

**BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**June 6, 2017**  
**Bedford High School - Large Group Instruction Room**

**1. Call to Order**

At 7:35 p.m., Mr. McAllister called to order the meeting of the Bedford School Committee. Other members present included Ms. Guay, Mr. Brosgol, Ms. Santiago and Ms. Scoville.

**2. Comments from Public**

None

**3. Personnel Report**

Mr. Sills asked the School Committee to approve the updated Anti-Bullying Policy which was presented to the School Committee last week. No School Committee members had further questions.

Mr. Brosgol made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee approve the Anti-Bullying Policy as presented.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Santiago**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

Mr. Coelho reported that Food Services is asking for an approval of a 10 cent price increase in school lunches at all schools in Bedford. This increase will comply with the Federal Price Equity calculation and will maintain the program's financial stability.

Ms. Scoville made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee approve the 10 cent increase in School Lunch prices in all four school for the 2017-18 school year. The price increase is needed to maintain the financial stability of the Food Service Program and comply with Federal Price Equity requirements. For the 2017-18 school year, lunch prices at Davis, Lane and JGMS will be \$2.70 and \$3.10 at Bedford High School.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Santiago**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

Mr. Sills asked the School Committee to approve the updated Web Page Permission policy which was presented at the last School Committee meeting. The policy has changed so that parents will be notified annually of their right to deny web permission. The default is parents give permission to the schools.

Ms. Scoville made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee approve the Web Permission Policy as amended.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Santiago**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

**4. Bedford High School Handbook Presentation**

Principal Heather Galante and Assistant Principals Christine Larimore and Kate Boynton and student Jonathan Pierre presented the changes in the School Handbook for Bedford High School for the 2017-2018 school year. A memo detailing all of the changes was given to the School Committee members. Ms. Galante led a discussion on the major changes.

One change discussed was that new language was added to describe the new weighted GPA calculation for the class of 2019 and beyond. Minor elective classes, heterogeneous classes and any courses with pass/fail will not be calculated towards weighted GPA.

Also, new language has been added on “vaping” which has become a significant problem at the high school. It is a Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) offense so it is important to educate students and parents. Ms. Galante explained that she will develop a clear message to parents and students that vaping is not allowed and is not healthy.

Ms. Galante also added language describing the new student government. She would like to open up the process so that more students can participate especially at the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade levels. Elected positions will only occur in grades 11 and 12. The 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade classes will have a representative government and all can participate. Ms. Galante feels, based on conversations with students and parents, that this will be very beneficial to Hanscom students since they are new to the school. She believes that all of the students are excited about this change. Also, she feels that the upper grade elections may actually be based on leadership qualities rather than popularity.

Ms. Boynton reported that the Hanscom Eligibility Chart will be added to the Handbook and will be added to our registration materials online.

Ms. Galante then went into a detailed discussion about rolling out a new attendance policy. She explained that this year, an attendance committee was formed. A new policy was created as a result of a lot of hard work by teachers, administration and the School Council (students and parents).

Attendance at the high school has been a growing concern. The current policy is not implemented consistently with staff and is not working. Ms. Galante said that she feels attendance is an important issue to address for many reasons. Students feel like they do not matter if their attendance in class or school goes unnoticed. Teachers are bothered by chronic tardiness. Administration worries about student safety when kids cut class or leave campus without permission. Parents need to understand the school’s concerns and the reasoning behind the new policy. Ms. Galante believes that they will eventually come around and partner with the school to solve attendance issues.

Highlights of the new policy include:

- Students can only miss 4 days of class in majors and 2 days of minor classes per term.
- The fourth term for seniors will allow fewer absences since they finish school earlier
- A student will be tardy if they are not in class by 7:45 and this will be consistently enforced by all teachers.
- In order for a senior to be exempt from final exams, they must now have fewer than 12 tardies in the class.
- Teachers must take attendance in Aspen for all class periods.
- Consequences for cutting class have been clarified.
- Attendance categories in Aspen will be streamlined.
- Parents need to call the school about a student being absent by 8:30.

Ms. Galante also discussed the fact that any student who fails due to absences will have to work with an Assistant Principal and/or Guidance Counselor to figure out consequences and interventions. Parents will need to be involved. The goal will be to improve the bad behavior.

There will be flexibility in each situation. The failure may even be reversed if students show improvement.

Ms. Larimore said that this big change will need a lot of communication to staff, students and parents. She believes the kids will end up changing their behavior regarding attendance. She would like to find a way to celebrate those with good attendance too.

Ms. Galante paused and asked if the School Committee members had any questions at this point.

Ms. Guay mentioned that the History Fair project used to cause a lot of kids to miss other classes. She asked if it is still this way. Ms. Galante said she has not heard that this is a problem but she will certainly monitor.

Mr. McAllister asked how parents feel about this change. Ms. Galante said that they were the toughest group to get on board during School Council meetings. Ultimately they agreed that this new policy is necessary.

Mr. McAllister asked if the high school has the capacity to sustain this new policy. Ms. Galante said she believes it does.

Ms. Santiago asked if the unlevleed classes would negatively affect student's GPA. Ms. Larimore explained that the unlevleed classes are for seniors and GPA is not recalculated or reported during senior year. Ms. Boynton noted that unlevleed classes are mentioned on the profile and that it is not uncommon for colleges to see these types of classes. Ms. Galante also noted that most students love the classes.

Ms. Galante then discussed another big change planned for 2017-2018. Next year, X block will be moved from the end of the day to first period on Days 2 and 5. It will become a Flex Block with a focus on time to meet with teachers for help. Kids who do not need assistance can go to the library, cafeteria, or gym or stay in their assigned homeroom. Teachers will not be running activities but will be on hand to help students. Activities will be moved to before or after school. (She is working with Mr. Mangan to communicate to coaches that many kids will have club activities after school so practices may have to start later or students should not be punished for arriving late to practice in these instances.)

Ms. Galante expects many positive outcome such as:

- Teachers will be available for the kids
- There may be a decrease in formal interventions
- There may be a decrease in the numbers of Ds and Fs and class level drops
- Students will have time to collaborate and do group projects

Ms. Galante said she is still revising BHS Live. She is currently thinking of having it air for 2 days a cycle under teacher supervision.

Mr. Sills asked Ms. Galante to present more information on the numbers of kids in intervention v. directed study. She agreed to do this.

Mr. Sills asked if there will be a decrease in the number of activities offered. Ms. Galante said that teachers say no. She will monitor the activities that are not stipend to see if there is a decrease and will intervene if necessary.

Ms. Guay suggested adding information on 504 plans. She thinks this will be very helpful to students and families. She fears students are embarrassed to use some of the accommodations they are entitled to and this may help. Ms. Galante thought it was a good idea and suggested putting the information on the Guidance website.

#### 2017-2018 School Improvement Plan

Ms. Galante began this presentation with a review of the 2016-17 year goals and accomplishments.

##### *Identify Struggling Students quickly and effectively...*

- Used referral flow chart
- SST process is comprehensive
- Data is collected
- 5 minute meetings between support and teachers established
- Case Management model adopted by Guidance

##### *Ensure high expectations for all students...*

- Learning expectations are complete
- Essential questions established

##### *Continue sharing strategies focused around the use of technology, cultural proficiency and intervention strategies...*

- PLC work continues
- Instructional coaches were well received
- Making connections with kids
- Social justice curriculum adopted at X blocks and assemblies
- Peer Leaders created Community Day and Unplugged
- Student workshops for 8<sup>th</sup> graders successful
- ED Camp another success

Ms. Galante then presented the 2017-18 School Improvement Plan. She discussed the feedback and data she used to create the plan. She thanked members of the School Council for hardwork.

##### 2017-18 Goals include:

1. Implementation, tracking, reflection and revision of the new Attendance/Tardy policy
2. Streamline the freshman transition to reduce overall anxiety of the 9<sup>th</sup> graders
3. Reduce unnecessary stress while maintaining academic standards and encouraging a health balance for youth.

Ms. Galante's presentation reviewed action steps under each of the above goals. She also presented data on student stress which helped her decide that reducing stress is a needed goal for 2017-18. Her action items under this goal will focus on fostering personal connections and mentorships between teachers/staff and students. Ms. Galante also hopes to help students and families make balance choices for course selections. She will work with BHSPA and Bedford Youth and Family Services to offer family forums on minimizing sources of stress for today's students and families. Ms. Galante also hopes that the new Guidance Program Administrator will work on offering more adjustment counseling services.

Ms. Galante asked for comments or questions.

Ms. Scoville said she is concerned about stress levels of students at the high school and is pleased to hear that this is a goal.

Ms. Santiago thanked Ms. Galante, Ms. Boynton, and Ms. Larimore on their hard work especially in the area of fostering personal connections.

Mr. Brosgol said that stress is real and it is a big deal. He wants schools to be a place with small amounts of stress. He also reminded everyone that technology is a major source of stress.

Ms. Guay suggested tapping into parent resources to help with reducing stress.

Mr. Brosgol made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee approve the 2017-2018 School Improvement Plan for Bedford High School as presented.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Santiago**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

Ms. Guay made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee approve the 2017-2018 Bedford High School Handbook as presented tonight.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Santiago**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

## **6. Superintendent's Report**

Mr. Sills congratulated everyone on a successful prom and graduation ceremony and all night party.

## **7. Minutes**

Ms. Scoville made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee approve the minutes of the May 9, 2017 School Committee meeting as amended.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Santiago**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

## **8. Adjournment**

Ms. Guay made the following motion.

**MOVED: Motion to adjourn at 9:35 P.M. to Executive Session for contract negotiations not to reopen.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Scoville**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

## **Roll Call Vote:**

<b>Mr. McAllister</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ms. Guay</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Mr. Brosgol</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ms. Santiago</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ms. Scoville</b>	<b>Yes</b>

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School Committee Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

**June 6, 2017**

**Exhibits/Documents**

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Web Permission Policy
- Memo of changes in the 2017-2018 Bedford High School Student Handbook
- Bedford High School's 2017-2018 School Improvement Plan
- Draft of minutes from the May 9, 2017 School Committee meeting.