students. A discussion of class size concerns and budget questions followed. Based on enrollment results in future years it is important to focus and provide the best results for the most students as possible.

Mr. Sparks emphasized the essential roll of guidance counselors. After reviewing the report regarding FGC coursework completion, a discussion was held regarding the importance of the school guidance counselor and consideration for additional support. Mr. Poole reiterated that an additional guidance counselor is likely needed to support the students and their program prep.

Mr. Poole said that it would be worth learning which AP courses have the highest success rate.

Mr. Barker explained how some lightly enrolled AP courses may be because of scheduling availability with both staff and students. As a result, it turns out to be well used time even though the classes are small.

Mr. Handy made the point that teaching staff are key in generating a student's interest and passion for a certain coursework or career support. It is an extended process beyond just the guidance counselor that includes engaged teachers.

Mr. Poole opened the conversation regarding block scheduling. A review of the pros and cons of block scheduling followed. Mr. Poole is recommending that converting to block schedule gets delayed, but that research continues to determine the best time table to implement school wide block scheduling, if desired. He recommends reaching out to educational peers with experience. Mr. Sparks agrees that he supports the idea of researching block scheduling and that it is an interesting option. Mr. Barker has done some research and shared the pros and cons of block scheduling verbally.

Mr. Barker feels that block scheduling is very beneficial to the teaching staff. Ms. Young expressed that she wants the focus to be on doing the best for the students that we have. She does not think that being innovative and unique is the key, rather, serving Belmont's students in the most successful manner should be the priority. Mrs. Tyler added that more information should be gathered before proceeding.

Mr. Poole asked about volunteer hours and related requirements. A discussion followed regarding various ways to modify the volunteer program and its requirements with a plan to place this matter on a following school board agenda. Mr. Barker explained that the key to success is having a very good manager of the program, which has helped the program this year. Mr. Handy suggested that the volunteer hours requirement be set to be completed by the lottery run date – it could be based on a percentage.

Mr. Poole provided a summary report regarding some teacher concerns that had come before him regarding Mr. Barker. Mr. Poole emphasized that peer group support and professional development is going to be essential with school growth. Mr. Poole asked Mr. Barker what he is doing to improve his skills as Principal.

Mr. Barker explained that he is scheduling to attend professional development programs and he is 100% supportive of increased professional development programs for himself. He provided an explanation of his management style and the related challenges of the job.

Mr. Poole expressed that a priority of focus should be on administrator growth.

Ms. Young mentioned that an Assistant Principal may be a viable option for the upcoming school year. Mr. Sparks agreed that the additional support in the chain of command be improved by adding an Assistant Principal. Mr. Poole requested that an Assistant Principal job description be developed.

Mr. Sparks provided encouragement that the process we are going through is to better the school and we all want to meet stakeholder expectations and serve the students and their families to the best level. Mrs. Tyler added that the entire staff is very much "Team Belmont" and supportive. Mr. Barker agreed that the right hire as an Assistant Principal would be beneficial to Belmont and expressed his desire to increase professional development and training.

Any discussion of the school calendar will be tabled until the March 25<sup>th</sup> school board meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 pm by Mr. Sparks, Chairman.