

Agenda School Committee Meeting 2.9.26

Mission Statement

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

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

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

GARDNER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

REGULAR MEETING OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Monday, February 9, 2026, 6:00 PM
City Council Chambers, City Hall, Gardner, MA 01440

ORDER OF BUSINESS

- A. **Call to Order**
- B. **Open Time for General Public –**
- C. **Consent Agenda**
 - a. Approval of Minutes: January 6, 2026
 - b. Accept Grant Funds on Grant listing dated February 9, 2026 in the amount of \$5,200.00
 - Warrant # 26-27, dated December 31, 2025, in the amount of \$435,663.55
 - Warrant # 26-28, dated January 8, 2026, in the amount of \$328,903.50
 - Warrant # 26-29, dated January 15, 2026, in the amount of \$83,900.29
 - Warrant # 26-30, dated January 22 2026, in the amount of \$158,601.57
 - Donations –
- D. **Subcommittee Report**
 - Facilities Subcommittee
 - Finance Subcommittee
- E. **Student Advisory Board - Aiden Lospennato & Natalie Ruiz**

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GARDNER, MA

Agenda School Committee Meeting 2.9.26

F. Discussion Items:

Item #3749 Second Reading of Policies (Vote Required)

DBD – Budget Planning

DBJ – Budget Transfer Authority

DD – Grants, Proposals, and Special Projects

DGA – Authorized Signatures

DH – Bonded Employees and Officers

DI – Fiscal Accounting and Reporting

DIE - Audits

DJ - Purchasing

IJOA – Field Trips

IJOA-E - Field Trip Approval Form

The Policy Subcommittee recommends acceptance of the above policies

Item #3750 CAPS Collaborative 2nd quarter update (**Information**)

Item #3751 Program of Studies (**Information**)

Item #3752 School Improvement Plans (**GHS, GMS & GES**) (**Presentations**)

Item #3753 2026-2027 School Choice Acceptance (**Vote Required**)

Item #3754 2026-2027 School Committee Schedule of Meetings (**Vote Required**)

Item #3755 GMS Overnight Field Trip, Outdoor Classroom, Groton, MA 5.5-8.2026 (**Vote Required**)

Item #3756 GHS Senior Class Day Field Trip to Chucksters Family Fun Park, Chichester, NH – May 19, 2026 (**Vote Required**)

Item #3757 GHS Field Trip, Grades 8-12th Canobie Lake Park, Salem, NH - May 18, 2026 (**Vote Required**)

Item #3758 Curriculum Coordinator Update (**Information**)

Item #3759 Grants Administrator Update (**Information**)

Item #3760 Special Education Update (**Information**)

G. Communications

H. Final Comments of School Committee

I. Executive Session

J. Next Meeting:

Meeting date for the future School Committee meeting;

Monday, March 9, 2026 @6:00PM

K. Adjournment

GARDNER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BRIEFING

REGULAR MEETING OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Monday, February 9, 2026, 6:00 PM
City Council Chambers, City Hall, Gardner, MA 01440

ORDER OF BUSINESS

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- C. Consent Agenda**
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 - Donations –
- D. Subcommittee Report**
 - Facilities Subcommittee
 - Finance Subcommittee
- E. Student Advisory Board – Aiden Lospennato & Natalie Ruiz**
- F. Discussion Items:**
 - Item #3749 Second Reading of Policies (Vote Required)**
 - DBD** – Budget Planning
 - DBJ** – Budget Transfer Authority
 - DD** – Grants, Proposals, and Special Projects
 - DGA** – Authorized Signatures
 - DH** – Bonded Employees and Officers
 - DI** – Fiscal Accounting and Reporting
 - DIE** - Audits
 - DJ** - Purchasing
 - IJOA** – Field Trips
 - IJOA-E** - Field Trip Approval Form

The Policy Subcommittee recommends acceptance of the above policies

- Item #3750** CAPS Collaborative 2nd quarter update (**Information**)
- Item #3751** Program of Studies (**Information**)
- Item #3752** School Improvement Plans (**GHS, GMS & GES**) (**Presentations**)
- Item #3753** 2026-2027 School Choice Acceptance (**Vote Required**)
- Item #3754** 2026-2027 School Committee Schedule of Meetings (**Vote Required**)

Briefing

School Committee Meeting 2.9.2026

Item #3755 GMS Overnight Field Trip, Outdoor Classroom, Groton, MA 5.5-8.2026
(Vote Required)

Item #3756 GHS Senior Class Day Field Trip to Chucksters Family Fun Park,
Chichester, NH – May 19, 2026 **(Vote Required)**

Item #3757 GHS Field Trip, Grades 8-12th Canobie Lake Park, Salem, NH - May 18,
2026 **(Vote Required)**

Item #3758 Curriculum Coordinator Update **(Information)**

Item #3759 Grants Administrator Update **(Information)**

Item #3760 Special Education Update **(Information)**

G. Communication

H. Final Comments of School Committee

I. Executive Session

J. Next Meeting:

Meeting date for next School Committee meeting;
Monday, March 9, 2026 @6:00PM

K. Adjournment

Gardner School Committee

City Council Chambers, 95 Pleasant Street, Gardner, Massachusetts

Regular Meeting – January 6, 2026

Members present: Mayor Michael Nicholson
Rachel Cormier
Anne Hurst
John LaFreniere
Jennifer Pelavin
Robert Swartz
Paul Cormier

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

Student Advisors: Aiden Lospennato Student Representative to the School Committee
Natalie Ruiz Student Representative to the School Committee

Call to Order

Mayor Nicholson, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. The meeting opened with a roll call and the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting was broadcast live on Channel 8 (Gardner Educational Television Station).

Open Time for the General Public

No one from the General Public requested to speak.

Introduction of School Committee Members

Mayor Nicholson welcomed Mr. Paul Cormier as the new School Committee Member sworn into office on January 5, 2026

Reorganization of School Committee - Officers

Mayor Nicholson read Chapter 37 of the City Charter regarding election of School Committee Officers. Nominations may be made from the floor and no second is required. Members may second the nomination to show support.

Vice Chair

Mrs. Pelavin nominated Mrs. Rachel Cormier to serve as Vice Chair of the Gardner School Committee for the ensuing year. Seconded by Mr. LaFreniere

Mayor Nicholson asked three times if there were other nominations for Vice Chair. There were none.

Mr. Swartz moved that nominations for Vice Chair be closed.

Seconded by Mr. LaFreniere. Vote - so voted.
Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

As required, a roll call vote was taken on the nomination of Mrs. Cormier.

Mrs. Cormier	Mrs. Cormier
Mr. LaFreniere	Mrs. Cormier
Mr. Swartz	Mrs. Cormier
Mrs. Pelavin	Mrs. Cormier
Mrs. Hurst	Mrs. Cormier
Mr. Cormier	Mrs. Cormier
Mayor Nicholson	Mrs. Cormier

Count - 7 in favor. Unanimous. Mrs. Cormier will serve as Vice Chair.

Finance Officer

Mrs. Pelavin nominated Mr. John LaFreniere to serve as Finance Officer of the Gardner School Committee for the ensuing year. Seconded by Mrs. Cormier.

Mayor Nicholson asked three times if there were other nominations for Finance Officer. There were none.

Mr. Swartz moved that nominations for Finance Officer be closed.
Seconded by Mrs. Pelavin. Vote - so voted.
Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

As required, a roll call vote was taken on the nomination of Mr. LaFreniere.

Mrs. Cormier	Mr. LaFreniere
Mr. LaFreniere	Mr. LaFreniere
Mr. Swartz	Mr. LaFreniere
Mrs. Pelavin	Mr. LaFreniere
Mrs. Hurst	Mr. LaFreniere
Mr. Cormier	Mr. LaFreniere
Mayor Nicholson	Mr. LaFreniere

Count - 7 in favor. Unanimous. Mr. LaFreniere will serve as Finance Officer.

Alternate Finance Officers

Mr. LaFreniere nominated Mrs. Pelavin and Mr. Swartz to serve as Alternate Finance Officers for the Gardner School Committee for the ensuing year.

Mayor Nicholson asked three times if there were other nominations for Alternate Finance Officers. There were none.

**Mr. Swartz moved that nominations for Alternate Finance Officers be closed.
Seconded by Mr. LaFreniere
Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.**

Vote - so voted.

As required, a roll call vote was taken on the nominations of Mr. Swartz and Mrs. Pelavin.

Mrs. Cormier	Mrs. Pelavin and Mr. Swartz
Mr. LaFreniere	Mrs. Pelavin and Mr. Swartz
Mr. Swartz	Mrs. Pelavin and Mr. Swartz
Mrs. Pelavin	Mrs. Pelavin and Mr. Swartz
Mrs. Hurst	Mrs. Pelavin and Mr. Swartz
Mr. Cormier	Mrs. Pelavin and Mr. Swartz
Mayor Nicholson	Mrs. Pelavin and Mr. Swartz

Count - 7 in favor. Unanimous. Mr. Swartz and Mrs. Pelavin will serve as Alternate Finance Officers.

Secretary

Mrs. Pelavin nominated Mrs. Hurst to serve as Secretary of the Gardner School Committee for the ensuing year. Seconded by Mrs. Cormier.

Mayor Nicholson asked three times if there were other nominations for Secretary. There were none.

**Mr. Swartz moved that nominations for Secretary be closed.
Seconded by Mr. LaFreniere.
Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.**

Vote - so voted.

As required, a roll call vote was taken on the nomination of Mrs. Hurst.

Mrs. Cormier	Mrs. Hurst
Mr. LaFreniere	Mrs. Hurst
Mr. Swartz	Mrs. Hurst
Mrs. Pelavin	Mrs. Hurst
Mrs. Hurst	Mrs. Hurst
Mr. Cormier	Mrs. Hurst
Mayor Nicholson	Mrs. Hurst

Count - 7 in favor. Unanimous. Mrs. Hurst will serve as Secretary.

Consent Agenda

Mr. LaFrenier moved to accept the Consent Agenda as presented:

- Acceptance of Minutes, December 8, 2025**

- **Ratification of the following Warrants as recommended by the Finance Subcommittee:**
- Warrant # 26-19, dated November 6, 2025, in the amount of \$170,510.57
- Warrant # 26-20, dated November 13, 2025, in the amount of \$139,835.48
- Warrant # 26-21, dated November 20, 2025, in the amount of \$268,644.06
- Donations-
 - Shun Fa Lan, Inc. (dba Yen Yen) \$2,500.00

Seconded by Mr. Swartz

Vote - so voted.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Policy Subcommittee

Mrs. Hurst, Chair of the Policy Subcommittee, reported that the Subcommittee met on December 17, 2025. Minutes of the meeting were presented.

The following policies were reviewed and no changes were required and they will be updated “Reviewed December, 2025”:

- ADF – Local Wellness Policy
- DCB – Fiscal Year
- DFG – Use of School Facilities and Equipment, Security and Management
- DJE – Bidding Requirements

Ten policies were recommended to the full School Committee for a first reading. See (Item #3746)

Eight Policies were recommended for second read (Item#3747)

Mayor asked the members if there would be any objection to taking the following out of order **Items 3746 & 3747.**

There were no objections

NEW BUSINESS

Item #3746 – First Reading of Policies

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

- **DBD** – Budget Planning
- **DBJ** – Budget Transfer Authority
- **DD** – Grants, Proposals, and Special Projects
- **DGA** – Authorized Signatures
- **DH** – Bonded Employees and Officers
- **DI** – Fiscal Accounting and Reporting
- **DIE** – Audits

- **DJ** - Purchasing
- **IJOA** – Field Trips
- **IJOA-E** - Field Trip Approval Form

Item #3747 – Second Reading of Policies

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

- **BGD** – School Committee Review of Procedures
- **BHC** – School Committee – Staff Communications
- **BIBA** – School Committee Conferences, Conventions, and Workshops
- **CB** – School Superintendent
- **CH** – Policy Implementation
- **CHCA** – Approval of Handbooks and Directives
- **CHD** - Administration in Policy Absence
- **JBB** - Educational Equity

Seconded by Mrs. Cormier.

Vote - so voted.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

Student Advisory Board

Ms. Natalie Ruiz & Mr. Aiden Lospennato gave their report

Congratulations to our December Wildcat Winners:

Gardner High School was one of a small number of schools invited to attend the Celebrating Academic Success Conference in Marlborough on December 3rd. Schools invited were recognized for having their most recent MCAS scores reach or exceed pre-pandemic levels.

We held our first Annual Holiday Movie Night, on December 13th, where all GPS families were invited to watch a holiday movie with free snacks and drinks in the GHS gymnasium. More than twenty-five families attended.

On December 17th, the English classes for the Class of 2028 were able to go to the Hanover Theatre to see "A Christmas Carol". The play was great, and the students had a wonderful time.

We held our Annual Student Success Assembly where upperclassmen shared their personal experiences of overcoming obstacles and finding success.

We held our Holiday Concert on Thursday, December 18th. The band and chorus programs continue to be top notch and were in full display for a packed Landry Auditorium.

Students interested in engineering were able to visit multiple innovative companies and speak directly with engineers to learn about their work.

Our winter athletic season has officially tipped off. A number of students have worked hard to join our athletic teams and a number of teams already have some wins under their

belts and Cam Gamache reached his 1,000-point milestone this past weekend, January 3rd.

Mayor welcomes and thanks Ms. Ruiz, he let her know he used to sit in her seat when he was in high school.

COMMUNICATIONS

Dr. Pellegrino wished everyone a Happy New Year, we are off to a great start. Welcome Natalie Ruiz to the committee as our student representative, Natalie is a senior with three years of best buddies she is top ten in her class and is looking into college to study business. I hope everyone had a great holiday and I'm excited to start the next semester.

FINAL COMMENTS

Mrs. Cormier

Looking forward to the new term. Nice to see Mr. Cormier here. Thank you for welcoming me back as Vice Chair.

Mr. LaFreniere

Welcome Paul Cormier, looking forward to working with you. Thank you Aiden & Natalie

Mr. Swartz

Happy New Year Everyone, Welcome Paul Cormier our committee is now even with three women and three men. Looking forward to January 20th very excited about the National Honor Society invitation to the induction.

Mrs. Pelavin

Happy New Year, Congratulations John, Rachel & Bob for your sub-committee positions and welcome Paul to the School Committee.

Mrs. Hurst.

Same as Ms. Pelavin, and looking forward to another four years with the committee.

Congratulations to everyone. Looking forward to the NHS Induction.

Mr. Cormier

Thank you all for the well-wishing. Very excited to see what the young students bring to offer. I'd like to close with a quote; Education is not the filling of the pail, but the lighting of a fire".

Mayor Nicholson

There is a Parking Ban in effect tonight that just went out. The Rockwell committee will be meeting in February to review applications. Applications are coming in and are open until January 30th. exciting time of year for everyone that applies. I hope you can all join us this Thursday, January 8th for the City Inauguration at 6:30. Please let Ryan in my office know if you can attend and we will have a seat for you.

Regular Meeting

**January 6, 2026
Page 7**

The Next meeting will take place on Monday, February 9, 2026 6:00PM

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. LaFreniere moved to adjourn.

Seconded by. Mr. Swartz

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

Vote – so voted.

The meeting adjourned at 6:16 pm

Anne Hurst, Secretary

B. Smith, Recording Secretary

Gardner Public Schools

Courtney Dunn, *Grants & Communications Manager*



www.gardnerk12.org

160 Elm Street, Gardner, MA 01440

(978) 632-1000

Grant Funding for Approval – February 9, 2026

Grant Title	Amount	Grant Period	Use of Funds
FY26 Fund Code 0199: Interpreter in the Education Setting Training Grant	\$5,200	Approval-8/31/26	To provide training to two bilingual staff to support administrators and families in meetings where interpretation is required.

Community • Appreciation • Responsibility • Excellence

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

**GARDNER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SYNOPSIS OF WARRANT**

WARRANT #: 26-27

WARRANT DATE 12/31/25

Location	Office / General / Custodial Supplies	Curriculum / Assessment	Salary pd thru Vendor	MTSS/PBIS	Athletics	IT	Facilities	Utilities	TOTAL
High School	\$ 1,117.75	\$ 34.99				\$ 2,701.22	\$ 2,686.90		\$ 6,540.86
Middle School			\$ 5,470.50			\$ 1,443.03	\$ 79.88		\$ 6,993.41
Gardner Elementary School	\$ 4,740.07					\$ 2,722.32	\$ 4,026.77		\$ 11,489.16
GALT									\$ -
Sub-Total	\$ 5,857.82	\$ 34.99	\$ 5,470.50	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,866.57	\$ 6,793.55	\$ -	\$ 25,023.43

Location	Office Supplies	Curriculum	Speech/OCC	Transportation	IT	Prof Services	Tuition	Facilities	Utilities	Dues & Mem	Carry Forward	TOTAL
Special Education				\$ 71,477.94	\$ 992.07	#####	\$ 67,424.01					#####
Administration					\$17,585.48			\$ 4,306.92			\$ 7,101.53	\$ 28,993.93
Sub-Total	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 71,477.94	\$18,577.55	#####	\$ 67,424.01	\$ 4,306.92	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,101.53	#####

Revolving Acct	\$ 245.00
Grants	\$ 9,738.72
Sub-Total	\$ 9,983.72

GRAND TOTAL	\$435,663.55
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**GARDNER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SYNOPSIS OF WARRANT**

WARRANT #: 26-28

WARRANT DATE 01/08/26

Location	Office / General / Custodial Supplies	Curriculum / Assessment	Salary pd thru Vendor	MTSS/PBIS	Athletics	IT	Facilities	Utilities	TOTAL
High School					\$ 2,393.10		\$ 30,702.86	\$ 350.00	\$ 33,445.96
Middle School			\$ 5,152.50				\$ 24,251.40	\$ 650.00	\$ 30,053.90
Gardner Elementary School		#####					\$ 41,897.89	\$ 400.00	\$ 43,584.24
GALT							\$ 3,308.59		\$ 3,308.59
Sub-Total	\$ -	#####	\$ 5,152.50	\$ -	\$ 2,393.10	\$ -	\$ 100,160.74	\$ 1,400.00	#####

Location	Office Supplies	Curriculum	Speech/OCC	Transportation	IT	Prof Services	Tuition	Facilities	Utilities	Admin Travel/ Prof Dev	Carry Forward	TOTAL
Special Education			\$ 5,700.62	\$ 85,535.00		\$ 2,131.25	\$ 29,965.74					#####
Administration					\$ 2,275.18			\$ 25,342.59	\$ 300.00	\$ 460.68	\$ 350.00	\$ 28,728.45
Sub-Total	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,700.62	\$ 85,535.00	\$ 2,275.18	\$ 2,131.25	\$ 29,965.74	\$ 25,342.59	\$ 300.00	\$ 460.68	\$ 350.00	#####

Revolving Acct	\$ 12,219.00
Grants	\$ 34,082.00
GHS Auditorium	\$ 20,148.75
Sub-Total	\$ 66,449.75

GRAND TOTAL	\$328,903.50
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**GARDNER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SYNOPSIS OF WARRANT**

WARRANT #: 26-29

WARRANT DATE: 01/15/26

Location	Office / General / Custodial Supplies	Curriculum / Assessment	Salary pd thru Vendor	MTSS/PBIS	Nurse	IT	Facilities	Utilities	TOTAL
High School					\$ 38.80	\$ 59.99		\$ 24,964.56	\$ 25,063.35
Middle School							\$ 45.98	\$ 13,666.21	\$ 13,712.19
Gardner Elementary School								\$ 21,380.47	\$ 21,380.47
GALT								\$ 5,849.78	\$ 5,849.78
Sub-Total	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 38.80	\$ 59.99	\$ 45.98	\$ 65,861.02	\$ 66,005.79

Location	Office Supplies	Curriculum	Speech/OCC	Travel	IT	Prof Services	Tuition	Facilities	Utilities	Carry Forward	TOTAL
Special Education											\$ -
Administration				\$ 82.02					\$ 5,849.78	\$ 190.83	\$ 6,122.63
Sub-Total	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 82.02	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,849.78	\$ 190.83	\$ 6,122.63

Revolving Acct	\$ 11,771.87
Sub-Total	\$ 11,771.87

GRAND TOTAL	\$83,900.29
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**GARDNER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SYNOPSIS OF WARRANT**

WARRANT #: 26-30

WARRANT DATE: 01/22/26

Location	Office / General / Custodial Supplies	Curriculum / Assessment	Salary pd thru Vendor	MTSS/PBIS	ATHLETICS	IT	Facilities	Utilities	TOTAL
High School				\$ 353.12	\$ 4,558.51		\$ 5,387.45		\$ 10,299.08
Middle School			\$ 5,341.00		\$ 338.00		\$ 1,181.50		\$ 6,860.50
Gardner Elementary School							\$ 981.50		\$ 981.50
GALT		\$ 134.97					\$ 384.00		\$ 518.97
Sub-Total	\$ -	\$ 134.97	\$ 5,341.00	\$ 353.12	\$ 4,896.51	\$ -	\$ 7,934.45	\$ -	\$ 18,660.05

Location	Office Supplies	Curriculum	Speech/OCC	Travel	IT	Prof Services	Dues & Mem	Facilities	Prof Dev	Carry Forward	TOTAL
Special Education	\$ 59.80		\$ 8,976.15	\$ 29,905.00		\$ 2,845.65	\$ -	\$ -			\$ 41,786.60
Administration	\$ 26.10	#####			\$ 3,635.92		\$ 150.00	\$ 384.00	\$ 2,261.41	\$ 1,677.20	\$ 12,004.73
Sub-Total	\$ 85.90	#####	\$ 8,976.15	\$ 29,905.00	\$ 3,635.92	\$ 2,845.65	\$ 150.00	\$ 384.00	\$ 2,261.41	\$ 1,677.20	\$ 53,791.33

Revolving Acct	\$ 5,234.43
Grants	\$ 80,915.76
Sub-Total	\$ 86,150.19

GRAND TOTAL	\$158,601.57
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GARDNER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Elm Street School
160 Elm Street, Gardner, MA 01440
Finance Sub-Committee Meeting
Thursday, February 2, 2026 at 5:00pm

Minutes

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

Members Absent:

Others Present: Mr. Mark Hawke, Director of Finance & Operations, Dr. Mark Pellegrino, Superintendent, Mr. Wayne Anderson, Director of Facilities, Ms. Joyce West, Director of Pupil Personnel Services

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

Motion to approve the minutes of the previous meetings was made by Mr. Swartz, seconded by Mrs. Pelavin. So Voted.

Expense Report Review:

The committee reviewed the Year to Date Expense report. Mr. Hawke noted Comcast processed our e-rate discount and the Management & Information line is back to normal. The Out of District Tuition line is negative, and is about \$40k more than last month. Mrs. Pelavin noted that the GES electricity line item was negative and all the others were positive. Mr. Hawke will look into this. Mr. Swartz asked about the Acquisition of Equipment line. Mr. Hawke noted the district needs a new pickup truck as the 2012 GMC Sierra has over 100K miles and will not pass inspection. It was submitted as a Capital need on the latest Capital Improvement report and we are waiting to see if we get the funding from the City.

The Revolving accounts were reviewed and are all healthy and operating as normal.

Projects Update:

N/A

New Business:

Mr. Hawke presented a preliminary budget preview showing the anticipated revenues and expenses. There is currently an anticipated \$2 million deficit the team is working to resolve.

Joyce West presented information and graphs depicting the rapid increase in Students With Disabilities (SWD). The information included charts showing how Gardner stands as compared to the state as well as other similar districts with regards to SWD population, autism rates and other sectors. Gardner is higher than the state averages and comparative districts averages, especially at the elementary level. All of this is going to lead to higher than normal Out of District (OOD) costs and a re-structuring of our Pre-K program.

Motion to adjourn 5:53 pm, So Voted.

BUDGET PLANNING

A significant portion of income for the operation of the public school system is derived from local property taxes. The school committee will attempt to protect the valid interest of the taxpayers. However, the first priority in the development of an annual budget will be the educational welfare of the children in our schools.

Budget decisions reflect the attitude and philosophy of those charged with the responsibility for educational decision-making. Therefore, a sound budget development process must be established to ensure that the annual operating budget accurately reflects the goals and objectives of the Gardner Public School System.

In the budget planning process for the school system, the school committee will strive to:

1. Engage in thorough advance planning, in order to develop budgets and guide expenditures in a manner that will achieve the greatest educational returns and contributions to the educational program in relationship to dollars expended.
2. Establish levels of funding that will provide high quality education for all our students.
3. Use the best available techniques for budget development and management.

The superintendent will have overall responsibility for budget preparation, including the construction of, and adherence to, a budget calendar.

Source: MASC

[Adopted: October 1998]

[Reviewed: December 2003]

[Reviewed: May 2008]

[Reviewed: February 2019]

[Reviewed: December 2021]

[Reviewed: March 2023]

[Revised: 2026]

BUDGET TRANSFER AUTHORITY

In keeping with the need for the periodic reconciliation of the school department's budget, the school committee will consider requests for transfers of appropriations of over \$10,000.00 as the superintendent recommends them.

The school business administrator is authorized to approve transfers of appropriations under \$1,000.00. The superintendent is authorized to approve transfers of appropriations between \$1,000.00 and 10,000.00.

The school committee shall be kept informed of these adjustments.

All funds in the general account not expended by the close of the fiscal year will be carried over to the next fiscal year.

| Source: MASC

[Reference: MGL 71, Section 37]

[Adopted: October 1998]

[Revised: October 2002]

[Reviewed: February 2019]

[Reviewed: December 2021]

[Reviewed: February 2023]

| [Revised: 2026]

GRANTS, PROPOSALS, AND SPECIAL PROJECTS

In accordance with state law, all grants and gifts to the District must be reviewed and accepted by the School Committee before expenditure. The school committee will encourage the administration to seek and secure all possible sources of state, federal, and other special funds that will enhance the educational opportunities for the children of our schools.

The superintendent will keep informed of all possible funds available to the school system under the various state and federal programs, and in what manner these funds can best be used in the school system.

The Superintendent will be responsible for coordinating the development of proposals for all specially funded projects and for keeping the Committee apprised and updated on all such projects.

The Superintendent shall ensure the district has and follows a written set of procedures in grant administration that aligns with state and federal laws and regulations.

Source: MASC

[Reference: M.G.L. 44:53A;71:37A; 2CFR 200 Federal Uniform Administrative Requirements , MASC 2022]

[Adopted: October 1998]

[Reviewed: June 2002]

[Reviewed: February 2019]

[Reviewed: March 2022]

[Revised: January 2023]

[Revised: 2026]

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURES

The Finance Officer of the School Committee is authorized to sign payrolls on behalf of the School Committee. In his/her absence, any member of the Finance Subcommittee of the School Committee is authorized to sign payrolls.

All School Committee members are encouraged to review and sign the warrants and vouchers prior to the School Committee meeting when the official vote is taken on the warrants. The minimum number of signatures required for processing a warrant is three: Superintendent or designee, one School Committee member, and one School Committee member who is also a member of the Finance Subcommittee.

| Source: MASC

[Reference: M.G.L. 41:52, 41:41, 41:56; Policy BDBD, Duties of Finance Officer]

[Adopted: October 1998]

[Revised: June 2002]

[Revised: January 2007]

[Reviewed: February 2019]

[Reviewed: December 2021]

| [Revised: 2026]

BONDED EMPLOYEES AND OFFICERS

Each employee of the school system who is assigned the responsibility of receiving and/or dispensing school funds will be bonded individually or covered by a blanket bond. The cost of the bond will be paid by the city.

SOURCE: MASC ~~Updated 2022~~

[Reference: M.G.L. 40:5; 41:109A; 71:47]

[Adoption: October 1998]

[Reviewed: November 2003]

[Reviewed: February 2019]

[Reviewed: December 2021]

[Revised: April 2023]

[Revised: 2026]

FISCAL ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING

-The Superintendent will be ultimately responsible for receiving and properly accounting for all funds of the school district, maintaining effective internal controls so as to assure the effectiveness and efficiency of operations; adequate safeguarding of property; assurance of expenditures in accordance with programs under which revenues are received; and compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

The accounting system used will conform with the Uniform Massachusetts Accounting System as well as good accounting practices, providing for the appropriate separation of accounts, funds, and special monies, to state requirements and to sound business practices. ~~The system will provide for the appropriate separation of accounts, funds, and special monies.~~

The school committee will receive monthly financial statements from the superintendent showing the financial condition of the school department. Such other financial statements as may be determined necessary by either the committee or the administration will be presented as deemed necessary.

SOURCE: MASC ~~Updated 2022~~

LEGAL REF.: MGL Ch. [44:38](#)
603 CMR [10:00](#)
2 CFR 200.303

CROSS REFS: [DBJ](#) Budget Transfer Authority

[DIE](#) Audits

[Adopted: October 1998]

[Revised: June 2002]

[Reviewed: February 2019]

[Reviewed: December 2021]

[Revised: April 2023]

[Revised: 2026]

AUDITS

As a department of the City, an audit of the school department's accounts shall be conducted annually by external auditors within nine months of the close of the fiscal year. This review shall be conducted in accordance with the generally accepted accounting principles and the Government Auditing Standards issued by the U. S. Comptroller General.

Upon completion of the external audit, the Superintendent will share the resulting documentation with the Committee. The School Committee will consider the recommendations made by the auditor for maintaining an efficient system for recording and safeguarding the school department's assets.

Additionally, the district is also subject to the following:

- End of Year Financial Compliance Report: Every Massachusetts school district must submit the results of this report to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). This End of Year report must be submitted to the DESE on or before September 30 each year.
- Government Accounting Standards Board 34: The District is covered in these government financial statements of revenue and expenditures of the municipality.
- Federal grant audits: The District is subject to the Single Audit Act based on spending thresholds as dictated by law.
- Student Activity Account: As required by state law, student activity accounts are audited annually. For accounts that exceed \$25,000, the School Committee shall consider an audit conducted by an outside firm every three years

The Committee may request an additional audit of the school district's accounts at its discretion

SOURCE: MASC ~~Updated 2022~~

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. [44:38-40](#); [71:47](#); [72:3](#)

CROSS REFS: [DI](#), Fiscal Accounting and Reporting
[JJF](#), Student Activity Accounts

[Adopted: October 1998]

[Reviewed: October 2002]

[Reviewed: February 2019]

[Reviewed: March 2022]

[Revised: October 2023]

[Revised: 2026]

PURCHASING

The School Committee declares its intention to purchase competitively without prejudice and to seek maximum educational value for every dollar expended.

The acquisition of materials, equipment, and services will be centralized in the Superintendent's office of the school system.

The appropriate agent of the Business Office will coordinate, develop and administer the purchasing program for the schools in keeping with legal requirements and with the adopted school budget.

The City Purchasing Agent shall serve as the purchasing agent for the school department.

Source: MASC

[Reference: M.G.L. 7:22A; 7:22B; 30B; 71:49A]

[Adopted: October 1998]

[Reviewed: November 2002]

[Reviewed: February 2019]

[Reviewed: May 2022]

[Reviewed: April 2023]

[Revised: 2026]

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips can bring the school and the community closer together, which can result in real life experiences that enrich the curriculum for students and also bring about better public relations. ~~The School Committee will also encourage field trips as an integral part of the instructional programs in the schools.~~

The Superintendent will establish regulations to assure that:

1. ~~All students have permission from a parent or guardian for trips. For field trips on campus with no transportation required, all parents/guardians will be notified prior to the date/time of the trip. For field trips off campus with or without transportation, all students must submit a permission form signed by parents/guardians prior to the date/time of the trip.~~
2. All trips are properly supervised.
3. All safety precautions are observed.
4. All trips ~~contribute will enhance and/or supplement substantially to~~ the students' educational experience program.
5. All trips allow student access without regard of family ability to pay.

All overnight trips and excursions, except those required for student participation in tournament competition or contests, must have advance approval of the School Committee. Fundraising activities for such trips will be subject to approval by the appropriate Administrator.

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

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

CROSS REF.: [JJH](#), Policy Relating to Field Trips Involving Late Night or Overnight Travel

SOURCE: MASC October 2016

[Adopted: April 2001]
 [Reviewed: September 2003]
 [Revised: March 2004]
 [Revised: January 2006]
 [Revised: April 2008]

[Revised: October 2013]
[Revised: November 2016]
[Revised: February 2021]
[Revised: April 2024]
[Revised: September 2024]
[Revised: 2026]

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 _____

On Campus trip without transportation

Sample Parent Notification Letter Attached: yes no

Off Campus trip with or without transportation

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. Staff supervising students will bring a copy of their building’s Medical Behavioral Emergency Response Plan to follow in the case of a medical or behavioral emergency.

[Revised: January 2006]

[Reviewed: September 2013]

[Reviewed: October 2024]

[Revised: 20265]

ROSELLI, CLARK & ASSOCIATES
Certified Public Accountants

**CAPS EDUCATION
COLLABORATIVE**

Basic Financial Statements
and Additional Information

Year Ended June 30, 2025



CAPS EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE

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INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

Board of Directors
CAPS Education Collaborative
Westminster, Massachusetts

Opinions

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of CAPS Education Collaborative (the "Collaborative") as of and for the year ended June 30, 2025 and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the Collaborative's basic financial statements as listed in the table of contents.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the Collaborative as of June 30, 2025, and the respective changes in financial position and cash flows thereof for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Basis for Opinions

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of the Collaborative and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinions.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Collaborative's ability to continue as a going concern for twelve months beyond the financial statement date, including any currently known information that may raise substantial doubt shortly thereafter.

Emphasis of Matter – Restatement of Prior Period Financial Statements

As discussed in Note VI to the financial statements, the Collaborative restated its beginning net position as of July 1, 2024 due to the implementation of Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement No. 101, *Compensated Absences*. This restatement reflects a change in accounting principle to align with the updated recognition and measurement guidance for compensated absences. Our opinion is not modified with respect to this matter.

Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditors' report that includes our opinions. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Collaborative's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Collaborative's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we identified during the audit.

Required Supplementary Information

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require that the management's discussion and analysis and the schedules listed under the required supplementary information section in the accompanying table of contents be presented to supplement the basic financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and, although not a part of the basic financial statements, is required by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, who considers it to be an essential part of financial reporting for placing the basic financial statements in an appropriate operational, economic, or historical context. We have applied certain limited procedures to the required supplementary information in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, which consisted of inquiries of management about the methods of preparing the information and comparing the information for consistency with management's responses to our inquiries, the basic financial statements, and other knowledge we obtained during our audit of the basic financial statements. We do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the information because the limited procedures do not provide us with sufficient evidence to express an opinion or provide any assurance.

Other Information

Management is responsible for the disclosures required under Massachusetts General Law as listed under the other information section in the accompanying table of contents. This other information is required by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education but does not include the basic financial statements and our auditors' report thereon. Our opinions on the basic financial statements do not cover the other information, and we do not express an opinion or any form of assurance thereon.

In connection with our audit of the basic financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and consider whether a material inconsistency exists between the other information and the basic financial statements, or the other information otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work performed, we conclude that an uncorrected material misstatement of the other information exists, we are required to describe it in our report.



Roselli, Clark & Associates
Certified Public Accountants
Woburn, Massachusetts
October 27, 2025

MANAGEMENT’S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

As the management of CAPS Education Collaborative (the “Collaborative”), we offer readers of the Collaborative’s financial statements this narrative overview and analysis of the financial activities of the Collaborative for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2025. We encourage readers to consider the information presented here in conjunction with their review of the basic financial statements, notes to the basic financial statements and other information found in this report.

Financial Highlights

- The assets and deferred outflows of financial resources of the Collaborative exceeded its liabilities and deferred inflows of financial resources at June 30, 2025 by \$3,445,235 (*net position*).
- The Collaborative’s total net position increased \$1,185,032 in fiscal year 2025. This increase was due to continued revenue growth.
- As of June 30, 2025, the Collaborative’s governmental funds balance sheet reported a combined ending fund balance of \$3,337,109, which is an increase of \$1,090,201 from the prior year.
- At June 30, 2025, the unassigned fund balance for the general fund was nearly 17% of the total fiscal year 2025 general fund expenditures.
- For financial reporting purposes, the Collaborative reports long-term debt in the form of lease liabilities for its transportation equipment and facilities. These lease liabilities totaled \$1,441,819 and \$1,590,162 at June 30, 2025 and 2024, respectively.
- Subsequent to the end of the year, the Collaborative executed a twelve-year facility lease for approximately 34,000 square feet of classroom space in Leominster, Massachusetts. The lease calls for annual fixed lease payments of approximately \$654,000 for the first twelve years of the lease; renewal options are available for two five-year options. Total minimum lease payments on this lease agreement will approach \$7.9 million over the twelve-year term.

Overview of the Financial Statements

This discussion and analysis is intended to serve as an introduction to the Collaborative’s basic financial statements. The Collaborative’s basic financial statements comprise three components: (1) government-wide financial statements, (2) governmental fund financial statements and (3) notes to the basic financial statements. This report also contains required supplementary information and other information required by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education of the Commonwealth (“DESE”) in addition to the basic financial statements themselves.

Government-Wide Financial Statements – The government-wide financial statements are designed to provide readers with a broad overview of the Collaborative’s finances, in a manner similar to a private-sector business.

The statement of net position presents information on all the Collaborative’s assets and deferred outflows of resources and its liabilities and deferred inflows of resources, with the difference between these figures reported as net position. Over time, increases or decreases in net position may serve as a useful indicator of whether the financial position of the Collaborative is improving or deteriorating.

The statement of activities presents information showing how the Collaborative's net position changed during the most recent fiscal year. All changes in net position are reported as soon as the underlying event giving rise to the change occurs, regardless of the timing of related cash flows. Thus, revenues and expenses are reported in this statement for some items that will only result in cash flows in future fiscal periods.

The Collaborative is engaged in a single governmental activity. The Collaborative does not report any business-type activities.

Fund Accounting – A fund is a grouping of related accounts that is used to maintain control over resources that have been segregated for specific activities or objectives. The Collaborative, like state and local governments, uses fund accounting to ensure and demonstrate compliance with finance-related legal requirements. All of the funds of the Collaborative are governmental funds; the Collaborative does not have any proprietary or fiduciary funds.

Governmental Funds – Governmental funds are used to account for essentially the same functions reported as governmental activities in the government-wide financial statements. However, unlike the government-wide financial statements, governmental fund financial statements focus on near-term inflows and outflows of spendable resources, as well as on balances of spendable resources available at the end of the fiscal year. Such information may be useful in evaluating a government's near-term financing requirements.

Because the focus of governmental funds is narrower than that of the government-wide financial statements, it is useful to compare the information presented for governmental funds with similar information presented for governmental activities in the government-wide financial statements. By doing so, readers may better understand the long-term impact of the government's near-term financing decisions.

The Collaborative maintains two individual governmental funds. Information is presented separately in the governmental fund balance sheet and in the governmental fund statement of revenues, expenditures, and changes in fund balances for the general and capital reserve funds.

The Collaborative adopts an annual budget for its general fund. A budgetary comparison schedule has been provided for the general fund to demonstrate compliance with this budget. This schedule has been prepared as required supplementary information and can be found along with its corresponding notes in this report.

Accounting guidelines distinguish fund balance between amounts that are considered nonspendable, such as fund balance associated with prepaid items and inventories, and other amounts that are classified based on the relative strength of the constraints that control the purposes for which specific amounts can be spent. Beginning with the most binding constraints, fund balance amounts will be reported in the following classifications:

- Nonspendable – amounts that cannot be spent because they are either (a) not in spendable form (i.e., inventory or prepaid items) or (b) legally or contractually required to be maintained intact.
- Restricted – amounts constrained by external parties, constitutional provision, or enabling legislation.
- Committed – amounts constrained by a government using its highest level of decision-making authority.
- Assigned – amounts a government intends to use for a particular purpose.

- Unassigned – amounts that are not constrained at all will be reported in the general fund or in other major funds, if negative.

Notes to the Financial Statements – The notes provide additional information that is essential to a full understanding of the data provided in the government-wide and fund financial statements.

Required Supplementary Information – In addition to the basic financial statements and accompanying notes, this report also presents certain required supplementary information concerning the Collaborative’s budget to actual results, pensions and other postemployment benefit liabilities.

Other Information – DESE requires that the basic financial statements be accompanied by additional disclosures, which are included in the Other Information section of these basic financial statements.

Government-Wide Financial Analysis

The condensed comparative statements of net position for the two most recent years are as follows:

	June 30, 2025	June 30, 2024 (a)	Dollar Change	Percent Change
Assets:				
Current and other assets	\$ 5,083,276	\$ 3,975,848	\$ 1,107,428	27.9%
Capital assets, net	<u>2,146,745</u>	<u>2,209,339</u>	<u>(62,594)</u>	-2.8%
Total Assets	<u>7,230,021</u>	<u>6,185,187</u>	<u>1,044,834</u>	16.9%
Liabilities:				
Long-term liabilities	1,251,835	1,887,532	(635,697)	-33.7%
Other liabilities	<u>2,532,951</u>	<u>2,037,452</u>	<u>495,499</u>	24.3%
Total Liabilities	<u>3,784,786</u>	<u>3,924,984</u>	<u>(140,198)</u>	-3.6%
Net Position:				
Net investment in capital assets	704,926	619,177	85,749	13.8%
Unrestricted	<u>2,740,309</u>	<u>1,641,026</u>	<u>1,099,283</u>	67.0%
Total Net Position	<u>\$ 3,445,235</u>	<u>\$ 2,260,203</u>	<u>\$ 1,185,032</u>	52.4%

(a) As restated for a change in accounting principle.

As noted earlier, net position may serve over time as a useful indicator of a government’s financial position. The Collaborative’s total net position increased \$1,185,032 in fiscal year 2025 as the pace of increases to instructional charges for services exceeded the pace of increases to instructional expenses.

The largest portion of the Collaborative’s total net position is reported as unrestricted. Unrestricted net position increased by \$1,099,283 from the prior year. The Collaborative also reports \$704,926 of its total net position as net investment in capital assets.

The condensed comparative statements of activities for the two most recent years are as follows:

	Year Ended June 30,		Dollar Change	Percent Change
	2025	2024		
Revenues:				
Program revenues:				
Charges for services	\$ 15,777,204	\$ 13,423,618	\$ 2,353,586	17.5%
Operating grants and contributions	2,057,988	2,240,216	(182,228)	-8.1%
General revenues:				
Member assessments	100,620	93,924	6,696	7.1%
Other	<u>125,576</u>	<u>74,414</u>	<u>51,162</u>	68.8%
Total Revenues	<u>18,061,388</u>	<u>15,832,172</u>	<u>2,229,216</u>	14.1%
Expenses:				
Instruction and other student services	14,656,861	14,205,652	451,209	3.2%
Administration and office	1,185,656	988,399	197,257	20.0%
Facilities	800,892	622,099	178,793	28.7%
Transportation	160,896	77,948	82,948	106.4%
Interest expense	<u>72,051</u>	<u>18,938</u>	<u>53,113</u>	280.5%
Total Expenses	<u>16,876,356</u>	<u>15,913,036</u>	<u>963,320</u>	6.1%
Change in Net Position	<u>1,185,032</u>	<u>(80,864)</u>	<u>1,265,896</u>	-1565.5%
Net Position:				
Beginning of year	2,260,203	2,943,267	(683,064)	
Change in accounting principle	<u>-</u>	<u>(602,200)</u>	<u>602,200</u>	
End of year	<u>\$ 3,445,235</u>	<u>\$ 2,260,203</u>	<u>\$ 1,185,032</u>	

Revenues totaled \$18,061,388 in fiscal year 2025 versus \$15,832,172 in the prior fiscal year. The \$2,229,216 increase in revenues was due primarily to increased charges for instruction as well as other services. Additionally, operating grants and contributions, which consist primarily of pension contributions made on behalf of the Collaborative by the Commonwealth, decreased approximately \$182,000 year-over-year.

Expenses totaled \$16,876,356 in fiscal year 2025 versus \$15,913,036 in the prior fiscal year. The \$963,320 increase was due primarily to increased instructional costs associated with the Collaborative's continued expansion; administrative and office costs associated with salaries; and facilities cost associated with additional rental space.

Instruction and other student services represented approximately 87% of total expenses in fiscal year 2025, which was consistent with the prior fiscal year. No other expense category represented 10% of more of total expenses in either fiscal year 2025 or 2024.

Governmental Funds Financial Analysis

As noted earlier, the Collaborative uses fund accounting to ensure and demonstrate compliance with finance-related legal requirements. The focus of the Collaborative's governmental funds is to provide information on near-term inflows, outflows and balances of spendable resources. Such information is useful in assessing the Collaborative's financing requirements. In particular, unassigned fund balance may serve as a useful measure of a government's net resources available for spending at the end of the fiscal year.

As of the close of the current fiscal year, the Collaborative's governmental funds balance sheet reported a combined ending fund balance surplus of \$3,337,109, which is an increase of \$1,090,201 from the prior year.

The general fund is the chief operating fund of the Collaborative. At the end of the current fiscal year, unassigned fund balance of the general fund was \$2,900,662, while total general fund balance was \$3,217,109. As a measure of the general fund's liquidity, it may be useful to compare both unassigned fund balance and total fund balance to total fund expenditures. Unassigned fund balance at year end represented approximately 17% of total fiscal year 2025 general fund expenditures, while total fund balance was approximately 19% of that same amount.

The Collaborative also maintains a major governmental fund to account for its capital reserve fund. The fund balance in the capital reserve fund decreased \$28,729 to \$120,000.

General Fund Budgetary Highlights

There were no differences between the original budget and the final amended budget. The Collaborative develops a budget using the economic resources measurement focus and the accrual basis of accounting.

A budget to actual schedule for the general fund has been provided as required supplementary information.

Capital Asset and Long-Term Financing Administration

Capital Assets – The Collaborative's investment in capital assets as of June 30, 2025 totaled \$2,146,745, net of accumulated depreciation and amortization. Capital assets primarily include the right to use facilities under lease, leasehold improvements, equipment and vehicles. Net capital assets decreased \$62,594 in fiscal year 2025, which was due primarily to the effect of depreciation expense exceeding capital additions.

Additional information on the Collaborative's capital assets can be found in the notes to the basic financial statements.

Long-Term Debt – All of the long-term debt reported by the Collaborative is in the form of lease liabilities for facilities and student transportation vehicles. The Collaborative's lease liabilities decreased \$148,343 in fiscal year 2025. The lease liabilities in place at June 30, 2025 are expected to mature at various intervals through fiscal year 2029.

Subsequent to the end of the year, the Collaborative executed a twelve-year facility lease for approximately 34,000 square feet of classroom space in Leominster, Massachusetts. The lease calls for annual fixed lease payments of approximately \$654,000 for the first twelve years of the lease; renewal

options are available for two five-year options. Total minimum lease payments on this lease agreement will approach \$7.9 million over the twelve-year term.

The Collaborative maintains a \$1,000,000 line of credit with a commercial bank. At June 30, 2025, no amount was advanced by the commercial bank to the Collaborative under this line of credit.

Additional information on the Collaborative's capital lease obligations can be found in the notes to the basic financial statements.

Economic Factors and Next Year's Budget

- The fiscal year 2026 budget was based on 209 projected student enrollments.
- Approximately 88% of budgeted fiscal year 2026 revenues are in the form of tuition. Total budgeted fiscal year 2026 revenues are approximately \$17.9 million.
- Employee salaries were budgeted to increase approximately 3.0% from the prior fiscal year.

The above items were considered when the Board of Directors of the Collaborative accepted its budget for fiscal year 2026 in May 2025.

Requests for Information

This financial report is designed to provide a general overview of the Collaborative's finances for all those with an interest in its finances. Questions concerning any of the information provided in this report or request for additional financial information should be addressed to the Business Manager, CAPS Education Collaborative, 2 Narrows Road, Suite C105, Westminister, Massachusetts 01473.

CAPS EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE

STATEMENT OF NET POSITION JUNE 30, 2025

	<u>Governmental Activities</u>
Assets:	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 2,967,355
Investments at fair value	445,029
Receivables, net of allowances	1,354,445
Prepaid items	316,447
Capital assets, net	<u>2,146,745</u>
Total Assets	<u>7,230,021</u>
Liabilities:	
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	166,069
Accrued payroll and related benefits	1,327,834
Other liabilities	9,705
Unearned revenues	242,559
Noncurrent liabilities:	
Due within one year	786,784
Due in more than one year	<u>1,251,835</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>3,784,786</u>
Net Position:	
Net investment in capital assets	704,926
Unrestricted	<u>2,740,309</u>
Total Net Position	<u>\$ 3,445,235</u>

See accompanying notes to basic financial statements.

CAPS EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE

**STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025**

Functions/Programs	Expenses	Program Revenues			Governmental Activities	Net (Expenses) Revenues and Changes in Net Position
		Charges for Services	Operating Grants and Contributions	Capital Grants and Contributions		
Instruction services	\$ 11,718,523	\$ 14,262,152	\$ 1,642,815	\$ -	\$ 4,186,444	
Other student services	2,938,338	1,488,767	302,144	-	(1,147,427)	
Administration and office	1,185,656	-	100,041	-	(1,085,615)	
Facilities	800,892	-	12,988	-	(787,904)	
Transportation	160,896	26,285	-	-	(134,611)	
Interest expense	72,051	-	-	-	(72,051)	
Total Governmental Activities	<u>\$ 16,876,356</u>	<u>\$ 15,777,204</u>	<u>\$ 2,057,988</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>958,836</u>	
		General Revenues:				
						100,620
						70,890
						<u>54,686</u>
						Total General Revenues
						<u>226,196</u>
						Change in Net Position
						<u>1,185,032</u>
						Net Position:
						Beginning of year
						2,862,403
						Change in accounting principle
						<u>(602,200)</u>
						End of year
						<u>\$ 3,445,235</u>

See accompanying notes to basic financial statements.

CAPS EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE

**GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS
BALANCE SHEET
JUNE 30, 2025**

	General Fund	Capital Reserve Fund	Total
Assets:			
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 2,967,355	\$ -	\$ 2,967,355
Investments, at fair value	445,029	-	445,029
Receivables, net of allowances	1,354,445	-	1,354,445
Due from other fund	-	120,000	120,000
Prepaid items	316,447	-	316,447
Total Assets	\$ 5,083,276	\$ 120,000	\$ 5,203,276
Liabilities:			
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ 166,069	\$ -	\$ 166,069
Accrued payroll and withholdings	1,327,834	-	1,327,834
Other liabilities	9,705	-	9,705
Unearned revenues	242,559	-	242,559
Due to other fund	120,000	-	120,000
Total Liabilities	1,866,167	-	1,866,167
Fund Balances:			
Nonspendable	316,447	-	316,447
Committed	-	120,000	120,000
Unassigned	2,900,662	-	2,900,662
Total Fund Balances	3,217,109	120,000	3,337,109
Total Liabilities and Fund Balances	\$ 5,083,276	\$ 120,000	\$ 5,203,276

See accompanying notes to basic financial statements.

CAPS EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE

**RECONCILIATION OF TOTAL GOVERNMENTAL FUND BALANCES
TO THE STATEMENT OF NET POSITION AS OF
JUNE 30, 2025**

Total Governmental Fund Balances	\$ 3,337,109
Capital assets used in governmental activities in the statement of net position are not financial resources and therefore are not reported in the funds	2,146,745
Long-term liabilities not currently due and payable are reported in the statement of net position and not in the funds:	
Compensated absences	(596,800)
Lease liabilities	<u>(1,441,819)</u>
Net effect of reporting long-term liabilities	<u>(2,038,619)</u>
Net Position — Governmental Activities	<u>\$ 3,445,235</u>

See accompanying notes to basic financial statements.

CAPS EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE

GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS

**STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025**

	General Fund	Capital Reserve Fund	Total
Revenues:			
Special education tuition	\$ 14,262,152	\$ -	\$ 14,262,152
Other student services	1,488,767	-	1,488,767
Member assessments	100,620	-	100,620
Transportation	26,285	-	26,285
Intergovernmental	2,057,988	-	2,057,988
Investment income	70,890	-	70,890
Other	54,686	-	54,686
Total Revenues	18,061,388	-	18,061,388
Expenditures:			
Current:			
Instruction services	8,268,575	-	8,268,575
Other student services	2,230,984	-	2,230,984
Administration and office	918,154	-	918,154
Facilities	876,862	-	876,862
Transportation	271,094	-	271,094
Pension and fringe benefits	4,185,124	-	4,185,124
Debt service:			
Principal	332,849	-	332,849
Interest	72,051	-	72,051
Total Expenditures	17,155,693	-	17,155,693
Deficiency of Revenues Over Expenditures	905,695	-	905,695
Other Financing Sources (Uses):			
Proceeds from issuance of long-term leases	184,506	-	184,506
Transfers in	28,729	-	28,729
Transfers out	-	(28,729)	(28,729)
Total Other Financing Sources (Uses)	213,235	(28,729)	184,506
Change in Fund Balances	1,118,930	(28,729)	1,090,201
Fund Balances:			
Beginning of the year	2,098,179	148,729	2,246,908
End of the year	<u>\$ 3,217,109</u>	<u>\$ 120,000</u>	<u>\$ 3,337,109</u>

See accompanying notes to basic financial statements.

CAPS EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE

**RECONCILIATION OF THE STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES AND
CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES OF GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS TO
THE STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025**

Change in Fund Balances — Total Governmental Funds \$ 1,090,201

Governmental funds report capital outlays as expenditures. However, in the statement of activities, the cost of those assets is capitalized and depreciated/amortized over their estimated useful lives.

Capital asset activity in the current fiscal year included:

Capital asset additions	518,070	
Effect of asset disposals	(20,000)	
Depreciation and amortization expense	(560,664)	
Net effect of reporting capital activity		(62,594)

The issuance of long-term debt provides current financial resources to the governmental funds, while the repayment of the principal of long-term debt consumes the financial resources of governmental funds. Neither has any effect on net position. Also, the governmental funds report the effect of issuance costs, premiums, discounts and similar items when debt is first issued; whereas these amounts are deferred and amortized in the statement of activities. Differences in the treatment of long-term debt transactions in the current fiscal year included:

Issuance of lease obligations	(184,506)	
Repayments on lease liabilities	332,849	
Net effect of reporting long-term debt activity		148,343

Some revenues/expenses reported in the statement of activities do not provide/require the use of current financial resources and therefore are not reported as revenues/expenditures in the governmental funds:

Compensated absences	5,400	
Net other postemployment benefits liability	3,682	
Net effect of reporting long-term liabilities		9,082

Change in Net Position — Governmental Activities \$ 1,185,032

See accompanying notes to basic financial statements.

CAPS EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE

NOTES TO BASIC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AS OF AND FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

I. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

The accompanying basic financial statements of CAPS Education Collaborative (the “Collaborative”) have been prepared in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles (“GAAP”) as applied to state and local governments. GAAP is prescribed by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (“GASB”), which is the primary standard-setting body for state and local government entities. The following is a summary of the more significant policies and practices used by the Collaborative:

A. Reporting Entity

The Collaborative is an association of school committees formed for the purpose of conducting education programs and services to complement and strengthen the school programs of member school committees and increase educational opportunities for children. The Collaborative provides preschool, elementary and secondary education for students aged three to twenty-one with significant disabilities.

The Collaborative was formed by agreement on July 1, 1976, as amended. The Collaborative is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of superintendents or members of participating school committees.

B. Government-Wide and Fund Financial Statements

The government-wide financial statements (i.e., the statement of net position and the statement of activities) report information on all nonfiduciary activities of the Collaborative. The Collaborative has only governmental type activities; there are no business-type activities to report. Governmental activities are principally supported by charges for services and member assessments.

Separate financial statements are provided for governmental funds. Major individual government funds are reported as separate columns in the fund financial statements.

Major Fund Criteria – Major funds must be reported if both of the following criteria are met:

- 1) The total assets, liabilities, revenues, or expenditures/expenses of an individual governmental or enterprise fund are at least 10% of the corresponding element (assets, liabilities, etc.) for all funds of that category or type (total governmental or total enterprise funds), and
- 2) The total assets, liabilities, revenues, or expenditures/expenses of the individual governmental fund or enterprise fund are at least 5% of the corresponding element for all governmental and enterprise funds combined.

In addition, any other governmental fund that management believes is particularly significant to the basic financial statements may be reported as a major fund.

C. Measurement Focus, Basis of Accounting, and Financial Statement Presentation

The government-wide financial statements are reported using the economic resources measurement focus and the accrual basis of accounting. Under this method, revenues are recorded when earned and expenses are recorded when incurred. Grants and similar items are recognized as revenue as soon as all eligibility requirements imposed by the provider are met.

The statement of activities demonstrates the degree to which the direct expenses of a given function or segment are offset by program revenues. Direct expenses are those that are clearly identifiable with a specific function or segment. Program revenues include (i) charges for services and (ii) grants and contributions that are restricted to meeting the operational or capital requirements of a particular function or segment. Member assessments, investment income and other revenues are reported as general revenues.

The governmental fund financial statements are reported using the current financial resources measurement focus and the modified accrual basis of accounting. Revenues are recognized when susceptible to accrual (i.e., measurable and available). Revenues are considered to be available when they are collectible within the current period or soon enough thereafter to pay liabilities of the current period. Expenditures are recorded when the related fund liability is incurred, except for unmatured interest on general long-term debt, which is recognized when due, certain compensated absences, claims and judgments which are recognized when the obligations are expected to be liquidated with current expendable available resources.

The Collaborative applies the susceptible to accrual criteria to intergovernmental revenues. In applying the susceptible to accrual concept, there are two types of revenues. In the first, monies must be expended for a specific purpose or project before any amounts will be paid; therefore, revenues are recognized as expenditures are incurred. In the second, monies are virtually unrestricted and are usually revocable only for failure to comply with prescribed requirements. These resources are reflected as revenues when cash is received, or earlier if the susceptible to accrual criteria are met.

The Collaborative reports the following major governmental funds:

The general fund is the Collaborative's primary operating fund. It accounts for all financial resources of the Collaborative except those required to be accounted for in another fund.

The capital reserve fund is used to support costs associated with the acquisition, maintenance and improvement of capital assets, including real property, pursuant to a capital plan. The capital reserve fund was established pursuant to Massachusetts education laws and regulations.

The Collaborative does not report any proprietary or fiduciary funds.

D. Assets, Liabilities, Deferred Outflows/Inflows of Resources, and Net Position/Fund Equity

Deposits and Investments – The Collaborative’s cash and cash equivalents are considered to be cash on hand, demand deposits and short-term investments with original maturities of three months or less from the date of acquisition. The Collaborative reports its investments at fair value. When actively quoted observable prices are not available, the Collaborative generally uses either implied pricing from similar investments or valuation models based on net present values of estimated future cash flows (adjusted as appropriate for liquidity, credit, market and/or other risk factors).

The Collaborative categorizes its fair value measurements within the fair value hierarchy established by GAAP. This hierarchy is based on valuation inputs used to measure the fair value of the asset or liability. The three levels of the hierarchy are as follows:

- *Level 1* – Inputs are quoted prices in active markets for identical investments at the measurement date.
- *Level 2* – Inputs (other than quoted prices included in Level 1) are either directly or indirectly observable for the investment through correlation with market data at the measurement date and for the duration of the instrument’s anticipated life.
- *Level 3* – Inputs reflect the Collaborative’s best estimate of what market participants would use in pricing the investment at the measurement date.

Receivables – Receivables generally represent unpaid amounts due to the Collaborative for services. At June 30, 2025, there were no amounts reported as allowances for uncollectible accounts.

Prepaid Items – Certain payments to vendors reflect costs applicable to future accounting periods and are recorded as prepaid items in both government-wide and fund financial statements.

Capital Assets – Capital assets, which include the right to use leased facilities, leasehold improvements, machinery and equipment and leased vehicles are reported in the government-wide financial statements. Capital assets are recorded at historical cost. Donated capital assets are recorded at the estimated fair market value at the date of donation. All capital asset purchases are capitalized at the date of acquisition if expected lives are deemed greater than three years. The costs of normal maintenance and repairs that do not add to the value of the asset or materially extend assets lives are not capitalized.

Capital assets are depreciated or amortized by the Collaborative on a straight-line basis over the following estimated useful lives:

Right to use facility	Remaining term of lease
Leasehold improvements	Remaining term of lease
Machinery and equipment	3 to 5 years
Vehicles	5 years

Interfund Balances – Activity between funds that are representative of lending arrangements outstanding at the end of the fiscal year are referred to as advances to/from other funds. All other outstanding balances between funds are reported as due to/from other funds.

Compensated Absences – It is the Collaborative’s policy to grant sick and vacation leave to its employees, who must use these benefits before the conclusion of the fiscal year. Generally, employees are not paid unused portions of their earned but unused sick and vacation leave upon retirement, death or termination. At times, the Collaborative may extend the period of time to use these benefits into the following fiscal year. Amounts related to these benefits are accrued when incurred in the government-wide financial statements. A liability for these amounts is reported in governmental funds only if they have matured.

Unearned Revenues – Tuition and other amounts collected in advance are reported as unearned revenues.

Long-Term Debt – Long-term debt is reported as liabilities in the government-wide financial statements.

Fund Equity – In the fund financial statements, fund balance for governmental funds is reported in classifications that comprise a hierarchy based primarily on the extent in which the Collaborative is required to honor constraints on the specific purpose for which amounts in the funds can be spent.

Fund balance is reported in five components – nonspendable, restricted, committed, assigned, and unassigned as described below:

Nonspendable represents amounts that cannot be spent because they are either (a) not in spendable form (i.e., inventory or prepaid items) or (b) legally or contractually required to be maintained intact such as the corpus of an endowment.

Restricted represents amounts that have constraints placed either externally by third-parties (creditors, grantors, contributors, or laws or regulations of other governments) or by law through constitutional provisions or enabling legislation.

Committed represents amounts that can only be used for specific purposes pursuant to formal action of the Collaborative’s Board of Directors, which represents the most binding constraint that gives rise to committed fund balance. Those committed amounts cannot be used for any other purpose unless the Board of Directors removes or changes the specified use by taking the same type of action it employed previously to commit those amounts.

Assigned represents amounts that are constrained by the Collaborative’s intent to be used for specific purposes but are neither restricted nor committed.

Unassigned represents amounts that have not been restricted, committed or assigned to specific purposes within the general fund.

At June 30, 2025, the Collaborative reported \$316,447 as nonspendable in its general fund, which represented the value of the Collaborative’s prepaid items. The Collaborative reported \$120,000 as committed in its capital reserve fund. The remaining fund balance of \$2,900,662 is reported as unassigned in the general fund at June 30, 2025.

When both restricted and unrestricted resources are available for use, it is the Collaborative’s policy to use restricted resources first, then unrestricted resources (committed, assigned and unassigned) as they are needed. The Collaborative did not report any amounts as encumbrances from normal purchasing activity at June 30, 2025 as assigned in the governmental funds financial statements.

Net Position – In the government-wide financial statements, net position reported as net investment in capital assets includes capital assets, net of accumulated depreciation and amortization, less the principal balance of outstanding debt used to acquire capital assets. Unspent proceeds of capital related debt are not considered to be capital related debt.

The Collaborative does not report any amounts as restricted in these basic financial statements.

E. Use of Estimates

The preparation of basic financial statements in conformity with GAAP requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure for contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the basic financial statements and the reported amounts of the revenues and expenditures/expenses during the fiscal year. Actual results could vary from estimates that were used.

II. Detailed Notes to All Funds

A. Deposits and Investments

State laws and regulations require the Collaborative to invest funds only in preapproved investment instruments which include, but are not necessarily limited to, bank deposits, money markets, certificates of deposit, U.S. obligations, repurchase agreements, and State Treasurer’s investment pool. In addition, the statutes impose various limitations on the amount and length of investments and deposits. Repurchase agreements cannot be for a period of over ninety days, and the underlying security must be a United States obligation. During the fiscal year, the Collaborative did not enter into any repurchase agreements.

Custodial Credit Risk: Deposits – In the case of deposits, this is the risk that in the event of a bank failure, the government’s deposits may not be returned to it. The Collaborative relies on depository insurance at each financial institution to mitigate this risk. At June 30, 2025, \$2,918,318 in Collaborative bank deposits were exposed to custodial credit risk as these amounts were uninsured and uncollateralized.

Fair Value Measurements: Investments – The following table presents the Collaborative’s investments carried at fair value at June 30, 2025:

Investments by Fair Value Level	June 30, 2025	Fair Value Measurements Using		
		Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Governmental obligations	\$ 10,438	\$ 10,438	\$ -	-
Mutual funds	434,591	434,591	-	-
Total investments by fair value level	<u>\$ 445,029</u>	<u>\$ 445,029</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>

Credit Risk: Investments – This is the risk that an issuer or other counterparty to an investment will not fulfill its obligations. The Collaborative has not adopted a formal policy related to credit risk. The Collaborative’s investments in governmental obligations were rated AA+ by Standard and Poor’s Global Ratings.

Custodial Credit Risk: Investments – In the case of investments, this is the risk that in the event of the invested party not being able to provide required payments to investors, ceasing to exist, or filing of bankruptcy, the Collaborative may not be able to recover the full amount of its principal investment and/or investment earnings. All of the Collaborative’s investments are registered in its name and cannot be pledged or assigned. As a result, the Collaborative does not believe it is exposed to custodial credit risk on its investments.

Concentration of Credit Risk: Investments – The Collaborative does not place a limit on the amount that may be invested in any one issuer. The following investments held by the Collaborative at June 30, 2025 exceeded 5% of total investments:

Lord Abbett Affiliated Fund Class A	30.1%
Lord Abbett Total Return Fund Class A	9.1%
Lord Abbett Bond Debenture Fund Class A	8.6%
Lord Abbett Fundamental Equity Fund Class A	8.5%
Lord Abbett Short Duration Fund Class A	8.5%
Lord Abbett International Equity Fund Class A	7.6%
Lord Abbett International Value Fund Class A	7.4%
Lord Abbett Alpha Strategy Fund Class A	<u>7.2%</u>
	<u>87.0%</u>

B. Receivables

Receivables at June 30, 2025 consisted of the following:

	<u>Gross Amount</u>	<u>Allowance for Uncollectibles</u>	<u>Net Amount</u>
Due from member communities	\$ 376,826	\$ -	\$ 376,826
Due from other communities	937,452	-	937,452
Other	<u>40,167</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>40,167</u>
Total receivables	<u>\$ 1,354,445</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 1,354,445</u>

C. Capital Assets

Capital asset activity for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2025 was as follows:

	Beginning Balance	Increases	Decreases	Ending Balance
Capital assets being depreciated or amortized:				
Right to use facilities under lease	\$ 1,457,753	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,457,753
Leasehold improvements	265,814	186,916	(3,755)	448,975
Furniture and equipment	578,189	146,648	(89,695)	635,142
Leased vehicles	<u>263,515</u>	<u>184,506</u>	<u>(109,005)</u>	<u>339,016</u>
Total capital assets being depreciated/amortized	<u>2,565,271</u>	<u>518,070</u>	<u>(202,455)</u>	<u>2,880,886</u>
Less accumulated depreciation and amortization for:				
Right to use facilities under lease	-	(291,551)	-	(291,551)
Leasehold improvements	(81,168)	(74,145)	3,755	(151,558)
Furniture and equipment	(150,538)	(140,660)	89,695	(201,503)
Leased vehicles	<u>(124,226)</u>	<u>(54,308)</u>	<u>89,005</u>	<u>(89,529)</u>
Total accumulated depreciation and amortization	<u>(355,932)</u>	<u>(560,664)</u>	<u>182,455</u>	<u>(734,141)</u>
Total capital assets, net	<u>\$ 2,209,339</u>	<u>\$ (42,594)</u>	<u>\$ (20,000)</u>	<u>\$ 2,146,745</u>

Depreciation and amortization expense for fiscal year 2025 was charged to functions as follows:

	<u>Depreciation</u>	<u>Amortization</u>	<u>Total</u>
Instruction	\$ 115,413	\$ 256,565	\$ 371,978
Other student services	4,319	-	4,319
Administration and office	14,845	34,986	49,831
Facilities	80,228	-	80,228
Transportation	<u>-</u>	<u>54,308</u>	<u>54,308</u>
	<u>\$ 214,805</u>	<u>\$ 345,859</u>	<u>\$ 560,664</u>

D. Line of Credit

In June 2018, the Collaborative executed a \$500,000 line of credit with a commercial bank which was modified to \$1,000,000 in October 2023. The line of credit is secured by all Collaborative assets and is payable on demand by the commercial bank. The line of credit bears interest at variable rates with a floor of 6.50%. At June 30, 2025, there were no advances by the Collaborative on the line of credit.

E. Long-Term Liabilities

The Collaborative enters into facility and transportation equipment leases, which for financial reporting purposes have been capitalized. Additionally, the Collaborative incurs various other long-term obligations relative to personnel costs. The following reflects the fiscal year 2025 activity in the Collaborative's long-term liability accounts:

Description of Issue	Beginning Balance	Increases	Decreases	Ending Balance	Due Within One Year
Compensated absences (a)	\$ 602,200	\$ -	\$ (5,400)	\$ 596,800	\$ 447,600
Lease liabilities - facilities	1,457,753	-	(254,696)	1,203,057	272,163
Lease liabilities - vehicles	132,409	184,506	(78,153)	238,762	67,021
Net OPEB liability	<u>3,682</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(3,682)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total long-term liabilities	<u>\$ 2,196,044</u>	<u>\$ 184,506</u>	<u>\$ (341,931)</u>	<u>\$ 2,038,619</u>	<u>\$ 786,784</u>

(a) The beginning balance has been restated to reflect the adoption of GASB No. 101. Refer to Note VI.

The change in compensated absences is reported net, which is permissible under GAAP.

F. Lease Liabilities

The Collaborative is party to several noncancellable leases for facilities and transportation equipment. For financial reporting purposes, these leases have been capitalized. Principal and interest requirements to maturity for lease liabilities in which the lease term is greater than one year are as follows at June 30, 2025:

Year Ended June 30,	Facilities			Vehicles		
	Principal	Interest	Total	Principal	Interest	Total
2026	\$ 272,163	\$ 52,763	\$ 324,926	\$ 67,021	\$ 8,924	\$ 75,945
2027	290,597	40,827	331,424	54,306	3,804	58,110
2028	309,971	28,082	338,053	55,375	2,736	58,111
2029	330,326	14,487	344,813	48,926	964	49,890
2030	-	-	-	13,134	2,825	15,959
	<u>\$ 1,203,057</u>	<u>\$ 136,159</u>	<u>\$ 1,339,216</u>	<u>\$ 238,762</u>	<u>\$ 19,253</u>	<u>\$ 258,015</u>

The following summarizes leased assets and their related accumulated amortization expense as of June 30, 2025:

Facilities	\$ 1,457,753
Vehicles	<u>339,016</u>
Total leased assets	1,796,769
Less accumulated amortization	<u>(381,080)</u>
Net carrying value	<u>\$ 1,415,689</u>

In fiscal year 2025, the Collaborative paid \$329,750 and \$388,401, respectively, to related and unrelated parties for facility rent.

As noted in Note V, subsequent to the end of the year, the Collaborative executed a twelve-year facility lease that will commence in November 2025. Refer to Note V for more complete details.

III. Other Information

A. Defined Contribution Pension Plan

The Collaborative established a 457(b) deferred compensation plan for eligible employees in 2017, which is available to all eligible employees over twenty-one years of age. This plan is intended to qualify as a defined contribution plan in accordance with Section 457(b) of the Internal Revenue Code. Participants may defer compensation under this plan subject to statutory limits.

The Collaborative makes matching contributions on the first \$1,000 of annual individual employees' contributions to this plan. The Collaborative made contributions of \$84,335 to the plan during the fiscal year ended June 30, 2025.

B. Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement System

Teachers and certain other instructional employees of the Collaborative participate in the Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement System ("MTRS"), a cost-sharing, multiple employer defined benefit pension plan. MTRS is managed by the Commonwealth on behalf of municipal teachers and municipal teacher retirees. The MTRS was established under Chapter 32 of Massachusetts General Laws ("MGL"). The Commonwealth's legislature has the authority to amend or modify the MTRS's funding policies. MTRS is a component unit of the Commonwealth and does not issue stand-alone audited financial statements.

The Commonwealth is a nonemployer contributor to the MTRS and is legally responsible by statute for all actuarially determined employer contributions and future benefit requirements of the MTRS. Therefore, the Collaborative is in a special funding situation as defined under GAAP.

For the year ended June 30, 2024 (the latest period for which MTRS has provided financial data), the Commonwealth contributed \$1,246,272 to the MTRS on behalf of the Collaborative. The Collaborative's proportionate share of the collective MTRS net pension liability at this reporting date was approximately 0.051551%, which was based on the actual, actuarially determined contribution made by the Commonwealth on behalf of the Collaborative as a percentage of the total annual contribution made by the Commonwealth on behalf of all employers.

The net pension liability assumed by the Commonwealth on behalf of the Collaborative was \$13,071,607 at June 30, 2024 (the latest period for which MTRS has provided financial data).

The pension expense incurred by the Commonwealth on behalf of the Collaborative was \$1,078,952 for the year ended June 30, 2024 (the latest period for which MTRS has provided financial data). This amount has been recognized by the Collaborative as intergovernmental revenue and pension expense in the statement of activities for the year ended June 30, 2025.

Additional information on MTRS can be found on its website.

C. Massachusetts State Employees' Retirement System

Full-time employees of the Collaborative that do not participate in the MTRS participate in the Massachusetts State Employees' Retirement System ("MERS"), a cost-sharing, multiple employer defined benefit pension plan established under Chapter 32 of MGL. MERS is administered by the Massachusetts State Retirement Board, which consists of five members. MERS is a component unit of the Commonwealth and does not issue stand-alone audited financial statements.

Educational collaboratives contribute amounts equal to the normal cost of employees' benefits at a rate established by the Massachusetts Public Employees' Retirement Administration Commission, which is currently 6.1% of covered payroll. Legally, educational collaboratives are only responsible for contributing the annual normal cost of their employees' benefits (i.e., the present value of the benefits earned by those employees in any given year) and are not legally responsible for the past service cost attributable to those employees or previously retired employees of the educational collaboratives. The Commonwealth, as a nonemployer contributor to MERS, is legally responsible for the entire past service costs related to the educational collaboratives and has a 100% special funding situation as defined under GAAP.

The Collaborative contributed \$272,679 to MERS during the fiscal year ended June 30, 2025.

For the year ended June 30, 2024 (the latest period for which MERS has provided financial data), the Commonwealth contributed \$677,167 to MERS on behalf of the Collaborative. The Collaborative's proportionate share of the collective MERS net pension liability at this reporting date was approximately 0.006020%, which was based on the actual, actuarially determined contribution made by the Commonwealth on behalf of the Collaborative as a percentage of the total annual contribution made by the Commonwealth on behalf of all employers.

The net pension liability assumed by the Commonwealth on behalf of the Collaborative was \$8,503,694 at June 30, 2024 (the latest period for which MERS provided financial data).

The pension expense incurred by the Commonwealth on behalf of the Collaborative was \$877,805 for the year ended June 30, 2024 (the latest period for which MERS has provided financial data). This amount has been recognized by the Collaborative as intergovernmental revenue and pension expense in the statement of activities for the year ended June 30, 2025.

D. Contingencies

During its day-to-day operations, the Collaborative is party to certain legal claims, which are subject to many uncertainties. The outcome of individual litigation matters in these situations cannot be reasonably estimated. Although the amount of liability, if any, in these situations at June 30, 2025 cannot be determined, management believes that the resulting liability, if any, should not materially affect the basic financial statements of the Collaborative at June 30, 2025.

IV. Implementation of GASB Pronouncements

A. Current Year Implementations

In June 2022, the GASB issued GASB Statement No. 101, *Compensated Absences*. The objective of this Statement was to update the recognition and measurement guidance for compensated absences by aligning the recognition and measurement guidance under a unified model and by amending certain previously required disclosures. The provisions of this Statement became effective in fiscal year 2025. The adoption of this accounting standard required a reduction to the Collaborative's beginning net position of \$602,200.

In December 2023, the GASB issued GASB Statement No. 102, *Certain Risk Disclosures*. The objective of this Statement was to provide users of government financial statements with essential information about risks related to a government's vulnerabilities due to certain concentrations or constraints. The provisions of this Statement became effective in fiscal year 2025. The adoption of this accounting standard did not have a material effect on the Collaborative's financial statements.

B. Future Year Implementations

In April 2024, the GASB issued GASB Statement No. 103, *Financial Reporting Model Improvements*. The objective of this Statement is to improve key components of the financial reporting model to enhance its effectiveness in providing information that is essential for decision making and assessing a government's accountability. The provisions of this Statement are effective for financial reporting periods beginning after June 15, 2025 (fiscal year 2026). The Collaborative is currently evaluating whether adoption will have a material impact on the financial statements.

In September 2024, the GASB issued GASB Statement No. 104, *Disclosure of Certain Capital Assets*. The objective of this Statements is to provide users of government financial statements with essential information about certain types of capital assets. The provisions of this Statement are effective for financial reporting periods beginning after June 15, 2025 (fiscal year 2026). The Collaborative is currently evaluating whether adoption will have a material impact on the financial statements.

V. Subsequent Event

In August 2025, the Collaborative executed a twelve-year facility lease agreement for approximately 34,000 square feet of classroom space in Leominster, Massachusetts. Under the terms of this lease agreement, annual fixed lease payments of \$654,504 plus the cost of electricity and janitorial services are due beginning November 1, 2025 for each of the twelve years of the lease. The facility lease provides for two five-year renewal options; however, the annual lease payments for the renewal terms must be negotiated in year eleven of the initial lease.

The Collaborative is required to make an advanced deposit of \$54,542 on this facility lease and \$250,000 for agreed-upon leasehold improvements. Total minimum lease payments on this lease agreement will approach \$7.9 million over the twelve-year term.

VI. Restatement for Change in Accounting Principle

The Collaborative adopted GASB Statement No. 101 in fiscal year 2025. The implementation of GASB Statement No. 101 resulted in the following adjustment to the Collaborative's net position:

Net position at June 30, 2024 - as reported	\$ 2,862,403
Adoption of GASB Statement No. 101	<u>(602,200)</u>
Net position at June 30, 2024 - as restated	<u>\$ 2,260,203</u>

* * * * *

CAPS EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE

**REQUIRED SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION
MASSACHUSETTS STATE EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM**

**SCHEDULE OF THE COMMONWEALTH'S PROPORTIONATE SHARE OF THE
NET PENSION LIABILITY**

(dollar amounts are in thousands)

For the Year Ended June 30, *	Commonwealth's Proportion of the Net Pension Liability	Collaborative's Proportion of the Net Pension Liability	Commonwealth's Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability	Plan Fiduciary Net Position as a Percentage of the Total Pension Liability
2025	100%	0%	\$ 8,504	72.9%
2024	100%	0%	8,817	70.7%
2023	100%	0%	7,763	71.1%
2022	100%	0%	4,392	77.5%
2021	100%	0%	8,423	62.5%
2020	100%	0%	6,958	66.3%
2019	100%	0%	6,009	67.9%
2018	100%	0%	5,974	67.2%
2017	100%	0%	5,489	63.5%
2016	100%	0%	4,204	67.9%

**SCHEDULE OF THE COLLABORATIVE'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
MASSACHUSETTS STATE EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM**

(dollar amounts are in thousands)

For the Year Ended June 30,	Contractually Required Contributions	Contributions in Relation to Contractually Required Contributions	Covered Payroll	Contributions as a Percentage of Covered Payroll
2025	\$ 273	\$ 273	\$ 4,475	6.1%
2024	252	252	4,131	6.1%
2023	231	231	3,787	6.1%
2022	217	217	3,557	6.1%
2021	178	178	2,918	6.1%
2020	183	183	3,000	6.1%
2019	156	156	2,557	6.1%
2018	145	145	2,377	6.1%
2017	124	124	2,033	6.1%
2016	113	113	1,852	6.1%

* Amounts are based on measurement date as of the previous June 30th.

These schedules are presented to illustrate the requirement to show information for ten years.

See accompanying independent auditors' report.

CAPS EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE
REQUIRED SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION
MASSACHUSETTS TEACHERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM

**SCHEDULE OF THE COMMONWEALTH'S PROPORTIONATE SHARE OF THE
NET PENSION LIABILITY**
(dollar amounts are in thousands)

For the Year Ended June 30, *	Commonwealth's Proportion of the Net Pension Liability	Collaborative's Proportion of the Net Pension Liability	Commonwealth's Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability	Plan Fiduciary Net Position as a Percentage of the Total Pension Liability
2025	100%	0%	\$ 13,072	61.5%
2024	100%	0%	12,366	58.5%
2023	100%	0%	9,944	57.8%
2022	100%	0%	7,808	62.0%
2021	100%	0%	10,539	50.7%
2020	100%	0%	9,524	53.9%
2019	100%	0%	7,799	54.8%
2018	100%	0%	7,635	54.3%
2017	100%	0%	6,854	52.7%
2016	100%	0%	5,008	55.4%

* Amounts are based on measurement date as of the previous June 30th.

Contributions to the MTRS are the responsibility of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Accordingly, the Collaborative has not recognized any portion of the net pension liability relative to Collaborative employees covered under the MTRS pension plan.

This schedule is presented to illustrate the requirement to show information for ten years.

See accompanying independent auditors' report.

CAPS EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE

**REQUIRED SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION
SCHEDULE OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCE
BUDGET AND ACTUAL - GENERAL FUND
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025**

	<u>Budgeted Amounts</u>		<u>Actual</u>	<u>Positive</u>
	<u>Original Budget</u>	<u>Final Budget</u>	<u>Budgetary Amounts</u>	<u>(Negative) Variance</u>
Revenues:				
Special education tuition	\$ 13,099,777	\$ 13,099,777	\$ 14,262,152	\$ 1,162,375
Other student services	1,200,000	1,200,000	1,488,767	288,767
Member assessments	100,620	100,620	100,620	-
Transportation	20,000	20,000	26,285	6,285
Investment income	-	-	70,890	70,890
Other	-	-	155,917	155,917
Total Revenues	<u>14,420,397</u>	<u>14,420,397</u>	<u>16,104,631</u>	<u>1,684,234</u>
Expenses:				
Instruction services	7,630,000	7,630,000	8,133,493	(503,493)
Other student services	2,512,600	2,512,600	2,219,418	293,182
Administration and office	526,250	526,250	914,472	(388,222)
Facilities	844,050	844,050	1,250,610	(406,560)
Transportation	60,000	60,000	178,639	(118,639)
Pension and fringe benefits	2,752,175	2,752,175	2,222,967	529,208
Total Expenses	<u>14,325,075</u>	<u>14,325,075</u>	<u>14,919,599</u>	<u>(594,524)</u>
Net Budget	<u>\$ 95,322</u>	<u>\$ 95,322</u>	<u>\$ 1,185,032</u>	<u>\$ 1,089,710</u>

See notes to required supplementary information.

See accompanying independent auditors' report.

CAPS EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE

NOTES TO REQUIRED SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION AS OF AND FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

An annual budget for the general fund is prepared under the direction of the Executive Director and approved by majority vote of the Board of Directors.

The Collaborative's annual budget is prepared using the economic resources measurement focus and the accrual basis of accounting. However, there are some differences between the Collaborative's budgetary balances and the final figures included in the Collaborative's Statement of Activities, which again is reported on the accrual basis of accounting. A complete reconciliation is provided below:

	Basis of Accounting Differences	Fund Perspective Differences	Total
Revenues — budgetary basis			\$ 16,104,631
On-behalf pension payments	\$ 1,956,757	\$ -	1,956,757
Revenues — GAAP basis	<u>\$ 1,956,757</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 18,061,388</u>
Expenses — budgetary basis			\$ 14,919,599
On-behalf pension payments	\$ 1,956,757	\$ -	1,956,757
Accounting for capital assets	283,265	-	283,265
Accounting for vehicle leases	(13,010)	-	(13,010)
Accounting for compensated absences	5,400	-	5,400
Accounting for OPEB	<u>3,682</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,682</u>
Expenses — GAAP basis	<u>\$ 2,236,094</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 17,155,693</u>

CAPS EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE

OTHER INFORMATION – UNAUDITED AS OF AND FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

The following other information is provided to comply with the requirements of Chapter 40 of Massachusetts General Law.

Note 1 – Names, Duties and Total Compensation of the Five Most Highly Compensated Employees

Employee Name	Duties	Total Compensation
Sheri D'Annolfo	Executive Director	\$ 151,350
Michelle Ann Atter	Program Director	135,261
Justin Nussey	Director of Finance and Operations	134,620
Jennifer Storm	Director of Student Services	133,130
Courtney Dunne	Program Director	128,188

Note 2 – Transactions Between the Collaborative and any Related For-Profit or Non-Profit Organization

None.

Note 3 – Amounts Expenses on Services for Individuals with Disabilities, Aged 22 and Older

None.

Note 4 – Amounts Expenses on Administration and Overhead

The Collaborative expended \$847,272 and \$1,386,447 for administration and overhead, respectively, for the year ended June 30, 2025.

Note 5 – Accounts Held by the Collaborative That May be Spent at the Discretion of Another Person/Entity

None.

Note 6 – Transactions or Contracts Related to the Purchase, Sale, Rental or Lease of Real Property

The Collaborative is party to several lease agreements for classroom and administrative office space under noncancellable leases, several of which are with related parties (i.e., member school systems). The Collaborative paid \$329,750 and \$388,401, respectively, to related and unrelated parties for facility rent, inclusive of common area maintenance of \$69,843, in fiscal year 2025.

Based on executed facility leases in effect at June 30, 2025, future minimum lease payments for facility leases are as follows:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Future Minimum Payments</u>
2026	\$ 324,926
2027	331,424
2028	338,053
2029	<u>344,814</u>
	<u>\$ 1,339,217</u>

Although the Collaborative only has a single executed facility leases with related parties in effect at June 30, 2025, the Collaborative expects additional facility leases incurring approximately \$300,350 in facility rent in fiscal year 2026 with related parties.

Note 7 – Annual Determination and Disclosure of Cumulative Surplus

Cumulative surplus is defined as the amount of general fund surplus in the Collaborative’s accounts, as reported through an independent audit. Cumulative surplus is derived from a collaborative’s unexpended general funds over a number of fiscal years. Cumulative surplus cannot exceed 25% of the previous year’s general fund expenditures.

Certified cumulative surplus is the total amount of general fund surplus as certified through an independent audit. The certified cumulative surplus at June 30, 2025 is \$2,900,722. The following table illustrates the Collaborative’s compliance with the 25% limitation rule:

Cumulative Surplus Worksheet CAPS Collaborative

Surplus Calculation

Fiscal Year 2025

Enter values below

Page in
FY25 FS

(A) Surplus as of June 30, 2024	\$ 1,793,840	(A) p. 14 *
<i>(Breakdown of use of 2024 surplus)</i>		
B(1) used to support the FY25 budget	\$ -	
B(2) issued as credits to member districts	\$ -	
B(3) issued as a check(s) to member district(s)	\$ -	
B(4) deposited to a restricted account(s)	\$ -	
(B) Board voted uses of surplus funds during FY25	(total from B1:B4) \$ -	(B) p. N/A
(C) Unexpended FY25 General Funds	\$ 1,106,882	(C) p. 14 **
(D) Cumulative Surplus as of June 30, 2025	(A) - (B) + (C) = (D) \$ 2,900,722	(D) p. N/A
(E) FY25 Total General Fund Expenditures	\$ 17,155,693	(E) p. 14
(F) Cumulative Surplus Percentage	(D) ÷ (E) 16.91%	(F) p. N/A

* Amount consists of the prior year's unassigned fund balance in the general fund. The unassigned portion of the reported general fund balance at the beginning of the year was \$2,018,167; the nonspendable portion of the reported general fund balance at the beginning of the year was \$255,398 (total fund balance in the general fund at the beginning of the year was \$2,273,565). Note that nonspendable fund balance is a GAAP measurement.

** Amount consists of the following:

Increase in fund balance in the general fund - FY 2025	\$ 1,118,930	p. 14
Increase in nonspendable fund balance in general fund	(12,108)	
	\$ 1,106,822	

CUMULATIVE SURPLUS REDUCTION Allowable uses of surplus - in excess of the 25% limit

(G) Cumulative surplus as of June 30, 2025	\$ 2,900,722	
	25% limit (allowed) \$ 4,288,923	
(H) Cumulative Surplus REDUCTIONS		
(H)1 Credited to member districts for tuition, services, etc.	\$ -	
(H)2 Deposited to an established trust and/or reserve fund	\$ -	
(H)3 Returned (check) to school districts/towns	\$ -	
	Total Reductions \$ -	
FY25 Cumulative Surplus Percentage after Reductions	16.91%	

The following is a reconciliation of the fund balance in the general fund for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2025:

	<u>Nonspendable</u>	<u>Unassigned</u>	<u>Total</u>
Balance — June 30, 2024	\$ 304,339	\$ 1,793,840	\$ 2,098,179
Changes in fund balances	<u>12,108</u>	<u>1,106,822</u>	<u>1,118,930</u>
Balance — June 30, 2025	<u>\$ 316,447</u>	<u>\$ 2,900,662</u>	<u>\$ 3,217,109</u>

* * * * *

CAPS Collaborative
Quarterly Update for Member District School Committees
Second Quarter – FY25

During the second quarter of the current fiscal year, CAPS Collaborative continued to demonstrate strong operational, financial, and programmatic performance. Below is a summary of key updates shared with the CAPS Board of Directors.

Financial Updates

- Independent Audit Completed: The FY25 independent financial audit was finalized and presented to the CAPS Board on November 12th. The audit confirmed CAPS' continued fiscal stability and compliance with all regulatory reporting requirements.
- Annual Report Approved: On December 11th, the FY25 Annual Report was presented for review and received formal approval from the Board.
- FY26 Revenue Projections: The Board also received an early update on FY26 revenue projections, enabling proactive budget planning and continued alignment with the needs of member districts.

Human Resources and Staffing

- Staffing Actions Approved: All new hires and staffing updates have been reviewed and approved at each of the first three Board meetings this fiscal year.
- Vacancies and Recruitment: Executive Director Sheri D'Annolfo provided the Board with an overview of current staffing vacancies, ongoing recruitment efforts, and strategies to maintain high-quality staffing across programs.

Enrollment and Referrals

- The Executive Director presented updated information on student enrollment, referral trends, and program capacity. CAPS continues to experience steady referral activity across programs serving students with specialized needs.

Miscellaneous

- The Executive Director updated the board on the status of the approved public day application for the Senator's program relocation to Leominster
- Updates on the building renovations were shared
- The Executive Director updated the board on the submission of the DDS application, including financial pre-qualification information for the Adult Day Program



2024-2025

Annual Report

www.capsed.net

978-632-2208

info@capsed.net

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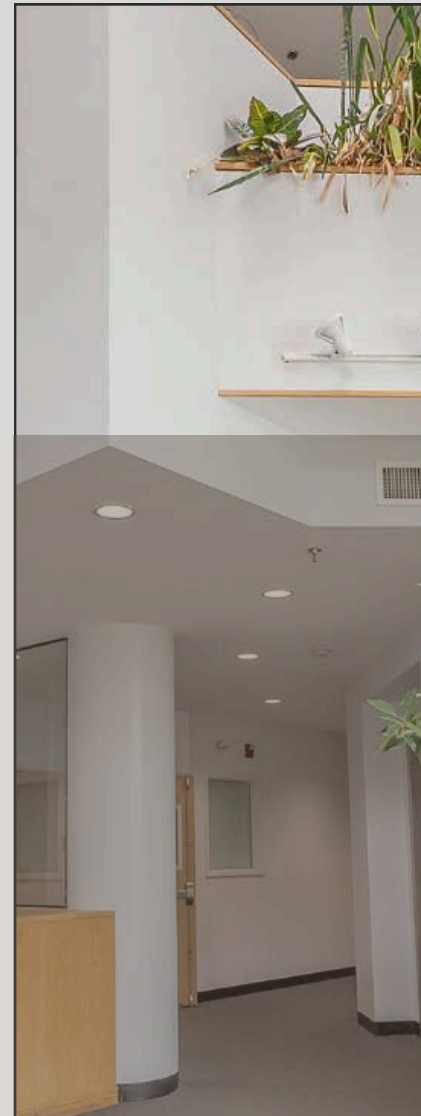
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From the Executive Director

Dear CAPS Collaborative Community Members,

This year marks a very special milestone for CAPS Collaborative as we celebrate our fiftieth year. CAPS opened its doors in 1975 with 8 students enrolled. We now proudly serve over 200 students. For fifty years, we have had the pleasure of partnering with students, families, and districts to provide high-quality special education programs and services in the most inclusive setting possible. Empowering students with diverse needs to grow and thrive has always been our main objective. CAPS' accomplishments would not have been possible without the unwavering support of our skilled and dedicated staff, partnerships with families, districts, and community members, and the supportive governance of our board of directors. We are grateful for this.

I am excited to share an extensive summary of the programs and services offered by CAPS Collaborative during fiscal year 2025, as well as the progress made in meeting our goals and objectives.

CAPS opened the 2024-2025 school year with 189 students. Similar to FY2024, our enrollment continued to grow steadily throughout the year, and we ended the year with an enrollment of 201 students.

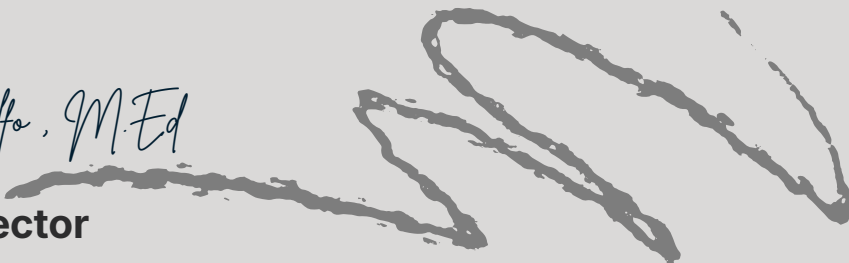
CAPS has experienced careful growth over the past few years in an effort to meet the needs of our member and non-member districts. We have also added new member districts during this time, including the most recent addition of the Wachusett Regional School District. As part of ongoing efforts to broaden our services and better support the community, CAPS explored opportunities for providing adult programming during FY25, and plans to open an adult day program are well underway. A much-needed expansion of our Senators program has led us to a new space, creating exciting opportunities for collaboration and enhanced services.

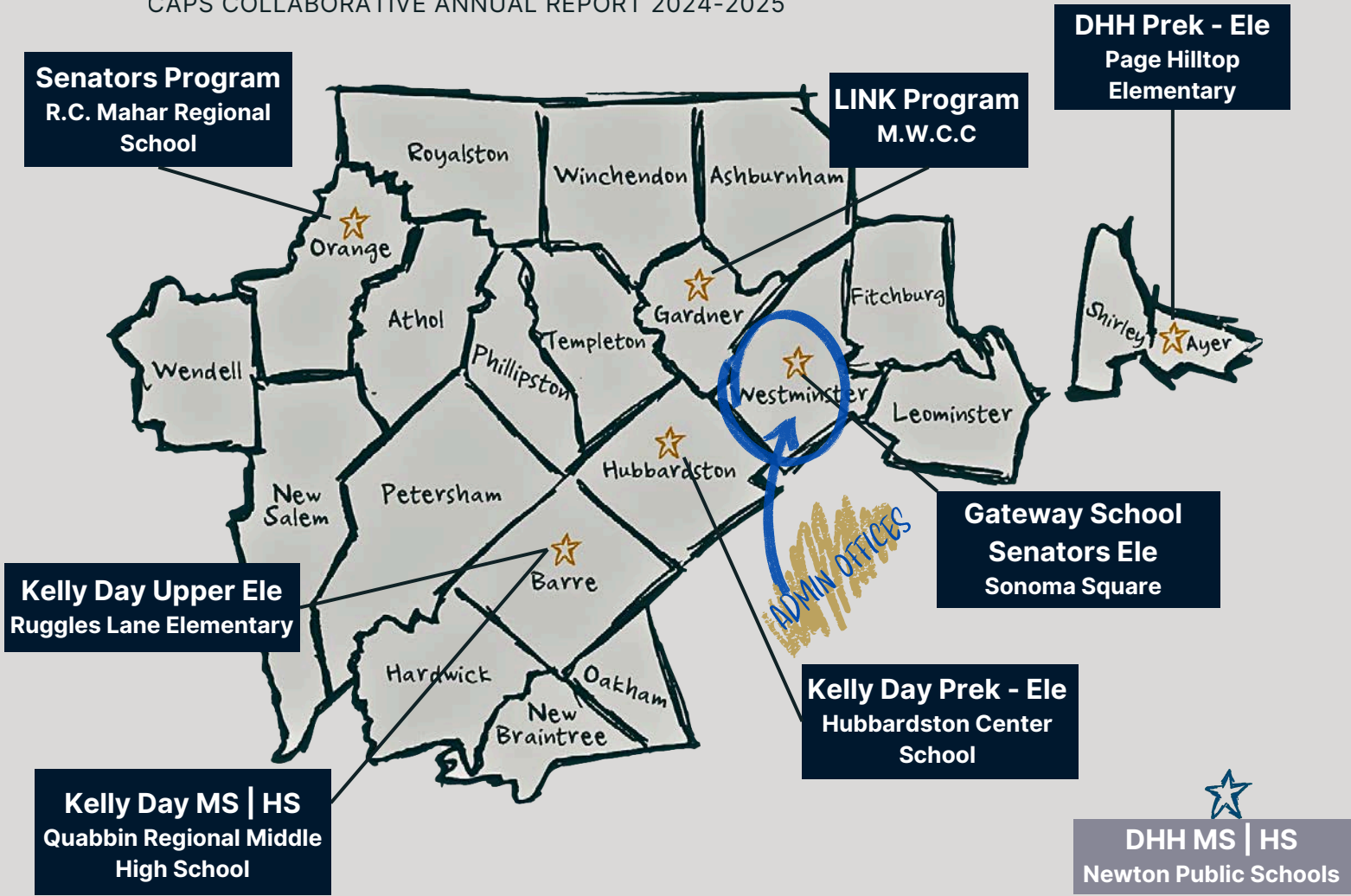
As we reflect on the progress we made in FY25, we are excited to build on this momentum and thank you once again for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Sheri D'Annolfo, M.Ed

Executive Director





Board of Directors

Ashburnham/Westminster	Kimberly Russo	School Committee
Athol/Royalston	Matthew Erenworth	Superintendent
Ayer-Shirley	Dr. Adam Renda	Superintendent
Fitchburg	Peter Stephens (<i>Chair</i>)	School Committee
Gardner	Dr. Mark Pellegrino	Superintendent
Leominster	Sandra Cucchiara	School Committee
Narragansett	Dr. Christopher Casavant	Superintendent
Orange	Crystal Clarke	School Committee
Petersham	Dr. Elizabeth Zelinski	Superintendent
Quabbin	Colleen Mucha	Superintendent
R.C. Mahar	Crystal Clarke	School Committee
Winchendon	Mark Gosselin	Interim Superintendent

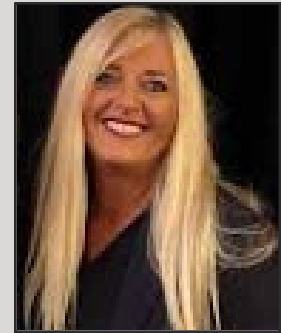
Our Leadership Team



Sheri D'Annolfo, M.Ed.
Executive Director



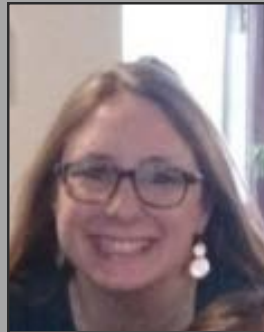
Justin Nussey, SBA
Director of Finance &
Operations



Jennifer Storm, M.Ed.
Director of
Student Services



Michelle Atter, M.Ed
Gateway School
Director



Courtney Dunne, M.Ed
Deaf & Hard of Hearing
Program Director



Jenni Guthrie, SHRM-CP
Human Resources
Director



Donna Amistadi
Kelly Day School
Coordinator



Holly Levesque
Senators Program
Coordinator



Judy Scola
Contracted Services
Coordinator

Our Vision

CAPS Collaborative will be the provider of choice for regional programs and services.



Our Mission

To work in partnership with districts and agencies to provide programs and services of the highest quality.

And Focus

The creation of education programs and services, the provision of technical assistance, professional development, programs for adults over the age of 22 and other community services.

Progress towards Objectives

TO COMMIT EVERY ASPECT OF THE ORGANIZATION TO PROVIDING EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL STUDENTS AND ADULTS WHO NEED SPECIALIZED SERVICES

1 CAPS will demonstrate quality and responsiveness by becoming the first choice of districts for programs and services.

Enrollment at the Collaborative increased throughout the year, serving an all-time high of 201 students by the end of the 2024-2025 school year. CAPS continued to expand community outreach to districts and community stakeholders to remain visible and distinct from other programs.

2 CAPS will strive to be a customer focused organization that constantly evaluates district needs.

Customer relationships are strengthened by regularly meeting with district stakeholders to stay aligned with their priorities and challenges. Guided by referral trends and district feedback, CAPS expanded Pre-K and elementary services in the DHH, Gateway, and Senators programs and broadened contracted supports by enhancing AAC and AT services, adding a school psychologist, and deepening partnerships that help families navigate transitions to adulthood.



Objectives **CONTINUED**

3 CAPS will integrate quality, integrity, respect, and teamwork into every aspect of the organization.

Teamwork is central to CAPS' mission, and our success depends on strong collaboration with students, staff, districts, families, and community partners. We take pride in delivering high-quality programming led by skilled and experienced professionals. To further enhance instructional excellence, CAPS established a new curriculum committee in FY25 focused on strengthening the use of quality, evidence-based practices.

4 CAPS will demonstrate accountability through constantly evaluating results and progress towards goals.

CAPS maintains a continuous cycle of program monitoring and evaluation to ensure each initiative aligns with our strategic goals. Ongoing review by the leadership team helps identify emerging needs and guide improvement efforts. Student success supported by strong partnerships with districts, families, and the community serves as a key benchmark of our progress.

5 CAPS will implement programs & services in the most cost-effective manner & exercise due diligence in financial decision-making.

The CAPS administrative team meets regularly to review program needs and staffing efficiency. Program and fiscal performance guide our decision-making, ensuring we remain accountable to high standards. By continually adjusting staffing to maintain effective student-to-staff ratios, CAPS delivers strong academic support while remaining a cost-efficient option for partner districts. A monthly report on service optimization is also provided to the Board.

6 CAPS will work in partnership with districts to ensure that students transition to the least restrictive environment in their home district.

CAPS is committed to equipping students with the skills and supports needed to learn in the least restrictive environment and, whenever possible, transition back to their sending districts. This work is strengthened through partnerships with host schools and districts that prioritize inclusive practices and expanded opportunities for all learners.

"WHEN WE INVEST IN OUR PROFESSIONALS, WE
STRENGTHEN EVERY CLASSROOM, EVERY
PARTNERSHIP, AND EVERY STUDENT'S PATH
FORWARD."

Professional Development

In FY25, CAPS continues its reinvestment in staff by expanding professional development opportunities and dedicating more than \$45,000 to training, mentorship, and structured learning programs. CAPS remains committed to supporting and strengthening its talented professionals through continuous learning, recognizing that their growth directly enhances the quality of education and care provided to our students.



2025 Highlights

ALICE
Blume Method
Collaborative Problem Solving
Crisis Prevention Institute
First Aid & CPR
MOEC Leadership Series
Safety Care
Trauma-Informed Care

Programs and Services



Innovation in EDUCATION

CAPS Collaborative provides a comprehensive continuum of specialized programs and services designed to meet the diverse learning, communication, behavioral, and medical needs of students across our partner districts.

Through close collaboration with educators, families, and community partners, CAPS ensures that every student receives individualized, high-quality support in environments that promote inclusion, growth, and independence.

Inclusive and Community-Based Learning

By leasing classroom space within local public schools, CAPS promotes meaningful inclusion, collaboration, and community belonging. Students participate in general education experiences when appropriate while receiving the specialized services they need to succeed in the least restrictive environment.

Expanded Related Services

CAPS collaborates with districts to deliver a wide range of related services, including:

- Speech-language therapy
- Occupational and physical therapy
- Assistive Technology (AT) and Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) support
- School psychology and behavioral consultation
- Transition and family support services

These offerings allow districts to access high-quality expertise that complements their local programming and supports students across settings.

Commitment to Student Growth

Across all programs, CAPS remains dedicated to helping students build the academic, social, communication, and life skills necessary for success in school and beyond. Through individualized instruction, collaborative planning, and equitable access to resources, CAPS empowers each learner to achieve meaningful progress and reach their full potential.

Programming Pillars at CAPS



Deaf and Hard of Hearing

- Pre-k Ele **Page Hilltop Elementary**
135 Washington St, Ayer
- Middle School **Bigelow Middle School**
42 Vernon St, Newton
- High School **Newton North High School**
457 Walnut St, Newton



Gateway School

- Ele - High School **Sonoma Square**
2 Narrows Rd, Westminster
- 18 - 22 **Mount Wachusett CC**
444 Green Street, Gardner



Kelly Day School

- Pre-k Early Ele **Hubbardston Center School**
8 Elm St, Hubbardston
- Upper Ele **Ruggles Lane Elementary**
105 Ruggles Ln, Barre
- Mid-High School **Quabbin Regional School**
800 South St, Barre



Senators Program

- Ele **Sonoma Square**
2 Narrows Rd, Westminster
- Mid-High Voc **Mahar Regional School**
307 S. Main St, Orange

Deaf and Hard of Hearing



The CAPS Deaf & Hard of Hearing (DHH) Program is committed to providing each student with full access to language, communication, and high-quality instruction. Designed to meet diverse learning needs, the program supports students who use American Sign Language (ASL), audition, spoken English, or a combination of modalities, ensuring that every learner can engage meaningfully in their education.

Key Components



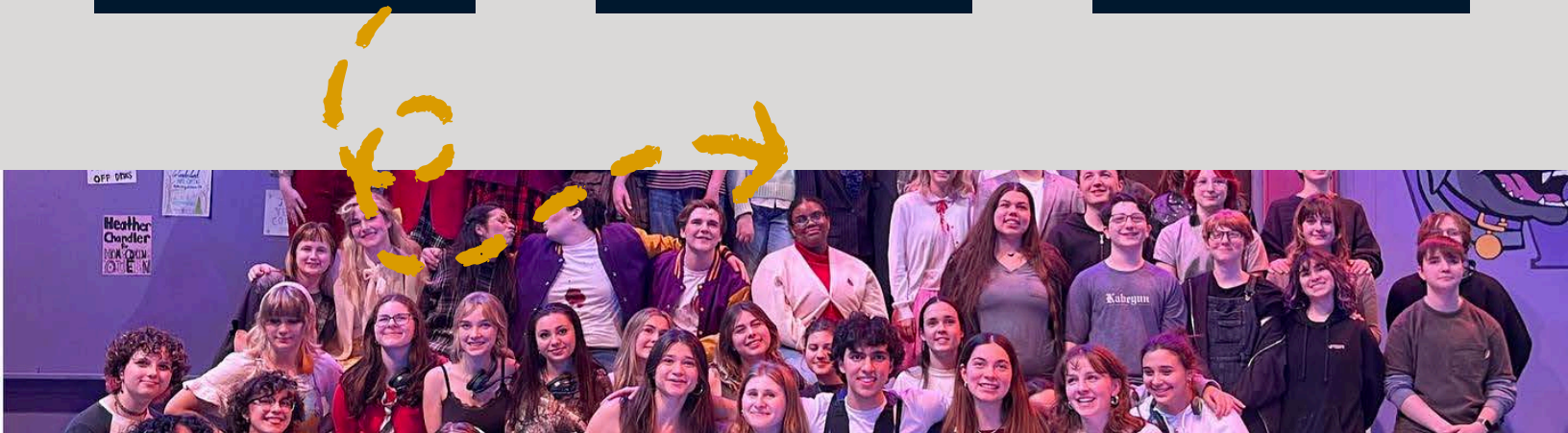
Integrated Gen. Ed Classes
Academic, Social & Extra-curricular opportunities from host schools



Small Group Instruction
by licensed Teachers of the Deaf



Individualized Transition
Planning
Vocational and career
readiness exploration





Students benefit from a continuum of services that includes small-group, self-contained instruction led by Teachers of the Deaf, as well as opportunities for full inclusion within general education settings. Instruction and supports are individualized to honor each student's primary mode of communication and to maximize the use of hearing assistive technologies such as hearing aids, cochlear implants, and FM/DM systems.

The DHH support team includes Teachers of the Deaf, ASL/English Educational Interpreters, Speech-Language Pathologists, an Educational Audiologist, Counselors, and Paraeducators. Together, this multidisciplinary team fosters academic growth, communication access, social connection, and the self-advocacy skills students need to thrive in a variety of educational and community settings.

For More Information

Dr. Courtney Dunne, M.Ed.

DHH Program Director

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Gateway School

The CAPS Gateway School is a separate public day program serving students in Kindergarten through Grade 12 who benefit from a highly supportive, relationship based environment. Students join the Gateway community when social and emotional needs impact their ability to thrive in a less restrictive setting. At Gateway, the focus is on meeting each student where they are and helping them grow into confident, capable, and resilient learners.

Gateway's approach blends collaborative problem solving, trauma informed practices, and strength based strategies to create a safe, predictable, and nurturing learning environment. Instruction is individualized and designed to recognize each student's unique profile honoring their strengths, addressing their challenges, and supporting their emotional, social, and academic growth. The goal is for students to build the skills they need to engage successfully in school, in the community, and in their future goals.

Key Components



Individualized instruction & supports tailored to each student's learning profile



Therapeutic Day School
Trauma-informed approach



Community based vocational and volunteering
Comprehensive pathways for growth

Gateway's learning model supports pathways toward high school graduation, postsecondary planning, and increased independence. Through individualized instruction, therapeutic support, and community-based learning, Gateway empowers each student to take the next steps in their academic futures and





LINK Program for 18 - 22

The LINK program, a CAPS Gateway School initiative located at Mount Wachusett Community College, serves students ages 18-22 as they prepare for adulthood. LINK students participate in transition classes, build functional and independent living skills, explore career pathways, and experience college life alongside their peers on campus.

Through partnerships with community employers such as Affordable Interior Systems (AIS) and its inclusive Radiance Program, LINK participants also gain real-world job skills, community-based work experience, and workforce training. Supported by CAPS transition staff and job coaches, students practice essential soft skills and learn practical, on-the-job tasks in authentic work environments, with some transitioning from supported internships into paid employment. Together, these collaborations help students build confidence, independence, and a meaningful foundation for their future.



For More Information

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Gateway School Director

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Kelly Day School



The Kelly Day School at CAPS Collaborative serves students with multiple and complex disabilities, including physical, medical, communication, sensory, and neurological challenges. Through an integrated therapy model, the program provides an engaging, dynamic learning environment tailored to each student’s unique strengths and needs.

Small, substantially separate classrooms located within host public schools allow for individualized instruction while maximizing opportunities for inclusion alongside peers. Students build functional, academic, and communication skills with the support of adaptive equipment, assistive technology, and a wide range of communication tools.

Key Components



Integrated therapy model
combining educational, therapeutic and clinical supports



Inclusion Opportunities
Small, highly individualized classrooms located within host public schools



Adaptive and Assistive Technology Supports
Multidisciplinary team classroom approach

The Kelly Day School is designed to foster independence, meaningful participation, and skill development across all areas of learning. By combining specialized instruction, therapeutic supports, and a variety of inclusion experiences, the Kelly Day School empowers students to grow, connect, and succeed in their school and community environments.

For More Information

Jennifer Storm

Director of Student Services

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Senators Program

The CAPS Senators Program supports middle school, high school, and post-graduate students (ages 12–22) with moderate to severe disabilities, including autism. Students in the program present with a range of cognitive, communication, social, and sensory needs and benefit from a highly structured, supportive learning environment tailored to their individualized goals.

Grounded in the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), the Senators Program provides instruction through a blend of small group learning and 1:1 teaching. Evidence based practices including: discrete trial instruction, incidental teaching, behavior shaping, and functional communication training are integrated throughout the school day to promote meaningful skill development.

Key Components



Functional Academics
Communication and Social Skill Development



Daily Living and Self-Care Learning
Leisure and Recreational Skill Building



Vocational and Community Based Training

Students have opportunities to participate in structured vocational experiences and community activities that support independence, confidence, and readiness for adult life. By combining specialized instruction, therapeutic supports, and a predictable, nurturing environment, the Senators Program helps students build the academic, social, and functional skills they need to thrive in school, in the community, and transitioning into adulthood.

For More Information

Jennifer Storm

Director of Student Services

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District Services

CAPS Collaborative provides a comprehensive range of related services designed to meet the individualized needs outlined in students' IEPs. Core therapy offerings including physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech language therapy are embedded within program tuition (typically up to 2x30 minutes, with additional services available as needed). These supports ensure students receive consistent, integrated therapeutic intervention aligned with their academic & functional goals.

In response to evolving student and district needs, CAPS continues to expand and strengthen its specialized service areas. Beginning in the 2024–2025 school year, Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) support is included as part of program tuition, offering enhanced expertise in behavior intervention, skill development, and data-driven instructional practices.

Over the past decade, CAPS has significantly broadened its itinerant services to remain at the forefront of progressive, inclusive, and assistive education practices.

CAPS' itinerant department now includes:

Augmentative & Alternative Communication (AAC)

Assistive Technology (AT)

BCBA Consultation & Direct Service

Teachers of the Deaf (TOD)

ASL Interpreting Services

Orientation & Mobility (O&M)

Cortical/Cerebral Visual Impairment (CVI)

Teacher of the Visually Impaired (TVI)

Psychology Evaluations

Through these expanded services, CAPS remains committed to partnering with districts to ensure students have the tools, expertise, and learning supports necessary to thrive in school, the community, and beyond.



Financial Analysis



Educational collaboratives were established through legislation in 1974 as a way for school districts to pool resources, share expertise, and deliver high-quality services they could not efficiently provide on their own. Collaboratives were designed to support the Commonwealth's most vulnerable learners by expanding access to specialized programs, therapeutic services, and inclusive educational opportunities. Their initial purpose remains true today: to strengthen public education by creating cost-effective, regional solutions that meet evolving student needs.

CAPS Collaborative was founded in this spirit in September 1975, when seven member districts entrusted the organization with serving students whose needs exceeded what individual districts could offer alone. What began with eight students has grown into a diverse regional resource that now serves over 200 students annually. CAPS embodies the foundational goals of education collaboratives to create, provide, and empower by delivering comprehensive programs, related services, and professional support while continually adapting to the changing educational landscape. Remaining cost-effective and responsive is central to CAPS' mission and to the leadership of its Board of Directors.

As CAPS approaches its 50th anniversary in 2025, it continues to evolve to meet regional needs, including expanding into adult services with the launch of a Community Based Day Program (CBDS). Nearing five decades after its founding, the work of CAPS Collaborative remains grounded in its original charge: to provide exceptional, inclusive, and innovative services for students with the highest level of need and to do so through partnership, purpose, and a commitment to opportunity.

Tuition Rates

Program tuition is set on an annual basis by the Board of Directors. Through its Finance Subcommittee, independent Treasurer and CAPS Administrative Team, a mix of area trend data compared to past, current and projected enrollment are analyzed during the budget process. Updating staffing needs with an emphasis on appropriate ratios for program safety and academic success, CAPS remains a cost-efficient option for its Member Districts.

CAPS Program	Private School Average	CAPS Member Tuition FY 25	Member Savings	Comparable Programs
Gateway School	\$105,803	\$55,109	\$50,694	Devereux, Lighthouse, RFK Community Alliance
Deaf Hard of Hearing	\$89,524	\$63,483	\$26,041	Beverly School, Clarke School, Learning Center, Willie Ross School
Kelly Day School	\$130,764	\$72,944	\$57,820	Boston Campus School, Devereux, New England Center for Children
Senators Program	\$115,852	\$71,533	\$44,319	Cardinal Cushing, May Institute, New England Center for Children

A method to evaluate a Collaborative's cost-effectiveness is through a comparison of its tuition rates with comparable private day school rates. Programs below were selected for similarities in services provided to the CAPS program, as well as similar proximities to its Member Districts.

Despite focused growth and program expansion since 2021, CAPS has operated near break-even during this period due to substantial reinvestment in program infrastructure. Over the past four years, the Collaborative has allocated significant resources to specialized in-program supports, including behavior intervention, assistive technology, augmentative communication, ASL services, and school psychology. These investments have enhanced the quality of instruction and broadened the expertise available to students and districts, but they have also constrained the Collaborative's ability to grow its fund balance in comparison to the growth of annual budgets.



The 2024–2025 tuition approach is therefore centered on rebuilding and strengthening the Collaborative’s financial position while continuing to reinvest strategically in program development. This balanced strategy aims to responsibly grow the fund balance toward the 25% limit, ensure long-term fiscal health, and maintain CAPS’ capacity to meet student and district needs with high-quality, sustainable programming.

Program	Members		Non-Members		2nd Tier	
	Annual	Daily	Annual	Daily	Annual	Daily
DHH PS-ES	\$63,483	\$352.68	\$73,014	\$405.63	\$75,177	\$417.65
DHH MS-HS	63,483	352.68	73,014	405.63	79,941	444.12
Kelly Day	72,944	405.23	87,649	486.94	-	-
Senators	71,533	397.41	85,979	477.66	-	-
Gateway	55,109	306.16	67,508	375.04	-	-
Gateway LINK	42,709	237.27	51,322	285.12	-	-

Over the past decade, CAPS Collaborative has experienced significant growth driven by increasing regional needs and a commitment to expanding high-quality, specialized programming. To support long-term sustainability and avoid program plateaus, the Collaborative prioritized opening new classrooms at the preschool and early elementary levels across three major programs: Deaf & Hard of Hearing (DHH), Gateway, and Senators. This intentional expansion strengthens foundational programming, creates additional capacity, and establishes a natural “feeder system” that supports organic growth over time. With student enrollment fluctuating unpredictably at times, building strong early-level programs remains essential to ensuring long-term program stability.



Program Enrollment

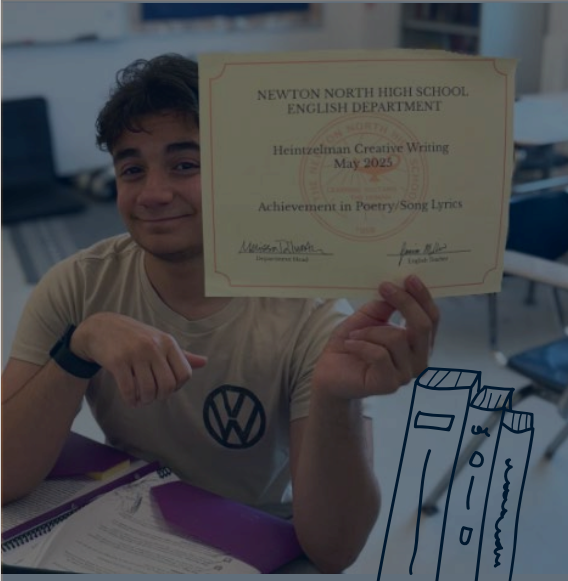
The 2024–2025 school year marked the third consecutive year of record-high enrollment for CAPS Collaborative. As the organization approaches its 50th anniversary, enrollment exceeded 200 students for the first time in its history, crossing the milestone in December and remaining above that threshold for the remainder of the year. Enrollment began in the low 180s, surged through the fall, tying the previous year’s all-time high of 187 students by October before surpassing it shortly after.

Program	SEPT	OCT	NOV	December	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
Gateway ES	12	12	14	16	17	18	18	20	20	20
Gateway MS	21	21	20	20	22	22	22	21	21	21
Gateway HS	20	22	26	28	28	26	24	25	24	23
Gateway LINK	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
DHH PS	9	9	9	9	10	10	10	10	10	10
DHH ES	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11
DHH MS	14	14	15	15	15	15	16	16	16	16
DHH HS	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	19
Kelly Day PS	7	7	7	8	9	9	9	9	9	9
Kelly Day K	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Kelly Day EES	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6
Kelly Day EMS	6	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Kelly Day EUS	7	7	7	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
Kelly Day MS	8	8	8	9	9	9	9	9	8	8
Kelly Day HS	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
Senators ES	4	5	5	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Senators JR	7	7	6	7	7	7	7	7	7	6
Senators SR	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4
Senator VOC	7	8	9	8	7	7	7	7	7	7
TOTAL	182	187	193	201	205	204	204	207	205	201

This year's growth reflects a long-term strategy launched in 2021 to build a full continuum of classrooms across all major programs. A key focus entering 2024-2025 was the expansion of Pre-K and elementary programming, ensuring strong early-level foundations that feed sustainable growth in later grades. Three new classrooms opened this year: a second DHH Pre-K classroom at Page Hilltop Elementary in Ayer, a new Senators elementary classroom temporarily located at Sonoma Square in Westminster, and an early elementary Gateway classroom in Westminster. Beginning the year with 6 enrollments, these new classrooms ultimately serving a combined total of 15 students by year's end including rapid midyear enrollment growth in the Senators Elementary classroom and the historic enrollment that pushed CAPS from 199 to 201 students in December.

The Kelly Day School continued its steady upward trajectory. After averaging 47 students in FY24, Kelly Day closed this year at 55 students, the highest enrollment in the program's history. With classrooms now spanning all elementary grade levels and a growing preschool foundation, the program is positioned to be a model of self sustainability. The Deaf & Hard of Hearing Middle and High School programs, which joined CAPS in 2021, continued their strong performance as well, adding five new students and celebrating two graduates. Looking ahead, the program anticipates its largest graduating classes yet, with 7 students projected to graduate in 2026 and 8 in 2028. These upcoming transitions highlight the strategic importance of the Collaborative's investment in early-grade programming to ensure stable, organic growth across all programs.

CAPS Collaborative celebrates both the growth and achievements of its students while also remaining focused on long-term sustainability. As larger graduating classes approach, the continued development of early elementary and preschool programs will be essential to maintaining strong enrollment across the Collaborative. The successes of 2024-2025 demonstrate that this strategy can be successful in building a strong foundation for the next 50 years of CAPS' service to students, families, districts and community.



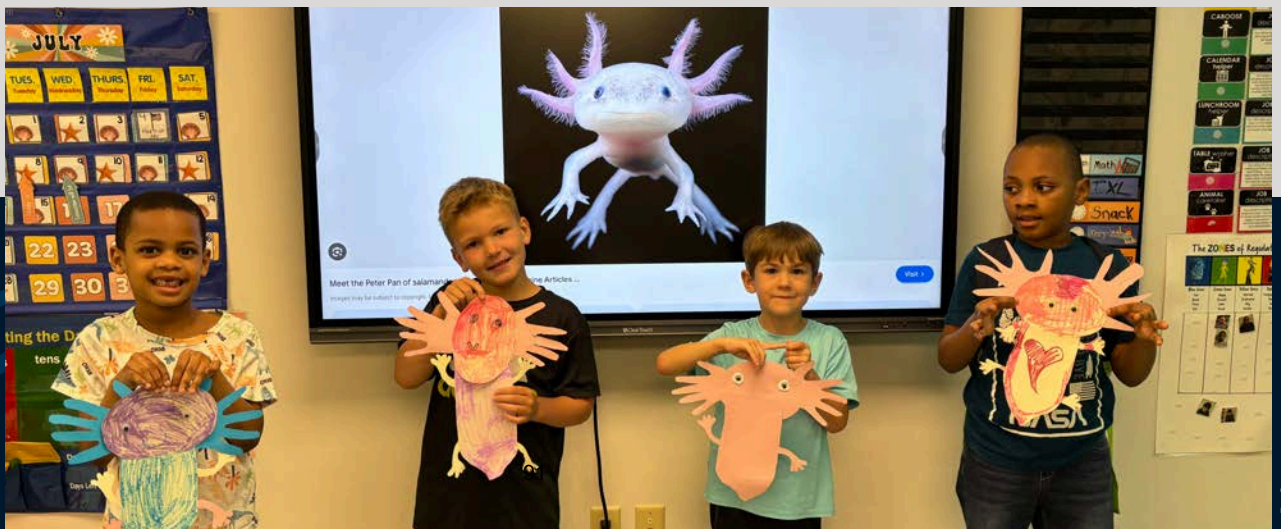
2025

Contracted Services

The Collaboratives vast range of specialists are available to districts to assist in meeting IEP goals and requirements, provide assessments or serve as the providers for in-district departments. Similar to tuition, these contracted services rates are reviewed during the budget process.

CAPS Service Provider	Private Per Hour Average	CAPS FY 25 Per Hour Rates	Member Savings	Comparable Service Providers
Assistive Tech AAC	\$215.00	\$118.50	\$96.50	Easter Seals
Interpreting (ASL)	130.00	71.75	\$58.25	Partners Interpreting
OT PT Speech Therapy	145.00	104.75	\$40.50	Delta T Group, Futures, Sunbelt
School Psychologist	180.00	125.00	\$55.00	Various private practices
Teacher of the Visually Impaired (TVI)	175.00	118.50	\$56.50	Various private practices

Cost-effectiveness for contracted service rates is measured through a comparison of its hourly rates with comparable private or independent contractor rates. Organizations above were selected for like service as well as availability with its Member Districts.



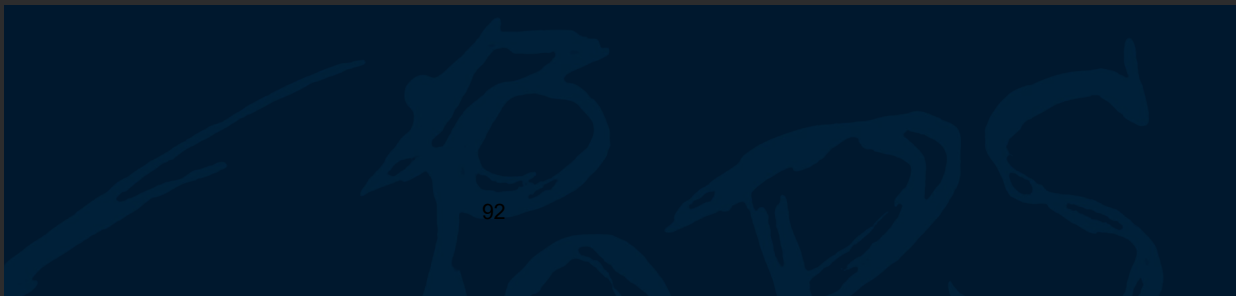
Contracted Service rates were increased by 5% increase for fiscal 2025, continuing the restructured format begun last year breaking out a Non-Member rate. Districts maintain their benefit by being members of the Collaborative with a 10% difference in rates from the new Non-Member amounts.

Therapy Services (Per Hour)			Other Services (Per Hour)		
	Mem	Non		Mem	Non
Occupational Therapy	104.75	115.25	Augmentative Communication Eval	120.75	132.75
Physical Therapy	104.75	115.25	Assistive Technology	118.50	130.25
Speech Language Pathologist	104/75	115.25	Board Certified Behavioral Analyst	118.50	130.25
Occupational Therapy Assistant	60.75	66.75	Interpreter (ASL ELL)	71.75	79.00
Physical Therapy Assistant	60.75	66.75	Orientation & Mobility Specialist	118.50	130/25
Speech Language Pathologist Assistant	60.75	66.75	Teacher of the Deaf In-Home Teach.	102.25	112.5
School Psychologist	125.00	66.75	Teacher of the Visually Impaired	118.50	130.25

Fiscal Year 2025 marked another positive year for CAPS’ contracted services as the organization continued to meet district and community needs beyond the classroom. In response to shifting district priorities and the loss of several in-district OT and PT contracts, CAPS used FY25 as a restructuring year redirecting these therapy services primarily to support internal programs while expanding other high-demand specialty services across the region.

This strategic shift led to notable growth in several areas. Teacher of the Visually Impaired (TVI) and Orientation & Mobility (O&M) services nearly doubled, and CAPS increased capacity in Assistive Technology (AT) and Augmentative & Alternative Communication (AAC) to meet rising district demand. At the same time, CAPS experienced an increase in IEP-driven 1:1 nursing and paraprofessional support, reflecting the higher needs of students arriving at CAPS programs and signaling continued growth in these service areas moving forward.

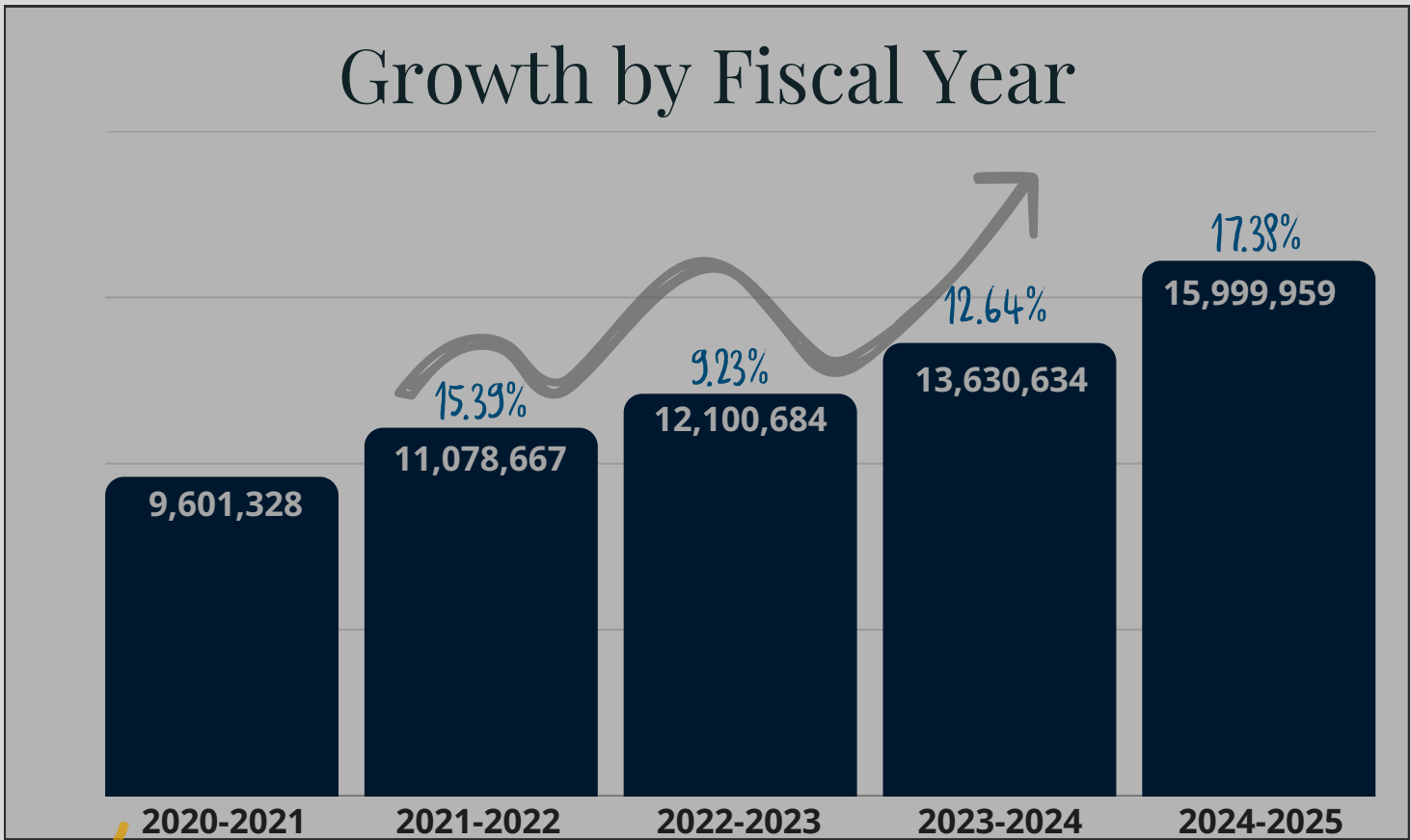
The demand for school psychology evaluations also grew significantly in FY25. CAPS added a part-time school psychologist to assess regional need, and after a busy spring season, plans to expand psychological services in FY26. Overall, the year demonstrated CAPS’ ability to adapt its service-delivery model, strengthen specialized offerings, and remain a responsive partner to districts throughout the Commonwealth.





Fiscal Performance 2025

The 2024–2025 fiscal year marked a turning point for CAPS Collaborative, reflecting the culmination of four to five years of strategic planning, investment, and sustained enrollment growth. With enrollment surpassing the projected 200-student threshold and remaining above it through the end of the year, CAPS has entered a period of stability in which program models and staffing structures can normalize around this expanded scale. Following a year of concentrated investment in 2024, Fiscal 2025 positioned CAPS to move confidently into its next phase of development.

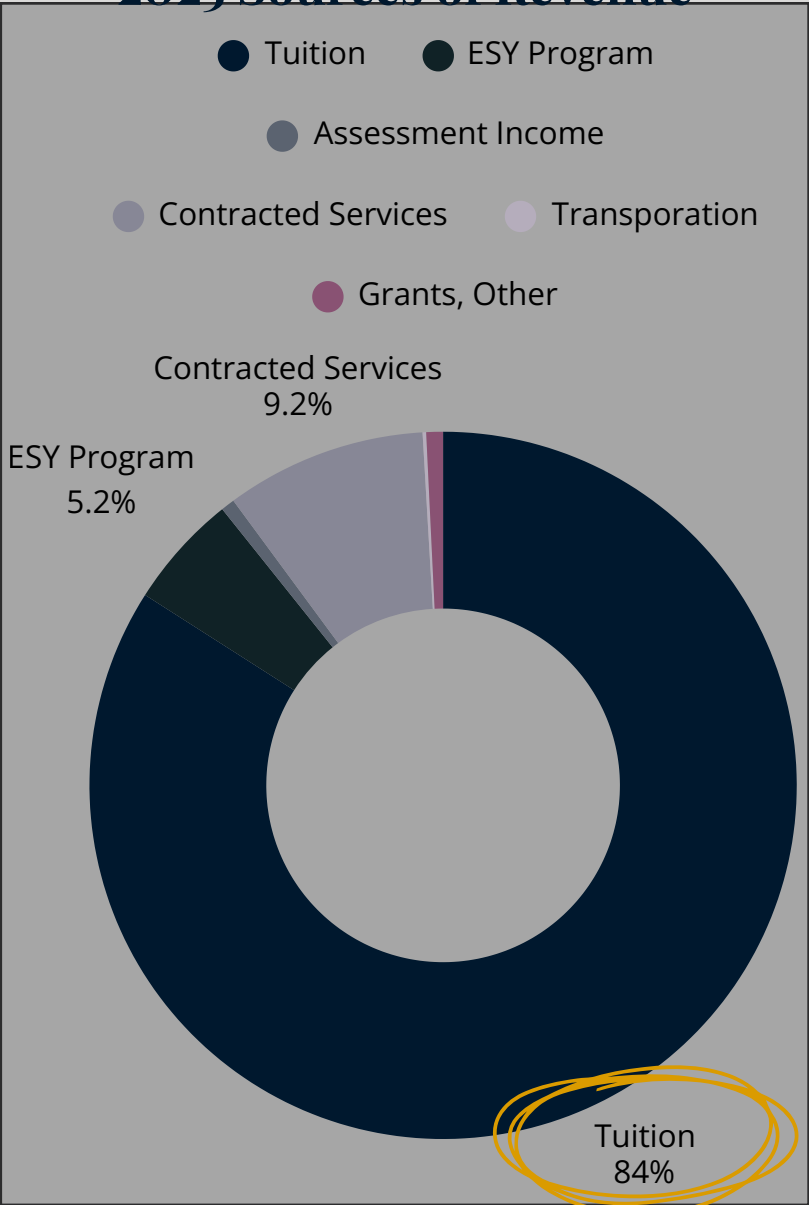


Since fiscal year 2020–2021, CAPS Collaborative has experienced remarkable expansion, growing by 54.64% as enrollment, programming, and community outreach reached new heights. This growth reflects sustained reinvestment in program quality, specialized services, and responsive redesign of instructional models to meet the evolving needs of the communities. Entering its next phase of redevelopment, this upward trajectory positions the Collaborative for continued innovation and long-term stability.

The Collaborative’s strong fiscal performance in 2024–2025 reflects both the support of its member districts, including first-year member Ayer–Shirley and incoming FY26 member Wachusett, and the structured reinvestment strategy that has guided CAPS over the past several years. Prior to FY25, CAPS experienced four consecutive break-even years while achieving a 43% growth ratio, driven by the opening of new classrooms, expansion of program offerings, and preparation for the changing needs of the “new student” being referred to collaboratives statewide. These investments began to yield measurable financial impact in FY25, with an 18.15% organizational growth rate and revenues exceeding expenses by \$1,185,032.

Fiscal Year 2025 was a strong revenue year with total revenues reaching \$15,999,959. This increase was driven primarily by record enrollment, peaking in April at 22 more students than FY24. This resulted in a 17.88% rise in tuition revenue. The Collaborative also saw substantial growth in instructed contracted services, with an 80% increase in requested O&M and TVI services and continued expansion in AAC and Assistive Technology supports. As students enroll at CAPS with increasingly complex needs, often requiring IEP-driven 1:1 nurses and paraprofessionals, overall contracted revenue rose by 26.33%. Despite restructuring the OT|PT department and transitioning most of those services back into tuition-based programming, the Speech Department continued its upward trend, marking its third consecutive year of growth with an additional 7% growth in FY25. Together, these revenue gains reflect both rising regional demand for specialized services and the strength of CAPS’ diversified service model.

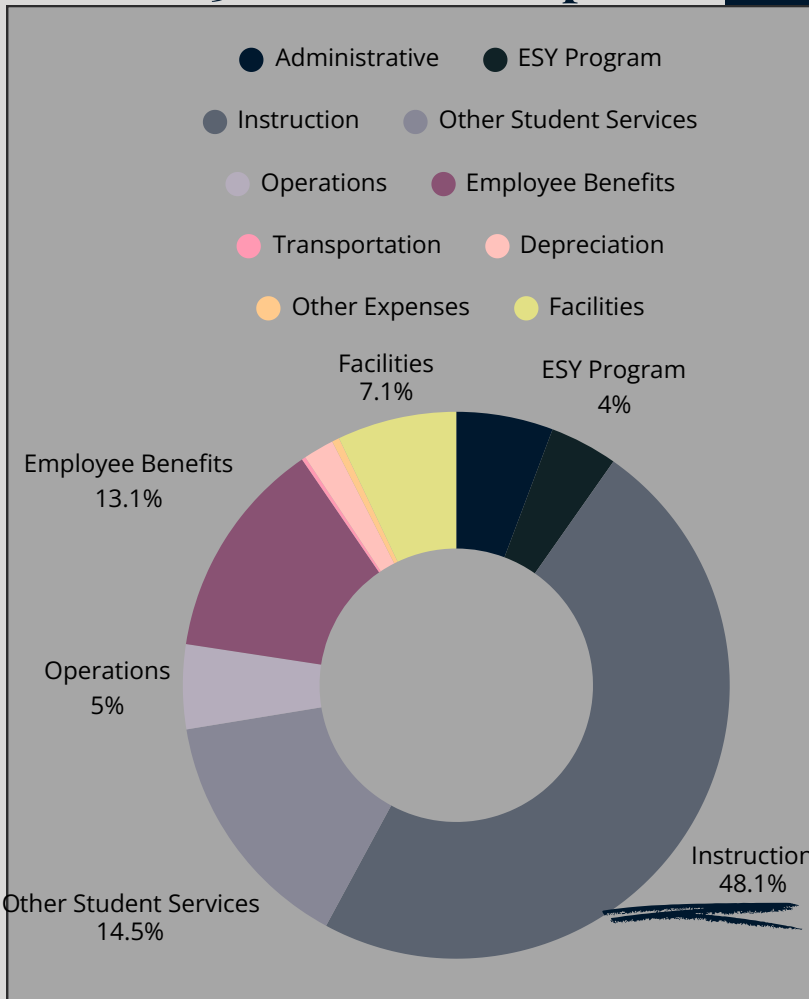
2025 Sources of Revenue





Fiscal Year 2025 marked a period of continued investment as CAPS scaled its staffing and infrastructure to meet record enrollment and rising student needs. With more students and more classrooms than ever before, CAPS expanded its administrative and instructional capacity to maintain high-quality oversight and program operations. This included the addition of a Director of Student Services, a new role created to strengthen professional leadership and support the growing complexity of programs across the Collaborative.

2025 Sources of Expense



The year also began a transition in program leadership structures. The former Satellite Director role was divided into dedicated Kelly Day Coordinator and Senators Coordinator positions, reflecting both program growth and the anticipated expansion of the Senators Program into additional classroom space. Although the Senators and Kelly Day Program is not yet at the point of having a standalone director, FY25 represented the first intentional step toward that future model.

Additional expenses in FY25 focused on program-quality enhancements, including investments in program-dedicated BCBAs, the launch of a new Registered Behavior Technician (RBT) program, and increased specialized supports aligned with student IEP needs. These strategic expenditures ensure that CAPS can continue to deliver high-quality services while preparing for the next phase of organizational development.

AUDITED FINANCIALS - Budgetary basis

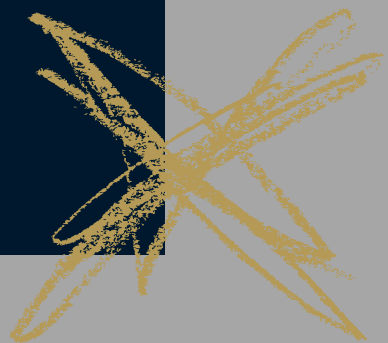
REVENUE		
Tuition	\$13,447,521	84.05%
ESY Tuition	834,630	5.22%
Assessment	100,620	0.63%
OT Contracted	94,725	0.59%
PT Contracted	17,799	0.59%
Speech Contracted	529,350	3.31%
Instructional Contracted	826,903	5.17%
Transportation Contracted	26,285	0.16%
Other Revnue	122,126	0.76%

Total Revenue \$ 15,999,959

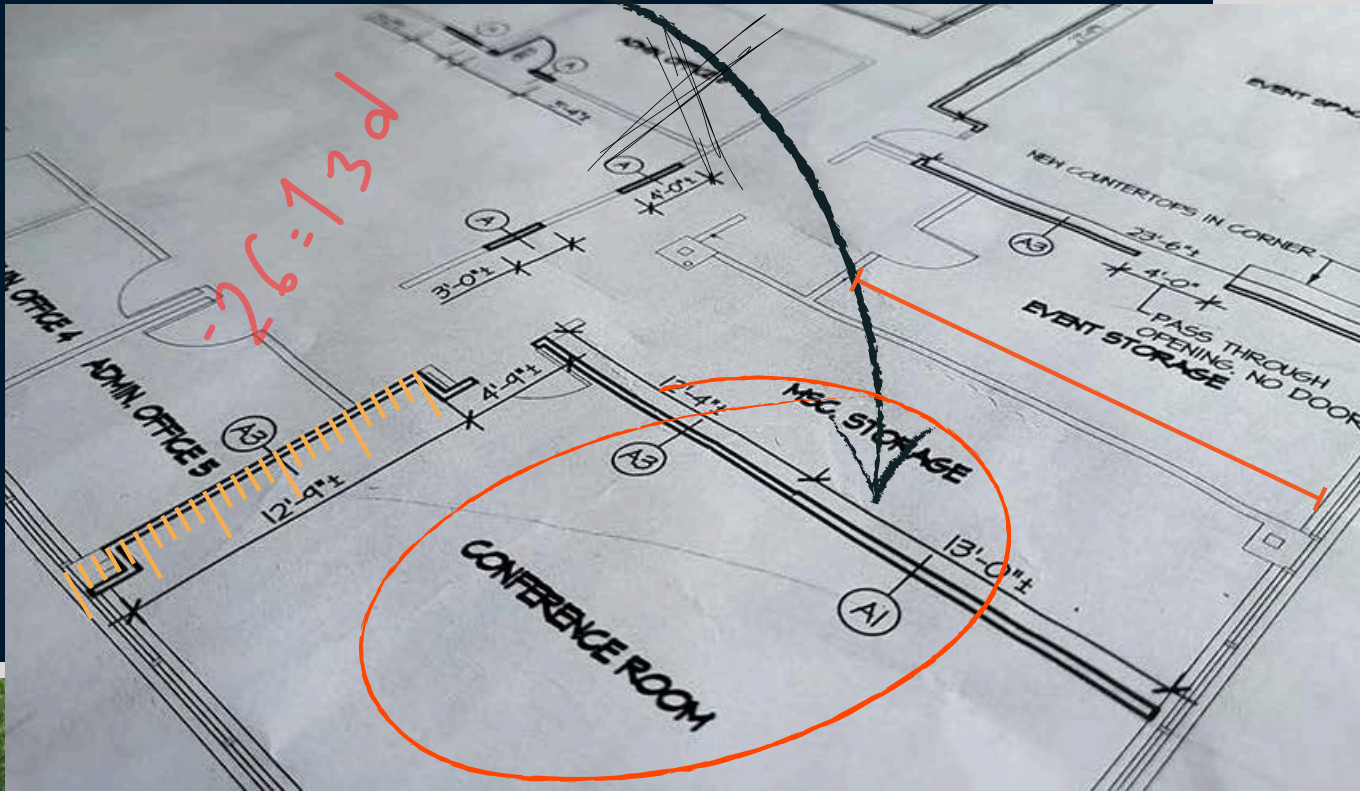
EXPENSE		
Administration	\$847,272	6.18%
Instructional	7,122,977	51.95%
OT	368,803	2.60%
PT	346,108	2.52%
Speech	1,043,605	7.61%
Operation & Maintenance	738,611	5.39%
Fixed Charges	2,650,403	19.33%
Transporation	78,752	0.57%
Itinerent	432,263	3.15%
ESY Instructional	594,296	4.33%
Other Expense	591,837	4.32%

Total Expense \$ 14,814,927

Change in Fund Balance	\$ 1,182,032
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2025 Year in Review



CAPS is not defined by its financial reports or the slogan on its website. The people are what define a Collaborative, both staff and students. The 2025 fiscal year was another example of incredibly talented professionals proving their dedication and selflessness for the student lives they improve daily. The impact of CAPS Collaborative is now statewide: reaching out and embracing new member districts, being an innovator through program design and new initiatives, putting on more graduation ceremonies, being at the forefront of assistive technology and new communication methods for our region, and most importantly, seeing different levels of success achieved every day throughout CAPS Classrooms. These are just a few examples of those 2025 successes:



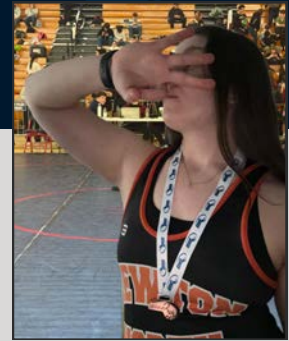
Workforce Training

In the Fall of 2024, students and Adults gained access to real-world job experiences and vocational skill development with community partnerships and on-site support from CAPS job coaches



Sonoma Expansion

A building remodel at Sonoma Square opened new Ele Classroom, a revamped Program office and entryway in Westminster



Championship Pedigree

A CAPS DHH HS Student at Newton North High School placed third at the MIAA D1 State Wrestling Championships



Graduates

The DHH program graduated two college bound seniors while Gateway celebrated one senior in the 2025 class



Mayor's Choice Award

Senators student chosen as Fitchburg Mayor's Choice Award recipient at an Art Show in April 2025



Artis Retreat

Three CAPS Students participated in Bigelow Middle School's production of "Artist Retreat" in November 2024



Leominster Expansion

CAPS secured a lease at 690 Mechanic St in Leominster for new growth and new programming coming in 2026



13th Member

Beginning July 2025, CAPS will welcome its 13th member district with Wachusett Public Schools



Special Olympics

The Kelly Day School attended Special Olympics hosted by Gardner Public Schools in the Spring of 2025

Building on Momentum



The success of long-term sustainable growth efforts across all four major programs now allows CAPS to focus on advancing program redevelopment and expansion. With the Senators Elementary program successfully launched and growing, planning is underway for a new program home in 2026. Consolidating grade-level classrooms into a larger, unified program space will create opportunities for stronger resource sharing, enhanced programming, and meaningful economies of scale—all of which support reinvestment back into classrooms and instructional quality.

In addition to program expansion, CAPS continues to look ahead to one of its longstanding goals: supporting students as they transition into adulthood after age 22. This year's fiscal growth and strategic positioning have created the foundation for the development of a Community Based Day Program (CBDS), allowing CAPS to expand its service continuum into adult programming for the first time. This initiative represents a natural extension of the Collaborative's mission and meets a longstanding regional need for post-22 supports.



The timing of these initiatives reflects years of incremental development, capacity-building, and careful financial stewardship since 2020–2021. With stable enrollment, strengthened program foundations, and forward-looking fiscal planning, CAPS Collaborative is well-positioned to enter its 50th anniversary year with confidence and momentum.



Contact Us

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Gardner High School

Program of Studies



2026-2027

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Gardner High School Mission Statement

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

MISSION: Gardner High School provides an enriched academic environment fostered through relevance, rigor and relationships and ensures that each student learns at a high level.

- In the classroom, we challenge all students in a supportive, positive environment that promotes scholarship and helps students develop the skills and characteristics to make them successful for their future.
- On the field, stage, or court, we create fun, engaging opportunities for students to excel in athletics, the arts, and co-curricular groups.
- We promote personal development and a sense of service to our community.

CORE VALUES: C.A.R.E.

- **Community:** We work together to achieve for all in a culture steeped in tradition
- **Appreciation:** We accept our roles, respect different perspectives, and acknowledge the good in others.
- **Responsibility:** We own our actions and honor our commitments by being prepared, involved community members.
- **Excellence:** We do our best and take pride in all we do in our community.

21ST CENTURY LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

- Communicate
- Critically Think and Problem Solve
- Collaborate
- Creatively Innovate

BELIEFS ABOUT STUDENT LEARNING

We believe that all students can learn at a high level with help and support if:

- All students are told over and over again in meaningful and compelling ways that academic achievement demands that same kind of hard work that is required to become the best in other arenas--at baseball, basketball, playing an instrument, etc...
- We know what excellent work looks like and what skills and competencies are needed for students to do excellent work, teaching the constitutive skills and competencies while providing examples of excellent work and careful guidance.
- We know where each student is academically and the skills, competencies and knowledge that are required for each one of them to access our challenging curriculum.

MOTTO: Omnia Labor Vincit (Latin for "Work Conquers All")

MAXIM: Good is not good enough

21ST CENTURY RUBRICS FOR CRITICAL THINKING & PROBLEM SOLVING

Expectation	Reaching 4	Expanding 3	Developing 2	Entering/Beginning 1/0
Understand the Problem Identify and define key issue/s and/or problem/s	Clearly, accurately, and appropriately identifies key issue/s and/or problem/s	Identifies most or all key issue/s and/or problem/s. Some minor inaccuracies or omissions may be present, but do not interfere with meaning.	Identifies some key issue/s and/or problem/s. May have some inaccuracies, omissions or errors present that interfere with meaning.	Most or all of key issue/s and or problem/s are not identified or defined, or are identified or defined inaccurately. Meaning is unclear.
Model the Problem/Look for Structure /Patterns Present and Analyze Data/Information	Presents relevant/appropriate, sufficient and credible data/information. Clearly analyzes information for accuracy, relevance, and validity. Information clearly relates to meaning.	Presents sufficient and relevant/appropriate data/information. Generally analyzes data/information for accuracy, relevance and validity. Minor inaccuracies or omissions do not interfere with analysis or meaning.	Presents some appropriate data/information. May miss or ignore relevant data/information. Analysis is limited or somewhat irrelevant/inappropriate. May contain inaccuracies or omissions that interfere with analysis and/or meaning.	Does not present relevant and appropriate data/information. Fails to analyze, or uses inaccurate or irrelevant/inappropriate analysis of data/information. Copies information with analysis.
Be Precise Apply a Multidimensional approach/Consider Context	Clearly applies a multidimensional approach. Synthesizes various perspectives. Correct answer with appropriate interpretation/description/units. Acknowledges limits of position or context - when appropriate.	Acknowledges multiple approaches. Some synthesis of perspectives. Correct answer with limited interpretation/description/units. Some acknowledgement that position may have limits. Acknowledgement context-when appropriate	Somewhat simplified position with some sense of multiple approaches. Minor or vague synthesis of perspectives. Incorrect answer with limited interpretation/description/units. Some acknowledgement positions may have limits. May not acknowledge context - when appropriate.	Student's position is grounded in a singular, often personal perspective. Position may be simplistic and obvious. Incorrect answer with no interpretation/description/units. Little or no awareness that position may have limits or context - when appropriate.
Communicate Answer with Reasoning Demonstrate Sound Reasoning and Conclusions	Reasoning is logical and creative, consistent, complete and often unique. Conclusion is complex and/or detailed, well supported, creative, complete, and relevant.	Reasoning is mostly logical, complete, and consistent. Demonstrates some unique or creative insight. Conclusion is generally complete, supported, and mostly consistent and relevant.	Reasoning contains elements of logic and/or creative insight, but not fully resolved. May have minor inconsistencies or omissions. Conclusion is relevant but abbreviated or simplified, not fully supported, and/or contains minor inconsistencies.	Reasoning is illogical, simplistic, and inconsistent or absent. Conclusion is simplistic and stated as an absolute, or inconsistent with evidence or reasoning. Lack of coherent or clear conclusion.

21ST CENTURY RUBRICS FOR CREATIVITY/INNOVATION

Expectation	Reaching 4	Expanding 3	Developing 2	Entering/Beginning 1/0
Defines the creative challenge	Develops insight about the particular needs and interests of the target audience	Understands the purpose driving the process of innovation (who needs this and why)	Understands the basic purpose for innovation but does not thoroughly consider the needs and interests of the target audience	May just follow directions without understanding the purpose for innovation or considering the needs and interests of the target audience.
Identify Sources of Information	Promotes divergent and creative perspectives during discussions	In addition to typical sources, finds, unusual ways or places to get information (adult, expert, community member, business or organization literature)	Finds one or two sources of information that are not typical Offers new ideas during discussions, but stays within narrow perspectives	Uses only typical sources of information (website, book, article) Does not offer new ideas during discussions
Generate and Select Ideas	Uses idea-generating techniques to develop several original ideas for product(s) Uses ingenuity and imagination, going outside conventional boundaries, when shaping ideas into a product. Seeks multiple sources of feedback and critique to revise the product to exceed the needs of the intended audience.	Uses idea-generating techniques to develop an original idea(s) for product(s) Carefully evaluates the quality of ideas and selects the best one to shape into a product. Asks new questions, takes different perspectives to elaborate and improve on the selected idea Seeks out and uses feedback and critique to revise the product to better meet the needs of the intended audience.	Develops some original ideas for produce(s), but could develop more with better use of idea-generating techniques. Evaluates ideas, but not thoroughly before selecting one Asks a few new questions but may make only minor changes to the selected idea Shows some imagination when shaping ideas into a product, but may stay within conventional boundaries Considers and may use some feedback and critique to revise a product, but does not seek it out	Stays within existing frameworks, does not use idea-generating techniques to develop new ideas for product(s) Selects one idea without evaluating the quality of ideas. Does not ask new questions or elaborate on the selected idea Reproduces existing ideas, does not imagine new ones Does not consider or use feedback and critique to revise product
Present Work to Uses/Target Audience	Creates visually exciting presentation that includes interactive elements	Creates visually exciting presentation media Includes elements in presentation that are especially fun, lively, engaging, or powerful to particular audience	Adds some interesting touches to presentation media Attempts to include elements in presentation that make it more lively and engaging	Presents ideas and products in typical ways (text-heavy PowerPoint slides, recitation of notes, no interactive features)
Originality	Is new, unique, surprising, offers a fresh perspective, expression, or point of view Successfully break rules and conventions, uses common materials or ideas in new, clever and unique ways	Is new, unique, surprising, shows a personal touch May successfully break rules and conventions, or use common materials or ideas in new clever and surprising ways	Has some new ideas or improvements, but some ideas are predictable or conventional May show a tentative attempt to step outside rules and conventions, or find new uses for common materials or ideas	Relies on existing models, ideas, or directions, it is not new or unique Follows rules and conventions, uses materials and ideas in typical ways
Effectiveness	Is seen as useful and valuable, it solves the defined problem and exceeds the identified need Improves quality of life for audience	Is seen as useful and valuable, it solves the defined problem or meets the identified need Is practical, feasible	Is useful and valuable to some extent, it may not solve certain aspects of the defined problem or exactly meet the identified need Unclear if product would be practical or feasible	Is not useful or valuable to the intended audience /user Would not work in the real world, impractical or unfeasible
Style	Is well-crafted, striking, designed with a distinct style and is appropriate for multipurpose Combines different elements into a coherent whole with a distinct style	Is well-crafted, striking, designed with a distinct style but still appropriate for the purpose Combines different elements into a coherent whole	Has some interesting touches, but lacks a distinct style Has some elements that may be excessive or do not fit together well	Is safe, ordinary, made in a conventional style Has several elements that do not fit together

21ST CENTURY RUBRICS FOR COOPERATIVE AND COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

Expectation	Reaching 4	Expanding 3	Developing 2	Entering/Beginning 1/0
Focus on Task and Participation	Consistently: -stays focused -works effectively with others	Usually: -stays focused -works effectively with others	Sometimes: -stays focused -works effectively with others	Rarely/Refuses: -stays focused -works effectively with others
Shared Responsibility and Dependability	Consistently: -follows through on task -evenly shares responsibility	Usually: -follows through on task -evenly shares responsibility	Sometimes: -follows through on task -evenly shares responsibility	Rarely/Refuses: -follows through on task -evenly shares responsibility
Listening, Questioning, and Discussing	Consistently & Respectfully: -listens, interacts, discusses and contributes to group	Usually: -listens, interacts, discusses and contributes to group	Sometimes: : -listens, interacts, discusses and contributes to group	Rarely/Refuse: -listens, interacts, discusses and contributes to group
Group/Partner Teamwork	Consistently: -make compromises -has a positive attitude -performs all duties and contributes to the group	Usually:: -make compromises -has a positive attitude -performs all duties and contributes to the group	Sometimes: -make compromises -has a positive attitude -performs all duties and contributes to the group	Rarely/Refuses: -make compromises -has a positive attitude -performs all duties and contributes to the group

21ST CENTURY RUBRICS FOR READING, WRITING, LISTENING AND SPEAKING

Reading for Understanding Rubric

Expectation	Reaching 4	Expanding 3	Developing 2	Entering/Beginning 1/0
<u>Claim</u>	<p>Claiming is clearly stated and responds directly to the prompt/question. Claim shows complete comprehension of the passage and thorough understanding of the question in an insightful manner</p> <p>Includes the passage title, genre, author's name</p>	<p>Claim is stated, mostly responds to the prompt</p> <p>Claim demonstrates understanding of the question being asked</p> <p>Includes some, but not all relevant authorship information</p>	<p>The claim does not respond directly to the question but makes a reference to it</p> <p>Shows partial comprehension of the passage and the question that was asked</p> <p>Makes a passing reference to the author or passage title, but does not include all relevant specifics</p>	<p>There is no claim , or it is too difficult to understand. The response to the prompt is inadequate or confusing</p> <p>Does not refer to the author, title, genre</p>
<u>Evidence</u>	<p>_____ pieces of perceptive evidence are used in the paragraph</p> <p>The evidence is strongly introduced and well-chosen to support the claim</p> <p>All evidence is properly cited (MLA)</p>	<p>_____ pieces of perceptive evidence are used in the paragraph</p> <p>The evidence is introduced and adequately supports the claim</p> <p>Most evidence is properly cited (MLA)</p>	<p>Fewer than _____ pieces of evidence are used in the paragraph</p> <p>The evidence may not support the claim and has not been carefully chose</p> <p>Makes a passing reference to the author or passage title, but does not include all relevant specifics</p>	<p>Evidence is referenced but not directly quoted, and does not provide usable support for the claim</p> <p>Evidence is not introduced</p> <p>Evidence is not correctly cited or citations are missing</p>
<u>Analysis</u>	<p>Analysis is insightful and demonstrates understanding of topic/text</p> <p>Fully explains how the evidence supports the claim</p> <p>Analysis follows each piece of evidence</p>	<p>Analysis demonstrates understanding of topic/text</p> <p>Mostly explains how the evidence supports the claim</p> <p>Analysis follows most pieces of evidence</p>	<p>There is an attempt to analysis</p> <p>There is little explanation of how the evidence supports the claim Not all evidence is analyzed</p>	<p>Analysis does not support the claim</p> <p>Explanation of the evidence is inadequate</p> <p>Analysis/Explanation is missing</p>
<u>Knowledge and Understanding</u>	<p>The response shows detailed knowledge and understanding of, and perceptive insight into, the text/work used for the assignment</p> <p>Insightfully responds to all aspects of the prompt w/analysis/explanation</p>	<p>The response shows knowledge and understanding of, and some insight into, the text/work used for the assignment</p> <p>Adequately explains all parts of the prompt</p>	<p>The response shows some knowledge but little insight or understanding of the text/work used for assignment</p>	<p>The response indicates a misreading of the material, or confusion with the content or question/prompt</p>
<u>Main Idea (Gist)</u>	<p>Most important who/what</p> <p>All important information about who/what</p> <p>In your words</p> <p>10 or fewer words</p>	<p>Most important who/what</p> <p>Most important information about the who/what</p> <p>In your own words</p> <p>Between 11-15 words</p>	<p>Most important who/what may be unclear or not specific</p> <p>Some important information about the who/what</p> <p>Mostly in your own words</p> <p>Between 16-20 words</p>	<p>Most important who/what missing/incoherent</p> <p>Minimal important information about the who/what</p> <p>Somewhat in your own words may have too many quotes</p> <p>Over 20 words</p>

WRITTEN/ARGUMENTATIVE RUBRIC

Area/Standard	Reaching 4	Expanding 3	Developing 2	Entering/Beginning 1/0	Entering/Beginning 1/0
Focus/Claim	<p>Insightfully addresses all aspects of the prompt</p> <p>Introduces artful and precise claims(s) in a sophisticated thesis statement</p>	<p>Competently addresses all aspects of the prompt</p> <p>Introduces precise, knowledge claims(s) in a clear thesis statement</p>	<p>Superficially address all aspects of the prompt</p> <p>Introduces reasonable claims(s) in a thesis statement</p>	<p>Partially addresses aspects of the prompt</p> <p>Introduces superficial or flawed claim(s) in a weak thesis statement</p>	<p>Minimally addresses some aspects of the prompt</p> <p>Fails to introduce a relevant claim and/or lacks a thesis</p>
Organization Structure	<p>Skillfully orients reader to topic(s) in introduction</p> <p>Thoughtfully develops claims(s) with relevant body paragraphs</p> <p>Provides a meaningful and reflective conclusion which draws from and supports claim(s)</p> <p>Creates cohesion through skillful use of linking words, phrases and clauses within and between paragraphs</p> <p>Includes purposeful and logical progression of ideas from beginning to end</p>	<p>Orients reader to topic(s) in introduction</p> <p>Develops claim(s) with relevant body paragraphs</p> <p>Provides a conclusion that follows from and supports claim(s)</p> <p>Creates cohesion through use of linking words, phrases, and clauses within and between paragraphs</p> <p>Includes logical progression of ideas from beginning to end</p>	<p>Partially orients reader to topic(s) in introduction</p> <p>Superficially develops claim(s) with body paragraphs</p> <p>Provides a conclusion which repetitively or partially supports claim(s)</p> <p>Creates some cohesion through basic linking words, phrases, and clauses within and between paragraphs</p> <p>Includes adequate progression of ideas from beginning to end</p>	<p>Inadequately orients reader to topic(s) in introduction</p> <p>Inadequately develops claim(s) with minimal body paragraphs</p> <p>Provides an adequate conclusion</p> <p>Uses limited and/or inappropriate linking words, phrases, and clauses</p> <p>Includes uneven progression of ideas from beginning to end</p>	<p>Fails to orient reader to topic(s) in introduction or introduction is missing</p> <p>Fails to develop claim(s) with body paragraphs</p> <p>Omits conclusion</p> <p>Uses few or no transition/linking words, phrases, and clauses</p> <p>Includes little or no discernible organization of ideas</p>
Evidence/Support	<p>Provides substantial and pertinent evidence (4) to supports claims(s)</p> <p>Seamlessly and effectively introduces and cites credible sources and/or text evidence</p> <p>Convincingly refutes specific counterclaim(s)</p>	<p>Provides sufficient (3) and relevant evidence to supports claim(s)</p> <p>Competently introduces and cites credible sources and/or text evidence</p> <p>Competently refutes specific counterclaim(s)</p>	<p>Provides limited (2) and/or superficial evidence to supports claim(s)</p> <p>Ineffectively introduces or cites credible sources and/or text evidence</p> <p>Minimally refutes specific counterclaim(s)</p>	<p>Provides minimal (1) and/or irrelevant evidence to support claim(s)</p> <p>Incorrectly introduces or cites sources and/or evidence that may not be credible</p> <p>Acknowledges alternate or opposing claim(s)</p>	<p>Provides inaccurate, little or no evidence to supports claim(s)</p> <p>Does not use or cite sources and/or text evidence</p> <p>Fails to acknowledge alternate or opposing claim(s)</p>
Analysis	<p>Shows insightful understanding of topic or text</p> <p>Uses persuasive and valid reasoning to connect evidence with claim(s)</p>	<p>Shows competent understanding of topic or text</p> <p>Uses valid reasoning to connect evidence with claim(s)</p>	<p>Shows superficial understanding of topic or text</p> <p>Uses some valid and accurate reasoning to connect evidence with claim(s)</p>	<p>Shows limited and/or flawed understanding of topic or text</p> <p>Uses limited, simplistic and/or flawed reasoning to connect evidence with claim(s)</p>	<p>Shows no understanding of topic or text</p> <p>Reasoning is missing or does not connect evidence with claim(s)</p>
Language	<p>Uses purposeful and varied sentence structures</p> <p>Contains minimal (1) to no errors in conventions (grammar, punctuation, spelling, and capitalization)</p> <p>Strategically uses academic and domain-specific vocabulary clearly appropriate for the audience and purpose</p>	<p>Uses correct and varied sentence structures</p> <p>Contains few (2-3) minor errors in conventions</p> <p>Competently uses academic and domain-specific vocabulary clearly appropriate for the audience and purpose</p>	<p>Uses mostly correct varied sentence structure</p> <p>Contains some (4-5) errors in conventions which may cause confusion</p> <p>Superficially uses academic and domain-specific vocabulary clearly appropriate for audience and purpose</p>	<p>Uses limited and/or repetitive sentence structure</p> <p>Contains numerous (6-7) errors in conventions which may cause confusion</p> <p>Inadequately uses academic and domain-specific vocabulary</p>	<p>Lacks sentence mastery (e.g. fragments/run-ons)</p> <p>Contains serious pervasive (8+) errors in conventions</p> <p>Fails to use academic or domain-specific vocabulary</p>

GHS LISTENING SKILLS RUBRIC

	Reaching 4	Expanding 3	Developing 2	Beginning/Entering 1/0
Following Directions	Follows all single and multi-step directions with self-initiated requests for clarification, as appropriate	Follows all single and multi-step directions, rarely requires repetition or prompting	Misses several single and multi-step directions, requires some repetition or additional prompting	Routinely misses most single and multi-step directions, requires frequent repetition and/or prompting
Focusing on the Speaker	Focuses on the speaker as evidenced by constant, respectful and interested attention	Focuses on the speaker as evidenced by consistent and respectful attention	Sometimes loses focus on the speaker as evidenced by periods of brief, observable distraction	Often loses focus on the speaker as demonstrated by periods of observable distraction and/or disruptions
Applying or Responding to Spoken Information	Responds relevantly (orally or in writing) through notes, reflections, commentaries or summaries which enhance the discussion	Responds relevantly and adequately (orally or in writing) through notes, reflections, commentaries or summaries	Responds inadequately and/or partially (orally or in writing) due to poor active listening	Does not respond appropriately (orally or in writing) due to lack of active listening

ORAL PRESENTATION RUBRIC

Skills	Reaching (4)	Expanding (3)	Developing (2)	Beginning/Entering (1/0)
TOPIC	Well focused topic w/ a well-developed argument. Full understanding of the purpose of the presentation.	Focused topic w/ a developed argument. Understanding of the purpose of the presentation.	Lack of focused topic. Partially demonstrated understanding of the purpose of the presentation.	Lack of focused topic. Vague sense of purpose for the presentation. Requires the audience to make assumptions.
EVIDENCE	Clear and convincing command of facts and information. Insightful explanations that help to illustrate the speaker's ideas.	Clear use of facts and information. Partially developed explanations in support of the speaker's ideas.	Partially clear use of facts. Partially developed explanations in support of the speaker's ideas.	Limited or confusing use of facts and information. Limited or incomplete explanations to support the speaker's ideas.
ORGANIZATION	Clearly and logically organized presentation. Engaging introduction. Logically sequenced body w/ appropriate transitions. Clear and convincing conclusion.	Clear attempt at organization w/ a beginning, middle, and end. Obvious transitions and a conclusion.	Some inconsistencies in organization and/or a lack of sustained focus throughout the presentation. Inconsistent use of transitions and a conclusion.	Some organization but lack of focus. Inconsistent or no transitions. Difficult to follow or rambling Confusing or incoherent conclusion.
LANGUAGE	Uses sophisticated and varied language that is suited to the topic and audience. Word choice is concise, original, and effectively conveys the appropriate tone given the purpose of the presentation.	Uses appropriate language and word choice. Less sophistication, expressiveness and/or originality.	Words are suited to the topic, audience, and purpose. Lack conciseness, originality, and/or fails to convey an appropriate tone and/or purpose of the presentation. May be overly wordy and rambling.	Words may be unsuited/inappropriate for the topic, audience, or purpose of the presentation. Word choice lacks originality. Fails to convey an appropriate tone and purpose of the presentation.
SUPPORTING MATERIALS	Skillful use of supporting materials with no mistakes in conventions or spelling errors. Presentation is well designed and visually appealing, enhancing the effectiveness of the presenter.	Effective use of supporting materials with only a few (1-3) errors in conventions or spelling. Presentation shows some elements of design and visual appeal, and is fairly effective in supporting the presenter.	Attempted use of supporting materials with excessive (more than 3) errors in conventions or spelling. Design and visual appeal may not support the presenter. Supporting materials may contain too much or too little information.	Limited/No attempt to use supporting materials. Errors in conventions or spelling make the supporting materials difficult to follow. Design of the presentation is ineffective and lacks visual appeal. Supporting materials contain too much or too little information.
EFFECTIVE DELIVERY	A combination of appropriate eye contact, clarity, and projection of voice, tone and pace, and gestures significantly enhance the speaker's words. Speaker remains enthusiastic, audience attention is maintained, and the purpose of the presentation is achieved successfully. Time > 5 min & < 15	A combination of appropriate eye contact, clarity, and projection of voice, tone, and pace, and gestures but w/o the smoothness required of "Reaching". Speaker shows some enthusiasm, the audience is mostly engaged. The purpose of the presentation is mostly achieved. Time >not met	A combination of eye contact, clarity and projection of voice, tone, pace, and gestures, but inconsistent in delivery and somewhat halting. Speaker shows inconsistent enthusiasm, and the audience may lose interest. The purpose of the presentation may be partially achieved. Time >not met	Inconsistent use of/lack of eye contact, clarity, and projection of voice, tone and pace, and/or gestures that interrupt the flow of speech. May read too much from paper/notes. Speaker shows limited enthusiasm, and audience interest is not sustained. The purpose of the presentation is minimally achieved. Time > not met

Mental Health Team

Gardner Public Schools has brought all Mental Health staff together to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of mental health interventions. The mental health team focuses on prevention through school wide screenings and implements interventions through integrated, data-based decision making and action planning. Using evidence based practices is a goal for the team. All mental health personnel are trained on the MTSS framework.

MTSS SEL/Behavior/Mental Health is an integrated system designed to provide equitable access to education and meet the needs of all students. Given the overlap between existing frameworks and practices, this integrated system is an emerging approach in education to build a single system to address academics, social-emotional well-being and mental health. MTSS SEL/Behavior/Mental Health is about how all systems in the school fit together to ensure that all students can access high quality education in a safe and supportive environment.

Goals of MTSS SEL/Behavior/Mental Health Teams are to support schools and the district to build social emotional and mental health MTSS models that are: Data-driven, Evidence-based, Comprehensive, Culturally responsive, and Sustainable.

The Mental Health Team at Gardner High School consists of School Counselors, School Adjustment Counselor, School Psychologist, Board Certified Behavioral Analyst, Bridge Coordinator, School Based Care Coordinator, Youth Mentor and Community Health Worker.

Universal Screening

BESS

The BESS (Behavioral and Emotional Screener System) is designed to assess behavioral and emotional strengths and weaknesses in children and adolescents (prek - high school). It consists of brief screening measures completed by teachers, parents, and/or students, used to quickly identify potential behavioral or emotional concerns in individuals or in large numbers of students. The BESS is not a comprehensive diagnostic assessment; it is a tool that can be used to determine a child's *risk level* for developing emotional and/or behavioral problems that require intervention.

Implementing a screening system for behavioral and emotional problems can provide schools with an:

- objective, efficient, and systematic way to identify children who may develop academic or other school-related problems as a result of poor behavioral or emotional functioning.
- Identify behavior concerns in need of intervention
- Show how students are responding to core (SEL) instruction
- Show how many students in a given population are at-risk
- Enable schools to catch a potential problems early in the year
- Provide data to teachers so that they can differentiate SEL instruction

SBIRT

SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment) is an evidence-based, comprehensive, integrated, public health approach to the delivery of early intervention and treatment services for persons with substance use disorders, as well as those who are at risk of developing these disorders. Primary care centers, hospital emergency rooms, trauma centers, and other community settings provide opportunities for early intervention with at-risk substance users before more severe consequences occur. Students are screened in 7th and 9th grade.

- Screening quickly assesses the severity of substance use and identifies the appropriate level of treatment.
- Brief intervention focuses on increasing insight and awareness regarding substance use and motivation toward behavioral change.
- Referral to treatment provides those identified as needing more extensive treatment with access to specialty care.

SCHOOL COUNSELORS

The School Counselors at Gardner High School work to help students understand themselves in light of their aptitudes, interests, and talents as indicated through testing, level performance, classroom lessons counseling sessions and data-base decision making. Our major objective is to assist each student in meeting appropriate academic and personal goals. To attain this, careful planning and cooperation on the part of parents, students and his/her counselor is essential.

Parents are encouraged to participate in parent meetings throughout the year for important information and to schedule appointments with counselors and/or teachers to ensure that each student is achieving the academic personal success available at Gardner High School. Please contact the student's counselor at 978-630-4066.

A packet explaining the college application process is available to juniors in the spring. Local scholarship packets are distributed to seniors in February of their senior year.

Students are advised to select the most challenging course program. Students who take full advantage of all opportunities available will realize the greatest success. Counselors meet frequently with students to discuss future plans and goals, proper course selection, school difficulties and other concerns that may interfere with school achievement.

GARDNER HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELOR CURRICULUM

The Gardner High School Counseling Department has created lessons and programs designed to expand a student's personal, social, academic and career skills and goals. At Gardner High School we are pleased to offer **SchoolLinks** as our all-inclusive college and career planning platform. This program offers intuitive tools designed to engage our students in exploring, planning, and preparing for college and careers. The program engages students in all grades with intuitive college and career exploration tools. It also helps streamline the college application process and tracks student outcomes from graduation to career placement. SchoolLinks is embedded into Gardner High School's school counselor curriculum at all levels.

All grades

MyCAP - MyCAP is a strategic planning tool intended to help youth identify and achieve goals after high school. It provides students opportunities for college and career development and exploration activities, and helps them choose high school courses that will prepare them to reach their postsecondary goals. Plans will be created through advisory lessons. Students will be setting academic and personal goals and will review these goals throughout the year.

Selecting Classes that are Best for Your Future - Students will understand how to select the best classes for them to prepare for their plans after high school.

College and Career Readiness-Students will understand the factors that contribute to not earning credit leading to being off-track for high school graduation. Students will learn how credit is accumulated for high school graduation. The link between high school credits, graduation requirements, and entry requirements for postsecondary options will also be reviewed.

Interests Career Lesson-Students will make the connection between what interests them on a daily basis and a future career.

Skills Career Lesson- Students will understand the connection between skills and possible careers based on those skills.

Learning Styles-Students will be able to identify their preferred learning style and know how to use the preferred learning style when studying and learning new things.

Things All Freshmen Should Know-Students will learn what they need to do to move on to 10th grade and to graduate. Students will also learn about their particular strengths contribute to my academic success

Signs of Suicide (SOS)-SOS Signs of Suicide, is a suicide prevention program that educates students about the relationship between suicide and depression. It encourages all students to seek help from trusted adults whether they have concerns about themselves or a friend using the ACT® message. This program is delivered during the Wellness 1 curriculum, usually by the Adjustment Counselor.

Grade 10

College & Career - Students will learn how to connect their skills, values and interests to a field of study (major) in college. Using the Myers Briggs personality inventory, students are able to connect future career opportunities with their personality.

Grade 11

College & Career - Students will be able to select colleges or postgraduate training programs based on the fields of study (major) they want to pursue. Students will learn about the college application process and timeline, as well as the financial aid process. Students learn about different post-secondary options and how to budget and financially plan for college.

PSAT Administration - All 11th grade students will be offered to take the PSAT exam at no charge to begin to prepare them for the SAT.

Grade 12

College & Career - Students complete Common Applications and state college applications online and receive assistance with writing a college essay.

Financial Aid Awareness - Students and parents will receive information regarding the process to apply for financial aid.

SAT Administration - All 12th grade students will be offered to take the SAT exam free of charge for college application purposes and to help determine if students are college & career ready.

Support Programs

Bridge Program: The Bridge Program provides clinical support, academic coordination, family support, and care coordination services to students who are reintegrating into a full schedule after missing extensive amounts of learning due to serious mental health, medical, and/or life transition challenges. The Bridge Program is a short-term program with supports customized to each student's needs that are culturally competent, clinically informed, and flexible. Program staff strive to coordinate resources within Gardner High School and the wider community - and partner effectively with families to help each participating student reintegrate and finish the school year on track for graduation.

Heywood Healthcare's Youth Tele Behavioral Health Program

Offers youth support with mental health needs, substance abuse treatment, mentors and community resource referrals. Our school based Community Health Workers and Youth Mentors work with our tele-clinicians, school staff, area providers, students and their families to coordinate care.

ACADEMIC LEVELS AT GARDNER HIGH SCHOOL

Gardner High School sets high standards and expectations for all students at all levels. Every course is designed to provide students with the knowledge and high level skills needed for post-secondary education, technical training, and employment. College preparatory, honors, and advanced placement course levels are offered at Gardner High School, as well as college level classes through our Early College Academy for which students can fulfill graduation requirements while also earning college credit.

Courses at Gardner High School develop literacy skills and teach students to think critically analytically. Classes are designed to prepare students for challenging and rigorous post-secondary learning and training at two and four year colleges and universities, vocational institutes, and/or career employment. All courses are based on rigorous and relevant content, which follow the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Courses prepare students to demonstrate successful performance outcomes including proficiency on the Massachusetts comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) and standardized entrance exams such as SAT, SAT subject tests, and ACT.

Course level placement for students is determined on an individual basis by examining data including assessments, teacher recommendations, grades, and other relevant information. Students must work with their parents and school counselors to plan a course of study over four years that will help them reach their highest potential in achieving their goals after high school.

Students must be aware that colleges, technical schools, and employers seek students who have completed a rigorous academic program. Therefore, students in all academic levels are expected to exhibit behaviors that lead to maximum learning within all content areas. Students must work independently, take responsibility for their learning, engage in the learning process, demonstrate time-management skills, utilize effective study skills, be inquisitive, practice problem solving strategies, use technology effectively, accept feedback, and persevere with difficult tasks.

Students are encouraged to challenge themselves academically while at Gardner High School. Below is a list of courses offered at GHS for Honors and Advanced Placement.

All students who register for an AP course will be expected to complete the course and take the AP exam. If a student does not take the AP exam, the AP designation will be removed from the course name on the student's transcript and will be changed to honors level.

If not enough students sign up for particular Advanced Placement (AP) courses, they may not run or we may offer those selected courses every other year.

HONORS

Honors courses move at an accelerated pace, designed to extend and deepen study of a subject through class work and independent work on projects and research outside of class. Below is a list of honors courses offered at GHS.

English

Honors English (9-12)

Science

Honors Biology (9-10)

Honors Chemistry (10-12)

Honors Physics (10-12)

Honors Anatomy & Physiology (11-12)

World Language

Honors Spanish 2, 3, 4, 5

Honors French 2, 3, 4, 5

Mathematics

Honors Geometry

Honors Pre-Calculus

Honors Algebra 2

Social Studies

Honors Modern World
History 2 (9)

Honors US History 1
(10)

Honors US History 2
(11)

ADVANCED PLACEMENT

Advanced Placement courses provide students an opportunity for learning that goes beyond just facts and figures. The rich course material, classroom discussions, and demanding assignments typical of AP courses will help students develop the content mastery and critical thinking skills expected of college students. In addition, AP helps students to develop better study habits, improve their writing skills, and sharpen their problem-solving abilities, skills vital to college success.

Who should take AP courses?

The AP courses are intended for students who wish to take college courses while in high school. The offerings are college courses, which follow world or national curricula. The course work is rigorous and the pace is intense.

The students must:

- Have demonstrated high achievement in previous courses in that subject area
- Be motivated to achieve
- Have a very strong work ethic
- Be able to work well independently
- Agree to take the National AP Exam

AP courses offered at Gardner High School are approved annually by the College Board. The process for approval involves a review of the course syllabus each year along with a review of textbooks, resources and materials that will be used by the classroom teacher.

All students who register for an AP course will be expected to complete the course and take the AP exam at the AP level. If a student finds an AP class to be too challenging, they must drop the course in the first week, during the Add/Drop period. (If you don't complete the course in its entirety and take the AP exam, students' transcripts will be changed, the colleges' students have applied to will be notified (if applicable), and students will receive honors weighted credit for the courses.)

Below is a list of Advanced Placement courses offered at GHS. due to the small number of students who elect certain Advanced Placement (AP) courses, we may offer these selected courses every other year

English

AP English Language & Composition
AP English Literature & Composition

Science

AP Biology
AP Physics II
AP Chemistry
AP Environmental Science

Social Studies

AP Human Geography
AP Modern World
History
AP US History
AP US Government & Politics

Mathematics

AP Calculus AB
AP Calculus BC
AP Statistics

Art

AP Studio Art
AP Photography
AP Music

VHS AP offerings are available upon request.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT DISTINCTION AWARD

In order to recognize our students who go “above and beyond” with challenging coursework and who contribute to their school and community, we have created the **Advanced Placement Distinction Award**. To be awarded this distinction at graduation, students must meet the following criteria:

- Receive passing grades in a minimum of 5 AP Courses during their four years of high school.
- Maintain good attendance; display good behavior; and present integrity and good citizenship when representing Gardner High School in the community (This will be reviewed by administration and guidance prior to receiving this award.)

****The Collegeboard charges an AP exam.** There is a reduced fee for students on Free/Reduced Lunch. Many colleges offer credit to students who achieve a high score on the AP exam. Please refer to a college’s website to read their AP credit policy as it varies from institution to institution.

EARLY COLLEGE DISTINCTION AWARD

In order to recognize our students who have participated in our Early College Program and who have challenged themselves with taking multiple college level courses during their junior and/or senior years, we have created the **Early College Distinction Award**. To be awarded this distinction at graduation, students must meet the following criteria:

- Receive passing grades and earn a minimum of 12 college credits, the equivalent of five college classes.
- Maintain good attendance; display good behavior; and present integrity and good citizenship when representing Gardner High School in the community (This will be reviewed by administration and guidance prior to receiving this award.)

GARDNER HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Full-year classes are worth 5 credits Half-year (semester) classes are worth 2.5 credits	GHS Requirements may be different from State Universities Entrance Requirements Please refer to page 21
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GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

English	20
Mathematics	20
Science	15
Social Studies Including: W. History, US History I, US History II -AP Human Geography will satisfy the World History requirement. -Students enrolled in our Early College Program may receive permission from the principal to substitute certain social studies requirements while at MWCC. -Transfer students to GHS may receive permission from the principal to substitute certain Social Studies courses.	15
Health & Wellness	2.5
Fitness	5
The Arts**	5
Financial Literacy	2.5
Electives	30
Total Credits	115
**ART CLASSES INCLUDE: All Music and Art Classes, Drama, Dance, Makerspace & other approved art-related classes	MassCore description see page 21

In addition to meeting the above course graduation requirements, all students in the class of 2025 and beyond must sit for, and complete, all MCAS sections (English, Math, Science), along with meeting the following competency standards in order to meet the required Gardner Public Schools Competency Determination (CD) to earn a high school diploma.

For the classes of 2026, successful Competency Determination (CD) requires a qualifying score on the MCAS prior to December 5, 2024 **or** receiving a passing grade (60 or higher) in the following coursework or their course equivalents*:

- English 9 and English 10
- Algebra I and Geometry
- Biology, Chemistry, or Physics

The class of 2027 and thereafter, successful Competency Determination (CD) requires receiving a passing grade (60 or higher) in the following coursework **or** their course equivalents*:

- English 9 and English 10
- Algebra I and Geometry
- Biology, Chemistry, or Physics
- US History I or US History II

* - The principal shall be responsible for determining what courses satisfy “course equivalents.”

GARDNER HIGH SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADE PROMOTION

All students must successfully complete a certain number of credits in order to be promoted to the next grade level

Promoted to Grade 10	25 credits including 5 credits in Algebra I
Promoted to Grade 11	55 credits
Promoted to Grade 12	80 credits
Graduation	115 credits

GRADE 8 CLASSES

Gardner High School includes grades 8-12. Students in the 8th grade are required to take 7 classes which include: English, Math, Science, Civics, STEM and a Fitness class. Courses taken in the 8th grade are not included on the high school transcript and do not count towards their grade 9-12 graduation requirements and grade point average.

Grade 8 students are allowed to take some high school elective classes, but do not receive high school credit for them. However, successful completion of the 1st level of a world language does serve as the prerequisite for the 2nd year of Spanish or French. It does not, however, count towards the two years of world language required by four year colleges. Most students who successfully complete Algebra I in 8th grade will move on to Honors Geometry in grade 9. The Grade 8 curriculum continues to prepare students for the MCAS assessment which occurs in the spring of the school year.

Gardner High Schools offer honors level English Language Arts, Algebra 1, Science and Social Studies to 8th graders. This allows students to be challenged in a more rigorous class to prepare them for the honors and Advanced Placement levels in high school. The high school staff is looking forward to working with students and families throughout this process in order to create a schedule that meets the individual learning needs and interests of your child, while providing an appropriately challenging high school experience.

Good student habits in grade 8 are extremely important in the successful completion of grade 8. Student behavior, attendance, and grades are crucial factors in the preparation of becoming a responsible high school student. Parents are encouraged to communicate with teachers and use PowerSchool for grade information to be well informed of their child's progress.

In order to ensure that our students are ready and prepared for high school, students who are in 8th grade who fail two or more core classes (English, Math, Science, or Social Studies) will be asked to participate in a summer program (pending funding). Meetings with parents/guardians regarding possible retention in 8th grade will also be scheduled by our guidance department and will include the principal.

Please contact the grade 8 school counselor with any questions or concerns.

MassCore
Massachusetts High School Program of Studies

English	4 Units*
Mathematics	4 Units
	Including the completion of Algebra II or completion of the integrated Math equivalent. All students are recommended to take a math course during their senior year.
Science	3 Units of lab-based science
	In June 2012, the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education (BHE) revised its admissions standards to count technology/engineering coursework based on academic standards and taken for science credit as meeting the science admission requirement.
History/Social Studies	3 Units
	Including US History and World History
Foreign Language*	2 Units
	Of the same language
Physical Education	As required by law
	State law (M.G.L., c. 71, s. 3) states: "Physical education shall be taught as a required subject in all grades for all students. Health can be integrated in Physical Education, science, or taught as a stand-alone course.
The Arts**	1 Unit
Additional Core Courses	5 Units
	Business Education, Career & Technical Education (CTE), Health, Technology (e.g., computer science, desktop publishing, multimedia and web design), or any of the subjects above. Note: Most students majoring in CTE will take more than 5 units in a CTE program of study
	22 Units - Is a minimum that students should take in high school
Additional Learning Opportunities	Complete as many of the following as possible
	Advanced Placement (AP); Capstone or Senior Project; Dual Enrollment courses taken for both high school and college credit; Online courses; Service Learning; and Work-Based Learning

*A unit represents a full academic year of study or its equivalent in a subject that covers all the standards contained in a specific Curriculum Framework. **Students enrolled in a state-approved Career and Technical Education program of studies have the option of opting out of Foreign Language and Art and still fulfill MassCore. MassCore is the recommended program of study that Massachusetts high school students need in order to be better prepared for college and a career. Developed by a statewide advisory group from the K-12, higher education and business sectors, MassCore maintains flexibility for students and high schools while allowing districts to set additional graduation requirements. Courses included in MassCore should be rigorous, engaging, and based on appropriate Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks high school level standards.

COURSE CHANGES

The selection of a student's schedule is a contract to be honored both by the students and school personnel. Counselors will consider a student's ability; a student's expressed career goals, and the graduation requirements of the school. The student must also acknowledge that the courses selected represent his/her preferred choice. NO subject should be chosen with the belief that a trial basis is possible. Changes are not encouraged during the school year. Some courses are offered only during alternating years. Student enrollment is considered when determining whether a course will be offered.

The add/drop period is during the first week of the first semester, and the first week of the second semester. Any requests for changes after the add/drop period must be approved by the Principal. Once scheduling is completed, changes are made only if there is a conflict in the student's schedule, if a course is eliminated, changed, or added or if a student fails a prerequisite course. Changes in course placement are extremely rare

once the initial requests are complete. No preference changes will be allowed. Partial credit will be awarded for full year classes if a student withdraws at the end of the semester with a passing grade, with the discretion of the Principal.

Students who drop a class after attending the class for one day will receive a withdrawal leave (W) on their transcript.

MARKING SYSTEM

60 is the lowest possible passing grade

HONOR ROLL

Honor Roll status is determined by the overall average provided there are no grades below 70, I's or F's. Students must pass four academic classes to obtain honor roll status.

Average of 80 or above - Honors

Average of 85 or above - High Honors

Average of 90 or above - Principals List

ELIGIBILITY FOR ALL EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES: A student must pass (grade of 60 or above) a minimum of five (5) credit-bearing classes during the marking term preceding participation in order to be eligible to participate in all extracurricular activities. Fall participation is based on final grades issued in June from the previous academic year, and students must pass a minimum of five (5) credit-bearing classes as final grades. However, summer school credits can be counted if taken as makeup or to restore credit. Term grades that are issued during an athletic season will impact eligibility during that season.

For students who are enrolled in college programs (ie. Early College Program, Gateway, Pathways, etc.) and are not enrolled in a traditional high school schedule, the following requirements must be met for eligibility for extracurricular activities. Again this applies to the marking period prior to participation. For college classes, this will be a final grade if term grades are not issued.

If a student is enrolled in three (3) credit-bearing classes per semester, they must pass (grade of 60 or above) all three (3) classes.

If a student is enrolled in four (4) credit-bearing classes per semester, they must pass a minimum of three (3) classes.

If a student is enrolled in five (5) credit-bearing classes per semester, they must pass a minimum of four (4) classes.

If a student is enrolled in six (6) credit-bearing classes per semester, they must pass a minimum of five (5) classes.

If a student is enrolled in seven (7) credit-bearing classes per semester, they must pass a minimum of five (5) classes.

The above guidelines also apply to students who have a combined schedule of high school and college classes.

NCAA

NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association): If you plan on participating in intercollegiate athletics, please register with the NCAA at www.ncaa.com. This should be done in the spring of your junior year or early fall of senior year.

GRADE POINT AVERAGE

The final grade for a course appears on the student's transcript. The transcript is a gauge of the student's work, effort, commitment and level of motivation. In formulating a first impression of you, employers, the military, post-secondary institutions, and scholarship committees will rely on the transcript.

The level of the courses a student chooses affects their GPA and class rank, a critical item for college admissions and scholarship awards. The higher the course is weighted, the more it will contribute to your class rank and weighted GPA. Class ranks are always a weighted rank. UE classes are not weighted and have no bearing on class rank or the weighted GPA. Transcripts **may** have both a weighted and unweighted GPA and a weighted class rank. GPA and Class Ranks are calculated at the end of the school year.

COURSE WEIGHTING:

Advanced Placement 1.3	Honors 1.15	Dual Enrollment Classes All credit bearing 1.15	College Prep 1	UE (unweighted electives) Count in simple GPA but not in weighted
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Weighted GPA and class rank will be used to determine the class valedictorian and salutatorian at the end of the 4th term senior year.

VALEDICTORIAN/SALUTATORIAN

To be considered eligible for Valedictorian or Salutatorian of a graduating class, a student must attend Gardner High School for a minimum of four (4) semesters.

ART

ART 1: This is a full year beginning art class that touches on a variety of art forms and techniques. Students will acquire various artistic skills and apply these skills to develop their own creative "voice". The Elements of Art will be explored through basic drawing, painting, printmaking and design as well as sculpture and cultural influences. A basic study of art history will give important background information and meaning to classroom projects students explore artistic possibilities.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will demonstrate creativity.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1574
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ART 2: This is a full-year course intended for motivated students as they enhance and improve their own artistic style or "voice". Students will experience and explore new areas of study and media as they apply a more developed

skill level in the production of their artistic work. They will choose a “theme” as an underlying focus of their work to unify and give meaning to their portfolio. Students will study the art movement and their influences on the art we experience today. The students will also experience a sampling of murals, fabric design, interior design and mixed media during the course.

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Art I or equivalent or written permission of instructor.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will demonstrate creativity.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1575
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ART 3: This full year course is intended for highly motivated students to prepare Art portfolios for college, advanced placement, and personal development. This class is intended for students who wish to explore and experience new areas of study and media by applying these in a creative manner as a form of personal expression and development of a unique personal style. Work from this class may also be included in the breadth section of the AP Portfolio.

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Art II or equivalent or written permission of instructor.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will demonstrate creativity.

Grade: 10-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1576
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ART 4: This full year course is intended for highly motivated students to prepare portfolios for college, advanced placement, and personal development. Students will explore and experience new areas of study and media by applying these in a creative manner as a form of personal expression. Students will have the opportunity to apply acquired skills and techniques in their creation of highly imaginative artwork that demonstrates ability to solve and to “think outside the box”. Students in this class will have input as to the direction of this class and production of work.

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Art III or written permission of instructor.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will demonstrate creativity.

Grade: 10-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1577
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DRAWING: Introduction to Drawing is a foundation studio elective that will expose students to basic concepts, themes and materials of drawing. Drawing will teach the elements of art and principles of design. Students will use a variety of media including pencil, pen, charcoal, ink and pastel. Students will be drawing from observation; subjects to be studied will be gesture drawing, still life, contour and perspective drawing.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will demonstrate creativity.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1586
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CERAMICS: This class is designed for students who have an interest in working with clay, and gives students experiences in making functional as well as sculptural pieces, using a variety of techniques. As a basic course the emphasis is on hand-building construction, design, aesthetics, and the creative development of clay objects examining cultural, historical and personal modes of expression. Upon completion of this course, the students should be able to perform the three hand-building techniques, glazing and firing methods, and apply design concepts in creating ceramic forms.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will demonstrate creativity.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1594
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ADVANCED CERAMICS: This is an advanced course which builds on and further explores the traditional hand-building techniques through larger size and in-depth study of organic and biomorphic form. After using the three basic hand-building techniques of pinch, coil, and slab students will choose a theme to begin to develop their own person style. Historically based projects will reinforce the deeper study of the history of art and ceramics.

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Ceramics I or written permission of instructor.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will demonstrate creativity.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1595
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PAINTING: Students will focus on techniques and mechanics while painting a variety of media, including watercolor, tempera, gouache, and acrylic. Projects will be based on the elements of Art and principles of design through the use of such themes as landscape, still life, portraits, and color theory.

Basic Learning Competencies:

- Create works using organizational principles and functions to solve specific visual arts problems.
- Create artwork demonstrating a purposeful use of the elements and principles to convey meaning and emotion.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will demonstrate creativity.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1556
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DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY: In this semester course, you will use digital cameras to learn how to compose better pictures, transfer photos from your camera to a computer, crop, retouch, modify images, correct color balance, organize your photos, eliminate red eye, scan images, and make photo presentations. Students will have the opportunity to have their photographic work published in the school yearbook and local newspaper. This course provides an introduction to “Photoshop CS3”, a powerful software application that allows you to use filters, effects and layers to enhance your photos and create digital art.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will think critically, listen actively and utilize technology effectively.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1597
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ADVANCED PHOTOGRAPHY: In this course, you will build upon previous experiences in Digital Photography. Hands-on activities relating to portraiture, nature photography, and natural light and flash photography will enhance your understanding of composition and exposure, which will allow you to create quality photographs. Students will have the opportunity to have their photographic work published in the school yearbook and local newspaper. This course also uses “Photoshop CS3” to enhance your photos and create digital art.

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Digital Photography and/or written permission of instructor.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will think critically, listen actively and utilize technology effectively.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1598
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AP DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY: This is a full year course that is designed for those who demonstrate a strong proficiency in digital photography/2-D design. The course is designed for a personal expression through eight to twelve (8-12) completed works that will contribute to the AP portfolio requirements meant to be submitted in May. During the creation period, students should understand the art process and be trying to display their creative expression and specific art style. Art works should show evidence of synthesis of materials, processes, and ideation. The final submission of your portfolio (to be submitted online) should consist of fifteen (15) detail/ process images of work, and five (5) physical works of your choosing. Upon completion and passing of this AP course the student will gain college credit. In addition to the coursework, there is summer work that needs to be completed prior to the beginning of the school year, and any student who does not complete this work may be withdrawn from the course. There is a reduced cost for students on free/reduced lunch. Many colleges offer credit to students who achieve a passing score on the AP exam.

Students who enroll in this course must take the AP exam.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will demonstrate creativity.

Grade: 11-12	Credits: 5	Level: Advanced Placement	Course#: 1540
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AP STUDIO ART: This is a full year course that is designed for those who demonstrate a strong proficiency in multiple art mediums (Drawing, 3-D, and non-photography 2-D). The course is designed for a personal expression through eight to twelve (8-12) completed works that will contribute to the AP portfolio requirements meant to be submitted in May. During the creation period, students should understand the art process and be trying to display their creative expression and specific art style. Art works should show evidence of synthesis of materials, processes, and ideation. The final submission of your portfolio (to be submitted online) will consist of fifteen (15) detail/ process images of work, and five (5) physical works of your choosing. Upon completion and passing of this AP course the student will gain college credit. In addition to the coursework, there is summer work that needs to be completed prior to the beginning of the school year, and any student who does not complete this work may be withdrawn from the course. There is a reduced cost for students on free/reduced lunch. Many colleges offer credit to students who achieve a passing score on the AP exam. **Students who enroll in this course must take the AP exam.**

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will demonstrate creativity.

Grade: 11-12	Credits: 5	Level: Advanced Placement	Course#: 1530
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BUSINESS

ENTREPRENEURSHIP: This interactive course provides opportunities to learn the underlying principles of starting a business. Students will learn how to identify business opportunities, how to start a business and how to profit as a business owner. Students will participate in hands-on activities centered around creating their own businesses and products throughout the course. Students will learn about the different types of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial strategies in the process.

Grade: 10-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1917
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BUSINESS: This course provides opportunities to learn and experience a variety of topics in the field of business. Students are exposed to various economies, their roles in our economy, entrepreneurship, marketing, managing financial and technological resources, and the use of social media. There will also be a focus on personal finance and money management.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1916
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BSAD 2040: FUNDAMENTALS OF MARKETING: This course discusses the role of marketing in our economic and social structure. It includes the planning, distribution, pricing and promotion of goods and services to consumer and industrial markets in the context of internal activities of the firm and environmental forces. This is a dual credit course through Fitchburg State University. This class will be taught on the GHS campus. Students who successfully complete the course with a passing grade will earn 5 high school credits and 3 college credits through Fitchburg State.

Grade: 11-12	Credits: 5	Level: Honors	Course#: 2961
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ENGLISH

ENGLISH 9: The reading content of this course will introduce the student to the works of various authors to include a survey of world and American literature. The writing component will emphasize the writing process, and students will focus primarily on argumentative/analytical as well as narrative compositions. Critical thinking skills as well as practice in responding to open-ended questions will be stressed in preparation for the MCAS. Vocabulary development and application of literary concepts will be incorporated into the literature instruction.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will read and write effectively.

Grade 9	Credits: 5	Levels: Honors College Preparatory	Course#: 1011 1012
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ENGLISH 10: This full year course focuses on the continued development of critical thinking skills through the exploration of American and world literature. Standards based curriculum units center on the preparation for the Next Generation MCAS exam. Each unit helps to develop the writing process for all types of writing including those featured on the MCAS exam such as narrative, persuasive, and analytical writing. Language and vocabulary development are embedded into each curriculum unit. This course encourages curiosity and question asking while building upon students' reading and writing skills via the literary genres of the novel, short story, essay, poetry, and drama.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will read and write effectively.

Grade 10	Credits: 5	Levels: Honors College Preparatory	Course#: 1001 1022
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ENGLISH 11: This full-year course continues to refine writing, reading and analytical skills. The course covers the analysis and critical study of representative works in American literature. Additionally, research techniques and presentation, grammar and usage, SAT preparation, media literacy, vocabulary, and various types of writing are taught and studied. A research paper will be a major component of this year of study.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will read and write effectively.

Grade 11	Credits: 5	Levels: Honors College Preparatory	Course#: 1031 1032
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ENGLISH 12: The reading content of this course will consist of classical and modern world literature in poetry and prose. The aim is to prepare students for a liberal education with a wide variety of literature in both fiction and nonfiction. The writing component will emphasize effective expression, proper spelling, usage and refinement of individual skills. Organizational and critical thinking skills will be stressed in written assignments and oral discussion of the reading. Vocabulary development, critical analysis and the application of literary concepts will be incorporated into the literature instruction.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will read and write effectively.

Grade 12	Credits: 5	Levels: Honors College Preparatory	Course#: 1041 1042
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AP ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION: This full-year course includes both reading and analysis of complex prose from various authors and periods with emphasis on nonfiction. The study of various types of discourse and active class participation are essential elements of this course. Students will engage in various writing experiences calling for the use of different styles, tone, and syntax. Through such study and practice, students will gain an understanding of the principles of effective writing and become proficient writers themselves. Students are required to take the official AP exam at the end of the year. With successful performance in the AP exam, up to one semester of college credit in an English Composition class may be granted from accepting colleges. Summer work is a mandatory part of this course. There is a reduced cost for students on free/reduced lunch. Many colleges offer credit to students who achieve a passing score on the AP exam. **Students who enroll in this course must take the AP exam.**

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will read and write effectively.

Grade 11	Credits: 5	Levels: Advanced Placement	Course#: 1030
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AP ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION: This full-year English course guides the student through classics of literature, poetry, and drama, which are considered the foundational basis of a liberal education. The student is taught in-depth close reading and critical analysis, not as an end in itself but as a useful tool in the study of the literature of life. Students are encouraged to expand their thinking processes with continued curiosity and question asking in the classroom. Students are expected to take an active and reflective role in class discussion of literature. As the students' literary and critical faculties are more clearly defined, they are encouraged to polish and refine their own style of writing.

Students are required to take the official AP exam at the end of the year. With successful performance on the AP exam, up to one semester of college credit in an English Composition class may be granted from accepting colleges. There is a reduced cost for students on free/reduced lunch. Summer work is a mandatory part of this course.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will read and write effectively at an advanced level of study.

Grade 11-12	Credits: 5	Levels: Advanced Placement	Course#: 1040
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HORROR AND FICTION: This course explores the fiction of the fantastic, the magical, the supernatural, and the horrific, including vampires, zombies, werewolves, and other frightening creatures. It also explores what it is about horror and fear that we are so drawn to, and how creators of horror play on our fears about the world and ourselves in order to make us think about important issues.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will read and write effectively.

Grade 8-12	Credits: 2.5	Levels: College Preparatory	Course#: 1054
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MYTHOLOGY: This semester course will focus on examining the gods, heroes and monsters of Greek mythology. Using both classic and modern stories, we will learn about the Olympians and investigate themes such as explaining natural phenomena, the quests and struggles of both immortals and mortals, and the role of fate. The course is designed for anyone who would like an introduction to Greek mythology and a look at its lasting influence.

Grade 8-9	Credits: 2.5	Levels: College Preparatory	Course#: 1055
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SPORTS WRITING: The sports world features diverse personalities, distinct narratives and intersects with numerous other disciplines. This semester-long course explores the world of sports through media. Students will use sports as the vehicle to discuss and explore these narratives through print, digital and social media.

Grade: 8-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1074
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HEALTH & WELLNESS

WELLNESS: This introductory course will focus on major life choices teens have to make concerning health care, disease prevention and health promotion. Students will learn and practice the skills needed to maintain or improve physical, mental and social wellbeing now and in the future. Topics will include health care, foundation of a healthy life, mental and emotional health, stress management, self-defense, drug and alcohol awareness, communicating needs, healthy relationships, safe dating and reproductive health.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1754
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LIFE MANAGEMENT: This course, designed for students in grades 10-12, will help develop the skills youth need to manage their lives after high school. Based on national health standards, students will learn and practice the health life skills of accessing health information, advocating for the needs of self and others, making healthy decisions and self-care. Topics will include first aid and CPR, the health care system, nutrition basics, food safety, prep and cooking, simple sewing techniques, drug and alcohol use, and personal care focusing on skin, dental and reproductive health. This is a project based, hands-on course that will require daily participation in classes.

Grade: 10-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1796
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DANCE: This semester's course is designed to keep the body moving. Students will explore many dances including ballet, jazz, folk dances and many different modern routines. Students will be encouraged to choreograph and teach to the rest of the class, participate in others' routines, with the goal that we keep moving each day. This course is open to all levels of dance from beginner to advanced. This class can be used as a Unified Art credit.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will problem solve effectively and think critically. Students will work collaboratively and improve communication skills.

Grade: 8-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1548
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UNIFIED PE: This course brings together students with and without disabilities for physical activities and sports, with the goal of enhancing the physical, intellectual and social growth of all. This class focuses on increasing physical fitness and sport-specific skills, rules, and strategies, as well as reinforcing positive habits and reasoning to make better health and lifestyle choices.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will problem solve effectively and think critically. Students will work collaboratively and improve communication skills.

Grade: 8-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1874
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OUTDOOR ADVENTURES is a fun and exciting elective course that covers physical education requirements. Students are taught lifelong skills through the integration of physical education, science, wildlife conservation, art and critical thinking. The focus is on being outdoors, participating in activities such as: challenge skills, hiking, plant identification, survival techniques, tracking, camping, trip planning and fort building. This class is designed to change young people's lives forever by exposing them to the Great Outdoors and its many physical and social opportunities.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will problem solve effectively and think critically. Students will work collaboratively and improve communication skills.

Grade: 8-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1756
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TEAM SPORT: Will cover a Physical Education requirement and will include instruction of skills and active participation in a variety of sports and physical activities. Some of the sports and activities offered in this course will include: basketball, volleyball, pickleball, badminton, soccer, capture the flag, speedball, futsal, flag football, and a variety of other team centered games. This is a participation course that promotes respect, healthy competition, sportsmanship and cooperation. Emphasis is also placed on the physical performance of learned skills and various approaches to the game.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will problem solve effectively and think critically. Students will work collaboratively and improve communication skills.

Grade: 8-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1757
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FARM TO TABLE: OUR FOOD SYSTEMS: In this course students will integrate the sustainable agricultural practices of farmers who grow our food and the people who prepare and consume it. Students will learn about supporting local economies, promoting biodiversity, encouraging sustainable farming practices, reducing the carbon footprint, and improving food quality and nutrition. In this class, students will work directly with local agencies and farmers while learning about the food to table social movement which promotes serving locally grown food directly from its origin to consumers.

Grade: 8-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1766
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MATHEMATICS

ALGEBRA 1: This course begins with a review of pre-algebra skills such as using variables, exponents, the order of operations, and tables & graphs. The remainder of the course will focus on operations with equations, inequalities, lines, and functions. It will also provide the opportunity for students to use data to find and display measures of central tendencies. Students studying at the college prep level will work at grade level pace, with an emphasis on the application of skills and justification of the steps in the problem solving process. They will investigate topics in depth with emphasis on critical thinking skills and applied problem-solving. Assessments are designed to evaluate students' ability to synthesize information according to Bloom's taxonomy.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will problem solve effectively and think critically.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1127
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GEOMETRY: This course begins with a brief review of algebra skills: such as solving equations, polynomials, and factoring. The remainder of the course is devoted entirely to geometry. Aspects of geometry that will be explored include: inductive and deductive reasoning with simple proof statements, lines, angles, polygons, circles, solids, congruence and similarity. Students studying at the honors level will work at an accelerated pace. They will investigate topics in depth with emphasis on critical thinking skills and applied problem-solving. Assessments are designed to evaluate students' ability to synthesize information according to Bloom's taxonomy. *Prerequisite: Successful completion of Algebra I*
 Expectations for Student Learning: Students will problem solve effectively and think critically.

Grade: 10-12	Credits: 5 Credits:10 w/Enrichment	Level: Honors College Preparatory	Course#: 1129 1172
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MATH ENRICHMENT: This course is taken in combination with Geometry to support a student's understanding of concepts covered. This course will not count towards Math credit required for graduation.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will problem solve effectively and think critically.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 5	Level: Unweighted	Course#: 1174
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ALGEBRA 2: This course begins with a review of Algebra I skills such as solving and graphing equations and inequalities. The remainder of the course will focus on graphing linear, quadratic and absolute value functions, operations containing matrices, complex numbers, counting principles, and arithmetic and geometric series. Students studying at the honors level will work at an accelerated pace. They will investigate topics in depth with emphasis on critical thinking skills and applied problem-solving. Assessments are designed to evaluate students' ability to synthesize information according to Bloom's taxonomy.

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Algebra I

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will problem solve effectively and think critically.

Grade: 10-12	Credits: 5	Level: Honors College Preparatory	Course#: 1191 1132
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ADVANCED ALGEBRA AND TRIGONOMETRY: This year long course is algebra based, with an emphasis on rational and radical functions and trigonometry. The course is designed for students whose background is not yet strong enough for pre-calculus, but intend to go on to college. There will be some SAT and ACT preparation before the exams in the fall.

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Algebra II

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will problem solve effectively and think critically.

Grade: 11-12	Credits: 5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1162
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HONORS PRE-CALCULUS: Students successful in this course will be prepared for either calculus or Advanced Placement Calculus. Students are exposed to familiar Algebra II topics, at a deeper level. New topics are also included, such as difference quotients, graphing various functions by hand, and trigonometry. Students studying at the honors level will work at an accelerated pace, and more emphasis will be placed on graphing. Extensive use is made of the TI-83+ or the TI-84 graphing calculators. It is strongly recommended that the students have one of these calculators.

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Algebra II

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will problem solve effectively and think critically.

Grade: 11-12	Credits: 5	Level: Honors	Course#: 1151
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AP CALCULUS AB: This is a complete full-year course in differential and integral calculus. Extensive use is made of the TI-84 graphing calculators. It is strongly recommended that the students have one of these calculators. The course is comparable to many college courses. Summer work is a mandatory part of this course.

There is a reduced cost for students on free/reduced lunch. Many colleges offer credit to students who achieve a passing score on the AP exam. **Students who enroll in this course must take the AP exam.**

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Pre-Calculus

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will problem solve effectively and think critically.

Grade: 12	Credits: 5	Level: Advanced Placement	Course#: 1160
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AP CALCULUS BC: This is a complete full-year course in differential and integral calculus that is the equivalent of two semesters of college calculus. Topics include all content covered in AP Calculus AB plus: integration by parts, infinite series convergence and Taylor series, vector and polar functions, and limits of indeterminate forms. Extensive use is made of the TI-84 graphing calculators. It is strongly recommended that the students have one of these calculators. Summer work is a mandatory part of this course.

*There is a reduced cost for students on free/reduced lunch. Many colleges offer credit to students who achieve a passing score on the AP exam. **Students who enroll in this course must take the AP exam.**

Prerequisite: Successful completion of AP Calculus AB.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will problem solve effectively and think critically.

Grade: 11-12	Credits: 5	Level: Advanced Placement	Course#: 1170
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AP STATISTICS: This advanced placement course in Statistics will cover the syllabus from the College Board. The purpose is to introduce students to the major concepts and tools for collecting, analyzing and drawing conclusions from the data. Students are exposed to four broad conceptual themes: Exploring Data, Sampling and Experimentations, Anticipating Patterns, and Statistical Inference. Students are required to take the official AP exam at the end of the year. Summer work is a mandatory part of this course.

There is a reduced cost for students on free/reduced lunch. Many colleges offer credit to students who achieve a passing score on the AP exam. **Students who enroll in this course must take the AP exam.**
Prerequisite: Successful completion of Algebra II

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will problem solve effectively and think critically.

Grade: 11-12	Credits: 5	Level: Advanced Placement	Course#: 1150
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STATISTICS AND PROBABILITY: This course introduces basic statistical topics with real world mathematical applications. Statistical topics will include analysis of one and two variable data, study and experimental design, and analysis of data. Topics in personal finance will reinforce the general math topics (such as arithmetic, using rational numbers, measurement, ratio, and proportion) and applying these skills to consumer problems and situations. Applications may include budgeting, taxation, credit, banking services, insurance, buying and selling products and services, personal income and investment.

In this course students will be introduced to the basic concepts and logic of statistical reasoning and students will have an introductory-level practical ability to choose, generate, and properly interpret appropriate descriptive and inferential methods. This course introduces basic statistical topics with real world mathematical applications. Statistical topics will include analysis of one and two variable data, study and experimental design, and analysis of data.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will problem solve effectively and think critically.

Grade: 11-12	Credits: 5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1152
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MATH MODELING: This course is an introduction to mathematical modeling using graphical, numerical, symbolic, and verbal techniques to describe and explore real-world data phenomena. It is designed to prepare students to pass the 092 college math course at Mount Wachusett Community College. Emphasis is on the use of elementary functions to investigate and analyze applied problems and questions, supported by the use of appropriate technology, and on effective communications of quantitative concepts and results. Students who successfully complete this course and the final exam will receive a certificate of course completion and will be eligible for college level placement in math at MWCC.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will problem solve effectively and think critically.

Grade: 12	Credits: 5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1194
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TOPICS IN MATH: This course explores a number of important ideas and practical applications in contemporary mathematics. Required topics include: problem solving strategies; measurement and the metric system; set theory; equations and inequalities; graphing and linear functions: consumer applications such as interest, annuities and present value; and basic statistics. Teachers will select one or two additional topics (as time permits), such as, history of math, voting and apportionment, logic, probability, or geometry.

Grade: 11-12	Credits: 5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1177
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PERFORMING ARTS

CHORUS: Chorus provides an opportunity for interested students to sign music in a large mixed choir (soprano, alto, tenor, and bass) from a variety of styles including classical and contemporary. Students will be introduced to proper vocal tone productions and the fundamentals of singing. They will become more proficient in sight-reading as they are exposed to many different musical works throughout the course. Performances will include in school and outside-of school concerts, competitions, festivals, and community events. Students may take chorus for more than one year. *Prerequisite: Reasonable competency at singing, reading music, and previous experience in a school choral program, or enrollment approval by the GHS Choral Director.*

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will demonstrate creativity.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1506
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BAND: This is the largest instrumental ensemble at Gardner High School. The class does not require an audition and every student who plays a standard band instrument is expected to participate. Students will begin the year with the focus on Marching Band and transition to Symphonic Band during the second quarter. Students will be exposed to a variety of musical pieces and will be instructed on correct performance practices for each style. Performances will include in and out-of-school concerts, competitions, festivals, and community events. In addition, students may be required to attend summer rehearsals, band camp, and other out-of-school rehearsals during the Marching Band portion of the class. Students may take band for more than one year.

Prerequisite: Reasonable competency at singing, reading music, and previous experience in a school choral program, or enrollment approval by the GHS Choral Director.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will demonstrate creativity.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1505
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COLORGUARD (Fall Semester Only): This is a half-year performance-based class that will be offered during the 1st semester and will meet during the same period as the band. Students enrolled in this class will perform with the Gardner High School Wildcat Marching Band. Performances will include in and out-of-school events such as marching band shows, parades, Fall Concert, Winter Concert, football games and pep rallies. There is no prerequisite, however, students will be expected to commit to the full Marching Band schedule and attend summer rehearsals, band camp, and other out-of-school rehearsals with the color guard instructors. Students will learn the proper use of color guard equipment, rehearsal performance technique, basic dance movements and marching technique.

When the fall marching band season is complete halfway through the 2nd quarter students will work on individual technique with various types of color guard equipment and will work on a group performance project that will be featured as part of the Winter Concert. Students may take color guard more than once.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will demonstrate creativity.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1504
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GUITAR: This half year course is designed for all levels of abilities from beginners to advanced players. The curriculum will be designed to challenge the students at the level of ability they have at the beginning of the semester. More advanced players will serve as mentors to beginner players. Individual students will develop goals for improvement and work on repertoire that challenges their current level.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will demonstrate creativity.

Grade: 8-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1547
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PIANO: This half-year class is designed for students who have little to no experience playing the piano or reading music. Topics covered include reading music, piano keyboard technique, scales, and basic chords that can be used for harmonization. By the end of the course students will be able to play basic melodies with simple accompaniments in several keys. There is no prerequisite for this class; however, it is not appropriate for students who have taken private lessons or those who are already proficient pianists.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will demonstrate creativity

Grade: 8-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1545
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MUSIC TECHNOLOGY: This course is designed for student musicians to explore and create music through technology-based experiences. Students will use computer and tablet music notation, composition, and creation applications to develop musicianship in a 21st century environment. Creativity, experimentation, and collaboration will be a major focus of this course, and students will be expected to learn and work independently by taking initiative to try new things to grow as musicians.

Prerequisite: It is recommended that students taking this course have some type of musical background.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will demonstrate creativity.

Grade: 8-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1554
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HISTORY OF ROCK AND ROLL: This half year class begins with the history of how Rock music began in the early 1900's with its Blues roots and moves through Country music, Doo-Wop, and many styles of rock through the mid 1960's. We will discover the music of Elvis, Buddy Holly, Motown, the Beach Boys, the Beatles and many other rock legends.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will demonstrate creativity.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1546
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DANCE: This semester's course is designed to keep the body moving. Students will explore many dances including ballet, jazz, folk dances and many different modern routines. Students will be encouraged to choreograph and teach to the rest of the class, participate in others' routines, with the goal that we keep moving each day. This course is open to all levels of dance from beginner to advanced. This class can be used as either an Art or PE credit.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will demonstrate creativity.

Grade: 8-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1548
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DRAMA/THEATER: This is an elective course that focuses on basic acting techniques, interpreting dramatic literature, games, improvisation, pantomime, monolog, and script adaptations with performance. Students will develop vocal, physical and emotional control through analytical, creative and team building activities, as well as develop group and self-assessment skills to improve performance. Students will also be able to connect literature from a variety of cultures and historical time periods to develop 21st century perspective on theater and its connection to daily life to promote success after high school graduation. Reading, writing, rehearsing and memorizing are vital to success in this course. This class is interactive and energetic.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will read and write effectively.

Grade: 8-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1544
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AP MUSIC: This class is designed for students who want to learn about advanced music theory. Students will develop a working knowledge and understanding of music analysis and composition. Topics in this class will be related to the Advanced Placement Music Theory exam. That is given at the end of the school year in May. Students in this course who are currently enrolled in musical ensembles such as band or chorus will also gain a better understanding of the music they perform on a daily basis. Summer work is a mandatory part of this course. There is a reduced cost for students on free/reduced lunch. Many colleges offer credit to students who achieve a passing score on the AP exam. Students who enroll in this course must take the AP exam.

Grade: 11-12	Credits: 5	Level: Advanced Placement	Course#: 1510
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SCIENCE

LIFE SCIENCE: This introduction to high school life science class will prepare students for 10th Grade CP Biology and the Biology MCAS exam.. Through this course, students will participate in lab activities that will reinforce essential science practices for future science classes. Topics include the interaction of organisms within their physical environment as well as with other organisms, the principles of inheritance and genetic variation, the principles of natural selection and evolution, and human body systems.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will work collaboratively, problem solve critically, and communicate effectively.

Grade: 9	Credits: 5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1202
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BIOLOGY: This course is geared towards preparing students for the Biology MCAS exam. Concepts will be introduced through lectures, discussions, activities, and will be reinforced through weekly laboratories. Topics in cellularity, biochemistry, genetics, evolution, body systems, diversity of life, and ecology are explored in the laboratory and the classroom. The same concepts taught in Honors Biology are taught in College Preparatory Biology, but in greater detail.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will work collaboratively, problem solve critically, and communicate effectively.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 5	Level: Honors College Preparatory	Course#: 1211 1212
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CHEMISTRY: This course is a developmentally appropriate, hands-on laboratory based program in which the basic chemical principles and skills students will need for college will be pursued. A variety of problem-solving techniques, laboratory activities, model building, and demonstrations are major components of this course. Both Honors Chemistry and College Preparatory Chemistry use algebraic principles throughout the course. College Preparatory Chemistry does so to a lesser extent.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will work collaboratively, problem solve critically, and communicate effectively.

Grade: 10-12	Credits: 5	Level: Honors College Preparatory	Course#: 1221 1222
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PHYSICS: This course will give students a solid understanding of the concepts in Classical Physics. The course covers topics such as Newtonian Mechanics, Thermal Physics, Waves, Electricity and Magnetism. The curriculum is designed as a thorough introduction to Physics and prepares students who are interested in medical fields, engineering and physical science. It is very mathematics intensive. It is recommended that students have completed Algebra II and be concurrently taking H. Precalculus.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will work collaboratively, problem solve critically, and communicate effectively.

Grade: 11-12	Credits: 5	Level: Honors College Preparatory	Course#: 1231 1232
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ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE: This is a full-year laboratory course that will focus on present-day problems in the environment. The study of energy flow, population dynamics, biodiversity, air and water pollution and toxic waste is explored. An emphasis will be placed on collection field data and we will use current technologies to support and analyze the data. The same concepts taught in Honors Environmental Science are taught in Environment Science, but in greater detail.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will work collaboratively, problem solve critically, and communicate effectively.

Grade: 11-12	Credits: 5	Level: Honors College Preparatory	Course#: 1271 1272
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ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY: This course is geared toward students interested in pursuing careers related to various fields in medicine, physical therapy, or sports medicine or for those interested in a more in-depth examination of the human body, which includes the study of the ten systems of the human body. Laboratory cats are dissected and serve as models of human anatomy and physiology. Demonstrations and laboratory experiments exemplify basic anatomy as well as physiological principles. Research papers and presentations integrate student learning to real life diseases and disorders. Interactive computer activities are conducted using Vernier, Physioex, and Interactive Physiology software. The same concepts taught in Honors Anatomy and Physiology are taught in College Preparatory Anatomy and Physiology, but in greater detail. Participation in dissections is mandatory.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will work collaboratively, problem solve critically, and communicate effectively.

Grade: 11-12	Credits: 5	Level: Honors College Preparatory	Course#: 1261 & 1262
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TECHNOLOGY/ENGINEERING: Students who are highly motivated, work well independently, are interested in high-tech careers and enjoy hands-on learning experiences should consider taking Technology/Engineering. This course encourages students to pursue global engineering questions and technological solutions that emphasizes research and problem solving using mathematical and scientific concepts. Students achieve a more advanced level of skill in engineering design by conceptualizing a game and building a game board. The game will be played with machines designed and built by students. The machines will be designed to apply all of the areas of study within the area of Technology Engineering. Students will learn how to solve the problem they've conceptualized by developing possible solutions, designing and building prototypes or models, and making modifications if necessary. Students will explore engineering design, construction technologies, energy and power technologies including fluid systems, thermal systems, electrical systems, and communication and manufacturing technologies. Technology Engineering is designed to fully immerse the student in higher level problem solving activities that will require detailed lab reports that will include the following: proper research citations, orthographic drawings, test and evaluation analysis and redesign of the prototype. This class can be used toward science graduation requirements.

This class can be used toward science graduation requirements.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will work collaboratively, problem solve critically, and communicate effectively.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1452
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BIOTECHNOLOGY: This full year biotechnology course provides students with dynamic and engaging exploration of the cutting-edge technologies shaping our world. Focusing on the scientific innovations that impact health, medicine, and society, students will investigate critical topics such as health equity, disease treatments, and recent scientific breakthroughs. Through hands-on experiments, case studies, and project-based learning, students will develop a deep understanding of biotechnology's role in advancing healthcare and addressing global challenges.

By the end of the course, students will not only gain a solid foundation in biotechnology but also develop the critical thinking and problem solving skills necessary to contribute to the future of science and technology. This course prepares students for further study in biotechnology, medicine, and related fields, while fostering an awareness of the ethical, societal, and global implications of biotechnology advancements.

Grade: 10-12	Credits: 5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1456
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AP BIOLOGY: AP Biology is designed for students who wish a vigorous extension of their biological knowledge and a deeper understanding of science as a process. The course will be taught to meet the standards of the College Board AP Biology Curriculum. The content of this course will involve 8 units of study, Chemistry of Life; Cell Structure and Function; Cellular Energetics; Cell Communication and Cell Cycle; Heredity; Gene Expression and Regulation; Natural Selection; and Ecology. Use of College Board AP Classroom, Case Studies, POGILs, website videos, and laboratory experimentation and design will be a vital part of the course.

There is a reduced cost for students on free/reduced lunch. Many colleges offer credit to students who achieve a passing score on the AP exam. **Students who enroll in this course must take the AP exam.**

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will work collaboratively, problem solve critically, and communicate effectively.

Grade: 11-12	Credits: 5	Level: Advanced Placement	Course#: 1250
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AP CHEMISTRY: This AP Chemistry course is designed for students who wish to attain a depth of understanding of the fundamentals of chemistry. The course will be taught to meet the standards of the National AP Chemistry Curriculum. Topics covered will include kinetics, equilibrium, thermodynamics, and electrochemistry with a review of atomic theory, kinetic molecular theory, bonding and stoichiometry. The course places emphasis upon critical quantitative thinking and lab work. **Summer work is a mandatory part of this course.**

There is a reduced cost for students on free/reduced lunch. Many colleges offer credit to students who achieve a passing score on the AP exam. **Students who enroll in this course must take the AP exam.**

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will work collaboratively, problem solve critically, and communicate effectively.

Grade: 11-12	Credits: 5	Level: Advanced Placement	Course#: 1290
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AP ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE: The Advanced Placement Environmental Science course is an interdisciplinary examination of the natural world. The goal of the course is to provide an understanding of the interrelationships among the various systems of the earth. Additionally, the course examines human impact of environmental changes to air, land, and water quality, biodiversity, and climate change. Students are challenged to evaluate and create solutions to the imbalance of natural resources necessary to maintain a sustainable planet for an exponentially growing global population from both a technological and political perspective. Students enrolled in the course will take the Advanced Placement Environmental Science exam. Summer work is a mandatory part of this course. There is a reduced cost for students on free/reduced lunch. Many colleges offer credit to students who achieve a passing score on the AP exam. **Students who enroll in this course must take the AP exam.**

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will work collaboratively, problem solve critically, and communicate effectively.

Grade: 11-12	Credits: 5	Level: Advanced Placement	Course#: 1270
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AP PHYSICS II: This full-year course is equivalent to a second-semester college course in algebra-based physics. The course covers fluid mechanics, thermodynamics, electricity and magnetism, optics, and atomic and nuclear physics. 25% of instructional time is devoted to inquiry-based laboratory investigations that foster student engagement in the practice of science through experimenting, analyzing, making conjectures and arguments, and solving problems in a collaborative setting, where students direct and monitor their progress. Students who enrolled in this course must take the AP Physics 2 exam in May. Students should have successfully completed first-year introductory physics. Students should also have taken or be concurrently taking honors pre-calculus. Highly capable and motivated students could take Honors Physics and AP physics 2 simultaneously if getting permission from the instructor.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will problem solve effectively and think critically

Grade: 12	Credits: 5	Level: Advanced Placement	Course#: 1260
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SCIENCE OF NATURAL DISASTERS: The ‘Science of Disasters’ course comprehensively explored the scientific foundations of a range of different extreme events. These encompassed earthquakes, hurricanes, tropical storms, flooding, tornadoes, wildfires, hazardous materials incidents, technological disasters, radiological incidents, and more. Students will gain a profound understanding of each disaster's mechanics, implications, and strategic responses.

Expectation for Student Learning: Students will work collaboratively, problem solve critically, and communicate effectively.

Grade:8-9	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1203
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MARINE BIOLOGY: Students will learn about the physical structure and chemistry of the ocean, the diversity of ocean life, marine ecology, and the scope and impact of human interactions with the oceans.

Prerequisite: Passing grade in Biology

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will work collaboratively, problem solve critically, and communicate effectively.

Grade: 10-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1205
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ASTRONOMY: This introductory Astronomy course explores the basics of celestial bodies and phenomena, such as planets, moons, stars, and galaxies and technology in space.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will work collaboratively, problem solve critically, and communicate effectively.

Grade: 8-9	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1204
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BOTANY: This course is the scientific study of plants and their relationship to the environment. Students will investigate the growth, reproduction, anatomy, morphology, physiology, biochemistry, taxonomy, genetics, and ecology of plants. Laboratory and outdoor experiences complement classroom activities.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will work collaboratively, problem solve critically, and communicate effectively.

Grade: 10-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1263
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FORENSICS: Forensic science is the application of science to law. This lab based course involves all areas of Science including: Biology, Anatomy, Chemistry, and Physics. There is an emphasis on complex reasoning and critical thinking. Topics will include: the basics of Forensic Science, crime scene analysis and reconstruction, impressions, prints (finger, lip and ear), blood splatter and typing entomology, teeth and toxicology. Due to the nature of the material, a certain level of maturity is required, as well as the ability to work in a safe manner.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will work collaboratively, problem solve critically, and communicate effectively.

Grade: 11-12 10th with approval	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1257
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SOCIAL STUDIES

MODERN WORLD HISTORY: The aim of this survey course is to provide a comprehensive study of the development of World History from the French Revolution (c. 1789) to the present day. All topics are aligned with the Massachusetts History and Social Sciences Curriculum Frameworks. Students are required to do essays and a research paper. A variety of assessments are used.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will problem solve effectively and think critically.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 5	Level: Honors College Preparatory	Course#: 1311 1312
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AP HUMAN GEOGRAPHY: The purpose of this freshman full-year college-level course is to introduce students to the systematic study of patterns and processes that have shaped human understanding, use, and alteration of Earth's surface. Students learn to employ spatial concepts and landscape analysis to examine human socio economic organization and its environmental consequences. They also learn about the methods and tools geographers use in their research and applications, comprehensive survey of human geographical patterns, throughout history. Students are required to complete an extensive summer reading assignment, read nightly, write intensively, analyze primary source documents, actively participate in class, and will take the **AP Human Geography exam. Students should be prepared to spend at least an hour every night completing these requirements. This course will cover various topics within the Massachusetts History and Social Science Frameworks. Students interested in taking this course should be prepared to devote a great deal of time toward achieving success. Self-motivation is essential.

This course can be used to meet the World History requirement.

There is a reduced cost for students on free/reduced lunch. Many colleges offer credit to students who achieve a passing score on the AP exam. **Students who enroll in this course must take the AP exam.**

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will problem solve effectively and think critically.

Grade: 9	Credits: 5	Level: Advanced Placement	Course#: 1310
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UNITED STATES HISTORY 1: In year one of this two-year unified course, students will examine the historical and intellectual development during the Revolutionary and Constitutional era. In addition, industrialization, westward expansion, slavery, and the Civil War will be topics of focus. Students will study the social, political, intellectual, religious, and technological development of the United States through the Progressive Era and World War I. Students will study the global relations of the United States and other nations. All topics are aligned with the Massachusetts History and Social Sciences Curriculum Frameworks.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will problem solve effectively and think critically.

Grade: 10-12	Credits: 5	Level: Honors College Preparatory	Course#: 1321 1322
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UNITED STATES HISTORY 2: In the second year of the two-year unified course, students will analyze the causes and consequences of the Great Depression with a focus on principles of economics. Students will study the goals and accomplishments of the New Deal. Students will analyze the causes and contributing factors that led America into the Modern World stage through historical events of WWII, the Cold War, Vietnam, Civil Rights through September 11, 2001. Students will understand the relationship of the United States in recent events, trends, and beliefs that shape modern America. All topics are aligned with the current Massachusetts History and Social Sciences Curriculum Frameworks.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will problem solve effectively and think critically.

Grade: 10	Credits: 5	Level: Honors College Preparatory	Course#: 1331 1332
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AP UNITED STATES HISTORY: The purpose of this demanding college-level course is to provide a comprehensive survey of United States history from the arrival of the first Americans via the land bridge through the present. Students are required to complete an extensive summer reading assignment, read nightly, analyze primary source documents, write intensively, and will take the **United States AP exam. Students should be prepared to spend up to two hours per night completing these requirements. This course will cover topics listed in the Massachusetts History and Social Sciences Frameworks. Students interested in taking this course should be prepared to devote a great deal of time toward achieving success. Self-motivation is essential. All topics are aligned with the current Massachusetts History and Social Sciences Curriculum Frameworks. This course will take place during two periods each day throughout the year. Summer work is a mandatory part of this course.

There is a reduced cost for students on free/reduced lunch. Many colleges offer credit to students who achieve a passing score on the AP exam. **Students who enroll in this course must take the AP exam.**

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will problem solve effectively and think critically.

Grade: 11	Credits: 10	Level: Advanced Placement	Course#: 1330
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AP GOVERNMENT: The purpose of this full-year college-level course for seniors is to examine and evaluate the theories, organization, politics and policy concerns of the American government, with primary focus on the federal government. It is aligned with the Massachusetts History and Social Science Curriculum Frameworks. Emphasis will be placed on written and oral communication; collection, organization, and analysis of data; problem-solving; and cooperative group work. The course will also prepare students to take the **AP U.S. Government & Politics exam. Students interested in this offering should be prepared to devote a great deal of time to the work of this course, and to active classroom participation. Self-motivation is essential.

There is a reduced cost for students on free/reduced lunch. Many colleges offer credit to students who achieve a passing score on the AP exam. **Students who enroll in this course must take the AP exam.**

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will problem solve effectively and think critically.

Grade: 12	Credits: 5	Level: Advanced Placement	Course#: 1340
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AP MODERN WORLD HISTORY: In this sophomore full-year college-level course, students will explore key themes of world history, including interaction with the environment, cultures, state-building, economic systems, and social structures from approximately 1200 C.E. to the present. Students will learn to apply historical thinking skills including the ability to craft arguments from evidence; describe, analyze and evaluate events from a chronological perspective; compare and contextualize historical developments; and analyze evidence, reasoning and context to construct and understand historical interpretations. Students are required to complete an extensive summer reading assignment, read nightly, write intensively, analyze primary source documents, actively participate in class, and will take the **AP World History exam. Students should be prepared to spend at least an hour every night completing these requirements. This course will cover various topics within the Massachusetts History and Social Studies Sciences Frameworks. Students interested in taking this course should be prepared to devote a great deal of time toward achieving success. Self-motivation is essential. Summer work is a mandatory part of this course.

There is a reduced cost for students on free/reduced lunch. Many colleges offer credit to students who achieve a passing score on the AP exam. Students who enroll in this course must take the AP exam.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will problem solve effectively and think critically

Grade: 10	Credits: 5	Level: Advanced Placement	Course#: 1350
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CRIMINAL PSYCHOLOGY: This very interactive course studies criminal behavior. Criminal psychology is the study of the wills, thoughts, intentions, and reactions of criminals. The study goes into the criminal mind by researching and studying some of the most infamous cases in criminal history. Students apply their knowledge of psychology and sociology towards a theoretical solution for criminal behavior. Students learn to apply terminology of law, criminology and psychology to discuss and debate the principles of criminal activity and society's reaction through the criminal justice system.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will problem solve effectively and think critically.

Grade: 11-12 10th with approval	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1375
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PSYCHOLOGY: This course will examine the psychological, biological and societal influences on human behavior in modern day society. The topics will include: the brain, perception, states of consciousness, human development, mental disorders and conventional/alternative therapies. The emphasis will be placed on hands-on learning through projects, small group discussion, role-plays and presentations. This course will prove useful to students seeking a career in the helping fields such as: nursing, teaching, counseling, physical therapy, animal science and medicine.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will problem solve effectively and think critically.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1377
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SOCIOLOGY: In Introduction to Sociology students will examine the ways in which the environment and social institutions such as government, schools, family, socioeconomic status, and church affects a person's social development and socialization. The study of social behavior in interpersonal relationships, groups and the community will also be explored. Several instructional strategies, including: lecture, discussion and debate, guest speakers, and video will be utilized.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will problem solve effectively and think critically.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1378
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MILITARY HISTORY: This course is designed to educate students about significant developments in the history of human armed conflict. Emphasis will be placed on significant battles, the evolution of weaponry and tactics, and military leadership. Students selecting this course must be willing to participate in class discussion and debate, conduct research relating to military history, and take related notes. A multiplicity of teaching strategies will be employed including lectures, text, class discussion and debate, case studies, videos, websites, guest speakers and media information.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will problem solve effectively and think critically.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1376
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HISTORY OF FILM: The first talking films graced the big screen in the 1920's. Since then, it has become a classic American pastime. Movies are a great way to connect our lives to the lives of factual or fictional characters. Films can vary drastically, while some may carry a lighthearted message others may portray a more tragic narrative. This elective dives into films that guide students through major historical events and themes of the 20th century. Topics will be paired with Massachusetts History and Social Sciences Curriculum Frameworks in order to help develop context surrounding the film. Students will learn to evaluate the accuracy of films through a variety of assessment methods. Bring your own popcorn!

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will problem solve effectively and think critically.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1374
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INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY: This course provides an introduction to philosophical thought which looks at questions regarding human nature and the world around us. Students will learn how to discuss, analyze, clarify and create arguments that will help them to be successful in an academic context.

Grade: 8-10	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1353
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PHILOSOPHY & ETHICS: This course provides an introduction to philosophical thought which looks at questions regarding human nature and the world around us. Students will explore the major philosophical schools of thought which include Logic and Reason, Aesthetics, Epistemology, Ethics, Metaphysics, and Existentialism and investigate how great philosophers have addressed these throughout history. Students will learn how to discuss, analyze, clarify and create arguments that will help them to be successful in an academic context.

Grade: 11-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1354
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HISTORY OF HIP HOP & RAP: This half year class begins with a look at the historical roots of the genre, the cultural differences between different styles (East v West, NYC, "Gangster Rap" v Native Tongues, etc) as well as the "reasons"/inspirations behind songs, and influences on modern day. We will be looking at the music of artists such as Grandmaster Flash, Tupac Shakur, Notorious BIG, Public Enemy, Outkast, Run D.M.C, Beastie Boys, Ice Cube, Ice T, Missy Elliot, Nas, Jay-Z, Wu-Tang Clan, Eminem, Kendrick Lamar, and many more. Expectations for Student Learning: Students will problem solve effectively and think critically.

Grade: 8-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1352
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MODERN HISTORY THROUGH POPULAR CULTURE: This half year class will use popular culture (music, movies, television, literature, video games) as a lens to interpret events in modern history starting in the 1970s and working our way to the present day. Expectations for Student Learning: Students will problem solve effectively and think critically.

Grade: 8-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1385
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TECHNOLOGY/ENGINEERING

TECHNOLOGY/ENGINEERING: Students who are highly motivated, work well independently, are interested in high-tech careers and enjoy hands-on learning experiences should consider taking Technology/Engineering. This course encourages students to pursue global engineering questions and technological solutions that emphasizes research and problem solving using mathematical and scientific concepts. Students achieve a more advanced level of skill in engineering design by conceptualizing a game and building a game board. The game will be played with machines designed and built by students. The machines will be designed to apply all of the areas of study within the area of Technology Engineering. Students will learn how to solve the problem they've conceptualized by developing possible solutions, designing and building prototypes or models, and making modifications if necessary. Students will explore engineering design, construction technologies, energy and power technologies including fluid systems, thermal systems, electrical systems, and communication and manufacturing technologies. Technology Engineering is designed to fully immerse the student in higher level problem solving activities that will require detailed lab reports that will include the following: proper research citations, orthographic drawings, test and evaluation analysis and redesign of the prototype. This class can be used toward science graduation requirements. *This class can be used toward science graduation requirements.*

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will think critically, listen actively and utilize technology effectively.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1452
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HONORS ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY: This full-year Honors Level Engineering & Technology course is beneficial to any student interested in careers related to engineering, physical sciences, mechanics, transportation, technological fields, or any aspect of manufacturing. The principles of Honors Engineering & Technology review seven major topic areas: Forces, Work, Rate, Resistance, Energy, Power, and Force Transformers. In each of the seven major topic areas, students will study and gain a practical understanding of mechanical, fluid, electrical, and thermal systems as they relate to each topic area. This course has a heavy emphasis on application. Students will be engaged in creative lab activities through the course.

Grade: 10-12	Credits: 5	Level: Honors	Course#: 1451
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MANUFACTURING TECHNOLOGY: The purpose of this class is to introduce students to theory and operations of manufacturing including manufacturing processes and equipment overview, manufacturing design, production process and flow, materials, machine operations and logistics. Students will learn concepts of production monitoring and control processes. Students will also earn their OSHA Safety Certification and other industry recognized manufacturing credentials for preparation for future employment in the manufacturing field.

Grade: 11-12	Credits: 5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1437
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INTRODUCTION TO WOODWORKING: This is an introductory course in woodworking technology. It includes the following: safety in the shop, drawing and planning a project. This course teaches the fundamentals of woodworking. You'll learn how to safely operate all shop machines and the proper use of hand and portable power tools. Emphasis will be placed on the designing, planning and selection phases used to construct a quality wood product. Curriculum is guided by the Massachusetts State Frameworks for Science, Engineering and Technology.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will think critically, listen actively and utilize technology effectively.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1464
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MAKERSPACE: MakerSpace at Gardner High School is a course where students will work collaboratively with other makers, creators, and designers to foster independent and creative problem solving through an authentic preparation for the real world from simulating real-world challenges. This hands-on course allows students to be creative, innovative, independent, and technologically literate. In addition, this course utilizes materials, tools, and equipment to allow students to combine engineering principles and artistic interests to take initiative, collaboration, persistence, and resourcefulness to produce the creation of engaging products.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will think critically, listen actively and utilize technology effectively.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1454
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ROBOTICS: During this full-year course, students will engage in real-world applications of Science Technology/Engineering and Math (STEM) concepts through the use of the engineering design process. Through hands-on activities students will utilize engineering concepts including: Physics, programming, mechanical systems, and electrical & electronics systems. These concepts are delivered via a robotics platform through activities and projects using VEX Robotics hardware and easy C robotic programming software.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will think critically, listen actively and utilize technology effectively.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1477
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ROBOTICS 2: During this full-year course, students gain knowledge of the programming process by creating a sequence of instructions that tell a computational device, such as the microcontroller on a VEX Robot, how to perform a task. Students utilize VEX Robots hardware and easy C robotic programming software to understand robotic programming code: Radio Control Code, Autonomous Code, and Mixed Autonomous & Radio Control Code. Radio control code allows you to configure the way in which the radio control transmitter controls the robot, allowing a human operator to provide input to the robot. Autonomous code allows a robot to perform behaviors without input from the radio control transmitter. The robot follows pre-programmed routines responding only to sensor inputs. Autonomous code can be integrated with radio control code to achieve even better robot performance for complex tasks.

Prerequisite: Students will have successfully completed Robotics.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will think critically, listen actively and utilize technology effectively.

Grade: 10-12	Credits: 5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1478
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ADVANCED WOODWORKING: This is an advanced level course in woodworking. It includes the following: safety in the shop, drawing and planning a project. Its purpose is to provide more extensive experience to students who desire to explore the woodworking field in greater depth. Emphasis will be placed on technology used in carpentry, cabinet and furniture making, as well as more abstract type woodworking. Students will be given the opportunity to advance skills learned in Wood Technology I in areas of materials, machines, and procedures. Students will be expected to design and develop plans for an advanced project of their choice. Curriculum is guided by the Massachusetts State Frameworks for Science, Engineering, and Technology. Students can take this course more than once.

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Wood Technology I or Intro to Woodworking.

Expectations for Student Learning: Expectations for Student Learning: Students will think critically, listen actively and utilize technology effectively.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1465
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INTRO TO AUTOMOTIVE/TRANSPORTATION TECHNOLOGY: This semester course is for students who want to learn about automotive ownership costs, how to perform routine maintenance, minor repairs and how to buy, sell, evaluate, modify, and personalize automobiles. Automotive theory, diagnosing common problems, performance, safety, pollution, insurance, hybrid designs, small engines, and societal impacts of all forms of transportation will be studied. The students will be involved in hands-on and theoretical learning.

Expectations for students learning: Students will think critically, listen actively, and utilize technology effectively.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1436
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WORLD LANGUAGE

FRENCH 1: This full-year course is an introduction to the French language and culture. Its emphasis is on the skills of listening comprehension and speaking. This is accomplished by oral and written practice of modern, everyday language and the use of selected audio-visual materials. Students will learn thematic vocabulary focusing on everyday needs and activities as they learn to communicate orally, and in writing.

Expectation for Student Learning: Students will listen actively and communicate effectively.

Grade: 8-12	Credits: 5	Levels: College Preparatory	Course#: 1614
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FRENCH 2: This full-year course students will continue to increase their proficiency in the skills of listening comprehension and speaking. Students will also focus on reading and writing in communication topics of interest in the past, present and future. Students will study aspects of the Francophone world.

Prerequisite: Successful completion of French I or written permission of instructor.

Expectation for Student Learning: Students will listen actively and communicate effectively.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 5	Levels: Honors College Preparatory	Course#: 1624
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FRENCH 3: This full-year course of French, taught in the target language, is intended for students who have developed basic skills to a functional degree allowing for individual expression and some extensive reading. Continued development of skills includes review and advanced study of the structure of the language. Reading and cultural material emphasize the contemporary scene in terms of the historical, social and aesthetic development of the people.

Prerequisite: Successful completion of French II or written permission of instructor.

Expectation for Student Learning: Students will listen actively and communicate effectively.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 5	Levels: Honors	Course#: 1631
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FRENCH 4: this full-year course of French is recommended for the highly motivated student upon recommendation of the instructor. The content will vary depending on the ability and interests of the students. Emphasis will be placed on one or more of these areas: language, literature, culture.

Prerequisite: Successful completion of French III or written permission of instructor.

Expectation for Student Learning: Students will listen actively and communicate effectively.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 5	Levels: Honors	Course#: 1651
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FRENCH 5: This full-year course is taught exclusively in the target language. It is designed to provide highly motivated students with the ability to use spoken and written language in a wide variety of situations. Target language readings consist of newspapers, magazine articles as well as authentic literary texts. Students will discuss current events and examine and analyze cultural contributions of significant people and events in history. Throughout this course students will communicate both orally and in writing, with increasing fluency and accuracy.

Prerequisite: Successful completion of French IV or written permission of instructor.

Expectation for Student Learning: Students will listen actively and communicate effectively.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 5	Levels: Honors	Course#: 1691
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SPANISH 1: This full-year course of Spanish introduces the student to the basic elements of the four basic skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Development of these skills is attained by oral and written practice of modern, everyday language and the use of selected audio-video materials. The student also acquires basic skills in reading and cultural concepts concerning everyday life in Spanish speaking countries.

Expectation for Student Learning: Students will listen actively and communicate effectively.

Grade: 8-12	Credits: 5	Levels: College Preparatory	Course#: 1615
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SPANISH 2: This full-year course of Spanish reviews the basic principles of the first year of Spanish. It expands on the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, and deals with the various types of Spanish literature.

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Spanish I or written permission of instructor.

Expectation for Student Learning: Students will listen actively and communicate effectively.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 5	Levels: Honors College Preparatory	Course#: 1625
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SPANISH 3: At this level the students continue to increase their ability to understand and speak the Spanish language. Throughout this course the students will incorporate more complex grammar structures and increase their vocabulary by reading, writing, listening and speaking Spanish in the classroom. Emphasis will be given to communication, both orally and in writing. Students will also explore the geography, history and culture of Spanish-speaking countries around the world. Most classroom business will be conducted in Spanish.

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Spanish I or written permission of instructor.

Expectation for Student Learning: Students will listen actively and communicate effectively.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 5	Levels: Honors	Course#: 1631
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SPANISH 4: This course students will further define their communicative and grammatical skills as they explore various themes through authentic materials. Students will read, view, and interpret various works in Spanish. More emphasis will be given to reading, writing and speaking. Students will explore ancient civilizations and cultures of the Spanish-speaking world as well as contemporary trends of the Spanish-speaking population in and outside of the United States. Spanish will be used extensively during class.

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Spanish III or written permission of instructor.

Expectation for Student Learning: Students will listen actively and communicate effectively.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 5	Levels: Honors	Course#: 1661
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SPANISH 5: This full-year course is taught exclusively in the target language. It is designed to provide highly motivated students with the ability to use spoken and written Spanish in a wide variety of situations. Readings such as newspapers, magazines as well as authentic literary texts will be used to help students to further develop their language skills. Students will discuss current events and examine and analyze cultural contributions of significant people and events in history. Throughout this course students will communicate both orally and in writing with fluency and accuracy.

Prerequisite: Successful completion of Spanish IV or written permission of instructor.

Expectation for Student Learning: Students will listen actively and communicate effectively.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 5	Levels: Honors	Course#: 1671
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SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Special Education Department provides students who have special needs with successful academic experiences through the development of individual education programs (IEPs) that may include both special and general education classes. The primary goal of the department is to encourage maximum student involvement, to the extent appropriate, in general education classes.

Placement of individual students in a special education program occurs only through the Team evaluation process, which involves exploring and documenting alternatives attempted in general classes before referral to special education. This process follows from a pre-referral (SST Committee) convened by the Guidance Department. It is the intent of the Massachusetts Special Education Regulations that a program be designed to include the student in general education while addressing unique needs that may require specialized instruction or related services in order for that student to access the curriculum. It is the purpose of the Special Education Department, therefore, to identify those students who are in need of modifications and support and to provide them with the specialized instruction necessary for successful inclusion in the general school structure. Students' participation in the evaluation process, including attendance at Team meetings, is critical to their programming. Therefore, it is understood that IEP development includes student participation in program planning

ACADEMIC SUPPORT: Students attend Academic Lab in support of English, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, and/or elective classes according to the goals set forth in their IEPs. Students are instructed in learning strategies, and they receive academic instruction in areas identified by their special education and general education teachers, who collaborate to meet students' needs in the classroom. (Team recommendation)

Expectation for Student Learning: Students will problem solve, write, and communicate effectively, think critically, and listen actively.

Grade: 8-12	Credits: 5	Level: Unweighted	Course#: 1878 (10-12) 1877 (8-9)
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READING: This course is for selected students identified as needing additional reading support as per their IEPs. Students will receive support that will reinforce reading skills and strategies. This will be done through targeting instruction along with various engaging texts and online programs.

Grade: 8-12	Credits: 5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1875
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STUDENT SUPPORT CENTER (SSC): This class is designed to offer both academic and social emotional support for students as per their IEP or for other students identified in special situations. Multiple staff (teachers, clinicians, etc) work together to offer intensive support to students on a daily basis to meet the individual needs of each student in the class.

Grade: 8-12	Credits: 5.0	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1876
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R.I.S.E.

The RISE (Resources in Special Education) Program at Gardner High School is designed to provide academic and vocational training for students in grades 9-12 who are at academic levels substantially below grade level. The primary goal of RISE is to provide opportunities to gain academic, independent living, prevocational, and social interaction/communication skills within and outside of the school setting. Students in the RISE Program learn academic and functional skills through a combination of classroom instruction, and school-based work and community experience. Students complete modified assignments in inclusive environments according to their IEP (Team recommendation).

RISE ENGLISH: This course focuses on reading and literature, language, and composition strands in ELA on entry levels. There is emphasis on reading for information, comprehension of written materials, and using information across settings. A multi-sensory approach will be taken that allows students to more fully understand the main ideas, characters, and settings of topics.

Expectation for Student Learning: Students will problem solve, write, and communicate effectively, think critically, and listen actively.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 5	Level: Unweighted	Course#: 1869
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RISE MATH: This course focuses on the basic operations in mathematics and everyday applications of these skills including counting money, time concepts, and measurement, budget and calculator skills. These skills will be taught in the classroom and then utilized in community environments to best provide generalized learning.

Expectation for Student Learning: Students will problem solve, write, and communicate effectively, think critically, and listen actively.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 5	Level: Unweighted	Course#: 1865
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RISE HISTORY: This modified course will have the students explore and demonstrate a general understanding of central past events and select people who have made an impact on our political, economic and/or social development in the United States. The students will use a variety of materials in this historical exploration including textbooks, reference materials, literature and multimedia.

Expectation for Student Learning: Students will problem solve, write, and communicate effectively, think critically, and listen actively.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 5	Level: Unweighted	Course#: 1866
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RISE BIOLOGY: This course is intended to provide students with a better understanding of the scientific method, cell theory, characteristics and classification of living things and their relationship to the environment. The students will also have a better understanding of heredity and reproduction.

Expectation for Student Learning: Students will problem solve, write, and communicate effectively, think critically, and listen actively.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 5	Level: Unweighted	Course#: 1864
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RISE/PRE-VOCATIONAL EXPERIENCES: This course is designed to provide students with work experiences starting with opportunities that are closely supervised, in-school jobs in order to build on skills that will be necessary for transitioning from high school. The focus of this course is to gain an understanding of work expectations, and to use good work habits in order to best prepare for future work experiences. The school-based work includes group projects and individual assignments including paper recycling, restocking machines and coolers, as well as school based businesses along with individual assignments.

Expectation for Student Learning: Students will problem solve, write, and communicate effectively, think critically, and listen actively.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 5	Level: Unweighted	Course#: 1868
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MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS

EL ENGLISH 1: This ESL English class provides an in-depth study in vocabulary, language, grammar and literature to students who are placed into WIDA Level 1. This course will introduce the students to multiple genres of literature including novels, short stories, poetry and informational texts. Exploration of each genre's literary elements including determination of theme and intent and examination of vocabulary and semantics will be included in the course content. The writing component of the course will focus on expository, descriptive, expressive and narrative writing. Students will continue to develop their listening, reading, writing and speaking skills throughout this course.

Expectation for Student Learning: Students will problem solve, write, and communicate effectively, think critically, and listen actively.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 5	Level: Unweighted	Course#: 1894
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EL ENGLISH 2: This ESL English class provides an in-depth study in vocabulary, language, grammar and literature to students who are placed into WIDA Levels 2 and 3. The genre focus in this course will be fiction, poetry, drama and non-fiction. Students will develop reading strategies that will help them make connections to the readings and understand inferences. Along with reading, the students will explore expository, narrative and descriptive writing. There will be an additional focus on grammar, including verb tenses, adjectives and adverbs, and complex compound sentences. Students will continue to develop their listening, reading, writing and speaking skills throughout this course.

Expectation for Student Learning: Students will problem solve, write, and communicate effectively, think critically, and listen actively.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 5	Level: Unweighted	Course#: 1895
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EL ENGLISH 3: This ESL English class provides an in-depth study in vocabulary, language, grammar and literature to students who are placed into WIDA Levels 4 and 5. It emphasizes comprehension and critical thinking skills in the reading of texts and literature. Students will be exposed to literary techniques such as irony, symbolism and tone, through the genres of short story, nonfiction, drama and poetry. In order to develop critical thinking and analytical skills, students' writing assignments will focus on autobiographical essays, persuasive essays and literary analysis. Students will continue to develop their listening, reading, writing and speaking skills throughout the course.

Expectation for Student Learning: Students will problem solve, write, and communicate effectively, think critically, and listen actively.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 5	Level: Unweighted	Course#: 1896
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EL ENGLISH 4: This course is designed for students designated as an English learner at WIDA's English language proficiency level 4. Various instructional materials are used, as in the ELD class, yet aligned to WIDA's Can Do Descriptors for levels 4, which highlight what ELs can do at levels 4 of language development. Students work on more complex language across all domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, while expanding their vocabulary to include key terms used across the content area in their mainstream classes. This course is offered as a full year course.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 5	Level: Unweighted	Course#: 1898
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EL ENGLISH 5: This course is designed for students at the expanding level of English language proficiency. All four areas of second language acquisition, listening, speaking, reading and writing, are emphasized through content-based instruction. This course focuses on the explicit teaching of reading and listening strategies appropriate for students at the expanding level of English language proficiency. The course utilizes theme-based literature instruction and includes authentic texts. Focus is given to vocabulary development while facilitating reading fluency and comprehension. Students apply reading strategies to literature and other texts to increase comprehension.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 5	Level: Unweighted	Course#: 1899
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ADDITIONAL COURSE OFFERINGS

ADVISORY: The Advisory block is designed to assist students with their academic, social and future-planning. This is done with the assistance of the Advisory Teacher and in turn, helps students make a connection with an adult in the building. The primary focus of the Advisory time is to work on the Individual Learning Plan (ILP). The ILP is a tool the student and advisor use to help the student identify academic, career and social goals for the school year. As part of their ILP, the advisor and student complete quarterly reviews of progress towards these goals.

FINANCIAL LITERACY: Using project-based instruction and real-world situations this course will give students the knowledge and general understanding of all key aspects of personal finances necessary to be successful now and throughout their adult lives. The structure of this class will reflect real-world situations as closely as possible.

Various opportunities to take this class will be made available to students to meet the graduation requirement.

Grade: 11-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1154
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LIFE STRATEGIES: This class is designed to increase student knowledge and necessary skills for everyday living. This course will emphasize goal-setting, decision making and problem solving, effective communication, healthy lifestyles and relationships, personal safety, citizenship, and consumerism.

Grade: 8-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1873
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AUT 110. INTRODUCTION TO AUTOMOTIVE TECHNOLOGY: Introduction to Automotive Technology examines the role and opportunities of the automotive service professional in today's automotive industry. Shop environment, tools/equipment, and personal safety are emphasized. Students will experience typical job-entry service skills and vehicle maintenance inspections. The necessary resources providing service information are examined. An introduction of vehicle operation and support systems will be presented. This course provides the background information required to continue in the automotive technology program. This is a dual credit course through Mount Wachusett Community College. This course is taught off campus. Classes will be held at the MWCC Autotech facility (42 Linus Allain Ave, Gardner). Upon successful completion of this course students will earn 5 high school credits towards graduation and 4.5 college credits towards their automotive technician certification/degree.

Grade: 11-12	Credits: 5	Level: Honors	Course#: 2451
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AUT 123. ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS I: This course covers the fundamentals of electricity and magnetism, along with exploring the relationship of volts, ohms, and amps. The course will apply these two series, parallel, and series-parallel circuits. Semiconductor components such as diodes and transistors will be explored. Students will learn to use digital volt-ohm meters and oscilloscopes. Battery design and testing will be explored along with starting and charging systems. Prerequisites: ENG 098, FYE 101, MAT 092 (or corequisite), RDG 098, or placement; AUT 110 (or corequisite). This is a dual credit course through Mount Wachusett Community College. This course is taught off campus. Classes will be held at the MWCC Autotech facility (42 Linus Allain Ave, Gardner). Upon successful completion of this course students will earn 5 high school credits towards graduation and 4.5 college credits towards their automotive technician certification/degree.

Grade: 11-12	Credits: 5	Level: Honors	Course#: 2461
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CERTIFIED NURSE ASSISTANT THEORY AND PRACTICUM (CNA CERTIFICATION): This course provides students with the theory and laboratory practice to safely care for clients in healthcare settings under the guidance and alliance with the states CNA Certification. This course provides students the opportunity to learn the nurse assistant theory and skills and provide safe, basic care to clients in long term care settings. Combined with successful completion of the theory and practicum components of the course, these students can safely care for clients in various healthcare settings. This is a dual credit course. This course may be taught on the GHS and/or MWCC campus. Successful completion on this course will earn students 5 high school credits to their diploma and 5 college credits through MWCC. Students will be eligible to take the CNA exam upon completion of this course.

Grade: 11-12	Credits: 5	Level: Honors	Course#: 2251
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STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS: This course is designed to help students develop study skills crucial for success in their academic classes. Specific skills taught include; organization, completing assignments, effective reading of textbooks, test taking, following directions, outlining and note taking skills. This course will also prepare students for the English/Language Arts portion of the MCAS exam. Students will review literary and poetic terms, review grammar skills, practice reading comprehension skills, work on open response questions, and practice writing for the long composition. Students will also prepare for the Mathematics portion of the MCAS exam, receiving tutoring to reinforce algebra and geometry concepts.

Expectations for Student Learning: Students will read and write effectively.

Grade: 9-12	Credits: 2.5	Level: Unweighted	Course#: 1905
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FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE (FYE): This course is designed to help prepare students, who are considering attending a two or four year college after graduation, with the transition to college life by teaching essential academic, personal, and social skills. Topics will include time management, study strategies, campus resources, self-advocacy, career planning, and critical thinking to foster a sense of belonging and prepare for a successful college career. A great deal of college and career research is embedded into this course and will include visits to college campuses. The SchoolLinks Program will be used to support research and information gathering.

Grade: 10	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1931
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FRESHMAN SEMINAR: This course is designed to develop students' academic, personal, and social skills as they prepare for high school and beyond into college or a career. Topics will include setting and achieving goals, improving self-image, and building positive relationships. This course is also designed as a check-in and monitor system of students grades and academic progress. Students will also complete interest and skills inventories and will engage in college and career research. The SchoolLinks Program will be used to support research and information gathering.

Grade: 9	Credits: 2.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1913
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MONTACHUSETT VOCATIONAL PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM (MVP ACADEMY):

Gardner Public Schools and Monty Tech have a unique partnership program that allows our students the opportunity to enroll in a vocational program during their junior and senior years. This program will run during the traditional school day. GPS students will attend their academic classes for one week at Gardner High School, followed by a shop week on the Monty Tech MVP Campus. This alternating weekly schedule will continue for the entire school year. Students who apply and are accepted into the MVP Academy are making a two-year commitment for their junior and senior years. At the end of their high school career, students will graduate from Gardner High School with a high school diploma, 900 vocational training hours, industry credentials, and some will have co-op experience. Our goal is to provide our students with vocational training while they are still enrolled at Gardner High school to better prepare them for careers in these vocational fields after graduation.

Interested students may apply for one of the following programs:

- Carpentry
- Electrical
- Plumbing

Academic Courses Include:

- MVP English 11/12 (two blocks each)
- MVP Algebra 11/12 and MVP Advanced Algebra Topics 11/12 (two blocks each)
- MVP US History II 11/12
- MVP Technology Applications 11/12

* Please note that in order to be eligible for the MVP Academy, students cannot be credit deficient going into their junior year. If there are more applications than there are spots available, there will be a blind lottery to fill the allotted spots and to produce a waitlist.

MWCC Automotive Courses: In conjunction with MWCC, Gardner High School offers college-level automotive courses free of charge. These courses are taught during the school day by licensed automotive instructors at the new state of the art MWCC Automotive Center. Students will simultaneously earn both high school and college credits with a passing grade in these courses. These credits will transfer directly into the MWCC Autotechnology certificate or associates degree programs for students who wish to pursue further coursework in automotive technology after graduation. Students must meet eligibility requirements to enroll in these classes and should see their school counselor or the College and Career Program Coordinator for more information. Typically, the first two classes in the program are:

- Introduction to Automotive Technology
- Electrical Systems I

Grade: 11-12	Credits: 17.5	Level: College Preparatory	Course#: 1436 & 2461
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INTERNSHIP OFFERINGS

YEARBOOK: This internship is intended to facilitate the completion of the Argus Yearbook. The goal is to gain experience in organizing and producing a yearbook as well as managing and training new staff members. The objective is to have the student experience putting together a yearbook which has real world applications in both the managerial and finance aspects. The program is graded as pass/fail and is unweighted. Acceptance is at the permission of the instructor only.

Grade: 11-12	Credits: 2.5 or 5	Level: Unweighted	Course#: 1587
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INTERNSHIP: This internship is designed as a semester or full-year elective course for juniors and seniors to assist a GHS teacher and to give students insight into the educational process. Teachers and students will establish an agreement/contract as to their responsibilities for the internship. Active participation and motivation is essential for this internship experience. The program is graded as pass/fail and is unweighted. The principal may approve students from different grades for internships.

Grade: 11-12	Credits: 2.5 or 5	Level: Unweighted	Course#: 1994
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SCHOOL TO CAREER INTERNSHIP: Students enrolled in this internship program gain first-hand experience in their chosen career field. Students are placed in various classrooms within the Gardner Public Schools, local business, industry and community-based organizations. Students participating in the internship program will continue to take classes in math, English, science, social studies and unified arts. At the work site, students recognize the applicability and importance of these academic and technical subjects. Most importantly, students will develop skills needed for lifelong learning and future success in the workplace. Students who have developed a strong career interest through participation in career awareness and planning programs, and are in good academic standing may apply for the internship. Students can earn up to 5 credits per semester depending on length of participation and must be approved by the principal. Site supervisors and students will establish an agreement/contract as to their responsibilities for the internship. The program is graded as pass/fail and is unweighted.

Grade: 11-12	Credits: 2.5 or 5	Level: Unweighted	Course#: 1998
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EARLY COLLEGE ACADEMY (ECA)

Through our Early College Academy and in conjunction with Mount Wachusett Community College (MWCC), Gardner High School offers eligible junior and seniors access to college courses, free of charge. While enrolled in these classes, students with passing grades will earn five credits per class towards fulfilling high school graduation requirements, while at the same time earning three college credits. Classes are taught by college professors at both the high school and also on the MWCC campus. ECA course offerings are extensive. Please refer to the [MWCC Course Catalog](#) for a list of possible courses to be offered. Students must meet eligibility requirements and should consult with their school counselors or the College and Career Program Coordinator.

EARLY COLLEGE DISTINCTION AWARD

In order to recognize our students who have participated in our Early College Program and who have challenged themselves with taking multiple college level courses during their junior and/or senior years, we have created the **Early College Distinction Award**. To be awarded this distinction at graduation, students must meet the following criteria:

- Receive passing grades and earn a minimum of 12 college credits, the equivalent of five college classes.
- Maintain good attendance; display good behavior; and present integrity and good citizenship when representing Gardner High School in the community (This will be reviewed by administration and guidance prior to receiving this award.)

ALTERNATIVE COURSE OFFERINGS

(with prior written approval of administration)

MAKE UP CREDIT/SUMMER SCHOOL

In order to receive full credit for courses taken elsewhere as a result of failing a regular Gardner High School course, the student must satisfy the following criteria:

In order to participate in a summer school program the student must have achieved a final grade of at least 50% in the failed course or the principal's discretion. Students earning a 60 or above in a makeup/summer school course will earn a "P" for the course. The course must be submitted for approval to the principal prior to registering.

CREDIT RECOVERY

Credit Recovery Courses are designed to provide students who had previously lost partial or all credit, due to varying issues. Students will regain that credit through satisfactorily completing coursework including readings, discussions, and comprehension of main concepts, writings, study guides, and quizzes. Students will perform tasks and learn on their own time at their own pace. Students will be required to periodically meet with teachers to discuss goals and objectives as well as progress. Subjects offered vary, but include English, Social Studies, Science, and Math.

Expectations for student learning: Students will think critically, read, write, and communicate effectively, demonstrate creativity, utilize technology effectively, and problem solve effectively.

OUTSIDE COURSES

Courses for make-up credit may be taken, but the cost is the student's responsibility. Outside courses must be pre-approved by the student's guidance counselor, and principal. It is the student's responsibility to make sure their official grades are forwarded to the Gardner High School Guidance Office.

GARDNER ACADEMY FOR LEARNING AND TECHNOLOGY (GALT)

With purpose and direction, the GALT Program is available for students faced by challenges within traditional academic and curriculum programming. The GALT School is committed to promoting both academic and personal growth for students to prepare them for post-secondary endeavors, or the eventual reintegration into traditional educational settings. The ultimate mission of the program is to enhance the learning abilities of each student and bring them to a point of realization relevant to those abilities.

The Gardner Public School's GALT Program supports students in recognizing their strengths through individualized programming while providing the opportunity to participate in an alternative education setting.

ONLINE COURSES: Gardner High School offers online programming to meet a variety of needs for our students. Classes are offered in a variety of subjects and levels. All online classes are provided through an online platform and have no live instruction. Classes are offered As such, this type of class is only recommended for students who can work independently and have self motivation and organizational skills. Parents and students can reach out to their School Counselor for more information. The Principal makes the final decision on whether online classes are appropriate for the student.

GENERAL INFORMATION

LEGAL ASSISTANCE

Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971 guarantees access to all public schools and public school programs, courses, advantages, and privileges without regard to race, color, sex, religion, or national origin.

TITLE IX OF THE EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1972 PUBLIC LAW 92-318

“No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefit of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance”.

PARENT-TEACHER COOPERATION

The school wishes to offer the richest possible educational experience for each student. This cannot occur without full communication between parents and the school. Parents are urged to maintain close contact with teachers, counselors, and administration. This process begins with careful review of the courses available to the student each year, and signature approval by parents on the course selection sheet in this booklet. The e-mail addresses for teachers are available by visiting the www.gardnerk12.org website. Parents are encouraged to contact teachers directly with concerns about their child’s academic progress and use Plus Portal to check student’s grades weekly.

ONLINE GRADES AND ATTENDANCE

Parents and students should access student grades online. PowerSchool allows individuals to see current information regarding a student’s grades (homework, quizzes, classwork, and exams), attendance, and assignments. In addition, it allows teachers to post questions for online discussions. Please email our guidance secretary for your login information.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued four (4) times per year; approximate time - every ten weeks (November, January, April and June). Report cards are distributed through the student’s homeroom. If you do not receive a report card from your child within two weeks after the marking period ends, please contact the school.

INCOMPLETES

The student must make up all incomplete grades on a report card, and grades submitted by their teacher within ten (10) school days from the day report cards are issued. The principal must approve any exceptions to this time limit in advance.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress Reports are given to the student midway through each term to indicate the present status of a student’s work. Progress reports are another way of communicating between parents and teachers, in order to assist the student in improving his/her performance. With close cooperation between parents and the school, the number of unsatisfactory grades can be considerably reduced. **A passing grade on a progress report does not necessarily assure a passing grade at term’s end.** Please contact the teacher if you have any questions.

TRANSFERRING FROM GHS

In the event a student transfers to another school, students will be provided with updated earned marks from their current courses. Partial credit is not awarded upon transferring. Credit is awarded at the completion of the course or at the end of the semester.

Gardner High School School Improvement Plan 2024-2027

Mission

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

Core Values

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

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

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

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

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

Vision

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

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

feel welcomed, safe, and included in our community;

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

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

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

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

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

Theory of Action

If we:

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

Strategic Objectives

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

Action Steps

Comprehensive professional development for staff and common planning time based on an MTSS tiered approach	Comprehensive professional development for staff based on an MTSS tiered approach	Comprehensive professional development for staff based on an MTSS tiered approach	Produce and administer student, staff, and parent feedback surveys
Create a school-wide written curriculum in a common format by department and subject area that is aligned with state standards and that is reviewed regularly	Develop, utilize and enforce a system of school-wide behavioral expectations	Monitor social-emotional data and through an MTSS approach and incorporate appropriate tiered interventions accordingly	Regularly utilize Gardner High School website page, digital newsletters and social media to share information, activities and achievements

Develop and incorporate rigorous and engaging instruction and lessons aligned with state standards and MCAS specific questions	Monitor discipline data, and through our MTSS system, incorporate appropriate interventions and progressive discipline accordingly	Incorporate an SEL curriculum into our Advisory period, which addresses students' social emotional needs	Maintain School Council meetings and voice for parent/community concerns and feedback
Monitor academic data that will drive future instruction, assessments (formative and summative) and interventions	Create and maintain a restorative approach to discipline with empathetic personal interactions which supports student behavioral growth		Further develop and expand our Early College and vocational programming.
Utilize teacher observation and evaluation system as well as the rigor rubric and the classroom instructional checks rubric to gather learning walk data for analysis and sharing to improve instructional outcomes			

Outcomes

- 1) Teachers in classrooms will incorporate Tier 1 academic, behavioral and social-emotional interventions with 80% fidelity
- 2) 100% of the teachers will regularly review school-wide expectations with their students multiple times a year and have school-wide and classroom expectations posted in their classrooms
- 3) 80% of students in need of Tier 2 or Tier 3 supports will meet progress targets
- 4) GHS will eliminate discipline disparities for all subgroups
- 5) GHS will eliminate attendance disparities for all subgroups
- 6) Students with disabilities and multi-lingual learners will have an increase of 10% meeting or exceeding on MCAS
- 7) All subgroups will meet MCAS targets in ELA, math and science
- 8) A minimum of 50% of seniors graduating from GHS will be enrolled in either our Early College Program or vocational offerings through the MWCC Autotech Program, the MWCC CNA Program, the MT MVP Program, our Manufacturing Program, or other developed vocational programs
- 9) Drop-out rates for all subgroups will be no higher than the aggregate
- 10) Parents and students will rate school relationships as at least 90% satisfactory

Implementation Timeline

Activity/Outcome	Person(s) Responsible	Measurement Tool(s)	Date to be Completed	Status
1) Use of common planning time in ELA,	Administration	Curriculum Map	June 2025	

Math, Science and Social Studies to complete standards-aligned curriculum mapping for all classes.	Building Leadership Team Faculty	Templates		
2) Use of common planning time in ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies to create rigorous lessons with a focus on instructional practices utilizing the district's CPT Meeting Agenda	Administration Building Leadership Team Faculty	Observation/ Feedback Lesson Plan Templates CPT Agendas and Evaluations	Weekly Ongoing Target Completion June 2026	
5) Regular monitoring of formative assessment data (ongoing checks for understanding) and summative assessment data (interim assessments, STAR benchmark testing, MCAS) to identify student needs and the instructional strategies necessary for addressing identified deficiencies	Administration Building Leadership Team Faculty	MCAS Data STAR Data Various Formative/ Summative Assessment Tools	Weekly Ongoing	
3) Regular professional development for faculty on MTSS to better understand and address academic, behavioral and social-emotional needs of our students	MTSS Administrator Building Administration Tier 1, 2 & 3 Teams	MTSS Data Collection Tools (academic, SEL, behavioral data)	Yearly Ongoing	
4) Use of observation/evaluation data to reinforce best teaching practices focusing on instructional practices and academic, behavioral and social-emotional needs of students	Administration	Observation/ Feedback Teachpoint Rigor Rubric Instructional Checks Rubric	Yearly Ongoing	
6) Ongoing professional development on empathetic personal interactions with students, de-escalation techniques, and a restorative practice approach to discipline	Administration MTSS Administrator	Discipline Data Observation/ Feedback	Yearly Ongoing	
7) Regular monitoring of student discipline, attendance, and academic data and continued identification of tiered interventions	Administration MTSS Tier 1, 2 & 3 Teams	GHS Tracker & Progress Monitoring Tool	Monthly Ongoing	
10) Regular monitoring of social-emotional data to identify students in need of tiered supports	Administration Tier 1, 2 & 3 Teams	GHS Tracker & Progress Monitoring Tool BESS Data	Monthly Ongoing	
11) Regular review of school-wide expectations; professional development for teachers; and a system for reviewing expectations in every classroom	MTSS Administrator Building Administration	School-wide expectations fidelity check-list	Quarterly Ongoing	

	Faculty			
12) Use scheduled advisory time for social-emotional programming utilizing the Character Strong curriculum, and academic monitoring and interventions	MTSS Administrator Building Leadership Team Faculty	MTSS Data, Collection Tool Check & Connect Data	Weekly Ongoing	
13) School Council meetings to share information and receive parent input into decision-making regarding school activities, policies and programs; supplemented by the annual Climate & Culture Survey	Administration School Council	Monthly Agenda & Meeting Notes Climate & Culture Survey	Monthly Ongoing	
14) Regularly use social media platforms, emails and one-call system to disseminate pertinent information to students and families	Administration Media Specialist	Facebook PlusPortals Newsletters	Ongoing	
15) Continue development of Early College Academy and Vocational Programs	College & Career Readiness Coordinator Building Administration School Counselors	DESE and EC Data Collection Tools	Yearly Ongoing	

Gardner Middle School School Improvement Plan 2024-2027

Mission

Our mission is to provide every student with equitable access to quality education in a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment. We strive to recognize and nurture each student’s unique talents, equip them with the skills and knowledge to achieve their goals, and challenge them with rigorous, supportive instruction that fosters success.

Core Values

At Gardner Middle School, we are:

Safe

Responsible

Respectful

Kind

Vision

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

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

feel welcomed, safe, and included in our community;

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

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

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

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

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

Theory of Action

IF we 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.

2025-2028 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.

Strategic Objectives

Academic:	Behavioral:	Social Emotional Learning:	Collaboration with Families and Community Partners:
Implement High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) across core content areas to enhance student engagement, equitable access, and academic achievement for all students:	Create and implement clear expectations and strategies across all grades and disciplines utilizing data to inform behavioral supports and interventions while supporting equity:	Utilize data to inform social emotional interventions and provide tiered supports to all students while supporting equity:	Collaborate with families and community partners to engage in shared decision-making for effective educational programming while supporting equity:

Action Steps

Identify HQIM for all core content areas.	Provide comprehensive professional development for staff based on MTSS tiered approach	Provide comprehensive professional development for staff based on MTSS tiered approach	Produce and administer student, staff and parent feedback surveys
Provide comprehensive professional development for staff to ensure HQIM is implemented with fidelity.	Monitor all data and through our MTSS system to incorporate	Monitor social-emotional data and through an MTSS approach incorporate appropriate interventions	Regularly utilize Gardner Middle School website page, digital newsletters and social media to share

	appropriate interventions accordingly	accordingly	information, activities and achievements
Develop and incorporate rigorous and challenging learning activities and instructional strategies that support academic growth of all students.	Monitor referral data through our MTSS system to create and maintain a restorative approach to behavioral interventions and discipline.	Review and analyze our SEL curriculum and Advisory schedule to ensure we are addressing students' social emotional needs.	Establish and maintain a Principal Advisory Group for students to voice concern and provide feedback.
Monitor academic data that will drive future instruction, assessments (formative and summative) and interventions		Plan and implement tiered small group learning supports based on data analysis	Maintain School Council meetings and voice for parent/community concerns and feedback
Utilize teacher observation and evaluation system as well as the rigor rubric and other district fidelity check tools for analysis and sharing to improve instructional outcomes.			Expand community partnerships

Outcomes

- 1) Teachers in core academic classes will incorporate HQIM, aligned with grade level state standards with 80% fidelity.
- 2) Teachers in classrooms will incorporate Tier 1 academic, behavioral and social-emotional interventions with 80% fidelity.
- 3) Reduce the gap with SWD and all students for MCAS by 5% each year.
- 4) GMS will eliminate discipline and attendance disparities for all subgroups
- 5) GMS will decrease office referrals (majors) by 5% each year.
- 6) Meet state accountability targets for chronic absenteeism each year.
- 7) Parents and students will rate school relationships as at least 90% satisfactory

Implementation Timeline

Activity/Outcome	Person(s) Responsible	Measurement Tool(s)	Date to be Completed	Status
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1) Admin will create and implement a more robust and organized Common Planning Time schedule for teachers	Administration Building Leadership Team Faculty	Schedule	Weekly Ongoing	
2) Use of common planning time (CPT) in ELA, Math, Science and Social Studies to create rigorous lessons based on HQIM with a focus on evidence based instructional practices	Administration Building Leadership Team Faculty	CPT Agendas Lesson Plan Templates Fidelity Checklists	Weekly Ongoing	
3) Regular monitoring of formative assessment data (ongoing checks for understanding) and summative assessment data (interim assessments, STAR, MCAS) to identify student needs and teacher strategies necessary for addressing identified deficiencies	Administration Building Leadership Team Faculty	Formative Assessment Data Collection Tool MCAS Data STAR Data	Weekly Ongoing	
4) Regular professional development for faculty on MTSS to better understand and address academic, behavioral and social-emotional needs of our students	Administration MTSS Teams	MTSS Data Collection Tools (academic, SEL, behavioral data)	Yearly Ongoing	
5) Use of observation/evaluation data to reinforce best teaching practices focusing on academic, behavioral and social-emotional needs of students	Administration	Observation/ Feedback Teachpoint Rigor Rubric	Yearly Ongoing	
6) Ongoing professional development on empathetic personal interactions with students and a restorative practice approach to discipline	Administration	Discipline Data Observation/ Feedback	Yearly Ongoing	
7) Regular monitoring of student discipline and attendance data and continued identification of tiered interventions	Administration Tier 1, 2 & 3 Teams	Discipline & Attendance Data MTSS Data	Quarterly Ongoing	
8) Regular monitoring of social-emotional data to identify needs which will drive interventions and future program development	Administration Tier 1, 2 & 3 Teams	MTSS SEL Data	Quarterly Ongoing	

9) Increase reading and comprehension skills in all students.	Administration, Tier 1, 2, 3 teams Academic Coaches	DIBBLS Data STAR Data UFLI Literacy RTI	Weekly Ongoing	
10) Regular monitoring of 18 new hires to identify needs, provide support, and stabilize the learning environment at GMS	Administration/	1:1 Meetings	Ongoing	
11) Use scheduled advisory time for social-emotional programming and academic interventions	Administration Building Leadership Team Mental Health Team	MTSS Data Collection Tools (academic, SEL, behavioral)	Weekly Ongoing	
12) Regularly use social media platforms, emails, one call system and School Newsletter	Administration	Facebook PlusPortals Newsletters	Weekly Ongoing	



Gardner Elementary School - G.E.S. - Improvement Plan - 2024-2027

Mission

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

Core Values

Safe, Respectful, Responsible, and Kind

Vision

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

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



Gardner Elementary School - G.E.S. - Improvement Plan - 2024-2027

Theory of Action

If we:

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

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

2025-2026 School (and District) Priority

Using High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM), Teachers will use their Common Planning Time (CPT) to design lessons that require Students With Disabilities (SWD) to participate in heterogeneously (mixed ability) grouped, academically productive discourse founded on grade-level text, resulting in a written product to improve reading and writing and close equity gaps for SWDs.

Strategic Objectives



Gardner Elementary School - G.E.S. - Improvement Plan - 2024-2027

<p>1. Utilizing an equity lens, create a school where all members experience JOY and CARE by implementing Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (M.T.S.S.) for social and emotional learning (S.E.L.) success.</p>	<p>2. Utilizing an equity lens, create a school where all students experience ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT by implementing A Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (M.T.S.S.) to enable common, high quality, curriculum and instruction.</p>	<p>3. Utilize academic and social/emotional data to inform MTSS processes and tiered interventions.</p>	<p>4. <u>Collaborate with families, students, and community partners</u> to engage in shared decision-making for effective educational programming and to create an environment where families and their students feel a part of our positive, CARING, and <u>JOYFUL school community</u>.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Action Steps</p>			



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Implement the Tier I S.E.L. curricula for all students with fidelity B. Create fidelity monitoring systems around Tier I progress and use of High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) for S.E.L. C. Create Fidelity monitoring systems for each schools' Tier 2 and Tier 3 systems for SEL interventions and supports D. Align and implement SST process with more fidelity E. Monitor effectiveness of tier 1, 2, and 3 practices and continually adjust accordingly to enable S.E.L. achievement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Create a common process for effective implementation of academic M.T.S.S. systems, particularly around foundational literacy B. Create and implement a process for monitoring and improving the fidelity of our Tier I instructional planning, practice and use of High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) C. Provide professional development to deepen practices and implement HQIM with fidelity D. Create systems and interventions for students not achieving academically (Tier 2 and 3 interventions and practices) E. Create Fidelity monitoring systems for each schools' Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions and supports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Align and identify the school's criteria to determine progress and success towards meeting Strategic objectives 1 and 2 B. Identify which assessments and data will be used to monitor how well the school is progressing towards meeting criteria for S.E.L. and academic improvement C. Create a common process/system for collecting, analyzing, and proactively responding to the data D. Utilize observation and assessment data to determine fidelity and effectiveness of tier I S.E.L. and Academic practices E. Utilize data to determine which students might need additional interventions (Tier 2 and 3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Build on the efforts of the Family and Community Engagement Committee in prior years to create events that bring joy and a sense of belonging to the school, while also incorporating opportunities for family and school academic connection and improvement B. Increase the School Council's membership to include parents/guardians as well as community members and business leaders C. Continually assess and improve communication and transparency through social media, web-sites, newsletters, meetings, and other outlets D. Create partnerships with community
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<p>(See Strategic Objective #3)</p>		<p>F. Continually monitor the effectiveness of the Tier 1, 2, and 3 systems, curriculum, practices, and interventions, and adjust when necessary utilizing the cycle and processes alluded to in strategic objectives 1 and 2.</p> <p>G. Create systems to better analyze attendance data and make strategic improvements in this area</p>	<p>organizations and businesses</p> <p>E. Increase participation of student, staff and family feedback</p> <p>F. Continue to focus on identifying, assessing, and implementing approaches to help families help their students achieve academically, socially, and behaviorally.</p>
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Outcomes - by 2027

1. Academic MTSS Tiers 1, 2, 3 will be developed and Tiers 1 & 2 will be implemented
 - a. Establish an MTSS Academic Team with a regular meeting schedule, purpose, self assessment, agreement on school 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-4 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. Students with Disabilities (SWD) for MCAS growth targets will be met
 - e. 10% increase of SWD meeting or exceeding MCAS
 - f. 85% of students will read at or near grade-level (i.e. yellow or above on DIBELS assessment)
 - g. Number of students meeting or exceeding on MCAS will grow by 15%



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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.
 - b. 90% of students will say they enjoy coming to school (end of year survey)
 - c. 100% of students will say that at least 3 adults in the building care about them.
3. Close equity gaps, specifically:
 - a. Gap between SWD and all students for MCAS will be reduced by 5% each year or 15% by 2027
 - b. Chronic absenteeism rate for SWDs and MLL will be no higher than annual state accountability targets for elementary schools
 - c. GES office referrals (major) will decrease by 5% each year or 15% by 2027
 - d. Reduce suspensions, restraints, and time-out usage for SWD by 25% by 2027
4. Improve School Climate and Partnerships
 - a. Increased participation on Climate Survey by 25% by the end of 2027
 - b. Increased total and sub scores on Climate Survey at or above comparison age national averages
 - c. 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.

Implementation Timeline					
	Activity/Outcome	Person(s) Responsible	Measurement Tool(s)	Date to be Completed	Status
1	Establish clear expectations for tier 1 academic systems/structures/ practices	Building academic MTSS Team	Expectations/ Implementation Manuals/Tools	Fall 2024	
2	Establish and implement a structured Common Planning Time (CPT) to plan high level student tasks and evidence-based instructional practices for all learners	MTSS District and Building Teams/BLT	Fidelity Check Protocols and Checklist Tools	Fall 2024	
3	Establish and implement a structured system for observing/monitoring CPT meetings and classroom instruction	MTSS District and Building Teams/BLT	Fidelity Check Protocols and Checklist Tools	Fall 2024	



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4	Establish and implement a structured system for feedback and follow-up of CPT meetings and classroom instruction	MTSS District and Building Teams/Admin Teams	Ed Eval Observation/ Feedback Tools	Fall 2024	
5	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	MTSS Academic and SEL Teams/BLT/Admin	Learning Walk/ Observation Data (Rigor Rubric), DIBELS (foundational reading assessment), Star Assessments (Math and ELA), MCAS Open Architects Powerschool	Fall 2024	
6	Create strategies to encourage parent participation on PTO, Surveys, and Parent input Council (a.k.a. School Council)	Admin/BLT	Attendance Logs; Newsletter Views; Survey participation and results	Spring 2025	
7	Fully implement MTSS Tier 1 academic systems/practices/supports using HQIM with regard to reading, with fidelity.	MTSS Academic District and Building Teams	Learning Walk/Observation Data/Fidelity Check Data	Spring 2025	
8	Identify and align standards-based lessons for ALL ELA and Math curricula and ensure these lessons are common and quality (Standards-aligned, rigorous and engaging student task through discourse and students bearing most of the cognitive load, assessed, and inclusive)	Teachers/BLT	Learning Walk/ Observation Data (Rigor Rubric), DIBELS (foundational reading assessment), Linkit Benchmark Assessments (Math and ELA), MCAS	Spring 2025	
9	Assess academic/SEL achievement and growth by grade level and by subgroups at least 3 times per year for adjustment of supports/practices	MTSS Teams/Admin/BLT	STAR, DIBELS, SWIS, BESS, District Data SEL Tool/Open Architects Dashboard	June 2025	In Process
10	Facilitate building leadership teams (BLTs) to provide systems, support and training for effective facilitation of CPTs; and to identify/plan PD for building staff with a focus on SWDs and MLs	MTSS Teams/Admin/BLT	Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI)/Office Discipline Referral data/Paths and RTI assessments/Learnin	June 2025	In Process



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			g Walk/ Observation Data (Rigor Rubric), DIBELS (foundational reading assessment), Linkit Benchmark Assessments (Math and ELA), MCAS		
11	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	MTSS District and Building Admin/BLT/ Tiered Teams	Fidelity Check Data of CPTs and Tier 1 HQIM Instruction/Learning Walk Data	June 2025	In Process
12	Measure fidelity of current practices, increase alternatives, and training to reduce suspension rates	Building Admin Teams/District Team	Bi-Annual District Data Review of SDR	June 2025	
13	Progress Monitor fidelity and accountability measures of CSS practice to ensure system in place	District MTSS SEL/Building MTSS SEL	Existing spreadsheet	June 2025	
14	District wide CPT practices incorporate high leverage accommodations for SWD and MLs using tools from HQIM and professional development	Special Education Administrators/ Principals/ML Admin/BLT Teams	Learning Walk Data/Fidelity tool	June 2025	
15	Establish clear expectations for Tier 2 academic assessment & data and instructional systems/structures/ practices	MTSS District and Building Tier 2 Teams	Expectations/ Implementation Manuals/Tools	June 2026	
16	Develop and initiate MTSS Tier 2 academic assessment & data/instructional systems/practices/supports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop a robust structure that connects specific skill deficits with targeted, research-based & specific skill supports/interventions 	MTSS District and Building Tier 2 Teams	Student Outcome Data, Learning Walk/ Observation Data/ Fidelity Check Data (Rigor Rubric)	June 2026	



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17	Assess academic/SEL achievement and growth by grade level and by subgroups at least 5 times per year for adjustment of supports/practices	Building MTSS Teams	STAR, DIBELS, SWIS, BESS, District Data SEL Tool/Open Architects Dashboard	June 2026	
18	Establish clear expectations for tier 3 academic assessment & data/instructional systems/structures/practices	MTSS District and Building Tier 2 Teams	Expectations/ Implementation Manuals/Tools	June 2027	



Gardner Public Schools

Mark J. Pellegrino, Ed.D *Superintendent*

www.gardnerk12.org

160 Elm Street, Gardner, MA 01440

(978) 632-1000

School Committee Schedule of Meetings

City Council Chambers, City Hall

September 2026-June 2027

Regular Meetings – 6:00 PM

(2nd Monday of the month)

Monday, September 14, 2026

Tuesday, October 13, 2026
(*Columbus Day, October 12th*)

Monday, November 9, 2026

Monday, December 14, 2026

Tuesday, January 5, 2027 (*Organizational Meeting*)

Monday, February 8, 2027

Monday, March 8, 2027

Monday, April 12, 2027

Monday, May 10, 2027

Monday, June 14, 2027

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Field Trip Approval Form

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

School: **Gardner Middle School**

Person(s) Responsible for Organizing Trip: **Annette M. Lussier** (7th grade science teacher at GMS)

Grade or Class: **Grade 6**

Number of Students Attending: **Approximately 100**

Destination: **Outdoor Classroom in Groton Massachusetts** (formerly known as Nature's Classroom)

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

"A broad range of science classes are offered at Outdoor Classroom that can pique the interest of any student. Whether it's building a structure in an engineering class, dissecting an animal, or playing a game to supplement a lesson, the classes allow students to learn in different ways. With less lecture time and more time engaged in hands-on activities, the students are able to make better connections with each other and the lessons." (modified from: <https://outdoorclassroom.com/why-outdoor-classroom/>)

Active engagement of middle school students with the science and engineering practices is critical: students generally make up their minds about whether they identify with science and engineering by the time they leave grade 8, and whether they will pursue these fields in high school and beyond. Students must have opportunities to develop the skills necessary for a meaningful progression of development in order to engage in scientific and technical reasoning so critical to success in civic life, postsecondary education, and careers. (<https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/scitech/2016-04.pdf>)

Outdoor Classroom provides our students an opportunity to actively engage in the science and engineering practices as well as providing students with unique field experiences that augment thier classroom experiences.

Departure date/ time/ place: **May 05, 2026/ 9:00 am/ Gardner Middle School**

Return date/ time /place: **May 08, 2026/ 1:30 pm/ Gardner Middle School**

Transportation Provider **NRT Transportation** Cost of Transportation **\$2,028.00**

N.B.: Additional cost for transportation may be required for students with special needs that will only be attending the day program. At the present time the need for this service is still being determined.

Cost of Activity \$415.00 per student

How will the cost of transportation and activity be paid?

The cost for transportation will be paid using funds awarded by the Williams-Rockwell Educational Gift Fund. Additionally each student's tuition was subsidized by the Williams-Rockwell Educational Gift Fund and a fundraising dance. The remaining \$315.00 will be paid by the student's families.

N.B. Money from the Williams-Rockwell Educational Gift Fund will also be used to fund full or partial scholarships on an as needed and individual basis, day transportation for students with special needs, and stipends for special education teachers who must be with students at all times including field groups and classes while at Outdoor Classroom.

Ratio of chaperones to students 1:10

Sample parent permission slip attached

YES, please see the attached parent packet that must be completed by all students prior to attending Outdoor Classroom

Emergency Phone Contact List:

Nature's Classroom Coordinator: Annette Lussier (978) 580-7796

School office/ administration: (978) 632-1603

School Nurse



Date 12/22/25

Principal



Date 12/22/25

Superintendent



Date 12/16/26

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 (attached)

Please see the chaperone packet from Outdoor Classroom attached to this document. The chaperone packet outlines the responsibilities of the school chaperones that are attending the program with students. During classes and field group times students will be supervised by the Outdoor Classroom staff.

Behavior contract as necessary - principal's decision (attached)

You will find the behavior expectations from Outdoor Classroom in the parent packet attached to this document, additionally all students are expected to follow the GMS student conduct expectations. There may be students that require individual behavior contracts, this will be determined by the school principal, special education administrator and the 6th grade guidance counselor.

Medical release forms obtained

See parent packet attached to this document from Outdoor Classroom. In this packet you will find the Medical release forms required for each student.

Daily Itinerary (attached)

See the parent packet attached to this document from Outdoor Classroom. In this packet you will find a sample daily itinerary. You will also find attached a weekly sample itinerary. The specific "classes" offered will be determined by the Outdoor Classroom staff a few weeks prior to our school attending the program.

Health Care Professional Attending

"Our on-site medics (RNs, LPNs, and EMTs) will be available 24 hours a day during the entire trip and will dispense medications and provide excellent medical care. We work closely with local and regional officials to ensure we are fully prepared for any emergency situation."

(<https://outdoorclassroom.com/health-safety/>)

If it is determined that a student or students attending require additional medical supervision a Gardner Public school nurse may also attend.

Administrator Attending: GMS administrators attend on a rotating basis with one administrator there each day.

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: October 2024]

Gardner Middle School

Brian Cote, Principal
Sherry Gelinas, Vice Principal
Stephanie St. Joseph, Vice Principal



Gardner Public Schools

www.gardnerk12.org

297 Catherine Street, Gardner, MA 01440

P: (978) 632-1603

F: (978) 632-4234

Outdoor Classroom Spring 2026 Information

Dear Students & Families,

We are pleased to be able to offer our **Grade 6** students the opportunity to experience Outdoor Classroom this spring. The goal of Outdoor Classroom is to provide a SAFE, FUN, and EDUCATIONAL experience for all those who choose to participate. This year's group will be traveling to the **Grotonwood facility in Groton, Massachusetts**. Those attending will depart from GMS on **Tuesday, May 5th and return on Friday, May 8th**.

The Groton site at Grotonwood Camp boasts 250 acres of forest with a wealth of different wetlands for students to explore! With an expansive trail system, a network of beaver ponds, Lost Lake, and even a section of birch forest, the Groton site is a perfect locale for nature-based education. The facilities at Grotonwood offer flexible dorm and cabin-style housing options for up to 150 students and every major building on campus is ADA-compliant.

Students will be provided with an immersive learning experience that has a profound and lasting impact. The program focuses on environmental science, social-emotional learning, and adventure education. Hands-on lessons allow students to process information using their critical thinking skills, collaboration, and teamwork. Students learn while having genuine fun through experiments, building challenges, and games.

Thanks to grant funding from the Rockwell Foundation, this year's price is **\$315.00** (original price \$415.00) The overall cost is based upon 100 students attending the trip and may therefore need to be adjusted slightly depending upon the number of students who actually sign up to attend. This price includes bus transportation to and from Grotonwood, lodging, and all meals.

Once we have a list of students planning to attend the trip, more information regarding the trip will be shared with these families.

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Outdoor Classroom Spring 2026 Deposit Slip

Please return this slip to Ms. Lussier in room 305 with your \$30 NON-REFUNDABLE deposit. Deposits must be received by Friday, October 31th. Deposits can be made in cash or by a check made payable to Gardner Middle School. Please bring deposits and signed permission slips to Ms. Lussier in room 305

I, _____, give permission for my
(print name of parent/guardian)

student, _____ to attend the field trip
(print name of student)

to Outdoor Classroom from May 5th-8th. My student is on team (circle one) 6A 6B

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Office Use Only

Date Received: _____ by: _____

(Circle One) Check # _____ Cash

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FAMILY PACKET

Please review this document in its entirety. Pages 5-9 must be completed and returned to your student's teacher by the designated deadline (set by the school teachers).

Dear Families,

We're thrilled that your child is joining us at Outdoor Classroom. This Family Packet will help students and families get ready for the Outdoor Classroom experience. In this packet you will find answers to frequently asked questions and other important information.

Your child's physical, mental, and emotional safety are our number one priority during their time with us. During instructional activities and mealtimes, your child will be supervised by enthusiastic and experienced Outdoor Classroom staff who have undergone background checks and training to provide your child with an inspiring and safe experience. Our staff are also certified in CPR and First Aid. During free-time and nighttime, students are in the care of their teachers and parent chaperones. If your student does become ill and it is determined that they are too sick to stay on site (fever 100.4 or above, vomiting, diarrhea, etc.) then our staff will contact you to make arrangements for you to pick up your child.

If you have any questions about the trip, please contact your school directly. If you have any questions that your school is unable to answer, please feel free to reach out to us at info@outdoorclassroom.com or (603) 539 8053.

We can't wait to share the field-trip of a lifetime with your student!

Sincerely,
The Outdoor Classroom Team

Outdoor Classroom Locations

Location	Host Site	Address
Freedom, NH	Camp Cody	9 Cody Rd, Freedom, NH 03836
Ocean Park, ME	Ocean Wood Camp	17 Royal St, Ocean Park, ME 04063
Groton, MA	Grotonwood Camp	167 Prescott St, Groton, MA 01450
Yarmouthport, MA	Camp Wingate Kirkland	79 White Rock Rd, Yarmouth Port, MA 02675
Great Barrington, MA	URJ Eisner Camp	53 Brookside Rd, Great Barrington, MA 01230
Lakeside, CT	Camp Washington	190 Kenyon Rd, Lakeside CT 06758
Ivoryton, CT	Incarnation Camp	253 Bushy Hill Rd, Deep River, CT 06417



Overview of the Program

Outdoor Classroom is a residential outdoor education program that focuses on science and engineering, social and emotional learning, and teambuilding. Our hands-on lessons focus on building critical thinking skills and exploring the connections between the natural and human-made world.

We work with each school group to help design a program that best fits the needs and outcomes of the group. Each program is rooted in the following components: Field Group, Class Choice, Large Group Activities, Evening Programs, Meals, and Free Time.

Students at Outdoor Classroom are always supervised by adults and a medical staff member is on site while students are on site and are available for medication administration, first aid, illnesses and emergencies.

Below is an example of a typical day:

7:00 Wake up 7:30 Morning Meds
7:40 Set/ 8:00 Breakfast
9:15 Field Group
<u>11:30 Free Time</u>
11:40 Set & Lunch Meds 12:00 Lunch
1:15 Class Choice
2:45 Break/Snack
3:00 Class Choice
<u>4:30 Free Time</u>
5:10 Set & Dinner Meds 5:30 Dinner
6:45 Evening Activity
8:00 Quiet Sing Nighttime Meds
8:30 Back to Cabins



Medications

All "Scheduled" medications will be overseen and distributed to your child by a medical staff member, as ordered by your child's medical provider. Children are not permitted to keep medications on their person, and this includes prescription and over-the-counter medications (Tylenol, vitamins, cough drops, etc.). Emergency medications (e.g. Epi-pens and rescue inhalers) will be available to your child at all times. When possible, children are encouraged to self administer under the care and guidance of trained medics or staff members.

All medications need to be sent **in the original bottle / packaging with the PHARMACY LABEL, Doctor's name, student's name, medication, strength, dosage, and usage instructions on the bottle / packaging**, if applicable. Please place the bottle / package in a clear ziplock bag with your child's name, school, date of birth and **fill out the medication document on page 9 of this packet**. School teachers or a designated employee will collect medications prior to departure (check with your school for due dates for drop off of medications), **do not pack medications in your child's bag**. We have basic medicines (Tylenol, cough drops, tums, etc) and first-aid supplies for students who may need them throughout the trip on an AS NEEDED basis.

Food Allergies / Dietary Needs

Our facilities can accommodate a variety of dietary needs. There is a section in this packet for you to indicate any dietary allergies, restrictions, or preferences. If you have concerns about your student's dietary needs while at Outdoor Classroom, please inform us as soon as possible.

Visitors and Communication

We ask you not to visit your student during their field trip. Visiting parents/guardians can distract students and may make some students homesick. Students are not permitted to have cell phones at Outdoor Classroom. This is to encourage them to enjoy life "unplugged" - live in the moment and appreciate their surroundings. If there is an emergency and you need to reach your child, please contact your student's school teacher, or you can contact us at (603) 539-8053.

Behavior Expectations

Below is a copy of our Outdoor Classroom Behavior Expectations. We require every student and their family to read the expectations and sign an acknowledgement statement.

We are committed to providing a safe, positive experience for all students. As part of the Outdoor Classroom community, students are expected to be familiar with and follow these behavior expectations. Students who are unable to follow them may be disciplined and sent home at the discretion of the school. Parents/Guardians are then expected to pick up their student(s). Please discuss these expectations with your student prior to the field trip.

- Students must remain with their group and instructor or teacher/chaperone at all times. Students should never be alone in camp or leave the property alone.
- Students must remain in the cabins with chaperones after lights-out.
- Students may not have in their possession any prohibited items (please review the Packing List).
- All medications should be given to the school teacher or medical staff.
- Students are expected to take care of the property and report any damages.
- Students should use equipment for its intended purpose and in a safe manner.
- Physical fighting or altercations are not tolerated and may result in immediate separation/dismissal without refund.
- Bullying is not tolerated and all suspected bullying instances will be dealt with firmly and may result in immediate separation or dismissal without refund of tuition.
- All school rules will be enforced at Outdoor Classroom.



Packing List

Mark all items with your child's name.
Please send old / play clothes (students will get dirty).
Laundry facilities are not available for general student use.

Arrival day: Students should be ready to participate in activities when they get off the bus. They should be wearing closed-toed shoes and have a day pack ready with sunscreen, a water bottle, and an extra layer.
Weather: Please check the weather for your Outdoor Classroom location, and pack according to expected precipitation and temperatures. Students will be outside all day (unless there is a safety concern).

Important! Prohibited items include:

- Cell phones
- Other electronics - iPods, iPads, portable video games or movie devices
- Candy, gum, or food of any kind
- Swiss army knives/leathermen or any other weapons
- Illegal substances, drugs, or alcohol
- Lighters / matches

Quantities: Adjust the number of clothing items based on the length of the field trip.

<p>Clothing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long pants/jeans • 1 or 2 pairs of pajamas • T-shirts & Long-sleeved shirts • Sweatshirt or fleece • Warm jacket • Socks (pack a few extra) • Underwear • 2 pairs of sneakers or hiking boots* • 1 raincoat or poncho • 1 pair of cros or water shoes if going to Ocean Park or Yarmouth <p>Cold Weather (November, March-April)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm insulated snow Jacket • Snow pants • Snow boots • Gloves/ Mittens • Wool socks • Warm hat • Thermal Baselayer <p>Bedding / Linens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sleeping bag or bedroll (sheets/blankets) • Pillow • 1 towel • Laundry bag for dirty clothes 	<p>Toiletries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toothbrush and toothpaste • Soap, shampoo, conditioner • Deodorant • Comb or brush • Lip balm/chapstick <p>Miscellaneous</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-day pack/backpack • 1-2 reusable water bottles (1 Liter) • Flashlight or Headlamp • Sunscreen/Bug Spray <p>Optional Items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flip flops for the shower • Book • Ballcap • Disposable Camera (No cell phones!) • Fitted sheet for the mattress (Twin) <p>*All footwear must be closed-toed **Outdoor Classroom is not responsible for items lost, stolen or left behind.</p>
---	---

PLEASE FILL OUT AND TURN IN THE FOLLOWING PAGES



Student's Name: _____	School: _____
Date of Birth : _____	Gender: _____ Grade: _____

Parent/Guardian Student Participation Waiver

My child and I understand what is expected of us before and during Outdoor Classroom and that we are familiar with these rules and agree to abide by the rules, procedures, and behavior expectations detailed within. I realize that no environment is risk-free and I am aware of these risks, and so I have instructed my child on the importance of abiding by the center's rules. I grant permission for my child to participate in all activities and Outdoor Classroom programs, including but not limited to challenge-course, out-of-camp trips by foot (hiking), and out-of-camp emergency transportation by school chaperone or ambulance. I understand that part of the outdoor education experience involves activities and group interactions that may be new to my child and that they come with uncertainties beyond what my child may be used to dealing with at home. I also understand that during my child's participation they may be exposed to a variety of risks and hazards, foreseen or unforeseen, which cannot be eliminated without fundamentally altering the unique character of the program. Those hazards include, but are not limited to, uneven terrain, standing and moving water, forested and other areas that may result in wildlife encounters including mammals, reptiles, and insects that could result in infections and various insect-transmitted diseases. Additionally, certain risks may be associated with activities such as field and court sports, high and low ropes elements courses, waterfront, hiking, walking, running, playing outside, as well as other activities. Other risks might include sunburn and heatstroke, dehydration, hypothermia and other mild or serious conditions or injuries; and unpredictable forces of nature (including weather that may change to extreme conditions without notice), etc. Outdoor Classroom is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged articles. I, the undersigned, have read and understand my responsibility to complete and submit all necessary forms and fees on time (and that my child will not be allowed to attend the program if any forms in the Family Packet are incomplete). I also acknowledge that participation is entirely voluntary, and I agree that any dispute concerning, relating, or referring to this contract, any representation concerning my child's outdoor education experience, or the outdoor education experience itself shall be resolved exclusively by binding arbitration in in the state and county where this camp is physically located, according to the then existing commercial rules of the American Arbitration Association and the substantive laws of that state.

I HAVE READ THIS AGREEMENT AND REVIEWED IT IN FULL WITH MY CHILD. I FULLY UNDERSTAND AND AGREE TO BE LEGALLY BOUND BY IT.

Parent/Guardian Full Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Email: _____

Parent/Guardian Phone Number: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Marketing Release-Check only one (1).

I DO give permission for photo/video of my child(ren) and their writing, artwork, and/or testimonials to be used by Outdoor Classroom for marketing and outreach, including (but not limited to) print/digital materials, website, social media, email, press, and outreach to partnered organizations. This permission applies while enrolled and after leaving the program.

I DO NOT give permission for photo/video of my child(ren) and their writing, artwork, and/or testimonials to be used by Outdoor Classroom for marketing and outreach, including outreach to partnered organizations, whether while enrolled or after leaving the program.

I acknowledge that since participation in publications is voluntary, I will receive no financial compensation. I further agree that participation in any publication format by Outdoor Classroom confers upon me no rights of ownership whatsoever. I release Outdoor Classroom and its employees from liability for any claims by me or any third party in connection with participation.



Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student's Name: _____ **Date of Birth :** _____ **School:** _____

Emergency Information

*Please Note: Outdoor Classroom will not distribute the personal information contained in these forms to a third party.

Guardian (Primary Contact) Name: _____ **Relationship to student** _____

Street Address: _____ **City** _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

Home Phone: _____ **Cell Phone:** _____ **Work Phone:** _____

Email: _____

Secondary Contact Name: _____ **Relationship to student** _____

Street Address: _____ **City** _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

Home Phone: _____ **Cell Phone:** _____ **Work Phone:** _____

Email: _____

Is there a custody agreement we need to be aware of? Yes (please attach additional information) No

NOTE: We are authorized to release the child only to the contacts listed above unless a note from the Guardian/Primary Contact states otherwise.

Authorization for Treatment

I hereby give permission to Outdoor Classroom to provide first aid and/or seek emergency medical treatment to my child if needed . I agree to the release of any records necessary for treatment or referral if sent off site. I give permission to Outdoor Classroom to arrange necessary transportation for my child to a nearby hospital or other medical facilities as required. In the event I cannot be reached in an emergency, I hereby give permission to the physician selected by Outdoor Classroom to secure and administer treatment, including hospitalization, for the person named above. Information in this paperwork may be given to the medical provider. I agree to incur all costs related to any medical emergency for the person named above.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____



Student's Name: _____ **Date of Birth :** _____ **School:** _____

Restrictions

- Student is cleared for unrestricted activity and full participation at Outdoor Classroom.
- Student is cleared for participation at Outdoor Classroom, but the following restrictions apply:

Notification of Allergies and Food Restrictions

Does your child have any food allergies, intolerances, or dietary needs?

- Yes. Please specify type, reaction, severity, and applicable treatment.

- No

Does your child have any other allergies (ie. environment, bees) etc?

- Yes. Please specify allergen, severity, reaction and treatment:

- No.

Health History

Are there any concerns (medical, behavioral, emotional)?

- Yes No

If YES please specify:



Student's Name: _____ **Date of Birth :** _____ **School:** _____

Permission to Dispense Over-the-Counter Medications ON an AS NEEDED Basis

We carry all of the following medications, you do not need to send these medications with your student (unless they take it daily). **Not all medications are approved for under 12 years of age.** Medical staff will give according to label instructions and our Standing Orders on file. If your child takes any of the following medications on a regular schedule please **DO send those medications with your child along with a physician's order or a physician's signature on page 9 to include those Over the counter medications.**

I give permission for Outdoor Classroom to administer **ONLY** the over-the-counter medications I have **CHECKED.** (If nothing is checked, then no medications, on this list, will be administered to your child.)

<input type="checkbox"/> Acetaminophen (Tylenol)	<input type="checkbox"/> Cetirizine (Zyrtec products)	<input type="checkbox"/> Antibiotic ointments for first aid (ie, triple antibiotic, bacitracin, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/> Ibuprofen (Advil)	<input type="checkbox"/> Diphenhydramine (Benadryl)	<input type="checkbox"/> Hydrocortisone (anti-itch cream)
<input type="checkbox"/> Antacid (TUMS)	<input type="checkbox"/> Loratadine (Claritin products)	<input type="checkbox"/> Poison Ivy Treatment (Ivy-Dry)
<input type="checkbox"/> Bismuth Subsalicylate (Pepto-Bismol products-over 12 only)	<input type="checkbox"/> Cough Drops (Generic)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Dramamine or generic equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/> Guaifenesin (Mucinex, Robitussin, products, etc)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Cough suppressants (Delsym, Robitussin and/or dextromethorphan products, etc.)	

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Emergency Medications (e.g. Epi-pens and rescue inhalers) will be held by the OC staff member who is with your child and sent to the cabin with the school chaperone responsible for your child at night. This will be managed by the medic on site, and administered as needed by the child (if trained to do so) or a trained staff member. List any emergency medications on the medication list and send any allergy response plans if applicable.

Medical Providers Name: _____

Medical Providers Phone Number: _____



Student's Name: _____ **Date of Birth :** _____ **School:** _____

Medications - Instructions

Send ALL medications in the original Pharmacy bottle / packaging with your child's name, Doctor's name, medication, strength, dosage, and usage instructions on the bottle / packaging. Place the bottle/package in a clear ziplock bag with your child's name, date of birth and school. **DO NOT** Send pre-packaged pill planners, envelopes, etc. (any medication not sent in the original package **CAN NOT** be administered).

Medication List

Please include emergency & "As Needed" medications, such as Epi pens or rescue inhalers.

Medication/Form	Strength	Dose	Time(s)	Reason	Special Instructions	As Needed
<i>Example Amoxicillin liquid</i>	<i>.125mg/5 ml</i>	<i>250mg/10ml</i>	<i>AM Lunchtime Bedtime</i>	<i>Infected tooth</i>	<i>Give after eating</i>	<i>No</i>

Comments: _____

I give permission for my child to receive the above scheduled medications as dictated above and ordered by his/her/their Doctor while at Outdoor Classroom.

Print Name: _____ **Relationship to Student:** _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

For melatonin, vitamins, nasal sprays, and other meds not listed in the over-the-counter chart on page 8 or if taken daily, **MUST be sent with a doctor's order, or the doctor can sign this form below to agree to the medications listed.** ****MEDICAL PERSONNEL CAN NOT ADMINISTER MEDICATION THAT DOESN'T COME WITH A DR'S NOTE/SIGNATURE UNLESS IN A CORRECTLY LABELED PRESCRIPTION BOTTLE.**

Doctor/medical provider signature: _____ **Date:** _____



CHAPERONE PACKET

Please review this document in its entirety. Page 6 must be completed and returned to the lead teacher at your school prior to attending the trip to Outdoor Classroom.

Dear Teachers and Parent Chaperones,

Thank you for volunteering your time for this trip. Without your support, we would not be able to provide this experience to your students. This packet is designed to help prepare you for your adventure with us. It includes important information regarding your role, as well as a packing list and answers to frequently asked questions.

Thanks,

Outdoor Classroom Staff

Outdoor Classroom Locations

Location	Host Site	Address
Freedom, NH	Camp Cody	9 Cody Rd, Freedom, NH 03836
Ocean Park, ME	Ocean Wood Camp	17 Royal St, Ocean Park, ME 04063
Groton, MA	Grotonwood Camp	167 Prescott St, Groton, MA 01450
Yarmouthport, MA	Camp Wingate Kirkland	79 White Rock Rd, Yarmouth Port, MA 02675
Lakeside, CT	Camp Washington	190 Kenyon Rd, Lakeside CT 06758
Ivoryton, CT	Incarnation Camp	253 Bushy Hill Rd, Deep River, CT 06417
Great Barrington, MA	URJ Eisner Camp	53 Brookside Rd, Great Barrington, MA 01230



Overview of the Program

Outdoor Classroom is a residential outdoor education program that focuses on science, engineering, social and emotional learning, and adventure education. Our lessons are standards-aligned and each program is customized to support student learning in the classroom. The hands-on lessons focus on building critical thinking skills and exploring the connections between the natural and human-made world.

We work with each school group to help design a program that best fits the needs and outcomes of the group. Each program is rooted in the following components: Field Group, Class Choice, Large Group Activities, Evening Programs, Meals, and Free Time.

Students at Outdoor Classroom are *always* supervised by adults. Outdoor Classroom staff are responsible for leading all day and evening activities. **Overnight cabin supervision and free time supervision is the responsibility of the school's teacher and parent chaperones (unless other arrangements have been made).** A medical staff member is available on site 24/7.

Below is an example of a typical day:

7:00 Wake up 7:30 Morning Meds
7:40 Set/ 8:00 Breakfast
9:15 Field Group or Large Group Activity 11:30 Free Time
11:40 Set & Lunch Meds 12:00 Lunch
1:15 Class Choice 2:45 Break/Snack 3:00 Class Choice 4:30 Free Time
5:10 Set & Dinner Meds 5:30 Dinner
6:45 Evening Activity 8:30 Quiet Sing Nighttime Meds 8:45 Back to Cabins

Teacher/Chaperone Role and Responsibilities

Cabin Supervision

We encourage you to take some time on the first day/evening to review your cabin expectations with the students. Topics to cover: introductions, shower schedules, cabin clean-up, lights out time, wake up time (and what to do if you wake up early), emergency meds, and appropriate behavior.

Students are never allowed in a cabin without adult supervision.

At night, once the students are dismissed to the cabin, it is your responsibility to get them settled and asleep. They will need time to shower, brush their teeth, and get ready for bed. Do not allow reckless or irresponsible behavior in the cabin; people get hurt and facilities get damaged when students are rowdy and/or unsupervised. Days at Outdoor Classroom are very long and active, so it is important that you enforce the "lights out" time so students get the sleep they need.

In the morning, chaperones must wake up the students and make sure they are packed and ready for morning lessons. You should wake students up approximately one hour before breakfast to allow enough time for them to shower, get dressed, and pack their day packs.

We ask that chaperones set some time aside each day for students to tidy up their cabins. This will also make the packing and move-out process go smoother on departure day.

Free Time

Free time is also supervised by teachers and parent chaperones. Instructors will directly hand students off to chaperones before lunch and dinner. You should make time for students to go back to their cabin and get prepared for the next activity (change clothes/ shoes, add things to the day pack etc.) and see the medic if needed. If they are ready for the next activity they can use sports fields, rec hall, and sports equipment.

Students are not allowed to spend time outside of the cabin during free time without adequate chaperone supervision. Please enforce boundaries for students based on the number of chaperones available to supervise.

Daytime and Evening Lessons

Teachers and chaperones are more than welcome to join students in most classes and activities. When joining a class or activity, we simply ask that you watch rather than participate, and allow the OC instructor to take the lead on behavior management and instruction.

Meals

We ask that all chaperones attend meals at Outdoor Classroom. This is a great time to say hi to students and gives the Program Coordinator an opportunity to make important announcements. At some sites, we may ask you to eat at a student table, while at others we may ask that you eat at the chaperone table.

Health Office

Outdoor Classroom provides a medical professional who is on site for the duration of your visit. They will be available for medication administration, first aid, illnesses and on call overnight for emergencies. Please note that the office does not have a place for students to lay down. If students are not feeling well and need to lay down, a chaperone will be asked to take them back to their cabin. Our office is supplied with basic first aid needs and over the counter medications that are listed on our student packet on page 8.



Behavior Expectations

Our goal is to provide a safe, fun experience for every student. In order to do that, students must be accountable for the choices they make regarding their behavior. Every family will receive the information below and sign an acknowledgment. As a chaperone, please make sure you are familiar with the student behavior expectations written below.

We are committed to providing a safe, positive experience for all students. As part of the Outdoor Classroom community, students are expected to be familiar with and follow these behavior expectations. Students who are unable to follow them may be disciplined and sent home at the discretion of the school. Parents/Guardians are then expected to pick up their student(s). Please discuss these expectations with your student prior to the field trip.

- Students must remain with their group and instructor or teacher/chaperone at all times. Students should never be alone in camp or leave the property alone.
- Students must remain in the cabins with chaperones after lights-out.
- Students may not have in their possession any prohibited items (please review the Packing List to view the complete list).
- All medications should be given to the school teacher or medical staff.
- Students are asked to take care of the property and report any damages.
- Students should use any equipment for its intended purpose and in a safe manner.
- Physical fighting or altercations are not tolerated and may result in immediate separation or dismissal without refund of tuition.
- Bullying is not tolerated and all suspected bullying instances will be dealt with firmly and may result in immediate separation or dismissal without refund of tuition.
- All school rules will be enforced at Outdoor Classroom.

Behavior expectations for visiting teacher and chaperones are as follows:

- **Students are not to be left unsupervised.**
- **Being alone one-on-one with a student is prohibited.**
- There will be no recreational swimming or boating unless special arrangements have been made prior to the trip.
- Use of low or high ropes courses is not allowed unless facilitated by a trained OC instructor.
- Chaperones are not to enter any restricted areas including the kitchen and maintenance areas.
- Entrances to any building may not be locked or unlocked without permission from OC staff.
- No moving items that belong to OC or the Host Site without permission.
- Smoking is only permitted with permission from the Host Site at designated smoking areas
- Alcohol, weapons, fireworks, and illegal substances are not allowed on the Host Site property at any time.
- Fires are only to be made in designated fire-pits and with the permission of OC staff.



Packing List

Prohibited items include:

- Candy, gum, or food of any kind
- Swiss army knives/leathermans or any other weapons
- Illegal substances, drugs, or alcohol

Please note:

Chaperones and teachers may bring **cell phones** and **computers** to communicate with family at home and keep up with work. Students are not permitted to bring or use cell phones. Please refrain from using cell phones in front of students other than to take pictures.

Laundry facilities are not available for general use.

Quantities: Adjust the number of clothing items based on the length of the field trip.

<p>Clothing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Long pants/jeans ● Shorts ● Pajamas ● T-shirts ● Long-sleeved shirt ● Sweatshirt or fleece ● Warm jacket ● Socks (pack extras) ● Underwear ● Hat and gloves ● 2 pairs of sneakers or hikers ● 1 raincoat or poncho <p>Bedding / Linens / Toiletries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sleeping bag or bedroll (sheets and a blanket) ● Pillow ● 1 towel ● Laundry bag/trash bag for dirty clothes 	<p>Toiletries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Toothbrush and toothpaste ● Soap, shampoo, conditioner ● Deodorant ● Comb or brush ● Lip balm/chapstick <p>Miscellaneous</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1-day pack/backpack ● 1 reusable water bottle (1 Liter) ● Flashlight ● Sunscreen <p>Optional Items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Flip flops for the shower ● Book ● Bandana ● Ballcap ● Bug spray ● Travel game/deck of cards ● Fitted sheet for mattress (Twin)
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Outdoor Classroom is not responsible for items left behind.



PLEASE FILL OUT AND TURN IN THIS PAGE

Teacher/Chaperone Name: _____ **School Name:** _____

Authorization for Emergency Treatment

I hereby give permission to Outdoor Classroom to seek emergency medical treatment. I agree to the release of any records necessary for treatment, referral, billing, or insurance purposes. I give permission to Outdoor Classroom to arrange necessary transportation for me. I hereby give permission to the physician selected by Outdoor Classroom to secure and administer treatment, including hospitalization, for the person named above. Information in this paperwork may be given to the physician. I agree to incur all costs related to any medical emergency for the person named above.

Teacher/Chaperone Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Notification of Food Allergy/Intolerance/Needs/Diseases

Each of our facilities can accommodate a number of food allergies, intolerances, restrictions, and preferences.

Do you have any food allergies, intolerances, or restrictions? Yes No

Please specify allergy, intolerance, or restrictions: _____

Chaperone / Teacher Contract and Waiver

I have read and completed the Teacher/Chaperone Packet in its entirety. I understand what is expected of me before and during Outdoor Classroom and agree to abide by the rules and procedures detailed within. I also understand that during my participation at Outdoor Classroom, I may be exposed to a variety of risks and hazards, foreseen or unforeseen, which cannot be eliminated without fundamentally altering the unique character of the program. Those hazards include, but are not limited to, hiking/walking/running/playing outside; ticks, snakes, insects, and large-animals; sunburn and heatstroke, dehydration, hypothermia, and other mild or serious conditions or injuries; falling and rolling rock; drowning; lightning and unpredictable forces of nature (including weather that may change to extreme conditions without notice), etc. I am aware of and assume these risks. Outdoor Classroom is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged articles. I, the undersigned, have read and understand my responsibility to complete and submit all necessary forms and fees on time (and that I will not be allowed to attend the program if any forms in this packet are incomplete). I give permission for photo/video of me and the writing, artwork, and/or testimonials created by me to be used in Outdoor Classroom's school outreach marketing materials, brochures. I acknowledge that since participation in publications is voluntary, I will receive no financial compensation. I further agree that participation in any publication format by Outdoor Classroom confers upon me no rights of ownership whatsoever. I release Outdoor Classroom and its employees from liability for any claims by me or any third party in connection with participation. As a condition of my participation in the Outdoor Classroom program, I acknowledge that participation is entirely voluntary, and I agree to assume full responsibility for the risks that participation may entail. I voluntarily agree to release and hold harmless Outdoor Classroom to the fullest extent permitted by law. I agree that any dispute concerning, relating, or referring to this contract, any representation concerning my child's outdoor education experience, or the outdoor education experience itself shall be resolved exclusively by binding arbitration in the state and county where this camp is physically located, according to the then existing commercial rules of the American Arbitration Association and the substantive laws of that state.

I HAVE READ THIS AGREEMENT. I FULLY UNDERSTAND IT AND AGREE TO BE LEGALLY BOUND BY IT.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Gardner Middle School

Brian Cote, Principal
Sherry Gelinias, Vice Principal
Stephanie St. Joseph, Vice Principal



Gardner Public Schools

www.gardnerk12.org

297 Catherine Street, Gardner, MA 01440

P: (978) 632-1603

F: (978) 632-4234

Outdoor Classroom Spring 2026 Information

Dear Students & Families,

We are pleased to be able to offer our **Grade 6** students the opportunity to experience Outdoor Classroom this spring. The goal of Outdoor Classroom is to provide a SAFE, FUN, and EDUCATIONAL experience for all those who choose to participate. This year's group will be traveling to the **Grotonwood facility in Groton, Massachusetts**. Those attending will depart from GMS on **Tuesday, May 5th and return on Friday, May 8th**.

The Groton site at Grotonwood Camp boasts 250 acres of forest with a wealth of different wetlands for students to explore! With an expansive trail system, a network of beaver ponds, Lost Lake, and even a section of birch forest, the Groton site is a perfect locale for nature-based education. The facilities at Grotonwood offer flexible dorm and cabin-style housing options for up to 150 students and every major building on campus is ADA-compliant.

Students will be provided with an immersive learning experience that has a profound and lasting impact. The program focuses on environmental science, social-emotional learning, and adventure education. Hands-on lessons allow students to process information using their critical thinking skills, collaboration, and teamwork. Students learn while having genuine fun through experiments, building challenges, and games.

Thanks to grant funding from the Rockwell Foundation, this year's price is **\$315.00** (original price \$415.00) The overall cost is based upon 100 students attending the trip and may therefore need to be adjusted slightly depending upon the number of students who actually sign up to attend. This price includes bus transportation to and from Grotonwood, lodging, and all meals.

Once we have a list of students planning to attend the trip, more information regarding the trip will be shared with these families.

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Outdoor Classroom Spring 2026 Deposit Slip

Please return this slip to Ms. Lussier in room 305 with your \$30 NON-REFUNDABLE deposit. Deposits must be received by Friday, October 31th. Deposits can be made in cash or by a check made payable to Gardner Middle School. Please bring deposits and signed permission slips to Ms. Lussier in room 305

I, _____, give permission for my
(print name of parent/guardian)

student, _____ to attend the field trip
(print name of student)

to Outdoor Classroom from May 5th-8th. My student is on team (circle one) 6A 6B

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Office Use Only

Date Received: _____ by: _____

(Circle One) Check # _____ Cash

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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 Gardner High School

Person(s) Responsible for Organizing Trip Jessie Flaherty + David Carson

Grade or Class Class of 2026 / Seniors

Number of Students Attending _____

Destination Chuckster's Family Fun Park Rt 4 Chichester, NH

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)?

Senior class trip for bonding in one last outing before graduation.

Departure date/time/place 8:30/9:00 AM 5/19/2026 GHS

Return date/time/place 4:00/5:00 PM 5/19/2026 GHS

Transportation Provider JP McCarthy Cost of Transportation \$1,200 per bus

Cost of Activity \$44 per person

How will the cost of transportation and activity be paid? class funds / students

Ratio of chaperones to students _____

Sample Parent Permission Slip Attached: yes no

Emergency Phone Contact List yes no

School Nurse [Signature]

Date 1/29/26

Principal [Signature]

Date 1/25/26

Superintendent [Signature]

Date 2/2/26

nurse may be needed

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 *in process*

Daily Itinerary (attach)

Health Care Professional Attending TBD

Administrator Attending M-ORF

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: October 2024]

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips can bring the school and the community closer together, which can result in real life experiences that enrich the curriculum for students and also bring about better public relations. The School Committee will also encourage field trips as an integral part of the instructional programs in the schools.

The Superintendent will establish regulations to assure that:

1. All students have permission from a parent or guardian for trips.
2. All trips are properly supervised.
3. All safety precautions are observed.
4. All trips contribute substantially to the educational program.
5. All trips allow student access without regard of family ability to pay.

All overnight trips and excursions, except those required for student participation in tournament competition or contests, must have advance approval of the School Committee. Fundraising activities for such trips will be subject to approval by the appropriate Administrator.

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

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

CROSS REF.: JH, Policy Relating to Field Trips Involving Late Night or Overnight Travel

SOURCE: MASC October 2016

[Adopted: April 2001]
[Reviewed: September 2003]
[Revised: March 2004]
[Revised: January 2006]
[Revised: April 2008]
[Revised: October 2013]
[Revised: November 2016]
[Revised: February 2021]
[Revised: April 2024]
[Revised: September 2024]

STUDENT TRAVEL

All student trips which include late night or overnight travel must have prior approval of the School Committee. Initial approval by the School Committee is required before engaging students in fundraising activities. The School Committee will also consider the educational value of the trip in relation to the cost prior to granting initial approval. Overnight trips should offer significant educational benefits to students that clearly justify the time and expense of the trip. Such trips should be appropriate for the grade level.

For trips planned to include late night travel (between midnight and 5:00 A.M.) at the time of contracting with outside transportation vendors, the Director of Transportation or designee will obtain an insurance certificate naming the City of Gardner as additional insured; will verify with the carrier that drivers are C.O.R.I. checked, and will ensure that the selected carrier is licensed for passenger transportation by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). The district will not contract with any carrier that has a safety rating of "conditional" or "unsatisfactory" by the FMCSA. FMCSA ratings are available at <http://www.safersys.org>. All findings will be reported to the Superintendent. The contract with the carrier will prohibit the use of subcontractors unless sufficient notice is given to the district that allows verification of the subcontractor's qualifications.

Final approval will not be granted until all preparations for the trip have been completed including, but not limited to, all logistical details involving transportation, accommodation arrangements and fundraising efforts. The School Committee requires that final approval be sought no less than 30 days prior to the scheduled trip dates.

Teachers and other school staff are prohibited from soliciting for privately run trips through the school system and in the schools. The School Committee will only review for approval school-sanctioned trips. The School Committee will not review or approve trips that are privately organized and run without school sanctioning.

[Reference: Chapter 346 of the Acts of 2002 (et.al.), MGL 69:1B; 71:37N; IJOA, Field Trips]
[Adopted: June 2004]
[Revised: March 2020]
[Reviewed: September 2024]



Gardner High School

Michael Bartkus, *Principal*
Lauren Davis, *Assistant Principal*
Melissa Paine, *Assistant Principal*
Arvid Tenney, *MTSS Administrator*



Gardner Public Schools

www.gardnerk12.org

200 Catherine Street, Gardner, MA 01440

P: (978) 632-1600

F: (978) 630-4040

Date: _____

Dear Parent/Guardian:

This is to verify that _____
(Student Name)

has your permission to participate in the following field trip.

TRIP TO: Chuckster's Family Fun Park

WITH: Jessie Flaherty + David Casson
(Teacher Chaperone)

DATE OF FIELD TRIP: 5/19/2026

LEAVING AT: 8:30 am RETURNING AT: 5:00 pm

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____

Printed name of Parent/Guardian: _____

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Park Policies and Rules:

These are some basic policies and rules from the management of Chuckster's Family Fun Park. Additional rules may be posted at ticket window, spoken verbally by park staff, or on signage throughout the park.

- All operating hours are weather dependent. Not all attractions may be open at all open park hours.
- No refunds due to weather
- Signed waivers are required to do the zipline. You may sign at ticket booth upon arrival or online [here](#).
- Children under ten years old must be accompanied by an adult
- Shirts and shoes must be worn at all times in the park.

Permitted:

- Your own food, soft drinks, coolers
- Service animals
- Smoking (in parking lot only)

Not permitted:

- Alcohol, smoking, vaping, or illegal substances
- Dogs (except in pet area behind ticket booth)
- Profanity, vulgar language, or clothing with offensive graphics
- Drones (unless with prior permission)
- Weapons
- Silly string, pinatas (unless with prior permission)

To book an outing:

Please call us at 603-798-3555, stop by, or email us at info@chucksters.com



Groups

Chucksters is the perfect place for your company, church, team, camp or other group outing! Chucksters can handle up to 250 people at a time, depending on your needs.

All group outings include exclusive use of a party tent or private area for the duration of party. For food, Chucksters offers a variety of hot food items, soft drinks, and of course ice cream. We can arrange pizzas or other catering from Constantly Pizza, or you can arrange your own.

Four Group Outing Options:

Mega Outing

- Includes unlimited access to ALL attractions for four hours
- Use of party tent or Grove picnic area

5-9 people \$48 pp
 10-24 people \$46 pp
 25-99 people \$44 pp
 100+ people \$42 pp

Info for groups with children:

-Chucksters provides the attractions, the environment, and assistance as needed; YOU provide the supervision of the children at all times!

-Some attractions have age or height/weight restrictions; please check below:

- Golf, Aeroball, Downpour Derby, Shoot-N-Shower, ChucksterBall, Frantic Hoops, Spider Climb, Dunk Tank: no minimums
- Batting cages: age 6 & up
- Climbing Wall and Klime Waltz: 40-250 pounds weight limits, ages 6 and up, 40" height minimum
- Go-Karts: 58" height minimum to drive, age 18+ to drive with a passenger, 40" height minimum to ride as passenger
- Zipline: 50-250 pounds
- Jumpsters: 250 pound maximum
- Bumper Boats: Up to one adult and two kids per boat, 450 pounds total maximum; drivers must be at least 44" tall, no age minimum; passengers must be at least 40" tall; drivers carrying passengers must be at least 18 years old; two children may not ride alone in the same boat; two adults may not ride together in the same boat

When you arrive:

Please check in at the ticket booth. Chuckster's shift supervisor will meet your leaders and give you wristbands for all participants; chaperones will need them also if they plan to do the attractions. If they are just watching and helping, they are free.

Your group will be directed to an area designated for your exclusive use.

Please pass on this information to your group before they get off the bus, or when you get to your designated party area:

-Your green Deluxe Outing wristband is good for all attractions for three hours, EXCEPT the zipline, and go-kart rides are limited to two rides per person. (if anyone is too short to drive, (58") an adult can drive them at no charge)

OR

-Your red Mega Outing wristband is good for all attractions for four hours.

-Restrooms are in the ticket booth building facing the parking lot; a portable is located at the go-kart track

-For mini golf, get clubs, balls, and scorecards from the ticket booth. (or the ice cream deck on a slower day) Please play the course in sequence, starting at hole one.

-For batting cages, get tokens at the ticket booth. (or ice cream window on a slower day)

-For all other attractions, go directly to the attraction and wait for an attendant to get you started.

-Snacks, drinks, and ice cream are available at the food window of the gray building.

-Please do not run while at the park, or cut through the mini golf course to get to the bumper boats...stay on designated walkways!

-Please return equipment where it belongs.

-Have fun!

File: IJOA-E

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 Gardner High School

Person(s) Responsible for Organizing Trip Heather Such Lindsay Sousa

Grade or Class 8-12 ML Students

Number of Students Attending 46

Destination Canobie Lake Park Salem, N.H.

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 5/18/26 - depart 8:00 AM

Return date/time/place 5/18/26 depart 1:00 pm

Transportation Provider NRT Cost of Transportation \$1600 estimate

Cost of Activity \$1,537

How will the cost of transportation and activity be paid? Students

Ratio of chaperones to students 4/46 1/9

Sample Parent Permission Slip Attached: yes no

Emergency Phone Contact List yes no

School Nurse [Signature]

Date 1/30/26

Principal [Signature]

Date 1/30/26

Superintendent [Signature]

Date 2/2/26

Nurse needs to attend

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 *in process*

Daily Itinerary (attach)

Health Care Professional Attending TBD

Administrator Attending *M. E. J.*

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: October 2024]

Outing Date: 5/18/26
Arrival Time: 9:15 Departure Time: 1:00
Est. Headcount: 53

Heather Such
Gardner High School
297 Catherine Street
Gardner, MA 01440

Rate per person*: \$29.00 each (Last year's rate?)

Procedures to make your outing day proceed as smoothly as possible:
Upon arrival at the Park, Group Leader must sign in at Group Sales to either pick up pre-purchased or pay for the passes.

Please Note: Payment needs to be made prior to park entry.

Payment: Make your trip as easy as possible! Pre-purchase your passes with a credit card (Visa, MC, Discover & AMEX), give us a call and we can process that payment so you can pick up your passes the day of your trip and no further steps are needed. If you are looking to pay with a check or cash prior to your trip call or e-mail to set up an appointment to make sure someone will be here to help you! You can mail in a check now, however if you are looking to mail a check within 2 weeks of your trip, please keep it and pay the day of your outing as if we have not received it by the time you arrive, no tickets will be issued, and another payment form must be presented. Call or e-mail to set up an appointment if within the 2 weeks and would like the passes in hand.

Payment can be made the day of your trip with a credit card (Visa, MC, Discover & AMEX), Organization check or cash. Personal Checks & Purchase Orders are not valid forms of payment, and we cannot bill your group. Just note paying the day of your trip will add some time to your check in process.

Security:

As part of our comprehensive security program, all guests, bags, parcels, clothing, and other items are subject to screening/security checks. All guests are subject to security screenings including the use of walkthrough and/or

in lines for others. For your safety and the safety of others, please refrain from running while inside the Park. Proper attire, including shoes and shirts, must be worn at all times inside the Park, except in designated water attractions only. We reserve the right to deny admission to or remove any person wearing attire that we consider inappropriate or attire that could detract from the experience of other guests. Visible clothing or tattoos that could be considered inappropriate, such as those containing objectionable language or designs, are not permitted. Violating Park rules/policies may result in ejection.

Safety:

If Group Leader is making the purchase or picking up the passes, Members must remain on bus until Leader returns with tickets. The Leader will then hand out a ticket to each member as they disembark from the bus. Do not distribute tickets in the parking lot or at the Park Entrance. Members may then walk towards the Park Entrance Plaza with tickets in hand for admission into the Park.

Chaperones:

Chaperones are adults who supervise and manage the Group's behavior, safety and welfare. Groups purchasing at least 25 tickets (Monday thru Friday, not including holidays) may receive up to one free Chaperone per 10 Group tickets purchased. Additional Chaperones can purchase tickets at the Group rate. Complimentary Chaperone tickets will not be issued until after all Group tickets have been purchased. Complimentary Chaperone tickets are not available to Groups who elect to purchase tickets individually. Chaperone tickets are dated and only valid on the date of your outing.

Food:

Food, beverages, bottles, coolers, grills, quantity packaging, and picnic supplies are not allowed into the Park. School children and summer campers may carry their own personal lunch individually.

Policy:

- The Park is a smoke free facility. Smoking permitted in our designated smoking areas (refer to a map & guide for locations).
- Line-jumping is a serious offense and can lead to ejection from the Park. be harmful or disruptive.

- Profanity and abusive language is not permitted on Park property, including on clothing.

Frequently Asked Questions 2025

Q: What if the Town made an organizational check out for too much money?

A: The Park will issue a refund check and mail it to the address on the check usually within seven business days

of your trip. It can also be saved for a future trip.

Q: What if we have late arriving members of our group?

A: You can leave tickets at the Group Sales Office in a sealed envelope for late arriving group members. They

would just need to be labeled under the appropriate names.

Q: What is needed to purchase the tickets?

A: You will need a total head count of all the students and adult chaperones. Do not include the Bus drivers in your final head count. Bus drivers are given complimentary admission to the park by our Security Officers in the parking lot. You will need an Organization Check, Credit Card (Visa, MC, Discover or American Express) or Cash to pay for the tickets. Personal Checks and Purchase Orders are not valid forms of payment. We

cannot bill your school. Payment in full is required at the time tickets are issued.

Q: Does a van count as a bus for complimentary driver admission?

A: Only bus drivers will receive complimentary admission to the Park when driving a large group. 15

passenger vans and the like will not qualify for the complimentary admission.

Q: What if the Bus Driver brought his or her own children?

A: The Bus Driver can purchase tickets at the same group rate for additional children. We do not provide the children of bus drivers with complimentary admission to the Park. A child may not use a bus driver ticket for

admission (they will be denied access by our Gate Attendants).

Q: What do I do with all of those tickets?

A: After you receive your tickets you should proceed back to your bus and hand each person a ticket. It is

A: We have a First Aid building inside the Park staffed by EMT's. This is a good place to meet up to dispense medicines. Our main First Aid is located behind the Carousel, directly to your right once you enter the Park. If a school nurse came on the field trip, it is a good idea to have him or her leave a contact number in the event a

student goes to First Aid.

Q: What happens if a person is injured during our trip?

A: When the injury is reported to the Park the person is taken to our First Aid Building for treatment. A chaperone is paged to the front gate and sent to First Aid to fill out the appropriate paperwork.

Q: Do you have cubbies or lockers to keep belongings in?

A: Lockers are available for rent, inside the Park, across from the Ferris Wheel, along the fence to the parking lot.

We have a variety of sizes and locations for the lockers. Our all day rentals cost \$10.00*, \$15.00* or \$20.00* depending on size. We have a limited number of lockers and they will sell out on busy days. Encourage your members to buddy up. Chaperones may choose to set up a base camp to watch over book bags and serve as a

meeting place for lost students. The Park is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Unattended items may cause a security concern and could be removed by Park staff. *Prices subject to change without notice. *

Q: Do you have any Food Vouchers or Gift Cards?

A: We do have gift cards available for purchase at least 2 week prior to your trip and can be applied towards select retail locations and all food locations throughout the park. If you would like to add them, let us know!

Q: Do you page the group when it is time to leave?

A: Yes. We will page your group when it is time to leave. You must go to Guest Services and request the page.

did not request one in your initial registration.

1



Gardner High School



Gardner Public Schools

Paula Bolger, Principal
Mike Barkus, Assistant Principal
Lauren Davis, Assistant Principal
Sherry Gelinias, MTSS Administrator

www.gardnerk12.org

200 Catherine Street, Gardner, MA 01440

P: (978) 632-1600

F: (978) 630-4040

Field Trip Permission Slip

Dear Parent or Guardian:

On Monday, May 18, 2026 your Gardner High School ML student has the opportunity to attend a field trip to Canobie Lake Park, at 85 North Policy Street in Salem N.H. We will leave GHS around 7:45 and return around 2:15. The cost of admission will be paid for by GHS. Students will have a packed lunch from our cafeteria. If your student does not want our packed lunch, they may bring their own which can be disposed of afterwards at the park, or they may purchase lunch at the park with their own money.

This field trip is a privilege, and as such, we reserve the right to revoke an individual's permission to go, should there be any major discipline infractions prior to the field trip. If such a situation arises, parents/guardians will be informed.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Heather Such and Lindsay Sousa
ESL Teachers
Gardner High School
suchh@gardnerk12.org sousal@gardnerk12.org
978-632-1600 X 1114 and x 1306

Permission Slip for Canobie Lake Park

This is to inform you that _____ (student name) has my permission to participate in the field trip to Canobie Lake Park on 5/18/26.

Signed by: _____
Parent/Guardian Signature

Emergency Telephone Number

Print Name

Relationship to Student

Allergies or medical needs we should be aware of _____



Gardner Public Schools

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

www.gardnerk12.org

160 Elm Street, Gardner, MA 01440

(978) 632-1000

January 30, 2026

Data Driven Instruction:

As part of implementing the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) model throughout the district, we utilize data to deeply analyze early literacy progress (grades K-4) and to implement “just right” interventions to all students. Below, you will see the aggregate results of the DIBELS 8 reading assessments.

As a reminder, the District has committed to focus academic resources and supports in the areas of early literacy and elementary/middle grades mathematics as determined by student achievement data and as is consistent with data results across the state. Schools continue to collect growth data in these two areas, and analyze that data to determine strategic academic supports and interventions. This report will focus on growth in early literacy.

DIBELS assessments are designed to measure growth in the acquisition of early reading skills. The assessments are quick checks that measure growth in reading for our students in grades Kindergarten through four (4). Results are broken into seven categories for the purpose of identifying specific skill strengths and deficiencies. The measured skills include phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, accuracy and fluency with connected text, reading comprehension, and vocabulary. This data in this report reflects the composite scores of all seven categories.

DIBELS 8 Reading Assessment Results

Winter Data	Kindergarten	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4
	% Approaching or Meeting Benchmark	% Approaching or Meeting Benchmark	% Approaching or Meeting Benchmark	% Approaching or Meeting Benchmark	% Approaching or Meeting Benchmark
Actual Results 2025-2026	59%	66%	73%	72%	69%
Actual Results 2024-2025	63%	67%	70%	68%	67%
Actual Results 2023-2024	56%	60%	70%	65%	63%
Actual Results 2022-2023	57%	69%	61%	56%	66%
Actual Results 2021-2022	66%	57%	47%	59%	71%

The results indicated above through the winter of 2025-2026 represent separate cohorts of students. Cohorts are color coded to represent the growth of each grade level cohort from winter of 2022 through winter of 2026. Using this analysis, we are able to see that grade level cohorts have shown growth in most grade levels. The data also reveal that reading scores are the same or higher at most grade levels in winter of 2026 than those from winter of 2025. The percentage of GES students who met benchmark in comparison to the last two years can be seen in the graph below and reveals promising growth year to date:



STAR winter benchmark assessments are in progress. I will share those results in my March report.



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 – February 9, 2026

Grants

The district has been awarded the following grant:

- [FY26 Fund Code 0199: Interpreter in the Education Setting Training Grant](#), to provide training to two bilingual staff to support administrators and families in meetings where interpretation is required. The district applied for \$5,200.

The district was not awarded the following grant:

- [FY26 Fund Code 213: Support Implementing of Updated Regulations Regarding Time-Out Practices](#), to continue the implementation of interventions and strategies to improve behavior de-escalation and reduce the use of time out rooms. The district was awarded this grant in a previous year.

The district is in the process of applying for the following grant:

- [Massachusetts Clean Energy Center's Green School Works Implementation Grant](#) to replace Gardner Middle School air handling units with energy efficient units on the new MSBA-funded roof. The application is in process and is due Friday, February 13, 2026.

The district has been awarded the [Early Literacy High-Dosage Tutoring](#) opportunity to provide services at Gardner Elementary School. The DESE-sponsored opportunity will provide targeted access to tutoring during the school day for up to 119 first graders scoring below or well-below set benchmarks.

Gardner Middle School and the district office are exploring potential grant opportunities to implement the [My Career and Academic Plan \(MyCAP\)](#) program, which “engages students in a continuum of learning grounded in the discovery of individual interests, skills, and talents” and is already in use at Gardner High School. Implementation at Gardner Middle School will ensure vertical alignment in the guidance curriculum from grade 5-12.

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Gardner Public Schools

Joyce West, Director of Pupil Personnel Services

Tasha Gamble, Assistant Director of Pupil Personnel Services

www.gardnerk12.org

160 Elm Street, Gardner MA 01440

(978) 630-4076

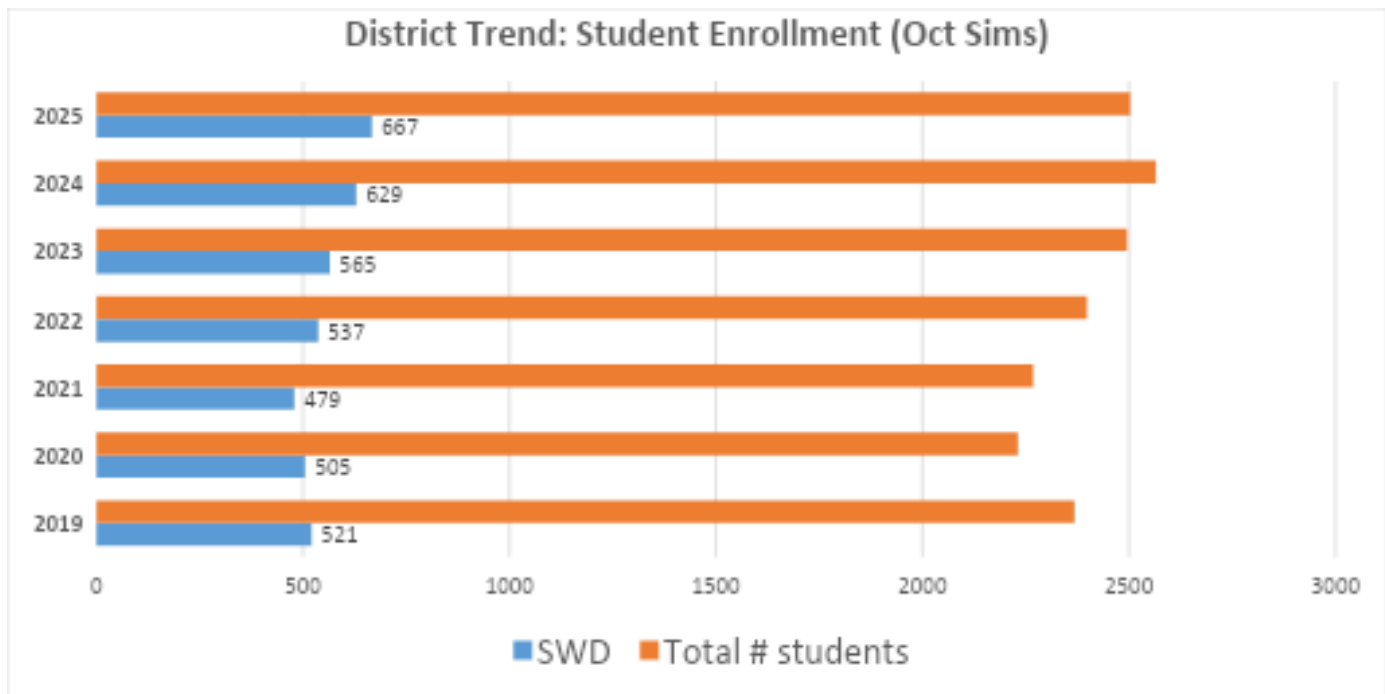
February 2, 2026

Report to the School Committee Pupil Services/Special Education Updates

SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT:

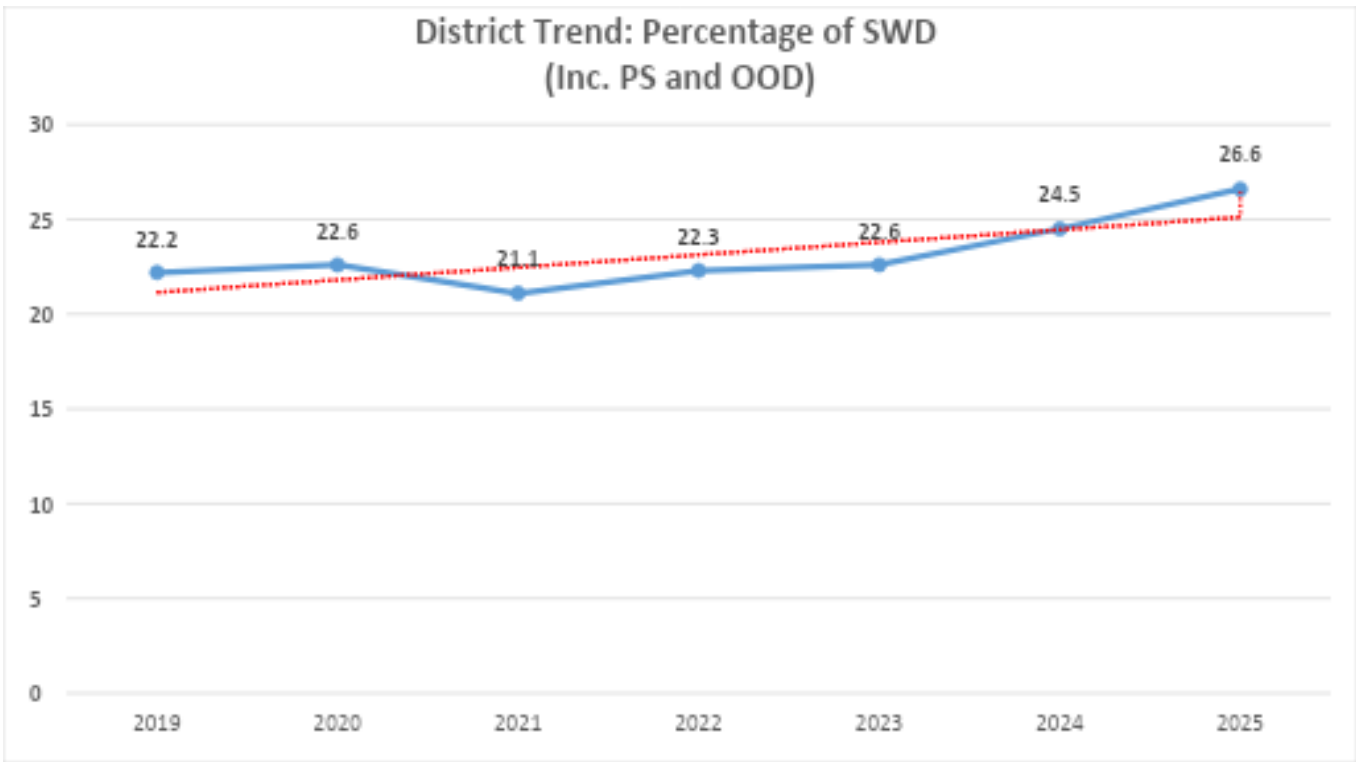
Current special education data has been reviewed using the recent SIMS Data submission release in November 2025. The district is experiencing increasing trends for students with disabilities across multiple data points. Students moving into the district already identified as students with disabilities (SWD) has contributed to the increase

I. ENROLLMENT TRENDS



SY	2023-24	2024-25	Jan 2026
SWD Moving into District	116	82	55
SWD Moved out of District	79	96	39
Increase/Decrease	+37	-14	+16

The number of SWD in Gardner is on an increasing Trend.

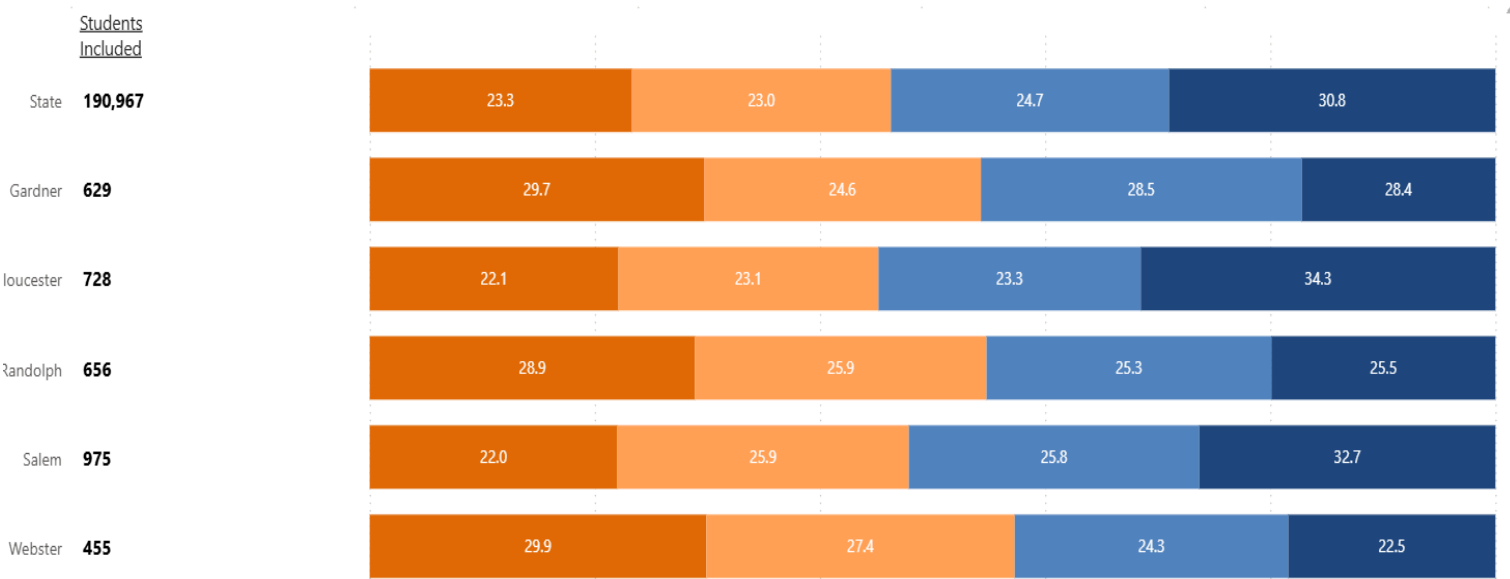


Increasing Trend of SWD PK-2. (Oct 2024 data) The number of pre-school students entering school requiring more support and qualifying for special education is increasing. (DESE RADAR)

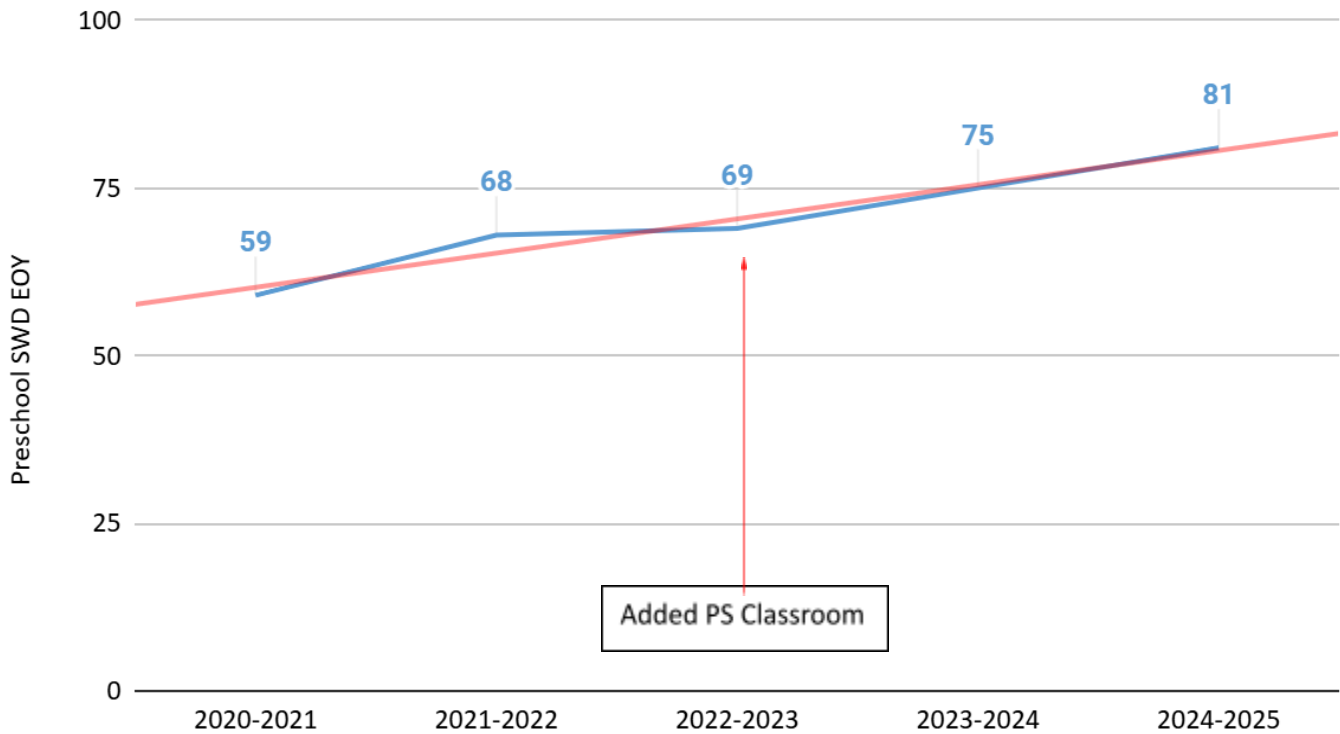
Percent of Students with Disabilities Enrollment by Grade Span



Legend ● PK to 2 ● Grades 3 to 5 ● Grades 6 to 8 ● Grades 9 to 12 ● Special Education Beyond Grade 12



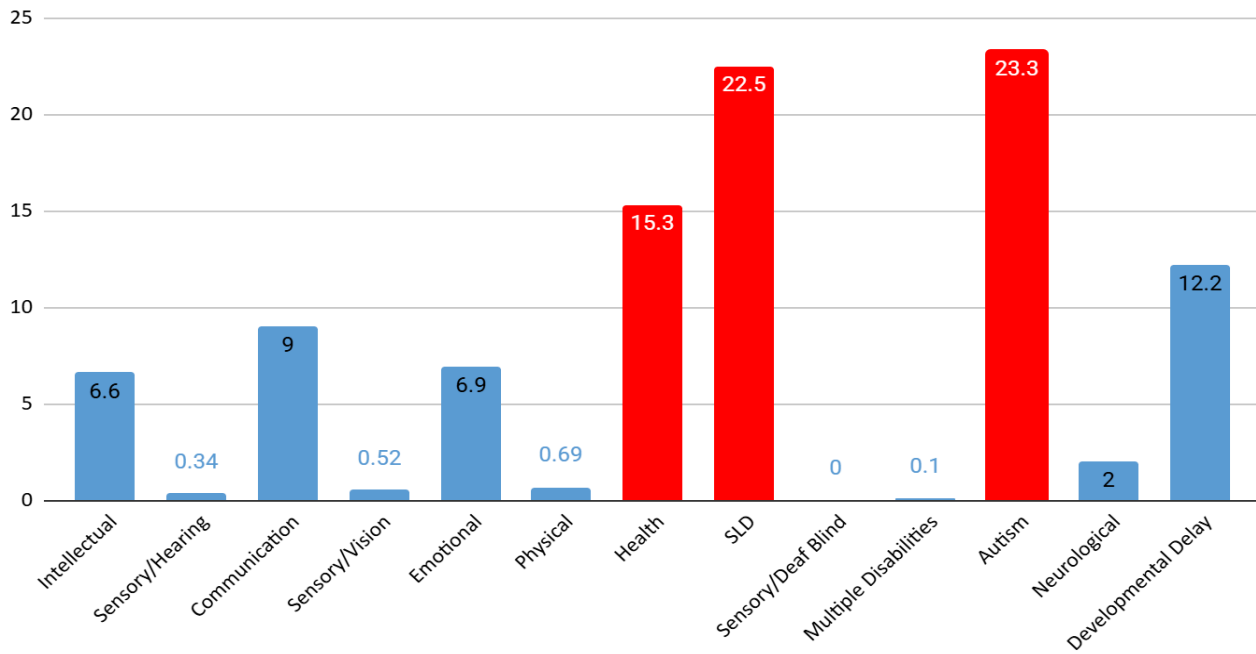
Preschool # SWD EOY



Preschool SWD enrollment trends continue to rise. In 2022 the district opened a 5th classroom due to previous years requesting waivers to go above the regulation limit of having no more than 7 SWD in classrooms (ratio per regulation is 8 peer models to 7 SWD) . DESE requires districts to rectify the issues causing the need for waiver requests. The current preschool model offers 2 half days, 4 half days, and 4 full days. The district is revisiting the preschool model to accommodate for the growing number of SWD entering preschool with moderate to high needs.

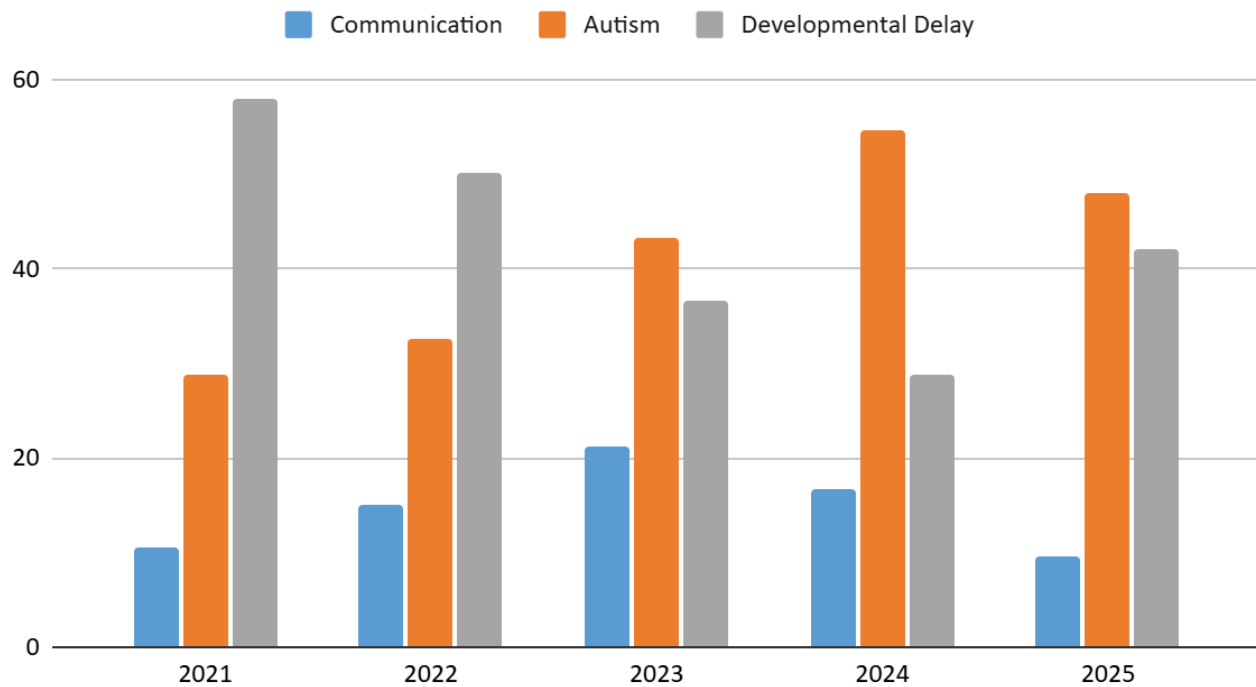
II. DISABILITY TRENDS

Disability Categories as Percentage of SWD Oct 2025 (grade K- to age 21)

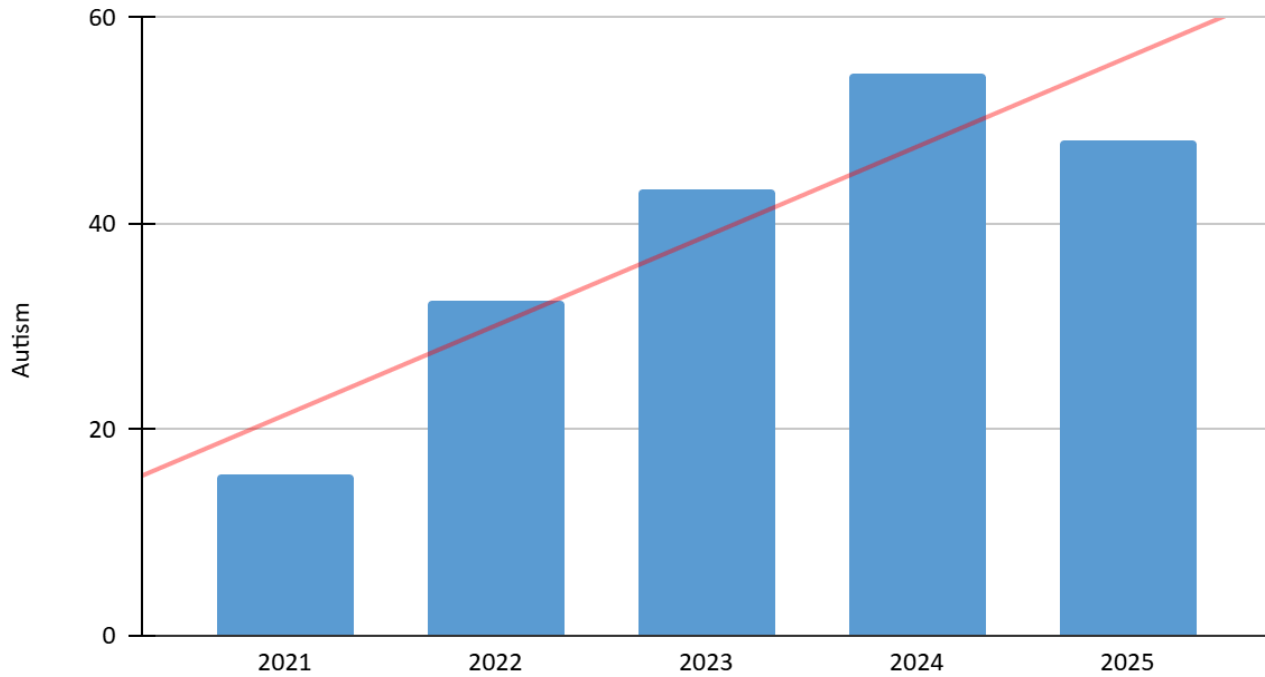


*State Average for Autism: 17.3%, SLD 23.9%, Health 15.4%.

Disability Trend as Percentage Ages 3-5



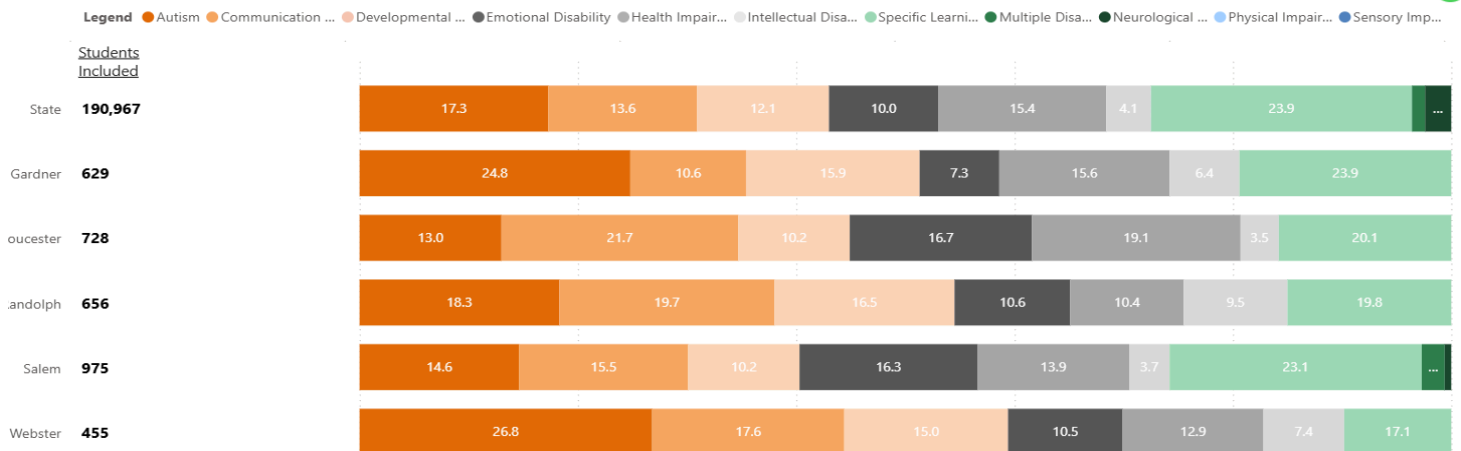
Preschool Disability Trend: Autism (Oct 1st SIMS)



Gardner Public Schools serves a high percentage of students with Autism. District trends indicate a continued upward trend of students identified with Autism. Students identified with Autism often present with a medical or clinical diagnosis from providers outside the school setting. The District is seeing a growing trend with students, especially preschool students, entering with the diagnosis. A comparison to the state average indicates that Gardner's increasing trend is exceeding the state average of 17.3%. The District current trend is more than 35% higher than the state average for school age students. Proportionately higher enrollment in this category has significant implications for the intensity and type of services required in schools, including specialized instructional supports, related services, staffing, and programmatic resources. Diagnosis of Autism implies more need for related services as many students require multiple services from multiple related service providers BCBA, SLP, OT, SAC etc.

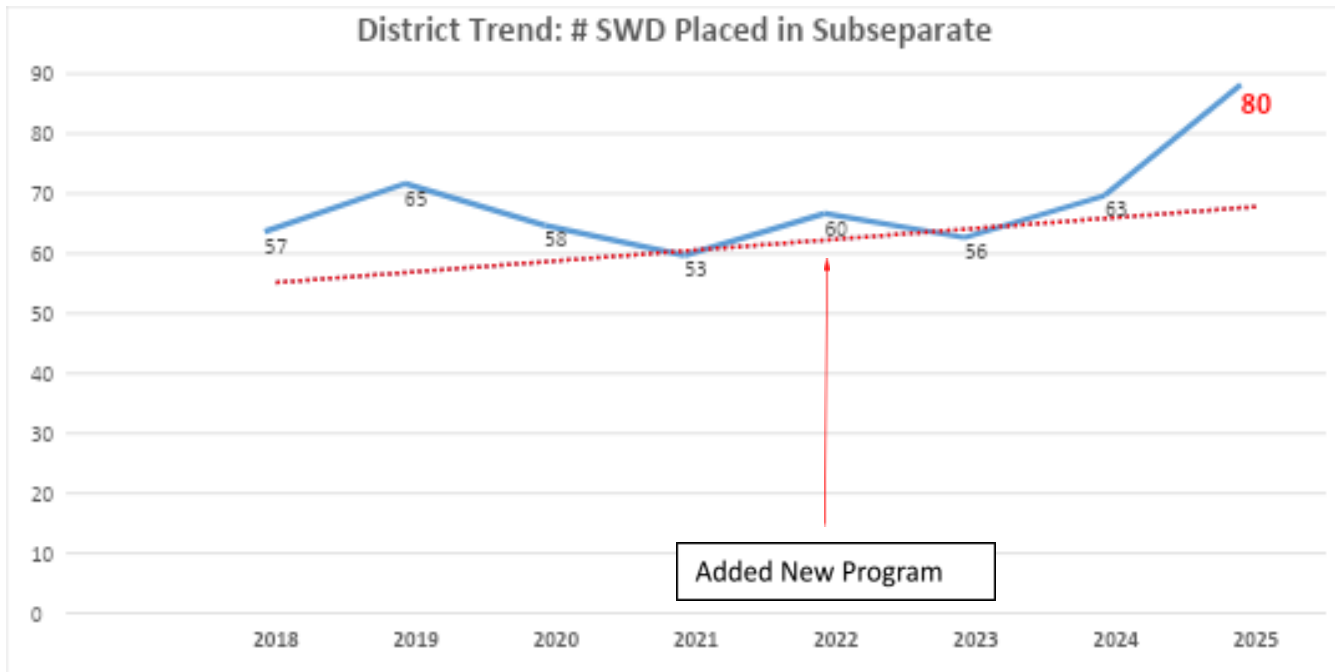
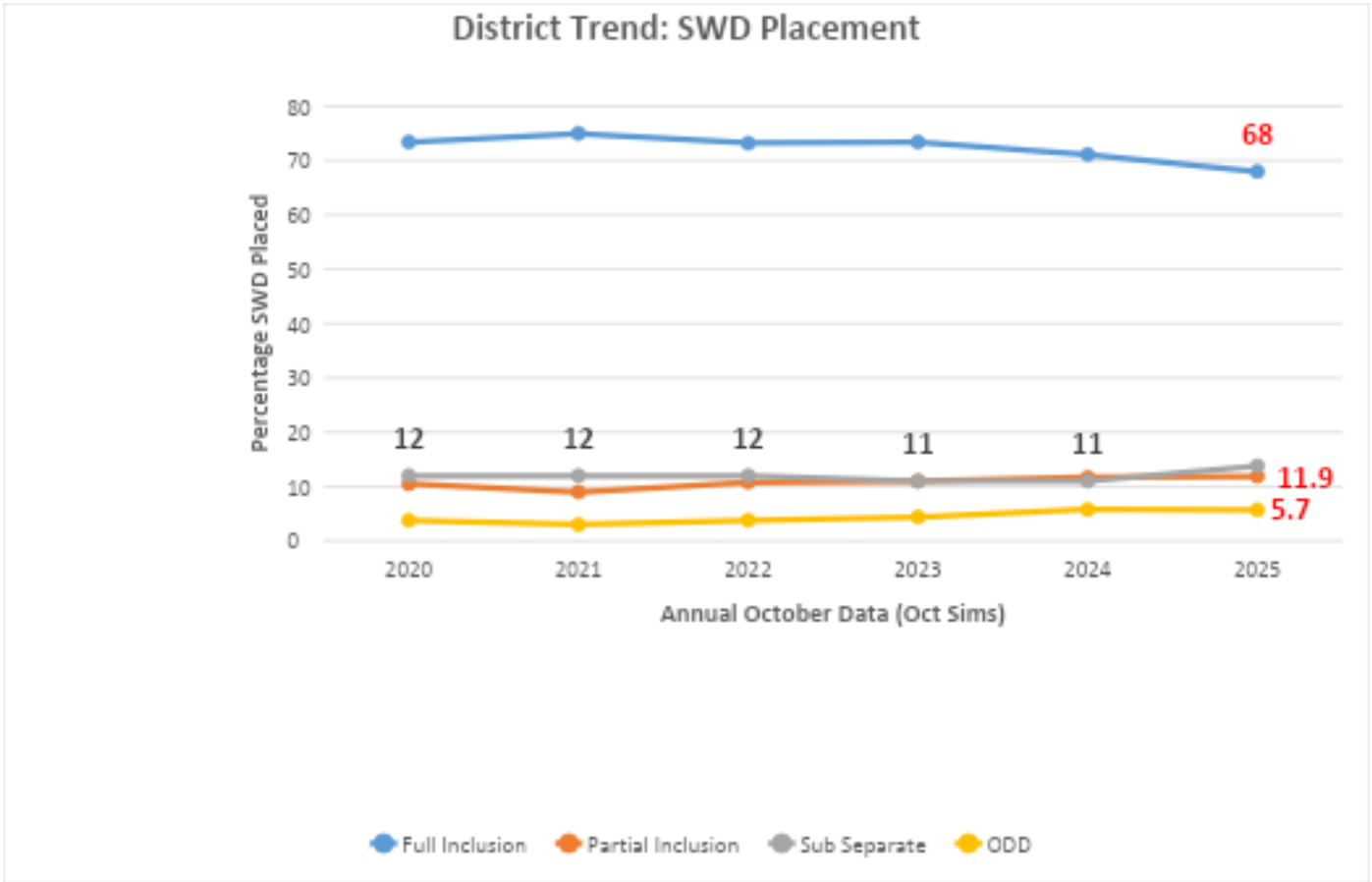
In addition, trends of comparable districts (identified by DESE) shows the District serves students with Autism at a higher rate. (DESE RADAR Oct 2024)

Percent of Students with Disabilities by Disability Type

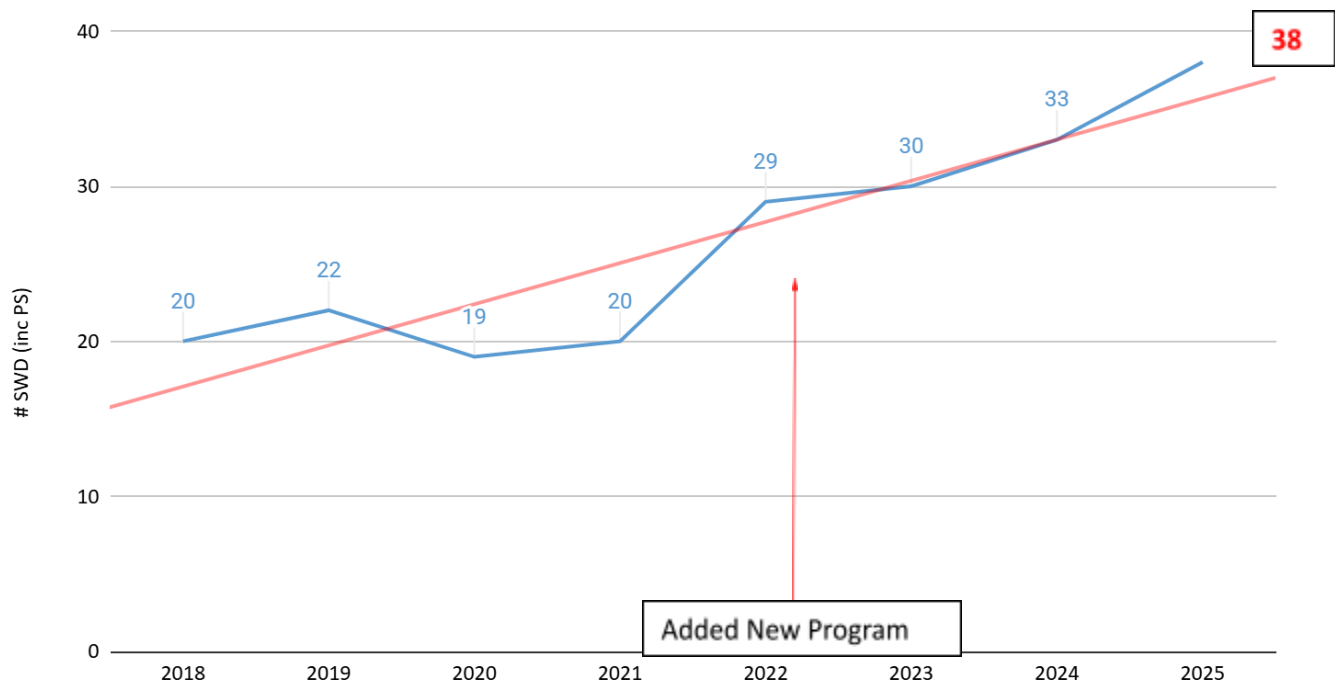


III. PLACEMENT TRENDS

SUB-SEPARATE PROGRAMS



GES Trend: # SWD Placed in Subseparate (inc. PS) Oct 1



Currently, all GES sub-separate programs for SWD with Autism and related disorders are operating at full capacity. Three years ago the District opened a third program to address the increasing trend. Three years later the District is faced with the immediate need to allocate resources to support current intensive student needs. The increase is occurring at a faster rate than the district has anticipated.

IV. OUT OF DISTRICT PLACEMENT (OOD) TRENDS

Over the last 10 years the District has focused on improving sub-separate programming and keeping students in the district. During this period of time due to the increasing student need, the District invested in hiring Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA) and changing the support staff role of paraprofessional in sub-separate rooms to a credential position of registered behavior technicians (RBT) trained and certified in applied behavior analysis (ABA) and requiring training and supervision hours from the BCBA’s. The District experienced success in lowering the number of SWD placed out of the district resulting in financial savings for quite a few years.

During the past two years there has been a significant increase in SWD diagnosis with autism and requiring more intensive support. There has also been an increase in students requiring more intensive support for mental health post COVID-19.

The District is overwhelmed with the volume of students requiring intensive support and placements outside of the District. The total number of students placed out of district identified in school committee reports only reflect students enrolled in Gardner. The District is fiscally responsible for a number of students that are not identified in the enrollment numbers. There is little difference in special education oversight, responsibility, and meeting obligations whether the district is identified as programmatic or fiscal only.

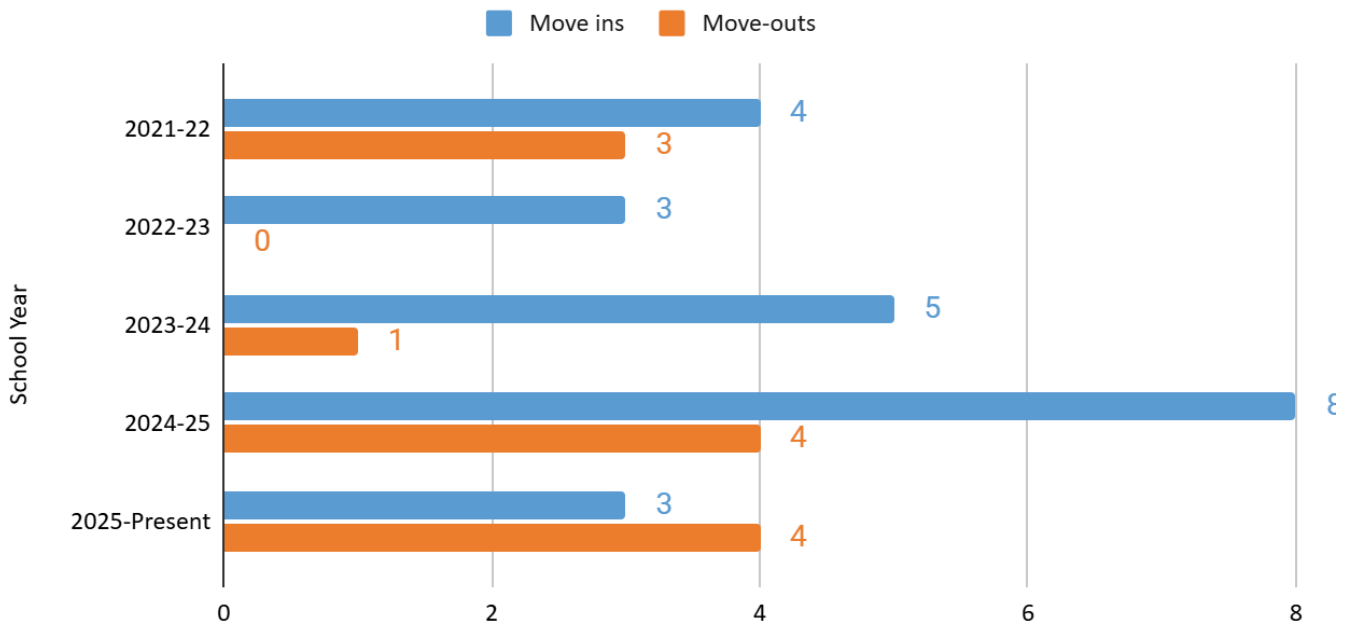
Students with disabilities who are placed in out-of-district programs attend schools located across a wide geographic area, often well beyond the boundaries of the district and surrounding communities. These placements are not concentrated in a single region; rather, they are spread across multiple cities and towns, requiring some students to travel significant distances to access the specialized programs and services they need. This also impacts staffing time and effort spent on maintaining compliance and site visits for student observation and program oversight required for public schools. Recent DESE requirements for public school oversight of these programs went into effect in the fall of 2025 increasing district expectations for monitoring out of district placements.

Currently, students placed out of district attend 28 different schools located across a wide geographic area, ranging from the Berkshires in western Massachusetts to Manchester, New Hampshire, and as far east as West Newton, Massachusetts.

Specialized transportation costs are significantly impacted with this increase.

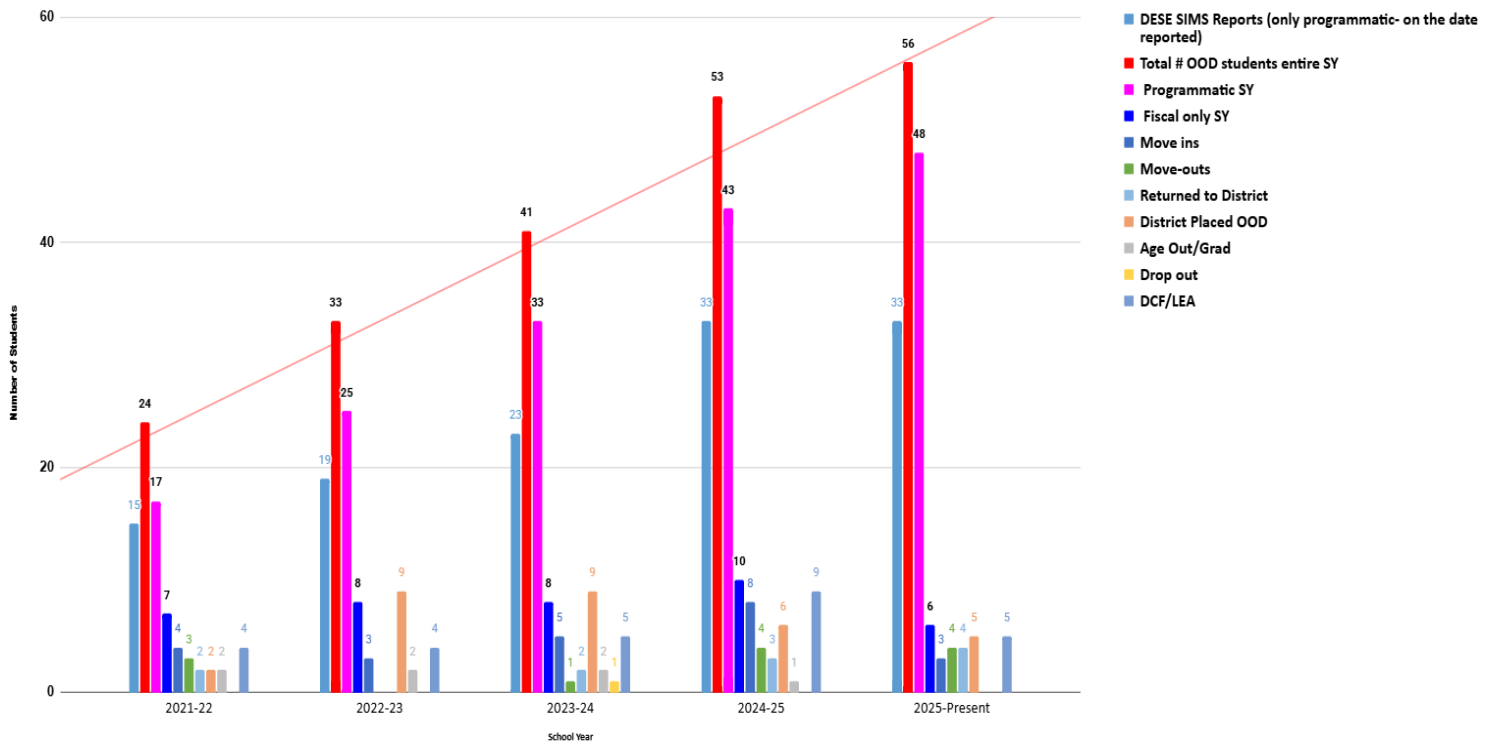
Trends have steadily increased over the last 4 years. Over the past 5 years the district has experienced more SWD enrolling in the District requiring OOD placement than our current SWD in OOD unenrolling from the District..

Trend Comparison: # of SWD enrolling in the District requiring OOD placement versus the # of SWD enrolled in OOD placement unenrolling



To date the District has 46 students in OOD placements with students awaiting acceptance or a start date, totaling 55 students.

Out of District Placement Trends



**numbers 2025 reflect students currently waiting for placement acceptance*

**Numbers do not reflect the number of students in extended evaluation in OOD*