

GROTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 5, 2022 @ 5:00 P.M.
CENTRAL OFFICE, ROOM 11

Members Present: Chairperson Kim Shepardson Watson, Andrea Ackerman- Vice Chairperson, Dean Antipas, William Horgan (arrived at 5:57 p.m.), Elizabeth Porter, Matthew Shulman (remote), Rita Volkmann (remote), Beverly Washington (remote), Jay Weitlauf (remote)

Also Present: Susan Austin, Phil Piazza, Sam Kilpatrick, Ted Keleher, NEASC Committee - Christian Canfield, David Tanner, Colleen Filush, Brian Stevenson, Cathleen Carmignani, Derek Leif

- I. Chairperson Shepardson Watson called the meeting to order at 5:07 p.m.
- II. New England Association of Schools and College (NEASC)

The members of the NEASC committee asked what the Board new about The Vision of the Graduate.

Mrs. Porter addressed the Vision of the Graduate R.I.S.E. which develops the character of the person. She shared examples of how she has experienced these traits.

A question was asked as to whether Groton develops a timeline to allow for collaboration to write curriculum. Mrs. Porter stated that the BOE Curriculum Committee, with Dr. Piazza and staff, are auditing all Disciplines to see what has been completed and what still needs to be reviewed and revised. Groton has set a schedule and timeline to enhance career pathways.

A question was asked, “What is the Board doing to support this work.” Mrs. Shepardson Watson responded that the Board supports the work of the district by building a budget, being good stewards, and showing community partnerships. Superintendent Austin added that the Policy Committee is adding policies to enhance student access to courses. Mrs. Porter explained the DEI Committee and the vision statement adopted by the Board.

A question was asked as to what is put in place to help teachers deliver instruction more effectively. Superintendent Austin and Dr. Piazza responded that there are 8 TLI (Teacher Learning Initiative) days and 5 full PD (Professional Development) days in the school calendar. Superintendent Austin noted that for every 1 million dollar grant there is embedded coaching whether it be literacy, math, science, STEM, and World Language. Mr. Keleher stated that the Board has been very supportive in terms of supplying resources and professional learning that are needed to support instruction.

A question was asked about budget priorities. Mrs. Shepardson Watson responded stating that our biggest asset is our staff. She noted that in multiple years, Groton has sustained 0% budget increases. She also stated that “having the right people on the bus” is important in making sure the district has what it needs so we can continue to produce global and social citizens but at the same time meeting the needs of our district. Mr. Kilpatrick commented that he and Mr. Knight, Business Manager, have submitted 2 grants regarding HVAC. He noted that FHS was upgraded around 2008, a new section and upgraded some parts of the building, however, there is still some parts we call vintage. This was a very important piece of the HVAC grant; and the 2020 plan was to close 3 schools, however, we were able to close 4. The oldest elementary school is Dr. Charles Barnum, built in 1965, is still in good condition but does not have a HVAC system. He is hoping to hear if the grant is approved in January 2023.

A question was asked regarding grading and assessment policies that piggy back on DEI that would support students in all classes, including higher level courses. Mrs. Shepardson Watson responded that the Board wants students to take the higher level courses if they so choose. We want to make sure higher level courses are available to anyone who can do that. The Board is not interested in watering down our higher level courses. The Board is so committed that we approve funding – your budget speaks for you.

III. Adjournment

MOTION: Porter, Antipas:

To adjourn at 6:00 p.m.

PASSED - UNANIMOUSLY