

**GARDNER SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**Regular Meeting – March 9, 2020**  
**City Council Chambers**  
**95 Pleasant Street, Gardner, Massachusetts**

Members present: Attorney James Walsh, Acting Chairperson; Jennifer Pelavin, Vice Chairperson; Anne Hurst, Secretary; James Abare, Rachel Cormier, John LaFreniere, and Robert Swartz

Student Representative: absent

School Personnel present: Mark J. Pellegrino, Superintendent  
Ms. Terri Hillman, Recording Secretary  
Ms. April Yu, Business Administrator  
Dr. Catherine Goguen, Chief Academic Officer  
Ms. Courtney Dunn, Grants, Communications & Compliance Manager

**Call to Order**

Attorney Walsh, Acting Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7 pm. The meeting opened with a roll call. The meeting was broadcast live on Channel 8 television.

**Open Time for the General Public**

Jonathan Dudley, 318 Central Street, Gardner, spoke about multi-social equity in the schools.

**RECOGNITION BY THE SUPERINTENDENT**

Superintendent Pellegrino recognized Ms. Courtney Dunn, Grants, Communications & Compliance Manager, for all the work she has done to obtain grants for the schools.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**Mr. LaFreniere moved that the District School Committee approve the Consent Agenda as presented:**

- **Approval of minutes of regular meeting, February 24, 2020**
- **Approval of the following Warrants as recommended by the Finance Subcommittee:**
  - **Warrant #20-32 dated 02/06/20 in the amount of \$79,531.74**
  - **Warrant #20-33 dated 02/13/20 in the amount of \$115,162.52**
  - **Warrant #20-34 dated 02/20/20 in the amount of \$105,001.22**
  - **Warrant #20-35 dated 02/27/20 in the amount of \$268,460.43**
  - **Warrant #20-36 dated 03/05/20 in the amount of \$288,875.15**

**Seconded by Mr. Swartz.**  
**Attorney Walsh abstained from voting.**

**Vote – so voted.**

**SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Facilities Subcommittee**

Mr. Abare, Chairperson, said that the Subcommittee met on February 25, 2020. Minutes of the meeting were presented.

Mr. Anderson and Ms. Yu gave an update on Moura's Cleaning Services. The Middle School lobby floor was cleaned and sealed during the February school break.

Mr. Anderson said the hybrid snow removal worked well in terms of improving quality of service and providing the district with good control. The Business Office will analyze all related costs at the end of snow season.

A list of completed projects and upcoming projects was presented. Grant funds were used to upgrade the camera server and software. A Kitchen Equipment grant was awarded for the purchase of a pizza oven and a School Water Improvement Grant has been applied for 14 water filtration units.

**Finance Subcommittee**

Mr. LaFreniere, Chairperson, said that the Subcommittee met on March 5, 2020. Minutes of the meeting were presented.

The Subcommittee reviewed the Finance packet for February 2020. Questions were asked regarding the encumbered total amounts of two budget line items. Ms. Yu will research and report back to the Subcommittee and also on questions on the transfer report.

Ms. Yu and Superintendent Pellegrino gave an update on the FY21 level services budget. The FY21 Budget booklet was presented and reviewed page by page. The Governor's budget increase for the City of Gardner is not enough to cover the cost of living adjustment in salaries and expenditures. There is a budget deficit of \$205K. Superintendent Pellegrino will present the level services budget to the full Committee on March 9, 2020.

The School Department intends to transfer the "care, custody, management and control" of the Prospect Street School Building to the City. Attorney John Flick has outlined the process and the item will be on the June 1 Finance Subcommittee meeting agenda and the June 8 School Committee agenda for votes.

**Policy Subcommittee**

Mrs. Hurst said that the Subcommittee met on February 28, 2020. Minutes of the meeting were presented.

The following policies were reviewed and determined that no changes were required and will be updated as “Reviewed February 2020”:

Policy DKC	Expenses/Expense Reimbursements
Policy GBEC	Gifts to and Solicitations by Staff
Policy JB	Equal Educational Opportunities

Several policies were approved for a first reading and they are presented under Item #3105 – First Reading of Policies.

**Student Advisory Board**

The Student Representative was not present and there was no report.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Item #3105– First Reading of Policies**

The Policy Subcommittee recommends approval for a first reading of the following policies:

- BEDH Public Comment at School Committee Meetings
- BIBA School Committee Conferences, Conventions, and Workshops
- BID School Committee Compensation and Expenses
- KHA Public Solicitation in the Schools
- KHB Advertising in the Schools
- JBB Educational Equity
- JEB Entrance Age (Currently JBB)
- JFABE Educational Opportunities for Military Children
- JLCA Physical Education of Students
- JLCC Communicable Diseases
- JLCD Administering Medication to Students

**Item #3106 – Second Reading of Policies**

**Mrs. Pelavin moved to approve the following policies for a second reading as recommended by the Policy Subcommittee:**

- **EEAG Student Transportation in Private Vehicles**
- **JFABD Homeless Students: Enrollment Rights and Services**
- **JFABF Educational Opportunities for Children in Foster Care**
- **JJA to JJH Student Travel (Reflects MASC policy reference)**
- **JLC Student Health Services and Requirements**

- JLCB            Immunization of Students
- KA              School/Community Relations
- KCD            Computer Donation Policy
- KHC            Distribution of Notices by Students (Policy to be changed to  
                         “Distribution of Notices to Students”)

Seconded by Mrs. Cormier.

Vote – so voted.

Attorney Walsh abstained from voting.

**Item #3107 – Removal of Policies**

Mrs. Pelavin moved that the District School Committee vote to approve the recommendation of the Policy Subcommittee to remove the following policies as they have been found by the MASC to be redundant or unnecessary:

- IHA            Basic Instructional Program
- JLA            Student Insurance Program

Seconded by Mr. Abare.

Vote – so voted.

Attorney Walsh abstained from voting.

**Item #3108 – 2020-2021 GHS Program of Studies**

Mrs. Pelavin moved that the District School Committee vote to approve the Gardner High School Program of Studies for 2020-2021 as presented.

Seconded by Mr. Swartz.

Vote – so voted.

Attorney Walsh abstained from voting.

**Item #3109 – Annual School Calendar**

Mrs. Pelavin moved that the District School Committee vote to reconsider the vote taken at the February 24, 2020 School Committee meeting approving the School Calendar for the Gardner Public School District for 2020 – 2021.

Seconded by Mr. Abare.

Vote – so voted.

Attorney Walsh abstained from voting.

Mrs. Pelavin moved that the Calendar be corrected as follows:

- November 3, 2020 is a half day for Professional Development
- March 12, 2021 is a full day for Professional Development

Seconded by Mr. LaFreniere.

Vote – so voted.

Attorney Walsh abstained from voting.

Mr. LaFreniere moved that the District School Committee vote to approve the Gardner Public School District 2020-2021 School Calendar as corrected.

Seconded by Mrs. Pelavin.

Vote – so voted.

Attorney Walsh abstained from voting.

**Item #3110 – Student Opportunity Act - Strategic Plan**

Superintendent Pellegrino presented information on the Student Opportunity Act (SOA). The Act was signed into law in November 2019. School officials met with stakeholders on March 2, 2020 to have input for applying for additional state funding and to determine priorities for the district.

**Mrs. Pelavin moved that the District School Committee move to accept these priorities and commitments and apply for the additional state funding (SOA).  
Seconded by Mr. LaFreniere. Vote – so voted.  
Attorney Walsh abstained from voting.**

**Item #3111 – Level Services Budget**

Superintendent Pellegrino presented the Gardner Public Schools FY 2021 Level Services Budget. He reviewed the Goal: Equity & Excellence for every child, in every classroom, every day. He presented the strategies and the challenges to accomplish this goal.

He went over the budget process and explained how the budget was developed. The Consolidated Spending Plan listed the General Fund appropriation, the Revolving Funds and the Grant Funds. The Budget is based on the same funding the City gave the district last year. As of March 9, 2020, there is a funding gap of \$218,813.

**Item #3112- Curriculum Coordinator Update**

The Curriculum Coordinator's Update was included in the packet. Dr. Goguen was present to answer questions.

**Item #3113 - Special Education Update**

The Special Education Update was included in the packet. Ms. West was present to answer questions.

- **SEPAC – Special Ed Parent Advisory Committee**

Mrs. Hurst received a memo from Ms. Katie Abbott, Chair of the SEPAC (Special Education Parent Advisory Committee), giving an update on the January and February 2020 meetings of the Committee.

**Item #3114 – Grants, Communications & Compliance Update**

The Grants, Communications & Compliance Update was included in the packet. Ms. Dunn was present to answer questions.

**Item #3115– MSBA – New Building Project**

No report at this time.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

Superintendent Pellegrino spoke about actions being taken to ensure that the students and teachers are safe during this time of the coronavirus.

**FINAL COMMENTS**

Mr. Abare thanked Courtney Dunn for her work in obtaining grants. He also spoke about the coronavirus.

Mrs. Hurst also thanked Courtney for all her work. She thanked Ms. Yu for her work on the Transportation Subcommittee and helping finalize a contract.

Mrs. Pelavin participated in “Read Across America” at two schools and it was a nice experience.

Mr. Swartz, Mr. LaFreniere and Mrs. Cormier did not have any comments this evening.

**Executive Session**

**Mrs. Pelavin moved that the Gardner School Committee go into Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining because an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the City's bargaining position. The School Committee will reconvene in open session only to adjourn.**

**Seconded by Mr. LaFreniere.**

**Roll Call Vote: Abare, yes; Cormier, yes; Hurst, yes; LaFreniere, yes; Pelavin, yes; Swartz, yes; Atty. Walsh, abstain.**

**Count – 6 yes; 1 abstention.**

The Committee went into Executive Session at 8:10 pm.

The Committee returned to Open Session at 8:17 pm.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Mrs. Pelavin moved to adjourn.**

**Seconded by Mr. Swartz.**

**Vote – Unanimous.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:19 pm.

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Anne Hurst, Chairperson

**Terri Hillman, Recording Secretary**