

**BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF**

**June 15, 2010**

**1. Call to Order**

At 7:35 p.m., Mr. Pierce called to order, the meeting of the Bedford School Committee. Other Members present included Ms. Bickford, Ms. Seibert, Ms. O’Gara and Mr. Hafer.

**2. Comments From Public**

None

**3. Personnel Report**

Dr. LaCroix asked the School Committee to approve a request for additional staffing at Davis School for the new Integrated Kindergarten classroom. Dr. LaCroix said that the planning for the new Integrated Kindergarten class has been completed and an additional Teaching Assistant, an additional .2 Speech Therapist and an additional .2 Occupational Therapist are needed for the classroom. Dr. LaCroix said that the cost for these additional staff members will be absorbed by the Out-of-District Special Education budget.

Ms. Bickford asked what the cost would be if these children were sent out-of-district rather than staying in Bedford in the newly created kindergarten program. Dr. LaCroix estimates that the cost would be greater than \$100,000.

Ms. Bickford made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee approve the request for an additional full time Teaching Assistant and an additional .2 Speech Therapist and .2 Occupational Therapist to support the Integrated Kindergarten classroom for the 2010-2011 school year.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. O’Gara**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

Ms. O’Gara asked how many students were in the class. Dr. LaCroix answered 15.

Dr. LaCroix also asked the School Committee to approve the addition of 1.5 ELL licensed teachers. Dr. LaCroix explained that due to the growing population of ELL students, she would like to replace the ELL tutors with 1.5 ELL teachers. The \$18,000 increase in salaries would come from the personnel budget.

Ms. Bickford said that she was amazed that 20% of the incoming kindergarten class is “non-native” English speakers. Dr. LaCroix agreed but did explain that this was the first year we had a professional ELL teacher at Kindergarten screening. She also said it was interesting to note that the current sixth grade class has three ELL students compared to the 32 ELL students coming into Kindergarten.

Ms. Bickford said she fully supports this request. She made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee approve the addition of 1.0 ELL Classroom Teacher and a .5 ELL Classroom teacher to meet the needs of the ELL population in the 2010-2011 school year.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. O’Gara**  
**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

Dr. LaCroix asked the School Committee to review several job descriptions. The School Committee reviewed the Building Secretary-Guidance-High School and the Building Secretary-Guidance/Athletics-High School positions which were revised due to recent retirements. The School Committee agreed to vote on these descriptions since the candidates have been selected and will work over the summer.

Ms. O’Gara made the following motion:

**Moved: That the School Committee approve the Building Secretary-Guidance-High School as amended tonight.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Bickford**  
**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

Ms. Bickford made the following motion:

**Moved: That the School Committee approve the Building Secretary-Guidance and Athletic Department – High School as amended tonight.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Seibert**  
**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

Ms. Seibert asked why there is only one job description for different jobs. (Guidance and Athletic Department) Dr. LaCroix said that traditionally, these jobs have always been covered by one person.

The School Committee reviewed the ELL Teacher position and gave Dr. LaCroix several edits. Ms. Seibert made the following motion:

**Moved: That the School Committee approve the English as Second Language Teacher position as amended.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. O’Gara**  
**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

The School Committee reviewed and edited the Transitions/Bridge Program Teacher. Ms. O’Gara made the following motion:

**Moved: That the School Committee approve the Transitions/Bridge Program Teacher job description as amended tonight.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Seibert**  
**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

Finally, the School Committee reviewed and edited the Integrated Pre-School Teacher job description. Ms. Bickford made the following motion:

**Moved: That the School Committee approve the Integrated Preschool Teacher job description.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. O’Gara**  
**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

Dr. LaCroix announced the following informational items:

Resignation:

Jessica Hinson

Teaching Assistant

Middle School

Reappointment:

Jennifer Ferro	Social Studies Teacher	High School
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Appointments:

Marjorie Harris	Secretary Counseling Office	High School
Amanda Rebesa	Secretary Counseling/Athletic Office	High School
Janet Stone	Replacement Elementary Teacher	Lane School
Denise Oldham	Assistant Director SPED – In –District System	

#### 4. Textbook Adoption.

The School Committee voted on textbook purchases that were discussed at the last meeting.

Ms. Bickford made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee approve the expenditure of \$12,920 for 170 Prentice Hall Algebra 1 textbooks, published by Pearson Publishing of Lebanon, IN for Grade 8.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. O’Gara**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

Ms. Bickford made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee approve the expenditure of \$8,190 for 90 copies of James M. Henslin Sociology – A Down to Earth Approach textbooks, published by Pearson 9<sup>th</sup> Edition, for students in Grades 11 -12.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Seibert**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

Ms. Bickford made the following motion regarding ELL textbooks.

**MOVED: That the School Committee approve the expenditure of \$8,387.19 for the following ELL textbooks published by National Geographic School Publishing and Hampton-Brown:**

- 1 kit/10 scenes of Vocabulary Builders for grades K-2
- 1 kit/50 books of Phonics Street for grades K-5
- 444 leveled content books of Windows on Literacy: Language Literacy and Vocabulary for Grades K-2
- 96 books/6 practice books/teacher kit of English to a Beat for Grades 3-5
- 6 student books/6 student literacy practice books/20 supplementary books of Inside the USA for Grades 6-12
- 112 Leveled content books of Reading Expenditures: Language, Literacy, and Vocabulary for Grades 3-12
- 72 books and 2 teaching kits of Millmark Modules for Grades 3-5

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Seibert**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

#### 5. BHS School Improvement Plan

Mr. Sills reviewed the highlights and challenges of the 2009-2010 school year. He began by thanking the School Council members Donna Tiano, Diane Gallagher, Maryann

Gildea, Markita Durant, Bethanie Gonsalves, Joe Zahka, Kim Alexander, Jim Sunderland, Eli Barkovic, Nicki Lespasio, Elizabeth Watson, Lucia Bennett, Kevin Tracey and Kristen Vogel.

Some of the highlights of the 2009-2010 school year discussed by Mr. Sills included:

- NEASC Accreditation
- Graduation Requirements Review and Proposal
- Memorial Plaza Dedication
- Reinstating BHS Live and Broadcast Journalism
- Successes addressing the increase in school-related marijuana use
- Basketball at the Boston Garden
- Completed Science Program Review

Mr. Sills also shared some of the many student successes from the past year. For example:

- Bedford won the regional round and competed in the national competition in the Euro Challenge.
- Three projects earned first or second place at the state National History Day competition.
- The Math Team finished 8<sup>th</sup> in the state.
- Bedford students won first place in Water Quality in the Massachusetts Environthon.

Mr. Sills discussed the NEASC commendations. These include:

- Use of core values to direct all decisions, procedures and practices at BHS
- A School Committee that provides adequate financial support, autonomous decision making and shared responsibility in order to promote the values of the school
- Varied opportunities for many students to engage in higher-order thinking
- Small class sizes
- Opportunities for students to reflect and assess their own learning
- Seamless integration of technology
- School-wide promotion of well-being and learning

Mr. Sills then presented his improvement plans for the 2010-2011 school-year.

#### *Governance and Leadership*

- NEASC follow-up
- Integrate the school-wide expectations in the school culture
- Continue to build diversity into student leadership
- Provide time for department-based curriculum work

#### *Curriculum and Instruction*

- Continue with the process to make sure that each student is sufficiently challenged by developing a school-wide collaboration in support of rigor, consistency and higher order thinking for all students.
- Ensure rigor/higher order thinking learning in all level 2,3,4 classes.
- Strengthen and expand common best instructional practices.
- Continue to expand classroom support to students who struggle.

- Continue to address educational equity.
- Explore further global focus for curriculum.
- Facilitate Occupational Education transition and modify offerings to better align with 21<sup>st</sup> Century demands.

#### *Assessment and Evaluation*

- Develop plans for measuring student progress on school-wide academic and social and civic expectations.
- Review midterm and final policy.

#### *Human Resources and Professional Development*

- Strengthen staff understanding of learning disabilities, Executive Function Disorder, social emotional issues and ADD.
- Expand regular education and special education teacher collaboration.
- More training in Response to Intervention.
- Explore ways to strengthen tolerant and empathetic student culture.
- Implement the Honor Code.
- Explore NEASC mandate regarding individual adult relationships for each student. Mr. Sills said he thinks the school does a good job on this and will survey the students.

The School Committee thanked Mr. Sills for a very thorough presentation.

Ms. O’Gara said that she commends the work done on posting assignments online. She also agrees that the NEASC mandate on student connection with an adult is a good idea but understands how it would be very difficult to measure.

Ms. Bickford thanked Mr. Sills for going through the NEASC process. She complimented him on his strong leadership and she is very proud of the NEASC report. Mr. Sills said that he really wants to thank the BHS staff for their hard work in this process.

Ms. Bickford said that she is unsure about how BHS can measure performance on students meeting social and civic expectations, one of the recommendations from the NEASC process. Mr. Sills said that he is going to try to come up with performance indicators but agrees that this will be a hard area to measure.

Ms. Seibert agrees that social attitudes are hard to measure. She too is thankful for the amazing effort Mr. Sills and the BHS staff put into the NEASC process..

Ms. Seibert asked Mr. Sills for more information on his plan to review the midterm/final policy. Mr. Sills said he would like to know if it is appropriate to have 20% of the student grade be contingent on midterms and final exams.

Mr. Hafer thanked Mr. Sills. He liked his memo summarizing the school year and how next year’s plans fit in. Mr. Hafer also commented that the personal connection between staff and students is very obvious at the graduation ceremony.

Mr. Pierce also thinks there is not a need for a formal process for student-adult connections at the high school. He feels it is already there.

Mr. Pierce asked about plans for summer school. Mr. Sills said that he thinks it is a good idea but it is on the back burner for now. Teachers are interested but there is no time to develop the idea.

Mr. Pierce thanked Mr. Sills for the School Improvement Plan. He thinks it is a “terrific reflection of Jon’s leadership and the staff’s commitment.”

Ms. O’Gara made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee approve the BHS School Improvement Plan for the 2010-2011 school year.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Bickford**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

## **6. Superintendent’s Goal – End of Year Report**

Dr. LaCroix reported highlights of the Superintendent’s Goals and Objectives. She explained that she was only going to highlight a few key initiatives since her last report to the School Committee this past February.

### *Governance and Leadership*

- Communications continues to be the critical issue and focus.
- The assessment portal has been opened for parents and students in grades 3 – 12.
- Lane School has a new leadership team. Staff will be trained on establishing Professional Learning Communities.
- The Equity Committee will continue its work into the next school year.
- K-12 Vertical teams have been designed and will get together to share best practices and curriculum.

### *Curriculum and Instruction*

- Continue with efforts to establish high expectations for academic excellence.
- RTI is being introduced and implemented at all schools to help struggling students.
- Improve student learning by collecting and using common assessment data.
- Continue to focus on growing ELL population.
- Continue to find ways to use technology to enhance learning and students global awareness.
- Focus on reading programs and blend reading/special education services to help students.
- Continue to define the writing program system wide.
- Pilot the Handwriting without Tears Programs in grades K-3.

### *Assessment and Evaluation*

Dr. LaCroix explained that the issue is to assess student achievement on local, state and national measures. To help do this Dr. LaCroix has:

- Hired an LABBB shared data analyst who has migrated Bedford’s data to the Data Warehouse.
- Bedford is part of EMI Minority Student Achievement Network and work under this initiative will begin in September.

- Continue to evaluate effectiveness of programs including in-house special education programs.

#### *Human Resources and Professional Development*

- Continue to hire highly qualified staff.
- The new Principal at Davis and the new Special Education Director been successful in first years in those positions.
- Will be adding a Behaviorist and Math Coach at the elementary levels.

#### *Finance and Asset Management*

Dr. LaCroix explained that the challenge of FY2011 is to meet the needs of a growing and very different student population with limited financial resources. She expects to close FY2010 without asking for a Reserve Fund Transfer even though she expected to ask for one to cover the \$76,000 transportation contract.

Dr. LaCroix also noted that the space utilization study was very helpful and she shared this report with the MSBA representatives. She expects to finalize the work and funding issues with MSBA later this year.

Dr. LaCroix said work with the Strategic Communications Task Force to enhance state and federal funding for HAFB students would continue.

Ms. O'Gara thanked Dr. LaCroix for the presentation. She is pleased that the focus is not on getting more data but on how to use the data we have.

Ms. O'Gara asked if other districts were doing the extensive Program Reviews like the ones Bedford has been undertaking. Dr. LaCroix said she would like more EDCO communities to participate. She is pleased that the Program Review process is becoming part of our culture and that it is very helpful to have outside eyes examine our programs.

Ms. Bickford said fifty-three pages of goals was very impressive. She thanked Dr. LaCroix for her leadership and is pleased to see that the focus is on student learning.

Ms. Bickford asked if Dr. LaCroix had any new information on the state's Maintenance Trust Fund. Dr. LaCroix said she feels certain that it will be approved.

Ms. Seibert said she is happy to hear that Dr. LaCroix is trying to give staff more time to collaborate because it is so important. Dr. LaCroix agrees and said more time is often derailed due to mandates, such as the upcoming bullying training. She will continue to work it out.

Mr. Hafer said that he sees balance in the Goals and Objectives and that clearly the focus is on academic excellence.

Mr. Pierce said that the report reflects the goal to attempt to service ALL individual students. He appreciates seeing all of the details and listening to a status three times a year (beginning, midyear and end-of-year).

Dr. LaCroix thanked the School Committee for a terrific year and acknowledged the hard work and dedication of Bedford Public Schools' "terrific staff".

Dr. LaCroix noted that next year, she will begin drafting the next strategic plan.

## **7. Superintendent's Report**

Dr. LaCroix has asked the Bedford Education Association to add an Occupational Therapist position in the contract as a way to have the Occupational Therapist become a permanent member of the staff.

Ms. Bickford agreed and made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee give the Chair of the School Committee authority to sign a side letter with the BEA adding an Occupational Therapist as a recognized teaching position to the BEA contract for the 2010-2011 school year.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. O'Gara**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

Dr. LaCroix reminded the Committee that the JGMS Moving on Ceremony is on June 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:30.

Dr. LaCroix explained that a new Bullying Policy is being prepared by the town attorneys.

## **8. Liaison Reports**

Ms. Seibert reported that the Green Communities Act qualification process is underway. She also reported that an energy policy and an energy reduction plan for the entire town is being created by the Energy Task Force.

Mr. Hafer reported that the Bedford Education Foundation is asking the community to log on to the Pepsi grant-giving website and to vote for the JGMS climbing wall. Also, the BEF will be planning and producing a town-wide talent show.

Mr. Pierce said that the Finance Committee will listen to a presentation on the Space Studies Report on June 24<sup>th</sup>.

## **9. Minutes for Review**

Ms. Bickford made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee approve the minutes of the March 30, 2010 School Committee meeting.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Seibert**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

Ms. Bickford made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee approve the minutes of the April 13, 2010 School Committee meeting.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Seibert**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**



Ms. Bickford made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee approve the minutes of the April 27, 2010 School Committee meeting as amended.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Seibert**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

Ms. Bickford made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee approve the minutes of the May 11, 2010 School Committee meeting as amended.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. O’Gara**

**MOTION APPROVED: 4-0 (Ms. Bickford was absent for this vote)**

Ms. Seibert made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee approved the Addendum to the Open Session minutes of May 11, 2010.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. O’Gara**

**MOTION APPROVED: 4-0 (Ms. Bickford was absent for this vote)**

Ms. O’Gara made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee approve the minutes of the Executive Session portion of the May 11, 2010 School Committee meeting.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Seibert**

**MOTION APPROVED: 4-0 (Ms. Bickford was absent for this vote).**

Ms. O’Gara made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee approve the minutes of the May 25, 2010 School Committee meeting as amended.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Seibert**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

Ms. O’Gara made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee approve the Addendum to the Open Session minutes of May 25, 2010.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Seibert**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

Ms. Bickford made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee approve the minutes from the Executive Session portion of the May 25, 2010 School Committee meeting as amended.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Seibert**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

## **11. Contract Approval**

Ms. Bickford made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee designate the Chair to sign a contract with Capital Carpet and Flooring Specialists for work not to exceed \$34,689.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Seibert**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

## **12. Donations Acceptance**

Ms. Bickford made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee accept the \$125 gift from the Lee and Choi families to support ELL efforts at the Davis and Lane Schools.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. O’Gara**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

Ms. Bickford and Mr. Coelho said that this gift was very touching and appreciated especially as we begin to create an ELL program in our schools.

Ms. Bickford made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee accept the donation of a PC and monitor from Mr. Morris Kesler.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. O’Gara**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

Ms. Bickford and Mr. Coelho thanked Mr. Kessler for his generous donation.

### **13. School Committee Reorganization**

Ms. Seibert made the following motion:

**MOVED: Nominate Brad Hafer as Chair of the School Committee for the 2010-2011 school year.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Bickford**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

Ms. Bickford made the following motion:

**MOVED: Nominate Ms. Seibert as Vice Chair of the School Committee for the 2010-2011 school year.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. O’Gara**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

Ms. O’Gara made the following motion:

**MOVED: Nominate Ms. Bickford as Secretary of the School Committee for the 2010-2011 school year.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Pierce**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0.**

### **14. Adjournment**

Ms O’Gara made the following motion:

**MOVED: Motion to adjourn at 10:15 p.m.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Hafer**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

**Roll Call Vote:**

<b>Mr. Hafer</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ms. Seibert</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Mr. Bickford</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ms. Pierce</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ms. O’Gara</b>	<b>Yes</b>

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School Committee Secretary

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Date