

Special Board of Education Meeting – Approved Minutes
July 13, 2020, 7:00 p.m.
Via Zoom videoconference

Present Board Members: Jenny Emery, Mark Fiorentino, Melissa Migliaccio, David Peling, Sarah Thrall, Rosemarie Weber, and Brandon Webster.

Absent Board Members: N/A

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

I. Chairman's Corner

Ms. Melissa Migliaccio, Board Chairman, shared opening remarks and stated the purpose of tonight's meeting is to discuss reopening plans for the Granby Public Schools and the Governor's Executive Orders. There is a lot of information to be shared. The Reopening Task Force has been working and the Governor's guidance is getting distilled a bit more for the Board to consider tonight.

II. Superintendent's Announcements

- Dr. Grossman thanked the Board for meeting this week stating we typically do not meet during the summer but from a communication standpoint and working relationship standpoint, it is important to know what is happening on a weekly basis. This is uncharted territory and working together as a team is imperative. He also thanked Mike Dunn, High School Principal and Co-chair of the Reopening Task Force, as well as Taylor Wrye, Middle School Principal, for being present this evening. Dr. Grossman informed the Board that tonight they will receive an update as to where we are currently. It was hoped to present the final plan tonight; however, the plan changes by the minute and it would be irresponsible to present a plan of what the reopening will look like for August 27th on July 13th. The district is trying to be very transparent and communicative to our population. The goal is to get a good plan. A draft plan will be submitted for July 24th. He requested that the Board meet next week to look at where we are with the draft of the plan before it goes to the state. The Board agreed to meet on Wednesday July 22nd at 6:30 p.m. Dr. Grossman stated the Board will get a draft on Monday evening and Ms. Parsons will present high leverage points on the plan at the meeting on Wednesday. He informed the Board he is looking for support on the plan not a vote.
- There is a motion on the agenda tonight for a revision to the 2020-2021 calendar and Dr. Grossman stated he hopes the Board supports that recommendation.

III. Revision to the 2020-2021 School Calendar

The Board discussed the recommendation by the Superintendent to modify the 2020-2021 school calendar moving the first day of school to Friday, August 28, 2020. A motion was made by Melissa Migliaccio and seconded by Jenny Emery that the Granby Board of Education approve the revisions to the 2020-2021 school calendar moving the first day of school to Friday, August 28, 2020 and making it a half day, changing Monday, August 31, 2020 to a half day and removing the full day of professional development day on Friday, May 28th, and making that a half day of school and a half day of professional development. The last day of school will remain at June 9, 2021. Jenny Emery inquired if there were any arguments against this recommendation. Dr. Grossman stated no, there has been a tremendous amount of support from administrators and teachers. This motion passed unanimously at 7:18 p.m.

IV. Approval of Minutes from the July 6, 2020 Special Board of Education Meeting

A motion was made by Melissa Migliaccio and seconded by Jenny Emery to approve the minutes from the July 6, 2020 Special Board of Education Meeting. This motion passed unanimously at 7:19 p.m.

V. Reopening Task Force Update

Ms. Jennifer Parsons, Assistant Superintendent, provided an update on the work of the Reopening Task Force Committee to the Board. She stated this is our best thinking at this time with this ever-evolving health crisis. She stated she would share ideas tonight and the full plan at the next meeting. It will be a working plan when submitted to the state on July 23rd. She stated the Task Force met last week to discuss initial pieces around a full reopening. Since then, working groups have been meeting and discussing the different pieces of reopening. Additionally, she and Dr. Grossman are having conversations with colleagues across the state to share ideas about what they are doing and also collaborating with the Farmington Valley Health District (FVHD). When administrators meet tomorrow, they will discuss other pieces such as ESL and career and technical education which will then be shared with the Task Force. She informed the Board the hybrid model and distance learning plans have not been addressed yet. Ms. Parsons shared a section of the plan regarding parents who will temporarily choose not to participate in schoolhouse learning and stated parents will need to notify the school. Students will have access to online learning, posted assignments and regular check-ins. The learning will be in-sync with classroom curricular goals and all student needs will be met. Brandon Webster inquired about the social/emotional needs of students if parents opt out. Ms. Parsons stated she realizes he has raised this question before and she will get back to him on that piece. Jenny Emery inquired if an in-school program might be different for a student with an IEP than for a student who has opted out for another reason and are those two different experiences. Ms. Parsons stated, yes, it is possible and the district will try to accommodate students' needs. She stated unfortunately it is not black and white but many shades of grey here for students who cannot return to school and there is a lot of conversation about this topic in particular.

Ms. Parsons discussed the next heading in the plan which involves requirements for school liaisons, communication plans and data collection. The district liaison will be the Assistant Superintendent's office and the school nurses will be the school liaisons. The district is required to establish regular channels of communication as is currently done, such as e-blasts, the website and videos for parents. Ms. Parsons stated 842 responses have been received thus far from the survey (1,439 students or 80%) and 66% of students are planning to return to school, 3% (about 48 students) responded they will not return to school and 38% are not sure. The survey is not closed and data will need to be unduplicated once the survey closes. Out of the students planning to return, 68% are willing to transport students to/from school; however, we will get into further transportation planning details at a later date. Ms. Parsons stated this survey was just a gauge and the data will be matched once the survey closes. Dave Peling inquired if a similar survey will be given to faculty. Ms. Parsons stated not at this point. Staff are contacting their principal and human resources with any concerns. Dr. Grossman stated he is working with legal counsel on this one and, if a survey goes it, it will be ADA compliant.

Ms. Parsons reviewed the next section of the plan which is facilities. Student workstations will be spaced at least 3' up to 6' apart facing in one direction and, if not possible, plastic barriers will be used on desks/tables. Teacher workstations will be located at the front of the class. If teachers are at least 6' away from students their mask can be removed. Teachers will also be supplied with a plastic barrier/face shield if necessary. Traffic flow in the classrooms will be established and marked. Additional furniture and materials will be removed from classrooms to negate having to clean these items and to also make space. Class sizes will not be capped; however, larger classes will be moved to larger spaces. Building walkthroughs are being conducted at each school to establish capacities and layouts for each space. Cleaning and disinfecting is also in the facilities section. On a daily basis, there will be routine cleaning of all areas of the school used during that day including outdoor areas. Cleaning and disinfecting of "high touch" areas targeted in the plan, such as, desks and chairs, doorknobs, countertops, bathroom surfaces, copiers/scanners/fax machines, computer equipment, etc. Bathrooms will be cleaned and sanitized twice daily especially during times of full

occupancy. Melissa Migliaccio inquired about sanitizing shared spaces and Ms. Parsons stated middle school/high school students will be able to sanitize with wipes and for elementary students, classrooms will be cleaned and disinfected every day and many times during the day with the sanitizing wipes. Melissa Migliaccio stated she would hope that good hygiene behavior of our students at home will be brought into the classroom as well. Ms. Parsons then discussed ventilation protocols. The Director of Facilities will establish systems per guidance that refresh the air. No free-standing fans may be used and windows may be opened to refresh stale air where deemed safe. All staff will be made aware of hygiene practices. Touch-free entry into spaces will be allowed where permissible by fire code as well as touch-free fixtures in bathrooms where possible. Bathrooms will be assigned by cohorts and use of stalls will be reviewed to maximize social distancing. Dr. Grossman stated the Director of Facilities will be checking room temperatures due to the fact that classrooms are not air conditioned and classes will be moved to air conditioned spaces where possible. Will get medical advice as to the highest acceptable classroom temperature. Jenny Emery inquired if a short-term need for additional custodial resources is necessary. Dr. Grossman stated a schedule will be developed with existing staff who will need overtime hours. Additionally, with regard to expenses, a list of everything being purchased is being formulated as there could be FEMA funds reimbursed to the town and he will work with the Town Manager on this.

Ms. Parsons reviewed daily operations for PK-5 students who will travel with their classroom cohort and, if possible, specials' teachers will do longer stretches within a grade level cohort, i.e., work with Grade 1 for 3-4 weeks. Grades 6-12 students will be divided into 4 longer class "blocks". Each class of the day will be composed of a cohort. Extended passing time will allow for sanitizing surfaces between cohorts. Cohorts will have assigned zones of the school for shared spaces and traffic patterns including bathroom use. Shared spaces will be scheduled at reduced capacity (50%), i.e., the cafeteria. School buildings will be closed to outside organizations until further notice and visitors will be very limited and by appointment only. Brandon Webster inquired if classes can be held outside and Ms. Parsons stated, yes, classes and lunches may be held outside; however, there will be building level protocols which will need to be written for those situations. Mr. Webster also inquired if there is any information about the Asnuntuck or VoAg programs. Ms. Parsons stated she has not received any information yet but will check with high school staff tomorrow.

Child nutrition was discussed. Grab and go meals will be served. There will be reduced capacity, increased spacing and increased hygiene. New policies and procedures will be developed for serving, ordering and accounting for lunches. Melissa Migliaccio inquired if there will be a meal plan for a remote or hybrid situation. Ms. Parsons stated when in school students can eat but there may need to be a service window where students can pick up meals or meals can be provided at the end of a school day for the following day. All of this needs to be explored further with the food service company and the Business Manager. The remote meal plans will be similar to distance learning where meals will need to be provided. With regard to transportation, the district will be running at full capacity. Knowing how many families need transportation will help us to plan. If there are increased pick up and drop offs, procedures will need to be developed to accommodate traffic flow and minimize contact with parents while safely loading and unloading students. For bussing, there will be ongoing communication and training with bus companies and families. Busses will be cleaned between runs and bus monitor positions have been posted and will be filled as soon as possible. Students will be required to wear face coverings, stay seated and keep personal space. Disposable masks will be available for students who do not have one. Seating charts will also be developed.

Health practices and protocols were discussed. The district will work with the FVHD and the nursing supervisor to establish health practices. They will communicate and teach practices, such as, social distancing; frequent hand washing and use of hand sanitizer; use of face coverings; respiratory and cough etiquette; and, enhanced cleaning/disinfection of surfaces. Will need to work

closely with the FVHD to establish criteria when students/staff need to be sent home and when and how they can return. Absences and suspected cases and exposures at school will be monitored while abiding by privacy regulations.

Additional information regarding social distancing was also reviewed. The protective factors of social distancing, cohorting and face coverings work in concert and when one factor is decreased the others should be increased. Students can take off their mask when eating in the cafeteria, mask breaks, recess, or physical education; however, during music classrooms students need to be 12' apart when singing or if involved in an instrument that involves blowing. Percussion and strings can go on as normal. Melissa Migliaccio commented on the music piece and stated based on the spacing for wind and brass instruments and singing, if the model could be made into a distance model as it appears to be very difficult to provide safe instruction under the Governor's orders of what is required. Dr. Grossman stated this will be discussed with the Task Force. Ms. Parsons went on to state that staff members should maintain 6' of social distancing at all times. Groups of larger than 10 adults should not convene inside. Face masks will become part of our school culture and expectations. Jenny Emery inquired if there is a point where we might include this in student handbooks. Ms. Parsons stated the plan must work in concert with our handbooks.

Masks were reviewed and the district considered the adoption of a mask policy but learned this is not advised at this point because when the restrictions are lifted, it will not be applicable. Clear masks will be needed for some students as necessary. Staff and students will have access to face shields/plexiglass workstations for additional protection. The district will provide disposable masks when needed. There will be signage and videos for the education and communication around the appropriate way to wear face coverings. Medical reasons cannot be denied for students who have documentation but parents cannot opt students out of wearing masks. Plastic barriers and social distancing are being suggested in these cases.

Melissa Migliaccio complimented Ms. Parsons on a great job narrowing down the funnel of what needs to be done. She stated there will be another meeting next week and asked if there were any further questions from the Board. Mark Fiorentino inquired about protocols and standards for after-school activities and sports and if the district will receive guidance. Dr. Grossman stated he received permission from CIAC that fall athletes can train and condition now. Further guidance is forthcoming for fall sports from the CIAC and the state. Dr. Grossman stated the report given tonight will be posted on the website since it is a document shared at a public meeting. Jenny Emery commented that the way in which Ms. Parsons is communicating this plan is very reassuring to her and that it is very important work.

VI. Executive Session/Non-Meeting

A motion was made by Rosemarie Weber and seconded by Sarah Thrall to adjourn the regular meeting and enter into an Executive Session to discuss a collective bargaining agreement issue. This motion passed unanimously at 8:28 p.m. The Executive Session adjourned at 8:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Weber
Board Secretary