

**Regular Board of Education Meeting – Amended/Approved Minutes**  
**September 15, 2021, 7:00 p.m.**  
**High School Auditorium**

Present Board Members: Mark Fiorentino, Melissa Migliaccio, David Peling, Sarah Thrall, and Tess Bajek and Jacob Scotto (Student Representatives)

Absent Board Members: Jenny Emery, Rosemarie Weber and Brandon Webster

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

**I. Administrative Reports**

**I.A. Chairman's Corner**

Sarah Thrall, Board Chair, stated the school year is off to a great start.

**I.B. Assistant Superintendent's Report**

Ms. Jennifer Parsons, Assistant Superintendent, provided updates from her office and stated 14 school days have officially been completed. Curriculum nights were all well attended. With regard to professional learning for teachers, a math consultant was in district and trained middle school math teachers as well as support staff and the administrative team. Additionally, a Teachers' College consultant for Kelly Lane teachers will be visiting in the next week or so. Regarding COVID, there have been 4 cases in our schools which is the most so far; however, all were impacted by community events. Overall, individuals are following the daily screening tool and staying home so this week there were no close contacts. Ms. Parsons stated that students who are quarantined based on a school or community exposure, they will have access to remote instruction; however, there is no option for remote learning voluntarily. Criteria has been developed for staff and students for learning/working remotely if applicable. Preparing for Executive Order 13G (vaccination of all individuals working in schools) and continuing to seek out advice in that area when it comes into effect on September 27<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Parsons stated she wanted to make a clarification that when there is a quarantine, there is a difference between returning to school and returning to athletics which Brian Maltese will review in his presentation this evening. David Peling inquired if there is any word from the Farmington Valley Health District (FVHD) on the Delta variant. Ms. Parsons stated there have been approximately 100 cases/week for the last few weeks; however, FVHD believes we are at the end of this wave and trends are going down a little bit but not significantly.

**I.C. Student Representative Reports**

- Tess Bajek stated the football team won last Friday against SMSA. All students were super excited and many people were there including administrators. Volleyball had a couple of games last week and this week and are undefeated so far; girls' soccer won against Rocky Hill 2-0, boys' soccer played a couple of games as well as field hockey.
- Student Government is attempting to plan a pep rally outside in the near future.
- Jacob Scotto stated there have been an influx of activities for the arts including auditions for *Radium Girls* which is a tragic but inspiring play.
- Auditions for chamber singers and a full in-person rehearsal was held last night.
- NHS met last week and are hoping to be more involved in the community this year.
- Students are happy to only have to wear masks in school and not having to deal with face shields and constant sanitizing and the school community feels much more together due to that.

Melissa Migliaccio stated there is a personal connection to Waterbury regarding *Radium Girls* and there is a museum in Waterbury that may have information. Sarah Thrall reminded the student representatives not to be shy and be involved in board meeting as the Board loves to hear their perspective on issues.

## **I.D. Business Manager's Report**

Ms. Anna Robbins, Business Manager, presented the June 2021 and July/August 2021 Statements of Accounts stating the FY21 year-end results and results for FY22 thus far were reviewed. The BOE showed a return to the town of \$198K which is broken down into special education and regular education expenditures. Special education expenditures were favorable \$63K and regular education was favorable \$135K. Savings in special education out-of-district transportation and tuition contributed to the favorable outcome compared to budget. There were significant savings in student activities and general supplies related to the pandemic. The Q&D fund showed a favorable variance to budget of \$187K due to savings in magnet school tuition, the curtailment of after-school activities, transportation, summer programs, and related personnel expenses. Revenue to the town showed a shortfall of \$46K for FY21 with favorable results in tuition from other towns but was offset by unfavorable results in the Excess Cost Savings reimbursement, rental fees and pay-for-participation fees. The town benefitted \$134K from the prior year's expenses reimbursed from grant funds awarded to the BOE. Ms. Robbins stated for FY22, as of August 31<sup>st</sup>, there is a positive forecast of \$16K with special education expenditures unfavorable \$161K and regular education favorable \$177K. The driving factor for this variance in special education is the net change of out-of-district placements for students since the budget was prepared. Most of the savings in FY22 was in salaries between turnover and new hires resulting in savings. Revenue to the town is projected to be under-budget by \$6K. Currently unsure of rental fees and pay-for-participation fees this school year. Overall, Q&D was ahead of budget last year and anticipated to be ahead of budget this year as well. Mark Fiorentino stated these were reviewed this evening and thanked Ms. Robbins for the detail of these reports.

## **II. Public Comment**

There were no public comments this evening.

## **III. Consent Agenda**

### **III.A. Minutes**

A motion was made by David Peling and seconded by Melissa Migliaccio to adopt the consent agenda. This motion passed unanimously at 7:17 p.m.

## **IV. Old Business**

### **IV.A. Fall Athletic Update**

Mr. Brian Maltese, Athletic Director, updated the Board on fall sports and COVID mitigation strategies in place for the fall season and stated all fall sports began on time, are in full swing including football this year, and will play a full schedule. Mr. Maltese informed the Board CIAC announced there will be a full post-season this year and have made a joint statement with the Department of Public Health encouraging all middle and high school athletes to get vaccinated. He also informed the Board that, unfortunately, athletics is facing an issue of transportation shortage for sporting events but that Granby is fortunate to have a lighted field in order that some events can be scheduled later. Mr. Maltese went on to state the current Executive Order will be followed on mask wearing. All athletes, spectators and coaches need to wear masks including volleyball (which is indoors) as well as coaches and students buses. He stated if a fully vaccinated asymptomatic athlete must wear masks Days 1-3 following an exposure and receive a negative test between days 3-5 and reviewed other scenarios for quarantining and returning to play as well. Mr. Maltese reviewed the fall participation numbers stating there are 239 high school athletes and 129 middle school athletes and the typical participation rate in the fall is around 40%. He informed the Board that live streaming events are being done when they can thanks to John Kroninger and others and athletics may team up with Mr. Gaeta to cover as many as possible. Sarah Thrall inquired about the return to play and quarantine policies from CIAC asking if they cover the coaches as well and Brian stated, yes, they do. David Peling inquired how the CIAC defines a severe case. Mr. Maltese stated whether a severe, mild or moderate case, you would have to be cleared by a medical professional. Ms. Parsons stated she believes severe would include hospitalization and that a physician would help to define this. Mark Fiorentino inquired what the

consequences are for failing to follow the guidelines and Mr. Maltese stated this is probably an addendum to the CIAC handbook and there would be a fine and potentially not being able to play in the post-season. Sarah Thrall inquired about unified sports and stated last year it did not come to fruition and Mr. Maltese stated this year they are hoping to put something together for a basketball season, bowling and possibly kickball.

## **V. New Business**

### **V.A. Annual Testing Report**

Ms. Jennifer Parsons, Assistant Superintendent, presented the 2020-2021 annual testing report to the Board and stated the summative-based tests include Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBAC), Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), and School-Day SAT. These tests measure student achievement and growth over time and this is an annual snapshot of student achievement. SBAC testing was administered the last 12 weeks of school to students in Grades 3-8. The tests is delivered electronically with a score scale ranges of 2000 to 3000 and is broken down between Levels 1, 2, 3 and 4. Ms. Parsons reviewed the ELA results for Grades 3-8 and presented scores from 2015 through 2021; however, there were no results for 2020 due to the pandemic. She shared that there was growth in the Grade 3 cohort over the years and that, overall, students did a great job in maintaining proficiency. The drop in scores last year was attributable to less exposure to the test format for students due to prioritizing standards during classroom time. This will be brought back into the classroom this year. Ms. Parsons reviewed ELA highlights and next steps and stated there will be a focus on our youngest readers and ensuring support for them moving forward. The district is also looking to grow the K-5 curriculum model, through a partnership with Teachers' College, up to the middle school.

Next Ms. Parsons reviewed the math proficiency levels on the SBAC and stated comparison data for the state averages was not available this year. There was a great level of detail in the data but the state did not provide the high level overall data. The data was broken out by students who learned in-person or remotely so there separate sets of scores. Pre-pandemic Grade 3 students came in at a pretty good proficiency rate but there is a not a significant increase in the proficiency rates as they go through the grade levels. Ms. Parsons reviewed highlights and next steps for math which include making a curriculum and instructional change at the middle school in Grades 6-8 to realign the standards and implement Illustrative Mathematics. NGSS results were also reviewed for Grades 5, 8 and 11. Ms. Parsons stated there are only 2 years of data as this was a pilot test prior to 2018. Grade 5 performed consistently as well as Grade 11 but Grade 8 went down slightly but overall Granby's scores for Science are high and significantly higher than overall state scores in Science. For next steps, Ms. Parsons stated the district will continue to refine NGSS units and student scientists are excited to get back to hands-on science experiments.

Lastly, School Day SAT results were presented. Ms. Parsons stated this assessment was adopted by the State in 2016 in lieu of the SBAC testing for Grade 11 and is our summative state assessment and was designed to be an achievement test as opposed to an aptitude test. The Evidence-Based Reading & Writing (ERW) test focuses on gathering evidence from text but expands to social studies and science and Math focuses on Algebra, data analysis and problem solving. The state proficiency benchmarks are for students to obtain a 480 on ERW and a 530 on Math. Results shown were of the test taken on the SAT Day and Granby had respectable scores of 553 for ERW and 551 for Math. Going forward the district will aim to embed SAT-like experience in all grades and core content areas. PSATs will be given to Grades 8-11 this year. Ms. Parsons reviewed the overall instructional movement to utilize a common instructional framework; align Board Goals with District and School Improvement Plans; and, train Content Area Specialists, coaches and department heads to lead teams in the work.

Sarah Thrall thanked Ms. Parsons for the comprehensive report and inquired with regard to the science test, how Granby is able to provide any intervention for students who missed last year. Ms. Parsons stated some of the science scores can be correlated to the ELA scores. Math and ELA are assessed every year but the science is every other year. David Peling inquired how a parent would

know if a student did not meet proficiency. Ms. Parsons stated annual parent reports will arrive home as early as tomorrow. Mark Fiorentino stated he is personally encouraged by some of the details but would love to see a sharper focus as follows: 1) goals to be internally focused on what we want percentages to be; and, 2) set a goal of where students should be when they enter high school. Ms. Parsons stated these are both great points.

#### **V.B. CAFE Leadership Award**

The Board reviewed the CAFE Leadership Award for Level II, Board of Distinction. A motion was made by Mark Fiorentino and seconded by Melissa Migliaccio that the Granby Board of Education approve the application for the CAFE Leadership Award for Level II, Board of Distinction. This motion passed unanimously at 8:08 p.m.

#### **V.C. FY21 Year-End Budget Transfers**

The Board will discuss the approval of FY21 year-end budget transfers as recommended by the Business Manager and Finance/Personnel/Facilities Subcommittee. A motion was made by Mark Fiorentino and seconded by Melissa Migliaccio that the Granby Board of Education approve year-end budget transfers for FY21 as recommended by the Business Manager and Finance/Personnel/Facilities Subcommittee. Mark Fiorentino stated this procedure is done every year to balance the accounts and is an administrative action. This motion passed unanimously at 8:09 p.m.

### **VI. Miscellaneous**

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

##### **VI.A.1. Finance/Personnel/Facilities**

Mark Fiorentino stated this Subcommittee met this evening, most of which was discussed ahead. An update on the building committee was received and the general report is we are on schedule and if we stay on schedule, the construction projects should start this summer.

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

##### **VI.B.1. CREC/CAFE**

Mark Fiorentino stated CREC Council met today. CAFE is actively working on addressing the bus driver shortage and helping the providers find the funds and personnel to get through it. They are also working on trying to secure an increase to secure federal and state funding for HVAC for schools.

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

There was nothing to report.

#### **VI.C. Calendar of Events**

Sarah Thrall stated very busy with curriculum nights. She attended the middle school one last night and thanked the teachers.

#### **VI.D. Board Member Announcements**

Spectators are now welcome to our sporting events so please come to the games and cheer on the Granby teams.

#### **VI.E. Action Items**

There were no action items this evening.

### **VII. Executive Session/Non-Meeting**

A motion was made by Mark Fiorentino and seconded by Melissa Migliaccio to enter into an Executive Session to discuss a collective bargaining agreement. This motion passed unanimously at 8:15 p.m.

The Executive Session adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Powell, Board Recorder