

Regular Board of Education Meeting – Approved Minutes
Wednesday, September 20, 2023, 7:00 p.m.
Town Hall Meeting Room

Present Board Members: Kristina Gilton, Katharine Leenders, Monica Logan, Donna Nolan, David Peling (via Zoom), Rosemarie Weber, and Katherine O’Neill (arrived at 7:50 p.m.) and Chase Alexander (Student Representatives).

Absent Board Members: Whitney Sanzo

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

I. Administrative Reports

I.A. Chairman’s Corner

Rosemarie Weber, Board Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting as well as those joining on Zoom. She announced that Spanish Exchange students will arrive in the district the evening of September 23rd and will be at the high school for the next two weeks traveling around with their host families as well as visiting Kelly Lane and Wells Road. Ms. Weber also shared she was proud to announce that the high school was awarded the Michael’s Achievement Cup this year. This award exists to honor CIAC member schools that provide exemplary athletic programs for their willingness to subscribe to the class act sportsmanship standards empowering students to take an active role in their school climate and their continued support for community service. Congratulations to the Granby Public Schools athletic community. This award speaks volumes of our students and their level of commitment to their sports as well as how they conduct themselves both in the classroom and in the community.

I.B. Superintendent’s Report

- Ms. Burke welcomed everyone in attendance as well as on Zoom.
- On Sept. 14th curriculum night was held at the middle school. Both the middle and high school curriculum nights were well attended and extremely informative. Grade 3 Curriculum Night was held on Sept. 19th and was very well attended. There is one more curriculum night for Wells Road on Sept. 21st for Grades 4 & 5 and Kelly Lane will have theirs on Tuesday, Sept. 26th, for Kindergarten and Grade 1 and Thursday, Sept. 28th, for PreK and Grade 2.
- Curriculum At-a-Glance documents for Grade 3 were passed out to the Board. Ms. Burke stated this document will be available at curriculum nights for each of the elementary grade levels. Following the curriculum nights, these documents will be posted on the website. It engages families and interested community members in units of study for Reading, Writing, Math, Science and Social Studies.
- Community Communication Plan Focus Groups are underway. The focus group for staff and faculty of Granby Public Schools was held 9/20 and the information received supports information already gathered in the surveys. Students in Grades 6-12 were sent the survey today to complete and parents/guardians of these students were notified. The Community Focus Group was rescheduled to Sept. 28th from 5:30-6:30 p.m. and a parent/family Focus Group will be held on Sept. 27th. Both of these focus groups are full.
- There will be no school on Sept. 25th in observance of the holiday and an early release on Sept. 27th for professional development.
- Financial Aid night will be held in GMHS auditorium on Sept. 28th at 7 p.m.
- The search for an Assistant Principal at the middle school is well underway. In just shy of one week, over 60 candidates have applied for the position and the application deadline is about 2 weeks away.
- The next regularly scheduled Board Meeting will be held on October 4th.

I.C. Student Representative Reports

- Planning for spirit week is underway, with dates for the homecoming dance, pep rally, and games planned with student government generating themes for each day of spirit week.
- The Clubs and Activities Fair was a success, with underclassmen learning about some of their extracurricular options during advisory last week and upperclassmen signing up for clubs during advisory today.
- High school seniors and their families participated in a senior post-grad planning meeting and learned about different options after high school.

- NHS and the World Language Honor Societies have made progress toward planning their induction ceremonies for new members which will take place in October.
- Katie O'Neill put together the sports report this evening but was playing in a volleyball game. The last game for football was against Valley Regional on Sep. 14th and it was a win. There is an upcoming game at Ellington on Sept. 22nd. Boys Soccer is currently undefeated at 4-0. They defeated Windsor Locks on Sept. 19th and will play Coventry Sept. 22nd at home. Girls Soccer is currently 2-1 and just defeated Windsor Locks 5-0. They will play Coventry on Sept. 22nd. Cross Country had a meet on Sept. 20th in East Granby. Volleyball is 3-1 and their next game is Sept. 26th vs. Ellington. Field Hockey is 2-1-1 and defeated Somers/Rockville on Sept. 28th 6-0. Their next game is Sept. 21st at Conard in West Harford.

I.D. Business Manager's Report

Ms. Anna Robbins, Business Manager, presented the June 2023 and July/August 2023 statement of accounts. FY23 financial results show an overbudget condition of \$273K with special education expenditures unfavorable \$549K and regular education favorable \$276K. These results were better than projected during the school year and forecast with almost 100% accuracy. Savings in salaries, transportation, and supplies offset overbudget condition in electricity, substitutes and out-of-district tuition and transportation. An additional appropriation for the shortfall was requested by the BOE and approved in June 2023. An early look at the financial forecast for FY24 shows an unfavorable forecast of \$279K with special education projected to be overbudget \$238K and regular education projected to be overbudget \$41K. This is an annual forecast but the district is obligated to make the best forecast at this time. Factors influencing the forecast include changes in personnel for regular and special education. Additionally, forecasted out-of-district tuition and transportation compared to budget is unfavorable due to the lapse in time between budget development and the beginning of the school year. Revenue to the town is slightly unfavorable at \$155K due to the Special Education Excess Cost Grant being the only contributing fact at this time. Donna Nolan stated this report was reviewed and approved in the Finance Subcommittee this evening.

II. Public Comment

Mike Kramarenko, Notch Road, Granby, stated 6th grade started off smoothly and he thanked the Board and Ms. Burke for all they do.

Ali Zafar (via phone on Zoom) stated he is looking forward to curriculum night at Wells Road tomorrow evening and echoed his gratitude toward Ms. Burke and the Board. He shared communication has been very responsive and he is looking forward to attending the focus group discussion.

III. Consent Agenda

III.A. Minutes

A motion was made by Donna Nolan and seconded by Monica Logan that the Granby Board of Education adopt the consent agenda. This motion passed unanimously at 7:19 p.m.

IV. Old Business

There was no Old Business to report.

V. New Business

V.A. Annual Summative Testing Report

Ms. Jennifer Parsons, Assistant Superintendent, presented the summative test results from the 2022-2023 academic year to the Board. She informed the Board that three assessments will be discussed this evening, Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBAC), Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and the SAT. All of these assessments are used across the country and offer an annual snapshot of student achievement. Assessment data is used throughout the year to make educational decisions. SBAC is administered in the last 12 weeks of school to students in Grades 3-8. Scores are broken down into four achievement levels: Level 1–Does not meet the achievement standard; Level 2–Approaching the achievement standard; Level 3–Meeting the achievement standard; and, Level 4–Exceeding the achievement standards. Ms. Parsons presented the ELA grade level results there is an overall 2% growth and 4th grade scores at the end of last year had a 12% growth increase and were the highest

achieving grade last year. She shared that she and Ms. Burke have been meeting with every school regarding student achievement data and are looking deeper into the transition years. Continued commitment with Teachers College and a refined use of intentional data practices as well as a focus on small group instruction are some strategies put into place. Next, Math scores were presented and scores have steadily gained from year to year. The average score for Grades 3, 4 and 7 is 66%. Grade 3 scores came in strong, Grade 4 scores grew and Grade 7 scores have seen great incremental growth. Standard and student levels of Grades 5 and 6 need to be examined. Ms. Parsons shared where Granby falls in comparison to other DRG B districts. For overall proficiency in ELA and Math, Granby falls in the middle for ELA and is last in Math. Kristina Gilton inquired if there is a way to find out if other districts are using other math programs or what is successful for them. Ms. Parsons stated she did learn that districts who were scoring well were using Illustrative Math and, consequently, this is one reason Granby has incorporated that resource.

Ms. Parsons discussed NGSS results which students take every three years beginning in Grade 5. Last year, Grade 11 had the highest score to-date. ELA and Science scores are aligned well and the district will continue to embed interim assessments and literacy in content areas. The DRG comparisons were shared for NGSS results and Granby is in the middle and significantly above the state score averages. Ms. Parsons presented the School-Day SAT scores which is a summative state assessment for Grade 11 as well as for college entrance. PSATs are also given in Grades 8-11 prior to the School-Day SAT given to Grade 11 in March. In 2016, this test was changed from an aptitude test to an achievement test. Proficiency on this assessment is a 480 on ERW and 520 in Math. Granby is significantly higher than the state average and has maintained its average in the 70th percentile. Average state scores are decreasing. The district is working on embedding SAT experiences in all grades and content areas and, at the 6-12 level, primarily at the high school, online assessments will model after SAT questions and data will be looked at and practiced in small groups. Granby falls 4th in ERW proficiency against the DRG and in 6th place in Math proficiency.

In summation, the district will continue to build common instructional framework moving into practice and feedback; embedding a culture of professional collaboration; monitor data to ensure small group instruction and differentiation; support teacher leaders and coaches in leading teams in the work; implement data warehouse and analytics tool (EduClimber); and refocus on supporting learners through Multi-Tiered Systems of Support.

Ms. Burke stated the goal for student achievement is rigorous and acknowledged there is a gap that needs to be closed. She stated very intense and lengthy data meetings were held with all of the schools and, in addition, this goal has been shared with staff asking them to identify growth targets that are respectful to the learning taking place. This is a slightly different model and it is a risk. Ms. Burke stated the percentage point may not be met but she is assured a better job will be done for each student along the way and tools afforded by the Board are just starting to come together.

Rosemarie Weber thanked Ms. Parsons for her presentation and stated Granby has work to do but has great pieces in place and great people. This was a meaningful presentation to the Board and they are very thankful for Cheri's leadership. Granby will get where they need to be with this leadership.

Katie O'Neill, Student Representative, joined the meeting after her game and informed the Board that the volleyball team won their game this evening.

V.B. FY23 Year-End Budget Transfers

The Board discussed the approval of FY23 year-end budget transfers as recommended by the Business Manager and Finance/Personnel/Facilities Subcommittee. Anna Robbins stated a budget is approved as presented in the budget book and at the end of the year there is an obligation to transfer funds in the budget that will equal the spending. It is a formality to do this. The transfers that are the most substantial are electricity, tuition, substitutes, and out-of-district tuition and transportation. A motion was made by Donna Nolan and seconded by Monica Logan that the Granby Board of Education approve the FY23 year-end budget transfers as recommended by the Business Manager and Finance/Personnel/Facilities Subcommittee. This motion passed unanimously at 8:12 p.m.

V.C. Approval of Signatures Change Form for Food Service Program

The Board discussed the approval of the Authorized Signatures Change Form for the Food Service Program on behalf of the Connecticut State Department of Education, School Health, Nutrition and Family Services. Rosemarie Weber stated this is a formality to include the new Superintendent of Schools, Cheri Burke. A motion was made by Donna Nolan and seconded by Kristina Gilton that the Granby Board of Education approve the Authorized Signatures Change Form reflecting the new Superintendent of Schools, Cheri Burke, as recommended by the Finance/Personnel/Facilities Subcommittee. This motion passed unanimously at 8:13 p.m.

VI. Miscellaneous (20 min.)

VI.A. Board Standing Committee Reports

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

This subcommittee did not meet.

VI.A.2. Finance/Personnel/Facilities

Donna Nolan reported this subcommittee met this evening to discuss the Statement of Accounts for June and July/August 2023. Received a Building Committee update and there are a few punch list items that need to be finalized. The Culinary Arts Phase I project went out to bid and the space should be completed in the next several months. The roof project is expected to be complete in about a month. Also discussed the renovation of the softball/baseball fields. There were problems with the irrigation system and hopefully the fields will be in tip-top shape for the spring season.

VI.B. Other Board-Related Reports

VI.B.1. CREC/CABE

Kristina Gilton stated she will have an update at the next meeting.

VI.B.2. Granby Education Foundation

There was no GEF report this evening.

VI.C. Calendar of Events

The calendar of events is as presented. Rosemarie Weber stated she would like to get back to Board members attending PTO/PAC meetings. Ms. Burke stated that PTO meetings will be scheduled soon.

VI.D. Board Member Announcements

There were no Board member announcements.

VI.E. Action Items

There were no action items to report this evening.

A motion was made by Rosemarie Weber and seconded by Donna Nolan to amend the agenda and add a brief Executive Session for the Granby Board of Education to enter into an Executive Session to discuss a collective bargaining issue. This motion passed unanimously at 8:19 p.m.

VII. Executive Session

A motion was made by Donna Nolan and seconded by Kristina Gilton to adjourn Executive Session. This motion passed unanimously at 8:44 p.m. A motion was made by Donna Nolan and seconded by Kristina Gilton that the Granby Board of Education enter back into regular session. This motion passed unanimously at 8:45.

VIII. Adjournment

A motion was made by Donna Nolan and seconded by Kristina Gilton that the Granby Board of Education adjourn the regular meeting. This motion passed unanimously at 8:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Monica Logan
Board Secretary