

**WATERTOWN BOARD OF EDUCATION  
REGULAR MEETING  
MINUTES**

**Meeting Date:** May 29, 2012  
**Meeting Time:** 7:30 PM  
**Meeting Place:** Watertown High School, Lecture Hall

**Members Present:** Mr. Richard Mazzamaro, Chairman  
Mr. Thomas Lambert, Vice Chairman  
Mr. Eric Berthel, Secretary  
Mr. Richard Beland  
Ms. Susan McCabe  
Mr. Guy Buzzannco  
Atty. Sean Butterly  
Mr. David Guerrero

**Absent:** Mr. Raymond Nardella  
Dr. James Collin, Asst. Superintendent of Schools

**Others Present:** Dr. Gail Gilmore, Superintendent of Schools  
Ms. Karen Clancy, Business Manager  
Ms. Sage Davino, Student Council Representative  
Representative Sean Williams  
Senator Robert Kane  
Jeanine Kaufman, Habitat for Humanity  
Jennifer Larkin, C.A.R.E. Program Coordinator  
Other interested guests

**A. Convene Regular Meeting - 7:30 PM**

**B. Salute to the Flag**

**C. Watertown Public Schools' Mission Statement-Eric Berthel**

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;
- are caring and responsible citizens;
- have a sense of social justice.

**D. Recognition**

**1.) C.A.R.E. Program (Character, Attitude, Respect, and Excellence)**

The Watertown Board of Education would like to recognize the students in the C.A.R.E. Program at Watertown High School and their advisors. The group C.A.R.E. is a Habitat for Humanity Group that stands for Character, Attitude, Respect, and Excellence. This group of Watertown High School students has won the \$6,000 grand prize from the Cablevision Charity Champions which will go directly to the Greater Waterbury Habitat for Humanity! Through

various fundraisers such as car washes, sale of baked goods and selling turkey pinups and snowman pinups throughout the year, the students raised more than \$3,000.00. An assembly for the presentation of the Charity Champion grant check to the C.A.R.E. group is scheduled for Friday, June 8, 2012 at 10:30 a.m. at the high school. It has been confirmed that Governor Dannel Malloy will attend this assembly.

Dr. Gail Gilmore-Thank you Mr. Mazzamaro and good evening everyone. Tonight is a very special night. We would like to honor our wonderful Watertown High School students that know that success is about giving back to our community. We are so very proud of you and our advisors. This evening we certainly have some wonderful guests to acknowledge as well and Representative Williams and Senator Robert Kane that are here this evening. So, it is a very special Board of Education Meeting and without further ado, I would like to call Jen Larkin to the podium where we will ask one of our C.A.R.E. Students to come up for the certificate with Mr. Mazzamaro, please.

The Board wishes to recognize:

Evan Alsdorf  
Leah Balnis  
Theresa Boivin  
Sadie Bradshaw  
James Civitello  
Chelsea Longo  
Nagihan Malik  
Anthony Martelli  
Jordyn McClary  
Itsha Medina  
Collin Murphy  
Paul Onofreo  
Eric Reeser  
Marisa Reeser  
Autumn Perugini  
Jennifer Sparso  
Alex Weihrauch  
John Welsh

Rhoda Emmanouil, Advisor  
Jon Faass, Advisor  
Jennifer Larkin, Program Coordinator

And, at this time I would like to call to the podium Jeanine Kaufman, she is the Director on the Board at the Habitat for Humanity and would like to address our wonderful students.

Jeanine Kaufman - Good evening, I am pleased to be here tonight to gratefully acknowledge that the C.A.R.E. Organization of Watertown High School will be making a monetary donation to Habitat for Humanity of Greater Waterbury. These funds will assist the affiliate with our next build which will take place later this summer in the Hopeville neighborhood of Waterbury.

On May 16, just a month ago, many student members of C.A.R.E., along with their advisor, joined us at our Board Meeting and several of the students explained how they formed the organization within Watertown High School, what their mission was and how they became visible within the student body and how their membership grew through inclusion. Moreover, they clearly stated again, they took ownership and responsibility for all of their endeavors. They planned it, they executed it and they cleaned up. So, we as a Board were so impressed with their mission and how they demonstrate compassion, empathy and leadership. They deserve the recognition and honor that Cablevision will bestow upon them on June 8 and not long after that award, this fine group of young people will travel to Fitchburg, MA to work for a week on a Habitat Build in that state. Later this summer, we hope to see many of you at our build, and then we work with our new partner family, which is very exciting for us.

We are going to build a house which will transform the lives of this family and turn an empty lot into a home, and remember kindness counts.

Dr. Gail Gilmore – I certainly want to reiterate the importance of kindness. Whenever you say a kind word to a person and you make a difference with their housing and their person, you have made a major contribution of life, so congratulations to our Watertown High School students. We are so proud.

Richard Mazzamaro – Mr. Ray Nardella couldn't be here tonight. He started his summer courses this evening and couldn't make the regular meeting, but he did send me some comments and he wanted me to read. C.A.R.E. Team members, Ms. Larkin, fellow Board Members, Administration and, Community members. I regret that I cannot be at tonight's meeting to celebrate the amazing accomplishments that the C.A.R.E. Organization has made. However, I would like to offer my most sincere congratulations on your amazing success. It is truly young citizens like you that make a difference, not only in the general community, but also and more importantly directly in the lives of individuals and youth that you work with. The contributions that you make on a daily basis and motivation, passion and desire that you instill in young people around you certainly does not go unnoticed as seen in the heights that you have already reached. I have not a doubt in my mind that each and every C.A.R.E. Team member will do amazing things and truly will change the world in your own unique, special and undoubtedly profound way. The success that you have seen as a result of team work and positive mindset that you advocate is always remarkable and epitomizes whatever community group should represent. I am so proud to recognize your success tonight and am honored at the unparalleled standards that you have brought to the Watertown Community. Again, from the bottom of my heart, congratulations and I look forward to working for all you stand for. Ray.

Now, we will recess for five minutes for photographs and reconvene at 7:50 p.m.

**E. Report from Student Council Representative – Sage Davino-Hello Everyone**

- Tomorrow the National Honor Society is holding a Blood Drive for teachers and students above the age of 17. Throughout the day Honor Society members will volunteer to aid students giving blood.
- The Senior Scholarship Awards Night is also tomorrow at 6:30 p.m. in the auditorium. Seniors will be awarded for their academics with awards and local scholarships.
- On Saturday June 2<sup>nd</sup>, the WHS Interact Club Relay for Life team will be at Waterbury's Relay for Life fighting for the cure! This year it will be held at Crosby High School and will have many events and activities.
- The Super Senior Dinner will be Tuesday, June 5<sup>th</sup>. A super senior is a senior that has never gotten in any trouble in their high school career. The dinner will be at the high school where teachers will serve the seniors for the night.
- Final exams will start on June 8<sup>th</sup> and will continue for the next week. Seniors have graduation rehearsal for the week and will be graduating June 15<sup>th</sup>. They are encouraged to go to Project Graduation, where they will be locked in the school for the night and enjoy activities like movies, swimming, palm readers and more. Congrats to the class of 2012!

**F. Public Participation-**

Roseceil Rader, I live at 291 Spring Street, Naugatuck and I teach at Swift Middle School. I live at 291 Spring Street, Naugatuck and I teach at Swift Middle School. I am here tonight to advocate for a fellow teacher whose job will be cut June 30. I can't see this happen without comment. I have had the

privilege of working with Kathy Sklanka for eight years at Swift Middle School and have come to respect and cherish her excellence as a science teacher and her tireless support of her students, colleagues and community. This is no ordinary teacher. The key to Kathy's inspiring teaching persona is her talent for building confidence and enthusiasm as well as academic skill. I have witnessed her infectious teaching style at work and the lasting impression it leaves on the young minds she nurtures including the least inclined and hard to motivate pupils. Science is her passion. Her pupils grow to love it too. They connect Science and Technology to the real world and thus see her subject as an authentic learning experience. Character education is also a major part of her teaching philosophy. She assertively and lovingly instills discipline into her classroom. Students demonstrate responsibility, kindness and trust. Kathy Sklanka's day does not end when the bell rings. She manages tons of students after school. Is advisor to two science clubs, Lego League Robotics and Stem, Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. The annual talent show, peer leaders and Peace Pals. She collaborates with her fellow teachers at Swift as team leader and serves as co-advisor of the International Haunted House and as a chaperon on the Science Club, Washington D.C. and World Language field trips. The Sunshine Club flourishes under her care. Her civic endeavors give further evidence of her commitment to our young. She works with WOA, Watertown Oakville Adolescent Heroes and WATCH, Watertown Adult Action Committee to combat alcohol and drug abuse and also the Relay for Life to raise funds for cancer. Watertown is so blessed to have this extraordinary woman serve the community and public education. Her teaching, her selfless service and true colleagueauships speak for themselves. Kathy Sklanka is that rare individual we all hope to find and emulate, but meet only once in a lifetime. She is an outstanding educator. I am a seasoned teacher of mature age and I've seen everything in my professional life, good and bad. Kathy Sklanka is amazing. In spite of her fate, she continues to carry on daily with the same verve and commitment. She has character. A greater love than hers hath no man for the students of Watertown. Your job is a difficult one, what to cut, where, who. I don't envy you, but in her case, it's just so said and so unjust. If this cut becomes a reality, you will be letting a truly great teacher slip through your fingers. What a terrible tragedy for the students of Watertown, but I have faith, faith in you, and faith can move mountains. Thank you for listening.

Richard Mazzamaro – Thank you. Would anyone like to address the Board? That will close our first Public Participation.

**G. Budget Summary – (Information Only – No Action Required)**

**H. Committee Reports:**

**1. Student Programs and Services – Richard Beland**

The Student Programs and Services Committee met tonight to discuss the possibility of having an 11<sup>th</sup> grade exchange student from Mexico come to the Watertown School District for the 2012-2013 school year and talked about the specifics of the host family and we will be bring this to the full Board for approval at our next meeting.

**2. Curriculum and Instruction Committee – Eric Berthel**

Mr. Chairman, the only update tonight is that we have set a date for the next Curriculum and Instruction Committee meeting on June 11 at 6:00 p.m. at the Watertown High School Principal's Conference Room.

**3. Policy and Labor Committee – Guy Buzzannco**

The Policy and Labor Committee met last Monday, the 21<sup>st</sup> primarily to review and consider

improvements to the policy on evaluating the position of the Superintendent. Our current policy has served us well for years, but both the Superintendent and Policy and Labor Committee feel that an approach that better integrates District goals and Superintendent objectives into the evaluation process is needed along with one that reflects the joint responsibility we share to lead the work of the District.

To that end, we reviewed a recommended evaluation policy from the CT Association of Boards of Education that provides a timeline and an instrument to guide the creation of long-term District goals, short term Superintendent objectives that support them, and a tool for evaluating the extent to which the objectives are met.

The new policy will focus on areas of contemporary concern for Districts supporting the development of children in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, including Educational Leadership, Organizational Management, Community and BOE Relations and Personal and Professional Qualities and Relationships.

A draft of the new policy is in development, and we expect to meet again in the coming weeks to review and approve it.

We also briefly discussed the role social media and mobile technology can play in supporting learning inside and outside the classroom. Districts, like Watertown, that have implemented policies to protect children from the risks of these technologies, are now working to understand how they can be leveraged to augment traditional classroom learning. We'll continue this discussion over the next few months.

That concludes our report, Mr. Chairman.

4. Budget, Finance and Operations Committee – Guy Buzzannco-none
5. Facilities/PBC/Operations Committee – Thomas Lambert

Yes, Mr. Chairman, tonight we had at our Facilities Meeting a presentation from Energy Education, Inc. This Board of Education is constantly looking at the cost of energy and the opportunity to save. Energy Education, Inc. would teach us how to lower energy costs using energy conservation strategies. I thought the presentation went very well and I think we are all excited to move forward essentially with a program like this. Thank you very much for your attention to this.

Richard Mazzamaro – I served on the Facilities Committee back in 2006 and at the time, we thought it was a great idea. However, our schools were just being unbuttoned to be renovated, so we didn't think it was the best time. You're talking energy savings in double digits and tens of thousands of dollars in real savings in the first year in this program with no capital outgoing. So there will be more information to come. A presentation will be forthcoming to the Superintendent. We are excited and I think Mr. Lambert and the Committee are very excited to bring this to the full Board and the savings involved.

David Guerrero – I was talking with the gentleman outside briefly and I think we have over a million dollars in energy costs every year, and he was saying on average is 20/30% savings that are realized, so 2 or \$300,000. is great so, hopefully, we can work that out and see some results.

6. Governance and Community Engagement Committee – Eric Berthel

I would just like to thank my fellow Board Members and Mr. Nardella who is not here this evening and Mr. Lambert for their participation in the Memorial Day Parade. We had a great time and walked with the Senator Robert Kane along with the Town Council and had a great showing for the Board on that very hot day yesterday. We do not have a Governance and Community Engagement Committee meeting at this time. I just want to extend thanks to the Board Members who offered their time yesterday.

**I. Communications - Secretary –Eric Berthel-None**

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**Agenda Item Number:** J.1.  
**Subject:** Minutes

**Motion Presented by:** Eric Berthel  
**Motion Seconded by:** Thomas Lambert

**Text of Motion:** Regular Board of Education Meeting – May 14, 2012  
To approve the minutes of the Board of Education Regular Meeting  
May 14, 2012

**Discussion:** None  
**Opposed:** None  
**Abstained:** 2  
**Vote:** 6-0-2 Motion passed.

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**Agenda Item Number:** J.2.  
**Subject:** Minutes

**Motion Presented by:** Eric Berthel  
**Motion Seconded by:** Thomas Lambert

**Text of Motion:** Special Board of Education Meeting – May 17, 2012  
To approve the minutes of the Board of Education Special Meeting of  
May 17, 2012

**Discussion:** None  
**Opposed:** None  
**Abstained:** 3  
**Vote:** 5-0-3 Motion passed.

**K. Superintendent's Recommendations and Report**

1. Appointments – (Information Only)
  - a.) Mr. Paul Kowalski to the position of Custodian at Polk Elementary School, Main Level Area B, 2<sup>nd</sup> shift, M-F, starting May 21, 2012, at the hourly rate of \$20.30.
2. Resignations – (Information Only)
  - a.) Ms. Nicole Holland from the position of Grade 4 Teacher at Polk Elementary School effective June 20, 2012 for personal reasons.
3. Senate Bill 458

We are delighted to have Senator Kane and Representative Williams as our guests this evening. They will provide an informational overview of Senate Bill 458, which addresses education reform. Thank you gentlemen for being here this evening and if you would please review the Senate Bill 458 that helps Connecticut close its achievement gap while raising academic outcomes for all students. So thank you once again for being here and if you could just provide

us information and review, we certainly would appreciate it.

Connecticut's Year of Education Reform produced a landmark education reform bill. Senate Bill 458 mandates the type of integrated changes that will help Connecticut to close its achievement gap while raising academic outcomes for all students.

The Board is honored and wishes to thank Senator Robert Kane and Representative Sean Williams for agreeing to be with us tonight to provide the Board with information on Senate Bill 458.

Senator Kane – Thank you Superintendent Gilmore and Chairman Mazzamaro. First, let me say that having served on the Town Council for six years, I know the kind of work you guys put in and I don't remember a room as nice as this, but it certainly is well-respected from my end and Sean's as well because you do a lot of work for very little reward. So I appreciate that very much.

What I've done and there are more on the podium if anyone would like to see it in the audience. What we have provided is an overview which I think is done really well, because if you look there are three columns. The first column is the Governor's Proposal which initially is well-known to be Senate Bill 24 and this is what the Governor proposed on the opening day of session in February. The middle column is what came out of the Education Committee process, I think, of how a bill becomes a law, and basically the Governor's law is put forth in a bill. The Education Committee that has cognizance over that public hearing. Many people testified on both sides of the issue and then it was changed rather a lot quite honestly compared to the Governor's proposal and the Education Committee voted out the middle column. What you see here is in the third column is Senate Bill 458, which ended up being the final draft. If I can just give you a little bit of a side bar if I may, which is my own commentary and I don't mean to put my own commentary on it, but I did vote No and I wanted to tell you why. This bill Senate Bill 458 was given to the Senate at 11:45 p.m. at night. Just about on the final day of the session, two or three days before session had ended, as you know, our session ended on May 9. This bill was 175 pages long, I think Sean has a copy of it. 175 pages given to you at midnight, and this is double sided, so you can just imagine how thick it would be. 175 pages given to you at midnight asking you to read an entire Bill and vote on it. I myself voted against it just on process alone. All of you know that you shouldn't be given an Agenda Item five minutes before you go in and expect to read the entire thing and be able to vote on it. I think the public, if you remember, had a great deal of concern about the Health Care Bill that passed in the Congress a view years back because it was thousands and thousands of pages and the big argument was who read it because no one was able to read it, but they voted on it. Unfortunately, on the process, and one of our members used the term Vampire Legislation, which is a bit of tongue and cheek, but at the same time not too far from the truth. If I may throw that commentary on there, that is my reasoning behind the No vote on the bill.

So there are three columns and we will turn it over to Sean in a second, and in the final page there are provisions that are similar in all three bills. Actually, if I can take a step back, some of the things you will be interested in certainly are the Teacher Tenure, Teacher Certification, and the ECS Funding, which thankfully has no change so we will be level funded. That is always a struggle for our town and many of the areas that are in our greater area. There are things like Charter Schools and Magnet Schools that typically don't affect us too much, and then of course Early Childhood Education, this is something that was supported by both sides of the isle, a thousand new spots for Early Childhood Education. I don't have to tell you guys these programs and early learning are so important for our children. The teacher evaluations and teacher preparation, collective bargaining, a lot of those things, not many changes. The Vo-AG changes, we don't have to pay for those, so it is important to get that funding and we got another million and ½ just in that. But the last page, you will see provisions that are similar in all three bills and a lot has to do with the Board of Education filing of annual reports. I know that is something that is near and dear to your hearts. Professional Development is very important. Getting into smaller group settings as opposed to larger settings and the alliance districts under ECS, and so I'll turn it over to Sean at this point, but I just wanted to make sure we were able to provide you with these columns so you can see the transformation of the bill from February to May and how it came through to process and what the final result was.

Sean Williams-Thank you Rob and thank you all for having us here this evening. First of all, just on a side note, Tom Lambert talked a little bit about the energy issue. I've always had a keen interest in energy issues since I was appointed to the Energy Committee in the legislature many years ago. I think it's phenomenal what you guys are trying to do. There are a lot of opportunities out there to save money through energy conservation, load management, things like that. It's found money in a lot of cases and I think it's great that you guys are pursuing that.

Rob touched on the process and Sean Butterly served in the legislature and still pays very close attention to the comings and goings of the legislature and he can tell you, I am sure better than I, and certainly as well as many how difficult the process can be. It's very disconcerting to go to the Capital. Sage visited with us a few weeks before we voted on the Education Bill. Her class was actually at the Capital on a really interesting day. They were there on the day we did the death penalty debate, and unfortunately they didn't see most of it. Hopefully, they got to watch it on TTN back at home. The process can be very very difficult to navigate and Rob's one thousand percent right. To have an almost four month long legislative session and have the marquee issue of the session, the most controversial issue of the session, debated at 11:45 at night the night before the last day of session is, it's deplorable. It is, I showed you how thick this is and I'll show you again. This is a double sided document. I don't remember how many sections. It is ninety-seven sections in this bill. On the whole, I think of lot of this, I got the opportunity to review the bill a little bit more than Rob did because the House voted on it after the Senate did. So we voted on it and we were given more of an opportunity to digest what was in it. If I was in his shoes, I would have done the same thing, just on process alone. When you do things at that late hour that are this complicated and mistakes are made, things are not done the way they are supposed to be done and I would have done exactly the same thing that Rob did.

Having said that, this was by far the most controversial bill of the legislative session and it was amongst the most controversial bills that I have seen in almost nine years that I have been a part of the legislature. The Governor when he first proposed what was by all accounts, whether you like it or not, a bold education initiative on the first day of the legislative session, set the whole debate up in a way that alienated so many different components and so many different focus groups within the debate that I think it caused an incredible amount of anxiety, and rightfully so, with the people that were all involved, not the least of which were, of course, our public school teachers. He stood in front of the legislature on the first day of session, and I'm paraphrasing but not too much, something to the effect that well, all you have to do is show up for four years and you get tenure. Well talk about a way to stoke the fire and create a lot of negativity. It didn't have to be represented like that, but it was and we had the opportunity of course throughout the weeks and months to meet with and talk to teachers I've gotten as well, many, many e-mails, many, many phone calls, many people stopping me in the grocery store and what have you about things that should have been changed in the bill. Ultimately, that's what happened, stepping up to the plate, calling their State Reps and State Senators. The whole issue, the whole sort of animosity was beaten back by the time the bill was finally passed. The bill from a substance perspective is significantly different from when it was proposed. Just on the tenure issue for example, the tenure issue categorically changed to agree the tenure still can be earned after four years. The superintendent will be involved in that process. It did not change dramatically. The Connecticut Education Association supported this initiative in the bill and the bill as a whole, it is my understanding anyway. Teachers' Certification Issue, there is a lot of anxiety on the Teachers' Certification Issue, and at the beginning of this process, rightfully so, that the Teachers' Certification would be tied to evaluations and there was sort of limitless power that would be given to those who may seek to wrongfully terminate the teacher. That whole process changed as well. I think by the way if the teacher's dismissal process was properly handled, we shorten the process, leaving can be very lengthy and expensive, forgive me for not knowing when or if there was a recent example of this here in Watertown, but we hear stories all across Connecticut of teachers sort of understood they needed to be dismissed, due to some horrific thing, not due to little things, due to moral misconduct, etc. These were sometimes hundreds of thousands of dollars in costs for this process. We've shortened the process to make it fair but efficient and I think that was something I think a lot of us supported for the school districts that have to spend an inordinate amount of time, energy and resources trying to dismiss teachers that I think that the general public would agree should not be employed. But it retained due process for those teachers to make sure that they had their case heard in a fair and open way.



The whole issue that Rob mentioned, Charter Schools, we provided additional funding. This whole bill, in my opinion, was and is targeted towards the lowest performing school districts in the State of Connecticut. The bulk of this bill, from my prospective, does not affect most of the suburban communities like Watertown. Yes, there are improvements that remain and changes that were made that would affect communities like Watertown, but the framing of the whole issue at the beginning of the process should have been we are targeting real urban areas that are having a real difficult time in public education. In that end, there are some additional funding for charter schools. I'm a huge supporter of charter schools that make it in those instances school choice, public school choice should be available to families. Individual liberties should be granted to families, but not shoved down anyone's throat. We did make some changes in respect to charter schools. The original bill had a penalty for small school districts. Under 1000 school students in the school districts, something that none of us in small towns supported because even if we represent school districts that had more than 1000 people, you can see where the trend is going, penalties for small school districts trying to get a more centralized school systems where small towns may be sucked up into big cities. That is not something that any of us want to see. Many of us here in this room support local control and want to see that retained, that autonomy retained. So that piece of the bill was taken out and replaced with incentives.

Lastly, I will touch on the issue of the Commissioner's Network, which was formed. Up to 25 of the lowest performing schools can opt into the Commissioner's Network to have many things changed in the school district, hours of the day, calendar year, etc., different working conditions. All with the consent of the Public Employment Unions working together with the school district and with the Commissioner to try to restructure the way things are done in the urban center. A lot of this bill should have been framed at the beginning to target those low performing districts, it was not unfortunately, and the end result, I think, was mostly very appropriate. When you have a 97 section bill, there's things in it that you hate, there's things in it that you like, but all of us have to evaluate, and I just don't mean people like Rob and I, but all of us collectively on the whole is this a step forward or is this a step back. I think that the other bill would have been a step back. The bill that was originally proposed, it would have run rough shot over our teachers in Connecticut. It would have been counterproductive on the whole accomplishes most of the goals that we collectively are setting out. Gail, you mentioned that we have the largest achievement gap in the country, that has to change and I think this bill takes a few steps to make that happen and it's not going to happen overnight. We didn't get into any of these problems we have overnight, we're not going to get out of it overnight. So I think it's, on the whole it's good. I would be happy mostly to listen to your concerns, thoughts and questions on the bill because all the decisions we make are based on the people we represent and we are sort of the echo chamber for all of you. I met Sean Butterly when I was just a kid. I met with Sean a number of times, Rob talked to Sean. He has an incredible perspective on these issues, both being a former legislature, now a teacher and member of the school board and his thoughts are incredibly helpful to us and we'd like to hear your thoughts on how we can improve this bill next year because this issue is not going away and we'll need to change going forward.

Sean Butterly-Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank both Senator Kane and Sean Williams because first of all in your opening comment, to take the major piece of legislation of the session and roll it out in the Senate at midnight and expect by 4 a.m., I guess when it passed, people to digest it, pass it, I understand a thousand percent your vote, and Sean I want to thank you because you took the time to sit with me at Starbuck's which I handed you my hand scratch which I wrote while I was watching my grandsons on a Saturday morning, and then I met with you. But our schools with all our faults are collaborative right now and any reform bill that makes us less than collaborative is hurting the kids first of all and teachers and the principals and our superintendents and our boards. I lobbied on two levels. I wrote to the leaders on the Education Committee. I e-mailed them. I used to serve on that Committee and I said when I meet on my school board in Watertown, I want to have the Democratic process that we have. I'm one of two democrats, but guess what, when the nine of us sit together, these folks are democrats running and we are the school board setting policy in Watertown under 10 220 of the General Statute. I don't want to lose that power to the Commissioner of Education, a Commissioner by the way who has not been a public school teacher. One of the great strengths I thought when we hired Gail at the school board here was that she was in the classroom and fought for our kids in town. 150 kids would march by in the Memorial Day Parade from her music classes. I knew she had that zip and

love for kids. That's the first thing you need and I believe our classroom teachers have that connect and I thank you for protecting us. Secondly, I want to protect our school boards because I believe in the work we do here. It's hard work and some of these folks this year have put in a lot more hours than I have, but to hear a wonderful presentation by a colleague for Kathy Sklanka. I went to high school with Eddie Sklanka, he's my best friend, and I miss him. This is a great teacher and we make these decisions to cut. It's heartbreaking. We're not paid up here, but we still try to think of what can we do to save a teacher and you guys at least have a process up there where you let the Governor know that the legislature counts. He can propose bills, but you under our state constitution are the people that pass the bills. I think you guys worked collectively to get something done and get it done in a way that doesn't hurt kids. I think we have a lot more work to do and there's good things we can all do together. Who doesn't support early childhood literacy, who doesn't want to help parents. Every day I get e-mails from parents. What can you do to help my son or my daughter, all of us do, so I just want to thank you because you did take the time to help us and work this through. It's a massive bill. In my opinion, having served when you guys served, I agree with you that it should have been the five month session if you're going to take this up and it shouldn't have been a last minute opening day sucker shot. It should have been, this is what I'm going to do if I'm elected governor. This is my main proposal. Run it then or run it the next election after this next fall. But it wasn't done that way unfortunately. I think that all the hard work that everyone collaboratively did, our schools can move forward together. That's how I look at my job here. I'm not here to break anyone's back. I'm here to help the town that I love. Four of my immediate family, my wife, myself, my sons were educated here. Four of us went to college Magna Cum Laude because of Watertown Teachers and that's because of a 50 year span where we started and got to here. I came here to help and I'm not going to back off that commitment to anyone. I really want to thank you for coming here tonight and I think you did some good work in this session to get this back to where it should have been. I want to thank both you men for that.

David Guerrero- I know for the Board of Ed here, we have to publish, is it 48 hours? Agendas. Is there a prodigal that can be initiated, they can do that at the last minute? Is that something to bring up in the future, I'm sure it's been done before with other bills, it's probably not the first time. It's not the right way to do it. How can that be changed?

Senator Robert Kane-You know Dave, that's a great question and my initial comments that Town Council get your agenda in many cases the Town Council, Town Manager or Chairman, put together the Agenda, it's given to you days ahead of time. The nice part about it is that you have the debate, you tackle the item and unfortunately in the legislative process, it just doesn't work that way and this as we've already stated and is probably that the threshold bill that came through this year is the education session and unfortunately although it was a four day session and all the work, a lot of the work, I must say and in the very last minutes of the last days as both Seans stated it was given to us at midnight. So no we don't have that same process and we should. That's the difficulty that I found in it is that the process should be more similar to what you are used to here at the Board of Education and what we are used to in the Town, and quite honestly in all our lives whether it be at work, in your local business, school, where ever, it should have that. Everyone should literally come up and watch the legislature in action and I hate to say it but it's model and efficiency, and luckily, we did get it right as Sean mentioned and that's a good thing, but at the Governor's own admission, in his press conference, he said there will be mistakes in here and we will try to fix them later. So, as Sean Williams commented, tell us how we can fix it for next year and we will make sure that it is.

Sean Williams-And just on that process part, there's an old saying and Sean Butterly probably knows who said it but somebody once said there's two things you never want to see made, sausages and laws. Rob is right, you should all take an opportunity to come up to the Capital and see it, but especially, if it's like a night like tonight where it just started to thunderstorm outside, you can watch it on TTN. Dave to your question, and it's certainly not a patrician thing and I wish I ran the place, but Republicans years ago proposed a number of different reforms for the process. Simply, we shouldn't be in past midnight, not because we don't want to work hard but because bad decisions are made when people are working on only a few hours sleep and have been there for 15, 16, 17 hours. Process reforms like you have to have a bill on the internet for 72 hours. Not just so we can review it, but so you all can review it and send us your comments on it. When things are negotiated behind closed doors with only a few people, whether it's the Chairman of the Education Committee or the ranking

House Republican on the Education Committee or the CEA or whoever, only a few sets of eyes are on it, only a few minds are on it and things inevitably fall through the cracks. I've seen things get a little bit worse over the years, not better with the process because things are put into statute that are sloppy and Oh we gotta come back and fix that next year and the press is on a skeleton crew and reduced staff so that makes it even worse. You're right Dave, the process should change and as a result of what happened this year, we are going to reintroduce the proposal next year and try to make it so, not so we don't have to work hard, but so we can work smarter.

David Guerrero – Out of this bill, where do you think specifically, if you had to pick what would have an impact on the Town of Watertown?

Sean Williams-I really think that the tenure reform for the small towns is going to be significant. I should say the dismissal process. If God forbid we are ever in the situation where we have to dismiss a teacher for gross negligence or misconduct, that process will become more expedited and less expensive. I think that down the road, I think that small district issue will come to light and I think there is going to be more and more of a push to create larger school districts and put together all the small towns. In the next year will that make a difference? No, but I think many years from now it will. Again, Sean mentioned early childhood literacy, you know, there are not a lot of slots allocated for it, but there are some, and they will be in small towns like Watertown. I think that that has huge potential, people and teachers have been talking to me about that for years. I think that has potential. A lot of these initiatives are small almost case studies and we will be implementing them on a larger scale and in smaller communities. The next twelve months, are there going to be some major change or impact here in Watertown? I would say probably not, but maybe what we did is avoid the adverse impact of some of the things that have been proposed like evaluations and certifications, things like that. It's not always what's in it, but what's not in it.

Dr. Gail Gilmore-I certainly want to underscore the passion that Attorney Butterly has for our teachers and students in this district. We are so passionate about teacher and learning and about making achievement for every single child and I want to thank Senator Kane and Representative Williams for taking the time this evening to join our family here in Watertown. Your passion and commitment to education is fabulous and we thank you so very much for being here this evening.

Richard Mazzamaro-We're going to jump ahead to Report to Chairman.

Gail Gilmore-Continuing on with our Superintendent's Report. Congratulations Stacie. We certainly want to congratulate our Watertown High School C.A.R.E. students. We also want to acknowledge our Watertown High School Girl's Track and Field and Watertown High School Girl's Tennis team who are the NVL Champions, and this weekend our Watertown High School Lacrosse Team the Western Connecticut Lacrosse Conference Title. Congratulations to all of our student athletes and their excellent coaches. We also want to thank our Watertown High School Youth Department for providing our Senior Citizens with the opportunity to sing with our Coral Ensemble from last week's Coral Conference, and we want to thank Dr. Collin for completing and submitting our 2012-2014 Special Education Grant for the Connecticut State Department of Ed, and this Thursday, May 31 at 7 p.m. at Swift Middle School Library, we will hold our preschool through Grade 12 Parent Advisory Council Meeting and we hope to see every parent there. All you are all invited and child care and refreshments of course will be provided. This year we have provided at each Board of Education Meeting an Instructional Best Practices utilizing our schools quality core instructions for all students, and this evening I would ask our Watertown High School Music and Band Teacher, Mr. Kyle Culbertson if he would address the IPADS in classroom learning,

4. 2012-2014 Special Education Grant Programs (IDEA Grants)

The 2012-2014 Special Education Grant Programs (IDEA Grants) have been completed and submitted to the State Department of Education for approval. The total amount of the Grant is \$682,808. The grant consists of two components:

- IDEA Special Education Assistance (611 Funds) \$665,930

- IDEA Preschool Education (619 Funds) \$16,878

The grant will supplement special education programs, pupil services, professional development, the IEP Direct license, and supplies.

The grant was written by Dr. James Collin.

5. Presentations Highlighting Best Instructional Practice

Dr. Collin, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, will introduce the next segment in our series of presentations to the Board highlighting best instructional practice. Mr. Kyle Culbertson, Music/Band Teacher at Watertown High School, will present "IPADS in the Music Program".

Kyle Culbertson-Thanks, I'm Kyle Culbertson, Thanks for giving me this opportunity. I am going to be turning on the projector and kind of operating some IPADS. I have some over here. That's o.k. I'll speak up so you can all hear me. (passing out pamphlets) At the faculty meeting a few teachers were asked to present some of the things we are doing with technology so I put myself in there and a couple of other teachers to put together this pamphlet so you can just browse through it to see what the other teachers are doing as well.

The project that I've been doing is Percussion Ensemble Class and what I have proposed to my students was to make an original composition using IPADS and so I proposed to my students let's use IPADS and let's see what we can come up with with our own original music using IPADS to create a composition and also play the IPAD to play a percussion instrument in a way. The projector was not working.

I can at least play the audio for you. One of the things that the IPAD has helped us to do that is a little bit different than using handwritten notations, and so we were happy to find that we were able to compose these quickly and share our ideas amongst the students in a handy way and open up this and be like "I just wrote this, what do you think?" and play it and listen to it. You can actually see wave forms when you record with the IPAD and what I liked about that is it allowed us to analyze and see timing wise if our music is correct. So instead of kind of using our best judgment, we can actually use the technology to say well look, this actually is incorrect and this is how we can fix it. You can see this percussion hit is a little bit behind the beat and it really should be in front. We can talk about it and look at it and really make our performance sound really professional in some ways and that's some of the things that using these devices really allowed us to do, and we are able to make creative choices and not feel so embarrassed when you are writing music. As a student, they are often feeling embarrassed when they are writing original music. I don't know what to write and with something like an IPAD to help you out you can just erase it real quick if you don't really like it so we created a piece in three movements and it's a little hard to understand without the students here to perform but basically using the IPADS we created a track that will be projected over the speaker at our concert and the students will be playing live percussion music with that track. So the track is playing over this loud speaker and the kids are on stage playing along with it. So it requires a lot of rehearsing. You have to make sure you're lined up with the track and so what I'll do for you is I'll play the third movement that we created. It's a really mellow sounding movement and I will use an AP on the IPAD, it sounds like a lead guitar almost and it allows the students to improvise using the IPADS as an instrument, which is a very hard thing for high schoolers to do to improvise and make music on the spot, just make it up as they go. There are some really nice handy things with the technology that allows more choices and a little easier. So I'll play the third movement and I'll improvise so you can get to hear what the kids are doing. June 7<sup>th</sup> will be our Spring Concert and if you want to come and check it out, you can hear the whole thing. So this is the third track.

(Music) Mr. Kulbertson said a few words over the music but was inaudible due to the amazing music.

Thank you.

Dr. Gilmore- Thank you very much and we will all go to the Spring Concert because we want to hear the ending. Thank you, and that completes the Superintendent's Report. Thank you.

**L. Report from the Chairman –Richard Mazzamaro**

I wanted to welcome our new principal of Polk Elementary School, Stacie D'Antonio and her family, and with that I'd like to turn it over to Dr. Gilmore.

Dr. Gail Gilmore-Thank you Mr. Mazzamaro-On behalf of the Board of Education, we are so excited to have Stacie D'Antonio as our Polk Principal. Stacie is currently serving with the District Literacy Curriculum and K-6 Literacy Specialist at Westwoods Elementary School in Hamden. She works directly with the Assistant Superintendent to affect positive changes for all children, and Stacie we are so excited that you have your husband with you, your three children, your mom, your mother in law and one of your best friends. Thank you for joining our leadership group, and if you would like to address the Board. Thank you.

Stacie D'Antonio-I just wanted to say thank you everyone for picking me as your next principal. I am very excited about working with all of you and helping to make the positive changes that you are looking for and I am very excited to be here and looking forward to working with all my new partners and collaborations. Thank you.

Richard Mazzamaro-Again, before you leave, we want to welcome you again to Polk School and our district to you and your family.

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**Agenda Item Number:**    **M.1.**  
**Subject:**    1. Consideration of the Appointment to the Position of Principal of Polk Elementary School

**Motion Presented by:**    Eric Berthel  
**Motion Seconded by:**    David Guerrero

**Text of Motion:**    It is recommended that the Board approve of the Superintendent's recommendation of the appointment of Ms. Stacie D'Antonio to fill the position of Principal of Polk Elementary School, effective July 1, 2012, at a contractual salary of Step 2 at \$95,959.00.

**Discussion:**    None  
**Opposed:**    None  
**Abstained:**    None  
**Vote:**    Motion passed unanimously.

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**Agenda Item Number:**    **M.2.**  
**Subject:**    2. Consideration of the Approval of Acceptance of Gift

**Motion Presented by:**    Guy Buzzannco  
**Motion Seconded by:**    Thomas Lambert

**Text of Motion:**    The Rotary Club of Watertown would like to donate a check in the amount of \$500.00 to the AP U.S. History classes at Watertown High School in recognition of Ms. Elizabeth Loughlin the 2012 Teacher of the Year.

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|--------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Discussion:</b> | None                       |
| <b>Opposed:</b>    | None                       |
| <b>Abstained:</b>  | None                       |
| <b>Vote:</b>       | Motion passed unanimously. |

N. Future Agenda Items and Board Members' Comments

Thomas Lambert-I would like to say that I am very very proud of our district in walking around our schools, looking at our clean lawns and trimmings that have been done in the last few weeks and our hope to be good stewards of our facilities and looking at the type of work that has been done to our lawns and our trimmings of our schools, it really to me shows what kind of job we can do and I just wanted to make that comment.

David Guerrero-One request, I would like to request that the Board of Ed be updated periodically on the job reductions going forward. It's unfortunate though I feel like we're kind of in the blue. I didn't know Mrs. Sklanka is being let go so I would like to be updated on the process and what the action items are for the next few months if that's possible.

The second thing, is I'm not sure how much longer Sage is going to be with us because she is graduating soon but maybe if you can tell us where you are going to college, so if she we can give her some recognition for that, where are you going and what you are majoring in?

## Sage Davino-Right Now?

David Guerrero-Yeah.

Sage Davino-I am going to Hofstra University at the end of August and I am probably going to be studying Sociology or Psychology in the hopes of becoming a Social Worker.

Richard Mazzamaro-We generally recognize our Student Council Representative at their last meeting, so I think she has one more meeting. So, we'll definitely have a recognition for her. Any other comments or questions?

O. Public Participation -None

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| Agenda:  | P.          |
| Subject: | Adjournment |

**Motion Presented by:** Eric Berthel  
**Motion Seconded by:** Sean Butterly

**Text of Motion:** That the meeting be adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

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|--------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Discussion:</b> | None                       |
| <b>Opposed:</b>    | None                       |
| <b>Abstained:</b>  | None                       |
| <b>Vote:</b>       | Motion passed unanimously. |

The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

**Respectfully Submitted by**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Berthel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Eric" and last name "Berthel" clearly distinguishable.

**Eric Berthel  
Board Secretary**

**Deborah Jacobs  
Minutes Secretary**