

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
June 14, 2016
Bedford High School - Large Group Instruction Room

1. Call to Order

At 7:40 p.m., Mr. McAllister called to order the meeting of the Bedford School Committee. Other members present included Mr. Brosgol, Mr. Pierce, and Ms. Santiago. Ms. Guay was absent.

2. Comments from Public

None

3. Personnel Report

Mr. Sills announced the following:

Resignation:	Kathy VanKuilenburg	METCO Administrative Assistant District
Appointments:	Rhonda Poole	Food Services JGMS
	John King	STEM Instructor JGMS
	Heather Galante	BHS Principal

4. Girl Scout Presentation

Gianna Missiti, Lindsey Steele, Nicole Steele, and Sabrina Turner – all 5th grade girl scouts – presented to the School Committee. They explained some of the volunteer work that they and the other girl scouts do in town. These girls are working on a special award and as part of this award they are trying to secure a regular place for the girl scouts to meet in town. The young ladies explained how difficult it can be to meet outside of school. They also explained that they tend to have a difficult time finding space in school buildings because the recreation department and the schools have so much going on after school that space is severely limited.

The School Committee members were impressed with the girls' presentation and asked many questions about scouting. Both Mr. Sills and Mr. McAllister said that they would try to help them out though Mr. Sills cautioned them that what he does for one group, he often has to do for all.

5. General Contract Bid Award; Lane School Building Project

Mr. Alani explained that after Town Meeting approval, Facilities solicited bids for the Lane School Building project. Three bids were received and evaluated. The Building Committee is recommending that the award go to New England Builders. The bid includes doing the alternative 1 option – the main office reconfiguration while still carrying a 10% contingency plan. The cost to award this contract is \$3,063,000.

Mr. Pierce said he would like to look at the alternative parking plan (not part of this contract) at a later date. Mr. Sills said there is a place holder for a new playground in the FY' 18 budget and this may help make the parking lot expansion more affordable. Mr. Alanis said he hopes that DPW could also do some of the work (paving) to reduce the cost.

Mr. McAllister asked what types of background checks we did on the contractor. Mr. Alani said that the contractor and the subcontractors are all registered with the State. It is also the same contractor we worked with on the Town Hall, which has been a very positive experience. The contractor also has a good DCAMM rating- a state building agency.

Mr. McAllister said that it is great that we are still on time with the project.

Justin, a representative from TBA, said he really appreciates Bedford's consistent communications and responsiveness. He said he will continue to work with the town and try to come up with a way to get the parking expansion project done.

Mr. Sills thanked Justin for taking time to meet with a fourth grade class to discuss the project.

Mr. Brosgol made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the Lane addition and renovation construction project bid for the base and alternate "I" and award it to New England Builders and Contractors in the amount of \$3,063,000 for the base and \$260,000 for the alternate "I" for a total of \$3,323,000.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Santiago

MOTION APPROVED: 4-0

6. Math Class Name Change

Dr. Turner, Principal of Bedford High School, asked the School Committee to approve a course name change for math. Apparently, State universities and the NCAA will not accept a "Personal Finance" class as a math requirement. Therefore, the name will be changed to Business Math. No other changes will be made to the course.

Ms. Santiago made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the name change for the Personal Finance course to "Business Math" effective 2016-17 school year.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Brosgol

MOTION APPROVED: 4-0

7. BHS School Improvement Plan and Student Handbook 2016-17

Handbook

Dr. Turner explained that this year, there are no significant changes to the Student Handbook. All changes are clerical in nature. However, the Assistant Principals will be looking at possibly revising the cell phone usage policy and the accompanying discipline code. Also, there have been a lot of students arriving late to school. This policy and procedure may be updated as well.

Mr. Pierce said he heard that teachers have a different practices with dealing with tardy students. Dr. Turner agreed that there is inconsistency in implementing the policy and consequences. He would like to approach the problem by looking for ways to change behavior rather than implementing punishments.

Ms. Santiago made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the changes to the Bedford High School Student Handbook 2016-17 with minor amendments as presented and discussed tonight.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Pierce

MOTION APPROVED: 4-0

2015-16 School Year

Dr. Turner reviewed some major highlights of the past year:

Ms. Capodanno, Ms. Morrison, and Ms. DellaValle have proposed some new ways to communicate regularly with faculty and families regarding struggling students. They are trying to develop a process that identifies who is responsible for the student, what signs are evident about the struggle, what supports are in the classroom, and how the supports are coordinated.

Dr. Turner said this is good work. The complexities of supporting students has been identified. There is high expectations for all students. Discrepancies in common expectations have been discovered – even within the same department and within the same levels. This year, the teachers have identified what they want students to know at all levels and what they are expected to do at each level.

Dr. Turner also noted that teachers have had professional development days that focus on cultural proficiency and diversity. In November, the day consisted of symposium style presentations on topics such as anxiety, race, gender identity, and ELL. BHS teachers led these symposiums. Everyone really appreciated these presentations and the organization of the entire day. Following professional days also examined how to make XBlock better. Next year 20 teachers will lead the 9th grade students in XBlock with more advisory focus.

Dr. Turner said that all in all, the teachers at the high school are committed educators who focus on students first. The culture is such that teachers recognize that it is good to learn from one another and to push back to one another all in an effort to help students.

2016-17 School Improvement Plan

Dr. Turner said the plan is building on past objectives and that it is purposely open ended so that the new Principal can add to it.

1. Identify struggling students
2. Ensure high expectations for all students. Ensure there are common expectations at all levels
3. Continue to share strategies around use of technology, cultural proficiency, and intervention strategies

Since this is Dr. Turner’s last presentation to the School Committee, Mr. Sills thanked Dr. Turner for leading the high school over the last several years.

Mr. Pierce also thanked Dr. Turner for his leadership. He did ask about any strategies for students who “coast” through high school.

Dr. Turner said that Mrs. Morrison has really transformed student achievement beyond basic academic and MCAS support. Her focus is on how we can identify students who need support and what can we do to help them? The schoolwide discussions on levelling also lead to discussions on why capable students are not productive. These discussions will lead to ways to better serve our students.

Mr. Brosgol asked if Dr. Turner has turned to other schools to learn new ways to teach tolerance. Dr. Turner said no, most of the work has been internal. He said many district turn to us for advice.

Mr. Brosgol asked if students have become active about any social issues. Dr. Turner said that the school’s Social Justice League will look to define what our students need to support

differences. Also, the Peer Leaders will help too. The Gender Studies course is good too because it teaches students to ask important questions.

Mr. Brosgol said that it seems like it is important for students to strike a good balance between doing your best and not being too anxious about it. Dr. Turner agreed and said that this past year, there was a speaker who addressed student anxiety with the staff. It was very well received.

Mr. McAllister said he likes the goals and is pleased that they are general in nature for the new Principal.

Dr. Turner thanked the School Committee and Superintendent Sills. He said Bedford is a tremendous district to work in and he leaves with mixed feelings.

Mr. Pierce made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the Bedford High School School Improvement Plan for 2016-17 as presented.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Santiago

MOTION APPROVED: 4-0

9. Residency Issue

Mr. Sills explained an unusual circumstance with regards to verification of a Bedford residency. He reminded the Committee that students need to reside in Bedford in order to attend any Bedford school since we do not participate in School Choice. Recently, Mr. Sills has learned that there are two properties in town that overlap into Billerica. These two properties have a Bedford address and are paying taxes to both communities but the majority of property tax is paid to Billerica.

This situation was brought to Mr. Sills's attention by the builder of one of the properties. The builder apparently called the school department and asked for clarification. He was told in writing that if a property had a Bedford address, then residents there could attend Bedford schools. The builder built the home assuming residents would go to Bedford schools.

Unfortunately, this is not correct in this instance. The majority of property tax is paid to Billerica, while Bedford receives a nominal amount. The School Committee needs to consider what to do about this situation. Mr. Sills also learned that a neighboring home is in the same situation and family members in this home have attended Bedford schools for many years.

After discussion, Mr. McAllister summarized options:

- 1) Allow the situation to remain as is – do nothing
- 2) Tell the families that the students need to attend Billerica Schools
- 3) Come to an agreement with Billerica to pay Bedford the amount of money owed for providing education to the residents
- 4) Come to an agreement with current families only. (Will this hurt future sale of new home?)

Mr. Pierce suggested that the town and schools look to see if there are any other houses in town that straddle a neighboring town. Also, to examine if these families have other "rights" in town, like voting at Town Meeting. Mr. Pierce also suggested looking to see if there is any other similar situations in other towns.

Mr. Sills said he would do more research on this issue. He told the School Committee members that there may be a summer meeting to discuss or take action.

10. Superintendent's Evaluation

Per law, the School Committee must publicly evaluate the Superintendent. Mr. Sills completed a self-assessment and gave it to Mr. McAllister who shared it with School Committee members. Mr. McAllister in turn evaluated whether there is enough evidence to determine if Mr. Sills exceeded or met goals or whether his performance was unsatisfactory.

Mr. McAllister thanks Mr. Sills for a detailed self- evaluation. He briefly reviewed some of the goals and evidence. School Committee members had the entire document to review prior to the meeting.

Highlights of Evidence:

- The district-wide vision is consistent and clear
- Mr. Sills knows effective classroom standards across the district
- Mr. Sills models excellent effort
- Mr. Sills is a tireless advocate for students with learning difficulties or struggles
- Mr. Sills is committed to a fair evaluation process
- Data drives decisions throughout the district
- Facilities are top quality/good relations with Facilities Director
- Mr. Sills works hard to hire quality teachers and administrators (as demonstrated in the recent Principal search)
- Mr. Sills complies with the many mandates and advocates to change those that are not in the best interest of students.
- Mr. Sills understands that family and community are essential to his position

All in all, Mr. McAllister recommends that Mr. Sills be ranked “proficient” in the four professional practice goals and the one student learning goal.

Mr. McAllister read a very positive summary of Mr. Sills’ performance. School Committee members supported the statement and the entire evaluation.

Mr. Sills thanked the School Committee members for giving him such a positive evaluation. He also thanked his Administrative team. He said, “I am fortunate to have a knowledgeable and supportive School Committee.”

11. School Committee Roles for 2016-17 School Year

School Committee members discussed changing leadership roles for next school year. Ms. Guay said she is not comfortable becoming the Chairperson at this time. Therefore, members agreed to not rotate positions. All members agreed to make no changes at this time to the leadership roles of the School Committee.

12. EDCO Articles of Agreement Amendment

Mr. Sills reported that the town of Wellesley has decided to drop out of the EDCO Collaborative because it is too far away from EDCO now that it is located in Bedford. Therefore, Mr. Sills presented an amended EDCO Agreement for School Committee to review and sign. He explained that there were no other substantial changes. The School Committee agreed to sign the new Amendment.

13. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Sills presented two new job descriptions for the School Committee to review. He presented a description for the high school, "Teaching Assistant – Campus Aide" and one for the elementary schools, "K-5 Math Instructional Coach". School Committee members agreed to review but did not want to vote to approve them until the next meeting.

Mr. Coelho asked the School Committee to vote to authorize a zero-fund transfer to cover the FY 2016 expense of the McKinney-Vento (homeless) transportation.

Mr. Brosgol made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee authorize the request of a zero-fund transfer from the Town Finance Committee to cover the FY2016 McKinney-Vento Homeless

Transportation account overage not to exceed \$83,819.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Pierce

MOTION APPROVED; 4-0

Mr. Coelho also asked the School Committee to delegate signing authority for the summer.

Ms. Santiago made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee delegate signatory authority for contracts during the summer 2016 time frame up until the next regularly scheduled School Committee meeting in September 2016 as follows:

Contracts with value up to \$10,000 - Director of Finance

Contract with value up to \$24,999 – Superintendent of Schools

Contract with value of \$25,000 and over – School Committee Chair

This includes all capital projects authorized and appropriated at the March 2016 Annual Town Meeting.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Pierce

MOTION APPROVED: 4-0

Mr. Pierce asked for a reporting of all contracts signed in the summer at one of the early School Committee meetings.

Mr. Coelho also asked School Committee to declare a list of surplus items which he plans to either sell, donate or dispose in accordance with state procurement laws. He distributed a memo with all of the items to the School Committee to review.

Mr. Pierce made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee declare the items listed on the memo dated 6/10/2016 from Mr. Coelho as surplus so the school department can sell, donate or dispose in accordance to state procurement laws.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Santiago

MOTION APPROVED: 4-0

14. Liaison Reports

None

15. Minutes for Review

Mr. Pierce made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the minutes of the May 3, 2016 School Committee meeting.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Santiago
MOTION APPROVED: 4-0

16. Adjournment

Ms. Santiago made the following motion.

MOVED: Motion to adjourn at 9:45 p.m. to Executive Session to discuss salary adjustments for non-union employees, not to reopen.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Pierce

MOTION APPROVED 4-0

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. McAllister	Yes
Ms. Guay	Absent
Mr. Brosgol	Yes
Mr. Pierce	Yes
Ms. Santiago	Yes

School Committee Secretary

Date

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE

June 14, 2016

Exhibits/Documents

- Superintendent's Evaluation Goals 2015-16
- EDCO Agreement Amendment
- Surplus List from David Coelho dated June 10, 2016
- Draft of minutes from May 3, 2016 School Committee meeting