

Gardner Public Schools

Mark J. Pellegrino, *Superintendent*



www.gardnerk12.org

70 Waterford Street, Gardner, MA 01440

(978) 632-1000

November 13, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Gardner Public Schools is committed to the success of our students and is implementing a universal social, emotional, and behavioral (SEB) screening for all students in identified grades. The social-emotional functioning of each student plays an important role in their learning and long-term success. Gardner Public Schools has begun the process of creating a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) linked directly to the assessed needs of our students. Universal SEB screening is recognized as a foundational component of a comprehensive, multi-tiered system of school-based support. Within MTSS, Response to Intervention or RTI, provides all students with timely and targeted interventions based upon the results of the universal screening tools in social emotional functioning and behavior.

Universal screening helps school staff determine which students may be socially, emotionally, or behaviorally “at risk”. Gardner Public Schools is utilizing a universal screening tool known as the *Behavioral and Emotional Screening System* (BESS) in all classrooms in grades K-10 in the district. The BESS consists of a teacher questionnaire and does not require direct assessment of your child. The BESS will be completed by your child’s classroom teacher twice during the school year. Students in grades 8 and 9, and students at GALT will complete the BESS self-assessment.

Students whose scores fall within a certain range are identified as possibly needing more social-emotional supports or behavior interventions. The results of the tool will be used to provide students with tiered support to help them engage positively in learning, and to provide data to the district regarding current social emotional learning (SEL) practices.

If you would prefer your child not take part in this universal screening program, please contact the school psychologist in your student’s building by **11/25/2020**:

Waterford Street School: Megan Wilson	(978)-632-1605 ext. 5123
Elm Street School: Sarah Carter	(978)-632-1673 ext. 3510
Gardner Middle School: Allison Doherty	(978)-632-1603 ext. 2002
Gardner High School/Gardner Academy: Jessica Forst	(978)-632-1600 ext. 1130

We are committed to ensuring your child is supported academically, socially and emotionally, and we look forward to partnering with each of you toward achieving this goal.

Sincerely,

District Administration

Community • Appreciation • Responsibility • Excellence