



in time, with no resolution in sight, is placing a severe financial strain on educational institutions in the state. Howard Gardner Multiple Intelligence Charter School is among those institutions feeling the impact. Once again, we, the Board of Trustees here at Howard Gardner, will be asked to entertain a proposal to significantly increase an existing line of credit, which will be satisfied only after a state budget is approved and funds begin to arrive from the Commonwealth.

Nonetheless, great things continue to happen at Howard Gardner. You will hear and see information about plans for a Veteran's Day Program, academic and assessment updates, school climate and continuing improvements, upcoming events and student enrichment opportunities, instructional staff and professional growth opportunities, as well as opportunities for student recognition.

Board Members will have been briefed and will be asked to approve a very positive Audit of annual school finances and expenditures.

A reminder that mandatory Act 55 Training for Board Members will be held at the school on Tuesday, October 28, 2025, from 5-6:30 pm.

Finally, we would like to recognize all those responsible for a very successful annual golf tournament held on Sunday, October 12th, at Pine Hills. We would like to recognize and thank the sponsors, the golfers, and especially Renee Dougherty, Trish Williams, Deana Bonacci, and John Marsico for their outstanding efforts, which will benefit Howard Gardner Students.

**HGMICS 2024-2025 Financial Audit:**

*Motion: Approve the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 year-end financial audit submitted by the accounting firm Brian T. Kelly, CPA & Associates, LLC, subject to receipt of the approval and acceptance of the pending legal letter by the School's legal counsel, McKenna Synder LLC.*

The motion was made by Laurie Cadden and seconded by Judy Price.

All Trustees voted Yes with 7 Trustees present.

**September 2025 Financial Report:**

*Motion: Approve the September 2025 Financial Report.*

The motion was made by Wayne Evans and seconded by Dr. Fran Langan.

All Trustees voted Yes with 7 Trustees present.

**HGMICS Line of Credit Authorization:**

*Motion: Approve the authorization for the CEO to apply for a \$2.1 million line of credit for operational expenses through March 2026 with Peoples Security Bank and Trust.*

The motion was made by Judy Price and seconded by Dr. Fran Langan.  
All Trustees voted Yes with 7 Trustees present.

**HGMICS October 2025 Personnel Activity Report:**

*Motion: Approve the October 2025 Personnel Activity Report as submitted.*

The motion was made by Laurie Cadden and seconded by Dr. Fran Langan.  
All Trustees voted Yes with 7 Trustees present.

**HGMICS 2026-2027 & 2027-2028 School Calendars:**

*Motion: Approve the 2026-2027 & 2027-2028 School Calendars as presented.*

The motion was made by Mike Barbetti and seconded by Laurie Cadden.  
All Trustees voted Yes with 7 Trustees present.

**Administrative Updates:**

**CEO Update – Joe Ross**

**Golf Tournament**

The golf tournament held on October 12, 2025, was a huge success. We had 144 golfers, a record number of players. The 50/50 raffle generated \$10,150 in sales; the winner was Rose Cawley, who won \$5,075. Basket sale revenue totaled \$1,900, and we generated an additional \$990 in revenue from a specialty hole. We received 4 presenting sponsors, and the sponsorship level set a record. Preliminary numbers show a profit of \$28,974.55!! It was a phenomenal day and a great celebration of our school community.

Special thanks to Renee Dougherty, Trish Williams, Deana Bonacci, and John Marsico for their outstanding work in making this tournament such a huge success.

**Budget Impasse**

There has been no movement on the state budget. HGMICS has started the process with People's Security to increase the line of credit by \$2,100,000, which will cover operational expenses until March 2026. Utilization of this line will be off-set on due from districts, which will be approximately \$4,900,000 through March 2026. Once the budget is passed, the LOC will be paid off and terminated.

## **Due Process Hearing**

On October 16, 2025, we received notification from the Hearing Officer granting our Motion to Dismiss of the JV due process hearing. Attorney Ramola is preparing a motion to dismiss the 2<sup>nd</sup> due process hearing that he filed with ODR. This 2<sup>nd</sup> request contains many of the same issues dismissed in the first complaint.

## **PA Charter School Coalition Conference**

Joe Ross and John Marsico attended the PAPCS conference in Bethlehem on 10/20 and 10/21. Due to the state budget impasse, they commuted to Bethlehem. Numerous sessions are geared to administrative, educational, and financial issues impacting charter schools. The event presented advocacy and networking opportunities.

## **ACT 55 Training**

HGMICS staff will conduct Act 55 training for the BOT on October 28, 2025 at the school. A zoom link will be offered for trustees unable to attend. Invitations have been sent to all Trustees. The training will be from 5:00pm-6:30 pm with dinner provided.

## **Veteran's Day Program**

Preliminary planning has begun to host our second annual Veteran's Day Thank you lunch on Monday, November 10, 2025. The student ambassadors will coordinate this event, which will include an America's White Table display.

### **Principal – TreeAnne McEnery**

The 2025–2026 school year is off to a strong and positive start. Students have transitioned smoothly into their academic routines, and the first several weeks have been marked by meaningful instruction, strong student engagement, and a renewed sense of community connection. The following report provides an overview of current academic initiatives, professional activities, and upcoming events.

## **Academic and Assessment Updates**

- **NAEP Participation:** Eighth-grade students will participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) between January and March 2025 in both English Language Arts and Mathematics.
- **Annual Benchmarking:** Beginning-of-year benchmarking assessments are nearly complete. These data provide valuable insights into student performance and guide instructional planning to address targeted learning needs. A summary of results will be included in the November report.
- **Mid-Trimester Reports (Middle School):** Mid-trimester reports were released on October 9, 2025, offering families an early opportunity to review student progress.

## **School Climate and Continuous Improvement**

- The **PBIS School Climate Survey** has been distributed to parents, teachers, and students. Feedback collected will inform ongoing efforts to strengthen the school’s learning environment and climate initiatives.
- A **Collaborative Community Event Committee** has been established to assist in the planning and implementation of schoolwide events and to promote deeper family and community engagement.
- **Arrival and Dismissal Update:** Beginning in the 2026–2027 school year, arrival will conclude at **8:10 a.m.** with classes beginning at **8:15 a.m.** Dismissal will begin at **2:55 p.m.** The Tuesday early-dismissal schedule will remain in place, with the same five-minute adjustment applied.

### Upcoming Events and Enrichment Activities

- The **Annual Halloween Parade** is scheduled for **October 31, 2025**, continuing a cherished HGMICS tradition.
- The **Parent Forum’s Annual Trunk or Treat** event will also take place later this month, offering families a fun and educational opportunity to gather. The **Wellness Committee** and **Schoolwide Title I Committee** will each host themed trunks highlighting their family engagement goals.
- Numerous **field trips** are planned this fall to enrich learning experiences across grade levels. Highlights include:
  - **Kindergarten–Grade 1:** Apple Pumpkin Festival
  - **Grades K–2:** Electric City Aquarium
  - **Grade 6:** *Hispania American Show* by the Hispanic Flamenco Ballet at Marywood University (October 29)
  - **Grades 7–8:** Girls in STEM Symposium at Lacawac Sanctuary
  - **Select Art and Music Students:** *The Nutcracker* by Ballet Theatre of Scranton (November 24)
  - **Science Classes:** Lackawanna State Park
  - **Schoolwide Outing:** Pittsburgh Penguins Game (October 3)

### Instructional Staff and Professional Growth

- All **new teachers** are participating in the **NEIU Year 1 Induction Program** and engaging in weekly mentoring sessions with in-house mentors as part of their professional development.
- **Formal classroom observations** will begin in late October and continue through November as part of the **Differentiated Supervision Plan.**
- **Student Performance Measures (SPMs)** for the 2025–2026 school year have been submitted in accordance with state and charter requirements.
- Teachers participating in the **Differentiated Supervision model** have submitted their annual goals and action plans, supporting a culture of reflection and continuous improvement.

### Student Opportunities and Recognition

- A team of **eighth-grade students** will represent HGMICS in the **Scranton Preparatory School Young Scholars Competition** on **November 15, 2025**. Participation in this academic event highlights the school’s ongoing commitment to student excellence and achievement.

I extend my sincere appreciation to the **Board of Trustees** for their continued support and leadership.

**Director of Student Services – Cathy Opshinsky**

**SAP Presentation**

On Friday, September 6, 2024 at 9 AM, Mr. Rory Stevens, LSW | SAP Coordinator from the NEIU, and Ms. Denise Reilly, Scranton Counseling Center liaison for the SAP program, presented to the middle school students as well as the 3rd and 4th grade students in their classrooms. They shared what the SAP program is about, reasons to refer peers, where and how to refer peers, mental health, and the importance of not trying/using vaping products. An email was sent out to all parents prior to the presentations to communicate when and what topics would be discussed with their children.

**Children’s Advocacy Center Partnership Update**

Howard Gardner MI Charter School is proud to partner again with the Children’s Advocacy Center of NEPA to provide students and families with research-based programming that promotes safety, awareness, and prevention. Through this partnership, three programs are being offered during the first trimester of the 2025–2026 school year: ROAR (Kindergarten and 1st grade), Safe Touches (2nd grade), and Smarter Parents, Safer Kids (for parents/guardians).

**ROAR: A Body Safety Program for Kids**

This October, our kindergarten and first-grade students will take part in ROAR, a fun and age-appropriate body safety program designed for children ages 4–8. Featuring Rex the Lion and his animal friends, ROAR uses engaging lessons to help children “find their ROAR”—a simple acronym that empowers them to understand that their bodies belong to them, to recognize when something feels wrong, and to speak up to trusted adults.

**Safe Touches: Child Sexual Abuse Prevention**

In September, our second-grade students participated in the Safe Touches workshop, an evidence-based, 50-minute program presented by state-trained facilitators from the Children’s Advocacy Center. Safe Touches uses puppets and interactive activities to provide developmentally appropriate education on body safety and protective tools children can use in unsafe situations.

Each child also received a Safe Touches activity booklet to take home, encouraging parent/guardian conversations about safety. This program is made possible through a grant awarded to the Children’s Advocacy Center of NEPA, which has already reached more than 14,000 students across Pennsylvania.

### **Smarter Parents, Safer Kids**

As part of the initiative, parents/guardians will be invited to attend Smarter Parents, Safer Kids further into the school year. This program is designed to provide adults with knowledge, tools, and strategies to help keep children safe.

This program is supported by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) and The Child Maltreatment Solutions Network at Penn State University.

### **Commitment to Student Safety**

Our partnership with the Children’s Advocacy Center reflects our ongoing commitment to fostering a safe, supportive learning environment. By engaging both students and families, these programs empower our school community with the knowledge and skills to recognize, prevent, and respond to unsafe situations.

### **Director of Operations – Patty Mickavicz**

### **Food Service**

The Food Service Department plans to introduce Domino’s Smart Slice as a monthly offering to students. The Smart Slice program is compliant with all National School Lunch Program (NSLP) nutritional standards and is fully reimbursable, resulting in no additional cost to families. Participation will be available through a preorder process only, with Domino’s providing delivery during students’ scheduled lunch periods.

### **October 2025 Enrollment by District**

School District	Regular	SPED	Enrollment	SD %
Abington Heights	13	5	18	4.59%
Dunmore*	7	4	11	2.81%
Lackawanna Trail	3	0	3	0.77%
Lakeland	1	0	1	0.26%
Mid Valley*	5	0	5	1.28%
North Pocono*	3	1	4	1.02%
Old Forge*	2	1	3	0.77%
Pittston Area	2	1	3	0.77%
Riverside	4	1	5	1.28%
Scranton*	258	72	330	84.18%
Tunkhannock	2	0	2	0.51%
Valley View	4	1	5	1.28%
Wyoming Area	2	0	2	0.51%
Total	306	86	392	100%

*\*Redirection*

### **PIMS**

The October PIM collection submission is complete, ACS will be signed off by the CEO prior to November 14.

**New Business:**

There was no New Business at this time.

**Adjournment**

*Next Meeting Date: November 18, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.*