

**East Granby Board of Education
Regular Meeting Minutes for
Monday, February 27, 2017**

Board Members Present:

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

Others Present:

Dr. Christine Mahoney, Superintendent
Mrs. Susan Greco, Business Manager
Ms. Lisa Kline, Board Clerk
Karen Gogel, Director of Student Support Services
Stella Ross, Curriculum Director
William Pitney, Visitor
Paula Berger, Visitor
Joy Giuliano, Visitor

Board Members Absent:

I. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

With a quorum present, Joe Doering, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m., and all recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Superintendent's Report

a. District Management Council (via conference call)

Dr. Mahoney distributed copies of the expanded document from the District Management Group regarding the ACE2 group project and then called Kevin McCarthy from DMC so he could clarify the cost and answer any questions or concerns from board members. Mr. McCarthy shared that the cost to participate is \$80,000 and can be paid over the next 2 school years. Jim Feeney would like to get references from districts that previously participated in ACE2. Mr. McCarthy will provide references to Dr. Mahoney.

I. a. Comments from Visitors Regarding Agenda Items

Paula Berger is involved in Project Graduation and requested to add the 2017 Graduation date to the agenda so she can share information. She is requesting that graduation not be held on a Friday as the venue she would like to reserve for Project Graduation is not available that evening.

b. Additions to the Agenda

MOTION: a motion was made by Michele Holt, seconded by Jim Feeney to add item IIe. Discussion of the 2017 Graduation Date and Last Day of School to the agenda. *Motion approved unanimously.*

MOTION: a motion was made by Bob Ravens-Seger, seconded by Jim Feeney to add item IVc. Accept Board Member Resignation to the agenda. *Motion approved unanimously.*

II. Chairperson's Report

a. BOE Member Resignation

Joe Doering reported that he received a letter of resignation from Brandon Freeman effective immediately.

b. Update on Efficiency Study

Joe Doering held a meeting with Joe Townsley, Dr. Mahoney, and Susan Greco to discuss the collection of information to identify high school cost. The deadline to have the information collected is March 30, 2017. Michele Holt asked Susan Greco what the total cost of the earlier efficiency study was. Mrs. Greco replied that it was \$25,000 taken out of the 2014-2015 fiscal year. Mr. Doering reported that Joe Townsley will submit the data for discussion. John Welsh would like Mr. Townsley to present the data to board members.

c. 2017-2018 Budget

The board recently held budget workshops where they discussed the presentation of a 1.5% budget guidance and a 2.63% budget which the board feels is necessary to properly fund the district. Joe Doering would like to share his presentation with the BOE before presenting it to the Board of Finance.

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

Joe Doering read an "Ordinance Establishing the Number of Members of the Board of Education" drafted by the town attorney. The ordinance covered the purpose, number of members of the Board of

Education, election of members, vacancies, minority representation, and the number of persons for whom electors may cast a vote.

e. Discussion of the 2017 Graduation Date and Last Day of School

Dr. Mahoney explained that by policy, the school calendar is revisited at the end of March to determine the date of graduation and the last day of school. Contractually, teachers have to work 187 days; students must attend 180 days. Our school calendar is built with 182 student days allowing for snow days. The middle/high school had to close for one day due to a water problem. Arrangements will have to be made to make up the time. The board will keep in mind Project Graduation's earlier request not to hold graduation on a Friday so they can move forward with securing a venue.

III. Superintendent's Report

a. District Management Council

Dr. Mahoney asked board members if they had any questions or comments regarding the conference call that took place earlier. Rob Crocker is concerned about the cost of the project especially when the board is looking at a budget guidance of 1.5%. Dr. Mahoney explained that the money is not coming out of the operating budget. This project would be more extensive than any study ever done before in this district. Joe Doering is concerned that there will not be enough money after paying Joe Townsley. Michele Holt wishes this was available back when they did the efficiency study. Dr. Mahoney spoke with participants and the results were incredible. John Welsh feels the district will benefit from it and suggested tabling it until we know how it will be funded. Dr. Mahoney explained that the group project would proceed.

b. Policy 6151 (SECOND READ)

At the last board meeting, it was recommended to list ranges for class size guidelines. Dr. Mahoney asked the board members what they think the ranges should be. There was a discussion about wording of the policy and the class sizes. Joe Doering would like a policy that considers the make-up of the class rather than a decision based on a mathematical point of view. Dr. Mahoney reported that R.D. Seymour School does not have any extra classrooms. John Welsh commented that we need a policy in place that will address class sizes for the long haul, not just for the coming year. Rather than ranges, Joe Doering suggested the following guidelines: Kindergarten – 18, Grade 1 – 20, Grades 2 & 3 – 21, Grades 4 & 5 – 22, and Grades 6-12 – 23.

c. LED Lighting Project

Susan Greco is working with a firm on a LED project to retrofit the light fixtures in Carl Allgrove and the middle/high school. Everything but the parking lot lights will be retrofitted. The light boards last for 5 years. The retrofitting at Carl Allgrove School would cost \$87,082. Eversource has a 40% reimbursement incentive and financing is spread out over 4 years with 0% interest. Our energy savings would be \$1,665 per month and to finance the cost would be \$1,088 per month. Our bill would still be reduced monthly. Joe Doering suggested that Mrs. Greco check with other towns who have implemented this energy saving initiative. Michele Holt asked if the quality of the lighting would have an effect on students academically. Mrs. Greco reported that the lights are brighter and have an even distribution so they will not affect the students' ability to see.

d. CHOICE Seat Declaration

Dr. Mahoney reported that 9 students from Hartford listed East Granby Public Schools as their first choice to attend school. We have until March 1, 2017 to declare the number of seats we would like to fill. The board members decided to let Dr. Mahoney determine how many students to accept for the 2017-2018 school year.

e. Business Insurance Proposal

Dr. Mahoney reported that Jim Hayden shared information with her that he received when he met with a USI Insurance agent regarding business insurance. Dr. Mahoney, Jim Hayden and Susan Greco will discuss the matter.

f. Update on Water Issue at EGMS/HS

Dr. Mahoney reported that on February 20, 2017, the plumber connected the water to the middle school. Unfortunately, they were informed that the insurance is not going to cover the cost. The insurance company was contacted to see if there is anything listed in the policy that would at least cover any portion of the work that was done.

IV. Recommended Actions

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

MOTION: a motion was made by Rob Crocker, seconded by John Welsh to approve the Number of BOE Members from 9 to 7 as presented in the Ordinance Establishing the Number of Members of the Board of Education drafted by the town attorney with the following options: Election of Members: Three candidates shall be elected to serve a term of four years and four candidates shall be elected to serve a term of two years. Candidates shall specify which term of office they are seeking. Number of Persons for Whom Electors May Cast a Vote: Pursuant to C.G.S. §9-204b, at any biennial election each elector may cast the same number of votes for candidates to the Board of Education as there are seats to be filled, excluding those candidates seeking to fill the remaining term of a member who has vacated his/her seat. The election of a board member to fill an unexpired term shall be considered separate from the election of candidates to fill a full term.

Michele Holt feels that now is not the time to change the number of seats and the DTC and RTC need to recruit more people. Bob Ravens-Seger would like to keep the 6 year terms. Jim Feeney feels that reducing the number of BOE members reduces the diverse representation of the population. John Welsh expressed that it is difficult to get individuals to run for office and several seats will need to be filled this fall. Joe Doering feels that reducing the number of members will improve cohesiveness and continuity on the board. (FOR: Rob Crocker, Jen Cook, John Welsh, Joe Doering. OPPOSED: Bob Ravens-Seger, Jim Feeney, Michele Holt).

Motion approved.

MOTION: a motion was made by Rob Crocker, seconded by John Welsh for the Board of Education to continue holding meetings twice a month. **Motion approved unanimously.**

b. Approve Policy 6151

MOTION: a motion was made by Jim Feeney, seconded by Bob Ravens-Seger to approve Policy 6151 as presented but amending the guidelines to reflect the numbers recommended by Joe Doering. Dr. Mahoney advocated keeping grades 6-12 at 25. Mr. Feeney agreed to amend his motion and keep grades 6-12 at 25.

Motion approved unanimously.

c. Accept Board Member Resignation

MOTION: a motion was made by Michele Holt, seconded by Rob Crocker to accept the resignation of board member Brandon Freeman. **Motion approved unanimously.**

V. Comments from Visitors - None

VI. Agenda Items for Future Meetings

a. District Management Group

b. 2017-2018 Budget – Mrs. Greco will schedule a budget workshop next week pending board member availability.

c. Update on Efficiency Study

Dr. Mahoney scheduled a strategic planning session with Office Depot for March 27, 2017 from 4:45 – 6:45 pm. to update the vision statement and board goals using the information collected at the Community Forum in January. Board members were invited to attend.

VII. Adjournment

MOTION: a motion was made by Michele Holt, seconded by Jen Cook, to adjourn the meeting. **Motion approved unanimously.** The meeting adjourned at 9:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Kline
Board Clerk

These minutes are issued pending Board of Education approval.