

**GROTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
NOVEMBER 17, 2025 @6:00 P.M.
CENTRAL OFFICE, ROOM 11/HYBRID**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Beverly Washington – Chairperson, Adrian Johnson – Vice Chairperson, Andrea Ackerman (remote), Ian Thomas (remote), Jay Weitlauf (remote/left at 8:24 pm.), Jennifer White, Michael Whitney

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dean Antipas, Sean Corcoran

ALSO PRESENT: Susan Austin, Denise Doolittle, Shannon Weigle, Lauren Casini (remote)

I. CALL TO ORDER – Mrs. Beverly Washington – Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

II. Review of the November 10, 2025, MEETING MINUTES

The minutes of November 10, 2025, were approved.

III. CK, CB, & NEA Data Review & Student Improvement Plans (Attachment #1)

Principals Stephanie Sawyer (CB), Christine Dauphinais (CK), and Ryan Cheney (NEA) gave an overview of the Data Review and Student Improvement Plans for their respective schools.

IV. Office of Early Childhood Grant (Attachment #2)

Denise Doolittle, Karen Hyatt (S.E. Supervisor), and Shannon Weigle (Grants Coordinator) gave an overview of the Early Childhood Grant. Mrs. Weigle reviewed the Smart Start Grant, Ms. Hyatt reviewed Phase 1 and Denise Doolittle reviewed Phases 2 & 3.

V. Update re: Grants (Attachment #3)

Shannon Weigle gave an update on grants, presently completing and those submitted.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Ackerman, Whitney:: To adjourn the meeting at 9:29 p.m.
PASSED - UNANIMOUSLY



**CB/CK/NEA Data Review
&
School Improvement Plan**

November 17, 2025

GPS Strategic Plan Pillars

1



Accelerate Academic Achievement



2



Cultivate a Rich and Vibrant Learning Community



3

Strengthen Pathways that Develop Post Secondary Readiness



4

Attract and Grow A Skilled and Supported Workforce



5

Improve Operational Efforts and Increase Fiscal Responsibility



Key Performance Indicators

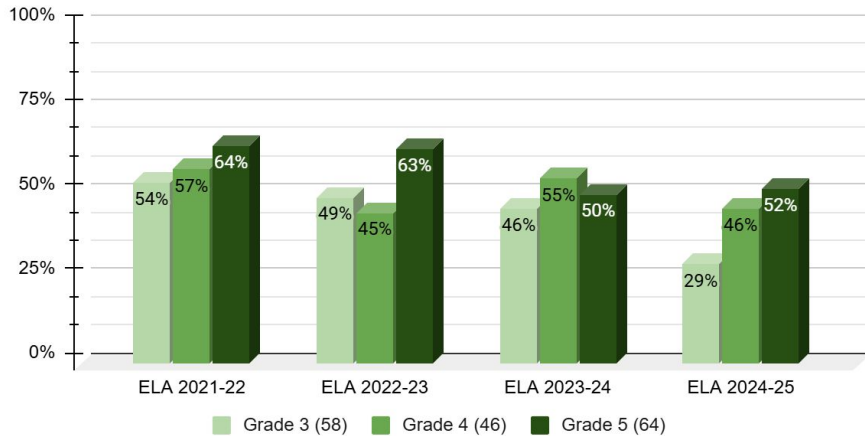
| Academics | Attendance | Behavior | College and Career Readiness | Communications & Climate |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| Accountability Index | Average Daily Attendance | # of Incidents of In-School Suspensions | % On-track for Graduation | % of K-5 Students Who Can Identify a Trusted Adult |
| DPI- ELA | % of Students Chronically Absent | # of Incidents of Out of School Suspensions | % Taking CCR Courses | % of 6-12 Students Who Can Identify a Trusted Adult |
| DPI- Math | Average # of Staff Absences | | Postsecondary Entrance | % of Staff Reporting PD is Connected to Position |
| DPI- Science | | | 4-Year Graduation Rate | % of Parents Who Believe there are Opportunities for Caregiver Involvement |

Charles Barnum Magnet School: Who We Are...

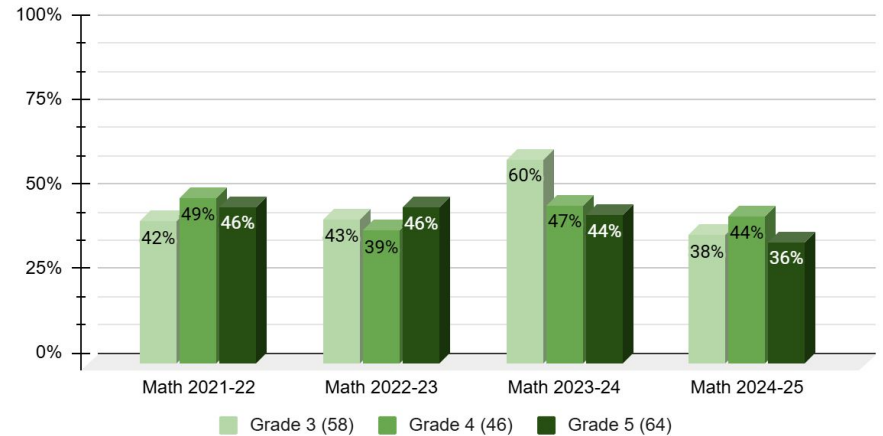
| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| School Enrollment | 316 |
| Special Programming | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grades 4 and 5 Academy |
| Student Makeup | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 36% Free/Reduced Eligible• 22% Special Education• 2% Limited English Proficiency |
| Chronic Absenteeism Trend | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2023- 15.6 %• 2024- 17.9%• 2025- 17.2 % |
| Theme/Theme Related Opportunities | <p>Charles Barnum Magnet School is dedicated to providing educational experiences that foster discovery through creativity, curiosity, and exploration. Discovery Block built into our weekly schedule as well as Discovery Enrichment. Discovery Expo after each cluster rotation. Partnership with the Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center.</p> |

Accelerate Academic Achievement

Charles Barnum SBAC Over Time
Students At or Above Benchmark



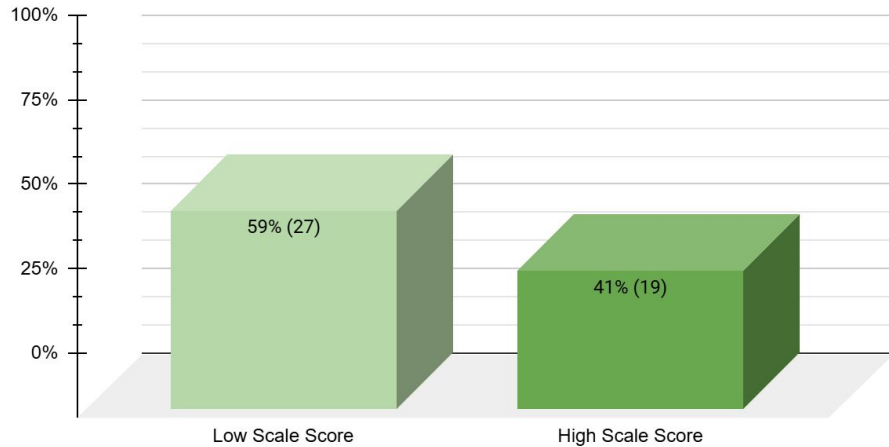
Charles Barnum SAC Over Time
Students At or Above Benchmark



Accelerate Academic Achievement

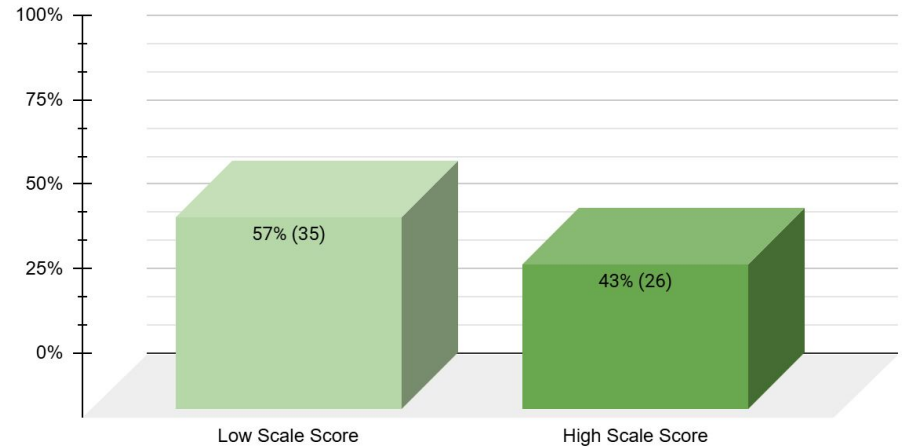
Charles Barnum ELA Performance

Students Approaching Benchmark (46)

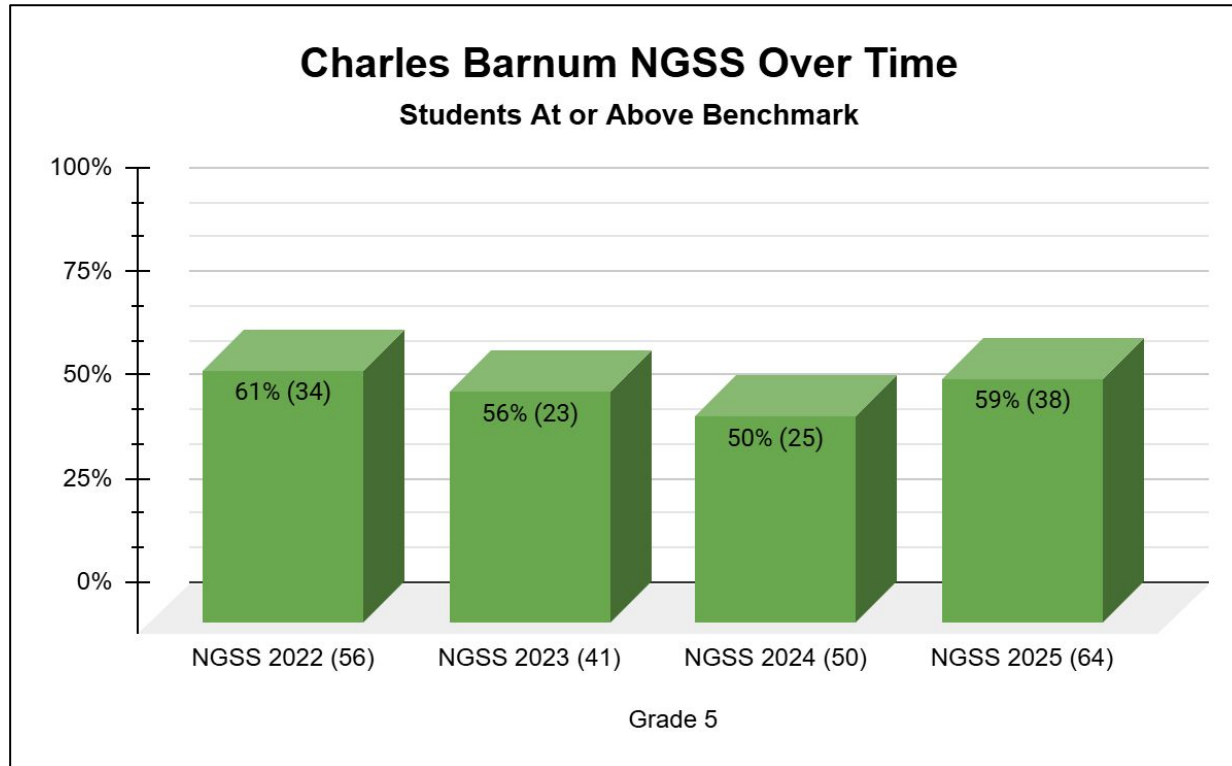


Charles Barnum Math Performance

Students Approaching Benchmark (61)



Accelerate Academic Achievement



Accelerate Academic Achievement

2024-2025 Action Step Focus:

- ELA-Implementation of UFLI Phonics (K-3); Wit & Wisdom implementation with fidelity; mClass DIBLES (K-5) - school-wide trends we've noticed correlate to SBAC; using suggested activities for small group instruction;; using interims for instruction - teaching tool to start the year
- Math - Fluency through games (math or WIN); Dreambox & Grade Level reflections; using interims for instruction - teaching tool to start the year -specials team; also small groups of enrichment
- SEL - Taking next steps to identify trusted adults in the building; DESSA results are being used with the SEL Team and will begin work on using the platform to complete whole group lessons and work with DESSA Groups (both SEL Tutors).
- Magnet - working through adding our DPNC partnership and expanding our Discovery Expo to bring in more families
- Science - Mystery Science; continue to improve our use of the NGSS Interim and meet with Science Coordinator

Outcome:

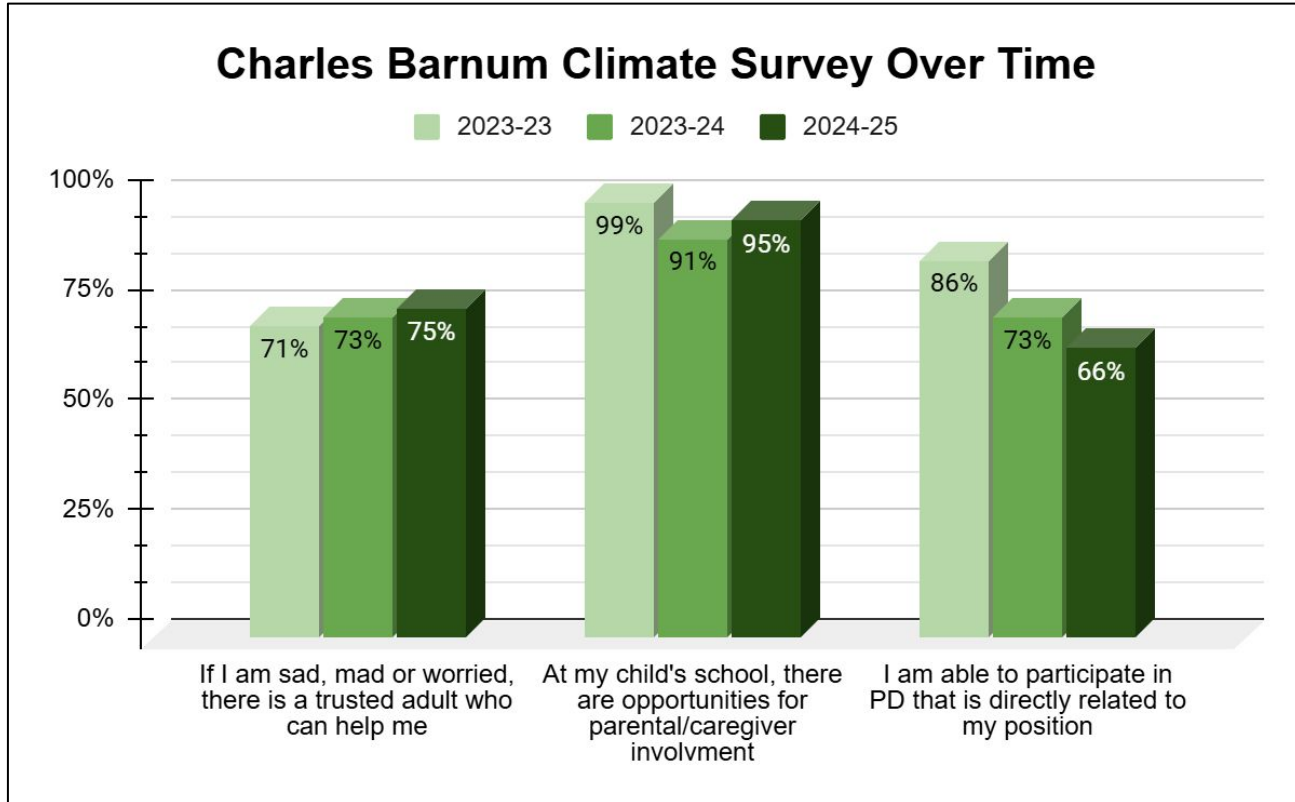
- ELA Academic Growth- 46.9% (all) 47.0% (high needs)
- Math Academic Growth- 59.9% (all) 67.0% (high needs)
- Science- 69.9 (all) 63.0 (high needs)
- Trusted Adult- 75%
- DIBELS



Accelerate Academic Achievement

| District Priorities | School Action Steps |
|---|---|
| Ensure a comprehensive, standards-aligned curricula for all students, PreK-Grade 12 | Ensure consistent implementation of the approved K-5 ELA, Math, and Science programs in alignment with district pacing guides and assessment timelines. |
| Provide engaging, student-centered instruction that promotes active learning and meaningful connections | Incorporate student-centered approaches that extend learning stamina, create opportunities for productive struggle, and increase teacher efficacy through deliberate planning, modeling, and reflection. |
| Use district, school, and classroom assessment data to make informed decisions about instruction and improve student outcomes | Design data-driven WIN blocks, incorporate IABs to strengthen unit alignment, and analyze i-Ready/DIBELS trends to adjust instruction. Weekly meetings with content specialists centered on student data, teacher action steps, and follow through |
| Ensure equitable access to resources and opportunities, including differentiated interventions and multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) | Continue our built in CST times Continue grade-level meetings with coaches to discuss student data and student progress Implement 6-8 week intervention cycles Attention to I-Ready weekly minutes and lesson completion |

Cultivate a Rich & Vibrant Learning Community



Cultivate a Rich & Vibrant Learning Community

| District Priorities | School Action Steps |
|--|---|
| Prioritize the physical and mental well-being of staff and students through supportive programs and initiatives | Continue monthly Community Meetings (SuperPowers), staff spirit events and check-ins, utilize SEL tutors for Tiered SEL interventions |
| Ensure students have at least one trusted adult who cares about them and knows their name, strengths, and story | Analyze results of trusted adult survey and determine next steps, continue morning meeting circles (Responsive Classroom) |
| Foster meaningful family and community engagement through accessible, frequent, and welcoming communication | Increase our social media presence, set goal of 100% parent/teacher conference attendance, weekly ParentSquare messages to families from teachers |
| Encourage students to use SEL strategies to build healthy identities, manage emotions, build empathy, maintain positive relationships, make responsible decisions, and achieve goals | Use SEL screener to determine targeted interventions from our support service providers (SEL tutors, social workers, school psychologist) Continue restorative circles and repairing the harm strategies |
| Empower student and educator agency by providing opportunities for voice, leadership, and celebrations of learning | Increase student leadership opportunities throughout daily school activities (morning announcements, A4L, Community Meeting and Assembly hosts) Supporting teacher growth goals, encourage staff participation on district committees, paraprofessional feedback on professional development opportunities |
| Increase student and staff engagement by emphasizing the importance of daily attendance | Monthly attendance incentives, increase communication about attendance with parents, building attendance goals, targeted interventions for historically chronically absent students |

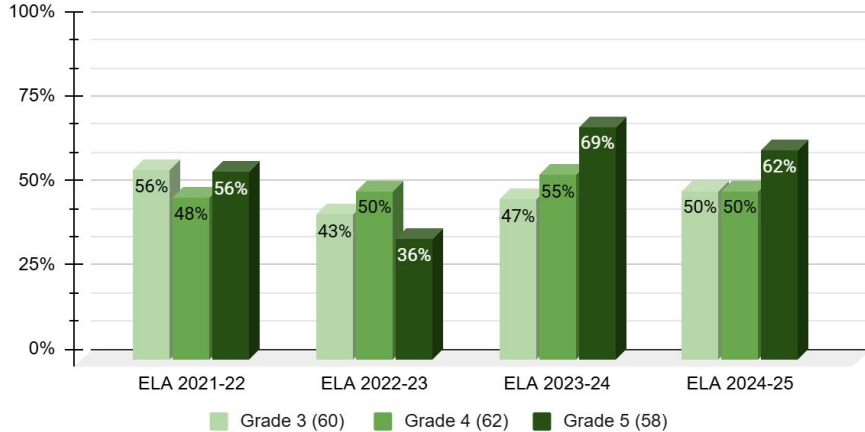
Catherine Kolnaski Magnet School: Who We Are...

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| School Enrollment | 349 |
| Special Programming | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Early Learning Skills Program (K-5) |
| Student Makeup | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 46% Free/Reduced Eligible• 17% Special Education• 4% Limited English Proficiency |
| Chronic Absenteeism Trend | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2023- 17.1%• 2024- 14.8%• 2025- 18.8% |
| Theme/Theme Related Opportunities | <p>STEAM = STEM + Arts Guaranteed experiences in science, engineering, computer science/coding, robotics, and maker education K-5 Piano Lab starting Gr 1 & Strings starting Gr 2 Additional opportunities in Lego Robotics and Drone Team Partnerships with CT Science Center, Project O, and NESS</p> |

Accelerate Academic Achievement

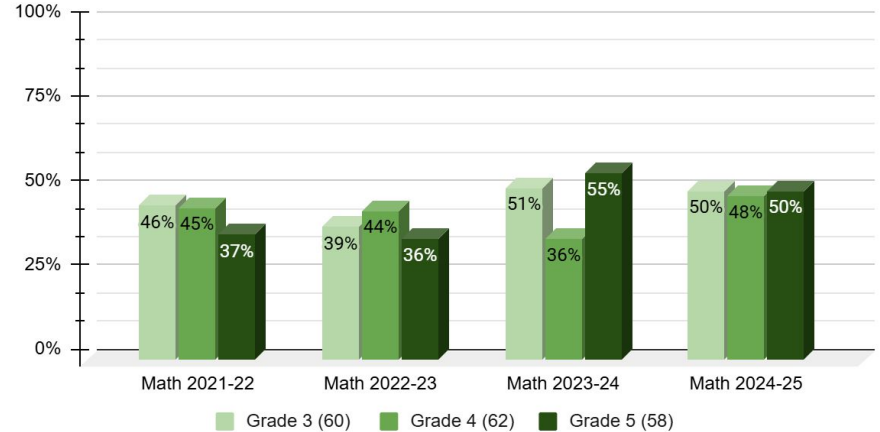
Catherine Kolnaski SBAC Over Time

Students At or Above Benchmark



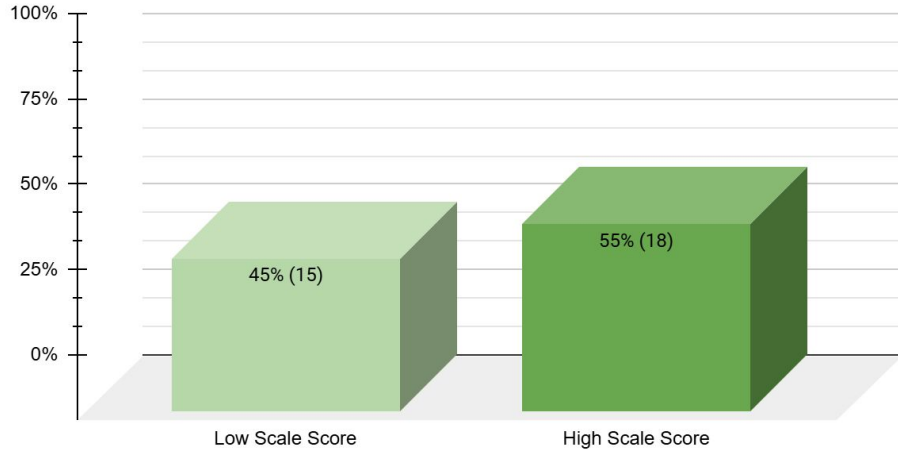
Catherine Kolnaski SBAC Over Time

Students At or Above Benchmark

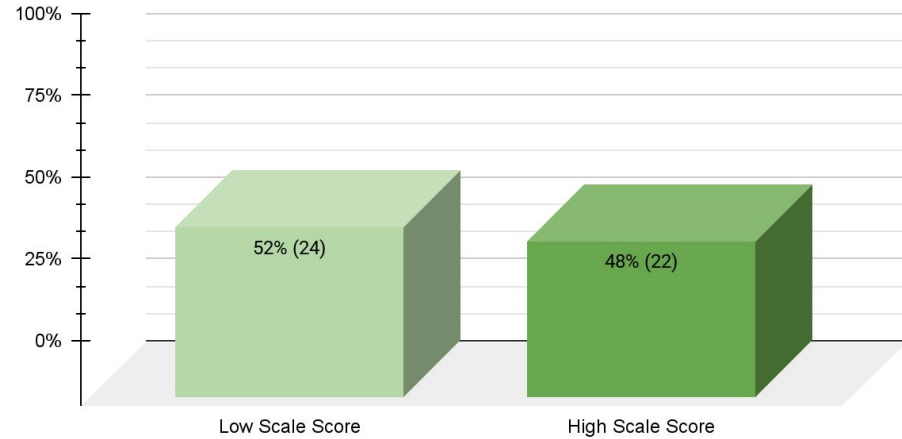


Accelerate Academic Achievement

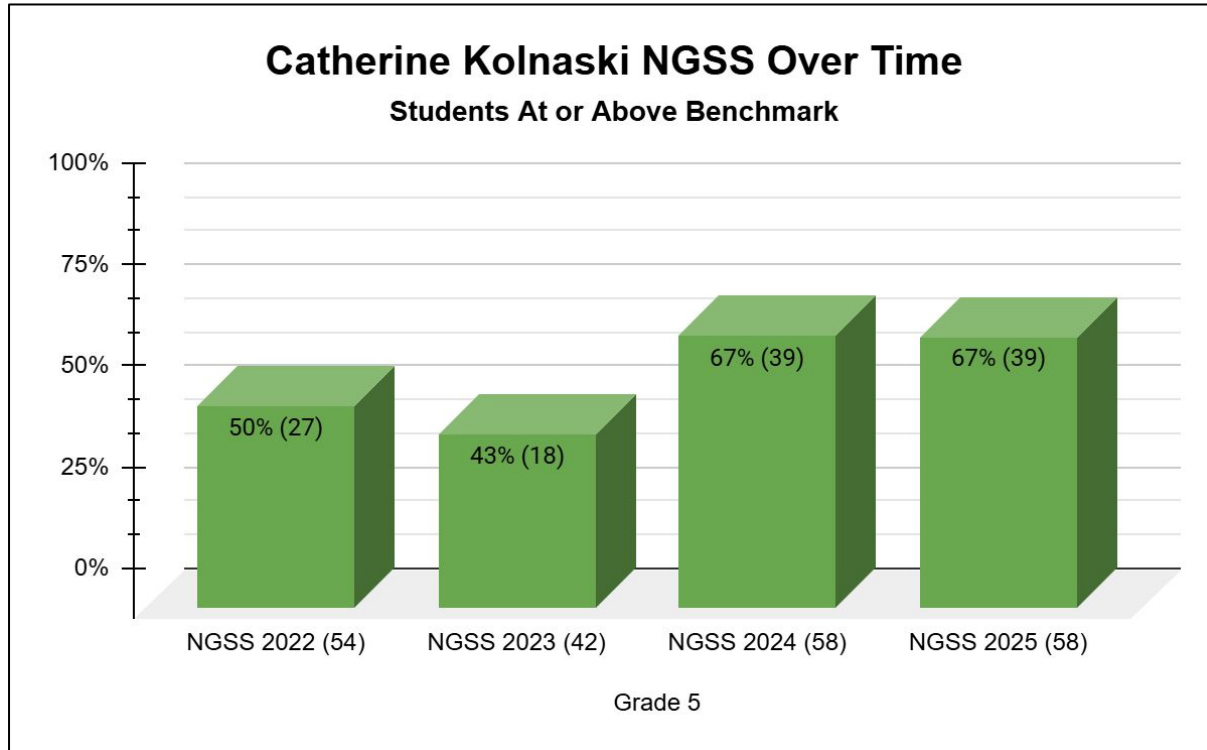
Catherine Kolnaski ELA Performance
Student Approaching Benchmark (33)



Catherine Kolnaski Math Performance
Student Approaching Benchmark (46)



Accelerate Academic Achievement



Accelerate Academic Achievement

2024-2025 Action Step Focus:

ELA- Increase in students' ELA performance as evidenced by DIBELS & SBAC performance.

Math - Increase in students' Math performance as evidenced by Forefront Number Sense Screener & SBAC performance.

Science - Increase in students' understanding of scientific concepts and ability to communicate thinking as evidenced by improved NGSS performance.

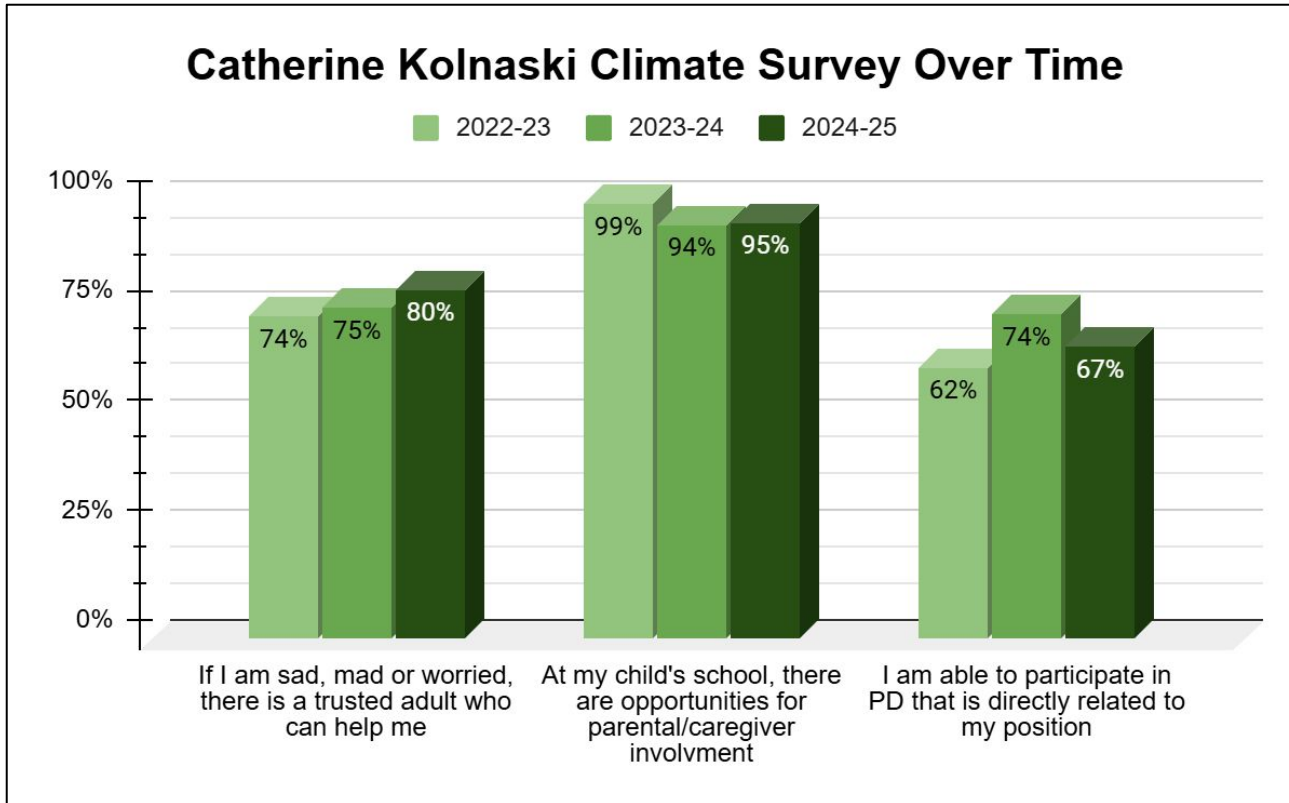
Outcome:

- **ELA** - 40% of grade 4 & 5 students made $\geq 100\%$ of growth target
- **ELA** - 50% of grade 4 & 5 students classified as high growth (decrease from 58%)
- **ELA** - rough cohort growth comparison 50% high growth in gr 4 to 55% high growth in gr 5
- **ELA** - % K-4 at/above on DIBELS increased 52% BOY to 65% EOY w/ 35% of student increasing 1 or more levels.
- **Math** - 54% of grade 4 & 5 students made $\geq 100\%$ of growth target
- **Math** - 64% of grade 4 & 5 students classified as high growth (increase from 56%)
- **Math** - rough cohort growth comparison 38% high growth in gr 4 to 73% high growth in gr 5
- **Science** - maintained 67% at or above despite small drops in ELA & Math

Accelerate Academic Achievement

| District Priorities | School Action Steps |
|---|---|
| Ensure a comprehensive, standards-aligned curricula for all students, PreK-Grade 12 | - Implement ELA, Math, & Science curriculum utilizing approved district programs K-5 according to the district pacing and assessment calendars |
| Provide engaging, student-centered instruction that promotes active learning and meaningful connections | - Incorporate student-centered instructional strategies (e.g., project-based learning, accountable talk, play-based learning, Building Thinking Classrooms) into daily lessons |
| Use district, school, and classroom assessment data to make informed decisions about instruction and improve student outcomes | - Utilize data from scheduled learning walks in literacy, math, & science to provide feedback on student-centered strategies. - Administer benchmark assessments, IABs, and unit assessment and review data at grade level data team meetings. |
| Ensure equitable access to resources and opportunities, including differentiated interventions and multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) | - Schedule grade-level and classroom teacher MTSS meetings every 6-10 weeks to review student academic progress and plan for enrichment and/or intervention |

Cultivate a Rich & Vibrant Learning Community



Cultivate a Rich & Vibrant Learning Community

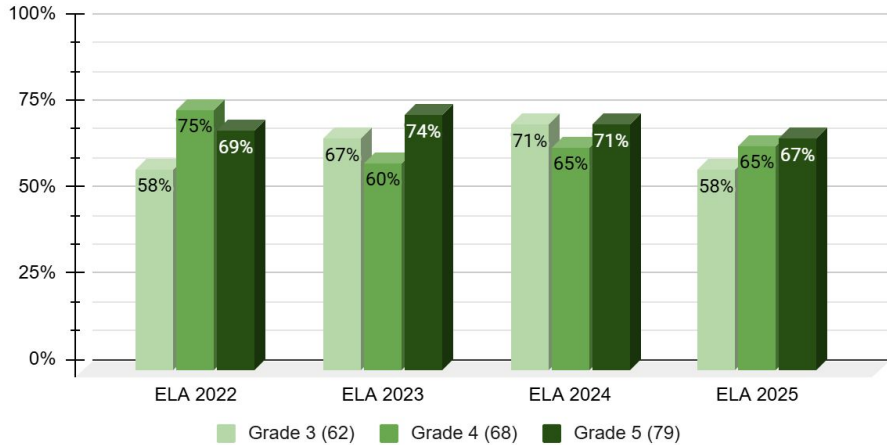
| District Priorities | School Action Steps |
|--|--|
| Prioritize the physical and mental well-being of staff and students through supportive programs and initiatives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Utilize the school community events team to coordinate community building activities and events for both students and staff |
| Ensure students have at least one trusted adult who cares about them and knows their name, strengths, and story | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Incorporate conversations about trusted adults, adults who can help you, where to go when you have a problem or big feelings, and what belonging means into weekly Second Step lessons, Recess Wrap-up, and Morning Meetings - Identify students in need of mentors and refer to the mentor program |
| Foster meaningful family and community engagement through accessible, frequent, and welcoming communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a weekly communication with families, providing important information, reminders, positive phone calls, and invitation to upcoming events |
| Encourage students to use SEL strategies to build healthy identities, manage emotions, build empathy, maintain positive relationships, make responsible decisions, and achieve goals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explicitly teach and model SEL skills using Second Step. |
| Empower student and educator agency by providing opportunities for voice, leadership, and celebrations of learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage broad representation of staff on school and district committees, including school committee leadership, to ensure all voices contribute - Explore student leadership options such as school ambassadors, school photographers, communication assistants, etc. |
| Increase student and staff engagement by emphasizing the importance of daily attendance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leverage School Attendance Team to track student attendance data, identify students in need of intervention, and provide tiered systems of support |

Northeast Academy: Who We Are...

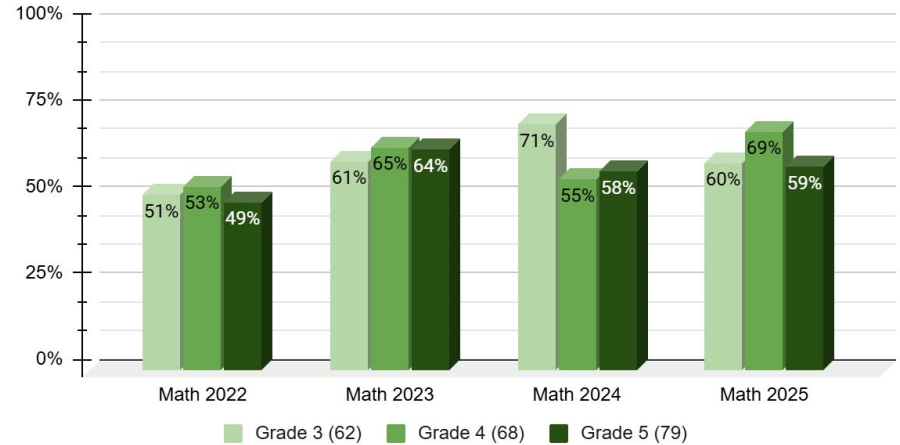
| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| School Enrollment | 353 |
| Special Programming | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Transitional Kindergarten- 1 class |
| Student Makeup | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● 27% Free/Reduced Eligible● 16% Special Education● 3% Limited English Proficiency |
| Chronic Absenteeism Trend | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● 2023- 9.7%● 2024-8.9 %● 2025-7.1% |
| Theme/ Theme Related Opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Flock Theater● CT Storytelling Center● cARTie● MMoA● USCGA Band● Celebrate The Arts Festival (every March) |

Accelerate Academic Achievement

Northeast Academy SBAC Over Time
Students At or Above Benchmark

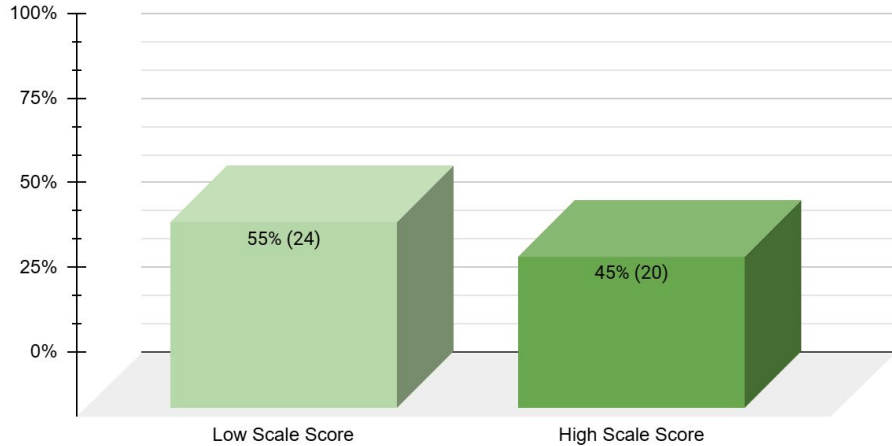


Northeast Academy SBAC Over Time
Students At or Above Benchmark

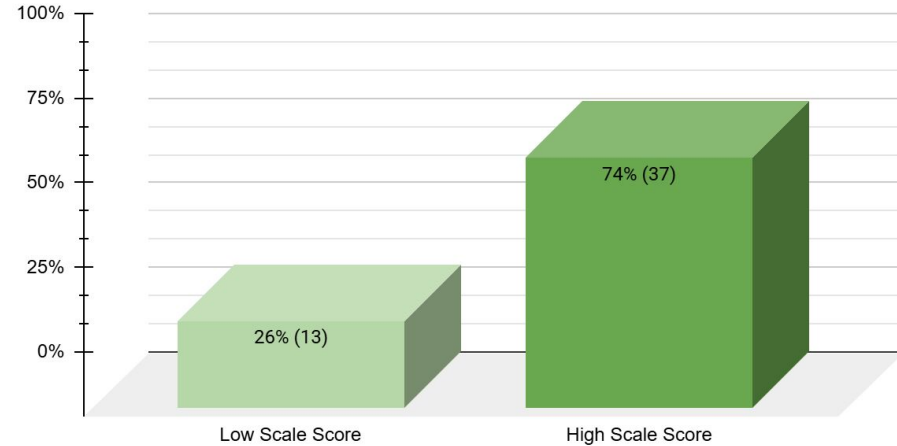


Accelerate Academic Achievement

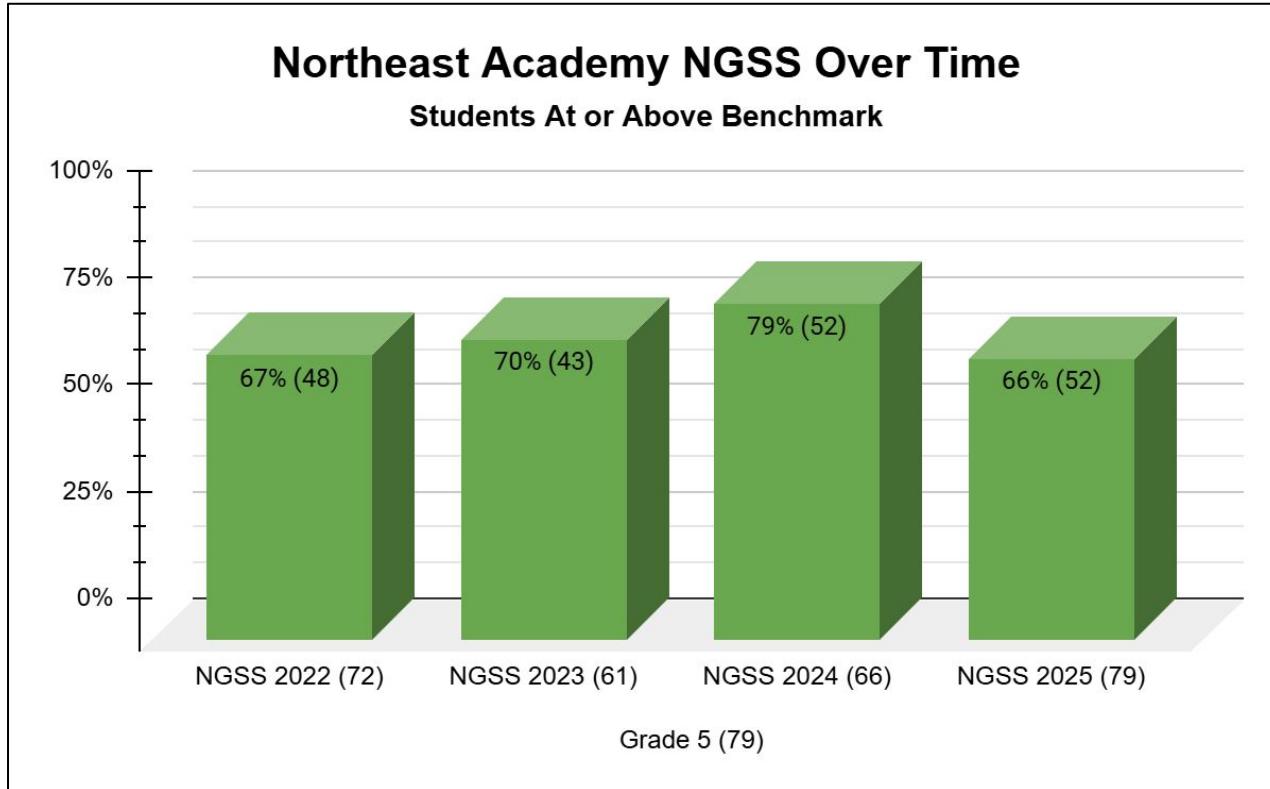
Northeast ELA Performance
Student Approaching Benchmark (44)



Northeast Math Performance
Student Approaching Benchmark (50)



Accelerate Academic Achievement



Accelerate Academic Achievement

2024-2025 Action Step Focus:

- Math - We will continue to use IABs and FIABs to inform instruction delivered by classroom teachers and the math specialist/tutor. We are also trying to provide more Tier 1 support with less staffing across all grade levels. Universal screeners administered three times a year (like DIBELS for reading) will help us identify student needs as they arise midyear.
- Reading - We will focus on growth for all students, including those with high needs, by making use of the mCLASS DIBELS platform to drive small group instruction. We will support classroom teachers in their first year of Wit & Wisdom implementation.

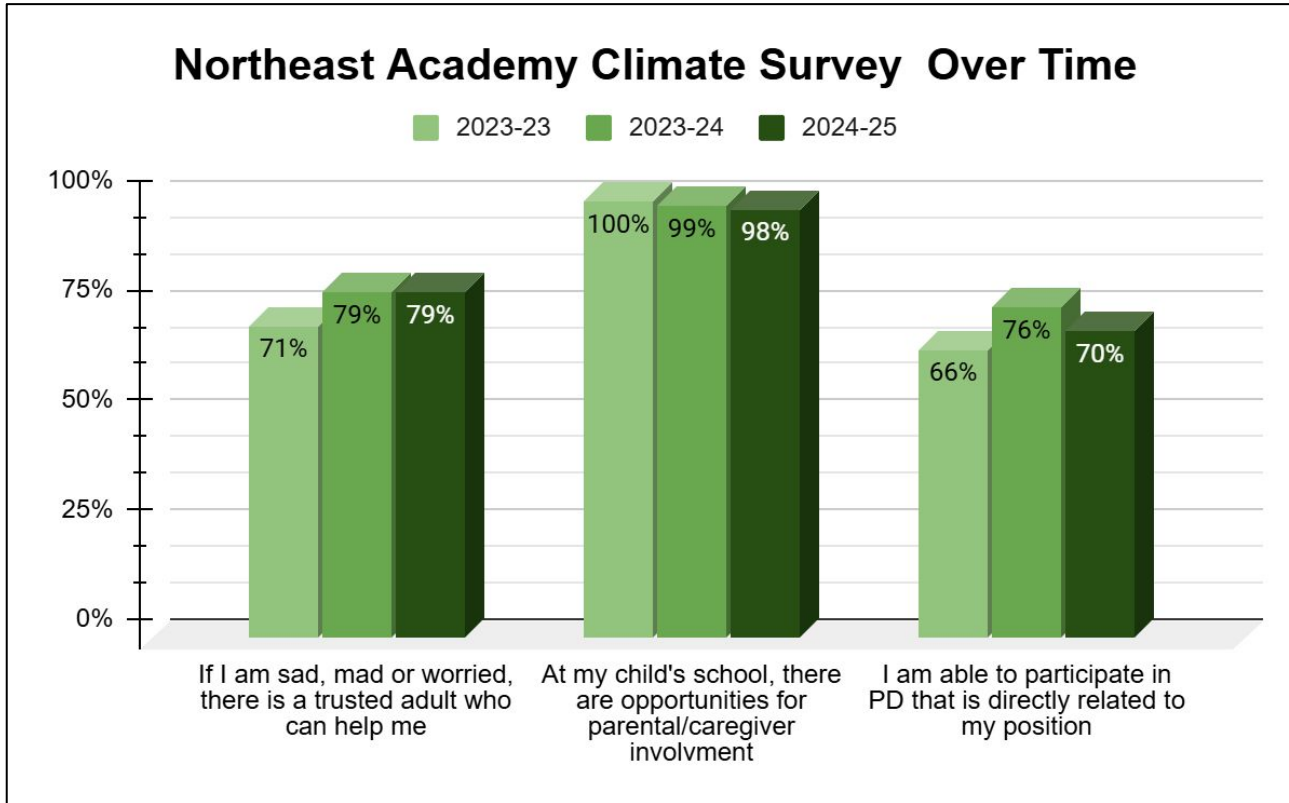
Outcome:

- While performance scores at NEA are generally high, there is little to no growth when tracking cohorts from year to year. This remains a high focus priority for school staff - what do we need to do differently to promote growth yet still achieve so well?
- With the addition of a second math tutor (thank you) and the new DI block for 45 minutes each day, we are committed to supporting teachers with instructional practices focused on individual student growth. This includes more direct support during Tier 1 instruction and the DI (differentiated instruction) block.

Accelerate Academic Achievement

| District Priorities | School Action Steps |
|---|---|
| Ensure a comprehensive, standards-aligned curricula for all students, PreK-Grade 12 | Continue to coach and support Tier 1 instruction of W&W, math programs and implementation of screeners (i-Ready and DIBELS). |
| Provide engaging, student-centered instruction that promotes active learning and meaningful connections | Commit to reviewing student work samples during monthly Admin Teaching/Learning team meetings and data-driven instructional decisions using the Atlas protocol. |
| Use district, school, and classroom assessment data to make informed decisions about instruction and improve student outcomes | Continue to review standardized testing data from spring in addition to Fall DIBELS and i-Ready scores. Use SBAC, DIBELS, i-Ready and IAB data to drive instruction. Focus on cuspy students and individual growth targets. |
| Ensure equitable access to resources and opportunities, including differentiated interventions and multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) | Commit to three MTSS windows (based on trimester schedule) with progress monitoring, communication and timely meetings to review student progress. |

Cultivate a Rich & Vibrant Learning Community



Cultivate a Rich & Vibrant Learning Community

| District Priorities | School Action Steps |
|--|--|
| Prioritize the physical and mental well-being of staff and students through supportive programs and initiatives | Continue monthly assemblies focused on JTS traits. Run lunch groups for students to practice social skills, empathy, problem-solving and communication. |
| Ensure students have at least one trusted adult who cares about them and knows their name, strengths, and story | Restart trusted adult lessons with our school social worker/psychologist. |
| Foster meaningful family and community engagement through accessible, frequent, and welcoming communication | Continue to promote volunteer opportunities for parents. ParentSquare posts by admin each Friday. |
| Encourage students to use SEL strategies to build healthy identities, manage emotions, build empathy, maintain positive relationships, make responsible decisions, and achieve goals | Incorporation of Second Step as our new SEL program. Push-in whole class lessons as needed based on class/grade level needs. |
| Empower student and educator agency by providing opportunities for voice, leadership, and celebrations of learning | Encourage new participation on our two main committees. Continue monthly JTS assemblies. Look for student participation in committees as appropriate. |
| Increase student and staff engagement by emphasizing the importance of daily attendance | Continue the School Attendance Board and periodic PSQ messages from the main office on attendance. |

Our Roadmap to Success



District
Improvement
Plan



School
Improvement
Plan

Key Performance Indicators and State Data Measure Progress



**Early Childhood Program
Expansion & Enhancement**

November 17, 2025

GPS Strategic Plan Pillars

1

Accelerate Academic Achievement



2

Cultivate a Rich and Vibrant Learning Community



3

Strengthen Pathways that Develop Post Secondary Readiness



4

Attract and Grow A Skilled and Supported Workforce



5

Improve Operational Efforts and Increase Fiscal Responsibility



Smart Start Grant

- GPS approved for two-year grant*
- Administered by Office of Early Childhood (OEC)
- Capital funds to renovate classrooms at Mary Morrison Elementary School
- Operating funds to enhance and expand current program
- Additional funding is available to apply beyond Year 2

**Made possible by the new Connecticut Early Childhood Education Endowment, a permanent savings account established to fund early childhood education.*

The Endowment marks a landmark investment in the future of Connecticut's child care system—strengthening providers and supporting families across the State.

Phase #1

FY 26

- Expand and enhance the preschool programs through the Smart Start Grant to provide all 4 year old preschool age children with academic and social readiness skills in full day programs at Mary Morrisson Elementary School

Prepare all GPS
learners to be
future ready and
globally prepared
citizens

Current Integrated Preschool Classes

Four ½ day preschool classes currently that will move to Mary Morrisson next year and become full day classes (50:50 model to 30:70)

Thames River Magnet School- 1 class

Mystic River Magnet School- 2 classes

New class- 1

Program Components:

- Full Day Program
- 18 children per class
- Transportation provided
- Attend Specials Classes
- School Meals Provided
- Classroom Paraeducator Support

Current PK/TK Classes

Four PK/TK classes currently that will move to Mary Morrisson next year
Thames River Magnet School- 2 classes
Mystic River Magnet School- 1 class
Northeast Academy- 1 class

Program Components:

- Full Day Program
- 18 children per class
- Transportation provided
- Attend Specials Classes
- School Meals Provided
- Classroom Paraeducator Support

Phase #2

FY 27

- Increase the number of Integrated Preschool Program slots for four year olds who would be eligible for kindergarten the following year at Mary Morrisson Elementary School

Cultivate a Rich
and Vibrant
Learning
Community

Proposed Classes at Mary Morrisson

Four classes of Integrated Preschool to be moved to Mary Morrisson Elementary School

4 year olds (students who will be eligible for Kindergarten the following year)

Program Components:

- Full Day Program
- Enrollment of 15 students per class
- Transportation provided
- Attend Specials Classes
- School Meals Provided
- Classroom Paraeducator Support

Phase #3

- Improve family engagement through the development of a Welcome Center at Mary Morrisson Elementary School

Cultivate a Rich
and Vibrant
Learning
Community

Our Roadmap to Success



District
Improvement
Plan



School
Improvement
Plan

Key Performance Indicators and State Data Measure Progress

GROTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS PROJECT GRANTS REPORT – November 2025

| I. Grants Awarded to Groton Public Schools Between July – November | | |
|---|---|--|
| Grant | Description | Award |
| 21 st CCLC (CSDE) | Supplemental grant, awarded for high attendance at GMS Roots program. | \$13,000 |
| Community Wi-Fi Round 2 (CEN) | Expansion of wi-fi to FHS and GMS athletic fields. | \$131,565 |
| COPS Hiring Program (DOJ) (<i>via Town of Groton Police Department</i>) | To hire two School Resource Officers for elementary schools. | \$250,000 (over four years); matching funds required |
| Kendall Foundation | To replace worn equipment and expand Farm to School gardens at each school. | \$100,000 |
| Nature Everywhere | To enhance GPS school playgrounds with nature-inspired equipment. | \$50,000 |
| Smart Start (Office of Early Childhood) | To convert Mary Morrison into Early Childhood Center. | \$600,000 (capital funds); \$300,000 (operational costs – year one) |

| II. Submitted Grant Applications (Award Announcements Pending) | | |
|--|---|-----------|
| Grant | Description | Award |
| State and Local Security Grant Program (DESPP) | To purchase and install new cybersecurity equipment and software. | \$191,030 |

| III. Upcoming Grant Applications | | |
|----------------------------------|--|------------------------|
| Grant | Description | Award and Due Date |
| Farm to School Program (USDA) | To replace worn equipment and expand Farm to School gardens at each school | \$100,000 (December 5) |

| IV. Grant Funded Projects in Progress | | |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| Grant | Description | Award |
| 21 st CCLC (CSDE) | For new afterschool program at GMS to engage uninvolved students with an emphasis on teamwork and leadership. | \$59,986/year (July 2021 - June 2026) |
| ARP Mental Health Specialist (CSDE Bureau of Nutrition) | To extend the Early Childhood School Social Worker position for two years. Professional development for staff who work with students ages 3-6. | \$228,872 (July 2023 – June 2026) |
| ARP Right to Read (CSDE) | To purchase supplies and provide professional development to teachers around the new GPS K-3 Literacy Plan. | \$191,000 (Nov 2022 – Dec 2025) |

| | | |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|
| ARP Stronger Connections (CSDE) | For Social Worker and Community Coordinators and to expand restorative justice programming. | \$147,744 (ends May 2026) |
| ARP Summer Mental Health Support (CSDE Bureau of Nutrition) | For additional Social Workers / School Psychologists to support the ESY and FHS summer school programs. | \$46,801 (July 2023 – June 2026) |
| CT Grown for CT Kids Grant (CT Dept of Ag) | To design and install a hydroponics shipping container system for the Food Services Dept and Farm to School Program. | \$250,000 (ends May 31, 2026) |
| Military Connected Academic and Support Program (DoDEA) | To develop a K-12 Career Pathway Program with a focus on health science. | \$750,000 (ends May 2026) |
| Military Connected Academic and Support Program (DoDEA) | To enhance elementary magnet themed programming and incorporate culturally responsive teaching practices into the K-12 curriculum. | \$1.25M (ends May 2028) |
| PEGPETIA (PURA) | Technology equipment. | \$12,000 (ends January 2026) |
| World Language Advancement and Readiness Program (DoDEA) | Professional development for all world language teachers to align to ACTFL standards and to expand the WL program to the elementary level. | \$1M (June 2027) |
| MMSGP (DESPP) | To add Mutualink service at TRMS, FHS, and CO. The 2023 CIP awarded to GPS in the amount of \$150,000 will be used to provide matching funds for this project and supply the remaining schools with the Mutualink service. | \$64,873 (ends December 2025) |