

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
June 3, 2014
Bedford High School - Large Group Instruction Room

1. Call to Order

At 7:00 p.m., Mr. Pierce called to order the meeting of the Bedford School Committee. Other members present included Mr. McAllister, Ms. Guay, Ms. Seibert and Mr. Hafer.

2. Adjournment to Executive Session

Ms. Seibert made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee move to Executive Session to discuss collective bargaining for the para-professionals' contract.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Hafer

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Pierce	Yes
Mr. Hafer	Yes
Ms. Seibert	Yes
Mr. McAllister	Yes
Ms. Guay	Yes

3. Return to Open Session

At 7:40 p.m., Mr. Pierce called to return to open session meeting of the Bedford School Committee. Other members present included Mr. McAllister, Ms. Guay, Ms. Seibert and Mr. Hafer. Ms. Emily Moss, Student Representative, was also in attendance.

4. Comments from Public

None

5. Personnel Report

Mr. Sills asked the School Committee to approve the creation of an inclusion specialist position (full time) for Lane School. He said this position is necessary to support a student with Downs Syndrome who will be included in regular education classes at Lane School starting in September. Mr. Sills said this person would support only this student. Mr. Sills explained that the district will spend approximately \$45-63,000 for this position but will avoid an out-of-district placement cost of at least \$125,000.

Ms. Seibert made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the 1.0 Inclusion Specialist position for Lane School.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Hafer

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

Mr. Sills asked the School Committee to approve an overnight field trip for 7th and 8th graders on March 6-8, 2015. Mr. Tracey and Mr. Mehler would like to offer a ski trip for these students to Sunday River in Maine in an effort to strengthen positive school culture. The cost will be \$299 per student and will cover meals, lodging and skiing. No school will be missed for this trip. There are scholarship funds available for this trip as well as the Washington D.C. trip.

Ms. Seibert made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the field trip to Sunday River in Newry, Maine for 7th and 8th grade students from JGMS on March 6-8, 2015 at no cost to the schools.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Hafer

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

Mr. Sills announced the following informational items:

- Marilyn Bemis is retiring from JGMS (English dept.)
- Michael McKinney resigned as a TA from Davis School
- Sandi McNutt is appointed Executive Assistant to the Superintendent
- Laurie Venuti is appointed Administrative Assistant to the Assistant Superintendent
- Michelle DellaValle will be the interim SPED Program Administrator at the high school.
- Michael Dattoli will be an elementary teacher at Davis School.

6. Davis School's School Improvement Plan

Principal Beth Benoit presented the improvement plan for the 2014-2015 school year. She began by sharing the vision statement of Davis.

“Davis School, in partnership with families and the community, will foster respect, responsibility, and readiness for learning in students as they become passionate, courageous, knowledgeable, skillful, reflective and collaborative life-long learners.”

Ms. Benoit then presented the mission statement: “The Davis School Community will educate all students in an inclusive, nurturing, safe, creative, and child-centered learning environment. The unique intellectual, social, ethical, and emotional growth of each learner will be honored by providing hands-on learning opportunities in a variety of contexts that allow for deep exploration, problem solving and skill development.”

Ms. Benoit explained the goals that support this mission are ongoing from last year.

Governance and Leadership

- Continue to strengthen and adapt teaching due to data analysis
- Have the Principal continue with becoming an active member of the community
- Solidify leadership team at Davis to push learning expectations and help teachers

Curriculum and Instruction

- Have a strong guaranteed and viable curriculum that engages all learners
- Integrate technology to engage in learning

Assessment and Evaluation

- How can teachers use authentic assessments through out the year?
- Define what it means to show “readiness to learn”?
- Encourage teachers to bring solid examples to collaborative meetings to discuss.

Student Support

- Bring consistency to the Open Circle curriculum (social and emotional development) and to all aspects of the school community.
- Implement Child Study and RTI (data) processes to support students regardless of schedule.
- Solidify how to use the Bridge Program to help all students.

Ms. Benoit noted that there will be more efforts to ensure parents are aware of the curriculum used at Davis School. The documents will be posted on the web, and she will host several curriculum meetings for parents. She will also use her newsletter as a means to communicate curriculum.

Ms. Guay and Mr. McAllister noted that they appreciate Ms. Benoit's efforts to keep creativity in the overall plan and vision of Davis School.

Mr. Hafer asked if Ms. Benoit had any feedback on the first year of 5-day kindergarten. Ms. Benoit said that all of the teachers appreciate the extra time with their students.

Mr. Sills asked Ms. Benoit to explain her vision of intervention. Ms. Benoit said she will cluster classrooms and a team will determine the schedule of intervention for these clusters. The specialists at Davis know good intervention and they will coach their team teachers on how to do this in the classroom. The building schedule will follow these cluster schedules.

Ms. Seibert made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the Davis School 2014-2015 School Improvement Plan.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Hafer

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

7. Lane School's School Improvement Plan

Principal Rob Ackerman presented the 2014-2015 School Improvement Plan for Lane. He said that the plan is to continue with the goals from last year. The theme will be "alignment".

Lane School will focus on:

- Coherent "higher order thinking"
- Developing appropriate common assessments
- Rolling out "thinking strategies" across the school

As part of this, Lane will roll out standards-based report cards. He will be communicating this change to parents. The goal is to use them in the spring.

Mr. Ackerman explained that the Guidance department has been working on a coherent social-emotional curriculum to help Lane students understand how to behave. Each classroom will have morning meetings dedicated to this and cultural proficiency efforts. The new start time will allow each classroom to have 20 minutes together before any specials are scheduled.

Mr. Ackerman reported that a Committee will be set-up to look at the Foreign Language Program. The goal will be to determine how Lane School wants to offer foreign language. He said that the program as it stands today faces placement issues and scheduling pressures. He believes Lane should continue to offer foreign language but the program needs to be defined.

Mr. Ackerman also wants to do a better job integrating technology naturally into the curriculum.

Ms. Seibert asked if Mr. Ackerman sees more anxiety in the Lane students as a result of pushing for more higher order thinking. She is concerned that this may be pushing developmental limits. Mr. Ackerman reassured Ms. Seibert that staff is always trying to address anxiety and stress.

Mr. Sills said that deep thinking is a more natural way to learn when compared to rigid memorizing of the past.

Ms. Seibert made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the 2014-2015 Lane School Improvement Plan.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Hafer

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

8. Lane School Presentation of iPad Pilot Program

Ms. Nicole Grymes, third grade teacher, and Ms. Molly Maguire, fifth grade teacher, showed the School Committee how they use iPads in their classrooms. Both teachers said that the iPads are integrated into their daily lessons and it is not a “cool” toy to use once in awhile. The iPads are used in a variety of subjects to engage the students.

Ms. Grymes explained that the iPad is a more student-centered tool. Her students used it for research in a variety of ways. She shared many examples of this.

Ms. Maguire showed how the iPad is used as an “eportfolio” and she showed examples of how her students use it to reflect on their learning through out the year.

Ms. Clements, Program Administrator for Technology Integration, commented that these teachers are now in a position to help other teachers at Lane integrate technology in their classrooms.

9. Fingerprinting Policy

Mr. Sills explained that there is a new law that requires all teachers to be CORI'd and to be fingerprinted. Bedford therefore needs a new policy in order to comply with this new law.

Mr. Sills presented a draft of the policy governing Criminal History Record Information Checks for non-criminal justice positions. He explained that it will cost the individual \$55 to have this required background check.

Mr. Hafer asked Mr. Sills what would happen if criminal background was discovered. Mr. Sills said it would require a decision based on judgment of the crime. He said he already does this with the existing CORI process. He would need legal advice if something detrimental was found in the background of an existing teacher.

Mr. Sills said that the district needs to decide, operationally, whether to make volunteers go through this comprehensive background check. He really does not want to make volunteers do this but he will seek School Committee direction on this issue.

School Committee agreed to review policy and discuss further at a later date.

10. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Sills said that the Capital Budget included \$86,000 for space modifications at Davis School and Lane. However, Davis is still experiencing growing enrollment. The new Facilities Director is rethinking how best to spend the money at Davis. He is suggesting investing the money into two modular classrooms rather than renovating the existing space. He plans on meeting with a vendor for details and will then discuss the idea with the Finance Committee for financing options. Mr. Sills thinks this is a good idea because it will keep the art and music rooms.

Modular classrooms will also help with the large classes while the District determines whether the increasing enrollments is a long term trend.

Mr. Sills said the cost to lease the modulars will be \$13,500 per year. He estimates that the setup and delivery will run about \$18-45,000. He will present a proposal for consideration at the next School Committee meeting.

Ms. Guay said that parents will need to be told as soon as possible.

Mr. Sills also reported that after a curriculum review period, the district will implement some changes to teaching tolerance. One change will be at the middle school. Eighth grade curriculum for half the year will focus on identity, group identity, national-level expression of democracy and anti-democracy using the Facing History curriculum.

Mr. Sills also complimented the annual prom stroll that happened earlier today. He reminded everyone that graduation is Thursday.

11. Liaison Reports

Mr. Pierce reported that the School Department fell short of meeting its 20% reduction in energy.

Mr. Pierce presented a letter thanking the Chair of the House Ways and Means Committee for securing Hanscom reimbursement funding into law. He asked members to sign or to approve using his signature.

Ms. Guay made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve Mr. Pierce signing the letter to the Chair of the House Ways and Means Committee on behalf of the Bedford School Committee.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Hafer

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

12. Minutes

Ms. Seibert made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the minutes of the February 25, 2014 School Committee meeting as amended.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Hafer

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

Ms. Seibert made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the minutes of the March 4, 2014 School Committee meeting as amended.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Guay

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

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13. Future Agenda

- Mr. Sills performance
- PARCC Assessments
- Modulars at Davis

14. Adjournment

Ms. Seibert made the following motion.

MOVED: Motion to adjourn at 10:00 p.m.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Guay

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Pierce Yes

Mr. Hafer Yes

Ms. Seibert Yes

Mr. McAllister Yes

Ms. Guay Yes

School Committee Secretary

Date

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE

June 3, 2014

Exhibits/Document

- Presentation: Davis School Improvement Plan 2014-2015
- Presentation: Lane School Improvement Plan 2014-2015
- Draft policy governing Fingerprint-based Criminal History Record Information Checks
- Draft minutes from February 25, 2014 School Committee meeting
- Draft minutes from March 4, 2014 School Committee meeting

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Executive Session
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