

**GROTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 27, 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, Zavion Quito

I. CALL TO ORDER – Chairperson Kim Shepardson Watson called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

II. RECOGNITION AND PARTICIPATION OF VISITORS AND DELEGATIONS

➤ Recognition of CEA Lifetime Achievement Award by Beth Horler

Doug Manfred, Vice Chair of the GEA, stated that he had nominated Beth Horler for the Clifford Silver Award that was awarded to Mrs. Horler. Mr. Manfred gave an overview of the award.

III. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT – Addie Clark and Zavion Quito reported that the Senior Advisor will be paying for the caps and gowns for seniors; that Advisors and the Administration are still working on events; a Senior Competition was held over Zoom whereby the students could write their own speeches - the graduation speakers will be: Valedictorian: Finn Koehler; Salutatorian: Will Miner; Class President: Graysen Scherer; Class Speaker Contest Winner: Ava Paprocki. The student reps also reported that AP Testing will be online with students taking home Chromebooks; the SAT Testing date was in March and the school is working with the Collegeboard for a new date; the National Honor Society is working with the Administration regarding supplying tutoring for students in need; the Junior Prom has been postponed and they are discussing having the Prom at a later date; there has been a problem for students to paint their parking spots; Virtual Spirit Week is going on: April 28th is Thank an Essential Employee Day; April 29th is Mix and Match Day; April 30th is Build a Fort Day; and May 1st is Special Surprise! Zavion discussed the Mental Health Protocol; noted that every Friday Mr. Keleher sends out a message to students; and noted the National Honor Society inductees.

IV. SUPERINTENDENT AND ADMINISTRATION REPORTS

1. Superintendent Report

a. Update from Commissioner of Education

Dr. Graner noted that last week the Commissioner noted the CARES Act will provide CT with 111 million dollars. The Commissioner noted that school districts will receive 83% of the Title I funds. Dr. Graner stated that the Governor is going to wait to decide when to return students to school. Dr. Graner noted that districts need to develop a reentry plan. The Governor also noted that the decision to hold graduation will be made in partnership with the health district.

IV. SUPERINTENDENT AND ADMINISTRATION REPORTS – cont.

2. Reports and Information from the Staff

1. Assistant Superintendent

- FY21 Staffing Update (SBB Special Education and .5 FHS Literacy Specialist) – Susan Austin noted that due to the large caseloads for special education teachers at SBB; there has been additional subs to help with the caseload for the last two years. Ms. Austin would like a 1 year sub for the next school year. There has not been a Literacy Specialist at the high school and Ms. Austin is recommending a .5 Literacy Specialist for next year.
- Distance Learning - The motto is to “start slow and grow.” Ms. Austin acknowledged the teachers, paraprofessional, food services department, administrators, and Central Office staff who put forth such tremendous effort during this trying time.
- Update re: School Reentry Plan – Ms. Austin noted that we will be using APEX for Summer School at the high school and the middle school. They will be reviewing curriculum and making any necessary adjustments as well as looking at academic support. Mrs. Doolittle noted that communication has been the key with distance learning for special education students. Mrs. Doolittle stated that her staff has been working as a team. Mrs. Doolittle noted that she had received a memo regarding PPT meetings and that her staff are developing a document on holding virtual PPTs. Ms. McGuire addressed grading stating that communication and flexibility is the key. Ms. McGuire noted teachers have been asked not to penalize students. Ms. McGuire noted that a grade change form has been developed and relative to the traditional weighting of grades, that it is important for teachers to be able to adjust them. Mr. Keleher noted that the high school administration is looking at the fourth quarter weight since there will be no final grades.

2. Business Manager Report

- Object Code Summary – Ken Knight stated that this evening’s object code summary was prepared on March 20, 2020 and shows a negative balance of \$7,375. He gave an overview of the budget highlighting what constituted this negative balance.
- Health Insurance Report – For the month of March, we are at 123% of the budget.
- Financial Planning for FY21 re: Additional Academic Support – Dr. Graner noted the funds from the CARES Act and stated that these funds will be used for the younger students to buy iPads and for the Food Services employees’ wages.
- Update re: STA Contract – Mr. Knight stated that STA has provided the district with a list of their expenses and that the district came up with a number. STA stated that they are paying their drivers and providing the district with documentation of such.

3. Director of Buildings and Grounds

- Groton 2020 – Update re: Middle School Packing and Moving Preparation - Sam Kilpatrick stated that Groton Middle School packing and moving is continuing to progress. Middle School teachers are coming in 5-6 teachers a day.
- Update re: Food Service Meals Program – Sam Kilpatrick stated that the number of meals provided remain steady and that Mr. Koschmieder has added two hot meals for students.
- Update re: Tennis Courts Resurfacing Project – Sam Kilpatrick stated that the Tennis Courts have gone out to bid and the bid packets are due May 11, 2020.

III. SUPERINTENDENT AND ADMINISTRATION REPORTS – cont.

- Update re: Current Maintenance Projects – Sam Kilpatrick stated:
 1. CB – needs painting throughout the building
 2. FHS – Green House is progressing
 3. Roof Repairs throughout the district
 4. Machine repairs
 5. Items from CMS/WSM are being moved to where they can be used elsewhere in the district

IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Policy – Lee White stated that the Policy Committee will meet on Monday, May 4, 2020, at 5:00 p.m.
- B. Curriculum – Andrea Ackermann stated that the Curriculum Committee will meet on Monday, May 4, 2020, at 4:00 p.m.
- C. Finance/Facilities – Jay Weitlauf reported that Finance/Facilities have not met.
- D. Negotiations – Kim Shepardson Watson reported that the meetings have been cancelled.
- E. LEARN – Rita Volkmann reported that the last LEARN has continue to meet. They discussed COVID 19 and lessons plans in collaboration with schools ; a subcommittee is working on a new formula for school funding; that there is no longer a Birth to 3 program; the Dual Language graduation; noted that there is a new principal at the Marine Science Magnet School and she will report further in May.
- F. BoE/TCC/RTM Liaison – Kim Shepardson Watson reported that next week’s meeting has been cancelled.
- G. BoE/AGSA/GEA Liaison – Kim Shepardson Watson reported that the next meeting has been cancelled.
- H. Trails Liaison – no report was given.
- I. Groton Scholarship – no report was given.

V. ACTION ITEMS

- A. Consent Agenda – all matters listed under the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion. Points of clarification will be allowed.

MOTION: White, Porter; to approve the Regular Meeting minutes of February 24, 2020 and the Special meetings of March 26, 2020 and April 6, 2020.
MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

V. ACTION ITEMS – cont.

B. Old Business – there was none.

C. New Business

1. Discussion and possible action regarding the extension of the Transition K pilot program through the 2020-21 school year.

MOTION: Volkman, Ackerman:

To approve the extension of the Transition K pilot program through the 2020-21 school year.

MOTION PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

2. Discussion and possible action regarding the funding of the cafeteria staff wages from the FY20 Board of Education budget.

MOTION: Porter, White:

To approve the inclusion of the funding of the cafeteria staff wages from the FY20 Board of Education budget.

MOTION PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

3. Discussion and possible action regarding the non-renewal of teaching contracts of non-tenured teachers.

MOTION: Weitlauf, Giuliani:

To approve the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools that, in accordance with the provisions of Connecticut General Statutes §10-151, the contracts of employment of the teachers listed below shall not be renewed upon the conclusion of the 2019-20 school year:

Kevin Crosen

David Hall

Zachary Jacobson

Raymond Luong

MOTION PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

4. Discussion and possible action regarding recognition of National Teacher Day and National Teacher Appreciation Week.

MOTION: Giuliani, Porter:

To recognize May 5, 2020 as National Teacher Day and May 3-9, 2020 as National Teacher Appreciation Week, and to direct the Superintendent of Schools to send a letter of appreciation to the teachers.

MOTION PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

C. New Business – cont.

5. Discussion and possible action regarding recognition of National School Nurse Day and Week.

MOTION: Watson, Newsome:

To recognize May 6, 2020 as National School Nurse Day and May 6-12, 2020 as National School Nurse Week, and to direct the Superintendent of Schools to send a letter of appreciation to the nurses.

MOTION PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

VI. INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS (Non-Action Items)

- A. Letters, communications, and comments by Board members on meeting items and any other items in their jurisdiction.

- Rita Volkmann stated that she had received questions regarding the trees at CMS and WSM and what will happen to them; that she enjoyed all the school videos; she made a referral to the COW for discussion of a name change regarding Student Support Services; she thanked Dr. Grander and Ms. Austin for sending out teacher assignments
- Elizabeth Porter noted that she has received questions regarding lighting for the tuff field at the middle school.
- Lee White thanked Mark Russell for his technical assistance relative to the remote meetings
- Jay Weitlauf recognized the Administrative Professional.
- Gretchen Newsome stated that she has received calls from bus drivers and that she has chatted with students in her neighborhood. She also noted parents who have gone down to CMS to play.

VII. ADVANCE PLANNING

- A. Future Meeting Dates and Calendar Items for Board Attention

- B. Suggested Agenda Items – Kim Shepardson Watson stated that she add Mrs. Volkmann’s request to a COW agenda.

- VIII. ADJOURNMENT – Ackerman, White: To adjourn at 8:05 p.m.

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY