

**BEDFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**March 25, 2020**  
**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 in order 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 4:11 p.m., Ms. Santiago called to order the meeting of the Bedford School Committee. All members of the School Committee were present; each member stated their name in a roll call attendance. There were no student representatives this evening.

**2. Comments from Public**

Mr. Lawrence Sheinfeld, a Bedford High School teacher from the Art Department commented voicing that he was very impressed with superintendent candidate Mr. Philip Conrad.

**3. Superintendent Search Discussion and Selection**

Mr. Brosgol made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee may proceed with a discussion related to the Superintendency and the Appointment of a new Superintendent of Schools**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Scoville**

**MOTION APPROVED 5-0-0**

<b>Mr. Brosgol</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ms. Santiago</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ms. Scoville</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Mr. Morrison</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ms. Guay</b>	<b>Yes</b>

*Ms. Guay was having some technical difficulties but was able to contact Ms. Santiago via text to cast her vote.*

Ms. Santiago asked the School Committee if they preferred to cast their vote to elect the new Superintendent of Schools with a majority vote which 3 out of 5 votes or if they preferred to have a super majority vote which would be 4 out of 5 votes.

The School Committee members agreed to use a super majority vote to choose the next Superintendent of Schools.

Ms. Santiago, as Chairperson of the School Committee declared that the appointment of Superintendent would require four affirmative votes cast for any candidate.

Ms. Santiago then explained that the School Committee would go through a high-level review of the process that were accomplished to date as well as a high-level review of the references that were conducted on the candidates. The School Committee members will then share their reflections of each candidate and then a straw poll will take place in order to start the process to select the final candidate.

After the Screening and Interview Committee chose the four finalists, each of the finalists met with the District Leadership and had a conversation on Bedford Cable Access TV in lieu of site visitation due to the current Covid-19 crisis. The panel of questions asked to the candidates were submissions from students, families, community members, faculty and staff.

Ms. Santiago said that students, families, community members, faculty and staff were surveyed about the candidates and 194 responses were received, which were very helpful to see the candidates through a different lens. Ms. Santiago thanked those who submitted responses to the survey.

The School Committee members did reference checks on all of the candidates with current and former superintendents, other school committee chairs, colleagues, mentors and others. Ms. Santiago stated that in lieu of the School Committee members conducting site visits to each candidate's current workplace, the members had phone conversations with administrators, colleagues, teachers, students and parents from each district.

*The School Committee then went on with their review of references for each of the candidates.*

Mr. Brosgol spoke about his references for Ms. Nan Murphy. He spoke with three references to include Ms. Anne Ludes, Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education for Framingham Public Schools and Ms. Jennifer Stys, Director of Student Services at Reading Public Schools. Both gave references validated Ms. Murphy's incredible capability of looking at data and working with groups of faculty and administrators on improving sub-groups scores, test scores and grade effectiveness. Mr. Brosgol received positive feedback about Ms. Murphy's work with students ranging from elementary to high school as well as her work as a collaborator.

Mr. Brosgol had a conversation with the Chairperson of the Weston School Committee as a reference for Mr. Anthony Parker. He received very positive feedback about Mr. Parker especially in reference to his work on the June Academy, which Mr. Parker spoke about in his interview and school schedule changes, which Mr. Parker led and pushed through with partnership with various constituencies.

Mr. Morrison spoke with one Mr. Parker's references, Dr. James Marini who was a former mentor and colleague in Newton. Dr. Marini gave a very strong reference for Mr. Parker noting his collegial abilities to build community, his compelling concern for children, the powerful values that he holds, his ability to establish a rapport with his leadership teams through that values system and a strong belief in interpersonal relations.

Ms. Santiago spoke to one reference for Mr. Parker, his current Superintendent Dr. Marguerite Connolly as well as teachers, the assistant superintendent, K-12 and 6-12 administrators as well as parents of high school students in Weston.

Ms. Santiago found that overall they described Mr. Parker as a nice person who is compassionate, collaborative and a good listener. One reference described Mr. Parker as an effective user of distributive leadership and that he is excellent at taking care of staff. Mr. Parker is able to deploy resources to help teacher facing challenges and he gives immediate feedback that feels supportive. One of his references stated Mr. Parker makes staff feel that they are able to take risks; he empowers department heads and directors and gives them a lot of influence to do their jobs, also mentioning that he is very approachable. Ms. Santiago said that one reference noted that Mr. Parker has had experience working on a strategic plan for his school. Another reference told Ms. Santiago that Weston is in the process of making budget cuts and that Mr. Parker has tried to focus on what is best for the kids and that he has chosen the option that is least impactful on the student and Ms. Santiago quoted "He has done a great job making cuts that maintain the programming". Finally, several references noted that Mr. Parker not only cares about the kids that are in the middle, but also the students with high achievement and those with a need for additional support as well.

Ms. Santiago also checked references for Mr. Philip Conrad. She spoke with a range of his colleagues and former colleagues to include superintendents, assistant superintendents from both Andover and Hamilton-Wenham, a school committee member, faculty, staff, leadership, parents and students from Andover.

Ms. Santiago said that he was described as honest, sincere, collaborative, approachable, compassionate, and student-focused. Mr. Conrad was hired as principal at a time of transition and turnover; he successfully managed to rebuild the trust of the staff and faculty. Mr. Conrad's work experience includes handling a difficult human resources matter where he made a decision that was not popular with the community, he made a difficult decision in lieu of public opposition from students and parents and he was able to persuade a number of people to change their view.

Mr. Conrad has had a hand in hiring the assistant principals and has succeeded in building a strong team and good faculty at his high school. Mr. Conrad has had experience with strategic planning in several districts that he has worked and he makes his recommendations based on data.

Ms. Santiago said that one reference added that Mr. Conrad had done a great job managing his high school budget and he understands it within the context of the district's budget; he focuses on making strategic investments.

Ms. Santiago was told that Mr. Conrad has experience with community and government relations and that he really believes that it is important to nurture a good intellectual environment and provide social-emotional guardrails. Mr. Conrad handles student discipline in a compassionate way and tries to make it a learning experience. Mr. Conrad became principal in the middle of the implementation of a new schedule change, which was controversial, he effectively handled the situation with both parents and students.

Ms. Santiago spoke to a former superintendent, colleagues, staff and a parent in reference to Ms. Nan Murphy. She is said to be firm but fair, she takes concerns seriously, and making decisions based on evidence. Ms. Murphy is a good listener and she is considerate of others' opinions. Ms. Murphy's school was top tier, labeled as "outstanding" and it was used as a model with respect to equity. The state considered her school a "turnaround school: and used it as an example to other principals and superintendents. Ms. Murphy is known to be very personable to

staff and encouraged them to stretch to reach for larger roles. It was cited that Ms. Murphy handled difficult situations well and as a result, she was able to bring staff members into the fold as collaborators. She has direct experience with school budgeting as well as managing grants directly in partnership with a state team, providing oversight. While in Central Office at Lowell Public Schools, Ms. Murphy worked on an overall budget of \$200M in the same capacity as an assistant superintendent. One reference referred to her as very academic and she favors proof based evidence.

Ms. Guay had some temporary technical difficulties and rejoined the meeting at 4:35 p.m.

*Ms. Santiago then asked each of the School Committee members to share their reflections and it was decided unanimously that the members would go through candidates alphabetically by surname in the order of Mr. Conrad, Ms. Murphy and then Mr. Parker.*

Mr. Brosgol started with Mr. Conrad, voicing that he liked what Mr. Conrad had to say and believes that he had some very innovative ideas. Mr. Brosgol liked that he was the only finalist that had specific examples when asked about hiring staff and questions that he would ask. Mr. Conrad had great use of data when asked about student achievement and test scores. Mr. Brosgol appreciated Mr. Conrad's answers about co-teaching and when talking about high achieving districts he acknowledged high achievers who became stagnant and were not moving along. Mr. Brosgol found him quite credible when he spoke about equity and he enjoyed his answer about the work he has done finding state and federal funding, he found this answer set him apart from the other finalists. Mr. Brosgol said that Mr. Conrad spoke flawlessly, pacing himself to find the right words, he seemed very comfortable and very relatable. The things that Mr. Brosgol did not think were very good from the interview were that Mr. Conrad was not familiar with the Hanscom funding and Mr. Brosgol did not think that he handled the answer about the relationship between the School Committee and the Superintendent, very well. Overall, Mr. Brosgol was very impressed with Mr. Conrad.

Mr. Brosgol found Mr. Parker very credible, interesting and believable when he talked about his tending to relationships and connecting with people. He appreciated how he would connect with each person in the room, not just the School Committee members and that he cared to take the time to meet and speak to people. Mr. Brosgol appreciated and respected Mr. Conrad's answers about innovation, particularly in June Academy. He found him credible when he talked about hiring a diverse faculty and the fact that he demonstrated that he has already done this. Mr. Brosgol certainly believes that he puts the kids first and enjoyed that he gave credit and validation to others many times throughout his answers. Mr. Parker gave a unique answer about restorative justice and working with School Resource Officers, which Mr. Brosgol found interesting and liked the way that he framed his answer.

Mr. Brosgol did not think that Mr. Parker addressed the question about the role of superintendent and the School Committee well, as he believes that it is not the job of the School Committee to support the superintendent first, rather they are in place to supervise the superintendent. He also felt that of all the candidates, Mr. Parker seemed to know the least about Bedford and his knowledge about the district did not seem to grow between the first and the second interview.

Mr. Brosgol then spoke about candidate Ms. Nan Murphy, saying that she gave very credible answers about co-teaching, inclusion and working with low-achieving students. He appreciated when she stated that “all” means “all” and he appreciated her view on Hanscom, how it presents a different challenge for Bedford and her experience first-hand experience as a member of a military family. Mr. Brosgol was concerned about Ms. Murphy’s middle school and high school experience. Mr. Brosgol felt that her answer to the question about the role of the Superintendent and the School Committee was not sufficient. Mr. Brosgol stated that he is a strong proponent of Mr. Conrad.

Mr. Morrison started by thanking the School Committee, the Hiring Committee, the community and the students of Bedford for all of their tremendous amount of work. He noted that he feels good about the process.

Mr. Morrison stated that he too is a very strong proponent of Mr. Conrad, he liked his opening comments about working on a very traditional path, from teacher to principal and he said that he believed that the Superintendency is an appropriate next step for him. Mr. Morrison was happy with Mr. Conrad’s attention to the importance of the social and emotional component of what we do in the school system and he believes he spoke very credibly about that topic. He enjoys that he is coming from a high school that is of a similar scale to Bedford High School. Mr. Morrison feels that because Mr. Conrad has not previously served as a superintendent, there is a need for growth and he feels confident that he will be able to grow into the position. Mr. Morrison was pleased that Mr. Conrad reiterated that there is a need for balance and believes that much of the job of superintendent is based on balance. He believes that he values the importance of relationships within the school and within the community. Mr. Morrison was appreciative that Mr. Conrad recognized that the use of data can be limited and that data is only one piece in a larger puzzle. Mr. Morrison said that what came through most powerfully to him was that Mr. Conrad is a man with a very strong value system and he could easily imagine how his values could easily translate to both students and teachers.

Mr. Morrison then spoke about Ms. Nan Murphy. He said that he really appreciated that she is a lifelong educator Mr. Morrison also thought that she spoke very eloquently about being the spouse of a Marine and her experience with a military upbringing, which he believes, would serve Bedford well especially with our unique circumstances having our Hanscom community. Mr. Morrison was impressed by Ms. Murphy’s passion about her work and noted that she voiced her love of what she does. He found it wonderful that Ms. Murphy’s motivation for coming to Bedford and applying for this position was that she misses her connection to her work expressing her desire to be around teachers and students once again. Mr. Morrison was delighted in her sensibility and desire to connect with all children and that she said that being number one for some is not the same as being number one for all. Mr. Morrison thought that her closing remarks were a “home run” being that she addressed the top five points of the school survey. He appreciates that she spoke eloquently, was well prepared and that she had done her homework, which he feels, is an important quality to have as a superintendent.

Mr. Morrison then addressed his thoughts on Mr. Parker. He concurs with what Mr. Brosgol said that Mr. Parker’s first priority is taking care of kids first and this comes through with everything that he does. Mr. Morrison appreciated that Mr. Parker started by saying that Bedford is a place where they ask, “how does an excellent district become more excellent”. Mr. Morrison was very impressed by Mr. Parker’s work on the June Academy by not only what he did to start it but

also by how he did it and that it is now it is being used as a model by other school systems. Upon Mr. Parker's visit to the JGMS, he asked if he could have tour the building. Mr. Morrison hosted the visit and feels that Mr. Parker's request spoke to his personality as a leader and thinks that his interaction with staff and teachers showed that he valued what they had to say and demonstrated that he is a naturally warm, caring person and a natural leader that people would respond to.

Mr. Morrison finished by stating that he believes that Mr. Conrad rose to the top of an absolutely fabulous group of candidates.

Ms. Guay applauded all that were part of this process to include the candidates, the hiring committee and Bedford Cable Access TV for their flexibility at this time. She stated that she hosted Mr. Conrad on his visit to Bedford. Ms. Guay said that she echoes Mr. Brosgol and Mr. Morrison's thoughts about Mr. Conrad's experience in both a middle and high school setting, his innovation bringing the Capstone project to Andover, participating in the Seal of Bi-literacy program as well as his experience in developing curriculum for grades K-12. Ms. Guay found Mr. Conrad was honest in conversation about his school ranking; she appreciated his insight on the co-teaching model and his and appreciated his discussion about achievement gaps and his data analysis. Ms. Guay was impressed with the way he worked students, families and the community during the Lawrence/Andover gas explosion crisis. She enjoyed his response to the use of School Resource Officers and thought that using a peer mediation group for restorative justice was a great opportunity for students.

Ms. Guay then spoke about Ms. Murphy stating that she was very impressed with her experience and appreciated her experience working as an educator on a military base as well as her military family experience. She like that Ms. Murphy was familiar with the Tenacity Challenge as well as the METCO program even though Lowell Public Schools do not have either; Ms. Murphy seemed to know the Bedford community well. Ms. Guay believes Ms. Murphy seemed very committed to inclusion and made it work at a school she taught at, meeting the needs of the students. She likes that Ms. Murphy worked in a school considered a "3" which had very little funding from the state yet with her hard work and commitment; she worked with her staff and brought the school to a "1" with very few resources. Ms. Guay thought that Ms. Murphy's closing statements were outstanding mentioning that she had experience working in Central Office, budget experience and first-hand involvement working at the Department of Education and Secondary Education (DESE), which she thinks, is very helpful. Ms. Guay believes Ms. Murphy's biggest strength is her work with sub-groups and she enjoyed meeting with her.

Ms. Guay stated that her biggest take away from Mr. Parker was when he asked, "How does an excellent district become more excellent?" She appreciated his work as a teacher in Newton and then a principal in Weston, two very high-performing districts yet he had an understanding that the needs of every student aren't always met. She loved the June Academy program that Mr. Parker spoke of; especially that it gave students an opportunity to co-teach. Ms. Guay recognized the importance of Mr. Parker's experience teaching in a co-teaching model and she enjoyed his style discussing that he has had hard conversations; she found his explanation of how he operates very honest. Ms. Guay said that Mr. Parker gave an outstanding response to the question pertaining to vocational training for students. She liked how he turned the question around, how he believes that all students are missing out if they do not have the opportunity some type of vocational class. She appreciated Mr. Parker's experience at the

Statehouse and that he emphasized the students taking part in the advocacy work. In response to the question about School Resource Officers and restorative justice, Ms. Guay liked that Mr. Parker formed a unique relationship with the SRO, involving the SRO as part of the team meeting with parents and taking part in meetings. She liked that he said that restorative justice is good for some students but may not work for all and that Mr. Parker pointed to the data showing that there was a drop in suspension due to the use of restorative justice.

Ms. Scoville reviewed her thoughts on Mr. Conrad expressing that she liked that his district had taken the risk to become part of the pilot Kaleidoscope program, which delves into deeper learning, and she finds that extremely important. She appreciated his work with the Capstone Project, which encourages hands learning and Ms. Scoville was intrigued with his use of data by using the Panorama survey. Ms. Scoville liked Mr. Conrad's analogy of the co-teaching model using a "classroom marriage" to describe the teaching team. She believes that he has a good understanding of the budget and finance at the state level demonstrated by committee seats he has held and his experience and advocacy for a legislative shadowing program. Ms. Scoville also appreciated that Mr. Conrad mentioned relationship building is a priority for him.

Ms. Scoville stated that she liked that Ms. Murphy also had experience with the Kaleidoscope Program. She was impressed by her "All means All" concept of student inclusion and that Ms. Murphy believes that all kids can be reached, each student can be met on his or her level. Ms. Scoville was happy to hear Ms. Murphy articulate that she was interested in a coming to the district as a long-term commitment. Ms. Scoville was impressed by Ms. Murphy's accomplishments in Lowell Public Schools, her state level understanding and her desire to be visible in the classroom.

Ms. Scoville also enjoyed Mr. Parker's work on the June Academy and that he spoke of teachers having the opportunity to teach what they are passionate about and students have an opportunity to learn co-teaching. She talked about Mr. Parker's work on moving the school start time to benefit students. Ms. Scoville felt that he was great at looking at the budget and seeing the "big picture", what is needed most for the school and students. She was impressed by his advocacy of the METCO program, his passion about working with families and being visible in the community. Ms. Scoville finished by thanking everyone who helped with the interview and hiring process.

Ms. Santiago said that she would try not to repeat what other members of the School Committee stated in their responses but one of the main things that she took away from what was shared by faculty and staff as well as the online survey, was that it can seem like a big jump to go from principal to superintendent. She believes that Mr. Conrad has some experience in some of the key paths in which superintendents are responsible such as seeing the budget in the context to the district and his experience working with an override in the Hamilton-Wenham district vote. She sees Mr. Conrad as very student focused which she believes is very important and she appreciates his experience dealing with public controversies. Ms. Santiago likes that he has worked on strategic plans in other districts and that he seems to have the administrative capabilities of a superintendent. Ms. Santiago proactively sought other references for Mr. Conrad and what stuck out to her was that his colleagues say he is skilled at building relationship, which she believes will be beneficial to the collegial atmosphere in Bedford Public Schools. She finished by saying that she appreciates his focus on social and emotional learning.

Ms. Santiago spoke about her thoughts on Ms. Murphy. She found that in her initial interview her budget insight was striking and that it stood out against the rest of the candidates. Ms. Santiago saw that Ms. Murphy has strong analytical skills and that she oversaw significant budget in Lowell. She feels that Ms. Murphy has a proven record of accomplishment securing grant funding and that she has district level experience according to her former superintendent who described Ms. Murphy's role as similar to an assistant superintendent.

Ms. Santiago loved Ms. Murphy's experience as a base teacher and a military spouse and considers that this perspective would be an asset.

Ms. Santiago loved that Ms. Murphy mentored the people that she worked, that she encouraged them to stretch to advance in their career and seems to have a great deal of experience managing people.

Ms. Santiago said that Mr. Parker seems excellent of taking care of staff, he has helped staff with professional challenges move forward; he is a good collaborator.

Ms. Santiago was impressed with the June Academy and that his references said that Mr. Parker took charge of this project bringing it to success.

Mr. Parker has been supportive of staff members with personal challenges with his flexibility.

Ms. Santiago liked his "big picture" view to look beyond "what is", she also appreciated that his moving away from a weighted GPA – allowing students to succeed in a different way.

She liked that he ensures that the top performers are challenged; the disadvantaged students have the resources they need yet also considers the "middle of the road" student.

Ms. Santiago appreciates Mr. Conrad's experience with budget and budget cuts by considering how spending has an impact on students.

Ms. Santiago then asked the School Committee to take a straw poll of their final choice:

Mr. Brosgol:	Mr. Philip Conrad
Mr. Morrison:	Mr. Philip Conrad
Ms. Guay:	Mr. Philip Conrad
Ms. Scoville:	Mr. Philip Conrad
Ms. Santiago:	Mr. Philip Conrad

Ms. Santiago then stated that the School Committee would then proceed to election of the Superintendent of Bedford Public Schools.

Ms. Santiago and the School Committee agreed on a ballot method where the School Committee Chair does a roll call and each member will call the name of their candidate of choice.

Mr. Brosgol:	Mr. Philip Conrad
Mr. Morrison:	Mr. Philip Conrad
Ms. Guay:	Mr. Philip Conrad
Ms. Scoville:	Mr. Philip Conrad
Ms. Santiago:	Mr. Philip Conrad

Ms. Santiago gave the opportunity for the School Committee members to change their vote, none did.



Ms. Santiago took the five votes for Mr. Philip Conrad and declared Mr. Conrad elected as the new Superintendent of Bedford Public Schools starting on July 1, 2020.

Mr. Morrison made the following motion:

**MOVED: That the School Committee appoint Mr. Philip Conrad as Superintendent of Bedford Public Schools effective July 1, 2020 subject to the successful negotiation of a contract of employment, mutually agreeable to the candidate and the Bedford School Committee, signed by both parties or their designees.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Ms. Scoville**

**MOTION APPROVED 5-0-0**

<b>Mr. Brosgol</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ms. Santiago</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ms. Scoville</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ms. Guay</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Mr. Morrison</b>	<b>Yes</b>

Mr. Morrison thanked Ms. Santiago for her leadership throughout the search and hiring process, he stated that it has been a long and successful process, in his opinion

Ms. Santiago thanked each applicant and finalists for their interest in Bedford and went on to thank the following:

- Mr. Glenn Koocher from the Massachusetts Association for School Committees for providing guidance
- Ms. Erin Crowley, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent for her hard work
- Ms. Katie Duval, Mr. Matthew Bergman and Mr. Michael Davis of Bedford Cable Access Television for their constant support in making the process transparent to the community during this time of uncertainty
- Ms. Julie Turner for her assistance with the community meetings
- The writers of The Bedford Citizen for keeping the community aware of the process and how they could participate
- The students, families, faculty and staff for their input and assistance
- Mr. Sills for his leadership, support, assistance and private guidance
- The members of the Bedford School Committee for their help throughout the process.

Mr. Brosgol asked Ms. Santiago to describe the process now since Mr. Conrad is a finalist elsewhere.

Ms. Santiago said that she would contact Mr. Conrad, assuming he accepts the role of Superintendent; she will then begin working with the School Committee attorney and Mr. Conrad to negotiate a contract, send out a press release and notify the community and the families of Bedford.

Mr. Brosgol made the following motion:

**MOVED: Motion to adjourn at 5:29 p.m. not to reopen.**

**MOTION SECONDED by Mr. Morrison**

**MOTION APPROVED 5-0-0**

Mr. Brosgol Yes

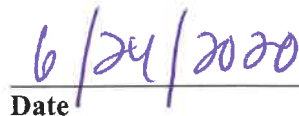
Ms. Santiago Yes

Ms. Scoville Yes

Ms. Guay Yes

Mr. Morrison Yes

  
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School Committee Secretary  
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Date