

Regular Board of Education Meeting - Minutes [Subject to Approval]

October 7, 2026, at 7:00 PM

Granby Town Hall Meeting Room, 15 N. Granby Rd., Granby, CT 06035

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83453303149?pwd=FnUxbNsuTX7XgA1OFncqAjZrR2Da.1>

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

Board Chair, Heather Lombardo, called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present Board Members: Heather Lombardo, Dave Peling, Ann Woods, Joel Danke, Jessica

Diglio-Tsaptsinos, and Andrew Billig. **Absent Board Members:** John Limeburner

Also Present: Superintendent Cheri Burke, Assistant Superintendent Jennifer Parsons and Director of Finance and Operations, Nicole Stevenson.

Student Representatives: Madison Schantz and Teagan Hall

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

The Board of Education Chair, Heather Lombardo, celebrated Granby Public Schools' Staff Member of the Year, Bethany Grupp. Ms. Burke added that Bethany was ever present in the daily operations of her programs and endeavors.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

Madison Schantz: Had several key updates pertaining to school activities. Student Principal Advisory Council is in motion, where monthly meetings are held with Dr. Dill, who has open discussions with the students to assess student-climate. Smart Pass has been overall, positively received, with a few experiencing time-constraint challenges, but overall a good implementation. Ms. Schantz reported that the high school drama production, *Puffs*, is also in motion and encouraged everyone to attend the drama club's presentation. Ms. Schantz reported that the National Honor Society will hold their inductions on October 29th, and acceptance letters have gone out; as have the World Language induction letters. Ms. Schantz shared that in October, the PSAT is coming up for all juniors and some AP World Language seniors will also have the opportunity to take a biliteracy test. Additional events include Field Hockey Senior Night and an in-school support day held for SRO Dufresne, who will be running the New York City Marathon.

Teagan Hall: Expressed excitement surrounding the Pep Rally's and Spirit Week, which took place last week. Ms. Hall reported on the homecoming game and Hollywood-themed homecoming dance, which students were excited about.

PUBLIC COMMENT

A **Town of Granby resident** shared concerns regarding IEP's, safety, and the bus company's handling of personnel matters.

A **Student**, who is currently a senior at Granby Memorial High School, spoke on concerns of bullying and how they are addressed.

Jessica Corinne: Expressed feelings on grading and how it affects students.

A resident of **[218 Salmon Brook St]** who is part of the *Balance Project* shared information on the initiative, which aims to help parents become informed on ways to balance technology for students.

Corinne Delgallo, Strawberry Hills, shared her support for teachers and the need for them to be appropriately compensated.

Maureen Eberly joined via Zoom to provide feedback on students' scores and shared her feelings on previous budget meetings and overall budget processes and information.

BOARD BUSINESS, DISCUSSION AND ACTION

Superintendent's Report:

District Highlights

Superintendent Burke highlighted school activities she has had the opportunity to see through her walks throughout the schools. Ms. Burke went on to share about a recent meeting on finding a balance within the budget, which gave her the opportunity to collaborate with the commissioner and cabinet members, as well as to roundtable with several superintendents to share on their budget processes and challenges. This also provided the opportunity for Ms. Burke to hear from the State Director of Special Education, Bryan Klimkiewicz, who provided insight into upcoming grants.

Ms. Burke also mentioned that she attended the NEASC workshop, as Granby was selected as one of seven districts in the state to participate in the district-wide accreditation process. This process provides support to the district as they meet requirements for accreditation.

Enrollment / Personnel

Ms. Burke was excited to share updates on new hires, which include a new band teacher, as well as a new Special Education teacher for the Rise program; in which enrollment has nearly doubled in the last year. Though the additional certified staff member for the Special Education, Rise Program, was not budgeted, Ms. Burke explained that the cost-savings in hiring a staff member as opposed to paying out-of-district tuition for each student in the program was fiscally beneficial and a fraction of what the out-of-district cost would be. Ms. Woods posed a question as to whether out of district students were in the program, and Ms. Burke explained that that particular program only housed Granby residents.

Facilities / Operations

The importance of the projects, one of which includes the scoreboard at the High School Stadium, were explained. The scoreboard at the stadium has reached the end of its life and is no longer supported with maintenance, as the parts are no longer manufactured. The other being the field, which has another sinkhole. Ms. Burke acknowledged that failing to act on replacing these items could further disrupt the sports played on these fields. Ms. Burke also mentioned that servers are being replaced, but costs have nearly doubled since the replacements were originally budgeted for in the small capital projects line item several years ago. Mr. Lambert, IT Director, stated that growth in data centers and storage were probable drivers in costs and limits their availability to others, such as school districts.

Other District Matters

Ms. Woods posed questions regarding the anonymous reporting app for students, Stop It, used to report incidents and concerns to identify trends. Ms. Parsons and Ms. Burke explained that the app is in use and while mostly anonymous, the incidents reported that have enough information are referred to police or the administrators at schools for review and follow-up. Ms. Parsons explained that data is collected in terms of identifying trends in reports and then staff uses pertinent subjects collected from such data to provide SEL lessons for students in similar situations.

Teaching and Learning:

World Language Department - Field Trip - Spain 2028 - Discussion and Action

Mr. Luis Miguel-Romero, Grades 9-12 World Language Director, presented plans for the Spain International Field Trip, planned for April 2028. Mr. Miguel-Romero expressed the need to provide the information early to families wanting to explore the enrichment opportunity. Ample notice provides parents with proper planning time, as well as cost-savings. Discussion surrounding ample notice, chaperone's and the tour company that is used to facilitate the trip were had between Ms. Burke, Mr. Peling and Mr. Miguel-Romero. The opportunity is open to high school students who wish to attend. Ms. Burke emphasized that there was absolutely no cost to the taxpayer as this is simply an enrichment opportunity presented to students, but that approval is sought from the board as it is an international trip. The presentation can be accessed [HERE](#).

Motion: Ann Woods moved to approve the Spain International Trip planned for 2028. Mr. Dave Peling seconded the motion. All in attendance were in favor.

Strategic Plan - Discussion and Action

Superintendent Burke presented the revised, [2nd Generation Strategic Plan](#), which considered the feedback received from the board on September 16, 2026. Ms. Burke emphasized that the "North Star," for the vision in the Strategic Plan is student achievement and that the plan creates an alignment - from language, to the mission to the implementation - for students and staff from Pre-K up through the Bear Academy program, which services students with special needs up to the age of 22. Ms. Burke envisions this as a, "[roadmap](#)," for the direction in which student achievement will be accomplished, configured with metrics, assessments, and accountability. There was extensive planning that went into creating the plan, from community, student and staff input, to creation of focus groups with members from all angles. The plan also considers every aspect of the operational, financial, staff and student success, from curriculum to professional development planning, down to the budget. Principals from all buildings will present their individual metrics of success and their own roadmaps in alignment with the plan in the coming months. More information on the Strategic Plan and [Student Data](#) can be found [HERE](#).

Motion: Mr. Joel Danke moved to approve the 2nd Generation Strategic Plan. Mr. Andrew Billig seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Technology Use Report - Information / Discussion

A presentation on the use of technology was given by Mr. Jon Lambert, IT Director, and Jennifer Parsons, Assistant Superintendent. Mr. Lambert opened the presentation by acknowledging that the use of

technology and AI in schools should be a mindful balance. Through the presentation screentime concerns were acknowledged, state legislation and Connecticut's guidance for technology use in schools were shared. Ms. Parsons shared that currently, there are no state laws on the use of personal or district technology in schools. She said that they are working on balancing between preparing students for the future of work, while also developing hands-on activities to balance technology use in the classrooms. Ms. Parsons emphasized that it is not only the minutes allotted for technology during the classroom time, but the quality and intentional use within those minutes that matter. The presentation can be viewed [HERE](#).

Curriculum Subcommittee Report - Information

Finance and Operations

Finance Subcommittee Update

Mr. Joel Danke, the Finance Subcommittee board member, highlighted previous meeting notes which included the work that was done at Wells Road with the changing of the propane tanks to a safer alternative and the security updates Mr. DeGray implemented. Mr. Danke also thanked Mr. DeGray and staff for the savings found, to perform in-house work that needed to be done with tiling.

Finance Subcommittee Meeting Minutes - September 16, 2026

Motion: Ann Woods moved to approve the September 16, 2026 Finance Subcommittee meeting minutes. Jessica Diglio-Tsaptinos seconded the motion. Ms. Lombardo, Mr. Danke, and Mr. Billig were all in favor. Mr. Peling, who was not present at the September 16, 2026 meeting, abstained, as did Ms. Woods. Motion carried.

BOARD LIAISON REPORTS - INFORMATION

Granby Education Foundation

Chairperson Heather Lombardo highlighted that Mr. Andrew Billig is the liaison member for the board.

Other Board Liaison Assignments

Ms. Heather Lombardo shared that the board is looking for people to fill the liaison roles. Meetings are held virtually and are only about 30-minutes, and during the day.

BOARD GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

Chairperson's Report

Ms. Lombardo gave an overview of what each committee does and how that is helpful to the board. Ms. Lombardo mentioned that a budget workshop will be the next Board of Education meeting, which will be used to gain input from the community prior to a budget being put together. The Budget Workshop will be publicized, along with the agenda. The information has already been announced in previous meetings, sent to the Drummer for publishing, and will be promoted through ParentSquare and other avenues of communication to ensure engagement.

IBAC (Intra Board Advisory Committee) Update

Ms. Lombardo gave an overview as to why the committee was formed, which included wanting to identify redundancies and efficiencies after concerns were brought up during previous budgetary conversations from the community. Ms. Lombardo shared that CLA will be conducting interviews between the Board of

Education and Town to audit efficiencies and roles. Hopes are to create a roadmap for their findings and implementation of recommendations from the firm that was selected to conduct the interviews.

POLICIES, CONTRACTS AND BOARD ACTION

Approval of Minutes

Regular Board of Education Meeting - September 16, 2026

Motion: Jessica Diglio-Tsapsinos moved to approve the September 16, 2026 Board of Education Minutes. Ann Woods seconded the motion. Ms. Lombardo, Mr. Billing, and Mr. Danke were all in favor. Mr. Dave Peling abstained.

Special Board of Education Meeting - Board Retreat - September 30, 2026

Motion: The minutes for the Special Meeting of the Board of Education Retreat from September 30, 2026 were approved. Andrew Billig moved to approve and Dave Peling seconded. Ms. Lombardo, Mr. Danke and Ms. Woods were in favor. Jessica Diglio-Tsapsinos abstained.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The board entered into Executive Session to discuss a student discipline matter, which could result in the disclosure of public records. Those who were in attendance were the Superintendent of Schools, Cheri Burke and Board Members: Heather Lombardo, Dave Peling, Andrew Billig, Ann Woods, Joel Danke and Jessica Diglio-Tsapsinos.

Motion: Jessica Diglio-Tsapsinos moved to enter into the Executive Session and Ann Woods seconded. All were in favor.

Motion: Dave Peling moved to approve the agreement as presented by the Superintendent. Andrew Billig seconded the motion. All were in favor.

ADJOURNMENT

The Executive Session went into session at 9:56PM. Andrew Billig moved to adjourn the meeting and Jessica Diglio-Tsapsinos seconded. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 10:05PM.

Submitted By:

Jennifer Arnold

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