

Regular Board of Education Meeting – Approved Minutes
Wednesday, December 21, 2022 7:00 p.m.
Town Hall Meeting Room

Present Board Members: Kristina Gilton, Donna Nolan (via Zoom), David Peling, Whitney Sanzo, Sarah Thrall, Rosemarie Weber and Chase Alexander (Student Representative)

Absent Board Members: Monica Logan 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 everyone and stated yesterday's referendum to allow for the roof project at the GMHS as well as the completion of Phase I completion passed. She thanked the community for coming out to vote.

I.B. Superintendent's Announcements

- Dr. Grossman thanked his administrative team and staff stating his mother passed away suddenly a couple of weeks ago and shared his mom was an educator and attended Convocation in August which was very special.
- Over \$4,000 was raised for the CCMC PJ Day Fundraiser and over 156 pairs of pajamas were collected at Wells Road Intermediate School. Since 2010, over 1,800 pairs of pajamas have been collected by Wells Road!
- A tour and ribbon-cutting for the Video Production Studio was held on Monday night to dedicate space. Dr. Grossman thanked Whitney Sanzo for attending.
- Met with the GRR group this week and discussed the work of the Granby Equity Team relative to student groups, as well as Juneteenth.
- The 2023-2024 calendar was sent out to the community last week.
- There will be an early release this Friday.
- The next regularly scheduled Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 4th and there will be a presentation with regard to the 18- to 22-year-old programming. Mrs. Ehrenwerth will give a short presentation providing a high-level view of the program.
- Dr. Grossman wished students, staff and families a Happy Holiday season and Happy New Year.

I.C. Assistant Superintendent's Report

Ms. Jennifer Parsons, Assistant Superintendent, provided updates from her office and stated she has been out and about in the schools. And shared that a lot of good things are happening with regard to IABs (intervention assessment blocks) across the district. IABs were spoken about during the recent Continuous Improvement Plan presentations. She stated schools are working on integrating language with Illustrative Math during these assessment blocks. Ms. Parsons also shared that mid-year assessments are quickly approaching as well as finalized dates for summative assessments.

I.D. Student Representative Reports

- Chase reported the winter season has officially commenced. Girls' basketball won against Stamford last night and are 3-0; boys' basketball is 0-2 but will play Simsbury tonight at home; ice hockey 0-3 and will play tomorrow night against West Springfield; wrestling are competing tonight against Portland at home; indoor track is preparing for NCCC Invitational Meet in Hartford on January 14th; swimming and diving competed against Enfield, Suffield, and Ellington yesterday and will host Northwest Catholic at the YMCA pool on Tuesday, January 3rd.
- Chorus and band performed during advisory today in a full school assembly.
- Students are participating in winter spirit week this week.

A motion was made by Rosemarie Weber and seconded by David Peling to move up agenda item, **II. Public Comment**, to before item **I.E. Business Manager's Report**. This motion passed unanimously at 7:11 p.m.

II. Public Comment

Carolers stopped into the meeting to sing a couple of Christmas carols with the Board.

I. Administrative Reports (Cont'd)

I.E. Business Manager's Report

Ms. Anna Robbins, Business Manager, presented the November 2022 Statement of Accounts to the Board and stated the full-year forecast shows an overbudget condition of \$615K which is better than the previous month by \$70K. The forecast for regular education of \$40K is favorable and is holding steady from the previous month. Purchased instructional services, specifically substitutes, continues to contribute to the overbudget condition. In addition, the cost and usage of electricity continues to climb. Savings in salaries as well as in transportation offset these increases. Special education is overbudget \$655K which is \$68K better than last month. Tuition and transportation continue to reflect multiple changes in placements since the budget was developed. Individual needs have also prevented our typical sharing of transportation for multiple students this year. Revenue to the town is favorable \$439K due to the increase in the special education Excess Cost Grant as well as billing for special education services from other towns which should bring in about \$90K more. The district remains in a positive forecast for this year and the five-year forecast. Rosemarie Weber stated this was reviewed in the Finance Subcommittee this evening. Whitney Sanzo inquired if the Excess Cost Grant was a one-time grant. Anna Robbins explained it is not a one-time grant and is based on our spending. Any spending that goes over the 4.5 times rate of our per pupil expenditure, the state reimburses 73% and that revenue goes to the town.

III. Consent Agenda

III.A. Minutes

A motion was made by Rosemarie Weber and seconded by Whitney Sanzo that the Granby Board of Education adopt the consent agenda. This motion passed at 7:20 p.m.

IV. Old Business

There was no Old Business to report this evening.

V. New Business

V.A. FY24 Plus One Budget

Dr. Grossman presented the FY24 Plus One Budget to the Board. Ms. Thrall stated this Plus One Budget is being presented a little ahead of schedule this year to provide for review. Dr. Grossman thanked his administrative team for being present this evening and working with their staffs on this budget. He also stated every budget needs to have a very good Business Manager and he thanked Anna Robbins for all of her work on the budget. Dr. Grossman reviewed the timeline for the Plus One Budget and requested the Board send him any questions by December 30th in order that they can be answered at the January 4th meeting when the budget will be up for approval to be sent to the Board of Finance (BOF). He stated the Plus One is where the budget is at this point in time prior to really knowing what the BOF would like the BOE to put forward with regard to a budget guideline. He stated this budget strongly aligns with the *Granby Public Schools' Moving Together Strategic Plan* and was a very difficult budget to put together with the rising cost of utilities, the cost of ESSER grant funds being moved to the operating budget as well as the increased cost of special education. He went on to state that this budget does not cut any programs at this time and is at 5.94%. Dr. Grossman explained just to roll over from this year to next year, the budget would be at 2.68%. The increase for special education is a 2.98% increase over this year's budget; a 0.38% in all other line items; a savings of 0.12% in retirement savings; and, a 0.02% in ESSER Grant funds. Dr. Grossman went on to share with the Board that the average increase in special education over the last four Plus One Budgets is 0.96%.

Dr. Grossman reviewed the ESSER Grant Funding showing personnel currently in the ESSER Grants which will need to be moved over into the Operating Budget. The total cost of personnel in the grant this year is \$246,645. The total cost after moving these positions over to the operating budget next school year will be \$210,239 which is a savings of \$36,000. He then reviewed the projected enrollment for the next 5 years as well as potential reductions in non-certified/certified staff.

Dr. Grossman began to review the Plus One Memo with the Board and stated the BOF unofficial guideline is 3.0%. He reviewed health benefits; transportation; salary negotiations; utilities; special education; fees/tuition (which is to be determined); enrollment (which will be trending downward the next five years); Quality & Diversity (which maintains a positive five-year balance); and, ESSER Grant funding.

Dr. Grossman reviewed the small capital budget summary for furniture, fixtures & equipment; maintenance; technology; and transportation. Items in these categories will be reviewed further in the memo. Staffing and notables were discussed for the 2023-2024 school year. A net of -0.23 staff members are included in the FY24 Plus One Budget. He reviewed some of the positions moving from the ESSER Grant to the Operating Budget for 2023-2024 as follows: Social Worker (District); Board Certified Behavioral Analyst Support (District); and, a Wilson Reading Tutor (District). There is an addition of a K-2 Early Intervention Specialist as well as a reduction of a Classroom Teacher at Kelly Lane; however, there will be the same number of sections for classes at Kelly Lane. Other positions to be moved from the ESSER grant to the operation budget are Teaching Assistants (Kelly Lane); Intervention Tutors (Kelly/Wells); Tutors (MS); and a Counseling & Academic Support Center Teaching Assistant (HS). There will also be a reduction of 0.43 Teaching Assistant at the high school to reflect the change in student need. Dr. Grossman reviewed some of the Notables in 2023-2024 such as athletic field maintenance at the high school and a composting program at Kelly Lane and Wells Road. Dr. Grossman also shared that this Plus One Budget does not reflect any impact of state legislation with regard to K-3 Reading Curriculum.

In 2024-2025, there will be a net of -0.5 staff member which includes a part-time custodian (District); an Instructional Technology Specialist (District); and, a Math Interventionist which will be instituted in lieu of a current Math Tutor. Dr. Grossman stated with regard to alternative school programming, that this work is currently in progress and will hopefully start in FY25 with a \$0 cost due to the allocation of FTEs and expenses. Additionally, the Teacher in Residence Program will continue and Dr. Grossman stated he is also projecting a reduction 2.0 FTEs in non-certified/certified staff members in FY25.

In 2025-2026, Dr. Grossman stated he anticipates the inclusion of a Reading & Writing Interventionist at the Middle School but once again projects a decrease in 2.0 FTEs of non-certified/certified staff and likewise for school years 2026-2027 and 2027-2028.

Dr. Grossman reviewed the FY24 Funded Small Capital list for all of the schools and highlighted some items from the list. Next, he reviewed the maintenance list for all of the schools and highlighted some areas to be addressed next year, such as, a badge entry system at Kelly Lane; completion of the Culinary Arts Classroom; grass for the pit field and baseball field; and, a new scoreboard for the middle school. Technology small capital was also reviewed which is primarily replacement equipment of interactive digital classroom displays. Lastly, Transportation small cap was reviewed and the pick-up truck requested last year was not purchased so it is in this budget as well as some maintenance equipment.

Dr. Grossman concluded by stating the Plus One Budget is 5.94%; however, he does not anticipate this will be the number when he presents the FY24 Administrative Budget in March and that a lot can happen between now and then. This budget is defined by the rising cost of utilities, rising cost of special education and the loss of ESSER Grant funds. Dr. Grossman stated any questions should be sent to Linda Powell, Anna Robbins, Jennifer Parsons, and himself by December 30th in order that the answers to the questions can be answered on January 4th.

Sarah Thrall asked Board members to please review this budget and think about what kind of questions they would like to ask at the January 4th meeting. She inquired if there were any questions the Board wanted to ask Dr. Grossman at this point in time. David Peling inquired about the special education Excess Cost Grant, specifically, the cost of transportation increasing over \$500K. Anna Robbins explained the transportation costs on the spreadsheet which compares the FY22 actual budget number, FY23 budget number and anticipated FY24 costs. In FY24 there is a \$620K increase or 111% in the transportation line item. There were no other questions and Board members will send any questions by December 30th.

VI. Miscellaneous

VI.A. Board Standing Committee Reports

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

This Subcommittee did not meet this evening.

VI.A.2. Finance/Personnel/Facilities

Rosemarie Weber reported this Subcommittee met this evening and discussed the November Statement of Accounts. She stated the Finance Subcommittee typically reviews revenue for programming such as pay-for-play and preschool and determines whether or not fees need to be adjusted. Tonight, preschool tuition was reviewed and it has been several years since this has been increased. It was voted on and approved to increase tuition by 2% (Approx. \$30). Additionally, a Building Committee update was provided. The referendum passed and the roof will be repaired this summer. In a food service update, breakfast and lunch are no longer free except for those who qualify. No issues have been reported. Lastly, looked ahead at a possible appropriation request to the town at the end of the year.

VI.B. Other Board-Related Reports**VI.B.1. CREC/CABE**

Kristina Gilton reported the next CREC Council Meeting is in January.

VI.B.2. Granby Education Foundation

Whitney Sanzo stated the GEF toured the Video Production Studio on Monday. It was a very exciting evening. Also reviewed some grant requests coming in and the GEF are receiving some great ones.

I.D. Student Representative Reports**VI.C. Calendar of Events**

Sarah Thrall stated winter break is coming up and there are also some concerts in January as well as Board Meetings.

VI.D. Board Member Announcements

There were no Board Member announcements this evening.

VI.E. Action Items

Board members should send any questions on to Dr. Grossman, Anna Robbins, and Linda Powell.

VII. Adjournment

A motion was made by Rosemarie Weber and seconded by David Peling to adjourn the meeting. This motion passed unanimously at 8:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Nolan
Board Secretary