

Regular Board of Education Meeting – Approved Minutes
Wednesday, February 21, 2024, 7:00 p.m.
Town Hall Meeting Room

Present Board Members: Liz Barlow, Heather Lombardo, Monica Logan, David Peling, Karen Richmond-Godard, Rosemarie Weber and Chase Alexander and Katie O’Neill (Student Representative).

Absent Board Members: Donna Nolan

I. Call to Order and Welcome

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

II. Awards and Recognition

The BOE thanked Catherine Erasmus, Granby resident and owner of Taylor Energy. Catherine created a two-day workshop for students in the College Connection Program at Asnuntuck which included developing a brand as students begin to look for a career including resume development and a mock interview. Catherine is an active member of the Career and Technical Education Advisory Board at the high school and partners throughout the year with our business and technical education programs. Ms. Logan thanked Catherine for her contributions and her dedication to our high school students.

III. Public Comment

Jack Darling and Kandace Royce, Granby students who attend the Vo-ag Program at Suffield High School, shared their experiences in the program with the Board. Kandace shared her journey of receiving her Future Farmers of America (FFA) jacket, her first speaking engagement as an FFA member and how she is now the Chapter President. She stated it has been a very influential part of her life and she would like to serve as a State FFA Officer. Kandace shared she hopes to attend veterinary college. Jack Darling stated the agriculture program let him explore who he is and helped him to become the person he is now.

IV. Student Representative Reports

- Katie O’Neill gave a sports report stating boys’ basketball is playing in the NCCC tournament tonight; girls’ basketball lost against Suffield and are looking forward to states; boys’ hockey is looking forward to states on Monday, March 4th, site and time TBD; girls’ hockey is also looking forward to states; track and wrestling have ended their seasons and Liam Kirkpatrick placed 5th in his weight class at state championships.
- Chase stated the DECA state conference will be held on March 6th at the Aqua Turf Club.
- The NHS Volleyball Tournament will be held on March 7th.
- The Empty Bowls Fundraiser will be held on Friday, April 26th. Students have been coordinating with local businesses for donations and combining artists’ donations and their own work in Ms. Hecht’s art room to produce handmade bowls for the event.
- Students participated in Black History Month during their advisory period.

V. Reports and Discussion

A. Schools in the Spotlight

GMHS Math Department Chair Elyse Nevins and high school students Taryn Grant and Averie Dickins, as well as BOE Student Representatives Chase Alexander and Katie O’Neill, presented on vertical math instruction and shared new strategies for making thinking visible in math instruction. Ms. Nevins shared a video showing students working vertically and stated this work comes from the book *Building Thinking Classrooms in Mathematics* and promotes high-quality collaboration and facilitates questions and rich conversations among students. Research shows that students attend to the task more quickly and also spend longer completing the task. The surfaces that students work on are non-permanent and allows for rough draft thinking. Ms. Nevins stated she is more of a facilitator in the process as students work with other students and other groups to build off each other’s understanding. The students worked in three different groups with Board members to solve a mathematical problem. The task presented can challenge even the most advanced students. She stated that communication and visualization is the most powerful aspect of this type of problem and it is a teaching strategy incorporated at the high school as well as all K-12 schools. Taryn and Avery stated it is very enjoyable, especially the social aspects and interacting with classmates. Karen Richmond-Godard inquired about how often this method is used. Ms. Nevins stated typically two (2) days per week, especially during the double period days.

B. Business Manager's Report

Anna Robbins, Business Manager, presented the January 2024 Statement of Accounts to the Board and stated the financial forecast shows an unfavorable balance of \$242K which is \$15K worse than last month. Regular education is projected to be underbudget by \$31K which is \$13K better from the previous month. Salaries and substitute services continue to fluctuate but major drivers in the forecast continue to be electricity and instructional purchased services. Will continue to monitor the line items closely in order to achieve balances with savings in some areas at the end of the year. Special education is overbudget \$273K which is \$28K worse than the previous month. The main driver is out-of-district tuition; however, the out-of-district transportation is underbudget by consolidating transportation wherever possible. Revenue to the town is projected to be unfavorable \$281K which is \$151K worse than the previous month. Received the per pupil expenditure (PPE) rate which is calculated off of the FY23 financial results. The PPE went from \$18,897 to \$19,961 (\$1,000 higher) This raises the stop loss used to calculate the special education excess cost grant which, in turn, lowers the amount eligible for reimbursement. These factors result in an additional shortfall of \$184K making the year-to-date shortfall \$365K in this category. The increase in the PPE resulted in an additional \$32K in revenue in the regular tuition line item. The forecast for the Quality & Diversity Fund continues to be positive. Rosemarie Weber stated the Finance Subcommittee reviewed the report this evening.

C. FY25 Quality & Diversity Budget

Superintendent Burke presented the FY25 Quality & Diversity (Q&D) Budget to the Board stating the Q&D Fund helps Granby Public Schools meet their legal obligation. The Q&D Fund is used to allow for enrichment opportunities to reduce racial, ethnic and economic isolation. The district will receive \$14,500 per Open Choice Kindergarten student as well as \$10,000 for every student enrolled in Grades 1-12. There are also bonus funds available and the district is always looking at enrollment to make responsible decisions. Participation this year is approximately 92 students. Next year, a slight decline is expected to around 89 students. The FY25 appropriation is \$1,069,766 which is used to offset tuition for magnet and Vo-Ag schools; staffing to support students; after-school clubs; materials for Granby Equity Team; and, the replacement cycle for 1-to-1 student computing devices. New items to the budget this year are an 0.4 FTE Counseling & Academic Support Center Teaching Assistant at the high school and a 1.0 FTE Board Certified Behavior Analyst at Kelly Lane and Wells Road. Enrollment for the Open Choice Program was shared as well as items that fall under the Open Choice Academic and Social Support Grant (which is not part of the Q&D budget). Prior and projected enrollment at magnet schools was also shared as well as the tuition rates for these programs. Liz Barlow inquired why the fee is the same for part-time as it is for full-time students at the Arts Academy. Anna Robbins stated that is the tuition set and it is a common question. Karen Richmond-Godard inquired if the Q&D Fund is unique to Granby. Ms. Burke stated all towns are required to have a fund that is shared publicly to reduce racial, ethnic and economic isolation. In all communities the funding is distributed to the town then appropriated to the district.

VI. Business Requiring Action

A. Minutes

A motion was made by Heather Lombardo and seconded by David Peling that the Granby Board of Education approve the minutes of the February 7, 2024 Board of Education Meeting. This motion passed unanimously at 7:57 p.m.

VII. Committee Reports

A. Board Standing Committee Reports

A.1. Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communication

Monica Logan stated this subcommittee has not met and the next meeting is on March 6th.

A. 2. Finance/Personnel/Facilities

Rosemarie Weber stated this subcommittee met this evening. They received an indoor air quality report and the maintenance and facilities staff is working hard so that the air quality and pest control are addressed in good timing. A survey was sent out to each school in the district with regard to air quality, cleanliness, and pest control in conjunction with a consultant that identifies any variations. Generally speaking, the district gets good marks. Also discussed the AED donation on the athletic field; the statement of accounts, and received an update on the fuel bid that the district is locked in at \$2.94; received a budget update; and, discussed two items under "other": a possible plow truck replacement and the school bus replacement schedule.

B. Other Board-Related Reports

B.1. CREC/CABE

Monica Logan stated the Board is still looking for a BOE volunteer for CREC; however, the meetings are during the day and in person which is hard for Board members.

B. 2. Granby Education Foundation

Monica Logan stated the Board is also looking for a volunteer for the GEF. Cheri Burke shared the GEF is hard at work with the GranBee and they just approved a grant for the Granby Dramatic Arts Program to purchase new microphones for actors and are anticipating a quick turnaround for the equipment to be used in the upcoming musical *Footloose*.

C. Calendar of Events

A Superintendent Community Conversation will be held tomorrow morning from 9-10 a.m.; middle school dance on March 1st; NHS Sports Tournament on March 7th; and, a Budget Workshop on March 13th.

D. Board Member Announcements

There were no Board Member announcements this evening.

E. Action Items

There were no action items this evening.

VIII. Superintendent's Report

- Superintendent Burke extended a thank you to Mike Dunn and Elyse Nevins as well as the students for the presentation this evening.
- Attended the Granby Senior Men's Breakfast last Friday and Wells Road and middle school students demonstrated hands-on STEAM activities. Jennifer Parsons presented a broad perspective on STEAM education across the district.
- Attended the CREC Legislative Breakfast this morning with Monica Logan to meet with legislators and make educational concerns known with regard to upcoming legislation.
- Kindergarten registration opened on February 1st and 75 students are projected to attend Kindergarten in the fall at the moment. The district is keeping a careful eye on this as 100 students were projected to enroll.
- A Superintendent Community Conversation will be held tomorrow morning with almost 20 participants. It will be recorded and posted on the website. An evening Superintendent Community Conversations will be held on Thursday, April 4th from 6-7pm via Zoom. It will be a conversation primarily about the budget but other educational items will be discussed as well.
- With the snow day last week, the current last day of school is on Tuesday, June 11th. An updated calendar is on the website.
- The next Board Meeting will be held on March 6th and the FY25 Administrative Budget will be presented.

IX. Chairperson's Report

Monica Logan, Board Chair, stated it was great to have the Granby Suffield Vo-Ag students attend this evening and speak during public comment. Ms. Logan encouraged attendance at the Budget Workshop on March 13th.

X. Adjournment

A motion was made by Rosemarie Weber and seconded by Heather Lombardo that the Granby Board of Education adjourn the Board of Education Meeting. This motion passed unanimously at 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Elizabeth H. Barlow
Board Secretary

