

Regular Board of Education Meeting – Draft Minutes
Wednesday, February 19, 2025, 7:00 pm
Town Hall Meeting Room

Present Board Members: Liz Barlow, Monica Logan, Heather Lombardo, Donna Nolan, David Peling, Karen Richmond-Godard, and Sofia Brenson (Student Representative)

Absent Board Members: Ali Zafar and Katie O'Neill (Student Representative)

I. Call to Order and Welcome

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

II. Chairperson's Report

Monica Logan welcomed everyone to the meeting and shared a fun experience she had at the middle school last Monday joining Kristin Rice and students in a mock trial program. She shared she has done hundreds of mock trial competitions and decided to participate with the middle school students. This activity will be piloted to see if it can be done on a permanent basis. It is a great opportunity for students to get hands-on experience and practice speaking skills. Competitions are statewide and nationwide.

III. Awards and Recognition

The Board recognized Granby Memorial High School students Gavin Baron, Jason Davila, Patrick O'Neill, Colin Samalus, and Cole Sullivan as recent winners of the Junior Achievement Stock Market Challenge. As winners of the challenge, students will travel to Atlanta, Georgia in June to attend the 2025 Junior Achievement Future Bound Conference at Georgia State University. Students shared their experience of the competition with the Board.

IV. Public Comment

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

V. Student Representative Reports

- Black History Month is being celebrated this month during Advisory.
- The winter coffeehouse at 7 pm and a pickleball fundraiser from 5-8 will be held on March 1st.
- Early releases will be held on March 10th and 11th for conferences.
- The GMHS Drama spring musical, *Legally Blonde*, will be held March 14-17.
- Boys' ice hockey won vs. Enfield on Monday; game tonight vs. Housatonic and it is senior night; boys' basketball tonight vs. East Windsor; girls' basketball vs. Suffield away; boys' wrestling Class S State Championship Saturday morning away at Killingly; swimming has a meet against Lakeview Saturday afternoon at the YMCA.
- Spring sports registration opens soon.

VI. Reports and Discussion

VI.A. Athletic Presentation

Mr. Karl Gates, Athletic Director, presented the annual athletic presentation to the Board. Superintendent Burke stated Mr. Gates joined Granby this fall and has done an outstanding job at promoting student athletes as a community and you will be happy to learn about some of the initiatives this year. Mr. Gates reviewed the number of sports teams consisting of 25 Varsity, 12 Junior Varsity, 3 Freshman, and 2 Co-Op teams. He stated it was a great fall season with girls' volleyball being a State Tournament Finalist; boys' soccer a State Tournament Semi-Finalist; and football and field hockey State Tournament Quarterfinalists. Additionally, field hockey and girls' volleyball were 2024 NCCC Champions. Mr. Gates also shared that Ben Delgallo was All New England for boys' soccer and many other GMHS athletes were all-state athletes with two (2) students signing to play lacrosse in college. Mr. Gates stated he is looking forward to a strong spring season and went on to share statistics for athletes as follows: 52% of GMHS athletes participate in multiple sports; 84% are scholar athletes; and, 60% of GMHS students participate in athletics. He informed the Board what was accomplished for the 2024-2025 initiative for better communication in the Athletic Department, such as an improved website, large TV screen outside the Athletics office which keeps students updated on postponements for practices and games; HUDL cameras to stream more JV games and the hope is to expand the service to Field #2 to stream every JV and Varsity game. Started a NCCC Conference App which will roll

out later in the spring season and will include directions to games. The @granbybears social media account has 300 followers and includes game announcements, players of the week, clubs and activities, etc. Mr. Gates spoke about student activities for students and shared a list of all of the current clubs stating amazing things are being done in after-school clubs. He shared athletic highlights and achievements including announcing players of the week, game of the week and team clean-up days. He informed the Board of the upcoming CIAC Summer Season which was proposed for the fall of 2023 as an extension of the season but it is optional. Certified coaches will be used for summer sessions 2 days per week/2 hours per session.

Mr. Gates also informed the Board about the track and turf field issues stating sinkholes have expanded from the track into the turf field, sinking the out-of-bounds turf area. The turf was installed in 2013 and typical turf life is 12-15 years. He stated that the sinkhole was previously repaired at a cost of \$25K but it returned. Mr. Gates shared that other future budget considerations in addition to the track and turf field would be 1) Press box, play clocks and a switch to LED lighting on the stadium field; 2) Turf and practice lights on field two; 3) Turf infield and the installation of HUDL cameras to stream baseball games; and 4) Patch and paint interior walls of the main gym as well as extend the wall padding and purchase a new scorer's table.

David Peling commented that the football team has 32 players and the baseball team has 29 players and when the football field starts to fall apart we bust into large cap to get it done right away. The baseball field has been in disrepair for many years. Last year the pitcher's mound was being mowed which is not something you should do. Also, as was mentioned, the field doesn't drain. It is the worst field by a lot in the NCCC. It is an embarrassment. Additionally, there is no electricity so pitching machines cannot be used and there is no running water. He stated the baseball/softball situation needs to be addressed as well. Superintendent Burke responded and stated last year resources were used for the baseball field and this year the turf infield is in the large cap projection. She shared that the turf field is also used by field hockey, lacrosse and the track is also used by the community. It is a multi-purpose field and it is currently a safety hazard. She stated that currently the track is a safety issue and, holistically, all fields need repair. She stated the district is committed to repairing the fields.

David Peling also inquired if there was a contract in place that includes protocols for parents with regard to behavior at games, i.e., yelling at coaches, officials, etc. Karl Gates stated, yes, there is a policy in place which worked well in the fall and he is looking forward to bringing it forward in the spring as well. Heather Lombardo inquired if there was a summer season this past year. Superintendent Burke stated that it did occur but without oversight and it was difficult with various teams needing equipment and field time. Mr. Gates added that other districts are seeing that students do participate to get a jump on the fall season. Liz Barlow inquired about payment for coaches and Mr. Gates stated that coaches receive stipends for their respective season and are not required to do anything for the rest of the year. Perhaps an hourly rate can be explored for the summer practices. He also shared that coaches are interested in the summer season.

VI.B. FY26 Quality & Diversity Budget

Superintendent Cheri Burke presented the FY26 Quality & Diversity Budget to the Board. Superintendent Burke stated much of this information was included in the Plus One Budget Memo and will also be seen in the budget book. Nickie Stevenson stated the Q&D Budget is a revolving fund and is funded with Open Choice money. The fund balance remains consistent. There is new information on Pages 2 and 3 regarding magnet school tuition students and Open Choice enrollment.

VII. Business Requiring Action

VII.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 February 5, 2025 Board of Education Meeting. This motion passed unanimously at 7:49 p.m.

VII.B. Director of Finance & Operations Report

Ms. Nickie Stevenson, Director of Finance & Operations, presented the January 2025 Budget Expense Report and stated both personnel and program account expenditures remain stable. Special education expenses continue to fluctuate as the year progresses to accommodate student movement, program modifications and staff adjustments. The shortfall in purchased services has been resolved with transportation savings. The Q&D Fund continues to be positive with an ending balance of \$100K. Liz Barlow inquired if Ms. Stevenson

can explain in layman's terms the Excess Cost Grant refund and Ms. Stevenson stated the district has to pay a minimum of \$93K for one special education student and, after meeting this threshold, will receive some expenses back from the state. At this point in time, the percentage reimbursed to the district is decreasing and the grant has never been fully funded by the state. A motion was made by Donna Nolan and seconded by Karen Richmond-Godard that the Granby Board of Education approve the January 2025 Budget Expense Report. This motion passed unanimously at 7:55 p.m.

VIII. Committee Reports

VIII.A. Board Standing Committee Reports

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

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

VIII.A.2. Finance/Personnel/Facilities

Donna Nolan reported this subcommittee met this evening to discuss the January 2025 Expense Report, also discussed the need to review the Q&D budget and include it within the budget book going forward; sharpen pencils and do work on FY26 budget with BOF guideline in upcoming budget workshops; transportation update will decrease \$400K in current contract; anticipates savings in the following year as well; need to go out to bid for food services contract in June.

VIII.B. Other Board-Related Reports

VIII.B.1. CREC/CABE

Monica Logan reported A Day on the Hill is upcoming which she plans to attend as well as a Board Chair meeting on Thursday.

VIII.B.2. Granby Education Foundation

Liz Barlow reported the GEF met last week to continue planning for the GranBee. They are looking for teams, auction items, and sponsorships.

VIII.C. Calendar of Events

Monica Logan highlighted the BOE Workshop on March 12th.

VIII.D. Board Member Announcements

There were no Board member announcements this evening.

VIII.E. Action Items

There were no action items this evening.

IX. Superintendent's Report

- Superintendent Burke expressed a huge thank you to the custodial and maintenance staff who came in over the past few weekends to keep schools open on the weekend for activities as well as get schools ready to open for staff and students.
- 95 students are currently registered for Kindergarten which includes 3 students from Open Choice.
- Community Conversations will be held tomorrow morning at 9 am and again next Thursday at 6 pm via Zoom. Please contact Linda Powell to obtain the link.
- The next meeting will be held on March 5th. The Superintendent's Proposed Budget will be presented.

X. Adjournment

A motion was made by Donna Nolan and seconded by Liz Barlow that the Granby Board of Education adjourn the Board of Education Meeting. This motion passed unanimously at 8:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth H. Barlow
Board Secretary