



Office of the Superintendent

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December 21, 2007

Mr. Donald Blevins, Chairperson
Board of Education Members

Mr. John W. "Bill" Sheehan, Chairperson
Board of Finance Members

Ms. Sharon Palmer, Moderator
Representative Town Meeting Members

Dear Moderator, Chairpersons and Members:

I am forwarding my budget recommendation for the 2008-2009 operating budget. This request represents a 3.40% increase over the 2007-08 operating budget. Significant costs are realized in the budget to fund negotiated contract increases, health insurance, the FastForward program for students not performing up to expected standards, Power School (a student management program software), outside private school tuition expenses and an increase in Talented and Gifted funding. Significant savings are realized due to decreasing school enrollment, closing of the Cohanzie School, administrative reorganization at Central Office and staffing reassignments.

2008-2009 Budget Format:

The 2008-2009 Budget is formatted by object. The Executive Summary section is structured according to object codes and this is where the most direct comparisons with last year's budget can be made. The Budget Detail section describes each segment of the Executive Summary in detail.

The next section of the budget document entitled Enrollment and Class Size provides current and projected enrollments at each of the schools as well as average class size information. The Superintendent's Report section includes the Annual Report as well as District Summary Profile. The Historical Data section provides information on high school staffing comparisons with surrounding towns, data regarding budget history, school facilities, textbook acquisitions, and public use, and fuel usage.

The following measures have allowed us to realize savings in a number of areas.

Fiscal Goals, Attained and Ongoing:

Quaker Hill Savings due to closing 2006-07

- As a result of closing Quaker Hill School for renovations during the 2006-07 school year, we were able to realize savings totaling \$520,270. This includes certified and support salaries as well as operational savings.

Cooperative Purchasing

- Participation in the Connecticut Department of Administrative Services Procurement Services Program, in particular for the schools' Copier Replacement Program with an annual savings of \$20,100 for Service and Supplies.
- Membership in a statewide school supply consortium providing savings on school, office, art, and paper supplies.
- Joined 100 other state school departments in signing strike price contracts authorizing Strategic Energy to purchase electricity at a rate that produces savings over the prevailing rate(s) from CL&P.

E-Rate

- We continue to apply for and receive E-Rate direct credits to our telecommunications and internet/network accounts. For 2008-09, we have received funding authorization for \$50,092.38.

Collaboration with Town

- BOE Maintenance Workers continue to maintain both Town and School facilities.
- Successful implementation of a Technology Support Services Program for both BOE and Town.
- Continued collaborative effort with Recreation and Parks Department in order to maximize community usage of our facilities.
- We have cooperated fully and willingly with the First Selectman as he fulfilled his obligation to develop a town-wide Capital Improvement Plan.
- In collaboration with the Waterford Police Department, we received a "Secure Our Schools" federal grant that funded training in the area of school security and allowed us to purchase security equipment for our schools.

Waterford Education Foundation

- The Waterford Education Foundation has been in existence now for four years. This group has made great progress in supporting many school and community initiatives through its grants. Some of the programs supported by the Foundation include the Waterford High School Art and Photography exhibit at the Hygienic Art Show as well as several mini-grants. The mini grants awarded this school year to date include: The

Friendship School's grant, "Consistent Reinforcement using Interventions for Social Engagement", Oswegatchie School's grant, "Reading Hall of Fame", Southwest School's grant, "Art Will Bring Us Together", Waterford High School's grant, "Quahog Bowl, Northeast Regional Science Bowl", Waterford Youth Service Bureau's grant, "Community Conversations Series". All of these grant funded programs have served to enrich the lives of our students. Many thanks go out to the members of the Foundation Board: Raymond Hasse, Lois Andrews, Joan Ballassi, Judith Coughlin, Michael Coughlin, Kim Hodges, Kristin Pezzolesi, Christine Riemann, John Stefan, and Brian Stockman. Ex Officio members include myself, Daniel Steward, Kathleen McCarty, Michael Seroussi, Cheryl Larder, George White and Craig Powers.

Educational Cost Sharing (ECS)

- We are delighted that the Governor and the Legislature have increased the State funding of ECS beginning in FY 2007-08. While we anticipated \$799,224 in State funding, we are actually receiving \$1,384,974, an increase of \$585,750.

Future Fiscal Goals:

- Three elementary schools instead of five will result in an annual operational cost differential of at least \$1 million when all three schools are finally on line.
- Construction of LEED (Leader in Energy Efficient Design) Certified energy efficient buildings will have long term cost savings. Quaker Hill will be the first LEED school to come online in the fall of 2008.
- We continue efforts to seek out Federal, State and local grants to improve education.
- I continue to advocate for an Enterprise fund for the operation of the pool and auditorium at Waterford High School. Thanks to Mr. Sheehan there is a proposal before the RTM that would authorize an Enterprise Fund.
- I continue to go to Hartford and lobby for the elimination of the Educational Costs Savings (ECS) cap and an increase in magnet school funding.
- The elementary Spanish Program is not slated for elimination in this budget request BUT will begin in Grade two instead of Kindergarten which will allow us to fund full-day Kindergarten at Quaker Hill without a staffing increase.

Conclusion:

Due in large part to the excellent reputation of the schools, Waterford has remained an attractive community to live in, and as we know, quality schools have a direct correlation to the value of home ownership. Quality schools have an enormous impact on the ability of Waterford to cope with the declining tax revenue. I appreciate the opportunity not only to present this budget request but also welcome the chance to defend it. I am hopeful that many individuals will take the time to become involved in the consideration of this request.

I want to pay special tribute to the immense amount of work undertaken by the Business Department, and the principals of our schools. Under the direction of Mr. Michael DeRay, the Business Department continues to review school budget expenditures in an effort to meet the demands of budget constraints. The principals have devoted a great deal of effort as we sought to achieve an educationally sound budget while being sensitive to fiscal realities. The principals have been very understanding in giving up many items that would have enhanced the educational

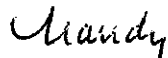
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program for their students in order to be supportive of the current fiscal climate. The professionalism of all of these individuals and the daily commitment and sacrifices of our teachers make me proud to work in Waterford. Without their patience and expertise, this document would not have been produced in a timely manner. I am indebted to them.

Thank you for your continued support of the high quality educational programs that exist in Waterford. Our children and their education must remain the number one priority of our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mandy".

Randall Collins
Superintendent of Schools

RHC:jc