

Regular Board of Education Meeting – Approved Minutes
Wednesday, November 15, 2023, 7:00 p.m.
Town Hall Meeting Room

Present Board Members: Monica Logan, Donna Nolan, Whitney Sanzo, Rosemarie Weber, and Chase Alexander and Katie O'Neill (Student Representatives).

Absent Board Members: Kristina Gilton, Katharine Leenders, David Peling

Rosemarie Weber called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

I. Administrative Reports

I.A. Chairman's Corner

Rosemarie Weber, Board Chair, thanked the high school for inviting her to the Veterans Day celebration and stated it was a very nice event. She shared a mattress sale will be held this Saturday, November 18th which is a fundraiser for the senior class as well as the Music Department. Ms. Weber also shared elections were held on November 7th and congratulated Monica Logan and David Peling on their re-election as well as congratulated Liz Barlow and Heather Lombardo who were in the audience. Additionally, she stated the Board must say goodbye to Katharine Leenders who was on the Board for a short time as well as Kristina Gilton who epitomized what it means to put students first and the Board looks forward to seeing what she will do for Granby in the future. Both Katharine and Kristina made tremendous contributions to the Board.

I.B. Superintendent's Report

- Ms. Burke welcomed everyone to the meeting in attendance as well as online GCTV and a special welcome to Ms. Angela Ehrenwerth and Jennifer Parsons who will share the Continuous Improvement Plan for special student populations.
- Ms. Burke thanked Kristina Gilton and Katharine Leenders for their service on the Board stating they were excellent members of the BOE. She congratulated Liz Barlow and Heather Lombardo as new BOE members and looks forward to them attending the next Board Meeting.
- National Kindness Day was on Monday, November 13th and was celebrated across the district and this week is also National Education Week and at the school level educators were recognized who support our students every day.
- Attended *A Christmas Carol* on opening night which was exciting and very well done. Congratulations to the students and directors of the play.
- Congratulations to student athletes on their successful fall seasons as well as their outstanding run at the start of the state tournament.
- Attended the joint collaboration between the GEF, Granby Public Library and Media Center Specialists for a Children's Book Festival on November 4th at Wells Road Intermediate School. The event was very well attended and a wonderful opportunity to celebrate books.
- A professional learning day took place on November 7th with workshops and sessions facilitated for teachers. Faculty members participated in two drives: one for the Granby Food Bank and one to collect toys for the Connecticut Children's Medical Center. Students from the Transition Academy sorted, organized and delivered the food to the food bank.
- Attended all of the Veterans Day celebrations. The schools honored veterans in various ways which were very meaningful.
- Currently working on the budget. A timeline for the budget will be shared later in the agenda.
- There is an early release day November 16th at the secondary level for conferences as well as on Wednesday November 22nd with no school on November 23rd and 24th.
- The next regularly scheduled Board Meeting will be held on December 6th.

Ms. Weber stated before moving to Student Representative Reports she would like to entertain a motion to table the District Communications Plan discussion due to some Board members' absence this evening and others not yet sworn in. A motion was made by Donna Nolan and seconded by Monica Logan to table Item 5.B., District Communications Plan, to the next Board Meeting on December 6th. This motion passed unanimously at 7:08 p.m.

I.C. Student Representative Reports

- Katie O'Neill shared there will be a mattress fundraiser on Saturday at GMHS for the Music Department and senior class.
- The GMHS Drama Department put on an amazing performance of *A Christmas Carol*.
- Local veterans were invited in last week for Veterans Day and answered questions developed by the student body.
- The annual Turkey Trot was held this week during advisory. Money raised benefitted the local food bank.
- World Language Honors Society held a Trivia Night on November 15th. Members from Spanish, French and Chinese Honor Societies put together questions spanning all three cultures.
- Conferences will be held on November 16th.
- Chase reported on the fall sports seasons as follows: Football will travel to SMSA on November 17th and the winner of that game wins the league; volleyball concluded their season last week after a great season with a 20-7 record including conference tournament play; boys' soccer made it to the second round of the state tournament and ended the season with a final record of 13-4-1; girls' soccer made it to the quarter finals and ended their season with a 16-3 record; field hockey also made it to the state tournament and ended their season with a 9-6-2 record; cross country competed in the Class SS State Championship at Wickham State Park on October 28th and the State Open was held the following week in the same location; and, the boys' and girls' soccer team put together a scrimmage on November 13th which was a lot of fun.

I.D. Business Manager's Report

Ms. Anna Robbins, Business Manager, presented the October 2023 statement of accounts stating the forecast for this year as of October 31st shows an unfavorable balance of \$269K which is \$21K worse than the previous month. Regular education is overbudget \$95K which is \$67K worse than the previous month. Changes to the forecast for electricity and substitute services contribute to the increase. Substitute services will be closely monitored districtwide. Ms. Robbins stated it is not typical to have a negative balance this time of year; however, with the increase in electricity and substitute services, she felt the need to report this. The special education forecast continues to be overbudget is \$47K better than the previous month due to a favorable change in tuition and transportation for out-of-district students. Savings in salaries due to transitioning staff contributes to the favorable change. Revenue to the town is projected to be unfavorable at this time, a factor used in the excess cost grant being the contributing factor. The forecast in the Q&D Fund continues to be positive due to a strong opening balance from the previous fiscal year. Donna Nolan stated the Finance Subcommittee reviewed this report this evening and also discussed some of the items such as electricity and education cost sharing. The town is pursuing long-term efficiency programs or an energy audit for savings. Rosemarie Weber suggested for the Finance Subcommittee to periodically review the progress of the energy cost saving programs.

I. Public Comment

Susan Regan, Hungary Road, Granby. Ms. Regan stated she sent an email on October 24th to Rosemarie Weber and copied Cheri Burke, Linda Powell, Mark Fiorentino, and Jennifer Parsons, with regard to how public comment is done at East Granby BOE Meetings. No response was given to this email. Another email was sent on November 2nd which also received no response. Ms. Regan stated she is extremely disappointed as a taxpayer that she did not receive a reply to her email.

II. Consent Agenda

A. Minutes

A motion was made by Donna Nolan and seconded by Whitney Sanzo that the Granby Board of Education adopt the consent agenda. This motion passed unanimously at 7:24 p.m.

III. Old Business

There was no Old Business to report.

IV. New Business

A. Continuous Improvement Plan for Special Student Populations

Ms. Angela Ehrenwerth, Director of Pupil Services, and Ms. Jennifer Parsons, Assistant Superintendent, presented the Continuous Improvement Plan for special student populations. Ms. Parsons shared a graphic which can be found on the state website and shared data for the 2022-23 school year. Enrollment remained in the 1700s over the past few years. She highlighted that a state average of 42% of students are eligible for free and reduced meals and in Granby it is 15.7% which is a slight increase over the past few years. With regard the percentage of students with disabilities, this remained in the 15% range while the state average continues to grow. Ms. Parsons stated this graphic will show a little bit of what Granby looks like as a whole. Granby's accountability index is 81.6% which meets the state goal of 80%. Ms. Parsons then shared the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) in the district consisting of levels of support within the school system as follows: Tier 1-Effective Differentiated Core Instruction; Tier 2-Targeted Enrichment Interventions & Supports; Tier 3-Intensive Remedial Interventions & Supports. Ms. Parsons stated there are many ways the district is supporting our various learners.

Ms. Ehrenwerth presented data on the special education student population stating there are 274 students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and 183 students with Section 504 Plans across the district equating to 25% of students with plans. She presented the categories of the students with disabilities across the district including Dyslexia, ADD/ADHD as well as students with an autism spectrum disorder. Qualifying conditions for Section 504 Plan students can include a broad range of medical, physical or mental impairments. Staff members that comprise the Special Education Department were reviewed including Special Education Teachers, School Psychologists, School Social Workers, Speech & Language Pathologists, Physical/Occupational Therapists, and Special Education Teaching Assistants. Ms. Weber inquired if there is a rise in the percentage of students with plans in the district. Ms. Ehrenwerth stated the Section 504 numbers are rising particularly at the secondary level.

Ms. Ehrenwerth reviewed *Board Goal #1 Student Achievement* for 100% of students with special needs to show measurable gains in academic achievement. In ELA students who took the spring STAR showed progress from 11 to 18%. For Math students taking the spring STAR showed progress from 4 to 23%; however, there is work to do across the board. Last year's 11th grade students scored 43.8% and met the state standard but saw a dip to 37.5% on the SAT. In Math they scored 18.8% on the PSAT and 25.0% on the SAT. She shared that Section 504 data is not reflected in these numbers. Monica Logan inquired if the scores were indicative of scores 3-5 years ago. Ms. Ehrenwerth stated this data looks at students new to IEPs and 504s. Ms. Burke stated this will be looked at to see what can be shared.

Ms. Ehrenwerth shared action steps for her Department to place an emphasis and focus on multi-sensory learning techniques and strategies; build capacity around technology tools; enhance progress monitoring tools to facilitate growth and instruction; and, expand in-district professional development for special education teaching assistants. Examples of specially designed instruction and goals for literacy, writing, math, communication, behavior, and transition were shared.

For *Board Goal #2, Community Engagement* for the Pupil Services Department to partner with families to support engagement, ongoing communication and collaboration is being accomplished by continuing to partnership with the Special Education Parent Teacher Organization; promoting personalized, reliable and regular channels of communication by case managers to families; full implementation of the CT-SEDS Parent Portal for IEP and 504 documents; and, continuing to build on- and off-campus internship opportunities. Ms. Ehrenwerth also shared improvements made to the Pupil Services webpage.

B. First Reading District Communications Plan

This item was tabled to the December 6, 2023 Board of Education Meeting.

C. FY25 Budget Timeline and Process

Ms. Burke shared the FY25 budget timeline stating she is very happy to share that everything is on course. All department and school budgets were reviewed. The FY25 Plus One Budget will be presented on December 20th and the FY25 Administrative Budget in March. Ms. Burke pointed out on the timeline, due to an update to the Town Charter, the Town Meeting will be held on April 1st instead of April 8th.

V. Miscellaneous

A. Board Standing Committee Reports

1. Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communication

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

2. Finance/Personnel/Facilities

Donna Nolan reported this subcommittee met this evening. The change order for the roof is almost complete. There were repairs to a ladder due to a safety issue. There is one other issue with regard to drainage and the architect is working with contractor to put in a change order for those repairs. If everything goes as planned the Building Committee scheduled to meet on Monday, November 20th, will be able to review and approve this change order which will hopefully get the project to the finish line.

B. Other Board-Related Reports

1. CREC/CABE

Nothing to report.

2. Granby Education Foundation

Whitney Sanzo reported the GEF is meeting next Monday.

C. Calendar of Events

The calendar of events is as reported with conferences at the middle school and high school; mattress fundraiser; NHS Sports tournament; and, winter choral concert on December 21st.

D. Board Member Announcements

There were no Board member announcements this evening.

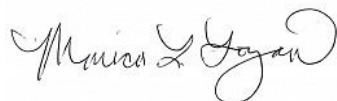
E. Action Items

- 1) The Finance Subcommittee to follow up on energy efficiency studies
- 2) Breakdown data for students transitioning off IEPs in relation to proficiency scores

VI. Adjournment

A motion was made by Donna Nolan and seconded by Monica Logan that the Granby Board of Education adjourn the Board of Education Meeting. This motion passed unanimously at 8:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Monica Logan
Board Secretary