

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE

October 24, 2023

Meeting location:

Select Board Room-10 Mudge Way and Telecast remotely via ZOOM

1. Call to Order

At 7:02 PM, Mr. Brosgol called to order the meeting of the Bedford School Committee. Other members present included Mr. Morrison, Ms. Mehta-Green, Ms. Scoville, Ms. McGinley, METCO Representative Ms. Williams , and Student Representative Shreyes Shivappa

2. Public Comment

Corrine Garrett-16 Reed Lane

Ms. Garrett spoke about her continued concerns around Literacy and the districts use of Lucy Calkin’s materials. Ms. Garrett stated she feels the district is wasting money on this program and she would like more parent input when it comes to Literacy discussions.

Erica Callahan-3 Woodmere Drive

Ms. Callahan spoke about her Literacy concerns and the continued use of Lucy Calkin’s materials. Ms. Callahan stated that this program does not teach the science of reading and that the district should stop using it now that Columbia University and Lucy Calkins have cut ties with one another. Ms. Callahan stated that she is upset with the strategies that her children are being taught to read and feels it is not helping them. She feels teachers need more PD to teach students the science of reading.

Julie Samble-32 Curb Street

Ms. Samble stated that she is not a trained teacher but has many educators in her family. She stated that students are not being taught the science of reading. Parents and children are confused with current literacy. Teachers often tell parents that everything is fine and the child is making progress but testing shows different. Ms. Samble stated she feels that because of this many families are choosing to go to other school districts due to outdated literacy program.

Jessica Jannace-6 Dewy Road

Ms. Jannace asked with the district was still using Lucy Calkin’s when she and Columbia University cut ties over her programs. We updated tis program last year with no evidence that it was working and helping students. Ms. Jannace would like new literacy curriculum developed and more PD made available for teachers. Now is this time to make a change to our literacy curriculum.

Jennifer Lee-38

Ms. Lee stated that she was speaking in support of those speaking up about literacy concerns this evening.

Jenny Holman-26 Page Road

Ms. Holman stated she wanted a better literacy program. She does not feel it is the teacher fault but rather the fault of the program being used. We need to embrace the science of reading- it would be a better use of time and money for literacy program. Ms. Holman stated she moved to Bedford for its reputation. Parents are spending money on tutors for help. Ms. Holman stated her child was misdiagnosed and chose to move the child to another district.

Andrew Jeffrey-11 Patriot Circle

Mr. Jeffrey read from pieces of the recent Boston Globe article which he says stated that Bedford is using a low quality of literacy material. Mr. Jeffrey asked the committee with such a high number of students struggling to read in the district what is the plan to change the literacy curriculum and bring the standard up to where it needs to be.

Stephanie Keep-12 Great Road

Ms. Keep spoke about her literacy concerns. Ms. Keep stated that her child was memorizing words not decoding words. Hired a tutor for her child. Ms. Keep stated that due to her frustration and negative experience with the literacy curriculum she chose to move her child to private school. Ms. Keep would like new literacy curriculum developed.

3. Minutes

Mr. Morrison made the following motion: The School Committee votes to approve the draft minutes with suggested edits on October 10, 2023

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. McGinley
MOTION APPROVED 5-0-0**

Mr. Morrison	Yes
Ms. McGinley	Yes
Mr. Brosgol	Yes
Ms. Scoville	Yes
Ms. Mehta-Green	Yes

4. Personnel Report

Appointment

George Kallis	Food Service	Davis
Dana Brett	ELL Teacher	Lane
Lydia Ortiz	5 day Building Sub	Lane
Kenneth Luongo	LTS BT/TA	BHS
Susan DeMarco	PD Nurse	District

Resignations:

Roseanne Ham	LTS PE Teacher	Davis
Jennifer Funk	School Adjustment Counselor	BHS

5. MCAS Presentation

Dr. Clifford presented the following information during her MCAS presentation. The results being presented are from Spring of 2023. Dr. Clifford went over each test subject area and provided detail data of all areas of improvement, areas of concern. Dr. Clifford shared during her presentation how Bedford students were doing compared to surrounding towns and communities of equal size of a 5-year period. A new Social Studies component will be added to MCAS next year. Dr. Clifford shared that lots of summer work with teachers had gone into focusing on writing. District will start using STAR as an assessment tool this year as a screener instead of track my progress.

6. METCO 50th Anniversary Briefing and vote to name Irene Parker Foyer at Bedford High School

Mr. Mondesir, Bedford METCO Director gave a presentation on the upcoming 50th anniversary of the METCO program in Bedford. He spoke about his time as a Bedford METCO student and the positive impact it had on his life. The METCO Anniversary presentation spoke to the positive and life changing experience many of the students have had with many returning to work/teach in Bedford.

Mr. Mondesir spoke about one person in particular, Mrs. Irene Parker. Mrs. Parker was instrumental bringing the METCO Program to Bedford. Mrs. Parker was once a resident of Roxbury but chose Bedford, as the community to raise her family. As this remarkable milestone approaches, METCO would like to acknowledge its trailblazer, Mrs. Irene Parker, longest Director of METCO in Bedford, by requesting that the front foyer at Bedford High School be renamed in her honor.

7. FY 25 Budget Introduction

Ms. Kirrane shared the following during her presentation of the budget process FY25. I am sharing with the School Committee a general overview of the budget process. Administrators in the district have already begun looking at and discussing needs for next year.

There are many variables that could affect the FY25 budget. The district leadership team will closely review budgets over the next two months and work with program administrators, directors, and other school leaders to determine our needs. We will work with School Committee, the Finance Committee, the Town Manager, and other town officials to provide the information about our needs while working to stay within budgetary guidelines the Finance Committee has set while ensuring we address essential needs of the district.

A preliminary discussion has been had with the new Town Manager and the Finance Committee chair about proposing a Special Education Stabilization Fund. This is a relatively new tool (part of the Municipal Modernization Act of 2016) that some neighboring towns have implemented. We expect to be recommending this for Bedford, and will share more information when appropriate.

The district planned for lower enrollments at the elementary schools this year. However, due to the emergency migrant shelter and current state of emergency has resulted in 50 additional students

across all four schools with a larger number of students at Davis. District-wide enrollment was 46 students over the projection made in the fall of 2023.

8. Superintendent Report- including CASE & LABBB Collaborative quarterly reports

Mr. Chuang presented the following during his report. He went over the quarterly report for both CASE & LABBB Collaboratives as Bedford is a participating member of each collaborative. Mr. Chuang stated that as of this afternoon all his trail walks have concluded. It was a great opportunity to meet, greet and hear from a variety of people. Classroom observations with leadership team members has begun. Great way to see firsthand what is happening in the classroom. Continuing to meet with staff one on one. Stable 3-4 weeks with families at the Plaza Hotel. New students will be registered tomorrow. Adult EL classes are happening now. Mr. Chuang will be going to Nature's Classroom with students tomorrow.

9. Adjournment

Ms. Mehta-Green made the following motion: **To adjourn the meeting at 9:45 PM into Executive Session for the purpose of Contract Negotiations. Not to reopen to the public.**

MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Morrison

MOTION APPROVED 5-0-0

Mr. Morrison	Yes
Ms. McGinley	Yes
Mr. Brosgol	Yes
Ms. Scoville	Yes
Ms. Mehta-Green	Yes

Exhibits/Documents

Draft Minutes

PR Report

MCAS Presentation

METCO 50th Anniversary memo

FY25 Budget Introduction Memo

CASE&LABBB Quarterly Reports

School Committee Approved: November 14, 2023