

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
February 24, 2015
Bedford High School - Large Group 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 Mr. Pierce, Ms. Seibert and Mr. McAllister. Miss Sophia Kyrou, student representative was also in attendance. Ms. Guay was absent.

2. Comments from Public

None

3. Personnel Report

Mr. Sills asked the School Committee to approve a field trip for the DECCA club to compete in the state competition in Boston on March 12 – 14, 2015. Students will leave for Boston after school on Thursday and will return to Bedford on Saturday, March 14th. No school will be missed. The cost is approximately \$350 per student.

Ms. Seibert made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the field trip request for the DECCA club to attend the state competition on March 12-14, 2015 at the Marriot Copley Place in Boston for approximately 24 students at a cost of \$350 per student and no cost to the schools.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. McAllister

MOTION APPROVED: 4-0

Mr. Sills announced the following:

Resignations:

Laura Bruno	English teacher at the High School
Jennifer Fillingame	Adjustment Counselor at the Middle School
Kelly Giusti	Special Education teacher at the High School

Leave of Absences:

Lisa Fontaine-Rainen	Gifted Teacher at the Middle School
Megan Salvucci Klotsche	Elementary Teacher at Lane School

Transfer:

Rion Foley	Custodian from Middle to High School
------------	--------------------------------------

Appointment:

Alysa Hober	Special Education Teacher at Davis School
-------------	---

Extra Curricular Appointments – Middle School:

Amy Budka	Musical Director
Jaime Smith	Assistant Musical Director
Barbara Ferri	6 th Grade Drama Coach
Libbey Beinart	Musical Choreographer
Linda Aiken	Musical Director/Accompanist

Mr. Sills presented an updated job description for the School Committee to consider. Mr. Sills explained that due to a teacher retirement, he updated the job description of “Director of Student

Achievement and Data Analysis for grades 6-12". He said the job now entails coordinating the RTI process as well as administering the MCAS tests and analyzing data. He asked the School Committee to review the description and to vote on approving it at the next meeting, which is the normal procedure with updated job descriptions.

4. FY'16 School Department Open Budget Hearing

Mr. Hafer opened the formal Open Budget Hearing at 7:45 p.m. He began the Hearing by summarizing the FY'16 budget and process. He explained that as of February 10, 2015 the School Committee voted the FY'16 operating budget request at \$36,201,993. The Finance Committee at this time suggested a guideline budget of \$35,950,535, leaving the difference between the two budget numbers of \$251,458. Mr. Hafer noted that although the Budget Hearing is opened tonight, the budget may change somewhat from now until Town Meeting as both committees try to agree on one final budget number for FY'16.

Mr. Sills presented an overview of the budget history as well as key drivers of the FY'16 school budget. Mr. Sills explained that the FY'16 maintenance of service budget is \$36,003,337 which is 3.8% larger than the FY'15 baseline (adjusted for utilities and computer replacements). Mr. Sills explained that this increase is driven by salaries, operating expenses, out-of-district tuition, out-of-district transportation and general transportation. He noted that this budget is also asking to restore some items that were cut out of the last budget – facilities maintenance supplies, text books, professional development, the Youth Risk Survey, software updates and new psychological testing protocols.

Mr. Sills also presented a budget to meet the additional needs that the school department is facing in FY'16 ("Expansion Budget"). He said key drivers to this Expansion Budget are enrollment increases at Davis School, increasing social-emotional needs of students, in-house special education program expansion, and other programmatic and academic needs.

Add-ons of the Expansion Budget include:

- Additional 1.0 Davis School kindergarten teacher
- Additional .4 FTE PE teacher at Davis
- Additional BHS .3 Special Ed teacher
- Additional .1 BHS art teacher
- Additional 1.0 Davis School Adjustment Counselor
- Additional .2 Adjustment Counselor at BHS
- Additional .2 Guidance Counselor (for expansion of Lighthouse Program)
- Additional Technology Teacher for Lane School (for STEM and Coding)
- Lane School After School program to help with struggling students
- Lane School project adventure TA (.4)

Mr. Sills also discussed the desire to add to the in-house special education programs for Davis and the high school. He explained that although special education numbers are overall declining, the type of disabilities that the schools' are seeing are increasingly more complicated. Mr. Sills said he would like to establish a substantially separate program at Davis School since there are some students in the Integrated Preschool who will need this next year. Also, there is a need for a substantially separate class for students in the high school. In fact, there have been adjustments made to staffing already for this program this year.

Mr. Sills expects that the total savings for the town, if these two programs are implemented, will be \$90,693.

Mr. Sills also discussed the need for improvements in technology for PARCC testing (\$55,000), Teaching and Learning (\$10,000) and Safety and System Maintenance improvements (\$18,900)

Mr. Sills also reviewed the steps that the Finance Committee has taken over the last few months regarding their budget assumptions and increasing the guideline including the pledge to put money into reserve to ensure funding for Hanscom students (\$516,283).

The budget gap to date, given all of the changes made by the Finance Committee and the School Committee is \$251, 458.

Mr. Sills then proposed a list of additional reductions that he could comfortably make to the schools FY'16 budget in hopes that the Finance Committee would take steps to reduce the gap on their end too. Mr. Sills total reductions was \$121,697.

School Committee members reviewed the list of items and some raised concerns about some of the items on the list. Mr. Pierce for example, said he would like to truly understand the impact on students if these items are removed. Ms. Seibert suggested keeping some of the items. Mr. McAllister felt that the amount saved is such a small piece of the budget that it does not really make sense, but he understands Mr. Sils' motivation in doing so.

Mr. Richard Daughtery, a member of the audience, said that this budget process takes up so much time year after year that he is afraid that important educational decisions do not get the attention they deserve as a result. He would like the process for the town and the school's to reach a budget agreement to be smoother and more efficient in the future.

Mr. Hafer said that there was no need to revote the FY'16 operating budget request at this time since there is still time to meet and negotiate with the Finance Committee before Town Meeting. He said that there are still a lot of moving parts.

Mr. Pierce commented change is the nature of schools and noted that the School Committee and the administration need to be ready to react to these changes in real time. He said that as things change, the School Committee may have to come back to the Finance Committee for more funding. It depends on what the new school year brings.

Mr. Sills said that if the Finance Committee cannot help by reducing the gap further, any further cuts by the schools would result in programmatic changes and/or larger class sizes.

The Budget Hearing closed at 9:00 p.m.

5. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Sills said that the state has cut the METCO budget by approximately \$1 million dollars. He said that this was a surprise and the amount will have an impact on our students this year. (The late bus may be stopped and we may have to let the bus monitors go.) Mr. Sills said he was at the State house earlier today lobbying in support of this funding.

Mr. Sills also reported on yesterday's PARCC testing trial at the middle school. He said overall, Bedford was technologically prepared for the test, but the PARCC system kept crashing. Also, the Assistant Principal learned that it take days to prepared for the tests. Unfortunately, the test itself was useless for the students. The questions used were very basic and gave no indication on what to expect in the future regarding test content. Mr. Sills is going to write a letter about this

experience and ask that PARCC be on a two-year pilot program where the State agrees not to publicize any test results until all of the issues are resolved.

Mr. Sills said that he is still not sure about the PARCC test but does see a need for a new complex thinking test to replace MCAS. But he would like the process to slow down so that it can be rolled out correctly and that teachers have time to teach the new curriculum. He also does not think it should be tied to teacher evaluations.

6. Future Agenda

Mr. Sills will discuss the desire to have a wrestling team at BHS. This year, we shared a wrestling program with Minuteman and interest at BHS has grown significantly.

7. Liaison Reports

Ms. Seibert said that the CEC will now be focusing on the long term view of the capital plan.

8. Minutes

The School Committee decided to review the minutes at the next School Committee meeting.

9. Adjournment

Mr. McAllister made the following motion.

MOVED: Motion to adjourn at 9:15 p.m. to Executive Session to discuss a personnel issue, not to reopen.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Pierce

MOTION APPROVED: 4-0

Roll Call Vote:

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

School Committee Secretary

Date

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
February 24, 2015
Exhibits/Document

- FY'16 Budget Hearing Presentation

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Executive Session
February 24, 2015