

Regular Board of Education Meeting – Amended & Approved Minutes
Wednesday, November 6, 2024, 7:00 p.m.
Town Hall Meeting Room

Present Board Members: Liz Barlow, Monica Logan, Heather Lombardo, Donna Nolan, David Peling, Karen Richmond-Godard, Ali Zafar (via Zoom), and Sofia Brenson (Student Representative)

Absent Board Members: Katie O'Neill (Student Representative)

I. Call to Order

Board Chair, Monica Logan, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. Chairperson's Report

Ms. Logan welcomed everyone in attendance this evening. She shared that she attended the Book Fair at Wells Road this weekend and extended many thanks to GEF and the many sponsors of this event.

III. Public Comment

There were no public comments this evening.

IV. Student Representative Reports

- Sofia Brenson stated the high school drama play performance is quickly approaching next weekend, November 15-17.
- Seniors are meeting with guidance for early action applications to colleges.
- PSATs were held on October 23rd as well as the NHS Induction Ceremony.
- The first quarter closed on October 29th.
- DECA will hold bottle and can drive fundraiser on November 16th from 10am-12pm.
- Next week there are two early release days for conferences on November 13th and 14th.
- Girls' volleyball and field hockey began their first round of states and were NCCC champions. Girls' soccer wrapped up their season and football plays on Friday night, November 8th, vs. Capital Prep.

V. Reports and Discussion

V.A. Middle School/High School Scheduling Update

Mr. David James, Managing Director, New Solutions K-12, shared the process and steps taken in consideration of a collaborative schedule between Granby Memorial Middle School (GMMS) and Granby Memorial High School (GMHS) as well as provided a preview of the findings. Mr. James reviewed the goals of the process as follows: 1) Highlight and elevate effective components of the current GMMS and GMHS schedules; 2) Understand where there is need and potential improvement; and 3) Define an updated set of scheduling priorities and vision. He reviewed the timeline of the project which was broken down by Summer-Fall (Understand District Context); Mid-Fall (Assess Existing Practice); and Late Fall (Share Findings). In the Summer-Fall, bell schedules were analyzed and course and staff data were collected and validated. In mid-fall, a detailed analysis was conducted to evaluate existing activities and opportunities in the schedule. Mr. James reviewed what a typical schedule would be for GMMS and GMHS and explained the benefit of being able to share staff. He shared a summary of commendations, such as, the use of a district-based scheduler; a foundational set of content-specific intervention courses; and, an extensive set of advanced placement, dual credit and external partnerships available to students (especially given the small size of our district). A summary of opportunities was presented to: 1) Align academic intervention programming at both schools with best practices; 2) Prioritize embedding content-specific collaboration time within the school day to ensure teachers have ample time to collaborate and prepare rigorous Tier 1 instruction; 3) Manage low-enrollment and single section classes at the high school differently to more cost-effectively provide variety to students; 4) Work to staff more precisely at both schools to more cost-effectively facilitate opportunities for students; and, 5) Align the bell schedules at both schools to enable more student-centered schedules.

Monica Logan inquired about courses with low enrollment as well as how many students were in these classes and Mr. James stated 15 students or fewer. Ms. Logan inquired at what level do we not run a class and Assistant Superintendent Jennifer Parsons stated 8-9 students. Liz Barlow inquired what other districts do about study halls. Mr. James stated sometimes schools with high study hall numbers cut back a period and go to a 7-period day; however, Granby does not have that volume of study halls. Ms. Logan inquired about next steps and Jennifer Parsons stated this is a multi-year plan and that the most pressing issues will be solved first and other issues can be solved over time. The district needs to look at preserving what is very important and deciding what to do first and when. Challenges in scheduling year-to-year can fluctuate hugely when class sizes fluctuate. With regard to a timeline for this project, things can be done relatively quickly and easily and will impact work the next 3-5 years. Superintendent Burke stated the guiding coalition will meet next week and she will be giving further updates to the Board as this process moves along. The goal is to provide robust opportunities for students and provide room for intervention at the secondary level. Ali Zafar inquired about the definition of oversized classes and Mr. James stated if there is consideration given to running larger classes in certain circumstances such as PE, then consideration could be given for specific courses to run larger classes to run 1 section instead of 2 sections which would allow a teacher to teach another course. Mr. Zafar also inquired about core and non-core courses and Mr. James stated that core courses are typically defined as those in Math, Science, ELA, and Social Studies and non-core courses are everything else: World Language, Music, Art, PE. David Peling stated he feels study halls are very important to students and Karen Richmond-Godard concurred with his comment.

V.B. Secondary School Reports

Ms. Heather Tanis, Middle School Principal, and Michael Dunn, High School Principal, presented their respective school reports to the Board. Ms. Tanis informed the Board of notable successes at Granby Memorial Middle School (GMMS) and stated academics have shown growth and highlighted the creation of a *Culture of CREW* with weekly CREW meetings. She went on to share highlights under this year's theme of *Connect. Believe. Achieve*. She explained that GMMS "*Connects*" by providing family engagement events, such as a beginning-of-the-year picnic and trivia night as well as hosting quarterly parent meetings. Next, GMMS supports "*Believe*" by holding student-led conferences (new this year) where students report on their own work and recognize success, identify areas of growth and build strong connections with their families. GMMS supports the "*Achieve*" aspect of the theme this year through building instructional practices by creating feedback loops for students and having purposeful data conversations. Ms. Tanis reviewed considerations for the year, such as, continuing to build and grow practices impacting the community outside the walls of GMMS; modernizing building instructional spaces; advocating for a Reading Interventionist; as well as making improvements to the schedule to promote Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) and department planning time. With regard to long-term plans, Ms. Tanis stated GMMS will be implementing a revised MTSS structure and interventions; embedding restorative work into classroom spaces; refining alignment instruction and assessment; and, incorporating student voice. Monica Logan inquired what building spaces need updating at GMMS and Ms. Tanis stated the Family & Consumer Science space needs to be modernized so that students can access what they need. Ms. Logan also inquired about technology and Ms. Tanis stated there is room for some robotics-type equipment. Karen Richmond-Godard inquired how the decision is made to pair teachers with students for 3 years of CREW. Ms. Tanis stated it was totally random this year and some very cool things are happening. Administration is considering if they will keep groups as-is or start over next year. Donna Nolan inquired about the Reading Interventionist. Ms. Tanis stated that GMMS currently has a tutor but is looking to turn this role into a certified role as was done with the Math Interventionist last budget cycle.

Mr. Dunn began by sharing news that girls' volleyball won their first-round state game tonight and will play again on Friday night. He reviewed the notable successes of Granby Memorial High School (GMHS), such as, ranking 20th in *U.S. News and World Report*; 94% of the Class of 2024 taking at least one college course; 83%

of the Class of 2025 scoring at benchmark on SAT in English; and, 89% of students scoring a 3 or higher on AP exams. Mr. Dunn reviewed how GMHS “*Connects*” as part of this year’s theme by holding restorative practices training; youth mental health first aid training; career and technology education partnerships; and improved messaging. With regard to supporting “*Believe*”, GMHS engaged by soliciting students for their input regarding an Advisory reboot; College and Career Planning; transition programming with a new coffee cart this year; teacher efficacy in evaluation; and, leadership team capacity. Lastly, for “*Achieve*”, GMHS continued this year with work around department goals that are aligned with PSAT; Vision of a Graduate measures; teacher use of DnA and EduClimber to inform work with individual students; a revised intervention system which is more efficient; and, Department Chairs and Coaches strengthening instructional practices. Mr. Dunn reviewed considerations and challenges, such as, evolving mental health challenges; a need for targeted interventions in reading, math and mental health; ongoing alignment to Vision of the Graduate; and, evolving challenges with technology. Mr. Dunn concluded with sharing long-term plans for GMHS to further develop interventions and programming; increase support and pathways for college and career; upgrades for athletic facilities; maximize scheduling opportunities; and NEASC preparation for 2028. Liz Barlow inquired about staffing to address the level of mental health need going on with students today. Mr. Dunn stated he is confident in the strength of his current staff at the moment. Monica Logan inquired if there are any Reading or Math needs at GMHS for interventions and Mr. Dunn stated he is still in conversations about this with his staff.

V.C. First Reading of Draft Policy 3160 - Budget Expense Reports and Line Item Transfers

The Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communications Subcommittee recommended draft Policy 3160, Budget Expense Reports and Line Item Transfers, to the Board for a first reading. Ms. Nickie Stevenson, Director of Finance and Operations, stated this policy was revised to combine two policies for budget expense reports and line item transfers and will allow the district to report quarterly as well as do line item transfers throughout the year rather than at the end of the year. Monica Logan stated the Board of Finance requested that monthly reporting continue; however, the BOE will rely more on the quarterly reports. This policy will go to the Board again at the next meeting for a second reading and approval

VI. Business Requiring Action

VI.A. Minutes

A motion was made by Donna Nolan and seconded by David Peling that the Granby Board of Education approve the minutes from the October 16, 2024 Board of Education Meeting. This motion passed at 8:19 p.m. with one abstention (Monica Logan).

VI.B. Ratification of the Granby Association of School Administrators' Contract

The Board considered ratification of the Granby Association of School Administrators' (GASA) Contract effective July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2028. Monica Logan stated she, Donna Nolan and Heather Lombardo were on the negotiations committee. She shared there was a general clean-up in contract language and the GWI (General Wage Increase) will be 1.75% in 2025-2026 and 2.25% in 2026-2027 and 2027-2028 with a total increase of 11.53% (including steps and level changes) over the 3-year contract. Employee premiums for health benefits will be 21.25% in 2025-2026 and 21.50% in 2026-2027 and 2027-2028. Additionally, there was a change in the language for retired administrators hired prior to July 1, 2025 that they may continue to participate in the Granby employee medical, dental and vision insurance plans at no cost to the Board. A motion was made by Donna Nolan and seconded by Heather Lombardo that the Granby Board of Education ratify the Granby Association of School Administrators Contract effective July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2028. This motion passed unanimously at 8:23 p.m.

VII. Committee Reports

VII.A. Board Standing Committee Reports

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

Karen Richmond-Godard reported that this subcommittee met this evening to discuss a new textbook, *Reporters Francophones Series, Levels 1-4*, which allows for alignment of courses at different levels and will prepare students well. This text was approved by the subcommittee and will be piloted next year for French II. Additionally, Carolyn Weiser and Michelle Tardiff, Department Chairs, presented the background of the Grades 9 and 10 curricula, followed by a thorough presentation. English Pre-AP will become English 9 as well as Capstone courses (changes in level, etc.). Motions on these course changes were tabled until the December 3rd Curriculum Subcommittee Meeting.

VII.A.2. Finance/Personnel/Facilities

This subcommittee has not met. Incorrect approved minutes were in the packet and will be posted correctly as well as attached in the next Board Meeting packet on November 20th.

A. Other Board-Related Reports

1. CREC/CABE

Nothing new to report.

2. Granby Education Foundation

Liz Barlow shared that the GEF met on October 21st. Planning started for the Gran-Bee; reviewed donations made in honor of Cal Heminway and also discussed recruitment and problem-solving around finding a new way of connecting with folks.

B. Calendar of Events

Ms. Logan stated she is excited to see *Twisted Tales of Poe* next weekend. Happy Veterans Day on Monday to all of those who have served.

C. Board Member Announcements

There were no Board member announcements this evening.

D. Action Items

Attach correct Finance Subcommittee approved minutes from September 28, 2024.


VIII. Superintendent's Report

- Many thanks to the GEF as well as all of the town and school librarians for their hard work that went into the 2nd Annual Granby Children's Book Festival. It was a wonderful event and very well attended.
- Congratulations to our girls' volleyball and field hockey teams on becoming NCCC Champions and best of luck to them and to the boys' soccer team in their CIAC state tournament games this week.
- Our Teacher of the Year, Kristin LaFlamme, is being honored at the Bushnell this evening and is being accompanied by Principal Pauline Greer.
- Mr. Christopher DeGray started as the new Director of Facilities on October 21st and has hit the ground running and is learning all of our buildings and his staff.

IX. Adjournment

A motion was made by David Peling and seconded by Donna Nolan that the Granby Board of Education adjourn the regular Board of Education Meeting. This motion passed unanimously at 8:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Elizabeth H. Barlow
Board Secretary