

## **Regular Board of Education Meeting – Approved Minutes**

**Wednesday, December 4, 2024, 7:00 p.m.**

### **Town Hall Meeting Room**

Present Board Members: Liz Barlow, Monica Logan, Heather Lombardo, Donna Nolan, David Peling, Karen Richmond-Godard, Ali Zafar, and Sofia Brenson and Katie O’Neill (Student Representatives)

Absent Board Members: N/A

#### **I. Call to Order**

Board Chair, Monica Logan, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

#### **II. Chairperson's Report**

Ms. Logan shared that the first CPPAC Meeting was held and that the meetings can be followed on GCTV. She thanked Dave Peling and Heather Lombardo for representing the BOE on this Committee. The first meeting went well as the Committee starts to define what they are doing for the entire town.

#### **III. Public Comment**

There were no public comments this evening in person or via Zoom.

#### **IV. Student Representative Reports**

- Katie O’Neill stated the band concert will be held tomorrow night.
- The World Language Honor Societies Induction Ceremony will be held next week on December 11<sup>th</sup>.
- The NHS volleyball tournament will be held on Friday night.
- Basketball first night will be held on Saturday night with mixed scrimmages, raffles, and contests to benefit the teams.
- Sofia Brenson shared that winter sports started this week and both boys’ and girls’ basketball teams will play tomorrow night.

#### **V. Reports and Discussion**

##### **VI.A. School Resource Officer Program**

Superintendent Cheri Burke, along with Police Chief, Scott Sansom, and Police Captain, Kurt LaFlamme, presented information with regard to a potential School Resource Officer Program for Granby Public Schools. Superintendent Burke thanked Chief Sansom and Captain LaFlamme for being present this evening and stated it takes very close collaboration with the town, especially the Police Department, to work with the schools. She shared additional resources used for her research on School Resource Officers (SROs) with the Board which will be posted on the website. She shared definitions of an SRO with regard to being a law enforcer, mentor, educator, and emergency manager. She went on to state that an SRO will serve as a liaison between the school and outside agencies to promote safety in or around the school by addressing crime or the fear of crime. The SRO will walk the buildings and interact with students. Superintendent Burke stated the school district will benefit from an SRO by creating and maintaining a safe school environment; establishing a cooperative relationship between students and police; prevent juvenile delinquency; and promote positive interactions between students and police officers. Chief Sansom shared that an SRO becomes part of the environment and builds relationships especially with families as well as the child and becomes a mentor in many situations.

Superintendent Burke stated across the State of Connecticut, 113 out of 169 districts currently have SROs in place and those districts that do not have SROs have security guards. She shared that Granby Police Officers are currently called to the schools an average of 2-3 times per week with calls ranging from a bear on campus, medical needs, social media concerns, drug use, threats of harm, and student aggression. She reviewed the duties of an SRO, such as, providing educational presentations on law enforcement; conducting investigations into any crimes; developing strategies for preventing and managing safety risks; and submitting regular reports to the Chief of Police and Superintendent. Chief Sansom explained the process of how an SRO is selected as well as the training required and Superintendent Burke reviewed

the training requirements for an SRO including digital safety, human trafficking, mental health, substance abuse, de-escalation practices, etc. An SRO is not responsible for school discipline, enforcing school rules/policy, leading searches of students, lockers, backpacks, etc.; and investigating cases of bullying. The presentation concluded with how an SRO would be funded. The salary of the SRO will be a new initiative in the Superintendent's proposed Plus One Budget. Superintendent Burke also reviewed how an SRO will be selected as well as how the effectiveness of the program will be evaluated. Chief Sansom shared that the Police Department will listen and work with the schools to see what type of program will work for the district. He suggested monthly meetings at a minimum as well as quarterly and yearly reporting which will be shared with the community.

Questions were raised from the Board. Dave Peling inquired if it would be a full-time position and Chief Sansom stated yes, and there would be two MOUs of agreement (1 for schools and 1 for a business model). Donna Nolan inquired if an interest survey will be sent to parents especially with regard to the funding of an SRO and Superintendent Burke stated, yes, absolutely. Karen Richmond-Godard inquired if the Campus Supervisors would continue in their current roles. Superintendent Burke stated she does not see an SRO replacing those positions; rather, enhancing these positions as the roles would be very different. Heather Lombardo inquired if it is important to have the same officer every year and Chief Sansom shared he believes at least 4 years in the position is good and coming in with a Freshman class. Liz Barlow commented that she is glad the SRO will not be a disciplinary position as it could be intimidating for some groups of students. Ali Zafar inquired how the relationships are built with students and Chief Sansom stated by being initially involved in incidents occurring; teaching; having office hours; and becoming part of the school by sitting in the back of a class, going to games, etc. Mr. Zafar also inquired about social media monitoring and Superintendent Burke stated it starts with the school district with filters and school-level investigations but sometimes it crosses a line and becomes more of a concern where the police need to be contacted and then they can be a consultant to the school district. The majority of social media bullying online is happening outside of the school environment/hours due to the filters and monitoring done by the school district. Monica Logan asked the Student Representatives if they had any comments and Katie O'Neill stated she thinks that having an SRO is a good idea to have someone there when an incident happens. Sofia agreed and stated especially during the lockdown recently, it would have been great to have someone explaining to students what was happening as it unfolded.

#### **VI.A. Draft 2025-2026 School Calendar**

The Board discussed the draft 2025-2026 school calendar. Superintendent Burke stated this is the first reading of the calendar for next school year and, just as a reminder, the responsibility of the Board is to ensure we abide by state regulations to be in school for 180 days; the first and last day of school; as well as vacations and holidays. With regard to conferences, open houses, etc., those dates are school-based decisions and will be planned in the near future. Additionally, the district is currently working to review the school schedules to unify the HS/MS bell schedules and also looking for collaboration with teachers. She does not anticipate any major changes to the calendar other than the PLC time, which is specifically at the high school. Ali Zafar inquired if there are any other holidays that can be accommodated and Superintendent Burke stated school districts are governed by State Statute to hold a minimum number of school days and need to honor certain holidays. There are also religious holidays with Christian holidays most often represented and are reflective of the community. Any additional days are purview of the BOE and would involve many different factors such as how many staff/students are absent on other religious holidays. The process would start with the community requesting it; data necessary to support it; as well as Board level involvement. The Board was encouraged to Google holidays observed around the state. Dave Peling commented on Granby only observing one Jewish holiday. Monica Logan stated that data would be gathered regarding religious holidays. Liz Barlow also inquired about how long the start of school has begun in August given there is no A/C and data will be gathered on this as well.

## **VI. Business Requiring Action**

### **VI.A. Minutes**

A motion was made by Donna Nolan and seconded by Heather Lombardo that the Granby Board of Education approve the minutes from the November 20, 2024 Board of Education Meeting. This motion passed at 8:11 p.m. with two abstentions (KRG and AZ).

## **VI. Committee Reports**

### **VI.A. Board Standing Committee Reports**

#### **VI.A.1. Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communication**

Karen Richmond-Godard reported the subcommittee discussed course revisions regarding the level in English 9 (previously AP English) and Capstone with a change in credit, level and alignment to standards. Meghan Bavol and Courtney Piotrowski presented, along with Assistant Superintendent Jennifer Parsons, about the process and history of changing literacy programs in the elementary school (as required by the State of CT). The Houghton Mifflin *Into Reading Series* was approved by the Subcommittee. Also received a monthly report update on the ELA program, scheduling and work creating the budget for FY26. Donna Nolan inquired about the full cost of the Reading Program and Ms. Parsons stated it is a 5-year period with online access and workbooks every year for K-2 and will cost \$190K. A full presentation will be shared with the Board and also posted on the website.

#### **VI.A.2. Finance/Personnel/Facilities**

This subcommittee has not met. Approved minutes are in the packet.

### **VI.B. Other Board-Related Reports**

#### **VI.B.1. CREC/CABE**

Monica Logan stated there was nothing new to report.

#### **VI.B.2. Granby Education Foundation**

Liz Barlow stated there was nothing new to report.

### **VI.C. Calendar of Events**

Monica Logan stated the calendar of events is as presented.

### **VI.D. Board Member Announcements**

There were no Board member announcements this evening.

### **VI.E. Action Items**

1) Data on past start dates; religious holidays and staff/student absences during those holidays

## **VIII. Superintendent's Report**

- Communication was sent out today regarding the process for inclement weather.
- GMHS Chamber Singers sang at the Women's Breakfast and will sing next Friday at the Men's Breakfast.
- All schools will participate in the CCMC PJ Day on December 13<sup>th</sup>.
- The Plus One Budget will be presented in a couple of weeks; process is starting with zero-based budgeting.
- There was an early release for elementary schools today as well as tomorrow and Friday.
- The next BOE Meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 18<sup>th</sup>.

## **IX. Adjournment**

A motion was made by Donna Nolan and seconded by David Peling that the Granby Board of Education adjourn the regular Board of Education Meeting. This motion passed unanimously at 8:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Elizabeth H. Barlow. Board Secretary