

Regular Board of Education Meeting – Approved Minutes

October 7, 2020, 7:00 p.m.

High School Auditorium

Present Board Members: Jenny Emery, Mark Fiorentino, Melissa Migliaccio, David Peling, Sarah Thrall, Brandon Webster, and Jacob Scotto (Student Representative)

Absent Board Members: Rosemarie Weber and Jack DeGray (Student Representative)

Melissa Migliaccio called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

I. Administrative Reports

I.A. Chairman's Corner

Ms. Melissa Migliaccio, Board Chair, stated there is a process improvement for public comment via Zoom for the public to type in a comment and Jon Lambert will read the comment so everyone can hear it.

I.B. Superintendent's Announcements

- Dr. Grossman thanked the public in-person and on-line for attending the meeting tonight and said a special welcome to Mrs. Shilansky and a student representative who are here to present for Schools in the Spotlight tonight.
- The first three weeks of school have gone extremely well. 96.3% of students for in-person learning are attending and for remote learners it is 95.7% attendance. Students, staff and administrators are doing an incredible job. Dr. Grossman has visited many classes and can see that students feel very comfortable in the classrooms.
- Dr. Gross reminded everyone that the Granby Public Schools are depending on the metrics which will indicate if/when we go into a remote/hybrid situation.
- The federally funded food service program providing free breakfast and lunch for all students under the age of 18 is going very well. Totals for breakfast: Monday 81, Tuesday 104 and Wednesday 118. Previous to this, we had 40 each week for breakfast. We have already exceeded our count and are above average compared to last year. Totals for lunch: Monday 474, Tuesday 537 and Wednesday 648. The average lunch count last year was 280.
- Weekly meetings with Farmington Valley Health District and medical team and continue to monitor the Farmington Valley and Hartford County.
- Open houses went well for all schools.
- Dr. Grossman thanked the Board for meeting on September 30th to discuss board goals, equity and their self-evaluation. Please give Mrs. Powell any changes by the end of the day on Monday.
- Administrators have received their FY22 budget worksheets. Meetings will begin in November.
- On Monday, Kelly Lane Primary School celebrated "National Be Kind Day" by wearing blue.
- The Building Committee continues to meet on the high school commons and media center. Dr. Grossman thanked student representative, Jacob Scotto, for attending these meetings.
- There will be no school on Monday and on Tuesday, October 13th professional development will focus on sexual harassment, equity and social/emotional learning.
- The next regularly scheduled Board Meeting is October 21st.
- Assistant Superintendent, Jennifer Parsons, will present the Anti-Bias/Anti-Racism Action Plan to the Board this evening.
- Dr. Grossman thanked the Board for everything they have done for the Granby Public Schools.

Melissa Migliaccio commented on the error from Governor Lamont's office stating the statewide positivity rate for COVID cases is .7% not 1.5% as reported. Dr. Grossman gave an update per the Farmington Valley Health District (FVHD). The Farmington Valley is at 2.6%; Hartford County at 5.6%; and, Granby is currently at 1.3%. Dr. Grossman stated Granby is still well within the guidelines to conduct full in-person learning and stated if the numbers creep up in the Farmington Valley and Hartford, the FVHD will lead the way to give Granby a recommendation relative to full in-person, remote or hybrid.

I.C. Student Representative Report

- Jacob Scotto stated all students have been cooperating with wearing masks.
- The new school lunch program is great and is being enjoyed by many students the last few days. This program is very helpful for students who forget their lunch or do not have lunch money.

- Plans for Coffeehouse/drama are being explored as virtual events.
- Sports records: Girls' soccer 2-0, Boys; Soccer 2-0-1 with next game on Friday at Windsor Locks; Field Hockey 1-1 and they are playing Avon tonight.
- The CIAC is creating a fourth sports season in between winter and spring for football.

I.D. Schools in the Spotlight

Ms. Mindy Shilansky, High School Music Teacher, and Nick Boyd, Grade 12, presented on GMHS music instruction in the time of COVID. Ms. Shilansky stated she is pleased to report that music is still being made at the high school and that the students have been amazing. Ms. Shilansky stated she spent the entire summer following studies regarding a return to the classroom stating she wanted to make music and still be safe. The State of Connecticut is following a 12-foot spacing guideline for singing. Rehearsals are limited to 30 minutes indoors and then students proceed outdoors. It is very rewarding to see the students making music again. Performances this fall and winter will be virtual. Nick Boyd, Senior, stated the students have been working tirelessly. A Zoom concert was done during the spring last year. The entire student body is looking forward to some of the performances this year. Melissa Migliaccio inquired if Nick feels any equipment is needed. Nick Boyd said any easily acquired technology would be great. David Peling inquired how Ms. Shilansky was able to get 30 students on the screen. Ms. Shilansky stated students sang separately with a sound track and all the tracks were sent to her and synched together. Sarah Thrall inquired if there were any remote learners for chorus this fall. Ms. Shilansky stated, yes, and that she has a portable amplifier as well as a sensitive microphone attached to her computer for remote learners. Remote students are following along and learning the music with the class.

I.E. Secondary School Improvement Plans

Mr. Michael Dunn, High School Principal, and Mr. Taylor Wrye, Middle School Principal, presented their respective School Improvement Plans for the 2020-2021 school year. Mr. Dunn thanked the Board, Dr. Grossman and Jennifer Parsons for all they have done this year. He reviewed the school improvement plan goals with the Board as follows: *Vision, Mission, and District Achievement Goal* to continue to improve systems and practices to maximize equitable opportunities for all students; *Student Achievement Goal* for all students to meet GMHS Learning Expectations as measured by departmental and standardized assessments; and; *Instructional Goal* to refine the use of formative assessments of clear learning targets to adjust instruction, including through an online platform. Mr. Dunn stated the high school needs to continue to be really clear with what we want our students to be able to do. He also informed the Board the high school will continue to work with the Connecticut Center for School Change around equity; focus on social/emotional learning for our students; and, work on the 2-year NEAS&C progress report. Brandon Webster inquired if there can be more specificity in the School Improvement Plan as opposed to "on-going" (i.e., quarterly, annually, etc.)

Mr. Taylor Wrye, Middle School Principal, also thanked the Board, Dr. Grossman, Jennifer Parsons, and the entire administrative staff for giving him a very warm welcome to the district. He stated he is loving being the new principal but knows there is a lot of work ahead. Mr. Wrye reviewed the goals for the middle school as follows: *Vision, Mission, District Achievement Goal* to strengthen school climate and promote positive school culture through Restorative Practices (creating relationships with each other and students to understand why something happened and create a sense of connectedness within the community); *Student Achievement Goal – Goal 1* to improve students' academic performance by creating and implementing a new schedule that provides a comprehensive middle school experience for all students and *Goal 2* to improve overall student academic performance by increasing the Student Growth Percentile in the areas of ELA and Math; and *Instruction Goal* to expand the knowledge and use of learning technologies of the middle school staff.

II. Public Comment

Kathy Boyd, North Granby, stated she is a parent of two high school students and thanked the Board, administration and teachers for getting students back to school. She also stated her appreciation for the tireless work to prepare the district should there be a need to go into remote or hybrid learning.

III. Consent Agenda

III.A. Minutes

A motion was made by Sarah Thrall and Jenny Emery to adopt the consent agenda. This motion passed unanimously at 7:56 p.m.

IV. Old Business

IV.A. Second Reading and Approval of Policy 6172.3 - Homeschooling

The Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communications recommended Policy 6172.3, Homeschooling, as amended, to the Board for a second reading and approval. A motion was made by Melissa Migliaccio and seconded by David Peling that the Granby Board of Education adopt Policy 6172.3, Homeschooling, as recommended by the Curriculum/Policy/Technology/ Communications Subcommittee. Jenny Emery stated she is surprised the policy does not speak about access to other school programs and inquired if the policy is strong enough if problems get raised. Jennifer Parsons stated homeschooling is when a parent withdraws their student from the Granby Public Schools and the last line in the policy reads that a homeschool student is not part of the Granby Public Schools. Dr. Grossman agreed that the policy is fine as written. This motion passed unanimously at 8:02 p.m.

IV.B. Second Reading and Approval of Revised Policy 4118.237/4218.237/5141.8, Face Masks/Coverings (5 min.)

The Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communications Subcommittee recommended Policy 4118.237/4218.237/5141.8 Face Masks/Coverings, as amended, to the Board for a second reading and approval. A revision was made to this policy to reflect masks are needed for all students and staff members to enter a building in lieu of an "individual". A motion was made by Melissa Migliaccio and seconded by Jenny Emery that the Granby Board of Education adopt Policy 4118.237/4218.237/5141.8 Face Masks/Coverings, as amended, and as recommended by the Curriculum/Policy/Technology/ Communications Subcommittee. This motion passed unanimously at 8:04 p.m.

IV.C. Update on Anti-Bias/Anti-Racism Plan

Ms. Jennifer Parsons, Assistant Superintendent, updated the Board on the work of the Granby Equity Team (GET) and presented the Anti-Bias/Anti-Racism Action Plan. The GET has been formed over the past two years. Ms. Parsons stated the prior Assistant Superintendent did a great job working with the committee. The work moving forward is very important especially in the current climate. Some common language you will see throughout the plan is Consciousness (increase awareness and understanding on the impact of racism); Responsiveness (ability to act on what we know and what we have learned); and, Advocacy (increasing agency and action to actively address issues of racism and equity). The GET is representative of teachers, parents, administrators, and Board members who meet monthly in the evening two hours in length. The three buckets of work: to monitor the implementation of this plan build consciousness between E3 activities; and to develop common language. Working to drive the equity team is the steering committee who will work with the CCSC to develop a progression and through line for the entire year. She reviewed the action steps for building consciousness, responsiveness and advocacy.

Actions to Build Consciousness: The Connecticut Center for School Change will work directly with staff to build consciousness; working with BOE; information will be gathered from surveys in relation to bias and racism; continue ongoing data review to identify trends and gaps; build the mindset and tools of staff to review lesson development and curricular units to view with an equity lens; and, library media center will offer a book club in January, "Waking up White" by Debby Irving.

Actions to Build Responsiveness: The district is looking for our school-based staff, principals and administration to build protected time and space for regular equity conversations; building an equity focus into the school improvement plans and the leadership capacity of our administrative team; a strong emphasis on looking at data and what the implications are of that data and what adjustments need to be made based on the data; imbed culturally responsive texts into existing curriculum units; develop comprehensive supports for Open Choice students; a community book club in the spring; and, explore partnership with CREC for minority teacher in-residence program.

Actions to Build Advocacy: Developing the district's vision of the graduate with equity and social emotional learning embedded; partner with Equity challenge; Teaching Tolerance Social Justice Standards; and, conduct a curriculum audit with an equity lens; holding open sessions to provide forums to have dialogue around race and bias; create a plan to expand the Bridges program.

Ms. Parsons stated this is a high-level view of the plan and entertained questions. Mark Fiorentino thanked everyone for their work on this plan and appreciated actionable items to follow progress on. Regarding Open Choice students, he would like to set a goal around the BOE's and administration's presence in their communities. Melissa Migliaccio inquired if the district is looking for a community partner and Ms. Parsons stated the district is looking for a partner/agency that would reach an additional audience in the community. Mark Fiorentino suggested the Chamber of Commerce. Jenny Emery inquired if monthly updates on equity can be put into *The Drummer* and the *Vision* for full transparency regarding the work of the GET and Brandon Webster inquired if a "goals" column be added to know if/when the goal was achieved. Ms. Parsons stated, yes, both of these items can be accomplished

V. New Business

There was no New Business to report.

VI. Miscellaneous

VI.A. Board Standing Committee Reports

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

Sarah Thrall reported this subcommittee met tonight and discussed: professional development on October 13th; reviewed current learning models and an update on technology tools—a great overview of all of the additional platforms; reviewed Title IX policy and an additional policy was received yesterday so this policy will stay in subcommittee for further review; reviewed and approved a policy on Individualized Education Plans with a minor revision which will move forward to the Board at the next meeting; and, Vision of the Graduate 101.

VI.A.2. Finance/Personnel/Facilities

Jenny Emery reported this subcommittee had a special meeting last week to discuss the lunch program. It is impossible in the current climate to sell lunches so the district took advantage of the extension of the Federal program which will run until December 31st. This gives an opportunity to increase the numbers. She stated it is great to get the early reviews of the success and to spread the word.

VI.B. Other Board-Related Reports

VI.B.1. CREC/CABE

Mark Fiorentino reported CREC has not met since the last meeting.

VI.B.2. Granby Education Foundation

Jenny Emery reported the GEF will meet in a week or so.

VI.C. Calendar of Events

The calendar of events is as presented. Athletic events have been added to the calendar. Parents are allowed to attend athletic events.

VI.D. Board Member Announcements

Sarah Thrall stated it was senior night tonight for volleyball. Please tune in if sporting events are live streamed.

VI.E. Action Items

Track goals on equity plan.

VII. Executive Session/Non-Meeting

A motion was made by Melissa Migliaccio and seconded by Jenny Emery to adjourn the meeting and enter into an Executive Session to discuss a collective bargaining agreement. This motion passed unanimously at 8:30 p.m. The Executive adjourned at approximately 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Weber, Board Secretary