GROTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
JULY 14, 2025 @ 6:00 P.M.
CENTRAL OFFICE, ROOM 11/HYBRID

MEMBERS PRESENT: Beverly Washington – Chairperson, Adrian Johnson – Vice Chairperson, Andrea Ackerman (remote), Dean Antipas, Matthew Shulman, Ian Thomas (remote), Jay Weitlauf (remote), Jennifer White, Michael Whitney

ALSO PRESENT: Susan Austin, Anne Marie Mancini, Sam Kilpatrick, Lauren Casini, Rebecca Beyus, John Burt (Town Manager), Dave Goode (Town Councilor), Adam Puccino (Town Councilor), Jill Rusk (Town Councilor)

I. CALL TO ORDER – Mrs. Beverly Washington – Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. REVIEW OF June 16, 2025, MEETING MINUTES – The minutes were accepted.

III. Update re: Proposed Park/Open Space Behind the Former Mary Morrisson Elementary School

John Burt and the other Town Council members in attendance gave an overview of the Town's request regarding open space.

Mrs. Washington suggested that the Superintendent and the Town Manager get together to draft a MOU.

IV. Discussion re: Lottery Process/Lottery Results (Attachment #1)

Lauren Casini gave an overview of the PowerPoint presentation of the Lottery Results SY25-26.

V. Discussion re: Graduation Credit Requirement – FHS (27 credits) vs. State (25 credits) (Attachment #2)

Anne Marie Mancini gave an overview of the Graduation Credit Requirements.

VI. Communication Update – (Attachment #3)

Rebecca Beyus gave a Communications update.

V. REVIEW REFERRAL TRACKING SHEET

MOVE:

- R2022-13 Discussion of Mentor Program – How we are doing? (MS) – to Communications Committee regarding promotion and advertisement and leave the discussion of the Mentor Program under COW
- R2025-6 Discussion re: the number of credits for high school graduation (MW) to Curriculum Committee

ADD:

- Mastery-based Assessment & Credit Reduction to Curriculum Committee
- Review Attendance Policy to Policy Committee

Mr. Shulman suggested that the Board read the Project 2025 section on Education.

V. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Ackerman, Antipas: To adjourn at 9:37 p.m.
PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Our Mission is Teaching and Learning

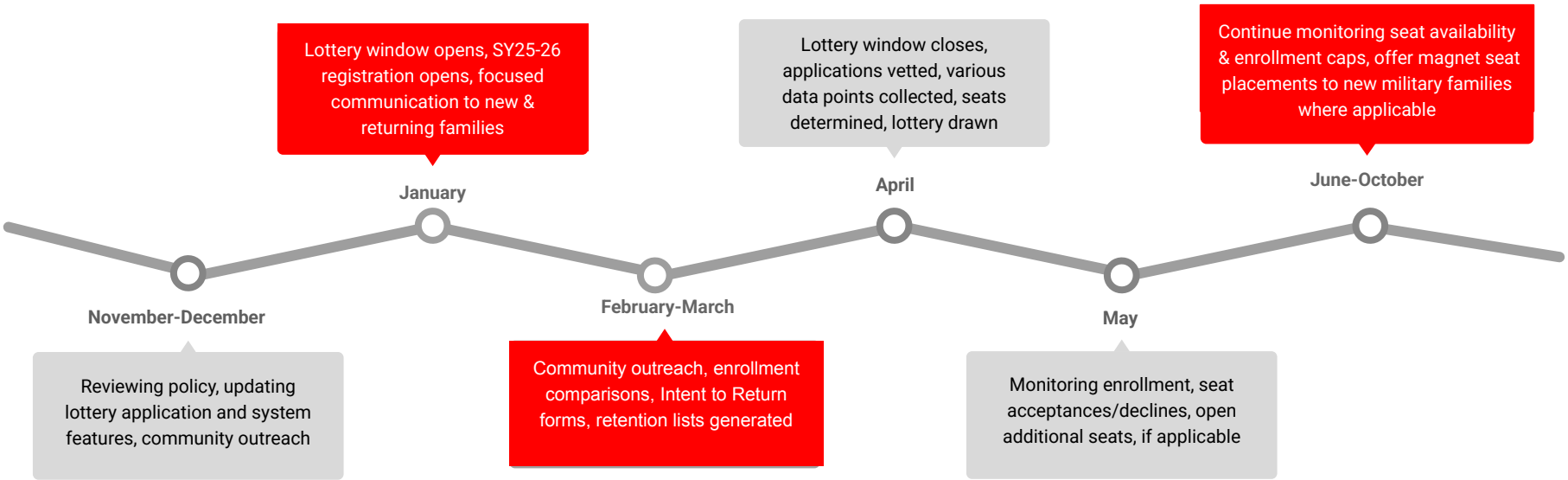
GROTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Groton, Connecticut

Lottery Results SY25-26

July 14, 2025

Lottery Timeline



Promote K-5 magnet themes across all elementary schools

Magnet Outreach & Recruitment

- 2025-2026 Elementary Magnet School Lottery
  - Incoming Kindergarten students - children who will be five on or before September 1, 2025
  - New students moving to Groton- Grades K-5
  - Current in district and out-of-district students rising to Grades K-5 interested in magnet opportunities/school choice

Lottery Process

New this Year: Seat Acceptance Deadline

- Vetting each lottery application to ensure accuracy of information
  a. Attendance zone schools
  b. Choice seating accuracy
  c. Sibling/home school priorities
  d. Grade levels
- Compiling various available data points
  a. Enrollment at each school and grade level
  b. New student registration for the 2025-2026 school year
  c. Intent to Return
  d. Retention lists
- Analyzing patterns of movement
  a. Cross-referencing lottery demands in and out of specific schools and grade levels
  b. Sibling preference impacts

Seated Summary Report

Elementary School	Seats Offered	Seated	Waitlisted
Catherine Kolnaski STEAM Magnet School	34	34	24
Charles Barnum Discovery Magnet School	5	4	3
Mystic River Active Exploration (Play and Ingenuity) Magnet School	11	10	11
Northeast Academy Arts Magnet School	23	22	4
Thames River Environmental and Marine Science Magnet School	13	12	17
Totals	**86**	**82**	**59**

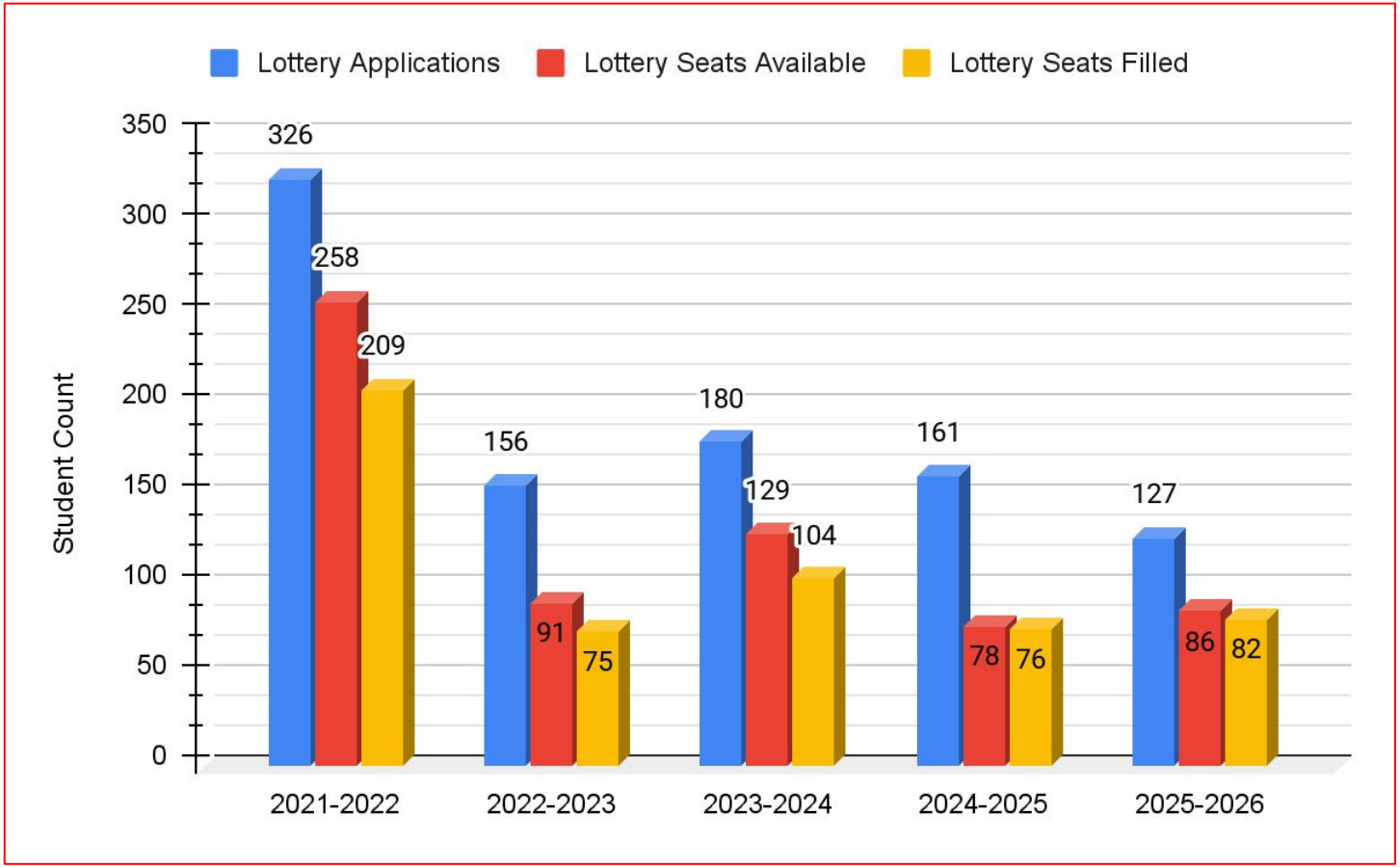
Kindergarten Placement

Kindergarten	Attendance-Zone School					
Lottery Seated School	CBM	CKM	MRMS	NEM	TRMS	**Grand Total**
CBM	1	0	0	0	1	**2**
CKM	11	1	5	2	10	**29**
MRMS	2	2	1	1	1	**7**
NEM	6	3	5	0	3	**17**
TRMS	3	4	1	0	2	**10**
Grand Total	**23**	**10**	**12**	**3**	**17**	**65**

Grade 1-5 Placement

Grades 1-5	Previous School					
Lottery Seated School	CBM	CKM	MRMS	NEM	TRMS	**Grand Total**
CBM	2	0	0	0	0	**2**
CKM	2	0	1	0	2	**5**
MRMS	0	0	3	0	0	**3**
NEM	0	0	1	0	4	**5**
TRMS	1	1	0	0	0	**2**
Grand Total	**5**	**1**	**5**	**0**	**6**	**17**

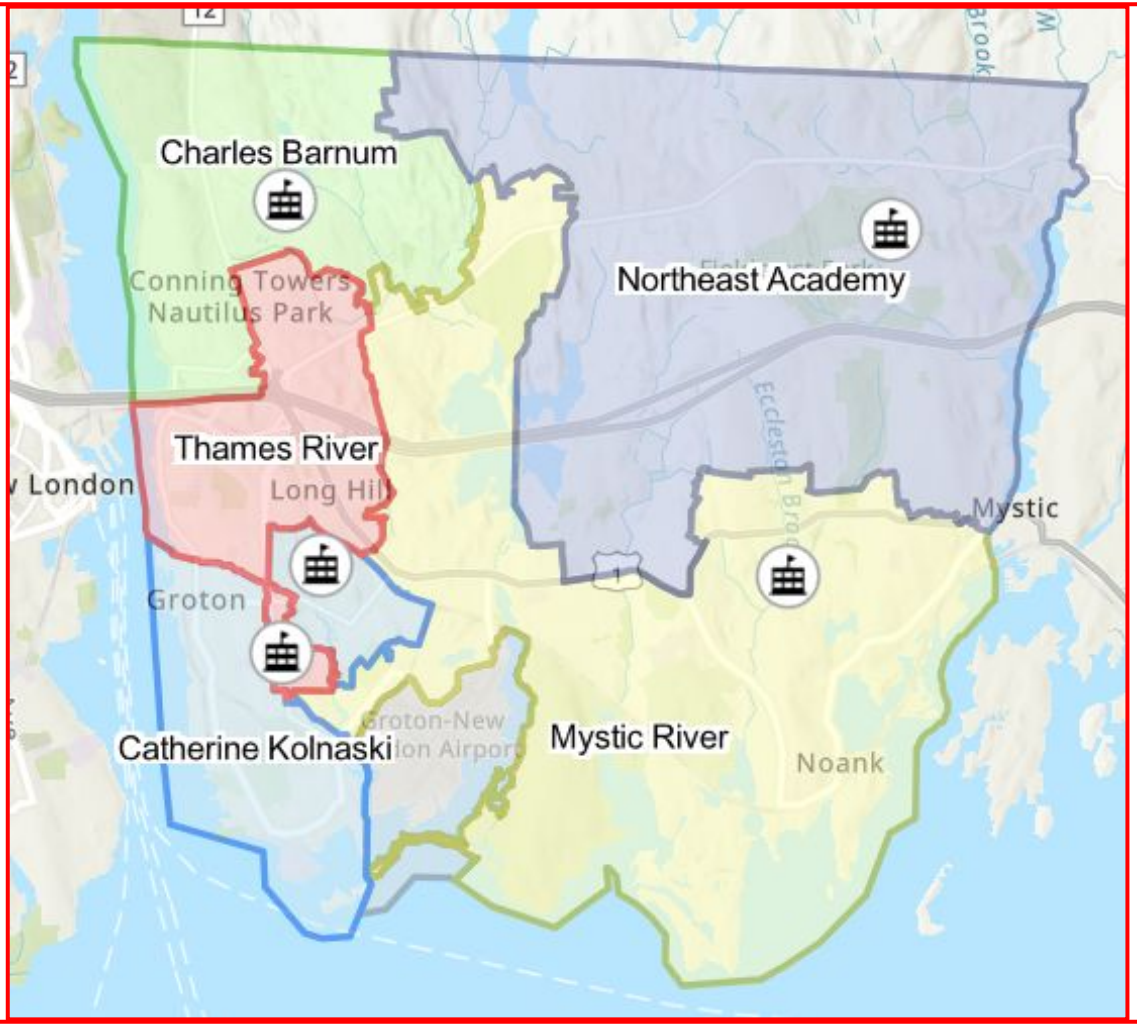
Historical Lottery Results



Historical Lottery Demand- Grade Level

Grade Level	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
K	86	84	96	82	74
1	59	20	26	16	18
2	60	12	15	14	7
3	32	18	15	11	11
4	55	9	20	11	12
5	34	13	8	9	5
Total	**326**	**156**	**180**	**161**	**127**

Attendance Zone School Map



Current School vs. Attendance Zoned School

	Attendance Zone School					
Current School	CBM	CKM	MRMS	NEM	TRMS	Grand Total
CBM	292	3	6	5	20	326
CKM	47	170	57	19	64	357
MRMS	30	13	327	18	24	412
NEM	37	11	51	270	13	382
TRMS	29	26	26	7	297	385
Grand Total	**435**	**223**	**467**	**319**	**418**	**1862**

Comparison of Requirements
CSDE to Fitch High School

Connecticut State Department of Education		Fitch High School	
Requirement	**Credits**	**Requirement**	**Credits**
HUMANITIES	**9.0**	**HUMANITIES**	**9.0**
English	4.0	English	4.0
Social Studies (includes 1.0 in US History and 0.5 in Civics)	3.0	Social Studies	3.0
Fine Arts	1.0	Humanities Elective	2.0
STEM	**9.0**	**STEM**	**9.0**
Mathematics	3.0	Mathematics	4.0
Science (includes 1.0 in Physical Science and 1.0 in Life Science)	3.0	Science	4.0
STEM Electives (includes 0.5 in Financial Literacy)	3.0	STEM Elective	1.0
PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND WELLNESS and HEALTH AND SAFETY	**1.0** **1.0**	**PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND WELLNESS and HEALTH AND SAFETY**	**1.0** **1.0**
WORLD LANGUAGE	**1.0**	**WORLD LANGUAGE**	**2.0**
MASTERY-BASED ASSESSMENT	**1.0**	**MASTERY-BASED ASSESSMENT**	**1.0**
ELECTIVES	**3.0**	**ELECTIVES**	**4.0**
FAFSA COMPLETION OR WAIVER	N/A		N/A
Totals	**25**		**27**


Our Mission is Teaching and Learning
GROTON
PUBLIC
SCHOOLS
Groton, Connecticut
Communications
Update
July 14, 2025

Communication Goals

Strengthening Communication and Engagement

- Enhance the parent user experience across all communication platforms.
- Expand staff and parent knowledge through targeted training on effective, day-to-day use of communication tools.
- Leverage existing platforms and resources to deepen family engagement—especially around initiatives that drive student success.
- Continue to support district and school efforts to highlight the achievements of Groton Public Schools' students, staff, and programs.
- Align communications initiatives to support the goals and objectives of the district's Strategic Plan.

Website

Website: Snapshot

District and School Websites - 8 Individual Sites



Website Improvements

Enhancing the Groton Public Schools Website Experience

- Improve user experience district-wide by ensuring easy access to key information and effectively showcasing Groton Public Schools schools, staff, and students.
- Simplify navigation menus and standardize design across all school websites for a consistent user experience.
- Highlight frequently accessed content for quicker reference and ease of use.
- Build staff capacity through targeted website training.
- Increase the volume and frequency of fresh content, incorporating interactive elements and engaging photo and video content to enhance user engagement.
- Prioritize accessibility by digitizing traditional paper-based formats and replacing PDFs and external links with fully integrated native web content. Ensure the site is:
    - Mobile responsive
    - Translatable
    - ADA compliant

ParentSquare

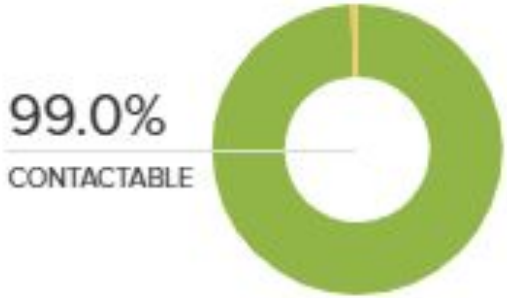
ParentSquare: Snapshot

4,009
STUDENTS →

1,119
STAFF & TEACHERS →

4,979
PARENTS →

155
GUESTS →



4,009 STUDENTS' FAMILIES →

CONTACTABLE **3,982** →
At least one student contact is contactable

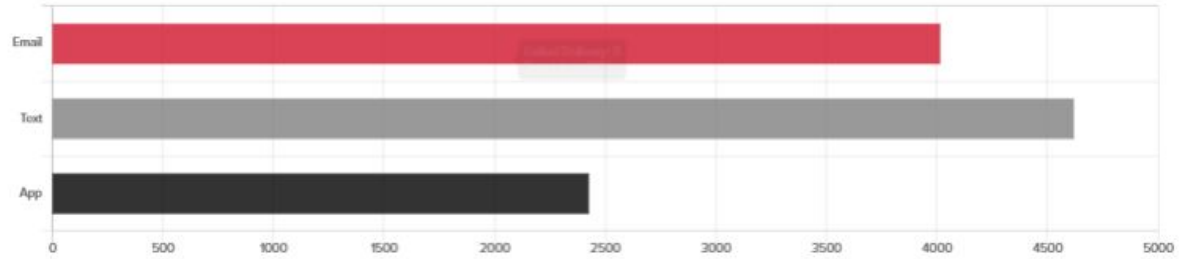
NON-CONTACTABLE **27** →
No student contact is contactable

NO CONTACT INFO **0** →
There are no student contacts listed



ParentSquare: Reach and Deliverability

REACH METHODS



EMAIL

4,245 (85%) Parents with emails

4,015 (81%) Opted to receive emails

4,015 (81%) Receiving emails

0 (0%) Failed emails

APP

2,889 (58%) Parents with app

2,426 (49%) Receiving notifications

TEXT

4,914 (99%) Parents with phones

4,619 (93%) Opted to receive texts

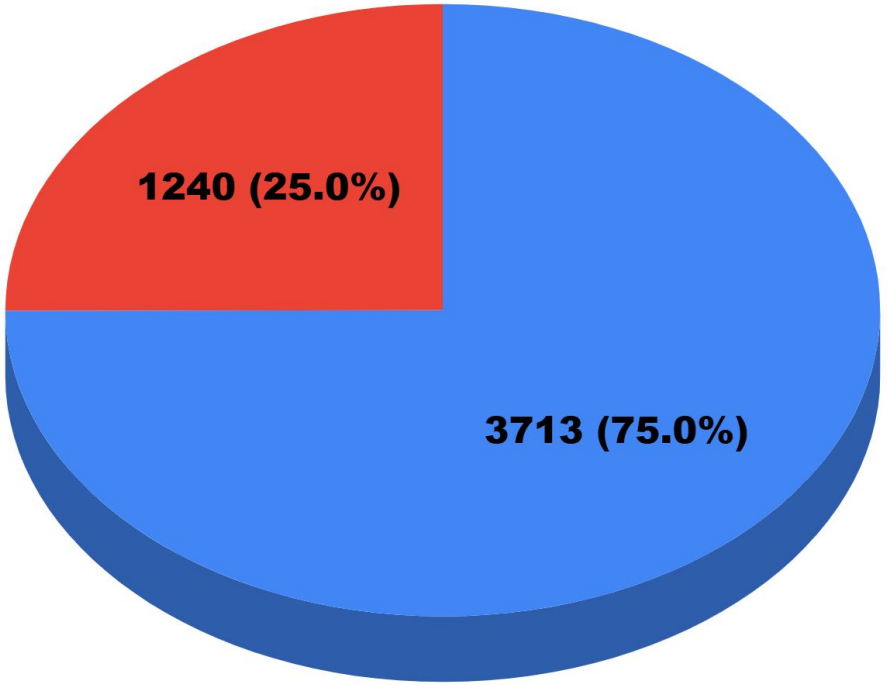
4,619 (93%) Receiving texts

0 (0%) Failed texts

** all percentages are out of the total 4,979 parents in the District*

ParentSquare: Parent Engagement

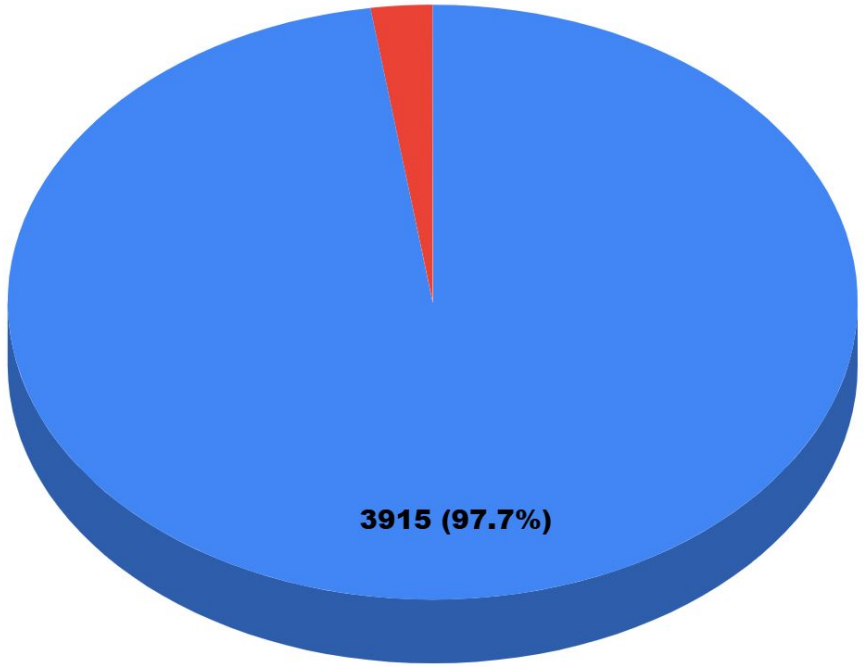
75% of our 4,979 unique district parents now have an **activated ParentSquare account**, an increase from **73.3% since March 20, 2025.**. Respectively, the percentage of parents without an activated account has dropped nearly 2%.



ParentSquare: Parent Engagement

97.7% of our 4,009 unique students have at least one parent or guardian with an **activated ParentSquare account**.

This marks an increase from **96.8%** as of **March 20, 2025**—a positive step closer to full family engagement!



ParentSquare: Two-Way Communication

190,498 Direct Messages / 18,328 Threads

During the 2024-2025 School Year

ParentSquare: Myth vs. Truth

What does activating an account really mean?

Myth: Families won't receive messages unless they download the app or activate their ParentSquare account.

Truth: Families will still receive communications from Groton Public Schools even if they do **not** download the ParentSquare app or activate their account.

However, activating your account unlocks many helpful features including thea bility to personalize ones ontifcation preferences. Families do need to register in order to participate in two-way messaging, sign forms, and access confidential, student-specific information and documents.

ParentSquare: Goals

- **Highlight and Promote Usage**
  Continue to highlight ParentSquare tools and resources to support increased participation and engagement between staff and families.

- **Ongoing Training**
  Provide consistent training opportunities for staff and parents to ensure effective use of the platform.

- **Streamline Communication**
  Monitor and manage message volume to minimize communication overload for families.

- **Review Community Information Policies**
  Evaluate district policies related to the distribution of community-based communications.

Secure Document Delivery

Digital Report Card Delivery: Progress & Alignment

- Parents views of K-5 report cards increased from **below 50% (2023–24)** to **above 90% (2024–25)**

- Benefits:
  - Saves time, paper, postage, and printing
  - Reaches parents in dual households
  - Trackable—we know when documents are viewed

- Still a time and place for paper, but digital is now the default

- CT is transitioning to Secure Document Delivery for SBAC over 2 years and phasing out paper.
  - Many districts already adopting Statewide Shift: Secure Document Delivery
  - Groton Public Schools will adopt digital delivery for the 2025-26 school year

Additional Highlights

Additional Focus Areas

- **Collaboration with Nurses**
  ParentSquare and PowerSchool teams are working with school nurses to improve efficiency in collecting and tracking required student medical documentation.

- **ParentSquare Pay**
  Exploring implementation of ParentSquare Pay to streamline payment collection and tracking.

- **Training for Coaches**
  Providing targeted meetings and training sessions to support athletic coaches in effective ParentSquare usage.

- **StudentSquare Implementation**
  Focused implementation of StudentSquare to increase student engagement and communication..

Attendance Supports

More direct, personalized outreach to families, through letters or texts, can reduce absenteeism, researchers have found.

Attendance Playbook

Attendance Playbook Highlights

Best practices include:

- Focus on empathy, how the school can help families, and what specific things families can do.
- Avoid focusing on punitive messages that leave parents feeling blamed
- Include printed personalized postcards or letters, rather than just texts
- Provide precise, personalized information rather than generic messages
- Send repeated communications throughout the year

Attendance

Parents can now respond directly to Attendance Notifications in ParentSquare to explain their child's absence.

- **Benefits:**
  - Increases parent engagement
  - Supports timely and accurate documentation to excuse absences
  - Encourages compliance with district attendance procedures
- **Policy Alignment: Board Policy 5113 – Attendance**
  "While a written note from a parent or guardian will likely be the most common form of documentation, other methods of reporting a student's absence are acceptable, such as... through an online system with controlled access..."

Attendance

- **Ongoing Support & Strategy:**
  - Meetings with Attendance Teams
  - Use of Attendance Plus for additional tracking and communication interventions

GROTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SCHOOL IS BETTER WITH YOU!

2025-2026 Student Calendar

School Times

Elementary:	9:00 a.m. - 3:35 p.m.
Middle:	7:50 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
High:	7:40 a.m. - 2:20 p.m.

N - No School
E - District Early Dismissal
C - K-8*Conferences/Early Dismissal *K-5 Only on March 26
L - Last Day
S - Snow Make Up Days

School is better with you!

www.grotonschools.org/betterwithyou

Thank you.