

**GROTON BOARD OF EDUCATION  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING  
APRIL 20, 2020 @ 6:00 P.M.  
REMOTE MEETING**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Kim Shepardson Watson-Chairperson, Andrea Ackerman-Vice Chairperson, Jane Giuliani, Gretchen Newsome, Liz Porter, Rita Volkmann, Jay Weitlauf, Lee White

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Rosemary Robertson,

**ALSO PRESENT:** Mike Graner, Susan Austin, Sam Kilpatrick, Ken Knight, Addie Clark, Xavion Quito

I. CALL TO ORDER – Chairperson Kim Watson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS RE: AFRICAN AMERICAN/BLACK STUDIES AND PUERTORICAN/LATINO STUDIES COURSES

This item was tabled.

III. UPDATE RE: COVID-19 RESPONSES

- a. Discussion of Possible Alternative Graduation Dates for the Class of 2020 – Erin McGuire, Assistant Principal of Fitch High School, stated that via Google Docks some schools have cancelled their Proms and Graduations. Dr. Graner noted that Mr. Keleher is hoping that the Board does nothing relative to the cancellation of graduation, thereby keeping it on June 19, 2020, and that the Board will wait until school resumes to make a decision. Ms. McGuire noted that the high school administration would be exploring the possibility of having an outdoor or virtual graduation. Ms. McGuire stated that she would get back to the Board after the high school finishes brainstorming this issue. Ms. McGuire noted the following:

Senior Updates

- Updates Senior Handbook will be going out this week to students and families
- Senior Class Advisors will be sponsoring the entire Class of 2020's cap and gown costs
- Senior Class Advisors, Admin and Grad Party will meet this week to brainstorm ideas on special things for our seniors in lieu of some of the events that will need to be cancelled this year

Senior Class Graduation Speaker/Speakers

- This year we held our Senior Class Graduation Speaker Contest over Zoom
- The students all read their speeches individually over Zoom to the panel of judges and we selected our Class of 2020 speaker
- Our graduation speakers will be
  - Valedictorian: Finn Koehler
  - Salutatorian: Will Miner
  - Class President: Graysen Scherer
  - Class Speaker Contest Winner: Ava Paprocki

### AP Testing

- This year our AP students will test virtually through the College board's Secure Browser
- We have been closely working with our students, parents/guardians, tech team and the College board to ensure that students are all ready to test
- All students taking the AP test will be using a school Chromebook
- Practice tests and other important information are being distributed to students daily

### SAT Testing

- Although we were not able to complete the SAT School Day test this year (in March), we are working with the College board to offer the SATs on a few Saturdays during the summer weeks

### NHS Updates

- National Honor Society Tutors will be offering virtual tutoring for any student who is struggling in a class
  - They sign up using this link: <https://forms.gle/vdwFTmPAagM1hXRK7>
- Students will be expected to also follow the Code of Conduct

### Virtual Spirit Week

- We will be hosting a Virtual Spirit Week starting on Thursday
  - We encourage everyone to get involved
  - Virtual Spirit Week Events are: April 23<sup>rd</sup> is Pajama Day; April 24<sup>th</sup> is Fitch Pride Day; April 27<sup>th</sup> is "Show us your pets! Day; April 28<sup>th</sup> is Thank an Essential Employee Day; April 29<sup>th</sup> is Mix and Match Day; April 30<sup>th</sup> is Build a Fort Day; and May 1<sup>st</sup> is Special Surprise!

### Mental Health Protocol

- We have established a protocol for helping students in mental health need during distance learning which includes an immediate response from our mental health team who have been reaching out to students and families to provide resources
- In the event we cannot get a hold of our students/families in immediate mental health need, the Groton Town and City PD have been able to help with home wellness checks

### Student Shout-Out

- Graysen Scherer (Class of 2020 President, NHS, Renaissance Crew, and Yearbook Staff) was invited by Jostens Renaissance to participate in an interview with Dr. Phil Campbell (PC) during their weekly Facebook Live programming focused on impacts of COVID on education
- The interview happened last Monday
- PC was the special guest speaker when Fitch hosted the Renaissance collaborative in December 2018
- <https://www.facebook.com/JostensRenaissance/videos/2658057131081080/>

### Message from the Principal

- Every Friday we send out a morning announcement from Mr. Keleher to our students and families

Student Awards, Scholarships and NHS Inductees

- The School Counselors and Administration are working to make sure that all awards are still happening for our students
  - Although we do not know if a ceremony will happen for each, we will still be awarding everything this year (book awards, scholarships, underclassmen awards, NHS new members, etc.)

Dr. Graner asked Addie Clark for her opinion on graduation. Addie stated that in talking with other students, they would like to keep the June 19, 2020 graduation date.

- b. Update re: STA Contract – Dr. Graner noted that he has met with STA regarding the Executive Order that states schools must pay their school contracts. Mr. Knight reviewed the costs associated with the remaining STA contract as result of discussions with STA.
- c. Review of Unanticipated Costa vs. Unanticipated Expenses – FY 20 & FY 21 – Mr. Knight gave an overview of the unanticipated costs and unanticipated expenses through the end of the fiscal year.
- d. Review of Alliance Funding Budget Modifications – Mr. Knight gave an overview of the Alliance funding budget modifications.

III. UPDATE RE: SCHOOL FACILITIES

- a. Update re: Construction of the Green House at Fitch High School – Mr. Kilpatrick stated that the Green House is up and enclosed. The Maintenance Department are presently installing water lines and electrical in the Green House.
- b. Update re: Milone and MacBroom Study – Dr. Graner stated that he had spoken to MacGroom and that MacGroom is getting ready to download data onto the district map.

Dr. Graner stated that the virtual tour of the middle school for teachers was done with the assistance of Mark Russell. Detailed information was provided by Tom Beebe, Moving Consultant, on the packing of the material in the classrooms to be sent to the middle school. A second tour of the middle school was provided by Tammy Hamelin, Construction Manager, who provided a more extensive tour of the middle school. Dr. Graner stated that the buildings will be demolished in July.

IV. SUGGESTED FUTURE TOPICS

Mrs. Volkmann recognized Mrs. Horler for her lifetime service to the GEA.

Mrs. Volkmann asked if the district had locked in fuel prices for the coming school year. Mr. Knight stated that the price had been locked in at last weeks' rates.

Mrs. Watson added to the Curriculum Committee agenda Summer School and what kind of program will be put in place and/or what modifications are needed.

Rita Volkmann asked for an update on Scholarships; who and when they will be passed out.

IX. ADJOURNMENT – Ackerman, Newsome: To adjourn at 7:40 p.m.

**MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**