

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
November 17, 2015
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. Hafer and Mr. Brosgol.

2. Comments from Public

None

3. Personnel Report

Mr. Sills asked the School Committee to approve an out-of-state professional development request for Claire Jones to go to the annual National Alliance of Black School Educators conference in Washington DC on November 18-22, 2015. The costs incurred to travel to and attend will come from the METCO Directors budget and the METCO grant.

Ms. Guay made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve Ms. Claire Jones' attendance to the National Alliance of Black School Educators conference in Washington DC on November 12-22, 2015 at no cost to the school department.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Hafer

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

4. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Sills asked the School Committee to approve and sign a contract with Power Products Corp. for purchasing an emergency generator for Davis School. Mr. Alani, Facilities Director, explained that two vendors submitted bids and Power Products submitted the lowest one and that it is of high quality. Mr. Alani said that the DPW and Facilities Department will do some prep. and electrical work for this project. Therefore, the cost will be \$50,923, much less than originally projected.

Mr. Pierce gave Mr. Alani some minor edits to the contract. The School Committee agreed to sign the contract with these minor edits.

Mr. Sills then reported that NESDEC will present its enrollment projection report to town officials.

Mr. Sills also noted that the DESE voted today to move forward with MCAS version 2.0 rather than PARCC or the existing MCAS exam format. Mr. Sills said he attended the meeting and spoke to the group advocating for a longer time period for rolling out any new test and the importance of NOT reporting results during the trial period. He also pointed out that it will take a long time for districts to get ready to manage an online test due to technology demands and costs. Overall, Mr. Sills said he was pleased with the decision to develop an MCAS 2.0 because it will be our own state test.

Mr. Sills is disappointed to learn the Bedford and the other districts who agreed to do the PARCC test last year will be required to take it again this year.

Mr. Pierce said that if the reason why we have to do PARCC again this year is due to the investment Pearson made to create and implement the test, then we as a district need to be clear that this is the reason.

5. Science, Technology and Engineering Standards (STE) Presentation

Mr. Griffin, Science Program Administrator, presented an overview of the revised STE standards. Mr. Griffin noted that the existing standards were adopted fourteen years ago, so these new ones are certainly welcomed. Science standards in Massachusetts were very inconsistent between districts and schools within the same district. Massachusetts will vote to accept them in 2016.

Bedford, according to Mr. Griffin, has always been ahead of the curve in Science. The curriculum has always incorporated writing and analysis skills and has emphasized linking concepts to the real world.

The new standards will contribute to college and career readiness. Practices will make sure that students can reason scientifically and technologically about the world. There is significant overlap between STE practices and math and ELA practices.

The new standards mean that the goal of teaching will need to shift from facts and concepts to explaining phenomena. Inquiry and design-based learning will not be a separate activity. More student conducted investigations will occur. There will be less memorization of facts and terminology.

Mr. Griffin said that the expected outcomes of integrating these new standards and practices will be an increased mastery of sophisticated subjects, more opportunities to engage in authentic practices and an overall increased interest in STEM. The standards are very detailed. Each school will figure out how to deliver the curriculum.

Mr. Griffin said the JGMS will be transitioning from traditional subject based grade to a spiraled approach – teaching all traditional subjects and ending with a culminating project. More programming and engineering skills will be incorporated.

There will not be any change in structure at the high school. (Grade 9 Physics, Grade 10 Chemistry, Grade 11 Biology). Work will continue on developing practices at the high school level. There will also be a move towards using student portfolios so that student work is passed along to new teachers.

Mr. Griffin summarized by saying that the key to the new standards is to get students:

- to interpret and explain the world around them
- to ask questions and define problems
- to identify and use models to test cause and effect
- to plan and carry out investigations
- to analyze and interpret data
- to use mathematical and computational thinking
- to construct explanations
- to engage in argument from evidence

Mr. Hafer said that the skills required of students are lofty – looks like a big challenge.

Mr. Griffin said that the goal is to give student skills to figure out how to answer big questions.

Mr. Pierce thanked Mr. Griffin for a terrific presentation and he is pleased to see that curriculum will be moving away from rote memorization to more hands on learning.

Mr. Brosgol asked if it would be a challenge to find text books to help with spiral curriculum. Mr. Griffin said yes, that teachers will have to pull from different resources. But the goal is to make science a really integrated process.

Ms. Guay said she thinks the new standards will bring more kids to be interested in science. She was pleased to hear how helpful the BEF have been to the Science department.

Ms. Guay asked about any opportunities to get kids to do more coding. Mr. Griffin said the department is always looking for more coding opportunities at both the middle and high schools. Mr. Sills said that this effort is actually underway K-12.

Mr. Sills noted that Mr. Griffin has been teaching the way of the new standards for years. He thanked Mr. Griffin for his work on presenting these standards tonight.

6. FY'17 Budget

Mr. Sills presented the first look at a maintenance of service budget for FY'2017. He explained that this budget takes a look at the costs of meeting our present obligations – no new staff, no new ODP students, etc. The FY' 17 request for a maintenance of service budget is \$37,614,091, which is a 4.25% increase over last year, FY' 16. Mr. Sills said that this equates to a 4.25% increase over last year. He also noted that 94.2% is nondiscretionary and 76.69% is for salaries.

Mr. Sills explained that projected enrollment for FY' 17 is expected to rise 1.3% from last year. This is based on an updated projection from NESDEC. Their update is based on the fact that single family home sales is expected to continue growing. Enrollment pressure is expected to continue at Davis School.

Mr. Sills handed out a budget breakout for School Committee members to review. He also shared information on School offset accounts.

Mr. Sills noted the following challenges/changes expected for FY'2017:

- Enrollment pressures at Davis School (will likely need 10 classes)
- Autistic cohort at Davis School will be moving on to the next grade and extra support will be needed.
- Title 1 funds are likely to be lower
- There is a need for K-5 ELA curriculum leadership. The work required is very complex.
- The facilities and technology departments are looking for clerical support. Mr. Sills said that this is a legitimate need.
- Davis, Lane and JGMS need some additional ipads,
- Additional robotics/engineering materials are needed.
- Looks like there is a possible need for 3.2 FTEs.

Mr. Sills said he will be presenting this preliminary presentation to the Finance Committee.

Mr. Hafer thanked Mr. Sills for delivering a comprehensive review of the FY' 17 budget request.

7. Liaison Reports

Mr. Hafer reported that the Policies for the fields and recreation facilities has been updated with some minor changes. The School Committee agreed to review and vote the changes at a future date.

Mr. Brosgol reported that Youth and Family Services hopes that the School department will find a way to make “Bedford Unplugged” official next year.

8. Future Agenda

Future meetings for budget season are December 8, 15 and January 12, 19, 26. A vote will be held on 2/2.

Also expect to see

- Vote on Fields Partnership changes
- Class size discussion parameters

9. Adjournment

Mr. Hafer made the following motion.

MOVED: Motion to adjourn at 9:35 p.m.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Guay

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

Roll Call Vote:

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

School Committee Secretary

Date

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
November 17, 2015
Exhibits/Document

- Draft of Use Policies for Athletic Fields and other Recreational Facilities
- FY'17 Budget Preview
- Purchase Contract with Power Products Systems LLC
- Science and Technology Engineering Standards proposal