

**Regular Board of Education Meeting – Draft Minutes**  
**Wednesday, June 7, 2023, 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 Chase Alexander and Tess Bajek (Student Representatives)

Absent Board Members: None

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 to the meeting as well as those joining on Zoom and stated there are many end-of-year celebrations this week. She attended the Unified Sports celebration at Kelly Lane and congratulated Colleen Bava and her staff on the success of this program. Ms. Thrall shared that she also attended the high school award programs as well as the retiree/25-year luncheon.

### **I.B. Superintendent's Announcements**

- Dr. Grossman welcomed everyone in attendance, online and via GCTV as well as to staff, students, administrators, and fellow board members.
- A statement was read regarding the video shown to Wells Road Students on June 1<sup>st</sup>: The district acknowledges that effective communication is the foundation of building trust and maintaining strong relationships with the school and community. The administration has heard from parents who voiced concern about some of the content in the video, parents who would have liked to receive notification regarding the video, and from parents who support the principal sharing the message with the students. With this in mind, the district will work to communicate more effectively in the future with our families as we move forward together to best serve our students and to continue to build a supportive and respectful environment for all, grounded in our Granby Public Schools' Vision of the Graduate to become powerful thinkers, effective collaborators and compassionate contributors.
- Congratulations to all of our high school students who received awards and scholarships last week at the Senior and Underclassmen Award Ceremonies and to community members who donated funds.
- The last family partnership event of the school year with Granby and Hartford families was held at Dunkin Donuts Stadium. Granby will work to continue growing this program in the next school year.
- The 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Washington trip went very well and students had a great time.
- There was a Culminating Ceremony for Unified Sports at Kelly Lane last week. Thank you to Sarah Thrall for attending. This program was very successful this year.
- The retiree/25-year luncheon was held today at Holcomb Farm Pavilion and the following retirees and 25-year employees were recognized. Retirees: Sue Alender, Kathleen Allen, Ann Boardman, Shirley Cowles, Dale Heller, Lori Hoeckele, Henrica Holden, Pamela Mitchell, and Linda Touchette. 25-year employees: John Bikowski and Laura Smith. Thank you to Sarah Thrall, Rosemarie Weber and Kristina Gilton for attending this special event.
- The 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Moving-Up Ceremony will be held tomorrow evening at 6:00 p.m. in the High School Auditorium and, of course, high school graduation will be held on Friday evening at 5:30 p.m.
- Field Day for Kelly Lane School was cancelled today due to weather and is rescheduled to Monday.
- The College Explorations Summer Seminar will be held June 20-22 this year.
- There will be half days for all schools next week with the last day of school on June 14<sup>th</sup>.
- The next regularly scheduled Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 21<sup>st</sup>.

### **I.C. Assistant Superintendent's Report**

Ms. Jennifer Parsons, Assistant Superintendent, shared current practices and comparisons of the new policy, Gifted and Talented Students Program, stating there is new legislation for districts to identify students who are gifted and talented. Granby is currently identifying students and a committee will be formed to look at current practices and revise them next year. If this policy is adopted, identification will need to occur at PPT meetings. Additionally, creative, visual and performing arts students will also be identified as gifted and talented. Presently, the district identifies students in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade and the new policy is Kindergarten through Grade 12. Ms. Parsons stated multiple measures will be used with the new policy; however, currently, a wide variety of sources are being used. Lastly, Ms. Parsons shared that services are offered to students who are identified and this policy will recommend using guidelines the state offers with regard to services. Granby will compare the services currently offered with the state guidelines.

## **I.D. Student Representative Reports**

- Tess Bajek stated seniors will graduate on Friday with rehearsals tomorrow and Friday morning.
- Seniors will do a walkthrough dressed in their caps and gowns at Kelly Lane and Wells Road schools to see students and teachers.
- Congratulations to all seniors who won an award or scholarship last week.
- Tess thanked the Board for being able to serve as Student Representative the past two years.
- Chase Alexander stated exams start tomorrow with period 7 and 8 and conclude next week.
- With regard to sports, he stated all teams have officially concluded their season. Track participated in a state open last week and senior Jacob Shine won Class M discus competition and Aiden Barbee qualified for the New England competition with his 6<sup>th</sup> place finish in pole vaulting.

Sarah Thrall presented Tess with a gift from the Board and thanked her for her dedicated service to the Board of Education the past two years and read a brief description of what Tess was involved with in her time at the high school. Tess will head to the University of Massachusetts-Amherst in the fall and will study Sociology.

## **I.E. Annual Technology Report**

Mr. Jon Lambert, Director of Technology, presented the Annual Technology Report to the Board and thanked the department staff who provide a high level of technical support to staff and students. He reviewed the positions held of each department staff member as well as the areas of support. Mr. Lambert provided an update on security and disaster recovery stating improvements were made to the existing system storage and software systems; efforts to monitor and fend off attacks; implementation of a single sign on for several software applications; implementation of multifactor authentication for staff accounts; updated security camera software; raptor visitor management and screening software; and, participation in the district's Emergency Planning Committee. With regard to network infrastructure, networking equipment was updated to improve network speeds between school buildings. Additionally, with regard to software, Mr. Lambert stated several new software platforms were rolled out and replaced and migrated an Individual Education Plan software to the State CT-SEDS program. Projects and improvements for the department included assistance with the wiring and design of the new high school broadcast room and phone systems are all on one platform and can be centrally managed. Mr. Lambert described the technology replacement schedule and gave an update on the 1-to-1 computing program stating grades 6 and 9 were replaced this school year. The department also provides support for meetings and events as well as works closely with the Town of Granby for their technology needs. Mr. Lambert reviewed some FY24 initiatives for the department to train a new incoming Technology Support Specialist; further develop cybersecurity plans; set up and roll out new data management and assessment platform; and, install 44 new 75-inch interactive displays at the high school. Lastly, Mr. Lambert shared what is trending in technology education and emerging technologies with regard to STEM education; cybersecurity; Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality in Learning; digital learning tools, etc. The Board thanked Mr. Lambert and his staff for all they do for staff and students.

## **II. Public Comment**

A motion was made by Rosemarie Weber and seconded by Kristina Gilton that the public comment section of the agenda be amended to have public comments be no longer than 3 minutes in length and to extend public comment from 20 minutes to 30 minutes. This motion passed unanimously at 7:41 p.m.

Liz Barlow stated she is a Clinical Social Worker and is in full support of what the district does with regard to diversity and inclusion and stated she supports Ms. Pauline Greer.

Nick D'Amato stated he supports students of all walks of life; however, it does not give the right to impede on other people's rights. Mr. D'Amato continued beyond his 3-minute allotment which led to the following motion:

**A motion was made by Whitney Sanzo and seconded by Rosemarie Weber for the Board to take a brief adjournment. This motion passed at 7:49 p.m. The Board rejoined the meeting at 7:52 p.m.**

Matt Brady stated he is the father of a transgender student at the middle school who has significant anxiety but is very fortunate to have an amazing group of friends, teachers and administrators. Mr. Brady was in favor of the video being shown to students.

Heather Lombardo stated she commends and is grateful for the video shown to students this week where the message was to accept students.

Nick Faraco stated he is a retired Guidance Counselor in Simsbury and has come across all types of students over the years. He inquired of the Board if this were 10 years ago, would we be here.

Jay Brown stated he is a Granby graduate and presently attends UConn. He stated the video would be useful to students and wished it was available when he was that age.

Nick Dethlefsen stated he is highly disappointed in parents' comments this evening and that the context in the video was specific. He stated there should be some sensitivity to other parents here this evening.

Ali Zafar stated he does not feel anyone in this room is advocating hate and that he had an issue with the video because he felt the video missed the mark on the message.

Kate Ciriello, a Wells Road parent, stated she supported Pauline Greer and the Wells Road school community and is in support of the video shown during pride month.

Cathy Watso stated more attention needs to be paid to motivations in our community. Culture wars divide people and are dangerous.

Mike Kramarenko stated he is disappointed in the Board and the school system for not notifying parents. These topics should be addressed at home and not in school.

Joe Wardrop stated he is disappointed but the Superintendent said going forward communication will be better. He also stated that Reading, Writing and Arithmetic should be taught in schools.

Alexis Chhabra inquired why the video was not shown last year and what makes this year different.

Britta Gotberg thanked Ms. Greer and hopes the BOE supports her. She stated she is grateful for Granby's inclusive school community.

### **III. Consent Agenda**

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

A motion was made by Rosemarie Weber and seconded by Monica Logan that the Granby Board of Education adopt the consent agenda. This motion passed unanimously at 8:21 p.m.

### **IV. Old Business**

#### **V.A. Second Reading and Approval of Revised Policy 6159 - Individualized Education Plan**

The Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communications Subcommittee recommended revised Policy 6159, Individualized Education Plan (IEP), to the Board for a second reading and approval. Ms. Parsons stated she has not received any comments on this policy and this is an update to the transition goals which is a statutory change. A motion was made by David Peling and seconded by Donna Nolan that the Granby Board of Education adopt revised Policy 6159, Individual Education Plan, as recommended by the Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communications Subcommittee. This motion passed at 8:22 p.m.

#### **V.B. First Reading of New Policy 6172.21 - Gifted and Talented Students Program**

The Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communications Subcommittee recommended new Policy 6172.21, Gifted and Talented Students Program, to the Board for a first reading. A motion was made by David Peling and seconded by Kristina Gilton that the Granby Board of Education adopt Policy 6172.21, Gifted and Talented Students Program, as recommended by the Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communications Subcommittee. This motion passed at 8:23 p.m.

### **V. New Business**

#### **V.A. Superintendent's Annual Report**

Dr. Jordan Grossman presented his annual report to the Board and stated accomplishments and progress are only made possible with the efforts of the entire school community. Dr. Grossman reviewed the *Student Learning and Achievement* goal and stated he is very pleased overall with the student achievement of the Granby Public Schools. He stated this goal was accomplished by the administrative team working together to develop best practices for use during data driven decision making; collaborating with Teachers College for ELA and CREC for Math; and, researching and vetting new web-based software called EduClimber that can house historic and current data and analyze as student, class and grade level data. The *Community Engagement* goal was attained with guidance from the *Moving Forward Together Strategic Plan* adopted in the fall of 2021 giving benchmarks of where the district is going. The Board requested for all budget goals and requests to be tied to the strategic plan and that was accomplished. Additionally, regular levels of communication with the BOE, town officials and the community were maintained. The *Safety and Social Emotional Well-Being* goal was accomplished by partnering with East Granby and the FVHD to hold a series of community conversations around the safe use of technology, trends in drug use and prevention strategies, community mental health first aid, and suicide prevention. With regard to *Budget Development and Fiscal Management*, Dr. Grossman thanked Mrs. Angela Ehrenwerth and Mrs. Heather Tanis for leading a committee

that led to the development of a plan for potential alternative programming. Dr. Grossman stated he will work with the incoming Superintendent to present to the BOE in the fall a program for high school students in the 2024-2025 school year. He stated he is also proud of the upcoming transition program for 18- to 22-year-old students this coming fall to be held at the YMCA. With regard to enrollment it is looking good for the fall of 2023 but the district will continue to monitor this. Dr. Grossman congratulated Mrs. Anna Robbins as well as Mr. Shannon Sullivan and Mr. Michael Dunn on the completion of the building projects at the high school and obtaining the grants and implementing the work that needed to be done. Dr. Grossman also thanked the Granby Education Foundation for their \$100K donation for the new Broadcast Studio and the Board of Finance for covering the overage of expenditures in special education and for adopting the 5.08% FY24 budget. The *Embracing Diversity* goal was accomplished by the continued development of the Granby Public Schools' Anti-Bias/Anti-Racism Plan; empowering the administrative team to lead; attending and chairing the Capitol Region PK-12 Safety and Emergency Management Committee; and, attending and chairing monthly State of Connecticut Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity meetings.

Sarah Thrall thanked Dr. Grossman and recognized him for his service to the Granby Public Schools and wished him well in his new position. Donna Nolan thanked Dr. Grossman for leading the district through the pandemic and getting our students and staff back into school. Kristina Gilton stated she was on the Reopening Taskforce and knew from the first meeting that we had a Superintendent who was going to lead the district through a difficult time. Monica Logan thanked Dr. Grossman for the education he was able to give students the past couple of years as well as his support with regard to diversity and equity efforts. David Peling stated it was a blessing that he was in Granby during a very stormy period and Granby made gains during that time due to his efforts to keep students in school. Sarah Thrall echoed everyone's sentiments and stated she personally enjoyed working with Dr. Grossman and wishes him all the best.

## **VI. Miscellaneous**

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

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

David Peling stated this subcommittee met this evening and discussed monthly meetings with the administrative team; met with interventions; replacing SRBI with MTSS; implemented EduClimber (student interventions); met with Math and World Language to talk about progression; hiring is well underway and nearly complete; recruiting of Choice students is going well; Teacher of the Year has been chosen and will be revealed at closing ceremonies; met with K-12 vertical teams; and, had a brief discussion of the summer academy and a conversation of holding off on strings lessons until 1<sup>st</sup> grade.

#### **VI.A.2. Finance/Personnel/Facilities**

This subcommittee has not met. Approved minutes are in the packet.

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

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

Kristina Gilton stated CREC Council meetings are done for the year.

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

Whitney Sanzo stated a brief end-of-year meeting was held and there were no updates.

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

Sarah Thrall stated many end-of-year celebrations at all of the schools.

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

Kristina Gilton stated that Luke Ranicar won the statewide Halo Award for his performance in Little Shop of Horrors. Additionally, Monica Logan thanked Tess Bajek for sharing her thoughts and opinions as a BOE student representative.

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

There were no action items this evening.

## **VII. Adjournment**

A motion was made by Sarah Thrall and seconded by Rosemarie Weber to adjourn the meeting. This motion passed unanimously at 8:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Nolan, Board Secretary