

Regular Board of Education Meeting – Approved Minutes
Wednesday, September 1, 2021, 7:00 p.m.
High School Auditorium/Zoom

Present Board Members: Jenny Emery (via Zoom), Mark Fiorentino, Melissa Migliaccio, David Peling, Sarah Thrall, Rosemarie Weber, Brandon Webster, and Tess Bajek and Jacob Scott (Student Representatives)

Absent Board Members: N/A

Sarah Thrall called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

I. Administrative Reports

I.A. Chairman's Corner

Sarah Thrall, Board Chair, reminded all present at the meeting that we are under an Executive Order per Governor Lamont to wear masks in school buildings and stated there plenty of masks available if you do not have one. Ms. Thrall thanked all administrators, staff, and teachers for a successful start to the school year as well as to all of our families and students. She also stated the Board held an annual retreat last week which will be discussed later in the agenda.

I.B. Superintendent's Announcements

- Dr. Grossman welcomed everyone in person and on-line this evening and stated it is great to be back for the start of our 2021-22 school year.
- Dr. Grossman welcomed Tess Bajek, a Junior at the high school, as our new Student Representative and also informed everyone that Tess was one of our emcees at convocation last week and did a fantastic job.
- Had a great convocation last week. All staff members attended in this auditorium for the first time in a year and half.
- Two early release days were called on the first two days of school last week due to heat and students have transitioned back wonderfully.
- It has been a busy hiring season, hiring approximately 50 new staff members. There are still a couple of openings to fill in our Special Education Department.
- Congratulations to the Granby BOE for the Award of Excellence for Communication for our Stronger Together Plan. On November 12th the BOE will receive this award at the CABA/CAPSS convention.
- Curriculum nights (formerly known as Open Houses) will be held in person with the guidance of the Farmington Valley Health District. These will only be held in-person; however, materials will be posted online for those who cannot attend.
- There will be no school on Monday in observance of the holiday.
- A BOE Summer Retreat was held last week along with a tour of our school buildings and a great discussion was had with regard to the strategic plan which we will speak about later on the agenda.
- The next BOE meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 15th.

I.C. Assistant Superintendent's Report

Ms. Jennifer Parsons, Assistant Superintendent, provided updates from her office and stated Granby Public Schools is always overjoyed to welcome new teachers to the district. They are very excited to be here and eager to learn about the Granby community. They took a tour of the town, met their principals and other administrators, and toured their buildings. Ms. Parsons also shared that three days last week were professional development days and one day was devoted to social/emotional learning as well as effective instructional strategies which you will hear a lot about over the next few years. She stated the district also welcomed back over 1,750 excited students and is 100% full in-person learning. With regard to COVID, Ms. Parsons stated many of the mitigation strategies that worked well last year are still in place; however, the district is relying less on cohorting and some of the barriers that were in place last year as these are not being recommended as mitigation strategies. The school year started with a community-based quarantine but currently there are no cases in the schools. She also shared that more will be learned about how the district will be supporting vaccinations. Brandon Webster inquired if will there be communication when a case arises in the district. Dr. Grossman stated, yes, the same communication will be sent out as was done last year and will be updated on our dashboard.

I.D. Student Representative Reports

- Tess Bajek introduced herself to the Board stating she manages the football and wrestling team and is also involved in choir and Chamber Singers. She is also the Secretary on the Executive Board of Student Government. She stated she wanted to be student representative so she can be a voice for students.
- There was a Football jamboree against Avon and Windham and won both scrimmages. Soccer also had a scrimmage but lost. Cross Country has their first meet next Friday. Girls' soccer has a jamboree on Saturday from 8-1 and this Friday football will have their first real scrimmage on Friday night.
- Jacob Scotto re-introduced himself to the Board stating he is a Senior at GMHS and manages the boys' soccer team and is a member of the Granby Drama Club and State Championship Tennis Team as well as enjoys singing and is part of chorus and chamber singers with Tess.
- Jacob stated it is nice to be back in school with no big shields on the desks and have interactions with students and teachers without barriers.
- Free lunch is very popular again this year as well as free breakfast which was added this year.
- Sports are also back including football. There was a boys' soccer scrimmage yesterday against Simsbury and they sadly lost 1-3.

I. Public Comment

Mr. Dave Emery, 71 Loomis Street, North Granby. Mr. Emery stated he is a 40-year resident in town and wanted to express his gratitude to Dr. Grossman and members of the BOE and teachers for an extraordinarily difficult year last year. He stated he was impressed with the frequent and high quality communications sent to the Granby community which provided a great source of information. Mr. Emery concluded saying he just wanted to express his thanks.

Brett Barbee stated he is relatively new to the area and is starting his second year in Granby stating he is also appreciative for the leadership Dr. Grossman and his staff demonstrated last year. He requested the Board to consider the level of risk that might exist for faculty members who choose not to vaccinate and the potential loss of those faculty members.

III. Consent Agenda

III.A. Minutes

A motion was made by Rosemarie Weber and seconded by Brandon Webster to adopt the minutes for the June 16, 2021 Board of Education Meeting. This motion passed unanimously at 7:25 p.m. A motion was made by Rosemarie Weber and seconded by Mark Fiorentino to adopt the minutes for the August 25, 2021 Summer Board of Education Retreat. This motion passed at 7:26 p.m. with one absention (Brandon Webster).

IV. Old Business

IV.A. Vision of the Graduate Approval

The Board discussed the approval of the Vision of the Graduate for the Granby Public Schools. A motion was made by Mark Fiorentino and seconded by Brandon Webster to adopt the Vision of the Graduate for the Granby Public Schools. Dr. Grossman thanked the Committee led by Jennifer Parsons as well as the Board for their support of this document which will be with the Granby Public Schools for many years ahead. Jenny Emery stated it became clear at the retreat that these documents are very important and help to guide the work of the district. Mark Fiorentino stated he is thankful for the work put into this document and stated he sees this as a powerful tool. This motion passed unanimously at 7:28 p.m.

V. New Business

V.A. Summer School Programming

Ms. Katie Busbey, Director of the Summer School Program, reviewed the summer programming this past summer. Ms. Busbey, Enrichment Coach at Wells Road Intermediate School, stated she has been the Director of Summer School for the past 8 years and the main purpose of summer school this year was to provide students with support. Ms. Busbey summarized all of the various camps which were held in-person and remotely: Camp Kelly (PreK, in-person, 9 students attended); Social Skills Camp/Support (K-8, in-person, 12 students attended); Get Ready for Kinder (Kindergarten in-person, 8 students attended); Tutoring (K-12, individualized in-person or remote, 22 students attended); Credit Recovery (Grades 9-12, in-person and remote, 14 students attended); and, Academic Classes (K-12, in-person or remote instruction targeting core academic skills from the previous year, 184 students attended). Moving forward, session times for summer

school programming can be set now in order for families to pre-plan for the summer and this will also help with staffing and programming. Ms. Parsons thanked Ms. Busbey and Ms. Miller for their leadership of the Summer School Program. She also thanked the YMCA and Granby Rec Department for requiring a quiet place for students who needed to get on-line to do work, tutoring, etc. Ms. Parsons also mentioned the AP Boot Camp which will be brought forward to a future Board Meeting. She also informed the Board that about 30 students were given the opportunity for summer school programming with funding available through grants. Ms. Thrall inquired what else stands out with regard to delivering summer school differently and how do we get back to that. Ms. Busbey stated the enrichment programming is very difficult to do remotely and needs to be mostly hands-on so conversations are beginning early. Melissa Migliaccio inquired how the academic classes with 184 students compares to previous years and also if parents are concerned with learning loss. Ms. Busbey stated she does not feel it is terribly lower than previous years. Mark Fiorentino inquired why the enrichment piece could not happen. Ms. Parsons stated enrichment classes are one-week long for 2 hours per class and it would be very hard to cohort these groups.

V.B. Strategic Plan for 2021-2025 for Granby Public Schools

The Board discussed the draft Strategic Plan for 2021-2025 for Granby Public Schools. Dr. Grossman thanked the Board for engaging in development of the Strategic Plan during the retreat and stated it is now starting to get out to the community in draft form. He suggested the Board focus on Goal #4 this evening as he would like to come back to the next meeting with additional items under Goal #5. Dr. Grossman stated this is a 4-year plan but hopefully we can report back after each year. Mark Fiorentino inquired how Goal 4.B. fits under Budget Development and Fiscal Management. Dr. Grossman stated that Human Resources falls under our Business Official's guidance and that is why it was placed there; however, he stated he is open to suggestions. Mr. Fiorentino stated he also feels an initiative should be added to continue to look for partnerships and efficiencies in the budget process and long-term budget savings with the town. The one that Jenny Emery raised was for long-term large capital projects and the timing of the bond referendum does not drive what is in the budget. Rosemarie Weber stated in the preamble, it states, "Practice responsible budget development and management through transparency and maximize available financial resources..." With regard to realizing efficiencies, she stated some of that is already stated in 4.F. and this should be used to encapsulate that idea. Melissa Migliaccio stated she does not understand what 4.C. means with regard to cross-training and Dr. Grossman stated that term means to gather institutional knowledge and have succession planning in place. Brandon Webster stated Goal 4.B. might fit under Goal #6. Jenny Emery stated, also for Goal 4.B., to make sure our compensation structure is commensurate with our expectations for performance. Dr. Grossman stated he would like assistance from the Board with regard to writing this goal. Mark Fiorentino stated he would be happy to help with this. Rosemarie Weber stated the Board should be careful with regard to contract negotiations and union issues and this could be a slippery slope. Brandon Webster also suggested adding to keep up with the latest technologies in education. Dr. Grossman stated we may have that under the Student Learning and Achievement Goal and Mr. Webster stated he was thinking more about financial efficiencies with regard to technology. Dr. Grossman concluded stating he would like to bring Goal #5 to the Board at the next meeting and is on target to complete this plan sometime in October.

VI. Miscellaneous

VI.A. Board Standing Committee Reports

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

Rosemarie Weber stated this Subcommittee met this evening to discuss activity from the end of the school year until the beginning of this year including summer school; credit recovery; AP boot camp; GMHS news studio; testing in Grades K-2; community engagement in the 21-Day Equity Challenge; work being done to showcase our district to potential Open Choice students; and, the onboarding of many new teachers. Ms. Weber stated the Subcommittee requested follow-up with regard to remote learning and what went right and wrong for future reference. The Subcommittee discussed the summer curriculum writing for middle school math, K-5 math, pre-calculus, Grades 3-4 science, and high school history classes to name a few. The annual policy update was reviewed and the Subcommittee will bring suggested policies for revision to the Board throughout the year. Finally, reviewed the work the district will be doing with the Great School Partnership in the areas of instructional framework and the two areas to be worked on are the learning environment and social emotional learning as well as ensuring clear, shared outcomes. With regard to data team processing, a consultant with the Granby School Partnership will be working with administration focusing on how to use data collected to promote, enhance and move forward student learning.

VI.A.2. Finance/Personnel/Facilities

Jenny Emery stated this subcommittee has not met. She also informed the Board that she will not be able to attend the Finance Subcommittee on September 15th but will be able to join the Board of Education Meeting.

VI.B. Other Board-Related Reports

VI.B.1. CREC/CABE

Mark Fiorentino stated CREC's official first meeting will be held two weeks from today.

VI.B.2. Granby Education Foundation

Jenny Emery stated the GEF meetings for the year have not started yet but stated the big grant and partnership for the high school news studio is creating some enthusiasm for the community.

VI.C. Calendar of Events

Sarah Thrall stated there are many curriculum nights happening around the district. Mark Fiorentino inquired if PAC and PTO meetings can be posted on the calendar. Dr. Grossman stated, yes, those meeting will be added to the calendar.

VI.D. Board Member Announcements

There were no Board member announcements this evening.

VI.E. Action Items

There were no action items this evening.

VII. Executive Session/Non-Meeting

A motion was made by Melissa Migliaccio and seconded by David Peling to enter into an Executive Session to discuss a school safety matter and Ms. Jennifer Parsons and the district's attorney into Executive Session. This motion passed unanimously at 8:14 p.m.

The Executive Session adjourned at approximately 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Weber
Board Secretary