

Regular Board of Education Meeting – Approved
April 22, 2020, 7:00 p.m.
Via Zoom Videoconference

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

Absent Board Members: N/A

Melissa Migliaccio called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

I. Administrative Reports

I.A. Superintendent's Announcements

- The Distance Learning platform is moving along with strength. Students will speak about how Distance Learning is going for them later on the agenda.
- Dr. Grossman publicly thanked teachers, students and staff for all they are doing. Amazing videos are being created throughout the district.
- The Senior class will always be on the minds for each of us every day. Committed to looking at graduation and end-of-year activities. Included students in on a meeting that occurred today and creative ideas are being discussed. Would love to have graduation on a normal date outside. Mr. Dunn, High School Principal, has been asked to update the Board and community where we are with HS graduation at a future Board Meeting. This will not be a rushed decision.
- Communication has been sent to high school families with regard to how we will be grading students with a Pass/Fail or letter grade. K-8 administrators are currently in discussion with staff for the last trimester for K-5 and last quarter for 6-8 students.
- Our hearts go out to our student athletes and musicians who are normally recognized this time of year. CIAC will hold a meeting tomorrow to discuss the future of athletics. Dr. Grossman will report back to Board what the CIAC decides tomorrow.

Melissa Migliaccio stated the district is currently closed until May 20th and inquired if there is any idea when the Governor will give more information. Dr. Grossman stated he was on a call with the Commissioner today and there should be an announcement sooner than later on the reopening of schools. It may be within a week or two but relatively quickly so schools can plan prior to May 20th.

I.B. Middle School Principal Announcement

Dr. Jordan Grossman introduced the new Principal of Granby Memorial Middle School (GMMS). He stated he would be remiss not to mention our current Principal, Mrs. Susan Henneberry, wished her the best in her retirement and thanked her for her leadership and guidance stating she would be missed in the community. Dr. Grossman stated there was an extensive search for the Middle School Principal and that Granby Public Schools is a very attractive district. There were approximately 65 applicants for the position. He thanked the Search Committee as well as the GMMS staff for giving a profile of what we were looking for in a new principal. Dr. Grossman stated it is a great pleasure to introduce Mr. Taylor Wrye as the new Principal of GMMS. Mr. Wrye is the current Principal of Westbrook Middle School in Westbrook, CT. He brings a tremendous amount of experience in middle school education and is confident the GMMS staff and students will love and adore him. Mr. Wrye stated he is grateful to Superintendent Grossman and the Board and that it was an amazing process to go through and it was very thorough. He is very excited to be here with his wife Caitlyn and two sons, Jack and Charlie, who attend Kelly Lane Primary School. Mr. Wrye stated it is a dream opportunity to live in a town and also be part of the Granby community. Dr. Grossman concluded by stating he will work with Mrs. Henneberry and Mr. Wrye to ensure a smooth transition.

I.C. Student Representative Reports

Ms. Dwaritha Ramesh and Mr. Jack DeGray, Student Representatives, reported on learning online and adjustments to student life. Dwaritha stated there are a lot of successes and with every week it is getting much smoother. Teachers are very supportive offering live meets and office hours. She

stated it is close as it could get to a regular classroom environment and she cannot think of any outstanding issues. Dwaritha stated she has been especially glad of the support she received from the Guidance Dept. She has officially accepted to go to UConn in the fall and it has been a good resource to have her guidance counselor available through email as well as access to the College & Career Center. She is currently applying for scholarships. Melissa Migliaccio inquired if there were any surprises with the distance learning platform? Dwaritha stated it takes a lot more motivation to get things done without a teacher in front of you and peers around you. It is not the same as just doing homework on a regular school day. Ms. Migliaccio also inquired about the Robotics program as Dwaritha is heavily involved in that. Dwaritha stated she connects with the group through a regular group chat and is trying to keep updated with everything; however, there is not too much going on except for planning, preparing for next season and training for underclassmen. Sarah Thrall asked Dwaritha for feedback on the google platform. Dwaritha stated she thinks Schoology is better but the Google platform, which took a while to get used to, is getting better as she gets used to it; however, it is not as organized as Schoology.

Jack DeGray stated it was helpful that the teachers and students had to launch distance learning at the same time as teachers were very understanding this was all new territory. Melissa Migliaccio inquired about the cancellation of SATs and what might happen with the College Board. Jack stated he and his classmates are certainly disappointed. College Board is saying the next test available is in August and October. Jack stated he likes that everything is on Google Classroom even though it was an adjustment and that distance learning is much easier using that platform. Ms. Migliaccio inquired how he and his classmates are keeping in touch. Jack stated some teachers have made it easier than others in having conversations with other students and it has been very easy to communicate with other students. Jenny Emery inquired if there is a sense that a lot of Granby kids are disengaged and if there is anything the Board can do differently with that problem. Jack stated he does think some students are disengaging; however, there are many students who want to do the work and get good grades. Dwaritha stated she knows of maybe 1 or 2 students she has not seen on the online platform and all other students have been accounted for at least in her classes.

Kate Hollister, Sophomore at the high school, is working on her Eagle Scout project and one of the merit badges is citizenship. Kate stated she spoke with Dr. Grossman about distance learning and issues for students. She also attended the April 1st BOE meeting and has been doing her research. It is much harder to obtain information but it is going as well as can be expected. While it is hard, it is getting easier. She feels she is missing when other students ask questions of teachers because she does not hear what the answers to those answers are.

I.D. Business Manager's Report

Ms. Anna Robbins, Business Manager, presented the March statement of accounts. The March report is an unusual one with a prediction as of the end of March but also a forecast with no school for the rest of the year. If school resumes on May 20th, there will only be 16 days left. Our projection is assuming no expenses for the remainder of the year. The forecast was a -\$90K if you look at March in the former capacity which is almost \$40K better than last month due to the fact that purchase orders are starting to close. Going forward with distance learning, there are some savings and some increases, i.e., savings in expenses such as nursing services, transportation, supplies, substitute services, utilities, and conferences. There is a slight increase in software purchases. Some assumptions were made in the Q&D fund with regard to enrichment activities, bus monitoring and support services. For revenues to the town, there is a reduction in building rentals and pay-for-participation fees. The Excess Cost Grant will likely be lower due to transportation savings. Jenny Emery stated this was reviewed in detail this evening. Assuming school resumes, the deficit created by special education will likely continue to shrink and is currently at a -\$90K. The projection if school does not recommence is built on a lot of variables and while there may be short-term savings due to programs not running, etc., there are also likely to be increased expenses related to coming back. None of this was built into the budget for next year. If the BOE ends up with savings from this year, the town will need to know there will likely be increased expenditures next year.

I.E. Assistant Superintendent's Report

Ms. Marian Hourigan, Interim Assistant Superintendent, provided an update to the Board on Distance Learning stating teachers have done an amazing job during this time period using an online format. The district sent out a parent survey a few weeks ago and received very positive survey results with parents noting they appreciated the amount of personal contact the students have with their teacher via class meetings, co-teaching and special interest clubs in off hours to name a few. There is built in time for students to do their work and teachers to correct their work. Ms. Hourigan informed the Board that Kelly Lane has a "Bucket Filling Day" and Wells Road has a "Wellsness Day" once a week to try new and different activities for learning. At the middle school there is a "Feedback Day" where one department per day will post new assignments so students can catch up on their past work and respond to their teacher's feedback. At the high school teachers slow the pace and extend assignments over longer periods where appropriate. The district continues to update and refine the work we are doing at all levels to provide the best possible education at this time. Sarah Thrall commented her son in 5th grade at Wells was excited that today was Wellsness Wednesday. He baked cookies with his sister and from a parent's perspective, it was a nice break as there is a lot of time in front of the screen so she applauds those efforts. Jenny Emery inquired if the district is reaching out to parents about technology. Ms. Hourigan stated the middle school will continue to reach out virtually to give lessons on Google Classroom. Ms. Emery stated she has not heard anything but appreciation for the good work being done. Melissa Migliaccio inquired if there is anything the Board can do to help teachers find ways to improve this experience. Ms. Hourigan stated she feels Granby is way ahead of the curve as the district has been using technology with Chromebooks and that teachers work with one another and feel the Board has been very supportive.

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 Jenny Emery that the Granby Board of Education adopt the minutes of the April 1, 2020 Board of Education meeting. This motion passed unanimously at 7:52 p.m.

IV. Old Business

IV.A. Revision to 2020-2021 School Calendar

The Board discussed the approval of adding Friday, May 28, 2021 as a professional development day to the 2020-2021 school calendar and move the last day of school to Wednesday, June 9, 2021. A motion was made by Melissa Migliaccio and seconded by Jenny Emery that the Granby Board of Education revise the 2020-2021 school calendar to add a professional development day on Friday, May 28, 2021 and move the last day of school to Wednesday, June 9, 2021. This motion passed unanimously at 7:54 p.m.

V. New Business

V.A. First Reading of Policy 5122 - Teacher and Class Assignments

The Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communications Subcommittee recommended Policy 5122, Teacher and Class Assignments, to the Board for a first reading. Sarah Thrall stated this policy states the building principal has the final say in teacher assignments and also sets a policy for transferring credits. This policy will move on to a second reading at the next meeting.

V.B. First Reading of Revised Policy 5141.21 - Administering Medication

The Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communications Subcommittee recommended Revised Policy 5141.21, Administering Medication, to the Board for a first reading. Sarah Thrall stated this is a simple language change for bus drivers to administer medication. This policy will move to a second reading at the next meeting.

V.C. New Food Service Contract

The Board discussed the approval for a new Food Service Contract as recommended by the Finance/Personnel/Facilities Subcommittee. A motion was made by Melissa Migliaccio and seconded by Dave Peling that the Granby Board of Education accepts the food service management company that was selected using the State of Connecticut mandated procedure and recommended by the Finance/Personnel/Facilities Subcommittee. Jenny Emery stated Granby was up for a new contract and has been with Sodexo for a while. The process is heavily scripted by the state. The rubric that was used to evaluate was reviewed in Subcommittee. There were 4 bidders, one of which was disqualified. The administration made its recommendation and will move toward finalizing a contract. The high scoring vendor is Fresh Picks Café out of Vermont. They have been around since the 1990s and have impressed the administration as being innovative and energized. This motion passed unanimously at 8:01 p.m.

V.D. Healthy Food Certification - Healthy Food Option Approval

A motion was made by Melissa Migliaccio and seconded by Jenny Emery that the Granby Board of Education certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources including, but not limited to, school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, culinary programs, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or by non-school organizations and groups. Jenny Emery stated this is a proforma item the Subcommittee goes through each year. Essentially, there is no down side and it sends the right message we are providing the right foods in our lunch program. This motion passed unanimously at 8:03 p.m.

V.E. Healthy Food Certification - Exemption for Food and Beverage Items

A motion was made by David Peling and seconded by Jenny Emery that the Granby Board of Education allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the food and beverage items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. The "regular school day" is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. "Location" means where the event is being held. JE stated this creates room for the district to be responsibly flexible for certain extracurricular activities that might fall outside the healthy food certification. This motion passed unanimously at 8:05 p.m.

VI. Miscellaneous

VI.A. Board Standing Committee Reports

VI.A.2. Finance/Personnel/Facilities

Jenny Emery reported this Subcommittee met this evening. Reviewed states of the building projects. The building committee meets tomorrow for the first time in a while. If everything falls into place properly including state requirements, etc. we have the architect and hope to engage a contractor to work on the MS this summer. HS still subject to ...before architect can be selected. Unlikely that work would get undertaken before next year. In addition, the committee has gone out to bid for the rest of the projects which will include some tradeoffs and will be talking about that tomorrow night as well. Make sense to have a project manager to move the pieces along with the bidding, selection and state approvals needed every step of the way.

VI.B. Other Board-Related Reports

VI.B.1. CREC/CABE

Mark Fiorentino reported CREC met last week and stated a couple of labor agreements were ratified with the administrators for CREC and one with the teachers' bargaining unit. He forwarded details on to Anna and Jordan to help inform us as we go through the process. He stated although the Education Commission got a fair amount of work done, they do not expect to take any action on any of the bills they worked on this session.

With regard to CABE, Melissa Migliaccio CABE has been great in communicating about the Governor's Executive Orders and she appreciates and values Granby's membership with them.

VI.B.2. Granby Education Foundation

Jenny Emery stated she was pleased to see the email about soliciting artwork from students. It is a great opportunity for the GEF to get more of the students' art and music shared with the community. Dr. Grossman stated he attended the meeting on Monday and the district is also trying to partner with the Senior Center and help seniors during this time and respecting social distancing. Ms. Emery mentioned the GEF Tribute Program which honors staff members and stated the program may take on new urgency this year due to the cancellation of the GranBee.

VI.C. Calendar of Events

Sarah Thrall stated the middle school PAC met on Tuesday morning and again this morning on Google Classroom.

VI.D. Board Member Announcements

Melissa Migliaccio thanked the entire Board, teachers, administrators, and the community for being supportive during this time and stated she hopes Granby will be back in session soon. Rosemarie Weber thanked Mrs. Henneberry for her service and stated how much she appreciates her leadership at the middle school as well as her quiet confidence and digging into data to understand the school and students to make improvements. Ms. Migliaccio stated the Board should invite retirees to a Board Meeting via Zoom to recognize them. Dr. Grossman stated we can definitely put it on an agenda. Dwaritha Ramesh commented she received an e-mail about the grading options for the high school and thinks it is fantastic for students to have the pass/fail option and happy that other students can get rewarded for the work they are doing. Ms. Migliaccio stated this is a great comment and an appropriate time to mention it. She believes it will serve our students well.

VI.E. Action Items

1) Update on end-of-year activities for seniors.

VII. Executive Session/Non-Meeting

There was no need to enter into an Executive Session/Non-Meeting this evening. A motion was made by Jenny Emery and seconded by Rosemarie Weber to adjourn the meeting. This motion passed unanimously at 8:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Weber
Board Secretary