

EDUCATION

Current facilities

Hardwick Elementary School

Hardwick's youngest students (k-6 grades) attend the Hardwick Elementary School at the Hardwick campus of the Orleans Southwest Unified District (OSUED) within the Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union (OSSU). The present building opened its doors to students in 1961. Currently, there are 240 students enrolled. The school can accommodate 360 students and is not considered to have a space problem at this time.

Hazen Union High School

Hazen Union opened its doors in 1970 and serves the communities of Hardwick, Greensboro, and Woodbury. Additionally, a few students from Stannard, Walden, Wolcott, and Wheelock attend on a tuition basis. Vocational students attend classes at Hazen Union and the Green Mountain Technology and Career Center (GMTCC) located in Hyde Park with a satellite facility in Hardwick. Currently there are 310 students enrolled. Hazen Union School can accommodate approximately 500 students and is not considered to have a space problem at this time.

Community use of facilities

The buildings and athletic fields of Hardwick Elementary and Hazen Union are used for a wide variety of activities and events by groups within the community and beyond. These include craft fairs, basketball and volleyball players using gyms, a community chorus, a Tae-kwon Do class, and a diversity of occasional events, from a Fish and Wildlife boating safety course to candidate forums. It is also the site for annual events such as Town Meeting Day. The Little League uses the athletic fields at Hardwick Elementary. The fields at Hazen Union are used by a women's softball league, a men's softball league and for Babe Ruth baseball.

Other educational services

Early education

Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union academic development programs include:

- Preparation for Kindergarten
- Learning through doing
- Individualized attention and activities
- Conferencing with teachers and parents
- Progress monitoring

Orleans Southwest SU has two public preschool programs within the supervisory union and partners with local providers either in a partnership or subcontract. Any child who resides in the towns of Craftsbury, Greensboro, Hardwick, Stannard, Wolcott, or Woodbury may attend a preschool program for a maximum of 10 hours at no charge, provided the tuitions between the

school district and program are the same. If not, the difference must be negotiated between the provider and parent. Some programs may have age specifications and may provide less than 10 hours.

Head Start and Early Head Start have a satellite program in Hardwick. These programs provide comprehensive, family-centered services for parents and children, with resources and referrals. Support services are provided to children with special needs. Currently the programs run from September to May and are part-time. Hardwick Head Start is located in the Masonic Temple but is exploring other options to allow for expansion of the program.

Essential Early Education

Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union has a goal to foster competence in the social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development of preschool children at risk of later school difficulty. This can be accomplished through an educational approach individualized to the needs of each young child in the child's home, community and/or early childhood center. The Early Education Program of the Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union provides a comprehensive early intervention program for eligible children ages 'birth through five' including those who are disabled, disadvantaged, or otherwise at risk for school failure.

A child may access one or more of the following programs:

- Essential Early Education (EEE) is special early education for eligible children ages three through five.
- Early Compensatory Education (ECE) is offered for children ages three through five who are delayed in language and communication skills. This is considered a preventative program for children.
- Children's Integrated Services – Early Intervention is for children birth to three with specific concerns regarding health, language, social, cognitive or emotional needs.

Vocational training

GMTCC offers career and technical education to all incoming juniors and seniors as well as adult learners in the surrounding school district areas. There are programs in automotive technology, business administration, computers, forestry and land management, manufacturing technology, and health and human services among others.

Personalized Learning Plans

Schools are now obligated to prepare students for higher education or technical careers by customizing their educational programs as early as the elementary school. Personalized Learning Plans will include such activities as field-based learning, job shadowing, and community experiences outside of the classroom.

Place-Based Education

Through a partnership between the Orleans Southwest Supervisory Union and the Center for an Agricultural Economy (CAE), Hardwick and Hazen students have an expanded place-based and food systems education. CAE seeks to strengthen the school and community connections through expanded opportunities for teachers, students, and the community. A variety of programs have been created, including farm field trips, school gardens, harvest dinners, internship opportunities, etc. As a component of this partnership, Hazen has introduced an Artisan and Entrepreneur Academy for the 2019-20 school year. Classes include “Woodcrafts to Market,” “Printmaking to Market,” and an Artisan Trade Independent Study.

Art Based Programs

A growing number of non-profit entities have initiated art classes for all ages. Wonder Arts and GRACE both have programs throughout the year.

Jeudevine Memorial Library

The library offers a wide range of educational opportunities and programs for all ages, from the youngest children to the oldest of adults.

School governance

As a result of Act 46, the Hardwick School Board has transitioned into the Orleans Southwest Union Elementary District (OSUED) Board. OSUED includes representation from Greensboro and Stannard at the Lakeview Union Elementary at the Greensboro campus, Hardwick Elementary at the Hardwick campus, and Woodbury Elementary at the Woodbury campus. The Board is responsible for policy setting and identifying the knowledge, skills and dispositions that each student will develop before graduating. Each town has representation on the board. As a result of this merger, children entering grades K-6 who live in the towns of Greensboro, Hardwick, Stannard, and Woodbury may enter the elementary school in their town of residence or may apply to attend an elementary school in another OSUED town. Intra-District Choice will be granted based on space availability.

The Hazen Union Board of Directors is responsible for policy setting and identifying the knowledge, skills and dispositions that each student will develop before graduating. There are eight seats on the board of which Hardwick has four seats, which are elected at Town Meeting for three year terms.

Educational attainment

According to most recent American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 88 percent of Hardwick’s residents over the age of 25 have a high school diploma or equivalent. This is below the statewide average of 92.3 percent and may indicate a need for educational services in this area. In 2000, only 78.0 percent of residents had a diploma so significant improvements are being made.

A look at college attainment figures reveals that 22.8 percent of residents have completed a bachelor's degree or higher which is below the state wide average of 36.8 percent. This figure has changed since 2000 when only 13.5 percent had a four year degree.

Adult educational services and facilities

There are a few places nearby where college level classes are available. In Morrisville the Community College of Vermont (CCV) has a satellite office where classes are taught. CCV offers programs in business and liberal arts as well as nursing. CCV also operates instructional sites in Hardwick and some of the surrounding towns.

The nearest private college is Sterling College located in Craftsbury. Johnson State College and Lyndon State College are both four-year colleges that have recently merged to create Northern Vermont University. Both campuses are located within 30 miles of Hardwick. Vermont has created the Early College program which enables students to simultaneously complete 12th grade, earn a secondary diploma and complete the first year of college.

As mentioned earlier, GMTCC offers adult education for anyone who is no longer enrolled in a traditional high school. Another resource for adult education is Central Vermont Adult Basic Education. CVABE is a non-profit organization that provides free instruction to individuals no longer enrolled in public school.

Goals, Policies, & Recommendations

GOAL

- To provide educational services and facilities to meet the needs of Hardwick's community.

POLICIES

- Hardwick supports efforts to broaden educational and vocational opportunities.
- Hardwick recognizes the importance to our community of high quality early education and day care. Hardwick supports organizations that provide these services.
- Hardwick supports the GMTCC and their efforts to broaden access to education for adult learners and to provide vocational opportunities for students.

ACTIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- The Select Board should support and facilitate the Jeudevine Memorial Library's efforts to improve its educational and social services.