

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE

March 9, 2021

Live Virtual Online Meeting using ZOOM Audio/Video Conference Software

**** Due to the COVID-19 Crisis, this meeting was live-streamed over the internet using ZOOM video/audio conferencing software in order to adhere with social distancing measures put in place by Governor Baker. This meeting was open to the public for live chat during Public Comment.**

1. Call to Order

At 7:02 pm, Mr. Brosgol called to order the meeting of the Bedford School Committee. Other members present included Ms. Guay, Mr. Morrison, Ms. Santiago, Ms. Scoville and student representative Ryan Doucette.

2. Comments from Public

Public comment is available through the webinar feature of Zoom™.

Participants are instructed to use the "raise hand" function in the software and add their name using the "chat" function. Mr. Conrad will invite the panelist into the webinar and each person is allowed three minutes to comment.

Sheila Mehta Green

Glen Ora Drive

Ms. Mehta Green Thanked everyone for all the work they have been doing and feel Bedford was ahead of others bringing back students. Mr. Mehta Green is concerned that there may be no more room to bring back 8th grade students for in-person learning. Ms. Mehta Green asked the committee for an update for each grade level with regards to space and the ability to bring back more students safely at JGMS and BHS.

Erin Dorr

Dunster Road

Ms. Dorr thanked everyone for the hard work they have done and continue to do on the re-opening plan ahead of the new mandates that came out. She knows it has been a stressful year and is thankful for the safe return for all students that has happened thus far.

Katy O'Connor

Radcliffe Circle

Ms. O'Connor asked the committee if any more thought has been given to move away from the 6ft distance requirement to 3ft to allow more students to return to in-person learning, especially at the middle school and high school.

Superintendent Conrad was asked to give a brief statement to address the news that had been released from regarding students returning to 5 day in-person learning. Mr. Conrad stated that on Friday the commissioner asked DESE for the authority to determine when hybrid/remote learning could end. The commissioner was granted the authority and today at 2 pm released his 25- page plan to implement student return to 5-day in-person learning. In this plan is states that after April 5th most hybrid/remote students time and learning will not count with the following two exceptions: if a

student/family choose all remote (Bedford's remote option will remain in place) or if a student, a group of students or classroom needs to isolate due to COVID. K-5 students need to return for 5-day in-person learning by April 5th, Grade 6-8 students need to return by April 28th and a high school return date has yet to be determined but it would be in April with a 2-week window to implement. As part of this process parents will be sent a survey and will have to make a choice of all in for 5 days or stay/join remote. No more cohorts.

3. BHS Re-opening Discussion

Ms. Galante, Mr. Hudder and Mr. Casey discussed with the school committee the BHS re-opening plan and processes being used this year to support and bring back students. Ms. Galante stated that students have been invited back throughout the year. They have been very flexible with families about moving between hybrid/remote learning until attendance started to become an issue. At which point families were asked to choose and stick to one learning model and that is when improvement in attendance began to turn around. BHS holds regular recurring meetings such as: case load, main office, equity and diversity meetings. Also two new committees were formed, advisory and re-opening team to name a few. Ms. Galant stated that students social and emotion health has always been at the forefront of discussions through the year.

4. School HVAC Update

Mr. Alani presented the school committee with an HVAC update specifically about Lane School. During Mr. Alani's presentation he stated that although the presentation was specific to Lane School the same concept is applied at all other schools. During Mr. Alani's presentation he spoke about the many processes and /procedures he and his team are going through to ensure proper ventilation is being achieved at all schools and that target goal of five or six total air changes per hour are happening, including ensuring that windows are open in classrooms when possible to allow for more air flow. Mr. Alani also spoke about and showed pictures of the lengthy and messy cleaning process that takes place on Wednesday and Saturday on the ventilation units to ensure they are cleaned properly to produce the best air quality in all classrooms.

5. FY21 Midyear Fiscal Update

Ms. Kirrane presented the school committee with a FY21 Midyear Fiscal update. Ms. Kirrane stated that every effort is taken to ensure all budgets and grants are used properly and all avenues are exhausted before asking the town for funds. This midyear fiscal update was done in January and some of the highlights in five categories discussed are:

- Salaries
 - Salaries are projected to the end of the year with a net positive balance of \$228,871. The savings are a result of many factors including para-professional, lower than anticipated long/short term substitutes and staff turnover. In addition, current hiring environment is challenging and openings are being filled more slowly than usual.
- Operating Expenses
 - All expense account through the end of the year are projected to end with a net positive balance of \$38,546. This is a result of savings in supplies, materials equipment and contracted services in many different departments. Some of the

savings have come from athletic transportation, special education contracted services and equipment.

- Out-of-District Tuition
 - Following FY20 tuition increases rose significantly above plan, actual and projected spending is trending very close to budget in FY21. A deficit of \$439,837 is likely versus the budgeted amount of -\$450,000 that is to be covered by Town reserve for tuition.
- Regular Transportation
 - All costs for regular/late school bus routes are encumbered. A projected surplus in the budget is \$6,088. As of today, changes in the bus services due to COVID have been cost neutral and the capacity of buses to serve registered riders has been significant.
- Special Education Transportation
 - Cost of all transportation for students in specialized programs within Bedford Public Schools and out-of-district placements have been projected to have a positive balance of \$37,510. The majority of transportation eligible students have been attending school in-person and have required transportation services.

Committee took a break from 9:42 PM to 9:54 PM

6. CASE Collaborative Agreement Review- First Read

Mr. Conrad presented briefly on the CASE Collaborative Agreement stating that the committee had been provided with a 2010 copy of the agreement that was signed in 2015. And pointed out the two minor proposed changes to the agreement. First change was in section 18 with regards to the withdrawal procure and the second change was in section 25 that was in regards to withdrawing from transportation. Mr. Conrad further stated that the committee need to review these changes and then vote and sign the agreement to bring the collaborative up to date.

7. Job Description-Literacy Specialist-First Read

Dr. Clifford went over the job description and insight that went into creating this new position. Dr. Clifford stated that she tried to keep in mind the current and future needs that this role would take with regards to reading and writing at the secondary level. Hoping that this person would be able to teach a larger group of students and do more intervention work.

8. District Calendar 2020-2021 Discussion- Juneteenth Holiday

Mr. Conrad presented to the school committee a change to the 2020-2021 school calendar as a result of clarification from the state with regards to the Juneteenth holiday. At the start of the school year the state declared Juneteenth as a state holiday that was to be observed on Friday June 18th and this date as indicated as a no school day. Since then more clarification has been presented by the state that states any holiday that falls on a Saturday will be celebrated on a Saturday, and any holiday that is on Sunday would be celebrated on a Monday. With this change it is now possible to change June 18th to a regular school day and designate it as the last day of school barring no more

snow days or other closures. Mr. Conrad mentioned that in the future the school calendar may need to be adjusted at the beginning of the year to include the Juneteenth holiday observance.

Mr. Morrison made the following motion:

MOVED: Motion to approve the change to the current FY2020-2021 district calendar to reflect that June 18th will be a regular in person day and the official last day of school due to the Juneteenth holiday being observed on Saturday, June 19, 2021.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Scoville

MOTION APPROVED 5-0-0

Ms. Santiago	Yes
Ms. Guay	Yes
Ms. Scoville	Yes
Mr. Brosgol	Yes
Mr. Morrison	Yes

9. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Conrad presented the school committee with following information during his Superintendent's report with regards to phased reopening. Mr. Conrad once again referenced the report that came out today at approximately 2pm from the DESE commissioner's office. A lot of information was presented in this document and Mr. Conrad and other administrators will continue to look at and figure out what is acceptable and feasible moving forward to be in compliance with these new directives. One area that stands out after a quick first read in the information that was provided by doctors with regards to distancing guidelines. That will be an area that we all need to pay special attention to.

JGMS and /BHS are working together on scheduling to help create the best options for bus transportation to work efficiently – the good news is teachers are now able to get vaccinated. Support staff has been moved around to better accommodate building needs and/coverage. Principals are making plans for the next transition. Davis and Lane are preparing students, staff, and families for the next transitions. Pool testing is set to begin this week starting with faculty. A letter to families will go out this week and students will start testing next week with testing results being made available to the community and committee on a weekly basis.

10. Adjournment

Mr. Morrison made the following motion:

MOVED: Motion to adjourn at 10:49 p.m., not to reopen.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Santiago

MOTION APPROVED 5-0-0

Ms. Santiago	Yes
Ms. Guay	Yes
Ms. Scoville	Yes
Mr. Brosgol	Yes
Mr. Morrison	Yes

Exhibits/Documents

BHS Re-opening
HVAC Update
Literacy Specialist Job Description
FY21 Budget Update
2020-2021 District calendar



School Committee Secretary

4/27/21

Date

