

DRAFT
BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
January 16, 2020
Large Group Instruction Room, Bedford High School

1. Call to Order

At 7:32 p.m., Ms. Santiago called to order the meeting of the Bedford School Committee. Other members present included Mr. Brosgol, Mr. Morrison, Ms. Guay and Ms. Scoville. There were no student representatives present this evening.

2. Comments from Public

None

3. Personnel Report

None

7. FY21 District Budget Discussion – (continued)

Mr. Sills and Ms. Kirrane asked the School Committee to continue their review of the FY21 budget request. The review is a continuation to the last School Committee meeting on January 14, 2020.

Ms. Kirrane presented the FY21 Percentage Cost Growth Changes which showed an explanation of increases and changes that are necessary for the upcoming school year.

The budget was again reviewed line by line. Ms. Kirrane explained her updates to the budget and addressed questions that the School Committee had from the prior meeting.

Ms. Kirrane talked about some of Facilities budget items and explained that she took a hard look at actual historical expenditures. She said that she noticed that there were high expenditures in overtime but also noted that this was due to the building projects that were being done at that time. Ms. Kirrane said that there were no offsets in the past to this overtime but in FY21, she plans on using a \$54K offset to this line. She said that she saw that in years FY17, FY18 and FY19, offsets to the custodial accounts were used only in the amount that was needed which she was in agreement with. Ms. Kirrane that she would prefer an increase rather than using an offset.

The School Committee had some questions and comments:

Mr. Brosgol had a question about the budget line for the Special Education Teaching Assistants. He wondered if the budget request for that line item was less than the prior year yet had an increase of staff positions.

Ms. Kirrane explained that there is quite a bit of turnover in Teaching Assistant positions and that the higher paid T.A.s have been with Bedford longest and they will be paid out of the Special Education IDEA grant which gives the district over \$600K to use towards those salaries and contracted services. She said that the newer staff start with lower salaries and that the total is less overall and will allow for a lower budget request for that salary line.

1 Mr. Brosgol also asked if there was a model that is used to determine the percentage of Special
2 Education staff versus overall staff and asked how that ratio was determined or if this is
3 dependent on the needs of the students that we serve.

4
5 Mr. Sills said that there is really no standard because there are a lot of variables. He said that our
6 increase in Special Ed staffing is primarily due to our in-house programming.

7
8 Ms. Guay asked what line of the budget interpreters are paid from. She was interested to know if
9 we track what we spend annually on interpreting to compare costs from year to year.

10
11 Mr. Sills said that interpreters are paid out of both the Central Administrative budget as well as
12 the Special Education budget.

13
14 Ms. Kirrane mentioned that we are also able to cover some translation of documents in house
15 using our current technology with programs such as Google Translate.

16
17 Ms. Guay commented that some of the busing costs include students who may get injured during
18 the year and that the school is required to pay for special transportation in these circumstances.

19
20 Ms. Guay asked if verbiage could be added to the budget proposal that states that by law, Circuit
21 Breaker funds must be spent on special education. Additionally, she asked if a brief explanation
22 of the Title I grant could be included as well as some further information on Out of District
23 transportation costs and how this is very hard to determine this in advance because we do not
24 know who any new students are until they are actually in enrolled, due to student privacy.

25
26 Ms. Guay also talked about the co-teaching model and stressed that she hoped that there may be
27 some funds available for support to train these staff members because of the importance of co-
28 teaching.

29
30 Mr. Sills indicated that the Program Administrators have attended training courses in order to be
31 able to hold in-house training for other staff members. Mr. Sills said that this has been in place for
32 the past several years.

33
34 Ms. Santiago asked if the Youth Services survey was done annually.

35
36 Mr. Sills said that this survey is done bi-annually.

37
38 Mr. Sills then went on to do a final review a slide show presentation of the FY21 Budget.
39 Ms. Kirrane and Mr. Sills addressed questions that the School Committee had throughout the
40 presentation.

41
42 Mr. Brosgol asked if Mr. Sills thinks that the budget request will look similar in FY22.

43
44 Mr. Sills said that we would more than likely be in the same situation next year with the MOE
45 (Maintenance of Effort) since we have had to exhaust our Special Education savings. He said that
46 it is very hard to predict it though we are no longer able to drive more savings.

47
48 Mr. Brosgol had questions on the cost per pupil.

1 Ms. Kirrane said that all of the information that is captured in that cost is audited annually by the
2 state and that he can feel confident that this cost is accurate.

3
4 Mr. Morrison asked if the change of the .5 custodial FTE will offset some of the overtime costs
5 and he believes this reduction is worth it for the savings.

6
7 Mr. Morrison noticed that number of students O.O.D. budgeted for FY20 is greater than the
8 number of students budgeted for FY21. He thinks that it is more important to show cost per pupil
9 in this case than the actual number of students.

10
11 Ms. Guay asked if we should expect a request for a \$450K carve out in the FY22 budget request.

12
13 Mr. Sills said that it is possible.

14
15 Ms. Kirrane mentioned that in her prior experience, a Special Education trust fund was set up
16 which was presented at a Special Town Meeting and that there are several tools available to help
17 cover these costs.

18
19 Mr. Morrison asked how the trust was funded.

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21 Ms. Kirrane said that she believes it was funded with free cash.

22
23 Mr. Brosgol suggested more research into this.

24
25 After some further discussion, the School Committee voted to decide which of the originally
26 proposed options to put forward to the Finance Committee for the FY21 Budget Proposal.

27
28 Mr. Brosgol made the following motion:

29 **MOVED: That the School Committee vote to support a 3.5% budget increase guideline**
30 **with a \$450,000.00 OOD carve-out /reserve fund transfer for a total FY21 budget request of**
31 **\$43,771,016.00**

32 **MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Scoville**

33 **MOTION APPROVED: 5-0-0**

34
35 Mr. Brosgol made the following motion:

36 **MOVED: That the School Committee vote to rescind the vote for a 3.5% budget increase**
37 **guideline with a \$450,000.00 OOD carve-out /reserve fund transfer for a total FY21 budget**
38 **request of \$43,771,016.00**

39 **MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Scoville**

40 **MOTION APPROVED: 5-0-0**

41
42 Mr. Brosgol made the following motion:

43 **MOVED: That the School Committee vote to support a 3.5% budget increase for a total**
44 **FY21 budget request of \$43,308,918.00 with a \$450,000.00 OOD carve-out /reserve fund**
45 **transfer**

46 **MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Scoville**

47 **MOTION APPROVED: 5-0-0**

1 **9. Superintendent's Report**

2
3 Mr. Sills reported that Mr. Max Turkewitz, Network Administrator has resigned and that there
4 will be a new job description draft for approval at the next School Committee meeting.
5
6

7 **11. Adjournment**

8 Mr. Brosgol made the following motion:

9 **MOVED: Motion to adjourn at 9:05 p.m. not to reopen.**

10 **MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Scoville MOTION APPROVED 5-0-0**

11 **Mr. Brosgol** Yes

12 **Ms. Santiago** Yes

13 **Ms. Scoville** Yes

14 **Ms. Guay** Yes

15 **Mr. Morrison** Yes
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23 **School Committee Secretary**

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Date

BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE

January 16, 2020

Exhibits/Documents

- Superintendent's FY21 Budget Proposal