

GROTON BOARD OF EDUCATION  
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
AUGUST 10, 2020 @ 6:00 P.M.  
REMOTE MEETING

**Members Present:** Chairman Kim Shepardson Watson, Vice Chairman Andrea Ackerman, Jane Giuliani, Gretchen Newsome, Elizabeth Porter, Rosemary Robertson, Rita Volkmann, Jay Weitlauf, Lee White

**Also Present:** Michael Graner, Susan Austin, Sam Kilpatrick, Ken Knight

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Watson called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

II. COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS

1. Mrs. Melanie Thompson, SBB parent, addressed her concern with her child who has asthma and his being able to use his nebulizer while at school.
2. Mrs. Rebecca O'Neill, 161 Buckeye Road, regarding the technology that was purchased for this year, if we go Hybrid will the schools provide the updated technology for the child specifically the elementary students.
3. Mrs. Joanna Priest, 39 Huntington Ridge, asked about the use of air conditioners. Mr. Kilpatrick responded that there will be air conditioners and that he will continue to search the CDC sites to keep up with the research. Mrs. Priest addressed cohort classes and calling the students to the gym for dismissal. How will parents be notified of a positive case when detected.
4. Mr. Mike Whitney, 112 Deerfield Ridge, noted the letter he sent to the Board last week:
  - Distance Learning is short on details;
  - Masks for teachers and students; should there be a minimum requirement;
  - Buses and routes;
  - Staffing;
  - More details needed regarding the isolation room.
5. Mr. Justin Barnhill, 7 Pegasus Drive, asked if Kindergarten would be part of the Hybrid model.
6. Mrs. Jen DeSillier, 24 Osage Lane, noted her concern that when students were not in school for their two days, many student will be outside their home and the need for child care situations; therefore, expanding the possibility of coming in contact with COVID and bringing it back to the school. Mrs. DeSillier hopes there has been thought put in and plans to mitigate this increased exposure.
7. Mrs. Katrina Fitzgerald, RTM Member, asked how many students and teachers needed to get sick before returning to remote learning.
8. Mr. Matthew Rogers, 255 Godfrey Road, asked when a decision would be made on reopening school. It was noted that the decision would be made tonight.
9. Mr. Ryan Zimmerman asked the same question as Mr. Rogers.

III. RESPONSE TO COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS

Mr. Weitlauf thanked everyone who logged in to address the Board.

Mrs. Volkmann noted that besides Ledge Light Health District, the Superintendent should solicit input from Dr. Blefeld.

IV. SUPERINENDENT REPORT

A. Introduction of Mr. Vin Varrecchione – Dr. Graner introduced Mr. Varrecchione and asked that give an overview of his background. Mr. Varrecchione gave a brief overview of his background – 33 years in education with half as an administrator.

B. Update re: Plan for Fall Athletics - Mr. Varrecchione noted that the CIAC has put out some recommendations:

- Gathering limitations
- Students will have to self-screen
- Rules regarding face coverings
- No sharing of food; students will bring their own water bottle
- There will be a reduced schedule for games
- There will be a limited number of students at times
- Allowing spectators at games is still being considered

Mr. Varrecchione noted that he has met with the Coaches and went over all the protocol with them.

Mrs. Volkmann recognized Mr. Steve Small. Mr. Small addressed cohort concerns; football being pushed back per CIAC; ECC has noted a 6 game schedule; and the start of the Football season may be moved to the spring.

C. Update re: Parent Focus Groups – Dr. Graner gave an overview of the Focus Groups noting that parents thought the Hybrid Model was the best choice. Dr. Graner noted that Mrs. Horler had surveyed the teachers and the majority was in favor of the Hybrid Model. Mrs. Heidi Hallissey, Paraprofessional President, surveyed the paraprofessional and they too were in favor of the Hybrid Model. Dr. Graner noted that parents gave lots of feedback through live streaming and that parents have the option to change their choice for reopening school. Dr. Graner noted that child care was discussed and that the local YMCA has shown an interest in helping with child care. A variety of resources have also offered their help. Dr. Graner stated that Treehouse will be operating. Dr. Graner stated that health and safety protocols were a high priority of the focus groups.

V. ACTION ITEMS

A. New Business

1. Discussion and possible action regarding the reopening of schools

MOTION: Watson, White: To approve the district's Hybrid Model for reopening with an ongoing assessment of the plan.  
YES – Watson, Ackerman, Giulini, Newsome, Robertson, Volkmann, Weitlauf, White  
NO – Porter  
**PASSED**

Mrs. White left the meeting at 7:16 p.m.

B. Old Business

1. Discussion and possible action regarding a second reading of policy P 3230.1 Federal Grant Procurement and regulations for policy P 3230.1 (Attachment #1)

MOTION: Porter, Giulini: To approve as a second reading of policy P 3230.1 Federal Grant Procurement and regulations for policy P 3230.1  
**PASSED - UNANIMOUSLY**

2. Discussion and possible action regarding a second reading of policy P3323 Bidding and regulations for policy P 3323 (Attachment #2)

MOTION: Weitlauf, Porter: To approve as a second reading of policy P 3323 Bidding and regulations for policy P 3323  
**PASSED - UNANIMOUSLY**

3. Discussion and possible action regarding a second reading of policy P 4118.7 Good Samaritan (Attachment #3)

MOTION: Volkmann, 2 Robertson:  
To approve as a second reading of policy P 4118.7 Good Samaritan.  
**PASSED - UNANIMOUSLY**

VI. ADVANCED PLANNING

A. Suggested Agenda Items

1. Mrs. Watson asked Board members who were interested to update the Mission Statement. Dr. Ackerman, Mrs. Porter, and Mr. Weitlauf volunteered to address this item.

Mrs. Volkmann noted that the revision to the Mission Statement should be a Board Goal. Ms. Austin suggested getting input from the DEI focus group.

2. Mrs. Watson reminded Board members to complete the template for evaluation and to forward it to Dr. Ackerman.
3. Mrs. Volkmann noted a need to discuss a plan for fall athletics.
4. Mrs. Newsome requested an update on how teachers are doing with the Hybrid Model as well as how the district will address feeding the students.
5. Dr. Ackerman requested at an October COW meeting of having teachers discuss with the Board solutions they have come up with in dealing with the Hybrid Model.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Ackerman, Newsome: To adjourn at 7:37 p.m.  
**PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Business/Non-Instructional Operations**

**Federal Funds**

**Federal Grants and Awards Administration (Federal Fiscal Compliance)**

The Board of Education (Board) of the Groton Public Schools intends to administer federal grant awards efficiently and to comply with all requirements imposed by law, the awarding agency, the Connecticut Department of Education, and/or other applicable pass-through entities, and all requirements applicable to the use of federal funds. To the extent that any provision of a Board policy is contrary to a federal law, regulation, term, or condition applicable to a federal award, the applicable federal requirement must be followed.

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall be responsible to develop, monitor, and enforce effective internal controls over federal awards and grants that provide reasonable assurance that the District is managing the funds in compliance with all requirements for federal grants and awards.

- Legal References:
- Uniform Administrative Requirements for Federal Awards, Title 2, Code of Federal Regulations – 2 CFR Part 200
  - Department of Education Direct Grant and State-Administered Programs, Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations – 34 CFR Part 75, Part 76
  - Uniform Administrative Requirements for Federal Awards, Title 2, Code of Federal Regulations – 2CFR Sec. 200.474

Policy Adopted:

GROTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Groton, Connecticut

## **Business/Non-Instructional Operations**

### **Federal Funds**

#### **Federal Grants and Awards Administration (Federal Fiscal Compliance)**

##### **A. Internal Controls**

Internal controls must meet all requirements of federal law and regulation, including the Uniform Guidance issued by the U.S. Office of Budget and Management, and shall be based on best practices.

The internal controls must provide for the following:

- 1) identification of all federal funds received and expended and their program source;
- 2) accurate, current, and complete disclosure of financial data in accordance with federal requirements;
- 3) records sufficient to track the receipt and use of funds;
- 4) effective control and accountability over assets to assure they are used only for authorized purposes;
- 5) comparison of expenditures against budget; and
- 6) written procedures for cash management and determining the allowability of costs.

At a minimum, the internal controls shall address the following areas.

##### **1. Allowability**

Costs charged by the District to a federal grant must be allowed under the individual program and be in accordance with the cost principles established in the Uniform Guidance. Costs will be charged to a federal grant only when the cost is:

1. reasonable and necessary for the program;
2. in compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and grant or award terms;
3. allocable to the grant;
4. adequately documented; and
5. consistent with Board of Education (Board) policies and administrative regulations that apply to both federally-funded and non-federally funded activities.

Prior written approval for certain cost charges must be obtained as required by the awarding agency in order to avoid subsequent disallowances.

##### **2. Cash Management and Fund Control**

Payment methods must be established in writing that minimize the time elapsed between the draw of federal funds and the disbursement of those funds. Standards for funds control and accountability must be met as required by the Uniform Guidance for advance payments.

**Federal Funds – cont.****3. Procurement**

All purchases for property and services made using federal funds must be conducted in accordance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations. Individuals or organizations that develop or draft specifications, requirements, statements of work, and/or invitations for bids, requests for proposals, or invitations to negotiate, must be excluded from competing for such purchases.

Contracts are to be awarded only to responsible contractors possessing the ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of a proposed purchase or service. No contract shall be awarded to a contractor who is suspended or debarred from eligibility for participation in federal assistance programs or activities.

Purchasing records must include at least the rationale for the method of procurement, selection of contract type, and contractor selection or rejection; the basis for the contract price; and verification that the contractor is not suspended or debarred.

**4. Conflict of Interest**

The requirements for conflicts of interest are applicable to all purchases or services.

Each employee, Board member, or agent of the District who is engaged in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by a federal grant or award and who has a potential conflict of interest shall disclose that conflict in writing to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall disclose in writing any potential conflict of interest to the federal awarding agency.

For purposes of this paragraph, a conflict of interest would arise when the employee, Board member, or agent of the District, any member of his or her immediate family, his or her partner, or an organization which employs or is about to employ any of these parties has a financial interest in or receives a tangible personal benefit from a firm considered for a contract. An individual who is required to disclose a conflict of interest shall not participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by a federal grant or award.

The employee, Board member, or agent with a conflict of interest shall not solicit or accept any gratuities, favors, or items from a contractor or a party to a subcontractor for a federal grant or award but they may accept a single unsolicited item with a value of \$10 or less or multiple unsolicited items from a single contractor or subcontractor having an aggregate monetary value of \$50 or less in a 12-month period. Violations of this provision are subject to disciplinary action.

**5. Mandatory Disclosures**

The Superintendent shall disclose in writing to the federal awarding agency in a timely manner all violations of federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuities potentially affecting any federal award. The Superintendent shall fully address any such violations promptly and shall notify the Board accordingly. The Board may request the Superintendent to develop a plan of correction for Board approval in appropriate situations as determined by the Board.

**Federal Funds – cont.****6. Equipment and Supplies Purchased with Federal Funds**

Equipment and supplies acquired with federal funds will be used, managed, and disposed of in accordance with applicable state and federal requirements. Property records and inventory systems shall be sufficiently maintained to account for and track equipment that has been acquired with federal funds.

**7. Accountability and Certifications**

All fiscal transactions must be approved by the Superintendent or designee and by the person managing the federal program who can attest that the expenditure is allowable and approved under the federal program. The Superintendent or designee shall submit all required certifications and is authorized to sign them on behalf of the Board.

**8. Monitoring and Reporting Performance**

The Superintendent shall establish sufficient oversight of the operations of federally supported activities to assure compliance with federal requirements and to ensure that program objectives established by the awarding agency are being achieved. Performance reports, including reports of significant developments that arise between scheduled performance reporting dates, must be submitted as required by federal or state authorities.

**B. Audits and Corrective Action**

1. An annual independent audit will be conducted and the Superintendent or designee will prepare all financial statements, schedules of expenditures, and other documents required for the audit.
2. At the completion of the audit, the Superintendent or designee shall prepare a corrective action plan to address any audit findings. The plan must identify the responsible party and the anticipated completion date for each corrective action to be taken. The Superintendent shall present the plan to the Board for approval.
3. Compliance deficiencies discovered internally through administrative supervision must be addressed promptly with the goal of improving processes to encourage future compliance and reduce audit findings.

**C. Training**

All individuals responsible for the administration of a federal grant or award shall be provided sufficient training and/or guidance to carry out their duties in accordance with all applicable requirements for the federal grant or award.



**Federal Funds – cont.**

**D. Reporting Mismanagement of Federal Funds**

Any employee who reasonably believes that federal funds have been misused or that the District is otherwise in violation of any requirement applicable to the receipt and use of federal funds shall report the matter to the Superintendent or designee.

Policy Adopted:

GROTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Groton, Connecticut

## Business and Non-Instructional Operations

### Soliciting Prices/Bidding Requirements

#### A. Definitions

1. **Quotation:** A notice, either oral or in writing, whereby a vendor informs the purchaser of the conditions and price under which he/she will furnish supplies, materials, equipment, or services to the purchaser.
2. **Bid:** ~~A notice, in writing in a sealed envelope, delivered to the buyer by a specified date, to be opened in public at a specified date and time by the buyer, whereby a vendor informs the buyer of the conditions and price under which he/she will furnish supplies, materials, or equipment.~~ A notice, either in writing or buyer-requested electronic format, delivered to the buyer by a specified date and time whereby a vendor informs the buyer of the conditions and price under which he/she will furnish supplies, materials or equipment. The bid responses shall be opened in public at a specified date and time at the discretion of the Business Manager or designee. Technical assistance will be provided by the requestor, where applicable, to the Business Manager who has the final responsibility for determining the vendor/price.

#### B. Procedures

##### 1. Purchases for more than \$5,000 but less than \$10,000

The Superintendent and/or their designee shall solicit quotations from at least three (3) companies if the nature of the commodity or service permits effective competitive pricing, and if possible, feasible, and to the advantage, of the district. The Superintendent of Schools or designee may award bids and/or quotes up to \$10,000 and he/she may reject any or all such bids.

~~An exception may be made if the State of CT negotiated a price.~~

##### 2. Purchases for \$10,000 and above

Purchases for \$10,000 or more shall be bid. Bids shall be advertised if deemed appropriate by the Superintendent or his/her designee. If a bid is not advertised, a vendor list will be utilized. All bids must be submitted in sealed envelopes and marked appropriately on the outside of the envelope. Bids shall be opened at the time specified. Bid openings shall be public. The school district reserves the right to reject any or all bids and reserves the right to waive the bidding procedure. The Superintendent or designee shall award all other bids upon receiving recommendations and bid results from the Business Manager or Superintendent designee.

##### 3. Vehicle Purchase/Replacement Policy

- a) **New-** New vehicles will be purchased within the framework of this policy.
- b) **Used** - Used vehicles shall be purchased from authorized dealers only. The purchase of a used vehicle from private individuals is prohibited. An independent appraisal may be required in addition to the Blue Book Value to determine the value of the vehicle. A vehicle which is more than seven years old may not be considered for purchase unless it is determined to be in the best interest
- c)

**Soliciting Prices/Bidding Requirements – cont.**

of the district. State of Connecticut bid awards are an acceptable means of purchasing a used vehicle. The process for awarding a contract on a state bid will be consistent with other bid awards.

**4. Purchases involving Federal Funds**

Purchases involving federal funds must follow policy P 3230.1 Federal Funds

**5. Emergency Situation**

The Board of Education (Board) recognizes that emergency situations may arise which affect the health, welfare and/or safety of students and/or staff. In an emergency situation, the procedures of sections for quotation and bidding may be suspended for the emergency only. The decision as to whether a given situation is an emergency situation shall be made by the Superintendent and a report will be given to the Board within a two week period of time detailing the emergency, why the policy was suspended and the amount of funds expended and to whom.

The Superintendent of Schools may provide temporary special education transportation pending completion of the bidding process. Such temporary arrangements shall not exceed 30 days without Board approval.

The authority to sign contracts is delegated to the Superintendent of Schools or their designee.

~~Bids are not required on~~ The following purchases are excluded from the above quotes and bid requirements:

1. Purchases where only one supplier exists.
2. Goods and services available through the pre-approved State contracts. (State of Connecticut, Department of Administrative Services website [www.das.state.ct.us/busopp.asp](http://www.das.state.ct.us/busopp.asp) )
3. Architectural services.
4. Legal services.
5. Services requiring specific expertise. (consultants, specialists)
6. Textbook purchases.

## **Business and Non-Instructional Operations**

### **Soliciting Prices (Bids and Quotations)**

#### **Regulations Relative to the Bidding Activity**

1. The purchasing personnel shall periodically estimate requirements of standard items or classes of items and make quantity purchases, thereby effecting economies. Whenever storage facilities or other conditions make it impractical to receive an entire order at one time, the total quantity should be bid and staggered delivery dates made a part of the bid specifications, or estimated quantities bid with deliveries to be made as requested.
2. Bid instructions and specifications should be clear and complete, setting forth all necessary conditions conducive to competitive bidding.
3. The purchasing personnel shall seek bids from those sources able to offer the best prices, consistent with quality, delivery and service.
4. The bids shall be ~~opened in~~ made available to the public at the discretion of the Business Manager or designee. ~~prescribed time and place and tabulated for review. Whether or not bid opening occurs exactly at the time advertised, no bids may be accepted after said advertised time.~~
5. After the bids have been opened and tabulated, they will be available for those interested to copy or examine. ~~They shall not, however, be removed from the purchasing office.~~ Copies may be shared electronically in pdf format upon request.

Groton Public Schools  
Requisition review checklist

Requisition #: \_\_\_\_\_  
Vendor: \_\_\_\_\_  
Person making request: \_\_\_\_\_  
Requisition total: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Per Groton Board of Education policy (P3323), all purchases more than \$5,000 but less than \$10,000 require at least three quotes (with certain exceptions).**

Were three quotes obtained (circle one)?                      Yes              No

If yes, above, please provide non-awarded vendor names:

\_\_\_\_\_

If no, check one of following:

- State of CT negotiated price
- Purchase where only one supplier exists
- Architectural services
- Legal services
- Service requiring specific expertise
- Textbook purchases
- Superintendent waived
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Per Groton Board of Education policy (P3323), all purchases more than \$10,000 shall be bid (with certain exceptions).**

Was this purchase bid (circle one)?                      Yes              No

If yes, above, please provide non-awarded vendor names:

\_\_\_\_\_

If no, check one of following:

- State of CT negotiated price
- Purchase where only one supplier exists
- Architectural services
- Legal services
- Service requiring specific expertise
- Textbook purchases
- Superintendent waived
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

*(Continued next page)*

**Groton Public Schools**  
Requisition review checklist

**For purchases involving federal funds, C.F.R. Sections 200.317 to 200.325 must be followed, per Groton Board of Education policy (P3230.1).**

Please check all of the following:

- Avoided unnecessary or duplicate items.
- Purchase awarded to responsible, capable vendors/contractors.
- Free from real or apparent conflicts of interest.
- Contractor/vendor not suspended or debarred.
- Procurement includes a termination for cause clause.
- Contractor is on prequalified list, if used.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Personnel

### Good Samaritan

All employees are encouraged to respond to health emergencies involving students or other employees which may occur on school grounds or at a school function, until qualified medical personnel are available. Such response should be reasonable under the circumstances and within the limits of the person's training and capabilities.

Teachers or other school personnel who have completed a course in first aid offered by the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, the National Ski Patrol, the Department of Public Health or any Director of Health, who render emergency first aid to a person in need thereof on school grounds or at a school function, shall not be liable for ordinary negligence.

Teachers or other school personnel who have completed both a course in first aid, as described above, and a course given by the medical advisor of the school or by a licensed physician **or by the school nurse** in the administration of ~~medication by injection~~, oral, topical, intranasal, inhalant, or cartridge injector **medication**, who render emergency care by administration of ~~medication by injection~~ oral, topical, **intranasal, inhalant, or cartridge injector medication** to a person in need thereof on school grounds or at a school function, will not be liable for ordinary negligence.

This Policy shall not be construed to require any teacher or other school personnel to render emergency first aid or to administer medication by injection.

(cf. 5141.21 Administering Medication)

Legal Reference:            Connecticut General Statutes 52-557b  
                                 Connecticut General Statutes 10-235  
                                 Connecticut General Statutes 10-236

Policy adopted:    July, 1979  
                         Revised:        April 13, 1998

GROTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Groton, Connecticut