

Regular Board of Education Meeting – Approved Minutes

May 19, 2021, 7:00 p.m.

High School Auditorium/Zoom

Present Board Members: Jenny Emery, Mark Fiorentino (via Zoom), Sarah Thrall (via Zoom), Rosemarie Weber, Brandon Webster, and Jacob Scotto (via Zoom) and Jack DeGray (Student Representative)

Absent Board Members: Melissa Migliaccio and David Peling

Rosemarie Weber, Board Secretary, called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

I. Administrative Reports

I.A. Chairman's Corner

Ms. Rosemarie Weber, Board Secretary, stated our Chair and Vice Chair are online via Zoom this evening. Sarah Thrall apologized for not being present this evening to present the CABE leadership awards. She welcomed Ms. Branda and GMS Student Council who were present for Schools in the Spotlight tonight.

I.B. Superintendent's Announcements

- Dr. Grossman welcomed middle school administration, staff and students here this evening.
- Last week we celebrated our school nurses. A special thank you to all of our nurses for going above and beyond this year. The district is grateful for all of their hard work, patience and care given to our staff and students.
- Congratulations to our CABE student leadership award recipients this evening.
- The CABE Board Recognition Award Application was submitted last week.
- Monitoring Kindergarten enrollment very closely. Numbers are sitting at 119 students registered and we are still waiting on our Open Choice seats; however, we are on target with our 125 student projection.
- The District will receive funds from the America Cares Grant of \$516,901 with \$102,380 devoted to student learning recovery for the next two years. Grant applications will be sent to us next week.
- SBAC and AP testing are complete. Juniors will be taking the NGSS on May 24th.
- The collaborative effort of food services with the Granby/East Granby Public Schools continues to run smoothly. Conversations are going well with providing breakfasts and lunches next year which will be free for another year.
- The collaborative effort last week under the leadership of Mike Dunn and Jacky Paton went very well with 15 students attending along with the Professor and Dean of the University of Saint Joseph.
- The 8th Grade moving-up ceremony will be held outside this year on the high school athletic practice field on Monday June 7th
- Angela Ehrenwerth was introduced at the SEPTO meeting this week and also toured all of the buildings today.
- The last Granby Equity Team Wed May 26th.
- Board members are invited to walk with Dr. Grossman and a First Grade class in the Memorial Day Parade.
- The next Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 2nd. In the afternoon on this day, the district will recognize retirees and 25-year employees. Board members are encouraged to attend. Please let Linda know.

Jenny Emery inquired if the influx of students other than Kindergarten across the grade levels can be determined. Dr. Grossman stated in speak to administration and looking at projections, we are closely in line with our projections.

I.C. CABE Student Leadership Awards

The Board recognized middle school students, Sydney Henry and Otto Gotberg, Grade 8, as well as high school students, Jacob Scotto, Grade 11, and Jack DeGray, Grade 12, as this year's recipients of the CABE Student Leadership Awards. Ms. Weber recited the criteria of the CABE leadership award, read a biography on each student and presented them with their award.

I.D. Schools in the Spotlight

Ms. Shannon Branda, Resource Teacher and Student Council Advisor, and students Annie Baldwin, Natalie D'Amato and Lily Heitman informed the Board of the work done this year by the Student Council at Granby Memorial Middle School. The students shared that they joined Student Council to make a difference in the school and in the community as well as shared what was accomplished this year, such as, running a book drive, food drive and toy drive. Student Council also organized PJ Day raising 1,700 for the Connecticut Children's Medical Center. Jenny Emery inquired if there are elected positions in Student Council. The students said anyone can join and there are students in Grades 6-8 involved. Ms. Weber inquired how they get members and the students stated that announcements were made as well as word of mouth between students.

I.E. Assistant Superintendent's Report

Ms. Jennifer Parsons, Assistant Superintendent, provided updates from the Assistant Superintendent's office. Ms. Parsons stated this afternoon she met with the District Leadership Team consisting of coaches, content area specialists and administration to talk about the accomplishments across all of the departments and buildings this year and how to move forward next year to improve instruction across the board. Planning is full speed ahead for summer and fall opportunities and it has been quite busy with hiring and staffing. The last two weeks we will finish the year strong, although some of the restrictions are becoming more optional than required; however, will be sharing the CDC guidelines that masks are still required in school buildings. The FVHD successfully launched their vaccination clinics for 12-16 year olds yesterday which were well run and filled up quickly. Ms. Parsons shared the Granby Equity Team is working on the 21-day equity challenge in partnership with the YMCA and there will be more information to come. Jenny Emery asked for a brief update on the News Studio. Ms. Parsons stated there were some follow-up questions from our last presentation. Dr. Grossman stated the GEF had a great meeting on Monday evening and stated we should hear in the next couple of days if they will grant the project. Brandon Webster inquired if there is any insight from the FVHD when a new plan might be rolled out in the fall. Ms. Parsons stated that is the question of the day, week and month but waiting to see what comes out from the SDE in conjunction with the State Department of Public Health. Other than remote learning, not being required next school year, no other information has been received.

I.F. Student Representative Reports

- Jack DeGray stated AP testing ended this week with many students awaiting their scores which will be released in July.
- The boys' baseball team is 6-9 with their Senior Night coming up next Tuesday against Northwestern; softball continues to impress with a 15-1 record and their Senior Night is next Wednesday against Canton; track and field had their Senior Day today as they await the upcoming state and regional tournaments; boys' lacrosse is 5-8 with a game against Newington tomorrow and their Senior Night is next Wednesday against Canton; and, girls' lacrosse is 5-7 playing against Glastonbury today with their Senior Night also next Wednesday against Suffield.
- Jacob Scotto stated the concert band will perform at 6:30 p.m. tomorrow evening in the parking lot of the high school.
- The concert choir will perform on Thursday, May 27th in front of the high school.
- The Drama Club will record its performance of Actor's Nightmare and will release it at a later date.
- Boys' tennis had their last home match of the season at home against Ellington on Monday and ended the season with an 11-3 record and girls' tennis had a home match today against East Granby with a record of 8-6.
- Robotics has continued to meet after school and will participate in some off-season events to close out the year.

Jenny Emery inquired if the band events can be extended to the broader community. Dr. Grossman stated that should be absolutely fine as the Granby community has been great in following the guidelines.

I.G. Business Manager's Report

Ms. Anna Robbins, Business Manager, presented the April 2021 statement of accounts and stated after the receipt of grant funds the general fund forecast is better than budgeted \$66K better than previous month by \$52K. Special education is over-budget by \$16K with no change. Regular education is positive at \$82K which is better than the previous month by \$52K. Overall the forecast for the general fund is expected to be positive. The balance in Q&D is better than budgeted by \$99K which is an increase from last month. The savings is due to limited extracurricular activities and reduced enrollment in the Asnuntuck and VoAg programs due to the pandemic. For FY21, the overall projection for revenue is better than last month by \$13K due to pay-for-participation revenues. Ms. Robbins stated she is working to submit our final grant fund request for the end of the year and working on applications for grants made available by the government and state. Jenny Emery stated given the added expenses built in last summer occurred long after the budget was adopted, it is nothing short of astonishing that the year is ending this way. The Business Office and Administration have been on the ball looking for grant funds and staying on top of everything this year. Kudos to the Business Office and to Jordan for his leadership. Rosemarie Weber inquired if the reduced enrollment in the Asnuntuck program is due to the pandemic. Dr. Grossman referred to Mr. Dunn, High School Principal, who stated that is exactly the issue this year and that....

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 to adopt the consent agenda. This motion passed at 7:39 p.m. with two abstentions (Jenny Emery and Brandon Webster).

IV. Old Business

IV.A. School Improvement Plan Update: Middle School

Mr. Taylor Wrye, Principal, presented an update to the School Improvement Plan for Granby Memorial Middle School as well as a new middle school schedule for 2021-2022 school year. Mr. Wrye reviewed the Vision, Mission and District Achievement Goal of school climate and stated the middle school worked with two groups: JoAnn Freiberg & Patricia Ciccone, School Climate Consultants, as well as Kerry Lord and Patricia Nelson from the CT Center for School Change, to make positive changes. Mr. Wrye shared many of the events that staff and students engage in to acknowledge that school life quality and character directly impact student development, learning and achievements. For the student achievement goal to improve overall student academic performance by increasing Student Growth Percentile (SGP) in the STAR assessment in the subject areas of English Language Arts and Mathematics, Mr. Wrye shared that student growth for middle school students was reviewed for Math and Reading and 59% of students at GMMS are performing at proficient levels. In Reading, a total of 62% of students attained high growth and 71% of students attained high proficiency. In Math, a total of 59% of students attained high growth and 42% of students attained high proficiency. For the instructional GMMS staff expanding their knowledge and use of learning technologies, students must be prepared to thrive in a constantly evolving technological landscape and the International Society of Technological Education (ISTE) standards are designed to empower student voice in the learning process and engage them in a modern pedagogical approach.

The GMMS master schedule for the 2021-2022 school year was discussed. Survey results from teachers, parents, students and administration were used as a guide. Mr. Wrye stated there are 415 minutes in the school day. The committee carved out some non-negotiable items such as World Language every day for Grades 7 & 8; expanded World Language offerings for Grade 6; and students having the option of selecting both band and chorus every other day to name a few. After months of hard work and research, a new schedule was developed with eight (8) 50-minute periods. Unified Arts classes will be back-to-back and a flex block or academic enrichment will be used for recess, student health and so much more. Next year there will be a student-centered middle school team model which will focus on restorative practices, collaborative practices and shifting the math curriculum to meet the needs of all of our students as well as aligning our World Language curriculum. Jenny Emery inquired about student proficiency from prior years. She would like help to interpret if the numbers presented tonight for proficiency are good numbers. Mark Fiorentino inquired about the goal to increase the student growth percentile and the chart informs us if the goal was attained. Mr. Wrye stated the STAR assessment is a nation-wide assessment and students who have made significant growth (40 points) in their performance and are still learning and growing. Ms. Parsons stated Granby is above average nationally at 59% and 62% with regard to growth. She stated the 71% proficiency on reading is higher than what we have seen but certainly the 42% in math is lower. Mark Fiorentino stated he would appreciate the data from last year. Sarah Thrall inquired if the high proficiency is at grade level standards or above grade level and, if the latter, how are we reflecting about students at grade level. Mr. Wrye stated students are achieving grade level standards on SBAC. Rosemarie Weber stated this year it is hard to measure anything; however, moving forward, she would like to see how we are measuring what we are putting in place is effective for our students. Brandon Webster commented that the Board is used to seeing action steps taken on the goals and Dr. Grossman stated baseline data was needed from the middle school as to where we are, where are we going and what are the specific plans.

V. New Business

V.A. Middle School Roof Completion Approval

The Board considered the approval of the completion of the middle school roof project. A motion was made by Jenny Emery and seconded by Brandon Webster that the Granby Board of Education accept the Granby Memorial Middle School Roof Replacement, State Project No. 056-0051 RR, as complete as recommended by the School Projects Building Committee. JE stated this is one of the first bonded projects. A lot of great work by Shannon Sullivan and the Building Committee. This motion passed unanimously at 8:17 p.m.

VI. Miscellaneous

VI.A. Board Standing Committee Reports

VI.A.1. Finance/Personnel/Facilities

Jenny Emery reported this Subcommittee met this evening to discuss the statement of accounts; talked about the roof replace; annual facilities report from Shannon Sullivan highlighting work done in the district this year; amendment of the food service contract – looking good that the large hole in food service cost this year is filling fast; and, reviewed an updated needs assessment in anticipation of a little bit of surplus this year – looking at one repair to the middle school boiler for \$10,000.

VI.B. Other Board-Related Reports

VI.B.1. CREC/CABE

Mark Fiorentino reported CREC met today but he was not able to attend. He will review the minutes and report out at the next meeting.

VI.B.2. Granby Education Foundation

Jenny Emery reported the GEF met on Monday evening; however, she was not able to attend. She stated another grant was approved for Kelly Lane and that the smaller grants are picked up as they go along and there is potential for the GEF to support the major grant of the GMHS News Studio.

VI.C. Calendar of Events

Rosemarie Weber stated the calendar of events shows a lot of end-of-year events and activities.

VI.D. Board Member Announcements

There were no Board member announcements this evening.

VI.E. Action Items

There were no action items this evening.

VII. Executive Session/Non-Meeting

A motion was made by Brandon Webster and seconded by Jenny Emery to adjourn the meeting and enter into an Executive Session to discuss a personnel-related matter. This motion passed unanimously at 8:23 p.m. The Executive Session adjourned at approximately 8:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Weber
Board Secretary