

**GROTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
GROTON, CONNECTICUT**

(*Attachments are available upon request from the Superintendent's Office.)

Committee of the Whole

September 9, 2019

A Committee of the Whole of the Groton Board of Education was held on September 9, 2019 in Room 11 of the School Administration Building.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Kim Watson, Chairperson, at 6:05 p.m.

PRESENT

ABSENT

Mrs. Kim Shepardson Watson, Chairperson
Dr. Andrea Ackerman, Vice Chairperson
Mrs. Katrina Fitzgerald
Mrs. Jane Giulini
Mrs. Gretchen Newsome
Mrs. Rosemary Robertson
Mr. Jay Weitlauf
Mrs. Lee White

Mrs. Rita Volkmann

Dr. Michael Graner, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Susan Austin, Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Dennis Colclough, Director of Technology Services
Mr. Sam Kilpatrick, Director of Buildings and Grounds
Mr. Ken Knight, Business Manager
Miss Addie Clark, Student Representative
Mr. Xavion Quito, Student Representative

1. Approval of Minutes of August 19, 2019

MOTION: Ackerman, White: To approve the minutes of August 19, 2019.
PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

2. Technology Update

Mr. Dennis Colclough gave an update regarding technology in the district:

- Network - Over the summer a lot of work on intra structure has been done:
 - Installed 25 WAPS at FHS to increase bandwidth capacity
 - Relocated WAPS from FHS to CB, WSM, CB, and CC. All old low density WAPS have been removed allowing us to run the latest software on wireless controllers
 - Upgraded switch in FHS to POE allowing the installation of new WAPS
- Servers
 - Updated and patched all servers
 - Updated PowerSchool, SIF Agents
 - Updated VMware ESXi, vCenter and replication site
 - ADSelfService Plus – New feature rolling out this year

Committee of the Whole

September 9, 2019

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- Moved to new MDM solution for Apple products
 - Better overall functionality and management of devices
 - Slightly lower cost over prior application
- Website
 - Continue to make improvements to District website
 - Most recent change, moving from older style photo slideshow to their “Resources” model
 - Athletic Schedules are now automatically fed into the site
 - Data Privacy section created around student data privacy
- Curriculum Website
 - Updated with curriculum work done over the summer
- Student Accounts
 - Google accounts available to teachers in PowerSchool. We no longer need to create lists of accounts
- Chromebooks
 - 1090 Chromebooks delivered and being distributed within our schools
 - 75 each to the elementary level; 160 to each middle school, and 300 for freshmen
 - 20 to the Academy Program at WSM
 - 1:1 is rolling out at WSM with CMS to follow
 - We now support over 5100 Chromebooks district wide (4304 students)
- Security Training
 - Will include security and online training via Safe Schools platform for staff
 - Email, passwords, Cybersecurity, etc.
- Promethean Training
 - Continue onsite training provided by Promethean for schools who currently have boards installed (Finalizing Sept 23rd at NEA)
- Promethean Replacement
 - Currently four units are in each middle school
 - One is installed at NEA
 - Meeting with Department Heads on Sept. 16th at FHS regarding the proper solution for classrooms (is touch necessary in all Departments)
- Laptop Replacement for Middle and High School Staff
 - Explore options for a sustainable replacement cycle
- Website
 - Relaunch self-service page(s) for School Messenger. Allowing parents and guardians to adjust how messages are received
 - Update Photo areas utilizing the “Resources” element allowing for faster creation and distribution of photo usage
 - Explore the idea of a way for crowd sourcing of photos via Google Forms
 - Refresh site pages with the help of the schools
- PowerSchool
 - Opening Parent Portal at the elementary level
 - New standards based Report Card
 - Contacts migration – required by PowerSchool
 - Utilizing TLI days to provide training for building support staff

- Edu Software
 - DreamBox
 - Pearson Realize
 - WaySide Publishing – French I & II
 - APEX program expanding outside of FHS to middle schools and VLA at Central Office
 - Student Data Privacy
 - Ongoing process of approving software companies for software being requested
 - Currently have over 180 software titles and growing

3. **Communications Update [ATTACHMENT #1]**

Ms. Rebecca Beyus, Communications Coordinator, gave an update regarding communications in the district:

- She noted the various means that we share news and stories and information about the Groton Public Schools
- Media relations: There have been features in the Day, Mystic Times and Groton Times
- Social Media: Looking to launch a GPS page by the end of September as well as a variety of other pages. She is working with Principals on the type of content to be posted.
- She noted the launch of the Groton Board of Education You Tube page
- She noted the aspects of the School Messenger page
- She noted upcoming events

4. **Update re: APEX On-Line Summer Learning Program [ATTACHMENT #2]**

Mr. Adam Diskin gave an overview of the APEX On-Line Summer Learning Program

- There were 39 students enrolled taking 68 courses
- He shared the 2018-2019 APEX Final Grade Distribution
- He shared the 6 components of APEX
- He shared the 2019-2020 APEX Digital Learning data
- He shared the course advancement guidelines

5. **Discussion re: advertising regulations [ATTACHMENT #3]**

Mr. Weitlauf noted that the Finance/Facilities Committee reviewed this issue and did not find it controversial; however, the committee had concerns regarding putting the banners in the building.

Dr. Graner shared the Advertising and Promotions Agreement used by the Athletic Director.

A referral was made to the Finance/Facilities Committee and the Policy Committee to determine where the limits are for having advertising done.

6. **Suggested Future Topics**

Mr. Weitlauf requested an update report on the Middle Years Program.

7. Adjournment

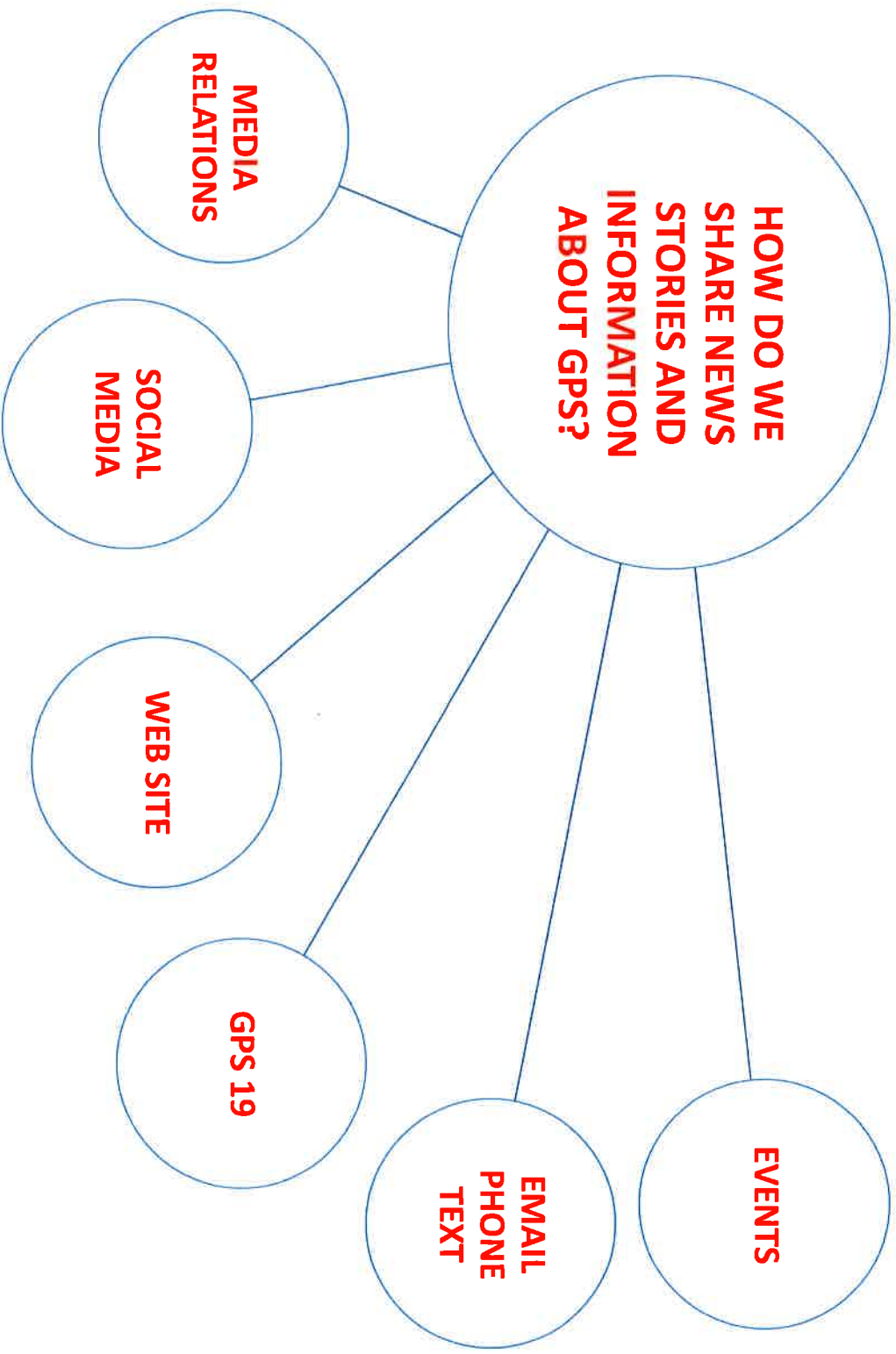
MOTION: Ackerman, Weitlauf:

To adjourn at 8:00 p.m.

PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

Groton Public Schools

Communications Update – September 9, 2019



**MEDIA
RELATIONS**

Groton school district pilots program

Transition Kindergarten approved for 2019-20

By **KIMBERLY DRELIICH**
Day Staff Writer

Groton — The Groton Public School district is piloting a new program this year intended to build the skills and confidence of young children so they will be ready to learn kindergarten the next year. Assistant Superintendent Susan Austin said the Board of Education has approved a one-year pilot for a Transition Kindergarten program for the 2019-20 school year.

"I'm very excited about it and the teachers are very excited. I feel that we're creating an opportunity for our youngest children to become more successful in school," Assistant Superintendent Susan Austin

Groton Teacher of the Year helps students become lifelong readers

Lizanne Johnson makes library fun for students, celebrates diversity

By **KIMBERLY DRELIICH**
Day Staff Writer

Groton — The West Side STEM Magnet Middle School library media center features bright boards encouraging students to read, as well as inspirational messages and posters on digital citizenship and media literacy, while shelves feature books on an array of subjects and characters.

Middle school students during the year frequent the library space, described as a hub of school culture, to ask for book recommendations, build their research skills, learn how to code, or use virtual reality goggles to take a virtual tour exploring the

In Connecticut, if a child turns 5 years old on or before Jan. 1 of a school year, he or she can enter kindergarten in the preceding fall, state Department of Education spokesman Peter Yarbok said.

Connecticut has rigorous Common Core State Standards and is the



Lizanne Johnson, media specialist at West Side Middle School, poses for a photo in the school's library Tuesday in Groton.

Industrial Revolution. Library media specialist Lizanne Johnson, who was named last month as Groton Public Schools' 2018-19 teacher of the year, makes students and staff feel welcome, teachers said.

"She's always positive and always willing to help any time," said eighth-grade language arts teacher Michelle Makzewski. She said Johnson has made the library

SEE LIBRARY PAGE 105

GROTON TO HOLD PRE-KINDERGARTEN AND PRESCHOOL SCREENINGS

Groton — The school district is encouraging Groton families interested in preschool opportunities for 3- and 4-year-olds for the 2019-20 school year to schedule a screening appointment for the Pre-Kindergarten Program and Integrated Pre-School Peer Role Models.

Screenings will be held Aug. 29 and a limited number of spots are available. Parents or guardians can register for an appointment at www.grotonschools.org

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MEDIA RELATIONS

Groton students learn about STEM at academy

Summer program brings pupils throughout district together

By **KIMBERLY DRELLICH**
Day staff writer

Groton — About a dozen first-graders shouted in wonderment as they stopped outside of Charles Barram Elementary School on Wednesday and the bracelets on their heads they were wearing lit into a rainbow.

After a bright, eight-sunlight, cheer Jane Pottlemeyer and her team had indeed happen when

Three Groton Schools now providing free meals to all students

District seeing huge increase in breakfast participation

"Even though it's only been two and a half days, I'm already seeing incredible progress, and they're just so excited to be here and so passionate."

DANIELLE DEEBLE, TEACHER AT CLAUDE CHESTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

"Let's see what it does," said fifth-grade students were participating this week in a four-day Summer STEM — science, technology, engineering and math — Academy.

Summer academy brings students together for STEM program enrichment

BOON

Students across the district are participating in the Summer STEM Academy. The program is designed to provide enrichment in STEM fields for students in grades K-5.

The summer of STEM is a time when students across the district are participating in the Summer STEM Academy. The program is designed to provide enrichment in STEM fields for students in grades K-5.

At a time when students are participating in the Summer STEM Academy, the district is seeing a significant increase in participation in STEM activities. This is due to the district's commitment to providing enrichment in STEM fields for all students.



First-grader Madison Farwell, a student with glasses, is smiling while participating in a STEM activity during the Summer STEM Academy at Charles Barram Elementary School in Groton.

All the activities in the academy are designed to provide enrichment in STEM fields for students in grades K-5. The activities are designed to be fun and engaging, and to provide students with a hands-on learning experience. The activities include experiments, projects, and games that focus on science, technology, engineering, and math.

The district is committed to providing enrichment in STEM fields for all students. This is why we have created the Summer STEM Academy. The program is designed to provide enrichment in STEM fields for students in grades K-5. The activities are designed to be fun and engaging, and to provide students with a hands-on learning experience. The activities include experiments, projects, and games that focus on science, technology, engineering, and math.

[View photos from the event.](#)

MEDIA RELATIONS

In the Schools: Summertime reading makes a big difference

By Susan Austin

Special Advertising Section

For the fourth of July passed, stores quickly began replacing summertime gear with back-to-school supplies. Students will soon start to fill with excitement about returning to school, meeting teachers, seeing their friends and all the new experiences they'll have as they step into a grade or school.

Teachers and staff are also glad to welcome students back this month and have been making preparations throughout the summer, working on curriculum, working on projects, and all of us, the start of the year may feel like it's coming quickly but the last few weeks of summer fun are also filled with learning.

Trips to the library, or playing in the backyard with opportunities to read and explore. These types of experiences and play are important for social and emotional growth.

One of my favorite late summer pastimes is reading a book at the beach. Summer is a great time to build a love of reading and readers of all levels can discover or expand their own passions and interests in a book.

For teens, who have required reading throughout the school year, this is especially important. The summer break offers freedom and choice to explore books and series that interest them and discover the enjoyment of reading.

Summer reading is also one of the most important ways students can prepare to return to school and is critical to helping students avoid the summer slide. According to Scholastic, students who don't read can lose two to three months of reading skills, while students who do read can gain an additional month of proficiency.

I encourage you and your child to take advantage of all the resources available in our own community and online, if you haven't yet. Many of our schools are offering drop-in summer reading programs in August or students can visit any of our community libraries. Our district website, grotonpublicschools.org, is also a resource for online programs and links to Groton Public Schools Summer Learning. Families who don't have access to a computer at home can visit the public library for free computer use with internet access.

In addition to summer opportunities for math and science learning, parks, and on our cool lines are limitless. As we all prepare for another school year, that you've had value your child during the summer, nobody knows your child better than you. Throughout the year, they may have discovered a new passion. You may have

Summertime reading can be a boon in the fall

IN THE SCHOOLS · SUSAN AUSTIN

way they are learning best and what they liked learning about, their strengths and what came most natural, or what was still a struggle.

Those insights can be invaluable to your child's teacher, as they get to know your child and work with him or her throughout the school year. Share them on the first day of school forms, in a quick email or phone call or at all fall conferences.

Throughout the coming school

GROTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO RECEIVE BOOKS

Newly purchased books at Books-a-Million in Waterford will be donated to Groton Public Schools as part of the franchise's Back-to-School Book Drive program. The drive runs through Aug. 26, and a list of desired books for grades K-12 is available at the store to spark a love of reading in all students. For more information, visit booksamillion.com/bookdrive.

Photo: Groton Public Schools

Photo: Groton Public Schools

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SOCIAL MEDIA

- Cross promotion with community pages
- Launch GPS page by end of September
- Content streams and content security



Town of Groton Parks and Recreation ...

August 25 · 🌐

Community share: Groton Public Schools currently has a limited number of Preschool and PreK screening appointments for 3 and 4 year olds open for Wednesday, August 29th. Interested parents can register for an appointment at www.grotonschools.org.





Groton School Matters



Back To School Book Drive to Benefit GPS

Aug 7 2019

Groton Public Schools has been selected as the recipient of the Waterford Books-A-Million Back to School Book Drive through

[Read More](#)

Transition K Pilot Program To Benefit Youngest Learners

Aug 7 2019

Program intended for students who K eligible and have limited preschool experience. Learn more at [TheDay.com](#)

A Fond Farewell to Fitch Principal Joe Arcarese

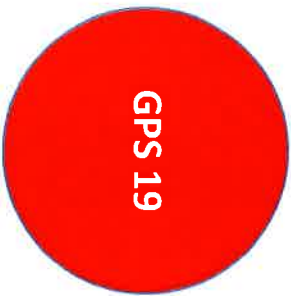
Aug 7 2019

Principal Arcarese is retiring after a total of 23 years at the school. Read the full article at [TheDay.com](#)

GPS in the News: June 10, 2019

Jun 11 2019

Groton Teachers awarded grants to travel abroad. [Read the full article at TheDay.com.](#)



Groton Board of Education
You Tube Channel

GPS 19
ON DEMAND

GPS Channel 19 On Air : Schedule

Time	Sunday	Monday	Thursday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
6:00 AM	STEM in 30: Mars	STEM in 30: Mars	CMS Girls' Basketball vs. Preston 1-31-19	STEM in 30: Mars	CMS Girls' Basketball vs. Preston 1-31-19	STEM in 30: Mars
6:30 AM	A Day of Kindergarten	A Day of Kindergarten		A Day of Kindergarten		A Day of Kindergarten
7:00 AM			FHS 5-24-17 Pops Concert		FHS 5-24-17 Pops Concert	
7:30 AM	WSM Play: Peter Pan	WSM Play: Peter Pan		WSM Play: Peter Pan		WSM Play: Peter Pan
8:00 AM			NEA 6-4-19 Orchestra Concert		NEA 6-4-19 Orchestra Concert	
8:30 AM						
9:00 AM	Convocation 2019	Convocation 2019		Convocation 2019		Convocation 2019
9:30 AM	CK 6-6-19 Band & Orchestra Concert	CK 6-6-19 Band & Orchestra Concert	WSSMMS 5-29-19 Orchestra Concert	CK 6-6-19 Band & Orchestra Concert	WSSMMS 5-29-19 Orchestra Concert	CK 6-6-19 Band & Orchestra Concert
10:00 AM						
10:30 AM	WSM 5-25-17 Band Concert	WSM 5-25-17 Band Concert	CMS 2017 Recital	WSM 5-25-17 Band Concert	CMS 2017 Recital	WSM 5-25-17 Band Concert
11:00 AM						
11:30 AM						
12:00 PM						

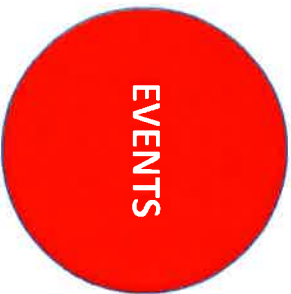
Schedule



- District and school outreach to parents
 - Parent portal
- Parent communications survey
- Bilingual materials



SCHOOLMESSENGER®



EVENTS

- Farm to School – USDA Grant Press Event
 - Congressman Courtney Visit - October 1, 2019
- Attendance Awareness Month – September
- Books-A-Million Back to School Book Drive

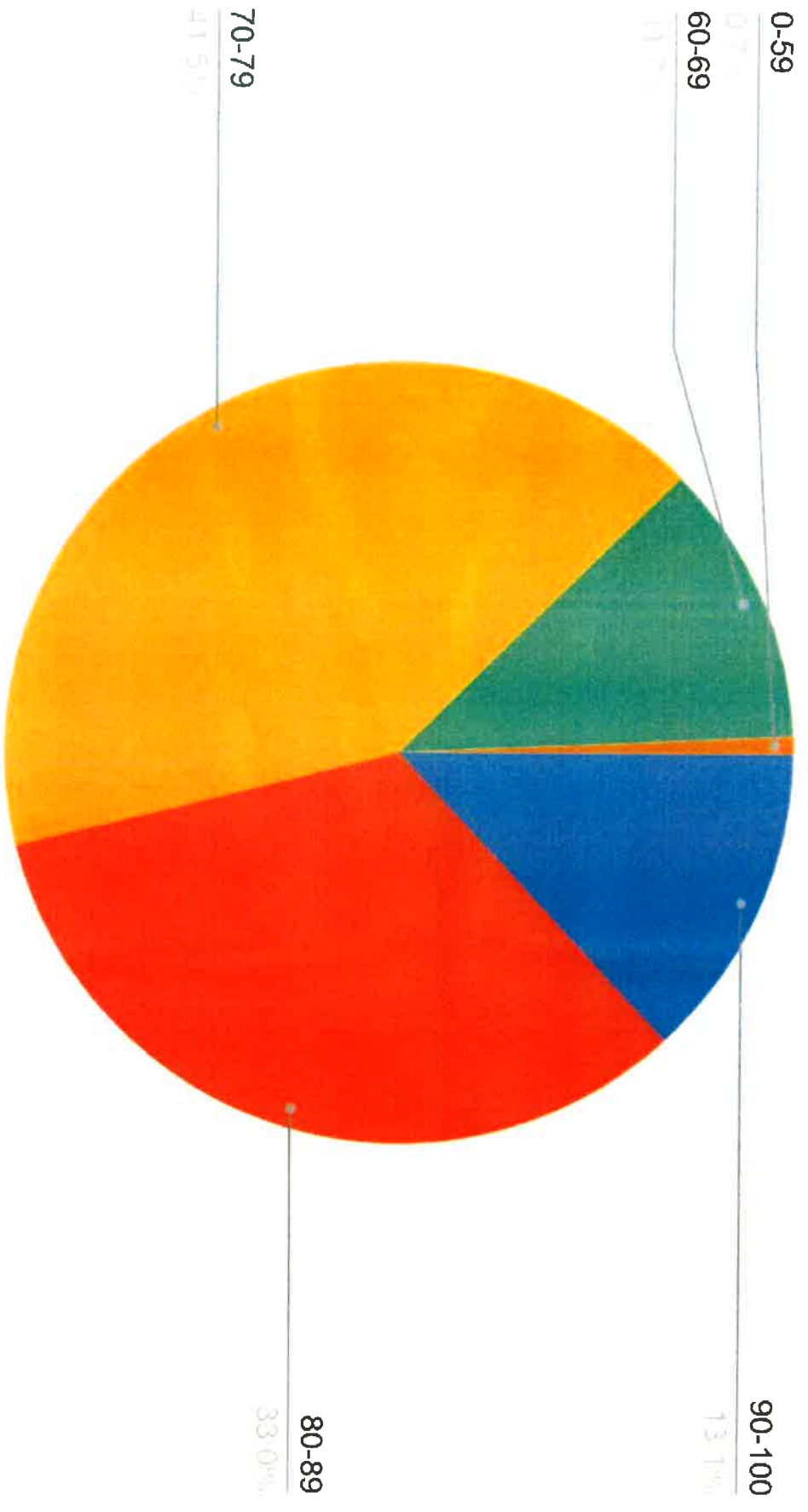
Apex Digital Learning

Serving Our Students

Summer School 2019

- **39** students enrolled
- **68** courses
- **36** Credit Recovery
- **3** Advancement Courses
- **65** courses completed and passed
- **3** *incompletes*

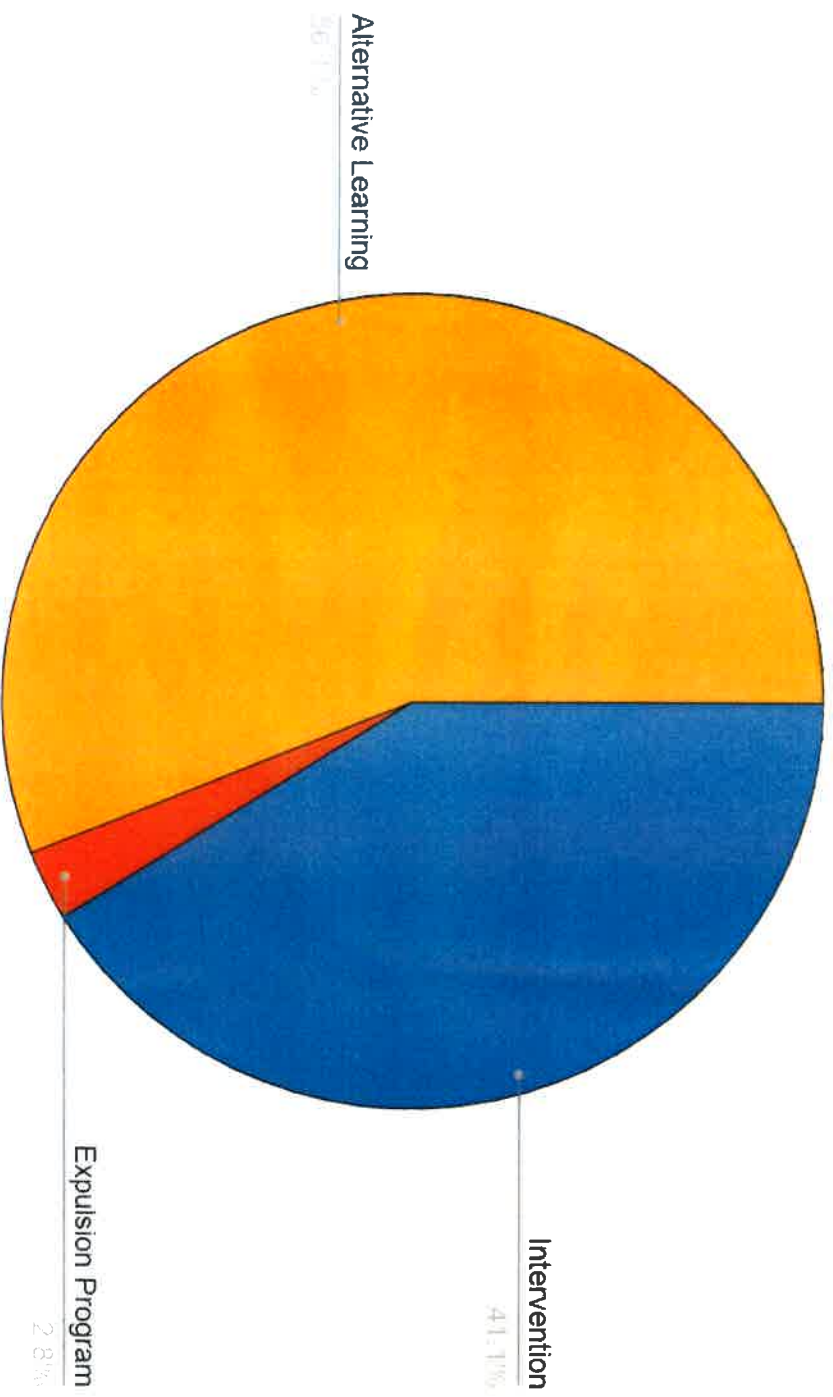
2018-2019 APEX Final Grade Distribution



6 Components of APEX

- ❖ **Alternative Learning Program**
- ❖ **Credit Recovery**
- ❖ **SRBI- Intervention/Supports**
- ❖ **NBA Program Instructional Support/Resource**
- ❖ **Expulsion Program**
- ❖ **Advancement Opportunity**

2019-2020 APPEX Digital Learning



Course Advancement Guidelines

Student Conferences with School Counselor



School Counselor Conferences with Department Chair



Recommendations to Assistant Principal



Principal Approval

Groton Public Schools

P.O. Box K
Groton, CT 06340

Advertising and Promotions Agreement

This agreement, made and entered on this date, _____, is by and between

Groton Public Schools and _____
(hereafter referred to as "Sponsor").

Whereas the Sponsor agrees to pay \$500.00 for one sign advertising on the grounds of Groton Public Schools for a period of one year. Additional signage will cost \$250.00.

Therefore, in consideration of the mutual benefits to be received, the parties agree with each other as follows:

- The GBOE reserves the right to reject any such sign, if it directly or indirectly promotes alcohol and/or tobacco use and/or products, and/or goods, services, content, themes or subject matter which the GBOE deems, in their sole discretion, to be of a political, adult, inappropriate, objectionable and/or non-family friendly nature.
- GPS will provide space for the Sponsor's sign hanging in a prominent location at the facility of choice.
- GPS reserves the right to refuse any advertisement that does not meet the standards observed by the school district advertising policy and guidelines per GBOE policy and regulation #1325.
- GPS has final authority in the approval of sign design, language, details, etc.
- The Sponsor agrees to pay in full for a 3' x 5' sign at a cost of \$500.00 for a year.
- Additional signage will be an additional \$250.00 per sign.

Advertising Agreement – Sponsor Contact Information

- Please return this form, the Sign Advertising Agreement, and a check to the address below made payable to: Fitch Athletics
- Purchase includes the banner, guarantee coverage of any damages to banners, display on FHS grounds, and recognition at athletic contests
- Email digital sign information to: mromano@groton.k12.ct.us

Business Information

Business Name:	
Contact Name:	
Phone:	
Fax:	
Email:	

Check desired location where the sign will be displayed for the year:

	Fall Season (Sept-Nov)		Winter Season (Dec-Mar)		Spring Season (Apr-Jun)
	Dorr Field (Football) *		FHS Gymnasium (Basketball) *		FHS Tennis Courts
	FHS Baseball Field (Field Hockey) *		FHS Gymnasium (Wrestling) *		FHS Baseball Field *
	FHS Gymnasium (Volleyball) *		FHS Gymnasium (Fencing) *		FHS Track
	Avery Point Pool		Avery Point Pool		Washington Park (Softball) *

* Recognition during home athletic contests

Total Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Check #: _____

Sponsor Signature

Date

GPS Superintendent Signature or Designee

Date