

Regular Board of Education Meeting – Approved Minutes
Wednesday, January 4, 2023, 7:00 p.m.
Town Hall Meeting Room

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

Absent Board Members: Kristina Gilton

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 and wished everyone a Happy New Year.

I.B. Superintendent's Announcements

- Dr. Grossman welcomed everyone in attendance and extended a special welcome to Mrs. Angela Ehrenwerth, Director of Pupil Services, who was in attendance to present on 18- to 22-year-old programming.
- Dr. Grossman attended Capstone presentations at the high school today and shared that one was on marketing schemes and the other on South Korea's educational system.
- There will be an early release for all schools on January 11th for professional development
- A chorus concert will be held at the middle school next Thursday evening, January 12th.
- There is no school on Monday, January 16th.
- There will be a Three-Board Meeting on Tuesday, January 17th in the Town Hall Meeting Room at 7 p.m.
- A dedication and ribbon-cutting ceremony for the high school building project will be held on Thursday, January 19th at 4:00 p.m. An invitation will be sent out to the Granby community by the end of this week.
- The next regularly scheduled Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 18th.

I.C. Assistant Superintendent's Report

Ms. Jennifer Parsons, Assistant Superintendent, provided updates from her office and stated the administrative team is already planning for next school year. She also shared students are starting to see upcoming courses at the middle school and high school and will also start to see course requests and course recommendations coming through. Changes in courses approved over the last few years at the middle school will start to be seen next year for World Language as well as math progression courses. Sarah Thrall inquired about the waiver application for the K-3 Reading Program. Ms. Parsons stated the application was released and she will start to put documentation together of our already approved assessment suite currently in place.

I.D. Student Representative Reports

- Tess reported some seniors presented their Capstone Projects today. Students get to choose a topic of their choice that they are very passionate about.
- Rehearsals have begun for the high school musical *Little Shop of Horrors*.
- There was a high school chorus and band concert prior to the break.
- Mid-terms are coming up and semester 2 is almost here.
- Chase reported the winter sports season is in full swing; girls basketball is 5-1 and they will play Ellington on Friday night; boys' basketball is having a slow start with a 0-5 record and play Hartford tonight; ice hockey is also 0-5 and they have a 6:30 game in Danbury tonight; wrestling attended a holiday tournament last Friday in Agawam and they have a meet tonight; track will have an invitational meet in Hartford on January 14th; and swimming has an upcoming meet against Northwest Catholic.

II. Public Comment

There were no public comments this evening.

III. Consent Agenda

III.A. Minutes

A motion was made by Rosemarie Weber and seconded by David Peling that the Granby Board of Education adopt the consent agenda. This motion passed at 7:10 p.m. with one abstention (Monica Logan).

IV. New Business

IV.A. 18-22 Programming

Dr. Grossman stated he is very excited that Ms. Angela Ehrenwerth, Director of Pupil Personnel Services, is here to present a post-secondary transition program for 18- to 22-year-old students for the 2023-2024 school year this evening. This program is only for students in that age group who are entitled to receive services. The goal is for the Board to vote on this program at the next Board Meeting on January 18th. Dr. Grossman stated the development of this program was part of the strategic plan and an initiative for the Special Education Department. Ms. Ehrenwerth provided an overview of post-secondary transition programming which would meet the individual needs of a specific population of students with significant special education needs after high school until the age of 22. She stated the District is legally required to provide this programming to eligible students. Currently, referrals are made to neighboring programs, such as, the Farmington Valley Transition Academy and The Rise Academy in Windsor Locks. Ms. Ehrenwerth stated this programming will provide greater continuity from high school to post-secondary transition programming.

Ms. Ehrenwerth presented the Post-Secondary Transition Program Committee's program proposal for the 2023-2024 school year slated to be held at the Farmington Valley YMCA. She also discussed staffing which would consist of an Administrator (Director of Pupil Personnel Services), Coordinator (Special Education Teacher), and 2-3 job coaches. She discussed the goals and outcomes of the program to bring transition services back to Granby's local community; provide students with a local comprehensive transition program; and, develop partnerships with community business and adult-service agencies. With regard to curriculum and training for this program, it would be broken down as follows: Independent Living (20%); Community Participation (40%); and, Employment/College (40%). Students will potentially attend this program for 3-4 years and she reviewed the yearly progression of the program for Years 1 and 2 as well as Years 3 and 4. Ms. Ehrenwerth also shared a sample daily schedule, Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. as well as potential community and employment partnerships with CT Adult Service Agencies; the YMCA; Top Drawer Consignment Shop; Lox, Stock & Bagels; Geissler's Supermarket; and, Asnuntuck Community College.

Sarah Thrall inquired if the programs students are currently attending have more students in them and Ms. Ehrenwerth stated, yes, typically about 40 students and the Granby program would have approximately 10-12 students. Whitney Sanzo inquired if Ms. Ehrenwerth felt this program would be a lot for her to manage along with her other responsibilities and Ms. Ehrenwerth stated it would eliminate the aspect of following up on students currently in these programs. Ms. Sanzo also inquired if there would be an option for students to stay in their current program or would they have to attend the Granby program. Ms. Ehrenwerth stated it would be a Placement and Planning Team decision; however, if Granby can provide the services, then that would be the recommended program. David Peling inquired how far out enrollment can be projected. Ms. Ehrenwerth stated 5 years is included; however, she did project out to 7 years and stated the need exists beyond 5 years. Monica Logan inquired if it is mandatory for students to attend all 4 years. Ms. Ehrenwerth stated, no, because it is based on the student's needs and goals and if their transition goals were met then a student can complete the programming sooner. Ms. Logan also inquired if this program would be open to students from other towns and Ms. Ehrenwerth stated she would be excited to offer it to students from other towns. Rosemarie Weber inquired if there was anticipation for additional staffing and Ms. Ehrenwerth stated speech therapy, for example, can be provided by current staff members. Ms. Weber also inquired if the Board could see the costs for students currently sent out-of-district vs. what this program will save the District. Dr. Grossman stated this data can be shared but the District needs to be careful as it can be identifiable. Ms. Weber then made a clarification stating she understands that this may be an instance where the benefits to the student population of bringing the services in-house may outweigh the costs and/or potential cost savings. Dr. Grossman stated he does not anticipate this program will cost any more than it currently does to send students out-of-district.

V. Old Business

V.A. FY22 Plus One Budget Approval

The Board continued to discuss the FY24 Plus One Budget and reviewed the questions asked by Board members. Dr. Grossman reminded the Board that the Plus One Budget is where the budget is at this point in time and that a 5.94% increase is in the realm of what a typical increase is for FY24. He also stated just to roll over the budget from this year to next year would be 2.68%. Dr. Grossman reviewed all of the questions and answers which pertained to enrollment; the increase in the special education budget; contract negotiations for teachers; potential programming cuts; the decrease in staff FTEs; fuel/oil/ natural gas prices; emotional/psychological/intellectual learning gaps; student achievement data; composting program; Open Choice enrollment; and, the impact of a 5.94% budget increase to Granby taxpayers. Sarah Thrall thanked Dr. Grossman and his team for their work on the budget and opened the floor to the Board for any other questions. Whitney Sanzo inquired what the Board of Finance (BOF) factors into their decision-making when setting the budget guideline. Dr. Grossman stated it is many things, such as, how does the BOF feel taxpayers will be with the mill rate and how much will the mill rate go up, stay the same or go down. They also look at the Board of Selectmen budget as well as the BOE. Additionally, they look at the revenue with regard to the Excess Cost Grant, out-of-town tuition revenue, tax revenue, and revenue from the Governor's budget. Dr. Grossman stated the formula the BOF uses is pretty clear and it is too early in the process to set a budget guideline. Discussions about this will begin on January 17th. A motion was made by Sarah Thrall and seconded by Monica Logan that the Granby Board of Education approve the FY24 Plus One Budget to be forwarded on to the Board of Finance. This motion passed unanimously at 8:27 p.m.

VI. Miscellaneous

VI.A. Board Standing Committee Reports

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

David Peling reported this Subcommittee met this evening to discuss recent test data and achievement scores at the high school as well as interventions being implemented. Also discussed the Assistant Superintendent's Report including planning for spring testing, summer school and professional development for Central Services staff. A new course, Psychology of Happiness, was approved.

VI.A.2. Finance/Personnel/Facilities

Sarah Thrall stated this Subcommittee has not met; however, approved minutes are in the Board packet.

VI.B. Other Board-Related Reports

VI.B.1. CREC/CABE

Sarah Thrall stated Kristina Gilton will report out on CREC at the next meeting.

VI.B.2. Granby Education Foundation

Whitney Sanzo stated the GEF has not met since the last meeting.

VI.C. Calendar of Events

Sarah Thrall stated there is a SEPTO meeting on Monday, January 9th as well as a couple of concerts.

VI.D. Board Member Announcements

Donna Nolan thanked Anna Robbins for submitting the grant application on the high school roof project.

VI.E. Action Items

There were no action items this evening.

VII. Adjournment

A motion was made by Rosemarie Weber and seconded by David Peling to adjourn the meeting. This motion passed unanimously at 8:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Donna Nolan
Board Secretary