

Regular Board of Education Meeting – Draft Minutes
Wednesday, April 3, 2024, 7:00 p.m.
Central Services

Present Board Members: Liz Barlow, Heather Lombardo, Monica Logan, Donna Nolan, Karen Richmond-Godard, Rosemarie Weber and Chase Alexander and Katie O'Neill (Student Representatives).

Absent Board Members: David Peling

I. Call to Order and Welcome

Monica Logan called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance and on Zoom.

II. Awards and Recognition

The Board recognized Ms. Carron Cooper, Second Grade Teacher at Kelly Lane Primary School. Ms. Cooper recently received the *Expect Excellence Award* from the CT Teacher in Residence Program. Board Chair Monica Logan stated she is a collaborator on her team, has a thirst for knowledge and high expectations for her own learning and performance and expects the same level of excellence from her students. Colleen Bava, Principal of Kelly Lane, also shared some remarks stating that Ms. Cooper has an uplifting spirit and is such a great addition to Kelly Lane. She is very excited to see what she accomplishes in her future years in Granby.

III. Public Comment

Susan Regan, 62 Hungary Road, Granby, stated she attended the public meeting on Monday and has some questions which she hopes can be answered via phone or email. Specifically, Ms. Regan would like to know if the proposed part-time HR Coordinator position is necessary; with regard to raises for Granby teachers, will they need to meet or exceed their objectives; the rationale for hiring of a Math Interventionist at the middle school instead of Math Tutor – what is the job description for that position and how are the increased costs being covered for salary, health insurance, etc.; and, lastly, is a Director of Pupil Services position necessary? She stated a Center of Excellence proposal which she submitted to John Ward several years ago should be considered. Ms. Regan stated again that she would appreciate a response via phone or email.

John Linebrenner, 290 Simsbury Road, Granby a certified school teacher employed by another district stated teachers are dedicated to the community and become ingrained with the students they teach and that to retain the best staff you have to have appropriate benefits and salaries. Additionally, he stated that Math Interventionists are very different from Math Tutors, as a Math Interventionist tailors individualized education plans to raise their math scores. This new position will have a direct impact on students.

IV. Student Representative Reports

- Katie O'Neill stated baseball played against East Granby on Monday and will play Friday, April 5th in Canton at 3:45; softball will play their first game against Rocky Hill and their next game is at home against Canton at 4:00 on Friday, April 5th; girls' lacrosse is 1-1 with a win against Rocky Hill and a loss against Farmington and their next game is tomorrow at Ellington; boys' lacrosse played South Windsor on Monday and will play Ellington at home on Thursday, April 4th; track and field had their first meet yesterday against Ellington and East Windsor and their next meet is at home against Bolton on April 10th; girls' tennis has their first game tomorrow at Suffield at 3:30; and, boys' tennis has their first game tomorrow at home against Suffield.
- The baseball/softball fundraiser is still going on so get your hands on the golden ticket coupon sheets before they are gone!
- Chase Alexander shared that Juniors took the SAT last Wednesday.
- Spanish students in the exchange program left today and are making their way to Spain where they will spend a few days in Madrid before reuniting in A Coruña with the students they hosted during the fall.
- Empty Bowls fundraiser is Friday, April 26th
- Student government spirit week will be the week leading up to Memorial Day.

V. Reports and Discussion

VI.A. Schools in the Spotlight

Kelly Lane Teachers, Lindsay Sessions and Brianna Simonetti and some students from Kelly Lane presented a new initiative in classrooms this school year called Soft Starts where students immerse themselves in engaging math games, phonics and choice activities. Ms. Sessions explained students begin their day with getting to do a choice activity, such as play dough, beads, and cutting for fine motor skills. Ms. Simonetti stated recent legislation was passed regarding play-based learning being a part of each regular school day for all students in Kindergarten and all preschool programs. The skills that can be derived from play are social emotional learning, oral language development, math and literacy skills, fine motor skills, and executive functioning. She stated executive functioning is a critical skill and a set of mental skills that include working memory, flexible thinking and self-control. Executive functioning skills grow the most in the 6-8-year age bracket. Ms. Simonetti shared that the Granby Education Foundation awarded over \$3K for Kindergarten, First Grade and Second Grade for soft opening materials and activities. Kelly Lane students shared their favorite soft start activities with the Board then demonstrated some of the activities for them, such as Magnatiles, Tinker toys, hashtags, and Tangrams. Pictures were shared of all the soft start activities showing what students create and how they work collaboratively.

VI.B. FY25 Board of Education Budget Update

Board Chair, Monica Logan, provided an update on the FY25 Board of Education Budget stating the public hearing was held this past Monday and the town-wide vote will be held on Monday, April 15th in the Town Hall Meeting Room. Any questions on the Board of Education Budget can be emailed to the Board. Ms. Logan did share that the question regarding the Human Resources Coordinator position addressed during Public Comment was requested on the Town side of the budget, not the Board of Education side. Any other questions will be addressed via email.

VI. Business Requiring Action

VI.A. Minutes

A motion was made by Donna Nolan and seconded by Heather Lombardo that the Granby Board of Education approve the minutes of the March 20, 2024 Board of Education Meeting. This motion passed unanimously at 7:43 p.m.

VI.B. Second Reading and Approval of Revised Policy 6142.43 - Food Charging

The Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communications Subcommittee recommended revised Policy 6142.43, Food Charging, to the Board for a second reading and approval. A motion was made by Karen Richmond-Godard and seconded by Liz Barlow that the Granby Board of Education adopt revised Policy 6142.43, Food Charging, as recommended by the Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communications Subcommittee. This motion passed unanimously at 7:44 p.m.

VII. Committee Reports

VII.A. Board Standing Committee Reports

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

Karen Richmond-Godard reported this subcommittee met this evening to discuss the Assistant Superintendent's Report and with regard to student learning and achievement, elementary teachers are familiarizing themselves with materials used during the literacy piloting in the fall. A draft of the new school climate policy was reviewed and will stay in the subcommittee for further review. Also received an update on the teacher evaluation plan which provides flexibility and is thoughtful about growth for teachers and administrators. It allows teachers to identify professional growth goals in order to improve practice over 1, 2 or 3 years. Professional development was held yesterday and newly revised social studies standards were reviewed with the Department Chair and middle school math and ELA coaches spoke about another tool to help students in the areas of math called IXL. Administrators and teachers participated in learning walks recently and there is one more at the end of April. Lastly, the Granby Equity Team met last Wednesday in collaborative action teams and their main focus was on creating policy with a student-centered lens.

VII.A.2. Finance/Personnel/Facilities

This subcommittee has not met. Approved minutes are in the packet

VII. Committee Reports (Cont'd)

VII.B. Other Board-Related Reports

VII.B.1. CREC/CABE

Monica Logan stated there is nothing to report.

VII.B.2. Granby Education Foundation

Monica Logan stated the Board is still looking for a Board Representative for GEF. She also expressed many thanks to the GEF for the \$3K award for Soft Starts.

VII.C. Calendar of Events

Monica Logan stated the calendar of events is as presented. April break next week; community conversation on social media, High school band and chorus Disney trip; GranBee on April 19th; Leo Club Alzheimer's walk on April 20th; the middle school chorus will sing *The National Anthem* at the Yard Goats game on the April 25th; and, Empty Bowls on April 26th; and, the budget vote will be on April 15th.

VII.D. Board Member Announcements

There were no Board member announcements this evening.

VII.E. Action Items

There were no action items this evening.

VIII. Superintendent's Report

- This week is the national week of recognition for paraprofessionals and teaching assistants and Ms. Burke stated the district could not do the necessary work without these important individuals that support students in every possible way. Students and teachers rely on their care and compassion.
- Thank you to Monica Logan for her excellent presentation on Monday evening.
- Thank you to parents and staff for accommodating the change in calendar for professional development yesterday which went very well. Teachers were engaged with building-based learning in the morning followed by vertical team meetings and a presentation by renowned author Katie Woods of *A Simple Seed*. Unfortunately, there was very low enrollment for the parent presentation and enrollment will need to be monitored for the next two events. The next one is by Trooper White and the last event is on QPR (Suicide prevention). Additionally, the Superintendent's Community Conversation was rescheduled for Tuesday, April 23rd at 6 p.m.
- April break is next week and the GranBee is on April 19th. Ms. Burke stated she is on a team with Jennifer Parsons and Andy Buckle and the district is donating some awesome prizes – one being front row seats for graduation.
- Save the date: The annual retirement/25-year employee luncheon will be held on Wednesday, June 5th at 12:30 at the North Barn Pavilion at Holcomb Farm. All Board members are welcome to attend.
- Have a wonderful break next week. Hopefully the weather will be more spring-like.

IX. Chairperson's Report

Monica Logan, Board Chair, stated that the district has been putting forward a lot of great opportunities for families to get involved and the district is trying to listen on a variety of levels, i.e., athletic boosters, football boosters, PTOs, etc.

X. Adjournment

A motion was made by Donna Nolan and seconded by Karen Richmond-Godard to adjourn the Board of Education Meeting. This motion passed unanimously at 7:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth H. Barlow
Board Secretary