

**Regular Board of Education Meeting – Approved Minutes  
December 2, 2020, 7:00 p.m.  
High School Auditorium**

Present Board Members: Jenny Emery (via Zoom), Mark Fiorentino, Melissa Migliaccio, David Peling, Sarah Thrall, Rosemarie Weber, Brandon Webster (via Zoom), Jack DeGray and Jacob Scott (Student Representatives)

Absent Board Members: There were no absent Board Members.

Mark Fiorentino called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Mr. Fiorentino stated Melissa Migliaccio is stepping down as Board Chair due to numerous responsibilities at work. He thanked her for her dedication, leadership and hard work during unprecedented challenges and leading the district through those challenges.

Ms. Migliaccio stated that everyone on the Board has made this a labor of love and that the Board works extremely well together. She stated it is a privilege to have served and thanked everyone for their kind words.

### **I. Organizational Meeting – Election of Board Chair**

Mr. Fiorentino stated that a new Board Chair needs to be elected. Votes should be in writing; however, inquired if there were any objections to Jenny Emery and Brandon Webster voting verbally. They will then send an email to Linda Powell confirming their vote in writing. Mr. Fiorentino nominated Sarah Thrall as Board Chair. Rosemarie Weber seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations for Board Chair. Board members voted as follows: Mark Fiorentino (Sarah Thrall); Sarah Thrall (Sarah Thrall); Rosemarie Weber (Sarah Thrall); Melissa Migliaccio (Sarah Thrall); David Peling (Sarah Thrall); Jenny Emery (Sarah Thrall); and, Brandon Webster (Sarah Thrall). By a unanimous vote of 7-0, Sarah Thrall was named the new Board Chair.

Sarah Thrall, new Board Chair, shared opening remarks stating she has big shoes to fill and that Melissa Migliaccio is the reason she is serving on the Board and that she given incredible encouragement and has been an amazing supporter and mentor. She stated under Ms. Migliaccio's leadership she has seen the Board through hiring and onboarding a new Superintendent, administration hires, developing new Board goals and a global pandemic.

### **II. Administrative Reports**

#### **II.A. Chairman's Corner**

Ms. Thrall stated at the next Board Meeting, there will be a brief organizational meeting to assign Board members to subcommittees.

Ms. Thrall stated the BOE received a letter from the Granby Education Association regarding feedback from a survey conducted by the CT Education Association. She thanked teachers for completing this survey for sharing their thoughts regarding Covid-19 infection rates and the transition to less in-person instruction. Dr. Grossman and his staff work closely with the FVHD on a frequent basis and continue to follow their advice. The Stronger Together Plan was developed to allow the district to move into various models based on those recommendations and students and staff have been incredible in their flexibility and adaptability. She thanked teachers for always keeping Granby students first. Brandon Webster also thanked teachers for submitting the letter and stated he echoes and shares their concerns. He understands that administration needs to take advice from local health officials and follow their guidance. Ideally, if it could be controlled where all students and parents go, we would be in a much better place and if that could have been

managed that the district could have followed a different model like other districts and had full remote learning from Thanksgiving until the end of the holidays. Jenny Emery thanked teachers as well as everyone in Granby for all they are doing and stated health experts and administration have served us well thus far so she is happy to follow along that path. Mark Fiorentino stated he is appreciative of input from teachers and there is no right answer. This is an impossible task. Rosemarie Weber echoed other Board member sentiments and stated she is very proud of the Granby school community and to our Superintendent for the transparency of the work they do to keep our schools open. Ms. Weber served on the Reopening Task Force and stated there were a lot of concerns and challenges that had to be balanced in reopening. There were many stakeholders involved and 86% of our community wanted students back in school. She also stated that our teachers are our greatest asset. The Stronger Together Plan had provisions written in it for a possible surge and to follow the science which is what is being done. Melissa Migliaccio thanked the teachers and administrators and stated the district grounded the reopening in science and data the entire way and to deviate from that now does not make sense and that the data will continue to be monitored. Sarah Thrall thanked the Board for their comments and the teachers who work so hard to ensure that learning is happening regardless of location and to administration for offering teachers, staff and students the tools necessary to do so.

In concluding her remarks, Ms. Thrall stated it is with great sadness to extend heartfelt condolences on behalf of the Granby Board of Education to Cathryn Kibby, a long-time teacher at Kelly Lane Primary School, on the loss of her beloved husband, Mark. The Granby community is heartbroken as Mark was a former Granby Public Schools teacher who taught hundreds of students and his sons, Ben and Owen, are both Granby High School graduates. Thoughts and prayers are with the entire Kibby family.

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

- Dr. Grossman thanked Melissa Migliaccio for her guidance the past year as Board Chair and stated he looks forward to working with Sarah Thrall.
- Dr. Grossman also offered sincere condolences on behalf of the district to the Kibby family stating this is truly a loss for the Granby community district.
- Kelly Lane Primary school returned on Monday after a two-week absence from school after staffing concerns. Our teachers and students were outstanding during that 2-week remote period. This was a very difficult decision to shut down our youngest learners.
- This week the Granby Memorial High School had to be closed due to staffing concerns. Teachers and students transitioned wonderfully to remote learning.
- As you know, at any time, at the recommendation of the FVHD, we can change models and will change models only on their recommendation. We speak to the FVHD daily about concerns we have in the classroom, in our buildings and in the community. Schools will only stay open as long as the community continues to come together to keep students, families and our staff safe.
- People have mentioned that metrics have changed. There are metrics to determine what model we use. The state changed that plan 4-5 weeks ago now that they have more information on Covid. Ms. Jennifer Parsons, Assistant Superintendent, will speak about this in her report this evening.
- In the past few weeks some students have gone from full in-person learning to remote learning and from remote learning to in-person learning. At Kelly Lane, 3 students transitioned to full in-person and 3 to remote learning for a net of 0; Wells Road had 7 students transition to in-person and 3 students to remote learning; the middle school remained the same; the high school had 34 students transition to remote learning (currently 79 students remote at the high school). These numbers are being monitored by the district as well as the FVHD. Ms. Parsons will go over in her report this evening regarding contract tracing and how quarantine works.
- Continue to meet daily with the FVHD and DPH.

- Have had wonderful conversations with the book club, *Waking up White*. The next meeting will be held on Monday, December 7<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m.
- Wells Road will hold a PJ day tomorrow with a \$1 donation, this fundraiser is for CCMC. Additionally, if you bring a new pair of PJs in on Friday, Scholastic Books will donate a book for every pair of PJs collected.
- CIAC and DPH will meet in January and right now athletics are postponed until January 17<sup>th</sup>. Brian Maltese, Athletic Director, will give an update to the Board at an upcoming Board Meeting.
- The administrative team is working on the FY22 Plus One Budget and the Superintendent will present that budget to the Board on January 6<sup>th</sup>.
- The Building Committee continues to meet regarding the high school commons. Anna Robbins, Business Manager, will give an update to the Board at the next meeting.
- Met with the Intra-Board Advisory Committee (IBAC) last week and this year's focus will be on technology initiatives between the BOE and the town.
- Conferences were held virtually Monday through today and it was a very positive experience. Will analyze if virtual conferences are something that should continue in the future.
- The next BOE meeting will be held on December 16<sup>th</sup>.

Jenny Emery inquired if the increase almost doubling to go to remote learning at the high school is just since the Thanksgiving holiday or is it a longer timeframe and also if there are any concerns why a relatively large number in high school have changed their mind. Dr. Grossman stated some students just do not want to quarantine and are therefore choosing to change to remote learning. Ms. Parsons added that some of the shift at the high school happened in early November. The quality of remote learning being very high is one of the factors as well as the fact that high school students can work independently and the pause in activities is also a factor.

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

Ms. Jennifer Parsons, Assistant Superintendent, provided a report on contact tracing and stated Granby was in a glorious state of no COVID cases until November 4<sup>th</sup> and it has been a collaborative effort to do contact tracing. Granby has had 16 cases which is still relatively low compared to our student population. Ms. Parsons reviewed the scenarios for contact tracing and isolation for a positive case: Notification of a case; outreach to the individual (parent if student or a staff member); questions asked regarding symptoms, if there was testing done and when it occurred; the case is reviewed with FVHD; and, the impact on the school is determined. The FVHD speaks to individuals outside of the community. The timeframe looked at is 48 hours prior to the onset of symptoms or to the date the positive test was taken. If the person is asymptomatic 48 hours prior to the test is the timeframe. A list of close contacts is identified of persons who were in close contact with the individual for 15 minutes or longer and within 6 feet. Ms. Parsons stated by pulling out the positive case and quarantining close contacts, we are trying to break the transmission line. A positive case means that everyone in that household needs to quarantine. Individuals can go about their business unless the individual becomes symptomatic. Attendance, seating charts, support services (guidance, nurse, office), transportation, and additional school activities are all reviewed for close contacts. Once the list is made, FVHD is contacted. With regard to communications, each individual needs to be contacted. Communication begins with an email to the affected individual/family and then to the community. In contact with the FVHD daily and sometimes multiple times a day. A daily risk assessment, mitigation strategies as well as making sure we are following our screening tool, sanitizing, masking, etc. are reviewed. We rely on the medical experts at the state and local level and are following their guidance. Melissa Migliaccio inquired if infection rates are monitored with our remote students. Ms. Parsons stated, yes, remote students are required to report cases and attendance is also taken. If students are absent virtually, our nurse follows up with them.

## **II.D. Student Representative Report**

- Jack DeGray thanked Mrs. Migliaccio for her service as Board Chair and congratulated to Mrs. Thrall on her appointment.
- NHS had their first full meeting on Monday. All meetings are held virtually. Annual stocking drive being held filling 40-50 stockings. Will also support a child's entire list. Still planning future group projects.
- Jacob Scotto reported the transition to distance learning is going very smoothly.
- Jazz band, chamber singers and drama club have all continued to meet in person at the high school for rehearsals.

Melissa Migliaccio asked the student representatives if they missed school this week. Jack stated he has actually missed school since before Thanksgiving but cannot wait to get back next week. Jacob stated being both in and out of school does have its advantages and disadvantages but he feels that all students are ready to learn in any model.

## **III. Public Comment**

Sarah Thrall reviewed the procedures for public comment and stated members of the public can address the Board for items not on the agenda. Five minutes is allotted for each speaker person and a maximum of 20 minutes per subject matter.

Kelly Lewis stated she is very thankful Granby is doing in-person learning. She has two children in the district and is hoping that the Board continues in-person learning.

Shannon Lewie stated she has three children in the system. Unfortunately, Shannon's statement was inaudible.

Dana Hobson stated she has two children in the district, one at Kelly Lane and one at Wells Road. She stated she feels in-person learning is working and everyone is doing an excellent job. Again, most of Dana's statement was inaudible.

Gennie Bussie stated she has children that are in another district and are in a hybrid model. She also has a daughter at the middle school who started in remote learning but has transitioned to in-person learning and it has been an incredible transition for her.

Whitney Sanzo stated she has five children in Granby and stated distance learning in the first quarter was phenomenal. Teachers pulled out all the stops and she has seen growth in her children. She opted to send her Kelly Lane and Wells Road students back and they were so excited to see their friends. She stated she does not feel strongly one way or the other but to just keep students safe. The more information we have helps especially for students who have special needs. She stated she was a little confused with regard to the parameters in the Stronger Together Plan and inquired if Granby is still setting parameters. She is also concerned that teachers are concerned.

Danika Jansen stated she has a Freshman and a student at the middle school and is very appreciative to the Board for in-person learning due to a variety of issues with remote learning (audio inaudible).

Sean Wilmington stated he has one student in the system who is doing in-person learning. He stated having a choice is the key (audio).

Erin Mueller stated she has a questions on the arts program at the high school. A lot of time and effort into athletic programs but arts programs are looking for that as well. Students could not even have coffeehouse 2 weeks ago when they were going to be singing in two different rooms. Are the arts going to get the same support as athletics have? Arts students deserve as much support as athletes.

Kristina Gilton stated she was part of reopening task force and had a daughter in the Class of 2020 and now has a son who is a Freshman. She commended teachers and administrators stating it has gone amazingly well. She fully supports going remote this week. Going forward, as long as safety is the number one caveat to it, she hopes we can get back into the classroom with the safety protocols. Many things were outlined in the taskforce, it is important for people to know that things are changing all the time and the district is doing the best job they can. It would help, however, to let people know if things or numbers are shifting. Emails are great but getting a bigger picture would be helpful.

Heidi Darling commended Dr. Grossman for keeping the kids in school in-person every day. She has 3 children but one child is in another district and is in hybrid which is all over the place. She also has a third grader and sophomore who attends the half day CREC arts program and they send home metrics with students which is helpful giving a breakdown of staff/students. She understands the metric has changed and that there is very little community spread in the classrooms.

Dr. Grossman stated communication will be send out on Friday which will make it a little clearer. Some people say the state moved the goalpost The state changed the model based upon more information they have learned regarding COVID. We will also give more indication as to where our numbers are. Dr. Grossman stated the arts is something true to his heart and he will be meeting with K-12 music staff tomorrow and will also mention this as well as to the Farmington Valley Superintendents.

#### **IV. Consent Agenda**

##### **IV.A. Minutes**

A motion was made by Rosemarie Weber and seconded by Melissa Migliaccio that the Granby Board of Education adopt the consent agenda. This motion passed unanimously at 8:13 p.m.

##### **V. Old Business**

###### **V.A. Second Reading and Approval of Draft Policy 4000.1 - Title IX - Personnel**

The Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communications Subcommittee recommended draft Policy 4000.1, Title IX - Personnel, to the Board for a second reading and approval. No feedback was received on this policy. A motion was made by Melissa Migliaccio and seconded by Rosemarie Weber that the Granby Board of Education adopt Policy 4000.1, Title IX - Personnel, as recommended by the Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communications Subcommittee. This motion passed unanimously at 8:14 p.m.

###### **V.B. Second Reading and Approval of Draft Policy 5145.44 - Title IX - Students**

The Curriculum/Policy/Communications/Technology Subcommittee recommended draft Policy 5145.44, Title IX - Students, to the Board for a second reading and approval. No feedback was received on this policy. A motion was made by Melissa Migliaccio and seconded by David Peling that the Granby Board of Education adopt Policy 5145.44, Title IX - Students, as recommended by the Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communications Subcommittee. This motion passed unanimously at 8:15 p.m.

##### **VI. New Business**

###### **VI.A. School Counseling Department Improvement Plan**

Ms. Julie Groene, Director of Guidance and Assistant Principal at Granby Memorial High School, presented the School Counseling Department Improvement Plan to the Board. Ms. Groene stated the school counseling goals differ greatly from the principal's school improvement plans. **Goal #1 Academic:** To review the current school counseling curriculum to align with the state and national standards. One action step is for counselors at the middle and high schools to document school counseling lessons in Eduplanet 21. She stated this will be done as professional development days were given to do this work. New state standards were received and they are posted on the state website. Another action step is the implementation of a school counseling council to provide input into the delivery of school counseling services at the middle and high schools. **Goal #2 College and Career Planning:** To increase exposure to career exploration in Grades 6-12. One action step is to expand the use of Naviance, specifically, Grades 6-8 as students prepare to move on to the high school. Another

action step is to institute a workshop model in the College and Career Center (CCC) to support students and parents in the college planning process. **Goal #3 Social and Emotional Supports:** To create opportunities for additional contacts with counselors to effectively support social/emotional learning needs. Ms. Groene stated she is proud of our counselors who shifted into a virtual model to work with families and students and stated the virtual option has been a very effective option even though in-person meetings are offered. Currently working on an end-of-year survey for parental feedback. Ms. Groene thanked Dr. Grossman for his guidance and to the Curriculum Subcommittee, including Marian Hourigan and Jennifer Parsons, for their guidance as well. Jenny Emery inquired 1) if a better job will be done following up with alumni in some way as to how prepared they were after leaving Granby; and, 2) if there is increased attention to the support of non-college students. Ms. Groene stated the survey she mentioned is looking at the student experience which has been more valuable. She stated it is not formally in the plan and with regard to non-college bound students, however, teachers have been asked if there are speakers who are not just from 2- and 4-year colleges. Mark Fiorentino inquired who is on the School Counseling Council. Ms. Groene stated an invitation was sent out to parents; however, it is an open invitation and families from Hartland and Hartford are also invited. Rosemarie Weber inquired if there is a plan to offer the workshops mentioned to lower grades. Ms. Groene stated this has already started with juniors but will have all students going through the CCC as it is not just for seniors.

## **VII. Miscellaneous**

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

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

Sarah Thrall reported this Subcommittee met this evening to discuss the assistant superintendent's report; new course Natural Disasters was approved to add course to catalog; new text was approved for AP English; overview on early literacy assessments with identifying dyslexia; and, reviewed the coaching structure at elementary schools and how more supports can be placed at that level.

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

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

Mark Fiorentino reported CREC has not met.

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

Jenny Emery reported GEF has not met since the last meeting.

### **VII.C. Calendar of Events**

The calendar of events is as reported. It was requested to add PAC/PTO meetings to the calendar.

### **VII.D. Board Member Announcements**

Melissa Migliaccio shared that she will be presenting to young moms called "Wake Up Leadership Now, Equity Now" through the Greater Hartford Leadership Council tomorrow from 9-10:30 a.m. virtually. She also thanked the Board for all of their kind comments.

### **VII.E. Action Items**

Jenny Emery inquired if there is a question of in-school or remote as opposed to hybrid. Dr. Grossman stated Jennifer Parsons will provide an update at the next Board Meeting with regard to hybrid and where the FVHD stands on it.

## **VIII. Executive Session/Non-Meeting**

There was no need for an Executive Session this evening. A motion was made by David Peling and seconded by Rosemarie Weber to adjourn the meeting. This motion passed unanimously at 8:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Weber, Board Secretary