

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
May 21, 2019
Bedford High School – Large Group Instruction Room

1. Call to Order

At 7:34 p.m., Mr. Brosgol called to order the meeting of the Bedford School Committee. Other members present included Ms. Scoville, Ms. Guay and Ms. Marquis. Ms. Samantha Gallant, student representative was also in attendance. Ms. Santiago arrived a little late.

2. Comments from Public

None

3. Personnel Report

Mr. Sills reported the following personnel items:

Retirement:

Amy Corssino Special Education Teaching Assistant Davis

Appointment:

Liping Chen Ell Teacher Davis and Lane

Transfers:

Victoria Wolk .8 to 1.0 English teacher Bedford HS

Jodi DeCleene Contracted OT to BPS JGMS/BHS

Margo Stitt Contracted OT to BPS JGMS/BHS

Mr. Sunderland and Mr. Culhane, History teachers at BHS, asked permission for students to travel to the National History Day Competition in College Park, MD on June 9-13, 2019 at a cost of \$607 each. Three students have earned the right to compete. Adult family members will join them.

Ms. Guay made the following motion:

MOVED: That the School Committee approve the out-of-state field trip request for three eleventh grade students to travel to College Park, MD on June 9 through June 13, 2019 to compete in the National History Day competition at a cost of \$607 per student and no cost to the schools.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Santiago

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

4. Seal of Biliteracy

Ms. Dana Curran, Program Administrator for Foreign Language grades 6-12, introduced the state's Biliteracy Program. This new program has been adopted by the State of Massachusetts to provide more options to heritage learners of other languages and to celebrate biliteracy. The program is part of LOOK (Language Opportunity for Our Kids), a state legislative commitment to the importance of language learning in this global environment,

Participation in the State Seal of Biliteracy Program is voluntary for districts. The Class of 2019 is the first class to receive this recognition.

There are three award levels based on proficiency test scores and/or AP test scores:

LOC Biliteracy Achievement Award

Massachusetts Seal of Biliteracy
Massachusetts Seal of Biliteracy with Distinction

Ms. Curran said she was so pleased with this program as it is a way to value learning a second language and to value student diversity. Also being literate in a second language is a tangible skill for the labor market and has college appeal.

Ms. Curran said that the high school has been using the DESE proficiency test for the last two years. Students have been taking it in class. Also AP scores in languages also count towards achieving these awards.

This year results at BHS are:

- 16 students with Distinction
- 10 students Massachusetts Seal of Biliteracy
- 16 LOC Biliteracy Achievement

Seniors who achieved an award will have the seal on their diploma and on their transcripts. Also, certificates will be presented to the students at the high school award night.

Ms. Curran said she needs to expand community awareness of this program and hopes to have funds to purchase awards.

Ms. Gallant, student representative, said that this was a great opportunity for Bedford students.

Ms. Guay thanked Ms. Curran for opting into this program. She is happy that English Language Learners are being recognized. She is also pleased that this honor will be recognized at graduation too.

Ms. Marquis asked how many other states have this program and how many Massachusetts school districts participate. Ms. Curran said that 37 states participate and 77 school districts in Massachusetts are part of the program.

Ms. Marquis asked if a lot of time is spent on the proficiency testing. Ms. Curran said it is all done in class and no extra time is spent preparing for the exam.

Mr. Brosgol asked about the test itself. Ms. Curran said that it is a computer-based Apple test on listening, speaking and writing.

Mr. Brosgol asked how many English Learner students achieved the seal. Ms. Curran said three!

Mr. Sills asked Ms. Curran to collect information on the program. He is concerned that some of the students who are unable to take a foreign language until middle school may not be able to achieve the biliteracy seal. Ms. Curran said she would watch the data and is pleased that students can qualify as late as 12th grade.

5. K-12 Guidance Department Presentation

Ms. Alicia Linsey, Director of Guidance K-12 and Ms. Paula Springer, K-5 Coordinator, presented to the School Committee.

They began the presentation by introducing the District Mission Statement:

“Promote developmentally-appropriate social, emotional, academic, and career growth for all students. We help students build upon their strengths to develop self-efficacy and resilience, make healthy decisions, and acquire a sense of personal and civic responsibility. Through collaboration within our diverse community, we support access and equity for all learners.”

Ms. Linsey reviewed the key counseling services:

- Direct student services
- School Counseling Core Curriculum prevention supports
- Individual Student Planning
- Responsive Services
- Indirect Student Services

She also touched upon the three tiers of support used K-12:

- Tier 1 for all students – proactive, differentiated instruction, social and emotional learning in the classroom
- Tier 2 for targeted students – those with some risk factors
- Tier 3 for intensive individual intervention

Ms. Linsey described how the student profile has changed over time:

- 20 percent of students aged 13-18 have mental health conditions
- 11 percent of youth have a mood disorder
- 10 percent of youth have behavior concerns
- 8 percent of youth have an anxiety disorder

She also pointed out key data from the recent Youth Risk Behavior Survey:

- 15 percent of respondents considered suicide
- 13 percent made a suicide plan
- 3 percent attempted suicide

Ms. Linsey noted that there are insufficient community based services for adolescents especially for the students who need help during an acute crisis, but not reaching the level of needing inpatient or partial hospitalization. The department goal is to strengthen the connection between area schools and community health providers. Partners include Emerson Hospital, The Eliot Center, Advocates, and Bridge for Resilient Youth in Transition. Ms. Linsey also plans on hiring a consultant to help with planning for next year.

Ms. Linsey noted that she would like to change the name of the department to Counseling Department and to have each person known as a School Counselor rather than a Guidance Counselor.

She also intends to create a monthly K-12 Mental Health Team next year comprised of representatives from Counseling, Special Education and Health & Wellness.

Ms. Linsey and Ms. Springer shared a video of student testimonials on why they go to the Counseling Dept.

Ms. Linsey is also committed to making everyone understand that it is important to regard social emotional learning as equally important as content curriculum for college and career readiness.

Other initiatives that are or will be underway include:

- Implementing an Adjustment Counselor referral process
- Implementing a referral and suicide ideation data collection process for grades 5-12
- Increasing the number of therapy counseling groups
- Holding round tables with community, therapists and pediatricians
- Create an area Therapist guide
- Create a resource guidebook for the district
- Work closely with neighboring districts

Ms. Gallant, Student Representative, asked if there was a way to identify the students who indicated they have contemplated suicide in the Youth Risk Behavior Survey. Ms. Linsey said that the survey is anonymous but counselors are going out to the class rooms to teach students about available services and to try to engage students to talk about mental health.

Ms. Gallant suggested adding the student voice to the Mental Health Team.

Ms. Guay thanked Ms. Linsey and Ms. Springer for the incredible work they do to help students. She said that there is a lot of need in the district and expects it will increase as we keep students with social emotional concerns in district.

Ms. Marquis said that she is pleased to learn that resiliency is the focus for young children with mental health concerns.

Ms. Marquis asked if there was a stigma for kids who go to Counseling Dept. Ms. Linsey said that the department is trying to educate people about what Counseling does and to be more welcoming to all students. For example, she is changing the visuals in the counseling office at the high school. She is taking down the college pennants and is now showing pictures of the counselors with bios about things they like to do in and out of school.

Ms. Scoville said she hopes Ms. Linsey and Ms. Springer continue to try to engage the families that need help but are difficult to reach. She also asked them to ensure there is enough support at Davis School now that the preschool is moving there.

Mr. Sills said that the schools need wrap around services from the State. He thinks it is great that we are collaborating with other districts. He is pleased that the department is coming together under the leadership of Ms. Linsey and Ms. Springer.

6. Bedford High School Improvement Plan 2019-2020

Principal Galante, Assistant Principal Casey and Assistant Principal Hudder presented a review of 2018-19 and a draft of the 2019-2020 School Improvement Plan for Bedford High School.

Ms. Galante's accomplishments organized by district wide goals include:

Disciplinary Literacy/Student Centered Learning

- Analyzed MCAS data to set learning goals
- Dedicated department time to develop literacy in each department
- Use assessments to remediate/change curriculum
- Use "I can" statements in all departments to help students own their learning
- Revised and implemented the DCAP (District Curriculum Accomodtion Plan)
- Leadership team discussed concerns and best practices

Equity & Diversity/ Teaching ALL

- Data team studied data and gaps in subgroups
- Re-establish the building Equity and Diversity Committee
- Celebrated Black History, Month of Military Child, Autism Awareness
- Held Principal's book club and Principal Advisory – an open meeting with meets every month with 15-25 students attending.

Health/Wellness and Deepen Community Support

- Challenge Success launched (teachers shadowed students, "I wish my teachers knew...panel)
- Administered survey and shared results with school community
- Challenge success drives faculty discussions on homework, grading, rigor, schedules, etc.
- "Ground Up" formed – a group of students who meet and inform teachers of key concerns.
- Weekly newsletter to BHS community established

Ms. Galante then presented a draft of the 2019-2020 School Improvement Plan. She noted that it is a draft because she is waiting for the results of the recent NEASC review and for the leadership team's summer retreat. The plan does support the District Improvement Plan which includes literacy, equity, building cultural proficiency and two-way communication with families.

Goal #1 Disciplinary Literacy

- Utilize the new Reading Program Administrator 6-12 to articulate essential literacy skills.
- Identify Tier 1 supports and articulate them in the DCAP
- Create more opportunity for student presentations (application of work)
- Use Department time to encourage peer observations to increase collaborations and model best practices

Goal #2 Equity & Diversity/Teaching all Students

- Continue work of data team to analyze MCAS data
- Establish a student Equity and Diversity Committee
- Observe inclusion practices to ensure all students are accessing curriculum
- Examine effectiveness of interventions

Goal #3 Health/Wellness and Deepen Community Support

- Continue with Challenge Success partnership
- Continue to develop Guidance curriculum
- Pilot a student advisory
- Incorporate mental health awareness into the Ambassador Program
- Re-examine the last week of school "Q5" program (teachers teach about a passionate subject)

Goal #4 Student Centered Learning and Engagement

- Enlist students and faculty to participate in the District Strategic Plan defining a Portrait of a Graduate
- Develop template for unit design that includes essential questions, concepts, skills
- Use Department time to create new and revised units of study to keep engagement at the fore front.

- Identify and implement consistent and equitable instructional practices across and within departments.

Ms. Gallant, student representative, asked if there was any district-wide race based training. Ms. Galante said yes, that all faculty is required to take an equity based course. The faculty is always talking about this.

Ms. Gallant also said she knows friends from other school districts who do the Q5 at the end of the year and they love it.

Ms. Guay said she is pleased that students have a voice at the high school and that Ms. Galante listens and responds. She is also pleased that Student Advisory helps kids learn how to advocate for themselves.

Ms. Marquis asked for more information on Ground Up. Ms. Galante explained that student leaders, trained in Challenge Success, have formed a group of students who will inform teachers of student struggles around stress etc.

Ms. Marquis is impressed that students are involved in Professional Development too.

Ms. Scoville said she likes the idea of a “Q5”. She also wanted to know how the high school collects qualitative data on students.

Ms. Galante said that Advisory, School Council, and daily interactions with students during unstructured time is the best way to collect qualitative data.

Mr. Sills added that the strategic planning process will result in more qualitative data collection too.

Ms. Santiago congratulated Ms. Galante on having kids advocate for themselves.

Mr. Brosgol noted that the school will be very different next year when the Preschool leaves. Ms. Galante said it will be sad to see the young children leave. She noted that next year, there will be JGMS Internships for students who want to continue with internships but are unable to get to Davis School. Ms. Galante said she is looking forward to the new space because the METCO students will have more room for their extra-long days here in Bedford.

Mr. Brosgol asked what work is being done to include the HAFB families. Ms. Galante said intentional efforts are done to meet with parents on Base and off.

Mr. Sills said that Challenge Success points to homework as a point of stress for students. He asked Ms. Galante if she is looking at other sources of stress? Ms. Galante said yes, that Challenge Success helps quantify stressors in our students’ lives and helps the faculty have these conversations.

7. Bedford High School 2019-2020 Handbook

Mr. Casey and Mr. Hudder discussed the proposed changes to the 2019-2020 Handbook. Most of the changes were minor. Some of the substantial changes discussed included:

- Community Service will no longer be reported on the transcript as a class. There now will be a statement “Student has or has not met Bedford High School’s community service requirement”.
- Students now have four years to meet the requirement (as opposed to senior year only).
- Added language regarding “suspicion about loitering in the bathrooms”. Vaping is common at the school and is a true safety concern.
- Changed language regarding “lock downs” and replaced with ALICE protocols.
- Shifted Category A and B offenses. Marijuana and alcohol hold the same penalty.
- Moved vaping infractions to Category B (with alcohol and marijuana). Previously it carried a lighter punishment since it is not easy to determine what kids are vaping.
- Added disciplinary measures on recording/distributing images and videos of others (similar to the middle school).

Ms. Gallant, student representative, said she did not think suspensions would deter students from vaping.

Mr. Hudder said that this was discussed in depth with the School Council. Students seem fed up with the amount of students loitering in bathrooms and vaping.

Mr. Casey said that they have offered students who have been suspended for vaping a class, but no one wanted to do that.

Mr. Sills said that suspensions may help parents realize the seriousness and dangers of vaping.

Ms. Santiago asked that these changes be communicated very clearly to parents and suggested that the impact of these changes be followed. She asked that the School Committee be updated at some point next year.

8. Superintendent’s Report

Mr. Sills reported that the Senate approved the same amount of funding for HAFB students (\$1.3M).

Mr. Sills said that Thursday will be the first, full day meeting with volunteers on the Strategic Plan.

9. Minutes

Ms. Guay made the following motion:

MOVED That the School Committee approve the minutes from the April 23, 2019 School Committee meeting as amended.

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Scoville

MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

10. Charter By-Law Committee

Ms. Santiago made the following motion:

MOVED: That Dan Brosgol serve on the town’s Charter and By-Law Review Committee on behalf of the School Committee

MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Guay

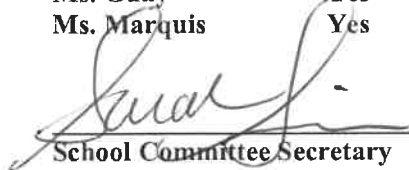
MOTION APPROVED: 5-0

11. Adjournment

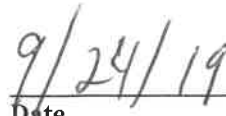
Ms. Scoville made the following motion:

MOVED: Motion to adjourn at 10:35 p.m. not to reopen.
MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Santiago

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



School Committee Secretary



Date

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
May 21, 2019
Exhibits/Documents

- Memorandum to School Committee from Alicia Linsey and Paula Springer regarding state of the Counseling Department dated May 21, 2019

- K-12 Guidance Dept. Presentation
- Bedford High School School Improvement Plan 2019-2020
- Draft of minutes from the April 23, 2019 School Committee meeting