

Regular Board of Education Meeting – Draft Minutes
Wednesday, May 18, 2022, 7:00 p.m.
Town Hall Meeting Room

Present Board Members: Kristina Gilton, Monica Logan, Donna Nolan, David Peling, Sarah Thrall, and Rosemarie Weber (via Zoom), and Jacob Scotto (Student Representatives)

Absent Board Members: Whitney Sanzo and Tess Bajek (Student Representative)

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 those in attendance and stated Dr. Grossman had another engagement and will join the meeting in a little while. She also welcomed middle school teachers Ms. Abel and Ms. Zhang as well as GMMS students Emma, Teagan and Katie who will be sharing the SUCCESS Class at the middle school.

I.B. Superintendent's Announcements

- Ms. Jennifer Parsons, Assistant Superintendents, welcomed everyone this evening as well as on Zoom and a special welcome to middle school teachers Ms. Abel and Ms. Zhang and some of their students who are to present for Schools in the Spotlight this evening as well as to Principal Taylor Wrye who is here to give the Board an update on the Continuous Improvement Plan for the middle school.
- Our new Family Engagement Specialist, Bethany Grupp, started last week and is meeting with administrators and social workers across the district and getting to know our Open Choice participants. Bethany is a Granby alum and is excited to bring her experience of working with students in Hartford back to the community where she grew up.
- On-line Kindergarten registration is current at 91 students registered which includes our current PK students. A Kindergarten workshop for parents was held last week and was very well attended.
- A STEAM Night will be held at Kelly Lane tomorrow evening from 5:30-7:00 p.m. Pre-registration required so contact the school.
- The middle school play, *Fractured Fairytales*, will be held on Saturday, May 21st from 4-6 p.m. and the middle school band concert will be held on Tuesday, May 24th at 7:00 p.m. Both of these events will be held in the High School Auditorium.
- A SEPTO Meeting will be held on Thursday, May 26th at 6:30 p.m. in the Wells Road Media Center and the topic will be transitions for students after high school and beyond.
- Summer enrichment opportunities are being advertised and will run July 5th through July 29th.
- There will be a public hearing regarding funds for the American Rescue Plan on Monday, May 23rd at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Meeting Room. This meeting will also be available via Zoom.
- Important dates to note: 8th Grade Moving-Up Ceremony (June 7th @ 6:00 p.m.); Graduation (Thursday, June 9th @ 5:30 p.m.); Last Day of School (Monday, June 13th); and, Summer Board Retreat (Monday, August 29th)
- A luncheon will be held for our retirees and 25-year employees on June 1st at Holcomb Farm. Board members are invited to attend.
- There will be no school next Friday, May 27th for Professional Development as well as Monday, May 30 in observance of the holiday.
- The next regularly scheduled Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 1st.

I.C. Assistant Superintendent's Report

Ms. Jennifer Parsons, Assistant Superintendent, provided updates from the Assistant Superintendent's office and stated professional development focused on three areas this year: developing Social/Emotional Learning (SEL) skills, Equity Conversations and Elements of Effective Instruction (EEI). It is a great framework that talks about building a common vocabulary for instruction. The two areas which will be focused on the professional development day on May 27th are SEL and EEI. Staff members are just finishing surveys which will assist in determining where to focus professional development next year. Last push this week for school climate surveys across the district. Data will be used from families and students for planning and goals. Also on May 27th vertical teams will be kicked off which is an opportunity for K-12 teachers to come together in a room and have conversations around curriculum in their content area. This group will also look at data connected to district learning goals, curriculum audit and revisions and shared instructional practices. Ms. Parsons also stated there will be a learning walk on Friday and is excited to have Monica and Sarah join in that day which is a great opportunity to see those elements of effective instruction in process.

I.D. Student Representative Reports

- Jacob Scotto stated girls' lacrosse is 11-4; boys' lacrosse is 6-7; girls' tennis played today; boys' tennis is 13-1 and just won the conference last night against Ellington; track had their last regular season meet; the varsity baseball team is 8-8 and played a game at the Yard Goat Stadium today and will play again on Monday.
- At the band concert on May 5th, students said goodbye and expressed their thanks and congratulations to Mr. Neri as he retires for his many years of service.
- An underclassmen awards ceremony was held today to recognize students for academic achievements.
- Chorus concert/Arts Expo will be held on Thursday night at 8:00 p.m.
- Senior prom is this Friday at the Riverview in Simsbury.
- The Senior outing is next Thursday, May 26th at Boulder Ridge.
- STEAM night is tomorrow night 5:30-7 p.m. with many experiments and demonstrations by high school students.

I.E. Schools in the Spotlight

Laura Abel, Social Studies Teacher, and Yi Zhang, Chinese Teacher, along with Granby Memorial Middle School students Teagan Hall, Katie Klem and Emma Lynch, presented on the new 6th Grade SUCCESS class which was designed to help students transition from elementary level to middle school. Ms. Abel shared that Ms. Cowles and Ms. Jaquez are the other two teachers who teach this class and that the class is broken into 4 units. Ms. Zhang gave an overview of the first two units and stated Unit 1 (Community) helps students to adjust to the middle school and understand the schedule and layout. Students also set up SMART goals and create action plans for their goals as well as set up portfolios to help them to manage their goals. Ms. Zhang reviewed Unit 2 (Awareness) where students understand learning styles and respect differences; explore mindfulness and gratitude; and journal to help guide their learning. Ms. Abel shared in Unit 3 (Inquiry) students learn about organizational methods; multiple intelligences and interest inventories; and, how to conduct research. For Unit 4 (Contributors) students investigate their research question; use a variety of sources; create a professional presentation; and, share their findings with their peers. Ms. Abel shared some of the topics students are researching, such as, how salt water in the ocean impacts the animals that live there; how hackers target the elderly, how to start a good business with photography; and, how horses were used in history. Katie Klem shared how the Naviance website is used for lessons where you get to answer questions about your possible future, goals you have for yourself and much more. Teagan Hall shared that many different topics are covered each opening up the curiosity, interests and understanding of sixth graders. Emma shared that students work on a portfolio that holds all of their topics learned during the school year. Principal Taylor Wrye stated this is a huge program for the middle school especially for our 6th grade students entering the middle school. Rosemarie Weber inquired how do you know if students are incorporating what they are learning in their daily routine and if there is an opportunity to troubleshoot this during class. Ms. Abel stated, as an example, students were taught how to write a professional email and she shared that a student wrote her an email which she helped the student to re-write. Ms. Weber inquired if there is a chance for 7th and 8th graders to learn anything from this class. Ms. Parsons stated the middle school is looking to formalize

something for those grades but more informally. Donna Nolan asked Katie if Brown vs. BOE was her topic and, if so, what sparked her interest. Katie stated she was interested in learning about segregation and how school was during that time. Ms. Nolan stated it was a very deep topic for a 6th grader and it is very impressive. David Peling shared where he worked in a different district, students wrote letters to themselves as 6th graders and shared them at their senior banquet.

I.F. Business Manager's Report

Ms. Anna Robbins, Business Manager, presented the April statement of accounts and shared the BOE shows a positive forecast balance of \$298K which is \$43K higher than last month. Special education is under-budget \$79K which is \$93K better than last month. Regular education expenditures are projected to be favorable \$219 which is worse than last month by \$49K due to an increase in unemployment benefits and severance. The positive forecast in regular education transportation, dues and fees and general supplies is offset by electricity, fuel and natural gas as well as items in repairs and maintenance. The Quality & Diversity Fund is projected to be favorable \$164K due to favorable variances in after-school activities, Kindergarten support staff salaries and summer school. Revenue to the town is better than budgeted by \$85K and is lower than last month's projection due to a decrease in the Special Education Excess Cost Grant. Rosemarie stated this report was reviewed and accepted in tonight's Finance Subcommittee Meeting.

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 David Peling that the Granby Board of Education adopt the consent agenda. This motion passed unanimously at 7:50 p.m.

IV. Old Business

IV.A. Continuous Improvement Plan Update for Granby Memorial Middle School (20 min.)

Mr. Taylor Wrye, Principal, provided an update to the Board on the Continuous Improvement Plan for Granby Memorial Middle School and reviewed Goals 1-6 as follows: Goal #1 *Student Learning and Achievement* for GMMS students to achieve levels of proficiency or higher on the state assessment by the Math Instructional Coach working with teachers to review best practices; pacing students' math needs in alignment with the Illustrative Math program; and, the ELA Instructional Coach working with teachers to support strategies and best practices. Data was shared from an Algebra I class to show how data is looked at to review student progress as well as where students may need additional support. Mr. Wrye shared literacy and numeracy data presented this winter showing 7th grade overall growth and 8th grade literacy growth. He reviewed the second goal under *Goal #1 Student Learning and Achievement* to build a Scientific Research-Based Intervention system to support all learners by Student Improvement Team members and instructional coaches meeting regularly to review student data and trends as well as creating plans for next steps including specific strategies and expectations for progress monitoring and data collection. Goal #2 *Community Engagement* to utilize technology to facilitate communication that reach all stakeholders by sending the monthly Bear Necessities publication; digital postings and notifications; and, quarterly PAC meetings. Goal #3 *Safety and Social Emotional Well-Being* to provide all GMMS staff with ongoing professional learning opportunities which focus on social and emotional well-being of students and staff by partnering with school climate consultants as well as the FVHD to provide training and expansion to the Bridges Program and Adventure Club for student leadership and team building exercises. Goal #4 *Budget Development and Fiscal Management* to create a long-term financial plan which aligns with the vision of the Board of Finance by continuing to maintain and modernize learning opportunities for middle school students and work with the Granby Education Foundation and teachers for grants. Goal #5 *Embracing Diversity* to ensure system-wide practices and structures are in place at GMMS by the training and implementation of Restorative Practices; Granby Equity Team members presenting at staff meetings; and continue to increase diverse books in school and classroom libraries. Goal #6 *Professional Learning* to implement a common instructional framework that aims to increase student engagement utilizing clear shared outcomes and practices by ongoing work with Great Schools Partnership to align the whole school and be consistent with shared outcomes. Sarah Thrall inquired what trends are being noticed with the achievement data and how might this affect the budget next year. Mr. Wrye stated students may not be progressing as fast as we like; however, this is being addressed with intervention coaches and teachers who are working together on student data. Dr. Grossman also stated that the Board will see tutors added to the

operating budget next year as they were part of a grant this year. David Peling inquired if there are any trends with special education vs. non-special education students. Mr. Wrye stated students needing additional supports are looked at to see if they are getting enough support. Additionally, Dr. Grossman stated there are gaps in some of the subgroups across the board K-12 and when the data is reported in the fall, this will be drilled down to as many subgroups as we can without it being personally identifiable.

V. New Business

There was no New Business to report.

VI. Miscellaneous

VI.A. Board Standing Committee Reports

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

This Subcommittee did not meet.

VI.A.2. Finance/Personnel/Facilities

Rosemarie Weber stated this Subcommittee met this evening to discuss the statement of accounts and wrapping it up for year-end; planning for next year and year-end; discussed the food service contract – the last two years were free due to grant funding - likely to return to a paid program next year but district is looking at the cost of food and labor and what that will do to the contract and cost for lunches. Administration will come up with options to consider.

VI.B. Other Board-Related Reports

VI.B.1. CREC/CABE

Sarah Thrall stated Kristina Gilton was named to CREC Council but has not heard back about meetings.

VI.B.2. Granby Education Foundation

Dr. Grossman stated that he attended the GEF Meeting on Monday night and the topic of discussion was the GranBee and reflections on the GranBee for next year. They also discussed the possibility of bringing an arts event back to the schools as well as GEF finances.

VI.C. Calendar of Events

Sarah Thrall mentioned the Public Hearing on Monday, May 23rd. Kristina Gilton stated safe grad night is back this year and will be held on June 9th at the YMCA. Senior parents do not volunteer or chaperone so the committee is looking for chaperones and volunteers. Contact Kristina if interested.

VI.D. Board Member Announcements

There were no Board member announcements this evening.

VI.E. Action Items

There were no action items this evening.

VII. Executive Session/Non-Meeting

Sarah Thrall stated there would be an Executive Session to discuss a collective bargaining agreement and invited Dr. Grossman into Executive Session. A motion was made by Donna Nolan and seconded by Kristina Gilton to enter into an Executive Session. This motion passed at 8:30 p.m. The Executive Session adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Nolan
Board Secretary