

Pending BOE Approval

**Watertown Board of Education
Regular Meeting Minutes**

Meeting Date: September 28, 2015
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. Victor Vicenzi
Mr. Jim Gambardella
Mr. Robert Makowski
Ms. Cathie Rinaldi
Mr. Donato Orsini
Ms. Josephine Cavallo-Rosa

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Dr. Bridget Carnemolla – Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Jill Browne – Business Manager
Karina Mancini – Student Council Representative

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 September 14, 2015 Regular Board of Education Meeting

Motion Presented By: Ms. Wilk
Motion Seconded By: Ms. Rinaldi

Text of the Motion:	Madame Chair, I move that the board approve of the minutes of the September 14, 2015 regular meeting of the Board of Education as submitted.
Discussion:	None
Opposed:	None
Abstained:	Mr. Orsini
Vote:	Motion Passes

E. Award Recognition

The Watertown Board of Education wishes to recognize and congratulate Watertown's 2015-2016 Paraprofessional of the Year, Ms. Dianne Bigham.

It is a pleasure to announce Dianne Bigham as Watertown's Paraprofessional of the Year for the 2015-2016 school year. Dianne grew up in Watertown and attended the Watertown Public Schools. She holds an Associate's Degree in Early Childhood Education. Dianne takes on many roles in an integrated classroom within the Just Friends preschool program at John Trumbull Primary School. She assists the teachers in supporting students in a variety of settings and works in small groups to support learning and achievement of students. Some of her strengths include organization, conscientious worker, and very dependable. She always has a smile and is willing to learn and try new things. She has a positive rapport with students and her colleagues. In her free time, Dianne enjoys spending time with her family and trying and sharing new recipes. She is truly an asset to John Trumbull Primary School.

F. Report from Student Council Representative – Karina Mancini

Good evening Board of Education and community members,

This week at John Trumbull Primary School, students in writing class are learning how to craft powerful endings to their stories. They are also rereading their own writing like detectives, looking for capitals and punctuation, and making sure their writing sounds correct and makes sense. In math, second graders are learning how to subtract from 10 and solve two step problems.

At Polk, the first Golden Bucket Winners of the school year were announced. Teachers continued to administer the Fall Benchmark tests. The end of the assessment window is near, and staff is getting ready to design small group interventions using these data sets.

At Judson, Mrs. Mathew's 4th grade class participated in an outdoor science program at Flander's Nature Center. Flanders Academy is an inter district grant program funded by the Connecticut State Department of Education. These programs offer the opportunity for students to take discovery hikes, engage in wildlife observation, and collaborate in interactive environmental science activities.

A planning meeting for Taft Community Day was held this week with staff members from Taft

School. 3r graders will be involved in these various activities on October 13th.

Swift students participated in the first SSP meeting of the school year. The meeting entailed ice breakers for both students and teachers in each group. Students also complete a self-esteem survey and decorated a star with symbols and phrases that represented their interests and goals.

At WHS, the Freshman counseling workshop class finished their study skills & time management unit and are now moving onto Bully and Cyberbullying.

Senior Parent Night/ Financial Aid Night will be held on October 6th. Guidance counselors will discuss the need-to-knows about applying to college, and an NVCC representative from the financial aid office will be there to present .

That is all for this week... thank you.

G. Superintendent's Recommendations and Report

1. Appointments (Information Only)

- A. Ms. Teresa Baldwin to the position of Grade 6 Peer Leader, Co-Advisor for Swift Middle School, effective for the 2015-2016 school year, being paid one third of the contractual stipend as represented in the MOU with the WEA of \$337.67.
- B. Mr. Everett Condit to the position of Wood Club Co-Advisor at Swift Middle School, effective for the 2015-2016 school year, being paid half the contractual stipend as represented in the MOU with the WEA of \$253.00.
- C. Ms. Lisa Dorso to the position of Leo Club Co-Advisor at Swift Middle School, effective for the 2015-2016 school year, being paid half the contractual stipend as represented in the MOU with the WEA of \$1,139.00.
- D. Mr. Charles Esposito to the position of Webmaster at Judson Elementary School, effective for the 2015-2016 school year, being paid the contractual stipend as represented in the MOU with the WEA of \$2,278.00.
- E. Ms. Diane Gaulzetti to the position of Newspaper Advisor at Swift Middle School, effective for the 2015-2016 school year, being paid the contractual stipend as represented in the MOU with the WEA of \$1,065.00.
- F. Ms. Pamela Hodorski to the position of Yearbook Advisor at Swift Middle School, effective for the 2015-2016 school year, being paid the contractual stipend as represented in the MOU with the WEA of \$1,393.00.
- G. Ms. Karen Hosking to the position of Peace Pals Advisor at Swift Middle School, effective for the 2015-2016 school year, being paid half the contractual stipend as represented in the MOU with the WEA of \$1,013.00.
- H. Ms. Karen Hosking to the position of Watertown Oakville Adolescent Hero, Co Advisor

for Swift Middle School, effective for the 2015-2016 school year, being paid half the contractual stipend as represented in the MOU with the WEA of \$1,139.00.

- I. Ms. Karen Hosking to the position of Grade 7 Peer Leader, Co-Advisor for Swift Middle School, effective for the 2015-2016 school year, being paid the contractual stipend as represented in the MOU with the WEA of \$1,013.00.
- J. Mr. Joseph Kuziak to the position of Wood Club Co-Advisor for Swift Middle School, effective for the 2015-2016 school year, being paid half the contractual stipend as represented in the MOU with the WEA of \$253.00.
- K. Ms. Lori Lampron to the position of Head Secretary II, Grade IV, at Polk Elementary School, effective September 22, 2015, at an hourly rate of \$19.15, as represented in the Watertown Educational Secretaries Contract.
- L. Ms. Sherri Marquardt to the position of Invention Convention for Judson Elementary School, effective for the 2015-2016 school year, being paid half the contractual stipend as represented in the MOU with the WEA of \$759.00.
- M. Ms. Shannon McDonnell to the position of System Wide Reading Language Arts Coordinator for Watertown High School, effective for the 2015-2016 school year, being paid the contractual stipend as represented in the MOU with the WEA of \$3,384.00.
- N. Ms. Danielle Muir to the position of Leo Club Co-Advisor for Swift Middle School, effective for the 2015-2016 school year, being paid half the contractual stipend as represented in the MOU with the WEA of \$1,139.00.
- O. Ms. Danielle Muir to the position of Student Council Advisor for Swift Middle School, effective for the 2015-2016 school year, being paid the contractual stipend as represented in the MOU with the WEA of \$1,065.00.
- P. Ms. Kacey Scroggins was re-appointed to the position of High School Athletic Director, effective July 1, 2015 at an annual rate of \$50,500.
- Q. Ms. Kathleen Sklanka to the position of Watertown Oakville Adolescent Hero, Co-Advisor for Swift Middle School, effective for the 2015-2016 school year, being paid half the contractual stipend as represented in the MOU with the WEA of \$1,139.00.
- R. Ms. Kathleen Sklanka to the position of Grade 8 Peer Leader Advisor for Swift Middle School, effective for the 2015-2016 school year, being paid the contractual stipend as represented in the MOU with the WEA of \$1,013.00.
- S. Ms. Kathleen Sklanka to the position of Leo Club Advisor for Swift Middle School, effective for the 2015-2016 school year, being paid the contractual stipend as represented in the MOU with the WEA of \$1,054.00.
- T. Ms. Janet Sweetland to the position of Grade 6 Peer Leader, Co-Advisor for Swift Middle

School, effective for the 2015-2016 school year, being paid one third of the contractual stipend as represented in the MOU with the WEA of \$337.67.

- U. Mr. Christopher Russo to the position of Peer Leader, Grade 6, Co-Advisor for Swift Middle School, effective for the 2015-2016 school year, being paid one third of the contractual stipend as represented in the MOU with the WEA of \$337.67.
- V. Ms. Alyssa Wallace to the position of Honor Society Advisor for Swift Middle School, effective for the 2015-2016 school year, being paid the contractual stipend as represented in the MOU with the WEA of \$1,065.00.

2. Resignations

- a) Ms. Sarah Farrell from the position of Paraprofessional at John Trumbull Primary School, effective September 18, 2015, for personal reasons.
- b) Ms. Mary Sklanka from the position of School Nurse at St. Johns School, effective August 24, 2015, for the purpose of retirement.

3. Grant – Informational Item

The Connecticut Community Foundation Grant (Informational Only)

John Trumbull Primary School was awarded a \$8,885.00 grant from the Connecticut Community Foundation for the Preschool Collaboration and Watertown Family Resource Center programs. The goals of both programs are to increase parent outreach about literacy; create joint professional development opportunities for Kindergarten and preschool teachers; develop and host Kindergarten transition visits; facilitate playgroups for children who are entering Kindergarten; and collect literacy data on students in Watertown/Oakville preschool programs.

The grant was written by preschool teacher Annette Pietro.

4. Superintendent's Report

We are finally able to hire a first grade teacher at John Trumbull, who will start October 5th. We currently have a sub in that position. I would also like to thank Annette Pietro, who works at this every year, and once again putting the grant for us from the Connecticut Community Foundation for the Preschool Collaboration. (Please see above for what the grant provides.) We also have a another grant we received from the State Department of Ed, you will remember we had coaching days last year, that were awarded to us by the state for the implementation of the common core state standards. We received that grant again for the maximum days they would allow this year, which are 28. Thank you to Dr. Parlato for the work that was done there. This year we will work and focus on grades 6 through 12, as last year we focused on grades K through 5. The people who come from the state will help us this

year with professional development related to our learning targets. It's a specific way we are looking at instruction and not just teaching objectives, but as learning targets. For instance, as a result of this lesson, what will you walk away knowing and able to do today? We will discuss this further in the year when we have a presentation on it.

I have been out in the past week at both Polk and Judson and had two good days at both schools. I did spend more time at Polk than I did at Judson as I got called back to the office, however I did manage to see every class at both schools. I have noticed that our teachers are doing a lot regarding learning targets just from the little bit of professional development that we've had. It's a noticeable change for us to be thinking about the learning for a particular lesson in this way.

I do have Mr. Foulds here for his presentation, and I wanted to update the board and give them a year end review on food services. As you know, Mr. Foulds has been doing quite a bit related to services, choices available to students, and to bring in better revenue for the food services. (See presentation below)

Before I move on, very quickly, I want to take a minute, Dianne, and say congratulations again. I had the distinct pleasure of being one of the people who was able to let Dianne know that she was Watertown's paraprofessional of the year, at the end of the last school year. When we showed up at John Trumbull, you would've thought it was the Publishers Clearing House coming to see her. I was so happy to be able to recognize you because I have seen firsthand, some of the work that you do and we really do appreciate everything that you do, even if you won't be the state paraprofessional of the year. You may very far in the process and made it to the final 10, which is not easy to do.

Moving on, we have a request on the agenda tonight for two used clothing bins by the PTO at Swift middle school. Please note we already have some of these bins at Judson and Polk and the PTO is now asked to do the same at the middle school. I did bring some pictures to make sure everyone knew what we were talking about. As for the location, all we can say tonight is an estimate of where we believe in the end of being, as what happens is the company doesn't even come out until they know they will have approval to place any bins. So, I brought this to you in advance of the company coming out. They will come out, survey the area, and tell us where it might be best and then meet with the principal. We then have input if we think that the area they chose may not be the best. For example, we wouldn't want the clothing bins to be at the entrance at Swift. There's already enough traffic that comes in and we wouldn't want to clog it up anymore. Also, just to let you know, we have a deal with the PTOs in writing, once we move forward, that is if the bins become any trouble, and by trouble I mean people are coming by and leaving stuff outside instead of putting them in the bins, or there is any other ugliness associated with having the bins on the property, we call and they pick up and that's it. We haven't had any such trouble at both Polk and Judson, so it's an easy way that the PTO brings in a little bit extra money for the school everyday people to donate to a good cause. Given that is being put on school grounds I wanted to bring it to your attention and make sure we routed to the board.

Ms. Crotty – I would like to know the anytime I have gone to drop off bags at either of the schools, they have been clear of any litter and I have never seen them at any time, look like the ones in other store areas or parking lots around town, which is quite fortunate.

Mr. Makowski - I would also like to share that the PTO overseeing this are extremely particular on the representation that these have. They make sure there are no issues and if there are any they contact the vendor very quickly.

5. Presentation – (Information Only)

Mr. Foulds – Thank you. I would like to talk a little bit about how we finished up last year. Food cost decreased from 39% in 13/14 to 37.8% in 14/15, resulting in a savings of \$24,000. The payroll costs did increase by \$22,000 compared to the previous year. We were able to maintain almost a constant cost of repairs and maintenance for the year and the district operated at a deficit of \$30,644 for the 14/15 school year. Daily averages for lunches served as a comparison over the past year: are paid lunches were slightly lower for 14/15, along with our reduced lunches which were slightly lower, but are free lunches were higher, making our percentages for free and reduced kids in the district rising. We were at about 25% last year. (25% of the children in the district are on free or reduced lunches). Overall, we served about 1,252 lunches per day last year, which is slightly down from the year before. Our participation increased by about half a percent.

Lunch participation in 13/14 was about 43.5% and we increase that to about 44% in 14/15. Overall, our lunch participation increased slightly, based on student enrollment, which resulted in an increase of 2,540 lunches served for the district. We are still working on our breakfast programs, but last year we did average about 190 per day, where the previous year was about 193. The last three months of 14/15 we averaged a little over 210 breakfasts a day, where the first seven months we averaged 185 a day, which is an increase of about 25 a day. Right now, 22% of the eligible free and reduced children are getting breakfast every day. Also, our participation of the student population for breakfast is approximately 7%. At WHS and Swift we introduced a fresh fruit smoothie station for breakfast giving children more choices. At the schools we offer freshly made fruit and yogurt smoothies every day. It is a popular option, and we are selling about 50 to 60 at the high school, and since our time is a little shorter at the middle school, we are selling about 25 a day there. In March, we did a big promotion to get the word out to the kids and get them to come down and eat breakfast. We did made to order breakfasts at the high school, I spent the day at Polk and Judson with the kids talking about breakfast, we also had a special breakfast at Judson and at John Trumbull. I continue to do a school lunch newsletter. I try to do five of them a year. In that newsletter I go over the different things we've done at the schools from programs we are trying, to any new information that comes out on our program. I hope everyone enjoys them. I also do special chef days once a month where I go to Swift and WHS. It is where I go into the school and I cook a special meal for the kids and I will serve them. I dress up in my chef coat and my big hat and go down and talk to the kids and it has turned into one of our most popular lunches. When we do it, we average about 10% more kids per day. I do continue to look for

new ideas and we even tried a sushi day this year which went over very well. I made for different roles for the kids, all of which went over well, and I went through about 150 roles. We also did a survey with the kids at the high school to see what they would be interested in, and it was very fun to see the responses we got from them.

The online payment method is turning into an extremely popular method of payment for the families of Watertown. Last year we had 327 families using this option and \$87,731 was deposited into children's accounts. We had 203 families and \$13,770 deposited in the first three weeks of this year.

At the high school, I still do my signature sandwich days which are very popular. Twice a week we offer a special fresh-baked hot sandwich, Stromboli, or calzone. These are made fresh every day and we sell somewhere between 100 and 150 items every day that they are on the menu. We also opened about the needy station at the high school which we do the other two days of the week. They can get a hot fresh paining off the grill at the sandwich station and it is also very popular with the students. We also continued our lucky trade day at the elementary level and the kids look forward to that every day.

Last year, we continued our Wellness Committee where we managed to have one meeting towards the end of the year. We will have several more this year and I will have more updates for you in the newsletters with the things that we come up with. New items that will come about for the 15/16 school year are the fresh fruit cup that we sell at the high school and the middle school, finding different ways to increase our breakfast programs with Chef days (pancake bars, etc), we will do a rainbow tray where we offer every day, at all five schools, which is a new way to get children to try fruits and vegetables. Every day we will offer at least five different choices for them to pick from. Part of the government regulations requires children to take at least a half a cup of fruit or half a cup of vegetables every day. What this will do is give them something that they may like instead of something they don't like but you have to take. We are also looking to do some tasting days at the elementary level for different items like vegetables and snacks. That is one of the goals for our Wellness committee this year. We are also in the process of applying for a grant to help with that this year. The grant is about \$2500 to help us to provide the products for that.

I also have a Twitter account that I continue to use of the high school, ChefDave@WHS, to notify students at WHS of menu items and all of the daily happenings in our café.

Ms. Crotty – I wanted to talk about the food costs percentage a little bit. I know we went down according to your report, can you talk a little bit about what you attribute that to, and are cash reimbursements considered before or after you do your food costs? **A:** Food costs are generated off our sales so you have to include reimbursements in net sales, as it is a huge part of what our fund is. So basically, I take all of our monies from lunch and breakfast sales, catering, vending, anything else like that, plus the reimbursements, and that is worked off of our food costs. So you take your total food costs and divide it by your sales and that gives us our percentage. Regarding attributing the decrease, we do without our food every year, so we are always looking for new products, best price, best product that we can find. I also do a menu analysis every year to make sure we are serving things that are in my budgetary

guidelines. I do a cost analysis for each meal and see if things are coming in high that I will see if I can get them lower, while still trying to maintain our product quality. I also do a training with my staff on portion sizing to make sure we are using the correct portions for where our budgets are. We also talk about how to control waste by cooking for our counts.

Q: Last year, when you presented, we talked a little bit about the lunch times that were scheduled. Do you think that they have an impact on the amount of the amount of children who purchase lunch? **A:** They can, we have had some changes this year, and for the first month, it has not affected our counts. The biggest changes we had were at the high school and at the middle school, and we are averaging high school a little over 400 per day, and the middle school has a vendetta little better than it was last year. Where we have been affected slightly was at breakfast time. The different starting times for the seniors, where they were a very big part of the breakfast program, so I have lost some of them. The elementary schools are usually little slower in the beginning of the year as well.

Ms. Wilk – What is the average amount of money that kids spend at lunch and then at breakfast? **A:** That is a tough one and I was asked that question this afternoon. It will take me a little while to put that together because our system does not break it out like that. I will have to go back in and poll numbers by month to get it out there. But I will also have to include reimbursements in there, because if we don't do it that way, you're not looking at a picture because now we are seeing how much cash came in with the 602 free/reduced kids that are in our system and that generates a decent amount of income. You have to include them. So I don't have an answer for you right now but I will have one soon.

Ms. Rosa – Dave, I do want to tell you that I do get a report about the food that is eaten by at least one third grader. She describes the food that she eat each day and says it's actually pretty good, so what I get from this is that you are making this third grader interested in eating her lunch, which third-graders are very fussy, so you are doing a very good job at this.

Mr. Makowski – Thank you. Personal, I would like to second that, having a daughter that just started at Swift, she is thrilled at the choices, and I have to say for those of you that have social media and you see some of the pictures the end of online of what school lunches look like across the country, we are knocking it out of the park. So, thank you. What I am hearing in my own household and with what I am seeing, it is so nice to see that we have your commitment and talent for our students. With that said, I'm curious to know what you see in trends as far as, we have certain nutritional requirements that are made, but I hear from others that kids just throw their vegetables away and things like that, so can you talk a little bit about your experience and what you are seeing with the habits of the children and how that impacts your budget with waste and things like that? **A:** Well, waste is a big issue and part of the problem with the new regulations, is that we are requiring them to take things that they were required to take before. That will generate waste. Our goal is to come up with things that they like and if we can do that, and I hear something they are going to take, that they want to take, then they will eat it. There is waste when they eat, but it is also their social time, so when they are there they may start talking and then all of a sudden they are told to leave and they may have gotten to all their food. It's a very challenging thing for us right now. The federal government has not renewed are healthy child initiative yet. Some of our

vendors are also having a hard time trying to formulate and meet some of these guidelines. So we are losing products which is also tough on us and that means our product base is going away. If they keep going where they are heading, it may change what we can offer. That would be a shame, I think, because what we are offering, I think, is a healthy lunch. I will stack up against anybody else's lunch that's being packed into my schools. If you want to do a nutritionally, I'll stick mine up against anybody else that comes in.

Ms. Rinaldi: I just want to say I also work in schools, so the fact that you are offering five different vegetables and fruits is a great option for them. I also see a lot of waste and giving them a choice is a great thing. I just want to ask, you said you are trying to increase the amount of students who do buy breakfast; where do you find the students are taking more advantage of it? Elementary school or the higher levels? **A:** The higher percentage would be the elementary schools, the middle school we just have a really tough time because the breakfast time just doesn't fit into the schedule. At the high school, we have a little bit more flexibility where they have study halls now in the café and they can get breakfast during the day. We do a grab and go at John Trumbull and Polk, where they go to the cafeteria and get a bag and eat that in the classrooms. Judson eats in the cafeteria. We did a lot of promotions last year, I sent home different letters on breakfasts trying to make people aware that once they are eligible for it they can get it. We have to get the parents to want to try it we can't just go pull the kids and say you're eligible for it.

Mr. Gambardella – I have just a comment. I was a little surprised at the amount of children getting a free/reduced lunch. I felt it was little high for Watertown and Oakville's situation. I thought it would be a little bit more like 10%. **A:** Oh no. It's been over 20 since I've been here.

Dr. Carnemolla – It has crept up a little bit. We follow federal guidelines where people submit incomes and that we use as guidelines to approve them so we have no "dog in the show", if you will, and we use their information with our numbers and then send those numbers and the federal government.

Ms. Crotty – I'd like to add to that, Jim, in the state of Connecticut, for the last fiscal year, one in seven kids are below the poverty level. Considering where the state is, and there are certain cities where that number goes way up, but back considering our percentages....

H. Public Participation

None

I. Report from the Board Chair

This week's chair report will be posted on Facebook and Twitter.

J. Committee Reports

Curriculum and Instruction Committee, Ms. Cathie Rinaldi, Chair – No

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

K. Communications – Secretary

No report

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

Agenda Item:	L.1
Subject:	Consideration of the Approval of an Out of State Field Trip to Hershey, Pennsylvania

Motion Presented By:	Mr. Lambert
Motion Seconded By:	Mr. Vicenzi

Text of the Motion:	Madame Chair, I move that the board approve of the out of state field trip to Hersey, PA for sixty five (65) Watertown High School Students and five (5) chaperones from May 20 th , 2016 to May 22 nd , 2016 for the purpose of participation in the Music in the Parks Adjudication Festival.
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Discussion:	None
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Opposed:	None
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Abstained:	None
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Vote:	Motion Passes
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Agenda Item:	L.2
Subject:	Consideration of the Approval to Place Two (2) Used Clothing Bins at Swift Middle School as Part of a Fundraising Opportunity for the Parent Teacher Student Organization (PTSO)

Motion Presented By: Mr. Vicenzi
Motion Seconded By: Mr. Makowski

Text of the Motion: Madame Chair, I move that the board approve to place two (2) used clothing bins at Swift Middle School as part of a fundraising opportunity for the Swift PTSO

Discussion: None

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

Vote: Motion Passes

M. Future Agenda Items and Board Members' Comments

None

N. Public Participation

None

O. Adjourn

Agenda Item: O.1
Subject: To Adjourn the Meeting

Motion Presented By: Mr. Lambert
Motion Seconded By: Mr. Vicenzi

Text of the Motion: Madame Chair, I move that we adjourn.

Discussion: None

Opposed: None

Abstained: None

Vote: Motion Passes

The meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mindi Davidson
Recording Secretary

Janelle Wilk
Secretary of the Board