

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
April 9, 2019
Bedford High School – Large Group Instruction Room

1. Call to Order

At 7:30 p.m., Mr. Brosgol called to order the meeting of the Bedford School Committee. Other members present included Ms. Santiago, Ms. Guay and Ms. Marquis. Student Reps. Samantha Gallant and Alex Oleksinski were also in attendance. Ms. Scoville and Mr. Sills were absent.

2. Comments from Public

None

3. Personnel Report

Ms. Sallee, Assistant Superintendent, asked the School Committee to approve a field trip proposed by Mr. Humphrey, Aerospace teacher at the high school. Mr. Humphrey and Mr. Mierz, another Aerospace teacher, would like to take 20-30 high school students on a camping trip to the T.L. Storer Scout Reservation in Barnstead, NH on October 12-13, 2019. The need for additional chaperones will be determined at a later date. The goal is to teach interested students outdoor recreational skills.

Ms. Santiago made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the field trip request for Mr. Humphrey and Mr. Mierz to take 20-30 high school students camping at the T.L. Storer Scout Reservation in Barnstead, NH on October 12-13, 2019 at no cost to the schools.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Marquis

MOTION APPROVED: 4-0 (Ms. Scoville is absent)

Ms. Sallee presented a new job description to the School Committee to review. The description is for the “Elementary School Adjustment Counselor for grades PreK through Grade 2”. It was the first time that the School Committee members reviewed the description so no approval vote followed. Ms. Guay did ask for more information on understanding the different counseling positions in the district and that this information would be helpful for families to know.

Ms. Sallee clarified that this position does not carry a case load.

Ms. Sallee also presented a revised job description for “Physical Therapist”. This was also an initial review so the School Committee did not consider approving the job description at this time. Mr. Oleksinski asked who the therapist would be working with. Ms. Sallee explained it would be with students whom required PT services as part of their education plan and not athletes. Ms. Sallee was unsure of the age group and agreed to clarify this at the next meeting.

4. Robotics Presentation

Mr. Griffin, Program Administrator for Science, teachers Ms. Leshay, Mr. King, and Mr. O'Connor and several students spoke about the vibrant Robotics classes and activities underway at JGMS and the High School.

Mr. Griffin reported that Ms. Leshay started the Robotics program about 12 years ago after she and some students entered a competition and won at the National level. The programs at both the middle and high school have truly blossomed since and are still growing in popularity and curriculum covered.

Mr. King, JGMS teacher, explained that Technology Education starts in 6th grade where students learn coding and programming simple tasks. Robotics follows in grade 7 where students learn how to design robots to accomplish certain tasks and solve problems. Several students demonstrated and explained some of the middle school challenges. (Grade 8 students study technical drawing and computer aided designs.)

Mr. Griffin described the engineering process undertaken by the kids to create a robot that can do a task. He pointed out that it is a highly collaborative process that involves lots of trial and error and rethinking and redesigning. He said the classes are student centered learning and that teachers truly rely on the students to ask questions. The teachers in turn guide them to find the answers.

Ms. Leshay addressed the School Committee explaining the Robotics class offerings at the high school. The Introductory class begins with understanding the engineering process. Students with a mix of abilities are in the class. They all work together and compete with one another. A high school student, Helen Gillespy, demonstrated a robot with a sound and light sensor which the class is currently working on.

Mr. O'Connor spoke about the Advanced Robotics class offerings at the high school. He explained that the curriculum is based on Lego Robotics programs developed by Tufts and MIT. The focus is on problem solving. He noted that the students' skill development over the years is very impressive as they move from the introductory class to more advanced classes.

Two seniors demonstrated a very complex robot that they are working on in class. Both seniors have been in Robotics all four years at BHS and are planning on majoring in Mechanical Engineering next year at UMass Amherst.

Mr. O'Connor noted how grateful he is to the Bedford Education Foundation for their donations to the Robotics programs.

Ms. Gallant and Mr. Oleksinski said they were impressed with the demonstration and the problem solving skills that the Robotics students have.

Ms. Guay said it was great to see the program develop over time and she was especially pleased to see the middle school students here tonight.

Ms. Guay did ask what challenges the program faces. Mr. Griffin said that there is always a need for more space – storage and work space. Mr. King concurred and said it was difficult for different groups of kids to work using the same equipment. Mr. O'Connor noted that it can be difficult to teach the different level classes in one period. Mr. Griffin said that he recognizes this problem, an outcome of a growing program, and will try to fix it.

Ms. Guay asked if there were any local businesses supporting these classes. Mr. O'Connor said the IRobot has been very supportive and have worked with students on some prototype products. He is also trying to arrange a visit to Amazon Robotics in North Reading.

Ms. Marquis said that the program is very impressive.

Mr. Brosgol asked what equipment is used to learn coding. Mr. O'Connor said laptops and Ipads. Mr. Griffin did say that keeping up with program updates can be challenging but everyone is trying to manage the process.

5. LABBB Board Capital Report

Ms. Sallee reported that the LABBB Collaborative has an annual surplus that exceeds the 25% carryover allowed by the contract. Therefore, according to Mr. Sills' memorandum, we have been directed to use 65% of the surplus for OPEB (other post-employment benefits) and for the capital fund for the collaborative. The capital fund is used to offset costs of room modifications and repurposing for LABBB use in various schools. Ms. Sallee, on behalf of Mr. Sills, asked the School Committee to approve this.

Ms. Guay made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve an increase in the LABBB capital plan by \$600,000 for a total of \$2.6 million.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Marquis

MOTION APPROVED: 4-0-0

6. Superintendent's Report

Strategic Plan Launched

Ms. Sallee reported that the school department is formally launching a strategic plan development process titled "A Portrait of a Bedford School Graduate". A new planning committee will be developed this week and then day-long meetings will be scheduled for May, June, September, November, January, March and possibly next April.

The new Committee will include the broader community. The purpose of developing a strategic plan will be to rethink the competencies, dispositions and literacies that our students will need in the future. It will also be an opportunity to some "bold dreaming and envisioning" about our school structures, curricula and instruction.

This will be a year-long process involving students, faculty, parents, school committee members, and community members including representatives from civic and corporate organizations.

New Text Books

Mr. Brosgol handed out new textbooks under consideration for purchase. He asked the Committee to review them for the next meeting,

7. Minutes

Ms. Guay made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the minutes of the February 26, 2019 School Committee meeting as amended.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Marquis

MOTION APPROVED: 3-0-1 (Ms. Scoville was absent and Ms. Marquis abstained)

Ms. Guay made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the minutes of the March 12, 2019 School Committee meeting as amended.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Marquis

MOTION APPROVED: 4-0-0 (Ms. Scoville was absent)

8. Adjournment

Ms. Guay made the following motion:

MOVED: Motion to adjourn at 8:55 P.M. not to reopen.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Marquis

Mr. Brosgol	Yes
Ms. Santiago	Yes
Ms. Scoville	Absent
Ms. Guay	Yes
Ms. Marquis	Yes



School Committee Secretary



Date

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE

April 9, 2019

Exhibits/Documents

- Draft of job description “ Elementary School Adjustment Counselor (PreK -2)
- Draft of job description ”Physical Therapist”
- Draft of February 26, 2019 School Committee meeting minutes
- Draft of March 12, 2019 School Committee meeting minutes