Focus Group: Belmont Hills Elementary School Staff
Date: 4/24/14

Key Questions
1. What should school look like ten year from now?
   ***Teaching/learning infused with creativity, collaboration, innovation.
   **Less formal/standardized assessments; more authentic, individualized assessment.
   *Interest driven and self-paced curriculum
   *Community service learning and activities
   Individualized learning with small class size
   Child centered
   Meaningful interdisciplinary curriculum, addressing students strengths
   Putting the joy back into learning and teaching
   Strong world language program for global community
   Technology that is more useful, accessible, and developmentally appropriate.
   More self-selected texts
   Incorporating the environment into the school day.
   1 to 1 with technology devices

2. What should a Lower Merion School District graduate look like? What are the skills, attitudes, and dispositions that we want for all students?
   *Kind and giving. Aware and sensitive to needs of others and world. Open minded.
   *Well rounded: arts, world languages, science, math writing, literature, physical fitness
   *Fluent in another language
   *Problem solvers with higher level thinking ability – academically/socially proficient
   Real world applications for learning.
   Self-directed.
   Positive outlook for future.
   Self regulation/social skills
   Able to work collaboratively, connecting with others
   Self sufficient
   Environmentally aware and sensitive
   Trained in life skills: finances/ budgets
   Globally aware
   Prepared to be community leaders
   Able to see failures as opportunities
   Niche learners – concrete plans for future based on interests and learning

3. What do we value as a District? How do we hold onto our traditions while simultaneously embracing change?
   *Well rounded learners; flexible grouping; true authentic learning.
   *meaningful curriculum vs. standards driven programs
   *Value educators’ perspective
*Student centered engagement
*Experiential learning: hands on, real life experiences
World-wide connections/ learning through the use of technology
Core values to develop the whole person.
Increased technology for teachers and students
Attention to needs of individual learners – special ed connections to school community based on specific needs.
Cultural proficiency
Passionate learners
Small class size
Experiential, inquiry, thematic based learning
Engage teachers in change – give them a voice
High academic achievement
Outstanding programs
Meaningful professional development
Prestigious reputation