



Bedford Central School District
Inspiring and Challenging Our Students



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November 5, 2018

Dear BCSD Community:

The purpose of this brief communication is to share some information with you regarding one of our most significant district commitments and initiatives. As you are aware, we have a BCSD Strategic Plan and have recently shared our district's [2018-2019 Success Plan](#).

One area of focus is **Membership and Student Voice**. We have been looking, overtime; at how connected all of our students feel about their experiences in our classrooms, in our school buildings, and throughout the BCSD. The research is clear that when students feel valued and invested in their education, when they feel safe and supported in the relationships they develop at school, they experience success.

Our district has been a long-time member of an organization of “high performing” school districts from New York, New Jersey and Connecticut, called the Tri-State Consortium. As a member district, every three years, we agree to host a visit by a team of teachers and administrators from other member districts to receive feedback and insight around an area of focus identified by the host district. We are planning for a visit of colleagues from Tri-State districts, **November 14-16th**, with focus on **Membership and Student Voice**.

We have a district Steering Committee that has been meeting since last year to plan for this visit. The Steering Committee has been looking at data, gathering artifacts that tell our story, and planning for classroom observations and interviews of students, parents and staff when our visitors join us on November 14-16th. The Tri-State team will visit our district not as evaluators of our programs and our work, but as “critical friends.” They will consider the questions developed by our Steering Committee and that we are asking ourselves in our quest to improve, enhance and further develop action steps that reaffirm and strengthen the experience of **Membership and Student Voice** for all of our district's students.

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Our Tri-State Steering Committee, in preparing for this visit, developed this “working definition” of **Membership and Student Voice**:

***Membership and Student Voice** is defined by **how much** students are invested in the school community. Do they feel that they are **a part of** and **have a say** in the school, their future, their goals? How much do they own their educational experiences inside and outside of the classroom?*

When the Tri-State Visiting Team visits Bedford, we will ask them to consider these three **Essential Questions**:

1. To what extent does the BCSD provide opportunities to promote and support membership and student voice for all across the district?
2. To what extent do our current instructional practices promote and reflect membership and student voice?
3. To what extent does our commitment to membership and student voice align with student experiences in the classroom, school, and district?

This letter is to let you know of this upcoming visit and the focus area. Many students will see visitors observing their classes over these three days, and students might be asked by their principals to participate in brief, 20-minute interviews with some of our visitors.

We are proud of our schools in Bedford and see our Tri-State visit as an opportunity to make our district even stronger.

Sincerely,



Dr. Joel Adelberg
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction

