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BELMONT, MA**

DATE: March 14, 2022  
TIME: 9:15 AM

Belmont Youth Commission Notes

February 10, 2022

1. Call to Order - 8:02 pm
  1. Attendees: Gavin Farrell, Zhenzhen Zhang, Lisa Gibalerio, Chris Bauge, Agnes, Ellie Lesser, Heidi Wickersham, Joanna Tzouvelis, Anya Chen, Claire Svetkey
2. Approval of January 13, 2022 Minutes minutes - motion by Joana, second by Zhenzhen
3. Conversation with Lisa Gibalerio of the Belmont Wellness Coalition
  1. When youth commission started in 2017 all work supporting youth was siloed, so commission was meant to bring everyone together to talk about what groups were doing and do work ourselves.
  2. 2018 wrote grant for a 6-yr drug-free community with 2 focus areas: mental health and prevention work around substances (why and how many youth are using?)
  3. Students have always been a target audience and included, but 2020 formed student branch of coalition with student ambassadors. Working toward peer mentorship.
  4. Survey data, 2019 and 2021, grades 7-12 on health and wellbeing to help inform work that they do.
  5. Questions:
    1. Zhenzhen - youth survey red flag around bullying - what was the reaction to this and planning around this? What were things you couldn't do related to financial or other constraints?
      1. Make suggestions to school department, but finite amount of money is spent by school department. They hired 5 new social worker and more professional aides to keep an eye on bullying.
      2. Part of conversation on getting anonymous tip line. Also open to staff training to teach on the kind of supports they can offer on mediation, etc. Bullying that doesn't happen on campus is out of authority, however looking to improve upstander education. More access to parents than youth is one constraint, so focus on parent education, except for work with ambassadors. Money is another challenge
    2. Gavin - What work has been done directly with kids, any success with this?
      1. Student ambassadors started in 2020 in the middle of the pandemic, but they helped a lot with content for Instagram. Kids are under a lot of stress in Belmont, more than other areas. Starting a social norming campaign. Focus on 75% kids not using alcohol [asset-based communication].
      2. Ellie, doing lots of stuff in building where the source of stress is.
    3. Heidi - what are the stressors?
      1. Academic stress, homework, school-related stress, extracurricular stress, COVID, family pressure/expectations, personal expectations
      2. Homework free weekends came out of this, limited number of AP classes sophomores could take. But some families got upset.

Featured the movie "Race to Nowhere" - kids talk about damage of parental pressure.

4. Gavin - where can we work together under this transition with the wellness coalition?
  1. Ellie - comparing results of surveys. Gavin provides description of survey
  2. Lisa usually shares on Facebook parents, k-12 listserve, and can pub in other places. Belmont Rec Department. Posting with QR code at testing sites, etc.
  3. Zhenzhen - help with stress problems? Parents will still find ways to fill the gaps with more stressful activities.
    1. Should ask kids what would be helpful managing their stress. What would make a difference? LGBTQ kids want help educating their parents on how to support them.

4. 4. Public Participation

5. Community Survey

. Should we include SES?

.At the end, make totally confidential

a. Should we ask about de-stressing activities?

b. Gavin will distribute over electronic

c. Deadline: March 31

d. Next steps: Heidi will update survey and flier and send to group for review over Friday, February 11.

6. 6. Other Business

7. Joanna makes motion to adjourn, Zhenzhen second