

**BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF
February 4, 2014
Bedford High School - Large Group Instruction Room**

1. Call to Order

At 7:30 p.m., Mr. Pierce called to order the meeting of the Bedford School Committee. Other members present included Ms. Seibert, Mr. Hafer, Mr. McAllister and Ms. Guay. Ms. Emily Moss, student representative was also in attendance.

2. Comments from Public

None

3. Personnel Report

Mr. Sills asked for approval on two field trips.

Ms. Leshay asked for permission to travel to Nashua, NH with members of the Robotics Team to compete in the Granite State Regional Robotics Competition on February 28 and March 1, 2014. Students will not be staying overnight but will be traveling back and forth to the competition. One day of school will be missed. School vans and private transportation will be used.

Ms. Seibert made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the field trip to Nashua, NH on February 28th and March 1st for participation in the Granite State Regional Robotics Competition at no cost to the schools.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Hafer

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

Ms. Leshay also asked for permission to travel with the Robotics team to Bryant University in Smithfield, RI on March 21 and March 22, 2014 to participate in another robotics competition. This is not an overnight trip. One day of school will be missed.

Ms. Seibert made the following motion

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the field trip to Bryant University in Smithfield, RI on March 21 and 22, 2014 for the Robotics Competition at no cost to the school department.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Hafer

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

Mr. Sills announced the resignation of Stephen Joseph, an Educational Assistant from the Middle School.

4. Presentation: 2014-2015 BHS Program of Studies

Mr. Turner, Principal and Ms. Vogel, Assistant Principal presented the changes in the BHS Program of Studies for the 2014-2015 school year. Ms. Vogel presented the School Committee with a memorandum dated January 27, 2014 that described all of the changes. She discussed a few of the more major changes.

For example, Ms. Vogel pointed out that the English department has added an Asian American Studies class in order to complement the literary diversity of the American Perspectives course

offered in junior year. Ms. Vogel said she hopes that the African American studies class will also run this year.

Ms. Vogel explained some of the changes in the math department. Trigonometry/Statistics and Probability Level 4 has been deleted because another AP Calculus course (AP Calculus AB) has been added. Also, the level 4 Calculus course has been changed so that more students can have an option to take it. Summer work will no longer be needed. The course will prepare students for a first semester college Calculus course.

Ms. Vogel noted that a new Introduction to Computer Science class is being offered in hopes that more students will take Computer Science courses.

Ms. Vogel explained that science class levels have been realigned and are now more consistent with other departments.

Ms. Guay asked why the Trigonometry/Statistics class is being dropped. Ms. Vogel answered that this course was removed in order to offer more calculus offerings. Mr. Turner said that Calculus BC is extremely rigorous and overwhelming to many students yet Calculus level 4 is not rigorous enough for some. Calculus AB will help with this problem. He will re-examine offering Trigonometry again in the future.

Mr. Pierce is concerned that students will no longer be exposed to statistics in high school with this change. He believes that statistics is used more in “real life”.

Mr. Turner said that Algebra will cover it a little as will introduction to calculus. He also noted that science classes embed a lot of statistics in its curriculum. Right now, Mr. Turner wants to open the door to calculus to more students.

Mr. Sills suggested that maybe Sarah Dorer and Christine Larimore could show the School Committee how statistics is covered in the Common Core.

Ms. Seibert said she is pleased that calculus will now be more accessible but she too would like to keep the statistics class since statistics is important to lots of majors in college.

Mr. Turner agrees but cannot offer all right now.

Mr. Hafer suggested offering Personal Finance as a half-year course and Statistics as a half-year course too.

Mike McAllister said he sees colleges shying away from AP classes. He asked Mr. Turner about his thoughts. Mr. Turner said he sees values in AP but sees how it can restrict the learning process. He is pleased that BHS is selective about which AP classes it offers. Mr. Turner said it is good exposure to the speed of a college class.

Ms. Vogel said colleges are selective in accepting AP credits and scores yet college admissions do look to see if students are taking AP classes. It is a mixed message to the high school students.

Mr. Sills said admissions do look to see if a student is taking the hardest class he or she can.

Ms. Seibert asked why the new English classes are level three. Mr. Turner said the goal is to expose students to new ideas and to try to offer some low pressure, fun classes as opposed to a directed study

Mr. Pierce asked Mr. Turner to analyze any negative effect the change in science classes may have on rank. (Science classes will now have level 5 and AP).

Mr. McAllister suggested having conversations with students about having too many AP classes because this can really cause a lot of stress. Mr. Turner agreed about talking about stress but does not want a policy that limits the number of AP classes for students.

Mr. Hafer suggested that the Profile explain clearly what courses are offered in each department and why. He thinks it should be clearly stated that there is no AP offering in history.

Mr. Pierce asked if there was any demand for an SAT prep course. Mr. Turner said no. He thinks that those students who need help get private tutoring. Ms. Guay commented that maybe some parents do not realize that their children could benefit from these classes or cannot afford these classes. Mr. Turner also noted that he is encouraging more sophomores to take the PSAT exam, which is good practice.

Ms. Seibert made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the 2014-2015 Program of Studies as discussed tonight.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Hafer

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

5. FY'15 School Budget Discussion

Mr. Pierce explained that the budget proposal was presented to the Finance Committee last week along with the school's technology plan. He also explained that there will be another Finance Committee meeting on February 10th and a vote is scheduled on February 13th.

6. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Sills reported on the following:

- The Biology Department received a \$15,000 award for professional development and equipment.
- The Community Preservation Committee may be interested in financing the press box. The Committee will meet on February 6 to discuss and to look more carefully at the cost of the project.
- The Assistant Superintendent search has begun in earnest.
- Governor Patrick has proposed additional Chapter 70 money but the Circuit Breaker and METCO will be level funded. He noted that Ms. Guay has lobbied to include transportation costs in the circuit breaker reimbursement.

7. Liaison Reports

Mr. Hafer announced that the Energy Task Force is back.

8. Minutes for Review

Mr. Hafer made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the minutes from the July 15, 2013 School Committee meeting as amended.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Seibert

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

Mr. Hafer made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the minutes from the School Committee executive session meeting on July 15, 2013.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Seibert

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

Mr. Hafer made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the minutes from the November 19, 2013 School Committee meeting as amended.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Seibert

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

9. Future Agenda

FY'2015 budget discussions

10. Adjournment

Ms. Seibert made the following motion.

MOVED: Motion to adjourn at 9:00 p.m.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Hafer

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Pierce Yes

Mr. Hafer Yes

Ms. Seibert Yes

Mr. McAllister Yes

Ms. Guay Yes

School Committee Secretary

Date

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE

February 4, 2014

Exhibits/Documents

- Program of Studies for 2014-2015
- Memorandum of proposed changes to Program of Studies dated January 27, 2014
- Draft of minutes from the July 15, 2013 School Committee meeting
- Draft of minutes from the Executive Session of the July 15, 2013 School Committee meeting.
- Draft of the minutes from the November 19, 2013 School Committee meeting.

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Executive Session
February 4, 2014