

Gardner School Committee

Regular Meeting – June 13, 2022

City Council Chambers, 95 Pleasant Street, Gardner, Massachusetts

Members present: Jennifer Pelavin, Vice Chairperson
Rachel Cormier, Secretary
John LaFreniere, Finance Officer
Anne Hurst
Shannon Leighton
Robert Swartz

Member absent: Mayor Michael Nicholson, Chairperson

School Personnel present: Dr. Mark Pellegrino, Superintendent
Terri Hillman, Recording Secretary
Gino DiVito, Student Representative
Dr. Catherine Goguen, Chief Academic Officer
Joyce West, Director Pupil Personnel Services

Call to Order

Mrs. Jennifer Pelavin, Vice Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:30 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.

Recognition by the Superintendent

Dr. Pellegrino recognized Gino DiVito who has served as Student Representative to the School Committee for the 2021-2022 school year. He thanked him for his participation and keeping the School Committee informed of student activities.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Swartz moved that the District School Committee vote to approve the Consent Agenda as presented:

- **Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting of May 9, 2022, as recommended by the School Committee Chairperson.**

- **Approval of the following Warrants as recommended by the Finance Subcommittee:**
 - **Warrant #22-45 dated 05/05/22 in the amount of \$181,276.35**
 - **Warrant #22-46 dated 05/12/22 in the amount of \$148,205.42**
 - **Warrant #22-47 dated 05/19/22 in the amount of \$267,789.83**
 - **Warrant #22-48 dated 05/26/22 in the amount of \$1,162,758.18**
 - **Warrant #22-49 dated 06/02/22 in the amount of \$3,837,779.65**
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Seconded by Mrs. Cormier.

Vote – so voted.

Mrs. Pelavin, Vice Chairperson, abstained from voting.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Facilities Subcommittee

Mr. Swartz said that the Facilities Subcommittee met on May 12, 2022. Minutes of the meeting were presented.

A report of ongoing projects at all the schools with expected completion dates was presented. Most of the projects are expected to be completed in the summer of 2022.

Moira Cleaning has been awarded a one-year contract due to the many unknowns concerning GHS, GMS, and the new Elementary School. A few students have been hired to assist as summer help and a new building maintenance craftsman has been hired.

Finance Subcommittee

Mr. LaFreniere said that the Finance Subcommittee met on June 2, 2022. Minutes of the meeting were presented.

The Subcommittee reviewed the Expense Report and the process of moving funds to cover negative accounts has started.

Mr. Hawke, Director of Finance and Operations has worked with Whitsons and is recommending that meal prices be increased closer to the actual reimbursement rate. The Subcommittee voted to recommend to the full School Committee that meal prices be increased as follows:

Breakfast	\$2.50	Lunch	\$4.00
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STUDENT ADVISORY MEMBER

Gino DiVito, GHS Student Representative to the School Committee, reported on the sports programs and the senior activities before graduation day which was held on June 4, 2022.

NEW BUSINESS

Item #3416 – COVID-19 Update

Dr. Pellegrino reported that there are three cases of COVID-19 at present. Next year the schools will not do testing for COVID-19.

Item #3417 – 2022-2023 Kindergarten Registrations and Summer School

Dr. Pellegrino reported that the kindergarten registration program is now on line.

Item #3418 – Student/Staff Meal Pricing

Mr. LaFreniere moved that the District School Committee vote to accept the recommendation of the Finance Subcommittee and vote to increase the school meal prices as follows:

Breakfast \$2.50 Lunch \$4.00

These increases will bring the meal prices closer to the actual reimbursement rate.

Seconded by Mr. Swartz.

Vote – so voted.

Mrs. Pelavin abstained from voting.

Item #3419 – Superintendent's Evaluation

Mrs. Pelavin had presented Committee members with the combined evaluation for the Superintendent with responses from all the members. Overall, the Committee members said Dr. Pellegrino either made significant progress towards or met his goals. He was given a Proficient Ranking regarding all of the standards.

Mrs. Leighton moved that the District School Committee vote to accept the Superintendent's Evaluation as presented.

Seconded by Mrs. Hurst.

Vote – so voted.

Mrs. Pelavin abstained from voting.

Mrs. Hurst moved that the District School Committee vote to give Dr. Pellegrino a 5% salary increase.

Seconded by Mr. Swartz.

Vote – so voted.

Mrs. Pelavin abstained from voting.

Dr. Pellegrino thanked the School Committee members for his evaluation and thanked his Staff for helping him achieve the Proficient Ranking. However, he will not accept a salary increase higher than his staff.

Item #3420- Curriculum Coordinator's Update

The Curriculum Coordinator's Update was included in the members' packets. Dr. Goguen was present this evening.

Item #3421 – Grants Administrator's Update

The Grants, Communications & Compliance Update was included in the members' packets. Mrs. Dunn was not present this evening.

Item #3422 – Special Education Update

The Special Education Update was included in the members' packets. Ms. Joyce West was present this evening.

Item #3423 – SEPAC Update

The Special Education Département held a virtual presentation for parents and interested parties on "Autism: Supporting the Whole Child Across Settings". Parents/guardians of students receiving special education services are needed to become SPEAC officers.

Item #3424 – MSBA – New School Building Project

Dr. Pellegrino reported the new school building project is on time and on budget. Mrs. Pelavin will arrange a tour of the new building for School Committee members.

COMMUNICATIONS

Dr. Pellegrino thanked the School Committee members, the Central Office Staff, Administrators, and everybody who really pitched in to help make gains academically.

FINAL COMMENTS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mrs. Leighton spoke about the work of the teachers and thanked them for all they have done for the students.

Mrs. Hurst thanked Gino for being the Student Representative. She said the speeches at the Graduation Ceremony were inspiring.

Gino DiVito spoke about his involvement in student activities.

Mr. Swartz attended the DARE graduation at the Middle School. Officer John Lawrence, School Resource Officer, has been the principal instructor for this program. Officer Lawrence will be retiring early in 2023 after approximately 22 years. Mr. Swartz also attended GHS Awards Night at which \$600,000 in awards were presented. He attended the GHS and GALT graduations and the promotion ceremony.

Mr. Swartz spoke about Ms. Susan Hui who recently passed away. She had been Principal of Waterford Street School and the Grants Administrator for the District. Ms. Gloria Zautantas who had been a substitute teacher in the Gardner schools also recently passed away.

Mr. LaFreniere thanked Officer Lawrence for his work with the students and thanked Dr. Pellegrino for a job well done. He wished Gino good luck as he continues his studies.

Mrs. Cormier thanked staff and administrators who made the COVID-19 protocol work. She thanked Gino for his reports on school activities.

Mrs. Pelavin thanked everyone who worked on the GHS Graduation ceremonies. She spoke about the grade 2 reading level growth.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. LaFreniere moved to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. Swartz.

Vote – so voted.

Mrs. Pelavin abstained from voting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm.

Rachel A. Cormier
Secretary