

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
October 7, 2014
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 Ms. Guay, Ms. Seibert and Mr. Pierce. Mr. McAllister was absent.

2. Comments from Public

None

3. Personnel Report

Mr. Sills presented an updated Custodial job description. After review, Mr. Pierce suggested that Mr. Sills consolidate some of the job functions since many seem repetitive. Mr. Sills agreed to do this and bring it back for approval.

Mr. Sills announced the following personnel items:

Jane DelGobbo	Maternity leave of absence from Lane School	
Estelle Chase	Long term sub for Ms. DelGobbo at Lane	
Kristina Kerwood	Secretary to Business Administrator	System
Ron Scaltreto	Athletics Site Manager	Facilities
Elizabeth Billouin	Athletics Site Manager	BHS
Sophia Grammenos	Assistant Indoor Track	BHS

4. MCAS Presentation

Dr. Jackson reported the 2014 MCAS results. She began by reviewing the reasons why districts/states test:

- To improve teaching and learning
- To improve school/district accountability
- To improve student accountability

Dr. Jackson reminded everyone that all public school students must take MCAS exams including those with special needs and anyone in an ELL program that has been in the United States for more than one year.

Dr. Jackson noted that since 2013, MCAS results are analyzed and reported with an improvement measure (“PPI”). Schools and districts are now classified as a level 1 – 5. To date, more than 80% schools are classified as a level 1 or 2. These schools have successfully closed the achievement gaps. BHS is a level 1. There are 500 level one schools in the state.

Dr. Jackson said that the test results show that the district needs to focus on improving the transition years, For example, students in grades 2 and grades 5 need to be able to transition smoothly to grades 3 and 6.

Dr. Jackson also noted, using growth charts, that the Skills Center at JGMS is making a difference. The graphs highlighted the student’s growth. She also believes that the JGMS After School Math Program for METCO students has helped the African American/Black subgroup improve their scores.

Dr. Jackson summarized as follows:

- Struggling students need more time on task. They need more high quality and content rich time.
- The district should continue to raise the bar for students in grades 5 as they transition to grade 6.
- Continue the Skills Center model, possibly at Lane School.
- Teachers need to know the curriculum in grades below and above them. For example, a 4th grade teacher needs to understand the third grade curriculum as well as the fifth grade curriculum.

Dr. Jackson reported that data on the DESE site is extensive. She gave the School Committee many links to find more information such as chart data, district profiles, and even a “how-to” on comparing MCAS results with next year’s PARCC results.

Ms. Guay said she was pleased to see that the Skills Center has a positive impact on student scores. Dr. Jackson said yes, that it is critical that the district pay attention to the subgroups and that the Skills Center is one good way to help them.

Mr. Sills noted that the Special Education subgroup still needs the district’s attention.

Ms. Seibert wondered what happened to the fifth grade cohort when they took MCAS tests in middle school since scores went down. She asked whether Dr. Jackson thought that maybe something was wrong with that test. Dr. Jackson said that it is more complex. Perhaps it is the middle school learning structure or the lack of learning expectations in 6th grade?

Ms. Guay thinks it is a good thing that the data indicates where we need to do a better job. Ultimately this will benefit these students.

5. Superintendent Goals for 2014-2015

Mr. Sills explained that all educators, including him, are in the process of setting Professional Practice Goals and a Student Achievement Goal. As Superintendent, he must make his goals public.

The Superintendent Goals for 2014-2015 are as follows:

1. Assess and effectively address enrollment trends across the district.
 - Mr. Sills has engaged in an enrollment study.
 - He will create a budget that takes into account class size and pressure.
 - He will begin the MSBA (Massachusetts process for school building renovations) process.
 - He will present his findings once the enrollment study is complete.
2. Build the Leadership Team’s shared and individual instructional leadership and collaborative building capacities.
 - The leadership team will go on bi-weekly school visits to observe teaching and PLCs.
 - Mr. Sills will implement regular building walk-throughs.
 - Mr. Sills will hire a new Assistant Superintendent.
3. Strengthen communications between district and community and between schools and families.

- Mr. Sills will help town committees and boards understand what is going on in schools today.
 - The schools will host another technology showcase for the people of Bedford.
4. Improve math skills for all subgroups in grade 6. (This is the student learning goal)
- Mr. Sills will set achievement goals for grade 6 math.
 - Special education practices in math will align better with classroom strategies.

Mr. Pierce noted that the student learning goals seems to be very narrowly focused. Mr. Sills said that looking at these classroom practices and trying to help this certain subgroup, all students will ultimately benefit. Mr. Sills feels it is appropriate to have a narrow goal, to identify an achievement gap and to address the deficiencies. This is what is expected for student achievement goals.

Mr. Pierce said he needs to understand how to measure this goal within the big picture.

Ms. Seibert suggested using other evidence, beyond MCAS data, as a measurement for the student learning goal. Mr. Sills agreed.

6. Capital Plan

Mr. Sills informed the School Committee that he would be presenting the six year Capital Request plan to the Capital Expenditure Committee. He would like to discuss the various projects on the list with the School Committee tonight.

Mr. Coelho explained that the Capital Expenditure Committee will review the proposed projects. The School Committee will present the need for the project. The School Committee may choose to rank proposed projects, but the Capital Expense Committee will not be doing this as they did in the past.

The School Committee agreed that they need to be prepared to explain the need for each project and to explain the plan and need for building expansions. They also agreed that the technology plan needs to be clarified.

Mr. Sills suggested that the School Committee focus on the technology plan tonight. School Committee members agreed.

Mr. Sills began the discussion by pointing out that the schools have gotten behind in cyclical replacements for technology, especially at the elementary schools. He noted that in the past, technology has been funded mainly through the building renovation process. Now that these processes are complete, we need to find a funding stream to keep up with technology equipment and infrastructure. Classroom replacement technology purchases will now be part of the capital process.

Mr. Sills and Mr. Coehlo presented slides that defined technology needs at each school for the 2016 school year. Mr. Sills noted that hand held devices are leased and will continue to be part of the operating budget. Mr. Sills also noted that the schools will be beginning to introduce students to computer programming beginning in the elementary level.

Ms. Seibert and Mr. Pierce asked Mr. Sills to provide information on what the schools have right now for technology and compare it to what we will need.

7. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Sills said he was very proud of how the staff, students, police, and fire reacted and responded to the recent bomb scare at the high school. He has learned that several school districts had similar threats and that the FBI is involved. He does not believe it was done by a local person.

Mr. Sills explained that the Facing History initiative is extensive. Lane and Davis teachers are ready to go be trained. Mr. Sills thanked the Bedford Education Foundation for contributing significant funding to these efforts.

Mr. Sills said that seniors at the high school have decided to hold the prom locally – at Tewksbury Country Club. It will be held on a Sunday night this year. All students will take coach busses to and from the event. Administration supports these changes.

Mr. Sills said that he has sent a letter, along with fifty other school districts, requesting that the Massachusetts accreditation process be changed.

8. Liaison Reports

Mr. Pierce reported that the Finance Committee has begun to discuss the financial models to be used for the budget process. Also, the town is seeing an additional \$1-2 million in new growth revenue. Also, the unused tax levy is higher than originally expected. "All good news."

Ms. Guay announced that the Community Partnership will hold fall flu clinics. Also, the High School Parent Association will be sponsoring a speaker on the dangers of teen age drinking.

Ms Seibert said that EDCO will be hosting an open house in their new Bedford facility.

9. School Committee Meeting Minutes

Mr. Pierce made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the minutes of the May 27, 2014 School Committee meeting as amended.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Seibert

MOTION APPROVED: 3-0-1

Mr. Pierce	Yes
Ms. Seibert	Yes
Mr. McAllister	absent
Ms. Guay	Yes
Mr. Hafer	abstained

10. Future Agenda

Capital Plan discussion with Facilities Director

11. Adjournment

Ms. Seibert made the following motion.

MOVED: Motion to adjourn at 10:15 p.m. to Executive Session to discuss non-salary contract salary adjustments.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Pierce

MOTION APPROVED:4-0

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Pierce	Yes
Ms. Seibert	Yes

Mr. McAllister	absent
Ms. Guay	Yes
Mr. Hafer	Yes

School Committee Secretary

Date

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE

October 7, 2014

Exhibits/Document

- Job description for Custodian position
- Draft of minutes from the May 27, 2014 School Committee meeting
- Presentation: Bedford Public Schools MCAS 2014 dated October 7, 2014
- School Technology Inventory and Renewal reports

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Executive Session
October 7, 2014