

GARDNER SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting – June 14, 2021
Zoom Meeting (due to COVID-19 pandemic)

Members present on Zoom: Mayor Michael Nicholson, Chairperson; Jennifer Pelavin, Vice Chairperson; Rachel Cormier, Secretary; James Abare, Anne Hurst, John LaFreniere, and Robert Swartz

School Personnel present on Zoom: Dr. Mark J. Pellegrino, Superintendent
Ms. Brenda Smith, Administrative Assistant
Dr. Catherine Goguen, Chief Academic Officer
Ms. Courtney Dunn, Grants, Communications & Compliance Mgr.
Mr. Mark Hawke, Director of Finance and Operations

Call to Order

Mayor Nicholson, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7 pm. The meeting opened with a roll call. The meeting was broadcast live on Channel 8, (Gardner Educational Television Station), Gardner YouTube, and recorded by Terri Hillman, Recording Secretary.

Mayor Nicholson announced that this public meeting is being conducted “virtually” pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L.c. 30A, §20, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Gardner School Committee is being conducted via remote participation. All votes taken at this meeting will be by roll call.

RECOGNITION

Dr. Pellegrino recognized the ten GALT students who qualified in the MCAS tests and fulfilled the requirements to receive the John and Abigail Adams Scholarship award.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mrs. Pelavin moved that the District School Committee vote to approve the Consent Agenda as presented:

- **Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting of May 10, 2021 as recommended by the School Committee Chairperson.**
- **Approval of Minutes of the Budget Public Hearing Meeting of May 10, 2021 as recommended by the School Committee Chairperson.**
- **Approval of Minutes of Special Meeting of May 14, 2021 as recommended by the School Committee Chairperson.**
- **Approval of the following Warrants as recommended by the Finance Subcommittee:**
 - **Warrant #21-45 dated 05/06/21 in the amount of \$284,542.72**

- **Warrant #21-46 dated 05/13/21 in the amount of \$43,085.57**
- **Warrant #21-47 dated 05/20/21 in the amount of \$252,100.12**
- **Warrant #21-48 dated 05/27/21 in the amount of \$211,080.47**
- **Warrant #21-49 dated 06/03/21 in the amount of \$4,201,819.44**

Seconded by Mrs. Cormier.

Roll Call Vote – Abare, yes; Cormier, yes; Hurst, yes; LaFreniere, yes; Pelavin, yes, and Swartz, yes.

Count – 6 yes.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Facilities Subcommittee

Mr. Swartz, Chairperson, said that the Facilities Subcommittee met on May 18, 2021. Minutes of the meeting were presented.

An update on Moura's Cleaning Service was provided. There are no cleaning issues at this time.

Lockers at the Gardner Middle School will be replaced during the summer. The City has allocated funding for the project. The full School Committee will be asked to declare the current lockers surplus once the new lockers are installed.

Mr. Christopher Daly has requested that a memorial plaque or street be named in memory of his mother, Mrs. Ellen Daly, who was instrumental in creating the opportunity to build the Gardner High School on Catherine Street. The Subcommittee will research possible options in reply to this request.

Finance Subcommittee

Mr. LaFreniere, Chairperson, said that the Finance Subcommittee met on June 7, 2021. Minutes of the meeting were presented.

The Subcommittee members reviewed and discussed the Finance packet for the month of May. Dr. Goguen, Interim Business Administrator, reported on the following:

- The final invoices for snow removal have been paid. A late spring storm created invoices that exceeded the available balance and a new transfer will be made to correct the deficit.
- Mr. Wayne Anderson, Director of Facilities, has a list of projects with various funding sources to be completed through the summer months and into the 2021-2022 school year.

Item #3296 – Kindergarten Registration Update

Dr. Pellegrino reported that to date there are 97 students registered for Kindergarten for the 2021-2022 school year. Registrations will continue through the summer months.

Item #3297 – Appointment to Keystone Collaborative

Mrs. Pelavin moved that the District School Committee vote to approve the appointment of Dr. Mark Pellegrino, Superintendent, to represent the Gardner School District on the Keystone Educational Collaborative Board of Directors.
Seconded by Mr. Swartz.

Roll Call Vote – Abare, yes; Cormier, yes; Hurst, yes; LaFreniere, yes; Pelavin, yes, and Swartz, yes. Count – 6 yes.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

Item #3298 – Appointment to CAPS Collaborative

Mr. Swartz moved that the District School Committee vote to approve the appointment of Dr. Mark Pellegrino, Superintendent, to represent the Gardner School District on the CAPS Collaborative Board of Directors.
Seconded by Mrs. Cormier.

Roll Call Vote – Abare, yes; Cormier, yes; Hurst, yes; LaFreniere, yes; Pelavin, yes, and Swartz, yes. Count – 6 yes.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

Item #3299 – Superintendent Evaluation – Summative Evaluation

The Collective Evaluation of the Summative Evaluation for Dr. Pellegrino was presented by Mrs. Pelavin. The Collective Evaluation is the summary of all the individual evaluations of each School Committee Member. The Collective Evaluation showed that overall the Committee felt Dr. Pellegrino made significant progress, met or exceeded all of his goals. The Committee ranked him on the standards as being Proficient or Exemplary which gives an overall rating of Proficient/Exemplary for the Superintendent.

Mrs. Pelavin moved that the District School Committee vote to accept the Collective Evaluation as the Summative Evaluation for Dr. Pellegrino for the School Year 2020-2021 with an overall rating of Proficient/Exemplary.

Seconded by Mr. Swartz.

Roll Call Vote – Abare, yes; Cormier, yes; Hurst, yes; LaFreniere, yes; Pelavin, yes, and Swartz, yes. Count – 6 yes.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

Mrs. Pelavin moved that the District School Committee, based on the rating by the Committee, vote that Dr. Pellegrino be given a 5% salary increase based on his employment contract with the City of Gardner.

Seconded by Mr. Swartz.

Roll Call Vote – Abare, yes; Cormier, yes; Hurst, yes; LaFreniere, yes; Pelavin, yes, and Swartz, yes.

Count – 6 yes.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

Dr. Pellegrino stated that he would not take a higher percentage raise than what the staff will receive once negotiations are completed.

Item #3300– Student/Staff Meal Pricing (Tabled)

Dr. Pellegrino requested that this item continue to be tabled until the next School Committee meeting.

Item #3301 – Curriculum Coordinator's Update

The Curriculum Coordinator's Update was included in the members' packets.

Dr. Goguen, Chief Academic Officer and Interim Business Manager, was present on Zoom to answer questions.

Item #3302– Special Education Update

The Special Education Update was included in the members' packets.

Item #3303 – Grants Administrator's Update

The Grants, Communications & Compliance Update was included in the members' packets. Ms. Courtney Dunn, Grants, Communications & Compliance Manager, was present on Zoom to answer questions.

Item #3304– MSBA – New Building Project

A Special Meeting of the School Committee was held on May 24, 2021 to visit the site of the new Gardner Elementary School. The project is on schedule.

COMMUNICATIONS

Dr. Pellegrino thanked School Committee Members, Administration, Staff, Secretaries, and all providers for all their efforts during the recent school year. He is pleased and proud of the people in the District - it has not been a wasted year.

FINAL COMMENTS

All School Committee Members commented on the recent passing of Mrs. Mary Lou Gilman, Health and Physical Education Director, for the Gardner School system for 31 years. She directed and ran the summer gymnastics program and other intramural programs at Elm Street School system and encouraged and inspired many students.

Mr. Swartz, Mrs. Cormier and Mrs. Pelavin attended the GHS graduation exercises. It was an excellent presentation.

Mrs. Hurst said she was proud of the graduating seniors and all they have accomplished.

Mr. Abare commented that he was not in favor of school choice because it makes the wealthy schools stronger and the poor schools weaker. He wished the state could fund schools on a need basis. He asked that his comment be recorded.

Mr. LaFreniere congratulated all the graduating students. He wished everyone a great summer.

Mrs. Pelavin thanked everyone for their work this past school year and hopes next year will be a great year.

Mayor Nicholson was conducting the meeting tonight via Zoom from Stonehill College, Easton, MA, where he is attending Boys State. Two Gardner students are attending. He spoke to the graduates at the GHS exercises and the GALT exercises and he congratulated them. He thanked the members of the community who donated over \$650,000 in scholarships for the students.

Mayor Nicholson congratulated Lieutenant Nicholas Maroni, School Resource Officer, for being chosen by the Gardner Police Department as 2021 Officer of the Year.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Swartz moved that the District School Committee vote to enter Executive Session under M.G.L. Chapter 39, §23B for the purpose of discussing the retirement of a Gardner Public School District employee and to adjourn from Executive Session.

Seconded by Mrs. Pelavin.

Roll Call Vote – Abare, yes; Cormier, yes; Hurst, yes; LaFreniere, yes; Pelavin, yes, and Swartz, yes. Count – 6 yes.

Mayor Nicholson abstained from voting.

The Committee entered Executive Session at 7:40 pm. and ended the Executive Session and adjourned the Regular Meeting from Executive Session at 7:50 pm.
