



**TOWN OF GRAFTON**  
**GRAFTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
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**MINUTES**  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
Grafton Municipal Center, Room F  
August 31, 2015  
7:00 p.m.

**Members Present:** Daryl Rynning, Chairman  
Laura Often, Vice Chair  
Teri Turgeon, Secretary  
Peter Carlson, Member  
Donna Stock, Member

**Student** Bianca Carangelo  
**Representatives:** Hannah Kelley

**Also Present:** Dr. James Cummings, Superintendent of Schools  
Tracey Calo, Assistant Superintendent  
Daniel Gale, Finance Director

**Call to Order – Open Session**

A moment of silence was held for Physics Teacher, Mr. Eschelbacher who passed unexpectedly on August 17, 2015.

Chairperson's Update: Mrs. Rynning welcomed Student Representative, Hanna Kelley and returning representative Bianca Carangelo.

1. Educational Reports

- a. Curriculum Update: Tracey Calo and Kristen Gasper presented a curriculum update, a review of 2014 and a look ahead to 2015. Ms. Calo discussed the Professional Learning Communities (PLC's) and reviewed the model for collaboration, with emphasis on two theories; ongoing study and constant practice and change in practice and improved learning. The following PLC's were outlined by Ms. Calo and Ms. Gasper: 6 Traits & the Writing Process; ORIGO; New Teacher and Mentor Program; and Impactful Practices. Mrs. Rynning asked what kind of guidance was available for the PLC's. Ms. Calo had trained district leaders. Because the feedback of PLC's was so positive, Ms. Calo stated that they would run their district initiative as a building base PLC this year. Staff will engage in a DATA process that will help them analyze the results of the common assessments they designed last year. This will help them with curriculum, instructional strategies and student learning. Ms.

Calo also outlined the accomplishments of the Report Card Committee which far exceeded her expectations. They revised and updated the report card, create a parent brochure as well as created resources to further assist parents with the learning strategies and communication. The feedback was positive on these changes. This coming year, Ms. Calo planned to develop a teacher handbook to create consistency in grading practices across the district. Mr. Carlson asked if there was any thought into creating a similar handbook for parents. Ms. Calo would look into this. Parent meetings throughout the year would be held. Ms. Often suggested filming some of the parent forums as it could be a resource for parents who cannot attend. Ms. Gasper discussed the Math Resource Committee, created for K-8. They worked towards finding the best components of good math instruction and finding resources to enhance our teaching. The group ended in June, ready to pilot a program for this year's curriculum. Ms. Calo noted that engagement had been a long standing district initiative. They looked at engagement with two components, active learning and motivation. The characteristics of each were reviewed; there was one technique that connects to both, that was collaborative learning strategies. This year during faculty meetings teachers will pilot, investigate and reflect on different collaborative learning techniques and the impact on student learning. It was noted that the Report Card Committee and the Math Resource Committee would continue this year. Both Ms. Calo and Ms. Gasper were excited about the upcoming school year and all the learning initiatives. Mrs. Turgeon asked Ms. Calo where she felt she would be next year considering each year it seems things can't get any much better. Ms. Calo would like to change faculty meetings into PLC Models. She would like to differentiate school needs by locations and bring them all together. Shape where the district is going focusing on collaborate learning. Mr. Carlson asked if there was a staff participation pattern. In Impactful Practice Ms. Calo saw a tremendous range. In lower levels you tend to see some of the same faces.

## 2. General Business

- a. Hiring Overview: Dr. Cummings gave an overview of the hiring process. In total there were over 40 hires. The quality of the new hires was phenomenal. A list was provided to the Committee for review. These hires were reflective of the FY16 budget. There was a new teacher orientation in place. Dr. Cummings reviewed the interview procedure. Mrs. Often was glad that students participated during the interview sessions. She also asked about teacher resources and how they got started. There was funding in the budget for this, teachers, principals and administrative staff would discuss specific needs as they come up.

## 3. Superintendent's Report

- a. District Update – Dr. Cummings and his staff were working on the activities list, it would cover activities ranging from September through December. They had a great start with K-9 students. Bus transportation went smooth;

AA Transportation put a great deal of work into this. Dr. Cummings thanked AA Transportation and their support staff. Dr. Cummings gave an overview of this summer's Capital Projects; the Maintenance and Custodial staff did great work this summer. Fall Sports started up with high level of participation. Dr. Cummings thanked Life Song Church in Sutton and Grafton Rainbow Girls for their generous donation of fully stocked backpacks. Mr. Cummings would like to recognize Jennifer Zinkas at an upcoming meeting for her lead efforts. The new district website is up and running, adding information daily. In the near future an App for iPhone users would be available as well.

4. Future Agenda Planning:

- A. A workshop was needed to discuss the filling of the school committee vacancy. The position is open until Sept 11<sup>th</sup> before the workshop they should develop an interview process and prepare questions. The vacancy appeared in the Grafton News Paper and should be on the Web as well. The committee wanted to be sure residents were aware of the vacancy. Including this in the superintendent's newsletter was suggested. A meeting was set for September 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. The Board of Selectmen would be invited to discuss the vacancy. Other topics would be Shared Services, School Committee Minute (GCTV Coverage), Web Site designee, policy review and subcommittee participation.
- b. Mrs. Rynning noted that it was time to sign up for MASC, she encouraged folks to attend.

5. Financial Report

- a. A motion was made by Mr. Carlson that the School Committee approve Warrant #7 dated August 13<sup>th</sup> in the amount of \$507,310.99 Motion Seconded by Mrs. Stock. Motion carried 5-0 School Committee and 2-0 School Representatives.
- b. A motion was made by Mr. Carlson that the School Committee approve Warrant #9, dated August 27, 2015 in the amount of \$216,630.16. Motion seconded by Mrs. Stock. Motion Carried 5-0 School Committee and 2-0 School Representatives.

6. Policy:

- a. KF – Community Use of School Facilities (Second Reading)  
Mrs. Often stated there were minimal changes from first reading, she outlined these changes. Ms. Often recommended eliminated the first paragraph. Mr. Carlson agreed with Mrs. Often but suggests leaving the last sentence, incorporating it into the paragraph beginning with use of school buildings. Mrs. Turgeon would like find a way to let people know they can use of the High School facility. We should promote this and not just reflect on what wasn't allowed. The Committee should be proactive on use of this building. A motion was made by Mr. Carlson to adopt section KF and KFR

Community Use School Facilities as amended as a second reading. Motion seconded by Mrs. Stock. Motion carried 5-0 School Committee 2-0 School Representatives.

7. Correspondence – Mr. Carlson received correspondence regarding opiate use and tragedies associated with it. He would share this with the committee members. The group had not revisited these items in years; he would like to see this on an upcoming agenda. Mrs. Often stated MASC was having discussions in Worcester in the next few weeks as well as another in October. She would be attending one of these events. Mrs. Stock noted an article in the T&G which addressed stress levels in the High School and lower levels. This too may be a topic of discussion in the near future.

Mrs. Rynning announced this was Mrs. Stocks last official meeting. She thanked her for all her years of dedicated service and for making such an impact over the years. Mrs. Stock stated that she had saved several items over the past 10 years. Mrs. Stock presented each member with a folder of assorted items which she felt had distinct connections to each individually. Mrs. Stock would be greatly missed.

At 8:20 p.m. a motion was made by Mrs. Stock to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Mrs. Turgeon. Motion passed 5-0 School Committee and 2-0 School Representatives.

Respectfully submitted,



Cindy Ide  
Recording Secretary