

**Regular Board of Education Meeting – Approved Minutes**  
**Wednesday, January 3, 2024, 7:00 p.m.**  
**Town Hall Meeting Room**

Present Board Members: Liz Barlow, Heather Lombardo, Monica Logan, Donna Nolan (arrived at 8:10 p.m.) David Peling, Whitney Sanzo, Rosemarie Weber, and Chase Alexander and Katie O’Neill (Student Representatives).

Absent Board Members: None

**I. Call to Order and Welcome**

Monica Logan called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

**II. Awards and Recognition**

Ms. Logan recognized Meghan Atwood, parent, who initiated the #buildtogive campaign at Wells Road last year. This year, she brought the program to the middle school and for every heart built out of Lego blocks Lego sent a child a gift. Ms. Logan thanked Mrs. Atwood for her contributions to the Granby Public Schools.

**III. Public Comment**

Debbie Reelitz, Silkey Road, North Granby, stated she was happy to see a request in the budget presentation for more mental health staffing and was glad to hear this is getting attention. She stated, however, there is very little attention given to how a healthy diet has played an enormous impact on mental wellness providing happiness and focus. She informed the Board she would like to see diet included in strategies for children with regard to mental health challenges and would like to see dietary recommendations given out along with other resources for children suffering with mental health conditions.

Mike Kramarenko, Notch Road, Granby, shared the extended absences of the Family & Consumer Science and the Technology teachers at the middle school were causing multiple study halls being held. He stated that parents should have been informed about staffing. He also shared his concerns around disruptive students during class time at the middle school.

**IV. Student Representative Reports**

- Chase Alexander reported girls’ basketball is playing tonight vs. SMSA and has a 4-2 record; boys’ basketball is 2-2; boys’ ice hockey is 3-0; girls’ hockey played today in Enfield and have a 3-3 record; indoor track will participate in a meet on Jan. 4<sup>th</sup> with Glastonbury; swimming and diving will compete in a meet against Plainville on Jan. 5<sup>th</sup> at the YMCA; and, wrestling has a meet in Rockville on Jan. 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.
- Seniors presented their capstone projects this afternoon.
- Goodwin University visited the high school yesterday to speak with some students about programs.
- National Honor Society students have been serving as tutors to their peers for midterm review sessions. Sessions are available for each class at allotted times across this week and the following week.
- The chorus concert will be held tomorrow night, Jan. 4<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.

**V. Reports and Discussion**

**A. FY25 Plus One Budget Approval**

The Board continued to discuss the FY25 Plus One Budget. A motion was made by Rosemarie Weber and seconded by Heather Lombardo that the Granby Board of Education approve the Plus One Budget to be forwarded on to the Board of Finance. Ms. Burke stated she received a number of questions from the Board which she will answer this evening. She reviewed the Plus One Budget increase of 6.43% which is made up of 4.34% contractual increases; 2.43 special education; and 0.34% for other factors. Many questions centered around the small capital budget and she reviewed the list of items in priority order. The amounts listed on each item are estimates and final quotes are expected soon. The Board inquired why so much of the small capital budget needs to be spent on safety and security when a very large upgrade was done through grants

several years ago. Anna Robbins explained that due to rapid technology advances, etc. many items need to be updated. Ms. Burke emphasized that all buildings in the district are safe and secure. The Board would like to understand why so many upgrades are needed at one time. Ms. Burke stated Shannon Sullivan will attend a future meeting to further explain the district's safety and security needs. Liz Barlow inquired if the future large capital list can be shared going forward so the Board can see what is coming up in the future. A question was raised with regard to the amount of funding needed to address maintenance concerns and if there would be sufficient resources for mental health for students and safety for staff. Ms. Burke stated mental health is in the forefront of decision making. Another question was raised with regard to the special education budget and if it is expected this will increase further. Ms. Burke explained that the budget is estimated based on enrollment and information known at the time of budget preparation. There were a couple of questions related to the reading curriculum and the cost of its implementation. Ms. Burke shared the district is reviewing the approved list of materials in the event that our reading waiver is denied on appeal, and will request additional information and quotes for programs which will be part of the FY26 budget proposal. Questions were also raised regarding class sizes and class offerings and Ms. Burke stated that Central Office and high school administration will review needs and requests and determine how many sections of high school courses should run and will also look at the impact. Additionally, there was a question about the continuation of the strings program. Ms. Burke stated the expansion of the strings program can be pushed back if necessary. Additional questions were asked around personnel, specifically, administrative positions. Ms. Burke explained the roles of the administrators in the district as well as provided staff-to-student ratios for principals/assistant principals. Ms. Burke shared some data with regard to Granby administrator staffing and stated Granby is well below the recommended average of administrator staffing levels. With regard to a question about the necessity of the Mandarin language course, Ms. Burke stated there are currently 49 students enrolled at the middle school and 60 students at the high school. David Peling inquired what the enrollment numbers are for Spanish. Jennifer Parsons stated approximately 400 students take Spanish and approximately 350 students take French. Ms. Burke reviewed the timeline of the budget stating the Three-Board Meeting will be held on January 16<sup>th</sup> and after that meeting she will present the FY25 Administrative Budget to the Board on March 6<sup>th</sup> with opportunities for Budget Workshops on March 13<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>. Following approval of the FY25 Administrative Budget, the budget then becomes the Board's budget which will go forward to the town for a vote. Ms. Logan thanked Ms. Burke for the presentation and her thoroughness in addressing the Board's questions. This motion passed unanimously at 8:24 p.m.

## **VI. Business Requiring Action**

### **A. Minutes**

A motion was made by Whitney Sanzo and seconded by Rosemarie Weber that the Granby Board of Education approve the minutes of the December 20, 2023 Board of Education Meeting. This motion passed at 8:25p.m. with one abstention (Donna Nolan).

### **B. Second Reading and Adoption of Draft Policy 6141.51 - Advanced Courses or Program, Eligibility Criteria for Enrollment to the Board for a second reading and approval**

The Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communications Subcommittee recommended Draft Policy 6141.51 - Advanced Courses or Program, Eligibility Criteria for Enrollment to the Board for a second reading and adoption, A motion was made by Whitney Sanzo and seconded by Donna Nolan that the Granby Board of Education adopt Policy 6141.51 - Advanced Courses or Program, Eligibility Criteria for Enrollment as recommended by the Curriculum/Policy/ Technology/ Communications Subcommittee. This motion passed unanimously at 8:26 p.m.

### **C. Second Reading and Adoption of Draft Policy 6141.52 - Challenging Curriculum**

The Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communications Subcommittee recommended draft Policy 6141.52, Challenging Curriculum, to the Board for a second reading and adoption. A motion was made by Whitney Sanzo and seconded by Donna Nolan that the Board of Education adopt Policy 6141.52, Challenging Curriculum, as recommended by the Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communications Subcommittee. This motion passed unanimously at 8:27 p.m.

## **VII. Committee Reports**

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

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

Whitney Sanzo stated this subcommittee met this evening to discuss the Assistant Superintendent's report including the completion of DNA platform training; exploration of the reading waiver and reading program options; continuation of fine tuning the budget; District Leadership Team Meeting; and a second orientation is being offered for 12 new teachers. Additionally, two new policies were reviewed and one was moved forward to the full board and the other will remain in subcommittee.

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

This subcommittee will meet on January 17<sup>th</sup>.

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

#### **1. CREC/CABE**

Ms. Logan stated a Board Representative still needs to be assigned to CREC Council.

#### **2. Granby Education Foundation**

Whitney Sanzo stated GEF will meet later in the month.

### **VII.C. Calendar of Events**

Ms. Logan stated the chorus concert will be held tomorrow evening; early release on January 10<sup>th</sup>; no school on January 15; and Poetry Out Loud is coming up soon.

### **VII.D. Board Member Announcements**

Ms. Weber inquired if Board Chair, Monica Logan, would like Board members to attend the Three-Board Meeting on January 16<sup>th</sup>. She stated she would like Board members to attend, if possible.

### **VII.E. Action Items**

- 1) Information with regard to large capital items in prior years
- 2) Finance Subcommittee to strategize for potential needs for large cap items in the future

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

Ms. Cheri Burke, Superintendent, provided district updates. She shared a SEPTO Meeting will be held on Monday, evening of January 8<sup>th</sup> in the Wells Road Media Center with a presentation by CPAC (Connecticut Parent Advisory Center) on the ABC's of special education. This is a very informative opportunity for parents with younger children. She thanked Jennifer Parsons, Colleen Bava and Angela Ehrenwerth for their leadership in organizing an Early Childhood Community Meeting with area preschools regarding the new requirements for Kindergarten given the age change for Kindergarten in the 2024-2025 school year.

## **IX. Chairperson's Report**

Ms. Monica Logan, Board Chair, wished everyone a wonderful New Year and thanked everyone for their work on the budget.

## **X. Adjournment**

A motion was made by Rosemarie Weber and seconded by Donna Nolan that the Granby Board of Education adjourn the Board of Education Meeting. This motion passed unanimously at 8:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Elizabeth H. Barlow

Board Secretary