

**East Granby Board of Education
Regular Meeting Minutes for
Monday, February 13, 2017**

Board Members Present:

Mr. Joe Doering
Mrs. Michele Holt
Mr. James Feeney
Mr. Bob Ravens-Seger
Mr. John Welsh (7:36)
Ms. Jennifer Cook

Board Members Absent:

Mr. Robert Crocker
Mr. Brandon Freeman

Others Present:

Dr. Christine Mahoney, Superintendent
Mrs. Susan Greco, Business Manager
Ms. Lisa Kline, Board Clerk
Joy Giuliano, Visitor
Bill Pitney, Visitor
Sharon Shepherd, Visitor
Alisa Ruggiero, Visitor
Kristie Clark, Visitor
Alicia Van Neil, Visitor
Gordon Russo, Visitor
Susan Tracey, Visitor
Becky Hayes, Visitor
Ken Kovaleski, Visitor
Cathi Dallesander, Visitor
Emily Farmer, Student Representative

I. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

With a quorum present, Joe Doering, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m., and all recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

a. Approve Minutes from the January 9, 2017, and the January 23, 2017 regular meetings

Mr. Ravens-Seger requested to replace the word 'Council' with 'Commission' in item IVc.

MOTION: a motion was made by Mr. Feeney, seconded by Ms. Cook to approve the January 9, 2017 minutes with the requested change. (FOR: Mr. Doering, Mr. Feeney, Mr. Ravens-Seger, Ms. Cook. ABSTAINED: Mrs. Holt). *Motion approved.*

MOTION: a motion was made by Mr. Ravens-Seger, seconded by Ms. Cook to approve the January 23, 2017 regular meeting minutes as presented. (FOR: Mr. Doering, Mr. Feeney, Mr. Ravens-Seger, Ms. Cook. ABSTAINED: Mrs. Holt). *Motion approved.*

b. Comments from visitors regarding agenda items

Joe Doering reviewed the agenda and encouraged visitors to support the budget this year before opening up the floor to visitor comments. Joy Giuliano asked about the status of the recommendation to explore regionalizing the high school with neighboring districts as suggested in the efficiency study. Mr. Doering explained that the board is only collecting information at this time. Ken Kovaleski would like to keep elementary class sizes to 20 students or less and feels this would allow for more physical space. Sharon Shepherd advocated for smaller class sizes in the fourth and fifth grades. Cathi Dallesander shared that research indicates that smaller class sizes increase academic performance and make students feel safe and valued. Kristie Clark found a significant difference in her children when their class size decreased. Alisa Ruggiero asked board members what information they found when comparing large classes with smaller classes. Alisha Van Neil asked board members to reconsider having smaller class sizes and requested to have more board meetings videotaped. Sue Tracey noted there is less anxiety when students are placed in a class that is smaller and she is aware of the number of considerations taken by the administration when placing students.

c. Additions to Agenda – Dr. Mahoney requested to add item VIId. Approve Field Trip to the agenda. Joe Doering requested to add Teachers' Contract to item IX. Executive Session.

MOTION: a motion was made by Mr. Ravens-Seger, seconded by Ms. Cook to add to the agenda item VIId. Approve Field Trip and include Teachers' Contract to item IX. Executive Session. *Motion approved unanimously.*

II. Student Representatives Report

Emily Farmer encouraged everyone present to participate in the blood drive at the high school on February 24, 2017 from 8a.m.-1:45p.m. and reported that the Snow Ball Dance held in January was well attended.

Rehearsals for the spring musical are well underway and the musical will be held on March 31st and April 1st, 2017. Planning for spring sports is also underway and high school students are still collecting hats and gloves for the homeless.

III. Chairperson's Report

a. Update on Efficiency Study

As a follow up to the efficiency study recommendation, Joe Doering reported that Joe Townsley is still pursuing collection of information.

b. Number of BOE Members and Number of Meetings per Month

Joe Doering asked board members to share their thoughts about reducing the number of BOE members and the number of meetings per month. Mr. Feeney feels that reducing the number of meetings limits the opportunity for visitors to attend them. Mr. Doering pointed out that the majority of BOE members will be up for election this November and one of the difficulties the board struggles with is maintaining continuity. Mr. Welsh and Mrs. Holt both feel that many people interested in serving cannot commit to the time it takes to be involved. Mrs. Holt suggested reducing the number of BOE members and assigning 1 or 2 alternates. Mr. Doering responded that unlike the board of finance, there is no provision available for alternates on the BOE. Due to the workload, Mr. Ravens-Segers is opposed to reducing the number of meetings and members.

c. 2017-2018 Budget Guidance and Workshop Schedule

Joe Doering reported that the BOE will present the 2017-2018 budget guidance of 1.5% at the March 14, 2017 board of finance meeting. Budget Workshops were scheduled for February 15th and 23rd, 2017 at 6:00 p.m.

d. District Management Council Follow-up

Joe Doering asked Dr. Mahoney to schedule another conference call with the District Management Council to answer questions from board members concerning the project.

IV. Superintendent's Report

a. Policy 6151 (First Read)

Dr. Mahoney distributed a copy of policy 6151 that represented the changes that were discussed at the last board meeting. The policy now allows administration flexibility to make decisions based on the number of combinations involved when determining class sizes. Joe Doering shared a class size guideline he generated. The guideline reflected the Connecticut average, the DRG average, and the average of surrounding towns back to FY 2012-2013. Dr. Mahoney shared that what is most important is the interaction between the highly effective teacher and the student. At this time, the board members and visitors toured a classroom with 24 desks to get a visual look of space. Some of the comments shared by visitors were that there was not enough space for groups and limited space could provoke anxiety.

b. Academic Program Update

Dr. Mahoney reminded board members that they will need to make a decision soon about whether or not East Granby wants to accept CHOICE students for the 2017-2018 school year. CHOICE usually wants a decision in March. Dr. Mahoney excitedly reported that we are growing our academic programs at the different grade levels. Some programs include the expansion of the Teachers College Reading Writing Workshop Program, the International Baccalaureate On-line Program, and the expanded 5th Year Associate Degree Manufacturing and Business Programs. Letters were sent to area businesses seeking their assistance in providing an opportunity for a grade 11 and/or grade 12 student to spend time in their place of business observing and learning the unique skill sets and the practical aspects related to their field of interest.

c. Facilities Update

Dr. Mahoney reported that water was discovered gushing from an underground source at the middle/high school last week. The company that installed the water lines was called to examine and address the leak. By Friday, the water was restored to the high school but not the middle school. Over the weekend, the plumber located another line that would allow water to the middle school. There was also a temporary problem with hot water, but it was resolved quickly. As a permanent remedy, we are

looking to have the lines relocated. Mr. Welsh would like to publicly thank Ed Hubbard from the DPW who discovered the program and acted quickly.

d. Strategic Planning – Agile Learner Update

Dr. Mahoney reported on the Community Forum that was held in January. Participants looked at and discussed the Intellectual Technological Agile Learner to get a sense of what the community is thinking in terms of student learning and preparing them for the 21st Century. The findings will assist the board of education in revising the vision statement.

V. Committee Reports

a. Policy – Previously discussed.

b. Budget – Previously discussed.

c. Curriculum – Dr. Mahoney reported that a recent curriculum committee meeting was held.

d. Facilities – Previously discussed.

e. Negotiations – Joe Doering reported that there will be a town meeting this Thursday evening to vote on the certified teachers' contract.

f. Communications – Michele Holt would like to have more board meetings videotaped. Dr. Mahoney shared that she scheduled video tapings with GCTV giving administrators the opportunity to present important programs going on in their school.

VI. Recommended Actions

a. Approve Number of BOE Members and Number of Meetings per Month

Board members had different views about whether or not to decrease the number of BOE members and the number of meetings per month.

MOTION: a motion was made by Mr. Ravens-Seger, seconded by Mr. Doering not to change the number of BOE members and the number of meetings per month at this time. *Motion approved unanimously.*

b. Approve January 2017 Financials

Sue Greco reviewed the January 2017 Financial Report and asked board members if they had any questions regarding the summary. Line items reviewed included Certified and Non-Certified Personnel lines, Certified Substitutes, Legal Fees and Public and Private School Tuition lines. The bill backs to Hartford that have not yet been made will help restore the personnel and tuition line items.

MOTION: a motion was made by Mr. Ravens-Seger, seconded by Mr. Feeney to approve the January 2017 Financials as presented. *Motion approved unanimously.*

c. Approve Efficiency Study Follow-up Service Contract

Dr. Mahoney read the service contract between Dr. Joseph Townsley and the East Granby Board of Education. Dr. Townsley will work with surrounding school districts to compile data for the board of education in its analysis related to the efficiency study, specifically the recommendation about regionalization. Dr. Townsley will be compensated at a rate of \$700 per day to complete the work.

MOTION: a motion was made by Mr. Ravens-Seger, seconded by Mr. Feeney to approve the Efficiency Study Follow-up Service Contract as presented. (FOR: Mr. Doering, Mr. Ravens-Seger, Ms. Cook, Mr. Feeney.

OPPOSED: Mr. Welsh and Mrs. Holt). *Motion approved.*

d. Approve Field Trip

Dr. Mahoney presented a field trip for the high school baseball team to travel to Dodgertown in Vero Beach Florida April 7th–13th, 2017. Students will depart at 9:30 a.m. and return approximately at 4:30 p.m. The cost is \$1,400 paid by the student.

MOTION: a motion was made by Mr. Ravens-Seger, seconded by Ms. Cook to approve the field trip to Dodgertown in Vero Beach Florida April 7th-13th, 2017 as presented. *Motion approved unanimously.*

VII. Agenda Items for Future Meetings

a. Number of BOE Members and the Number of Meetings per Month

b. Policy 6151 (Second Read)

c. 2017-2018 Budget

VIII. Comments from Visitors

Sharon Shepherd thanked the board members for everything they do and commented that the Community Forum in January was the best one yet. Mrs. Shepherd would like to see the technology gap in the younger grades addressed, especially in the library. Dr. Mahoney responded that the matter is being examined and addressed.

Joy Giuliano encouraged the board members to utilize the Connecticut State Department of Education for free materials and information that is readily available.

IX. Executive Session – Personnel Matter – Teachers’ Contract - See Executive Session Minutes

X. Adjournment

MOTION: a motion was made by Mr. Ravens-Seger, seconded by Jen Cook to adjourn the meeting. ***Motion approved unanimously.*** Meeting adjourned at 10:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Kline
Board Clerk

These minutes are issued pending Board of Education approval.

**East Granby Board of Education
Executive Session Meeting Minutes for
Monday, February 13, 2017**

Board Members Present:

Mr. Joe Doering
Mr. James Feeney
Mr. Bob Ravens-Seger
Mr. John Welsh
Mrs. Michele Holt
Ms. Jennifer Cook

Others Present:

Dr. Christine Mahoney, Superintendent
Mrs. Susan Greco, Business Manager

Absent:

Mr. Rob Crocker
Mr. Brandon Freeman

The Executive Session was called to order at 10:10 p.m.

MOTION: a motion was made by Bob Ravens-Seger, seconded by Michele Holt, to move into Executive Session for the purpose of a Personnel Matter and the Teachers' Contract. The board invited Dr. Mahoney and Susan Greco to attend. **Motion approved unanimously.** The Executive Session was called to order at 10:10 p.m.

The Board returned to regular session at 10:20 p.m.

MOTION: a motion was made by Bob Ravens-Seger, seconded by Jennifer Cook, to adjourn the meeting. **Motion approved unanimously.** The meeting adjourned at 10:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Ravens-Seger
Board Secretary