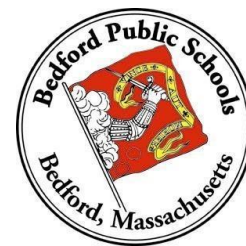


BEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS



To: Members of the Bedford School Committee
From: Cliff Chuang, Superintendent
Date: September 22, 2023
Subject: Security Camera Policy - First Read & Discussions

During the 2022-2023 school year, the School Committee had multiple presentations and discussions related to school safety and security, both in executive and open sessions. In particular, at the June 13, 2023 meeting, you heard from the high school team about how security cameras would greatly assist in creating a safer learning environment for students. You also heard a presentation regarding the proposed safety upgrades in Phase 1 of a multi-year safety improvement project to address priority items outlined in the safety and security reviews initiated by former Superintendent Phil Conrad and conducted by the Edward Davis Company (EDC), a security consulting firm.

The absence of security cameras in our schools was identified as a key risk to school safety by EDC. In addition, the [School Security Best Practices Guide 2022](#) of the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association (MCOPA) states:

A video surveillance system is a component of any school or district security program, providing deterrence and detection and, in more advanced implementations, enhancing response to a variety of daily challenges experienced at schools. (p. 15).

The vast majority of other school districts in Massachusetts already have security cameras in place to keep their schools safe, and it is time for our district to take the next logical step in securing our buildings and property and keeping our students and staff safe.

I am presenting this proposed draft security camera policy (ECAF) for initial discussion and first read at your September 26, 2023 meeting. It is important to have a policy in place prior to proceeding with a budget request to include security cameras in a future capital expenditure request for Phase 2 of the safety improvement project, which I intend to bring for your consideration in upcoming meetings. Please note that this draft policy incorporates material from and supersedes the Bus Video Camera Policy adopted by the School Committee on March 17, 2020.

This draft policy is largely based on the [model ECAF security camera policy](#) recommended by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, which forms the basis for many school committees' policies, including those of Concord, Lexington, Lincoln-Sudbury, and North Reading. Some adaptations were made based to fit the particular context of Bedford after consultation with our attorneys at Stoneman, Chandler & Miller LLP; superintendents from multiple Massachusetts school districts; and Bedford Chief of Police John Fisher. The draft policy was also discussed with and has the full support of the district leadership team and the district critical response team (which also includes Bedford Health and Human Services Director Heidi Porter, Facilities Director Ron Scaltreto, and School Resource Officer Justin Brooks).

I am always available to answer any questions you may have, and I will be joined by members of the high school administrative team for the discussion at your September 26, 2023 meeting.