

# Gardner Public Schools



Mark Pellegrino, *Superintendent*

Gardner Public Schools

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Dear Gardner Academy Students, Families, Staff, and Friends,

Gardner Academy for Learning and Technology is being reorganized as of September, 2026. The Academy was conceived in 2008 to address Gardner High School's high dropout rate. At that time, almost one out of every ten students was dropping out of Gardner High School. However, Gardner High School has made significant progress since then. Their successes have led to a reduced average enrollment at the Academy from about sixty (60) Gardner resident students in 2011, to thirty (30) resident students today.

Considering the reduced size of the program, and budgetary reductions the district is facing, we have decided to reorganize Gardner Academy for Learning and Technology to be a small, separate school within Gardner High School starting in September, 2026. The students of Gardner Academy will continue to be enrolled in a separate school, with separate classrooms that have intensive support. However, their classrooms will be housed within Gardner High School.

While we know change is difficult, we believe that this change will be beneficial to our students in the long run. Here are some key points that have been designed to ensure our Gardner Academy students continue to get what they need:

- Mr. Bartkus will be the principal for Gardner High and Gardner Academy starting today, ensuring a smooth transition and improved future referral process;
- Students will be provided opportunities to provide input into the Academy's new structure;
- Mr. Beauregard and Mr. Baumeister will continue to be the school's lead teachers;
- A special education teacher will be dedicated to the school;
- There will be dedicated classrooms with small class sizes and intensive support;
- The collaboration with Mount Wachusett Community College will be expanded to support more vocational training, college prep courses, and career pathways; and
- Students will have more access to mental health and tiered supports by sharing resources with Gardner High School.

We believe these changes will continue to serve our students well. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to email me at [pellegm@gardnerk12.org](mailto:pellegm@gardnerk12.org), or call me at (978) 632-1000.

Sincerely,

Mark Pellegrino, Ed.D.

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