

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
May 14, 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. Guay and Ms. Marquis. Ms. Scoville and Ms. Santiago arrived later.

2. Comments from Public

None

3. Personnel Report

Mr. Sills reported the following personnel items:

Resignations

Shaena Grossman	Bridge Teaching Assistant	JGMS
Amanda Szidat	Behavioral Tech/Teaching Assistant	Davis
Katherine Connell	Special Education Teaching Assistant	JGMS

Retirements

Mary Lou Sallee	Assistant Superintendent	District
Sema Arakelian	Elementary Teacher	Davis
Sarah Dorer	Gifted & Talented Teacher	Davis/Lane
Nancy Seldon	Kindergarten Teacher	Davis
Louise Reidy	Special Education Teaching Assistant	Lane
Peggy Regan	Special Education Program Administrator	Davis

Appointments

Matthew Sahatjian	Computer Technician	District
Anne Pumphrey	K-5 Math Coordinator/Coach	Davis/Lane
Jennifer Rabold	6-12 Reading Program Administrator	JGMS/BHS

Mr. Sills presented a field trip request from Mr. Smith and Ms. Post for two full day field trips for Lane School 5th graders to travel to Kittery, Maine on May 16, 2019 and then again on May 23, 2019. They will be going to Take Flight Adventures to participate in corresponding Project Adventure course. The cost is \$25 per student and no cost to the schools.

Ms. Guay made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the field trip for 95 Lane School fifth graders to travel to Take Flight Adventures in Kittery, Maine on May 16, 2019 and May 23, 2019 at a cost of \$25 per student and no cost to the schools.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Marquis

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

Mr. Sills presented the annual Washington D.C. trip for 8th graders. Mr. Casey, once again, is organizing a trip for the entire 8th grade class to travel to Washington D.C. on May 26-29, 2020 at a cost of \$849 per student. It is the same trip that has been done in the past. The trip enhances the 8th grade Civics Curriculum and provides a valuable culminating experience for the 8th graders. World Strides is the sponsoring travel company.

Ms. Guay made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the 8th grade trip to Washington D.C. to be held on May 26 through May 29, 2020 at a cost of \$849 per student and no cost to the schools.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Marquis

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

Mr. Sills presented the School Committee with a report that showed the vaccination ratios for all grades in Bedford Public Schools. The percentages of vaccinated students ranges from a low of 97% (kindergarten) to 100%. The School Committee members were reassured to learn this.

4. Finance Director

Mr. Sills introduced Julie Kirrane, the person he is recommending to be appointed Finance Director. He explained that he has spent a lot of time with Ms. Kirrane and he feels very confident about her ability and experience. He is impressed with her strong interest in public education and her ability to get along well with all.

Ms. Kirrane addressed the School Committee and reviewed her experience. Some of the things she has been involved with include:

- Education planning activities
- Building renovation projects
- Long range planning and data analysis
- Managing federal, state and private grants
- Regular written and oral presentations on fiscal and operational status to School Committee
- Municipal finances
- Staff supervision

Ms. Guay noted that the town of Bedford is very supportive of our schools and that the Schools work collaboratively with Finance and other committees. She said residents at Town Meeting are very respectful of the School Department's work. Ms. Guay also mentioned how important Hanscom Air Force Base is to the town and the schools. Ms. Kirrane said she respects the support of the town and understands the importance of HAFB. She looks forward to learning more about HAFB.

Ms. Marquis said she is impressed with Ms. Kirrane's background and strong interpersonal skills. She is pleased to know that Ms. Kirrane has worked on building projects too.

Ms. Santiago said that she was on the interview committee that worked with Ms. Kirrane so she really did not have any further questions or comments.

Mr. Brosgol asked for a little bit more information about her role on Building Committees. Ms. Kirrane said that she would make her case for the need, then join the Building Committee while always keeping an eye on future needs. She noted she also has capital project experience.

Mr. Brosgol and Ms. Kirrane also discussed Newton's method and accuracy on enrollment projections. He was happy to learn about her experience in this area.

Ms. Kirrane reported that she is familiar with monitoring energy usage at Newton schools and worked closely with the Transportation Manager.

Ms. Sills said he believes that Ms. Kirrane is a learner and that she understands that joining a small district like Bedford means that she will have direct impact and accountability.

Ms. Guay made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the appointment of Julie Kirrane as Director of Finance for the Bedford Public Schools effective July 1, 2019.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Santiago

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

5. School Choice Vote

Mr. Sills said that the schools have posted a public notice of tonight's public hearing on the School Choice vote for the proper number of days. Therefore, he would like the School Committee to take a vote on whether Bedford Public Schools will participate in the state's School Choice program. He reminded everyone that School Committees must do this every year and the vote is to accept out of town students. (School districts must pay for any student who decides to attend another school district.)

Ms. Scoville made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee chooses not to participate in School Choice for the 2019-2020 school year.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Santiago

MOTION APPROVED: 4-0-1 (Ms. Guay abstained)

6. Davis School 2019-2020 School Improvement Plan

Principal Beth Benoit introduced Davis School's theme for the year, "Building the Foundation". (It is appropriate given the ongoing construction of the new building addition and renovations.)

Ms. Benoit explained that during this year, the focus on "integrated study" has really helped students dig deeper and to learn critical thinking skills. All classrooms at Davis have taken many steps towards personalized learning. She showed examples of how the school is setting learning goals and changing the mindset of the students. For example, second graders now say "I will use a different strategy" rather than "I give up".

Ms. Benoit said the focus at Davis this past year has been on sharing professional collaboration experiences, student work, teacher work and data. For example, staff at each grade level looked at the data and developed a hypothesis.

Ms. Benoit explained that the School Improvement Plan for 2019-2020 was developed a little bit differently in the past. This year, the staff read three books to help with the SIP development process. The end result was the collective desire to learn and practice the Responsive Classroom Approach in order to fully implement it at Davis for the 2020-2021 school year.

Therefore School Improvement Goals for 2019-2020 include:

- Learning and practicing the Responsive Classroom approach to provide students the opportunity to learn a set of social and emotional competencies
- Recognizing that teaching social and emotional skills is as important as teaching academic content.
- Understanding how we teach is as important as what we teach and that cognitive growth occurs through social interactions.

- Understanding what we know and believe about our students (individually, culturally, and developmentally) informs our expectations about these students.
- Working together (adults) is as important as our individual contribution.
- Partnering with families is important as knowing the children we teach.

Ms. Benoit highlighted some specific initiatives that will be put forth in 2019-2020 to help meet Davis and district wide goals.

- Pilot Lucy Calkin's Reader workshops – 2 in kindergarten, 2 in first grade and 4 in second grade.
- Roll out the "Just Right Phonological Awareness Program" to all kindergarten classrooms.
- Review the Burlington Science Curriculum with our current Integrated Studies Curriculum to increase hands on learning and focus on science practice standards.
- Implement common learning experience in all grades.
- Use the student data platform ("Insights") to record and view information on each student. It will be a way to share things such as what excites this student, what interventions have been tried.
- Roll out a Family Education Program for PreK through Second Grade as a way to engage a wider range of families.
- Deliberately schedule and plan for faculty time that brings Prek and K-2 staff together while honoring teacher time and professional development needs.

Ms. Guay asked for an example of how data has helped a teacher. Ms. Benoit said that data gives teachers a wider view which is often surprising. Also, data can help teachers pinpoint struggles, validate something that a teacher felt all along. She said that teachers are finally learning that data is helpful and not punitive.

Ms. Guay asked if teachers find it challenging to teach children with different educational backgrounds. For example, some kindergartners can read, others cannot. Ms. Benoit said that teachers are challenged but are able to show kids that everyone is an expert at something.

Ms. Guay also asked about the dyslexia screening indicator and the implications of this. Ms. Benoit said that the new Phonological Awareness program will help teachers and Ms. Salipante, ELA Coordinator for K-5, will be able to coach the teachers to help students who may have been flagged.

Ms. Santiago asked if there is curriculum alignment work being done with Lane? Ms. Benoit said yes and that the ELA Coordinator and Math Coordinator will help. Work is being done on making language and structure more continuous and familiar to kids.

Mr. Brosgol said that there will be so many big changes next year at Davis with the new renovation and the integration of the Pre-School program. He applauds Ms. Benoit's vision amongst all these changes.

6. Lane School's 2019-2020 School Improvement Plan

Principal Ackerman reviewed the accomplishments from this year and presented the Lane School Improvement Plan for 2019-2020.

Accomplishments from 2018-19 include:

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- Successful integration of the SAIL classrooms.
- Installation of a very popular new playground.
- Grade 5 had the highest ELA MCAS scores in the state.
- Lucy Calkins has been implemented in all grades.
- Improved reading assessment tool, Fountas & Pinnell, is used.
- Improved data aggregation and disaggregation.
- A coherent, high level science curriculum has been implemented.

Mr. Ackerman reviewed the goals of the 2019-2020 School Improvement plan while noting some of the key drivers of these goals:

- Increasingly complicated student population. The “high needs” category of students has grown from 29% in 2013 to 35% in 2019.
- Student anxiety is growing while resiliency is declining. Parent anxiety is rising too.
- Social Emotional Learning is needed to foster resiliency. Targeted counseling work and whole class lessons will be implemented to help.
- Self-regulation efforts are needed – they will pilot mindfulness lessons.
- Parent education and support is needed on self-regulation and resiliency.
- Professional development on making the school more welcoming for all students will be implemented.
- Improve phonics alignment for grades K through 5.
- Adapt schedule to have a longer literacy block – establish a Scheduling Committee to help.
- Increase literacy coaching for teachers.
- Consultants from Landmark will offer professional development to teachers of language-based classrooms.
- Lucy Calkins will be used in all classrooms and this will help with integration of science and social studies with writing and reading.
- Need to improve communications regarding the Lucy Calkins program with families.
- Use Student Insights data system to help with the grade 5 to grade 6 transition.

Ms. Guay asked Mr. Ackerman to describe the biggest surprise he encountered regarding integrating the SAIL classrooms to the school. He said he is so impressed with the teacher’s excellent work with the students.

Ms. Guay noted that we need to think about how our schools are contributing to our students’ anxiety. Mr. Ackerman agrees. He said that teachers are stressed and want to do well and this affects the kids, which in turn affect the parents.

Ms. Scoville pointed out that “high needs students” is a state term and not one we created.

Ms. Scoville also noted that she and many parents miss Mr. Ackerman’s videos he used to do to communicate with parents. She enjoyed seeing the non-academic side of life at Lane School too.

Mr. Brosgol said he would like to hear from Audrey Jackson since she has helped both Lane and Davis School look and utilize data in such meaningful ways.

Mr. Brosgol suggested Mr. Ackerman look into doing a short pod cast for Lane families as a way to communicate. He listens to pod casts a lot and knows many families do the same.

7. Minutes for Review

Ms. Guay made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the minutes of the April 9, 2019 School Committee meeting as amended.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Marquis

MOTION APPROVED: 4-0-1 (Ms. Scoville abstained)

8. Future Agenda

Ms. Guay asked if schools would consider resuming the practice of sending home information regarding boy or girl scouts with students.

Ms. Guay said that Sue Bauldauf is retiring from Youth and Family Services and although she will be missed, it is a good opportunity for the schools and the town to partner about the future of supporting youth and families in Bedford.

9. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Sills will be kicking off the Strategy Planning meeting with 24 community volunteers on May 23rd.

10. Adjournment

Ms. Guay made the following motion:

MOVED: Motion to adjourn at 10:15 p.m. to Executive Session to discuss individual information, not to reopen.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Marquis

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



School Committee Secretary



Date

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
May 14, 2019
Exhibits/Documents

- Davis School Improvement Plan 2019-2020 presentation
- Lane School Improvement Plan 2019-2020 presentation
- Draft of Minutes from the April 9, 2019 School Committee meeting