

## **Agenda School Committee Meeting 10.15.2024**

### **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**

**Tuesday, October 15, 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** Student Advisor, Nora Morris, Senior at GHS
- D. **Consent Agenda**
  - a. Approval of Minutes: Meeting, September 9, 2024
  - b. Warrant # 25-10, dated September 5, 2024, in the amount of \$426,759.42
  - c. Warrant # 25-11, dated September 12, 2024, in the amount of \$265,937.74
  - d. Warrant # 25-12, dated September 19, 2024, in the amount of \$105,140.62
  - e. Warrant # 25-13, dated September 26, 2024, in the amount of \$156,938.00
  - f. Donations
- E. **Subcommittee Report**
  - Finance Subcommittee
  - Policy Subcommittee
- F. **Student Advisory Board –**

## Agenda School Committee Meeting 10.15.2024

### G. Discussion Items:

#### New Business

#### Item #3642 First Reading of Policies (Information)

JICA – Student Dress Code

JJD – Athletic Policy

JJF – Student Activity Accounts

JJIF – Head Injuries and Concussions in Extracurricular Athletic Activities

JK – Student Conduct

JKAA – Physical Restraint Policy and Procedures

#### Item #3643 Second Reading of Policies (Vote Required)

AC - Non-Discrimination Policy

BHE - Use of Electronic Messaging by School Committee Members

EHAA – District Security Relating to Technology (for adoption)

EHB – Data and Records Retention (for adoption)

GBEE – Personnel Use of Technology (for adoption)

IJNDB – Acceptable Use of Technology

IJOA-E – Field Trip Approval Form

IJNDD Policy on Staff Use of Social Media (for adoption)

JIH – Searches and Interrogations

KDCB - District Website and Social Media (for adoption)

KDD – News Media Relationships/News Releases (for adoption)

#### Item #3644 Superintendent Goals (Vote Required)

#### Item# 3645 District Improvement Plan (Vote Required)

#### Item #3646 Curriculum Coordinator Update (Information)

#### Item# 3647 Director of Multilingual Learners (Information)

#### Item #3648 Grants Administrator Update (Information)

#### Item #3649 Special Education Update (Information)

#### Item #3650 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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City Council Chambers, City Hall, Gardner, MA 01440

**ORDER OF BUSINESS**

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- D. **Consent Agenda**
  - a. Approval of Minutes: September 9, 2024
  - b. Warrant # 25-10, dated September 5, 2024, in the amount of \$426,759.42  
Subcommittee recommends ratification of Warrant #25-10.
  - c. Warrant # 25-11, dated September 12, 2024, in the amount of \$265,937.74  
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  - f. Donations –
- E. **Subcommittee Report**
  - Finance Subcommittee
  - Policy Subcommittee
- F. **Student Advisory Board-**
- G. **Discussion Items:**
  - New Business**
  - Item #3642 First Reading of Policies (Information)**
    - JICA** – Student Dress Code
    - JJD** – Athletic Policy
    - JJF** – Student Activity Accounts
    - JJIF** – Head Injuries and Concussions in Extracurricular Athletic Activities
    - JK** – Student Conduct
    - JKAA** – Physical Restraint Policy and Procedures
  - Item #3643 Second Reading of Policies (Vote Required)**
    - AC** - Non-Discrimination Policy
    - BHE** - Use of Electronic Messaging by School Committee Members
    - EHAA** – District Security Relating to Technology (for adoption)

## **Briefing**

### **School Committee Meeting 10.15.2024**

- EHB** – Data and Records Retention (for adoption)
- GBEE** – Personnel Use of Technology (for adoption)
- IJNDB** – Acceptable Use of Technology
- IJOA-E** – Field Trip Approval Form
- IJNDD** Policy on Staff Use of Social Media (for adoption)
- JIH** – Searches and Interrogations
- KDCB** - District Website and Social Media (for adoption)
- KDD** – News Media Relationships/News Releases (for adoption)

- Item #3644** Superintendent Goals (**Vote Required**)
- Item# 3645** District Improvement Plan (**Vote Required**)
- Item #3646** Curriculum Coordinator Update (**Information**)
- Item# 3647** Director of Multilingual Learners (**Information**)
- Item #3648** Grants Administrator Update (**Presentation**)
- Item #3649** Special Education Update (**Information**)
- Item #3650** 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 – September 9, 2024**

Members present: Rachel Cormier  
Anne Hurst  
Shannon Ward-Leighton  
Jennifer Pelavin  
Robert Swartz

Members absent: Mayor Michael Nicholson  
John LaFreniere

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

## **Call to Order**

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.

## **Recognitions by the Superintendent**

There were no recognitions this evening.

## **Consent Agenda**

**Mr. Swartz moved to accept the Consent Agenda as presented:**

- **Acceptance of Minutes, June 10, 2024**
- **Accept Grant Funds on Grant Listing dated September 9, 2024 in the amount of \$2,279,748.00**
- **Ratification of the following Warrants as recommended by the Finance Subcommittee:**
  - **Warrant #24-50 dated 06/13/24 in the amount of \$247,981.35**
  - **Warrant #24-51 dated 06/20/24 in the amount of \$559,584.04**
  - **Warrant #24-52 dated 06/27/24 in the amount of \$276,699.75**

- **Warrant #24-53 dated 06/30/24 in the amount of \$677,110.31**
- **Warrant #24-54 dated 06/30/24 in the amount of \$33,454.48**
- **Warrant #24-55 dated 06/30/24 in the amount of \$195,711.62**
- **Warrant #25-04 dated 07/25/24 in the amount of \$570,262.55**
- **Warrant #25-05 dated 08/01/24 in the amount of \$77,809.76**
- **Warrant #25-06 dated 08/08/24 in the amount of \$145,582.67**
- **Warrant #25-07 dated 08/15/24 in the amount of \$922,543.17**
- **Warrant #25-08 dated 08/22/24 in the amount of \$761,296.05**
- **Warrant #25-09 dated 08/29/24 in the amount of \$57,592.90**

**Seconded by Mrs. Cormier.**

**Vote - so voted.**

**Mrs. Pelavin abstained from voting.**

### **SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **Facilities Subcommittee**

Mr. Swartz, Chairperson, reported that the Facilities Subcommittee met on September 4, 2024. Minutes of the meeting were presented.

Mr. Hawke presented a complete list of summer projects for all the school buildings, grounds and for the District. Completed and still in process items and those items scheduled or to be scheduled were listed.

#### **Finance Subcommittee**

Mrs. Pelavin, Vice Chairperson, reported that the Finance Subcommittee met on June 6, 2024. Minutes of the meeting were presented.

The Subcommittee reviewed the Expense Report and general questions about various line items were asked and answered. Dr. Pellegrino is going to work to reduce the cost of the Zoom licenses.

**Policy Subcommittee**

Mrs. Hurst, Chair of the Policy Subcommittee, reported that the Subcommittee met on June 5, 2024. Minutes of the meeting were presented.

Six policies were recommended to the full School Committee for a first reading and five policies for adoption. See Item #3632 – First Reading of Policies.

**Student Advisory Board**

The student representative has not yet been selected.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Item #3632 – First Reading of Policies**

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

- AC Non-Discrimination Policy
- BHE Use of Electronic Messaging by School Committee Members
- EHAA District Security Relating to Technology (for adoption)
- EHB Data and Records Retention (for adoption)
- GBEE Personnel Use of Technology (for adoption)
- IJNDB Acceptable Use of Technology
- IJOA-E Field Trip Approval Form
- IJNDD Policy on Staff Use of Social Media (for adoption)
- JIH Searches and Interrogations
- KDCB District Website and Social Media (for adoption)
- KDD News Media Relationships/News Releases (for adoption)

**Item #3633 - Second Reading of Policies**

**Mrs. Hurst moved that the District School Committee vote to approve the following policies as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee:**

- **IJOA Field Trips**
- **IMGA Service Animals in School (for adoption)**
- **JI Student Rights and Responsibilities**
- **JICFA Hazing/Prohibition of Hazing**
- **JIFCA-E Hazing**
- **JICH Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Use by Students Prohibited**
- **JIE Pregnant Students**

**Seconded by Mrs. Ward-Leighton.**

**Vote - so voted.**

**Mrs. Pelavin abstained from voting.**

Mrs. Hurst moved that the District School Committee vote to remove the following policy as the MASC has found it to be redundant or unnecessary:

- IJNDC Internet Publication

Seconded by Mrs. Ward-Leighton.

Vote - so voted.

Mrs. Pelavin abstained from voting.

**Item #3634 - Ratify Contract Unit A & Unit B**

Mr. Swartz moved that the District School Committee vote to ratify the Agreement between the Gardner School Committee and the Gardner Education Association - Unit A- for the period July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2027.

Seconded by Mrs. Hurst.

Vote - so voted.

Mrs. Pelavin abstained from voting.

Mrs. Hurst moved that the District School Committee vote to ratify the Agreement between the Gardner School Committee and the Gardner Education Association - Unit B- for the period July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2027.

Seconded by Mrs. Cormier.

Vote - so voted.

Mrs. Pelavin abstained from voting.

**Item #3635 - MASC Delegate**

Mrs. Hurst moved that the District School Committee vote to appoint Robert Swartz to represent the Gardner School Committee at the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) in November 2024.

Seconded by Mrs. Cormier.

Vote - so voted.

Mrs. Pelavin abstained from voting.

**Item #3636 - Superintendent's Goals**

Dr. Pellegrino presented his goals for FY25. All these Goals align with the District Improvement Plan.

- Fidelity to Common Planning Time (CPT) Expectations
- Fidelity to Tier 1 Core Instructional Practices

Student Learning

- Reduce academic equity gaps for students who are Multilingual or have Special Needs
- Students in Grades K-4 will be Reading on Grade Level

Professional Practice

- Participate in Lynch Leadership Academy District-level Supervisory Program



**Item #3637 - District Improvement Plan**

Dr. Goguen presented the Gardner Public Schools District Improvement Plan for 2024-2027. Mission - Gardner Public Schools will work side by side with our families to prepare students for their future success in college, career, and community endeavors. This will be done in a safe, caring, just and equitable environment. The Core Values are - Community, Appreciation, Responsibility and Excellence.

The Plan presented the Strategic Objectives with Action Steps. The Implementation Timeline and Outcomes by 2027 are also included. The Plan is updated every three years and will be voted on at the next School Committee meeting.

**Item #3638 – 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 #3639 - Grants Administrator Update**

The Grants & Communications Update was included in the members' packets. Mrs. Dunn, Grants & Communications Manager, was not present this evening.

**Item #3640 - 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 #3641– SEPAC Report**

Ms. West reported that the SEPAC Co-Chairs, Katie Donovan and Laurie Davis, are meeting with her and Ms. Gamble, Assistant Director, to prioritize needs and create a calendar of events to share with families and the community.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

Dr. Pellegrino reported that school opening was very smooth. He is pleased that the teachers and staff have a contract. This year he had all the schools do a Welcome Evening before school started. It gave families and students a chance to come visit the schools before the opening day of school.

**FINAL COMMENTS**

Mrs. Ward-Leighton welcomed everyone back for the new school year. The pre-school program was an opportunity for students to visit the schools and to meet their teachers.

Mrs. Hurst welcomed everyone back. She spoke about Suicide Prevention and that September is National Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. Suicide is a national health problem and currently ranks as the second leading cause of death for ages 10-44. "**A Friend Asks**" is a free smartphone app that can provide information.

Mr. Swartz welcomed everyone to the beginning of a new school year. He spoke about the question that will be on the November election ballot to drop MCAS as a graduation requirement. He thanked the members for appointing him to represent them at the MASC Annual Meeting.

Mrs. Cormier is happy students are back and that the opening went well.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Mr. Swartz moved to adjourn.**

**Seconded by Mrs. Ward-Leighton.**

**Mrs. Pelavin abstained from voting.**

**Vote – so voted.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm

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**Rachel Cormier**  
**Secretary**

T. Hillman, Recording Secretary

**GARDNER PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SYNOPSIS OF WARRANT**

WARRANT #: 25-10

WARRANT DAT 09/05/24

Location	Office / General / Custodial Supplies	Curriculum	Athletics	IT	Dues & Mem	Utilities	Facilities	TOTAL
High School		\$1,474.64	\$855.20	\$2,701.22	\$723.00		\$32,267.15	\$38,021.21
Middle School				\$1,443.03			\$25,158.43	\$26,601.46
Gardner Elementary School		\$440.70		\$2,722.32			\$42,502.48	\$45,665.50
GALT							\$3,538.53	\$3,538.53
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$1,915.34</b>	<b>\$855.20</b>	<b>\$6,866.57</b>	<b>\$723.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$103,466.59</b>	<b>\$113,826.70</b>

Location	Office Supplies	Dues & Mem	IT	Transportation	Tuition	Prof Ser	Legal	Facilities	Assessment	Carry over	TOTAL
Special Education	\$139.12		\$992.07	\$5,600.00	\$66,436.19	\$280.00	\$3,264.00		\$456.33		
Administration		\$500.00	\$24,885.26					\$5,461.15		\$664.00	
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>\$139.12</b>	<b>\$500.00</b>	<b>\$25,877.33</b>	<b>\$5,600.00</b>	<b>\$66,436.19</b>	<b>\$280.00</b>	<b>\$3,264.00</b>	<b>\$5,461.15</b>	<b>\$456.33</b>	<b>\$664.00</b>	<b>\$108,678.12</b>

Revolving	\$15,652.22
Grants	\$48,985.53
Student Activity Acct.	
Bond	\$139,616.85
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>\$204,254.60</b>

<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$426,759.42</b>
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**GARDNER PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SYNOPSIS OF WARRANT**

WARRANT #: 25-11

WARRANT DAT 09/12/24

Location	Office / General / Custodial Supplies	Curriculum	Nurse	IT	Dues & Mem	Utilities	Facilities	TOTAL
High School		\$801.84				\$1,122.43	\$7,921.46	\$9,845.73
Middle School		\$577.50				\$583.00	\$527.76	\$1,688.26
Gardner Elementary School	\$416.90	\$20,466.25	\$2,390.75			\$792.52	\$645.01	\$24,711.43
GALT						\$87.50		\$87.50
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>\$416.90</b>	<b>\$21,845.59</b>	<b>\$2,390.75</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$2,585.45</b>	<b>\$9,094.23</b>	<b>\$36,332.92</b>

Location	Office Supplies	Prof Dev	IT	Transportation	Tuition	Assessment	Utilities	Facilities	Dues & mem	Carry over	TOTAL
Special Education				\$40,767.06	\$72,496.00	\$8,256.20					
Administration	\$103.08	\$7,698.00	\$14,260.55				\$87.50	\$4,326.02	\$9,888.00	\$4,455.00	
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>\$103.08</b>	<b>\$7,698.00</b>	<b>\$14,260.55</b>	<b>\$40,767.06</b>	<b>\$72,496.00</b>	<b>\$8,256.20</b>	<b>\$87.50</b>	<b>\$4,326.02</b>	<b>\$9,888.00</b>	<b>\$4,455.00</b>	<b>\$162,337.41</b>

Revolving	\$150.00
Grants	\$3,152.41
Student Activity Acct.	
Bond	\$63,965.00
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>\$67,267.41</b>

<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$265,937.74</b>
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**GARDNER PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SYNOPSIS OF WARRANT**

WARRANT #: 25-12

WARRANT DAT 09/19/24

Location	Office / General / Custodial Supplies	Curriculum	Nurse	IT	Dues & Mem	Utilities	Facilities	TOTAL
High School		\$1,723.80				\$363.18	\$1,548.13	\$3,635.11
Middle School		\$259.37				\$1,724.88	\$1,819.40	\$3,803.65
Gardner Elementary School		\$291.56				\$1,471.33	\$3,056.32	\$4,819.21
GALT						\$149.00		\$149.00
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$2,274.73</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$3,708.39</b>	<b>\$6,423.85</b>	<b>\$12,406.97</b>

Location	Office Supplies	Prof Dev	IT	Transportation	Tuition	Prof Services	Utilities	Facilities	Dues & mem	Carry over	TOTAL
Special Education			\$738.08		\$34,081.31	\$42.00					
Administration	\$21.20		\$2,491.58	\$200.00			\$149.00	\$2,135.20	\$1,621.05		
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>\$21.20</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$3,229.66</b>	<b>\$200.00</b>	<b>\$34,081.31</b>	<b>\$42.00</b>	<b>\$149.00</b>	<b>\$2,135.20</b>	<b>\$1,621.05</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$41,479.42</b>

Revolving	\$290.00
Grants	\$50,964.23
Student Activity Acct.	
Bond	
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>\$51,254.23</b>

<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$105,140.62</b>
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**GARDNER PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SYNOPSIS OF WARRANT**

WARRANT #: 25-13

WARRANT DAT 09/26/24

Location	Office / General / Custodial Supplies	Curriculum	Athletics	IT	Field Trip	Prof Dev	Facilities	TOTAL
High School	\$1,157.46	\$1,337.50	\$75.00	\$699.00	\$600.00		\$8,616.54	\$12,485.50
Middle School	\$410.00	\$119.00					\$71.49	\$600.49
Gardner Elementary School		\$3,909.15					\$5,403.44	\$9,312.59
GALT						\$2,125.00	\$52.95	\$2,177.95
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>\$1,567.46</b>	<b>\$5,365.65</b>	<b>\$75.00</b>	<b>\$699.00</b>	<b>\$600.00</b>	<b>\$2,125.00</b>	<b>\$14,144.42</b>	<b>\$24,576.53</b>

Location	Office Supplies	Curriculum	IT	Assessment	Tuition	Pre-emp Exam	Legal	Facilities	Dues & mem	Carry over	TOTAL
Special Education				\$308.00	\$29,016.05		\$4,657.00				
Administration		\$7,799.65	\$4,060.49			\$7,449.00		\$356.73		\$93.21	
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$7,799.65</b>	<b>\$4,060.49</b>	<b>\$308.00</b>	<b>\$29,016.05</b>	<b>\$7,449.00</b>	<b>\$4,657.00</b>	<b>\$356.73</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$93.21</b>	<b>\$53,740.13</b>

Revolving	
Grants	\$78,621.34
Student Activity Acct.	
Bond	
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>\$78,621.34</b>

<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$156,938.00</b>
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# GARDNER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Policy  
Subcommittee  
Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, September 11, 2024  
4:30 PM  
Professional Development Room  
160 Elm Street, Gardner, MA  
01440

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

Absent:

Also in Attendance: Dr. Catherine Goguen, Chief Academic Officer; Ms. Courtney Dunn, Director of Grants and Communication; Ms. Rebecca McCaffrey, Director of School Services

Mrs. Hurst called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

A motion was made by Mrs. Cormier and seconded by Mrs. Hurst to approve the minutes of the June 5, 2024 Policy Meeting. So Moved.

The following policies were reviewed and it was determined that no changes were required. Therefore, the policies will be updated as "Reviewed September 2024":

- JFBB-1 – School Choice
- JJA – Student Organizations
- JJH – Student Travel
- JKD – Student Suspension/Expulsion

Policy JH – Student Absences and Excuses was placed on the agenda in error as it was revised and approved in May, 2024. Therefore, no discussion was necessary.

Policy KDC – Community Use of Digital Resources was tabled to the October Subcommittee Meeting for further review and discussion.

Policy AC – Non-Discrimination and Harassment was reviewed and discussed. Dr. Goguen stated that Title IX regulations were updated as of August 1, 2024 and this policy reflects all of the Title IX changes. Dr. Goguen recommended that the presented policy language replace the current Policy AC language in its entirety. A motion was made by Mrs. Cormier and seconded by Ms. Ward-Leighton to send the policy with the recommended changes to the October full School Committee Meeting for a first read.

The motion passed unanimously.

Policy JICA – Student Dress Code was reviewed and discussed. The Subcommittee recommended the removal of language referencing handbooks, and to replace gender specific language with the word “their”. A motion was made by Mrs. Cormier and seconded by Ms. Ward-Leighton to send the policy with recommended changes to the October full School Committee Meeting for a first read. The motion passed unanimously.

Policy JJD – Athletic Policy was reviewed and discussed. Athletic Director, Dan Forte submitted updates regarding participation expectations. The Subcommittee also recommended a minor change to language regarding user fees to reflect the ability to charge or not charge user fees. A motion was made by Ms. Ward-Leighton and seconded by Mrs. Cormier to send the policy with the recommended changes to the October full School Committee Meeting for a first read. The motion passed unanimously.

Policy JJF – Student Activity Accounts was reviewed and discussed. The Subcommittee recommended changes to the NOTE section removing language regarding regional school districts and districts with large numbers of schools. A motion was made by Ms. Ward-Leighton and seconded by Mrs. Cormier to send the policy with the recommended changes to the October full School Committee Meeting for a first read. The motion passed unanimously.

Policy JJIF- Head Injuries and Concussions in Extracurricular Athletic Activities Policy was reviewed and discussed. Ms. McCaffrey presented updated language regarding current practices and regulations. The Subcommittee also recommended the removal language redundant to other policies or state regulations. A motion was made by Mrs. Cormier and seconded by Ms. Ward-Leighton to send the policy with the recommended changes to the October full School Committee Meeting for a first read. The motion passed unanimously.

Policy JK – Student Conduct was reviewed and discussed. The Subcommittee recommended the removal of the first sentence of the Policy as it was redundant to the nature of the policy. A motion was made by Ms. Ward-Leighton and seconded by Mrs. Cormier to send the policy with the recommended changes to the October full School Committee Meeting for a first read. The motion passed unanimously.

Policy JKAA – Physical Restraint Policy and Procedures was reviewed and discussed. Ms. West submitted changes that reflect the most updated regulations for physical restraints. A motion was made by Mrs. Cormier and seconded by Ms. Ward-Leighton to send the policy with the recommended changes to the October full School Committee Meeting for a first read. The motion passed unanimously.

The next Policy Subcommittee meetings will occur in the Central Office Professional Development Room as follows:

- Wednesday, October 23, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, November 20, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.



- Wednesday, December 18, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.

A motion was made by Ms. Ward-Leighton and seconded by Mrs. Cormier to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

## STUDENT DRESS CODE

School officials shall not abridge the rights of students as to personal dress and appearance except if such officials determine that such personal dress and appearance promote alcohol, tobacco, drug use, violence, or violate reasonable standards of health, safety, cleanliness, and the orderly operation of the school.

Student dress will comply with requirements for health and safety, will not be destructive to school property, and will not interfere with the educational process. The administration is authorized to take action in instances where individual dress does not meet the stated requirements ~~in the respective school handbooks~~.

Student, faculty, or parent groups may recommend appropriate dress for school on special occasions. A student will not be prevented from attending school or a school function, or otherwise be discriminated against, so long as ~~his or her~~their dress and appearance meet the requirements set forth above.

[Reference: MGL Ch. 71, Section 83; 192nd General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts: Acts of 2022, Chapter 117]

[Adopted: June 1998]

[Revised: May 2003]

[Revised: December 2006]

[Reviewed: February 2014]

[Reviewed: December 2019]

[Revised: November 2022]

[Revised: 2024]

## ATHLETIC POLICY

Participation in interscholastic sports in the Gardner Public Schools is a privilege extended to those students who wish to represent our school and communities. The students who exercise this privilege of participation assume responsibility for their behavior. Student-athletes are expected to conduct themselves at all times in a manner that will reflect positively upon themselves, their school and their communities.

### **Rules for Student Athlete Participants**

In conjunction with this philosophy, the following regulations shall be adhered to by all student-athletes participating in any sport:

1. All student-athletes must abide by the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (M.I.A.A.) rules. A copy of these rules may be found on the M.I.A.A. web site ([www.miaa.net](http://www.miaa.net)).
2. The athletic department provides bus transportation or a suitable substitute to all away games, scrimmages and or clinics. All team members are expected to travel with their team. Exceptions to this rule will be considered when a written request is made to the athletic director by the athlete's parent(s) or guardian prior to the contest. The athletic director may give permission for an athlete to ride HOME from a game site with their parents.
3. MIAA rule 56 states all students who participate in athletics must have written proof of a current physical examination and updated immunization records signed by a physician and dated within thirteen (13) months of the official starting date for that sport for any athletic participation.
4. "Captain's practices" are not endorsed or recognized by Gardner Public schools.
5. From the first allowable day of fall practice, through the end of the academic year or final athletic competition of the year, whichever is later, a student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use or consume, possess, buy or sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol, any tobacco product, marijuana, steroids, or any controlled substance.
6. All rules and regulations contained in the Student Handbook and Athletic Handbook must be followed.
7. Students are expected to be present for all practices in order to be considered eligible for games. Should a student miss practice for an unexcused reason; they will be considered ineligible for game participation. This includes vacation weeks (Christmas, February, April), Holidays, and Fall preseason (please note that the fall season begins in mid-august and participation guidelines apply accordingly). Exceptions to these rules are subject to review by the Athletic Director.

6-8. Students who are interested in participating in a sport are expected to join the team within one week of the start of the season to be considered eligible to participate. Please note that in the fall, this policy is extended through the first week of school. Exceptions to these rules are subject to review by the Athletic Director.

**Do we remove the language for user fees given that we don't charge them, or keep the language in just in case they come back?**

### **Athletic User Fees**

Students who wish to participate in the Interscholastic Athletic Program at Gardner Public Schools ~~may~~ shall be required to pay an Athletic User Fee. The payment of the fee does not provide a student with any special consideration or entitlement with respect to playing time. Rather, fees collected in this manner are designed to help defray the operational costs of the Gardner Public Schools athletic budget.

### **Fees**

A User Fee will be assessed at the discretions of the Athletic Director, and will be communicated for each season, a maximum fee will be set. for families, and. any waivers will be given at the discretion of the Athletic Director.

In the event a student is unable to or decides not to participate in interscholastic athletics prior to the first contest for that sport, a full refund of the fee will be granted *provided that the Director of Athletics is notified prior to and up to the date of that contest.*

**Do we remove the language for user fees given that we don't charge them, or keep the language in just in case they come back?**

[Adopted: December 2010]

[Revised: April 2017]

[Revised: April 2021]

[Revised: 2024]

## **STUDENT ACTIVITY ACCOUNTS**

Student funds may be raised to finance the activities of authorized student organizations. Student activity funds are considered a part of the total fiscal operation of the District and are subject to policies established by the School Committee and the Office of the Superintendent. The funds shall be only for the benefit of students and managed in accordance with sound business practices, which include accepted budgetary, accounting, and internal control practices. The Superintendent shall ensure that, annually, all Principals and student organizations receive a copy of this policy as well as a copy of established procedures for control of receipts and expenditures that meet or exceed DESE guidelines.

In compliance with Massachusetts General Law, the School Committee:

1. Authorizes the Principals or designee to accept money for recognized student activity organizations, which currently exist, or as from time to time may be revised. All funds received for student activities must be deposited into the Student Activity Agency Account and no funds shall be directly deposited to a Student Activity Checking Account except from the Student Activity Agency Account. Standard receipt and disbursement form approval by the City Auditor shall be used.
2. Authorizes the Town or District Treasurer to establish and maintain a Student Activity Agency Account(s) which is to be audited as part of the Town's annual audit. The interest that is earned on such accounts shall be maintained in the Agency Account and distributed annually among the Student Activity Checking Accounts as directed by the procedures established by the Superintendent.
3. Authorizes Student Activity Checking Accounts for use by the Principals with specific maximum balances established annually for each school by vote of the School Committee. Payments for expenditures shall be made, whenever possible, by check, debit, or EFT directly from the Student Activity Checking Account. Reimbursements to personal credit card holders shall require the prior authorization of the Superintendent. Signatory authorization for Student Activity Checking Accounts shall be restricted to the Principal and (Superintendent or Treasurer). Student Activity Checking Accounts shall be audited annually in accordance with DESE guidelines.
4. Directs Principals to provide the Treasurer with a bond in an amount agreeable to the Treasurer.
5. Shall annually, prior to the start of each school year, vote to establish or change the maximum balance that may be on deposit in each Student Activity Checking Account.
  - Gardner High School \$30,000.00
  - Gardner Middle School \$30,000.00
  - Gardner Elementary School \$10,000.00
  - Gardner Academy \$10,000.00

For accounts with maximum balance limits that exceed \$25,000.00, the School Committee shall consider, in accordance with DESE guidelines, that an audit be conducted by an outside audit firm every three years

### **Graduating Class Funds**

Funds held on behalf of graduating classes are to be held within the Student Activity Checking Account for the High School. Such funds shall be designated by the class' Year of Graduation.

Once a class has graduated from High School, their funds should be removed from the High School Student Activity Checking Account no later than two years from the date of graduation. It is the responsibility of the class officers to arrange for these funds to be removed from the High School Activity Checking Account. When requested, and once all outstanding financial obligations of the graduating class have been met, the remaining balance should be removed from the fund by check transfer payable to the Class of XXXX. Checks payable to individual members of the graduating class are not permitted.

Should the class officers not request to have their funds removed from the Student Activity Checking Account within two years of their graduating, the funds will be forfeited by the class and transferred into the General Sub-fund portion of the Student Activity Agency Account. These funds will then be allocated by a vote of the School Committee.

Class officers should be given a copy of this policy during the course of their senior year to ensure their knowledge of their obligations to perform under this policy.

### **Inactive Student Activities**

When a student activity ceases to be active for a period of three years or more the Principal or other authorized administrator shall require the following actions:

1. obtain written notice from the faculty advisor or student officer that the activity will cease to be a viable account. If unable to obtain such notification the Principal shall request action to close the account from the School Committee.
2. Identify in writing all assets of the student activity. The disposition of any assets shall be determined by the School Committee and may not benefit specific individuals.
3. Annually notify all students of the required actions if an activity ceases to exist.

### **Student Activity Deficits**

Individual student activity accounts are not permitted to be in a deficit position. Whenever a deficit exists that is not the result of timing, the Superintendent shall recommend remedial action to the School Committee in a timely manner.

SOURCE: MASC - Updated 2021

LEGAL REFS: MGL [71:47](#)

CROSS REFS: [JJA](#), Student Organizations

DIE, Audits

NOTE: DESE audit guidelines for Student Activity Checking Accounts require an annual audit. ~~In regional districts these accounts may be a part of the annual audit by a third party auditor.~~ In municipal districts the audits may be conducted by a district or municipal employee but not by the Principal, Treasurer, Superintendent, or any authorized signatory on the accounts. ~~Districts with large numbers of schools may rotate the schools through the audit process.~~

[Adopt: November 2022]

[Revised: 2024]

## HEAD INJURIES AND CONCUSSIONS IN EXTRACURRICULAR ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES <sup>1</sup>POLICY

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Gardner Public Schools seeks to prevent concussion and provide a safe return to activity for all students after injury, particularly after a head injury. In order to effectively and consistently manage these injuries, the Athletic Department abides by the following procedures that have been developed to aid in ensuring that concussed athletes are identified, treated and referred appropriately, receive appropriate follow-up medical care during the school day, including academic assistance, and are fully recovered prior to returning to athletic activity.

### **Person Responsible for Implementation of School Policy and Procedures**

The Gardner School District has designated its Athletic Director to oversee the implementation of policies and protocols governing the prevention and management of sports-related head injuries. In addition, the AD will be responsible for:

- (1) Supporting and enforcing the protocols, documentation, required training and reporting
- (2) Assuring that all documentation is in place
- (3) Reviewing, updating and implementing policy every two years and including updates in annual training and student and parent handbooks.

### **Annual Training Requirement**

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires annual safety training on sports related concussion, including second impact syndrome, for coaches, certified athletic trainers, trainers, volunteers, school nurses, school and team physicians, athletic directors, directors responsible for a school marching band whether employed by a school or school district or serving as a volunteer, parent or legal guardian of a child who participates in an extracurricular athletic activity and student who participates in an extracurricular athletic activity. At the Gardner Public Schools, the above-named school personnel are required to complete free, on-line training (either the National Federation of High Schools or the CDC's Heads Up Concussion training) or attend a training event organized by the athletic department and approved by the Department of Public Health. For student athletes and their parents, this training can be provided in the regular pre-season meetings where written materials are also available. Attendance can be taken at such meetings and the attendance roster serves as a record of verification for participants who are trained. If parents or students are unable to attend this training, they must complete one of the

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<sup>1</sup> Extracurricular Athletic Activity means an organized school sponsored athletic activity generally occurring outside of school instructional hours under the direction of a coach, athletic director or marching band leader including, but not limited to, Alpine and Nordic skiing and snowboarding, baseball, basketball, cheer leading, cross country track, fencing, field hockey, football, golf, gymnastics, horseback riding, ice hockey, lacrosse, marching band, rifle, rugby, soccer, skating, softball, squash, swimming and diving, tennis, track (indoor and outdoor), ultimate Frisbee, volleyball, water polo, and wrestling. All interscholastic athletics are deemed to be extracurricular athletic activities.



approved on-line trainings and submit a certificate of completion to the athletic director to meet this participation requirement. Alternatively, parents may review DPH-approved written materials (provided by the athletic department) and sign a verification form that they have read and understood these materials.

### **Documentation of Physical Exam**

Each student athlete must have a physical examination on an annual basis, i.e. within 12 or 13 months of the student's last physical examination (to allow for insurance coverage of the examination). Any student athlete who does not have a current physical on file with the nurse prior to the first day of try-outs/practice, is not eligible until a new/updated physical is submitted. If the student's physical examination expires during the sports season, they must have an updated physical examination to continue to participate in the sports season. All physical forms are to be turned in to the nurse, not the coach.

### **Pre-Participation Head Injury Reporting Form, Submission and Review**

The Massachusetts concussion law requires athletes and their parents to inform their coaches about prior head injuries at the beginning of each sports season. This reporting is done via the **Pre-Participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting for Extracurricular Activities** form and should be completed by the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and the student. It must be submitted to the Athletic Director **prior to the start of each season a student plans to participate in an extracurricular athletic activity.**

**Until the pre-participation form is completed and signed by the parent/guardian and student and returned to the Athletic Director prior to the start of each sports season, the student cannot participate in the extracurricular sports activity.**

### **Medical/Nursing Review of Pre-Participation Forms**

At the start of each sports season, the Athletic Director will review all pre-participation forms and forward to the school nurse those forms indicating a history of head injury. The school nurse will be responsible for:

- reviewing or having the school physician review completed pre-participation forms
- addressing any questions raised by the Athletic Director
- communicating with the coach regarding the student's concussion history and discussing concerns
- following up with parents and students as needed prior to the student's participation in extracurricular athletic activities.

### **Medical/Nursing Review of Reports of Head Injury During the Season**

The following procedures will be followed when an athlete receives a head injury:

- Athlete is removed from the contest or practice.
- **Athletic Trainer** completes the **Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form**
- The **Athletic Trainer** will give **Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form** to Athletic Director.

- Athletic **Trainer** will also give a copy of the **Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form to the** notify school nurse ~~who will review the Report of Head Injury form.~~
- School nurse will contact athlete's teachers, guidance counselor, and principal.

### **Procedure for Reporting Head Injuries to School Nurse and/or Certified Athletic Trainer**

Head injuries or suspected concussions (after a bump, blow or jolt to the head or body) sustained during extracurricular athletic activities must be reported by the coach as soon as possible to the athletic trainer. The athletic trainer will then report to the athletic director and school nurse. ~~school nurse and the athletic director.~~ **Athletes who experience signs or symptoms of a concussion should not be allowed to return to play.**

### **Removing Athletes From Play and Medical Evaluation**

In the event that a student athlete receives a head injury, or is suspected of having a head injury, the student will be removed from play and will not be returned to play or practice that day. The coach should report the head injury to the athletic director, **athletic trainer**, or school nurse, if available, as soon as possible, for medical assessment and management and for coordination of home instructions and follow-up care. The athletic director or school nurse will be responsible for contacting the athlete's parents and providing follow-up instructions. If the athlete is injured at an away event or if the athletic director or school nurse is unavailable, the coaching staff are responsible for notifying the athlete's parents of the injury and, if warranted, call for emergency care. Coaches should seek assistance from the host site athletic trainer, coach or school nurse if at an away contest.

If the athlete is able to be sent home (rather than directly to MD):

- a. the coach or athletic director will ensure that the athlete will be with a responsible adult, who is capable of monitoring the athlete and understanding the home care instructions, before allowing the athlete to go home;
- b. the coach or athletic director will continue efforts to reach the parents;
- c. if there is any question about the status of the athlete, or if the athlete is not able to be monitored appropriately, the athlete will be referred to the emergency department for evaluation. A coach or athletic director will accompany the athlete and remain with the athlete until the parents arrive, and
- d. athletes with suspected head injuries will not be allowed to drive home.

### **Medical Clearance and Return to Play**

The **Athletic Trainer**, if available, should be involved. **Medical clearance is meant to be provided AFTER a student has completed his or her graduated return to play plan.**

The medical provider and/or athletic trainer giving medical clearance for returning to play must use the MDPH Medical Clearance Form, "**Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form**" available on the MDPH website ([www.mass.gov/dph/injury](http://www.mass.gov/dph/injury)). The Medical Clearance Form contains more detailed information than a simple statement that the student is ready to return to athletics. This additional information is necessary as school staff monitor the student returning from a concussion. Athletic staff may consider providing this form

to the athlete to share with the physician. The completed forms should be kept in the student's medical record in the school health office as well as athletic department office.

### **Development and Implementation of Post Concussion Graduated Reentry Plans**

It is required that all students returning to school and athletics after a concussion have a written plan for reentry. School staff, such as teachers, school nurses, counselors, administrators, speech-language pathologists, coaches and others should work together to develop and implement this plan in coordination with the student, their parent/guardian and the primary care provider.

Graduated return to academic plans are based on the stages of recovery framework that takes a student from rest, to gradual return to full participation in academic activities.

#### **Stages of Recovery:<sup>2</sup>**

The stages of recovery are a framework designed through a collaborative effort by health care professionals. The purpose of this framework is to create common language that will help guide students, families, school personnel and health professionals through the recuperation process. Placement in stages is based on assessment of the student's medical condition by a licensed medical professional and accompanied by written orders.

Red Stage (Usually 2 – 4 days, but could last weeks)

1. Rest
2. Students typically do not attend school

Orange Stage

1. Rest
2. Attend school half to full days
3. Avoid school bus and heavy backpacks
4. Work with designated educational personnel regarding school accommodations
5. No tests in school
6. No sports, band, chorus, physical education or outdoor recess

Yellow Stage

1. Attend school full-time if possible
2. Students and families work with teachers regarding homework deadlines (complete as much as possible)
3. See school nurse for pain management and/or rest if needed
4. Limit one quiz/test per day (untimed testing is recommended)
5. Work in 15 minute blocks
6. No sports
7. Licensed medical professional will make decisions regarding band, chorus, physical education and outdoor recess (elementary level) based on medical assessment

Green Stage

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<sup>2</sup> Based on the work of Dr. Janet Kent of South Shore Hospital; see [http://www.southshorehospital.org/yhc/HeadSmart\\_Handbook.pdf](http://www.southshorehospital.org/yhc/HeadSmart_Handbook.pdf)

1. Attend school full time
2. Resume normal activities
3. Resume sports once school work is back on track, student is symptom-free, and has been cleared by a licensed medical professional

Graduated return to athletic plans will begin only after a student has returned to full participation in academics and is completely symptom free at rest.

### **Return to Play Schedule**

When a student athlete is completely symptom free at rest and has the approval of a medical professional, she/he may begin a graduated return to play protocol. The return to play schedule for the student should proceed as follows:

Step 1: Light exercise, including walking or riding an exercise bike. No weight-lifting.

Step 2: Aerobic exercise such as running in the gym or on the field. No helmet or other equipment.

Step 3: Non-contact training drills in full equipment. Weight-training can begin.

Step 4: Full contact controlled training followed by practice or training.

Step 5: Full contact game play.

The written reentry plans will be signed by the student, their parent/guardian, the school nurse, the guidance counselor, principal, athletic director and coach so that all parties are in agreement as to the plan for reentry. Frequent or periodic assessments by the school personnel including the nurse, athletic director, school physician or team physician as appropriate may be necessary until full return to classroom activities and extracurricular athletic activities are authorized by medical staff. A copy of the plan will be kept in the student's medical record.

### **Providing Information, Forms and Materials to Parents and Athletes.**

#### **a. Annual Training Requirement**

For student athletes and their parents, this training can be provided in the regular pre-season meetings where written materials are also available. Attendance can be taken at such meetings and the attendance roster serves as a record of verification for participants who are trained. If parents or students are unable to attend this training, they must complete one of the approved on-line trainings and submit a certificate of completion to the athletic director to meet this participation requirement. Alternatively, parents may review DPH-approved written materials (provided by the athletic department) and sign a verification form that they have read and understood these materials.

#### **b. Procedure for the School to Notify Parents When an Athlete Has Been Removed From Play for a Head Injury or Suspected Concussion**

The athletic director, athletic trainer, or school nurse/~~physician~~ will be responsible for contacting the athlete's parents and providing follow-up instructions. If the athlete is injured at an away event or if the athletic director or school nurse is unavailable, the coaching staff are responsible for notifying the athlete's parents of the injury and, if warranted, call for emergency care. The student should be sent home with the "Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form" as well as the "Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form".

c. Protocol for Parents/Students to Obtain Medical Clearance for Return to Play and Academics After a Diagnosed Concussion (see also #8 above)

Parents and students are oriented about the protocol on obtaining medical clearance for return to play after a diagnosed concussion. In addition, our athletic handbook under the section for “Sports Concussion” includes our policies regarding sports concussion including obtaining medical clearance after a concussion. The website of the school at [www.gardnerk12.org](http://www.gardnerk12.org) under the Athletic Department tab has a page on sports concussion that also details these protocols. Finally, parents and students can always call the athletic department office at 978-632-1600, ext. 1800 or the school nurse’s office at 978-632-3934 (high school) or 978-632-3324 (middle school) to get further clarification or ask questions. No student will be allowed to return to play until the medical clearance form is signed by authorized medical professional, submitted and reviewed by the school nurse.

d. Parent’s Responsibility for Completion of the Pre-Participation Form

At the schools’ annual meeting in the fall, parents and students are oriented about the requirement to submit the pre-participation form, signed by both student and parent, which provides a comprehensive history with up-to-date information relative to concussion history. It is the parent’s responsibility to tell all the student’s coaches and school nurse if the student has ever had a concussion via this form. In addition, our athletic handbook under the section for “Sports Concussion” includes our policies regarding sports concussion including the requirement to complete the pre-participation form by student and parent at the start of every sports season. The website for the school at [www.gardnerk12.org](http://www.gardnerk12.org) under the Athletic Department tab has a page on sports concussion that also details these protocols. Finally, parents and students can always call the athletic department office at 978-632-1600, ext. 1800 or the school nurse’s office at 978-632-3934 (high school) or 978-632-3324 (middle school) to get further clarification or ask questions. These forms should be submitted to the athletic department office which copies and reviews them and then forwards them to the school nurse’s office for review. No student will be allowed to participate in athletic activities until the pre-participation form is signed, submitted by parent and student and reviewed by designated staff annually.

e. Parent’s Responsibility for Completion of the Report of a Head Injury Form

At the schools’ annual meeting in the fall, parents and students are oriented about the requirement to submit all forms including the Report of Head Injury Form signed by parent if their child has a head injury related to athletic activities. In addition, our athletic handbook under the section for “Sports Concussion” includes our policies regarding sports concussion including the requirement to complete and sign. The website for the school at [www.gardnerk12.org](http://www.gardnerk12.org) under the Athletic Department tab has a page on sports concussion that also details these protocols. Finally, parents and students can always call the athletic department office at 978-632-1600, ext. 1800 or the school nurse’s office at 978-632-3934 (high school) or 978-632-3324 (middle school) to get further clarification or ask questions. These forms should be submitted to the athletic department office which copies and reviews them and then forwards them to the school nurse’s office for review. No student will be allowed to participate in athletic activities until all required forms including the report of head injury form has been signed, submitted by parent and student and reviewed by school nursing and athletic department staff.

### **Inclusion of Sport-Related Head Injury Policy in the Student and Parent Handbook**

We have recently modified our student, parent handbook, and athletic handbook that are distributed at the beginning of the school year and now contain:

- Most recent Concussion information fact sheet
- Links and information about annual training
- Gardner Public Schools' protocol/policies on sports-related head injuries
- **Pre-participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form for Extracurricular Activities, Report of Head Injury During Sports Season report form, and Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization forms.**

Our handbooks with information on sports-related concussions are updated every other year and are available at the school's website or within the school's website under the Athletic Department directory. Hard copies of these manuals are also available at the Athletic Director's Office at 978-632-1600, ext. 1800 and/or School Principal's Office at 978-632-1600 (high school) or 978-632-1603 (middle school).

### **Communicating With Parents With Limited English Proficiency**

Because of limited English skills, some parents may be unable to communicate with school personnel and may feel isolated from the school community. We make every attempt to communicate effectively with parents with limited English proficiency. We have translated school policies on head injury and concussions in extracurricular athletic activities and the on-line training classes and the mandated forms ~~into Spanish and Portuguese. (should we consider other languages?)~~ These documents are listed on the Gardner High School's Athletic Department website at [www.gardnerk12.org](http://www.gardnerk12.org) in these languages. We will translate other materials as requested. In the event a student receives a concussion or is suspected of having a concussion, the Athletic Director's office should notify the parent in the appropriate language. Interpreters are available by contacting the Principal's office.

### **Outreach to Parents for Form and Training Completion**

Student athletes will not be permitted to participate in extracurricular sport until both the parent and student have completed and returned the signed Pre-Participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form for Extracurricular Activities *before the start of each sports season*. In the event the school has not received the Pre-Participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form or other required forms, including documentation of an annual physical examination and documentation that both the student athlete and their parent/guardian have completed the required annual training, we will make three attempts to contact parent using the school's typical communication methods to parents (email, snail mail, telephone, etc.). The student athlete will not be allowed to play or practice until the appropriate required signed and completed forms are returned to the Athletic Department.

### **Sharing Concussion-Related Health Information**

Informal collaboration occurs on a temporary, as-needed basis for information exchange, as when the school nurse informs (while adhering to protocols for confidentiality) the physical education teacher that a particular student may not participate in athletic activities because of a recent injury. There may be circumstances in which there is a need to share information in the student health

record with authorized school personnel – either to enhance the educational progress of the student or protect his/her safety or well-being. For example, staff may need to be alerted to signs or symptoms of a medical problem on a need to know basis and offered a course of action. This type of disclosure should be made only to those authorized school personnel who work *directly with* the student in an instructive (academic or athletic), administrative, or diagnostic capacity. Finally, authorized school personnel should be instructed not to re-disclose the information.

~~If there is any question about the sensitivity of the information, the school nurse should seek the permission of the parent/guardian and student, if appropriate, prior to disclosure to authorized school personnel. Ultimately, however, federal regulations permit information in the student health record to be seen by authorized school personnel on a need to know basis, and the basis for such sharing seems even more compelling when necessary to protect the well-being or safety of the student.~~

~~There may be times when a school nurse has a legal obligation to disclose health or related information to protect a student's health or safety. Public policy requires the protection of a patient's right to privacy by medical professionals, unless there is an immediate threat or serious harm to the student or others. This statement sounds like HIPPA and we are covered under FERPA. I would take this statement out and maybe the whole paragraph because its redundant to what the previous paragraph states.~~

### **Requirement that Coaches, Athletic Trainers, Trainers and Volunteers**

#### **Teach Strategies That Minimize Sports-Related Head Injury and Prohibit Dangerous Play**

Coaches of Gardner Public Schools are expected to be current with best practices in their sport that reduce the likelihood of head injury. In addition, coaches are prohibited from teaching or promoting dangerous practices such as using a helmet as a weapon. It is expected that all coaches and athletic department staff teach techniques that minimize sports injury and/or concussion such as proper fitting, certified (especially helmets) equipment and protective equipment.

### **Penalties**

Gardner Public Schools takes the safety of student athletes seriously. All members of the school staff are expected to follow these policies and protocols to support the health and safety of student athletes. The underlying philosophy of these policies is “when in doubt, sit them out”. Failure to comply with the letter or spirit of these policies could result in progressive discipline for staff and/or forfeiture of games. If students or parents have concerns that the policies are being violated, they should contact the Principal and also place their complaint in writing with a request for resolution.

[Adopted: 2/2012]

[Revised: April 2016]

[Reviewed: November 2020]

[Revised: 2024]

## STUDENT CONDUCT

~~Discipline is the dual responsibility of the home and school.~~

The Massachusetts General Laws require the school committee to adopt written policies, rules and regulations not inconsistent with law, which may relate to study, discipline, conduct, safety and welfare of all students, or any classification thereof, enrolled in the public schools of the District.

The implementation of the general rules of conduct is the responsibility of the principal and the professional staff of the building. In order to do this, each school staff in the District shall develop specific rules, not inconsistent with the law nor in conflict with District policy. These building rules shall be an extension of the District policies by being more specific as they relate to the individual schools.

The purpose of disciplinary action is to restore acceptable behavior. When disciplinary action is necessary, it shall be administered with fairness and shall relate to the individual needs and the individual circumstances.

Students violating any of the policies on student conduct and control will be subject to disciplinary action. The degree, frequency, and circumstances surrounding each incident shall determine the method used in enforcing these policies. Most of the situations which require disciplinary action can be resolved within the confines of the classroom or as they occur by reasonable but firm reprimand, and/or by teacher conferences with the student and/or parents or guardians.

If a situation should arise in which there is no applicable written policy, the staff member shall be expected to exercise reasonable and professional judgment.

[Reference: M.G.L. 71:37H; 71:37L; M.G.L. Chapter 76, S. 16 and 17; Chapter 380 of the Acts of 1993; Massachusetts Department of Education, Advisory Opinion on Student Discipline, January 27, 1994]

[Adopted: March 1999]

[Reviewed: June 2003]

[Reviewed: June 2014]

[Revised: February 2021]

[Revised: 2024]



## PHYSICAL RESTRAINT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Physical restraint shall mean direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student's freedom of movement. Physical restraint does not include: brief physical contact to promote student safety, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing comfort, or a physical escort.

Physical restraint shall be considered an emergency procedure of last resort and shall only be used when a student's behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm to self or others and the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions, or such interventions are deemed to be inappropriate under the circumstances.

In the event that physical restraint is required to protect the safety of school community members, the Gardner School District has enacted the following policy and procedures to ensure the proper use of restraint and to prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of restraint.

The use of time-out is a behavior support strategy in which a student temporarily separates from the learning activity or the classroom either by choice or direction from staff, for the purpose of calming. During a time-out the student must be continuously observed by a staff member. -Staff shall be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times. The space used for time-outs must be clean, safe, sanitary, and appropriate for the purposes of calming. Time-out shall cease as soon as the student has calmed. A student will not remain in time-out for more than 30 minutes (based on continued agitation) without principal approval. ~~The Staff will seek the principal's approval should a student require a time out lasting more than 30 minutes due to continued agitation.~~

These procedures shall be annually reviewed, provided to school staff, and made available to parents of enrolled students.

**NOTE:** None of the foregoing paragraph or the policy/procedures that follow, precludes any teacher, employee or agent of the Gardner School District from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

### DEFINITIONS

Consent: agreement by a parent who has been fully informed of all information relevant to the activity for which agreement is sought, in his or her native language or other mode of communication, that the parent understands and agrees in writing to carrying out of the activity, and understands that the agreement is voluntary and may be revoked at any time. The agreement describes the activity and lists the records (if any) which will be released and to whom. In seeking parental consent, a public education program shall not condition admission or continued enrollment upon agreement to the proposed use of any restraint.

*Mechanical Restraint:* the use of any physical device or equipment to restrict a student's freedom of movement. The term does not include devices implemented by trained school personnel, or utilized by a student that have been prescribed by an appropriate medical or related services professional, and are used for the specific and approved positioning or protective purposes for which such devices were designed. Examples of such devices include: adaptive devices or mechanical supports used to achieve proper body position, balance, or alignment to allow greater freedom of mobility than would be possible without the use of such devices or mechanical supports; vehicle safety restraints when used as intended during the transport of a student in a moving vehicle; restraints for medical immobilization; or orthopedically prescribed devices that permit a student to participate in activities without risk of harm.

*Medication Restraint:* the administration of medication for the purpose of temporarily controlling behavior. Medication prescribed by a licensed physician and authorized by the parent for administration in the school setting is not medication restraint.

*Physical Escort:* a temporary touching or holding, without the use of force, of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, or back for the purpose of inducing a student who is agitated to walk to a safe location.

*Physical Restraint:* direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student's freedom of movement. Physical restraint does not include: brief physical contact to promote student safety, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing comfort, or a physical escort.

*Principal:* instructional leader of a public school education program or his or her designee.

*Prone Restraint:* a physical restraint in which a student is placed face down on the floor or another surface, and physical pressure is applied to the student's body to keep the student in the face-down position.

*Seclusion:* involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving. Seclusion does not include a time-out as defined below.

*Time-Out:* a behavioral support strategy, developed pursuant to 603 CMR 46.04(1), in which a student temporarily separates from the learning activity or the classroom, either by choice or by direction from staff, for the purpose of calming. During time-out, a student must be continuously observed by a staff member. Staff shall be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times. The space used for time-out must be clean, safe, sanitary, and appropriate for the purpose of calming. Time-out shall cease as soon as the student has calmed.

## 1. Staff Training

- A. All staff/faculty will receive training regarding the school's restraint policy within the first month of each school year, and employees hired after the school year begins will

receive training within one month of starting their employment. Each principal or director shall determine a time and method to provide all program staff with training regarding the program's restraint prevention and behavior support policy and requirements when restraint is used.

- B. Required training for all staff will include review of the following:
1. The program's restraint prevention and behavior support policy and procedures, including use of time-out as a behavior support strategy distinct from seclusion;
  2. Interventions which may preclude the need for restraint, including de-escalation of problematic behaviors; and other alternatives to restraint in emergency circumstances;
  3. Types of restraints and related safety considerations, including information regarding the increased risk of injury to a student when an any restraint is used; in particular, a restraint of extended duration;
  4. Administering physical restraint in accordance with known medical or psychological limitations known or suspected trauma history, and/or behavioral intervention plans applicable to an individual student; and
  5. Identification of program staff who have received in-depth training (as set forth below in section C) in the use of physical restraint.
  6. The role of the student, family, and staff in preventing restraint
- C. Designated staff members shall participate in at least sixteen hours of in-depth training in the use of physical restraint, with at least one refresher training occurring annually thereafter
1. At the beginning of the school year, the principal will identify those staff who will participate in in-depth training and who will then be authorized to serve as school-wide resources to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint.
  2. In-depth training will include:
    - Appropriate procedures for preventing the need for physical restraint, including the de-escalation of problematic behavior, relationship building, and use of alternatives to restraint.
    - A description and identification of specific dangerous behaviors on the part of a student that may indicate the need for physical restraint and methods for evaluating the risk of harm in individual situations in order to determine whether the use of restraint is warranted;
    - The simulated experience of administering and receiving physical restraint, instruction regarding the effect(s) on the person restrained, including instruction on monitoring physical signs of distress and obtaining medical assistance;
    - Instruction regarding documentation and reporting requirements and investigation of injuries and complaints; and
    - Demonstration by participants of proficiency in administering physical restraint; and

- Instruction regarding the impact of physical restraint on the student and family, recognizing the act of restraint has impact, including but not limited to psychological, physiological, and social-emotional effects
- D. Staff/faculty will review any behavior plans pertaining to special techniques for identified students.
- E. Staff/ faculty will review the uses of time-out as a behavioral strategy for applicable programs. Staff/faculty will review the program procedure for obtaining principal approval of time-out for more than 30 minutes based upon a student's continuing agitation.
2. Administration of physical restraint
- A. Physical restraint shall be used only in emergency situations of last resort, after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution. Staff will use physical restraint with two goals in mind:
1. To administer a physical restraint only when needed to protect a student and/or a member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm; and
  - B. To prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint. Physical restraint is prohibited in the following circumstances:
    1. As a means of discipline or punishment;
    2. As a response to property destruction, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a school rule or staff directive, or verbal threats that do not constitute a threat of imminent, serious, physical harm. However, if the property destruction or the refusal to comply with a school rule or staff directive could escalate into, or could itself lead to serious, imminent harm to the student or to others, physical restraint is appropriate.
    3. As a standard response for any individual student. No written behavior plan or individualized education program (IEP) may include use of physical restraint as a standard response to any behavior
    4. When the student cannot be safely restrained because it is medically contraindicated for reasons including, but not limited to, asthma, seizures, a cardiac condition, obesity, bronchitis, communication-related disabilities, or risk of vomiting
- C. Only school personnel who have received required training or in-depth training pursuant to this policy shall administer physical restraint on students with, whenever possible, one adult witness who does not participate in the restraint. The training requirements, however, shall not preclude a teacher, employee or agent of the school from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.
- D. Physical restraint shall be limited to the amount of force necessary to protect a student or others from, physical injury or harm.

- E. A person administering physical restraint shall use the safest method available and appropriate to the situation. Restraints, including prone restraints otherwise permitted under 603 CMR 46.03(1)(b) may only be administered by a staff member who has received in-depth training as specified in this policy and, when in the judgment of the trained staff member, such method is required to provide safety for the student or others.
  - F. Physical restraint shall be discontinued as soon as the student is no longer an immediate danger to himself or others, or the student indicates that he or she cannot breathe, or if the student is observed to be in severe distress, such as having difficulty breathing, or sustained or prolonged crying or coughing.
  - G. Additional safety requirements:
    - 1. No restraint shall be administered in such a way that the student is prevented from breathing or speaking. A staff member will continuously monitor the physical status of the student, including skin temperature color and respiration, during the restraint.
    - 2. If at any time during a physical restraint the student expresses or demonstrates significant physical distress, including but not limited to, difficulty breathing, the student shall be released from the restraint immediately, and school staff shall take steps to seek medical assistance.
    - 3. Program staff shall review and consider any known medical or psychological limitations, known or suspected trauma history, and/or behavioral intervention plans regarding the use of physical restraint on an individual student.
    - 4. If a student is restrained for a period longer than 20 minutes, staff shall obtain the approval of administration. The approval shall be based upon the student's continued agitation during the restraint justifying the need for continued restraint.
  - H. At an appropriate time after release of a student from physical restraint, a school administrator or other appropriate school staff shall:
    - 1. Review the incident with the student to address the behavior that precipitated the restraint;
    - 2. Review the incident with the staff person(s) who administered the restraint to discuss whether proper restraint procedures were followed; and
    - 3. Consider whether any follow-up is appropriate for students who witnessed the incident.
3. Limitations on Specific Typers of Restraints ~~prohibited~~
- A. Medication restraint – the administration of medication for the purpose of temporarily controlling behavior.– is prohibited unless prescribed by a licensed physician and authorized in writing by the parent for administration in the school setting.
  - B. Mechanical restraint – the use of any device or equipment to restrict a student's freedom of This does not include devices implemented by trained school personnel, or

utilized by a student that have been prescribed by an appropriate medical or related services professional, and are used for the specific and approved positioning or protective purposes for which such devices were designed. Examples of such devices include: adaptive devices or mechanical supports used to achieve proper body position, balance, or alignment to allow greater freedom of mobility than would be possible without the use of the device or mechanical supports; vehicle safety restraints when used as intended during the transport of a student in a moving vehicle; restraints for medical immobilization; or orthopedically prescribed devices that permit a student to participate in activities without risk of harm.

- C. Seclusion restraint - the involuntary confining a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving without access to school staff is prohibited.
  - D. Prone restraint - a physical restraint in which a student is placed face down on the floor or another surface, and physical pressure is applied to the student's body to keep the student in the face down position is prohibited except under the following circumstances:
    - 1. The student has a documented history of repeatedly causing serious self-injuries and/or injuries to other students or staff;
    - 2. All other forms of physical restraints have failed to ensure the safety of the student and/or the safety of others;
    - 3. There are no medical contraindications as documented by a licensed physician;
    - 4. There is psychological or behavioral justification for the use of prone restraint and there are no psychological or behavioral contraindications, as documented by a licensed mental health professional;
    - 5. The program has obtained consent to use prone restraint in an emergency as set out in 603 CMR 46.03(1)(b), and such use has been approved in writing by the principal; and,
    - 6. The program has documented 603 CMR 46.03(1)(b) 1 - 5 in advance of the use of prone restraint and maintains the documentation.
  - E. The use of "time out" procedures during which a staff member remains accessible to the student, and the student is continuously observed by a staff member shall not be considered "seclusion restraint."
4. Reporting requirements
- A. Staff will report any incidence of physical restraint to their building administrator. Program staff shall provide a written report no later than the next school working day to their building administrator after administration of a physical restraint.

- B. The staff member who administered such a restraint shall verbally inform the principal of the restraint as soon as possible and by written report no later than the next school working day.
1. The written report shall be provided to the principal or his/her designee, except the principal shall prepare the report if the principal administered the restraint;
  2. The principal or his/her designee shall maintain an on-going record of all reported instances of physical restraint, which shall be made available for review by the parent or the Department of Education, upon request.

~~C.~~ 3. The principal or his/her designee shall make reasonable efforts to verbally inform the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) of such restraint as soon as possible and within 24 hours of the restraint, and by written report postmarked no later than three school working days following the use of such restraint or to an email address provided by the parent for communication about the student i

~~4.~~ 4. If the school customarily provides school-related information to the parent(s)/guardian(s) in a language other than English, the written restraint report shall be provided in that language.

~~5.~~ 5. The school will provide the student and the parent an opportunity to comment orally and in writing on the use of the restraint and on information in the written report.

~~D.C.~~ The written report required by both sections B and C above shall include:

1. Names and job title of the staff who administered the restraint, and observers, if any;
2. Date of restraint and time restraint began and ended;
3. Name of administrator who was verbally informed following the restraint; and as applicable, the name of the administrator who approved continuation of the restraint beyond 20 minutes.
4. Description of the activity the student, other students, and staff in the area were engaged in immediately preceding the use of physical restraint;
5. Student's behavior that prompted the restraint;
6. Efforts made to de-escalate the situation and alternatives to restraint that were attempted;
7. Justification for initiating physical restraint;
8. Description of administration of restraint including:
  - The holds used and reasons such holds were necessary
  - The student's behavior and reactions during the restraint
  - How the restraint ended and
  - Documentation of injury to the student and/or staff, if any, during the restraint and any medical care provided;
9. For extended restraints (restraints lasting more than twenty minutes), description of the alternatives to extended restraint that were attempted, the outcome of those efforts, and the justification for administering the extended restraint; Information regarding any further action(s) that the school has taken or may take, including any disciplinary sanctions that may be imposed on the student; and

10. Information regarding opportunities for the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) to discuss with school officials the administration of the restraint, any disciplinary sanctions, and/or other related matters.

E.D. Individual student review. The principal shall conduct a weekly review of restraint data to identify students who have been restrained multiple times during the week. If such students are identified, the principal shall convene one or more review teams as the principal deems appropriate to assess each student's progress and needs. The assessment shall include at least the following:

1. Review and discussion of the written reports submitted in accordance with 603 CMR 46.06 and any comments provided by the student and parent about such reports and the use of the restraints;
2. Analysis of the circumstances leading up to each restraint, including factors such as time of day, day of the week, antecedent events, and individuals involved;
3. Consideration of factors that may have contributed to escalation of behaviors, consideration of alternatives to restraint, including de-escalation techniques and possible interventions, and such other strategies and decisions as appropriate, with the goal of reducing or eliminating the use of restraint in the future;
4. Agreement on a written plan of action by the program.

If the principal directly participated in the restraint, a duly qualified individual designated by the superintendent shall lead the review team's discussion. The principal shall ensure that a record of each individual student review is maintained and made available for review by the Department or the parent, upon request.

F.E. Administrative review. The principal shall conduct a monthly review of school-wide restraint data. This review shall consider patterns of use of restraints by similarities in the time of day, day of the week, or individuals involved; the number and duration of physical restraints school-wide and for individual students; the duration of restraints; and the number and type of injuries, if any, resulting from the use of restraint. The principal shall determine whether it is necessary or appropriate to modify the school's restraint prevention and management policy, conduct additional staff training on restraint reduction/prevention strategies, such as training on positive behavioral interventions and supports, or take such other action as necessary or appropriate to reduce or eliminate restraints.

G.F. Report all restraint related injuries to the Department of Secondary and Elementary Education (DESE). When a physical restraint has resulted in an injury to a student or program staff member, the program shall send a copy of the written report required to the Department postmarked no later than three school working days of the administration of the restraint. The program shall also send the Department a copy of the record of physical restraints maintained by the principal for the 30-day period prior to the date of the reported restraint. The Department shall determine if additional



action by the program is warranted and, if so, shall notify the program of any required actions within the 30 calendar days of receipt of the required written report(s).

H.G. The district will report all physical restraints to the Department. Each school shall collect and annually report data regarding the use of physical restraints in a manner and form directed by the Department.

5. Grievance procedures

A. Parents will notify the principal or designee of any concerns regarding restraint practices and procedures. If a designee receives the complaint or concern that designee shall notify the principal within the school day. The principal shall notify the Superintendent within twenty-four hours of a school \_working day of receiving a concern. The Superintendent shall at his or her discretion order an investigation.

The District has developed and implemented specific procedures regarding appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention.

6. *Methods to prevent student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide (individual crisis planning, de-escalation techniques)*

Through the implementation of MTSS/PBIS frameworks and the District Accommodation Plan (DCAP) the District strives to ensure all students' social, emotional, behavioral and academic needs are met while in the school setting. All school buildings implement Student Support Teams and Tiered Support Teams for universal, supplemental and intensive student supports. These teams are able to support individual students, consult with teachers and assist families. Through these supports the District provides necessary training and planning with the goal of minimizing negative consequences when a student crisis occurs. Each building also has counseling staff/staff available to support social, emotional and behavioral needs that may impact a student during the school day. All buildings implement a universal social emotional learning curriculum, universal mental health screening, and student check in procedure. Additionally, subject to eligibility under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA") and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504") students individual needs can be addressed through the identification, evaluation and placement process, which provides for individual services and/or accommodations for eligible students.

Some of the ways District staff are trained to prevent violent, self-injurious behavior and suicide are as follows:

Training of all staff on Suicide Prevention, Training provided to staff on De-escalation Strategies, Phases of De-escalation and Managing Staff Behavior, Training provide to staff on Threat Assessments, Training provided to select building staff on in-depth Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI), Training on Documentation in the District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP<sub>[MJ1]</sub>)

**Alternatives to physical restraint (verbal prompting, physical escort, time-out, de-escalation techniques)**

Through the implementation of [MTSS/PBIS frameworks and Student Support Teams/Tier 3 Teams](#) students may be provided with individual behavior support plans, direct instruction and/or special education supports. The District's goal is to teach students the social, emotional, and behavioral regulation skills they require to access and progress in the curriculum. Each building has staff members identified who have received the in-depth restraint training with a curriculum that includes extensive de-escalation strategies. This training also provides staff with an understanding of challenging behaviors and specific strategies for prevention or changing the negative behavior (s).

**Description of physical restraints used in emergency situations**

Through the training provided to staff through [Crisis Prevention Intervention](#) the following restraints may be used as an emergency procedure of last resort<sup>[MJ2]</sup>:

- Seated low level restriction
- Seated medium level restriction
- Seated high Level restriction

- Standing low level restriction
- Standing medium level restriction
- Standing high level restriction

For more ~~information~~information, please see the Crisis Prevention and Intervention Training Curriculum located on [gardnerk12.org](http://gardnerk12.org) website

**Methods to engage parents in discussions about restraint prevention and the use of restraint solely as an emergency measure**<sup>[MJ3]</sup> <sup>[WJ4]</sup>

Parents will be provided an opportunity to respond to the written incident report either in writing or in person. They should contact the principal directly who can arrange this. Information on the District's restraint procedures will be shared at/through [the district website and student/parent handbook](#). –Parents can always request to meet with the building Principal or the [District Restraint Coordinator](#) if they have more questions regarding restraint prevention or the use of restraint.

A. \_\_\_\_\_

**6.7. Other interventions. Nothing in this policy prohibits:**

- A. The right of any individual to report to appropriate authorities a crime committed by a student or another individual;

- B. Law enforcement, judicial authorities or school security personnel from exercising their responsibilities, including physical detainment of a student or other person alleged to have committed a crime or posing a security risk; or
- C. The exercise of an individual's responsibilities as a mandated reporter or to deter any individual from reporting neglect or abuse to the appropriate state agency.
- D. Policies and Procedures shall not preclude the use of school violence prevention techniques or procedures i.e., counseling, DARE, etc.

[Reference: M.G.L. 69 Section 1B and C71, S37G, Regulation 603 CMR 46.00 Physical Restraint]

[Adopted: December 2001]

[Revised: October 2003]

[Revised: March 2006]

[Revised: April 2008]

[Reviewed: June 2014]

[Revised: March 2016]

[Reviewed: April 2021]

[Reviewed: 2024]

## NON-DISCRIMINATION AND HARRASSMENT

The Gardner Public Schools does not tolerate discrimination against students, parents, employees or the general public on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, pregnancy related conditions, pregnancy status, disability, homelessness, religion, age or immigration status. The Gardner Public Schools is also committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, pregnancy related conditions, pregnancy status, age, genetic information, ethnic background, ancestry, disability, or any category protected by state or federal law. In addition, the District provides equal access to all designated youth groups. Consistent with the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act, the District also does not discriminate against students on the basis of homelessness.

The Superintendent shall designate at least one administrator to serve as the compliance officer for the District's non-discrimination policies in education-related activities, including but not limited to responding to inquiries related to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act; the Age Act; M.G.L. c. 76, § 5; M.G.L. c. 151B and 151C; and 603 C.M.R. § 26.00. Inquiries about the application of Title IX to the District may be referred to the District's Title IX Coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, or both.

The Gardner Public Schools' policy of nondiscrimination will extend to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business; no person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in employment, admission to a public school of the school district, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, pregnancy related conditions, pregnancy status, age, genetic information, ethnic background, ancestry, disability, or any category protected by state or federal law.

In addition to designating at least one administrator to handle inquiries regarding the District's non-discrimination policies, the Superintendent shall adopt and publish one or more grievance procedures for addressing reports of discrimination, harassment and retaliation under the protected classes identified in this policy. If an individual is interested in filing a complaint that they have been discriminated against because of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, pregnancy related conditions, pregnancy status, disability, homelessness, religion, age or immigration status, their complaint should be filed in accordance with the District's grievance procedures for discrimination, harassment, and retaliation.

The student handbooks and grievance procedures shall identify the name, office address and telephone number for the compliance officer(s) for the above-referenced statutes and this policy and be posted on the District's website.

LEGAL REFS.: Title VI: 42 U.S.C. 2000d; 34 CFR 100.3(a),(b); EEOA: 20 U.S.C. 1703(f); Title IX: 20 U.S.C. 1681; 34 CFR 106.31, 106.34, 106.35;

Section 504: 29 U.S.C. 794; 34 CFR 104.4; Title II: 42 U.S.C. 12132; 28 CFR 35.130; IDEA 2004: 20 U.S.C. 1400; 34 CFR 300.110; NCLB: Title III, Part A, Sec. 3121(c)(1)(C); Title X, Part C, Secs. 721, 722(g)(4); Mass. Const. amend. art. 114; M.G.L. c. 71A, s. 7; c. 76, s. 5; 603 CMR 26.03 as amended by Chapter 199 of the Acts of 2011; MGL. c. 71, s. 370; 42 USC s. 2000c et seq.; 42 USC s. 2000d et seq.; 20 USC s. 1701 et seq.; M.G.L c. 71, Sec. 84; MGL c. 151B; 151C.

~~The Gardner Public Schools does not tolerate discrimination against students, parents, employees or the general public on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, homelessness, religion, age or immigration status. The Gardner Public Schools is also committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or pregnancy status, age or disability. In addition, the District provides equal access to all designated youth groups. Consistent with the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act, the District also does not discriminate against students on the basis of homelessness.~~

~~The Superintendent shall designate at least one administrator to serve as the compliance officer for the District's non-discrimination policies in education-related activities, including but not limited to responding to inquiries related to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act; the Age Act; M.G.L. c. 76, § 5; M.G.L. c. 151B and 151C; and 603 C.M.R. § 26.00. Inquiries about the application of Title IX to the District may be referred to the District's Title IX Coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, or both.~~

~~The Gardner Public Schools' policy of nondiscrimination will extend to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business; no person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in employment, admission to a public school of Gardner or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, age, homelessness, disability or immigration status.~~

~~In addition to designating at least one administrator to handle inquiries regarding the District's non-discrimination policies, the Superintendent shall adopt and publish one or more grievance procedures for addressing reports of discrimination, harassment and retaliation under the protected classes identified in this policy. If an individual interested in filing a complaint that they have been discriminated against because of their race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, homelessness, disability, or immigration status, their complaint should be filed in accordance with the District's grievance procedures for discrimination, harassment, and retaliation.~~

~~The student handbooks and grievance procedures shall identify the name, office address and telephone number for the compliance officer(s) for the above-referenced statutes and this policy and be posted on the District's website.~~

~~LEGAL REFS.: Title VI: 42 U.S.C. 2000d; 34 CFR 100.3(a),(b); EEOA: 20 U.S.C. 1703(f); Title IX: 20 U.S.C. 1681; 34 CFR 106.31, 106.34, 106.35; Section 504: 29 U.S.C. 794; 34 CFR 104.4; Title II: 42 U.S.C. 12132; 28 CFR 35.130; IDEA 2004: 20 U.S.C. 1400; 34 CFR 300.110; NCLB: Title III, Part A, Sec. 3121(e)(1)(C); Title X, Part C, Secs. 721, 722(g)(4); Mass. Const. amend. art. 114; M.G.L. c. 71A, s. 7; e. 76, s. 5; 603 CMR 26.03 as amended by Chapter 199 of the Acts of 2011; MLG c. 71, s.370; 42 USC s. 2000e et seq.; 42 USC s. 2000d et seq.; 20 USC s. 1701 et seq.; M.G.L c. 71, Sec. 84.~~

[Revised: September 2020]

[Revised: August 2024]

## USE OF ELECTRONIC MESSAGING BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

As elected public officials, School Committee members shall exercise caution when communicating between and among themselves via electronic messaging services including, but not limited to, electronic mail (e-mail), text messages, social media postings ~~and~~, Internet web forums, and Internet chat rooms.

Under the Open Meeting Law, deliberation by a quorum of members constitutes a meeting. Deliberation is defined as movement toward a decision including, but not limited to, the sharing of an opinion regarding business over which the committee has supervision, control, or jurisdiction. A quorum may be arrived at sequentially using electronic messaging without knowledge and intent by the author.

School Committee members should use electronic messaging between and among members only for housekeeping purposes such as requesting or communicating agenda items, meeting times, or meeting dates. Electronic messaging should not be used to discuss committee matters that require public discussion under the Open Meeting Law.

Under the Public Records Law electronic messages between public officials may be considered public records. The District shall provide district e-mail addresses, which are archived. Student information is confidential and will not be shared by school staff, school committee members or any other City of Gardner employee.

[Reference: M.G.L. Chapter 4 Section 7, Chapter 66 Section 10]

[Adopted: 3/13/00]

[Reviewed: January 2002]

[Revised: February 2015]

[Reviewed: March 2018]

[Revised: December 2021]

[Revised: 2024]

## DISTRICT SECURITY RELATING TO TECHNOLOGY

The protection of sensitive data and technology is vital in supporting teaching and learning through access to resources, information, learning activities, interpersonal communications, research, training, collaboration, curriculum, and materials.

The School Committee recognizes data and information as resources that must be protected from unauthorized accessor use, and, as such, supports a balance of security and access. The Committee expects district staff, student, and family data to be protected by adequate controls commensuration with the sensitivity of the data.

The Committee directs the Superintendent to develop and maintain an effective district data protection system of procedures for the protection of sensitive district information. Such procedures should protect the confidentiality, availability, and integrity of district information.

SOURCE: MASC 2023

[Adopted: 2024]



## DATA AND RECORDS RETENTION

The School Committee recognizes that, as an entity of local government, every District record is presumed to be public unless it may be withheld under a specific exemption. The custodian of public records of the district is the ~~X~~[Director of Pupil Personnel Services](#); contact information for this position will be placed in a prominent position on the district website.

The District is responsible for a myriad of records which vary in the length of time retention is required. The Superintendent is responsible for ensuring such retention requirements are followed.

Under the Public Records Law, electronic messages between public officials, including public employees, may be considered public records. As such, all district employees and the School Committee will be given district email address, with which they are to conduct all district business, so the district may comply with public records requirements.

SOURCE: MASC 2023

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L.4:7; 66:10

REF: A Guide to the Massachusetts Public Records Law (Secretary of the Commonwealth)

CROSS REFS.: [BHE](#) - USE OF ELECTRONIC MESSAGING BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

[GBEE](#) - PERSONNEL USE OF TECHNOLOGY

[\[Adopted" 2024\]](#)

## PERSONNEL USE OF TECHNOLOGY

The School Committee recognizes that the use of technology is an important part of preparing students for adult life. As such, the School Committee expects that staff will use technology as provided, as necessary, and as beneficial.

Employees shall use digital resources in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner in accordance with the mission of the district. Staff members are responsible for teaching and for modeling responsible digital citizenship. The digital resources are provided to support the work of the district; occasional personal communication is permitted so long as such use does not interfere with the employee's job duties and performance, with systems operation, other users, or network performance. All use must comply with the policies and procedures of the ~~X~~Gardner Public Schools.

All staff must agree to and sign an appropriate digital use form prior to being granted access to district digital resources.

Staff is required to use their school-issued accounts, not personal accounts, for all communication with students, and parents/guardians; such accounts must be used with other staff members when conducting school business.

Employees' communication is a matter of public record and all accounts and hardware are the property of Gardner Public Schools. This extends to employee use of social media when conducting district business. The district shall maintain access to all accounts and hardware beyond staff employment; former employees will not have access to accounts or hardware beyond the final date of employment.

Any online activities that would not be considered appropriate in the classroom should not be conducted online. High standards of appropriate online communication and conduct must be maintained.

Team, class, or student organization pages, accounts, or groups will be created only in conjunction with the coach or faculty advisor. All groups must include the appropriate administrator as a member. Access to the page will remain with the coach or faculty advisor.

All contact and messages by coaches and faculty advisors with team members shall be sent to all team members, except for messages concerning medical or academic privacy matters, in which case the messages will be copied to the appropriate administrator.

When interacting with students online, group interactions are encouraged and should include two staff members. One-to-one interactions should be avoided.

Failure to uphold the responsibilities above is misuse, which may lead to disciplinary action.

REF: M.G.L. Ch. 66 10 (b)  
CROSS REF: [ACAB](#) SEXUAL HARRASSMENT  
[GBEB](#) STAFF CONDUCT  
[GBEBD](#) ONLINE FUNDRAISING AND SOLICITATION  
[INJD](#) ACCESS TO DIGITAL RESOURCES

INJDC ACCEPTABLE USE OF DIGITAL RESOURCES  
SOURCE: MASC 2023  
[Adopted: 2024]

## ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY -- TECHNOLOGY

### **Our Commitment to Technology**

Gardner Public Schools is committed to providing students, teachers, and staff with the technology and information literacy skills needed for learning and teaching in the 21st century. Our mission is to integrate technology into curriculum and instruction to promote student achievement and prepare students for success in today's information society both locally and globally. The School Committee supports the right of students, employees, and community members to have reasonable access to various information formats and believes it is incumbent upon users to utilize this privilege in an appropriate manner and intends to support such use with appropriate budgetary allocations, providing for timely updates to technology as necessary.

The Superintendent, in conjunction with the Director of Technology, shall develop and implement appropriate procedures to provide guidance for access to digital resources.

Gardner Public Schools provide students and employees access to technology including equipment, applications, network resources, and the Internet for educational and communication purposes. *Educational purposes* shall be defined as classroom activities promoting learning, career and professional development, and high-quality self-discovery and reflection activities. *Communication purposes* shall refer to the use of email transmissions, online learning systems, the Internet, social media platforms, and other electronic resources to communicate and collaborate amongst students, parents, employees, professionals, and the Gardner Public Schools community for educational reasons.

Gardner Public Schools is committed to providing a safe and productive educational environment. We maintain systems preventing inappropriate intrusions from the outside world through our Internet connections and a website Internet filter in compliance with Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). Teachers are responsible for monitoring student technology activities. However, no system or filter is perfect, and it is virtually impossible for any teacher to monitor every activity of every student in the classroom. Therefore, ~~each user of Gardner Public Schools' technology resources is accountable for his/her own use and activity.~~ all students must agree to and sign an appropriate digital use form developed by the Superintendent in conjunction with the Director of Technology; this form must also be signed for the parent or guardian for students under the age of 18.

Access to the system/network is a **privilege, not a right**. The Superintendent or designee shall implement, monitor, and evaluate the use of the district's system/network for educational and communication purposes at any time. There is no right of privacy or confidentiality regarding files/documents created and stored on the district systems, or electronic communications sent internally or externally. Such files and communications are governed by the public records law and may be accessed, viewed, and/or deleted at the discretion of the Superintendent or designee at any time.

All users, parents and or legal guardians, shall be required to acknowledge receipt and understanding of all administrative regulations and procedures governing use of the system and shall agree in writing to comply with such regulations and procedures.

### **User responsibilities and acceptable use**

1. All users of Gardner Public Schools technology resources must sign the Technology Acceptable Use Agreement form prior to using schools technology resources. Students and employees are required to sign the AUP under the following circumstances:

- Upon first time enrollment/employment in the district
  - Change in policy occurs.
2. Users of Gardner Public Schools' technology resources are responsible for their appropriate use in accordance with this Technology Acceptable Use Policy, school rules and codes of conduct as stated in school handbooks, and city, state, and federal laws.
  3. Students are obligated to abide by any guidelines set forth by teachers integrating technology resources in their classroom.
  4. All Network software accounts, including email, are to be used only by the authorized owner of the account. Sharing of passwords and ~~network~~ accounts are prohibited.
  - ~~5. Posting personal information on the Internet is prohibited for the safety of students and employees. Personal information includes but is not limited to passwords, full name, telephone number, address, parent/guardian information, school information.~~
  - ~~6.~~5. Users represent Gardner Public Schools when using the schools' technology resources to participate in online communications and publishing to the Internet whether on or off school premises.
  - ~~7.~~6. Users will conduct themselves with a commitment to integrity and respect of others and oneself at all times when communicating online. Any form of online harassment including, but not limited to, sexual and other protected class harassment, bullying, and offensive language, is prohibited and may be subject to appropriate laws. Any knowledge of such activities should be reported to a teacher or administrator.
  - ~~8.~~7. Users are required to abide by the generally accepted rules of netiquette (network etiquette) when communicating online.
  - ~~9. Student pictures, educational works, and audio and video recordings may be published to the Internet or social media to promote learning. Only first name and last initial may be published. Permission of the student and parent is required prior to publication.~~
  - ~~10.~~8. Accessing material that is obscene or advocates illegal acts, violence, or discrimination is prohibited. Unintentional access of such material should be reported to a teacher or administrator immediately to prevent a claim of intentional access.
  - ~~11.~~9. All resources should be properly cited to avoid plagiarism. Plagiarism will be dealt with according to the student handbook guidelines.
  - ~~12.~~10. All copyright, privacy, and international laws are to be abided by at all times. Users should assume material is copyrighted unless explicitly stated.
  - ~~13.~~11. Forgery or pretending to be someone else is prohibited.
  - ~~14.~~12. Installing software is prohibited. Downloading of materials requires the permission of a teacher and/or an administrator.
  - ~~15.~~13. Vandalism of any type is prohibited and will result in disciplinary and possibly legal and/or

financial charges. Vandalism includes but is not limited to damage, destruction, or theft of hardware, software, data, or intellectual property; disrupting network traffic; intentionally introducing viruses, gaining unauthorized access to network resources (hacking); or using the system for inappropriate or illegal purposes.

~~16.14.~~ Commercial use of technology resources is permissible only for the benefit of the Gardner Public Schools community. Use of technology resources for personal gain is prohibited.

~~17.15.~~ The school maintains the right to review any individual's electronic documents and communications made using technology resources provided to ensure a safe, secure, and orderly educational environment.

~~18.16.~~ Any violations of the above responsibilities and acceptable uses are to be reported immediately to a teacher or administrator. Users uncertain of actions that may violate their responsibilities or acceptable use of technology resources are accountable for asking a teacher or administrator prior to performing the action(s) in question.

### **Consequences**

Failure to comply with the Technology Acceptable Use Policy may be subject to disciplinary action determined by the building principals and/or district administrators in accordance with the school handbook, educational policies, and this acceptable use policy. Noncompliance may result in the suspension or termination of a user's technology privileges. Violations of local, state, or federal laws may also result in criminal prosecution. Gardner Public Schools will cooperate fully with officials in any investigation related to illegal activities conducted via the schools' technology resources.

### **Limits of liability**

Gardner Public Schools shall not be liable for users' inappropriate use of technology resources, mistakes or negligence, violation of copyright restrictions, or costs incurred for any reason. Gardner Public Schools is not responsible for loss of data, exposure to inappropriate or inaccurate material found on the Internet or external networks, or accuracy or usability of any information found on external networks or the Internet.

Note: FCC regulations that went into effect April 20, 2001, implementing The Children's Internet Protection Act (47 U.S.C. § 254) require each school/district to certify compliance with certain policy requirements in order to maintain eligibility for Internet access discounts and other services provided by the federal government.

[Adoption date: May 1998]

[Revision date: June 1999]

[Revised: June 2002]

[Revised: September 2009]

[Revised: December 2013 - Replaces IJNDB&IJNDB-R]

[Revised: November 2016]

[Revised: February 2019]

# Field Trip Approval Form

(This form must be completed for all field trips and signed by the building principal before it is forwarded to the Superintendent for approval.)

School \_\_\_\_\_

Person(s) Responsible for Organizing Trip \_\_\_\_\_

Grade or Class \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Students Attending \_\_\_\_\_

Destination \_\_\_\_\_

How does the trip relate to the curriculum or to the school-sponsored or school-approved extra-curricular activity (i.e., band, student council, and so on)?

Departure date/time/place \_\_\_\_\_

Return date/time/place \_\_\_\_\_

Transportation Provider \_\_\_\_\_ Cost of Transportation \_\_\_\_\_

Cost of Activity \_\_\_\_\_

How will the cost of transportation and activity be paid? \_\_\_\_\_

Ratio of chaperones to students \_\_\_\_\_

Sample Parent Permission Slip Attached: \_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no

Emergency Phone Contact List \_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no

School Nurse \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Principal \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Superintendent \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Part Two: This section of the form must be completed for all overnight trips/activities, Out-of-State Trips, and Out-of-Country Trips. All trips of this nature must be submitted for School Committee review and approval sixty (60) days prior to the scheduled event.**

**Supervision plan (attach)**

**Behavior contract as necessary – principal’s decision (attach)**

**Medical release forms obtained \_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no**

**Daily Itinerary (attach)**

**Health Care Professional Attending\_\_\_\_\_**

**Administrator Attending\_\_\_\_\_**

*The procedures of this form are in accordance with the Policy of the Gardner Public School Committee on Field Trips.*

[Revised: January 2006]

[Reviewed: September 2013]

[Reviewed: 2024]



## POLICY ON SOCIAL MEDIA

The Superintendent and the School Principals will annually remind staff members and orient new staff members concerning the importance of maintaining proper decorum in the on-line, digital world as well as in person. Employees must conduct themselves in ways that do not distract from or disrupt the educational process. The orientation and reminders will give special emphasis to:

- 1) Improper fraternization with students using social media or other electronic means.
  - a. Teachers may not friend or follow current students on social media.
  - b. All electronic contacts with students should be through the district's computer and telephone system, except emergency situations.
  - c. Team, class, or student organization pages, accounts, or groups will be created only in conjunction with the coach or faculty advisor. All groups must include the appropriate administrator as a member. Access to the page will remain with the coach or faculty advisor.
  - d. All contact and messages by coaches and faculty advisors with team members shall be sent to all team members, except for messages concerning medical or academic privacy matters, in which case the messages will be copied to the appropriate administrator.
  - e. Teachers will not give out their private cell phone or home phone numbers without prior approval of the district.
  - f. Inappropriate contact via phone or electronic device is prohibited.
- 2) Inappropriateness of posting items with sexual content
- 3) Inappropriateness of posting items exhibiting or advocating use of drugs and alcohol
- 4) Examples of inappropriate behavior from other districts, as behavior to avoid
- 5) Monitoring and penalties for improper use of district computers and technology
- 6) The possibility of penalties, including dismissal from employment, for failure to exercise good judgment in on-line conduct.

The Superintendent or designees ~~will~~may periodically conduct internet searches to see if teachers have posted inappropriate materials on-line. ~~When~~If inappropriate use of computers and websites ~~is discovered~~is brought to the attention of the district, the School Principals and Superintendent will promptly bring that inappropriate use to the attention of the staff member and may consider and apply disciplinary action up to and including termination.

SOURCE: MASC October 2016

## **SEARCHES AND INTERROGATIONS**

### **Searches by Staff**

The right of inspection of students' school lockers is inherent in the authority granted school committees and administrators. This authority may be exercised as needed in the interest of safeguarding children, their own property and school property.

Nevertheless, exercise of that authority by school officials places unusual demands upon their judgment so as to protect each child's constitutional rights to personal privacy and protection from coercion and to act in the best interest of all students and the schools.

Searches by school officials of students' automobiles or the student will be conducted in a way that protects the students' rights consistent with the responsibility of the school district to provide an atmosphere conducive to the educational process.

### **Interrogations by Police**

The schools have legal custody of students during the school day and during hours of approved extracurricular activities. It is the responsibility of the school administration to protect each student's rights, , with respect to interrogations by law enforcement officials. Therefore:

1. When law enforcement officials find it necessary to question students during the school day or periods of extracurricular activities, the school Principal or their designee will be present when possible. School Administration will contact the student's parent or guardian prior to the interrogation so that the responsible individual may be notified of the situation.
2. If custody and/or arrest are involved, the Principal will request that all procedural safeguards, as prescribed by law, be observed by the law enforcement officials.

SOURCE: MASC -Updated 2021

[Adopted: October 2020]

[Revised: 2024]

## DISTRICT WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

The School Committee wishes to ensure accurate delivery of information, and as such, the ~~XXGardner~~-Public Schools will maintain a district website and such district and school social media accounts as authorized by the Superintendent. All such online platforms will be maintained by district staff, acting in their professional capacities.

~~In order for public communication with the School Committee and district personnel to be responded to in a timely manner, in line with the legal requirements for public communication, commenting on all district and school sites will be turned off. Every school and district site will clearly indicate this policy and will direct those wishing to contact the school and district personnel to the appropriate venues to do so.~~

Unauthorized use of district or school names s is prohibited.

A high priority will be placed on such platforms being accessible, frequently updated, and user friendly. District and school staff will not utilize copyrighted or trademarked materials without expressed written consent from the content's owner.

Identifying information about students will not be published. Student photographs may be published only with the written consent of the student's parent or guardian. Student work may be published without any identifying information about the student.

SOURCE: MASC 2023

LEGAL REF: Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Declaration of Rights, Article 16

Constitution of the United States of America, Amendment 1

MGL Ch. 66

MGL Ch. 30A

REF: A Guide to the Massachusetts Public Records Law (Secretary of the Commonwealth)

CROSS REF: [BEDH](#) - PUBLIC COMMENT AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

[GBEE](#) - PERSONNEL USE OF TECHNOLOGY

[BHE](#) - USE OF ELECTRONIC MESSAGING BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

[Adopted: 2024]

## NEWS MEDIA RELATIONS/NEWS RELEASES

Every effort will be made to assist the press and other communications media to obtain complete and adequate coverage of the successes, challenges, programs, planning, and activities of the school district.

All representatives of the media will be given equal access to information about the schools. General releases of interest to the entire community will be made available to all the media simultaneously. There will be no exclusive releases except as media representatives request information on particular programs, plans or problems.

In order that school district publicity is given wide coverage and is coordinated into a common effort and purpose, the following procedures will be followed in giving official information to the news media:

1. The School Committee Chair will be the official spokesman for the Committee, except as this duty is delegated to the Superintendent.
2. News releases ~~that are of a district wide or a sensitive nature or pertain to established Committee policy~~ are the responsibility of the Superintendent.
3. ~~News releases that are of concern to only one school, or to an organization of one school, are the responsibility of the Principal of that particular school, but must be approved by the Superintendent.~~
4. All statements made to the press will be made by the Superintendent or approved designee. by other staff members of the particular school must be cleared with the Principal.

While it is impossible to know how news releases will be treated by the press, every possible effort should be made to obtain coverage of school activities that will create and maintain a dignified and professionally responsible image for the school district.

SOURCE: MASC - Updated 2022  
[Adopted: 2024]

# Gardner Public Schools

Dr. Mark J. Pellegrino, *Superintendent*



www.gardnerk12.org

70 Waterford Street, Gardner, MA 01440

(978) 632-1000

## Superintendent Goals FY25

### District Improvement

#### **Goal 1: Fidelity to Common Planning Time (CPT) Expectations**

By May 31, 2025, 70% of core academic Common Planning Time meetings in grades K-7 will follow the CPT Fidelity checklist. The Instructional Priority for the district was developed at DESE's Instructional Prioritization Institute: "K-7 teachers will implement High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) with fidelity and integrity to ensure Students with Disabilities (SWD) have access to grade-level instruction and collaborative, active engagement with their peers." Following the fidelity checklist will help teachers to create plans that support the district's Instructional Priority.

#### **Goal 2: Fidelity to Tier 1 Core Instructional Practices**

By May 31, 2025, 70% of core academic classroom instruction will meet the expectations described in the Tier 1 Instructional Fidelity Check in grades K-7. Classroom observations by administrators of core instruction will evaluate whether or not the instruction meets the expectations described in the district's instructional priority. Specifically, "K-7 teachers will implement High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) with fidelity and integrity to ensure Students with Disabilities (SWD) have access to grade-level instruction and collaborative, active engagement with their peers."

### Student Learning

#### **Goal 1: Reduce academic equity gaps for students who are Multilingual or have Special Needs**

By May 31, 2025, equity gaps of SWD and ML learners meeting/exceeding learning expectations measured on math Star testing will be reduced by 10% compared with the aggregate group..

#### **Goal 2: Students in Grades K-4 will be Reading on Grade Level**

By May 31, 2025, at least 75% of students in grades K-4 will meet or exceed grade level reading standards as measured by DiBELS.

## Gardner Superintendent Goals 2020-2021

### Professional Practice

#### **Participate in Lynch Leadership Academy District-level Supervisory Program**

By May, 2025, the superintendent will have participated in three full days of PD and additional coaching from the Lynch Leadership Academy to inform coaching, supervision, and evaluation of principals.

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  
District Improvement Plan**

**2024-2027**

**Mission**

Gardner Public Schools will work side by side with our families to prepare students for their future success in college, career, and community endeavors. This will be done in a safe, caring, just, and equitable environment.

**Core Values**

Community Appreciation Responsibility Excellence

**Vision**

**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.
- Schools 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 are restorative rather than punitive.

*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 schools will monitor and adapt their instruction to ensure students learn the skills and knowledge to prepare them for their own future.

**Theory of Action**

***IF*** we have a culture of dignity and inclusion for all;

***AND*** we hold high expectations that are aligned with grade level district and state standards & objectives for the social/emotional, mental health, and academic outcomes for our students;

***AND*** we collect, analyze, and respond to relevant data for all students individually and collectively, providing tiered supports based on that data;

***AND*** we provide teachers with adequate time, training, support, leadership, and resources focused on equity;

***AND*** we work in collaboration with families and community partners to engage in shared decision making for effective educational programming;

***THEN*** All students will achieve academic success and career readiness; and will develop the social emotional wellness required to thrive as contributing members of their community and workplace.

**2024-2025 District Priority**

Grades K-7 will implement inclusive Tier 1 lessons using HQIM with fidelity and integrity to ensure Students with Disabilities have access to grade-level instruction and collaborative, active engagement with their peers.



**Gardner Public Schools  
District Improvement Plan**

<b>Strategic Objectives</b>			
<b>1. High expectations aligned with grade level district and state standards &amp; objectives for social/emotional/behavioral wellness, and successful academic outcomes for all students:</b>	<b>2. Provide teachers with adequate time, training, support, leadership, and resources focused on equity:</b>	<b>3. Collect, analyze, and respond to relevant academic and social/emotional/behavioral data for all students individually and collectively, providing tiered supports based on that data:</b>	<b>4. Collaborate with families and community partners to engage in shared decision-making for effective educational programming:</b>
<b>Action Steps</b>			
<p><b>1A)</b> Create, implement, and assess clear, high level common expectations for student learning aligned with grade level district and state standards &amp; objectives</p> <p><b>1B)</b> Develop/revise rigorous, challenging learning activities and instructional strategies that support social emotional and academic growth and develop positive learning partnerships</p> <p><b>1C)</b> Implement systemic inclusive practices and co-teaching practices</p> <p><b>1D)</b> Develop Vision of Excellent Instruction and Monitor Cycle of Instructional Improvement</p>	<p><b>2A)</b> Support for sustained effective Co-Teaching/ Inclusion practices</p> <p><b>2B)</b> Support for all administrators, instructional/behavioral coaches in effective observation/evaluation practices</p> <p><b>2C)</b> Support District and Building MTSS Teams through the development of systems, data and practices</p> <p><b>2D)</b> Support for improved instruction and intervention in Early Literacy</p>	<p><b>3A)</b> Identify data points to be collected, analyzed, and monitored to determine student achievement and progress</p> <p><b>3B)</b> District and building data teams to monitor academic and non-academic data and plan/implement targeted tiered supports &amp; interventions</p> <p><b>3C)</b> Plan and implement tiered small group learning supports based on data analysis</p> <p><b>3D)</b> Revise special education/intervention practices to reduce CDR and Restraints</p>	<p><b>4A)</b> Expand our strategic partnerships through existing parent forums (PTO, SEPAC, School Council, District MTSS Team)</p> <p><b>4B)</b> Expand our stakeholder membership on building level Tier 1 Teams through attendance and/or parent partners</p> <p><b>4C)</b> Improve participation and scores on School Climate Survey across stakeholder groups</p> <p><b>4D)</b> Improve staff and family participation at school wide events</p>





## Gardner Public Schools District Improvement Plan

### Outcomes – By 2027:

- 1) Academic MTSS Tiers 1, 2, 3 will be developed and Tiers 1 & 2 will be implemented
  - a. Establish a District MTSS Academic Team with a regular meeting schedule, purpose, self assessment, agreement on district data sources/points, a progress monitoring schedule and written action plan.
  - b. Identify and develop fidelity measures for building level Tiers 1 & 2 teaming, instructional practices, data and systems with 70% fidelity across all buildings
  - c. Establish a fidelity measure and monitoring schedule for Grades K-7 implementation of inclusive Tiers 1 & 2 lessons using HQIM with fidelity and integrity to ensure Students with Disabilities have access to grade-level instruction and collaborative, active engagement with their peers with 70% fidelity across all buildings
  - d. SWD for MCAS growth targets will be met
  - e. 10% increase of SWD meeting or exceeding MCAS
  
- 2) MTSS SEL Tier 1
  - a. 80% of building classrooms will meet classroom support system high leverage practices goal of 80% engaged and on task.
  
- 3) Close equity gaps, specifically:
  - f. Gap between SWD and all students for MCAS will be reduced by 5% each year or 15% by 2027
  - g. Chronic absenteeism rate for SWDs and MLL will be no higher than annual state accountability targets for all schools/district
  - h. Drop-out rate for each subgroup will be no higher than the aggregate
  - i. Building level office referrals (major) will decrease by 5% each year or 15% by 2027
  - j. Reduce suspensions, restraints, and time-out usage for SWD by 25% by 2027
  
- 4) Improve School Climate and Partnerships
  - k. Increased participation on Climate Survey by 25% by the end of 2027
  - l. Increased total and sub scores on Climate Survey at or above comparison age national averages
  - m. Parent and Staff attendance average will increase by 25% at school wide events from 2024-25 SY baseline attendance as compared to 2026-2027 SY average attendance.



## Gardner Public Schools District Improvement Plan

**Dashboard monitoring status: Conceive; Initiate; Implement; and, Sustain**

**Conceive** - the need is established and the idea is in formation

**Initiate** - moving from conceptualization to logistic development and launching

**Implement** - execute, resource allocation, monitoring, and cycle of improvement

**Sustain**- institutionalized into who we are; ongoing iterative cycle of improvement.

Implementation Timeline					
Activity/Outcome	Person(s) Responsible	Measurement Tool(s)	Date to be Completed	Status	
Establish clear expectations for tier 1 academic systems/structures/ practices	<b>District and Building Tiered Teams</b>	<b>Expectations/ Implementation Manuals/Tools</b>	<b>Fall 2024</b>		
Establish and implement a structured Common Planning Time (CPT) to plan high level student tasks and evidence-based instructional practices for all learners	<b>MTSS District and Building Admin Teams</b>	<b>Fidelity Check Protocols and Checklist Tools</b>	<b>Fall 2024</b>		
Establish and implement a structured system for observing/monitoring CPT meetings and classroom instruction	<b>MTSS District and Building Admin Teams</b>	<b>Fidelity Check Data of CPTs and Tier 1 HQIM Instruction</b>	<b>Fall 2024</b>		
Establish and implement a structured system for feedback and follow-up of CPT meetings and classroom instruction	<b>MTSS District and Building Admin Teams</b>	<b>Ed Eval Observation/ Feedback Tools</b>	<b>Fall 2024</b>		
Support use of data dashboard of district-level/grade level student academic/SEL achievement/growth and social/emotional/behavioral wellness for improved analysis and decision-making Create & implement a structure for analyzing data to create targeted, specific instructional strategies for struggling learners	<b>District Academic/SEL Teams</b>	<b>Open Architects Dashboard with SEL and Academic student Outcome Data</b>	<b>Fall 2024</b>		
Create communication strategies to encourage parent participation on Climate Survey	<b>District MTSS/FE</b>		<b>Fall 2024</b>		
Create and use metric for parent attendance at school wide events	<b>District MTSS /FE</b>	<b>Attendance metric TB developed</b>	<b>Fall 2024</b>		
Fully implement MTSS Tier 1 academic systems/practices/supports	<b>MTSS Academic District and Building Teams</b>	<b>Learning Walk/ Observation Data/ Fidelity Check Data (Rigor Rubric)</b>	<b>June 2025</b>		



**Gardner Public Schools  
District Improvement Plan**

<b>Implementation Timeline</b>					
	<b>Activity/Outcome</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>	<b>Measurement Tool(s)</b>	<b>Date to be Completed</b>	<b>Status</b>
	Facilitate building leadership teams (BLTs) to provide support and training for effective facilitation of CPTs; and to identify/plan PD for building staff with a focus on SWDs and MLs	<b>District and Building Leadership</b>	<b>Fidelity Check Data, PD Survey Data</b>	<b>June 2025</b>	
	Assess academic/SEL achievement and growth by grade level and by subgroups at least 3 times per year for adjustment of supports/practices	<b>Building MTSS Teams</b>	<b>STAR, DIBELs, SWIS, BESS, District Data SEL Tool/Open Architects Dashboard</b>	<b>June 2025</b>	
	Establish and implement a structured system for data-informed PD to improve facilitation of CPT meetings and implementation of evidence-based classroom instructional practices focused on SWDs and MLs	<b>MTSS District and Building Admin/BLT/ Tiered Teams</b>	<b>Fidelity Check Data of CPTs and Tier 1 HQIM Instruction/Learning Walk Data</b>	<b>June 2025</b>	
	Measure fidelity of current practices, increase alternatives, and training to reduce suspension rates	<b>Building Admin Teams/District Team</b>	<b>Bi-Annual District Data Review of SSDR</b>	<b>June 2025</b>	
	Progress Monitor fidelity and accountability measures of CSS practice to ensure system in place	<b>District MTSS SEL/Building MTSS SEL</b>	<b>Existing spreadsheet</b>	<b>June 2025</b>	
	District wide CPT practices incorporate high leverage accommodations for SWD and MLs using tools	<b>Special Education Administrators/ Principals/ML Admin</b>	<b>Learning Walk Data/Fidelity tool</b>	<b>June 2025</b>	
	Establish clear expectations for Tier 2 academic assessment & data and instructional systems/structures/ practices	<b>MTSS District and Building Tier 2 Teams</b>	<b>Expectations/ Implementation Manuals/Tools</b>	<b>June 2026</b>	



**Gardner Public Schools  
District Improvement Plan**

<b>Implementation Timeline</b>					
	<b>Activity/Outcome</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>	<b>Measurement Tool(s)</b>	<b>Date to be Completed</b>	<b>Status</b>
	Develop and initiate MTSS Tier 2 academic assessment & data/instructional systems/practices/supports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a robust structure that connects specific skill deficits with targeted &amp; specific skill supports/interventions</li> </ul>	<b>MTSS District and Building Tier 2 Teams</b>	<b>Student Outcome Data, Learning Walk/Observation Data/Fidelity Check Data (Rigor Rubric)</b>	<b>June 2026</b>	
	Assess academic/SEL achievement and growth by grade level and by subgroups at least 5 times per year for adjustment of supports/practices	<b>Building MTSS Teams</b>	<b>STAR, DIBELs, SWIS, BESS, District Data SEL Tool/Open Architects Dashboard</b>	<b>June 2026</b>	
	Establish clear expectations for tier 3 academic assessment & data/instructional systems/structures/practices	<b>MTSS District and Building Tier 2 Teams</b>	<b>Expectations/Implementation Manuals/Tools</b>	<b>June 2027</b>	



# Gardner Public Schools

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

www.gardnerk12.org

70 Waterford Street, Gardner, MA 01440

(978) 632-1000

October 3, 2024

## Curriculum and Instruction Update

### Home School Update

During the 2022-2023 school year the District approved home school programming for 74 families which includes 113 students. During the 2023-2024 school year the District approved home school programming for 81 families which includes 135 students. To date the District has approved homeschool programming for 70 families, which includes 124 students. These numbers are approximately double what they were prior to COVID but seem to be remaining steady since 2021. The numbers also do not reflect the same families as each year several students leave homeschool programs for various reasons, and new families enroll in homeschool programs.

### Curriculum/Assessment

The District has purchased a high quality universal screener and progress monitoring/diagnostic assessment tool, STAR by Renaissance, for Math and ELA. This assessment will be administered three times per year for screening and growth measurement. It can also be used in between the three administrations as a progress monitoring, formative assessment tool to inform instructional changes. The STAR Math assessment will be used in grades Kindergarten through ten and the STAR Reading assessment will be used in grades three through ten. Training in the use of this tool took place during the first four days of professional development for staff, and the first assessment administration will be complete this week. This data will be used as a baseline for determining growth throughout the year and it will also be used to determine tiered interventions for students not meeting expected benchmarks.

Additionally, the District purchased a high quality reading curriculum, Amplify ELA, for grades six through eight. Training for grades six and seven ELA teachers took place during the first four days of professional development for staff, and the curriculum is currently being implemented. Grade eight ELA teachers will be trained in the use of the curriculum this fall to implement upon completion of that training.

### District/School Accountability

MCAS assessments were administered during the Spring of 2024 in grades 3-8 and 10, and the results of the 2024 MCAS administration determines District accountability status. The District's overall accountability status is "Not requiring assistance or intervention" and making moderate progress toward targets. Gardner Middle School and Gardner Elementary School will each be working with a Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Statewide System of Support (SSoS) team

to address targeted areas of focus. A full report of the District's MCAS results will be presented at the November School Committee Meeting.



# Gardner Public Schools

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

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

## English Language Learners Update –October 15, 2024

### **New Enrollments**

The district has seen an increase of 57 students identified as English Language Learners over the past 90 days. This brings the total number of students identified as multilingual learners to 389 with 257 of them currently enrolled in ESL classes. This represents an increase of 127 multilingual learners from the same time last year. The remainder of identified students have reached the language proficiency benchmark that designates them as former EL students. Students who exit the program are monitored by teachers for 4 years to ensure their continued success.

### **Parent Engagement**

We have tentatively planned four ELPAC meetings for this year with the first one happening on October 29. Since our participation at ELPAC was so low last year, we are combining the meeting with Family Game Night in hopes of increasing family engagement. At our first meeting, we will be playing board games and, while the children are eating, we will hold a brief meeting with the parents to discuss how they can be more involved in their children's schooling with a specific focus on how to use Dojo and PowerSchool.

### **Beginning of Year (BOY) Assessment**

All EL students will be taking the Beginning of Year Assessment appropriate for their grade level. Kindergarten students will take the WIDA MODEL and the 1-12 students will be using Summit K12. This data is used by teachers to help determine which language domains need to be focused on during the upcoming school year. The Multilingual Learner Department will be focusing on using data to drive their instruction.

In alignment with the district priority: K-7 teachers will implement HQIM with fidelity and integrity to ensure that Students with Disabilities (SWDs) have access to grade level instruction and collaborative, active engagement with their peers. All schools have High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) to meet the needs of their English learners.

### **New Member of the ML Department**

We would like to welcome Lindsay Sousa to the multilingual learner team. She has joined the staff at GHS as an ESL teacher. We are very excited to have her as a part of the team.

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

Courtney Dunn, *Grants & Communications Manager*

www.gardnerk12.org

160 Elm Street, Gardner, MA 01440

(978) 632-1000

## Grants & Communications Update to School Committee – October 15, 2024

### Grants

The district submitted an application on September 19, 2024 for Fund Code 348 to “support multilingual newcomer students who are also homeless”. Based on eligibility requirements, the district applied for \$18,000 to purchase [Pocketalk](#) devices to support language acquisition, peer relationships, and access to community resources.

The district is presently in the process of applying for the following grants:

- [FY25 Fund Code 460: Early College Support Grant](#), due 10/14/24, to further support the Early College Program at Gardner High School and the Gateway Program at Gardner Academy. The district is eligible for \$150,000.
- [FY25-FY27 Barr Foundation Grant](#), due 10/16/24, to continue to work in partnership with Leominster and Winchendon Public Schools to strengthen school leadership in the region through professional development, coaching and capacity building of new and current leaders as well as teacher leaders. The 36-month opportunity will total \$925,000 if awarded.
- [FY25 Fund Code 311: Supporting Students’ Social Emotional Learning, Behavioral & Mental Health, and Wellness Grant](#), due 10/21/24, to continue to develop SEL strategies within the MTSS system at all buildings. The district is eligible for up to \$100,000.

At this point, all FY24 non-multi-year grants that ended on June 30, 2024 have been closed and accounted for. The district is awaiting the final draw down window for ESSER III, which will open on October 20, 2024. Once the final funds have been drawn, the closeout process will follow, as all funds have been expended. In addition to ESSER III, final Improving Ventilation and Air Quality (IVAQ) Grant funds have been expended and drawn, with the closeout being in process.

Gardner Elementary School was awarded [FY24 Fund Code 213](#) – Implementing Strategies to Reduce or Eliminate the Use of Time-Out Rooms Federal Competitive Special Education Program Grant in the spring, requiring an end date of September 30, 2024. Available funds have been expended on professional development, supplies and contractual services to support the implementation of new strategies to reduce the use of calm down space at GES. The district is processing closeout documentation.

### Other

Ninety-nine percent of GPS staff members have completed the Annual Mandatory Training modules as of 10/3/2024 with ongoing monitoring to ensure the remaining and new staff complete the training, as required.

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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

October 7, 2024

## Report to the School Committee Special Education Updates

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT:**

The roll out of the new individualized education programs (IEP) form continues to be a priority area for the district. The district has purchased a web-based training tool to support and further develop special education teachers and related service providers in writing IEP using the new form. The feedback from teachers has been positive.

During October's professional development day all counselors, special education administrators and assistant principals attended a training on the 504 process. Special education teachers and related services providers had scheduled time to use the trainings available on the new IEP training tool.

The district has had more challenges with using the new IEP/504 database than the actual use of the new form and facilitating meetings. The decision to transfer to PowerSchool Special Programs as our new IEP database was determined as a better way to streamline the process of tracking and monitoring Individualized Education Plans/504 for students with special needs through our existing Student Information System (SIS) PowerSchool database. By using a centralized database it allows educators, parents, and administrators to easily access and update important information, track progress, and ensure that each student is receiving the support they need to succeed academically. By implementing this system, schools can improve communication, collaboration, and ultimately provide better outcomes for students with disabilities.

The roll over of IEP/504 data from Frontline to PowerSchool has posed numerous challenges for educators and administrators alike. One major issue was the upload of student data between the two systems, leading to discrepancies in data transfer and potentially crucial information being lost or corrupted in the process. This has made it difficult for teachers to access accurate and up-to-date student information when planning accommodations and modifications for IEPs and for students on 504 plans.

Additionally, the transition has required extra time and resources to troubleshoot technical issues and ensure that all student data is accurately transferred. As a result, educators have faced increased stress and frustration in navigating the new system, impacting their ability to effectively support students with special needs. The District has been fortunate to have Special Education Administrators to immediately attempt to rectify and troubleshoot issues.

Assistant Special Education Director, Tasha Gamble, has taken over the role of overseeing the special education database and works closely with the District's Instructional Technology Team and PowerSchool to ensure that issues are fixed.

In addition to the IEP data roll over issues, PowerSchool also updated their SIS system and the updates to that system altered our current student data in the main database. Special Education Administrators have spent numerous hours fixing coding errors for data that is required to be transferred to the DESE portal in October. Resolving the multiple errors has reduced the time available for the administrator's typical job responsibilities.

**SEPAC:**

SEPAC Officers, Katie Donovan and Laurie Davis met with Tasha Gamble and Joyce West to plan activities for this school year. The first SEPAC Meeting will be held virtually on October 17, 2024 from 6 to 7 pm. SEPAC Officers wanted to use this first meeting to welcome attendees and provide an overview of the SEPAC.