



The Connection

WATERFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

WINTER/SPRING 2023

*Bringing the accomplishments and initiatives of the Waterford Public Schools to the Town, Community and beyond to create a **Connection** that will reinforce a strong commitment to coming together to educate the whole child.*

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Learning Walks at WPS

In keeping with the Convocation theme of Empowering Excellence, Waterford Public Schools administration and staff have participated in Learning Walks throughout the 2022-2023 school year, to enhance and build the capacity of our staff and promote effective instruction and powerful classroom experiences. Learning Walks, a teacher-led/building-based model for identifying the instructional status of the schools, have been held at all five of our schools and have included central office administration to teach the process and building administration, teacher observers and teacher presenters who led and participated in this experience.

Learning Walks allows staff to further develop a shared understanding of what constitutes "high quality instruction" across our schools in all content areas and provides additional opportunities for the growth and development of our staff. Schools have focused on content areas such as "How are teachers delivering instruction to all learners?" and "How are teachers using small group instruction to target specific learning needs". Learning Walks has allowed teacher observers to visit and observe peers, providing valuable learning experiences throughout the district.

Feedback from the first series of Learning Walks has been overwhelmingly positive and we look forward to continuing with the next round of this exciting in-house professional learning.



"Visiting classrooms in a purposeful, targeted way is a great opportunity to see a side of teaching that might not be demonstrated in your own classroom."

"For me, I loved to see how groups of students were engaging in discourse, but also how the teachers utilized different strategies in organizing groups and the workspaces."

Budget Update

At the February 23, 2023 Board of Education meeting, the Superintendent's Recommended Budget was approved. The BOE approved budget as well as the Superintendent's presentations from the February 2 and 9 budget workshops can be found on the WPS website at <https://www.waterfordschools.org/our-district/departments/business-office/budget>. See page 8 for information on the budget process going forward.



WHAT THIS BUDGET ACCOMPLISHES

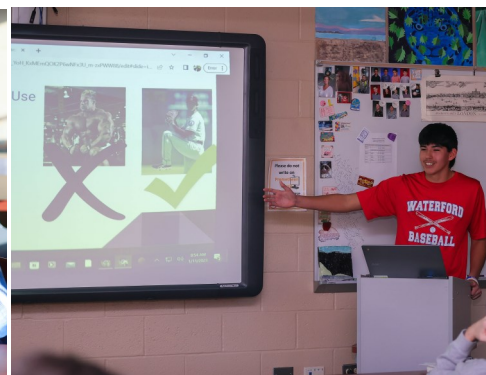
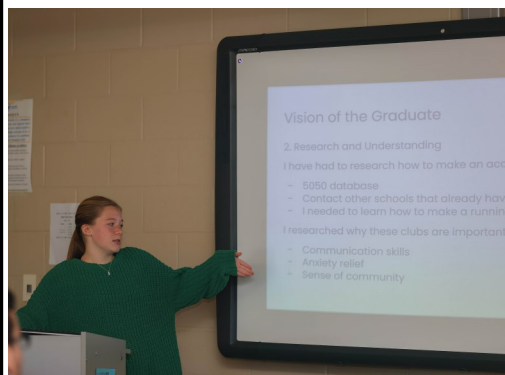
- Continue to Address Pandemic Challenges
- Continue to Provide a High-Quality Education
- Fund our Strategic Plan Goals
- Maintain *most* Current Programs and Offerings
- Continue Reasonable Class Sizes
- Preserve Athletic and Extra-Curricular Programs
- Continue Quality Professional Development
- Sustain our Curriculum Renewal Cycle
- Continue Preventive Maintenance Program

EMPOWER EXCELLENCE



Implemented in the 2021-2022 school year, the Capstone Experience is an authentic learning experience aligned to the [Vision of the Graduate](#). As part of the high school graduation requirements (Policy 5080) Capstone is a culminating experience whereby students learn the process of successfully executing a student-directed independent project, employing many of the transferable skills of the Vision of the Graduate.

During an extended advisory in January, Waterford High School Grade 11 Capstone students presented their projects to groups of 2-3 advisories. Students in the Capstone class used the semester to develop projects and research papers that demonstrated student mastery of the Vision of the Graduate performance indicators. Students shared their research papers, created presentations to show their process and then presented their projects. Students presented for 10-15 minutes and answered audience questions. Projects highlighted student interest and passion and included; teaching tennis to children, building computers, creating new clubs, volunteering in the community, and researching areas of interest.



NEW LONDON Homeless Hospitality Center



The Clark Lane Middle School Unified Community Club, a club that focuses on how staff and students can give back to the local community, recently launched a Joy of Sox event to collect and donate socks to local homeless shelters. 2,270 new pairs of socks were collected. All of the men's socks and a portion of the women's socks were donated to the Homeless Hospitality Center in New London. A portion of the women's socks and all of children's socks were donated to Safe Futures in New London.

in a world where you
can be anything

be kind

Great Neck Elementary School established its first Kindness Council. The Kindness Council, comprised of 4th and 5th grade students, represents Great Neck and works to lead kindness initiatives throughout the school and community. Students are responsible for generating ideas, planning initiatives and carrying them through. Students will also be responsible for sharing their work when GN recognizes members of the community during their annual Kindness Assembly in May of 2023.

WPS in the News

Check out "Waterford Public Schools in the News" for media interviews and local newscasts of the great things happening in the District and the schools.

- ⇒ WFSB Channel 3 - [GREAT KIDS: Marine Biology students set sail with legacy boat kit project](#)
- ⇒ WFSB Channel 3 - [School staff members in Waterford recognized for saving boy's life](#)
- ⇒ The Day - [The needs created by the pandemic haven't ended](#)



CLUSTER: MANUFACTURING



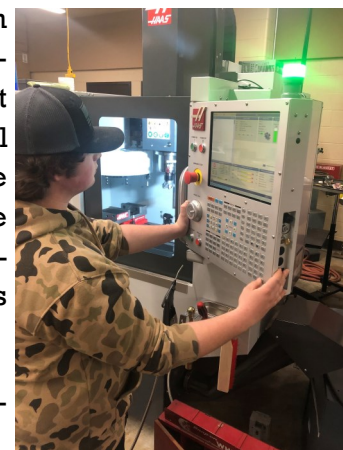
PATHWAY: YMPI

At the January 26, 2023 Board of Education meeting, Technology Education teacher Michael Bono and Waterford High School Principal Kirk Samuelson highlighted the Youth Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative that is available to students at Waterford High School. This pathway, implemented in the 2021-2022 school year, provides students the opportunity to receive college credit through Three Rivers Community College and an industry recognized credential issued by the Eastern Workforce Investment Board (EWIB). Students who complete this Pathway can use this credential to gain employment at a local manufacturer such as SECONN Fabrication, Jaypro or [Electric Boat](#).

Mr. Bono noted that "Manufacturing has quickly become one of the fastest growing sectors in Connecticut." Waterford High School is excited to offer this pathway to students and provide access to courses such as Drafting/CAD, Automotive Engineering, Tooling and Woodworking to name a few.

The Youth Manufacturing Pipeline Initiative presentation can be viewed on the Board of Education YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PMCzlu5q5MM>.

More information regarding this pathway can be found at <https://www.ewib.org/pipeline> or by contacting Faculty Advisor for this Pathway: Michael Bono MBono@WaterfordSchools.org or School to Career Coordinator: Lisa Sweeney LSweeney@WaterfordSchools.org.



WHS Senior Andrew Pafias
manually programming a
Haas Mill control

LEVEL 1

CERTIFIED Educator

Google for Education



The WPS Information Technology Department offered two sessions of Google Level 1 training to 47 faculty and staff throughout the district. The Level 1 Fundamentals Training Course is designed to teach staff strategies for integrating Google into their instructional practice. Earning the Level 1 status indicates staff are able to successfully incorporate Google Apps for Education tools to enhance teaching and learning.

Investing in our Staff

WATERFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS



One Team, One Purpose
Putting Our Students First!

JOB FAIR

Onsite
Hiring
Interviews

**APRIL 19, 2023
FROM 3 - 5 PM**

Clark Lane Middle School

Contact HR to RSVP

860.440.1863

Scan QR Code for
Vacancies & Application

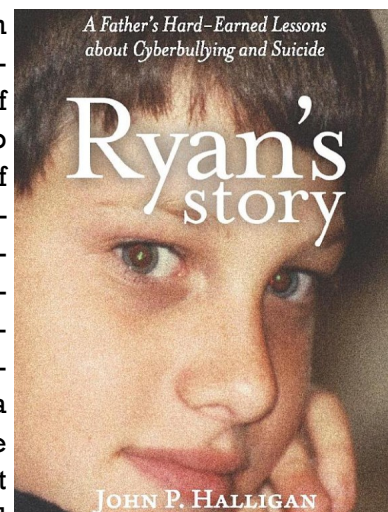


"I read every reflection sheet [students] submitted to their Advisory teachers, and I gave special attention to [students] responses on – "two things you would do differently from now on" and "one thing you would tell the presenter if you had the opportunity." It is my sincerest hope [students will] follow through on their commitment to combat bullying in our school, which I know they will, because that's what Lan-cers do."

Kirk Samuelson
WHS Principal

Ryan's Story - Bullying, Cyberbullying & Teen Suicide Prevention

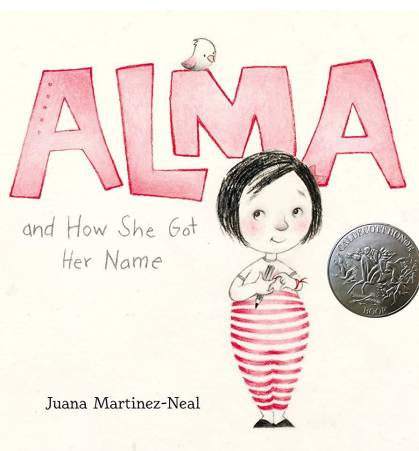
Waterford High School, in partnership with the Brian Dagle Foundation, hosted a school-wide assembly, Ryan's Story (in memory of Ryan Patrick Halligan, 1989-2002), to help raise awareness and combat the problem of bullying, both in schools and online. Presented by Ryan's father John Halligan, an international speaker and author, the presentation included powerful video clips, still pictures, and the story of Ryan's life and the factors that led to his suicide giving students a first-hand perspective of what it means to be affected by bullying and cyberbullying, not only as a target but also as a family and friends of a target. The assembly ended with a wrap-up session that educated students on forgiveness, suicide prevention, and the role of bystanders. CLMS students and staff will participate in a Ryan's Story assembly on March 31, 2023



QH Connects

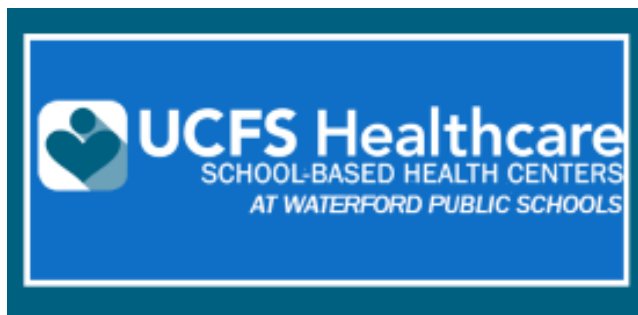
Quaker Hill Elementary School re-introduced an initiative, developed in 2019, that ensures all students feel a sense of connection at school each day. Titled **QH Connects** this program focuses on creating meaningful connections at school to help improve student behavior, attendance and overcoming childhood trauma. A team of QH staff worked together to create a "School Connectedness Screener" and students completed the screener on the iPads (PK-1) and Chromebooks (2-5). All students were asked, "When you come to school, who are you excited to see, visit with, or talk to?" Students had an opportunity to click on the photo of any staff member at QH that they felt connected with. All staff (teachers, paras, recess aides, custodians, coaches, and food service staff) were included. The data from the School Connectedness Screener assists staff in identifying students in need of additional connections and matching these students up with a staff member that will check in with them throughout the week. The goal of the program is to ensure all students feel safe and connected to their school. For more information, check out the February 10th edition of the QH Newsletter at https://qh.waterfordschools.org/OurSchool/news/announcements/quaker_hill_newsletter

Exploring Identity Through the Arts at OSW



Author and illustrator Juana Martinez-Neal, Caldecott Honor recipient and author of such books as "Alma" and "Zonia's Rain Forest", visited Oswegatchie Elementary School on February 13, 2023. Ms. Martinez-Neal spoke about her childhood in Peru and how her name story influenced her book "Alma". She discussed how she had to overcome stereotypes about people from Peru when she moved to the United States and how those experiences influenced her work. The assembly coincided with Oswegatchie Elementary School's grant work based on exploring identity through the arts.

United Community and Family Services (UCFS) has had the privilege to serve the Waterford Public School's population and has enjoyed getting to know you and your families over the course of this school year. Thank you all for welcoming us and allowing us to take part in your town's after-school functions. We loved meeting you all at events such as the Harlem Wizards game, back to school nights and field day. We are also proud to say that one of our clinicians, Debra Abbey, was recently acknowledged by the



Waterford Board of Education for her heroic efforts in an emergency situation that occurred at Clark Lane Middle School. UCFS is also proud to support The Heart and Sole program which helps inspire middle school aged girls value what makes them unique. Working together, each student learns how to build up on their confidence to better their own emotional and physical strength.

For those of you who are not aware, we have offices located in Waterford High School and Clark Lane Middle School which provide medical and behavioral health services during routine school hours. Any student enrolled in the Waterford School District is eligible to receive services at the High School or Middle School as long as an enrollment form is filled out and signed by a parent or guardian.

Each School-based Health Center is staffed by a medical provider (APRN or PA), a medical assistant and a licensed behavioral health clinician. Services available are wide and varied, and include sports physicals, routine well child visits, immunizations and sick visits as well as mental health counseling. These services are meant to support and augment a student's primary care provider, not take the place of the PCP. Contact and collaboration with the student's primary care provider is seen as an integral part of providing care within the school.

School-based Health Centers are playing an important role in this country, providing care to students who otherwise would have difficulty accessing services. Parent work schedules, transportation and doctor's backlog of appointments are often barriers to care. Students enrolled in School-based Health Centers can be seen during the school hours, reducing barriers to care.

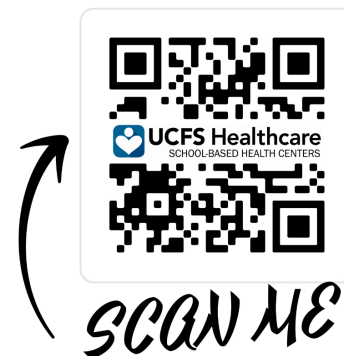
Rebecca Richard, PA-C, is the medical provider located at the Waterford schools along with the medical assistant, Kelly Brown. Amber Naglie is the behavioral health clinician that serves the high school and Debra Abbey is our clinician located in Clark Lane.

Enrollment forms can be found online by typing <https://www.ucfs.org/services/school-based-health-centers/> and click the "SBHC Enrollment Form". We also have paper enrollment forms located at the schools. If you have any questions or would like to speak with our staff, please call 860-822-2803. We look forward to continuing to be a part of your community and meeting many more of you!

 [WPS School-based Health Centers](https://www.ucfs.org/services/school-based-health-centers/)

UCFS School-Based Health Centers at Waterford Public Schools

Scan below to find out more information about the School-Based Health Centers at Waterford High School and Clark Lane Middle School!



 **UCFS Healthcare**
SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CENTER
at Waterford Public Schools

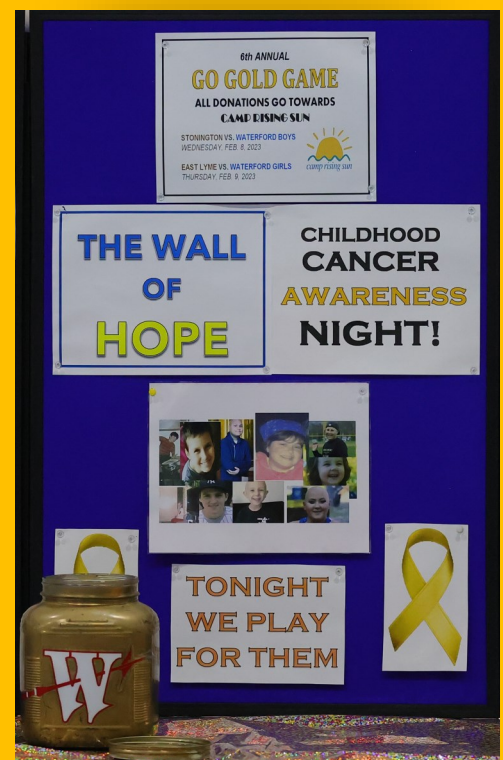
Go Gold Games for Childhood Cancer Awareness

Waterford athletics held the 6th annual Go Gold Games on February 8 and 9, 2023. The games raise awareness and funds to help end childhood cancer. Stonington High School joined the boys basketball team and East Lyme High School joined the girls basketball team to support this important cause. Each starter for both teams played for a child in our surrounding community that has succumbed to cancer.

The Go Gold Games for Childhood Cancer Awareness was established by graduate and National Spirit of Sport Award winner Marissa Walker. It was a great event, one of collaboration across the district with all proceeds being donated, a 50-50 raffle, a bake sale hosted by the WHS Softball team and the Great Neck Elementary School chorus singing the national anthem at both games.

Over \$1000 was raised and all donations will go to Camp Rising Sun – “a camp that welcomes any child ages 5-17 who has faced a diagnosis of cancer to a week of fun and friendship.” 100% donation driven, “Camp Rising Sun exists to provide a safe, nurturing environment for kids who have faced the diagnosis of cancer so that they may grow and learn from their experiences to become the best they can be.”

www.camprisingsun.com



PUFFS by Matt Cox made its **WATERFORDrama** debut Feb 9-11 at the WHS Auditorium, directed by new drama coaches David Conaway & Monique Nee. Taking a comedic, heartwarming, and sometimes devastating look at the seven Harry Potter books and movies told from the point-of-view of the Hufflepuffs, or in this production...*The Puffs*. With a cast of 22 playing over 50 roles and a crew of 27, this fast-paced show delighted audiences. The story focused on the friendship of Wayne, Oliver & Megan, played by John Morgan, Tigie Burrige, and Ama Rosado, with Kal Dioquino as the Narrator leading us through the highlights. Katie Jamroga played Cedric, the leader of the Puffs, with the remaining housemates played by Yana Abramova, Phoebe Brown, Sofia Fioravanti, Isabela Haque, Emily Rose Johnson, and Oliver Smith, who all played other roles as well. Karas Boluch was wonderful as Harry, Fern Hill was hilarious as Bippy (as well as being the Production Stage Manager), and newcomer Kla Key played 5 very different roles with fantastic commitment. Jamie Gannon, Lauren Gerboth, Ally Dazy, Francesca DeSantis, Atlas Hoff, Caleb Nichols, Rylee Partridge, and Emily Roy rounded out the cast with standout performances. The crew also did a fantastic job, with hundreds of light cues, music, sound effects, a fog machine, fantastic props, great costumes, and hair & makeup. A special appreciation goes out to all of the volunteers who helped make the production a success. Congratulations to everyone for a job very well done.



Four students from Waterford High have been selected to perform in the 2023 CT All-State Music Festival! Each year the Connecticut Music Educators Association hosts a 3 day All-State honor ensemble festival at the CT Convention Center in Hartford. This year, four WHS students auditioned and were selected to perform amongst the most talented high school music students in the state. The festival consists of an honor Choir, Band, Orchestra, and Jazz Ensemble. The audition score is based on the performance a prepared piece of music selected by the All-State Committee, scale performance, and the sight reading performance of music. These honor ensemble students will attend the festival in Hartford on March 30, 31, and April 1. The concerts will take place on the afternoon of April 1 at the Hartford Convention Center. Tickets can be purchased [here](#).

MATHCOUNTS®



The Clark Lane Middle School Math Counts Team participated in the Eastern CT Math Counts Chapter Competition at UCONN. Four CLMS students, Ethan Wang, Justin Wang, Michael Chuchev and Logan Couture, participated and the team came in first. Also, Ethan Wang scored first in the individual competition and Justin Wang scored second. The team will go on to participate in the State Competition in March.

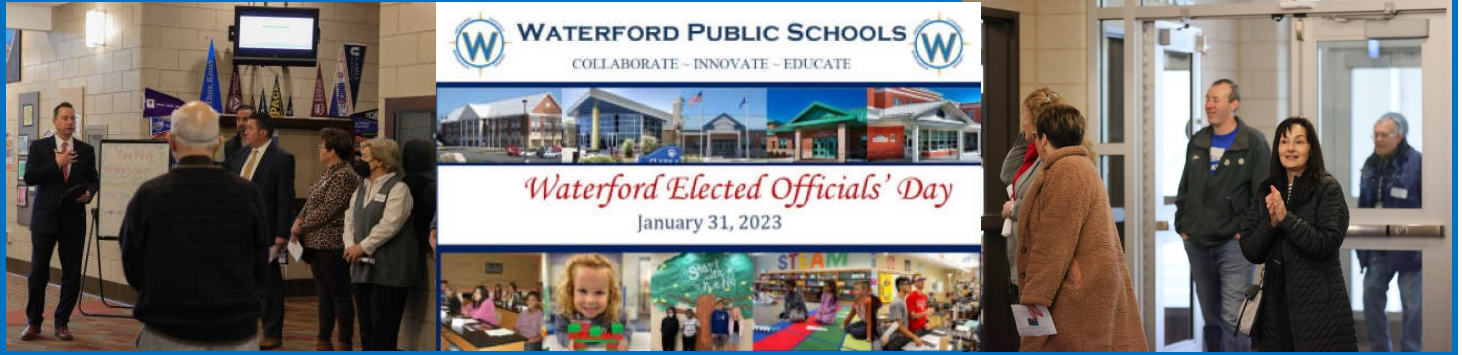
Budget Timeline

2023-2024 Budget Timeline & Highlights



Elected Officials' Day in WPS

Waterford Public Schools hosted the Waterford Elected Officials' Day on January 31st. This event began in 2019 but was put on hold due to the pandemic. Officials from the Waterford RTM, Board of Finance, Board of Education, Town Offices, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Board of Assessment Appeals, joined District Personnel and School Administration for tours of Waterford High School, Clark Lane Middle School, and Oswegatchie Elementary School. The tours were a great time to showcase the high quality teaching and learning at Waterford Public Schools and to provide an "inside look" at our wonderful schools' technology and infrastructure. Officials enjoyed the opportunity to have a first hand look at the exciting initiatives that have been going on in schools and gained important insight into the exceptional programs, staff and students who make Waterford a great place to live and learn!



Waterford Public Schools

Pat Fedor, Board of Education Chairperson

Thomas W. Giard III, Superintendent

15 Rope Ferry Road

Waterford, CT 06385

Phone: 860-444-5852

Fax: 860-444-5870

Contact: Caroline Whittaker - Executive Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent

E-mail: cwhittaker@waterfordschools.org

Waterford Public Schools is a community of learners that fosters and supports high aspirations, ensuring every student acquires the skills and knowledge necessary to be a responsible citizen, prepared to contribute and succeed in an ever-changing world.

Stay Connected...

- ♦ **WPS Website - Visit**
www.waterfordschools.org for up to date BOE, school and event information.
- ♦ **BOE meetings are held on the 4th Thursday of each month. For the complete schedule of meetings, go to the [BOE section](#) of the WPS Website.**
- ♦ **Download the [WPS App](#) to 'stay abreast' of all the happenings at our schools.**
- ♦ **Follow us on [Twitter](#) : [@WPS_CT](#) and [@WaterfordSuper](#)**