

Regular Board of Education Meeting – Draft Minutes
Wednesday, November 20, 2024, 7:00 p.m.
Town Hall Meeting Room

Present Board Members: Liz Barlow, Monica Logan, Heather Lombardo, Donna Nolan, David Peling (arrived at 7:38 pm), and Katie O'Neill (Student Representative)

Absent Board Members: Karen Richmond-Godard, Ali Zafar and Sofia Brenson (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 person as well as on Zoom. She shared that she attended two of the Veterans Day celebrations last week at Wells Road and the Middle School. The speakers were fantastic and the students were engaged. It was very well done. She also shared that she has been submitting articles to *The Granby Drummer* on various topics such as FERPA, bullying and communication issues. She stated Superintendent Burke also submits articles that can give great insight with regard to certain processes and procedures as well as courses of action for certain types of issues that need to be addressed so keep on the lookout for those articles.

III. Awards and Recognition

The Board recognized Granby's 2024-2025 Teacher of the Year, Mrs. Kristin LaFlamme, Fifth Grade Teacher at Wells Road Intermediate School. Board Chair Logan shared that Mrs. LaFlamme is a graduate of Granby Memorial High School and attended Eastern Connecticut State University with a degree in Psychology and certificate in early Childhood Education. She went on to obtain her Master's degree in Elementary Education from Central Connecticut State University. Mrs. LaFlamme is a cheerleader for her students and gets to know them personally on a deeper level. She is involved in the Granby community as a field hockey coach and participates in various local events including the Granby Road Race and GranBee. Ms. Pauline Greer, Principal, shared that the Wells Road staff was extremely excited that Mrs. LaFlamme applied for and received the Teacher of the Year Award and stated she is very deserving of this honor.

IV. Public Comment

There were no public comments this evening in person or via Zoom.

V. Student Representative Reports

- Katie O'Neill stated girls' soccer lost in the second round of states to New Fairfield; field hockey lost in the quarter finals to North Branford; boys' soccer ended their season against Northwestern losing by 1 point in penalty kicks; girls' volleyball lost in the state finals to Joel Barlow. All of these teams had great seasons. Varsity football plays this Friday against North Branford.
- Winter sports: Formal practices have not started yet; however, girls' and boys' basketball first night will be held on Saturday, December 7th at 5:00 p.m. to kick off the season and welcome fans.
- Veterans Day celebrations were held last week. A record of 25 veterans attended and were split into smaller panels for each grade. It was great to get insight on their service and how they live their lives.
- Two early release days for conferences were held last week.
- DECA had their can and bottle drive last week which was a success.
- *Twisted Tales of Poe* wrapped up an amazing weekend of performances. Looking forward to *Legally Blonde* in the spring.
- The annual Turkey Trot was held this week and money was raised for the local food pantry.
- Spanish and French AP Classes had a field trip today to Boston to visit the art museum.
- The Powder Puff game will be held next Tuesday, November 26th at 2:45 p.m. The seniors are prepared.

VI. Reports and Discussion

VI.A. Elementary School Reports

Ms. Colleen Bava, Principal of Kelly Lane Primary School, and Ms. Pauline Greer, Principal of Wells Road Intermediate School, presented their respective school reports to the Board. Ms. Bava began by reviewing the successes of the past year including a 95% attendance for students which was a significant decrease over last year of 16%; launching the language arts foundational literacy resource; and, giving back to the community with events such as food drives, CARES bags and the Veterans Day celebration. To support the “*Connect*” portion of this year’s theme, “*Connect. Believe. Achieve.*”, Kelly Lane has a monthly schoolwide focus on character traits; student check-in and check-out for tiered support; and sustained participation in Unified Sports (third year). For the “*Believe*” category, Kelly Lane staff believes in schoolwide culture, climate and equity committees; conducts lunch and learn opportunities for staff; and sends weekly newsletters to families. With regard to “*Achieve*” Kelly Lane staff uses PLC time to analyze data; utilizes teaching assistants for personalized skill practice; and instituted the RISE program for identified students this year to help build students’ success. Ms. Bava shared some considerations from Kelly Lane with budget season upcoming for increased staffing to support specific needs for students; increased self-regulation and behavioral needs; and additional professional development and resources for the new reading legislation. Ms. Bava reviewed some long-term plans for Kelly Lane, such as Play Legislation; increased preschool opportunities; and revising the outdated report cards/progress reports to look at communicate more clearly what is being reported. Monica Logan inquired about the lunch and learn program. Ms. Bava reached out to her staff over the summer to see who would be interested in sharing a learning opportunity. She stated it has been great. Liz Barlow inquired about attendance initiatives and what was done to improve attendance. Ms. Bava stated there is a team that meets monthly to see where students fall short and families are called to see if it is related to health reasons, transportation, etc. Spirit days have also helped tremendously and this has increased attendance.

Ms. Greer reviewed the notable successes at Wells Road, such as, Wells Done awards and students starting the year as goal getters; students’ participation in essay contests; and, student leadership including student council and student-led advocacy. With regard to how Wells Road “*Connects*”, each classroom has a class community charter; creation of Whole School Spotlight assemblies; and, a school song written by Mr. Whitten’s classroom. Ms. Greer went on to state that Wells Road “*Believes*” by believing in one another and learning from one another by doing internal learning walks; having a specific focus on Executive Functioning skills; dedicating a time for social/emotional grade level conversations; and, schoolwide climate, social/emotional and equity committees. For the “*Achieve*” portion of the theme, Wells Road students partake in goal-setting to empower themselves to “own” their data; grade level data team meetings are held to ensure a data focus is always present; professional development on the SBAC math performance task; and, entrance and exit data for multi-tiered systems of support. Ms. Greer reviewed considerations for the upcoming budget season, such as, staffing to support specific students and increased behavioral needs; materials to increase math engagement and progress; and, the state-mandated new reading legislation for third grade. With regard to long-term plans, Ms. Greer shared she would like to increase student leadership opportunities by incorporating real world experiences; fully train staff regarding restorative practices; and create consistent school-wide celebrations and acknowledgements. Ms. Logan inquired about executive functioning skills and if there are plans to continue this stating she personally sees advantages to this. Ms. Greer stated, yes, absolutely. It is an essential skill for students to have especially as they leave Wells Road and head to middle school.

VII. Business Requiring Action

VII.A. Minutes

A motion was made by Donna Nolan and seconded by Liz Barlow that the Granby Board of Education approve the minutes from the November 6, 2024 Board of Education Meeting with the amendment that Ali Zafar was present on Zoom. This motion passed unanimously at 7:50 p.m.

VII.B. Second Reading and Approval of Revised Draft Policy 3160 – Budget Expense Reports and Line Item Transfers

Monica Logan stated this policy was amended to reflect that these reports will be done monthly instead of quarterly due to a recommendation by the Board of Finance and concerns of BOE members. A motion was made by Donna Nolan and seconded by Heather Lombardo that the Granby Board of Education adopt Policy 3160, Budget Expense Reports and Line Item Transfers as amended and recommended by the Curriculum/Policy/Technology/Communications and Finance/Personnel/Facilities Subcommittees. Donna Nolan stated her appreciation of the changes being made and that the BOE has worked well with the BOF and we must continue this relationship. This motion passed unanimously at 7:52 p.m.

VIII. Committee Reports

VIII.A. Board Standing Committee Reports

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

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

VIII.A.2. Finance/Personnel/Facilities

Donna Nolan reported this subcommittee met this evening and reviewed and approved the October 2024 expense report; were advised the Director of Finance and Operations, Nickie Stevenson, entered into contracts with East River Energy and locked in a competitive rate through June 2025; discussed negotiation of a modification to the CREC transportation contract negotiating a decreased rate providing for a substantial savings; received an update on health benefit funding and there is a positive trend with health claims going down; reviewed trends in enrollment; and, reviewed draft Policy 3160. Ms. Logan expressed many thanks to Nickie Stevenson for savings incurred in the transportation contract. Heather Lombardo echoed Monica's sentiments of gratitude for Ms. Stevenson's hard work and financial savings.

VIII.B. Other Board-Related Reports

VIII.B.1. CREC/CABE

Superintendent Burke stated she attended the CABE/CAPSS Convention last Friday and Saturday and it was great to collaborate with superintendents as well as Boards of Education across the state. She attended a fascinating workshop on facilities and stated a number of speakers and workshops focused on communications in the current climate and how to keep communication focused on students. Superintendent Burke also shared the Board received an Honorable Mention for the district's Communications Plan.

VIII.B.2. Granby Education Foundation

Liz Barlow reported the GEF meet on Monday focusing on recruitment of new board members. Finances are very strong and the GEF is excited to fund projects in the schools as well as in the community.

VIII.C. Calendar of Events

Ms. Logan stated the calendar of events is as presented.

VIII.D. Board Member Announcements

There were no Board member announcements this evening.

VIII.E. Action Items

There were no action items this evening.

IX. Superintendent's Report

- Veterans Day across the district was fantastic. An opportunity to feel pride and it is impressive how many veterans live in our community. It was a recognition of celebration as well as learning.
- Job well done to Katie O'Neill and her volleyball teammates.
- The high school drama play was phenomenal. It is truly an impressive group of talented students.

- Kevin Kurtz, winning children's author in nonfiction, visited Kelly Lane today. Thank you to the PTO for sponsoring this event.
- In the throes of the budget. The FY26 Plus One Budget will be presented in December. Meetings have been conducted with every administrator and department leader. Costs are growing which is challenging and the district is always looking at efficiencies.
- There will be a CPPAC (Capital Projects Priorities Advisory Council) Meeting on December 2nd at 5pm to look at a long list of capital needs for the town and school district and determine next steps with regard to funding.
- There will be an early release on November 27th. Happy Thanksgiving to all of our staff and families.
- The next regularly scheduled Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 4th.

X. Adjournment

A motion was made by Donna Nolan and seconded by David Peling that the Granby Board of Education adjourn the regular Board of Education Meeting. This motion passed unanimously at 8:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth H. Barlow
Board Secretary