

MEMO

To: Granby Board of Education

From: Superintendent of Schools

Date: April 1, 2026

Subject: BEAR Transition Academy Relocation and Program Expansion

I am pleased to share an exciting update regarding the continued growth and success of the Granby B.E.A.R. (Bringing Emerging Adults Resources) Transition Academy. The B.E.A.R. program will be relocating from the YMCA to a new site at South Congregational Church, located at 242 Salmon Brook Street, for the 2026–2027 school year.

This location will also serve as the home for our new Granby Alternative Program (G.A.P.), serving secondary students who require a nontraditional educational setting and addressing the social, emotional, behavioral, and academic needs of such students. G.A.P. was successfully piloted this year and will be completely funded by the Connecticut Special Education Expansion and Development (SEED) grant, designed for school districts to implement in-district special education services, reduce the need for costly out-of-district placements, and address staffing shortages.

This move represents a significant and positive step forward for Granby Public Schools. As enrollment and programming opportunities have expanded, it has become increasingly important to provide a larger, dedicated space designed specifically to meet the unique needs of our students. We thank the YMCA for housing our program for the past three years, as it has grown. The new location will offer enhanced learning environments, including individualized instructional spaces, a kitchen area, and flexible group spaces that will support hands-on, real-world learning experiences and the continued development of independent living skills.

Equally important, this transition strengthens and expands our community partnerships. We are proud to continue our valued collaboration with the YMCA, where students will still access wellness activities, fitness facilities, and meaningful vocational and internship opportunities. These experiences remain a cornerstone of the program and will continue uninterrupted.

At the same time, we are excited to establish a new partnership with South Congregational Church. Only a short walk to the town center, this connection will further embed the program within the community and create additional opportunities for student engagement, skill-building, and employment. The students already value the internships with Waste Not, Want Not Community Kitchen on this campus and look forward to exploring more internships in the town center.

The development and expansion of G.A.P. and B.E.A.R. reflect our commitment to expanding opportunities for students' academic, social, and emotional needs to be met within Granby Public Schools. This next chapter positions our programs to grow thoughtfully while maintaining the strong relationships and experiences that have made it so impactful. We look forward to sharing more about the process at a BOE meeting this fall and inviting the board members to an open house in the new space.