

Regular Board of Education Meeting – Draft Minutes
Wednesday, November 16, 2022, 7:00 p.m.
Town Hall Meeting Room

Present Board Members: Kristina Gilton (via Zoom), Monica Logan, Donna Nolan, Whitney Sanzo, Sarah Thrall, Rosemarie Weber and Tess Bajek and Chase Alexander (Student Representatives)

Absent Board Members: David Peling

Sarah Thrall called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

I. Administrative Reports

I.A. Chairman's Corner

Sarah Thrall, Board Chair, welcomed students and their families from Wells Road Intermediate School as well as teachers Ms. Wojtas and Ms. Martin and Literacy Coach Ms. Piotrowski who will present for Schools in the Spotlight. Ms. Thrall thanked Mrs. Bava and her staff as well as Monica Logan for attending the Boardwalk last week. She also thanked Chase Alexander for attending the Learning Walk this week. Ms. Thrall made an announcement regarding the Special Town Meeting on Tuesday, December 13th at 7:00 p.m. in the Senior Center. This meeting is being held to discuss the reallocation of excess funds from the Bridges Project to the School Projects which would address the shortfall in funds needed to complete the School Projects. There will be a referendum vote on Tuesday, December 20th from 12-8 p.m. in the Town Hall Meeting Room.

I.B. Superintendent's Announcements

- Dr. Grossman welcomed everyone in attendance and extended a special welcome to Wells Road students and their families as well as to Ms. Piotrowski, Literacy Coach, and teachers Ms. Wojtas and Ms. Martin who will present for Schools in the Spotlight.
- Dr. Grossman thanked Sarah Thrall and Monica Logan for attending the Boardwalk at Kelly Lane last week and informed the Board that there will be another Boardwalk tomorrow at Wells Road from 9-11 a.m.
- Veterans Day ceremonies at all of the schools last week were all great events honoring our local veterans.
- Congratulations again to the Board on receiving the CAFE Board of Distinction, Level Two Award. This award will be accepted on behalf of the Board at the CAFE/CAPSS Convention in Groton on Friday.
- Congratulations also to the World Language Honor Society students who were inducted last week.
- Results were received last week from the boring done on the track stating that there is a problem with one lane of the high school track. The recommendation is to repair that area of the track and then develop a long-range plan for the track. Athletes will be able to use the affected lane on the track this coming spring.
- Still in process of creating the FY24 Plus One Budget which will be presented to the Board on December 21st. This is not the final budget. The FY24 Administrative Budget will be presented in March.
- There will be an early release for the middle school and high school tomorrow for conferences. Elementary conferences will be held December 7-9.
- The Granby Parks & Recreation Department will offer after-school childcare at Kelly Lane for either 2 or 5 days per week from 3:30-5:30 p.m. beginning in January 2023.
- There will be an early release on November 23rd and no school on November 24th and 25th.
- The next regularly scheduled Board of Education Meeting will be held on December 7th.

I.C. Assistant Superintendent's Report

Ms. Jennifer Parsons, Assistant Superintendent, provided updates from her office and stated the professional development day on November 8th was very successful. Vertical teams met in all 4 content areas and there were also sessions on clear shared outcomes and learning environments. A self-study option was also offered. Staff stated the professional development met their needs. Ms. Parsons also shared that Math Consultants are hard at work as well as Teachers College consultants for Grades K-8. She stated each consultant comes into the schools 5 times per year. The CREC Consultant is working with all of the middle school teachers with regard to the Illustrative Math Program. On Monday, a team of 11 went into all of the buildings for a learning walk. An hour was spent in each building. Chase Alexander, Student Representative, was able to attend and stated it was a very interesting opportunity to see similarities and differences as to how learning materials are used district-wide. Ms. Parsons stated two more learning walks are scheduled for January and May.

I.D. Student Representative Reports

- Tess reported renovations are still taking place at the high school and students are now able to use the new band room which is exciting.
- A blood drive was held last Tuesday by Student Council.
- The annual turkey trot was held today and money will be donated to families in need.
- Tess stated she attended the high school play, *Daughters of the Appalachians*, this last weekend and it was great to see a normal event at the high school
- A Veterans Day assembly was held last week and it was the first all-school assembly since 2020.
- Poetry Out Loud is going on now at the high school where students recite poems to their classmates ending with finalists reciting their poems to the entire student body.
- Chase stated that sports are transitioning between seasons at this point in time. Football will play against Coventry this Friday. Congratulations to all of the Granby teams this fall season and the new season begins in a few weeks.

I.E. Schools in the Spotlight

Wells Road Intermediate School students from Grades 4 and 5, along with Cristin Wojtas (Grade 4 Teacher), Caroline Martin (Grade 5 ELA Teacher), and Courtney Piotrowski (Grades 3-5 Literacy Coach) provided an overview of how partnerships are a critical part of the reading and writing workshop curriculum currently implemented in Grades 3-5. Ms. Piotrowski stated partnerships and collaboration are crucial in reading and writing workshops. She explained the benefits of a workshop classroom which is a gradual release model that provides student choice, builds stamina and volume, creates a collaborative learning community, and encourages independent thinking. The structure of the workshop allows for small group instruction and conferring. Worktime consists of working with a partner, book clubs or working independently. Ms. Martin explained how the partnerships work in reading and stated in the fall, teachers modeled partnerships for students. Ms. Wojtas explained how the partnership in writing benefits partners by using the brainstorming process to come up with ideas. She also explained the glow and grow feedback which helps students to grow by receiving compliments as well as suggestions on their work. Sam Pagliaro and Shayla Loughran showed the Board how students work in partnerships for reading and shared how they help each other after reading a book by using the tools they learned in class. Shaun Penzon and Caroline Wiggins shared with the Board how students work in partnerships for writing by reading each other's writing and giving suggestions to help improve their writing. The presentation concluded with the discussion of the professional development piece of the Teachers College Reading and Writing Workshop.

I.F. Business Manager's Report

Ms. Anna Robbins, Business Manager, presented the October 2022 statement of accounts stating the favorable forecast shows an anticipated overbudget condition of \$684K. The forecast for regular education is favorable \$38K but is \$29K lower than the previous month. Special education is overbudget \$722K which is \$104K worse than last month. This shift is primarily due to changes in out-of-district tuition and transportation costs. Revenue to the town is projected to be favorable \$418K due to the projected increase over budget in the Special Education Excess Cost Grant. The Q&D Budget continues to trend positive due to the favorable fund balance from FY22. Although revenue is forecasted lower than budget due to lower Open Choice enrollment, expenses are also forecasted to be lower due to the projected savings in tuition and personnel expenses. Rosemarie Weber stated the statement of accounts was reviewed in the Finance Subcommittee Meeting this evening.

II. Public Comment

There were no public comments this evening.

III. Consent Agenda

III.A. Minutes

A motion was made by Donna Nolan and seconded by Rosemarie Weber that the Granby Board of Education adopt the consent agenda. This motion passed unanimously at 7:56 p.m.

IV. Old Business

There was no Old Business to report this evening.

V. New Business

V.A. Wells Road Intermediate School Continuous Improvement Plan

Ms. Pauline Greer, Principal, presented her Continuous Improvement Plan for 2022-2023 and reviewed all of the goals beginning with *Goal #1 Student Achievement* for students at Wells Road to achieve levels of proficiency or higher on the state assessment by monitoring their growth and performance over time. This will be accomplished by structured discussions focused on curriculum, data and strategies in PLC meetings; engaging teachers with coaching cycles throughout the year for support on curriculum and instruction; and, examining data/benchmark assessments and areas of growth to create targeted goals. For the second goal under *Student Achievement* for staff to continue developing a culture of data in which teachers gather and analyze a variety of data sources to inform instruction for their class, Ms. Greer reviewed the literacy and numeracy results for SBAC. She explained that the scores show the percentage of students who scored at or above benchmark in the spring of last year; what percentage of students scored at or above benchmark on STAR in the fall of this year (based on the test they will take in the spring); and, also what percentage of students are projected to meet goal for the spring of 2023. For *Goal #2 Community Engagement* that Wells Road will enhance communication that reaches all stakeholders in a timely fashion, Ms. Greer stated Wells Road will continue to find ways to communicate with families and the community; promote student advocacy and voice to lead community events; and continue to collaborate with parent volunteers and PTO. *Goal #3 Safety and Social Emotional Well-being* to implement a social emotional well-being curriculum and behavioral expectations that provide a common experience for all learners will be accomplished by developing a leadership team to implement DESSA schoolwide; providing staff with ongoing professional development focusing on social emotional practices; and, continuing to use the Principal's Morning Message to provide common experience and behavioral expectations. *Goal #4 Budget Development and Fiscal Management* to continue to create a long-term financial plan which aligns with the vision of the Board of Finance will be accomplished by continuing to work with all stakeholders within the Granby Public Schools to ensure budgets reflect current needs; monitoring class size and staffing; and continuing to review and analyze current student achievement data to ensure adequate supports in place. For *Goal #5 Embracing Diversity* to ensure system-wide practices and structures are in place at Wells to support the implementation of Granby Public Schools' Anti-Bias/Anti-Racism Plan, Ms. Greer stated this will be accomplished by continuing to build the Wells Road Equity Team; recognizing Cultural Heritage Months; and continuing to build staff capacity around equity and social emotional learning. Lastly, *Goal #6 Professional Learning* to implement a common instructional framework that aims to increase student engagement will be accomplished by building teacher and staff capacity in using data for informed discussions; increasing knowledge around small group instruction; and, utilizing specialized consultants for language arts and math professional development. Ms. Thrall thanked Ms. Greer for her report this evening.

V.B. First Reading of Revised Policy 5144.4 - Physical Exercise and Discipline of Students

The Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communications Subcommittee recommended revised Policy 5144.4, Physical Exercise and Discipline of Students, to the Board for a first reading. Sarah Thrall stated this policy is being revised to prohibit the taking away of physical activity time as a consequence and that this is only permissible in the case of safety concerns as well as consequences for adults. Any comments should be sent to Ms. Parsons. This policy will go to the Board for a second reading and approval at the next meeting.

V.C. Draft 2023-2024 School Calendar

The Board discussed the draft calendar for the 2023-2024 school year. Dr. Grossman stated this calendar is very similar to this year's calendar with the school year starting on August 24th (professional development for teachers) and the first day for students on August 29th with two half days on the first two days of school. The last day of school is slated to be June 7th with 5 additional emergency days added June 10-14. This calendar will go to the Board for approval at the next meeting.

VI. Miscellaneous

VI.A. Board Standing Committee Reports

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

Sarah Thrall stated approved minutes for this Subcommittee can be found in the packet.

VI.A.2. Finance/Personnel/Facilities

Rosemarie Weber stated this Subcommittee met this evening to discuss the October Statement of Accounts. Additionally, had a brief health benefit fund update which factors into the budget process; a building committee update with good news that the band moved into the band room; a food service update that the free lunch program will be ending on December 7th; a human resource update with regard to personnel shortages and hiring needs; and. reviewed the timeline for the FY24 Plus One Budget.

V.B. Other Board-Related Reports

V.B.1. CREC/CABE

Sarah Thrall stated she and Dr. Grossman will attend the CABE/CAPSS Convention on Friday and will bring back a report. Kristina Gilton stated CREC Council met today and the continuing shortage of bus drivers was discussed. CREC is in an 80-person shortfall situation and working to hire more bus drivers. She also reported on the recent field trip by CREC and charter schools to a college fair in Harlem and 28 students were interviewed and given acceptances on the spot to colleges. Also discussed were rising costs and inflation rates related to building projects and the increased cost of heating oil and diesel fuel. Ms. Gilton stated the December meeting was cancelled and the next meeting for CREC Council will be held in January.

V.B.2. Granby Education Foundation

Whitney Sanzo stated GEF met on Monday and reviewed a list of grants that were just funded. Looking forward to the opening of the Video Production Studio which will be toured at next month's meeting.

V.C. Calendar of Events

Sarah Thrall stated there are concerts and conferences coming up.

V.D. Board Member Announcements

There were no Board member announcements this evening.

V.E. Action Items

There were no action items this evening.

VII. Adjournment

A motion was made by Rosemarie Weber and seconded by Monica Logan to adjourn the meeting. This motion passed unanimously at 8:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Nolan
Board Secretary