

## **Regular Board of Education Meeting – Draft Minutes**

**June 2, 2021, 7:00 p.m.**

**High School Auditorium/Zoom**

Present Board Members: Jenny Emery, Mark Fiorentino, Melissa Migliaccio, Sarah Thrall, Rosemarie Weber, and Jacob Scotto and Jack DeGray (Student Representatives)

Absent Board Members: David Peling and Brandon Webster

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

### **I. Administrative Reports**

#### **I.A. Chairman's Corner**

Sarah Thrall, Board Chair, announced the win of the Granby boys' lacrosse team as well as our boys' tennis team. She also stated that our retirees and 25-year employees were recognized today at a very nice luncheon.

#### **I.B. Superintendent's Announcements**

- Dr. Grossman also recognized our retirees (Aimee Martin, Rebecca Dantas, Gina Magennis, Lauren Shafer, Jody Bascetta, Susan Vacek, and Rene Rainville) as well as our 25-year employees (Hollie Hecht, Karen Kudish, Sheridan Toomey, David Pickhardt, and Megan Proto).
- This past Monday, Dr. Grossman stated he had an opportunity to honor our soldiers on Memorial Day. Mrs. Sessions's first grade class marched in the parade with him. He stated he was humbled at how many Granby alumni were present along the parade route and was also humbled to be asked by the American Legion to give a speech. The message of the speech was to never forget our soldiers, especially former GMHS graduate Richie Emmons who lost his life on Memorial Day 10 years ago while serving in Afghanistan.
- Thank you to the Granby Education Foundation for the signs around town and at schools recognizing staff and teachers for a great year.
- Professional development was held for teachers last Friday and focused on ELA scope and sequence, equity and math instructional practices.
- Kindergarten enrollment is continually being monitored. There are currently 122 students registered with 7 Open Choice slots. If all 7 Open Choice students register, the number will be 129 (125 projected). We will continue to monitor and will give another report to the Board on June 16<sup>th</sup>.
- Will apply for the America Cares Grant fund money of \$516,901 with a portion of these funds devoted to student learning recovery for the next two years.
- As part of receiving the grant funds, there will be a Granby Public Schools' Reopening Task Force Committee Meeting to solicit feedback on the year and what the Committee feels we need to do for next year. A lot is still unknown with regard to mitigation strategies; however, we need to start planning.
- 8<sup>th</sup> Grade moving up ceremony will be held outside on Monday June 7<sup>th</sup> with rain dates on June 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>.
- Closing ceremonies will be held either outside on the field or in the auditorium on Friday, June 11<sup>th</sup> at 1:45 p.m. depending on the weather.
- Working on the last issue of the *Vision* which is celebratory in nature recognizing our graduates, retirees and 25-year employees.
- The next regularly scheduled Board of Education Meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 16<sup>th</sup>.

#### **I.C. Assistant Superintendent's Report**

Ms. Jennifer Parsons, Assistant Superintendent, provided updates from the Assistant Superintendent's office. Ms. Parsons thanked the community for completing the climate surveys which will help to reflect on the year. She stated the district is getting ready for summer school and that the last of the professional days will finish up when the students have early releases next week. Additionally, administrators are excited for the Administrative Retreat in June and will come back in August for 2 additional days. Ms. Parsons thanked the Board for the recommendations brought to the Board for Math as they were shared with incoming 6<sup>th</sup> graders last night. She also stated that she and Dr. Grossman continue to meet with the FVHD and DPH with regard to mitigation strategies and that the district is trying to get back to in-person activities. Ms. Parsons had one last thank you to the health and medical team. She stated Nurse Jodi French has been amazing as our lead nurse as well as Justine Ginsberg from the FVHD and our medical advisor Dr. Rob Parker. Ms. Parsons stated she is happy to report there have been no cases the last two weeks.

## **I.F. Student Representative Reports**

- Jacob Scotto stated the GMHS Drama Club spring play, *Actor's Nightmare*, was recorded last night and will be released on the Granby Performing Arts YouTube Channel soon.
- The boys' tennis team won yesterday and today and is advancing to the State finals tomorrow against Westbrook and will be playing at the Racquet Club in Manchester at 10:00 tomorrow morning.
- The choir and band concerts both went exceedingly well last week with a very large audience who was able to listen to some wonderful pieces from both groups.
- The boys' lacrosse team defeated Canton in overtime this evening.
- Jacob also wished all of the retirees well and stated they will be sorely missed by students.

Jenny Emery stated Sean Dowd received the NCCC Player of the Year and Jordan Grossman announced that the girls' softball team are also advancing to the quarter finals.

## **II. Public Comment**

Ashton Busse, a student at the middle school, stated she is finishing 8th grade this year and that she moved here from Houston, Texas in 2015. She stated an IEP was put in place in order for her to catch up academically and that special education services have helped her to manage. She also stated regular education teachers helped to prepare her for the real world. Ashton thanked Administration for in-person learning in Granby and asked to please remember how important social interactions are for middle school students as it is very difficult wearing masks.

Mike Mercier, 26 Notch Road, stated he is concerned about Granby's mask wearing policies and inquired if students will need to wear masks for the remainder of the year. He also inquired about wearing masks next year. He inquired if the DPH states masks should be worn, will Granby follow that guidance. Mr. Mercier stated he does not feel masks are necessary at this time. Dr. Grossman stated currently mask wearing is an executive order and we have been informed by the DPH to finish the year with masks being worn on school campuses. The fall is still to be determined. Once we know what it is, we will work with our FVHD and if the State requires it then it is a mandate. Mr. Mercier also inquired about vaccinations and what will happen with students who do not get vaccinated versus students who do and what that means for wearing masks. Mr. Mercier stated he will call Dr. Grossman to discuss this further.

Mrs. Mercier, 26 Notch Road, Granby stated the CDC has been wrong many times with regard to wearing masks and has walked back some of their decisions. With regard to the Executive Order in place, she stated the Governor does not have executive rights in the realm of a virus outbreak and is overreaching his allowed authority. She asked if Dr. Grossman had a response to her comment. Dr. Grossman reiterated what he said to Mr. Mercier but stated that currently it is not in the hands of the Granby Public Schools and stated he could make no other comment at this time but would be happy to speak to her in person or via phone.

## **III. Consent Agenda**

### **III.A. Minutes**

A motion was made by Rosemarie Weber and seconded by Jenny Emery that the Granby Board of Education adopt the consent agenda. This motion passed at 7:25 p.m. with one abstention (Melissa Migliaccio).

## **IV. Old Business**

### **IV.A. Revision to 2021-2022 School Calendar**

Dr. Grossman stated changes needed to be made to next year's calendar after collaboration with the teachers' union and administration. He described the changes to the school calendar as follows: Moving the Monday, March 21, 2022 early release day for professional development to Friday, March 11, 2022; early release for parent conferences (secondary schools only) on March 22, 2022; and, early release for parent conferences (elementary schools only) March 23-25, 2022. The new school schedules have also been added to the calendar reflecting an additional 10 minutes to the school day. Melissa Migliaccio inquired if virtual conferences will continue and Dr. Grossman stated, yes, it is just a matter of scheduling but will definitely be reviewed. A motion was made by Jenny Emery and seconded by Melissa Migliaccio that the Granby Board of Education approve the revisions to the 2021-2022 school calendar as recommended by the Superintendent. This motion passed unanimously at 7:29 p.m.

## **V. New Business**

### **V.A. Fresh Picks Food Service Contract Amendment**

The Board discussed the amendment to the Fresh Picks Food Service Contract for the 2021-2022 school year. A motion was made by Jenny Emery and seconded by Melissa Migliaccio that the Granby Board of Education approve the amendment to the Food Service Contract for the 2021-2022 school year as recommended by the Finance/Personnel/Facilities Subcommittee. Jenny Emery stated this was reviewed at the last Finance Subcommittee Meeting and that the contract has to be renewed every year and the only change in the terms relates to imposing the cpi on some of the rates of reimbursement. It is a very minor financial change. Ms. Emery stated the district is pleased with the work of Fresh Picks. This motion passed unanimously at 7:30 p.m.

### **V.B. Annual Technology Report**

This item was tabled until the June 16<sup>th</sup> Board of Education Meeting.

### **V.C. Granby Equity Team Presentation**

Ms. Jennifer Parsons, Assistant Superintendent, and Ms. Jacky Paton, Science Teacher and Steering Committee Member of the Granby Equity Team (GET) updated the Board on the Anti-Racism/Anti-Bias Plan. Ms. Parsons provided an update on the action item and reminded the Board that GET is formerly known as Equity Taskforce. At the core of the Team's work, they are building consciousness, responsiveness and advocacy around critical race and equity issues. Ms. Paton stated she has been on the Team for the last 4 years. A steering committee was added with staff members as well as two liaisons from the CT Center for School Change who are essentially the heart of GET. They plan all of the meetings and make sure there is a through line in the work of the group. GET includes stakeholder groups such as other staff members, community members, parents, and students who meet monthly (virtually) for two hours. The idea is that the work of that groups will network and branch out and eventually break into everything that the Team is trying to do. Ms. Paton reviewed the action items for building *consciousness* to increase awareness and understanding of faculty, students and families on the impact of racism, bias and marginalization on student experiences and outcomes. She stated there were 4 sessions of professional development for teachers on equity; distribution of an equity and inclusion survey; and, a book discussion with Debby Irving which there were over 100 participants. With regard to action items for building *responsiveness* this year to increase the capacity of school and district leaders to actively lead for equitable opportunities, experiences and outcomes for students, Ms. Parsons stated that protected time and space was established for regular equity-based discussions; a webpage was created with book lists and resources addressing equity; and supports were established for Open Choice students to foster relationships to attract and retain students. For the action steps taken to build *advocacy* and increase agency and action to actively address issues of racism and equity in Granby Public Schools, Ms. Parsons stated a Vision of the Graduate was developed with an equity perspective and accessible to all students; engagement with the YMCA on the 21-Day Equity Challenge; a curriculum audit was conducted with an equity lens; and, a plan was created to expand the Bridges Program facilitated by students for students. Ms. Parsons stated additionally the district is very excited about participation in the teacher residency program and shared that a candidate has been matched with a Wells Road teacher mentor for next year. Ms. Parsons stated the last GET meeting was held last week and a majority of time was spent gathering feedback on each of the action steps. The Team will meet to review the feedback and make any changes to the plan. Completed action items will be marked as such and a revised plan will be brought forward to the Board in the fall.

Mark Fiorentino inquired what the terms tools and toolkit mean under building consciousness to review lesson development and curriculum and effective time for teachers. Ms. Paton stated when talking about building a teacher's toolkit, it is things like how do teachers tackle difficult conversations with students. Jenny Emery stated she would be interested in a perspective or comment from anyone on the committee on how to keep the momentum of the community support going. Ms. Parsons stated the committee is making the room to do the work and continues to balance what is building consciousness and responsiveness and are prepared to engage in the work. Mark Fiorentino asked the student representatives if they have noticed any changes in school. Jack DeGray stated he was on the Task Force in 8<sup>th</sup> grade and attended the Bridges meetings through the high school. He stated it was a helpful experience for him and helped to change his perspective. Ms. Paton stated in the last year, she has had more teachers request to join without spots for them. She also stated there is a lot of anti-Asian hate going on in the world right now and being one of the very few non-white members of the staff, she stated she received a very large percentage of support from staff members so she personally sees a lot of change and it is part of her daily work now. Mark Fiorentino thanked Ms. Parsons and Ms. Paton for their work and stated a great measure of success would be if in a year from now we are hearing students say they are talking about these subjects.

## **V.D. Superintendent Contract Approval**

The Board discussed the approval of the Superintendent's Contract effective July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2024. Ms. Thrall stated Dr. Grossman met or exceeded all of the goals of his evaluation. A motion was made by Melissa Migliaccio and seconded by Jenny Emery that the Granby Board of Education approve the Superintendent's Contract effective July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2024. Ms. Thrall stated the evaluation of the Superintendent is based upon the goals of the Superintendent and stated Dr. Jordan Grossman has met or exceeded his goals for this school year. Jenny Emery commented that Dr. Grossman had a heck of a year this year and relayed thanks from a parent who was thrilled Granby was in full in-person learning this year. Melissa Migliaccio stated the community is thrilled that Granby Public Schools were open all year for full in-person learning and that she looks forward to more good work. Rosemarie Weber stated Dr. Grossman has met or exceeded the expectations of most if not all of the Superintendents in Connecticut is not short of exceptional. She stated she is personally grateful as she has two students in the system. Mark Fiorentino thanked Dr. Grossman and stated he is grateful to have him as Granby's Superintendent. Sarah Thrall stated it took a lot of courage to open schools this year and thanked Dr. Grossman for being fearless and also thanked him for giving the Board the opportunity to renew his contract. She stated she is excited to see him move the district forward. This motion passed unanimously at 8:01 p.m.

## **VI. Miscellaneous**

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

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

Rosemarie Weber stated this Subcommittee did not meet this evening and she has not heard about a rescheduled date as of yet.

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

#### **VI.B.1. CREC/CABE**

Mark Fiorentino reported the next CREC Council meeting will be held two weeks from today.

#### **VI.B.2. Granby Education Foundation**

Jenny Emery reported the GEF has not met since the last meeting.

### **VI.C. Calendar of Events**

Melissa Migliaccio noted that since this is the last Board Meeting for our student representatives, with the next meeting being after school gets out, she wanted to express her thanks to Jack DeGray for his service on the Board.

### **VI.D. Board Member Announcements**

Sarah Thrall thanked Ms. Migliaccio for the segue way for her to also recognize Jack DeGray contributions as a Student Representative to the Board and presented him with a University of Florida "Gators" water bottle. Jack DeGray thanked the Board and also stated the lacrosse team will play on Saturday at Sheehan for the quarterfinals. Mark Fiorentino added that Jack did a great job today as an MC at the retirement luncheon.

### **VI.E. Action Items**

There were no action items this evening.

## **VII. Executive Session/Non-Meeting**

A motion was made by Jenny Emery and seconded by Rosemarie Weber to adjourn the meeting and enter into an Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter. This motion passed at 8:06 p.m. The Executive Session adjourned at approximately 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Weber  
Board Secretary