

Agenda School Committee Meeting 12/11/2023

Mission Statement

The mission of the Gardner Public School System is to prepare, in collaboration with parents, students who are ready upon graduation for the challenges of college and career without remediation. This will be done in a safe, caring, just and equitable environment. Our Core Values are Academic Excellence, Creativity, Respect and Responsibility.

Notice: The listing of agenda items are those reasonably anticipated by the Chairman which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.

Any person may make a video or audio recording of an open session of a meeting, or may transmit the meeting through any medium, subject to reasonable requirements of the Chair as to the number, placement, and operation of equipment used so as not to interfere with the conduct of the meeting. Any person intending to make such recording shall notify the Chair forthwith. All documents and exhibits used or referenced at the meeting must be submitted in duplicate to the Recording Secretary, as they become part of the meeting minutes.

GARDNER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

REGULAR MEETING OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Monday, December 11, 2023, 6:30 PM

City Council Chambers, City Hall, Gardner, MA 01440

ORDER OF BUSINESS

- A. **Call to Order**
- B. **Open Time for General Public**
- C. **Recognitions by the Superintendent-** John & Abigail Adams Recipients Class of 2024
- D. **Consent Agenda**
 - a. Approval of Minutes: November 13, 2023
 - b. Accept Grant Funds on Grant listing dated December 11, 2023 in the amount of \$124,765.00
 - c. Warrant # 24-19, dated November 9, 2023, in the amount of \$874,115.15
 - d. Warrant # 24-20, dated November 16, 2023. in the amount of \$326,506.75
 - e. Warrant # 24-21, dated November 22, 2023, in the amount of \$418,050.44
 - f. Warrant # 24-22, dated November 30, 2023, in the amount of \$426,779.82
 - g. Donations -

Agenda School Committee Meeting 12/11/2023

E. Subcommittee Report

Finance Subcommittee
Policy Subcommittee

F. Student Advisory Board – Zayvian Rowe-Class

G. Discussion Items:

New Business

Item #3570 First Reading of Policies (Information)

GCBA – Professional staff Salary Schedules

GCBB – Employment of Principals

GCBB-1 Employment of Administrators

GCBC – Professional Staff Supplementary Pay Plans

GCE – Professional Staff Recruiting/Posting of Vacancies

GCF – Professional Staff Hiring

GCG – Part-Time and Substitute Professional Staff Employment

GCO – Evaluation of Professional Staff

GDA – Military Leave Provision

GDB – Exit Interviews/Support Staff Contracts and Compensation Plans

Item #3571 Second Reading of Policies (Vote Required)

ECAF –Security Cameras in School (for adoption)

GBEB – Staff Conduct

GBEBC – Gifts to and Solicitations by Staff

GBEC –Drug-Free Workplace

GBJ – Personnel Records (for adoption)

Item #3572 Murdock Middle School (Update)

Item #3573 School Improvement Plans (GHS & GALT) (Presentation)

Item #3574 Curriculum Coordinator/Learning Walks Update (Information)

Item #3575 Grants Administrator Update (Information)

Item #3576 Special Education Update (Information)

Item #3577 SEPAC Update (Information)

H. Communications

I. Final Comments of School Committee

J. Executive Session

K. Adjournment

GARDNER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BRIEFING

REGULAR MEETING OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Monday, December 11, 2023, 6:30 PM
City Council Chambers, City Hall, Gardner, MA 01440

ORDER OF BUSINESS

- A. **Call to Order**
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- C. **Recognitions by the Superintendent** – John & Abigail Adams Recipients Class of 2024
- D. **Consent Agenda**
 - a. Approval of Minutes: November 13, 2023
 - b. Accept Grant Funds on Grant listing dated December 11, 2023 in the amount of \$124,765.00
 - c. Warrant # 24-19, dated November 9, 2023, in the amount of \$874,115.15
Subcommittee recommends ratification of Warrant #24-19.
 - d. Warrant # 24-20, dated November 16, 2023, in the amount of \$326,506.75
Subcommittee recommends ratification of Warrant #24-20.
 - e. Warrant # 24-21, dated November 22, 2023, in the amount of \$418,050.44
Subcommittee recommends ratification of Warrant #24-21.
 - f. Warrant # 24-22, dated November 30, 2023, in the amount of \$426,779.82
Subcommittee recommends ratification of Warrant #24-22.
 - g. **Donations** –
- E. **Subcommittee Report**
 - Finance Subcommittee
 - Policy Subcommittee
- F. **Student Advisory Board**- Zayvian Rowe-Class
- G. **Discussion Items:**
 - New Business**
 - Item #3570 First Reading of Policies (Information)**
 - GCBA** – Professional staff Salary Schedules
 - GCBB** – Employment of Principals
 - GCBB-1** Employment of Administrators
 - GCBC** – Professional Staff Supplementary Pay Plans
 - GCE** – Professional Staff Recruiting/Posting of Vacancies
 - GCF** – Professional Staff Hiring
 - GCG** – Part-Time and Substitute Professional Staff Employment
 - GCO** – Evaluation of Professional Staff
 - GDA** – Military Leave Provision

Briefing

School Committee Meeting 12/11/2023

GDB – Exit Interviews/Support Staff Contracts and Compensation Plans

Item #3571 Second Reading of Policies (Vote Required)

ECAF – Security Cameras in School (for adoption)

GBEB – Staff Conduct

GBEBC – Gifts to and Solicitations by Staff

GBEC – Drug-Free Workplace

GBJ – Personnel Records (for adoption)

The Policy Subcommittee recommends acceptance of the above policies

Item #3572 Murdock Middle School (**Update**)

Item #3573 School Improvement Plans (GHS & GALT) (**Presentation**)

Item #3574 Curriculum Coordinator/Learning Walks Update (**Information**)

Item #3575 Grants Administrator Update (**Information**)

Item #3576 Special Education Update (**Information**)

Item #3577 SEPAC Update (**Information**)

H. Communications

I. Final Comments of School Committee

J. Executive Session

K. Adjournment

Gardner School Committee

City Council Chambers, 95 Pleasant Street, Gardner, Massachusetts

Regular Meeting - November 13, 2023

Members present: Mayor Michael Nicholson, Chairperson
Jennifer Pelavin, Vice Chairperson
Rachel Cormier, Secretary
John LaFreniere, Finance Officer
Anne Hurst
Shannon Leighton
Robert Swartz

School Personnel Present: Dr. Mark Pellegrino, Superintendent
Teni Hillman, Recording Secretary
Dr. Catherine Goguen, Chief Academic Officer

Call to Order

Mayor Michael Nicholson, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. The meeting opened with a roll call and the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting was broadcast live on Channel 8 (Gardner Educational Television Station).

Open Time for the General Public

No one from the General Public requested to speak.

Recognitions by the Superintendent

Dr. Pellegrino and Mrs. Rebecca McCaffrey recognized the volunteers from the Gardner Lion's Club for partnering with the Gardner Public School nurses to provide vision and hearing screenings to our students. The help these volunteers provided allowed the screening to be done earlier in the school year which can really support the students' academic learning by identifying and addressing vision or hearing issues early in the academic year.

Ed Thompson, Mark Dupris, Kate Margoles and Linda LeBlanc were present and the other four volunteers, Nancy Levada, Chris Kerns, Vicki Baker and Steve Cormier, could not be present this evening.

Dr. Pellegrino and Mrs. Rebecca McCaffrey also recognized Jennifer Brow, Media Specialist, and Jennifer Giancaterino, Reading Specialist, at Gardner Elementary School for being flexible and supportive team players. They gave up their usual workspace for a week and a half in order that the screenings could be conducted more efficiently.

Mayor Nicholson declared a five-minute recess at 6:38 pm to allow time for a photo op. The meeting was reconvened at 6:41 pm

CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. LaFreniere moved that the Gardner Public School Committee vote to approve the Consent Agenda as presented:

- Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting of October 10, 2023.
- Accept Grant Funds on Grant Listing dated November 13, 2023, in the amount of \$159,825.00.
- Ratification of the following Warrants as recommended by the Finance Subcommittee:
 - Warrant #24-15 dated 10/12/23 in the amount of \$293,602.48
 - Warrant #24-16 dated 10/19/23 in the amount of \$233,117.67
 - Warrant #24-17 dated 10/26/23 in the amount of \$217,180.57
 - Warrant #24-18 dated 11/02/23 in the amount of \$153,093.16

Accept the Donation from Shun Fa Lian, Inc. (DBA Yen Yen) of \$2,000.00 as recommended by the Finance Subcommittee.

Seconded by Mr. Swartz.

Vote - so voted.

Mayor Nicholson, Chairperson, abstained from voting.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Facilities Subcommittee

Mr. Swartz, Chairperson of the Facilities Subcommittee, reported that the Subcommittee met on November 2, 2023. Minutes of the meeting were presented.

Mr. Swartz reported on items he noticed on his weekly tour of the schools. The items listed were from Gardner Elementary School, Gardner Middle School and Gardner High School. Mr. Anderson, Director of Facilities, will be checking on these concerns.

A list of electronic equipment that is no longer useable or salvageable as determined by the IT Department will be recommended to the full School Committee to be declared surplus. (See Item #3564 on November Agenda.)

Finance Subcommittee

Mr. LaFreniere, Chairperson of the Finance Subcommittee, said that the Subcommittee held two meetings - October 5 and November 2, 2023. Minutes of the meetings were presented.

Expense Reports were reviewed at each meeting. Mark Hawke, Director of Finance & Operations, answered general questions and will review and provide information on the historical substitute teacher expenses for the past fourteen year

Policy Subcommittee

Mrs. Cormier, Member of the Policy Subcommittee, reported that the Subcommittee met on October 4, 2023. Minutes of the meeting were presented.

The Subcommittee reviewed the following policies and determined that no changes were required. The policies will be updated as "Reviewed October 2023."

Policy GBEA	- Staff Ethics/Conflict of Interest
Policy GBEBD	- Online Fundraising and Solicitations - Crowdfunding

Five Policies were recommended for a first reading by the full School Committee. (See Item #3560 - First Reading of Policies.)

Several Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) policies were reviewed and deemed to be redundant to Massachusetts General Law, or not relevant to the District. They were not recommended for adoption.

Student Advisory Board

Zayvian Rowe-Cross was not present this evening. Dr. Pellegrino read his report regarding activities at Gardner High School.

NEW BUSINESS

Item #3560 -First Reading of Policies

The following policies were presented for a first reading as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee:

ECAF	Security Cameras in School
GBEB	Staff Conduct
GBEBC	Gifts to and Solicitations by Staff
GBEC	Dmg-Free Workplace
OBJ	Personnel Records

Mr. Swartz recommended Policy ECAF back to Policy Subcommittee for further review.

Item #3561 - Second Reading of Policies

Mrs. Leighton moved that the Gardner Public School Committee vote to approve the following policies for a second reading as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee:

EEA	Transportation Policy
EEAEC/JICC	Student Conduct on School Buses
EEAJ	Motor Vehicle Idling on School Grounds
GBA	Equal Employment Opportunity

Seconded by Mrs. Hurst.

Vote - so voted

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

Item #3562 - Scholarship

Mr. LaFreniere moved that the Gardner Public School Committee vote to accept a \$100,000.00 perpetual charity donation scholarship in memory of Captain Erkki O. Minkkinen, Ret VSN, for a GHS student applying for a degree in (preferably) Marine Engineering or Civil Engineering.

Seconded by Mrs. Pelavin.

Vote- so voted.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

Item #3563- Field Trip-GHS Band and Chorus to Florida

Mrs. Leighton moved that the Gardner Public School Committee vote to approve the Field Trip request for the Gardner High School Band and Chorus to travel to Florida to Walt Disney World and Universal Studios, The students and chaperones will leave on November 29, 2023, and return on December 4, 2023.

Seconded by Mrs. Cormier.

Vote- so voted.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

Item #3564 - Declaration of Surplus Equipment

Mr. Swartz moved that the Gardner Public School Committee vote to declare the list of equipment items surplus as presented.

Seconded by Mrs. Pelavin.

Vote - so voted.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

Item #3565 - Curriculum Coordinator's Update

Dr. Catherine Goguen, Chief Academic Officer, presented a PowerPoint with MCAS results for the schools. Except for grade 7, an increase was shown in Math. In Science, grades 8 and 10 have shown increases. Gardner Middle School is holding steady in the 11th percentile and needs to be pushed forward. Action steps were outlined, and all is in alignment with the District Improvement Plan as presented in September.

Item #3566 - Grants Administrator's Update

The Grants Administrator's Update Report was included in the members' packet. Ms. Courteny Dunn, Grants, Communications & Compliance Manager, was not present this evening.

Item #3567 - Special Education Update

The Special Education Update Report was included in the members' packets. Ms. Joyce West, Director of Pupil Personnel Services, was not present this evening.

Item #3568-SEPAC Report

Ms. Laurie Davies, SEPAC Chair, is finalizing dates and topics for SEPAC meetings this school year

Item #3569 - MSBA- New Building Project

Dr. Pellegrino reported that everything is going well at GES.

COMMUNICATIONS

Dr. Pellegrino reported on his attendance at the National PBS Leadership Forum held in Chicago. Gardner's new elementary school was highlighted on opening day. He also reported on the visit by members of the Disability Law Center to GES. They stated that GES is a model school.

Dr. Pellegrino commended Lori Simpson, ELL Instructor, for the phenomenal job she is doing.

FINAL COMMENTS

Mrs. Leighton, Mrs. Hurst, and Mrs. Pelavin congratulated Mrs. Cormier, Mr. LaFreniere, and Mrs. Swartz on their re-election to the School Committee. All the School Committee members congratulated Mayor Nicholson on his re-election.

Mrs. Hurst spoke about the refugees who have come to Gardner.

Mrs. Pelavin thanked the members of the Lions Club who helped with vision and hearing screenings for our students. She wished the Soccer Team Good Luck on their upcoming game.

Mr. Swartz thanked the voters of Gardner for their votes in the recent City election.

Mr. LaFreniere also thanked Gardner voters who had faith in what the current members are doing on the School Committee and re-elected us.

Mrs. Cormier said it is amazing to see how many artistic kids there are in our schools.

Mayor Nicholson congratulated the GHS Marching Band on winning silver at the MICCA competition. He congratulated all the athletic teams for their great fall season. He also spoke about upcoming changes in medical insurance for school employees.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Swartz moved to adjourn.

Seconded by Mrs. Pelavin.

Vote - so voted.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

The meeting adjourned at 7:26 pm.

Rachel Cormier
Secretary

Gardner Public Schools

Courtney Dunn, *Grants & Communications Manager*



www.gardnerk12.org

130 Elm Street, Gardner, MA 01440

(978) 632-1000

Grant Funding for Approval – December 11, 2023

Grant Title	Amount	Grant Period	Use of Funds
FC460 Early College Support Grant	\$100,000	11/17/2023-6/30/2024	Salary, stipends, contractual services and supplies in support of the Early College Program
FC274 Federal Targeted Special Education Program Improvement Grant	\$24,765	12/5/2023-9/30/2024	Support the implementation of the new IEP improvement project.

Community • Appreciation • Responsibility • Excellence

The Gardner Public School District does not discriminate due to race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, age, homelessness or limited English proficiency.

**GARDNER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SYNOPSIS OF WARRANT**

WARRANT #: 24-19

WARRANT DATE 11/09/23

Location	Office & Gen Supplies	Curriculum	Student Activity	IT	Athletics	Utilities	Facilities	TOTAL
High School	\$109.73	\$186.76	\$150.00		\$461.10	\$1,569.35	\$1,638.25	\$4,115.19
Middle School							\$384.00	\$384.00
Gardner Elementary School	\$1,283.78	\$819.88		\$604.68			\$200.00	\$2,908.34
GALT								\$0.00
Sub-Total	\$1,393.51	\$1,006.64	\$150.00	\$604.68	\$461.10	\$1,569.35	\$2,222.25	\$7,407.53

Location	Office Supplies	Transport.	IT	Dues	Legal	Tuition	Prof. Services	Prof. Dev	Facilities	Carry Over	TOTAL
Special Education		\$36,000.00		\$499.00		#####	\$19,112.30				\$114,908.17
Administration	\$70.07	\$74,160.00	\$53,363.45		\$1,725.00			\$7,915.00	\$567.54	\$3,530.09	\$141,331.15
Sub-Total	\$70.07	#####	\$53,363.45	\$499.00	\$1,725.00	#####	\$19,112.30	\$7,915.00	\$567.54	\$3,530.09	\$256,239.32

Revolving	\$250,696.35
Grants	\$107,567.00
School Music	
Bond	\$252,204.95
Sub-Total	\$610,468.30

GRAND TOTAL	\$874,115.15
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**GARDNER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SYNOPSIS OF WARRANT**

WARRANT #: 24-20

WARRANT DATE 11/16/23

Location	Office & Gen Supplies	Curriculum	Student Activity	IT	Athletics	Prof Dev.	Facilities	TOTAL
High School			\$1,650.00	\$3,080.64	\$8,309.00	\$30.00	\$31,813.82	\$44,883.46
Middle School		\$148.85		\$1,668.05			\$22,101.58	\$23,918.48
Gardner Elementary School	\$310.00	\$11,580.39		\$3,097.34			\$37,886.61	\$52,874.34
GALT								\$0.00
Sub-Total	\$310.00	\$11,729.24	\$1,650.00	\$7,846.03	\$8,309.00	\$30.00	\$91,802.01	\$121,676.28

Location	Office Supplies	Transport.	IT	Dues	Legal	Tuition	Prof. Services	Utilities	Facilities	Carry Over	TOTAL
Special Education	\$1,142.07	\$97,066.00			\$1,104.00	#####	\$8,143.02				\$160,752.49
Administration			\$810.90					\$10.00	\$7,280.57		\$8,101.47
Sub-Total	\$1,142.07	\$97,066.00	\$810.90	\$0.00	\$1,104.00	#####	\$8,143.02	\$10.00	\$7,280.57	\$0.00	\$168,853.96

Revolving	\$555.00
Grants	\$35,421.51
School Music	
Bond	
Sub-Total	\$35,976.51

GRAND TOTAL	\$326,506.75
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**GARDNER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SYNOPSIS OF WARRANT**

WARRANT #: 24-21

WARRANT DATE 11/22/23

Location	Office & Gen Supplies	Curriculum	Student Activity	IT	Athletics	Utilities	Facilities	TOTAL
High School	\$1,290.73	\$3,157.80	\$1,676.50		\$3,250.31	\$1,594.20	\$959.96	\$11,929.50
Middle School	\$875.47	\$272.44				\$1,700.73	\$4,914.46	\$7,763.10
Gardner Elementary School	\$19.80	\$377.47				\$1,021.07	\$4,709.27	\$6,127.61
GALT								\$0.00
Sub-Total	\$2,186.00	\$3,807.71	\$1,676.50	\$0.00	\$3,250.31	\$4,316.00	\$10,583.69	\$25,820.21

Location	Utilities	Transport.	IT	Curriculum	Legal	Tuition	Prof. Services	Advertising	Dues & Mem	Carry Over	TOTAL
Special Education		\$51,785.00	\$749.34			#####	\$8,796.03				\$118,922.53
Administration	\$2,897.01			\$880.00	\$18,080.00			\$478.66	\$3,315.00	\$12,495.00	\$38,145.67
Sub-Total	\$2,897.01	\$51,785.00	\$749.34	\$880.00	\$18,080.00	#####	\$8,796.03	\$478.66	\$3,315.00	\$12,495.00	\$157,068.20

Revolving	\$12,432.86
Grants	\$207,510.20
Student Activity Acct Transfer	\$7,855.00
Bond	\$7,363.97
Sub-Total	\$235,162.03

GRAND TOTAL	\$418,050.44
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**GARDNER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SYNOPSIS OF WARRANT**

WARRANT #: 24-22

WARRANT DATE 11/30/23

Location	Office & Gen Supplies	Curriculum	Dues & Mem	IT	Athletics	Utilities	Facilities	TOTAL
High School		\$733.00	\$1,300.00	\$349.00	\$20,337.32	\$14.83	\$4,574.48	\$27,308.63
Middle School		\$133.88			\$778.25		\$959.10	\$1,871.23
Gardner Elementary School	\$572.43						\$3,482.21	\$4,054.64
GALT		\$68.33						\$68.33
Sub-Total	\$572.43	\$866.88	\$1,300.00	\$349.00	\$21,115.57	\$14.83	\$9,015.79	\$33,302.83

Location	Office Supplies	Transport.	IT	Admin travel	Legal	Tuition	Prof. Services	Utilities	Facilities	Carry Over	TOTAL
Special Education											\$0.00
Administration	\$112.47		\$1,646.69	\$1,214.28	\$12,260.71				\$2,462.90	\$7,296.00	\$24,993.05
Sub-Total	\$112.47	\$0.00	\$1,646.69	\$1,214.28	\$12,260.71	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,462.90	\$7,296.00	\$24,993.05

Revolving	
Grants	\$214,292.51
School Music	
Bond	\$154,191.43
Sub-Total	\$368,483.94

GRAND TOTAL	\$426,779.82
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GARDNER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Policy
Subcommittee
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday November 15, 2023
4:30 PM
Professional Development Room
160 Elm Street, Gardner, MA
01440

In Attendance: Mrs. Anne Hurst, Chair; Mrs. Rachel Cormier, Member; Mrs. Shannon Ward-Leighton, Member via ZOOM

Absent:

Also in Attendance: Dr. Catherine Goguen, Chief Academic Officer; Ms. Courtney Dunn, Grants & Compliance Manager; Ms. Jennifer Vickrey, Human Resources Manager; Dr. Pellegrino, Superintendent

Mrs. Hurst called the meeting to order at 4:36 p.m.

A motion was made by Mrs. Cormier and seconded by Mrs. Ward-Leighton to approve the minutes of the September 6, 2023 Policy Meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Mrs. Cormier and seconded by Mrs. Ward-Leighton to approve the minutes of the October 4, 2023 Policy Meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

The following policy was reviewed and determined that no changes were required. Therefore, the policy will be updated as "Reviewed November, 2023":

- GCRD – Tutoring for Pay

The following MASC policies were reviewed and deemed to be redundant to Massachusetts General Law, or not relevant to the District. Therefore they were not recommended to be sent to the full School Committee for adoption:

- GCIA – Philosophy of Staff Development
- GCJ – Professional Teacher Status
- GCK – Professional Staff Assignments and Transfers
- GDA – Support Staff Positions
- GDB – Support Staff Contracts and Compensation Plans

Policy ECAF- Security Cameras in Schools was reviewed and discussed. During the November full School Committee Meeting, Mr. Swartz asked that the Subcommittee review language in the policy to address gender specific language. The Subcommittee

recommended that gender specific language be changed to gender neutral language. A motion was made by Mrs. Cormier and seconded by Mrs. Ward-Leighton to send Policy ECAF with the recommended changes to the December full School Committee Meeting for a second read. The motion passed unanimously.

Policy GCBA – Professional Staff Salary was reviewed and discussed. The Subcommittee recommended that the District replace current policy GCBA language with the Massachusetts Association for School Committees (MASC) model Policy GCBA language as it is more succinct and relevant to current regulations and practices. A motion was made by Mrs. Cormier and seconded by Mrs. Ward-Leighton to send Policy GCBA with the recommended changes to the December full School Committee Meeting for a first read. The motion passed unanimously.

Policy GCBB – Employment of Principals was reviewed and discussed. The Subcommittee recommended that the District replace current policy GCBB language with the MASC model Policy GCBB language as it is more relevant to current regulations and practices. A motion was made by Mrs. Ward-Leighton and seconded by Mrs. Cormier to send Policy GCBB with the recommended changes to the December full School Committee Meeting for a first read. The motion passed unanimously.

Policy GCBB-1 – Employment of Administrators was reviewed and discussed. The Subcommittee recommended a change to contract length in alignment with Policy GCBB. A motion was made by Mrs. Cormier and seconded by Mrs. Ward-Leighton to send Policy GCBB-1 with the recommended changes to the December full School Committee Meeting for a first read. The motion passed unanimously.

Policy GCBC – Professional Staff Supplementary Pay Plans was reviewed and discussed. The Subcommittee recommended a language change from the word “rewarded” to the word “provided” regarding the provision of extra compensation. A motion was made by Mrs. Cormier and seconded by Mrs. Ward Leighton to send Policy GCBC with the recommended changes to the December full School Committee Meeting for a first read. The motion passed unanimously.

Policy GCE – Professional Staff Recruiting/Posting of Vacancies was reviewed and discussed. Ms. Vickrey recommended removing discrimination language as it is redundant to several other policies and district documentation. The Subcommittee also recommended changing the word “town” with the word “city”. A motion was made by Mrs. Cormier and seconded by Mrs. Ward-Leighton to send Policy GCE with the recommended changes to the December full School Committee Meeting for a first read. The motion passed unanimously.

Policy GCF – Professional Staff Hiring was reviewed and discussed. The Subcommittee recommended that the District replace current policy GCF language with the MASC model Policy GCF language as it is more relevant to current regulations and practices. A motion was made by Mrs. Ward-Leighton and seconded by Mrs. Cormier to send Policy GCF with the recommended changes to the December full School Committee Meeting for a first read. The motion passed unanimously.

Policy GCG – Part-Time and Substitute Professional Staff Employment was reviewed and discussed. The Subcommittee recommended a language change to clarify the last sentence of the policy. A motion was made by Mrs. Cormier and seconded by Mrs.

Ward-Leighton to send Policy GCG with the recommended changes to the December full School Committee Meeting for a first read. The motion passed unanimously.

Policy GCO – Evaluation of Professional Staff was reviewed and discussed. The Subcommittee recommended that the first sentence of the last paragraph be removed as the language is unnecessary to the policy. A motion was made by Mrs. Cormier and seconded by Mrs. Ward-Leighton to send Policy GCO with the recommended changes to the December full School Committee Meeting for a first read. The motion passed unanimously.

District Policy GDA – Military Leave Provision was reviewed and discussed. This policy has the same file name as MASC Policy GDA – Support Staff Positions. The Subcommittee recommended that the file name be changed with the initials of the policy name, to “File: GMLP”. A motion was made by Mrs. Cormier and seconded by Mrs. Ward-Leighton to send District Policy GDA with the recommended changes to the December full School Committee Meeting for a first read. The motion passed unanimously.

District Policy GDB – Exit Interviews was reviewed and discussed. This policy has the same file name as MASC Policy GDB – Support Staff Contracts and Compensation Plans. The Subcommittee recommended that the file name be changed with the initials of the policy name, to “File: GEI”. A motion was made by Mrs. Cormier and seconded by Mrs. Ward-Leighton to send District Policy GDB with the recommended changes to the December full School Committee Meeting for a first read. The motion passed unanimously.

The next Policy Subcommittee meeting will occur on Wednesday, December 13, 2023 at 4:30 p.m. in the Central Office Professional Development Room

A motion was made by Mrs. Ward-Leighton and seconded by Mrs. Cormier to adjourn the meeting. So moved. The meeting adjourned at 5:27 p.m.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF SALARY SCHEDULES

Teachers

The School Committee will adopt a salary schedule for regular teaching personnel as part of the contract negotiated with the teachers' bargaining unit. The schedule will be designed to recognize and reward training and experience and encourage additional study for professional advancement.

Principals and Administrators on Individual Contracts

Salaries will be reviewed annually prior to July 1. The School Committee, with the advice of the Superintendent, will establish levels of compensation for each position based on the circumstances, dynamics, and requirements of each position. It is the responsibility of the Superintendent to present evidence to the School Committee to support recommendations for salary increases.

SOURCE: MASC - Updated 2022

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:40; 71:43

CROSS REF.: GCBB, Employment of Principals

Administrators and Principals

~~Salaries will be reviewed annually by the Finance Subcommittee. When a position becomes vacant and is being advertised, the appropriate subcommittee of the School Committee, with the advice of the Superintendent, will establish levels of compensation based on the circumstances, dynamics and requirements.~~

~~Ongoing consideration may be given to individuals for exceptional performance as a basis for establishing merit increases.~~

Merit Incentives

~~The Gardner Public Schools permits the payment of merit incentives* under the following terms:~~

~~The Superintendent may agree to provide an additional merit incentive for employees with whom the Superintendent has an employment contract on the following conditions:~~

- ~~—The employee and the Superintendent shall agree upon, or the Superintendent shall identify, a set of objectives including measurable outcomes for the employee on an annual basis.~~
- ~~—The Superintendent may award a merit incentive to such an employee who has demonstrated exemplary performance with respect to the agreed upon or identified objectives and only after the Superintendent has completed a written performance evaluation for the employee.~~
- ~~—Such merit incentive shall be paid on or before (the last day of the contract year) and shall not be added to the employee's base pay for purposes of future salary increases.~~

~~It is the responsibility of the Superintendent to present evidence to the School Committee to support recommendations for merit increases. The determination as to whether and, if so, to what extent the employee has achieved the performance objectives in a given contract year, as well as~~

~~the determination as to whether or not to grant such merit incentives and in what amount, shall be made unilaterally by the superintendent in his/her sole discretion based on the superintendent's assessment of the employee's performance up to the maximum merit incentive provided herein.~~

~~*As used in this policy "merit incentive" means a one-time payment in addition to contractual compensation given to award job performance.~~

~~[Reference: M.G.L. 71:40; 71:43]~~

[Adopted: June 1998]

[Reviewed: January 2003]

[Revised: June 2010]

[Reviewed: June 2019]

[Revised: 2024]

EMPLOYMENT OF PRINCIPALS

Principals shall be employed by the School District under individual contracts of employment. Said contracts shall be submitted to the School Committee for their approval of all terms concerning compensation/benefits, prior to the presentation of a contract of employment to the Principal. The compensation/benefit levels, above referenced, may be exceeded only with the approval of the School Committee.

Initial contracts issued to Principals may be up to three years in length, and may be reissued by the Superintendent at levels of compensation/benefits, determined by the School Committee, provided that the Superintendent may employ a Principal under the terms and conditions of the previous contract of employment.

The length of second and subsequent contracts of employment for Principals shall be in accordance with state law.

As a condition of employment, each Principal must maintain current licensure, adhere to the policies and goals of the School Committee and the directives of the Superintendent, and annually must submit, with the school council, the educational goals and school improvement plan for the school building(s) under their direction.

SOURCE: MASC - Updated 2022

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:41; 71:59B

CROSS REF.: GCBA, Professional Staff Salary Schedules

~~Principals shall be employed by the Gardner Public Schools under individual contracts of employment. Said contracts shall be submitted to the School Committee for their approval of all terms concerning compensation/benefits, prior to the presentation of a contract of employment to the principal. The compensation/benefit levels, above referenced, may be exceeded only with the approval of the School Committee.~~

~~Contracts issued to principals will be up to three years in length, and may be reissued by the Superintendent at levels of compensation/benefits, determined by the School Committee, provided that the Superintendent may employ a principal under the terms and conditions of the previous contract of employment.~~

~~As a condition of employment, each principal must maintain current certification, adhere to the policies and goals of the School Committee and the directives of the Superintendent, and annually by the September School Committee Meeting must submit, in conjunction with the school council, the educational goals and school improvement plan to the School Committee.~~

[Adopted: June 1998]

[Revised: January 2003]

[Reviewed: April 2016]

[Revised: September 2019]

[Revised: 2024]

EMPLOYMENT OF ADMINISTRATORS

Administrators shall be employed by the Gardner Public Schools under individual contracts of employment. Contracts issued by the Superintendent to administrators may be up to ~~three~~five years in length, and may be reissued or non-renewed, at the end of such term, at the discretion of the Superintendent.

As a condition of employment, each administrator must maintain current Massachusetts Department of Education certification and adhere to the policies and goals of the School Committee and the directives of the Superintendent.

Administrators may not be appointed to an extracurricular position in the Gardner Public Schools, unless need arises.

[Adopted: March 2000]

[Revised: January 2003]

[Reviewed: April 2016]

[Revised: June 2019]

[Revised: 2024]

PROFESSIONAL STAFF SUPPLEMENTARY PAY PLANS

Certain assignments require extra responsibility or extra time over and above that required of other staff members who are on the same position on the basic salary schedule. When such supplemental assignments require extra time and responsibility beyond that regularly expected of teachers, they will be ~~rewarded~~provided with extra compensation.

Assignments that are to be accorded extra compensation will be designated by the committee. Appointments to these positions will be made by the Superintendent for district-wide positions or by the principal with the approval of the Superintendent for building-based personnel. The amount of compensation for the position will be established by the committee at the time the position is created.

A teacher who is offered and undertakes a supplementary pay assignment will receive a supplementary contract specifying the pay, duration and terms of the assignment. If a teacher will not be extended the assignment for the following school year but will remain on the teaching staff, he or she will be so notified in writing prior to the expiration of the contract. Upon termination of the assignment, the supplementary pay will cease.

[Adopted: June 1998]

[Reviewed: January 2003]

[Reviewed: April 2016]

[Revised: June 2019]

[Revised: 2024]

PROFESSIONAL STAFF RECRUITING/POSTING OF VACANCIES

It is the responsibility of the Superintendent, with the assistance of the administrative staff, to determine the personnel needs of the school system and it is the responsibility of the principal, in consultation with the Superintendent to determine the personnel needs of the individual schools. In addition, school councils may review personnel requirements as a means of evaluating the needs of a school. Any recommendations for the creation or elimination of a position must be approved by the School Committee.

The search for good teachers and other professional employees will extend to a wide variety of educational institutions and geographical areas. It will take into consideration the characteristics of the ~~town-city~~ and the need for a heterogeneous staff from various cultural backgrounds. The ~~Gardner Public Schools do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, age or place of residence.~~

Recruitment procedures will not overlook the talents and potential of individuals already employed by the school system. Any current employee may apply for any position for which he or she has certification and meets other stated requirements.

Openings in the schools will be posted in sufficient time, before the position is filled, to permit current employees to submit applications.

[Reference: Massachusetts Association of School Committees, Inc.]

[Adopted: May 1997]

[Reviewed: December 2002]

[Revised: April 2017]

[Revised: June 2019]

[Revised: 2024]

PROFESSIONAL STAFF HIRING

Through its employment policies, the District will strive to attract, secure, and hold the highest qualified personnel for all professional positions. It is the responsibility of the Superintendent, and of persons to whom they delegate this responsibility, to determine the personnel needs of the school district and to locate suitable candidates. No position may be created without the approval of the School Committee. The District's goal is to employ and retain personnel who are motivated, will strive always to do their best, and are committed to providing the best educational environment for the children

It will be the duty of the Superintendent to see that persons considered for employment in the schools meet all licensure requirements and the requirements of the Committee for the type of position in which they will serve.

The following guidelines will be used in the selection of personnel:

1. There will be no discrimination in the hiring process due to race*, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, active military/veteran status, marital status, familial status, pregnancy, or pregnancy-related condition, homelessness, ancestry, ethnic background, national origin, or any other category protected by state or federal law..
2. The quality of instruction is enhanced by a staff with a wide variation in background, educational preparation, and previous experience.
3. The administrator responsible for the hiring of a staff member (in the case of District-wide positions, for the position of Principals, it is the Superintendent; for building-based personnel, it is the Principal) is directed to establish a representative screening committee. The administrator has the final say in determining who will be hired but it is expected that the screening committee's input will be a factor in the decision. For those positions where the hiring authority rests with the School Committee, a representative screening committee may be established by the School Committee, or the School Committee may direct the Superintendent to establish a screening committee to assist the Superintendent in making their recommendation to the School Committee.

*race to include traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture, hair type, hair length and protective hairstyles.

SOURCE: MASC - Updated 2022

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 69:6; 71:38; 71:38G; 71:39; 71:45

603 CMR 7:00, 26:00, and 44:00

Acts of 2022, Chapter 117 - <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2022/Chapter117>

~~Through its employment policies, the district will strive to attract, secure, and hold the highest qualified personnel for all professional positions. The selection process will be based upon an awareness to candidates who will devote themselves to the education and welfare of the children attending the schools.~~

~~It is the responsibility of the superintendent, and of persons to whom he or she delegates this responsibility, to determine the personnel needs of the school system and to locate suitable~~

~~candidates. No position may be created without the approval of the school committee. The district's goal is to employ and retain personnel who are motivated, will strive always to do their best, and are committed to providing the best educational environment for all students.~~

~~It will be the duty of the superintendent to see that persons considered for employment in the schools meet all certification requirements and the requirements of the committee for the type of position for which the nomination is made.~~

~~The following guidelines will be used in the selection of personnel:~~

- ~~1. There will be no discrimination in the hiring process due to race (which includes traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture, hair type, hair length, and protective hairstyles), color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, age, homelessness, genetic information, ancestry, military status, pregnancy or pregnancy related condition, or limited English proficiency.~~
- ~~2. The quality of instruction is enhanced by a staff with a wide variation in background, educational preparation, and previous experience.~~
- ~~3. The administrator responsible for the hiring of a staff member is directed to establish a representative screening committee. The administrator, with approval of the superintendent, has the final say in determining who will be hired but it is expected that the screening committee's input will be a factor in the decision. For those positions where the hiring authority rests with the School Committee, a representative screening committee may be established by the School Committee, or the School Committee may direct the Superintendent to establish a screening committee to assist the Superintendent in making their recommendation to the School Committee.~~

~~[Reference: M.G.L. 69:6; 71:38; 71:38G; 71:39; 71:45; Massachusetts Board of Education Requirements for Certification of Teachers, Principals, Supervisors, Directors, Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents in the Public Schools of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, revised 1995; 192nd General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts: Acts of 2022, Chapter 117; 603 CMR 7:00, 26:00, and 44:00~~

~~[Adopted: June 9, 1997]~~

~~[Revised: March 2003]~~

~~[Revised: April 2017]~~

~~[Revised: February 2021]~~

~~[Revised: November 2022]~~

[Revised: 2024]

PART-TIME AND SUBSTITUTE PROFESSIONAL STAFF EMPLOYMENT

Part-time Teachers

Teachers may be employed on a part-time basis. The salary of part-time teachers will be in proportion to the hours worked.

Substitute Teachers

Each building principal will have the authority to employ as many substitute teachers as may be necessary to take the place of teachers who are temporarily absent.

The school system will employ as substitute teachers, to the extent possible, persons who meet the requirements for teacher appointments and will assign teacher's substitute teaching positions on the basis of their areas of competence. When the supply of potential substitutes in a particular subject area is too limited to meet school department needs, there will be active recruitment for substitutes in those areas. All substitute teachers will be expected to provide educational services, rather than to assume merely a student-supervisory role. They will be provided with as much support as possible by building administrators and teachers.

The school committee will set the daily rate of pay for substitute teachers, including extended-term substitutes. Extended is defined as 15 consecutive days substituting for the same teacher. The rate of pay after 15 days will be at the bachelor's or master's minimum daily rate of pay ~~per~~ as defined in the Gardner Education Association (GEA) contract.

[Adopted: May 1998]

[Revised: February 2003]

[Revised: January 2006]

[Reviewed: April 2016]

[Reviewed: May 2019]

[Revised: 2024]

EVALUATION OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF

In order to assure a high quality of teacher and administrator performance and to advance the instructional programs of the schools, a continuous program for teacher and administrator evaluation will be implemented following Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Guidelines and per the Gardner Education Association (GEA) Collective Bargaining Agreement. Regular reports will be made to the superintendent concerning the outcomes of these evaluations.

The evaluation process will include:

1. The development and periodic review of techniques and procedures for making evaluations.
2. Interpretation of the information gained in the evaluative process in terms of the objectives of the instructional program.
3. The application of the information gained to the planning of staff development and in-service training activities, which are designed to improve instruction and increase teacher competence.

~~The evaluation process will include self-evaluation, supervisor initiated observations, and teacher-initiated observations.~~ The ~~written~~ evaluation should be specific in terms of the person's strengths and areas for growth. Those areas where improvement is needed should be clearly set forth and recommendations for improvement should be made. Subsequent evaluations should address themselves to any improvement or to any continuing identified areas for growth that are observed.

[Reference: Collective Bargaining Agreements; M.G.L. 69:1B; 71:38, 71:38Q; 150E; 152B
603 CMR 35:00]

[Adopted: June 1997]

[Revised: March 2003]

[Revised: June 2016]

[Revised: September 2019]

[Revised: 2024]

MILITARY LEAVE PROVISION

Employees who are members of the National Guard or Armed Forces Reserve, and who participate in an annual two-week active duty or training program, must provide reasonable advance notice to their supervisor. Employees will be paid the difference between military pay plus allowances received for such duty, and the employee's normal rate of pay.

Upon return from military leave, employees should submit to the Superintendent a copy of their original duty orders and a statement of their military pay and allowances for the two-week period.

An employee of the commonwealth in the service of the armed forces of the commonwealth or a reserve component of the armed forces of the United States shall be entitled to receive pay without loss of ordinary remuneration as a public employee during service in the uniformed services, annual training under M.G.L. Part I, Title V, Chapter 33, Section 60 or drills and parades under section 61, not exceeding 34 days in any state fiscal year and not exceeding 17 days in any federal fiscal year, and shall not lose any seniority or any accrued vacation leave, sick leave, personal leave, compensation time or earned overtime. For the purposes of this section, "uniformed services" shall include the state defense force or similar organization composed as permitted by law; (ii) the state staff when engaged in duty under this chapter or Title 32 of the United States Code; or (iii) the armed forces of another state or territory when ordered to active duty under appropriate authority.

An employee of the commonwealth in the service of the armed forces of the commonwealth under sections 38, 40 or 41 shall be entitled to receive pay without loss of ordinary remuneration as a public employee and shall not lose any seniority or any accrued vacation leave, sick leave, personal leave, compensation time or earned overtime during the first 30 consecutive days of any mission. Thereafter, any such ordinary remuneration shall be reduced by any amount received either from the United States or the commonwealth as base pay for military service performed during the same pay period, and there shall be no loss of any seniority or any accrued vacation leave, sick leave, personal leave, compensation time or earned overtime. National Guard duty performed under Title 32 of the United States Code shall not be deemed service in the armed forces of the commonwealth under sections 38, 40 or 41 for the purposes of this section.

An employee of the commonwealth in the armed forces of the commonwealth performing duty under Titles 10 or 32 of the United States Code shall be paid the regular base salary as a public employee for each pay period of such military leave of absence, reduced by any amount received either from the United States or the commonwealth as base pay for military service performed during the same pay period, and shall not lose any seniority or any accrued vacation leave, sick leave, personal leave, compensation time or earned overtime.

An employee of the commonwealth in a reserve component of the armed forces of the United States who is ordered to service for more than 30 consecutive days shall be paid the regular base salary as a public employee for each pay period of such military leave of absence, reduced by any amount received either from the United States or the commonwealth as base pay for military

service performed during the same pay period. No such employee shall lose any seniority or accrued vacation leave, sick leave, personal leave, compensation time or earned overtime.

Unpaid military leave for regular tours of active duty or for period of longer training or emergency duty are granted, on written request, to permanent full-time and part-time employees any time after their dates of employment. Employees may use available paid time off for all or part of the absence. An employee returning from a military leave within time frames specified by federal and state law will be reinstated to his or her former job, or a comparable one, without reduction in pay or time accrued for past service. The employee will be treated as though he or she was continuously employed for purposes of determining benefits based on length of service, such as the rate of vacation accrual and job seniority rights.

[Reference: M.G.L. Part I, Title V, Chapter 33]

[Adopted: June 2004]

[Reviewed: April 2016]

[Revised: October 2019]

[Revised: 2024]

EXIT INTERVIEWS

Purpose:

To gather information from existing employees in order to gauge the employment experience and consider changes, where necessary, to improve this experience.

Policy:

It is the policy of the Gardner Public Schools to ensure that any employee whose employment is being terminated receives an exit interview. The exit interview shall be held at the time of the employee's discharge. The interview will be conducted by the City of Gardner Human Resources Director or his/her designee. Though the exit interview is voluntary, employees should be encouraged to participate, as their feedback is valuable to the District. The objectives of the exit interview are as follows:

- To determine the actual reason for an employee's resignation;
- To retain the goodwill of the employee toward the Gardner Public Schools.
- To discover any grievances the employee may have about the department in order that corrective action(s), if necessary, may be undertaken;
- To discover any misunderstandings the employee may have had about his/her job, or with his/her supervisor(s) in order that corrective action(s), if necessary, may be undertaken.

[Adopted: May 2014]

[Revised: April 2015]

[Revised: October 2019]

[Revised: 2024]

SECURITY CAMERAS IN SCHOOLS

The School Committee works to maintain a safe and secure environment for its students, staff, visitors, and facilities. Security means more than having locks and making certain that doors are locked at the proper times. Security also means minimizing fire hazards, reducing the possibility of faulty equipment, keeping records and valuables in a safe place, protection against vandalism and burglary, the prosecution of vandals, and developing crisis plans.

School facilities and their contents, constitute one of the greatest investments of the community. The School Committee believes it to be in the best interest of students and taxpayers for the district to exert every reasonable means to protect the investment adequately.

In pursuit of this objective, the School Committee authorizes the use of security cameras in school district buildings and on its property to ensure the health, welfare and safety of all students, staff and visitors, to deter theft, vandalism and other negative behavior, to safeguard district buildings, grounds and equipment, and to monitor unauthorized individuals in or on school property. Security cameras may be used in locations as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent of Schools in consultation with school officials as well as local law enforcement and emergency response agencies. They may be used in any area, inside or outside of school buildings where there is no reasonable expectation of privacy.

Use of Security Cameras on School Buses

The use of security cameras on school buses is aimed at increasing overall bus safety. Security cameras will function to prevent discipline problems from occurring, but are not to serve as a threat to normally acceptable behavior. Security cameras will not replace the responsibility of the driver to control the students riding the bus. All bus discipline policies and procedures remain in effect and the driver must continue to monitor the behavior of riders.

The district shall notify students and staff through student and employee handbooks and appropriate signage that security cameras have been installed and may be used at any time. Students or staff identified on security cameras in violation of School Committee policies will be subject to disciplinary action.

The Superintendent shall ensure that proper procedures are in place and are followed regarding use, viewing, disclosure, retention, disposal and security of video recordings or photographs from security cameras in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. A video recording used for security purposes in school district buildings and/or on school property shall be the sole property of the school district. All video recordings will be stored in their original format and secured to avoid tampering and to ensure confidentiality in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. Access to video recordings from security cameras shall be limited to school administrators (Superintendent/designee, School Principal/designee). Law enforcement and emergency response officials shall be granted access to video recordings or the security system as the situation requires.

The Superintendent may, from time to time, issue further guidance that is consistent with current laws and this policy.

SOURCE: MASC - Updated 2022

[Adopted: 2023]

STAFF CONDUCT

All staff members have a responsibility to familiarize themselves with and abide by the laws of the State as these affect their work, the policies of the School Committee, and the regulations designed to implement them.

In the area of personal conduct, the committee expects that teachers and others will conduct themselves in a manner that not only reflects credit to the school system but also sets forth a model worthy of emulation by students.

All staff members will be expected to carry out their assigned responsibilities with conscientious concern, and will conduct themselves in ways that do not distract from or disrupt the educational process.

~~Essential to the success of ongoing school operations and the instructional program are the following specific responsibilities, which will be required of all personnel:~~

- ~~1.—Faithfulness and promptness in attendance at work.~~
- ~~2.—Support and enforcement of policies of the committee and their implementing regulations and school rules in regard to students.~~
- ~~3.—Diligence in submitting required reports promptly at the times specified.~~
- ~~4.—Care and protection of school property.~~
- ~~5.—Concern for and attention to their own and the school system's legal responsibility for the safety and welfare of students, including the need to ensure that students are under supervision at all times.~~
- ~~6.—Responsible use of all social media outlets; improper fraternization with students, improper use of district computers and technology, or failure to exercise good judgment in online conduct will result in consequences up to, and including, termination.~~

[Reference: M.G.L. 71:37H; 264:11; 264:14A]

[Adopted: June 1997]

[Reviewed: January 2003]

[Revised: June 2019]

[Revised: April 2021]

[Revised: 2023]

GIFTS TO AND SOLICITATIONS BY STAFF

Gifts

The acceptance of gifts worth \$50 or more by school personnel in a calendar year when the gift is given because of the position they hold, or because of some action the recipient could take or has taken in his or her public role, violates the conflict of interest law. Acceptance of gifts worth less than \$50, while not prohibited by the conflict of interest law, may require a written public disclosure to be made.

In keeping with this policy, no employee of the school district will accept a gift worth \$50 or more that is given because of the employee's public position, or anything that the employee could do or has done in his or her public position. Gifts worth less than \$50 may be accepted, but a written disclosure to the employee's appointing authority must be made if the gift and the circumstances in which it was given could cause a reasonable person to think that the employee could be improperly influenced. The value of personal gifts accepted is aggregated over a calendar year (4 gifts of \$20 value is the same as 1 gift of \$80 if given in the same calendar year).

In general, homemade gifts without retail value are permissible because a reasonable person would not expect an employee would unduly show favor to the giver, so no disclosure is required. Such gifts could include homemade food items (cookies, candy, etc), handpicked flowers, and handmade gifts worth less than \$10 (ten) dollars.

Class Gifts

There is a specific exception to the prohibition against accepting gifts worth \$50 or more, when the teacher knows only that the gift is from the class, not from specific donors. A single class gift per calendar year valued up to \$150 or several class gifts in a single year with a total value up to \$150 from parents and students in a class may be accepted provided the gift is identified only as being from the class and the names of the givers and the amounts given are not identified to the recipient. The recipient may not accept an individual gift from someone who contributed to the class gift. It is the responsibility of the employee to confirm that the individual offering such gift did not contribute to the class gift.

Gifts for School Use

Gifts given to a teacher solely for classroom use or to purchase classroom supplies are not considered gifts to an individual employee and are not subject to the \$50 limit. However, an employee who accepts such gifts must keep receipts documenting that money or gift cards were used for classroom supplies.

Solicitations

In spirit, the School Committee supports the many worthwhile charitable drives that take place in the community and is gratified when school employees give them their support. However, the solicitation of funds from staff members through the use of school personnel and school time is prohibited by the conflict of interest law. Therefore, no solicitations of funds for charitable purposes should be made among staff members. Staff members of course remain free to support charitable causes of their own selection.

[Reference: M.G.L. 268A:3; 268A:23; 930 CMR 5.00; KHA, Public Solicitations in the Schools;
~~JP, Student Donations and Gifts;~~ MASC December 2012]

[Adopted: April 2015]

[Reviewed: April 2019]

[Revised: 2023]

DRUG–FREE WORKPLACE POLICY

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY

The School District will provide a drug-free workplace and certifies that it will:

1. Notify all employees in writing that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance, is prohibited in the District's workplace, and specify the actions that will be taken against employees for violation of such prohibitions.
2. Establish a drug-free awareness program to inform employees about the dangers of drug abuse in the workplace; the District's policy of maintaining a drug-free work-place; and available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs; and the penalty that may be imposed on employees for drug abuse violations occurring in the workplace.
3. Make it a requirement that each employee whose employment is funded by a federal grant be given a copy of the statement as required.
4. Notify the employee in the required statement that as a condition of employment under the grant, the employee will abide by the terms of the statement, and will notify the District of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than five days after such conviction.
5. Notify the federal agency within ten days after receiving notice from an employee or otherwise receiving notice of such conviction.
6. Take one of the following actions within 30 days of receiving notice with respect to any employee who is so convicted; take appropriate personnel action against such an employee, up to and including termination; or require such employee to participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a federal, state or local health law enforcement, or other appropriate agency.
7. Make a good faith effort to continue to maintain a drug-free workplace through implementation of all the provisions of this policy.

~~The school district will provide a drug-free workplace and certifies that it will:~~

- ~~1. Notify all employees in writing that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the district's workplace and specify the actions that will be taken against employees for violation of such prohibitions.~~
- ~~2. Establish a drug-free awareness program to inform employees about the dangers of drug abuse in the workplace; the district's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace; and available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs; and the penalty that may be imposed on employees for drug abuse violations occurring in the workplace.~~
- ~~3. Make it a requirement that each employee whose employment is funded by a deferral grant be given a copy of the statement as required.~~
- ~~4.—~~

- ~~• Notify the employee in the required statement that as a condition of employment under the grant, the employee will abide by the terms of the statement, and will notify the district of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than five days after such a conviction.~~
 - ~~• Notify the federal agency within ten days after receiving notice from an employee or otherwise receiving notice of such conviction.~~
 - ~~• Take one of the following actions within 30 days of receiving notice with respect to any employee who is so convicted: take appropriate personnel action against such an employee, up to and including termination; or require such employee to participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a federal, state or local health law enforcement, or other appropriate agency.~~
4. Coordinate with the City of Gardner to enforce and maintain the City of Gardner Drug and Alcohol Free Work Place Policy, including:
- ~~• Any new employee, that has been offered a position in the City of Gardner, will be required to submit to a physical examination and drug test prior to beginning work. The failure to pass such a test shall be grounds for the City to rescind any offer of employment given to such applicant.~~
 - ~~• Testing of present employees shall only be permitted where there is reason to suspect drug or alcohol abuse. Immediate testing shall be permitted upon the reasonable suspicion standards hereinafter set forth. Objective facts that may lead to reasonable suspicion shall include but not be limited to: questionable balance, unsteady walking gait, slurred speech, uncooperative attitude, bloodshot eyes, or odor of marijuana or alcohol on the breath or on the clothing of the employee. Other criteria that may lead to reasonable suspicion are that the employee's supervisor deems the employee to be impaired or incapable of performing assigned duties, an excessive number of vehicle or other types of accidents, inconsistent behavior, irritability, mood swings, nervousness, or hallucinations. In addition substantiated possession of drugs or alcohol while on duty shall be deemed to be de facto suspicious.~~
 - ~~• The City shall provide any suspected employee with a written report evidencing reasonable suspicion within a reasonable time in advance of a proposed drug or alcohol test. The employee may initiate a review of the directive to submit a test sample or undergo testing. Such review shall be undertaken by the Mayor or, in his/her absence, the City's Director of Human Resources. If the Mayor or Human Resources Director determines that there are reasonable grounds for suspicion, the employee will undergo the testing and the test results shall be provided to the Mayor. The parties shall ensure the confidentiality of the testing process and results. Access to information about the tests shall be limited to the employee and only members of management and union officials with a compelling need for the information. The failure of an employee to submit to testing upon being so directed shall be grounds for immediate discipline up to and including termination of employment. If after undertaking testing, an employee is deemed to have failed the test by evidencing signs of drug and alcohol abuse while on the job, discipline up to and including termination may be imposed by the City.~~

- ~~• As an alternative to discipline, the Mayor may at his/her sole discretion offer to the employee an opportunity to attend a rehabilitation program during which time the employee may utilize sick days for such program or other form of treatment. Under these circumstances, the employee shall be expected to comply with all the requirements and regulations of the substance abuse rehabilitation program. The failure to abide by all such conditions and requirements shall be a basis for termination of employment. Any employee successfully completing such a program shall agree as a condition of returning to work to submit to random urinalysis testing at the discretion of the City for a period of two (2) years after returning to work. If any such random test yields a positive result, the employee shall be immediately subject to discipline including termination.~~

~~5. Make a good faith effort to continue to maintain a drug-free workplace through implementation of all the provisions of this policy.~~

SOURCE: MASC - Updated 2022

[Reference: 41 USC 81~~The Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988~~]

[Adopted: May 1997]

[Revised: January 2003]

[Revised: October 2019]

[Revised: 2023]

PERSONNEL RECORDS

Information about staff members is required for the daily administration of the school district, for implementing salary and other personnel policies, for budget and financial planning, for responding to appropriate inquiries about employees, and for meeting the School Committee's education reporting requirements. To meet these needs, the Superintendent will implement a comprehensive and efficient system of personnel records maintenance and control under the following guidelines:

1. A personnel ~~folder-record~~ for each present and former employee will be accurately maintained in the central administrative office. In addition to the application for employment and references, the ~~folders-records~~ will contain ~~records-and~~ information relative to compensation, payroll deductions, evaluations, and any other pertinent information.
2. The ~~Superintendent-Human Resources Manager~~ will be the official custodian for personnel ~~files-records~~ and will have overall responsibility for maintaining and preserving the confidentiality of the files within the provisions of the law.
3. Personnel records are considered confidential under the law and will not be open to public inspection. Access to personnel ~~files-records~~ will be limited to persons authorized by the ~~Superintendent-Human Resources Manager~~ to use the files for the reasons cited above.
4. Each employee will have the right, upon written request, to review the contents of their own personnel ~~file-record~~.
5. Employees may make written objections to any information contained in the file. Any written objection must be signed by the staff member and will become part of the employee's personnel ~~file-record~~. Further, no negative comment will be placed in a staff member's file unless it is signed by the person making the comment and the staff member is informed of the comment and afforded the opportunity to include their written response in the ~~file-record~~.
6. Lists of school district employees' names and home addresses will be released only to governmental agencies as required for official reports or by law.

SOURCE: MASC - Updated 2022

LEGAL REFS.: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, Sec. 438, P.L. 90-247

Title IV, as amended

88 Stat. 571-574 (20 U.S.C. 1232g) and regulations

M.G.L. [4:7](#); [71:42C](#)

Teachers' Agreement

CONTRACT REF.: All Agreements

CROSS REF.: [KDB](#), Public's Right to Know

| [\[Adopt: 2023\]](#)

Gardner High School School Improvement Plan 2021-2024

Mission

Gardner High School provides an enriched academic environment fostered through relevance, rigor and relationships and ensures that each student learns at a high level. In the classroom, we challenge all students in a supportive, positive environment that promotes scholarship and helps students develop the skills and characteristics to make them successful for their future. On the field, stage, or court, we create fun, engaging opportunities for students to excel in athletics, the arts, and co-curricular groups. We promote personal development and a sense of service to our community.

Core Values

Our Core Values (**C.A.R.E.**) are:

Community - We work together to achieve for all in a culture steeped in tradition;

Appreciation - We accept our roles, respect different perspectives, and acknowledge the good in others;

Responsibility - We own our actions and honor our commitments by being prepared, involved community members; and

Excellence - We do our best and take pride in all we do in our community.

Vision

We will be the premier school of choice for our students and their families.

Every child, in every classroom, every day, will:

feel welcomed, safe, and included in our community;

- Adults will personally welcome each child as they enter the school and each classroom.
- The layout of the school and each classroom will be inviting and conducive to learning.
- Students will learn social-emotional skills through direct instruction, supports, and institutional practices.
- Our school will actively engage families in the education of their children and community.

have adults consistently interact in ways that foster positive, supportive relationships;

- School expectations, practices, and rules will be informed by the chronological and actual developmental levels of the children we serve.
- Adult responses to children's behaviors will be empathetic and caring, considering their comprehensive knowledge of the child's development and any possible trauma or stressors.
- The school will work proactively and collaboratively with families to support the whole child.
- Disciplinary practices will be done through a restorative approach.

and be engaged in relevant, academically rigorous instruction, informed by data.

- Each lesson will incorporate rigorous student tasks that engage all learners, provoke higher-order thinking, monitor each student's progress, and provide feedback to students for improvement.
- The school will monitor and adapt its instruction to ensure students learn the skills and knowledge to prepare them for their own future.

Theory of Action

If we:

- **Create** a clear set of expectations and strategies that are shared across every classroom to assess, monitor, and utilize academic, behavioral and social emotional data to inform our instruction and interventions,
- **Then** there will be continuity of practices across all classrooms and grade levels where the same high level of rigorous instruction is provided to all students, which is aligned with objectives and state standards.
- **And**, if we implement challenging learning activities and differentiated instructional strategies that support students' academic, behavioral and social emotional growth while developing positive relationships,
- **Then** students will develop higher order thinking skills, and the ability to articulate their thinking, while utilizing appropriately challenging resources.
- **And**, if we work in collaboration with families and community partners to engage in shared decision making for effective educational programming while giving all students equitable access and opportunities to achieve at their highest level,
- **Then** students will become lifelong, collaborative, problem solvers who positively contribute to the workforce and their community.

Strategic Objectives

Academic:	Behavioral:	Social Emotional Learning:	Collaboration with Families and Community Partners:
Create and implement a standards-aligned curriculum across all grades and disciplines utilizing data to inform instruction, lessons and interventions while supporting equity:	Create and implement clear expectations and strategies across all grades and disciplines utilizing data to inform behavioral supports and interventions while supporting equity:	Utilize data to inform social emotional interventions and provide tiered supports to all students while supporting equity:	Collaborate with families and community partners to engage in shared decision-making for effective educational programming while supporting equity:

Action Steps

Comprehensive professional development for staff and common planning time based on MTSS	Comprehensive professional development for staff based on MTSS	Comprehensive professional development for staff based on MTSS	Produce and administer student, staff and parent feedback surveys
Create a school-wide written curriculum in a common format by department and	Monitor discipline data and through an MTSS approach	Monitor social-emotional data and through an MTSS approach incorporate appropriate interventions	Regularly utilize Gardner High School website page, digital newsletters and social media to share

subject area that is aligned with state standards	incorporate appropriate interventions accordingly	accordingly	information, activities and achievements
Develop and incorporate rigorous and challenging instruction and lessons aligned with state standards and MCAS specific questions	Monitor attendance data and through an MTSS approach incorporate appropriate interventions accordingly	Incorporate topics addressing students' social emotional needs into Advisory Program	Maintain Student Advisory Board to garner student feedback and assist with policy and program development
Monitor academic data that will drive future instruction, assessments (formative and summative) and interventions	Create and maintain a restorative approach to discipline with empathetic personal interactions which supports student behavioral growth	Create a system for which mental health support staff can meet and effectively plan social-emotional supports and programming	Maintain School Council meetings and voice for parent/community concerns and feedback
Create clear objectives that align with state standards			Further develop and expand our Early College and Innovation Pathways Programming
Utilize teacher observation and evaluation system as well as the rigor rubric for learning walks including observing and supporting our co-teaching model			

Outcomes

- 1) Grade 8, 9 and 10 Math, ELA, Social Studies and Science curriculum maps will be aligned with state standards and 100% completed
- 2) 75% of teachers in classrooms will incorporate Tier 1 academic, behavioral and social-emotional interventions
- 3) GHS will eliminate discipline disparities for all subgroups
- 4) GHS will eliminate attendance disparities for all subgroups
- 5) Students with disabilities' failure rates will be reduced by 50%
- 6) All subgroups will meet MCAS targets in ELA, math and science
- 7) A minimum of 50% of seniors graduating from GHS will do so from either the Early College or Innovation Pathways programs with a minimum of 4 college and/or certification classes
- 8) Parents and students will rate school relationships as at least 90% satisfactory

Implementation Timeline

Activity/Outcome	Person(s) Responsible	Measurement Tool(s)	Date to be Completed	Status
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1) Use of common planning time in ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies to complete standards-aligned curriculum mapping for 8th, 9th and 10th grade classes	Administration Building Leadership Team Faculty	Curriculum Map Templates	Dec 2021	Complete
2) Use of common planning time in ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies to create rigorous lessons to support the curriculum which also reinforce MCAS specific questions	Administration Building Leadership Team Faculty	Lesson Plan Templates	June 2023	In Progress
5) Regular monitoring of formative assessment data (ongoing checks for understanding) and summative assessment data (interim assessments, Linkit, MCAS) to identify student needs and teacher strategies necessary for addressing identified deficiencies	Administration Building Leadership Team Faculty	Formative Assessment Data Collection Tool MCAS Data Linkit Data	Weekly Ongoing	In Progress
3) Professional development for faculty on MTSS to better understand and address academic, behavioral and social-emotional needs of our students	Administration Tier 1, 2 & 3 Teams	MTSS Data Collection Tools (academic, SEL, behavioral data)	Yearly Ongoing	In Progress
4) Use of observation/evaluation data to reinforce best teaching practices focusing on academic, behavioral and social-emotional needs of students	Administration	Observation/ Feedback Teachpoint Rigor Rubric	Yearly Ongoing	In Progress
6) Ongoing professional development on empathetic personal interactions with students and a restorative practice approach to discipline	Administration	Discipline Data Observation/ Feedback	Yearly Ongoing	In Progress
7) Regular monitoring of student discipline and attendance data and continued identification of tiered interventions	Administration Tier 1, 2 & 3 Teams	Discipline & Attendance Data MTSS Data	Quarterly Ongoing	In Progress
10) Regular monitoring of social-emotional data to identify needs which will drive interventions and future program development	Administration Tier 1, 2 & 3 Teams	MTSS SEL Data	Quarterly Ongoing	In Progress
11) School Council meetings to share information and receive parent input into decision-making regarding school activities, policies and programs; supplemented by the annual Climate & Culture Survey	Administration School Council	Monthly Agenda & Meeting Notes Climate & Culture Survey	Monthly Ongoing	In Progress
12) Student Advisory Board meetings to share information and receive student input into decision-making regarding school activities, policies and programs; supplemented by the annual Climate & Culture Survey	Administration Student Advisory Board	Monthly Agenda & Meeting Notes Climate & Culture Survey	Monthly Ongoing	In Progress
13) Use scheduled advisory time for social-emotional programming and academic	Administration Building	MTSS Data Collection Tools	Weekly Ongoing	In Progress

interventions	Leadership Team Faculty	(academic, SEL, behavioral)		
14) Regularly use social media platforms, emails and one-call system to disseminate pertinent information to students and families	Administration Media Specialist	Facebook PlusPortals Newsletters	Weekly Ongoing	In Progress
15) Continue development of Innovation Pathways and Early College Programs	Administration Guidance Central Office Personnel	DESE EC & IP Data Collection Tools	Ongoing	In Progress

**Gardner Academy for Learning and Technology
School Improvement Plan
2021-2024**

Mission

To fit the school to the students and re-engage them in their learning. We are a school of choice. We meet the students where they are and enhance their ability, skill, and understanding so that they can achieve a diploma and beyond. At our core we build strong relationships, utilize blended methods for learning, and partner with students, families, and the community for student success.

Core Values

Community

Compassion

Responsibility

Integrity

Vision

At Gardner academy:

We believe in the potential for all students to succeed. Our community strives to expand our student's understanding of the world. We build self-worth and drive. Our learners are shown that there are possibilities beyond what they know and that all that exists in their world is not all that there is.

Theory of Action

If we:

1. Hold high standards and expectations for students' academic and behavioral performance that provide them with a Purpose for Learning, Challenge them with success, Build Relevance in their learning, and establish Strong Relationships with students and our community.
2. **AND** Within a solid MTSS process, we identify, target, and implement supports and interventions that address the SEL and Academic needs of our students.
3. ***And***, if we combine this with instruction that is based on giving students voice and choice in what they learn and how they can demonstrate their understanding while holding high standards and expectations, utilizing formative and summative data to inform our instruction, and developing habits of mind to make strong learners utilizing a standards-based, project focused model.
4. ***And***, if we support each student where they are socially and emotionally and provide strong systems to identify and implement for their personal social and emotional growth,
5. ***Then*** we will eliminate inequitable learning gaps, motivate students to engage in rigorous instruction, and provide students with opportunities to enhance their future possibilities to obtain the next level of learning, college and postgraduate education, preparations for standardized testing and preparation for life with viable employment opportunities that will allow for our learners to choose their future

Strategic Objectives			
School - Based Objectives			Family/Community Partnerships
Academic: -Develop and implement a standards based design for the whole school. -Have a system of assessment in place to support standards based design. -Implement a project-based learning style of pedagogy for student success. -Have a full tier I classroom support system in place and utilizing the data from the results. -Utilize the “classroom support system” for classroom needing further assistance. -Have a robust system of collaboration with MWCC for gateway and ECA classes.	Behavioral: Create and implement clear expectations and strategies for building community, a culture for learning, and understanding of our place in the world.	Social and Emotional: -Have a solid system of PBIS and SEL protocols and practices for all tiers for student support.	Collaboration with families and community partners: -Collaborate with families and community partners to engage in the shared decision-making for equitable access to curriculum, policy, post-graduation opportunities, culture, and community. -Implement a three tiered system of interventions for families and students to gain community resources as needed.
Action Steps			
Create a system of aligning state standards/assessments with student learning expectations and assessment/instructional practices through our MTSS academic time.	Create and implement strong systems of data collection and interventions for tiered supports following the MTSS model and Trauma sensitive schools protocols.	Create data systems for measuring success in attendance, grading, drop-out prevention, and graduation rate.	Utilize student, staff, and parent surveys for feedback. Collect feedback and interventions from staff.
Create and utilize assessments, both formative and summative, that calibrate with the levels of standard for state, district, and school expectations.	-Utilize the BESS and BRISC data to ensure proper interventions and systemic approaches	Create & implement a system for collecting and analyzing Academic and SEL data	Provide Early College opportunities in manufacturing. Build internship opportunities with local businesses for students to obtain work based understanding values. Provide programs for dual enrollment.

Create a UDL and Project based lessons from our PBL training.	Develop an advisory curriculum for understanding core values and expectations for our school to connect all students as a community.	Build a strong student advisory board for allowing voice and choice in school decision-making	Increase communication through district/school website pages and development of Social Media.
Build literacy practices across-the -curriculum to create whole-school common approaches to vocabulary, writing standards, numeracy, reading strategies, and cross-pedagogical practices.	Develop a system of peer expectations for behaviors and interventions.	Create a system for developing and implementing action plans to address academic and SEL needs identified by data.	Increase opportunities to partner with families in decision making through Family Council and other venues to inform policy and student learning experiences.
Create and sustain opportunities for all students to enroll and complete alternative learning pathways to provide more equitable opportunities for our students; and to decrease drop-out rates/increase student graduation rates.	Utilize restorative practices and PBIS to build and maintain strong relationships and student buy-in.		
-Have a fluid system in place for students to move laterally between Gateway, Innovations/pathways, and Early college programs. -Have a system in place for identifying the proper place for students who apply to the programs for proper calibration and placement.	Build SEL support systems into the classrooms for constant feedback and assessment.		
-Have a solid system for the MVP academy with Monty Tech for 11th and 12th graders.			

Outcomes

1. By 2025, the school will have created and implemented tracking systems for MTSS for SEL, Academics, and Equity with the purpose of identifying student needs, implementing and managing interventions, and tracking progress of interventions for the school's progress.
2. By 2024, the school will have established a tool for triangulation alignment, and mapping of academic standards based on what the state standard for each class across the curriculum, when those standards are presented and taught for mastery in each class, and how often the standard appeared on the MCAS testing and does our instruction of the standard match the expectation and design of the MCAS questions. This will be maintained and managed through the CPT playbook.
3. By 2024-2025, the school will review the established intervention trackers and protocols for interventions in SEL and Academics for efficiency and effectiveness and make appropriate changes based on the TFI for both areas.
4. By 2024-2005, the school will focus on assessment tools to align with standards taught and ensure a layered assessment practice and tools for monitoring foundational, applicable, and connective understanding.
5. By 2025, the school will work with GHS to add to the "Program of Studies" that encompasses all of our rubrics and expectations by discipline and class.
6. By 2025, the school will have established our MTSS SEL/Academic teaching model as a specific design for instruction, assessment, expectations, and SEL practices. Also solid Tier I SEL practices in the classrooms utilizing CSS and PBIS.
7. By 2024-2026, the school will have tier two and three systems that utilize MTSS approaches and CASEL model practices for implementation and tracking decision-making and personal growth.
8. The school will meet expectations for all students to pass all MCAS testing.
9. For 2024-2027, the school will continue to meet MCAS passing rates to 100%, increase proficiency rates by 20%.
10. For 2021-2024, the school will increase participation in dual enrollment and innovation/pathways, MVP, ECA by 10% each year.

Implementation Timeline				
Activity/Outcome	Person Responsible	Measurement Tool(s)	Date Completed	Status
1) Use MTSS academic & SEL time twice each week, staff meetings twice monthly and PD days to identify power standards on MCAS per each class and build alignment in classes taught here at the school.	Administration Faculty	TFI	By end of 2023	In Progress
2) Friday meetings for implementation and planning/assessing of interventions. Monitoring parent contact practices using monthly/daily contact logs	Administration Faculty	TFI	By end of 2024	In Progress
3) Use principal meetings to go over evaluation and also progress on standards being taught in class.	Administration Faculty	Teachpoint/ feedback tool	By end of 2024	In Progress
4) Use of observation/evaluation data to reinforce best teaching practices focusing on academic, behavioral and social-emotional needs of students	Administration	Teachpoint/ feedback tool	Ongoing	In Progress
5) Regular monitoring of formative assessment data (ongoing checks for understanding) and summative assessment data (interim assessments, CPT playbook, MCAS, etc.) to identify student needs and teacher instructional strategies necessary for addressing identified deficiencies (utilizing layered assessment format)	Administration Faculty/ teacher leaders/ admin.	Linkit, Edwin	Ongoing	In Progress
6) Ongoing monitoring of the TFI for MTSS for implementation.	Admin., BLT., staff	TFI	Ongoing	In Progress
7) Regular monitoring of student discipline data	Administration	Data tracker, Rediker	Ongoing	In Progress

8) Regular monitoring of student attendance data and subsequent implementation of interventions for students with high truancy and absenteeism rates (attendance trackers that measure period attendance, weekly/monthly attendance, attendance by sub-group, and two week interval attendance)	Administration Secretary	Data tracker, Rediker	Ongoing	In Progress
9) Utilize CASEL system for monitoring SEL growth (Continue to utilize Heywood and Telehealth for student needs)	Administration Faculty	BESS, TFI	By end of 2023	Early Stages
10) Regular monitoring of social-emotional data to identify needs which will drive interventions and future program development (attendance, academic performance, counseling services, DCF/DYS involvement, decision-making rubrics, work production, probation, foster-care)	Administration Staff	BESS, Data-tracker (grad tracker)	By end of 2025	Early stages
11) Parents will have a venue through surveys and School Council to share concerns and have input into decision-making regarding school activities/policies	Administration School Council	District Survey, Parent council	Monthly	In Progress
12) Students will have a venue through surveys and the Student Advisory Board to share concerns and have input into decision-making regarding school activities/policies (utilize Advisory classes for organizing and implementing strategies for meeting school objectives for SEL)	Administration Student Advisory Board	District Survey	Weekly	Early Stages In Progress
13) Development of Manufacturing program and Gateway/Pathways programming in partnership with MWCC to extend our offerings for curriculum.	Administration	Meeting minutes, enrollment data	Ongoing	In Progress

Gardner Middle School School Improvement Plan 2021-2024

Mission

All students have the right to an education and that education can be an equalizer in a world where unfair differences exist for our students. All of our students have talents and our school needs to foster the growth of these talents. Our school needs to identify students' goals and supply the knowledge and skills that allow each student to enter adulthood with access to their goals. All students need to be given challenging work, but always be put in a situation to succeed. This needs to be done in a safe and respectful environment for all. Every child, in every classroom, every day, will: feel welcomed, safe, and included in our community; have adults consistently interact in ways that foster positive, supportive relationships; and be engaged in relevant, academically rigorous instruction.

Core Values



Vision

We will be the premier school of choice for our students and their families.

Every child, in every classroom, every day, will:

feel welcomed, safe, and included in our community;

- Adults will personally welcome each child as they enter the school and each classroom.
- The layout of the school and each classroom will be inviting and conducive to learning.
- Students will learn social-emotional skills through direct instruction, supports, and institutional practices.

- Our school will actively engage families in the education of their children and community.

have adults consistently interact in ways that foster positive, supportive relationships;

- School expectations, practices, and rules will be informed by the chronological and actual developmental levels of the children we serve.
- Adult responses to children's behaviors will be empathetic and caring, considering their comprehensive knowledge of the child's development and any possible trauma or stressors.
- The school will work proactively and collaboratively with families to support the whole child.
- Disciplinary practices will be done through a restorative approach.

and be engaged in relevant, academically rigorous instruction, informed by data.

- Each lesson will incorporate rigorous student tasks that engage all learners, provoke higher-order thinking, monitor each student's progress, and provide feedback to students for improvement.
- The school will monitor and adapt its instruction to ensure students learn the skills and knowledge to prepare them for their own future.

Theory of Action

If we:

- **Create** a clear set of expectations and strategies that are shared across every classroom to assess, monitor, and utilize academic, behavioral and social emotional data to inform our instruction and interventions,
- **Then** there will be continuity of practices across all classrooms and grade levels where the same high level of rigorous instruction is provided to all students, which is aligned with objectives and state standards.
- **And**, if we implement challenging learning activities and differentiated instructional strategies that support students' academic, behavioral and social emotional growth while developing positive relationships,
- **Then** students will develop higher order thinking skills, and the ability to articulate their thinking, while utilizing appropriately challenging resources.
- **And**, if we work in collaboration with families and community partners to engage in shared decision making for effective educational programming while giving all students equitable access and opportunities to achieve at their highest level,
- **Then** students will become lifelong, collaborative, problem solvers who positively contribute to the workforce and their community.

Strategic Objectives

Academic:	Behavioral:	Social Emotional Learning:	Collaboration with Families and Community Partners:
Create and implement a cohesive system for designing student tasks that require students to access the rigor stated in the state standards.	Create and implement clear expectations and strategies across all grades and disciplines utilizing data to inform behavioral supports and	Utilize data to inform social emotional interventions and provide tiered supports	Collaborate with families and community partners to engage in shared decision-making for effective educational

	interventions while supporting equity:	to all students while supporting equity:	programming while supporting equity:
Action Steps			
Provide comprehensive professional development for staff and common planning time based on MTSS	Provide comprehensive professional development for staff based on MTSS/PBIS	Provide comprehensive professional development for staff based on MTSS	Produce and administer student, staff and parent feedback surveys
Create a school-wide written curriculum in a common format by department and subject area that is aligned with state standards	Monitor discipline data and through an MTSS/PBIS approach incorporate appropriate interventions accordingly	Monitor social-emotional data and through an MTSS approach incorporate appropriate interventions accordingly	Regularly utilize Gardner Middle School website page, digital newsletters and social media to share information, activities and achievements
Develop and incorporate rigorous and challenging instruction and lessons aligned with state standards and MCAS specific questions	Monitor attendance data and through an MTSS/PBIS approach incorporate appropriate interventions accordingly	Incorporate topics addressing students' social emotional needs into Advisory Program	Maintain Student Council to garner student feedback and assist with program development and school culture.
Monitor academic data that will drive future instruction, assessments (formative and summative) and interventions	Create and maintain a restorative approach to discipline with empathetic personal interactions which supports student behavioral growth	Create a system for which mental health support staff can meet and effectively plan social-emotional supports and programming	Maintain School Council meetings and voice for parent/community concerns and feedback
Create clear objectives that align with state standards			
Utilize teacher observation and evaluation system as well as the rigor rubric for learning walks including observing and supporting our co-teaching model			

Outcomes

- 1) Grade 5, 6 and 7 Math, ELA, Social Studies and Science curriculum lessons will be aligned with state standards and 100% completed
- 2) 75% of teachers in classrooms will incorporate Tier 1 academic, behavioral and social-emotional interventions
- 3) GMS will eliminate discipline disparities for all subgroups
- 4) GMS will eliminate attendance disparities for all subgroups
- 5) GMS will eliminate academic disparities for all subgroups
- 6) All subgroups will meet MCAS targets in ELA, math and science
- 7) Parents and students will rate school relationships as at least 90% satisfactory

Implementation Timeline

Activity/Outcome	Person(s) Responsible	Measurement Tool(s)	Date to be Completed	Status
1) 1. Admin will create and implement a more robust and organized Common Planning Time schedule for teachers	Administration Building Leadership Team Faculty	Schedule	Sept 2021	Complete
2) Use of common planning time in ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies to create rigorous lessons to support the curriculum which also reinforce MCAS specific questions	Administration Building Leadership Team Faculty	Lesson Plan Templates	June 2023	In Progress
3) Regular monitoring of formative assessment data (ongoing checks for understanding) and summative assessment data (interim assessments, Linkit, MCAS) to identify student needs and teacher strategies necessary for addressing identified deficiencies	Administration Building Leadership Team Faculty	Formative Assessment Data Collection Tool MCAS Data Linkit Data	Weekly Ongoing	In Progress
4) Professional development for faculty on MTSS to better understand and address academic, behavioral and social-emotional needs of our students	Administration Tier 1, 2 & 3 Teams	MTSS Data Collection Tools (academic, SEL, behavioral data)	Yearly Ongoing	In Progress

5) Use of observation/evaluation data to reinforce best teaching practices focusing on academic, behavioral and social-emotional needs of students	Administration	Observation/ Feedback Teachpoint Rigor Rubric	Yearly Ongoing	In Progress
6) Ongoing professional development on empathetic personal interactions with students and a restorative practice approach to discipline	Administration	Discipline Data Observation/ Feedback	Yearly Ongoing	In Progress
7) Regular monitoring of student discipline and attendance data and continued identification of tiered interventions	Administration Tier 1, 2 & 3 Teams	Discipline & Attendance Data MTSS Data	Quarterly Ongoing	In Progress
8) Regular monitoring of social-emotional data to identify needs which will drive interventions and future program development	Administration Tier 1, 2 & 3 Teams	MTSS SEL Data	Quarterly Ongoing	In Progress
9) School Council meetings to share information and receive parent input into decision-making regarding school activities, policies and programs; supplemented by the annual Climate & Culture Survey	Administration School Council	Monthly Agenda & Meeting Notes Climate & Culture Survey	Monthly Ongoing	In Progress
10) Student Council meetings to share information and receive student input into decision-making regarding school activities and school culture	Administration Student Council	Monthly Agenda & Meeting Notes Climate & Culture Survey	Monthly Ongoing	In Progress
11) Use scheduled advisory time for social-emotional programming and academic interventions	Administration Building Leadership Team Mental Health Team	MTSS Data Collection Tools (academic, SEL, behavioral)	Weekly Ongoing	In Progress
12) Regularly use social media platforms, emails, one call system and School Newsletter	Administration	Facebook PlusPortals Newsletters	Weekly Ongoing	In Progress



Gardner Elementary School - G.E.S. (W.S.S./E.S.S.) - Improvement Plan - 2021-2024

Mission

Gardner Elementary School will work side by side with our families to prepare students for their future social, emotional, and academic success. This will be done in a safe, enjoyable, caring, just, and equitable environment.

Core Values

Safe, Respectful, Responsible, Ready and Kind

Vision

At Gardner Elementary School, we are committed to being a place where all community members experience joy, achievement, and care.

- Experiencing JOY:
 - Students look forward to attending school and joyfully come home every day with knowledge to share, skills to demonstrate, and a smile on their face!
 - Staff derive joy from the incredibly important and rewarding work they do every day.
 - Families should be filled with confidence that their child will have a positive school experience.
- Experiencing ACHIEVEMENT:
 - Socially, Emotionally, and Behaviorally -
 - Learning and practicing what it means to be a safe, respectful, responsible, ready (to learn) and kind Gardner Elementary School citizen - these five words make up our school mantra. We teach and live these values daily.
 - Students will be cooperative, resourceful, growth-oriented, and skilled at regulating themselves when inevitable struggles arise.
 - Academically:
 - All students will attain skills and knowledge necessary to succeed not only on the major assessments and in the next grade-level, but in future life occupations.
 - Students will be curious, resourceful, cooperative, and critical thinkers.
- Experiencing CARE:
 - Students should be filled with a sense of belonging and pride in their school. Go GES Wildcats!
 - Positive relationships between the staff, students, and families will be formed and cultivated.



Gardner Elementary School - G.E.S. (W.S.S./E.S.S.) - Improvement Plan - 2021-2024

Theory of Action

If we:

- Focus on **equity** as a driving force at our school - the idea that every student has a different level of need - and work to address these varying level of needs *through*
- a **Multi-Tiered System of Support (M.T.S.S.)** which creates common, rigorous, standards-based, high quality instruction - both SEL and academic - for all (Tier 1) and implements additional interventions and supports for those who did more to succeed (Tier 2 & 3) *and*
- Continually and proactively evaluate **data** to inform, and adjust these tiered academic, social, and emotional MTSS processes and interventions *and*
- Work in **collaboration with families and community partners** to engage in shared decision making for effective educational programming, *then*

All students will have equitable access and opportunities to achieve at their highest level, and become lifelong, collaborative, problem seekers and solvers who positively contribute to the workforce and their community.

Strategic Objectives (Big “sunflowers” - areas to grow)

1. Utilizing an equity lens, create a school where all members experience JOY and CARE by implementing Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (M.T.S.S.) for social and emotional learning (S.E.L.) success.	2. Utilizing an equity lens, create a school where all students experience ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT by implementing A Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (M.T.S.S.) to enable common, high quality, curriculum and instruction.	3. Utilize academic and social/emotional <u>data</u> to inform MTSS processes and tiered interventions.	4. <u>Collaborate with families, students, and community partners</u> to engage in shared decision-making for effective educational programming and to create an environment where families and their students feel a part of our positive and <u>JOYFUL school community.</u>
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Gardner Elementary School - G.E.S. (W.S.S./E.S.S.) - Improvement Plan - 2021-2024

Action Steps			
<p>A. Create a schedule that allows time for Tier I (universal/all students) S.E.L. curriculum to be implemented</p> <p>B. Create common systems, processes, and cycles for MTSS SEL teams</p> <p>C. Implement the Tier I S.E.L. curricula for all students.</p> <p>D. Define outcomes for these areas of our vision statement (Care/Joy/Achievement)</p> <p>E. Align and implement Positive</p>	<p>A. Facilitate the alignment of goals and vision for the soon to be combined schools</p> <p>B. Create a schedule to enable staff time to plan and accomplish M.T.S.S. goals</p> <p>C. Create a common process for effective implementation of academic M.T.S.S. systems</p> <p>D. Analyze and adjust the curriculum to ensure unit and lesson objectives align with rigorous state standards for English Language Arts and Math</p> <p>E. Based on an analysis of standards and the major assessments, determine which standards are the most important ("Power Standards")</p> <p>F. Based on these most important</p>	<p>A. Align and identify school's criteria to determine progress and success towards meeting Strategic objectives 1 and 2</p> <p>B. Identify which assessments and data will be used to monitor how well the school is progressing towards meeting criteria for S.E.L. and academic improvement</p> <p>C. Create a common process/system for collecting, analyzing, and proactively responding to the data</p> <p>D. Utilize observation and assessment data to determine</p>	<p>A. Combine the family and community organizations of the two elementary schools (School Council, PTO, etc.)</p> <p>B. Build on the efforts of the Family and Community Engagement Committee in prior years to create events that bring joy and a sense of belonging to the school, while also incorporating opportunities for family and school academic connection and improvement</p> <p>C. Increase the School Council's membership to include parents</p>



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<p>Behavior Systems (PBS)</p> <p>F. Align and implement each schools' Tier 2 and Tier 3 systems for SEL interventions and supports</p> <p>G. Align and implement SST process with more fidelity</p> <p>H. Monitor effectiveness of tier 1, 2, and 3 practices and continually adjust accordingly to enable S.E.L. achievement (See Strategic Objective #3)</p>	<p>standards, determine the highest leverage lessons to achieve mastery of the standard;</p> <p>G. Create common, and quality instructional practices for power lessons</p> <p>H. Implement effective co-teaching practices</p> <p>I. Create systems and interventions for students not achieving these academic expectations (Tier 2 and 3 interventions and practices)</p> <p>J. Offer professional development to enable staff instructional and S.E.L. success</p> <p>K. Monitor effectiveness of tier 1, 2, and 3 practices and continually adjust accordingly to enable academic achievement (See Strategic Objective #3)</p>	<p>fidelity and effectiveness of tier I S.E.L. and Academic practices</p> <p>E. Utilize data to determine what students might need additional interventions (Tier 2 and 3)</p> <p>F. Continually monitor the effectiveness of the Tier 1, 2, and 3 systems, curriculum, practices, and intervention, and adjust when necessary utilizing the cycle and processes alluded to in strategic objectives 1 and 2.</p>	<p>as well as community members and business leaders</p> <p>D. Continually assess and improve communication and transparency through social media, web-sites, newsletters, meetings, and other outlets</p> <p>E. Create partnerships with community organizations and businesses</p> <p>F. Increase participation of student, staff and family feedback</p> <p>G. Continue to focus on identifying, assessing, and implementing approaches to help families help their students achieve academically, socially, and emotionally.</p>
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Outcomes



Gardner Elementary School - G.E.S. (W.S.S./E.S.S.) - Improvement Plan - 2021-2024

- Strategic Objective 2 and 3 - by 2024, all grade K, 1, and 2 students will be reading achievers by scoring at grade-level or above on the DIBELS reading assessment;
 - 85% by the end of 2022
 - 90% by the end of 2023
 - 95% by the end of 2024
- By 2024, the number of grade 3 and 4 students will score in the meeting and exceeding expectations categories on ELA and Math MCAS will improve by 50% from 2021, to 2024
 - 10% improvement in ELA and Math scores from 2021 - 2022
 - 20% improvement in ELA and Math scores from 2022 - 2023
 - 10% improvement in ELA and Math scores from 2023 - 2024
- By 2024, ALL students will be SEL achievers by demonstrating kindness, cooperation and resourcefulness through ...
 - Tiered Fidelity Inventory will be at 90% or higher;
 - Creation of a kind/cooperative/resourceful/growth portfolio;
 - 90% of students will say they enjoy coming to school
 - 30% Growth in SEL skills as evinced by the RTI skills checklist and the Paths curriculum assessment;
 - 10% by the end of 2022
 - 20% by the end of 2023
 - 30% by the end of 2024
 - Decrease in discipline referrals by 30%
 - 10% by the end of 2022
 - 20% by the end of 2023
 - 30% by the end of 2024
- By 2024:
 - 90% of parents will agree in the Parent Voice Survey that school-family partnerships are satisfactory
 - 90% of students will agree in the Student Voice Survey that school-family partnerships are satisfactory

Implementation Timeline					
	Activity/Outcome	Person(s) Responsible	Measurement Tool(s)	Date to be Completed	Status
1	Align M.T.S.S. Academic and S.E.L. processes between the two current elementary schools (time to meet, participants identified, protocols implemented)	Building Admins/Building Leadership and MTSS Teams	Building Admin. and MTSS District team observations	June 2022	In Process
2	Align goals, assessments, data, and progress/success criteria under a common vision	MTSS Academic District and Building Teams	Learning Walk/ Observation Data (Rigor Rubric)	June 2022	In Process



Gardner Elementary School - G.E.S. (W.S.S./E.S.S.) - Improvement Plan - 2021-2024

3	Create a schedule for each school to enable MTSS systems and teams to function effectively and student achievement. This will serve as a model for the new unified elementary school	Building Admin./BLT	TFI/Annual District SEL Reports	January 2022	Near Completion
4	Implement a common, and quality SEL curriculum for every student (Tier 1)	Teachers/Counseling Teams	Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI)/Office Discipline Referral data/Paths and RTI assessments	June 2022	Partially complete
5	Identify and align high leverage (“power”) standards and lessons for ELA and Math curricula and ensure these lessons are common and quality (Standards-aligned, rigorous and engaging student task, assessed, and inclusive)	Teachers/BLT/Instructional Coaches	Learning Walk/ Observation Data (Rigor Rubric), DIBELS (foundational reading assessment), Linkit Benchmark Assessments (Math and ELA), MCAS	June 2022	In Process
6	Implement effective Tier 2 and Tier 3 SEL interventions for students who need it.	Counseling Teams/ Building Admin	Office Discipline Referral data/Paths and RTI assessments/TFI	June 2022	In Process
7	Implement effective Tier 2 and Tier 3 Academic interventions for students who need it.	Teachers/Tutors	DIBELS (foundational reading assessment), Linkit Benchmark Assessments (Math and ELA), MCAS	June 2022	In Process
8	Identify and align standards-based lessons for ALL ELA and Math curricula and ensure these lessons are common and quality (Standards-aligned, rigorous and engaging student task, assessed, and inclusive)	Teachers/BLT	Learning Walk/ Observation Data (Rigor Rubric), DIBELS (foundational reading assessment), Linkit Benchmark Assessments (Math and ELA), MCAS	June 2023	In Process
9	Adjust, improve, and re-align MTSS S.E.L. and academic systems, processes and practices based on data and the unforeseen obstacles of merging into a new school	MTSS Teams/Admin/BLT	MTSS Building and District Team observations	June 2023	In Process
10	Utilize assessment and benchmark data to determine what are the strategic areas of improvement	MTSS Teams/Admin/BLT	Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI)/Office	2022-2023	In Process



Gardner Elementary School - G.E.S. (W.S.S./E.S.S.) - Improvement Plan - 2021-2024

			Discipline Referral data/Paths and RTI assessments/Learning Walk/ Observation Data (Rigor Rubric), DIBELS (foundational reading assessment), Linkit Benchmark Assessments (Math and ELA), MCAS		
11	Implement professional development training for staff to enable greatest areas of improvement	Admin team/MTSS Teams/Outside consultants	Staff attendance sheets	2022-2023	In Process
12	Equity/Family Engagement team assesses and identifies base-line current practices and develops action plans for increased school-family partnerships and equity;	Equity & Family Engagement Team/Principal	MTSS Guidelines for Family Engagement	June 2022	In Process
13	Merge the current family and community engagement teams	Principal/Family and community engagement coordinator		June 2023	In Process
14	Implement Family and Community engagement ideas for increased involvement and improved equity lens based on assessment of current practices	Principal/Family and community engagement coordinator/Other Staff	Family Surveys	2022-2023	In Proce
15	Identify and align standards-based lessons for all non-ELA/Math curricula and ensure these lessons are common and quality (Standards-aligned, rigorous and engaging student task, assessed, and inclusive)	Teachers/Coaches	Learning Walk Observation Data/Subject-specific assessments	2023-2024	



Gardner Public Schools

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December 1, 2023

Curriculum and Instruction Update

MTSS Academics

As reported last year, the District continues to focus on Social, Emotional & Behavioral Learning (SEL) and academic improvement across all schools. Step one of the MTSS academic strategic plan (Alignment of Standards & Curriculum) began in the fall of 2021 and continued throughout the 2021-2022 school year (see Table below). District and building teams were, and continue to be trained and supported through each phase of the work for each grade level and in each content area.

TIER ONE: STEPS TO IMPLEMENTATION			
		Step Two...	Step Three...
Step One...			
Team	<u>Systems</u>	<u>Data</u>	<u>Practice</u>
Building Leadership Team (BLT) Review Data to Support Professional Development and coaching of staff and teacher leaders	Review Data for Effective CPT Team Facilitation & Development <ul style="list-style-type: none">Observe CPTMeeting Agenda, Minutes & GoalsAdmin/Teacher Leader Coaching Meetings	Ensure Assessment Implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none">LinkIt! Formative AssessmentsCommon Classroom Assessments of Objectives/Learning TargetsLinkIt! Benchmark AssessmentsAdmin/Teacher Leader Coaching Meetings	Review Data to Assess Effectiveness of Tier 1 Supports and Fidelity to Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none">Mini Learning Walks to assess fidelity of practicesLesson PlansResults of LinkIt! Benchmark AssessmentsAdmin/Teacher Leader Coaching Meetings
Teacher Leaders lead their Common Planning Time (CPT) Team to promote Data-Driven Instruction and Evidence-based Effective Practices	CPT Meeting Goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Align curriculum, instruction and assessments to the state standards so they are common to all grade-level teachersDecide how students can demonstrate mastery of the standardUnpack the standards to identify Objectives/Learning TargetsDevelop Lesson Plans that meet the standards/Objectives/Learning Targets	Implement Assessments to Generate Relevant Data <ul style="list-style-type: none">LinkIt! Formative AssessmentsCommon Classroom Assessments of Objectives/Learning TargetsLinkIt! Benchmark Assessments	Review Assessment Results to Inform Responsive Practices <ul style="list-style-type: none">Universal Design for Learning (UDL)Effective Use of Classroom's Inclusive SupportsFour Evidence-Based Practices

Step two of the academic plan (effective use of data) was introduced at the end of the 2021-2022 school year and planning for implementation of step two occurred during the summer of 2022. District and building leaders meet frequently to calibrate messaging and progress

monitor the use of district developed strategies and protocols for data analysis and action planning for the implementation of effective tiered instruction in all grade levels and content areas. Teachers have scheduled common planning time several times per week to implement the protocols in preparation for best instructional practices in the classroom. Step three of the academic plan (full implementation of practices) began at the beginning of this school year. District and building level supports continue as buildings work through initial implementation challenges.

To ensure a continuous cycle of improvement and effective implementation of the MTSS academic strategic plan, the District has been collaborating with consultants from the May Institute and the Lynch Leadership Academy of Boston College, specializing in inclusion/co-teaching practices, SEL practices, and academic school improvement respectively. Collaboration with each of these groups will continue throughout this school year and next school year to assist with:

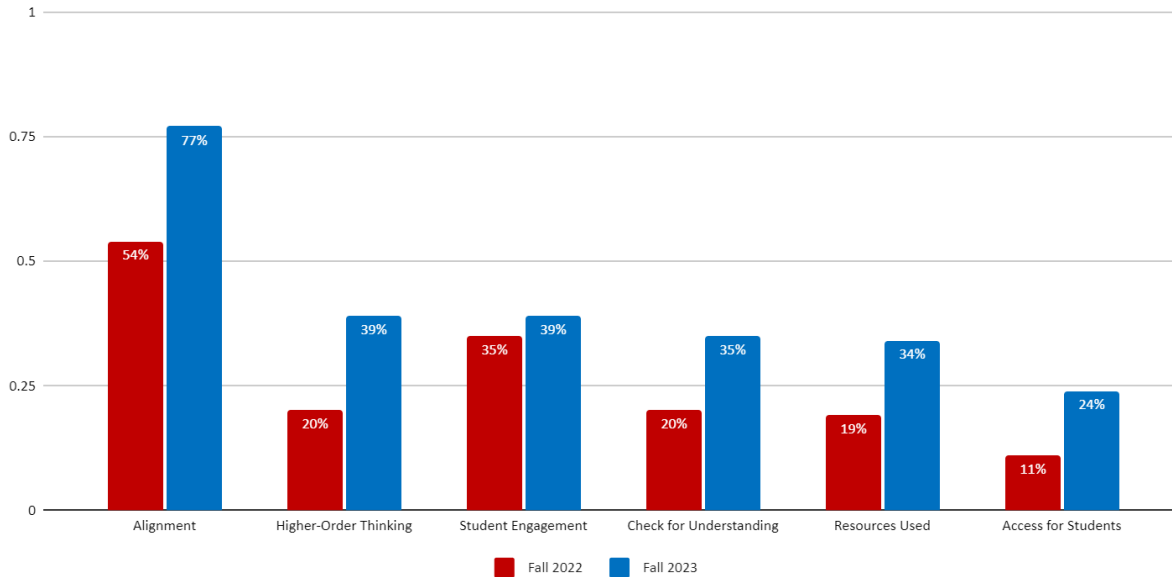
- The refinement of an effective model for tiered supports in both SEL and academics;
- The development of a system to monitor progress of the work; and
- The development of a system of sustainability for continuous SEL and academic/instructional improvement.

Learning Walks

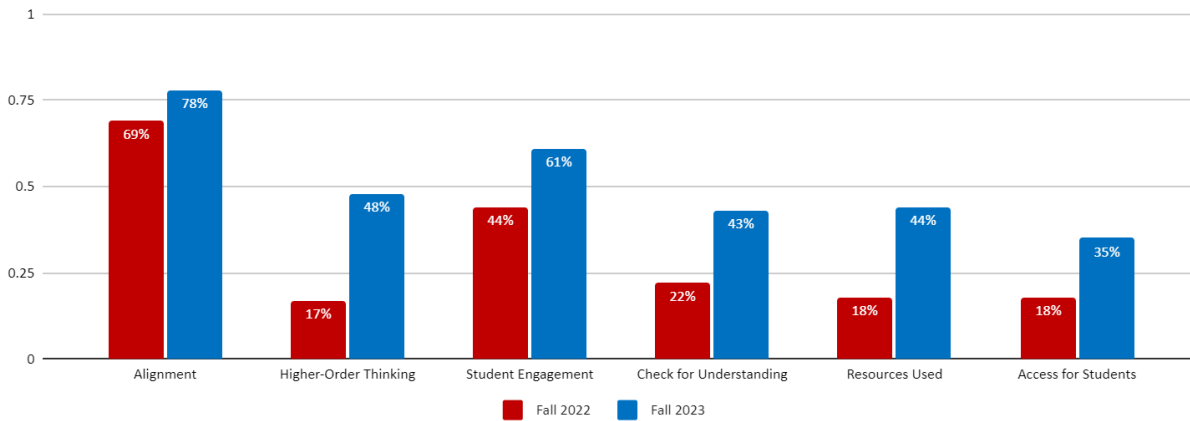
District Administrators, Instructional Coaches, Principals and other building staff members conducted building-wide Learning Walks during the month of October. The major focus of the Fall Learning Walks was to gather evidence of rigorous learning experiences for students throughout each building and District-wide. These are the first of two Learning Walks that will take place this year at each building. The Fall Learning Walks are intended to give baseline data to determine areas of strength and areas of need. Fall results will also be used to plan focused, embedded supports for teachers in the classroom and also during common planning, staff meetings, and Professional Development days. The end of year Learning Walks will be implemented to determine progress and make adjustments to supports in the areas of previously identified need.

Learning Walk data collected to date indicate that there is improvement in many areas at Gardner Elementary School and Gardner High School. Data also indicate that there is a continuing need for support in the areas of small group instruction for differentiated learning, creating rigorous, student-focused learning experiences for higher order thinking, and high levels of student engagement at all schools. This is especially true at Gardner Middle School (GMS) which was identified by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as a school in need of assistance. Funding from the Targeted Assistance grant awarded to GMS will be utilized to contract with MTSS consultants for providing a needs analysis, targeted professional development for staff and coaching for District/building administrators to facilitate effective improvements at GMS and at all schools. Consultants are being interviewed during the week of December 4th and the selected group will begin providing support as soon as January, 2024 through the end of the 2023-2024 school year

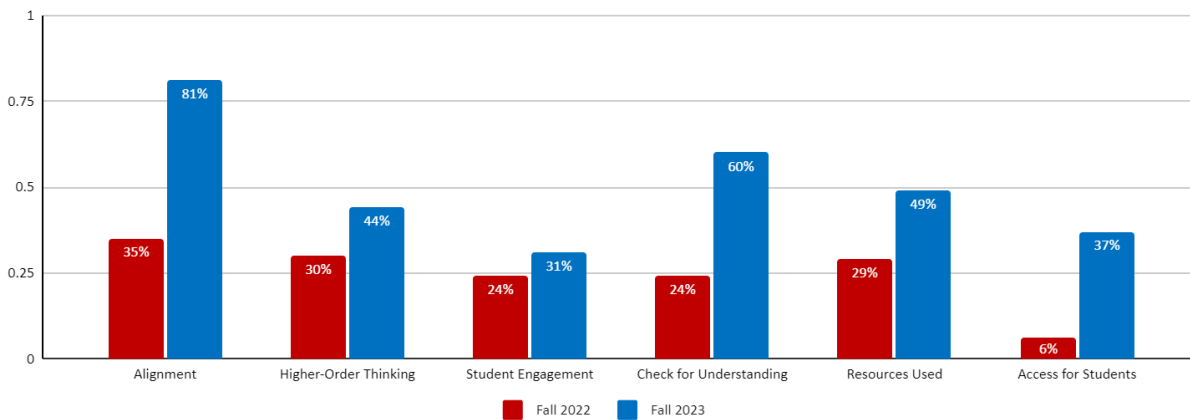
Learning Walk Rigor Rubric Data
% Meeting or Exceeding District Expectations of Practice
District



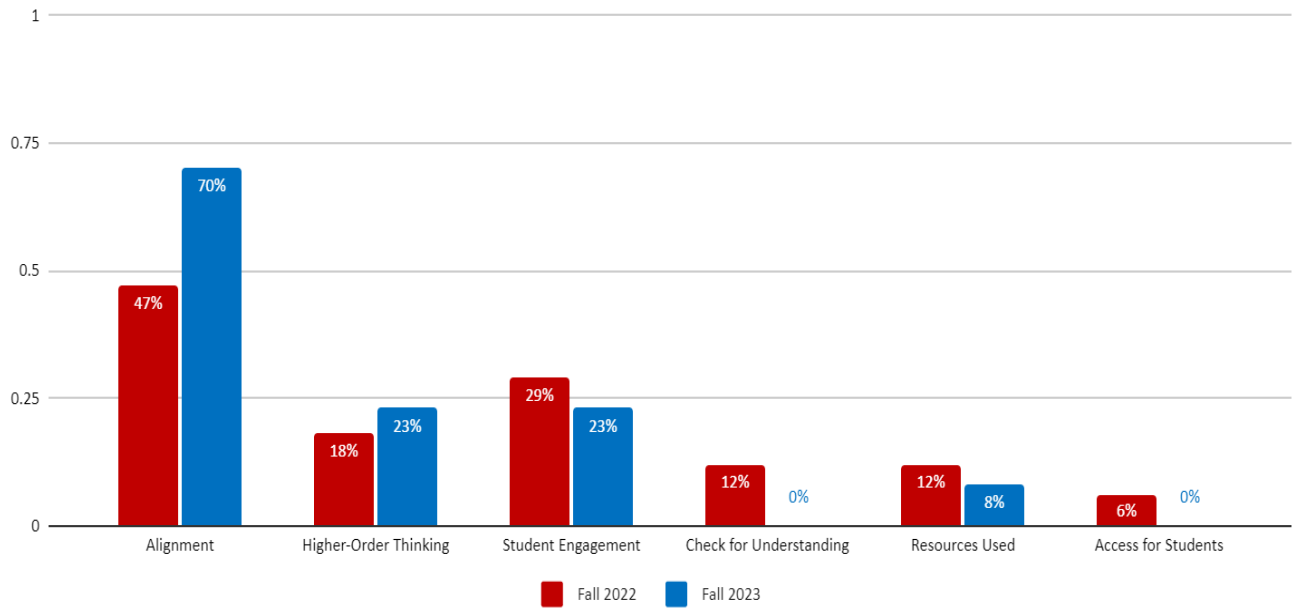
Learning Walk Rigor Rubric Data
% Meeting or Exceeding District Expectations of Practice
Gardner Elementary School



Learning Walk Rigor Rubric Data
% Meeting or Exceeding District Expectations of Practice
Gardner High School



Learning Walk Rigor Rubric Data
% Meeting or Exceeding District Expectations of Practice
Gardner Middle School





Gardner Public Schools

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Grants & Communications Update to School Committee – December 11, 2023

Grants

FY24 Grants

The district has been awarded the following grants, for School Committee Approval:

- Early College Support Grant – the grant will continue to support the implementation of the Early College Program, including the College & Career Readiness Coordinator position, single-seat courses to ensure students are able to access necessary programming, college field trips, mental health supports, and recruitment/promotional material development.

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Gardner Public Schools

Joyce West, Director of Pupil Personnel Services



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December 3, 2023

Report to the School Committee Special Education Updates

SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT:

District Special Education Administrators are in the planning stage of rolling out the new IEP form for the 2024-25 school year. The District will be using the 274 grant for special education professional development to supplement planning and implementation needs for the remainder of the school year.

Special Education Administrators meet bi-weekly and are planning to use the remainder of the professional development days this school year to set up training models for all special education teachers, related service providers, and general education staff. In addition, training modules will be provided to all administrators. The Department of Secondary and Elementary Education is promoting a system implementation and discussion with all administrations so that school buildings are addressing special education needs at a system level.

Two training sessions will be offered to parents and community members or any interested parties later in the spring. The District is working with the Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) to schedule these trainings.

There will need to be revisions to district forms and supporting documentation used to facilitate IEP meetings. These documents will need to be completed before the start of next year and all special education staff will need coaching on facilitating the IEP meetings using the form and support district documentation. It is anticipated that coaching support will need to be continued throughout the next school year.

Special Education Administrators and Special Education Administrative Assistants have been considering making a switch from the current IEP database, Frontline, to PowerSchool. The District has been using Frontline, formally esped, for many years. Given the District switch to a new district wide student database last school year, PowerSchool, consideration for switching to their special education program is being explored. If a switch is to happen, this is the perfect opportunity given that the entire system would be altered even if we were to continue with Frontline. There have been numerous issues getting PowerSchool running throughout the district and there is concern that there will be issues with the special education program. The benefits to streamlining and using the same database system however, has many additional benefits and can cut down on man hours currently required to cross check accuracy of fields across to systems.

HOMELESS/FOSTER CARE:

As the Homeless Liaison for the District, the Director of Pupil Personnel coordinated a meeting with the regional contacts for Super 8 Motel, the new Massachusetts emergency shelter located in Gardner, which was newly designated this fall. District members included the Director, Director of Multilingual Learners, the District Social Worker, and the Administrative Assistant assigned to the homeless liaison. The purpose of the meeting was to streamline communication and information regarding homeless families with school age children needing to enroll either in Gardner Schools or maintain enrollment in their previous school districts.

SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL (SEPAC):

Laurie Davis, Chair, and Shania Cassey, Secretary, held the first SEPAC meeting on November 16, 2023. This was a virtual meeting with 5 parents and 1 community member in attendance not including the SEPAC officers, school committee liaison, and Director of Pupil Personnel.