

**BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**October 16, 2018**  
**Bedford High School – Large Group Instruction Room**

**1. Call to Order**

At 7:30 p.m., Mr. Brosgol called to order the meeting of the Bedford School Committee. Other members present included Ms. Scoville, Ms. Guay and Mr. McAllister. Student Representatives Alex Oleksinski and Samantha Gallant were also in attendance. Ms. Santiago was absent.

**2. Comments from Public**

None

**3. Personnel Report**

Mr. Sills announced the following personnel changes:

***Resignation***

Shawn Daley	School Adjustment Counselor	BHS
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***Retirement***

Margie Harris	Guidance/Counseling Administrative Assistant	BHS
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***Appointments***

Tara Turner	Teaching Assistant/Behavior Tech	Lane
Maria Norese	Educational Assistant/Recess Coordinator	Davis

***Transfer***

Amanda Rabesa	PE Admin Assist to Guidance Admin Assistant	BHS
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**4. Boston/Bedford Connections Program Presentation**

Ms. Jamie Nolan, Lane School teacher, and Ms. Maureen McDermott, JGMS Guidance Counselor presented to the School Committee a program that has been developed to help promote meaningful relationships between Bedford and Boston students.

Last year, Ms. Nolan and another Lane School teacher created an opportunity for all of the fifth grade METCO students along with a Bedford classmate to participate in the Appalachian Mountain Club Youth Opportunity Program. The teachers thought that this would be a good way to create lasting bonds with Bedford and METCO students – something that would extend beyond the school day.

After approval of the trip, Bedford student names were picked out of a hat to join the METCO students on this adventure. A lot of meetings were held before the actual trip to help the kids get to know one another and to acclimate themselves to a camping/hiking adventure in New Hampshire. There was even an opportunity for families to get together at the Museum of Science.

The trip was held at Mt. Cardigan in New Hampshire. Ms. Nolan shared many stories of the trip and shared photos from the hiking weekend.

In the end, the students and adults created a strong bond and all of the kids made authentic connections with one another.

This year, the group has moved on to JGMS. Ms. McDermott spoke about how she would like to continue to foster the friendships that were started at Lane during this trip. In the fall, she hopes to have a local Bedford event where Bedford students can act as guides to their Boston friends. Then in the spring have an event in Boston where the METCO students can host their Bedford friends. She also hopes to plan an event for families.

Ms. McDermott also hopes to create opportunities for JGMS students to visit Lane and Davis schools and even the high school.

Ms. Gallant, student representative, said that this program sounds fantastic.

Mr. Oleksinski, student representative, said that opportunities to form friendships with Boston students is key and in fact one of his best friends is from Boston. He said his Mom has always reached out to offer to help classmates from Boston with logistics whenever needed.

Mr. McAllister said it would be good to create opportunities to encourage more Bedford students to travel into Boston.

Ms. Guay asked about parent feedback on program, Ms. Nolan said that parents are very interested in doing more to connect the Boston and Bedford students.

Ms. Scoville said that her son participated in the Mt. Cardigan trip and had a very positive experience. She appreciates that this was done in 5<sup>th</sup> grade to help with the transition to middle school.

Mr. Brosgol and Mr. Sills said that it sounds like a great program. Mr. Sills said that JGMS should be thoughtful about trying to keep these kids together in classes wherever possible.

## **5. Class Size Reports**

Mr. Sills made his annual report on the average class size at each school. He began the presentation with a slide showing enrollment trends from October 2012 to this year. Davis and Lane school continue to show the largest growth. For example Davis School had a total of 492 students in 2012 and now has 602 students. Lane's 2012 total was 537 compared to today's total of 611. JGMS and the high school have more or less steady enrollment during this period. Mr. Sills said that our aggregate enrollment projections appear to be on track.

Mr. Sills also reviewed the class size guidelines set by the School Committee as follows:

	Guideline	Maximum
Kindergarten	18	20
Grade 1	20	22
Grades 2-5	22	24
Grades 6-8	23	25
High School	18	20 (college prep)
	22	25 (honors and high honors)

Additionally, the middle and high school should strive to keep aggregate student numbers per teacher at a 100 limit.

Mr. Sills then reported on the class size for each school:

- Davis School Kindergarten Average is 21.4
- Davis School Grade 1 Average is 23.3 (above desired maximum)
- Davis School Grade 2 Average is 22.1
- Lane School Grade 3 Average is 22.4
- Lane School Grade 4 Average is 23.6
- Lane School Grade 5 Average is 22.9
- JGMS Average for all grades is 18.4
- BHS Average for all Courses is 16.4

Mr. Sills noted that BHS is unique in the fact that teachers often teach different levels of a class during the same period (overlays). There are 180 overlays out of the total 466 course sections.

Mr. Oleksinski, student representative, said that it is much easier to learn in smaller classes.

Mr. McAllister said that he is not worried that we have a few small classes because this is good for the kids and we will be ready for the larger classes that are coming into the middle and high schools.

Mr. Sills said that small classes happen as a product of the schedule. Also, classes can be created to meet the needs of the students and sometimes these classes end up being the smaller ones.

Ms. Guay asked if we ever close a class because it is full. Mr. Sills said yes, but the Guidance Counselors try to work with the kids – such as checking to see if they can take it next year.

Mr. Brosgol said it would be interesting to see the year to year trends in class size to review where we tend to go over or under the guidelines.

Mr. Brosgol also asked for information on the numbers of students who go to private schools.

## **6. MCAS Presentation**

Ms. Marylou Sallee, Assistant Superintendent, introduced the new 2018 MCAS Accountability Reporting used by the state. The system is new for all school districts and is very complex. The full Accountability Explanation presentation will be posted on the district's webpage.

Ms. Sallee explained that highlights of the new system include using additional indicators beyond student test scores and focusing on the performance of each school as a whole and of its lowest performing students. The purpose of the new system is to provide clear and actionable information to families and the community about school performance. The system helps the state direct resources and assistance.

Indicators have been developed to provide more information about school performance and student opportunity. Indicators include achievement, student progress, high school completion, progress toward English proficiency for English Learners, chronic absenteeism and advanced coursework completion.

Schools will be measured on its performance against improvement targets and how it is doing compared to other schools across the state. They are categorized as “Meeting Target” or “Partially Meeting Target”. Districts will also be categorized the same way.

There will be an increased focus on raising the performance of each school’s lowest performing students.

Ms. Sallee presented a Lane School report that showed the school target to be set at 91% and the lowest performing students set at 92%. Previous year’s MCAS results at Lane met both of these targets.

JGMS met targets except for the ELA and the lowest performing student groups, especially in the chronic absenteeism indicator. Overall JGMS earned a 64% which is “partially meeting targets” category.

There are concerns at BHS with math achievement and ELA with the lowest performing students. Overall, BHS earned a 56% - partially meeting targets.

Bedford as a district earned at 72% - partially meeting target.

Ms. Sallee discussed ways the District will use this information to improve. For example, chronic absenteeism will be examined immediately. ELL, Advanced Coursework completion and the numbers of students participating in testing are also in the individual school’s improvement plan.

Ms. Sallee said that this reporting will help Bedford dig into student data. She believes that Bedford is teaching the standards that MCAS 2.0 will be testing.

All MCAS testing will now be done online. Ms. Sallee pointed out that it is really important to ensure optimal online testing conditions for our students on test days. We have learned that the Ipad is not the best tool for taking the test, so arrangements will be made to have the students take the test using Chrome books, desktops and laptops. This will involve a lot of coordination amongst the schools and planning is already underway.

Ms. Gallant, Student Representative, said that it is important to look at individual results and to take the time to understand the background and supports.

Mr. Oleksinski said it is important to get a sense of kids’ preference on how to take the test since it can really vary a lot.

Mr. McAllister thanked Ms. Sallee for explaining this new information to the School Committee. He is concerned how complex the system is and that it will not really translate into answering the question on how we are doing and what we need to do to help the students.

Ms. Sallee agrees that it is very complex but believes it will ultimately help teachers understand what is happening with students and how we can help these students succeed.

Ms. Guay had several observations:

- Bedford does a great job educating every student who comes in
- We keep launching new programs to help those who do not do well

- Please look to see if the low performing students went to preschool
- Maybe our change from pull-out to co-teaching needs more time to be effective
- Can we help the lower performing students in other ways (summer work, homework help for students with parents who do not speak English, no preschool boot camp)

Mr. Brosgol asked if our decision to keep 6<sup>th</sup> graders in heterogeneous teams affect the 6<sup>th</sup> grade MCAS scores?

Mr. Sills thanked Ms. Sallee for the effort to understand the new MCAS reports and for presenting this information tonight. He acknowledged that it is very complex and hopes that it will evolve. However, Massachusetts frameworks have changed and now the state testing has changed and is testing things Bedford believes are important. MCAS 2.0 has become a very important diagnostic tool.

Mr. Sills pointed out the following good news in Bedford's scores:

- 5<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA is the highest in the State
- 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Math came in at 93% of target
- Bedford is looking at the data and following individual students.
- Bedford's data is allowing Principals to develop work plans to meet monthly goals
- Our Data warehousing project will help analyze the MCAS data.

#### 7. Minutes

Mr. McAllister made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee approve the minutes of the September 11, 2018 School Committee meeting.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Scoville**

**MOTION APPROVED: 4-0-0 (Ms. Santiago was absent)**

#### 8. Adjournment

Mr. McAllister made the following motion:

**MOVED: Motion to adjourn at 9:40 p.m.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Guay**

**MOTION APPROVED: 4-0-0**

#### Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Brosgol	Yes
Ms. Santiago	Absent
Ms. Scoville	Yes
Ms. Guay	Yes
Mr. McAllister	Yes

  
School Committee Secretary

  
Date

**BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**October 16, 2018**  
**Exhibits/Documents**

- Draft of the September 11, 2018 School Committee meeting minutes
- Bedford Public Schools Accountability Report Presentation
- Glossary of 2018 Accountability Report Terms