

Pending BOE Approval

**Watertown Board of Education
Regular Meeting Minutes**

Meeting Date: January 9, 2016
Meeting Time: 7:30 p.m.
Meeting Place: Lecture Hall, Watertown High School

Members Present: Ms. Leslie Crotty, Chairman
Mr. Tom Lambert, Vice Chairman
Ms. Janelle Wilk, Secretary
Mr. Robert Makowski
Ms. Cathie Rinaldi
Mr. Victor Vicenzi
Mr. Jim Gambardella
Ms. Cheryl Albino

Members Absent: Ms. Josephine Cavallo-Rosa

Others Present: Dr. Bridget Carnemolla – Superintendent of Schools
Jill Browne – Business Manager
Representative Eric Berthel

A. Convene Regular Meeting – 7:30 p.m.

B. Salute to the Flag

C. Roll Call – Ms. Davidson

D. Minutes

Agenda Item: D.1
Subject: Minutes of the December 12th, 2016 Regular Board of
Education Meeting

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

Text of the Motion:	Madame Chair, I move that the board approve of the minutes of the December 12 th , 2016 regular meeting of the Board of Education as presented.
Discussion:	None
Opposed:	None
Abstained:	None
Vote:	Motion Passes

E. Award Recognition

Ms. Crotty – Tonight, we begin the Awards part of our Agenda by recognizing one of our own, Dr. Bridget Carnemolla. It is with great pleasure that I share with you that Dr. Carnemolla has been appointed by the House Majority Leader of the Connecticut General Assembly to the Connecticut Advisory Council for Teacher Professional Standards. Dr. Carnemolla was selected as the one superintendent representative on the Advisory Council, from over 160 superintendents in the entire state.

This Council plays a very important role in educational improvement in our state. They pinpoint, study, and bring greater visibility to critical educational matters and advise and make policy recommendations to the Governor's Office, the Education Committee of the General Assembly, and the State Board of Education. We are most proud of your accomplishment, and recognize you for your breadth of knowledge and outstanding leadership that has surely lead to this prestigious appointment. Please welcome to the podium Representative Eric Berthel who would like to say a few words.

Rep. Berthel – Thank you for having me tonight. You pretty much summed it up, but I will say this, Dr. Carnemolla, when Rep. Ritter told me that he had appointed you, I was even more excited when I found out you had accepted the appointment. As you know, I am a little biased, I am a big Dr. Carnemolla fan, and have been since the first time I met you when you interviewed for our position as high school principal, but what I have seen since then is exceptional leadership, a breath of knowledge with what you bring to the job as our high school principal and what you now bring every day as your role as superintendent. That has been, thus far, for the benefit of the good people of the town of Watertown. With your appointment to this Council, this will now get extended to the great people of our great state. I can't think of a better way, for you, who I know has about as much free time as the rest of us, which is to say very little, I can't speak to how much that means to me that you would volunteer to share your knowledge and wealth. What we have witnessed very effectively in the last few years here in Watertown is your uncanny ability, with the help of this entire board of education, to recognize the needs of our children, the desires of our staff, and at the same time, to balance that with respect to the tax payers. And I think, now, you will bring that same level of expertise, that same level of caring, and skill to the people of our great state and, quite honestly, we need a lot more of that in Connecticut right now. So, I congratulate you on behalf of the General Assembly, I welcome you to the committee and I can't wait to see you in Hartford and to hear about your contributions to that counsel. Congratulations.

Ms. Crotty – Thank you Representative Berthel. Now, with all due respect to your appointment, there is a much larger, more significant event that takes place today...your birthday. The Board of Education decided to engage the youngest students of our district, and put this book together for you in honor of your birthday. For we know, at the heart of everything you do, is our students. In honor of a day we are all extremely grateful for, please welcome Swift Students: Olivia Bendler, Melany Boivin, Grace Brown, Lira Cenka, Kelly Duffany, Jordan Elliot, Adriana Rinaldi, Alyssa Ruszkowski, and Isabelle (Izzy) Sarandrea, led by Ms. Katie Cummings and Mr. Joel Pacheco. (Students sang "Happy Birthday" to Dr. Carnemolla)
Thank you, students, Ms. Cummings, Mr. Pacheco, and Mrs. Lerz.

Judson Elementary School

The Watertown Board of Education would like to congratulate the following Judson Elementary School students. Each student is recognized as STAR of the Month winners, and awarded for his or her excellent citizenship for the month of December.

Grade 5

Zachary Butler	Talia Solla
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Grade 4

Dean LeMay	Jenna Sharoh
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Grade 3

Jace Kiernan	Sara McGowan
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F. Report from Student Council Representative – Ali Dika

At John Trumbull Primary, the PTO had their holiday fundraisers where students were able to purchase gifts for family members.

At Polk Elementary School, students will begin taking the Developmental Reading Assessment and four subtests in Aimsweb throughout January for Winter Benchmarks. The third and final session of co-teacher training, with special education and general education teacher counterparts working cooperatively, took place and will soon be implemented in the 2017-18 school year.

For Judson Elementary School, class-based spelling bees were held, with winners moving on to a school wide bee, and the winner of that participating in a local spelling bee held at Saint Joseph University. Teachers will begin conducting winter benchmark testing through AIMSweb and DRAs.

In Swift Middle School, members of the WHS Chamber Choir alongside Mrs. Poloquin met the members of the 8th grade chorus, learning a new song together. The WHS students answered questions and provided information for those interested. In December, the Swift Peace Pals and the Swift staff earned \$1500 through fundraising, providing 74 Swift students with anonymous gift cards for the holidays.

And finally at Watertown High School, our Link Crew will be running Cocoa and Cramming for the freshmen students tomorrow after school, with freshmen being able to get academic support from upper classmen prior to midterm exams. About 62% of seniors have applied to college and many have sent in multiple applications.

G. Superintendent's Recommendations and Report

1. Appointments – (Information Only)

Ms. Michele Baim to the position of SSP Coordinator for Watertown High School, effective for the 2016-2017 school year, being paid the contractual stipend of \$2,500.00 as presented in the WEA Agreement.

Mr. Warren Campbell to the position of Perkins Grant Coordinator at Watertown High School, effective for the 2016-2017 school year, being paid the contractual stipend of \$1,150.00 as presented in the WEA Agreement.

Ms. Susan Danaher to the position of Speech & Language Co-Coordinator for Watertown Public Schools, effective for the 2016-2017 school year, being paid half the contractual stipend of \$1,406.00, as presented in the WEA Agreement.

Ms. June Fishbein to the position of Long-Term Substitute Fourth Grade Teacher for Polk Elementary School, effective January 5, 2017 through approximately May 1, 2017, to be paid \$75.00 per day for the first ten (10) days and \$230.96 on the eleventh day, Step 2, as presented in the WEA Agreement.

Mr. Timothy Fisher to the position of Indoor Track Assistant Coach for Watertown High School, effective for the 2016-2017 school year, to be paid the contractual stipend of \$1,895.00, as presented in the WEA Agreement.

Ms. Karen Hennessey to the position of Long-Term Substitute Special Education Teacher for St. John's and St. Mary's Magdalen Schools, effective January 3, 2017 to approximately January 24, 2017, being paid the contractual rate of \$230.96, Step 2 of the WEA Agreement.

Ms. Nicole Lewis to the position of SSP Coordinator for Watertown High School, effective for the 2016-2017 school year, being paid the contractual stipend of \$2,500.00, as presented in the WEA Agreement.

Ms. Shannon McDonnell to the position of System-Wide K-5 Reading Coordinator for Watertown Public Schools, effective for the 2016-2017 school year, being paid the contractual stipend of \$3,384.00 as presented in the WEA Agreement.

Ms. Marna Murtha to the position of Interim Director of Student Services, effective December 23, 2016 to approximately January 31, 2017, being paid the per diem rate of \$600.00 per day.

Mr. Joel Pacheco to the position of Substitute Music Teacher for Swift Middle School, effective January 3, 2017 to the end of the school 16-17 school year, at the rate of \$75.00 per day.

Ms. Donna Poliquin to the position of System-Wide Music Coordinator for Watertown Public Schools, effective January 3, 2017 for the remainder of the 2016-2017 school year, being paid the contractual stipend of \$2,812.00, (prorated) as presented in the WEA Agreement.

Mr. Roberto Rinaldi to the position of System-Wide Mathematics Coordinator for Watertown Public Schools, effective for the 2016-2017 school year, being paid the contractual stipend of \$2,812.00, as presented in the WEA Agreement.

Ms. Meghan Robinson to the position of YSB Grant Coordinator for Watertown Public Schools, effective for the 2016-2017 school year, being paid the contractual stipend of \$15,000.00, as presented in the WEA Agreement.

Ms. Beth Wolf to the position of Speech & Language Co-Coordinator for Watertown Public Schools, effective for the 2016-2017 school year, being paid half the contractual stipend of \$1,406.00 as presented in the WEA Agreement.

Mr. Richard Guerrera to the position of Temporary/Summer Maintenance for Watertown Public Schools, effective September 1, 2016, at 40 hours per week, at an hourly rate of \$12.00 (correction to rate of pay from the September 12, 2016 agenda).

2. Transfer – (Information Only)

Ms. Shana Blanchard from the position of Paraprofessional Category 1 at John Trumbull Primary School, to the position of Paraprofessional Category 2, at John Trumbull Primary School, effective December 2, 2016.

Mr. Christopher Ritter from the position of Custodian 4th shift at Watertown High School, to the position of Custodian 3rd shift at Swift Middle School, effective January 9, 2017.

Ms. Michelle Spagnoletti from the position of School Nurse at John Trumbull Primary School, to the position of School Nurse at Watertown High School, effective January 4, 2017.

Mr. Scott Sturges from the position of Custodian at Swift Middle School to Custodian 2nd shift at Polk Elementary School, effective December 19, 2016.

3. Resignations – (Information Only)

Ms. Donnah Swaby from the position of Director of Student Services for Watertown Public Schools, effective December 23, 2016 for personal reasons.

4. Superintendent's Report

Thank you. My regular school visits have gotten underway, because as you know, although I was out the schools, I was trying to meet with the nearly 500 staff members, and that took up the first couple of months. I still visited the classrooms, although I wouldn't say I did it and what would be my normal way. In the last few weeks, I have been able to do that again and have been out and all five schools resuming classroom visits and meetings with school

administrators. Another thing that we are happy to have gotten back underway is our three-year technology plan. For many years, the state has required districts to have a technology plan and for the most part, that often meant filling in the lines, crossing the T's, dotting the I's, about what we are going to do for technology education. We have had a technology plan in the district for years, however, I would say from this point forward our plan will look a little different and more comprehensive. It will look more like what the district vision is for technology over the next three years and also giving some consideration to how it gets implemented very specifically within the district's five schools. Thank you to Dr. Parlato and Mr. Turner who have become this work and it will be a joint project between the two of them since it is related to curriculum and instruction and obviously to technology. This is something we have talked about in the past about our path forward and now will be solidified in a plan. This will help guide our focus as we move forward and ensure that all of our teachers, staff, and students understand what technology is to be used for in this district in relation to enriching teaching and learning, not just the use of technology.

I would like to thank John Trumbull and our kindergarten teachers for working with our students to design the holiday card. Once again, we present that to a kindergartner, Ava Blum, at John Trumbull and that was a really great day right before we left for the Christmas break. It is amazing how much better they all were, even in the second year, of the contest to create the district holiday card. It was an incredibly difficult decision, as a matter of fact, we almost had a runner up, then two runners up, then maybe I thought we could just had a box of cards, and assorted box of their artwork, and use all of the designs, but in the end, we went with what we told them and it was a very tough choice to select Ava's. Thank you again to everyone at John Trumbull helped us do that.

From a community standpoint, it is that time of year when the Watertown – Oakville Crimestoppers puts together their annual fundraiser. You will be hearing a little bit more about that... They have done the pasta dinners with the police department for years and in addition, to the many other fundraisers, I am mentioning it because I am on that board and we have met and begun planning for that, and I think doing things a little bit differently there this year.

As you know, we have a posting for a new school resource officer. I have spoken with Chief Gavallas, and as soon as it closes on Friday, I expect that we will have a resource officer in the schools full-time within the next two weeks. That is perfect timing, because we are beginning to do the security plan audits again, even though it is a more brief version of them, because we did what we did over the last two years, and we significantly brought them down in certain areas, but regardless we will be meeting again and what we will really be looking at is standardization regarding visitors coming in and leaving the buildings. It is something that we believe needs a little attention, I don't mean to say that means we are letting people into the buildings with little protocol, but what I am saying is that is another area we are looking to standardize a little bit. How you check-in and checkout is not exactly standard because of the way the schools are set up, and we prefer that it was, so that is one of the things this committee will be looking at as they audit the plans this year. Likewise, they are still continuing the labeling of the closed captioned television system at the police department. It is there and fully functional and usable in an emergency, but we have been renaming all of the cameras so that they mean the same thing at the police department that they do to the school district. That has been a tremendous undertaking and this new resource officer will be completing that and I would say it is about 70% complete. Our resource officer definitely needs to be part of that process, so we have stopped that process for the last few weeks waiting for our new resource officer appointment. I'm glad that Chief Gavallas has had that

posting and they are going to the process there and we are moving forward.

I wanted to speak a little bit about the work we've been doing with our mathematics. Dr. Parlato and Ms. Archibald has been working together over the past few weeks very specifically with Polk and Judson developing some new variety of assessments and mathematics using the smarter balanced interim assessments to measure where they are at this point and then to prepare them for the online testing. It will be starting sooner rather than later and we have been ensuring that our students are ready from the technology perspective and from the ability to work on the computer to take the online versions of these exams. Dr. Parlato and Ms. Archibald has done quite a bit of work with that over the course of the year, but especially in the last few weeks. They have also been working with Mr. Turner to figure out the best ways to integrate the chrome books that we have continued to purchase for grades three – five into instructional practices. We are buying the technology to enrich the instruction and to truly ensure that it is being used in a way that is a tool, not just a piece of technology in the classroom.

Also on the agenda, most of our appointments are the appointments that we do midway through the year, coordinators, coaches, and we had a temporary maintenance worker that we brought in, and we have had a few transfers and the custodial department. Mr. Sturges, for example, is now permanently at Polk, and the bidding process is now over for that particular position. So now the shifting will begin and you'll see we have moved Mr. Ritter from fourth shift at the high school to Swift middle school, but that is not permanent as there is a bidding process that will ensure that he stays there according to their contract. Also, as you know, and is in tonight's agenda, Ms. Swaby resigned from being the Director of Student Services, effective December 23, and we have an interim director as you can see on the agenda, that is only through the end of January. That is because the person that we are utilizing, Ms. Marta Murtha, is retired and she and her family are moving to Florida February 1. At this juncture, she was the best choice for being the interim director because she has served several times over the years in that role so it was a very easy transition because she knows our programs and schools, our administrators and schools, our student services personnel and so forth. We will be moving forward looking to post a position and we are trying to determine whether that will be just another interim for the time being or if we post a permanent position. The reason for that is because it is a difficult time of year to have someone come in and also because just about anyone who would apply for the job will have some notice that will have to be given to where they are, usually about 30 days, and could be as many as 90 depending on their contract. Right now we are working with Ms. Murtha and we will make a decision how to move forward with that.

H. Public Participation (Please state name, address and topic of discussion)

None

I. Report from the Board Chair

On December 29th, 2016 the State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management issued a letter announcing twenty million dollars in mid-year cuts to the 2016/2017 Education Cost Sharing Grant. It is estimated that the Town of Watertown will lose \$123,095 in state education aid this year. I hope the public will join me in urging Governor Malloy to restore this funding. These cuts are scheduled to take effect immediately and will result in diminished educational opportunities for the students who attend public schools.

CAPSS Executive Director Joe Cirsuolo stated that "While we are aware of the difficult budget situation for Connecticut right now, pulling the fiscal rug out from under 169 municipalities is no way to conduct business". It is critical to ensure that programs and services that have long been planned for, be continued as planned. CAGE Executive Director Bob Rader stated that "ECS has always been considered a moral contract between the State and school districts. All districts receive funding as representation of the State's responsibility to ALL students, no matter where they live. Some of the cuts to school districts were so large that they call into question whether that moral contract still exists."

Watertown Public Schools and the Town of Watertown are true partners in education, and we, like CAGE and CAPSS, understand the challenges that the Office of Policy Management has with respect to balancing the State's budget, as we address similar challenges every year. The difference is, our board and our town council, have firsthand knowledge of the impact of their decisions on students and residents. The decision by the Governor to cut aid will make it very difficult for us. We as a Board, and as a community, must be ready to engage in conversations with state elected leaders, on the impact of the decision that was made on education and on the future lives of our public-school students. We must, together with our Town Council, CAGE and CAPSS, call upon the Governor to restore the ECS funding and urge the leaders to take every action necessary to protect our current and future educational funding.

On March 8th, 2017, I, along with fellow BOE colleagues, will be attending the CAGE Day on the Hill where we will rally for public education. The morning will feature remarks by the leaders of the CT General Assembly, briefings on how pending legislation can impact our school district, an education rally, and visits with legislators at the state capitol. If you have not lobbied before, I can assure you that it is an experience worth having. I encourage all local officials and interested community members to contact me if they are interested in joining us on the Hill. Thank You.

J. Committee Reports:

Curriculum and Instruction Committee, Ms. Cathie Rinaldi, Chair – Yes

The committee met earlier this evening with a presentation from Mr. Jones about the program of studies at Watertown high school for the 2017 – 2018 school year. The committee will have a chance to review the program of studies and we will discuss it and vote at the January 23 Board of Education meeting.

Policy and Labor Committee Mr. Victor Vicenzi, Chair – No

Budget and Finance Committee, Mr. Thomas Lambert, Chair – Yes

Just a reminder, there were be a budget and finance committee meeting January 31 at 6 PM at the Swift middle school library.

Facilities/PBC/Operations Committee, Mr. Thomas Lambert, Chair – No

Governance and Community Engagement Committee, Mr. Robert Makowski, Chair – Yes

We will be having a committee meeting on February 13 at 6:30 PM, in this room, prior to the scheduled Board of Education meeting. And invite went out to all board members and I hope to see everybody there.

K. Communications – Secretary

None

L. Action Items – Adoption of Items to be Approved by Consent

Agenda Item:	L.1
Subject:	Consideration of the Approval of Acceptance of a Gift
Motion Presented By:	Mr. Gambardella
Motion Seconded By:	Ms. Albino
Text of the Motion:	Madame Chair, I move that the Board approve of the \$1,115 donation, generously donated by the Watertown Foundation to John Trumbull Primary School's music department for the purchase of drums and that a letter of appreciation be sent to the donor.
Discussion:	None
Opposed:	None
Abstained:	None
Vote:	Motion Passes

M. Future Agenda Items and Board Members' Comments

None

N. Public Participation (Please state name, address and topic of discussion)

None

O. Adjournment

Agenda Item:	O.1
Subject:	Adjournment
Motion Presented By:	Mr. Vicenzi
Motion Seconded By:	Ms. Rinaldi
Text of the Motion:	Madame Chair, I move that we adjourn.

Discussion:	None
Opposed:	None
Abstained:	None
Vote:	Motion Passes

The meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mindi Davidson
Recording Secretary

Janelle Wilk
Secretary of the Board