

**Regular Board of Education Meeting – Amended & Approved Minutes
March 18, 2020, 7:00 p.m.
Via Teleconference**

Present Board Members: Jenny Emery, Mark Fiorentino, Melissa Migliaccio, David Peling, Sarah Thrall, Rosemarie Weber, Brandon Webster and Dwaritha Ramesh (Student Representative).

Absent Board Members: Jack DeGray (Student Representative)

Melissa Migliaccio called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Melissa Migliaccio stated she is pleased for the ability to hold this meeting virtually to recognize and respect the social distance which will hopefully flatten the curve of the spread of the virus. She also recognized the importance of continuing to move the business of the district forward.

I. Administrative Reports

I.A. Superintendent's Announcements

Dr. Jordan Grossman thanked the Board and the community at large for their support stating the Granby Public Schools will move forward with strength. A lot has happened since the last Board Meeting the meeting we had last Thursday. Schools were shut down for we thought what would be a 14-day closing and the following day or so Governor Lamont closed all schools in the state to at least March 31st. Dr. Grossman stated he has been communicating with the Commissioner of Education and on phone calls with Governor Lamont and is monitoring the Executive Order very closely. The Commissioner of Education said to each Superintendent of Schools to begin immediately a plan of remote learning for students across the State of Connecticut. Dr. Grossman said he would like to share with the Board and the community that the district has been talking about remote learning for 2 to 2-1/2 weeks and we needed to put plans into effect immediately. He informed the Board that Granby immediately applied for a federal grant to provide meals for students who are in need and starting on Monday the district was able to provide grab and go breakfasts and lunches for students. With the Governor's Executive Order of shutting down the schools and the Commissioner's order of putting in a plan for remote learning. Yesterday, Dr. Grossman stated he was able to meet with his District Leadership Team within the district to discuss the roll-out of remote learning. Communication was sent out to the entire staff and families and to the community at large that Granby will start a distance learning plan on Monday March 23rd. Our teachers came forward in strength and said they would do what they need to do for the students of Granby. Virtual staff meetings will be held tomorrow. The Special Education Department will reach out to families by the end of the week to discuss plans. A distance learning website has been created for family members, students and staff will be able to use this website as a resource. Granby is united as a community and many people have reached out to thank us for the work we are doing. It takes courage and leadership and we are all faced with unprecedented challenges. Dr. Grossman stated he will work with his team to move forward with strength every day and that everything the district is doing is in the best interest of all children.

Melissa Migliaccio opened up any questions from the Board:

Jenny Emery inquired about the work being done to improve the timeliness of some issues with sending out communication to parents. Dr. Grossman stated the Technology team is working with the company we use to send communication and that all information communicated can be found on the main website and the website we created for distance learning. Dr. Grossman stated principals sent out a survey to families yesterday and any individual who is in need of a device can report in small groups to pick one up at the middle school and the same for Kelly Lane and Wells Road on Friday. Additionally, he stated some companies are providing internet access for families who do not have it.

Melissa Migliaccio inquired about special education services. Dr. Grossman stated a team is working not only with our district but also with the Farmington Valley of what would be best practices for our students with IEPs. Aimee Martin, Director of Pupil Services, will be sending out a letter to families in

the next two days and she has a faculty meeting with her staff on Friday for steps going forward. She will meet with Teaching Assistants on Monday for their role in providing distance learning to students. Dr. Grossman stated this is a learning curve, especially for the different services that students will need, such as, OT, PT and speech.

Dave Peling inquired if this a day-to-day situation. Dr. Grossman stated this is a great question and that he has a phone conference tomorrow with the Commissioner of Education. The district is planning for now, the next two weeks as well as months and several years ahead. Dr. Grossman stated he hopes the Governor releases his Executive Order but right now there is no timeline. If the Governor says it is up to local school districts, then he and the BOE will need to discuss the situation. As soon as he knows, he will let the BOE know as soon as possible.

Rosemarie Weber stated hopefully district learning can be as effective as possible and inquired how the district will address remediation issues based on where students are now to where they will be in June. She inquired how will the district will assess this and put services in to place. Dr. Grossman stated that any time students are removed from school they are missing education. Students will be out 11 days now but if they are out longer it will be a different issue and it will have to be looked at student-by-student and case-by-case. A school closure could not only have an academic impact but can also have a financial impact as well.

Brandon Webster inquired about the delivery of instruction. Dr. Grossman stated the high school instruction will go on as best we can and teachers will post on-line. Fortunately, Grades 3-12 use Google Classroom. Videos are being created for families on how to use Google Classroom and resources are on the website. Dr. Grossman stated the district needs to be creative with regard to music, art, PE, and technology and teachers will need to get involved. Kelly Lane will be using SeeSaw and Dr. Grossman stated he expects that students will not be on computers or iPads all day long. They will need to read books, go outside and exercise. Teachers should also create professional learning networks to network with other teachers across the country. The district wants to create as much normalcy as possible.

I.B. Business Manager's Report

Ms. Anna Robbins, Business Manager, presented the February statement of accounts and stated the BOE shows a negative forecast of \$129K. Special education expenditures are projected to be unfavorable by \$307K and regular education favorable by \$178K. The overall forecast is favorable over the previous month by \$30K. Salaries and benefits show a favorable forecast of \$147K. The over-budget conditions in transportation have been reduced by \$30K due to an accounting error in the recording of a credit. The Quality & Diversity Fund continues to show a favorable forecast of \$22K due to magnet school tuitions and personnel expenses. Revenues to the town continue to reflect a favorable projection for regular tuition from other towns of \$39K. The projection for special education tuition from other towns remains favorable at \$21K. Excess Cost Grant funding of \$328K was received by the town in February and the rate of reimbursement is 74.7% which is higher than projected. The anticipated 72% change reflects full-year forecast for revenue at a favorable \$6K compared to budget. This will be a very fluid situation moving forward. Jenny Emery stated the Finance Subcommittee reviewed this tonight. The credit in transportation is a result of CREC contracting with us to use buses for summer camp services. This has been favorable and the \$30K is our share of their profits from that which was a nice surprise as it helps to shrink the gap with the special education deficit. She stated there was some discussion about the possibility of school being closed and that some expenses will not be expended; however, if looked further out, there may well be unanticipated expenses in trying to remediate the lost education along the way.

II. Consent Agenda

II.A. Minutes

The Board discussed the approval of the minutes for the March 4, 2020 Board of Education Meeting, March 11, 2020 Budget Workshop and March 12, 2020 Emergency Board of Education Meeting. A motion was made by David Peling and seconded by Jenny Emery to adopt the consent agenda. This motion passed unanimously at 7:32 p.m.

III. New Business

There was no New Business to report.

IV. Old Business

IV.A. Third Reading of Revised Policy 5114 - Student Discipline

The Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communications Subcommittee recommended draft Policy 5114, Student Discipline, to the Board for a third reading and approval. A motion was made by Sarah Thrall and seconded by Rosemarie Weber that the Granby Board of Education adopt revised Policy 4114, Student Discipline, as presented by the Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communications Subcommittee. Sarah Thrall stated she has not received any feedback on this policy and that this policy clearly defines if a student is suspended/expelled to extend the suspension/expulsion through the summer. This motion passed unanimously at 7:34 p.m.

IV.B. FY21 Board of Education Budget Approval

The Board continued to discuss and considered the approval of the FY21 Board of Education Budget. A motion was made by Jenny Emery and seconded by Rosemarie Weber that the Granby Board of Education adopt the FY21 Board of Education Budget. Melissa Migliaccio stated that at the last budget workshop Mark Fiorentino stated he supported the budget as he was not anticipating being here this evening. The budget is under the guideline of 3% at 2.92%. It is important for Board Members to weigh in on this before the vote. Mark Fiorentino stated he has not changed his mind and still supports the budget. David Peling echoed Mr. Fiorentino's sentiment. Given the transition of a new Superintendent, it is a very good budget for this moment in time. He stated he is looking forward to seeing what comes out next year after new goals are defined and that he supports this budget. Rosemarie Weber stated she supports the budget. A phenomenal job always in tight margins to maximize efficiencies and move the district forward while staying under the guidelines. Brandon Webster thanked the administration for putting the budget together and he appreciates everyone's hard work. He stated it would be fantastic in an ideal world to find a way to add in the Math Interventionist and Social Worker but great job. He is interested to see what Dr. Grossman can do going forward and he supports the budget. Jenny Emery stated she supports the budget but has two issues to raise for the record: 1) Spent a lot of time thinking about and looking at numbers related to the first item on the unfunded list in support of Aimee Martin and special education for the Special Education Supervisor. She was looking at whether there was some way to include this in the budget halfway through the year and stated she cannot imagine that we will not need this resource and it will save the district money. She wants to keep a close eye on it. 2) She stated she is very concerned about the budget vote. She does support the budget and the fact that schools have run at less than the cost of doing business for a number of years now. She does not know what will happen with the April budget vote but when it comes time to vote, all hands will need to be on deck for this budget. Melissa Migliaccio stated she appreciated all the comments. There have been different proposals floating about the budget timeline and she will keep the Board apprised. Sarah Thrall stated she appreciates that Dr. Grossman and his team were able to come in below the guideline. It is a solid budget and she supports it. Melissa Migliaccio stated she echoes everyone's comments and Jenny raises a great point about the special education piece which continues to be an issue to attack with the Board. She thanked Dr. Grossman for presenting this budget his second day on the job and is very pleased it was brought in under the guideline as well as the special consideration for Kindergarten class sizes. This motion passed unanimously at 7:44 p.m.

V. Miscellaneous

V.A. Board Standing Committee Reports

V.A.2. Finance/Personnel/Facilities

Jenny Emery reported this Subcommittee met this evening to discuss the food service contract which is out to bid. The state has changed the calendar so this will be pushed off to April for a vote. Anna reported that 5 companies were interested. Also received an update on the building projects. The two main issues are that the district has the architect and wants to get moving with selecting

the contract for the rest of the middle school roof. Would like to get this done this summer but have not received a response from the state. Anna and Jordan will try to get an answer on this. The main issue is the district is out to bid for an architect for most of the rest of the project. It will depend on what the architect comes up with and the final costs. The deadline was extended another 3 weeks but hope to keep it moving forward. The only other thing discussed was the concern about some people in the public not getting messages. Brandon Webster mentioned the availability of breakfast and lunch. Dr. Grossman stated right now it is available 10-12 daily in the front circle of the middle school parking lot; however, this may change to Mon.-Wed.-Fri. or Tue./Thurs. but this will be monitored as we go along. Melissa Migliaccio stated the numbers are up to 46. Dr. Grossman stated Hartford students are being served by Hartford Public Schools and Hartland families were informed that they can come in to Granby to pick up food as well. He stated he has had several people reach out to him regarding any transportation issues but has not heard of any need.

V.B. Other Board-Related Reports

V.B.1. CREC/CABE

Mark Fiorentino reported the CREC meeting today was cancelled. Melissa Migliaccio stated a CABE listserv for Board Chairs has been incredibly helpful and CABE has done a great job with communication and facilitation on that front.

V.B.2. Granby Education Foundation

Jenny Emery reported the last meeting was cancelled and the GranBee is also cancelled this year. An event in the fall will partially take its place and a bigger and better GranBee will be held in 2021. GranBee is one of the major GEF fundraisers. Funds go to grants and to the community. Kim Becker has inquired if there are opportunities for the district to reach out to the GEF for any support, they are willing to help. Melissa Migliaccio strongly encouraged every Board Member to support the GEF.

V.C. Calendar of Events

The calendar of events is as reported. No events in the state can exceed 50 people.

V.D. Board Member Announcements

Jenny Emery informed the Board of some wonderful outreach online (#sunshine songs) where students performed their high school musical songs. It made her think about Granby's Got Talent, Coffeehouse, etc. and if some students want to set up performances, she would love to get those out there to view. Dave Peling stated this is a great point and there may be a way to do them virtually.

Dwaritha Ramesh, Student Representative, stated it is very disappointing that many events are being cancelled. She was looking forward to the musical as well as her last season on the Robotics team. Events like prom and senior outing are up in the air. She and her peers are hoping for the best. She understands the importance of not spreading the virus and it is unfortunate senior year has to end like this.

Melissa Migliaccio stated the CIAC stated today they are not willing to shut the door on a spring sports season. She thanked Board Members for their support and coming together tonight. It is a great Board and she is proud to serve with everyone.

V.E. Action Items

There were no action items to report this evening.

VI. Executive Session/Non-Meeting

There was no need for an Executive Session/Non-Meeting. A motion was made by Jenny Emery and seconded by David Peling to adjourn the meeting. This motion passed unanimously at 8:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Weber
Board Secretary