

**BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF
September 9, 2011**

OPEN SESSION

John Glenn Middle School – Superintendent’s Conference Room

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

At 7:30 a.m., Ms. Seibert called to order the meeting of the Bedford School Committee. Other members present included Ms. Bickford, Mr. Pierce and Mr. Hafer. Dr. LaCroix and Ms. Taymore were also in attendance. Ms. O’Gara arrived at 7:50 a.m.

2. Report on the Opening of School

Dr. LaCroix reported on the opening of the 2011-2012 School Year, highlighting the following:

- Increased enrollment from a local Bedford hotel that is serving as a temporary Homeless Shelter for the State has presented some additional challenges to the start of the school year. Staff has been involved in significant outreach with the families, and Bedford Charter as well as other Town Departments have all been very helpful. Dr. La Croix described it as a difficult situation but stressed that the goal of our efforts has been to create the best conditions for student learning despite the difficulties.
- The changes in the bus routes and the change in BHS start times, as approved last year, have also created challenges. Dr. LaCroix described it as a “work in progress” and discussed that issues related to the arrival times of the buses at the schools (both early and late), changes in individual bus trip times for some students, and changes in the length of passing times at BHS (reduced from 5 minutes to 3 minutes) were generating the most comment from parents.

Dr. LaCroix stated that she would provide additional information at the September 13, 2011 School Committee meeting.

3. Superintendent Search Process

Mr. Glenn Koocher from the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (“MASC”) was present to provide the School Committee with an overview of the services that MASC can provide to assist School Committees as they conduct a process to replace an outgoing Superintendent. He also described the recent history in Massachusetts in other communities with Superintendent replacement processes, including the steps followed and outcomes. In this discussion, he highlighted the following:

- There have been 60 Massachusetts Superintendent turnovers per year in the past three years.
- Last year MASC provided assistance for 25 districts conducting a Superintendent search.
- Candidates are typically Assistant Superintendents, Directors of Curriculum, Directors of Special Education or Principals and there are few, if any, current or acting Superintendents applying for these positions. There are very few candidates coming from out-of-state.
- In recent years about one-third of the Superintendent searches resulted in an internal candidate being selected either as the Superintendent or as an Interim Superintendent.
- Some districts have not been able to find strong internal or external candidates. Those communities appointed a retired Superintendent to an Interim position while they extended their search. The state will provide a waiver for “critical need” in such cases.
- Mr. Koocher noted that Belmont, Billerica, Harvard, Ludlow, Middleborough, Norwell and Palmer are also looking for new Superintendents this year.
- Mr. Koocher sketched out a sample timeline that has resulted in a successful search for many districts.
- The suggested timeline would begin with a community survey, an internal posting, community forums and interviews of internal candidates.
- If no internal candidate was selected the process would continue with an external job posting and the establishment of a Search Committee who will review all candidates and recommend finalists for the School Committee to interview.
- MASC can assist with the development and tabulation of on-line surveys for the community to provide input regarding the search for new Superintendent.
- MASC will post vacancies on the its website free of charge.
- MASC can provide sample interview questions from successful searches in other communities.
- Mr. Koocher reviewed the legal requirements necessitated by the Opening Meeting Law in Massachusetts and reminded the Committee of legal requirements for job posting deadlines.

- Mr. Koocher noted that Bedford is a desirable place to work. He also stated that early fall is an excellent time to begin a Superintendent search and would give the successful candidate ample time to participate in the various transition and mentoring programs available through the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents.
- Mr. Koocher explained that when external candidates hear of a potential superintendent opening they call his office and ask three questions: What is the community like? What is the board like? And is there a strong internal candidate?

The Committee members thanked Mr. Koocher for his informative presentation and the detailed explanation of how MASC could be of assistance in the Superintendent search process.

4. Future Agenda Items

None.

5. Adjournment

Mr. Hafer made the following motion:

MOVED: Motion to adjourn at 9:08 a.m.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Bickford

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Seibert	Yes
Ms. Bickford	Yes
Ms. O’Gara	Yes
Mr. Pierce	Yes
Mr. Hafer	Yes

School Committee Secretary

Date