



Board of Education

TO: Board of Education
FROM: Gary School Principal, Amie Correa
 Executive Director of Business & Operations, Karen Apostoli
DATE: April 23, 2026
RE: Gary Donation

This memo is:

- Information only.
 Information with a recommendation, and a request for Board approval by vote.

Date by which a Board decision is needed: 5/7/26

Previous memos on this topic can be found:

- in previous Board packet(s) dated. _____
 or attached to this memo

Basic information:
This proposal seeks approval to accept a fully donated organic garden installation that will support hands-on learning and environmental education for our Gary students.
Background or historical information:
The organization, USAgain, is providing all materials and installation, including raised beds, soil, and starter plants. There is no financial obligation for the district. The garden will serve as an outdoor learning lab where students can engage in real-world science, observation, and environmental responsibility. Two classrooms will begin the program, with opportunities to expand over time. Students will actively participate in every stage of the gardening process.
We are excited to share a new partnership with USAgain that will bring hands-on sustainability learning to our students! Through their Planet Protection Pioneers initiative, USAgain is generously donating and installing two organic garden beds on our campus. These raised beds are constructed from safe, chemical-free materials and will be filled with soil and starter plants provided by the organization. This project is designed to help students connect with nature, understand sustainability, and experience the benefits of growing healthy, locally sourced food.
What to Expect:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● April/May: Garden beds will be built and planted ● May: Students will begin participating in garden-based lessons ● June–July: Summer school students will help care for and maintain the gardens ● August/September: Students will harvest crops

- **Next Year:** Expansion into butterfly gardens

Student Involvement:

Two classes will actively participate in planting, weeding, harvesting, and recording scientific observations, providing meaningful, hands-on learning experiences tied to science and environmental stewardship.

We are incredibly grateful for this opportunity and look forward to watching our students grow alongside our gardens!

Previous decisions, actions or parameters that relate to this topic or issue:

Recommendations:

The administration recommends accepting a donation of an organic garden installation to support hands-on learning and environmental education for our students.

Other questions? What else does the Board wish to know?: