

Pending BOE Approval

**Watertown Board of Education
Regular Meeting Minutes**

Meeting Date: June 24, 2013
Meeting Time: 7:30 p.m.
Meeting Place: Lecture Hall, Watertown High School

Members Present: Mr. Guy Buzzannco, Chairman
Mr. Tom Lambert, Vice Chair
Mr. Eric Berthel, Secretary
Ms. Susan McCabe
Ms. Mary Colangelo
Mr. Ray Nardella
Mr. Richard Beland
Mr. David Guerrera
Atty. Sean Butterly
Mr. Adam Kuegler, Student Council Representative

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Dr. Gail Gilmore, Superintendent of Schools
Pasquale Buccitelli, Business Manager

- A. Convene Regular Meeting – 7:30 p.m.
- B. Salute to the Flag – Mr. Buzzannco
- C. Watertown Public Schools' Mission Statement – Mr. Nardella

- The mission of the Watertown School District, with determination to be a world-class educational leader and a centerpiece of a dynamic and growing community, is to meet the diverse needs of each student – academic, artistic, athletic, emotional, ethical, social, and technological – to develop members of our community who embrace life-long learning and are caring and responsible citizens.

Mr. Buzzannco - Thank you for that reading, Mr. Nardella. Tonight's agenda, before we continue, includes an executive session, item O. We would like to remove that item from our agenda this evening. Is there a motion?

Motion Presented By: Mr. Beland
Motion Seconded By: Ms. Colangelo

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| Text of the Motion: | Mr. Chairman, I move that we remove item O.1, Executive Session, from the agenda. |
| Discussion: | None |
| Opposed: | None |
| Abstained: | None |
| Vote: | Motion Passes |

D. Award Recognition

Mr. Buzzannco – Moving on to item D recognition, I would like to turn it over to the superintendent.

Dr. Gilmore – Thank you Mr. Buzzannco. We are very excited this evening to congratulate students from Polk School for their writing and creativity in the 2013 CHET Dream Big! contest. The CHET program, which stands for Connecticut Higher Education Trust, announced that Polk School was one of the highest participating schools in the city Connecticut. I would ask at this time for principal D'Antonio and Mr. Buzzannco to join me at the podium to announce our 4 students who will receive a \$300 contribution to a 529 savings account to help prepare for their future college costs. And the students have already received that, so I hope that it is in their bank for their college savings. So, if you would please join me, Mrs. D'Antonio and Mr. Buzzannco?

Ms. D'Antonio – Ok, first we have two students who are grade 3. The first is Betim Kllobocishta. (Applause) The second student is not here this evening, she unfortunately already had to leave the country just before school got out, but she is Sarah Mustafi. (Applause) Our fourth-grade student is Adriana Rinaldi. (Applause) And then one more student, a grade 5 student, Aliveya Gebhardt. (Applause) Let's hear it for our future leaders of tomorrow, right here. (Applause)

Dr. Gilmore - Our next recognition is the Superintendent's Award for the deserving grade 2 and grade 5 boys and girls who exemplify leadership, citizenship, academic excellence, and community service. Would principles please join us for this special recognition? Principles please.

Ms. Scully –(John Trumbull) Good evening everyone. I am so pleased to recognize two fabulous second graders here at John Trumbull. First I would like to recognize Derek Graziano.(Applause) Derek has distinguished himself as an exceptional student in the second grade classroom. He is always prepared for class, he listens carefully and thinks of thoughtful questions. He is polite and respectful to everyone. Derek can always be counted on to lend a helping hand. He is a very

mature and responsible second-grader and a good friend to all of his classmates. Derek?
(Applause)

Next I would like to recognize Emily Kiernan. Emily is a polite, conscientious, and responsible second-grader. She is always willing to help out a friend. She is a diligent worker and completes her school assignments with consistent effort and a neat manner. She asks thought-provoking questions during lessons and is a curious learner. Outside of school she participates in Girl Scouts and takes dance lessons. So congratulations to Emily!

Ms. Rommel – (Judson School) Good evening. Tonight I am recognizing to outstanding fifth-grade students. And the first one is Rachel Dillon. (Applause) Rachel has excellent academic grades and just loves writing and reading. She is a wonderful role model for her peers, a good friend to others, and her teacher Mrs. Marquardt, has stated that Rachel has wisdom beyond her years. She always makes the right choice, even with some peer pressure. Rachel is a member of the student Council and has served as the chairperson for the student Council school wide food drive; she has also served as chairperson for the American Heart Association annual fundraiser. Outside of school, Rachel enjoys drawing, horseback riding, reading, fashion, as you can see, books and shoes! This is Rachel Dillon. (Applause)

And our gentleman is Vincent Kaverud. (Applause) Vincent is another one that has excellent academic grades in all areas. Ms. Greenwood, his fifth grade teacher, has stated that Vincent is a great helper in the classroom and always ready to volunteer. He also enjoys helping his peers and has been selected as student of the month for his respectful and responsible behavior. On top of all that, Vincent also plays the violin and enjoys creating artwork. He was named musician of the month at Judson and represented Judson school at the Connecticut Association of Schools Celebration of the Arts dinner for his outstanding artwork. Outside of school, Vincent volunteered by playing his violin at the music boosters charity at the Barnes & Noble's bookstore. So again, I would like to introduce you to Vincent Kaverud. (Applause)

Ms. D'Antonio – (Polk School) I also have the pleasure of introducing you to two outstanding Polk School fifth-graders. The first one is Priscilla Nascimento. (Applause) Priscilla is one of the most hard-working and dedicated fifth-graders that many of the teachers have seen. She often goes above and beyond to show the understanding of a topic. She exceeds expectations in all she works to complete and her senses and all of the descriptions that she provides to teachers and friends are phenomenal. When Priscilla is not working on a task, you can always find her with her nose buried in a book. Her thirst for knowledge is not easily quenched. Secondly, Priscilla is dedicated to her school and her community. She has worked to bring her students concerns to the student Council meetings and has responded to her classmates on a regular basis. She also helps create centerpieces and her work for the senior center. She is a kind and generous fifth-grader who goes out of her way to show kindness and respect to others. Priscilla? (Applause)

And my second outstanding Polk fifth-grader is Jordan Arnold. (Applause) Jordan's dedication to excellence exceeds expectations. He holds himself to high standards and wants to succeed. He is a very talented mathematician and loves to problem solve. He refuses to give up on difficult problems or difficult situations and knows when to humble himself and ask for help. His balance of perseverance and dedication is only one of the reasons why he is deserving for this award. In addition, he contributes to his community, by regularly volunteering for the Special Olympics and working backstage in the school play. Jordan has a big heart and is a young man who treats everyone he encounters with the same respect he wants for himself. Jordan Arnold. (Applause)

Dr. Gilmore – Thank you Principles. Isn't this exciting night when we get to celebrate our wonderful students and their families who support them? You so much for being here at this Board of Ed meeting. We are delighted when we have a full audience. Thank you so much. Our next honor is to announce our Watertown high school 2013 valedictorian and salutatorian for Watertown high school. So would Principal Carnemolla please join us?

Ms. Carnemolla – (Watertown High) Thank you. I am pleased to acknowledge the students this evening as well that our graduation because they deserve this much acknowledgment. Firstly, our valedictorian, Adam Kuegler, you know as sitting here, as one of our board members. He was recommended for this evening and for his grades without hesitation because that is the kind of student Adam is. As valedictorian of his graduating class, Adam has worked hard in the classroom, taking a very diverse schedule each year while remaining in active member in the community. Adam is friendly, kind, polite, and has always been a pleasure to work with. In order to take the most demanding classes our high school offers, Adam applied to her honors cohort program. This is a very challenging program that a small group of students are selected for. Only 15 students were selected items year. Each student in the cohort program take the same honors level History, English, Biology, Geometry, and Algebra II their freshman year. Some of the benefits of the cohort are the ability of the teacher to move at a quicker pace, cover more material, and have more critical thinking conversations, and take more advanced classes later in high school. Adam took the challenge of the honors cohort and greatly excelled in the classes. Not only is Adam a strong academic student but he is also an active contributor to our school climate. Adam also takes on leadership roles such as president of his junior and senior class and Capt. of the cross-country team. Adam has also served as a mentor for other students in our school. One student was struggling academically in his history class. Adam was asked if he would be able to help the student with his studying skills and help him prepare for the class. He immediately agreed and soon began helping the student. Adam showed the other student study tips and how to do research that could help him in the history class. Ultimately, Adam helped him pass the class with flying colors. Last year, Adam also met with a student with special needs. He worked on improving his social skills. Again, Adam was dependable, understanding, and served as a positive mentor for the student. In the future, Adam plans to pursue a degree in international affairs, economics, or political affairs. He is had an interest in these fields for many years and has taken on roles to have more experience such as serving as a student representative to the Board of Ed and managing a state Senate campaign. Adam's dedication to

learning along with his genuine polite and kind personality make him a positive addition to these roles. I am confident that Adam will continue to be the hard worker that he is both in and out of the classroom. And he will continue to look for more opportunities to learn more and continue to be the thoughtful and dependable person that he is. He has a bright future ahead of him and will be a positive addition to UCONN in the fall. (Applause)

Our salutatorian, also here with us this evening, is Lauren LeBlanc. As salutatorian of the graduating class, Lauren has taken a very challenging course load. For honors cohort program, she has worked very hard and has been very dedicated to her classes. Likewise she has found a true love for science. Specifically, for clinical laboratory science and medical technology. Beginning in Lauren's freshman year, she was selected to take the honors cohort program. And she excelled in it, I won't go into what that entailed again, but it is a challenging program, and Lauren excelled. Through classes and community experiences, Lauren's love for the field of science and technology grew. She is one of the few students we have worked with who has done everything she could think of to best prepare herself for the medical field. Lauren has taken almost every science class that our school offers, has volunteered her time in the laboratory, has shadowed a medical lab technician, and has worked with our science department head as a lab assistant. Through my interactions with Lauren, she has always been respectful, reliable and great to work with. I would like to highlight how important it is for Lauren to work with the medical lab, and how much time and effort and experience she has put into making sure this is a good fit for her. I'd also like to highlight that on her SATs Lauren scored a 710 on the biology SAT and a five on her AP biology exam, both very difficult to do. Lauren has a very positive future ahead of her in the medical field. I am confident that she will continue to be driven, reliable, and hard-working student that she has been in high school well into the future and her college career. She will be a great addition to, Lauren reminded me? Yes that's what I thought, UCONN... she will be a very positive addition to UCONN, as that is where our top two are going this year. Thank you, come on up.

Dr. Gilmore - And our next recognition is our student Council representative who serves diligently every month on our board of education and Mr. Buzzannco will present this special recognition to Adam. (Speaking to Adam away from mic)

Mr. Buzzannco - Oh boy, it's a pleasure to talk about Adam, and get comfortable. You know, Mark Twain said, "That out of the public schools comes the greatness of a nation." I won't tell you what he said about school boards. But boy, did you see tonight, proof of what he meant. I can't imagine a greater group of students than who we honored tonight. And capping it off with our valedictorian and salutatorian awards for Lauren and Adam. I tell you it's been an absolute pleasure to work with Adam. Adam has been the student Council board of education representative. If you read the bylaws, and I don't know why you would, I can think of one person who might read the bylaws of the Watertown Board of Education, but the student Council representative is not just a representative on the board. He or she is a member of the Board of Education, nonvoting, but a member of the Board of Education none the less. Adam, you lived up to the spirit of being a member of the Board of Education. Your reports were

always outstanding each and every time, through, accurate, comprehensive, and you made us feel like we walked the hallways of the school every day with your reports. You did such an honorary service to every organization, every athletic program, every service group, every academic effort, you made sure every one of those bases are covered and boy did you raise the bar. I really feel sorry for the person who has the following your footsteps. On behalf of the entire board, thank you for being an outstanding member of this Board of Education. (Applause)

Ms. Carnemolla - I just quickly want to add in that I met with Adam today as I do when we have a board meeting, it would come look at each other, both of us realizing this is the last meeting, I was probably sadder about that than Adam was. But I wanted to reiterate part of what Mr. Pisano said, he truly has been a member of the Board of Ed and for the administrative team at the high school that has meant a lot because of most of you know, we took over the school during the summer with a very little frame of reference, because of the many changes that happened, and for a lot of the year, Adam was that frame of reference even as a student. In sitting with me and talking through issues in preparation for coming to these meetings, sure but also really because he was a senior class president and he is that civic minded in community service driven. I also think he would've done those things with me no matter what. And every day of the week, he proved again and again that only why he deserved to be valedictorian but why he deserved to sit here every other Monday night. And I personally wanted to thank Adam for all he did to assist me and our team as we took over the school this year.

Dr. Gilmore - It is such an honor to be superintendent of schools and have Adam as part of our team. He is such a special... And he always gives of himself to the community and that's what makes them truly special. So Adam, tomorrow night will be a special night for you and it will be very exciting to see you walk across that stage. As well as all of the students in the class of 2013. So once again, give a nice round of applause for Adam. Thank you.

Mr. Buzzannco - Adam before we recess, I think that some of your fellow Board of Education members have some comments they would like to add.

Mr. Lambert - I have a few comments about our friend Adam. Adam Kuegler has taken advantage of his high school education. He has positioned himself for college. He seems to know where he is at the present but most of all, where he is headed in the future. Well-rounded and everyone's pick to succeed in college, in his chosen field, a winner, but in the end his future success depends on his internal strength and character. Like a well-built house, is only as strong as its foundation, his parents must be bursting with pride because of the foundation that they helped build. Their gift to him, it is astonishing to me, that someone so young is so comfortable in his own skin. A very rare trait in our youth today. And he even looks great in a bowtie even though he is not wearing one tonight. I know that I can speak for all of us on the board when we say that we are so very proud of him for his work, his service, his friendship, but most of all his performance in representing all of the schools here in Watertown with honesty and sincerity and dedication. Adam we will certainly miss you.

Mr. Guerrera - I had the pleasure of meeting Adam about a year and a half ago on Mount Fair Farm. We were campaigning for the Board of Ed and Mr. Berthel was there, and I saw these articles in the paper from an Adam Kuegler, and I said who's this Adam Kuegler? He's running for the Republicans. So, I'm out there at Mount Fair Farm and he came up to me should my hand and said I'm Adam Kuegler, he had a firm handshake, he looked me in the eye, and said, "hi it's nice to meet you." And I thought wow, he is something else. And then I got to know him through the Board of Ed and he is truly a gentleman, a scholar, an athlete. And it is rare to find someone with all three of those qualities. You can always do well in school but if you don't have the athletic ability or being well rounded, you need to be well-rounded life to succeed in college, and to succeed in the future, and Adam has that. I know you're going to do very well. I would like to wish you all the best of luck at UCONN, I think UCONN is very lucky to have you there. Students like Adam and our salutatorian; make Watertown proud and in the future will give us the name. So we look up to you Adam, and don't forget us when you make it to the top, but God speed and the best of luck to you Adam.

Mr. Butterly - I quickly want to say, that I echo everyone else's thoughts. We love the reports about our high school, which is the center of our education system. Mrs. Butterly is in Virginia watching her grandchild but she is so proud of you and she wanted me to send her best to you, congratulations and in all your future endeavors, I wish you success. Thanks Adam.

Mr. Berthel - Adam, first of all, along with the rest of the board, I think you for your service to this board and to your school. I don't think I need to repeat much of what has already been said about you and your service. But I will say this, you know tomorrow night, this board will officially release you and the entire graduating class of 2013 into the world. We have met our obligation to best of our ability to provide you with what I hope, and I think I know after getting to know you, is a great education. I look forward to participating in the commencement exercises with you and your class tomorrow, and especially to hearing you deliver your speech as the class valedictorian. I believe this quote from Pres. Dwight Eisenhower defines an important part of you. President Eisenhower said, "When you are in any contest you should work as if there were to the very last minute, a chance to lose it." I think that that defines a large part of what you are and what your ethic is all about. Thank you so much for being a member of this board this year, thank you for being a friend, and I wish you only the best in your future endeavors.

Mr. Nardella - Adam, I'm not sure really sure you know this yet, but I kind of got your life planned out already. So in the year 2032, you'll be 35 and I'll be 35, so I am letting you know that we will seek the presidency of these United States. On a serious note, I think they really hit it on the head. You do a great job, you excel at it. I am truly honored to have known you; I think I'm a better person for having known you. And I know you're going to do just as well if not better, at UCONN and beyond. So seriously, congratulations and I cannot wait until tomorrow night to see you and Lauren and the rest of the class of 2013 walk across that stage.

Congratulations.

Ms. Colangelo - Adam is the privilege and honor to know you, such a fine young man. I am wishing you all the best in your endeavors and I know you will make us proud. We will miss you.

Ms. McCabe - I'd like to say quickly congratulations to everyone who was recognized tonight. You are our future and we will be looking to you. Lauren congrats as salutatorian and Adam congrats as valedictorian, really a great job this year. Best of luck we will miss you.

Mr. Beland - I just want to say Adam best of luck to you and it is been a privilege and an honor to know you and who worked on this board with you. Thank you for everything you have done.

Mr. Buzzannco - Thank you all very much and Dr. Gilmore I will turn it back over to you.

Dr. Gilmore - We certainly would like to continue our acknowledgment and recognition portion of the Board of Education meeting in the following children have received first prize or honorable mention in the Eighth Annual Children's Poetry Contest for 2013. This was sponsored by the friends of the Watertown Public Library. So we would like to knowledge the following children:

First Prize

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| Jessica Liano | Judson Elementary School, Grade 5 |
| Avery O'Connell | Judson Elementary School, Grade 3 |
| Brandon Emerick | Swift Middle School , Grade 7 |
| Mary Ryan | Swift Middle School, Grade 8 |
| Sarah Tata | Swift Middle School, Grade 6 |

Honorable Mention

| | |
|-------------------|------------------------------|
| Emma Conard | John Trumbull, Grade 2 |
| Claire Roberts | John Trumbull, Grade 2 |
| Ryan Topi | John Trumbull, Grade 1 |
| Julian Frantzis | Judson School, Grade 3 |
| Biana Sadiku | Judson School, Grade 3 |
| Evan Arnold | Polk School, Grade 5 |
| Mikayla Brown | Polk School, Grade 4 |
| Diana Ghisa | Swift Middle School, Grade 7 |
| Brianna Lucarelli | Swift Middle School, Grade 6 |
| Alli Peschel | Swift Middle School, Grade 7 |
| Ireland Thompson | Swift Middle School, Grade 8 |

Mr. Buzzannco - Before we continue on I would like to call for a short recess for about seven minutes. We will reconvene at about 10 minutes after and that will allow for everyone to have a chance take pictures with the principles and their families and socialize. And then we will continue on with this evening's meeting. Thank you.

E. Report from Student Council Representative – Adam Kuegler

Mr. Buzzannco – Thank you everyone, I took 15. I will now reconvene this regular meeting of the Watertown Board of Education and I am so sorry Adam to make you sing for your supper but we are going to turn now to the report from the student Council elite.

Adam Kuegler – Thank you Mr. Chairman. In terms of the school news, most of what is going on right now is graduation. There are graduation practices, today and tomorrow, and graduation is of course tomorrow night at 6 PM. Besides the makeup days, exams have wrapped up in spring sports have also wrapped up. The students are very excited for the summer. Graduation, each year, is met with a lot of mixed feelings. Leaving this board brings on a lots of those mixed feelings for me, while I am sad to leave this position, and all of you, as a kid interested in public service and politics, I cannot think of a better learning experience that I could have gotten in this building in terms of learning about leadership from Mr. Buzzannco and Dr. Gilmore and the other members of this board. I learned about public speaking and hard work and the hard-work not only here, but I've heard about all the hard work that is done in other committee meetings and all of their obligations. I can't think people enough for being so complementary both tonight and each week as I did my report but the truth is that I was just given great material to write about. I'm not writing fiction here, I'm not writing a story line, the students of Watertown high school, they honestly do great things and I just get to report about it to you. It has been a joy for me to have it go both ways and tell you what is going on in the high school and tell the students of the high school what is going on here. When I talked to the student Council advisors, Miss Bellemare and Miss Loughlin, at the start of the year, they said usually they have to beg someone last minute to do this job, and I just volunteered and said I would be glad to do it. And then I thought, wow, am I just that much of a sucker? I wondered if there were times at the end of the year like around now if I would rather be doing something different, like out with my friends, but instead what I did is I spent a lot of time with a different group of friends, a nice new group of friends in all of you that I got to meet. You welcomed me so kindly and onto the board and made me feel so welcome right from the beginning. I have enjoyed my time with all of you and in preparing these meetings with Mrs. Carnemolla and Ms. Brown and Mr. Tartarelli, along with our athletic director Mr. Medic and the art teacher Mrs. Bartholomeo, the art teacher, and even Danny Nelson. A lot of the times I get a lot of credit for being out here but a lot of hard work goes on, not tonight obviously because all of the audio video equipment is in the gym for graduation, but Danny Nelson and his dad Mr. Nelson were always so kind to me seeing me in the halls, and even Mr. Nelson would joke with me and say, Oh you know the agenda is more than five pages tonight, make sure you keep your report short." I got to talk to the people who came to the meetings and watch, I had a great time talking to them both before and after the meetings. And to my friends and family who have been so supportive, and you can tell who they are because they are the only ones still here, whenever I give my report after an awards presentation, wow I really know how to clear room, because most of the time everybody is

usually gone by the time I give my report. But I've come to the Board of Education meetings, and my brother was, in the school system and Zach who is here tonight, before I was, so I have come to Board of Ed meetings, even before I was in the Watertown Public schools, and I have seen a few people do this job before me. I've dreamed about doing this job it is something that I have really enjoyed, and honestly, some great students come through and sit in the seat, I can't claim to be the most orative or the best speaker, as I said some great students have come through, and this may be a surprise but I may not even be the best looking student representative, but I can claim to be the most grateful for what I have learned and the kindness that you have all shown me. And with that, I will conclude my final report to the Board of Education. Thank you.

Mr. Buzzannco – Thank you Adam, for the friendship, and as you mentioned, does not end here tonight. Please know that you can contact any of us at any time, and if there's anything we can do to help you in your career, or in your studies or in life.

F. Public Participation

Mr. Buzzannco – We will be moving on to our first Public Participation tonight. Is there anyone tonight that wishes to address the board? Yes, please, Fran.

Fran Palmer – 220 Middlebury Rd. I would like the board to consider a change to the 2013-2014 school schedule. Please include 3 half days at the end of the school year. They would be full days for the teachers. As a seventh-grade teacher, I just spent two hours after school today completing papers where teachers make recommendations for students going into the eighth grade. If we had a half day for students, I would be able to complete this work during my contracted day instead of from 2:45 to 4:45. I also spent another 45 minutes at home, making comments in my electronic grade book because I don't have time at school to do this. Another reason for half days, when I left my classroom today it was over 90°.

Mr. Buzzannco – Thank you very much. Is there anyone else who wishes to address the board?

Peg Germain – 225 Morris Town Line Rd. Good evening. I am the sixth grade language arts teacher at Swift Middle School and I ditto what Fran said. (Mic cut out) I am wondering if the board would consider changing its approach to delayed opening this next year. Instead of having a 90 minute delay, looking at a two hour delay. So we would either have no school or we would have a two hour delay. Because if you listen and watch surrounding towns, they seem to have adopted that. And I do believe there were perhaps at least two days, maybe only one, that might have bought a couple of degrees of warmth and maybe just the opportunity to get another parking lot plowed. So, just something for consideration. And perhaps, if that is the case, that would prevent us to still be in school, attempting to teach students, in conditions that are really not conducive to learning. My second seed, I am an avid newspaper reader and a

recent headline caught me, that a local town and I can't remember the name of it, was going to adopt a change in its grading system. And the change went from 60 to 70 being required for passing grade. And I thought, oh that's the system that we use. And then I started thinking a little bit more completely about this, and I thought this doesn't make too much sense to me. Because in our system, the way it stands, there is a six point differential between failing and being able to be an honor student. Because students can achieve a 75, and as long as their average is high enough, they are listed as honor students. So something doesn't add up to me if 70 is the grade you need to achieve to pass and 69 is failing, and 75 gets you honor role. So, again, just planting a seed. And I thank you for your time.

Mr. Buzzannco – Is there anyone else who wishes to address the Board? Is there anyone else who wishes to address the Board? Hearing none, we will close our first round of public participation and move on to our committee reports.

G. Committee Reports

Curriculum and Instruction Committee, Mr. Eric Berthel, Chair-No

Policy and Labor Committee, Mr. Eric Berthel, Chair-No

Budget and Finance Committee, Mr. Tom Lambert, Chair-No

Facilities/PBC/Operations Committee, Mr. Tom Lambert, Chair-No

Governance and Community Engagement Committee, Mr. Ray Nardella, Chair-No

H. Communications – Secretary – Mr. Berthel

No report

I. Minutes

Mr. Buzzannco – We will move on to item I, minutes of the regular Board of Education meeting of June 10, 2013. Are there any corrections? Hearing none is there a motion to approve the minutes of the regular Board of Education meeting of June 10, 2013?

Agenda Item Number: I.1a
Subject: Minutes of the Board of Education Meeting – June 10, 2013

Motion Presented By: Mr. Berthel
Motion Seconded By: Mr. Nardella

Text of the Motion: Mr. Chairman, I moved that we approve the minutes of the regular Board of Education meeting of June 10, 2013.

Discussion: None

Opposed: None

Abstained: Mr. Berthel

Vote: Motion Passes

J. Superintendent's Recommendation and Report

Dr. Gilmore –Thank You Mr. Buzzannco. And now, I would like to announce our 2014 teacher of the year, Mr. Michael Gerardo. Mr. Gerardo is the Watertown High School Social Studies teacher and our Interact class advisor. And the board and I will officially be recognizing and celebrating this honor with Mr. Gerardo during our fall board meeting. Our sincere congratulations, of course, and to all the teachers who were nominated for this very prestigious recognition. Also, I would like to think Ms. Murphy and Ms. Carey, Polk school teachers who will be moving out of state, and we will truly miss you. Thank you to Mrs. Bok for her services to our students and staff. Tuesday, July 2, is referendum day. Please exercise your civic responsibility and vote. Polling sites are Polk school, Judson, Swift middle school, and the Hemingway municipal building from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. As I always say, invest in our children, invest in education, and please support the Watertown public schools for the betterment of our community.

This week is the last week of school, and as Superintendent, I want to thank our Board of Education for their support and commitment to our students. And I want to thank our administrators, many of whom are here this evening, as well as our teachers and staff for making a difference each and every day in the lives of our students. You are very much valued and appreciated and I certainly also want to thank our PTOs and parents who were always lending a hand anytime we need you for a school program. Everyone, great job this year.

Watertown High School graduation will be held tomorrow evening, at 6 p.m. in the Watertown High School gymnasium. And the Swift Middle School graduation will be held Wednesday evening at 6 p.m. at the Swift Middle School gymnasium. We are honored to present our graduates with their 2013 diplomas.

And tonight's presentation will be facilitated by Maggie Dreher, Food Service Director, and she will present her year-end review. Mrs. Dreher , please?

Ms. Maggie Dreher - Good evening, I am here to present an overview of the year in Food Services. It has been a very busy year. We began the year implementing the changes to our

Wellness Policy. In order to keep our students safe and offer healthy choices, the updated Wellness Policy offers parents the opportunity to purchase snacks from food services that are on the Connecticut healthy snack lists. The principal contacts the food service office provided me with a list of food allergies in the classes. I would then check the requested item's ingredient list to ensure there were no allergens in the item. If there were, I would make an alternate suggestion. We handled these changes proactively by meeting with PTOs, school administrators, and various groups throughout the school community. For the most part, the changes were received positively and things have settled in nicely. The Wellness Committee met recently to review our progress, as well as planning a focus, for the next school year. There are a couple of areas that the committee would like to take a closer look at, such as nutrition education, physical education, and physical activity opportunities, for our students and the school community.

There were many federal regulation changes to our meal patterns. This was the first time in many years and the changes were substantial. Calorie ranges and food options were adjusted to be appropriate for different age groups. We transitioned to offering whole grains and low fat and low sodium options. One of the most significant changes was with our offer versus service procedure. Students had been required to take three out of five components including a grain, protein, dairy, fruit, and vegetable. Now, students are still required to take three out of five components, but one of the components must be a fruit or vegetable or combination of both. This change was met with resistance by older students. Fruit was being tossed in the trash and this is very upsetting to us. I commend the food service staff for their patience and understanding. They worked very hard explaining the regulation changes in encouraging students to make healthy choices. This has been a challenge but it is also settling in. The industry of medicine provides nutritional regulations for our meal patterns and sometimes science and practicality don't always agree. As the year went on, any schools throughout the nation were receiving complaints that children were still hungry. The School Nutrition Association submitted recommendations for adjustments to the regulations and, happily, there were some compromises made. Originally, there were maximum amounts of grains and proteins that could be served. The industry of medicine listened to our concerns and the maximum amounts were removed. This allowed us to serve a larger portion of grains and protein as long as we remained within the correct calorie range. This made our students happy, especially our athletes. These changes were made to help our students make healthy choices and also fight the epidemic of childhood obesity. As a result, our food costs and paper goods costs have increased significantly. We did receive \$50,000 in a Department of Defense Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Grant and, we will again next year, take advantage of this great program.

I am so proud that this year the Watertown student lunch program was awarded a grant from the Share Our Strength and Connecticut No Kid Hungry Campaign. The purpose of the grant is to provide funds to start a school breakfast program in each of our schools. No child should start the day hungry. Research confirms that breakfast is the most important meal of the day for children's health, academic achievement, cognitive development, and mental health. Eating

breakfast can also help to decrease obesity and end hunger at the same time. In fact, the goals work hand-in-hand. Providing children with breakfast at school helps to end hunger and children who eat breakfast regularly have a better quality of nutrient intake and are less likely to be obese or overweight. This February, we implemented the breakfast programs at Watertown High school and Swift Middle school. This program makes breakfast available to all of the students at Swift and Watertown High. Participation was slow at first but is growing steadily. We have submitted the required documentation to the state office of Child Nutrition to expand our breakfast program to include John Trumbull Primary school, Judson Elementary school, and Polk Elementary school, beginning September 9, 2013. I have met with Kathy Scully, Lisa Rommel, and Stacie D'Antonio and we are working together to prepare a plan of action for a successful breakfast program at each of their schools. Due to all of our schools participating in a school breakfast program, the Watertown student lunch program will receive \$15,000 in grant funds from the State of Connecticut to assist us in running these programs.

Elementary students charging lunch continues to be a challenge. At this time, the lunch program is owed approximately \$1000. Through our infinite campus messenger component, my office has been able to email parents, as well as sent letters, and make phone calls an attempt to collect these charges.

Our labor costs include retro-pay after settling the food-service employee union contract. Although we have seen increases in food, supplies, repairs, and maintenance costs and also outstanding lunch charges, at this time we are showing a \$22,000 profit. This figure does not include June, which will have higher labor costs than usual due to the many weather related days off and extended calendar. I am predicting ending the year breaking even or showing a small loss. It has been a rewarding and challenging year.

Dr. Gilmore - Thank you, Mrs. Dreher. We sincerely appreciate your work, especially the work with the grants, and most importantly that every child will get a breakfast starting next year. So thank you so much for that opportunity and for helping us.

Mr. Buzzannco - I would certainly echo that, and if we had another boutonniere, we would pin it on you, Maggie. I think we will look back on 2012 and 2013 for a year of incredible improvements, a real turning point in our school district. The wellness policy that you introduced, the children are far healthier with the wellness program that was introduced in the beginning of the year. And on behalf of the board, please, pass along our thanks and appreciation to your many front-line staff members who took on the misdirected frustration of the students who were adjusting to those new food requirements. I know they bore the brunt of that very unfairly. Most importantly, this will be the year where students have the opportunity to no longer go hungry in the morning when it comes to breakfast. Many of you know the Connecticut is last in the nation for the participation of the school breakfast program. It has been a priority for our government, our district, and across the state to change that. And now with Maggie's leadership, we now have that school breakfast program that will roll out to all five schools this fall. In some of our schools, almost 30% of our children qualify for a free or reduced

the breakfast, and they will now have that opportunity thanks to Maggie's leadership. And thank you for the implementation and guidance of the principles all our buildings and the food service staff there. Thank you for an outstanding year.

Mr. Berthel - A couple of comments, please, Mr. Chairman? Maggie, I would just like to add my complements. As you know, I have two young boys in our school system and the new program that we launched for the wellness, as you know I was a little hesitant at first, but I supported the initiative because we need to get over the curb, because it was the right thing to do. But I can tell you how easy it made doing parties, facilitating a party and knowing that our children were safe in the classroom. It really gave peace of mind and then most recently, I was in a classroom at John Trumbull and the teacher had put out a spread for a class play and I asked the teacher, "Where did this come from?" And she said, "From the food service." And that is just terrific. I knew that we are not violating our policy, and I knew that our children and our guests for that matter, would be safe and we would not have any problems. And lastly, I may be five or six dollars of that thousand dollars that is owed so please let me know. Thank you again for your dedication and are very hard work this year. And yes, I know, there is an app for that. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

2. Appointments – (Information Only)

- a. Ms. Chryll Beliveau to the position of K-5 Title 1 Summer School Director for the Watertown School District effective, July 1, 2013 through July 25, 2013, at a contractual stipend of \$3,750.00. Payable at the end of the session.
- b. Ms. Sue Danaher, to the position of Speech/Language and ELL Services Co-Coordinator for the Watertown School District for the 2012-2013 school year, at a contractual stipend of \$1,348.00. Payable at the end of the program.
- c. Ms. Beth Wolf, to the position of Speech/Language and ELL Services Co-Coordinator for the Watertown School District for the 2012-2013 school year, at a contractual stipend of \$1,348.00. Payable at the end of the program.

3. Resignation (information only)

- a. Ms. Heather Murphy, from the position of Third Grade Teacher at Polk Elementary School effective, June 28, 2013 for the purpose of moving out-of-state.
 - b. Ms. Jamie Carey, from the position of Fifth Grade Teacher at Polk Elementary School effective, June 28, 2013 for the purpose of moving.
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K. Report from the Chairman

Mr. Buzzannco - It is just incredible that it is June 24 and there are still two days left of school. It just boggles the mind. And many more if you are in the payroll in this district. This is such a hot and humid week and we can only give all of you our deepest thanks and appreciation for what you are going through this week as well as our sympathy, with these incredible levels of heat and humidity. On behalf of our entire board, we want to congratulate our graduating seniors and we join your families and the entire district in wishing you, a great, if not short, summer and much success in joy in what lies ahead for you. To our central office staff, our maintenance building staff, who will keep working throughout the summer, thank you for all you do to keep this district operating in such fine shape. We want to give special thanks to the staff in this room and across this district, who worked directly with children every day. Educating children is one of life's most rewarding experiences. But it is an experience that comes with more stress, more challenges, than I know I can handle. All of our schools buildings employees, our teachers, our secretaries, our counselors, nurses, cafeteria workers, maintenance workers, have to accomplish their daily tasks. There is no getting around their assignments for the day. On the board, we can postpone considering a policy, we can delay it indefinitely, choice isn't a luxury that school building employees have. On top of that, though, their tasks are interrupted constantly, by urgent situations, minor in major, that require their immediate attention. Yet, you folks do it all. And you do it all, smiling. How you handle that kind of pressure and stress, every day with the kind of grace that you have, confidentially, I feel you deserve a much longer break than our students do this summer. But we are very grateful that you were going to be back at the end of August. Thank you for all you do for our children and enjoy your summer. Thank you. This concludes the Chairman's report for this evening.

L. Action Items – Items to be Approved by Consent

Agenda Item Number: L.1

Subject: Consideration of the Approval of the Termination of Teaching Contracts
Because of a Reduction in Force

Motion Presented By: Mr. Berthel

Motion Seconded By: Mr. Lambert

Text of the Motion: Mr. Chairman, I move that the Board approve of the termination of contract for the following staff member because of a Reduction in Force due to budget constraints for the 2012-2013 school year and a letter to be sent to the staff member notifying them of the termination of their contract effective June 30, 2013. The effected employee is Janice Pond, .6 FTE, World Language Teacher at Swift Middle School.

Discussion: I am opposed to this. There have been quite a few resignations and retirements and I believe in the board packet tonight, and I asked last meeting, what the impact would be on the district. I think there is a lot of savings out there that we are not taking into consideration that could potentially be saving these positions, so I am opposed to this. And I hope, that we get an answer to that question that I have asked, in regards the impact of teachers retiring, and how that is going to save us money. And I also asked a question a while back, about the insurance savings that we are seeing from our teachers switching plans and I also have not gotten an answer on that either. So those are some big areas that I have multiple questions on and I am opposed to this motion. Thank you.

Opposed: Mr. Guerrera
Abstained: None
Vote: Motion Passes

Agenda Item Number: L.2
Subject: Consideration of the Approval of the Expenditure for the CABE Policy Services

Motion Presented By: Ms. Berthel
Motion Seconded By: Mr. Lambert

Text of the Motion: Mr. Chairman, I move that the board approve the expenditure of \$3517 for the 2012-2013 budget year for CABE's Customized Policy Service, followed by payments of \$3517 and \$3516 in each of the two subsequent budget years.

Discussion: Board members may recall, that the policy service that we are taking up tonight, was recommended and approved by the Policy and Labor Committee in January, and the expenditure was recommended to the full board, and we are taking up this evening. Any other discussion?

Opposed: None
Abstained: None
Vote: Motion Passes

M. Future Agenda Items and Board Members' Comments

Mr. Buzzannco – Does any member have any comments or proposed agenda items this evening?

Mr. Nardella - Yes, Mr. Chairman, I have a comment. I think it's just a general (mic cut out). Sometimes as public servants, I think whether we serve a Council, a Board of Ed, whatever the case may be, sometimes we get so caught up in our work that we are elected to do, and the politics of the inevitable business, the politics of life that, we forget to zoom out a little bit, and take time for ourselves, or take time to see the broader perspective. I would just like to say, that tonight, the gambit of recognitions that we have done, whether it's the amazing things that Adam and Lauren have done, or the high school or the elementary schools, the programs that Maggie was telling us about, it really reminded me why I ran for the seat, and I really couldn't be prouder to be part of this district and to represent the people of this district in the educational system. So with that, I would like to wish everyone a great summer and a safe summer.

N. Public Participation

Mr. Buzzannco – Is there anyone tonight that wishes to address the board? Is there anyone tonight that wishes to address the board? If not, we will close our second round of public participation and move for adjournment. Is there a motion?

O. Adjournment

Agenda Item Number: O.1
Subject: Adjournment

Motion Presented By: Mr. Berthel
Motion Seconded By: Mr. Nardella

Time of the Motion: 8:47 p.m.

Text of the Motion: So moved.

Opposed: None
Abstained: None
Vote: Motion Passes

The meeting adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Eric Berthel
Secretary of the Board of Education

Mindi Davidson
Recording Secretary