

**BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF  
November 9, 2010**

**Bedford High School - Large Instruction Room**

**1. Call to Order**

At 7:30 p.m., Mr. Hafer called to order the meeting of the Bedford School Committee. Other members present included Ms. Seibert, Ms. O'Gara, Mr. Pierce and Ms. Bickford. Miss Ashley Nagy, student representative, was also in attendance.

**2. Comments From Public**

None

**3. Personnel Report**

Dr. LaCroix asked the School Committee to approve the ELL Coordinator job description. This job description was presented to the School Committee last school year and incorporates the suggested changes.

Ms. Bickford made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee approve the ELL Coordinator Job description dated November 10, 2010 as amended.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Pierce**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

Dr. LaCroix announced the following coaching appointments:

High School

Beth Billouin	Cheerleading
Al Dougherty	Indoor Track
Rich Schilder	Indoor Track Assistant
Jim Byrnes	Basketball Boys Varsity
Vin McGrath	Basketball Boys JV Co-Coach
Akil Modesir	Basketball Boys JV Co-Coach
Jeff McGrath	Basketball Boys Freshmen Co-Coach
Matt Hagar	Basketball Boys Freshman Co-Coach
Kelly Cole	Girls Varsity Basketball
Jim Greenwood	Girls JV Basketball
Ashley Martell	Girls Freshmen Basketball
Rich Carson	Rifle Team
Mark Fontas	Varsity Ice Hockey
Peter Dion	Assistant Varsity Ice Hockey
Dotty Blake	Swimming Varsity
Matt Rose	Swimming Assistant
Gunnar Olson	Varsity Skiing

Middle School

Dave Wilson	Boys Basketball
Jim Nagle	Girls Basketball

#### **4. Presentation: Later School Start**

Jesse Dickinson Meltz, BHS student, presented a proposal for establishing a later school start time at Bedford High School. Dr. LaCroix introduced Mr. Dickinson Meltz. She reminded the School Committee that this issue was discussed a few years ago, but a change in start time was rejected due to the costs associated with the proposed change. However, she is pleased that Mr. Dickinson Meltz is bringing this issue back to the School Committee's attention because it is an important issue that deserves to be examined again.

Mr. Dickinson Meltz presented research that concludes that teens need 9.75 hours of sleep due to their brain development needs. However, most teenagers only get 6.5 hours of sleep each night. He also explained that teenagers cannot simply go to bed earlier because melatonin, a sleep trigger, is released in teenagers between the hours of 11 pm and 8 am.

Mr. Dickinson Meltz also presented scientific research that shows the negative effect of loss of sleep on teens and how detrimental it is to learning. The research compared the effect to lead poisoning.

Mr. Dickinson Meltz explained the importance of REM sleep. This sleep concretizes memories from the day. This is when teenagers shift what was learned during the day into more efficient regions of the brain – short-term memory is converted into long-term memory. He also pointed out that sleep loss affects mood and is linked to depression.

Mr. Dickinson Meltz presented information on a number of schools that have initiated later school starts with success. For example the Minneapolis School System changed to a later start in 1997. Since then, SAT scores have increased. Hingham, Lynnfield, Shrewsbury, Holyoke and Duxbury are examples of Massachusetts' schools that have made a change to later school starts. Hingham's MCAS scores, SAT Scores, and attendance have all improved.

Mr. Dickinson Meltz proposed the Bedford High School start 30 minutes later from 7:20 to 7:50. He proposed the following start/release times:

JGMS	7:20	1:50
BHS	7:50	2:31
Lane	8:45	2:51
Davis	9:15	3:20

He noted that this schedule would not incur extra bus runs and extra bus charges and would not interfere with athletic schedules.

Mr. Dickinson Meltz acknowledged that the early middle school time might be perceived as a problem. However he presented research that concluded that younger teenagers feel somewhat less of the effect of the sleep phase shift than older teens.

Mr. Dickinson Meltz also presented evidence from Hingham and Lynnfield that changing to a later start time by only 30 minutes is enough to make a positive change.

Mr. Pierce thanked Mr. Dickinson Meltz for a terrific presentation. He said it was "impressive" that this proposal does not cost anything extra. Mr. Pierce said he is concerned about the big change for 6<sup>th</sup> graders – school start from 8:49 at fifth grade to 7:20 at sixth grade is quite significant. Mr. Pierce would also like more information affirming that sports will not be affected.

Mr. Pierce asked what the next step is. Dr. LaCroix said that Mr. Dickinson Meltz is presenting to the various School Councils and that the School Department will do some further analysis with the bus schedules.

Dr. LaCroix noted that Middle School teachers would no longer be able to coach at the High School.

Ms. O’Gara said that Mr. Dickinson Meltz used some great research to make his argument. She would however like to hear from the parents to get their feedback on a possible later start/later home arrival for Davis students.

Ms. Bickford said the presentation was very comprehensive and is impressed with Mr. Dickinson Meltz’s passion about the topic. She said that this is a very important issue and is thankful that he brought it to the School Committee’s attention again.

Ms. Bickford does have concerns about the middle school start time and feels that this age group will suffer too. Ms. Bickford suggested looking at different schedules and analyzing impact of not offering full town-wide coverage of high school bus transportation.

Ms. Seibert said that it was a great time to bring this presentation to the School Committee because there has been a lot of buzz about the issue of later school start times. She noted that the last study focused on changing the time by 1 hour. She is interested to learn that research now shows that a change by only 30 minutes will be effective. She is willing to look at the issue again as a Committee.

Mr. Hafer thanked Mr. Dickinson Meltz for a good presentation. It highlighted the point that teenagers need more sleep. Now it is the School Committee’s and/or School System’s job to figure out how to implement it.

Ms. Ashley Nagy said that she personally thinks that opening school 30 minutes later would make a big difference.

Dr. LaCroix said that the School Committee should put this report into a larger context. Instead of looking at the single question of adopting a later start time at the high school, look at the bigger question of how to be more effective with time. Teacher contract negotiations will soon begin so it is an opportune time to look at the big picture. Dr. LaCroix noted that one of the big concerns going forward is how to carve out more time for teachers. In addition to considering later school start time, consider the need for more early release days too. Also, should the midyear/final exam time allotment be changed? Dr. LaCroix also pointed out that parent feedback on many of these issues would be critical.

## **5. Presentation: Health/Physical Education/Family & Consumer Sciences**

Ms. Jackie Suprise, Program Administrator for K-12, updated the School Committee on the Health, Physical Education, and Family and Consumer science programs at all of the schools.

At Davis, the focus is on developmentally appropriate skill progressions and getting the students into all types of movements. One popular example is the “Fall into Fitness” initiative and the Friday morning “Walking Club” where families are invited to come in early and walk around the gym. Also the Fire Department and Police Department are great partners in teaching the kids safety lessons.

At Lane School, there are many technology initiatives that really engage students and teach them how technology can help get them active. There is also a focus on bike safety and a GPS mentor program.

At the Middle School, there are many grant-funded enhancements to encourage lifelong activity and wellness. Wave boards, roller blades, snow shoeing, fitness equipment, badminton, cricket, rugby and heart monitors are some of the enhancements that result from grant funding and even community donations.

At the High School, lifelong fitness is the goal. The curriculum goes way beyond sport activities. The curriculum emphasizes student choice. For example, each year approximately 75 students take the CPR certification course. Other offerings include dance, nutrition classes, and preschool internships. The indoor ropes course and fitness room have drastically improved.

Ms. Suprise also noted that next year two sport seniors will have the option to waive the PE requirement. Ms. Suprise reminded the School Committee that there is an application process for this waiver.

Ms. Suprise also noted that anti-bullying is and has been part of the curriculum at all schools. In K-5, the curriculum has focused on Open Circle. In grades 6 - 9 the curriculum covers conflict resolution, assertiveness and refusal skills.

Ms. Suprise said risky behaviors are addressed in the Middle and High School health classes. At the Middle School, the focus is on drug and alcohol prevention. At the High School, the focus changes to decision making. However, there has been an increase focus on the dangers of marijuana and dispelling myths and clarifications of the change in law.

Ms. Suprise said her concerns are:

- Growing class sizes at the high school
- Lost time for many students – they often get pulled out of PE/Health for academic support.
- Repair and maintenance of equipment.
- Consistency in use of facilities.
- Lost grant funding for Open Circle.
- Need for adaptive PE in the future.

Mr. Pierce thanked Ms. Suprise and said it was important to note that Bedford has not cut back on PE, Health and Family Consumer Sciences.

Mr. Pierce asked about the senior waiver of PE. Ms. Suprise said she does not anticipate that a lot of students will opt out. There will be an application process and she expects that there may be a few issues that arise. However, she is more concerned that some students will opt out in order to take a sixth major which will mean a lot of stress for the student.

Ms. O’Gara thanked Ms. Suprise and thinks the programs are great. Ms. O’Gara said that she is concerned to hear that there is a need for repair and maintenance of equipment. She asked if there was a budget for this. Dr. LaCroix said no. Ms. Suprise said that she will try to do some creative “fundraising” perhaps money from vending machines, etc. could help with this.

Ms. O’Gara asked about getting funding for Open Circle. Ms. Suprise said that the plan is to get together with EDCO partners and to speak to Open Circle about getting on-site trainers. Dr. LaCroix said that Open Circle and Project Alliance will be put into the 2011-2012 budget proposal.

Ms. Bickford told Ms. Suprise that she is happy to have her here in Bedford. Ms. Bickford admires Ms. Suprise’s philosophy that PE is all about movement and not just organized sports. She is so pleased that there are so many great choices for all types of students.

Ms. Bickford asked if the Peer Leadership Program was still active. Ms. Suprise said yes that it is a very active and involved group.

Ms. Bickford asked Ms. Suprise about her reflections on Family Consumer Science since this is her first year with this curriculum responsibility. Ms. Suprise said that it fits in with her PE and Health background. (She has early childhood experience with camp.) However, Ms. Suprise said she is still learning and is excited about the opportunity.

Ms. Seibert asked what her wishes are for the programs. Ms. Suprise said that she has really lost health time at the elementary schools and would like to get it back. She would also like to improve student fitness and to help with the national obesity problem.

Ms. Sills, Principal, said that we are very lucky that the PE, Health and Family Consumer Science programs are so strong and intact in our town.

Mr. Hafer thanked Ms. Suprise and that he is pleased to hear that the programs encourage kids to do their own, personal best.

Ms. Nagy said that it is great that there are a lot of health and PE courses to choose from.

Dr. LaCroix thanked Ms. Suprise for her presentation and her critical role in the recent NEASC review process. Dr. LaCroix said Ms. Suprise is an “integral part of the High School leadership team.”

## **6. Revision of Anti-Bullying Policy**

Dr. LaCroix noted that the anti-bullying policy recently approved omitted an important definition. Therefore, she presented a revised bullying prevention policy, which contained the following definition of bullying:

“represents a marked imbalance of power between bully and target. Bullying is a one-sided, unfair match.”

Ms. Bickford made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee approve the bullying prevention policy JICFB as amended.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. O’Gara**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

## **7. Review: Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan**

Dr. LaCroix presented an overview of the BPS Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan.

Dr. LaCroix explained that the Plan was developed by the Bullying Task Force, which was made up of Administrators, Parent Representatives, the Police Chief, Bedford Youth and Family Services and a School Committee member. The Plan created by the Task Force was done to create a safe learning environment and to develop a policy that states bullying of any type has no place in a school setting.

Responsibilities were defined in the Plan. For example, the Superintendent will assess resources and will review student survey information. Principals will receive reports, amend handbooks and engage parents, staff and students in ongoing anti bullying education.

Dr. LaCroix explained that in September, all Bedford Public School staff received legal training on the new Massachusetts General Law regarding bullying prevention. Further professional and curriculum development will cover effective interventions and information on cyber bullying. The Assistant Superintendent will search for anti-bullying resources and will review curriculum selection. This year, a homegrown curriculum will be used in hope that DESE will soon identify approved curriculums.

The Plan specifies that students on an Individual Education Plan (IEP) have special legal requirements. Team Chairs are aware of these requirements and are modifying IEPS where ever necessary.

The Plan clearly states that reports of bullying will go directly to the Principals. Each school has an Intervention Incident Reporting Form that is age appropriate. A report can be filed anonymously but no disciplinary actions will be taken on an aggressor solely on an anonymous report.

The Principal is responsible for prompt investigations and will interview students, staff, witnesses, and parents. The Principal, upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, will notify parents of the target and of the aggressor.

Dr. LaCroix pointed out that it will be very important to educate parents on privacy rights. It will be imperative that parents know that schools cannot share student disciplinary information.

Principals may have to notify police if there is reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued.

The Plan very clearly states that retaliation against a person who reports bullying or provides information about bullying is prohibited.

Disciplinary action will be decided by the Principal and will be consistent with the building Anti-Bullying Plan and the Code of Conduct for the school.

The Plan will include a comprehensive list of definitions.

Dr. LaCroix made some other important points about bullying:

- All bullying involves the aggression, but not all aggression is bullying.
- The aggressor is referred to an aggressor until he or she is determined to be a bully.
- Bedford Public Schools must complete the Anti-Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan by December 31, 2010.

Mr. Pierce asked if we had to report the number of bullying incidents to the DESE. Dr. LaCroix said yes but privacy laws will prohibit information being discussed about cases.

Mr. Pierce asked if anonymous reports would be investigated. Dr. LaCroix said it depends on the circumstances and that the Principal will have to make a judgment call.

Ms. Taymore said that the Assistant Principals are concerned about putting anonymous accusations into Aspen because it may influence future teachers. Dr. LaCroix reminded the School Committee that disciplinary files are not part of the permanent record.

Mr. Pierce said that overall, balance is needed when applying the new bullying plan and procedures.

Ms. O’Gara agreed and said that she sees a lot of constitutional issues with the anti-bullying legislation.

Ms. O’Gara also thinks that Bedford is culturally ahead of the curve with anti-bullying discussions but needs to be careful with implementing policies and record keeping.

Ms. Bickford said that the anti bullying legislation is very idealistic. She asked if the DESE will approve or disapprove the Plan? Dr. LaCroix said she is not sure that this will happen.

Ms. Seibert hopes that children don’t become “bad guys” now that there is such a focus on bullying.

Mr. Hafer thanked Ms. Seibert for serving on the Anti-Bullying Task Force.

Mr. Hafer wondered why bullying is in the spotlight now, acknowledging that it has always been a problem. Dr. LaCroix said she thinks it is a bigger problem today because it is so pervasive given today’s technology. Students cannot ever get away from it and that this is very troubling.

## **8. Signing of Contract for the High School Energy Conservation**

Mr. Coelho asked the School Committee to approve a contract for energy conservation opportunities at the High School. The project includes replacement of light fixtures in the gym with new fluorescent fixtures and will add occupancy sensors. The project is estimated to save \$12,717 per year and the payback period is 2.06 years.

Mr. Pierce asked if there would be light sensors in the gym. Mr. Coelho said yes and agreed to check to see if there is emergency lighting as a back up.

Ms. Bickford made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee approve the contract with Blue Stone Energy Services of Norwell, offset by an NSTAR rebate, for a cost of \$26,727 to be paid with BHS building funds.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Piece**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

## **9. Superintendent’s Report**

November 30<sup>th</sup> will be the next School Committee meeting and the FY’2012 budget request will be presented. School Committee meetings will also be held on December 7<sup>th</sup> and December 14<sup>th</sup>.

Dr. LaCroix said that the ELA visiting team gave a very positive oral report about their visit to Bedford. The written report will be forthcoming.

#### **10. Liaison Reports**

Ms. O’Gara reported that Youth and Family Services is working on approving a Body Mass Index reporting letter for families.

Ms. Bickford said that no reprioritization of capital project requests is required for the CEC. She also said that the Space Needs presentation was very effective.

Ms. Bickford also noted that the DPW made a presentation to CEC asking for funding to take down 23 trees in front of the high school. Ms. Bickford said that some very valuable information regarding the trees near the Jenks Trail should be passed along to an appropriate BHS science staff member.

Ms. Seibert said that the Bedford Community Partnership met recently. She also congratulated the Bedford TV for winning an award. She told everyone to be aware that the BEF would soon hold another Barnes and Noble fundraising event.

Mr. Hafer said that the Field Partnership Committee would be working on a plan with the DPW to improve field conditions.

#### **11. Minutes**

Ms. O’Gara made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee approve the minutes of the October 26, 2010 School Committee meeting as amended.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Pierce**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

#### **12. Future Agenda**

- There will be a Veteran’s Day celebration on Thursday, Nov. 11<sup>th</sup> at Noon.
- Bedford Unplugged will be celebrated on Wednesday, Nov. 10<sup>th</sup>.

#### **13. Adjournment**

Ms Bickford made the following motion:

**MOVED: Motion to adjourn at 10:25.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Pierce**

**MOTION APPROVED: 5-0**

##### **Roll Call Vote:**

<b>Mr. Pierce</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ms. Seibert</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Mr. Hafer</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ms. Bickford</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ms. O’Gara</b>	<b>Yes</b>

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School Committee Secretary

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Date



**BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

**November 9, 2010**

**Exhibits/Documents**

- English Language Learner Coordinator job description
- Teen Sleep Needs presentation
- Health, Physical Education and Family, Consumer Sciences presentation
- Revised Bedford Public School Bullying Prevention Policy JICFB
- Memo from David Coelho regarding BHS Nstar Lighting Retrofit Project
- Draft of minutes from the October 26, 2010 School Committee meeting