

Agenda School Committee Meeting 5.13.24

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, May 13, 2024, 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 – GES – MTSS SEL Team**
- D. **Consent Agenda**
 - a. Approval of Minutes: April 8, 2024
 - b. Accept Grant Funds on Grant listing dated May 13, 2024 in the amount of \$55,085.00
 - c. Warrant # 24-40, dated April 4, 2024. in the amount of \$472,217.44
 - d. Warrant # 24-41, dated April 11, 2024, in the amount of \$356,114.886
 - e. Warrant # 24-42, dated April 18, 2024, in the amount of \$181,238.53
 - f. Warrant # 24-43, dated April 25, 2024, in the amount of \$320,472.50
 - g. Donations -
- E. **Subcommittee Report**
 - Facilities Subcommittee
 - Finance Subcommittee
 - Superintendent's Evaluation Subcommittee

Agenda School Committee Meeting 5.13.24

F. **Student Advisory Board** – Zayvian Rowe-Class

G. **Discussion Items:**

New Business

Item #3616 Second Reading of Policies (Vote Required)

IMG – Animals in School

JF – School Admissions

JFBC – School Tuition Policy

JH – Student Absences and Excuses

The Policy Subcommittee recommends acceptance of the above policies

IHBG-R – Home Education Guidelines (For Removal - Vote Required)

IJOAA – Field Trips/Not School Sponsored (For Removal - Vote Required)

The following policies have been found, by the MASC, to be redundant or unnecessary and should be considered for removal from our policy manual

Item #3617 College & Career Readiness Coordinator (Presentation)

Item #3618 Curriculum Coordinator Update (Information)

Item #3619 ELL Coordinator Update (Information)

Item #3620 Grants Administrator Update (Information)

Item #3621 Special Education Update (Presentation)

Item #3622 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

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 - b. Accept Grant Funds on Grant listing dated May 13, 2024 in the amount of \$55,085.00
 - c. Warrant # 24-40, dated April 4, 2024, in the amount of \$472,217.44
Subcommittee recommends ratification of Warrant #24-40.
 - d. Warrant # 24-41, dated April 11, 2024, in the amount of \$356,114.886
Subcommittee recommends ratification of Warrant #24-41.
 - e. Warrant # 24-42, dated April 18, 2024, in the amount of \$181,238.53
Subcommittee recommends ratification of Warrant #24-42.
 - f. Warrant # 24-43, dated April 25, 2024, in the amount of \$320,472.50
Subcommittee recommends ratification of Warrant #24-43.
 - g. Donations –
- E. **Subcommittee Report**
 - Facilities Subcommittee
 - Finance Subcommittee
 - Superintendent’s Evaluation Subcommittee
- F. **Student Advisory Board-** Zayvian Rowe-Class
- G. **Discussion Items:**
 - New Business**
 - Item #3616 Second Reading of Policies (Vote Required)**
 - IMG** – Animals in School
 - JF** – School Admissions
 - JFBC** – School Tuition Policy
 - JH** – Student Absences and Excuses
 - The Policy Subcommittee recommends acceptance of the above policies
 - IHBG-R – Home Education Guidelines (For Removal - Vote Required)**
 - IJOAA – Field Trips/Not School Sponsored (For Removal - Vote Required)**

Briefing
School Committee Meeting 5.13.2024

The following policies have been found, by the MASC, to be redundant or unnecessary and should be considered for removal from our policy manual

Item #3617 College & Career Readiness Coordinator (**Presentation**)

Item #3618 Curriculum Coordinator Update (**Information**)

Item #3619 ELL Coordinator Update (**Information**)

Item #3620 Grants Administrator Update (**Information**)

Item #3621 Special Education Update (**Presentation**)

Item #3622 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 and Public Hearing– April 8, 2024

Members present: Jennifer Pelavin, Vice Chairperson
John LaFreniere, Finance Officer
Anne Hurst
Robert Swartz

Member absent: Mayor Michael Nicholson, Chairperson
Shannon Ward-Leighton

School Personnel Present: Dr. Mark Pellegrino, Superintendent
Terri Hillman, Recording Secretary
Dr. Catherine Goguen, Chief Academic Officer
Mark Hawke, Director of Finance and Operations
Joyce West, Director of Pupil Personnel Services

Absent: Zayvian Rowe-Cross, Student Representative

Call to Order

Mrs. Jennifer Pelavin, Vice 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 was present.

Public Hearing – FY25 School Budget

Mrs. Plavin, Vice Chairperson, opened the Public Hearing on the proposed FY2025 School Budget in accordance with MGL Chapter 71, Section 38N, at 6:32 pm.

Dr. Pellegrino presented the FY2025 Level Services Budget for the Gardner Public Schools. He presented the increased costs associated with changes in demographics, higher expenses for the number of students leaving the District, and the out of District placement cost. He also presented information on the Student Opportunity Act and the three-year expected investment.

Preparation for the FY2025 Budget began with the Principals and Administrators and continued with meetings with the Superintendent and the Director of Finance. The budget was developed to address the needs of all students.

Mark Hawke, Director of Finance and Operations, presented information on increased staffing and the cost involved. He presented information on the budgeted amounts for salaries, expenses and revenues. He presented information on Net School Spending (NSS) - costs that do not apply to NSS and the NSS Spending History. The total school balanced budget for FY2025 is \$34,786,971.

After the presentation, Mrs. Pelavin, Vice Chairperson, asked if there were any questions from School Committee members. There were none.

Mrs. Pelavin, Vice Chairperson, asked three times if anyone from the general public had any questions on the FY2025 Level Services Budget. There was no one from the general public present at the meeting,

Mr. LaFreniere moved that the Public Hearing on the FY2025 Level Services Budget be closed.

Seconded by Mr. Swartz.

Vote – unanimous.

The Public Hearing was declared closed at 6:45 pm.

FY 2025 School Budget (Vote)

Mr. Swartz moved that the Gardner School Committee vote to approve the FY2025 Level Services Budget as presented with a Total School Budget in the amount \$34,476,971.

Seconded by Mr. LaFreniere.

Vote – unanimous.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Swartz moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented:

- **Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting March 11, 2024**
- **Ratification of the following Warrants as recommended by the Finance Subcommittee:**

- **Warrant #24-36 dated 03/07/24 in the amount of \$355,239.59**
- **Warrant #24-37 dated 03/14/24 in the amount of \$317,668.73**
- **Warrant #24-38 dated 03/21/24 in the amount of \$150,559.06**
- **Warrant #24-39 dated 03/28/24 in the amount of \$83,303.51**

Seconded by Mrs. Cormier.

Vote – so voted.

Mrs. Pelavin, Vice Chairperson, abstained from voting.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Subcommittee

Mr. LaFreniere, Chairperson of the Finance Subcommittee, said that the finance information was presented at the Public Hearing.

Policy Subcommittee

Mrs. Hurst, Chairperson of the Policy Subcommittee, reported that the Subcommittee met on March 20, 2024. 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 March 2024:

- Policy IMB - Teaching About Controversial Issues/Controversial Speakers
- Policy JBB - Educational Equity
- Policy JFABD - Homeless Students: Enrollment Right and Services
- Policy JFABE - Educational Opportunities for Military Children
- Policy JFABF - Educational Opportunities for Children in Foster Care
- Policy JHD - Exclusions and Exemptions from School Attendance

Four Policies were recommended for a first reading by the full School Committee. (See Item #3610 – First Reading of Policies.)

Student Advisory Board

Zayvian Rowe-Cross was not present this evening. There was no report.

NEW BUSINESS

Item #3606 – Appointments to Keystone and CAPS Collaborative

Mr. LaFreniere moved that the Gardner School Committee vote to approve the appointment of Dr. Mark Pellegrino, Superintendent, to represent the Gardner School District on the Keystone Educational Board of Directors.

**Seconded by Mrs. Hurst. Vote – so voted.
Mrs. Pelavin abstained from voting.**

Mrs. Hurst moved that the Gardner School Committee vote to approve the appointment of Dr. Mark Pellegrino, Superintendent, to represent the Gardner School District on the CAPS Collaborative Board of Directors.

**Seconded by Mrs. Cormier. Vote – so voted.
Mrs. Pelavin abstained from voting.**

Item #3607 – School Improvement Plans - GHS, GALT, GMS and GES

Mr. Swartz moved that the Gardner School Committee vote to approve the Gardner High School Improvement Plan for 2021-2024 as presented.

**Seconded by Mr. LaFreniere. Vote – so voted.
Mrs. Pelavin abstained from voting.**

Mr. Swartz moved that the Gardner School Committee vote to approve the Gardner Academy School Improvement Plan for 2021-2024 as presented.
Seconded by Mr. LaFreniere. Vote – so voted.
Mrs. Pelavin abstained from voting.

Mr. LaFreniere moved that the Gardner School Committee vote to approve the Gardner Middle School Improvement Plan for 2021-2024 as presented.
Seconded by Mr. Swartz. Vote – so voted.
Mrs. Pelavin abstained from voting.

Mrs. Hurst moved that the Gardner School Committee vote to approve the Gardner Elementary School Improvement Plan for 2021-2024 as presented.
Seconded by Mrs. Cormier. Vote – so voted.
Mrs. Pelavin abstained from voting.

Item #3608 – Field Trip – GMS, Grade 7 to Canobie Lake Park

Mr. LaFreniere moved that the Gardner School Committee vote to approve the request of the Gardner Middle School grade 7 class to travel to Canobie Lake Park, Salem, NH, on June 7, 2024, leaving the Middle School at 7:30 am and returning at 5 pm. It is a celebration for completing Middle School.
Seconded by Mrs. Cormier. Vote – so voted.
Mrs. Pelavin abstained from voting.

Item #3609 – Add Ayer/Shirley to CAPS Collaborative and Accept Updated Charter

Mrs. Hurst moved that the Gardner Public School Committee vote to approve adding Ayer/Shirley to CAPS Collaborative and accepting the updated Charter to include this school district.
Seconded by Mrs. Cormier. Vote – so voted.
Mrs. Pelavin abstained from voting.

Dr. Pellegrino explained that the addition of Ayer/Shirley will make CAPS Collaborative stronger and the updated Charter is required with this addition.

Item #3610 –First Reading of Policies

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

- IMG - Animals in School
- JF - School Admissions
- JFBC - School Tuition Policy
- JH - Student Absences and Excuses

Item #3611 – Second Reading, Adoption and Removal of Policies

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

- IHAMB - Teaching about Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drugs
- IHBA A - Observations of Special Education Programs
- IHBF - Homebound Instruction
- IHBHE - Remote Learning
- JICFB - Bullying

Seconded by Mrs. Cormier.

Vote – so voted.

Mrs. Pelavin abstained from voting

Mrs. Hurst moved that the Gardner Public School Committee vote to approve the following policies for adoption as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee:

- IHBG - Home Education
- IJOA - Field Trips
- IJOC - School Volunteers
- ILD - Student Submission to Educational Surveys and Research

Seconded by Mrs. Cormier.

Vote – so

voted.

Mrs. Pelavin abstained from voting.

Mrs. Hurst moved that the Gardner Public School Committee vote to remove the following policy as MASC has found it to be redundant or unnecessary and should be removed from the Policy Manual:

- JFA - Grade Placement for Students Leaving Charter School

Seconded by Mrs. Cormier.

Vote – so voted.

Mrs. Pelavin abstained from voting.

Item #3612 – Curriculum Coordinator’s Update

The Curriculum Coordinator’s Report was included in the members’ packets. Dr. Goguen, Chief Academic Officer, was present this evening.

Item #3613 - Grants Administrator’s Update

The Grants Administrator’s Report was included in the members’ packets. Ms. Courtney Dunn, Grants, Communications & Compliance Manager, was not present this evening.

Item #3614 – Special Education Update

The Special Education Update Report was included in the members’ packets. Ms. Joyce West, Director of Pupil Personnel Services, was present this evening.

Item #3615– SEPAC Report

Mrs. Hurst reported for the SEPAC. A Parent and Student Basic Rights Training was held in March. This is a required annual training. The District has posted the presentation/PowerPoint on the website for anyone who was unable to attend. SEPAC and the District are working to translate the PowerPoint into other languages as needed.

COMMUNICATIONS

Dr. Pellegrino reported that two school days will have to be made up due to the recent snowstorm. MCAS is underway and everything is going well. He appreciates the hard work the teachers and administrators have done to make the tests go smoothly.

FINAL COMMENTS

Mrs. Hurst thanked Dr. Pellegrino and Mr. Hawke for the FY2025 Budget Presentation and thanked everyone who worked on the budget.

Mr. Swartz said he appreciates the terrific job Dr. Pellegrino is doing for the school system.

Mrs. Pelavin attended the recent student theatrical productions, and they were amazing.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. LaFreniere moved to adjourn.

Seconded by Mr. Swartz.

Vote – so voted.

Mrs. Pelavin abstained from voting.

The meeting adjourned at 7 pm

**Rachel Cormier
Secretary**

T. Hillman, Recording Secretary

Gardner Public Schools

Courtney Dunn, *Grants & Communications Manager*



www.gardnerk12.org

160 Elm Street, Gardner, MA 01440

(978) 632-1000

Grant Funding for Approval – May 13, 2024

Grant Title	Amount	Grant Period	Use of Funds
FC213 Strategies to Reduce or Eliminate the Use of Time-Out Rooms	\$55,085	5/1/24-9/30/24	Support professional development, technology infrastructure and materials for staff to implement new strategies to reduce the use of time-out rooms.

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 #: 24-40

WARRANT DATE 04/04/24

Location	Office & Gen Supplies	Curriculum	Athletics	IT	Activities	Utilities	Facilities	TOTAL
High School			\$9,299.25			\$147.56	\$27,892.98	\$37,339.79
Middle School	\$99.49						\$23,077.09	\$23,176.58
Gardner Elementary School	\$4,375.48					\$7,394.33	\$39,263.17	\$51,032.98
GALT								\$0.00
Sub-Total	\$4,474.97	\$0.00	\$9,299.25	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$7,541.89	\$90,233.24	\$111,549.35

Location	Office Supplies	Transport.	IT	Curriculum	Legal	Tuition	Dues & Mem	Prof. Dev	Facilities	Carry over	TOTAL
Special Education		\$10,657.50		\$672.00	\$8,565.20	\$97,573.08					\$117,467.78
Administration			\$29,992.63		\$437.00		\$1,440.00	\$799.20	\$6,498.17		\$39,167.00
Sub-Total	\$0.00	\$10,657.50	\$29,992.63	\$672.00	\$9,002.20	\$97,573.08	\$1,440.00	\$799.20	\$6,498.17	\$0.00	\$156,634.78

Revolving	\$143,271.63
Grants	\$50,396.46
School Music	
MSBA	\$10,365.22
Sub-Total	\$204,033.31

GRAND TOTAL	\$472,217.44
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**GARDNER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SYNOPSIS OF WARRANT**

WARRANT #: 24-41

WARRANT DATE 04/11/24

Location	Office & Gen Supplies	Curriculum	Athletics	IT	Prof Dev	Utilities	Facilities	TOTAL
High School	\$1,971.73	\$213.63		\$3,080.64	\$550.00	\$15,364.23	\$1,460.78	\$22,641.01
Middle School	\$24.99	\$125.28		\$1,668.05		\$10,590.08	\$152.91	\$12,561.31
Gardner Elementary School				\$3,097.34		\$7,685.30	\$216.00	\$10,998.64
GALT								\$0.00
Sub-Total	\$1,996.72	\$338.91	\$0.00	\$7,846.03	\$550.00	\$33,639.61	\$1,829.69	\$46,200.96

Location	Office Supplies	Transport.	IT	Curriculum	Nurse	Utilities	Dues & Mem	Prof Ser	Facilities	Carry over	TOTAL
Special Education		\$64,825.00	\$1,142.07				\$363.75	\$35,911.68			\$102,242.50
Administration	\$25.44		\$3,278.15		\$105.00	\$10,095.04			\$19.68		\$13,523.31
Sub-Total	\$25.44	\$64,825.00	\$4,420.22	\$0.00	\$105.00	\$10,095.04	\$363.75	\$35,911.68	\$19.68	\$0.00	\$115,765.81

Revolving	\$1,016.90
Grants	\$16,462.01
Student Activity	\$919.18
Pathways / Early College	\$175,750.00
Sub-Total	\$194,148.09

GRAND TOTAL	\$356,114.86
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**GARDNER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SYNOPSIS OF WARRANT**

WARRANT #: 24-42

WARRANT DATE 04/18/24

Location	Office & Gen Supplies	Curriculum	Athletics	IT	Activities	Utilities	Facilities	TOTAL
High School		\$428.66						\$428.66
Middle School	\$74.39						\$444.41	\$518.80
Gardner Elementary School	\$9.98							\$9.98
GALT								\$0.00
Sub-Total	\$84.37	\$428.66	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$444.41	\$957.44

Location	Office Supplies	Transport.	IT	Curriculum	Legal	Tuition	Prof. Services	Prof. Dev	Facilities	Carry over	TOTAL
Special Education			\$102.27			\$15,249.14	\$20,105.42				\$35,456.83
Administration		\$80,100.00						\$1,939.00	\$2,018.29	\$640.32	\$84,697.61
Sub-Total	\$0.00	\$80,100.00	\$102.27	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$15,249.14	\$20,105.42	\$1,939.00	\$2,018.29	\$640.32	\$120,154.44

Revolving	\$1,118.84
Grants	\$59,007.81
School Music	
MSBA	
Sub-Total	\$60,126.65

GRAND TOTAL	\$181,238.53
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**GARDNER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SYNOPSIS OF WARRANT**

WARRANT #: 24-43

WARRANT DATE 04/25/24

Location	Office & Gen Supplies	Curriculum	Athletics	IT	Activities	Utilities	Facilities	TOTAL
High School	\$323.75	\$559.98	\$689.50		\$414.05	\$167.85	\$1,596.91	\$3,752.04
Middle School	\$672.07						\$3,907.55	\$4,579.62
Gardner Elementary School	\$1,120.26						\$6,244.45	\$7,364.71
GALT								\$0.00
Sub-Total	\$2,116.08	\$559.98	\$689.50	\$0.00	\$414.05	\$167.85	\$11,748.91	\$15,696.37

Location	Office Supplies	Transport.	IT	Curriculum	Legal	Tuition	Dues & Mem	Prof Serv.	Facilities	Carry over	TOTAL
Special Education		\$65,560.00	\$729.71		\$7,129.00	#####	\$200.00	\$11,442.25			\$217,416.87
Administration	\$52.01	\$450.00	\$1,824.83		\$1,104.00				\$4,635.67	\$2,282.00	\$10,348.51
Sub-Total	\$52.01	\$66,010.00	\$2,554.54	\$0.00	\$8,233.00	#####	\$200.00	\$11,442.25	\$4,635.67	\$2,282.00	\$227,765.38

Revolving	\$680.30
Grants	\$65,684.21
School Music	
Bond	\$10,646.24
Sub-Total	\$77,010.75

GRAND TOTAL	\$320,472.50
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GARDNER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Facilities Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes Thursday, May 2, 2024

Central Office, Elm Street, Gardner, MA 01440

PRESENT: Robert J. Swartz, Chair; John LaFreniere, Jennifer Pelavin

REGRETS: Mark Pelegriano, Wayne Anderson Director of Facilities

OTHERS PRESENT: Mark Hawke Director Finance and Operations,

1. Call to Order 5:10 PM. Meeting took place in Central Office.
2. Approval of Minutes of the Facilities Subcommittee Meeting held on:
 - March 7, 2024. Mr. LaFreniere motioned, Ms. Pelavin seconded, Motion passed.
3. OLD BUSINESS:
 - Reviewing the Maintenance Dept. Project List we find:
Not much change in the maintenance department's project list. However, we did note that on the projects listed that there are now estimated costs and contractor names on the projects identified, and projects are moving forward.
 - Take note with the pictures attached that the rehab of the GHS (Landry) Auditorium is slowly progressing with the installation of scaffolding throughout the room.
 - This is the beginning of upgrading the HVAC and electrical systems in the room.
 - The committee also discussed the line item of (Miscellaneous Theatrical Upgrades) at the estimated costs of \$500K. We wished there were more details available on this line item. We will continue to monitor this line item.
 - During the summer break ceiling tiles will be replaced in the GHS kitchen.
 - We discussed the replacement of the dishwasher again and question the cost of an estimated \$100,000. Mr. LaFreniere,

who has most knowledge of these things, stated the costs should be around \$15-20K plus installation. this summer.

- GMS: We need to upgrade the generator and attached fuel systems. There is an in-ground fuel tank that needs attention because of contaminated fuel. This project may not be accomplished this year, due to funding.
 - The fire sprinkler systems need upgrading to comply with code. i.e., sprinkler heads need replacement due to time, A valve needs replacement and to take care of a small leak.
 - Replace the front doors and walk off grill.
 - Replace parking lot lighting system.
 - Repair the gym divider, (broken drive chain), repair/paint the divider, and the gym.
 - The left flag-pole flag lifting mechanism has been in-operative for years; it is time to repair.
 - Elm St. School:
 - Relocate the walk-in freezer to GMS.
 - Install security cameras on GALT portion of the building.
 - Replace auditorium and gym doors. Although they still look surprisingly good there is a need to provide additional security for the 1st floor and that can only be done by replacement.
4. There being nothing further to discuss, Mr. LaFreniere made a motion to adjourn. Motion seconded by Ms. Pelavin. Adjournment was at 5:30 PM.

Robert J. Swartz
Chair
Attach:
Pictures & project list.

SUMMER 2024 FACILITIES PROJECTS



APRIL 30, 2024

BUILDING	LOCATION	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED COST	CONTRACTOR	COMMENTS
High School	Building	PA System Replacement.	\$ 75,000	Valley Communications	
High School	Building	Electric Service Upgrades.		Stutman	
High School	Kitchen	Acoustical Ceiling Tiles.	\$ 2,500	Facilities	
High School	Kitchen	Dishwasher Replacement.	\$ 100,000	Singer Equipment Royal Steam	
High School	Kitchen	Hood Exhaust Compliance	\$ 15,000	Royal Steam	
High School	Landry Auditorium	HVAC Upgrades.		Stutman	
High School	Landry Auditorium	Miscellaneous Theatrical Upgrades.	\$ 500,000	Stutman	
High School	Main Office	Asbestos Abatement (Floor Tiles & Mastic).	\$ 10,000	NG Environmental	
High School	Main Office	Replace carpet and VCT Tiles.		PJM Construction	
High School	Nurses Office	Replace settled cast iron drain piping in the Hallway by Receiving.		Royal Steam	
High School	Building	BMS Upgrades (Honeywell & Facilities Explorer).		Impower Automation	

SUMMER 2024 FACILITIES PROJECTS



APRIL 30, 2024

BUILDING	LOCATION	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED COST	CONTRACTOR	COMMENTS
Middle School	Front Entry	Replace Exterior Doors, Hardware, & Walk-Off Grill.	\$ 30,000	Suburban Glass	
Middle School	Building	Generator Repairs		FM Generator	
Middle School	Building	Fire Sprinkler System Repairs.	\$ 45,000	Johnson Controls	
Middle School	Building	BMS Upgrades (Honeywell & Tridium).		Impower Automation	
Middle School	Exterior	Underground Fuel Storage.		TBD	Exploratory / Testing Define Scope of Work & Develop Action Plan
Middle School	Exterior	Above Ground Fuel Storage.		TBD	Exploratory / Testing Define Scope of Work & Develop Action Plan
Middle School	Exterior	Miscellaneous Minor Roof Repairs.		Tremco	
BUILDING	LOCATION	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED COST	CONTRACTOR	COMMENTS

SUMMER 2024 FACILITIES PROJECTS



APRIL 30, 2024

District	District	Genetec Security & Access System Upgrades.		Signet	Card reader replacement.
Elm Street School	1st Floor	Install Security Cameras.		Signet	
Elm Street School	1st Floor	Replace Auditorium & Gym Doors.		PJM Construction	
Elementary School	Building	Construction Project - Closeout			FYI, it has been 598 days since Substantial Completion on September 12, 2022.



Scaffolding in GHS Auditorium being installed.



WILDCATS wind screens on the new dugouts



New dugouts



New Pitching/Batting tunnels

GARDNER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Elm Street School
160 Elm Street, Gardner, MA 01440
Finance Sub-Committee Meeting
Wednesday, May 2, 2024 at 5:00pm

Minutes

Members Present: Mrs. Pelavin, Mr. Swartz, Mr. LaFreniere

Members Absent:

Others Present: Mr. Mark Hawke, Director of Finance & Operations

Mr. LaFreniere called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

A motion was made by Mr. Swartz and seconded by Mrs. Pelavin to approve the minutes of the March 7, 2024 Finance Subcommittee meeting. So voted.

Expense Report Review:

The Committee reviewed the Expense Report. General questions were asked and answered about various line items. Ms. Pelavin noted a few new negative line items have shown up. Mr. Hawke assured her that adequate funds remained to cover those negatives. Mr. Hawke informed the Committee that the spending and hiring freeze that are in effect will slow the increase in the negative line items and the process of transferring money from within the budget would begin slowly during the month of May. Some of the negative line items were due to a timing issue with MUNIS.

Mr. Hawke also presented the Revolving Accounts Analysis. All accounts are doing well and have positive balance.

Projects Update:

No updates.

Gifts & Donations:

None

New Business:

None

The meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

ANIMALS IN SCHOOL

No animal shall be brought to school without prior permission of the building Principal.

The Gardner School District is committed to providing a high quality educational program to all students in a safe and healthy environment.

School Principals, in consultation with the Health Services Providers in each building, shall utilize the Department of Public health publication "Guidelines for Animals in Schools or on School Grounds" and review student health records to determine which animals may be allowed in the school building. The decision of the Principal shall be final.

Educational Program

Use of animals to achieve specific curriculum objectives may be allowed by the building Principal provided student health and safety is not jeopardized and the individual requesting that the animal be brought to school is responsible for adhering to the "Guidelines for Animals in Schools or on School Grounds" and any other conditions established by the Principal to protect the health and well-being of students.

Student Health

The health and well-being of students is the District's highest priority. Animals may cause an allergic reaction or otherwise impair the health of students. No animals may be brought to school or kept in the school, classroom, office or common area that may negatively impact the health of any student who must utilize that area. Animals that cause an allergic reaction or impair the health of students shall be removed from the school immediately so that no student shall have his/her health impaired and each student shall have full access to available educational opportunities.

Service Animals (Guide or Assistance Dogs)

-

~~The Gardner School Committee does not permit discrimination against individuals with disabilities, including those who require the assistance of a service animal. The District will comply with Massachusetts law concerning the rights of persons with guide or assistance dogs and with federal law and will permit such animals on school premises and on school transportation.~~

~~For purposes of this policy, a "service animal includes any dog that has been individually trained to do the work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability". The regulations further state that "a public entity shall make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures to permit the use of a miniature horse by an individual with a disability if the horse has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of the individual with the disability".~~

~~Service animals perform some of the functions and tasks that individuals with disabilities cannot perform themselves. Service animals are not pets. The task performed by the service animal must address one of the following needs for the disabled individual: physical, sensory, psychiatric,~~

~~intellectual, and other mental disability. The service animal can be excluded from a municipal building or school or program if its purpose is to act as a deterrent to assaultive behavior, bullying, or other misconduct, or to provide emotional support and companionship to the disabled individual. In addition, the service animal can be excluded if the animal is not under the handler's control or if it is not housebroken. Under the standards of the ADA generally, a service animal can be excluded if the service animal presents a direct and immediate threat to others in the governmental building or school.~~

~~No particular breed of dog can automatically be excluded solely based on the perceived characteristics of the breed. Also, there are no weight or size limitations for the service dog.~~

~~When a student will be accompanied by an service animal at school or in other District facilities on a regular basis, such staff member or such student's parent or guardian, as well as the animal's owner and any other person who will have custody and control of the animal will be required to sign a document stating that they have read and understood the foregoing.~~

[Adopted: May 2011]

[Reviewed: August 2013]

[Reviewed: October 2019]

[Revised: 2024]

SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

All children of school age who reside in the city are entitled to attend the public schools, as well as certain children who do not reside in the city but who are admitted under Sschool Ccommittee policies relating to nonresident students or by specific action of the Sschool Ccommittee.

Advance registration for prospective kindergarten students will take place in the school year preceding enrollment. Every student seeking admission to school for the first time must present a birth certificate or equivalent proof of age acceptable to the principal, proof of vaccination and immunizations as required by the state and the Sschool Ccommittee. Proof of residency or legal guardianship may also be required by the school administration.

The above requirements may be waived for eligible students identified under policies JFABD, JFABE, JFABF.

[Reference: M.G.L. 15:1G; 76:1; 76:5; 76:15; 76:15A; 603 CMR 26:001; ~~26:02; 26:03~~; JLCA, Physical Examination of Students; JLCB, Immunization of Students; JFBB, School Choice; JFABD, Homeless Students: Enrollment Rights and Services; JFABE, Educational Opportunities for Military Children; JFABF, Educational Opportunities for Children in Foster Care]

[Adopted: December 1998]

[Revised: April 2003]

[Revised: June 2019]

[Reviewed: June 2020]

[Revised: 2024]

PRE-SCHOOL TUITION POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The School Committee believes that tuition payments for preschool peer models (non-IEP students) are an investment in our children's education. Therefore, the School Committee has the responsibility for adopting certain policies concerning the amount of tuition, the manner of payment, and in general, the development of policy. Further, it is the responsibility of the School Committee to insure that adequate financial resources are available to provide these programs and yet make enrollment in these programs as available and affordable as possible to the affected families.

TUITION PAYMENT

- I. Families with children enrolled as preschool peer models shall make tuition payments as established by the School Committee.
- II. All families shall be expected to make tuition payments according to one of the following payment plans. Each family's preferred manner of payment must be submitted following student registration.
 - A. **Full Payment Plan.** Under this plan, the entire amount of tuition is paid on or before August 30. This payment is made directly to the Superintendent's office. Checks shall be made payable to the City of Gardner.
 - B. **Monthly Payment Plan.** Under this plan, the entire amount (or the remaining amount if a cash deposit is made) is paid over ~~a ten-an~~ eight-month period beginning on August 30. Gardner Public Schools may choose to utilize an outside service for collection of these payments

The outside collection service may require a service charge for processing.

LATE REGISTRATIONS

- I. Tuition for students registering on or after the first day of school shall be pro-rated over the number of months remaining in the school calendar.

LATE PAYMENTS

It shall be the responsibility of each family to keep the Business ~~Administrator Office~~ informed of their need to make any changes in their preferred tuition payment plan or adjustments in the amount of tuition expected to be paid. Without such information, the following procedure will apply when tuition payments are received late.

- I. **Monthly Payments.** Families who choose the monthly payment plan and miss a monthly payment will receive a letter from the School Business ~~Administrator Office~~ requesting the payment in full immediately. If the family is unable to pay immediately due to hardship, the School Business ~~Administrator Office~~ will set up a reasonable payment plan.

II. **Tuition Delinquency.** Families who have missed two monthly payments and have not made suitable arrangements within fourteen (14) calendar days of the second missed payment will be informed that their child(ren) will not be allowed to remain in the program.

All families must be current in their payment of tuition. By August 25th, if the family is not current, students will not be admitted in the program on the first day of school.

TUITION ASSISTANCE

At this time, the School Committee is not able to offer any tuition assistance.

TUITION REFUNDS

Families withdrawing students prior to the first day of school shall be refunded the amount of tuition that has been paid for the current school year. After the first day of school, tuition refunds will be pro-rated over the number of school days each student was in attendance. From that amount, the School Committee will deduct a 5% handling fee to cover administration costs.

[Adopted: March 2003]

[Revised: June 2006]

[Revised: February 2021]

[Revised: 2024]

STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential for success in school. The committee does recognize that parents/guardians of children attending our schools have special rights as well as responsibilities, one of which is to ensure that their children attend school regularly, in accordance with state law.

Therefore, students may be excused temporarily from school attendance, with approval of the School Administrator, for the following reasons:

1. Illness or quarantine;
2. Bereavement or serious illness in family;
3. Weather so inclement as to endanger the health of the child; or
4. Observance of major religious holidays.

A ~~child~~-student may also be excused for other exceptional reasons with approval of the school administrator or excused under other applicable school committee policies relating to absences.

~~A student's understanding of the importance of day-to-day schoolwork is an important factor in the shaping of his character. Parents/guardians can help their children by refusing to allow them to miss school needlessly.~~

Accordingly, parents/guardians will provide a written explanation for the absence and tardiness of a child. This will be required in advance for types of justifiable absences where advance notice is possible.

In instances of chronic or irregular absence reportedly due to illness, the school administration may request a physician's statement certifying such absences to be justifiable.

Student Absence Notification Program

Each Principal or designee will notify a student's parent/guardian within 3 days of the student's absence in the event the parent/guardian has not informed the school of the absence.

Each Principal or designee shall make a reasonable effort to meet with any student, and that student's parent/guardian, who has missed five (5) or more unexcused school days (a school day shall be equal to two (2) or more class periods in the same day) in a school year. The meeting shall be to develop action steps to improve student attendance and shall be developed jointly by the Principal or designee, the student, and the student's parent/guardian. The parties may seek input from other relevant school staff and/or officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing, and nonprofit agencies.

Dropout Prevention

A student who has not graduated from high school and has been absent from school for ten (10) consecutive days of unexcused absence shall not be considered permanently removed from

school unless the Principal has sent notice to the student, and that student's parent/guardian. The notice shall be sent within five (5) days of the tenth consecutive day of absence and shall offer at least 2 dates and times within the next ten (10) days for an exit interview with the Superintendent or designee, the student, and the student's parent/guardian. The notice shall be in both English and the primary language of the home, if applicable. The notice shall include contact information for scheduling the exit interview and shall indicate the parties shall reach an agreement on the date/time of the interview within the ten (10) day timeframe. The timeframe may be extended at the request of the parent/guardian and no extension shall exceed 14 days.

The Superintendent or designee may proceed with any interview without a parent/guardian present, provided the Superintendent or designee has documented a good faith effort to include the parent/guardian.

The Superintendent or designee shall convene a team of school staff to participate in the exit interview and shall provide information to the student and, if applicable, the student's parent/guardian on the detrimental effects of early withdrawal from school and the alternative education programs and services available to the student.

[Reference: M.G.L. 76:1; 76:1A; 76: 1B; 76:16; 76: 18; 76:19; 76:20; JFADB, Homeless Students: Enrollment Rights and Services; JFABE, Educational Opportunities for Military Children; JFABF, Educational Opportunities for Children in Foster Care]

[Adopted: June 1998]

[Revised: October 2000]

[Revised: April 2003]

[Revised: May 2019]

[Revised: August 2020]

[Revised 2024]

HOME EDUCATION GUIDELINES

The Gardner School Committee recognizes the right of parents or guardians to educate their child(ren) at home. The School Committee appreciates the personal and cultural uniqueness of each family and desires to ensure that the process by which school officials approve and review home education programs is both lawful and equitable. Therefore, the School Committee establishes this home education policy.

Parent(s) or guardian(s) planning to undertake a home education program for their child(ren) between their sixth and sixteenth birthday shall inform the Superintendent by completing the *Notice of Intent to Pursue a Program of Home Education* form as approved by the School Committee prior to commencing a home education program.

Home education programs shall be considered in an equitable, objective, and timely manner. Factors that may be considered by the Superintendent or School Committee in deciding whether or not to approve a home education proposal are:

1. An overview of the educational program that is to include subjects and instructional materials. In order to meet the specific educational needs of their child(ren), the parent(s) or guardian(s) may adjust the material to achieve the goals of the educational program without further notification to the Superintendent's office.
2. A statement concerning instructional hours that will be followed.
3. A mutually agreeable method of assessment which corresponds to the type of educational program being followed and may include one or more of the following:
 - a. Daily logs, journals, progress reports, portfolios or dated work samples;
 - b. An independent report made by someone acceptable to both superintendent and parent(s) or guardian(s);
 - c. Standardized test results;
 - d. Consultation with the Superintendent or appropriate school principal;
 - e. Any other method agreed to by both Superintendent and home educator(s).

A student being educated in a home-based program within the district will have access to extra-curricular activities. Children participating in extra-curricular activities must meet all requirements regarding immunizations. Acceptance and completion of a homeschooling plan does not meet the requirements for a Gardner High School diploma.

The Superintendent has the responsibility for the development of the procedures and forms necessary for the implementation of this policy.

[Reference: M.G.L. 69:1D; 76:1]

[Adopted: April 2001]

[Revised: September 2003]
[Revised: June 2007]
[Reviewed: September 2016]
[Reviewed: May 2020]

FIELD TRIPS/NOT SCHOOL SPONSORED

Trip organizers must inform students and parents/guardians, in writing, if the trip is not sponsored by Gardner Public Schools. The School Committee will be notified that the trip is being organized. Trip organizers must also disseminate copies of this policy to parents/guardians of students attending the trip. If the school committee votes approval and the district disseminates information and collects funds, then it would be a school sponsored trip.

The presence of a staff member, or use of school facilities for meetings or trip promotion does not, by itself, constitute school sponsorship. There are many third party trip providers, especially for out of state and out of country trips, who will hire teachers to run their tours or rent facilities.

[Adopted: March 2001]

[Revised: September 2003]

[Reviewed: September 2013]

[Revised: December 2019]



Gardner Public Schools

Melissa Paine, *College & Career Readiness Program Coordinator*

www.gardnerk12.org 70 Waterford Street, Gardner, MA 01440 (978) 632-1000

College & Career Readiness Program Update to School Committee – May 13, 2024

Early College Programs:

- Current Early College students are currently wrapping up their semester and completing their final exams. We are very excited for these students for their accomplishments this semester and for persevering through several challenging and rigorous courses this semester. End of the year data and student progress will be shared next month when all final grades are closed and we receive transcripts from MWCC.
- We have had a very busy spring with recruitment for Early College next year. At this time we have 77 completed applications into the 24-25 ECA cohort. This is in addition to the 36 juniors we have set to return for the 24-25 cohort. At this time we are still working with MWCC to complete all placement criteria for students who need to meet additional requirements beyond GPA/academic history. The final 24-25 ECA cohort information, demographics, and retention rates will be included in the end of the year report.
- Summer Internship Program: Through the partnership with MassHire and WBLA (Work Based Learning Alliance) our Early College students will have the opportunity to complete paid internship experiences over the summer in a field of their interest. Applications are being accepted for internships through May 20th.
- Advocacy and Stakeholder Engagement:
 - Gardner Early Academy has had some exciting opportunities this spring to engage with stakeholders and share the impact and importance of our programs. At the end of February we were honored to host the Massachusetts Alliance for Early College and several schools across the state as a program spotlight. We had the opportunity to share about your program, best practices, tour the college campus, and have stakeholders meet with ECA students and faculty/staff through a panel discussion. The summary of the event is featured on the MA4EC website and can be accessed here:
 - [MWCC Site Visit Recap 032024.pdf](#)
 - In February, I also had the opportunity to participate in a focus group with the Department of Higher Education regarding college and career readiness and access across the state. This was a very productive conversation with DHE, and 6 Massachusetts Early College schools where we were able to share out program practices, student needs, challenges in k12, and how DHE can further support these programs and college access across the state
 - Lastly in March, a small group of our Early College students attended the State House with myself and our partners at MWCC for the State House Early College Advocacy Day. Our students had the opportunity to attend a State House tour, an Early College Briefing, and spent two hours meeting with our local delegates sharing their experiences and the impact of Early College. It was amazing to see our students meeting with politicians and engaging in high level conversations around college and career access.



Additional Programming & Updates

- CNA: As of May 1st, we had 7 students complete and pass our two Certified Nursing Assistant programs. All 7 students are currently getting scheduled for their state licensure exams.
- Additional Dual Enrollment Classes: Students are currently in finals for our additional dual enrollment offerings including our Electrical Systems1 Auto Technology course, Principals of Management (through FSU) and Eng 102 (through MWCC). Data on passing rates and impact will be shared in the June report.

Montachusett Vocational Partnership:

- Recruitment for our new Monty Tech partnership program MVP through parent information sessions, student information sessions, and staff information sessions was completed through March and April. Applications were open for 3 weeks in April. At this time we have filled all 10 seats for the electrical program and 10 seats for the carpentry program. Official acceptance letters have been sent to students and families. Students will complete a mini-orientation program in June to help them prepare for and transition into the program for the start of the school year.

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Gardner Public Schools

Catherine A. Goguen, Ed.D., Chief Academic Officer



May 2, 2024

Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Update

Title I:

The Title I Summer Program will take place this summer from Tuesday, July 9, 2024 through Thursday, August 1, 2024 at Gardner Elementary School. Students entering grades one, two, three and four will be invited into the program based on end of year ELA and Mathematics assessment results. The District will host the program each Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Students will have the opportunity to build on their knowledge and skills in ELA and Mathematics to narrow their learning gaps and to be better prepared as they enter the 2024-2025 school year. During the days and times that the Title I program is running, the District will also provide virtual English Language instruction and supports for English Learners in the program.

Title I:

Title I funding allocations for districts for the 2024-2025 school year will be announced by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education during mid-July. Early information has revealed that the District percent change in eligible children from FY24 to FY25 decreased by 11.4%. This information indicates that the District should be held harmless for the 2024-2025 school year which means that the level of funding could change in either direction by an amount no greater than 15% of 2023-2024 funding levels. Based on this projection, the District should be able to maintain all current initiatives and staffing.

District Improvement Plan (DIP) Update:

I presented an update of progress regarding the District Improvement Plan for 2021 through 2024 to the full School Committee at the September, 2023 School Committee Meeting. The plan outlined four (4) implementation benchmark tasks to be completed by June of 2024. I am happy to report progress on these tasks below as either completed or making progress.

16	MTSS Tier 2 academic systems/practices/supports fully implemented	MTSS District Team/BLT/ CPTs	Learning Walk/ Observation Data (Rigor Rubric)	June 2024	This item will be included in the new 2024-2027 DIP. We are currently still focused on Tier 1.
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17	MTSS Tier 3 SEL systems/practices/supports developed and implemented	Building SEL Teams/District Team	TFI Annual District SEL Reports	June 2024	Partially Complete and Ongoing. This item will be included in the new 2024-2027 DIP to continue the work.
18	Full implementation of revised reading program K-5	BLT/CPTs	Learning Walk/ Observation Data (Rigor Rubric)	June 2024	Complete and Ongoing
19	Full implementation and action plan for sustainability and fidelity of effective co-teaching practices	Karen Martin/ Building Admins.	Action Plan and Observation Tool for Inclusion/ Co-Teaching Practices	June 2024	Partially Complete and Ongoing - This item will be included in the new 2024-2027 DIP to continue the work.
20	Assess academic/SEL achievement and growth by grade level and by subgroups at least 5 times per year for adjustment of supports/practices	Building MTSS Teams	Linkit, DIBELs, SWIS, BESS, District Data SEL Tool	June 2024	Partially Complete and Ongoing – We are currently reviewing academic data 3 times per year. This item will be included in the new 2024-2027 DIP to continue the work.

As the current 2021-2024 District Improvement Plan ends in June of 2024, a full presentation of the 2024 – 2027 District Improvement Plan will be given in the fall of 2024 at the September School Committee meeting. It will be presented for a first read in September for vote of approval at the October full School Committee meeting.

Gardner Public Schools

Lori Simpson, Ed.D., *Director of Multilingual Learner Education*

www.gardnerk12.org 160 Elm Street, Gardner, MA 01440 (978) 632-1000



Multilingual Learners Update – May 2, 2024

ACCESS Assessment

ACCESS scores were released on April 26, 2024. There were 34 students in the Gardner Public Schools who achieved a score high enough to exit the ESL program. To put this into perspective, there were only 11 students in the district who exited the program during the 2022-2023 school year. This is an increase of 209%.

The department will be hosting an End of Year Celebration on May 21 in the GES cafeteria to celebrate these students and their families.

New Curriculum

New curriculum materials were purchased for GMS and GHS. After reviewing published materials using DESE's High Quality Instructional Material review process, the ESL curriculum team chose HMH English 3D. These curriculum materials have both a print and digital component. Teachers at both schools have begun to use the materials in class and most students have responded positively to the switch from the fully digital materials they were using previously.

Additionally, students in grade 1-12 will be using Summit K-12 for formative and summative assessments and goal progress monitoring, as well as preparing for ACCESS testing.

Parent Engagement

Families participated in Bingo for Books on February 29. ESL teachers and students participated in the Community Culture Night at GHS on April 10. Teachers ran a table where students and families could create Shrinky Dink flags of the country of their choice.

The ML Department will hold the final ELPAC meeting of the year on June 5 where parents/guardians can receive information about understanding their child's ACCESS scores.

Program Evaluation

We have been providing information for the required progress update in response to the DESE findings during the program evaluation conducted last year. Our final evidence submission date is June 30, 2024.

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Gardner Public Schools

Courtney Dunn, *Grants & Communications Manager*

www.gardnerk12.org

160 Elm Street, Gardner, MA 01440

(978) 632-1000

Grants & Communications Update to School Committee – May 13, 2024

Grants

FY24 Grants

The district has been awarded the following grants:

- FY24 FC213 Strategies to Reduce or Eliminate the Use of Time-Out Rooms (through 9/30/2024, in the amount of \$55,085) to support professional development, technology infrastructure and materials for staff to implement new strategies to reduce the use of time-out rooms.

Other

The district has submitted all FY23 ESSER I, II, and III Data Reporting as required by DESE and the Federal Government. These reports were due May 10, 2024 and covered all expenses incurred from July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. This is Gardner's final reporting period for ESSER I and ESSER II.

GPS is partnering with Attuned Education Partners to collect data and insights regarding the ongoing leadership development work being done through the Barr Grant. Attuned is conducting observations and focus groups and will discuss the findings with the District Strategy Team during the summer as the district plans to submit a proposal for further Barr Foundation funding in support of the North Central School Leadership Pipeline.

The district is currently in the midst of reviewing and finalizing all applicable grant closeout documentation for FY24.

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Gardner Public Schools

Joyce West, Director of Pupil Personnel Services

www.gardnerk12.org

130 Elm Street, Gardner MA 01440

(978) 630-4076

April 1, 2024

Report to the School Committee Special Education Updates

Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC):

On April 25, 2024, the SEPAC hosted an informational meeting and presentation conducted by the Special Education Department on the implementation of the NEW IEP which will be fully implemented in September of the 2024-25 school year.

Special Education Update:

The District has experienced a 10% increase in the number of students in the district with disabilities requiring special education services at the beginning of the 2023-24 school year. This increase can be attributed to the overall increase in student enrollment in Gardner. Using the October 2023 Student Data submitted to DESE our overall percentage of students with disabilities (SWD) has stayed the same even with the additional students enrolling in Gardner.

October SIMS Data	SY 2022-23	SY 2023-24
Total Students Enrolled	2398	2495
Total Number SWD	536	565
Percentage of SWD	22.3%	22.6%

This increase impacts the special education budget across all areas such as curriculum and instruction materials, supplies, services hours, evaluation needs, and staffing. Enrollment of students with disabilities continues to increase throughout this school year and it is anticipated next fall's trend data will reflect higher total numbers.

The District is also experiencing an increase in students receiving services in out of district (OOD) placements. Currently there are 29 enrolled students placed outside the District and an additional 6 students not enrolled that we maintain fiscal responsibility. Of the enrolled 29 students, 12 were new placements for this year.

Reasons for students being placed in OOD programs during the 2023-24 SY:

Reason for Placement 2023-24 SY	Number of Students
District Decision	8
Student Move-In with OOD services	2
LEA Assignment: DESE determined	2

The District has educational responsibility and oversight for all enrolled students regardless of where they receive services. Special Education Administrators maintain case management, facilitate student meetings, and conduct site visits of all schools. To date, these students are placed across 17 different school locations across the state and staff travel can take up to 2.5 hours one way for some students placed in residential facilities. A site visit for one student in an out of district school could take an entire day for a special education administrator.

The Assistant Director of Pupil Personnel Services Tasha Gamble, started the last week in April. As Ms. Gable acclimates to her role, efforts will focus specifically on special education programs and services, supporting administrators and teams, professional development needs, and compliance.