

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE

February 23, 2021

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 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 7:01 pm, Mr. Brosgol called to order the meeting of the Bedford School Committee. Other members present included Ms. Guay, Mr. Morrison, Ms. Santiago (joined at 7:05), Ms. Scoville (joined at 7:11) and student representative Ryan Doucette.

Note: Superintendent Conrad dropped from the screen at 7:27 PM due to technical issues. Although he could not be seen he could be heard and continued to participate in the meeting until the technical issues were resolved.

2. Comments from Public

Public comment is available through the webinar feature of Zoom™.

Participants are instructed to use the “raise hand” function in the software and add their name using the “chat” function. Mr. Conrad will invite the panelist into the webinar and each person is allowed three minutes to comment.

Melissa Brandt Orchard Road

Ms. Brandt is in full support of all students returning to school in-person. She is concerned about student's mental health with not being in school full-time. She has three children attending school. One in Cohort C and 2 in Cohort A. Student in Cohort C is doing the best. Others have anxiety and depression. Happiest days are when they are in school.

Marilyn Missitti Winthrop Ave

Ms. Missitti is in full support on in-person learning. Ms. Missitti is concerned for student's social and emotional health, loss of academic learning and increase in depression the longer schools are not operating close to normal. Time for students to get back to school.

Patty Carluccio Washington Street

Ms. Carluccio stated that she is speaking on behalf of teachers. Raised concerns about academic differences, no peer learning and depression. Ms. Carluccio is in full support of returning students back to school for in-person learning.

Lisa Kaushik Jeffrey Circle

Ms. Kaushik commented that COVID still exists as do the dangers that go along with it. In support of getting students back to in-person learning if safety protocols are kept in place. Ms. Kaushik stated that she is a Lane parent and is not in support of a 4-day return and wants the current hybrid model to remain. Ms. Kaushik feels pressured to make a choice she is not in favor of and is concerned about class size increasing and the risk to staff and teachers along with the quality of teachers that would be on boarded at this point in the year.

Holly Munsie
Lexington Circle

Ms. Munsie stated that she is in favor of bringing back those students at Lane (specifically) that are struggling. Change causes anxiety and at this point in the year students have a strong foundation/bond with classmates and teacher. 77% of staff/families are not in favor of changing to 4 days of in-person learning.

Jocelyn Finn
South Road

Ms. Finn's fourth grade student is more challenged on in-person school days and is in support of bringing back more students to in-person learning. But feels only those students that are struggling or want to return for 4-dyas in person should have the opportunity. Families shouldn't be forced to return their children to 4-day in person learning if they feel that is not the best option for them.

Jane & Dennis
Woodland Road

Mr. Dennis supports return to full time in person learning. Finds it difficult to support students on remote learning days. Child is struggling to be engaged and does not want to be on a computer for six hours. Asking a lot of both parents and students. Those students that want and need to be back in school should be in school.

Carey Sclafani
Carlisle Road

Ms. Sclafanii has a kindergarten student that recently went through a transition to 4-day in-person learning. Parents spoke about the transition as did teaching staff. All moves were made with thought and care for students. Please trust administrators and teachers to make the necessary changes for all students to get back to school.

Karen Morrissey
Wildwood Drive

Ms. Morrissey stated that she would like the 6-ft distance to be changed to 3-ft to allow for more students to be returned to school. Would like to know what teacher's feel about changing the 6ft distance protocol to 3ft. Ms. Morrissey would like her daughter to return to school so she can thrive. Would like a 5-day return to school and keep all other safety measures in place.

Michelle Herron
Harvard Drive

Ms. Herron has a third-grade student at Lane and a kindergarten student in private school because a 5 day in-person option was available. Third grade student has anxiety because it is difficult to know what work to do when, not knowing what work to do at home on remote days. Received help from teacher to work on goals to help ease anxiety.

Erica Callahan
Woodmore Drive

Ms. Callahan stated she is a Lane parent and asked if some or all students are being brought back? Interested in having son return to school but unwilling to do so if it means must change his teacher. Wants to know if other spaces in town are being considered to fit more classes so that they do not have to change teacher/friends. That way everyone could remain as they are just hold class in a different location.

Erica Liu
Southridge Road

Ms. Liu is in full support on all in-person learning as younger children are less likely to get COVID. Ms. Liu has concerns but trust the teachers. Ms. Liu is concerned with her child not interacting with his peers. Ms. Liu also spoke on behalf of a “friend” and stated that her friend’s middle school student is suffering from depression.

It was communicated to all watching that if a student they live with or knows is exhibiting depression that parents should reach out to a member of the counseling team at their school for assistance

Elana Poulter
South Road

Ms. Poulter is in support of students returning to school full time in-person. She is a pediatrician and is seeing a lot of social emotional issues, eating disorders and is worried for student health. She stated the school is not a major source of COVID transmission. Please make sure families get the help they need with behavioral issues they are dealing with.

Rebecca Lin
Shire Lane

Ms. Lin is in full support of students returning to in-person learning as her child struggles on remote learning days. Thank you to everyone for all that has been done to this point.

Jennifer Lee
Hartwell Road

Ms. Lee stated that ADHA/Anxiety existed pre-COVID. Now concerned about student depression, low number of students attending in person classes at BHS and their social emotional health. Please get students back in school. Consider changing 6ft distance rule. Teachers are doing a wonderful job this year. Is the plan to bring back more staff and teachers from remote learning?

Richard Endleman
Red Coat Road

Mr. Endleman raised concerns about ventilation with the re-opening of school and bringing back more students. Mr. Endleman made remarks that Lane had failed ventilation tests months ago and

is concerned that they have more work to do on all units the needed to be fixed or repaired before we bring back more students.

Stephen Carluccio
Washington Street

Ms. Carluccio stated that there is light at the end of the COVID tunnel. Please give student what they need. We need to begin focusing on recovery, stress relief and fatigue and the learning/developmental damage that has been done because of all of this so we can get students back to school.

Jennifer DiPasquale
Fox Run Road

Ms. DiPasquale stated that she is happy that Kindergarten students are back in school. He child is more focused/happy learning with the teacher and peers. However, her 3rd grade child cried because she could not return to school more days. Ms. DiPasquale is concerned for student wellness.

Christina Miller
Temple Terrace

Ms. Miller is in support of return to in-person learning as it has been a tough 10-months for her children. Concerned about the emotional toll this is having on students. Praised Kindergarten transition and would like to see more in-person time offered to Lane students.

Stephen Winter
Great Road

Mr. Winter thanked everyone for their efforts thus far in the school year. Mr. Winter is in full support with bringing bac younger students for more in-person learning even if it means going to 3ft distancing instead of 6ft. Mr. Winter expressed deep concern for the middle and high school students about mental health issue and fewer students showing to in-person learning.

Kristen Cefalo
Pine Street

Ms. Cefalo spoke about the recent kindergarten transition. Initially she was not pleased with her child having to change class/teacher. However, after the teachers spoke with the children about the change and celebrated it and created a supportive environment, Ms. Cefalo changed her mind and attitude about the shift. Ms. Cefalo is hoping the same could be done at Lane.

Jennifer Melincini
Page Road

Ms. Melincini stated that she has been an educator for 24 years in a different district. School can be a safe place and would like to see students return to class but has concerns about the shifting of teachers and classrooms. Concerned that curriculum would be delivered at different time. Students

are already stressed not sure they could thrive with a new transition. In favor of bringing back as many students as possible with the best possible option in mind.

Becky Venuti
Evans Ave

Ms. Venuti stated that she had sent an email previously to tonight's comments to the school committee expressing her concern about students changing classrooms/teachers. Her child had a solid learning plan prior to COVID and then everything fell apart once COVID hit. She does not want her daughter to have to change class due to coping issues and anxiety. She will work with the school if she needs to change to help her adjust but would rather not have her endure another change this year.

Kelly Horton
Evans Ave

Ms. Horton expressed concern for her child that attends Lane. She is in favor of students returning to in-person learning due to the stress, self-esteem and mental health issues students are exhibiting by not learning with a teacher in class.

Sherry Megan Foley
Great Road

Ms. Megan Foley is in support of returning students for 4-day learning but is concerned that Lane school will not be able to accommodate such a shift after the last meeting in which it was stated that they needed to hire teachers, safety concerns. Are all space options being considered so that class can stay together?

Isabelle Dilacis
Willis Road

Ms. Dilacis stated the remote days are struggle at her house. Her child yells and cries and cannot follow along with the lessons and her child does not always seek help from the teacher when needed. Had to hire a tutor to help her child keep up but knows that she would greatly benefit from more days in-person learning with the teacher.

Catherine Van Praagh
South Road

Ms. Van Prough stated she is a BHS parent and had a difficult time making the remote option choice, but it was a family decision in the end to do so. She is concerned that families are being forced to make an either-or choice given that the vaccine is not yet available for teachers and others to get. Feels people's anxiety levels are going up because of feeling forced into a choice that may not be best for them.

Katie Dowdall
Shawsheen Road

Ms. Dowdall stated that she is speaking up on behalf of the teachers. Ms. Dowdall wants to make sure space, safety and teachers getting vaccinated are being taken into consideration when speaking of returning students back to school. She asked-please do not forget about the teachers. Families

have personal reason for not wanting to send their children back to school. Please do not force them to return.

Suzanne Koller

Davis Road

Ms. Koller has deep concerns about long term and immediate effects on students' mental health. Some students are lonely/scared or suicidal. It is taking months to get appointments with mental health providers. Students feel isolated and we should be focusing on the transition back to school.

Julie Halloran

Notre Dame Road

Ms. Halloran supports students returning to in-person learning. Ms. Halloran feels that those in support of a full return tend to be those families that are having little to no issues with the current hybrid model, yet we must all remember that not all families are having the same experiences.

Elizabeth Berner

Wagon Wheel Drive

Ms. Berner stated that her child is academically doing well but struggling at home all the same. Concerned about students social and emotional wellness. Students need to be back in school

3. PR Report

Transfers:

Christine Connor	1.0 SPED SAIL Inclusion Teacher	Davis
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Appointments:

Jill Marquis	1.0 SPED TA	Davis
Joan Payne	0.2 Title I Math TA	Davis
Meagan Jackson	1.0 SPED TA/Behavior Tech	Davis

Substitutes:

Alyssa Leto	4 Day Building Sub	Davis
Bobbie Andersen	4 Day Building Sub	JGMS
Samantha Slatton	Per Diem Sub	District
Nathaniel Ryan	Per Diem Sub	District
Mei Yuk Lui	Per Diem Sub	District

4. BHS Programs of Studies 2021-2022

Ms. Galante and Mr. Casey gave a presentation to the school committee regarding the BHS Program of Studies proposed changes for the 2021-2022 school year. During the presentation it was shared with the committee that some of the changes/additions to class offering were because students and teachers came up with ideas for courses to expand upon curriculum already being offered. Students suggested courses they would like to see added or minor changes made to current curriculum.

Mr. Morrison made the following motion:

MOVED: Motion to accept the BHS Program of Studies proposed changes for the 2021-2022 school year.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Santiago

MOTION APPROVED 5-0-0

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

5. Class of 2021

Ms. Galante gave a presentation to the school committee about some of the upcoming activities that are being planned for the Class of 2021. All events will adhere to current COVID restrictions and guidelines. A survey was sent out to students for their input. Some of the ideas that were presented were:

- Currently pictures of athletes are lining the field/drive way as you come into the school
- Future Plans Day: Students will dress and take pictures dressed as what they aspire to become/do after graduation
- Senior Movie Night
- Kimball Farms
- Letters to Seniors- Facility /staff district wide will take place in writing letters to Seniors
- Bedford Citizen will run a tribute edition as a keepsake for the Senior class
- Graduation- June 3rd or 5th
 - Tsongas Center or Turf

6. Fall 2 Sports Update

Mr. Mangan provided the school committee with an update to Fall 2 sports. Volleyball started in the gym. Football and Track teams are using the turf. Cheerleading and unified basketball have been moved to Spring in hopes of holding basketball games on the outside courts. At this time, no spectators will be allowed to attend but games will be streamed or recorded much like during the Winter Sports season. Will have more news on this in a week or so. Mr. Mangan thanked everyone involved for keeping the turf cleaned and cleared of snow so the students could have practice/games.

7. Job Description: Literacy Specialist, First Read- Postponed

8. EDCO Collaborative Update

Mr. Conrad shared with school committee that at a recent EDCO meeting it was voted on by the board 15-0-1 to accept Acton-Boxborough's request to consider its termination from EDCO and dissolve the board. Now the question is what should happen to collaborative. Even though the

process is starting this year it takes a year to fully dissolve the collaborative. So, June 30, 2022 would be the date the collaborative would be officially dissolved. Mr. Conrad stated that school committee needs to vote to continue with steps to dissolve the collaborative. The collaborative is being dissolved because it cannot pay its debts and programs would begin to shut down. Lease is through 2029 which includes taxes and maintenance. Would we be asked for financial support? As a member 5.74% of everything would be owed.

Ms. Guay made the following motion:

MOVED: Motion Bedford Public Schools move to terminate EDCO Collaborative as of June 30, 2022

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Santiago

MOTION APPROVED 5-0-0

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

9. Superintendent's Report

• Phased Re-Opening

Mr. Conrad presented to the school committee the following during his Superintendent's Report. Mr. Conrad spoke about DESE's news that came out today stating that all Elementary students will be returning to school for 5 days of learning with the 6- foot distancing rule remaining in place. Vaccination is not a pre-requisite to getting back to in-person learning. District will keep in-person and remote learning option. Mr. Conrad and Dr. Clifford will be on call tomorrow to learn more about the DESE announcement and hope to gain more insight as to what is expected going forward. This will be a collaborative effort with staff, teachers and families to get students back to school. Pool testing is about to begin. Nursing staff is working to get everything ready. Mr. Conrad introduced Mr. Ackerman, Principal of Lane School to give an update on the Lane school re-opening plans.

Mr. Ackerman presented the following information to the school committee about Lane re-opening. Plan. Lane will return to in-person learning on Monday, March 15th. Mr. Ackerman stated that he tried to keep students in grades 3, 4 and 5 from having to make any or moderate shifts to be able to keep classes together for continuity. Some classrooms were moved to different locations to achieve this goal. With the increase in students returning to 4 days in-person dismissal time will increase. Here are some key elements of Lane school needs including funds to help facilitate this transition:

- All grades back in person on March 15th
- Funding needed for six new teachers and three EA's/materials
- Approximately 80 students being moved out of current classrooms (out of 360 hybrid students)
- The art room, library and computer lab will become classrooms

- Some teachers will teacher across two classrooms to be able to keep class together
- Increased afternoon pick-up due to increase in student population

Mr. Morrison made the following motion:

MOVED: Motion to accept Grade 3-5 expansion plan at Lane school to include \$136k to hire additional staff and materials.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Scoville

MOTION APPROVED 5-0-0

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

Committee took a break from 10:45 PM-10:52 PM

10. Minutes- Postponed

11. Adjournment

Ms. Santiago made the following motion:

MOVED: Motion to adjourn at 11:17 p.m., not to reopen.

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Morrison

MOTION APPROVED 5-0-0

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

Exhibits/Documents

BHS Program of Studies

EDCO



 School Committee Secretary



 Date

