

**BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF
December 3, 2013
Bedford High School - Large Instruction Room**

1. Call to Order

At 6:15 p.m., Mr. Pierce called to order the meeting of the Bedford School Committee. Other members present included Ms. Seibert, Mr. Hafer, Mr. McAllister and Ms. Guay.

2. Adjourn to Executive Session

Ms. Seibert made the following motion:

MOVED: To adjourn to Executive Session at 6:17 for purposes of discussing strategy for Collective Bargaining.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Hafer

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

3. Return to Open Session

Mr. Pierce called to order the meeting of the Bedford School Committee at 7:30. All members were present.

4. Comments from Public

None

5. Personnel Report

Mr. Sills announced the following:

Resignation:

Paula Gearan	Teaching Assistant at the High School
--------------	---------------------------------------

Appointments:

Carley Brogan	Teaching Assistant at the High School
Ashley Martel	Basketball Coach at Middle School

Mr. Sills asked the School Committee to consider changing the Tutoring for Pay policy (File:GCRD). He proposed renaming the policy "Tutoring for Private Pay". He also believes that the policy is too broad so he proposed language that limits the tutoring by current or former teachers and prohibits tutoring to be done during the school day or in a Bedford Public School building. He explained that his reason for doing this is because he wants to avoid any conflict of interest or even any perception of a conflict of interest.

Ms. Guay asked if we should go further and have a policy that says no Bedford teacher should tutor a Bedford student. However, she said she has no idea how many teachers tutor.

Mr. McAllister said he did not want to limit teachers' ability to make extra money, especially during summers.

Ms. Seibert agreed that she can see Bedford teachers tutoring in the summer as a way to extend curriculum for some students.

Mr. Hafer suggested making the policy very broad, something like “no tutoring should be a conflict of interest”.

Ms. Seibert suggested running changes by the school’s legal counsel to make sure it is not a bargaining issue.

Ms. Sills agreed to get advice from counsel and come back to the School Committee.

6. FY’15 Budget Request

Mr. Sills reported that the FY’ 15 budget request proposal is \$36,506,859, which is 6.7% more than FY’ 14.

The cost center breakdown of this proposal is:

Regular Education	8.20% increase
Special Education	3.76% increase
Facilities	5.50% increase

The driving factors of this budget are:

- Enrollment and changing demographics in Bedford
- Unfunded state and local mandates
- In-house special education program expansion
- Ensuring high levels of achievement for ALL students

Mr. Sills then explained the context of this budget request by explaining the paradigm shift in education today. He explained that our country’s economy has changed from manufacturing base to an information technology based economy. He said that this change clearly has implications for education and schools. Also, he explained that there has been a shift in cultural norms and that today, there is pressure on schools to educate at high academic levels, all students. “This is a big challenge for schools”.

Mr. Sills said that not only do we have to focus on all students, we also have increased expectations of knowledge and how we teach students to learn and how we assess success. Mr. Sills noted that at one time, we were content to graduate only 50 to 60% of students and students of color, learning disabled and other traditionally underperforming students were largely invisible. This is not so today. “Today, the curriculum prioritizes higher order thinking and understanding in addition to discipline-based knowledge and skills.” Teaching was once about focusing on the middle and assuming the bell curve. Today, teachers must differentiate to meet varying needs and learning styles of each child.

Mr. Sills also provided data that Bedford reflects these societal changes.

	Low Income	ELL	SPED	African American	NonWhite
FY’04	2.4%	1.1%	13%	-	17.5%
FY’ 14	13.2%	5.1%	14%	13.8%	28.8%

Today, schools have code-mandated facilities and include students with special needs. Teachers have an array of new professional tools such as special education teachers, paraprofessionals, therapists, psychologists, and advocates. There are also IEPs and accommodation plans that need to be followed.

Mr. Sills summarized. “All in all schools are now expected to respect and act upon the right of each and every individual to high quality education.” The academic success of each unique individual has become the center of our educational efforts. There is no change in time on learning, the length of the school day and the number of students a teacher is expected to teach. Also, the curriculum is shifting to meet America’s changing economy and teaching has changed.

All instruction today is student-centered. Students must be actively engaged. Instruction must be differentiated. Accountability is key.

In this context, the FY’15 class size is a major driver of the budget request for additional FTE:

Davis \$131,361

Davis will have 8 or 9 kindergarten classes, 10 first grade classes and 8 second grade classes. If we follow established class size guidelines, we will need 2 full time teachers, and an additional .1 art teacher.

Lane \$62,553

1 additional classroom teacher (assuming 22-25 students per class)

BHS \$319,518

4 new teachers (English, math, science, foreign language)

.6 FTE for PE/Health

1.0 TA for directed study

Mr. Sills also summarized the list of state and federal mandates (twenty three).

Mr. Sills explained that State testing will switch from MCAS to PARCC assessments. This change, among other things, will increase the need for academic support and increase the need for more technology, especially at the elementary and middle schools. Furthermore, ELL needs are 2.0 FTE at Davis and .2 at the high school. There is also a need for a bus monitor for the homeless students.

Mr. Sills explained that if the Integrated Pre-School moves to a full day, we will be allowed to keep two students in-house and bring back 2 more to in-district. It will save us \$54,000 over the long run.

Also, in special education, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of initial evaluations and re-evaluations so there is a critical need for another school psychologist. (\$88,400). Lane School’s adjustment counselor needs to be full-time. The total increase for Special education is \$163,684.

Mr. Sills highlighted other budget needs:

Steps & Lanes	\$414,000
Assistant Superintendent	\$65,000
SPED ODD	\$5,534,2600 (1.27% increase over last year)
Utilities	\$834,000
Retirements	\$102,523
Non Salary	\$226,500 (2.42%)

Mr. Sills also explained that there are many unmet needs:

- Not all BHS classes will be at the size guideline
- An additional .8 arts and wellness teacher at JGMS to relieve over enrollments.
- Curriculum coordinators at Lane and Davis
- An .8 transition specialist
- .2 Homeless Coordinator
- elevating team chair positions to Program Administrators (to include supervision)
- Additional instructional technology teacher
- Purchase a data management system
- Additional hand held technology devices at the elementary schools and middle school
- Full time assistant to Athletic Director

Ms. Guay asked how new technology will be used at the elementary level. Mr. Sills said one example is during reading time, groups can rotate – read with the teacher, write, and listen. iPads for example can help students with phonics. iPads can supplement teaching in extraordinary ways.

Ms. Guay suggested that some of the special education programs, such as Bridge, really require professionally trained assistants not all Teaching Assistants can do this job. Mr. Sills agrees.

Mr. McAllister said that the numbers of students is increasing, the complexity of educating these students is increasing, and expectations are also increasing. Therefore, it is obvious that we need more people. Bedford is lucky that the competency of its teachers can meet these demands but to continue, we need more competent and skilled people.

Ms. Seibert asked if there were any mandates that we were pushing back on. Mr. Sills said yes, he is working with other Superintendents to change the NEASC process and the time frame of the PARCC roll out.

Ms. Seibert suggested that we pull out the direct costs of these items in case we don't move forward with these mandates.

Mr. Hafer complimented Mr. Sills on positioning the school's need for additional personnel. However, he said it will be a challenge as it is the largest request for FTE in awhile. He said that it is clear that there are increased demands but on the supply-side, taxpayers, are being squeezed.

Mr. Pierce said that tonight's presentation by Mr. Sills puts the need for our budget in context. He noted that the financial guideline for increases next year is about \$900,000 and the school is at \$2.2 million. Mr. Pierce said that there will be a lot of questions and a lot of work for the school committee.

School Committee members asked Mr. Coelho to prepare more financial information to help with analysis. The next meeting will be December 10 and possibly December 17th.

8. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Sills reported that there has been some anti-Semitic graffiti in the schools and at Hanscom AFB. He explained that Mr. Turner held some meetings with teachers and students on this topic. As a result, it became apparent that some Jewish students feel uncomfortable being a minority in town. A town-wide response is now underway to address these feelings.

Mr. Sills said that bargaining training has begun.

9. Liaison Reports

Ms. Guay said that on December 7th the Bedford Education Foundation is holding its annual Winter Bash fundraiser.

Ms. Seibert reported that the CEC will meet tomorrow to discuss all the capital requests.

Mr. Pierce said that the Finance Committee will meet at 7:30 on Thursday.

10. Adjournment

Ms. Seibert made the following motion:

MOVED: Motion to adjourn at 9:30.

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

School Committee Secretary

Date

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE

December 3, 2013

Exhibits/Documents

- **Draft of “Tutoring for Private Pay” policy File:GCRD**
- **Superintendent’s FY15 Budget Presentation to School Committee dated December 3, 2013**

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Executive Session
December 3, 2013