

Regular Board of Education Meeting – Approved Minutes
Wednesday, April 6, 2022, 7:00 p.m.
Town Hall Meeting Room

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

Absent Board Members: Tess Bajek

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

I. Administrative Reports

I.A. Chairman's Corner

Sarah Thrall, Board Chair, congratulated Jacob Scotto on being the recipient of the Connecticut Association of Schools Performing Arts Award. She also congratulated the Wells Road Drama Club on their performance of *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown*. Ms. Thrall welcomed the Best Buddies Program and Angela Ehrenwerth who were in attendance to present this evening.

I.B. Superintendent's Announcements

- Dr. Grossman welcomed those in attendance and virtually and also welcomed high school Resource Teacher, Liz David, and some high school students who are here to present for the Spotlight as well as to Ms. Angela Ehrenwerth, Director of Pupil Personnel Services, who is here to present an update on her Continuous Improvement Plan.
- At Monday evening's Board of Selectmen Meeting, the Board voted to award the contract for the high school building project. The work on this project is scheduled to begin next week.
- The Board of Education Budget will be presented at a public hearing on April 11th at 7:00 p.m. in the high school auditorium. The budget will go to a town-wide vote on Monday, April 25th from 12-8 p.m.
- Congratulations to Connecticut Association of Schools Annual Arts Awards Winners: In Visual Arts – Mara Wutka and in Performing Arts – Jacob Scotto.
- Also, congratulations to the Wells Road Drama Club on their performance of *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown*.
- On-line Kindergarten registration began on February 1st and, thus far, 83 students are registered which includes our current PK students.
- Spring conferences were well attended for both elementary and secondary (in-person and virtual).
- A combined PTO/PAC Meeting was held Monday night via Zoom to discuss the budget.
- A Superintendent's Community Conversation will be held on Tuesday, April 19th from 10-11 a.m. via Zoom to discuss the budget and other educational issues.
- The budget edition of the *Vision* will be delivered to all town residents this week prior to the public hearing on the budget on April 11th.
- I wish all of our staff, students and family a wonderful break next week.
- The next regularly scheduled Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 20th.

Rosemarie Weber inquired if there was an increase in parent/teacher conference participation with the virtual aspect. Jennifer Parsons stated she will get that information. Dr. Grossman stated he will include this information in his weekly Board report.

I.C. Department Spotlight

Ms. Elizabeth David, Resource Teacher, and some high school students highlighted the Best Buddies Program at Granby Memorial High School. Chelsea Newton, senior, informed the Board of the Best Buddies Mission and shared a history on the program stating the high school had a Best Buddies Club; however, this year created a Best Buddies Chapter with the international organization. Natalie Kalva shared that at the Best Buddies Ball on Sunday, new friends were made and that is what she likes best about the program. Chelsea described all of the groups they work with including Leo Club, Cheerleading and Unified Basketball. Amelia Davis shared that one of the first activities this year was Apple Picking. A Halloween Party, Friendsgiving celebration; Chapter Holiday Party; Leo Club Holiday Party; and, a St. Patrick's Day Party were also held. Additionally, Best Buddies went bowling and had a Best Buddies Friendship Ball held at the Aqua Turf in Southington, CT. This past Tuesday, an Easter Egg Hunt was

held at the high school. Future events were shared as follows: Annual Friendship Walk Fundraiser at Dunkin' Donuts Park on May 1st; End of Year Celebration at Antonio's on May 15th; and, a Best Buddies Meet and Greet with incoming buddies on May 17th. Maeve Dingley shared future goals and next steps to recruit more underclassmen to the club as peer buddies and spread the message about the chapter in the school community. Sarah Thrall inquired what the BOE can do to support the Best Buddies Program. Liz David stated she cannot do anything without the help of the students and the major goal for Best Buddies in the next year is to grow the chapter and inform families and students about who they are what they do. She also shared that students do not need to have a disability to be involved and can be a peer mentor. Ms. David stated she has been involved with Best Buddies for about 8 years and it is the best part of her teaching career and she cannot wait to do more events in the future and Board members are welcome to stop by anytime. Ms. Thrall also inquired how many students are in the program and Liz stated there are 13 peer mentors and 4-5 buddies. Monica Logan inquired how frequently does the club meet. Chelsea Newton stated the club meets the first Thursday of the month. Rosemarie Weber suggested having a joint event with another organization in the high school (i.e., NHS). Ms. Thrall thanked Ms. David for her passion and her leadership and thanked everyone for participating. Angela Ehrenwerth also thanked Ms. David and the students for their leadership of this program as well as to Anna Robbins, Business Manager, for her assistance with events.

I.D. Assistant Superintendent's Report

Ms. Jennifer Parsons, Assistant Superintendent, stated end-of-year summative testing is well underway. She stated the district is awaiting SAT results; 4th and 8th graders took the NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress); and, Science and Smarter Balanced assessments are in process. Summer curriculum work and planning for professional development next year is also well underway. Ms. Parsons shared there were 50 nominations this year for Teacher of the Year. Next steps are nominated teachers can apply and then the committee decides on the 2023 Teacher of the Year. Donna Nolan inquired if there was any feedback on students who took the SAT online. Ms. Parsons stated she is in process of soliciting information on this. Mike Dunn, Principal, shared he did speak to students after the test and there were mixed reactions from students. Sarah Thrall inquired about the Granby Equity Team meeting last week. Ms. Parsons stated the Team met last week and continued discussion around ways individuals are recognizing women in history as well as power (who holds power, how do you gain power, shifts in power). Also discussed the survey administered last year talking about experiences in school and what additional information we want to gather and put together at our last meeting for our action plan. Rosemarie Weber inquired about the participation in the survey and Ms. Parsons stated there was over 80% participation from students. The results of the survey will provide what the implications are for the Team's work going forward.

I.E. Student Representative Reports

- Jacob stated spring sports have begun. Boys' lacrosse has a record of 0-2; girls' lacrosse 2-0; baseball 0-1. Boys' and girls' tennis have their first matches over the April break; golf has their first match on April 19th; girls' and boys' track on Friday.
- The first ever spring pep rally will be held this Friday.
- All-state for musicians was held this past weekend.
- The NHS Volleyball Tournament was a great success as well as the NHS Empty Bowls fundraiser, raising over \$4,000 for the Granby and Hartland Food Banks.
- There will be an NHS FUNdrive for clothes and soft donations (sheets, pillowcases, etc.) starting April 11th and running until April 24th aiming to fill up 100 trash bags for donation.
- The GMHS Blood Drive was on Monday.
- Robotics had a competition on March 19th and there is another competition this weekend.
- A Spring Coffeehouse will be held on April 30th in the High School Commons.
- Spirit Week was this week as follows: Met Gala Monday; Tropical Tuesday; Western Wednesday; Character Thursday; and, class colors/sports jerseys for pep rally.

Donna Nolan inquired how donations should be made for the FUNdrive. Jacob Scotto stated donations can be brought into the school and NHS will package up for donation.

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 Kristina Gilton to adopt the consent agenda. This motion passed unanimously at 7:39 p.m.

IV. Old Business

IV.A. Pupil Services Department Continuous Improvement Plan Update

Ms. Angela Ehrenwerth, Director of Pupil Personnel Services, provided an update to her Continuous Improvement Plan for the Board. She reviewed her goals as follows: *Goal 1: Student Learning and Achievement* that students with special needs show measurable gains in academic achievement when provided effective core instruction by supporting data conversations through work with special education leadership; using mid-year conferences to discuss student performance data; revisiting previous district work on priority standards; and, instructional coaching with an emphasis on literacy at the PK-5 level. She shared data highlights as well and Grade 2 is on track to meet the literacy goal and Grades 3-5 are on track to meet numeracy goals. Data was shared for PSATs for Grades 9-11 and 11th graders are on track to meet evidenced based reading and writing goal; current 10th graders are showing stronger literacy skills and current 9th graders are showing stronger numeracy skills. *Goal 2: Community Engagement* to partner with families to support engagement, ongoing communication and collaboration between staff and families by holding regular SEPTO (Special Education Parent Teacher Organization) meetings; provide a monthly newsletter; and ongoing communication with families. *Goal 3: Social and Emotional Well-Being* to support social/emotional/ behavioral learning of students and staff to foster a positive learning environment that is responsive and encourage by engaging in a review and revise process for behavioral assessments; expanding the role of the BCBA to provide broader supports across grade levels and schools; and, the SEL Committee assessing current practices in each building. *Goal 4: Budget Development and Fiscal Management* to aim to be fiscally responsible through careful identification of needs and appropriate spending to support student learning and growth by ongoing examination of special education programming needs PK12; initiating an Alternative Education Programming Committee to explore Grades 6-12 programming; and, monthly collaboration and discussions with Farmington Valley Directors about shared programming possibilities. *Goal 5: Embracing Diversity* to support the implementation of the Granby Public Schools' Anti-Bias/Anti-Racism Plan by promoting equitable practices and outcomes for all students, particularly those with identified special needs, through specialized instruction and programming by an active and growing Best Buddies Chapter and successful Unified Sports basketball season; supporting professional growth opportunities for staff to increase differentiated instruction; and, exploring ways at the building level to best collect routine data on goals and objectives. *Goal 6: Professional Development* to provide meaningful professional learning opportunities to enhance practice and increase learning outcomes for students by continuing to participate alongside general education colleagues; participating in weekly IEP Preview Sessions offered by the state; and supporting staff in participating in discipline-specific professional development.

Rosemarie Weber inquired if PSAT data for identified students is individual or by group. Ms. Ehrenwerth stated they are students identified with an IEP. As of October 1st, there were 291 special education students throughout the district. Ms. Weber inquired if they are broken down by grade and further by literacy, etc. and Ms. Ehrenwerth stated data can be looked at in a variety of ways including grade level and individual scores. Whitney Sanzo inquired if instructional coaches advise Resource Teachers. Ms. Ehrenwerth stated a new position or a PK-5 Special Education Instructional Coach will meet with the special education case manager and help to look at data, etc. and will interface with other coaches (math/literacy coaches). Co-teaching was brought up and Dr. Grossman stated Granby did not have co-teaching before his arrival. Ms. Ehrenwerth stated teachers co-plan and are equal partners in the classroom which allows for flexibility and opportunities for some groups to work more intensely. The administrative team will do training to best understand the models of co-teaching. Sarah Thrall inquired about the work of the Alternative Education Program Committee. Ms. Ehrenwerth stated there has been one meeting so far and the charge of the Committee was presented and the Committee is ready to move ahead with some planning. Ms. Weber inquired if there is an identified student population for this program. Ms. Ehrenwerth stated the population may be students struggling with their learning or attendance and can be general and regular education. Dr. Grossman stated it will be very important for this program to have stakeholder feedback and support so it will have a solid foundation. Ms. Thrall thanked Ms. Ehrenwerth for her monthly newsletter and her leadership with SEPTO.

IV.B. Town of Granby Strategic Plan

The Board discussed the BOE goals to be included in the Town of Granby Strategic Plan. Sarah Thrall stated Erica Robertson and Mark Fiorentino came to a Board Meeting in February regarding the development of a Town Strategic Plan. The BOE was charged with developing goals for this plan and what may be helpful in working with the town. She stated under Goal #4 - Budget Development and Fiscal Management to use strategic initiative 4.I. which is to continue to work with the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance on large capital projects. The Board agreed to move this goal forward. Kristina Gilton stated communication within the Boards and out to the community should be one consistent message. Rosemarie Weber stated she would phrase a different way stating, to continue to look for ways to integrate goals in order that all resources become available to make that goal happen. Whitney Sanzo stated a goal integrating town services with students would also be good. Jennifer Parsons stated a way to connect what Whitney Sanzo stated can be found in Goal I.H. and 2.G. Dr. Grossman stated he will go back and write a goal to ensure it is measurable and come up with a sentence specifically regarding communication. Sarah Thrall stated the Board will review and approve the goals at the May 4th BOE Meeting.

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

David Peling reported this Subcommittee met this evening to discuss the Assistant Superintendent's Monthly Report. Bringing forward two policies regarding attendance to include a definition of mental health days and updating the definition of remote learning and how it relates to attendance. A third policy regarding student health will also be brought forward removing the religious exemption for vaccinations. Medical exemptions will be grandfathered if prior to April 21st prior to entering Kindergarten. This is state-mandated legislation. A revised policy was also discussed regarding graduation requirements from 2023 to 2025 to new requirements in 2026 as well as student performance. Sarah Thrall stated these policies will be on the next agenda to review with approval at the following meeting.

VI.A.2. Finance/Personnel/Facilities

This Subcommittee has not met.

VI.B. Other Board-Related Reports

VI.B.1. CREC/CABE

Sarah Thrall stated there was nothing to report.

VI.B.2. Granby Education Foundation

Whitney Sanzo stated GranBee is coming April 22nd.

VI.C. Calendar of Events

Sarah Thrall stated to mark your calendars of events. The Town Hearing is on April 11th and spring break next week.

VI.D. Board Member Announcements

There were no Board member announcements this evening.

VI.E. Action Items

1) Information on donations for clothing drive; and, 2) Work on smart goal for Town Strategic Plan

VII. Executive Session/Non-Meeting

A motion was made by Kristina Gilton and seconded by Monica Logan to enter into an Executive Session to discuss a collective bargaining agreement. This motion passed unanimously at 8:37 p.m. The Executive Session adjourned at 9:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Nolan
Board Secretary