

**Budget Workshop – Approved Minutes**  
**March 10, 2021, 5:30 p.m.**  
**Via Zoom**

Present Board Members: Jenny Emery, Mark Fiorentino, Melissa Migliaccio, David Peling, Sarah Thrall, Rosemarie Weber, and Brandon Webster

Sarah Thrall called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.

**I. FY22 Administrative Budget**

The Board continued to discuss the FY22 Administrative Budget. Sarah Thrall stated the Superintendent presented the budget at the last Board Meeting and will answer a couple of questions tonight as well as any other questions the Board may have. Dr. Grossman reviewed the budget appropriation request of 3.56% and stated it is below the guideline of 3.6%. He explained to just roll the budget over from last year, it is a 3.45% budget. When special education is added in it is a 3.57% and when retirement and other savings are added it comes to a 3.56%. Dr. Grossman responded to questions that were submitted by the Board. One question was in regard to any considerations in place for children who have academic catch-up needs and the answer to that question is yes. The budget includes extra tutor support, social/emotional support and transitional programming. Another question was in reference to any requirements/limits to what was allowed in the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Grant. Dr. Jordan stated the grant listed four priorities under which funds could be used as follows: 1) Academic Supports, Learning Loss, Learning Acceleration, and Recovery; 2) Family and Community Connections; 3) School Safety and Social Emotion Well-Being of Students and Staff; and, 4) Remote Learning and Staff Development. These funds will be used for tutor support and technology needs as a direct result from the effects of the pandemic. A question regarding the Q&D budget was asked and if the district has an understanding of which line items within Q&D are actually utilized by students of color. Dr. Grossman stated the Q&D fund provides funding for items, such as, transportation, snacks, magnet school tuition, supervision, and various enrichment activities for all students but also specifically our Open Choice students. The last question was in regard to if there are other grants available to offset the increase in technology and the answer is, yes, there are other grants used to help offset technology needs as follows: ESSER I and ESSER II; the Open Choice Academic and Student Support Grant; and, the Governor’s Education Emergency Relief Fund Grant.

Dr. Grossman stated he feels very comfortable where the district is in the budget cycle and that the budget meets the needs for the district. Next year the plan should be followed that was laid out within the Plus One Budget with regard to subsequent years and that it sets the foundation for future years. He stated he appreciates the support of the Town and Board of Finance with this budget. Sarah Thrall stated she appreciates the fact that the BOE is coming under the guideline and asked the Board if there were any other questions regarding the budget.

Jenny Emery stated she appreciated the question regarding the Open Choice grant and bringing diversity into Granby benefits everyone. She stated she would be interested keeping in mind any new initiatives that will need funding which may need to be taken from the Q&D Budget. Hopefully, any new initiatives bring forward things that would require an investment to close the achievement gap. Dr. Grossman thanked Jenny for her comments. Dr. Grossman stated the Anti-Bias/Anti-Racism Plan really sets a good strategic initiative to guide the Q&D fund analyzing what our needs are in that area looking at culture, climate and achievement and where funds need to be spent.

Mark Fiorentino stated regarding the action steps we have identified and are building on in our Anti-Bias Plan, what is important is that we execute and fund them – not necessarily what fund it comes out of. He also stated that Dr. Grossman should inform the Board if there is something that he feels he is struggling to fund.

David Peling inquired what would be the first thing Dr. Grossman would put in next year that he could not have this year. Dr. Grossman stated everything he wanted is in the budget thanks to grants and moving things around with health savings; however, he would probably move up the Humanities Coach which was not funded this year.

Brandon Webster inquired how the next budget cycle is expected to look without grant assistance. Dr. Grossman stated this is a great question and informed the Board that the district was very careful and strategic what was put into the grants. The 0.5 FTE Social Worker can be in the grant for a maximum of two years and this will need to be discussed. The software (\$29K) will have to be looked at 2 years from now as well with regard to on-line learning. As far as tutoring, Dr. Grossman stated that ebbs and flows a little bit. He informed the Board the State of Connecticut will receive federal funds and Granby may receive an additional \$500K next year and he anticipates that he will be able to use those funds for possible remote learning issues.

Rosemarie Weber stated she fully supports the budget and that administration has been extremely creative. She stated she feels comfortable where the funds come from that make up the budget and that it is a very responsible budget.

Melissa Migliaccio echoed Ms. Weber's statements and thanked Dr. Grossman, Anna Robbins and Jennifer Parsons on the hours spent on the budget. She stated she has no issues with the budget and supports it.

James Tsaptsinos, Board of Finance member, stated the BOF trusts this budget and all of the work put into it and that it is pretty much a standing still budget and is extremely responsible.

Sarah Thrall stated she supports the budget and feels it is the right thing for the schools. Mark Fiorentino stated he is very supportive of the budget and is grateful for the team who worked on it. In terms of the percentage increase, he feels it is unfair to call it a standing still budget. Jenny Emery stated she is very comfortable and thanked the BOF for their engagement in the process as well as recognized the teachers for their efforts during the negotiation process. David Peling stated he fully supports the budget and that it is a win/win with a 0% mill rate increase and that students were kept in school so it is actually a win/win/win. Brandon thanked Dr. Grossman, administration and the teachers for their work and for putting in the additional supports and resources to help students who are struggling. Melissa Migliaccio stated she absolutely supports the budget and agreed that the administration and teachers were instrumental in having our students attend school in-person.

Dr. Grossman thanked the Board and stated they are true partners in what needs to be done in the district. He stated Granby is the district he thought it was and a district he is proud to be in and he especially appreciates working with the Board and the Board of Finance on the budget.

Dr. Grossman stated next Wednesday's Finance Subcommittee Meeting will be held at 5:00 p.m. and there will be an Executive Session at 6:30 p.m. to discuss a personnel issue which will be held in-person in the Chorus Room.

A motion was made by Jenny Emery and seconded by David Peling to adjourn the meeting. This motion passed unanimously at 6:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Weber  
Board Secretary