

Regular Board of Education Meeting – Approved Minutes
Wednesday, June 5, 2024, 7:00 p.m.
Town Hall Meeting Room

Present Board Members: Liz Barlow, Heather Lombardo, Monica Logan, Donna Nolan, Karen Richmond-Godard, Rosemarie Weber, and Katie O'Neill

Absent Board Members: David Peling

I. Call to Order and Welcome

Monica Logan called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. Chairperson's Report

III. Monica Logan, Board Chair, shared that Cal Heminway passed away this past weekend. He served as Board Chair for the Granby Board of Education giving countless hours of service. Rosemarie Weber also shared that Mr. Heminway had a very understated way of doing things and he had a positive impact on Granby schools serving on the Board for 32 years. He was a proponent of full-day kindergarten and the world language program, to name a few. We have lost a hero and advocate for Granby Public Schools. Mr. Heminway recently attended a BOE meeting to see one of the large projects the Granby Education Foundation funded – the Salmon Brook Ecology Center. Ms. Logan stated to please keep Cal Heminway in your memory and that the BOE appreciates his years of service.

III. Awards and Recognition

The Board recognized Granby Public Library Director Amber Wyzik and Librarian Michele Kaminski, along with Library Media Specialists for Granby Public Schools Laurie Smith and Leigh Ann Ryan (Joy Cloukey and Casey LaPlante were also recognized but not present) on receiving the 2024 Connecticut Library Association's Faith Hektoen Award. The Granby Public Library and Granby Public Schools worked collaboratively to organize a Granby Children's Book Festival this past fall. It was a celebration of reading and literacy for children and their families generously sponsored by the Granby Education Foundation.

IV. Public Comment

Susan Patricelli Regan, Higley Road, Granby, CT stated she submitted an opinion editorial which was published in the June edition of *The Granby Drummer* and stated it was not meant to be derogatory but rather candid. She reiterated some of the article's points as follows: Harassment of Granby students has been reportedly occurring over the past year including bullying and intimidation and there has been no public response; with regard to DEI, she stated some corporations have made cuts in 2023 and that DEI is divisive and does not promote the best people for leadership positions; there needs to be more diversity on the Granby BOE and she hopes for a more balanced group of individuals to serve the town; and, lastly, Mrs. Regan commented on the constant teacher demand for more pay in Granby and that we are in inflationary times and teacher pay raises should be based on student test scores/merit.

Mike Kramarenko, Notch Road, Granby, CT commented on the following: kids are reportedly still bullying at the middle school; students are receiving passing grades for technology and FCS without permanent teachers; middle/high school teachers are reportedly allowing students to call them by nicknames not Mr. or Mrs.; students are swearing and not being told not to; June is not just Pride month but also Men's mental health awareness month. He would like school to teach kids reality and that the world does not care about feelings; there has been no notification of summer school yet; and, hard copies of school communications should be sent home rather than emailed.

V. Student Representative Reports

- Chase Alexander stated the underclassmen awards were held last Friday and senior awards last night.
- Underclassmen exams start tomorrow and go through Tuesday.
- Graduation rehearsals will be held the next two days at 8 a.m.
- The top scholar luncheon will be held tomorrow for the top 10% of the class.
- Seniors will gather tonight for the sunset and students will play games while watching the sunset.

- Katie O'Neill stated boys' lacrosse played their last game today and lost to Somers in the state semi-finals. They had a great season and should be very proud. Time will be spent over the summer for summer workouts and practice.

Monica Logan recognized Chase Alexander for being a Student Representative on the Board of Education for the past two years and wished him well at Northeastern University where he intends to study Business Administration and Communications in the fall.

VI. Reports and Discussion

A. Elementary and Secondary Student Achievement Data Report

Superintendent Burke shared the emphasis on the two goals selected: to promote student achievement as well as to measure student growth for this school year. Ms. Parsons stated the goal this year around student achievement is for all students to achieve growth and for more to hit the proficiency targets on the assessments. She explained that the data presented tonight is internal data where the district is checking in on themselves and trying to predict how progress is made towards the state data benchmarks. She stated two tools are used for elementary-level proficiency check-ins: Dibels for Literacy and Acadience for Numeracy. For Grades 2-8 a test called STAR is used for skills assessments for reading and math and growth over time can be measured. Ms. Colleen Bava joined the presentation to share Kelly Lane testing results and shared scores for K-2 for DIBELS, Acadience and STAR. In Kindergarten, 100% of students made growth over time with 80% meeting/exceeding the proficiency level and in Numeracy, again, 100% of students made growth and 76% met/exceeded the proficiency level. In Grade 1, 99% made growth in literacy with 82% meeting/ exceeding the proficiency level and in numeracy 93% made growth with 76% meeting/exceeding proficiency. For Grade 2, growth is seen for all and this is the first year that students take standardized testing. Ms. Bava shared that 95% students made growth in reading with 57% meeting/exceeding proficiency and in math, 95% made growth with 62% meeting/exceeding proficiency. Next, Ms. Bava shared highlights at Kelly Lane with regard to student achievement, such as, revising intervention cycles to ensure student progress; grade levels achieving and surpassing instructional goals and data targets; and, providing support and guidance from the Early Intervention and Academic Coaches. With regard to areas for growth, Ms. Bava stated developing entrance and success criteria for intervention; sharing and creating student exemplars aligned with grade-level expectations; and, incorporating additional collaboration time to discuss data.

Student achievement data for Wells Road was shared and Ms. Pauline Greer, Principal of Wells Road Intermediate School, stated that she is certainly celebrating the growth that has been made by students. She highlighted the literacy scores in Grades 3-5 where proficiency was met/exceeded as follows: 57% for Grade 3; 63% for Grade 4; and, 75% for Grade 5. In math for Grades 3-5 where proficiency was met/exceeded as follows: 62% for Grade 3; 48% for Grade 4; and 45% for Grade 5. Ms. Greer stated there is work but students are making growth. Ms. Parsons stated literacy skills are developed in Grade 3 but are still growing where in math, skills are still being developed. Liz Barlow inquired about iXL and Ms. Greer stated Wells Road dabbled a little bit in iXL and it was used well with the Math Tutor but students are not ready to navigate it responsibly independently. Ms. Greer shared highlights at Wells Road, such as, taking a deeper dive of data; building small group time into the daily schedule; and, conducting internal math walkthroughs focused on math strategies. With regard to areas for growth, Ms. Greer stated Wells Road will be maximizing math instruction and increasing math instructional time; sharing and creating student exemplars aligned with grade-level expectations; and analyzing current benchmark assessment results to identify growth areas. Monica Logan inquired if the elimination of foreign language presents opportunities to focus more time for math. Ms. Greer stated the schedule is being looked at very carefully. Rosemarie Weber inquired if a decision is anticipated by this fall to increase math instruction time and Ms. Greer stated, yes, definitely.

Next, Jennifer Parsons presented middle school data stating the middle school continues to use STAR testing for assessment in Grades 6, 7 and 8 and shared there is promising growth in 8th grade math. Heather Tanis shared that middle school students are applying all of the skills they have in both reading and math in all of their classes. In 6th grade for reading and math, there was a slight decrease but students are making growth. 85% of students are making growth in math in 6th grade. Literacy scores have been maintained despite no direct reading instruction in the curriculum; however, much reading takes place across all classes. Ms. Tanis shared highlights regarding iXL to focus on math skill development; students

looking at their own data and tracking it monthly; and implementing smarter balanced daily skill practice in Grade 8 social studies. With regard to areas for growth, Ms. Tanis stated an exciting piece is leveraging work with the new Math Interventionist and collaborating and working with Wells Road to analyze the 5th to 6th grade transition and improve current practices to ensure a successful start to middle school.

Ms. Parsons provided an update with regard to the secondary student achievement presentation at the last meeting comparing PSAT data from fall to fall. School Day SAT results were presented and for 2023-2024 in ELA 82% of students hit the benchmark and 52% of students hit the benchmark for Math. She shared that state and national scores across the country are lower than ours and continue to drop; however, in Granby, scores are trending to grow back to pre-Covid scores. Rosemarie Weber inquired where Granby falls in the DRG and Ms. Parsons stated scores for 2024 are not yet released publicly but are published on EdSight and will be presented as part of the fall testing presentation. She shared a chart showing historical scores from 2015-16 through 2022-2023 showing the percentage of students in each grade scoring proficiency or higher.

VII. Business Requiring Action

A. Minutes

A motion was made by Rosemarie Weber and seconded by Donna Nolan that the Granby Board of Education approve the minutes from the May 15, 2024 Board of Education Meeting. Motion passed with one abstention (Liz Barlow) at 8:23 p.m.

B. Approval of Signatures Change Form for the Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs

The Board will discuss the approval of the Authorized Signatures Change Form for the Connecticut Department of Education, Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs, for Cheri P. Burke, Superintendent of Schools, and Nicole Stevenson, Director of Finance and Operations. A motion was made by Donna Nolan and seconded by Karen Richmond-Godard that the Granby Board of Education approve the Authorized Signatures Change Form for the Connecticut State Department of Education, Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs, for Cheri P. Burke, Superintendent of Schools, and Nicole Stevenson, Director of Finance and Operations. This motion passed unanimously at 8:24 p.m.

VIII. Committee Reports

A. Board Standing Committee Reports

1. Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communication

Karen Richmond-Godard reported that the Curriculum Subcommittee met this evening and discussed the Assistant Superintendent's Report as follows: New teacher celebration was held last month; coordination of schedules across schools for 2024-2025; attended a communications conference on how to use communication tools and AI; district leaders met to discuss accomplishments of the year; professional development on May 24th; announcement of Teacher of the Year Kristin LaFlamme; and, composting may be brought to the middle school next year. Also received a student achievement update and summer enrichment update. Up to 75 students are enrolled in 3 weeks of summer enrichment classes which is an increase in past enrollment. Students engage in art, music strings, and STEM activities. Classes are held at Kelly Lane. Lastly, teachers signed up to do summer curriculum work for Grades 1-5. More will be learned about this in the fall.

2. Finance/Personnel/Facilities

This subcommittee did not meet and will meet on Tuesday, June 18th.

B. Other Board-Related Reports

1. CREC/CABE

Nothing to report.

2. Granby Education Foundation

Cheri Burke reported that Cal Heminway joined the last Granby Education Foundation meeting encouraging the GEF to spend the money in his grant. Also discussed was the success of the GranBee. The GEF expressed gratitude to the school district as well as James Whitten who was emcee for the event.

C. Calendar of Events

Monica Logan stated the school year is winding down and there is a shorter calendar. Graduation will be held this Friday and is planned to be outside. The 8th Grade moving-up ceremony is on Tuesday, June 11th.

D. Board Member Announcements

There were no Board member announcements this evening.

E. Action Items

There were no action items this evening.

IX. Superintendent's Report

- Ms. Cheri Burke, Superintendent, stated there is a lot to celebrate and too many things to mention with many students being recognized for awards and many events held in the district the past couple of weeks such as a wax museum at Wells Road, concerts, art shows, and the concert in the park.
- There were exceptional professional development opportunities on May 24th. Thank you to Jennifer Parsons for coordinating.
- Thank you to the Granby Lions and American Legion for cooking for the staff on the professional development day.
- The district is busy preparing for the upcoming school year. Hiring is ongoing for open and new positions as well as fine tuning the budget and maximizing schedules to maximize instruction.

Monica Logan mentioned the retirement luncheon held today for retirees and 25-year employees at Holcomb Farm and thanked Linda Powell for organizing the event.

X. Adjournment

A motion was made by Donna Nolan and seconded by Karen Richmond-Godard to adjourn the meeting. This motion passed unanimously at 8:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted.

Elizabeth H. Barlow
Board Secretary