

**Regular Board of Education Meeting – Draft Minutes**  
**Wednesday, April 2, 2025, 7:00 p.m.**  
**Town Hall Meeting Room**

Present Board Members: Liz Barlow, Monica Logan, Heather Lombardo, David Peling, Karen Richmond-Godard, Ali Zafar, and Katie O'Neill (Student Representative)

Absent Board Members: Donna Nolan and Sofia Brenson (Student Representative)

**I. Call to Order and Welcome**

Ms. Monica Logan, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**II. Chairperson's Report**

Board Chair Logan welcomed administrators, teachers, parents, and students in the audience this evening.

**III. Awards and Recognition**

Pepper Jones and Benjamin Finkbeiner were recognized for being recipients of the Connecticut Association of Schools Elementary Arts Award for students who excel in the areas of visual or performing arts and who exhibit high levels of citizenship and cooperative skills. Pepper Jones was selected by Ms. Nicole Lucas, Music Teacher, to receive the Elementary Arts Award in Performing Arts and Ben Finkbeiner was selected by Ms. Katie Ransom, Art Teacher, to receive the Elementary Arts Award in Visual Arts.

**IV. Public Comment**

Silvana Brenson, 4<sup>th</sup> grade student at Wells Road Intermediate School, expressed her concern to the Board that water is not sold during lunch, only milk and chocolate milk, which is an issue for students who are lactose intolerant. She raised a suggestion of selling bottling water to students which can also raise money for the school. Additionally, she expressed a concern regarding food allergies and intolerance and suggested there be one allergy-friendly option on the lunch menu and also suggested that healthy food options be added. She requested for the Board to please take these suggestions into consideration.

Mike Kramarenko, 150 Notch Road, thanked Superintendent Burke for her quick response last week with regard to teachers telling students that if the budget didn't pass students would lose after-school programs. He also commented on the State Department of Education dissemination of funding for schools and stated without national standards there is no way to make schools accountable. Lastly, Mr. Kramarenko shared a program called "Pennies for Police" which gets students involved to raise money for bullet-proof vests for School Resource Officers and he strongly advocated for this program.

**V. Student Representative Reports**

- Katie O'Neill shared students are in the homestretch with Quarter 4 beginning last week.
- Juniors took the CT SATs last week.
- The Empty Bowls Fundraiser was held last Friday and \$2K was raised for Granby/Hartland food banks.
- Modified schedules were held on Monday and Tuesday this week for students to participate in connect days. Students gave presentations on a wide variety of topics to other students and also watched a short film called *Screenagers: Growing Up in the Digital Age* about the effect of phones on the brain as developing adolescents.
- Students are looking forward to the April break April 12-20.
- Sports Report: First games as follows: Baseball April 3<sup>rd</sup>; softball April 7<sup>th</sup>; boys' lacrosse April 5<sup>th</sup>; girls' lacrosse April 5<sup>th</sup>; track's first meet is April 8; golf's first match is April 3<sup>rd</sup>; boys' tennis April 5<sup>th</sup>; and, girls' tennis April 5<sup>th</sup>.

## **VI. Reports and Discussion**

### **VI.A. Schools in the Spotlight**

Colleen Bava, Kelly Lane Principal, introduced Natalie Ferreri, Kindergarten Teacher, and Lis Diemer, Early Intervention Specialist, along with some students from Kelly Lane Primary School, who shared how a love for reading is instilled through the Kindergarten Book Buddies Program. Ms. Diemer shared this is the third year of implementation of this program. There are two opportunities for members of the community to purchase books for students. The cafeteria is decorated, snacks and juice are served and each student goes to their seat to find a wrapped book. It is a great opportunity to promote early literacy. Each student shared their book and what they enjoyed most about the book. Ms. Ferreri stated this is a great way for the community to get involved with the schools. After the celebration, all of the Kindergartners write thank-you notes to their book buddy. Ms. Burke commented that she participated last year and was amazed to see the note in the beginning of the year and the growth made when the second note was received.

Katie Busbey, Instructional Specialist, Laurie Smith, Media Specialist, Christina Janssen and Kristin LaFlamme, Grade 5 Teachers, and Alyssa Linden, Teaching Assistant, along with some 5th grade students from Wells Road Intermediate School and 6th grade students from GMMS shared interdisciplinary learning through their Wax Museum projects. Pauline Greer, Wells Road Principal, shared the Wax Museum Project is an interdisciplinary, almost capstone experience and stated that since 5<sup>th</sup> graders have not yet presented their projects, 6<sup>th</sup> grade students were invited back to speak about the projects they presented last year. Students shared the process for the project which includes writing a draft of a proposal and submitting it for approval. Next, a biography of the assigned person is read to gain a better understanding of the person. Various reliable sources are checked. 6<sup>th</sup> graders spoke about Book Creator and how students become authors and these books are shared digitally. The wax museum project is linked with art class. In library tech class, a tri fold of the project is made including a biography, timeline, pictures, quotes, and poems. Students then dress up in character and present the final project to the whole school and parents. Karen Richmond Godard inquired if students get to pick their person and if a backup is needed. Students shared they actually choose 3 people for that reason. Superintendent Burke asked the students how it feels to work on one project with several adults in the school and students shared that it is a very fun project. David Peling asked the 6<sup>th</sup> grade students if there was anything learned from this project to help them this year and students shared that it helped with speaking in front of people and the fact that it was a big project.

### **VI.B. FY26 Board of Education Budget Update**

Board Chair, Monica Logan, will provide an update on the FY26 Board of Education Budget. Chair Logan stated the BOE budget was presented to the BOF last week and it was accepted at 3.41%. The BOE saved money wherever possible and put forth the most responsible budget possible. April 7<sup>th</sup> public hearing at HS at 7pm. The referendum will be held 4/21 8-8 at the town hall meeting room. She shared that if anyone has a question on the budget to please email her and she will get back to you.

## **VII. Business Requiring Action**

### **VII.A. Minutes**

A motion was made by Heather Lombardo and seconded by Karen Richmond-Godard that the Granby Board of Education approve the minutes from the March 19, 2025 Board of Education Meeting. This motion passed unanimously at 7:47 p.m.

### **VII.B. Second Reading and Approval of Revised Policy 4112.5/4212.5 - Security Check/Fingerprinting/Criminal Justice Information**

The Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communications Subcommittee recommended revised Policy 4112.5/4212.5, Security Check/Fingerprinting/Criminal Justice Information, to the Board for a second reading and approval. Jennifer Parsons stated this policy is now up-to-date with processes such as background checks, fingerprinting, etc. No questions were received after the first reading. A motion was made by Heather Lombardo and seconded by Ali Zafar that the Granby Board of Education adopt revised Policy 4112.5/4212.5, Security Check/Fingerprinting/Criminal Justice Information, as recommended by the

Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communications Subcommittee. This motion passed unanimously at 7:48 p.m.

### **VII.C. Ratification of Secretarial Union Contract**

The Board will consider ratification of the CSEA/SEIU Local 2001 Secretarial Contract effective July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2028. Board Chair Logan stated the Board met with members of the SEIU Union three times during negotiations and they were very collaborative meetings. The increased cost over the life of the 3-year contract is 10.82%. There is a slight increase in health insurance rates in 2027-2028 and dental rates remain flat. Language changes were made similar to the teachers' contract around retirement as well as general language clean-up. Liz Barlow inquired if salaries are in line with other districts. Superintendent Burke stated that salaries are comparable and the salary increases were acceptable. It was a great negotiation providing a fair and equitable contract. A motion was made by Liz Barlow and seconded by Karen Richmond-Godard that the Granby Board of Education ratify the CSEA/SEIU Local 2001 Secretarial Contract effective July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2028. This motion passed unanimously at 7:51 p.m.

## **VIII. Committee Reports**

### **VIII.A. Board Standing Committee Reports**

#### **VIII.A.1. Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communication**

Karen Richmond Godard reported this Subcommittee met this evening and reviewed the Assistant Superintendent's report which included an update on the Wellness Committee related to legislative requirements for healthy foods in schools; going out to bid for a new food services contract; and field day is on the last Friday in May with Wells Road and the middle school combined. The District Leadership Team met recently and discussed the March 7<sup>th</sup> professional development day. Departments are currently assessing their respective curriculum review cycles. Received a scheduling update after over a year of working with a consultant and various stakeholders as part of the committee. Discussed needs going forward and the schedule next year will align the middle school and high school which will allow increased instruction time by 86 hours/year for students. Classes will be an average of 45 minutes per day per class. This will coincide with the Superintendent's goal of increasing student achievement.

#### **VIII.A.2. Finance/Personnel/Facilities**

Approved minutes are in the packet.

### **VIII.B. Other Board-Related Reports**

#### **VIII.B.1. CREC/CABE**

Monica Logan stated she attended the Board Chair meeting last Thursday. The focus was on individual town budgets and federal reduction in funds from the federal government. She stated there is a lot of "wait and see" still happening and will share when it is appropriate.

#### **VIII.B. 2. Granby Education Foundation**

Liz Barlow stated the GEF is still working hard getting ready for the GranBee. Fundraising is going well.

### **VIII.C. Calendar of Events**

The calendar of events is as presented.

### **VIII.D. Board Member Announcements**

There were no board member announcements this evening.

### **VIII.E. Action Items**

There were no action items this evening.

## **IX. Superintendent's Report**

- The district had an opportunity to present at the Senior Women's Breakfast this morning. Thank you to Music Teachers, Carmen Irons and Jessica Foscitt, along with students in Grades 2, 5 and 8 who performed a strings concert. They were very enjoyable performances. Superintendent Burke also thanked Joelle Gilbert, Family & Consumer Science Teacher. Her classes prepared baked goods and yogurt parfaits for approximately 60 women. Four students, Maeve Maroney, Claudio Ortiz-Sanchis, Hayes Horst, and Callie Lawton served the breakfast items and engaged with the women. They did a great job representing the outstanding students in our district.
- The PTO is holding a Family Books and Bingo Night tomorrow night.
- 5<sup>th</sup> graders are performing *Sponge Bob* also tomorrow night.
- *Screenagers: Growing up in a Digital Age* will be shown to middle and high school parents on Tuesday, April 8<sup>th</sup> from 6:30-8:30 pm.
- There will be no Board Meeting on April 16<sup>th</sup> due to the April break. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 7<sup>th</sup>.
- The 2025-2026 calendar for next school year has been finalized. The Board already adopted this calendar with regard to start date, end date, etc.; however, the calendar needed to be completed with open houses, curriculum nights, etc. As a result of the scheduling work to align schedules across the middle and high school campuses, the decision was made to no longer hold the PLC late openings for high school students. In past calendars you would have seen an indication that every Thursday was a late opening; however, when one school out of four are afforded this opportunity, it creates an equity issue. Instead, professional learning will be embedded in collaboration during the day. Unfortunately, some hard decisions need to be made in order to improve student achievement. Additionally, some slight changes were made in professional learning. The full day traditionally in May is moved to January and two additional early release days have been added to the calendar in the months of October and February. This also aligns with semester and quarter breaks. Every month there is an opportunity for professional learning. Assistant Superintendent Jennifer Parsons also made note that elementary conferences have been moved up to November as opposed to December.

## **X. Adjournment**

A motion was made by Karen Richmond-Godard and seconded by Ali Zafar that the Granby Board of Education adjourn the Board of Education Meeting. This motion passed unanimously at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth H. Barlow  
Board Secretary