GROTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
APRIL 20, 2026 @ 6:00 P.M.
CENTRAL OFFICE, ROOM 11

MEMBERS PRESENT: Beverly Washington – Chairperson, Adrian Johnson – Vice Chairperson, Andrea Ackerman (remote), Sean Corcoran (remote, arrived at 6:38 p.m.), Mitch Shinbrot (remote, left at 7:00 p.m.), Ian Thomas (remote), Jennifer White, Michael Whitney (remote, arrived at 7:23 p.m.), Jay Weitlauf (remote, left at 7:39 p.m.)

ALSO PRESENT: Susan Austin, Anne Marie Mancini

I. CALL TO ORDER – Mrs. Beverly Washington, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

II. REVIEW MARCH 16, 2026 MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: Johnson, White: To approve the March 16, 2026, meeting minutes.
PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

III. PRESENTATION RE: ILLUSTRATIVE MATH K-8 (Attachment #1)

Dr. Anne Marie Mancini and D. Rhau gave an overview of the Illustrative Math K-8.

This item will be moved to the Regular Board meeting for a vote.

IV. UPDATE RE: GROTON MIDDLE SCHOOL SCHEDULE (Attachment #2)

Dr. Anne Marie Mancini and Samantha Singleton gave an overview of the middle school scheduling committee

V. DISCUSSION RE: COMMUNICATION WITH State Delegation to allow for Interpreters /Interpretative Technology of SBAC Testing.

Superintendent Austin explained what is available for students who need assistance in taking tests.

Mr. Thomas asked that this item be put on a future COW agenda for discussion.

VI. REVIEW OF THE REFERRAL TRACKING SHEET

The Board reviewed the Referral Tracking sheet.

REMOED: R2024-24 Discussion re: dashboard proposal

ADD: R2026 – 3 Define the revision of curriculum
R2026-4 Review of Foreign Language offerings (this was a referral from the Curriculum Committee)

VII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Ackerman, Corcoran: The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.
PASSED - UNANIMOUSLY

IM Resource and Pilot Review
BOE COW Meeting
April 20, 2026

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



AGENDA



- Vision and Approach to Math Instruction
- IM Resource Overview
- IM Pilot: GPS Grades K-8
- Reasons to Transition to IM
- Q&A

Vision and Approach to Math Instruction

Groton Public Schools will ensure equitable access to rigorous and dynamic mathematics so that students will make sense of math in creative, interactive, and authentic ways.

				
Aligned to Standards	**Promotes Active Learning**	**Encourages Real World Connections**	**Emphasizes Conceptual Understanding**	**Builds K-12 Coherence**

Key Design Principles

Illustrative Math (IM) features key design principles that align with GPS' Vision and Approach to Mathematics:

- **Student-Led Exploration**: Students have opportunities to see what they can figure out for themselves before having concepts explained or being told what to do. The teacher is a facilitator of the learning.
- **Real-World Contexts**: Connects abstract math to tangible, relatable scenarios.
- **Cohesive Progressions**: Built to ensure students develop mastery over time.

IM transforms the classroom into a space where students don't just "do" math– they understand, use, and enjoy it!

Typical Lesson Structure

- **Invitation to Learning**: Makes clear to students what the learning goal is for the day
- **Warm Up**: Launches the lesson or focuses on number sense and fluency
- **Instructional Activities** (1-3): Allow for experience with new context; introduce new concepts and language; introduce new representations; formalize definition of a term, and work toward mastery of a concept or procedure
- **Lesson Synthesis**: Guides students through their big picture understanding through large group discussion, a response to a prompt, or adding on to a concept map
  - Makes connections to what students already know
  - Situates their new understanding; gives it words
- **Cool Down Task**: Checks for understanding; determines if the students understood the lesson and informs instruction for the next day

IM Pilot: GPS Grades K-8

- **Implementation Plan**: All K-8 schools would implement 1-2 units, starting in August 2025.
  - Grades K-5: Units were selected by Elem. Math Specialists
  - Grades 6-8: Units were selected by Secondary Math Supervisor
- **Resources**:
  - Middle school teachers and Elem. Math Specialists were given curriculum writing hours to work on incorporating pilot units into existing curriculum.
  - Resources were downloaded and placed into the shared curriculum drive for teachers.
- **Training**: has been provided by a certified IM instructor, focusing mainly on the Mathematical Practices. Professional learning also included in-classroom modeling and visits to a school that has successfully implemented IM.
- **Feedback**: was collected from teachers and leaders.

Why Transition to IM?

1. **Supports Improved Student Outcomes**: Quantitative data from state testing indicates a need for an adjustment.

2. **Addresses the Need for HQIMs**: Ensures alignment to grade-level standards and a rationalized sequencing between grade levels.

3. **Supports the Shift in our Vision and Instructional Approach**: IM incorporates a learner-centered and problem-based approach to teaching mathematics.

4. **Establishes Program Coherence**: There is a need to establish continuity between our K-8 programs in preparation for high school math courses.

Reason#1: Supports Improved Outcomes

Smarter Balanced Math

Grade/Year	2022	2023	2024	2025
Grade 3	48%	50%	56%	47%
Grade 4	46%	52%	46%	52%
Grade 5	39%	45%	49%	47%
Grade 6	34%	22%	31%	34%
Grade 7	44%	41%	34%	44%
Grade 8	30%	35%	33%	27%

Reason#2: Addresses the Need for HQIMs

- There is a strong link between high-quality instructional materials (HQIMs) and positive learning outcomes.
  - Several studies find that the choice of math textbooks had significant effects on test scores.

- When teachers do not have access to HQIMs, research indicates that the following things are likely to happen:
  - Teachers are forced to spend time (7 hours per week) looking for materials online.
  - Teachers spend time creating their own materials (5 hours per week).

- The result → There is no standards alignment, quality control, or analysis of the effectiveness of the content that is being pulled together for the students.

Reason#2: Addresses the Need for HQIMs

Districts that use IM that have also had improved student outcomes:

- Philadelphia Public Schools: highest test scores in 9 years
  - Article: January 2026
- Los Angeles Public Schools: exceeded pre-pandemic math performance
  - Article: October 2025
- Washington, DC Public Schools: identified as the most improved state in math achievement (2022-2024)
  - Article: March 2025

Reason#2: Addresses the Need for HQIMs



Investigations in Number, Data, and Space, 3rd Edition

FORMAT
Core: Comprehensive

SUBJECT
Math

GRADES
K-5

RELEASED
2/10/2017

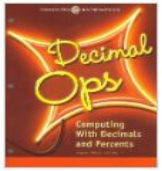
REVIEW TOOL
v1.0

GATEWAY 1
Partially Meets

GATEWAY 2
Partially Meets

GATEWAY 3
NE Not Eligible

Current Math Resources



Connected Mathematics Project 3

FORMAT
Core: Comprehensive

SUBJECT
Math

GRADES
6-8

RELEASED
2/13/2015

REVIEW TOOL
v1.0

GATEWAY 1
Does Not Meet

GATEWAY 2
Meets Expectations

GATEWAY 3
Partially Meets

Reason#2: Addresses the Need for HQIMs



William G. McCallum

CEO & Co-Founder of Illustrative Math

Lead writer of the Common Core State Standards for Math

New Resource

Illustrative Mathematics® v.360

FORMAT
Core: Comprehensive

SUBJECT
Math

GRADES
K-8

RELEASED
7/31/2025

REVIEW TOOL
v2.0

GATEWAY 1
Meets Expectations

GATEWAY 2
Meets Expectations

GATEWAY 3
Meets Expectations

MULTILINGUAL LEARNER SUPPORTS
Scores Available

Reason#3: Supports Shift in Instructional Approach

Problem-Based Learning (PBL) Framework

- Shifts the focus from passive listening to active discovery; students engage with a "Launch, Explore, Discuss" cycle that prioritizes student thinking over teacher lecture

Asset-Based Instructional Routines

- Utilizes routines like *"Notice and Wonder"* and *"Which One Doesn't Belong?"* to ensure every student—regardless of prior knowledge—has a mathematical entry point into the lesson

Intentional Mathematical Discourse

- Prioritizes mathetical logic through the use of intentional student discourse- By defending their own reasoning and analyzing the methods of others, students master the underlying principles necessary to solve problems across complex math concepts and into other academic disciplines.

Reason#3: Supports Shift in Instructional Approach

Coherent Learning Progressions

- Respects the learner's journey by connecting new concepts to familiar contexts, allowing students to build deep conceptual mastery rather than memorizing isolated procedures.

Agency and Authority

- Empowers students to see themselves as "doers of mathematics," shifting the authority of "truth" from the textbook to the student’s own logical reasoning.

Reason#4: Establishes Program Coherence

Current Program Model

K-5: Investigations + Context for Learning Mathematics (CFLM)

6-8: Connected Math Project 3 (CMP3)

New Program Model

K-8:
Illustrative Math

Our Roadmap to Success





District Improvement Plan



School Improvement Plan

Key Performance Indicators and State Data Measure Progress

Questions?



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TO: Beverly Washington, Board of Education Chairman
Susan Austin, Superintendent

FROM: Anne Marie Mancini, Assistant Superintendent

DATE: March 3, 2026

RE: Middle School Scheduling Exploration Committee

This memo serves as an update on the status of the work of the Middle School Scheduling Exploration Committee ("The committee"). The committee was composed of 13 teachers, representing a variety of grade levels and content areas. It also included two building administrators, Principal Peter Bass and Assistant Principal Samantha Singleton.

The committee met six times between September 22, 2025 and March 2, 2026. Initial meetings focused on outlining limitations with the existing schedule as well as priorities for a potential new model. There committee identified four common priorities: (1.) maintain common planning time for teachers, (2.) enable Math and ELA to meet with students regularly, (3.) improve delivery of intervention (MTSS), and (4.) deliver instruction in shorter blocks of time.

The committee reviewed a variety of scheduling models, discussing the pros and cons of each. Members were careful to consider the implications on student learning and engagement, teacher workload and collaboration, special education and support services, the arts and electives, transportation and cafeteria services, and the school's overall culture and climate, as well as any resource implications. In addition, the committee researched a comprehensive list of middle school schedule models that are currently in place locally (e.g., Leonard J. Tyl MS, Montville), in addition to schools in Connecticut that have similar in student enrollment (between 850-1150). A small group of our teacher committee members also created schedule options that incorporated the strengths of the models that had been researched.

For each schedule model put forward, the committee encountered a barrier related to staffing (e.g., insufficient # of teachers) or facility space (e.g., need for four lunch waves). Consequently, the final meeting of the Middle School Scheduling Exploration Committee was held on Monday, March 2, 2026. The work of this group had to be paused to allow Assistant Principal, Sam Singleton, to begin developing next year's schedule for the current and incoming students. This is a lengthy process that takes several months. Additionally, the committee wanted to ensure that it would have time to collect feedback on the new model from school stakeholders, including students, staff, and caregivers. As such, there will not be a new schedule implemented at Groton Middle School (GMS) for SY 2026-2027; however, the committee believes it has made important progress.

There were several next steps identified for this committee. First, Principal Bass, Asst. Principal Singleton, and I will provide an update to the whole staff on the work of the committee. As a part of this, we will share some of the compromises that may have to be made while addressing identified priority areas. Second, a survey will be shared with the GMS team to obtain additional input. Third, the committee will reconvene in the late spring/early next fall to continue its work to identify a model that could potentially be implemented in SY 2027-2028.