

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
February 28, 2017
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 Ms. Guay, Mr. Pierce, Mr. Brosgol and Ms. Santiago. Mary Manning, Student Representative was also in attendance.

2. Comments from Public

None

3. Personnel Report

Nicole O'Toole is seeking permission for five students to attend the All-State Music festival in Boston on March 9 through March 11, 2017. These students had to audition for participation in this event. The students will miss only one day of school (March 9th) and will cost \$325 per student. The schools will be charged \$485 for chaperone's hotel.

Mr. Pierce made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the field trip for five Bedford High School students to attend the All-State Music Festival on March 9-11, 2017 in Boston at a cost of \$325 per student and \$485 for the school to pay for chaperone's hotel.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Guay

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

Mr. Sills also presented the field trip for the 6th grade class to attend Nature's Classroom on October 18-20, 2017. This will be the fifth year this field trip is offered to 6th graders as it fosters an understanding of the environment and builds community for the students as they enter middle school. The cost will be \$275 per student and no cost to the schools. The middle school does a lot of fundraising for this trip so that all may attend regardless of ability to pay.

Mr. Brosgol made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the out-of-state field trip for the 6th grade to attend Nature's Classroom in Freedom, NH on October 18-20, 2017 at a cost of \$275 per student and no cost to the schools.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Santiago

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

Mr. Sills asked the School Committee to approve the high school field trip to the state DECA Competition to be held on March 9- 11, 2017 at the Marriott Copley and Hynes Convention Center in Boston. Nineteen students will attend and all have won a spot to compete in this championship. The cost to the students is \$430 per student and no cost to the schools.

Mr. Pierce made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the field trip to the DECA State Championship in Boston, MA for nineteen high school students on March 9-11, 2017 at a cost of \$430 per student and no cost to the schools.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Santiago

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

Mr. Sills will present the field trip for the fifth grade class to go to Take Flight Ariel Adventures in Kittery, Maine at the next meeting.

Mr. Sills asked the School Committee to award the contract to build the vertical wheelchair lift at the press box at Sabourin field in order to comply with State and Federal ADA requirements. Mr. Sills said that the only bid that was received was from Garavanta USA, Inc. for \$31,700. Mr. Sills explained that the bid is based on our facilities department doing some of the related prep and electrical work.

Ms. Guay made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee award the contract for building the vertical wheel chair lift at the press box at Sabourin Field to Garavanta USA, Inc. at a cost of \$31,700.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Pierce

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

Mr. Sills also asked the School Committee to accept a gift of \$50 from Lueders Environmental, Inc. This organization makes an annual donation to the Bedford Public Schools.

Ms. Santiago made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee accept the \$50 contribution from Lueders Environmental, Inc. to the school department.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Pierce

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

The School Committee thanked Mr. Lueders for making this generous donation.

5. High School Peer Leader's Presentation

Ms. Galante introduced this year's Peer Leaders to the School Committee. Peer Leaders are a select group of juniors and seniors who are in a Peer Leadership Wellness class. The focus of the class is to acquaint students with information about current social issues and to try to make Bedford High School are more cohesive community. Peer Leaders apply and are selected based on their potential leadership skills. Ms. Ham and Ms. Martel are the teachers for the Peer Leaders.

The Peer Leaders who attended and presented at the meeting were Julianna Byington, Helen Pulizzi, Katie Pinney, Amy Martin, Lauren Sullivan and Seren Parikh.

The students discussed this year's focus – instituting a character campaign. Each student introduced the School Committee to their campaign. For example, one campaign was "Trust" and another was "Fairness". The students were very enthusiastic about the work they have done and what is planned for the future. Each campaign had a communications and activities plan.

The students (and Mrs. Galante) also talked about Community Day, which was held earlier this year. This year, the Peer Leaders had many activities planned for the entire BHS community which focused on unity. Many of the activities were about reducing stress and making connections with one another. Mrs. Galante noted that this year's Community Day did a better job of involving the teachers too. She said, "It was truly an all school event, not just a student event." Mrs. Galante thanked the many community sponsors who supported this special day at the high school. The Peer Leaders are looking into the feasibility of holding another Community Day – or maybe a day of service - this spring.

Ms. Galante also noted that she relies on the Peer Leaders quite a bit. She often visits their classroom to hear what they are working on and to bounce ideas she has off of them. She is proud of their work and thinks that they are all “courageous” in what they do to try to make Bedford High School a more welcoming school for all.

Mr. McAllister thanked the students for coming in to speak to the School Committee tonight. He believes they are truly providing great leadership for the school.

Mary Manning, student representative, said that she is also a Peer Leader. She said that everyone works really hard and that many students apply to be a Peer Leader.

Mr. Pierce asked what the students have learned. Lauren Sullivan replied that she is more aware of issues and participating in Peer Leadership has helped her build leadership skills. Helen Pulizzi said she learned that it is important to listen to everyone’s ideas and to then figure out how to work together on an idea, even if it was not your idea.

Mr. Brosgol noted that there was only one male in the group tonight and asked if many boys participated. Ms. Galante said that yes there were boys, but only about 6 out of 50 total.

Mr. Brosgol asked the students if they had time to reflect on their activities. Helen Pulizzi said yes that this was part of the class.

Mr. McAllister encouraged the current Peer Leaders to encourage their friends and acquaintances to try-out for next year.

Mr. Sills said that the Peer Leaders make him very proud.

6. 2016-2017 District Goals – Midyear Update

Mr. Sills reported on his status of meeting the 2016-2017 District Goals. He began the presentation by reviewing the foundational work that is done in order to support the goals.

Foundational accomplishments include:

- Successfully established a FY’18 budget that met programmatic, enrollment and special education needs while also meeting town financial guidelines. (Final step is Town Meeting approval in late March)
- Supporting the new Assistant Superintendent and new High School Principal transitions
- Lane School expansion project is on budget and on time
- The Space Needs Task Force has been reconvened to address Davis needs.
- Contract negotiations with the BEA are underway

Mr. Sills said that key learning challenges in the district have been identified. Reading comprehension and writing improvements in the middle school and grades 3-5 are needed especially in high needs subgroups.

Mr. Sills then discussed efforts and initiatives that are underway under each of the key goals. Highlights of this follows (a complete document may be found on the District website):

Goal: Coherent, Higher Order Thinking Curriculum/Student-centered learning

- Introduced concept of students being curators of their own work

- Continue with Common Assessment reviews to ensure they reflect higher order thinking skills.
- Looking to acquire a new Data Management Systems to help perform longitudinal analysis.
- Continue to integrate technology to deepen learning
- Teachers are learning how to integrate engineering and coding into everyday lessons. (Also developing a coding curriculum)

Mr. Sills then gave some school specific initiatives. For example, Davis School is focusing on writing expectations and use of writing rubrics to assess students. Lane School is focusing on helping students become more discerning readers. At the middle school, the focus is on “making thinking visible”. BHS is developing student’s capacity for self- reflection.

Mr. Sills also touched upon the district’s focus on continuing to integrate technology to support its instructional priorities. Several examples from each school were presented.

Goal: Equity, Diversity and Community: Teaching All Students

Mr. Sills described the sustained and comprehensive process underway to recruit, hire and support educators of color. He also discussed the recently completed work by the Religious and Cultural Holidays Task Force. Survey results and initial recommendations would be presented to the School Committee in March.

Mr. Sills also reviewed the SAIL program at Davis, the expansion of the Integrated Pre-School, the STEP program, and co-teaching as examples of successful in-house special education programs.

Other initiatives include

- Davis School holds all school assemblies to help the students understand diversity as well as what makes each unique and special.
- Lane teachers read specific multicultural books as a way to surface conversations about race and diversity.
- BHS had a Professional Development day focusing on building community and cultural proficiency. They also identified students who do not have connections with adults in the building and are planning on taking steps to reach out to these kids.
- JGMS is working on the middle school Tenacity Challenge to be held on April 29th.
- JGMS staff read and discussed the book, “Whistling Vivaldi” to help with cultural proficiency.

Goal: Collaborative Professional Culture

Mr. Sills noted the following:

- Exploring opportunities for teachers to observe each other’s practice and to learn from one another. The Ed Camp model at the high school is spreading to the other schools.
- Improving scheduling and coordination of early release Wednesdays in order to strengthen teams/PLCs collaborative work.
- Continue to push back at the state level against those mandates that impede effective teaching and learning.

Goal: Strengthen Communication and Deepen Community Support

- Convene a Task Force to review and modify the five year strategic plan.

- Mr. Sills plans on involving students in the development of the district's brochure/progress report and video.
- Create a Technology Advisory panel comprised of parents, academics, and local business personnel.
- Continue to increase opportunities for teachers and students to present their work to the School Committee and the broader community.
- Update and maintain the website and promote blogs and social media to communicate district vision and good works.

All members of the School Committee thanked Mr. Sills for presenting a clear and comprehensive review. All agreed that there is a lot going on in our district.

7. Minutes for Review

Mr. Pierce made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the minutes from the January 17, 2017

School Committee meeting.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Brosgol

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

8. Future Agenda

Ms. Guay would like to review the policy and practice of what students can and cannot bring to school and why this policy exists. She received a lot of questions after Valentine's Day.

Mr. McAllister reminded everyone that tonight is Mr. Pierce's last School Committee meeting. Mr. Pierce is not running for re-election of the School Committee but he has decided to run for Selectman. Mr. Pierce thanked Mr. Pierce for his years of hard work for the Bedford Public Schools. He thanked Ed for mentoring each new School Committee member and for his especially thoughtful work when it came to budget development and analysis. Mr. McAllister said that the School Committee was going to miss Mr. Pierce's institutional knowledge.

Other members of the Committee expressed their gratitude and how much they were going to miss working with Mr. Pierce.

Mr. Sills said that local government works because of dedicated people like Mr. Pierce. Mr. Pierce's deep values and common sense will be missed.

Mr. Coelho thanked Mr. Pierce for being a huge resource to him and helping the schools' have such a successful relationship with the town especially when it comes to finances.

Mr. Pierce said that he is embarrassed by the process but thankful to hear his colleagues' thoughts. He has learned a lot from each member – current and past. "It was not an easy decision to leave the School Committee as it has been a rewarding learning experience."

9. Adjournment

Mr. Brosgol made the following motion:

MOVED: Motion to adjourn at 9:40 p.m., not to reopen.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Santiago

MOTION APPROVED 5-0

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. McAllister **Yes**

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

School Committee Secretary

Date

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE

February 28, 2017

Exhibits/Documents

- Presentation: 2016-17 District Goals Midyear Update - Achievement Highlights
- Draft of minutes from the January 17, 2017 School Committee meeting