

Regular Board of Education Meeting – Approved Minutes
Wednesday, September 21, 2022, 7:00 p.m.
Town Hall Meeting Room

Present Board Members: Kristina Gilton, Monica Logan, Donna Nolan, David Peling, Whitney Sanzo, Sarah Thrall, Rosemarie Weber and Chase Alexander and Tess Bajek (Student Representatives)

Absent Board Members: None

Sarah Thrall called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

I. Administrative Reports

I.A. Chairman's Corner

Sarah Thrall, Board Chair, welcomed everyone in attendance as well as on via Zoom.

I.B. Superintendent's Announcements

- Dr. Grossman welcomed everyone in attendance and on Zoom this evening and thanked the administrative team for attending tonight's meeting.
- CREC and the Granby Public Schools are still affected by the national shortage for bus drivers.
- Curriculum nights were held at all schools with first grade being held tomorrow night. Working on a plan to increase attendance at the secondary level.
- Congratulations to Colleen Mello for her induction into the American School Band Directors' Association. This is wonderful news and the district is very proud of this accomplishment.
- The construction project and video production studio at the high school are moving along very well.
- A meeting was held today to discuss the athletic grass fields, namely, the soccer field, field hockey, softball and baseball fields. A plan will be developed and the Board will see something in the budget to begin addressing these fields.
- There will be an early release for professional development on Wednesday, September 28th.
- There will be no school on October 5th and October 10th due to the holidays.
- The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on October 12th with a change in location in the high school auditorium

I.C. Assistant Superintendent's Report

Ms. Jennifer Parsons, Assistant Superintendent, provided updates from her office and stated she will present the testing report from the 2021-2022 school year. As a reminder, those are the SBAC, NGSS and SAT tests that occur throughout the year. There are a variety of purposes for the testing and results: to measure student achievement and growth over time, state accountability system, and a fair measurement of students' progress/attainment of knowledge and skills required to be college bound. With regard to SBAC, it is administered during April/May to students in Grades 3-8 and is aligned to the CT core standards for ELA and Math. Ms. Parsons explained how the tests are scored as well as the achievement levels, Level 1 (does not meet the standard) through Level 4 (exceeds the achievement standard). Scores in Level 3 or 4 are considered proficient or higher. Ms. Parsons reviewed the ELA scores and, overall, the ELA scores climbed by 2 points. Third Grade closely aligned to the previous proficiency levels prior to the pandemic and came in at 60% proficiency. Fifth Grade scores were the highest across the district. The highest growth rates were in 4th, 7th and 8th grade last year. The Grade 5-6-year transition was not as strong this past year or so and the district will be looking at what the curriculum looks like for this shift in grade level. Rosemarie Weber inquired about Readers Workshop and what is being done for the students who are now in 7th grade. Ms. Parsons stated the middle school has other supports in place to help these students, such as, tutor support and classroom philosophies with small groups within classrooms. Ms. Parsons also shared with the Board that Teachers' College is able to support teachers this year by actually coming to the schools to provide consultancy services.

Ms. Parsons then shared SBAC test results for Math and stated the district is about halfway back to where we were pre-pandemic and overall improved about 7 percentage points overall. Sixth/Seventh Grade are at or above the district average and utilized the Illustrative Math Program resource for the entire year. Great gains were realized in 6th Grade. Granby is significantly above the state average in Math. Moving forward,

older students will learn to use scrap paper while taking the test in the digital format. Sarah Thrall inquired if what the averages looked like pre-pandemic (2018-19) and what we should expect those averages to be. Ms. Parsons stated averages are typically in the high 40% to low 50% range with high-performing districts touching 80%. Rosemarie Weber inquired what was implemented in 6th Grade in math to give the success of the scores. Ms. Parsons stated utilizing the Illustrative Math approach which was used to deliver the instruction and hopefully the gains will be greater as time goes on.

Ms. Parsons reviewed the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) assessment which is administered to Grades 5, 8, and 11. The trend is that year over year there is continued growth for an overall district average of 76%. 80% would be a high-level performance. Next year cohort data will be able to be seen.

Ms. Parsons shared that the state reached out to Dr. Grossman and herself with regard to Granby's growth this past year in relation to trends across the state and the correlation with an increased use in the state-provided assessment readiness tools and interim assessment blocks. A team from Granby is invited to attend the state-wide Performance Matters Conference in October to speak about some of the work being done.

Ms. Parsons went on to state the high school level assessment is the school-day SAT which is a summative state assessment for Grade 11 as well as for college entrance. Every student takes this test at least once. Granby students take the PSATs in Grade 8 through Grade 11. Reading & Writing focuses on gathering evidence from text including the meaning of key words and phrases. In Math, the focus is on the "Heart of Algebra", data analysis and problem solving. Ms. Parsons shared the testing results from 2016-2022 and stated since the pandemic, the district is maintaining around 80% proficiency. Kristina Gilton inquired without STAR assessments at the high school, are there any other predictors, such as, students taking honors classes and to see who is not hitting the benchmarks at a certain grade level. Ms. Parsons stated students are looked at year over year and there is an ability to see who is not yet hitting the benchmarks at the previous grade levels and how these students are being supported. Ms. Parsons concluded stated Granby is significantly higher than state averages in the SATs and largely maintained performance in English, however, saw a decrease in math but will continue to look at the math progression.

Overall, Ms. Parsons stated the district will continue to build the common instructional framework. District goals have been aligned to the Board goals which will be trickled down this year to Department goals. Teacher leaders, coaches and department heads are being trained to lead teams in the work and, additionally, ensuring data is easily accessible and useful, including the use of technology to support the analysis. Ms. Thrall thanked Ms. Parsons for her report and stated she is looking forward to hearing each school's improvement plan this fall. David Peling congratulated the district on seeing improvement in 6 out of 10 categories in ELA/Math and inquired if the district had a student achievement dashboard and Ms. Parsons stated, yes, there is one in place and the district is looking at how to improve the current system.

I.D. Student Representative Reports

- Tess reported all clubs are up and running
- Homecoming dance is October 22nd. A Chick fil a and Zen truck as well as a snow cone truck will be coming to the dance.
- Spirit week will be held the following week.
- Chase stated sports are in full swing. Football holds a 1-1 record; volleyball is 4-1; field hockey is 3-1; boys' and girls' XC is in Coventry today and will have a home meet against Canton and Rockville next Wednesday; girls' soccer is 1-1-1 and will play Canton on Friday; and, boys' soccer is 1-2 and will host Canton on Friday night.

I.E. Business Manager's Report

Ms. Anna Robbins, Business Manager, presented the June 2022 and July/August 2022 statement of accounts and stated FY22 financial results showed a return to the town \$295K. Special education expenditures were favorable \$149K and regular education expenditures were favorable \$146K. Generally, salaries and benefits made up 75.82% of the total budget for FY22 and were forecasted with 100% accuracy. Revenue to the town for FY22 was higher than budgeted \$152K and most of that was due to special education tuition from other towns. When considering the return to the general fund, the total benefit to the town for FY22 is \$447K.

Ms. Robbins stated an early look at the financial forecast for regular education is \$130K favorable but an overall unfavorable forecast of \$554K. Special education is over-budget \$684K largely due to an increase in out-of-district transportation costs. Factors include a discontinuation of the “ride-share” program and the nation-wide bus driver shortage also severely impacted this collaboration.

Revenue to the town is projected to be favorable \$452 due to the projected increase in the Excess Cost Grant. At this time, the Q&D Fund is looking favorable with lower expenditures along with lower revenue. Rosemarie Weber stated the Finance Subcommittee reviewed and accepted the Statement of Accounts this evening.

II. Public Comment

Susan and Bill Regan thanked everyone for their hard work even though they no longer have students in the system. Susan inquired if Common Core was the standard practice utilized throughout all the schools in the state as well as common practice across the United States. Ms. Thrall stated the Board cannot respond; however, the district does have standards they align to and Dr. Grossman would be happy to sit down and discuss this with her. Ms. Regan stated she has noticed on a regular basis in conversation with younger people that grammar is terrible and that however grammar/writing is being taught, it needs to be extremely well presented and that language skills are lacking in order for younger people to present themselves properly. She stated she is not so sure Common Core is the way to go and she is concerned about the Common Core and the strategy for teaching math. She would like to know from Dr. Grossman if the Common Core will continue to be used.

III. Consent Agenda

III.A. Minutes

A motion was made by Rosemarie Weber and seconded by Donna Nolan that the Granby Board of Education adopt the consent agenda. This motion passed unanimously at 8:04 p.m.

IV. Old Business

IV.A. Second Reading and Approval of Revised Policy 6142.101 - Student Nutrition & Physical Activity (Student Wellness)

The Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communications Subcommittee recommended revised Policy 6142.101, Student Nutrition & Physical Activity (Student Wellness) to the Board for a second reading and approval. A motion was made by David Peling and seconded by Monica Logan that the Granby Board of Education adopt revised Policy 6142.101, Student Nutrition and Physical Activity, as recommended by the Curriculum/Policy/Technology/ Communications Subcommittee. This motion passed unanimously at 8:05 p.m.

V. New Business

V.A. FY22 Year-End Budget Transfers

The Board discussed the approval of FY22 year-end budget transfers as recommended by the Business Manager and Finance/Personnel/Facilities Subcommittee. Rosemarie Weber stated the end-of-year adopted budget versus where the budget ended up at the end of the year. The Finance Subcommittee reviewed the details of the transfer this evening. A motion was made by Rosemarie Weber and Donna Nolan that the Granby Board of Education approve the FY22 year-end budget transfers as recommended by the Business Manager and Finance/Personnel Facilities Subcommittee. This motion passed unanimously at 8:06 p.m.

V.B. CABE Leadership Award Application

The Board reviewed the application for the CABE Leadership Award, Level II, Board of Distinction. Sarah Thrall stated the Granby BOE has been a Level II Award recipient for many years and stated this application confirms that the BOE has completed many of the requirements that exemplary boards do, such as, a strategic plan, vision of a graduation, etc. A motion was made by Sarah Thrall and seconded by Kristina Gilton that the Granby Board of Education approve the application for the CABE Leadership Award for Level II, Board of Distinction. This motion passed unanimously at 8:08 p.m.

VI. Miscellaneous

VI.A. Board Standing Committee Reports

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

This subcommittee did not meet.

V.I.A.2. Finance/Personnel/Facilities

Rosemarie Weber stated this Subcommittee met this evening to discuss the statement of accounts as well as received a food service update. Last year ended profitably by \$143K and this year the district is able to continue offering free breakfast and lunch until November and will re-evaluate going forward. Also received a building committee update and the high school project is moving along with the estimated completion date in early November this year. Two leaves-of-absences were also discussed and approved.

VI.B. Other Board-Related Reports

VI.B.1. CREC/CABE

The CREC Council met today and shared issues facing CREC such as the bus driver shortage and staffing. Issues were raised specific to Boards of Education and for CREC to help BOEs with the number of controversial issues facing boards going forward and helping BOE's to celebrate successes. CREC is also organizing for CREC Council to visit CREC schools in-person. Sarah Thrall stated she will attend the CABE Legal Issues Workshop and invited any other Board members to attend with her.

V.I.B.2. Granby Education Foundation

Whitney Sanzo reported the GEF met on Monday evening and wrapped up progress made over the summer. She stated grant requests are a little quiet but the GEF is excited to receive grants from teachers.

VI.C. Calendar of Events

Sarah Thrall reminded Board members there will be no meeting on October 8th due to the holiday.

VI.D. Board Member Announcements

There were no Board member announcements this evening.

VI.E. Action Items

David Peling to get information from Bloomfield on the data system used by that district and send it to Jennifer Parsons.

VII. Adjournment

A motion was made by Rosemarie Weber and seconded by Monica Logan to adjourn the meeting. This motion passed unanimously at 8:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Nolan
Board Secretary