

**BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF
May 10, 2011**

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, and Mr. Pierce. Ms. Emma Currier, student representative, was also in attendance. Ms. Bickford was expected to arrive later in the evening.

2. Comments From Public

None

3. Personnel Report

Dr. LaCroix asked for the approval of an out-of-state field trip from Jim Felker. The trip is for the marching band to travel to Disney World in Florida during April 2012 vacation. It is for marching band students in grades 8-12. The trip will cost approximately \$1,200 each and will provide an opportunity to perform on one of the biggest stages available to student musicians.

Ms. O’Gara made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approved the Marching Band trip to Disney World in Florida during the April 2012 school vacation at a cost of \$1,200 per person and at no cost to the school department.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Pierce

MOTION APPROVED: 4-0

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

Mr. Hafer asked about other trips planned for the same time period. Dr. LaCroix said she would find out but does not expect this trip to suffer with attendance.

Dr. LaCroix asked the School Committee to review and approve the job descriptions tonight as previewed in an email for edits. Dr. LaCroix asked for the vote tonight because the updated descriptions reflect only minor changes.

The job descriptions presented and reviewed include:

- Bridge Alternative Teacher
- Computer Lab Assistant
- Instructional Technology Teacher
- Reading Specialist
- Student Own Strategies Teacher
- METCO Program Liaison
- Speech Language Therapist

Ms. O’Gara made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the job descriptions as referenced in the Personnel Memo dated May 6, 2011 (Bridge Alternative Teacher, Computer Lab Assistant, Instructional Technology Teacher, Reading Specialist, Student Own Strategies Teacher, METCO Program Liaison, Speech Language Therapist).

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Pierce

MOTION APPROVED: 4-0

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

Dr. LaCroix announced the following personnel changes:

Appointments:

Justin Newton	.8 Physical Education Teacher	Middle School
Megan Salvucci	.6 Student Owned Strategies Teacher	Middle School
Katie Weinstein	Grade 5 Teacher	Lane School
Molly Maguire	Grade 5 Teacher	Lane School
Erin Wyman	Special Education Teacher	Middle School
Jessica Smith	Guidance Counselor	Lane School

4. iPad Lease

Mr. Coelho explained that the total lease cost for acquiring 27 iPads for the 9th grade teachers is \$26,085. Our attorney is currently in discussions with Apple regarding a few sections of the lease. One section in particular, the Indemnity Section, raises a little concern. Mr. Coelho explained that there are three lease payments - one in June 2011, September 2011 and September 2012. There is a \$1.00 buy-out at the end of the lease term. In order to expedite the process, Mr. Coelho is asking the School Committee to authorize the Chair of the School Committee to sign the lease agreement when finalized.

Mr. Pierce had Mr. Coelho read the indemnity section. Mr. Pierce agreed that the section needs clarification because it could be a significant issue.

Ms. O’Gara asked if other school districts are leasing with Apple. Mr. Coelho said that Millis is and is in the second year of the project. He will contact Millis for insight.

Ms. O’Gara made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee appoint the Chair as signatory for signing a lease agreement with Apple subject to our attorney’s satisfaction to clause in question.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Pierce

MOTION APPROVED: 4-0

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

5. BHS School Improvement Plan

Mr. Jon Sills reviewed initiatives for the current school year and presented the BHS Improvement Plan for the 2011-2012 school year.

Mr. Sills discussed the following:

2010-2011 Highlights

- Completed the NEASC Special Progress report.
- Conducted faculty-wide professional development in metacognitive learning strategies.
- Conducted a faculty-wide pilot in summarizing learning strategies.
- Increased department based curriculum development time.
- Provided time for vertical team meetings.
- Reviewed progress and collection of data regarding higher order thinking instruction in all Level 3 courses.
- Continued to update curriculum documents and integrate school-wide academic expectations.
- Continued, or began in some cases, benchmarking common and equivalent assessments in all departments.
- Studied RTI and integrated more targeted intervention, increased tracking and instituted a more systematic approach for Student Assistant Teams. Sharpened many interventions to become more “RTI like”.
- Increased teacher workshop time in making web pages.
- Implemented guidance program for METCO students. (All METCO students and their families met with a counselor and established academic goals.)
- Began work on inter-district academic scholarship competition for African American and Latino students.
- Engaged all constituents in the change in start time for next year.

Mr. Sills then presented the 2011-2012 School Improvement Plan for the high school. Highlights of the goals in the plan include the following:

Leadership & Governance goals

- Implement new late start and early release professional development schedule.
- Continue to build diversity into student leadership.

Curriculum & Instruction goals

- Align school-wide academic expectations and curriculum with Common Core. Mr. Sills said he believes that much of the work with the Common Core is related to current curriculum but uses a different language. He plans on revamping the curriculum documentation using the Common Core language. However, as part of the move to the Common Core, Mr. Sills said that graduation requirements need to be revisited, especially the math requirements. There is a requirement to change to a four year math requirement and a two year foreign language requirement. These changes will be presented to School Committee at a later date.
- Implement iPad 1:1 pilot to the freshmen class. Mr. Sills will work with the 1:1 Task Force to accomplish this.
- Further develop rigor, consistency and higher-order thinking for all students.
- Continue to strengthen best instructional practices including metecognitive learning strategies.
- Continue to expand classroom support for students who struggle academically.

- Continue to address educational equity issues. Will continue to be proactive in hiring to help address this issue.
- Continue to integrate global education across the curriculum.

Assessment and Evaluation goals

- Continue to develop benchmark assessments in all departments.
- Develop a plan for measuring and communicating student's achievement of school-wide expectations.
- Continue to review midterm/final policy. A policy change will be forthcoming to School Committee.

Human Resources and Professional Development

- Provide professional development on challenges facing military families and their children.
- Continue with professional development on social/emotional issues and the impact on education.
- Explore implementation of an "Extended Day" for chronic 9th grade homework avoidance. Mr. Sills said he believes that meaningful homework is important for students to learn. He will discuss what meaningful homework is with staff. However, he needs to help students who don't or won't do their homework.
- Learn more about clinical model of in-house therapeutic services.
- Implement RTI using MCAS or Reading screenings.
- Communicate the uniqueness of BHS to College Admissions personnel.
- Strengthen the collaboration with regular and special education teachers. Mr. Sills said this is especially important as we bring more and more programs in-house.
- Further expand support for students who struggle to achieve. Mr. Sills said he will be exploring online summer school especially for those students who have missed a lot of school due to medical reasons.
- Explore ways to strengthen tolerance and empathy.
- Continue to promote a sense of pride in the school campus.
- Continue to implement the Honor Code.

School Committee members had several questions and comments for Mr. Sills.

Mr. Pierce noted that the focus is on the struggling student. He also applauds the effort to "sell" the uniqueness of BHS with College Admissions personnel.

Mr. Pierce asked if the Strategic Communications Task Force could help get the inter-state plan for State exam reciprocity with other states approved by the Department of Education. Dr. LaCroix said she believes this is a good idea. She also thinks the implementation of the National Common Core will help with this issue too.

Mr. Pierce asked Mr. Sills for more information on the Extended Day Homework program. Mr. Sills said he would like to set up a process to help students who do not do their homework stay in school. He hopes that a structured environment may help accomplish this. The program will be aimed at students who choose not to do their homework and not those who struggle academically. This program will be similar to the academic probation for athletes.

Mr. Pierce asked what class will be affected by the change in graduation requirements in math and foreign language. Ms. Taymore said that in order to comply with Race to the Top, the class of 2014 will need to be compliant. Mr. Pierce pointed out that some 9th graders may have already opted out of a foreign language for 10th grade and therefore should be notified that they should not opt out in 10th grade. Mr. Sills agreed and will have the Guidance Counselors look into it.

Ms. O’Gara complimented Mr. Sills on the efforts to have all METCO students and families meet with Guidance Counselors to establish academic goals. She suggested that the ELL students and families to be the next group to target for help in this area.

Ms. Seibert suggested that the whole issue of “homework” be discussed with a wider audience including faculty, parents and students. Mr. Sills said he would consider this.

Ms. Seibert asked how many students are not doing any homework. Mr. Sills said he estimates that there will be approximately twenty-five 9th graders. He stressed that the program will be a pilot and will help the administrative team learn what is going on with some students and learn why they do not do the homework. It will also help the faculty as a whole examine what meaningful homework is.

Ms. Seibert asked if the Honor Code has helped with the problem of cheating. Mr. Sills said he has not collected any data on this issue but will continue to find ways to stop cheating.

Ms. Currier said that she is happy to hear that BHS’s uniqueness will be promoted to colleges. She said that she believes that Bedford is on par with private high schools and it does tend to get overlooked by colleges due to its small size.

Mr. Hafer said that Mr. Sills had good goals for the iPad program and that they will help determine if the pilot is a success. He too is pleased to hear about the promotion plans for BHS (with College Admissions). He is also pleased to hear about efforts to continue to build a sense of pride on the campus.

Mr. Pierce made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the BHS School Improvement Plan for the 2011-2012 school year as presented tonight.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. O’Gara

MOTION APPROVED: 4-0

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

Mr. Sills asked the School Committee to consider a policy change on the use of the “AlcoBlow” tool. Currently, this tool is used to verify alcohol use by students determined to be under the influence of alcohol at school dances and the Proms. Mr. Sills would like to be able to use it on the few students who will drive themselves or friends to the Prom. Most students will not be allowed to drive themselves to the Prom but a few exceptions exist. Therefore, Mr. Sills would

like to use the AlcoBlow tool to check any student who drives to the Prom. He expects that there are only two students affected this year.

Mr. Pierce suggested that the tool be used to test the drivers as they leave the Prom too. Mr. Sills agreed.

Mr. Pierce made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee allow the AlcoBlow tool to be used for students who drive themselves, and their passengers, to the Prom or Semi-formal. The tool will also be used on these students as they leave the Prom or the Semi-formal.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. O’Gara

MOTION APPROVED: 4-0

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

6. John Glenn Middle School Improvement Plan

Ms. Jayne Viladenis gave a review of current year initiatives and presented the School Improvement plan for the 2011-2012 school year.

Review of 2010-2011

Ms. Viladenis said that most of the work done this year was a result of a culmination of a three-phase curriculum initiative. Highlights include:

- Supported the efforts of the Bedford Education Foundation in educating the JGMS community of the Foundation’s goals.
- Implemented RTI training and began implementation.
- Curriculum maps completed, but now need to be updated due to the state’s adoption of Common Core.
- Trained middle school faculty on protocols for MCAS writing genre.
- Communicated student support processes and contacts.
- Published RTI process.
- Documented examples of 21st century skills. Web permissions hindered this goal.

Ms. Viladenis presented the 2011-2012 Improvement Goals. She began by thanking those that served on the Committee.

Curriculum and Instruction

- Continue implementation of RTI Tier II supplementary services. The focus will be on exploring benchmark testing in math and literacy for more data drive assessments.
- Provide a targeted instruction Tier II block in the existing schedule.
- Provide curriculum maps that are updated to new Common Core.
- Provide professional development to increase content knowledge and use of scientifically-based instructional strategies in Math and English (specific AYP requirements).

Assessment & Evaluations

- Develop data teams and train teachers to collect and analyze classroom and school data.

Human Resources and Professional Development

- Work with students, staff and parents on accepting differences and tolerance. Ms. Viladenis said that anti-bullying efforts have helped. Efforts will continue on finding ways to continue and enhance discussions.

School Committee members had questions and comments.

Mr. Pierce said that the RTI write up (for the Handbook) is very helpful.

Mr. Pierce asked how data collection/information will be delivered to the teachers. Ms. Viladenis said that some information will be on Aspen and other will be put directly into teacher's hands. The faculty together will figure out the best ways to share data and how it can be used to help students.

Ms. O'Gara said that she really finds "Document B" which clearly describes all of the student services at JGMS very helpful.

Ms. O'Gara asked if Ms. Viladenis is frustrated with the required changes in the curriculum maps. Ms. Viladenis said yes and no. She recognizes that curriculum is always changing and evolving but the Common Core updates require a lot of changes in a very short time frame. Some of the changes are significant but many are just "tweaks".

Ms. Bickford (who arrived at 9:25 p.m.) asked what will change to accommodate the targeted Tier II intervention block. Ms. Viladenis said she is currently looking at changing the advisory block and reducing all 6 periods by 2 minutes. It is still a work in progress. Ms. Viladenis reminded the School Committee that this new block is not only an opportunity for remediation but also enrichment and skill building.

Mr. Pierce made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the JGMS School Improvement Plan for the 2011-2012 school year as presented tonight.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. O'Gara

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

JGMS Student Handbook

Mr. Peter Chapman presented some proposed changes to the 2011-2012 JGMS Student Handbook. He explained that the changes are a product of conversations with administrators, the JGMS Leadership Team, faculty, staff, students and the School Council. A few of the major changes were discussed. (All were highlighted in a memo given to the School Committee).

Mr. Chapman said that the Handbook includes a contract for parents and students to address student aggression. This document was approved the School Committee in late 2010. The School Committee suggested having an incident report handy possibly in the student agenda along with other important forms.

He also discussed adding a new document that clearly describes the student services available at JGMS (Document B). Ms. Bickford thinks the Guidance Counselor section is in a different voice and needs to be revised.

The Handbook also describes how a placement test will be given (in math and English) for new out-of-state or private school students to help with placement decisions. The Handbook also clarified Choice Class scheduling.

Mr. Chapman also pointed out changes in the Attendance Policy. The biggest change is a START Team has been established to help with students who have a combination of 20 unexcused absences or tardies. Parents will be asked to attend a START meeting to try and figure out a way to resolve school attendance issues.

Mr. Chapman asked to include a change in cafeteria seating policy. They would like to have required seating at the beginning of the year for all sixth graders. Mr. Chapman and Ms. Viladenis explained that the transition from 5th grade to 6th grade can be overwhelming for some students. There tends to be a lot of table hopping, shouting, and no listening in the cafeteria at first. So they would like to start the year with required seating for 6th graders. Ms. Viladenis feels that this will also take the social pressure off students trying to find friends to eat with. The School Committee members discussed this issue at length and asked that the policy only be for a short period of time in the beginning of the year, as a transition only. They do not want to make it arbitrary or punitive since students relish the JGMS freedom compared to elementary schools.

Mr. Pierce made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the 2011-2012 JGMS Student Handbook as amended tonight.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. O’Gara

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

7. School Choice

Mr. Pierce made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee not accept the School Choice program for the 2011-2012 school year.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Bickford

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

8. Superintendent’s Report

Dr. LaCroix said that there are two meetings left this year, May 24th and June 14th.

The Strategic Plan process has begun. Several community members have been invited to join. An online survey will be issued in September to all residents. A paper version will also be available. The goal is to have a draft of a plan to review in February 2012.

9. Liaison Reports

Ms. Bickford reported that the next CEC meeting will discuss the town’s Capital Management system.

10. Minutes for Review

Ms. Bickford made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the minutes of the March 8, 2011 School Committee meeting as amended.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. O’Gara

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

Ms. O’Gara made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the minutes of the April 5, 2011 School Committee meeting as amended.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Pierce

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

11. Adjournment

Mr. Pierce made the following motion:

MOVED: Motion, at 11:05, to adjourn to Executive Committee for contract negotiations to reopen.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. O’Gara

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Hafer Yes

Ms. Seibert Yes

Mr. Pierce Yes

Ms. Bickford Yes

Ms. O’Gara Yes

OPEN SESSION II

Bedford High School – Principal’s Conference Room

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

At 11:30 p.m., Mr. Hafer called to order the meeting of the Bedford School Committee. Other members present included Ms. Seibert, Ms. Bickford, Ms. O’Gara, and Mr. Pierce. Dr. LaCroix was also in attendance.

2. Report of Executive Session Motion

Mr. Hafer reported that in the Executive Session held on May 10, 2011, the School Committee approved the following motion, with a vote of 5-0:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve an increase in non-contract personnel compensation of \$27,709 for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2011.

3. Adjournment

Ms. Seibert made the following motion:

MOVED: Motion to adjourn at 11:37 p.m.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. O’Gara.

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Hafer Yes

Ms. Seibert Yes

Ms. Bickford Yes

Ms. O’Gara Yes

Mr. Pierce Yes

School Committee Secretary

Date

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE

May 10, 2011

Exhibits/Documents

- Job Description for Bridge/Alternative Teacher – BHS
- Job Description for Computer Lab Assistant
- Job Description for Instructional Technology Specialist
- Job Description for Reading Specialist
- Job Description for Student Owned Strategies Teacher
- Job Description for METCO Program Liaison
- Job Description for Speech Language Therapist
- BHS School Improvement Plan for 2011-2012
- JGMS 2011-2012 School Improvement Plan
- Memo to Dr. LaCroix regarding proposed changes to the 2011-2012 JGMS Student Handbook
- Draft of March 8, 2011 Minutes
- Draft of April 5, 2011 Minutes

