

**BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**May 26, 2020**  
**Live Virtual Online Meeting using Zoom™ Audio/Video Conference Software**

*\*\* Due to the Covid-19 Crisis, this meeting was live-streamed over the internet using Zoom™ video/audio conferencing software in order to adhere with social distancing measures put in place by Governor Baker. This meeting was open to the public for live chat during Public Comment.*

**1. Call to Order**

At 7:34 p.m., Ms. Santiago called to order the meeting of the Bedford School Committee. Other members present included Mr. Brosgol, Ms. Guay, Ms. Scoville and Mr. Morrison; each member stated their name in a roll call attendance.

**2. Public Comment**

None

**3. Personnel Report**

**INFORMATION ITEMS:**

**Resignations:**

<i>Jaime Reichlen</i>	<i>1.0 Mathematics Teacher</i>	<i>BHS</i>
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**Retirements:**

<i>Kathleen "Kathy" Busa</i>	<i>PT (30 hrs/wk) Library Educational Assistant</i>	<i>JGMS</i>
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**Appointments:**

<i>Sauna Decoteau</i>	<i>1.0 Grade 3 Elementary Teacher for 1 year LOA</i>	<i>Lane</i>
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**Education:**

Elon University  
Elon, North Carolina  
Major: Communications  
Bachelor of Arts  
2015

Boston College  
Chestnut Hill, MA  
Major: Elementary Education  
Master of Education  
2015

**Experience:**

Norwell Public Schools  
Norwell, MA  
Grade 3 Elementary Teacher  
5 years

Placement Step: MA – 05

*Jennifer Ferrari*                      *1.0 Grades 3-5 Visual Arts Teacher*                      *Lane*

Education:                      University of Massachusetts at Amherst  
Amherst, MA  
Major: Art and Communication  
Bachelor of Arts  
2007

Springfield College  
Major: Educational Studies  
Master of Education  
2009

Experience:                      Northbridge High School  
Whitinsville, MA  
Visual Arts Teacher  
5 years

Placement Step: MA – 05

#### **4. FY21 Budget Update**

Mr. Sills shared his review of the FY21 updated budget, which he noted, is a work in progress.

He reviewed a May 26, 2020 draft, which he and all of the school departments have been working hard in collaboration.

- Adjusted Reduction Target for FY21 School budget \$1,711,079.00
- Proposed Reduction Target for FY21 School budget \$1,278,000.00
- FY20 Savings \$86,827.00
- FY21 Budget Changes - Total Reductions identified to date (\$1,027,585.00)

Some savings are due to reduced stipends, extended leases on IPADs, a possible reduction of fall athletics and no administrator raises.

Mr. Sills thanked Ms. Julie Kirrane for her help and support.

Mr. Brosgol asked if the use of the Circuit Breaker funds would result in a low fund balance for the following fiscal year.

Ms. Kirrane is currently at \$120K and she will work to increase the funds in that account.

Ms. Brosgol asked if the incoming ninth graders would have a reduced fall athletics schedule.

Mr. Sills stated that he is not sure what the state will allow and decisions could be made until he had more information but a late start to the season would result in a significant savings.

Mr. Morrison asked for an explanation of the \$200K increase to the substitute budget.

Ms. Kirrane that after a historical review of spending, she made the adjustment due to the possible increase in staff absences. She said that she has made adjustments in other areas to cover the increase.

Mr. Morrison asked if there was more information on the reduction of two FTEs in salary unit A.

Mr. Sills said that they do have an idea of where that reduction would take place.

Mr. Morrison asked how the leadership team feels about these reductions.

Mr. Sills said that it would be tough because the teachers have relied on the teaching assistants and that it will have an effect noting that no one is happy about giving up any of these positions.

Ms. Guay asked if there was any word from the Federal government about money for cleaning supplies for the schools. She also had questions about the early retirement deadline.

Mr. Sills said that he is expecting help from FEMA. As for early retirement, he said that the deadline has been extended from May to June.

Ms. Guay asked if there was an expected reduction in Circuit Breaker funds.

Ms. Kirrane expects to hear more information in early June.

Ms. Guay wondered if DESE was still in the process of meeting with Special Education directors.

Ms. Kirrane noted that the Special Education directors are waiting on guidance for the Extended School Year program.

Ms. Santiago lost her connection at 7:49 p.m. and returned at 7:53 p.m.

Ms. Scoville lost her connection at 8:07 p.m. and returned at 8:11 p.m.

Ms. Santiago noticed that there were potential cuts in the Athletics as well as some tech contracts and asked for information that is more specific.

Mr. Sills said that the iPad leases were not going to be renewed for the year and that technology updates have been pushed off for a year as well. He said that athletic uniforms will not be replaced which will result in a savings as well.

Ms. Santiago asked if there would be a reduction in the JGMS construction project.

Mr. Sills mentioned that the workers have just come back and that he does not anticipate any overtime.

Ms. Kirrane said that the work at JGMS has not been heavily impacted by the closure.

Ms. Scoville asked for clarification on who is included in Unit A and Unit C.

Mr. Sills stated that Unit A is comprised of professional staff such as teachers, counselors and union contracted employees such as principals and vice principals. He said that Unit C is predominantly Educational Assistants and Teaching Assistants. Mr. Sills went on to say that, Impact Aid may be cut but when this happens, he has requested some reserve funds from the Finance Committee.

Ms. Guay believes that some staff may want to go to a 4/5ths schedule.

Mr. Sills said that he would give some that some thought.

Ms. Santiago thinks that this may also be an option for EAs and TAs.

Mr. Brosgol understands why potential cuts are being made to EA and TA positions, but he feels that they play an essential role in learning.

Mr. Sills stated that the decision to reduce some of those positions has not been decided or confirmed.

## **5. Superintendent's Report**

*Mr. Sills briefed the School Committee on new information and his plans for reopening the schools:*

- CDC guidelines have been released
- Still waiting to hear from DESE for the plan for Massachusetts
- Planning on funding from FEMA
- Planning on state funding for technology and CARES Act III Aid
- CARES Act funds to town are \$1.2M, hoping for 60% to 70% for schools
- Plans for 3-sided shields on student desks, masks for younger children may be a challenge for them
- Hoping for full return of elementary students
- Students may eat lunch at their desks, not leaving the classroom
- Hand sanitizing stations in each classroom
- Classrooms and common areas will be cleaned and fogged with disinfectant on a regular basis
- Secondary grades may do a split rotation
- Considering SWIVL (full motion cameras) in classrooms to enhance classroom experience for students at home
- Investing in iPads for kindergarten students
- Students will have Chromebooks to keep at home for learning

- Currently seeking members to form a reopening task force

Mr. Brosgol thanked Mr. Sills.

Mr. Morrissey suggested 3-sided enclosures to have curves instead of corners for thorough cleaning.

Ms. Guay asked if there were any members of the district working with DESE.

Mr. Sills said that there is not anyone at this time.

Ms. Guay suggested that Bedford seek to add an epidemiologist to the task force if available. She also suggested using cafeteria for classrooms to allow more social distancing.

Ms. Scoville asked if the students would be in one classroom all day and if not, how they would travel to a secondary classroom.

Mr. Sills said he would pose that question to the new committee once it has been set up.

Ms. Scoville asked if the students would spend time outdoors for recess and said that she believes that students in the second grade up may have less of a problem with wearing masks than younger students.

Ms. Santiago acknowledged the challenges that will be faced by both teachers and students. She expressed her concern with the use of art supplies, musical instruments and athletics. Ms. Santiago wondered if there were any updates on graduation, given the DESE guidelines.

Mr. Sills said that he was working with Ms. Galante and they hope for an outdoor graduation in August.

*Mr. Sills went on to give an update on the EDCO Collaborative:*

- EDCO has had to reduce staff to make up for their budget deficiencies due to poor financial practices and loss of grant funds
- The town of Lexington, Belmont and Concord have decided to terminate their contracts with the EDCO Collaborative.
- Ms. Nadine Ekstrom, EDCO Collaborative Executive Director has shown a clear and practical plan, although not guaranteed, Mr. Sills would like to continue support EDCO.
- EDCO has a 51 year history
- EDCO has been the source for diversity training for Bedford staff members
- Mr. Sills believes that if Bedford withdraws from the EDCO contract, it may cost the schools up to \$350K
- Mr. Sills hopes that other districts will change their minds and decide not to terminate their relationship with EDCO.

Ms. Santiago asked if there are other resources available to provide the key services that EDCO provides to Bedford.

Mr. Sills said that DESE would not allow EDCO to dissolve until all of the students that they are serving have been placed elsewhere.

Ms. Santiago wanted to clarify that Bedford does not use EDCO for student educational services and her understanding that other agencies may be able to provide the professional development as well as other services to Bedford, but this may be at an increased cost.

Mr. Sills agreed.

*Mr. Brosgol lost connection at 8:44 p.m. and returned to the meeting at 8:45 p.m.*

## **6. Superintendent Search Subcommittee meeting – review of minutes**

*Under the direction of the Town Manager, the School Committee held a meeting of the Superintendent Search Subcommittee to review meeting minutes for approval.*

### ***Call to Order***

At 8:51 p.m., Ms. Santiago called to order the meeting of the Superintendent Search Subcommittee. The members present included Mr. Brosgol, Ms. Santiago and Mr. Sills serving as ex officio; each member stated their name in a roll call attendance.

### ***Public Comment***

None

### ***Minutes***

Mr. Brosgol made the following motion:

**MOVED: Motion approve the Superintendent Search Subcommittee minutes from December 23, 2019 as amended.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Santiago**

**MOTION APPROVED 2-0-0**

<b>Mr. Brosgol</b>	<b>Yes</b>
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<b>Ms. Santiago</b>	<b>Yes</b>
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Mr. Brosgol made the following motion:

**MOVED: Motion approve the Superintendent Search Subcommittee minutes from January 13, 2020.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Santiago**

**MOTION APPROVED 2-0-0**

<b>Mr. Brosgol</b>	<b>Yes</b>
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<b>Ms. Santiago</b>	<b>Yes</b>
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Mr. Brosgol made the following motion:

**MOVED: Motion approve the Superintendent Search Subcommittee minutes from January 23, 2020 as amended.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Santiago**

**MOTION APPROVED 2-0-0**

Mr. Brosgol	Yes
Ms. Santiago	Yes

***Adjournment of the Superintendent Search Subcommittee***

Mr. Brosgol made the following motion:

**MOVED: Motion to adjourn the Superintendent Search Subcommittee meeting at 8:54 p.m. not to reopen.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Santiago**

**MOTION APPROVED 2-0-0**

Mr. Brosgol	Yes
Ms. Santiago	Yes

*The School Committee Meeting resumed regular session at 8:55 p.m.*

Ms. Santiago stated that executive session would be rescheduled to another evening.

**7. Adjournment**

Mr. Morrison made the following motion:

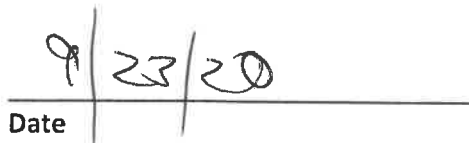
**MOVED: Motion to adjourn at 8:56 p.m. not to reopen.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Brosgol**

**MOTION APPROVED 5-0-0**

Mr. Brosgol	Yes
Ms. Santiago	Yes
Ms. Scoville	Yes
Ms. Guay	Yes
Mr. Morrison	Yes

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
School Committee Secretary

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**May 26, 2020**  
**Exhibits/Documents**

- Personnel Report
- FY21 Budget Update Draft
- Superintendent Search Subcommittee Minutes
  - December 23, 2019
  - January 13, 2020
  - January 23, 2020