

**Regular Board of Education Meeting – Approved Minutes
November 18, 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, Jack DeGray and Jacob Scotto (Student Representatives)

Absent Board Members: There were no absent Board Members.

Melissa Migliaccio called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

I. Administrative Reports

I.A. Chairman's Corner

Melissa Migliaccio, Board Chair, shared opening remarks and stated this meeting was planned to be held via Zoom in order to share remote learning at Wells Road Intermediate School. Ms. Migliaccio thanked Jenny Emery for attending the Board of Selectmen (BOS) meeting on Monday night to present the GEA contract. The BOS took no action on the contract. The contract has been ratified by the BOE and GEA. Additionally, Ms. Migliaccio stated the BOE appreciates the herculean efforts to keep school running during Covid-19. She also congratulated the NCCC championship teams and athletes.

I.B. Superintendent's Announcements

- Dr. Grossman welcomed everyone to the first virtual Board Meeting in a long time. The BOE has met in person since July but since Wells Road teachers were presenting on remote learning today, we thought it would be fitting to do the meeting virtually.
- It is American Education Week and we celebrate being educators and thriving on what we do best.
- Ms. Aimee Martin, Director of Pupil Personnel Services, will present the continuous improvement plan for special education this evening.
- Since the last Board Meeting, Granby had Covid-19 positive cases which forced the district to react with the Stronger Together Plan. The plan was followed perfectly. Granby follows the guidance from the DPH and the FVHD. They are making recommendations to us and we need to follow those recommendations. The district sent communication to families. The message received by the DPH and the FVHD is to continue with the model of full in-person learning. This weekend the district went into remote learning with Kelly Lane students and staff for the safety of students and staff. There was not enough staff to open buildings until November 30th. Dr. Grossman stated it has been a seamless transition into a remote learning environment. He visited 7 classrooms yesterday and students did not miss a beat. He commended the staff and students as well as the parents for assisting students. As the district writes in all communications, staff and families need to be prepared to move at any time to any model and this is a perfect example. Dr. Grossman stated Assistant Superintendent Parsons will give an update as well this evening.
- Part 2 of the discussion of Waking Up White will be held on Monday, November 23rd at 5:00 p.m.
- Veterans Day went well last week and each school honored our veterans via writing letters, picture boards, virtual interviews, etc.
- Kelly Lane celebrated World Kindness Day last week to promote awareness around kindness.
- The CIAC Board of Control met this week and they postponed winter athletics until January 19th. Dr. Jordan stated he will update the Board when he has further information. Brian Maltese, Athletic Director, is scheduled to present at the next Board Meeting.
- The FY22 Budget is underway. The Plus One Budget will be presented at the Jan. 6th BOE Meeting.
- The Building Committee will meet tomorrow night at 5:30 p.m.
- Conferences will be held November 30-December 2. Please see the website for details.
- Next BOE meeting will be held on December 2nd.
- There will be an early release on November 23rd and no school on November 24th and 25th for the Thanksgiving holiday.
- Dr. Grossman wished a Happy Thanksgiving to all of our staff and families.

I.C. Schools in the Spotlight

Wells Road Intermediate School distance learning teachers, Mrs. Bavol, Mrs. Proto, Mrs. Lagano, Mrs. Martin, and Mrs. Clough, shared with the Board what remote learning looks like for students in Grades 3-5 and how it has developed since the start of the school year. Kristin Rice, Math Coach at Wells Road, and who is also working as a Remote Teacher Coach this year, stated when the opportunity came up to share what remote teachers are doing, she was excited to share what is happening in Grade 3-5 classrooms. Each teacher shared their experiences as well as what a typical day is like in their remote classroom. Additionally, some videos of students' experiences were shared with the Board. Ms. Rice concluded that distance learning is difficult but it can be done and it is amazing how much can be done with students over a computer screen. Rosemarie Weber thanked everyone for presenting and stated the BOE hears about the plan on paper but getting to see it in person, it is very impressive. She inquired how we are measuring students' progress in ELA or Math. Ms. Proto stated remote students are being assessed the same way as in-person learning students are and that all assessments are identical. Jenny Emery inquired if there are circumstances where remote learning is not working and are we able to identify that and make plans when able. Ms. Bavol stated remote teachers are still following the same intervention plans as in-person learning as well as following the same process. Students who have intervention plans are getting those services. Pauline Greer, Principal at Wells Road, stated she has had families say that remote learning is not working for them and is getting those students back into the building. Sarah Thrall inquired if there are any struggles or transition problems with regard to Grade 3 students going from iPads to Google Classroom. Ms. Bavol stated there is definitely a learning curve. The day is pretty structured. Students get a slideshow every day and all of their work is done in that slideshow so structure has been key. Ms. Thrall also inquired if there are technology needs that come along with remote learning that would be nice to have or that they do not have. Ms. Proto stated Ms. Greer, Ms. Parsons and Dr. Grossman have been very generous in getting items needed. Dr. Grossman publicly thanked Kristen Rice for leading this team of teachers. Ms. Rice is currently in a leadership program. Melissa Migliaccio inquired how teachers manage the distraction factor. Ms. Lagano stated you invite it, embrace it and move on. If you acknowledge it, students love it.

I.D. Assistant Superintendent's Report

Ms. Jennifer Parsons, Assistant Superintendent, provided updates from the Assistant Superintendent's office and commented that remote teachers doing a great job and are resident experts. Teachers were able to share the best remote strategies they have learned thus far during the last professional development day. Ms. Parsons gave the Board an update on Covid-19 stating Granby is extremely lucky to have put in over 2 months of school prior to getting its first case. The first case was discovered on November 4th at Wells Road with second case at Wells Road unrelated. This has had minimal staff impact. One quarantine ended and the class is back. On November 11th, one case was discovered at Kelly Lane followed by 2 more cases on Sunday, November 15th. Two classes have been quarantined; however, there was a major impact on staff. This week, on Monday, there were 2 cases discovered at the high school. The district reaches out to FVHD as well as medical advisors and all information is gathered and a list is put together of individuals before verifying with FVHD. Each individual is then reached out to in order to answer questions. Individuals are emailed information on how to quarantine then communication is sent to the community. Ms. Parsons stated everything in our plan came to fruition as well as the ability to follow exactly as written. Six cases in a community Granby's size is a minimal impact at this point. The district consults and ask sometimes multiple times a day or a week to see if we should stay the course. The best place for our students are in our buildings and we are going to try to keep that in place as long as possible. Melissa Migliaccio commented for parents who are comfortable sending their kids to school to please carry on good habits happening at school at home. She also stated Ms. Parsons and Dr. Grossman are doing a great job keeping the Board informed.

I.E. Student Representative Report

- Jacob Scotto reported that today was the Turkey Trot fundraiser and the high school raised \$612 for Food Share.
- Veterans Day was a success. Advisories watched a video of veterans in the community who were interviewed.
- Students are being extra conscious while at school with wearing masks and social distancing.
- The Coffeehouse is postponed until further notice due to reinstated restrictions.
- The Drama Club is still rehearsing but the play has been postponed until further notice.
- New NHS members have been notified and a slide show will be shown on Monday evening.
- Four teams made the championship game: Field Hockey, Girls' and Boys' Soccer and Volleyball.
- Volleyball and both soccer teams won their respected championship and will have banners updated in the gym.
- Congratulations to seven high school athletes who signed with colleges/committed to play a sport last week: Grady Kelly (Eastern Connecticut State University/Soccer); Abigail Maher (Wentworth Institute of Technology/Volleyball); Natalie Schock (St. Lawrence University/Soccer); Avery Bryanton (Bellarmine University/Field Hockey); Tyler Mackowski (Tufts University/Baseball); Luke McFarland (Stanford/Gymnastics); and, Lauren Roy (Lehigh University/Track).
- The CIAC announced yesterday and all winter sports will be on hold until January 19th.

I.F. Business Manager's Report

Ms. Anna Robbins, Business Manager, presented the October statement of accounts and stated it reflects the forecast of the cost of reopening schools and a safe learning environment. It also projects the receipt of the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Refund Grant and the Coronavirus Relief Fund Grant which are two big grants that Granby was expecting to receive. We have finally received award letters. After receipt of grant funds, the general forecast is still negative \$202K. Special education is over-budget \$171K and regular education is over-budget \$31K. Line items that contribute to the over-budget condition are Teaching Assistants, Custodial and Maintenance Salaries, Bus Monitors and Unemployment. The balance in the Q&D Fund is forecast to be higher than budgeted at \$22K. The overall projection of revenue to the town is unfavorable \$94K. The forecast for the Excess Cost Grant is better than projected last month but continues to fluctuate. Jenny Emery stated the bottom line message is the \$30K negative forecast for general education is a tremendous outcome given the extra expenses for Covid-19. The subcommittee will work to keep the Board of Finance up-to-date on exactly where we are on all of these pieces.

II. Public Comment

There were no public comments this evening.

III. Consent Agenda

III.A. Minutes

A motion was made by Melissa Migliaccio and seconded by David Peling to adopt the consent agenda. This motion passed at 8:22 p.m. with one abstention (Brandon Webster).

IV. Old Business

IV.A. Draft 2021-2022 School Calendar

The Board continued to discuss the approval of the 2021-2022 School Calendar. A motion was made by Melissa Migliaccio and seconded by Sarah Thrall that the Granby Board of Education adopt the calendar for the 2021-2022 school year. Dr. Grossman stated the only change in the calendar is that the graduation date was removed. Graduation date can be set during the year next year and he stated he would also recommend not setting a date for this year yet until the winter is over. Ms. Migliaccio inquired if the last day of school in June 2021 is June 7th. Dr. Grossman stated, yes, that is correct. This motion passed unanimously at 8:24 p.m.

V. New Business

V.A. Pupil Services Department Improvement Plan

Ms. Aimee Martin, Director of Pupil Services, presented the Pupil Services Department Improvement Plan for the 2020-2021 school year. She shared the Vision, Mission and District Achievement Goal; the Student Achievement Goal and the Instruction Goal. Ms. Martin reviewed the action steps under the Vision, Mission and District Achievement Goal to work with general education teachers and coaches to determine priority standards in each content area; target students with disabilities for increased participation in high-level courses; partner with newly formed Special Education Parent Teacher Organization (SEPTO) to foster relationships and improve communication between professionals and families; and, work with principals, teachers and specialist to develop preventative models of social and emotional learning. With regard to action steps under the Student Achievement Goal, she stated special education teachers need to be made aware of the critical skills that need to be mastered at each grade/content level in order to keep pace with the curriculum; use a state-approved dyslexia screener at the K-3 level; and increase the capacity of special educators to provide robust specialized instruction to their students. Action steps under the Instruction Goal include to evaluate current practices and new programs or instructional techniques that will elevate teaching and improve student outcomes; provide teachers the opportunity to write more effective IEPs utilizing the student's strengths to help mitigate their concerns; and, review current progress monitoring tools to determine whether the most important thing is being measured in providing formative feedback on which to base instruction. Ms. Martin stated it is important to note that all of this work is done while remaining compliant with the state and that the work is being done in a fiscally responsive way. This is due to having great professionals to work with our students. Brandon Webster inquire if monitoring tools are reviewed against CT standards. Ms. Martin stated, yes, and sometimes they are simple tools aligned with an instructional product, such as, the Wilson Program which has tools built within. Mark Fiorentino thanked Ms. Martin for going through the process and articulating a plan and inquired if there goals she was able to identify because of this new process. Ms. Martin stated it helped her to clarify her thinking of the work with general education staff, for example, as she does not have control over that as to when staff can meet. Ms. Migliaccio thanked Ms. Martin for her presentation.

V.B. First Reading of Draft Policy 4000.1 – Title IX – Personnel

The Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communications Subcommittee recommended draft Policy 4000.1, Title IX – Personnel, to the Board for a first reading. Sarah Thrall stated this was reviewed in Subcommittee over several meetings. The district is currently compliant with this policy. The biggest issue was the preponderance of evidence versus clear and convincing argument. This policy for personnel and the policy for students are very similar. Jennifer Parsons stated these policies are required to be updated due to federal regulations changing around Title IX. The major change is how incidents can be reported is broader but the standard is higher by definition. Obtained legal counsel advice to stay with the preponderance of evidence and to also give an informal resolution process between students, not between students and staff. Regulations are very comprehensive.

V.C. First Reading of Draft Policy 5145.44 – Title IX – Students

The Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communications Subcommittee recommended draft Policy 5145.44, Title IX – Students, to the Board for a first reading. Sarah Thrall stated this policy is basically the same with the updates noted in the above policy. Melissa Migliaccio stated these policies will go to the Board at the next meeting for a second reading and approval.

VI. Miscellaneous

VI.A. Board Standing Committee Reports

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

Sarah Thrall stated there was a Special Curriculum Subcommittee Meeting held last Monday. Reviewed a few highlights from Jen's monthly report; Brandon Webster and Rosemarie Weber are reviewing the new text for the Pre-AP English Course; a new course proposal for a science class, Natural Disasters, will continue to be discussed at the next meeting; World Language review in light of schedule at the

middle school, specifically, the Chinese program and how that impacts the high school as well as Spanish in the elementary schools and how it is all being aligned; inclusion of the PSAT test in Grade 8 which is a recommendation of the administration; and a report from the Guidance Department to the full Board with the progress on the strategic plan they put together. Jenny Emery inquired when the Pre-AP Program will be reviewed and evaluated. Ms. Thrall stated this was brought up at the last meeting and Ms. Parsons stated this program is in Year 2 of implementation and working through what are the hard and fast parameters of the course. The English Department has had positive feedback on the instructional strategies from teaching a novel to teaching standards. This course is closely connected to the PSAT which can help to closely monitor the impact of this course over time.

VI.A.2. Finance/Personnel/Facilities

Jenny Emery reported this subcommittee met this evening. The food service situation is being monitored and the move to the federal program with the combination of delicious food has recently reduced any loss that was happening; however, it is expected that by next month some deficit will be forecasted. It is a tough one especially if students are not in school. Discussed health benefits and money is needed for each year's claim. The fund for self-insured benefits has the right balance and also money for OPEB (other post-employment benefits) which is basically an unfunded liability for retiree benefits other than pension. Ms. Emery stated this may or may not impact the operating budget but there is more to come. Fee structures were also discussed for Pre-K, pay-to-participate, and facility rental fees. It was unanimous by the Subcommittee not to increase fees this year.

VI.B. Other Board-Related Reports

VI.B.1. CREC/CABE

CREC has not met.

VI.B.2. Granby Education Foundation

Jenny Emery stated a grant was put together for students who are livestreaming sports and other events and the GEF and Granby Athletic Boosters joined forces to get that funded. Equipment was purchased in time for the Coffeehouse but, unfortunately, the Coffeehouse has been postponed.

VI.C. Calendar of Events

The Coffeehouse is postponed and conferences will be held virtually November 30-December 2.

VI.D. Board Member Announcements

Melissa Migliaccio stated it is with mixed emotions that it is her last night as Board Chair informing the Board that has come to realize that she cannot do it all. She will stay on the Board but will step down as Board Chair. She stated if any Board members are interested in the role of Chair, please speak to Mark Fiorentino. Rosemarie Weber thanked Ms. Migliaccio for her leadership through a Superintendent Search, Assistant Superintendent Search, Covid-19, successful budgets, while keeping what is best for our students at the forefront. She stated her knowledge and experience will continue to help the Board in the many months to come. Ms. Migliaccio stated she appreciated the kind words.

VI.E. Action Items

There were no action items this evening.

VII. Executive Session/Non-Meeting

A motion was made by Melissa Migliaccio and seconded by Brandon Webster to adjourn the meeting and enter into an Executive Session to discuss a contractual item. This motion passed unanimously at 9:10 p.m. The Executive Session adjourned at 9:33 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rosemarie Weber
Board Secretary