

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF
January 28, 2014
Bedford High School - Large Instruction Room

1. Call to Order

At 7:30 p.m., Mr. Pierce called to order the meeting of the Bedford School Committee. Other members present included Ms. Seibert, Mr. Hafer, Mr. McAllister and Ms. Guay. Ms. Emily Moss, student representative was also in attendance.

2. Comments from Public

None

3. Personnel Report

Mr. Griffin asked the School Committee to consider approving two field trip requests. The first one is for permission to take a group of approximately 22 students (members of the Environmental Club) to travel to Merck Forest and Farmland in Rupert, Vermont to tour the farm and learn about sustainable farming techniques and use. The trip is planned for May 30 – June 1, 2014 at a cost of \$100 per student and no cost to the schools.

Mr. Griffin also asked for permission to travel to Belize on February break in 2015. Approximately 18 students will explore and learn about the rainforests of Belize, Mayan culture and coral reefs. The cost will be \$3,100 per student. There will be no cost to the schools.

Ms. Seibert made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the Environmental Club trip to Merck Forest in Vermont on May 30-June 1, 2014 at no cost to the school department.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Hafer

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

Ms. Seibert also made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve a trip to Belize for approximately 18 students during February vacation 2015 at an approximate cost of \$3,100 per student and not cost to the schools.

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

Mr. Shawn Daley is requesting permission for a field trip to Franconia Notch during April 16-18, 2014 for approximately 12 to 14 students from the Bridge Program. The students will miss school but will be learning to develop resiliency, self esteem, social skills and emotional and cognitive coping strategies. The cost will be approximately \$2,000 to the schools. Students will not incur any costs.

Ms. Seibert made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the field trip for 12-14 students in the Bridge Program to travel to Franconia Notch, NH during April 16-18, 2014 at a cost of approximately \$2,000 to be paid out of the Special Education budget.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Hafer

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

4. Presentation: 2014-2015 School Calendar

Mr. Sills presented a proposed school calendar for 2014-2015. The calendar follows the same pattern as the current school calendar. However, Mr. Sills has asked for an extra vacation day on January 2, 2015, which is a Friday.

Ms. Seibert said she has heard from parents asking to increase the winter break to two full weeks since the week of December 22 would only be two days. Mr. Sills said he thought the extra day of January 2, 2015 would be sufficient.

Ms. Seibert made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the 2014-2015 School Calendar as presented and discussed tonight.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Hafer

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

Mr. Pierce commented that he is pleased to see school starts after Labor Day for students.

5. Discussion: FY'15 School Department Budget

Technology

Mr. Sills presented the School Committee with a technology inventory report to help them better understand the technology budget request.

Ms. Seibert asked how deployment of iPads help reduce the numbers of PCs needed by the district. Mr. Sills said that at the High School, a computer lab has closed and that many laptops are being sent to JGMS. However certain classes like Foreign Language, Art, Music and Computer Programming need PCs. So the budget will request some replacements.

Ms. Seibert asked if the high school still had Wyse terminals. Mr. Sills said yes, there are about 120 of them throughout the high school. He commented that although these terminals cost less than a PC, they have been consistently unreliable. They have proved to be a difficult and challenging alternative to PCs.

Mr. Pierce asked Mr. Sills to explain the vision of iPad implementation at the elementary schools. Mr. Sills explained that the vision at Davis is different than the high school. The plan is to have 4 or 5 iPads per classroom and will be used for instructional applications for small group activities. Lane will have two classrooms that will have iPads for all students. The vision here is to use the tool to demonstrate understanding and create content. Special education students at both Lane and Davis will also be able to use iPads.

Mr. Steele asked if the inventory report included donated equipment. Mr. Sills said he would verify.

Mr. Pierce asked if iPads at the elementary school could be used as hoped given the fact that only Phase 1 of the wireless upgrade will be done in FY'2015. Mr. Sills said that many of the applications can be downloaded to the iPad but the use will be somewhat limited and problematic at times.

Impact Aid

Mr. Coelho reported that impact aid for FY'15 is expected to be approximately \$516,000, about \$122,000 more than budgeted. This money will help close the budget gap between the school's desired budget and the Finance Committee's guideline.

Mr. Sills said work is underway to get this impact aid codified with the State so we do not have to fight the battle to get the money each year. Mr. Pierce noted that Representatives Murphy and Gordon have worked to get this bill through the house and would like to make it law.

Ms. Guay asked if there were any plans to seek additional funding to help towns impacted by homelessness through the budget.. Mr. Sills said he did not know but he can report that Rick Reed, Town Manager, recently hosted a meeting with communities affected by use of homeless shelters. Mr. Sills thinks this may be a start for legislative help in the future.

List of proposed reductions from School Committee FY'15 budget recommendations

School Committee members reviewed the proposed list of reductions presented by Mr. Sills. Members discussed the reduction in the Teachers for Scholars Program. Mr. McAllister suggested reducing this program but keep more money in the professional development line item since more teachers can participate in professional development rather than the Teachers for Scholars Program. Mr. Sills agreed.

The School Committee agreed to remove the request for a ninth kindergarten teacher and aide for now. They decided to risk moving forward with eight kindergarten classrooms for the time being.

The School Committee also discussed the pros and cons of eliminating the library aide at the high school. They also reviewed budget line items to see if there was anything they could comfortably do without. All in all, \$706,000 of cuts (from the original budget request) were identified.

Ms. Seibert and Mr. Hafer suggested to stop at this point and to defer any other decisions until after the upcoming meeting with the Finance Committee. School Committee members agreed with this strategy.

Ms. Seibert made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the FY'15 budget request of \$35,845,029.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Hafer

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

6. Superintendent's Goals

Mr. Sills presented his goals again for final review and approval by the School Committee. The School Committee reviewed the goals previously and gave Mr. Sills some comments and edits. After review, Ms. Seibert made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the Superintendent Goals for 2013-2014 as presented on January 22, 2014.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Hafer

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

7. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Sills sadly announced that Mary Koert, former Special Education Director for Bedford Public Schools has passed away earlier this week.

Mr. Sills also reported the EDCO and LABBB are collaborating on developing a new therapeutic setting for high school special education students with emotional challenges. EDCO 's lease is up and they are looking for space that can accommodate an new setting. There is space in Bedford, on Middlesex Turnpike. Mr. Sills hopes this works out and that the new program will be up and running by September 1st.

Mr. Sills announced that the Bedford Public Schools will host a Technology Showcase on March 19th and that all community members are invited and encouraged to attend.

The Facilities Director position has been offered to Tasir Alani, an engineer from Dedham.

Mr. Sills presented a framework for the district's Technology Vision - How does technology fit?

- Technology is a tool for learning
- Learning goals include capable reader, numerically literate, transferable computer skills, etc.
- Instruction needs to support learning goals – student centered, minds on, personalized. Teachers must be able to check for understanding.
- Define types of technology
 - Assistive (Kurzweil, alpha smarts)
 - Discipline specific (calculators, art lab, robotics)
 - Interactive projection (smartboards)
 - Computer labs, laptops for research, writing
 - Mobile devices for one-to-one, collaboration, self- pacing, etc.
- Measure impact of technological tools

Mr. McAllister and Ms. Guay think that the Technology Showcase should follow this framework and show how the iPad can do all of the above.

8. Liaison Reports

None

9. Minutes for Review

Ms. Seibert made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the minutes of the October 22, 2013 School Committee meeting as amended.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Hafer

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

Ms. Seibert made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the minutes of the November 5, 2013 School Committee meeting as amended.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Hafer

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

10. Future Agenda

School Committee meetings will be held on February 4th and 25th to continue budget discussions.

11. Adjournment

Ms. Seibert made the following motion.

MOVED: Motion to adjourn at 10:15 P.M.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Hafer

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

Roll Call Vote:

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

School Committee Secretary

Date

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
January 28, 2014
Exhibits/Documents

- Draft of October 22, 2013 School Committee meeting minutes.
- Draft of November 5, 2013 School Committee meeting minutes.
- Draft of 2014-2015 School Calendar

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Executive Session
January 28, 2014