

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
June 11, 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. Scoville, Ms. Guay, Ms. Marquis and Ms. Santiago.

2. Comments from Public

None

3. Personnel Report

Mr. Sills reported the following:

Resignations

Jessica Dussi	Special Education Teaching Assistant (TA)	Davis
Erin Wyman	Special Education Teacher	JGMS

Transfers

Caitlin Fennell	Replacement to Permanent TA	Lane
Josh Spirn	Special Education TA to .8 Teacher	BHS
Fay Backert	Special Ed Program Admin from BHS to Davis	
Michelle Della Valle	Special Ed Program Admin from Lane to BHS	

4. Surplus Materials Disposition

Mr. Coelho presented the School Committee with a list of textbooks that are not in use and are considered obsolete. He explained that per State procurement laws, the School Committee must declare these items as “surplus” in order to sell, donate or dispose of the items.

The memorandum listed:

168 copies of “World Studies – Foundations of Geography” Copyright 2008
4 copies of “World Studies – Europe and Russia” Copyright 2008
123 copies of “World Studies – Asia and the Pacific” Copyright 2008
151 copies of “World Studies – Africa” Copyright 2008
70 copies “The Americans” Copyright 2003
225 copies “McDougal Littell Math Course 1” Copyright 2007
All books (approximately 1300) of Connect Math Project Copyright 1998

Ms. Santiago made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee declare textbooks listed on June 6, 2019

memorandum from David Coelho to Jon Sills regarding list of surplus books as surplus.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Marquis

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

5. Religious & Cultural Holidays Policy

Mr. Sills reminded the Committee that last week he presented survey results on the 2 year pilot program of the Religious & Cultural Holidays policy. He reviewed the policy:

- Any student absent due to religious or major cultural holiday observance will upon notification by parent have absence recorded as “exempt”.

- Any student unable to attend class due to religious and/or cultural beliefs will be provided with time (no less than 1 week) and opportunity to make up missed work or assessments.
- Open and timely communications between students, families, and teachers shall ensure the above opportunities

This policy replaced previous practice of directing teachers to not assign homework, projects and assessments on Jewish high holidays and no school on Christmas Eve Day and half a day for students on Good Friday. This practice interrupted learning. The District did not have a clear policy on treatment of absences and school work on religious holidays and major cultural holidays (such as Chinese New Year). There was inequitable treatment of different faith and cultural practices.

Mr. Sills said that a Religious and Cultural Task Force was established. It included students, parents, faculty, and community members. Attendance data was reviewed and guidelines established. The pilot policy was rolled out and period of trial ended this school year.

Mr. Sills sent out a survey to gather information on the pilot policy. Results were clear – 77.4% of respondents would like the policy to continue. A few respondent remarks during the survey included:

- It is generally unfair to have homework or tests on religious holidays
- There should be no school or at least a half day on Good Friday
- There should be no school on Jewish High Holidays
- There has been inconsistent implementation of policy

Mr. Sills is recommending that the Religious and Cultural Holidays Policy be reaffirmed. He does suggest that the schools do a better job informing families, faculty and students about the process and rationale of the new policy and work to improve fair and consistent implementation of the policy amongst all four schools.

Ms. Marquis asked what would happen if we do not adopt this policy. Mr. Sills said we would go back to not having any policy and figure out how to manage the issue at each school.

Ms. Scoville asked if the subject of starting school before Labor Day was ever part of the conversations. Mr. Sills said no.

Mr. Brosgol asked how the Bedford Education Association handled the policy. Mr. Sills said that teachers could use one sick day for a religious or cultural holiday.

Ms. Guay made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee make permanent the Religious and Cultural Holidays Policy.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Scoville

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

6. Superintendent's Evaluation

Mr. Brosgol explained that the School Committee is responsible for publicly evaluating Mr. Sills' performance on meeting personal and DESE standards. This evaluation is based on Mr. Sills' self-assessment and School Committee member's comments and assessment of Mr. Sills' efforts this year.

Mr. Brosgol reviewed highlights of the written evaluation and summarized School Committee member assessments:

Instructional Leadership - Proficient

- Implemented “I Can” statements and point of view across district
- Implementation of Challenge Success
- Implementation of Lucy Calkins
- Useful and thorough analysis of MCAS data
- Appointment of a Director of Student Achievement
- Strengthening the ELL program
- Continued implementation of Co-Teaching in all schools

Management & Operations (Safe & Effective Learning Environment) – Proficient

- Appointed a new K-12 Guidance Director
- Partners with Mothers Out Front
- Solar Panel projects planned
- New Davis School project near completion
- Participated on Board of LABBB and other collaboratives
- Appointed a K-5 Math coordinator
- Hired new Assistant Superintendent
- Effort to recruit more diverse faculty
- Strong state level advocate for METCO program
- Social-Emotional well-being commitment to schools and community

Promote Learning for all - Enhance Family Connection – Proficient

- Promotes cultural proficiency
- Superintendent blogs
- Authentic and caring response to racism and anti-Semitism
- Creates an inclusive community
- Creates strong relationships with Bedford community, METCO and Hanscom

Staff Leadership – Proficient

- Tenacity Challenge
- Useful website
- Effective Ed Camp professional development days
- Passion for equity
- Transparent to community

Mr. Brosgol commented that Mr. Sills did a great job preparing and gaining support for the School budget. He would like to continue to work on diversifying the faculty. He would like to figure out a better way to improve substitute coverage. He is looking forward to discussing the future of athletics.

Ms. Guay thanked Mr. Sills for all of his work especially garnering town support for our schools.

Ms. Marquis commented that Mr. Sills is vested in our schools and town and that we are honored to have him. She truly appreciates his honest communications.

Ms. Scoville was pleased with the success of the Interracial Committee that was established this year.

Ms. Santiago said she appreciates Mr. Sills' passion for education for all. She thanked him for his hard work.

Mr. Brosgol said that Mr. Sills has the trust and admiration of faculty. He also thanked Mr. Sills for bearing a lot of the town's responsibilities too. "In your heart, you are a teacher and mentor and equity and student wellness is your key value."

Mr. Sills said he appreciates the School Committee support.

Mr. Sills and the School Committee thanked Mr. Coelho, who will be leaving Bedford Public Schools, for his many years of service. Mr. Sills said David has been so supportive of the schools and to him personally in so many ways. He will truly be missed.

7. Adjournment

Ms. Guay made the following motion:

MOVED: Motion to adjourn at 8:20 p.m. to Executive Session to discuss non-union personnel contracts.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Scoville

MOTION APPROVED 5-0

Mr. Brosgol Yes

Ms. Santiago Yes

Ms. Scoville Yes

Ms. Guay Yes

Ms. Marquis Yes



School Committee Secretary

9/24/19

Date

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE

June 11, 2019

Exhibits/Documents

- Memorandum from David Coelho to Jon Sills regarding Surplus List of Books dated June 6, 2019
- Religious and Cultural Holidays Policy Presentation