



2024-2025 Annual Report



Board of Education

2024-2025

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Message from the Interim Superintendent of Schools

Dear Waterbury Public Schools Community,

As we close the 2024–2025 school year, I want to take a moment to reflect with pride and gratitude on the incredible accomplishments of our students, staff, and community. This year was marked by innovation, resilience, and a shared commitment to excellence across Waterbury Public Schools.

One of our proudest academic milestones was the continued improvement in student performance districtwide. Our educators worked tirelessly to implement high-quality instruction and data-informed strategies, and the results are evident in the gains we've made in achievement and growth across grade levels. We also took significant steps to enrich and expand opportunities for all students. This included the launch of new, rigorous curricula that reflect the needs of today's learners and tomorrow's leaders. We expanded our robotics programming, providing students with more hands-on, future-focused learning experiences that build problem-solving, collaboration, and critical thinking skills.

This year, our students truly shined. We celebrated numerous local, state, and national awardees across academics, the arts, athletics, and leadership. In a particularly noteworthy achievement, Waterbury ranked 1st and 2nd in the state for FAFSA completion at Waterbury Career Academy and Waterbury Arts Magnet School, a powerful testament to our community's belief in the potential of every graduate.

We also made meaningful progress in supporting student safety and social-emotional well-being. We introduced the YONDR bag initiative to promote a more focused, connected school environment, and we launched an Expulsion Academy to ensure that all students—regardless of circumstance—have access to education and support when they need it most.

None of this would have been possible without the dedication of our teachers, administrators, support staff, families, and partners. Together, we are building a stronger, more vibrant school system that prepares every student for success in college, career, and life. I look forward to the continued momentum and possibilities ahead in 2025–2026.

With appreciation,

Dr. Darren M. Schwartz
Superintendent

Core Values, Mission and Vision

Core Values

The Waterbury Public Schools System

- Holds high expectations for excellence in teaching and learning
- Promotes equity in policy, practice and resources
- Provides students a quality learning experience aligned to our Portrait of a Graduate
- Acts as stewards for community resources and managing our assets to ensure equity and excellence
- Recognizes that meaningful relationships are the foundation of a high-quality education
- Committed to embracing a diverse community
- Committed to civility, honesty, responsibility and transparency

Mission

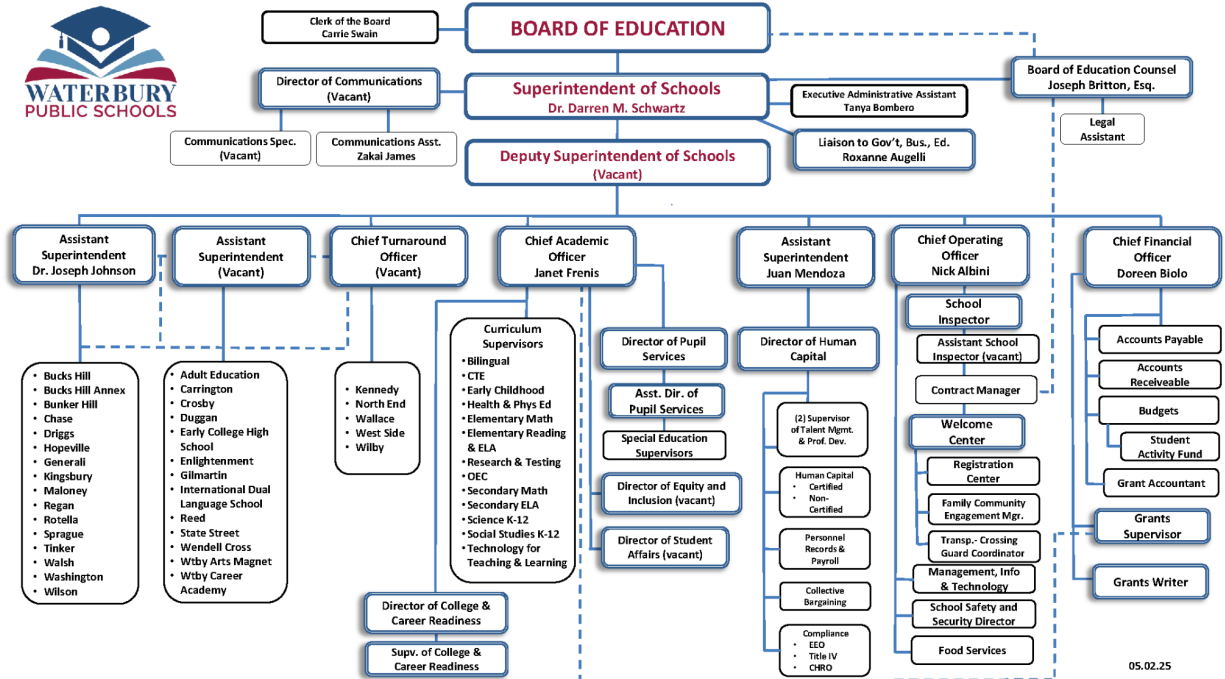
The mission of Waterbury Public Schools is to inspire and prepare every student to be successful in and beyond school.

Vision

All Waterbury Public Schools students will graduate ready to transform their world.

Waterbury Public Schools Administration

District Organizational Chart



Central Office Support

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

Interim Superintendent	Dr. Darren Schwartz
Deputy Superintendent	Vacant
Chief Academic Officer	Mrs. Janet Frenis
Chief Financial Officer	Mrs. Doreen Biolo
Chief Operating Officer	Mr. Nicholas Albini
Assistant Superintendent	Vacant
Assistant Superintendent	Dr. Joseph H. Johnson
Assistant Superintendent of Human Capital	Mr. Juan Mendoza
Director of Pupil Services	Ms. Wendy Johns
Director of Communications	Vacant
Chief Turnaround Officer	Vacant
Board of Education Attorney	Attorney Joseph Britton
Supervisor of Management, Info. and Tech.	Mr. Will Zhuta

Director of College and Career Readiness
Director of Equity and Inclusion
Director of Safety and Security

Mrs. Nyree Toucet
Vacant
Mr. Daniel Barry

TEACHING AND LEARNING SUPERVISORS

Multilingual Learners Education
Career and Technical Education
College and Career Readiness
Fine Arts (PreK-12)
Health & Physical Education
Math (PreK-5)
Math (6-12)
Reading/English Language Arts (PreK-5)
Reading/English Language Arts (6-12)
Research, Development, and Testing
Science
Social Studies
Technology for Teaching and Learning

Mr. Manuel Zaldivar Barahona
Mr. Michael Merati
Dr. Vira Boatright
Vacant
Mr. Joseph Gorman
Mr. Robert Shagensky
Ms. Elizabeth Corbin
Ms. Melissa Calabrese
Ms. Jennifer Sarja
Ms. Tara Battistoni
Mrs. Kari Nizzardo
Mrs. Veda Harris
Mr. David Lucian (Int.)

RECRUITMENT & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Talent & Professional Development Supervisor
Talent & Professional Development Supervisor

Ms. Marissa Waters
Ms. Carli Carpentieri

SPECIAL EDUCATION SUPERVISORS

Ms. Donajean (DJ) Belcher
Kimberly DiVergilio
Dr. Michelle Cormier
Ms. Allison Finley
Mrs. Nancy Hill
Ms. Patricia (*Patty*) Ferrare
Ms. Jamie Miller
Ms. Chayna Nath
Ms. Wendy Santarsiero (*Owen- via email*)
Kaitlyn Siena
Mrs. Tracy Menzies (Assistant Director)
Vacant Supervisor (3)

WELCOME CENTER

Family and Community Engagement Manager
Student Registration
District Liaison to Students in Transition
Community Connections Coordinator
Bussing/Crossing Guard Coordinator
Bussing Assistant

Ms. Sandra Romero
Ms. Margaret Williams
Mrs. Shynea Paris
Mrs. Barbara Tenor
Mr. Jeffrey Hunter
Mr. Edwin Ellington

OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

Supv. of Early Childhood Education
Supv. of Early Childhood Special Education
School Readiness Liaison

Mrs. Maureen Bergin
Mrs. Patricia Ferrare
Ms. Krista Pisano

FOOD SERVICE

Food Service Director

Ms. Linda Franzese

GRANTS

Supervisor of Grants
Competitive Grants Writer

Ms. Linda Riddick-Barron
Ms. Louise Allen Brown

SCHOOL INSPECTOR

School Inspector

Mr. Michael Konopka

School Principals

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS AND PROGRAMS

Waterbury Adult Continuing Education
Enlightenment School
State Street Program
Bucks Hill Preschool

Mr. Antonio Musto
Ms. Lauren Miele
Mrs. Lisa Ariola-Simoes
Ms. Amy Simms

HIGH SCHOOLS

Crosby High School

Principal
Vice Principal
Vice Principal

Mr. Michael Veronneau
Mrs. Cathleen Newmark
Mr. Jason Martinez

Vice Principal
Vice Principal ECHS

Ms. Kara Riley
Mr. Sean Mosley

John F. Kennedy High School

Principal
Vice Principal
Vice Principal
Vice Principal

Mr. Robert Johnston
Mr. George Smalley
Mr. Matthew Gwiazdoski
Ms. Karyln Fitzpatrick

Wilby High School

Principal
Vice Principal
Vice Principal
Vice Principal
Administrator on Special Assignment

Dr. Michelle Baker
Ms. Angela Joyce
Mr. Hugh Aird
Ms. Elizabeth Henson
Mr. Joseph Begnal

Waterbury Arts Magnet High School

Principal
Vice Principal
Vice Principal
Vice Principal

Dr. Maria Stasaitis
Mr. Daniel Ferreira
Mr. Joseph Nole
Ms. Jennifer Deeley

Waterbury Career Academy High School

Principal
Vice Principal
Vice Principal

Mr. Michael Harris
Mrs. Jennifer Franceskino
Mr. Peter Flammia

MIDDLE SCHOOLS

North End Middle School

Principal
Assistant Principal
Assistant Principal
Assistant Principal

Mrs. Jacquelyn Gilmore
Mr. James Simpson
Ms. Jennifer Egan
Mrs. Sharell Herbert

Wallace Middle School

Principal
Assistant Principal
Assistant Principal

Mr. Vincent Balsamo
Mr. Ryan Carpenter
Ms. Bridget Regan



Assistant Principal
Academic Academy Supervisor

Ms. Patricia McCarthy
Mrs. Melinda Grove

West Side Middle School

Principal
Assistant Principal
Assistant Principal
Assistant Principal

Mr. Peter McCasland
Mrs. Kathleen Ferrucci
Ms. Dana Mancini
Ms. Cathie Rinaldi

Waterbury Arts Magnet Middle School

Principal
Vice Principal
Vice Principal
Vice Principal

Dr. Maria Stasaitis
Mr. Daniel Ferreira
Mr. Joseph Nole
Mrs. Jennifer Deeley

ELEMENTARY AND PRE K-8 SCHOOLS

Bucks Hill Elementary School

Principal
Elementary Vice Principal

Mrs. Maria Jimenez
Ms. Dana Coelho

Bunker Hill Elementary School

Principal
Elementary Vice Principal

Ms. Brittany Dunn
Mrs. Emily Griffin

Carrington Elementary School

Principal
Elementary Vice Principal

Ms. Karen Renna
Ms. Kristen Gwiazdoski

H.S. Chase Elementary School

Principal
Elementary Vice Principal
Elementary Vice Principal

Mrs. Lori Eldridge
Mr. Ivan Hernandez
Mrs. Sonja Selenica

Wendell L. Cross Elementary School

Principal
Elementary Vice Principal

Mrs. Donna Cullen
Mr. Raymond Irrera

Driggs Elementary School

Principal
Elementary Vice Principal

Dr. Jennifer Rosser
Mrs. Ann Drewry

John Duggan Elementary School

Principal
Elementary Vice Principal

Ms. Melissa DiGiovanni
Ms. Carla Fidanza

M.M. Generali Elementary School, Margaret

Principal
Elementary Vice Principal

Ms. Kristen Gaudiosi
Ms. Shernett Evans Foster

Gilmartin Elementary School

Principal
Elementary Vice Principal

Mrs. Erika Lanza
Ms. Melissa Vargas

Hopeville Elementary School

Principal
Elementary Vice Principal

Mrs. Julissa Crespo
Mrs. Christina Piccochi Frank

Roberto Clemente International Dual School

Principal

Mrs. Diurca Tomasella

F.J. Kingsbury Elementary School

Principal
Elementary Vice Principal

Ms. Hannah Sam
Ms. Susan Groppi

Maloney Interdistrict Magnet School

Principal
Elementary Vice Principal

Mrs. Diane Bakewell
Ms. Jan Phillips

Jonathan E. Reed Elementary School

Principal
Elementary Vice Principal

Mr. Erik Brown
Mr. Michael LaBagh

Frank G. Regan Elementary School

Principal

Mrs. Angela Razza

Rotella Interdistrict Magnet School

Principal
Elementary Vice Principal

Mrs. Robin Henry
Ms. Dana Wallace

Sprague Elementary School

Principal
Elementary Vice Principal

Ms. Stephanie Carpentieri
Ms. Kimberly Mays

B.W. Tinker Elementary School

Principal
Elementary Vice Principal

Mr. Ryan Sullivan
Ms. Claudia Biello

Walsh Elementary School

Principal
Elementary Vice Principal

Dr. Maureen Wilson
Mrs. Courtney Pierresaint

Washington Elementary School

Principal

Mrs. Inez Ramirez

Woodrow Wilson Elementary School

Principal
Elementary Vice Principal

Mr. Michael Theriault
Ms. Mallory Brito

Board of Education

COMMISSIONERS

Mayor Paul K. Pernerewski, Jr. - Chairman Ex-Officio

Juanita P. Hernandez - President

Elizabeth C. Brown - Vice President

Melissa Serrano-Adorno - Secretary

Anthony Ireland

LaToya R. Ireland

Jacqueline A. Jackson

Yarixa Lopez

Margaret A. O'Brien

Rocco F. Orso

Thomas Van Stone, Sr.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Dante Myers, Crosby High School (Grade 12)

Sinclair Hudson, Crosby High School (Grade 12)

Aiden Mejia, Crosby High School (Grade 11)

Vidya Sagendorf, Kennedy High School (Grade 12)

Jayden Acevedo, Kennedy High School (Grade 11)

Jayden Greenlaw, Waterbury Arts Magnet School (Grade 12)

Braelyn Mae McDougall, Waterbury Arts Magnet School (Grade 11)

Tiffany Rodriguez, Waterbury Career Academy (Grade 12)

Analyah Baez, Waterbury Career Academy (Grade 11)

Tamia Mitchell, Wilby High School (Grade 12)

Milan-Renee Tumba, Wilby High School (Grade 11)

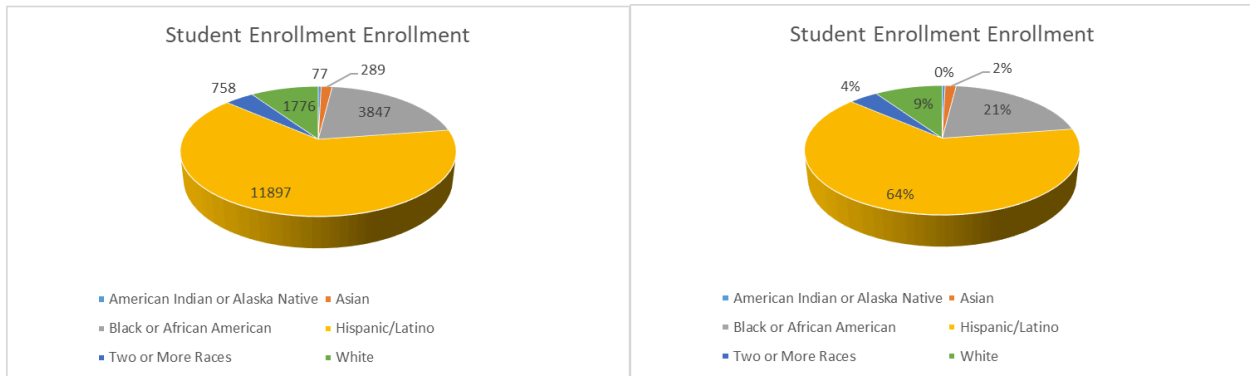
Demographics at a Glance

Students

District Student Enrollment

Total Enrollment (October 2024) **18,644**

District Student Demographics



Student Enrollment	
Ethnicity/Race	Count
American Indian or Alaska Native	77
Asian	289
Black or African American	3,847
Hispanic/Latino	11,897
Two or More Races	758
White	1,776

Enrollment Trends

School Year	Total Enrollment	Special Education	MultiLingual Learners	Pre-K
24-25	18,644	3800	3938	883
23-24	18,827	4051	3974	897
22-23	18,595	3662	3393	795
21-22	18,660	3,733	3,307	885
20-21	18,450	3,896	2,969	414
19-20	18,807	3,637	2,919	836
18-19	18,847	3,583	2,820	779
17-18	19,007	3,396	2,615	817
16-17	19,001	3,345	2,553	819
15-16	18,862	3,307	2,432	744
14-15	18,878	3,242	2,354	702
13-14	18,706	3,093	2,121	682
12-13	18,485	2,951	2,061	666
11-12	18,175	2,803	1,952	662

Instructional Staff

Administrators			
Ethnicity/Race	Male	Female	Total
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0	0
Asian	1	0	1
Black or African American	1	8	9
Hispanic/Latino	6	6	12
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0	0	0
Two or More Races	2	6	8

White	17	52	69
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Teachers			
Ethnicity/Race	Male	Female	Total
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	1	1
Asian	1	14	15
Black or African American	17	63	80
Hispanic/Latino	32	122	154
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0	0	0
Two or More Races	9	26	35
White	293	915	1208

District Improvement

Process and Overview

The strategic plan for Waterbury Public Schools served as a roadmap for continuous improvement across the district. Guided by focusing on key areas-Educating the Whole Child, Expanding Access, Choice, and Equity, Ensuring Safe and Healthy Schools, and Investing in the Future, the district made significant strides in enhancing the quality of education for all students..

- **Educating the Whole Child** - *some examples*

In Waterbury Public Schools, educating the whole child involves creating a balanced approach that addresses academic, emotional, and physical development. The district has adopted innovative strategies such as mastery-based learning and personalized plans to ensure students meet high standards. Opportunities for STEM programs, arts integration, advanced coursework, and enrichment activities expand access to high-quality learning experiences that promote curiosity and creativity.

Supporting students' social-emotional needs is central to this work. The district integrates social-emotional learning into instruction, implements restorative practices, and provides access to counseling and mental health resources. Wellness initiatives help students manage stress and

build healthy coping skills, while daily physical activity and nutritious meals contribute to overall well-being.

Finally, the district values student voice and cultural awareness as critical components of whole-child education. Students take part in advisory councils and service-learning projects which promote leadership and ownership of learning.

- **Expanding Access, Choice and Equity** - *some examples*

The district strives to provide every student with equitable access to high-quality educational opportunities, regardless of background or circumstance. Expanded programs such as advanced coursework, dual enrollment, magnet schools, and career and technical education pathways allow students to explore interests and prepare for college and careers. These opportunities give students multiple options to meet their goals while fostering engagement and motivation.

The district provides targeted supports for multilingual learners and students with disabilities to ensure that individual needs are met and barriers to success are removed. Resource allocation decisions are data-driven to guarantee fairness across schools and programs.

Family and community engagement is also prioritized to strengthen partnerships that support student achievement. Outreach efforts and language access services families have the tools and information needed to actively participate in their child's education. By expanding access and choice, the district creates a system where every student has the chance to thrive.

- **Ensuring Safe and Healthy Schools**

The district recognizes that a safe and healthy school environment is the foundation for effective teaching and learning. Comprehensive safety measures include updated security protocols, emergency preparedness plans, and ongoing facility improvements to maintain secure and welcoming campuses. Staff training ensures all personnel are equipped to respond effectively to safety concerns.

Student well-being is a core priority. The district provides access to mental health professionals, implements social-emotional learning programs, and promotes anti-bullying initiatives to create a positive climate where students feel supported and respected. These efforts foster strong relationships between students, staff, and families, which are essential for building a sense of community and trust.

In addition, partnerships with local health organizations and social service agencies provide additional resources for physical and emotional wellness. Wellness programs, counseling

services, and healthy lifestyle initiatives promote holistic health, ensuring students are ready to learn each day.

- **Investing in the Future** - *some examples*
 - *Evaluation and Professional Learning*- This year marks the district's first implementation of the new Teacher and Administrator Evaluation Plan and System using PowerSchool's Unified Talent Perform and Professional Learning platforms. This fully online system streamlines the entire evaluation process, enabling timely, consistent feedback and a greater focus on educator growth and development. By integrating seamlessly with our existing district systems, this improvement provides educational leaders with powerful tools for collecting, analyzing, and reporting evaluation data. This allows both school-based and district-level leaders to more effectively support instructional improvement through a collaborative, data-informed approach tailored to the unique needs of each campus. The transition to this modernized system reflects the district's commitment to fostering a culture of continuous professional learning and instructional excellence.
 - *Leadership Support*- CT Center for School Change - to support district instructional leaders and staff with the understanding of the Acceleration framework components

Budget and Finance Highlights



Education Budgets for FY 2025:

- General Fund Operating Budget at \$158,375,000 - Continuing to control costs and achieve a year-end budget surplus for consecutive years of a minimal budget and prepared consecutive years of minimal growth operating budget with little proposed negative effect on educational programs offered to our students.

- The General Fund Operating Budget was \$158,375,000 for Fiscal year 24-25 and has been flat funded (no increase) in past years.
- The State Funded Education Cost Sharing (ECS) total for Fiscal Year 24-25 was \$189,654,075 of which \$76,036,893 was the Alliance Grant portion to the Education Department. Also ten percent of the Alliance increase in the amount of \$706, 989 went to the Increasing Education Diversity Grant. To avoid a fiscal cliff , the State accelerated our amount of the phase-in formula for ECS in FY24-25.
- The total of State Grants for Fiscal Year 24-25 total was \$30,945,082. Other types of State Funded Grants are the 21st Century, School Safety and Security Grants, Priority School, Family Resource Center, Magnets, School Readiness, etc.
- An additional State Grant was awarded for Commissioner’s Network Schools in the amount of \$2,158,156 for three comprehensive middle schools (North End, Wallace, West Side) and for one comprehensive high school (Wilby). In this fiscal year two schools, North Middle and Wallace Middle have reached their required benchmarks in Reading & Math and will no longer be considered Turnaround Schools so this will be their last year receiving these funds.
- The total of Federal Grants for Fiscal Year 24–25 total was \$63,136,739 Some types of Entitlement Grants are IDEA, Title I, Title II, Title III, Title IV, 21st Century After School. Other federal grants include ARP ESSER carryover funds. This is the final year for the ARP ESSER funds.
- Another Federally funded grant awarded in our eighth consecutive year for a total of \$1,095,204 was the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) School Improvement Grants awarded to Opportunity Districts for three middle schools (North End, Wallace and West Side)and the three high schools (Crosby, Kennedy, Wilby) to assist student needs further.
- The Education Finance Department prides itself on receiving complete “clean” audit reports of any findings or comments for a number of consecutive years.

Operations

The Operations Departments (Technology, Facilities, Security, Food Services, Transportation, and Welcome Center) have completed and planned many projects for the 2024-2025 school year. The programs continue to focus on building from recent successes, seeking cost-effectiveness and efficiency in supporting the District's educational goals, mission, and vision. Creating and sustaining healthy, safe, cost-effective, and efficient infrastructure and support for students and

staff remain the guiding principles for the Operations Departments. Through investigation, research, and collaborative planning, many projects have been started and completed leveraging several funding sources. Working in collaboration with all other Education Departments, the Operations Departments diversified plans to continue to support the expansion of one-to-one learning initiative and engage in multiple projects designed to support the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services. A summary of the many projects and efforts by the Operations Divisions is as follows:

Computer Technology Center

Waterbury Public Schools has undertaken a series of transformative technology initiatives to modernize its infrastructure, enhance educational outcomes, and ensure fiscal sustainability. These projects, including the shift to a classroom-based Chromebook distribution model, the completion of a resilient fiber network and Wide Area Network (WAN) upgrade, the Cisco Switch Replacement Project, a comprehensive document scanning and digitization effort, and the impending renewal or amendment of the Canon copier contract, collectively position the District as a leader in technology-driven education. Supported significantly by the federal E-Rate program, which has offset up to 90% of costs for several initiatives, these efforts address immediate operational needs while laying a scalable foundation for future innovations. By optimizing resource allocation, enhancing connectivity, and streamlining administrative processes, Waterbury Public Schools is fostering an equitable, efficient, and forward-thinking educational environment that benefits students, educators, and the broader community.

Chromebook and Laptop Distribution

The District has shifted from its previous 1:1 Chromebook policy, where each student was assigned a dedicated device, to a new model where Chromebooks are assigned to schools and managed by classroom teachers. Under this updated policy, teachers are responsible for the care and maintenance of these devices, ensuring they remain undamaged and available for student use during instructional time.

Financial constraints necessitated this change, as federal and state funding for the Chromebook program has significantly decreased, and local funds are unavailable to sustain the 1:1 initiative. By transitioning to a school-based assignment model, the District aims to ensure the sustainability of the Chromebook program while continuing to provide students with access to essential technology resources.

The Technology Distribution Center on Harper Ave continues to play a pivotal role in supporting this new model. The Center efficiently manages device intake, asset tagging, and distribution, while also handling the refurbishment and repair of damaged or returned Chromebooks. The Distribution Center processed 1,500 devices, with each Chromebook replacement costing \$432. This effort has saved the district nearly \$650,000 in replacement costs. Over the past three

years, interns have repaired 9,139 devices, saving over \$3 million in replacement costs. Managing a fleet of over 30,000 Chromebooks, the Center ensures devices are available and functional for classroom use.

To support schools in tracking their Chromebook inventory, the Center provides detailed device inventory reports and conducts a bi-annual reconciliation process to ensure accurate tracking and accountability. These efforts help maintain an efficient and sustainable technology program across the District, aligning with the new classroom-based Chromebook assignment model.

Resilient Fiber Network Update

The resilient fiber network project for Waterbury Public Schools has been successfully completed, delivering a robust, high-speed internet infrastructure that is now fully operational. This network, designed for resilience and reliability, ensures uninterrupted connectivity across the district, supporting critical digital learning resources, online assessments, and advanced educational tools. With a recorded uptime of 99.95% since its launch, the network provides a stable foundation for modern education, enabling seamless access to technology-driven instruction and fostering an enriched teaching and learning environment.

The importance of this resilient network extends beyond immediate connectivity needs. It empowers Waterbury Public Schools to meet the demands of today's digital classrooms while preparing for future technological advancements, such as artificial intelligence-driven tools, virtual learning environments, and expanded cloud-based applications. This scalability ensures the district remains at the forefront of educational innovation, providing equitable access to cutting-edge resources for all students and educators.

The project's completion was made financially viable through the USAC E-Rate program, which covered 90% of the upgrade costs. This significant support alleviated the financial burden on the district, enabling reallocation of funds to other essential areas, such as student support services and curriculum enhancements. By leveraging E-Rate funding, Waterbury Public Schools has achieved a state-of-the-art, resilient technological infrastructure while maximizing cost savings.

In summary, the completed resilient fiber network strengthens Waterbury Public Schools' ability to deliver high-quality, technology-driven education. With exceptional reliability and future-ready capacity, this network ensures sustained benefits for students, teachers, and the broader district, supporting educational excellence today and for years to come.

Wide Area Network Upgrade

The Wide Area Network upgrade for Waterbury Public Schools has been successfully completed, and the new 20GBPS fiber network is now fully operational. This significant milestone ensures high-speed, reliable internet access across the district, supporting the growing demand for digital learning resources, online assessments, and other internet-based educational tools. The

enhanced network infrastructure enables students and teachers to seamlessly utilize modern technology, fostering an enriched and dynamic educational experience.

Since its activation, the fiber network has achieved an impressive uptime of 99.9%, ensuring consistent connectivity for classrooms, administrative functions, and district-wide operations. This reliability minimizes disruptions to instruction and supports the integration of advanced digital tools, such as interactive learning platforms and real-time collaboration systems, which are critical for 21st-century education.

The benefits of this upgrade extend to both present and future needs of Waterbury Public Schools. Today, the network supports equitable access to technology, enabling all students to engage with digital resources and preparing them for a technology-driven world. Looking ahead, the scalable 20GBPS infrastructure positions the district to accommodate emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and expanded cloud-based learning, ensuring long-term adaptability and innovation in education.

The project's success was bolstered by the USAC E-Rate program, which covered 90% of the upgrade costs, significantly reducing the financial burden on the district. These savings have allowed Waterbury Public Schools to redirect resources toward other critical educational priorities, such as curriculum development and student support services, while maintaining a state-of-the-art technological infrastructure.

In summary, the completed fiber network upgrade provides Waterbury Public Schools with a robust, high-speed, and reliable internet backbone. With exceptional uptime and the capacity to support both current and future educational technologies, this investment ensures a sustainable and forward-thinking digital learning environment for students and educators alike.

Cisco Switch Replacement Project Summary

The Cisco Switch Replacement Project for Waterbury Public Schools has been successfully completed at a total cost of \$1,855,604.81. The federal E-Rate program funded 90% of the project (\$1,670,044.33), with the remaining 10% (\$185,560.48) covered by the General Fund.

This comprehensive initiative modernized the district's network infrastructure by replacing outdated switches with state-of-the-art Cisco technology across all schools. The project included the removal and replacement of old equipment, configuration of new switches for advanced network features, rewiring of data closets for efficiency, and implementation of a color-coded VLAN structure to streamline network management and troubleshooting. Through meticulous planning and phased implementation, the project ensured continuity of service with minimal downtime, maintaining uninterrupted connectivity for educational operations.

The project involved the replacement of 270 Cisco network switches across 88 data closets in 33 facilities throughout the district. These switches form the backbone of the network, supporting a vast array of devices critical to educational and operational functions. The upgraded infrastructure now powers 19,000 Chromebooks, 3,500 laptops, 2,000 desktops, 1,500 Wi-Fi access points, over 1,700 school security cameras, door access systems, HVAC components, copiers, and other connected devices. This extensive scope ensures robust connectivity and performance for the district's diverse technological ecosystem.

The benefits of the upgraded network are significant and far-reaching. The new Cisco switches deliver enhanced performance, supporting the increasing demand for digital learning tools, online assessments, and other internet-based educational resources. Improved security features safeguard sensitive data and protect against cyber threats, ensuring a safe digital environment for students and staff. The network's increased reliability, with a recorded uptime of 99.9% since completion, minimizes disruptions and supports seamless classroom instruction.

Looking forward, the modernized infrastructure is scalable, enabling Waterbury Public Schools to integrate emerging technologies such as cloud-based platforms and advanced educational tools. The color-coded VLAN structure simplifies future network management, reducing maintenance costs and improving troubleshooting efficiency. By leveraging E-Rate funding, the district achieved this critical upgrade while preserving resources for other educational priorities, ensuring long-term sustainability and fostering an equitable, technology-driven learning environment for current and future students.

Document Scanning Project

The Waterbury Public Schools, in partnership with DataBank IMX, LLC, will launch a comprehensive document scanning and digitization project for Waterbury Public Schools in early fall 2025. This initiative will digitize approximately 8,013,925 images from 3,680 boxes and 125 rolls of 16mm film across key departments, including Special Education, Grants Office, City HR and Human Capital, School Business, School Inspector, Office of the Superintendent, Grant Cellar Files, and Welcome Center student files. The project, statement of Work for the Chase Building (5,998,025 images) and Welcome Center (2,015,900 images). Documents will be scanned at 300 DPI, converted into searchable PDF/A files with Optical Character Recognition (OCR), and indexed at the folder level for integration into the PageIQ Cloud Platform. With secure transportation, chain-of-custody tracking, and options for document destruction or return after 90 days, the project ensures efficiency, security, and compliance with SOC 2 and ISO 27001 standards, with 90% of the PageIQ subscription costs covered by the federal E-Rate program.

The benefits of this project are transformative for Waterbury Public Schools. The digitization of over 8 million images will enable rapid retrieval of critical records, streamlining administrative

processes for departments like Special Education and HR, where timely access is vital. The PagelQ Cloud Platform, offering 99.9% uptime and up to 2TB of storage, ensures secure, scalable access to records, supporting compliance and future integration with cloud-based technologies. By reducing reliance on physical storage, the district will lower maintenance costs and reallocate resources to educational priorities. This initiative positions Waterbury Public Schools for enhanced productivity, equitable resource access, and readiness for future technological advancements.

Copiers

The current copier contract with Canon for Waterbury Public Schools, managing 186 copiers and 230 printers, is nearing the point where it must either be amended or put out for a Request for Proposal (RFP) to ensure continued efficiency and cost-effectiveness. Over the past five years, the district has produced over 100 million copies, highlighting the critical need for a robust copier leasing program and print management solution. The forthcoming contract, whether through amendment or a new RFP, will enhance operational efficiency by providing visibility into all documents produced, controlling output costs, implementing “Follow Me Printing” rules to streamline access, and conducting printer output analysis to optimize resource use. Additionally, the initiative aims to eliminate local printers, further reducing costs and aligning with the district’s goals of fiscal responsibility and modernized print management.

Food Services

The 2024-2025 school year proved to be a tough and challenging year for the Food Service Department. The Commissioner’s Network schedule has continued to have a negative impact on the participation rates. This schedule demonstrated that when students are in school the participation increases significantly. Each Commissioner’s Network day directly results in 1,000 less meals being served on those days and approximately 40,000 less meals served in a year. These numbers suggest that approximately 2,000 less meals were being served on those days. These statistics account for a significant reduction in the reimbursement received on those days and amount of future entitlement dollars that are allocated in future years, but we are not able to see a significant reduction in costs. This also raises the question of what are these 1,000 students doing for meals on these days? We also had 3 unexpected major equipment replacements. West Side Middle School, Wilson Elementary School and Wilby High School all needed completely new freezers after failures of older systems. The Department was also plagued by higher than expected inflation that directly affected our food, supply and repair costs. These factors lead us to operate at a deficit of over \$400,000. This deficit will be covered by a fund balance which is in excess of \$2.5 million.

This year also had many successes. We have seen an increase in our daily average meals served of approximately 100 breakfasts and 500 lunches. This is a direct correlation to the surveys conducted and tracking of daily participation that allowed us to pivot our meal planning to fall in line with the preferences of the student population. Our Central Kitchen continues to grow its capabilities and offerings and remains a valued addition to our organization. We have begun offering salad bars at piloted locations: Gilmartin Elementary School, Waterbury Arts Magnet School, Kennedy High School and North End Middle School. This has allowed students to be more involved in the selection of healthy options for their lunch meals. We look forward to increasing this program where space and demand allow. For schools that do not have the space for a full salad bar we are continuing to supply freshly made salads from our Central Kitchen so that all students can begin developing healthy eating habits.

Looking forward to 2025-2026 we hope to continue to see an increase in the number of students participating in the various programs. During our most recent bidding cycle we have seen new vendors showing interest in supplying our program. This has shown a significant reduction in the cost of food and supply costs. We will also be receiving an increase in our reimbursement and entitlement money that is allocated for the City. These factors along with menu adjustments will allow us to replenish funds that have been used from the fund balance account and ensure continued success and achievement of the goal of providing nutritious meals in a professional, clean and safe environment.

Welcome Center

Family and Community Engagement continues to engage in the fourth year of its partnership with Capitol Region Education Council (CREC) under the Connecticut Family School Partnerships (CFSP).

The Welcome Center was designed to support families by creating a welcoming and supportive environment that fosters strong relationships between families and the school community. At the Waterbury Welcome Center, families can access a variety of services, including student registration, McKinney-Vento support, transportation assistance, records requests, and language assessments. All services are conveniently located in one central location. During the 2024–2025 school year, the Welcome Center served a total of 2,203 individuals.

School Parent Liaisons play a vital role in empowering parents to become active participants in their children's education by creating and implementing innovative programs that support learning at home. Initiatives such as math nights, literacy nights, community meeting days, newsletters, and courageous conversations have been well-received by families. These efforts

foster engagement, strengthen relationships, promote meaningful connections, and provide valuable support to both families and school staff.

The Registration Office successfully processed and enrolled a total of 1,940 students in grades K–8 and 579 students in grades 9–12 for the 2024–2025 academic year. Of the students enrolled in grades K–8, 140 students were placed in a bilingual program and 239 students were identified as requiring special education services.

Transportation

Waterbury Public Schools had over 18,760 students enrolled last year. The Education Department transported 15,336 Regular Education students over 125 routes with 125 propane powered buses in the 2024-2025 school year. All Regular Education buses are equipped with a total of three interior and exterior recording cameras with audio. The camera systems have been updated this year and an additional exterior camera located near the Stop Sign has been installed on every bus reducing the potential for hitting children while boarding and disembarking. Buses are also equipped with the Bus Tracker G.P.S. system for parents and staff to see the location of their student’s bus while en route to the bus stop or school, and a child safety check mechanism to ensure sleeping children aren’t missed at the end of the route.

Special Education buses transported 1,983 of the nearly 3,000 registered Special Education students with a combination of 60 diesel or gasoline powered buses on 60 routes within Waterbury. All Special Education students are met at their home for ease of pick-up and drop-off with door-to-door service.

The Education Department is also mandated by the State of Connecticut to transport Waterbury residents to State, private and parochial schools, these include Alpha & Omega, Brass City Charter, Catholic Academy, Children’s Community, Holy Cross, Kaynor Technical, Mount Carmel, Southington Vocational-Agricultural and three Yeshiva schools. State, private and parochial students totaled 2,079 for the 2024-2025 school year.

Facilities and Construction

Waterbury Public Schools is committed to providing safe, effective and enjoyable learning environments to all students, parents and the community. The 2024-2025 school year was a great year for Facilities and Construction projects. Our focus was on safety, comfort, efficiency, aesthetics and the major initiatives completed across our schools. This past school year brought a comprehensive array of ongoing projects across our district, encompassing real estate, capital improvements, and initiatives. The upcoming period of 2025-2026 will continue this trend of incredible upgrades provided to all schools. Here is an overview by content areas and schools:

Heating and Cooling Centers with Electrical Upgrades

- Installation of centers at thirteen elementary schools.
- Improved climate control, enhancing comfort, and air quality.
- Electrical service improvements for HVAC reliability for safety and energy efficiency, and future HVAC upgrade readiness.

HVAC Replacements

- **Duggan Elementary School:** Complete HVAC system replaced to improve air quality and energy efficiency, and continuing to phase out out-of-date refrigerant and phase-in lower GWP (global warming potential) alternatives with R-454B and R-32.
- **Gilmartin Elementary School:** Full replacement of HVAC system, incorporating BMS (Building Management System) controls for enhanced reliability and performance.
- **State Street School:** Removal of outdated and no longer repairable Venmar ventilation with a Daikin DOAS (dedicated outdoor air system) upgraded to improve performance and reliability.

HVAC System Reliability Enhancements

- **West Side Middle School:** Full chiller and cooling tower overhaul to ensure reliability, energy efficiency and optimal condenser water temperature.

Major HVAC Projects – High Schools

- **Crosby High School:** New cooling towers, pit overhaul, BMS (Building Management System) controls, and replacement of multiple air handling units including the gymnasium were completed. A new HVAC system was added to support the newly created weight room.
- **Kennedy High School:** Original systems were replaced adding cooling to the auditorium, cafeteria, media center and previous daycare area. Installation of new pool HVAC system making the facility swim-meet ready. Building-wide installation of 43 exhaust fans.
- **Wilby High School:** Upgrades included redundant 400-ton chiller system upgrade, new pool HVAC unit installation, and refurbished bleachers. Replacement of air handling unit and exhaust fans replacements.

Gymnasium Floors, Moisture Barriers and Bleachers

- **Tinker Elementary School Gymnasium Floor & Bleachers:** Old rubber flooring removed, slab sealed (moisture barrier) and leveled, new gym floor installed and refurbished bleachers with new poly surfaces and black frame paint.
- **Washington Elementary School Cafeteria/Gymnasium:** Water intrusion resolved and easy-to-maintain LVT (Luxury Vinyl Tile) flooring installed to ensure safety and versatility in dual-use space.

Gymnasium Floor Maintenance

- Restoration across several schools with polyurethane coating applied to improve durability, appearance and traction for enhanced playability.

Flooring Projects

- **Rotella Magnet School:** New Barn Oak LVT (Luxury Vinyl Tile) installed in main and conference offices to enhance aesthetics and functionality.
- **Carrington Elementary School:** Removal of old playground base material and replaced with new Pre-K playground surfacing and additional landscaping creating a safer and more inviting playground.

District-Wide Painting Initiative

- Interior and exterior surfaces refreshed learning environments, improved aesthetics and surface protection.
- Elementary schools were prioritized.

Roof Replacements

- New roofs installed at Kennedy High School, Sprague and Tinker Elementary Schools.
- Leaks resolved, insulation improved, extended life of facilities (30 year minimum), providing safer and more energy-efficient learning environments.

Electrical and Infrastructure

- **Regan Elementary School:** New electrical service installation increasing capacity and supporting future upgrades.
- **Wilson Elementary School:** Demolished outdated, unhealthy, and unsafe portables, reclaiming space for safer student use.

Specialized Learning Spaces

- **Wallace Middle School:** New, modern, professional-grade culinary learning space created offering students hands-on cooking and nutrition education.
- **Wallace Middle School:** Added new sound absorption barriers throughout the newly renovated Music Room along with new carpeting.
- **Crosby High School:** Renovated physical fitness room featuring updated equipment and improved layout promoting health and wellness for students.

West Side Middle School Upgrades

- **Music Room:** Broadloom carpet was replaced with new Barn Oak LVT (Luxury Vinyl Tile) flooring and green broadloom carpet matching the school colors, enhancing acoustics, improving durability and ease of cleaning.
- **Main Office:** Updated carpeting and LVT flooring creating a welcoming and professional environment.
- **Auditorium:** Barn Oak LVT flooring installed to boost aesthetics, improve safety and simplify maintenance.

District-Wide Initiatives and Additional Accomplishments

- **Bunker Hill Library:** Refurbished existing shelves and added new.
- **Crosby High School Library:** Reconfigured space.

- **Chase Elementary School:** New bathroom.
- **Wilby High and Wallace Middle/Crosby High Schools:** Updated student lounges.
- **Enlightenment:** Created a Teacher’s Lounge with table, chairs, refrigerator and microwave oven.
- **Carrington Elementary School Gym:** Repairs and waterproofing to stop water intrusion.
- **Waterbury Arts Magnet School Apron Stage:** New theatrical lighting installed.
- **Waterbury Arts Magnet School Catwalk:** New emergency lighting installed.
- **Rotella Magnet School:** Modern hot water tank installed ensuring clean water for Food Service operations.
- **Rotella and Maloney Magnet Schools:** New gutters installed.
- **Generali Elementary School:** Heating pipe insulation installed underground to prevent heat intrusion into SPED classrooms.
- **Generali & Regan Elementary Schools:** New exhaust fans installed.
- **Wilby High School Music Suite and Band Room:** New carpeting installed, including practice rooms.
- **Kennedy High School Pool:** New pool pumps and sand replacement installed.
- **Wilby High School Pool:** Sand replacement, painting, new pump installed, bleacher refinishing, and power transformer replacement.
- **New Kitchen Classrooms:** Five new cooking classrooms at Crosby and Wilby High Schools, and Wallace Middle School.
- **Roof Repairs:** Addressed leaks at elementary schools and Crosby High School.
- **Waterbury Career Academy:** Old gym controls removed and new system installed.
- **State Street Program:** Overhaul of Daikin HVAC unit
- **Driggs Elementary School Classrooms:** Ceiling replacement (removed old plaster/lath and installed new sheetrock and lights).
- **Carrington Elementary School:** New fire monitoring system First school taken off the digitizer.
- **District-Wide:** Full deployment of face recognition time clocks at all schools and Harper Avenue (Supply).
- **District-Wide:** On-going chemical water treatment plan for all schools.
- **District-Wide:** Extensive asphalt patching at school parking lots.
- **District-Wide:** Major painting at the majority of schools.

Upcoming Projects 2025-2026

- Crosby High School and Wallace Middle School Roof Replacement.
- Driggs and Wilson Elementary Schools Elevator Additions.
- Driggs and Washington Elementary Schools Paving.
- Alarm Monitoring at All Schools.
- Fire Panel Upgrades.
- IdentiMetrics implementation.
- CLEAR ID Confirm.
- Replace Partial Sewer Line to Driggs.
- West Side Middle School HVAC Upgrade Phase II.

- Kennedy High School Pool Deck Support System.
- Man-Trap Doors at Driggs and Wilson.
- Main Entrance Flooring at Driggs and Washington.
- Enlightenment Intercom installation.
- Indoor Air Quality Survey – State Mandated.
- Municipal Stadium: Install 4 Cameras for Added Safety and Security at Football Games.

Safety and Security

Safety and Security focused primarily on the following projects while assisting school administrators with immediate safety and security issues, bus matters, traffic problems at arrival and dismissal, various types of investigations, fire and safety drills as well as any risk management inquiries.

1. School Security Grant Round 6 continues into 2025-26 School Year. Several cameras were added this school year and by the start of the 2025-26 school year our current district-wide camera infrastructure count will total over 3,000 operational cameras. This is a substantial upgrade from the approximate 800 operational cameras in place district-wide three years ago. All school cameras are monitored daily and connected to the Real Time Crime Center (RTCC).
2. MUTALINK is fully operational in all Waterbury Public Schools. This allows for immediate emergency notifications as well as interoperability between schools and emergency services.
3. Critical Response Group (CRG) mapping of all school properties. CRG provides First Responders with accurate mapping (diagram) of school facilities including athletic fields on Fire and Police CAD (Computer-Aided Design software) systems to support their responses to emergencies.
4. The Automated External Defibrillator (AED). All district gyms, pools and offices now have defibrillators and complete monitoring coverage. Units are monitored by the Safety and Security Office via a web application which provides instant notification of defibrillator activation. The application also monitors the battery power and electrode pad life of each defibrillator.
5. HALO Vape Detection Systems are installed at high and middle school buildings. Installation of these units provide school administrators the ability to reduce vaping and other similar activities in their schools including remote areas of the building.
6. The installation of the Lockdown System has been completed at all schools. The system secures doors in an immediate shutdown and alerts neighboring school buildings and all pertinent personnel. Notification to district and building staff of all emergencies utilizing EVERBRIDGE.

7. Fire, lockdown, shelter-in-place and evacuation drills and Safety Minutes are submitted monthly by all schools to the Safety and Security Office where they are tracked. Each school's fire drills are logged and submitted to the State of Connecticut by June 30 every year. All Hazards Plan for the district submitted annually to the DESPP.
8. Daily assistance of ongoing safety and security needs is provided to all schools including support for camera, access and radio issues.
9. Police and Fire access capabilities have been revamped and updated for these City departments.
10. Over 70 outside security doors have been replaced in cooperation with the School Inspectors Office over the last two years at various school locations.

Human Capital

Juan Mendoza, Assistant Superintendent of Human Capital

Highlights

In the fiscal year 2024-2025, the Human Capital Office supervised the recruitment, selection, and appointment of **one hundred and fifty (150) highly qualified teachers** and **thirteen (13) administrators**. The Human Capital Office worked tirelessly to staff our 33 educational sites and the supporting locations that may have been impacted through the year by resignations, retirements, non-renewals, or movement due to promotion to higher positions. The average salary level for new teachers was **\$68,556** and **\$127,424** for administrators. These salary placements were within budgetary allocations. Each salary placement is made in collaboration with Human Capital partners in the School Business Office, Superintendent's Office and Academic Office. The average teacher salaries were higher than the previous school year (2023-2024) and the average administrator salaries were also higher than the previous school year.

The district did see an **increase** in the number of requests for employee paid sick time during the 2024-2025 school year compared to the previous year. Also, the number of FMLA related approved leaves rose in 2024-2025. Approved FMLA leaves counted **347** based on a variety of potential qualifying reasons which is a **1.44% increase** from the previous year.

Under the direction of the Superintendent, the Human Capital Office undertook and/or subsequently completed **eighty-two (82)** employee relations inquiries. The varied inquiries

resulted in select coaching opportunities, referral opportunities for specific training, and/or disciplinary action in accord with applicable collective bargaining agreements.

In accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements, the Human Capital Office received and properly processed various grievances. A grievance is filed when a respective bargaining unit, on behalf of its member, believes the disciplinary action taken by the district was not in accord with the collective bargaining agreement or that proper procedures of the collective bargaining agreement were not followed. A grievance can also be filed if a specific element or language of a collective bargaining unit is claimed by the unit to have not been followed by the district. An example of such a grievance could be a dispute regarding duty periods, lost prep periods and/or other contractual language. The number of grievances for 2024-2025 totaled ten **(10)** which was a three **(3)** grievance **decrease** from the previous year. In addition to collective bargaining agreement based grievances, the Human Capital Office in collaboration with the District's and City's legal counsel received and processed **seven (7)** CHRO and **seven (7)** EEOC complaints this year.

In the 2024-2025 academic year, **WTA** filed **eight (8)** grievances on behalf of its nearly 1200 members. Of those eight grievances, five (5) were settled by mutually beneficial agreements after informal discussions or preliminary contractual presentations and two grievances (2) progressed through the contractual process to the Board of Education's Grievance Committee. The Board subsequently denied those two grievances and they were both ultimately settled or withdrawn prior to any further actions or discussion before the State Labor Board. One WTA (1) grievance remains potentially outstanding largely based on a timing matter. Similarly, **SAW** filed only **two (2)** grievances for the 2024-2025 academic year on behalf of its nearly 125+ members with one (1) withdrawn and one (1) outstanding based on a summer break timing matter.

WPS New Teachers

Our district is committed to supporting teacher success through ongoing mentorship. All newly hired teachers were assigned a **TEAM** mentor, even though not required by state statute. This support extended to teachers hired under DSAP permits, ensuring they received mentorship and opportunities for reflection, regardless of certification status.

In addition, new teachers participated in a comprehensive New Teacher Orientation designed to familiarize them with district policies and procedures—from attendance expectations to appropriate social media use. Collaborating with the Academic Office, Director of College & Career Readiness, and Director of Pupil Services, the orientation emphasized effective instructional practices, professional responsibilities, classroom management, multilingual learner support, and special education procedures.

To help staff understand the communities they serve, the two-day orientation included our annual citywide bus tour, culminating at the Mattatuck Museum. This experience provided cultural and

historical context essential for fostering student relationships and building positive classroom rapport.

To support the well-being and success of all new teachers, we provided a midyear and end-of-year check-in to ensure ongoing guidance, address challenges, and celebrate progress. In addition, we collaborated with the United Way and Copper Beech Institute to offer Mindfulness training and professional development sessions in January and May, focusing on stress management, self-care, and building resilience in the classroom. These sessions were designed to equip new teachers with tools to sustain their well-being throughout the school year. A midyear survey was also distributed to gather feedback and gauge the overall pulse of the new teacher experience, allowing us to adjust supports and respond to emerging needs in a timely and meaningful way. We are deeply committed to the success of our new teachers by fostering a supportive, responsive, and nurturing environment that empowers them to thrive professionally.

New Teacher Retention

Our goal is to maintain a high new teacher retention rate, and recent data reflects strong progress toward this objective, with 137 out of 150 WPS New Teachers (91.3%) retained, highlighting the district's strong commitment to supporting early-career educators. Among teachers of color, the retention rate was similarly high, with 39 out of 43 (90.6%) remaining in their roles. This success is attributed to a multifaceted support system that includes effective and relevant professional development opportunities, a comprehensive new teacher orientation, and targeted midyear check-ins. Additionally, initiatives such as mindfulness training and structured mentorship have played a critical role in fostering a supportive and resilient teaching environment, contributing to the overall retention of new educators.

Advertising

The Human Capital Department continues to develop targeted recruitment initiatives to enhance both the quality and number of effective educators in our district. We use a variety of strategies to attract, support, and retain a diverse, high-performing workforce. From July 2024 through May 2025, our talent team participated in 15 in-person and virtual career fairs hosted by colleges and universities, the Connecticut State Department of Education, and community organizations—creating valuable networking opportunities with potential candidates and partners.

Beyond career fairs, we leverage multiple platforms to expand our reach, including CT REAP, CSEES, Handshake, Indeed, Frontline, K12 Job Spot, HBCU Careers, and EdWeek-TopSchoolJobs. Job postings are also shared through targeted email blasts to over 60 community partners. Strategic outreach campaigns have been sent to certified educators in high-need areas across the state, featuring district highlight videos and QR codes linking directly

to our application portal. Visually engaging flyers designed in Canva are also shared via our social media channels, including Facebook and Twitter.

With the conclusion of ESSER funding and reductions to Title I, Title II, and Alliance program support, the need for innovative and cost-effective recruitment strategies has become critical. Key takeaways from recent professional development events—including the Quinnipiac Educator Diversity Symposium, CAFE's Diversifying the Educator Workforce event, the WestEd/CSDE Certification Webinar, and the National Teacher Apprenticeship Conference—emphasize the importance of aligning recruitment with retention.

As a result, we have shifted away from broad, high-cost advertising methods in favor of strengthening our Grow Your Own (GYO) initiatives. These programs invest in current non-certified staff who are deeply rooted in the community and demonstrate strong long-term commitment—making GYO a proven strategy for both recruiting and retaining educators.

Educator Preparation Partnerships (EPP) & Grow Your Own (GYO) Initiatives

We have developed strategic partnerships with 15 Educator Preparation Programs and Grow Your Own (GYO) initiatives as a key recruitment and retention strategy. Our partners include the University of Connecticut, University of Bridgeport, University of Hartford, University of St. Joseph, CCSU, ECSU, SCSU, WCSU, Grand Canyon University, CT State Community College Naugatuck, the State of Connecticut ARC Program, CT Teacher Residency Program, WPS Teacher Apprenticeship Program, NextGen Educator Program, and the Central Inspire Teacher Residency Program.

To date, we have hosted 29 aspiring educators across a range of certification areas through these programs. Additionally, 54 WPS high school students participated in the EdRising program. The chart below provides an overview of 2024–2025 placements across our Grow Your Own (GYO) programs and Educator Preparation Programs, detailing certification areas and the number of student teachers, residents, and apprentices placed in our district.

2024–2025 Placement of Student Teachers, Residents, and Apprentices		
GYO Program	Certification Areas	Number of Participants
CT Teacher Residency	Elementary	3
WPS Teacher Apprenticeship	Art (1), Elementary (2), Social Studies (1)	4
NextGen Educator	World Language Spanish	1
Central Inspire Teacher Residency	Special Education	1

Educator Preparation Program	Certification Areas	Number of Participants
UCONN Teacher Residency	Biology (1), Special Education (3)	4
ARC	Business, World Language Italian	2
CCSU Student Teaching	Dance, Elementary, Social Studies	3
ECSU Student Teaching	Elementary	2
Grand Canyon Student Teaching	Elementary, Special Education	2
USJ	Special Education	1
WCSU Student Teaching	Music	1
SCSU Student Teaching	Biology (1), Social Studies (1), Special Education (1), Speech & Language Pathologist (3)	6
	Total	30

We are dedicated to supporting aspiring educators at every stage of their journey, whether high school students exploring the profession through EdRising, or adult learners, including paraprofessionals and career changers, advancing through residency and alternative certification programs. We also continue to partner with TEACH Connecticut to provide personalized, accessible pathways to certification for students, paraeducators, and community members.

Teacher Apprenticeship

We are pleased to announce that our district now has two registered teacher apprenticeships with the Connecticut Department of Labor. Last year, we became one of the first districts in the state to launch a Teacher Apprenticeship program for CCSU students. This year, in collaboration with the CSDE and CTDOL, we expanded the program to include CT Teacher Residency Program (CT TRP) candidates. These registered apprenticeships position us to access additional workforce grant funding, further strengthening our support for aspiring educators.

Increasing Educator Diversity

With a diverse student body of over 18,000, we are committed to recruiting, hiring, developing, and retaining a racially, ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse group of highly effective educators to prepare students to succeed and transform their world.

We continue to refine systems that foster the development and retention of diverse educators who support students' academic, social, and emotional growth.

In compliance with Public Act 23-167 Section 10, established by the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), we implemented our Increasing Educator Diversity (IED) Plan this school year. Below is a summary of our progress toward our three strategic goals:

Recruitment Goal: Increase the percentage of multilingual educators and teachers of color entering our Grow Your Own (GYO) programs by 10% annually.

- Educators of color in GYO programs increased from 50% last year to 62% this year, a 12% gain that exceeded our goal.
- Multilingual participants decreased from 38% to 23%, a 15% decline that fell short of our goal

We will strengthen recruitment by engaging non-certified staff (e.g. paraprofessionals, classroom assistants, and substitutes) along with community members and former WPS students. We will also host virtual sessions with our partners to expand outreach.

Hiring Goal: Maintain a minimum 25% hiring rate for multilingual educators and teachers of color annually.

- 28% of new hires were teachers of color, meeting the target.
- 18% were multilingual (27 of 150), below the target.
- New hires are fluent in Albanian, French, German, Greek, Italian, Latin, Mandarin Chinese, Polish, Portuguese, Sign Language, Sinhala, and Spanish.

We will continue to align our hiring practices with equity-centered best practices to attract and select diverse talent.

Retention Goal: Retain 95% of multilingual educators and teachers of color annually.

- Retention was 90.6% for teachers of color and 93% for multilingual educators, just short of our goal.

We will continue to build equitable school and district cultures and expand leadership and career growth opportunities to ensure educators feel valued, supported, and safe.

Waterbury U

To support professional growth and career advancement, we continue to offer *Waterbury U*, a micro-credential program for WPS educators. This initiative provides job-embedded professional learning aligned with current best practices, helping educators enhance instruction and improve student outcomes—ultimately strengthening teacher retention.

To date, 412 courses have been completed and 25 WPS educators have earned a Master’s Degree in Curriculum & Instruction through the program, including 14 graduates in May 2025. Funded by ESSER, *Waterbury U* is set to conclude in Spring 2026, with the upcoming year marking its final phase.

2024-2025 Teacher Hires by Subject Area

School/Dept.	Grade/Subject	Number of New Teachers
Elementary	Art	3
Elementary	Bilingual	4
Elementary	English Second Language	1
Elementary	Grades Pre-K Through 5	23
Elementary	Health & Physical Education	2
Elementary	Library Media Specialist	2
Elementary	Literacy Facilitator	1
Elementary	Music	3
Elementary	School Counselor	2
Elementary	School Psychologist	2
Elementary	School Social Worker	2
Elementary	Special Education	22
Elementary	Speech Language Pathologist	3
High School	Allied Health	1
High School	Business	1
High School	English Language Arts	3

High School	English Second Language	1
High School	Family Consumer Science	1
High School	Health & Physical Education	5
High School	Math	5
High School	School Counselor	1
High School	School Social Worker	1
High School	School Psychologist	1
High School	Science	7
High School	Social Studies	5
High School	Special Education	2
High School	Technology Education	4
High School	World Language (Spanish)	3
Middle School	Art	1
Middle School	Bilingual Math	1
Middle School	Computer & Business	1
Middle School	English Language Arts	13
Middle School	Family & Consumer Science	1
Middle School	Health & Physical Education	1
Middle School	Literacy Facilitator	1
Middle School	Math	3
Middle School	School Social Worker	1
Middle School	Science	2
Middle School	Social Studies	3
Middle School	Special Education	9
Middle School	Technology Education	2
	Total	150

Teachers Hired with Durational Shortage Area Permits (DSAP)

In certain circumstances, the Connecticut Department of Education, Bureau of Teacher Certification will issue temporary teaching certificates in subject areas where a school district is experiencing a shortage of suitably certified candidates, or due to Priority District need. To qualify for a DSAP the applicant must have completed: (1) minimally, a bachelor’s degree from a regionally-accredited higher education institution is required and 12 semester hours of credit must be completed in the area to be taught, (2) enrollment in an approved preparation program as required and the ED 177 Application is required, when an approved program of preparation is required to obtain the actual certificate, (3) for teachers adding the endorsement, the ED 177 Application is not required, unless an approved program is required to add the cross-endorsement. DSAP candidates must pass the Praxis II in their content area if required by the program.

For 2024-2025, twenty-eight (28) new teachers were hired through DSAP with the State of Connecticut. This represented 18.6% of all new teachers hired in 2024-2025. DSAP teachers were hired in the content areas listed below. There are nine additional pending DSAPS certification in process.

Certification Area	Number of DSAPs
Art	1
English Language Arts	2
English Second Language	1
Family & Consumer Science	1
Health & Physical Education	1
Math	2
School Psychologist	1
Science	2
Special Education	14
Technology Education	3
Total	28

Northeastern Reciprocity

To remain competitive amid the ongoing national teacher shortage, Waterbury Public Schools is continually enhancing its recruitment and retention strategies to attract high-quality, diverse educators. One key approach is leveraging the Connecticut State Department of Education’s Enhanced Educator Certification Reciprocity Policy for the Northeastern Region. This streamlined process has enabled us to hire 10 certified educators from MA, NH, NY, SC, and VA across areas such as Bilingual, Early Childhood, Elementary, ELA, PE/Health, and Special Education.

Relevant Salary Data for Teachers Hired During 2024-2025

The average starting salary for teachers hired during 2024-2025 was \$68,556. This was determined by years of experience and content/shortage area. Those in shortage areas negotiated/demanded higher steps. The budgeted salary for new teachers was within budget.

Education Level of Teachers Hired During 2024-2025

Degree Held	Number of New Teachers
Sub Pending certifications	5
Bachelors	51
Masters	55
6 th Year	36
Doctorate	3
Total	150

Teacher & Administrative Hires by Race/Ethnicity During 2024-2025

Race/Ethnicity	Number of Teacher New Hires	Number of Admin New Hires
Asian	2	0
American Indian	0	0
Hispanic	18	3
Black/African American	15	1
Two or More	7	0

White/Caucasian	108	9
Total	150	13

Approximately **28%** of all new hires during 2024-2025 were diverse staff of color.

Teacher Resignations/Teacher Deceased During 2024-2025

Total Resignations: 89

This is a decrease of **62** staff resignations from the previous year 2023-2024. Exit Surveys are sent out to every teacher upon resignation. The Human Capital Office reviews the results of the exit surveys to identify any trends or areas of need to address as another retention strategy.

Deceased: 2

Teacher Retirements/Non-Renewals During 2024-2025

Total Retirements: 33

Non-Renewals: 0

Administrator Hiring/Promotions/Lateral Transfers 2024-2025

Nine (9) administrative vacancies occurred for 2024-2025 as a result of retirements, resignations, transfers, promotions, and expansion positions. Administrative vacancies were filled with qualified staff and 30.77% were diverse staff of color.

Overall, we recognize the essential role Human Capital plays in enhancing our school system and supporting our students' success. We are committed to continuing our vital efforts in recruiting and retaining high-quality educators for the students of Waterbury Public Schools.

Academic Department

Career and Technical Education

- Academies & Career Pathways
 - [CTE Academies and Career Pathways](#)
- Developed and Designed
 - 5,914 YouScience content-specific, industry standards-based exams completed

- 3,014 YouScience exams met proficiency score
 - 52% of exams completed met proficiency
 - 569% increase since 20/21 school year
- 357 students earned CTE Work Ready Graduation Cord. (192 previous school year)
 - Increase of 86% from previous school year
- New partnership with UConn Waterbury Robotics Institute
 - First Robotics Competition teams utilized dedicated practice space for collaboration and competition practice.
 - Conducted high school robotics exhibition event with middle school students in attendance
- All 5 high schools participated in 2025 First Robotics Competition season Wilby, Kennedy, WCA, WAMS, Crosby
 - Wallace participated in First Lego League
- New CTE course 24-25 school year
 - High Schools - Game Design and Development 3
- Curriculum writing
 - Software Development 1,2, Business and Computers, Culinary 4, Game Design and Development 1,2,3, Drone Technology, Drone Operator Prep, Engineering Design Project, Engineering Milestones, Foundations of Health, Medical Terminology, Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA), Introduction to Allied Health Professions, Robotics and Automation
- Professional Learning
 - Future of Education Technology Conference (FETC)
 - South by Southwest EDU Conference
 - 3D Printing Training
 - Artificial Intelligence
 - Introduction to Next Gen Personal Finance
 - CT Workspace Business and Culinary Workshops

- King Arthur Baking Company
- Pax East
- Teaching and Learning with Technology Conference
- AHA BLS/CPR Instructor Training

Reading and English/Language Arts

- Curriculum Development
 - Elementary:
 - Implemented six Common Core State Standards and SmarterBalanced-aligned lessons for each grade three through five for a total of 18 lessons.
 - Implemented a protocol for guiding students in grades three to five through SmarterBalanced Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) aligned to the new lessons.
 - Implemented Benchmark Education K-5 core program.
 - Implemented Enhanced Core Reading (ECRI) for supporting foundational skills in K-2 to increase practice and word reading.
 - Secondary:
 - Expanded Literacy Coaching: Hired three new Literacy Facilitators, forming a team of six (with one position still to be filled) to support instructional coaching across twelve secondary schools.
 - Curriculum Launch: Rolled out *myPerspectives 2025* in middle and high school English, establishing a unified, rigorous curriculum designed to support diverse learners and promote instructional coherence across grades 6–12.
 - Targeted Literacy Interventions: Piloted *iLit20* and *iLit45* in middle schools to enhance reading support—*iLit20* for Tier 1 classroom instruction and *iLit45* for students requiring consistent Tier 2 intervention.
 - Assessment Alignment: Implemented new assessments aligned to the adopted curriculum to better monitor student progress and inform instruction.

- Innovative Teaching Strategies: Began training teachers in *Building Thinking Classrooms* strategies, focusing on small-group problem-solving using vertical, non-permanent surfaces to foster collaboration and deeper thinking.
 - K–8 Teacher Collaboration: Initiated monthly collaboration sessions for Grades 6–8 English teachers in K–8 schools, providing peer support and professional learning opportunities for teachers without in-building grade-level colleagues.
- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)
 - Elementary: Implemented a process for Data-based Individualization (DBI) for K-5 students receiving Tier III reading support including goal setting and action planning.
 - Monthly caseload reviews were conducted collaboratively with the reading staff and special education teachers.
- Professional Learning on:
 - K-5: Benchmark Education overview and deeper dive
 - K-5: Writing
 - K-5 Reading Staff: Language Comprehension
 - Secondary:
 - Curriculum Implementation with SAVVAS
 - Expanding Reading Comprehension
 - Building Thinking Classrooms

Mathematics

- Curriculum and Instruction
 - Integrated the *Building Thinking Classrooms* framework into the Tier 1 Math Instruction block. (K-8)
 - Conducted Monthly Math Tier II Small-Group Walkthroughs in collaboration with building administrators and assistant superintendents to monitor the implementation process. (K-5)/(6-12)

- Aligned Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) to the *i-Ready® Classroom Mathematics* units. (3-5)
 - Implemented four IABS during the course of the school year. (3-5)/(6-8)
 - Maintained the use of *i-Ready® Classroom Mathematics* as a blended learning core curriculum. (K-5)
 - Continued Tier I and Tier II Small Group Instruction as part of the daily Math Block. (K-5)
 - Continued implementing our core learning curriculum of *HMH Into Math*. (6-8)
 - Teachers implemented three to four IABs during the school year. (6-8)
 - Using *HMH Into Math* resources, a pacing guide for Accelerated Math grades 6 & 7 was implemented with success. (6-8)
 - Implementation of the new core high school math curriculum, *Savvas: enVision* and *Demana*, was implemented in Atlas. (9-12)
 - Began the implementation of our core learning curriculum of *Savvas: enVision* and *Demana*. (9-12)
 - Teacher feedback was given regarding the curriculum implementation for each topic taught, and adjustments were made and continue to be made. (9-12)
 - Midterms and finals were edited at the district level for Algebra 1, Geometry, Algebra 2, Trigonometry & Statistics, and Pre-Calculus to reflect the changes in the curriculum. (9-12)
 - Following the dissolution of contracts with Curriculum Associates and HMH, a Request for Proposal (RFP) was issued for K–8 Mathematics, resulting in the selection of *Curriculum Associates* as the provider for all Grades K–8.
- Additional Supports
 - 530 Club ran successfully at the five high schools (9-12)
 - MFA monthly meetings continued with the previous cohort. This program is designed to increase building and department leadership amongst the participating math teachers (6-12)
- Professional Learning
 - *An Introduction to Building Thinking Classrooms* (K-8 and Elementary District STEM Coaches)
 - *Building Thinking Classrooms: Non-Curricular and Curricular Tasks* (Elementary District STEM Coaches)
 - *i-Ready® Classroom Mathematics* New Teacher Virtual Training Sessions (K-5)
 - Performance Matters (6-12)
 - Building Thinking Classrooms (6-12)
 - Smarter-Balanced with IAB implementation success plan and data analysis (6-8)
 - *Savvas: enVision* and *Demana* program implementation training (9-12)
 - *Savvas: enVision* and *Demana* effective use of the digital path training (9-12)
 - Growth Mindset (6-12)

- i-Ready[®] *Classroom Mathematics Diagnostic* and *My Path* training (6-8)
- i-Ready[®] *Classroom Mathematics Data Analysis* training (6-8)

Science

- Elementary Science
 - The elementary science team—comprised of STEM coaches and the science supervisor—has completed the development of a phenomenon-based, NGSS-aligned science curriculum for grades K–3. This curriculum is designed to spark curiosity, promote inquiry-driven learning, and intentionally align with the three science units embedded in each grade level's K–3 ELA curriculum. To support this work, a curriculum review team was formed, consisting of elementary teachers from across the district representing each grade level. This team met during two half-day sessions to provide thoughtful, actionable feedback for refinement.
 - We are grateful for our continued partnership with Flanders Nature Center, which provided all grade 2 students with a live-streamed Fall session on animals and their habitats and a Spring field trip, made possible through grant-funded transportation, where students conducted field studies in forest and pond ecosystems. Additionally, through our partnership with STARBASE, 5th-grade students at seven schools participated in 25 hours of STEM-focused, hands-on learning, fully funded by the U.S. military. While STARBASE programming was temporarily suspended from February 7 to April 20, we look forward to extending the opportunity to schools not served this year during the upcoming school year.
 - In June, STEM coaches participated in two full days of professional learning focused on the OpenSciEd science curriculum for grades 4 and 5. This in-depth training equipped them with the knowledge and tools needed to support classroom implementation. The coaches will use what they learned to guide and assist grade 4 and 5 teachers at Bucks Hill and Chase elementary schools, who will be piloting the OpenSciEd curriculum during the 2025–26 school year.
- Secondary Science
 - Human Biology and Environmental Science curricula have been further refined and by the end of the summer will be fully integrated into the ATLAS curriculum management system. With their completion, all district science courses K-12 are now available in ATLAS and include comprehensive pacing guides, assessments, and alignment to the district's Portrait of a Graduate competencies.
 - Grade 6 science teachers at Duggan, Waterbury Arts Magnet School (WAMS), and Wallace Middle School will pilot the OpenSciEd science curriculum during the

2026–27 school year. In preparation, Jaimie Farrell, Science Department Chair at WAMS, will attend a week-long OpenSciEd Facilitator Training in Massachusetts this August. This training will build local capacity to support high-quality, three-dimensional science instruction aligned with the NGSS and position Ms. Farrell as a leader in the district’s science curriculum implementation efforts.

- The MFA Fellowship successfully concluded its fourth and final year. Throughout the year, the Fellows participated in a two-day summer institute and a series of monthly collaborative sessions focused on evaluating and refining three-dimensional, NGSS-aligned science assessments. As teacher leaders, the Fellows played a key role in deepening instructional practices by analyzing student work, calibrating scoring, and promoting the use of phenomenon-based assessment tools. Their expertise and leadership were instrumental in planning and delivering professional learning to their colleagues during the December districtwide PD day, where they facilitated sessions focused on strengthening assessment literacy aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards.
- District-wide PD days for grades K-12
 - Throughout the year, a range of professional learning opportunities were offered to support elementary and secondary science educators in strengthening instructional practice and deepening content knowledge. In August, K-3 teachers received professional learning on the first unit of study of the new curriculum, while grades 4 and 5 teachers explored the alignment between the HMH Science Dimensions program and the new ELA Benchmark Advance curriculum. Secondary teachers participated in our annual Chemical Safety Training to ensure safe and compliant lab practices. October's session focused on hands-on, curriculum-based activities tailored to content areas, followed by a collaborative data dive into Beginning of Year (BOY) benchmark data to guide instructional planning. On December 4, educators explored the alignment between our CREC-designed curriculum and OpenSciEd, and calibrated the grading of CER (Claim-Evidence-Reasoning) responses within their PLCs. In the afternoon, teachers selected from two targeted choice blocks: Block 1 offered sessions on Universal Design for Learning in the Science Classroom or Strengthening Scientific Reasoning; Block 2 provided a choice between 3-Dimensional Assessments (middle or high school-specific led by the MFA Fellows) or strategies to strengthen scientific literacy through a 3-dimensional approach.

Preschool

- Programmatic Initiatives
 - The OEC and community partners assessed over 90 students for Early Entry to Kindergarten for the 2025-2026 school year

- Collaborated with the Departments of Chief Academic Office and Special Education to develop curriculum and assessment programming for part day learning
- Bucks Hill Pre-k at the Annex and Roberto Clemente Dual Language International School were awarded a five year term of NAEYC Accreditation for excellence
- Continued development of educator understanding of Response to Intervention for preschool students in district and community settings
- Collaborated with the CT Office of Early Childhood for seamless transition from Priority School Readiness programming to the new Early Start CT 2025-2027 program for young children
- Curriculum
 - Monthly preschool observations and specific feedback to staff with directed focus on curriculum implementation with fidelity
 - Analyzed program growth through pre and post testing using the Speed DIAL 4 and Teaching Strategies Gold digital assessment resource
 - Monitored all classrooms for overall program and student growth by analyzing student day across three marking periods
 - Continued implementation of UCONN social emotional program for young learners, Feel Your Best Self
- Professional Development
 - Brain Development and the Effect of Trauma on Young Children
 - Appreciative Inquiry: Strategies to Increase Math, Literacy and Social Emotional Outcomes
 - Creative Curriculum On-site coaching for curriculum implementation
 - Unpacking NAEYC Standards for Increased Teacher and Student Outcomes
- Parent Engagement
 - 100 school and community site families participated in Pre-School Family Nights
 - Attended evening and weekend events sponsored by Bridge to Success and Early Care Program to promote early learning and CT Sparkler at City Wide Events

- Registered over 700 students into the WPS Pre-K program through on site registration fairs in the community, PowerSchool Platform and in-person meeting
- Provided administrative support to Family Resource Centers located at Wilson and Reed Schools.
- Increased capacity for before school programming, play group attendance, and parent involvement through improved Family Resource Center activities

Multilingual Learners

- Highlights
 - The 5-year EL cohort graduation rate for 2024 (most recently released data) for Waterbury Public Schools' ELs is **8.1 percentage points higher than the state average for the same population**. Additionally, Connecticut's graduation gap between ELs and non-ELs is 17 percentage points, but Waterbury's is only
 - **256** Students earned the Seal of Biliteracy in 16 different languages, which is **78** more students than last year.
 - **188** students met the Connecticut English Mastery Standard, which is **29** more students than last year.
- Seal of Biliteracy

The Connecticut State Seal of Biliteracy was established to recognize public high school graduates who have attained a level of proficiency in English and one or more languages. It recognizes the value of students' academic efforts, the tangible benefits of being bilingual and biliterate and prepares students to be 21st-century global citizens in a multicultural, multilingual world. The Seal of Biliteracy acknowledges that mastery of two or more languages is a valuable asset for both individuals and their communities. It also provides recognition to English learners for the great value of developing English and maintaining their primary language.

- **256** Seals of Biliteracy were awarded to 16 different languages to the 2025 graduating class
- **15** students earned the seal in two languages
- **1** student earned the seal in three languages
- **145** ML students (63.9%) were **proficient in both** English and another language.
- **127** students (55.9%) of the Seal recipients have been identified as **English Learners** (ELs). Among those 127 ELs, **45** students (35.4%) have met the exit criteria for English language proficiency.

- Seals were earned in the following languages: There was an increase of 8 new languages for this school year.
 - Albanian, Bangla, **Bengali**, **French**, **German**, Guyanese Creole, Haitian Creole, **Hindi**, Italian, Jamaican Patois, **Kichwa**, Portuguese, **Punjabi**, Spanish, **Urdu**, and **Yoruba**.

The district has concluded the first year of implementation of Benchmark Adelante, Express at the K-5 schools, and myPerspective for Middle and Highschool.

- K-5 Benchmark Adelante: This program supports the Bilingual Students, which is a core language arts program that provides a cohesive structure for the development of literacy skills and content knowledge. Aligned with Science of Reading research. Benchmark Adelante is the spanish version of the framework. This is a Tier 1 Instruction program.
- K-5 Benchmark Express: This program supports ESL students, which builds language, boost confidence and ensure readiness. This program supports attaining need-to-know basics and fundamental English, meaningful integration of culture and primary language, and structures for engaging students in academic conversations. This is a supplemental material used by ESL teachers in K-5 schools for pull out services.
- myPerspectives is a Middle and high school online core one instruction program for language arts curriculum that places students at the center of learning, brings students in with relevant and engaging content, it is scaffolded for all learners, provides teachers with tools and resources, research-based guidance, and autonomy to support each unique learner. This program is used by ESL/Bilingual shelter teachers.

We have worked on identifying supplemental material that will support newcomers and other multilingual learners.

- Benchmark Hello! This program's main purpose is to support students with 0-10 months of multilingual services in 3-5 grade. It combines survival skills, English language development, and social-emotional learning. It supports students gaining the experience, proficiency, and confidence to propel their language learning. This is a supplemental material used by ESL teachers providing services to 3-5 grade students during pull out services.
- iLit ELL for Middle and Highschool: ESL beginner and intermediate classes. This program's main purpose is to accelerate the receptive and expressive language skills of all secondary English Learners, from newcomers to experienced multilingual learners. Instruction focuses around rigorous and relevant grade-level

anchor text. It has first language support, and embedded SIOP practice teaching strategies. This is a supplemental material, The program is used by the ESL/bilingual shelter teachers.

- Palabras a su paso/Words Their Way is a word study instruction program to develop students phonics, spelling and vocabulary skills based on their developmental or instructional level. This is a supplemental program used by ESL/Bilingual shelter teachers to support Spanish speakers newcomers (0-10 months of ML services) build foundational skills in Spanish, so they can transfer them when using Words Their Way
- English Language Proficiency Assessments
 - Administered the LAS Links and CAAELP assessments to students in K-12
 - Worked collaboratively with the Supervisor of Research, Development, and Student Testing, the appointed English Language Assessment Coordinator (ELAC) for the district, who worked with Special Education Supervisors, building principals, and teachers to ensure EL/SPED dually-identified students received the appropriate designated accommodations on the LAS Links
 - 188 students met the Exit Criteria for English Mastery Standard
- Teacher Recruitment and Retention
 - Recruited, developed and supported teacher candidates as they meet certification requirements for hire in the shortage area of Bilingual Education for the current school year
 - ARCTELL: Utilized Title III and Title I funding to support **5** teachers in completing requirements for Bilingual Education/TESOL cross-endorsement certification
- Immigrant Children and Youth
 - The overall number of immigrant students increased from **1,308** in June 2024 to **1371** in June 2025, indicating a potential growth.
 - **41** Immigrant Students earned the Seal of Biliteracy, this is an increase of 10 from the previous year.
 - Increased the number of scholarships about which information was sent to families of High School students from **190** during the 2023-2024 SY to **220** during the 2023-2024 SY
 - **131** Immigrant students enrolled in the Spanish for Native Speakers courses. Twenty-five immigrant students took AP classes and received AP study books to

help them prepare for the AP exam, which represents an increase of 15 students compared to last year

- In April 2025, we organized and led a trip for students from three high schools (Crosby, Kennedy, and Wilby) to the Connecticut State Community College-Naugatuck Valley. The trip included campus tours and information sessions, giving students firsthand experience of college life and valuable insights into their future educational paths.
- The number of immigrant students who met the Connecticut Mastery Standard/Exit Criteria for English Proficiency increased from **17** in 2024 to **23** in 2025.
- Parent Empowerment/Community Partnerships
 - Collaborated with various community organizations and Institutions of Higher Learning to provide parent empowerment workshops designed to engage parents in their children's education, as well as to connect them with community resources. To facilitate attendance, most workshops were held virtually
 - Community Partners
 - Hispanic Coalition of Greater Waterbury
 - NVCC
 - Workshop Topics
 - Immigration resources
 - College application/admissions process
- Professional Learning
 - Ongoing professional development provided on topics of:
 - Biliteracy/Dual Language Instruction
 - Oracy instructional practices for ESL instruction
 - Scaffolds and Supports to Make Content Accessible: Language Arts
 - Initial iLit ELL instructional practices and program implementation

Physical Education/Health

- Notable Highlights:

- July 2024 to June 2025 - Collaborated with the CSDE Performance Office, the Supervisor of Technology for Teaching and Learning and the Supervisor of Research, Development and Testing to upgrade and refine our reporting protocols for the 2025 Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessment (CPFA) individual student reporting requirement
- June 2025 – Finalized CPFA (Fitness Testing) results indicate that WPS achieved a 98.7% participation rate and a 42.2% passing rate district-wide. This represents a 5.0% increase in the participation rate, and a 1.7% decrease in the cohort of grade 4, 6, 8, 9 and 10 students meeting or exceeding the health fitness level standards on all four (4) assessment items
- July 2024 to August 2025 - ongoing revision, updating and transfer of curricula for Elementary Health, Elementary Physical Education, Middle School Health and Middle School Physical Education into the Atlas Curriculum Platform
 - Revision and uploading of the High School Health and Physical Education curriculum into Atlas has also been ongoing. All four required courses are complete
- July 2024 to June 2025 - Continuous upgrading of all health and physical education instructional equipment and supplies at all 32 schools
- For the fifth (5th) consecutive year, WPS was awarded the Everfi Empowered District Seal recognition, largely due to the embedded online resources in our secondary Health Education curriculum and our adoption of skills-based elements within delivery of instruction
- Staff Professional Development
 - August 22, 2024
 - Unwrapping the new Physical Education Standards K-12, presented by Elementary PE, Middle School PE, Middle School Health and High School Health & PE curriculum writing committee members
 - Movement Identity and Whole Child approach to Health and Physical Education by Dr. Dean Kreillars, University of Manitoba, Canada
 - 'Instructional Coherence in Health & Physical Education PK-12', presented by Joe Gorman
 - October 2nd, 2024
 - Effectively embeddding Social and Emotional Learning in Elementary Physical Education classes with Amanda Amtmanis
 - Teaching Aerobic and Latin Dance with Naida Rodriguez-Rosado: structured to enhance instructor skills for teaching dance forms with students.

- POLAR FIT training with Brett Lato - HS Heart Rate monitoring initiative
 - High School Fitness Center Maintenance and troubleshooting
 - Overview of Mastery Based Credit Initiative and staff input on planning for Health & PE portfolios with Joe Gorman
 - December 4, 2024
 - QPR suicide prevention training with Western CT Prevention Coalition
 - Connecting to Care Connecticut and AIM presented by Jules Calabro
 - Secondary formative and summative PE Assessment Strategies with Joe Gorman, providing guidance on how to assess national grade level performance standards that drive Health and PE instruction in grades K-12
 - Introduced the newly upgraded CPFA Reporting Template with Dr. Michelle Eckler and Joe Gorman
 - Elementary, Middle and High School Physical Education dynamic instructional strategies for student success presented by PE Palooza / Dave Senecal
 - November 2024 - Lifeguard certification / re-certifications with secondary teaching staff at Crosby, Wilby, Kennedy, North End, West Side and Wallace
 - August 2024 to June 2025 - Conducted performance evaluations in EdReflect of first/second year Health and Physical Education teachers assigned at all levels throughout the district
- Curriculum Work:
 - August 2024 to June 2025 - Supervised the following curriculum writing committees tasked with continued refinement of Health and Physical Education curricula and their transfer into the Atlas Curriculum platform:
 - Elementary Physical Education Gr. K-5
 - Elementary School Skills-Based Health Education Gr. K-5
 - Middle School Physical Education Gr. 6-8
 - Middle School Skills-Based Health Education Gr. 6-8
 - High School Skills-Based Health Education Gr. 9-12
 - High School Health and Physical Education Gr. 9-12
 - National grade-level performance standards successfully embedded in all unit and lesson plans in Health and Physical Education instruction PK-12

- SEL crosswalks embedded in Health and Physical Education in all model unit and lesson plans at all levels
- Collaborated with HS Principals, Academic Office Supervisors and CTC to continually update the district-wide High School Program of Studies
- Collaborated with the CSDE Performance Office, the Supervisor of Technology for Teaching and Learning and the Supervisor of Research, Development and Testing to upgrade our reporting platform for CT Physical Fitness Assessment individual student performance reporting
- School Support Activities:
 - Partnered with the Connecticut Association of Schools and collaborated with elementary principals to launch the first-ever Elementary Unified Sports program in city history. The participating schools in this inaugural year were Gilmartin, Reed, Chase and Washington Schools, and the program was implemented at zero cost to the district
 - Collaborated with the HS athletic directors to facilitate the second season of High School Intra-district Boys' Volleyball. By all accounts, the first two seasons of Boys' Volleyball have been an enormous success
 - Collaborated with the athletic directors to launch a partial second season of High School Intra-district Girls' Soccer in May 2025. Due to lack of an available coach at Crosby, only Kennedy, Career and Wilby were able to field teams in 2024-2025; participation rates have not met expectations for the second consecutive year
 - Leveraged Title IV funding to acquire large/durable Physical Education instructional equipment and re-supply item upgrades at all 32 schools
 - Coordinated the "Save a Life Tour" distracted driving prevention program for all high schools at zero cost to the district
 - Coordinated the Lions' Club International KidSight program, which partners with our school nurses to conduct hi-tech vision screening and referral of children in grades PK-5 at zero cost to the district
 - Coordinated the 26th annual First Tee of Ct in-school Golf Clinics in all K-5, PK-8 and middle schools at zero cost to the district
 - Helped coordinate the "SmileBuilders" dental screening program (at zero cost to the district) for all WPS students PK-12

- Continued collaboration with the School Inspector’s Office and the Athletic Directors to plan and help implement a facilities repair/restoration management plan for all school campus fields and athletic facilities

Social Studies

- This year, the Social Studies department focused on aligning instruction to new state standards and enhancing civic learning opportunities across middle and high school levels.

Implementation of New Connecticut Social Studies Standards

- The newly adopted Connecticut State Social Studies Standards were shared with all middle and high school teachers.
- Teachers were organized into grade-level and content-specific groups to: analyze the new standards in depth, begin aligning their first instructional unit to reflect the updated expectations, and collaboratively plan with a focus on inquiry, civic reasoning, and disciplinary thinking.

National History Day (NHD) Professional Learning

- Teachers participated in PD focused on integrating NHD into the curriculum.
 - A review of each NHD project category (exhibit, paper, website, performance, and documentary).
 - Hands-on opportunities to view student work samples and project examples. Discussions on how to scaffold project development and support student research, analysis, and presentation skills.

Debate Strategies PD with the Connecticut Democracy Center

- Focused training on teaching effective debate techniques that promote civil, evidence-based discourse. Also on how to structure debates within their classroom content, guide students in preparing arguments using primary and secondary sources, and encourage respectful disagreement and the exchange of ideas.

Civic Knowledge and Engagement PD with We the People Organization

- Professional learning sessions aimed at enhancing student understanding of constitutional principles and civic responsibility.
- Teachers explored strategies for: engaging students in constitutional discussions, stimulating congressional hearings and civic role play, promoting active citizenship and community connections.

Civil Discourse PD with the Bill of Rights Institute

- This training centered on fostering respectful classroom discussions around complex and controversial issues.
- Teachers received tools and resources for: guiding students through productive, respectful conversations, balancing differing viewpoints while maintaining academic rigor, creating safe spaces for open dialogue in the classroom.

Smarter Balanced/SAT Questioning Techniques

- Teachers were trained in developing and analyzing assessment items aligned to Smarter Balanced and SAT frameworks, writing stimulus-based questions that require higher-order thinking, embedding literacy and argumentation skills into content assessments, and using data from formative and summative assessments to inform instruction.

Celebrating Student Civic Leadership: Connecticut's Kid Governor

- Waterbury's own Keudy Martinez, a 5th grader from Chase Elementary School, was elected as the 2024–2025 Connecticut Kid Governor. His platform, "Speaking Up for Safe and Happy Schools," reflects a strong commitment to student voice, well-being, and creating inclusive school communities.

Research & Testing

- Conducted, analyzed, and disseminated data for the Kindergarten Inventory, mCLASS, Smarter Balanced, Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), PSAT, SAT, Advanced Placement, LAS Links, and Next Generation Accountability model
- Served as the district English Language Assessment Coordinator (ELAC) and completed all tasks for the administration of the LAS Links and CAAELP assessments to multilingual learners (ML) in absence of Bilingual Department Supervisor
- Reviewed, advised, and approved multiple doctoral candidate research projects from current employees to be conducted in the district
- Prepared and presented a comprehensive voluntary staff training on standardized testing accommodations at the beginning of the school year, ensuring students receive timely and appropriate supports well in advance of spring testing deadlines
- Conducted a detailed statistical analysis on the effectiveness of WPS summer school in mitigating the "summer slide" for elementary school students, using mCLASS and iReady data

- Analyzed and quantified the impact of chronic absenteeism on standardized test scores (Smarter Balanced, NGSS, and CT-SAT) by grade and school
- Computed ***unadjusted*** (true) Percentage of Target Achieved (PTA) results for Smarter Balanced, LAS Links, and PSAT/SAT by student, school, and grade by lifting the CSDE artificially imposed caps of 0% and 110% to provide more accurate student growth insights to stakeholders
- Disseminated prior-year individual student test data electronically for incoming students before school opening, allowing educators to target instruction and improve outcomes from day one
- Compared all schools on key accountability indicators (achievement, growth, and chronic absenteeism) to department “Post-Covid” targets based on 2020-2021 post-pandemic data, in addition to state ESSA benchmarks based on 2016-2017 pre-pandemic data
- Provided weekly FAFSA status updates
- Determined Waterbury Promise student eligibility after each marking period
- Submitted all grades 4, 6, 8, 9, and 10 student and subtest physical fitness assessment results to CSDE in the Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessment portal
- Compiled data for multiple projects, grant submissions, and agreements (Alliance, Commissioner’s Network, Gear Up, etc.)
- Worked with the Special Education department to monitor and correct inaccurate test accommodations and supports selected in student IEPs and 504 plans in CT-SEDS, ensuring accurate accommodations for students prior to state testing
- Partnered with the Information Technology department to monitor and align district and state student information systems to maintain the highest level of data integrity for state reporting
- Served as one of only two district representatives on the CSDE Connecticut Cohort Verification System (CCVS) planning team for graduation rate reporting and calculations
- Participated as a member of the CSDE Connecticut Comprehensive Assessment Advisory Committee
- Participated as a member of the CSDE Connecticut Accountability Advisory Committee
- Served on the National Smarter Balanced Performance and Practice Committee (nominated by CSDE)

Technology for Teaching and Learning and Library/Media

Professional Learning

- Understanding the Atlas Curriculum Management System (District-Wide) - Throughout the Year
- Mastery-Based Learning for Teachers - October 2024
- AI and College-Readiness (Librarians) - October 2024
- Creating Questions and Assessments in Performance Matters for Teachers - October 2024
- Google Educator Training and Refresher Course - Fall 2024
- Mastery-Based Credit Panelist Training - November 2024
- Understanding Performance Matters Data for Admins - January 2024
- AI in Education for Teachers (BRISK Tutorial) - May 2025
- LanSchool Training for Teachers - April 2025

Projects and Accomplishments

- All Library/Media Specialists completed the Future Reading Librarianship course through ISTE and are now certified Future Ready Librarians
- Continued to manage our district's Atlas Curriculum Management platform, including launching the [parent/community site](#).
- Managed all Ed Tech programs within the district via Clever.
- Worked with CTC and Corp Counsel to develop a system for approval and listing of all approved educational technology within the district.
- Maintained the School Improvement Plans for the district and supported the addition of School Climate Committees
- Leading the introduction of Educational AI, with an AI plan and platform testing for the future rollout.
- Served on the Mastery-Based Learning leadership team to develop the ongoing assessment plan.

- Managed the data for the Mastery-Based Learning credit and ran meetings of the Lead Panelists.
- Managed all data as well as the Performance Matters platform.
- Maintained and updated the [High School Program of Studies](#)
- Continued to support Google Certification for staff.
- Supported the technology side of the implementation of Unified Talent Perform for evaluations.
- Served on the PDEC Committee and helped to develop the new Educator and Leader Evaluation Plans.
- Supported the setup and organization of the new Professional Learning platform.
- Worked collaboratively with the Health and Physical Education department to manage the data collection process for state testing.
- Worked collaboratively with the Research and Testing department to provide more accurate and up-to-date rosters for state testing reporting.
- ISTE Certified Educator, ISTE Community Leader, ISTE Bronze Level Community Service Member, ISTE Expert Webinar Presenter, ISTE Live 24 Playground Coordinator

Special Education

Introduction

Waterbury Public Schools are committed to providing high-quality education to all students, including those with diverse learning needs. This annual report highlights the work and achievements of the Special Education Department over the previous academic year. Our mission is to ensure that all students receive the support and resources they need to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

Overview of Special Education Services

The Special Education Department provides a range of services to meet the needs of students with disabilities. Our services include:

- Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)
- 504 Plans
- Speech and language therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Physical therapy
- Counseling services

- Specialized classroom instruction
- Assistive technology support

Key Accomplishments

This year, the Special Education Department focused on the following:

- **Increased Mainstreaming Opportunities:** Expanded inclusive education practices, integrating students with disabilities into general education classrooms.
- **Technology Integration:** Implemented new assistive technologies, including communication devices and learning software.
- **Professional Development:** Conducted workshops for staff on best practices in special education, focusing on supporting the needs of the diverse learner, SUPPORT (De-escalation), Prevent-Teach-Reinforce/ Functional-Behavioral-Assessments and Behavioral Intervention Plans, and Transition Assessments.
- **SEPTO:** Initiated a Special Education Parent-Teacher-Organization partnership.

Staff and Professional Development

This year, the department focused on professional development in the following areas:

- Differentiated Instruction: Strategies for teaching students with diverse learning needs.
- Behavioral Interventions: Techniques for managing challenging behaviors in the classroom.
- Assistive Technology: Training on the latest tools and resources.

Future Goals

Looking ahead, the Special Education Department aims to:

- **Additional Self-Contained Placements:** Further opportunities for additional students to receive the support they need within the classroom.
- **Expand Inclusive Practices:** Further integrate students with disabilities into general education settings.
- **Enhance Professional Development:** Offer more targeted training for staff.
- Strengthen Family Partnerships: Increase opportunities for parent and community involvement.
- **Improve Transition Services:** Enhance support for students transitioning from school to post-secondary opportunities.
- **Oversight and Accountability:** Ensure all students in specialized programs, including out-of-district placements, are in settings most conducive to learning and are systematically monitored.

Acknowledgements

We extend our gratitude to the students, families, staff, and community members who contributed to the success of the Special Education Department this year. Your dedication and support are invaluable.

College and Career Readiness

Waterbury Public Schools is committed to providing equitable access to all students to achieve the skills needed to be college, career, and life-ready. All Waterbury Public Schools students have the opportunity to explore, engage, and experience career pathways, earn college credit, and participate in job shadow/internship programs. The district is committed to preparing and empowering all students to reach their individual, full potential that promotes social-emotional growth, academic achievement, and college/career readiness.

The mission of the school counselors of Waterbury Public Schools is to empower all students to reach their full potential and to be productive life-long learners. Therefore, the mission of the school counselors of Waterbury Public Schools is to empower all students to reach their full potential and to be productive life-long learners.

Direct Student Services

Direct student services are provided by our school counselors while working directly with students. This face to face time includes individual student planning, delivering the school counseling curriculum, and responsive services. These services are data driven and meant to help promote healthy development, a positive attitude toward work and learning and help students achieve success in school as well as effectively identify post-secondary choices. Direct services can be proactive and reactive.

Individual Student Planning

Session results in the development of a Student Success Plan for each student that is focused on career/education/social-emotional goals and postsecondary options. The plan is revised and modified annually throughout the student's school career beginning in middle school and continuing throughout high school.

School Counseling Curriculum

Classroom Lessons: School counselors, in collaboration with teachers, deliver a learning activity or unit in the classroom. The curriculum provides developmental and sequential lessons and activities in classroom and/or group settings, which address student development in academic, career and social-emotional domains. Lessons are approximately 45 minutes in length.

Small Groups: Counselors conduct groups outside the classroom to respond to students' identified interests or needs. School counselors plan and lead structured activities that are

designed to increase the skills and knowledge of student participants. Small groups will be developed by analyzing data from classroom lessons, as well as student feedback, and collaboration with staff and families. Groups may also be formed as a need arises.

School-wide Events and Activities: Designed to reinforce the concepts being taught in the classroom by school counselors. Collaborations within and outside the school community are used to address specific information relevant to students and families.

Responsive Services

School counselors are trained and prepared to react to a crisis or immediate need experienced by a student or school community. School counselors provide supportive individual and group counseling, referral, collaboration, and consultation to help students and families overcome academic, personal-family, and socio-emotional barriers to healthy development. (CT Comprehensive K-12 School Counseling Framework Guide, November 2020)

Indirect Student Services

Indirect student services are provided by our school counselors on behalf of students. School counselors take a team approach when working on behalf of students. As part of this team approach, consultation with staff, administration, and families in regards to the challenges and barriers that students face, is an important part of our school counseling framework.

Through collaboration within the school and with outside agencies, school counselors develop programming as part of the comprehensive school counseling framework that fits the needs of students, parents and community members. Collaboration also allows for the school counseling department to make connections with outside agencies to provide students and parents with a number of resources that are available to them to help with issues that are not otherwise within the scope of the school day. School counselors often become a point of contact for families within the school. By providing referrals, families can connect with needed services not only within the school system but outside in the community as well. (CT Comprehensive K-12 School Counseling Framework Guide, November 2020).

Overview:

- **Staff Professional Learning**
 - Internet Safety
 - Section 504 Plans
 - Mindlgnite career training
 - Job Corps
 - Junior Achievement
 - Analyzing student interest inventories(Naviance)

- **Curriculum and Instruction**
 - School counselors continue to revise and implement the WPS School Counseling Curriculum. The student lessons are aligned with the 2020 Connecticut School Counseling Standards and are based on what students should be able to understand, know, and be able to do in the academic, career, and social-emotional domains.
 - College and Career fairs (K-12) at individual schools
 - MindIgnite (K-8)
 - College field trips
 - Career readiness field trips
 - Educators Rising
 - Imagine Learning credit recovery

- **Parent workshops**
 - School Counselors organized FAFSA events, College Planning Night, and coffee with school counselors

- **Student Internships opportunities**
 - St. Mary's Hospital
 - Waterbury Hospital
 - McCall Behavioral Health
 - City of Waterbury/Waterbury Public Schools partnership

- **After-school partnerships for students**
 - NRWIB/MASC (Manufacturing Alliance Service Group)
 - UCONN Health Mini Medical Program
 - Wealth Generation - Financial Literacy

- **Partnerships**
 - UCONN Waterbury - WISHFest
 - Waterbury Promise
 - CT State (GEAR UP/Upward Bound)
 - Taft - Global Leadership Institute

Recognitions, Awards, and Honors

2025 Excellence in Education Award Winners



2025 Building Level Teachers of the Year (Elementary)

Bucks Hill Preschool- Rebecca Lewis

Bucks Hill Elementary School- Anne Marie Fortuna

Bunker Hill Elementary School- Amber Barbieri

B.W. Tinker Elementary School- Maura Bemer

Carrington Elementary School- Marissa Rosa

Driggs Elementary School- Carmen Rijos*

F.J. Kingsbury Elementary School- Christine Capaldo

Frank G. Regan Elementary School- Katilynn Scarpati

Gilmartin Elementary School- Elaine O. Cieslewski

Hopeville Elementary School- Rachel Bette

H.S. Chase Elementary School- Shipe Mamudi

John Duggan Elementary School- Rachel Donahue

Jonathan E. Reed Elementary School- Katherine Nazario-Ugalde

Maloney Interdistrict Magnet School- Patience Fiore*

M.M. Generali Elementary School- Bridgette Sodano

Roberto Clemente International Dual Language School- Nanichi Rodriguez Velez*

Rotella Interdistrict Magnet School- Carla Cruess*

Sprague Elementary School- Jessica O'Connor

Walsh Elementary School- Timothy Riccio

Washington Elementary School- Jennifer DeMatteis

Wendell L. Cross Elementary School- Heather Balanda

Woodrow Wilson Elementary School- Kelly Fengler

2025 Building Level Teachers of the Year (Secondary)

Crosby High School- Julie Jannetty*

Enlightenment School- Cynthia Hernandez-Santiago

John F. Kennedy High School- Karen Anton

North End Middle School- Adriana Terenzi

State Street Program- Lauren Nocera

Wallace Middle School- Julio E. Bosques

Waterbury Arts Magnet School- Kristin Munch Winstanley

Waterbury Career Academy High School- Kendra O'Brien

West Side Middle School- Kritzia LaRose

Wilby High School- Eric Brummitt

**WPS Teacher of the Year Finalists*

2025 Paraprofessionals of the Year

Elementary Paraprofessional of the Year- Sandra Eldredge, B.W. Tinker Elementary School

Middle School Paraprofessional of the Year- Julie E. Austin, West Side Middle School

High School Paraprofessional of the Year- Ann Cianciolo, Wilby High School

2025 Support Staff of the Year

School Secretary- Jessica DeJesus, Sprague Elementary School

2025 Central Office Staff of the Year

School Inspector- Michal Konopka

2025 Administrator of the Year

Principal- Jackie Gilmore, North End Middle School

2025 Waterbury Public Schools Teacher of the Year



Ms. Nanichi Rodriguez Velez, Grade 3 Spanish Teacher at Roberto Clemente International Dual Language School, was named the 2025 WPS Teacher of the Year.

Ms. Rodriguez Velez creates an inclusive, engaging classroom focused on biliteracy, cultural relevance, and differentiated instruction, ensuring all students feel valued and supported. She advocates for biliteracy, seeing proficiency in both English and Spanish as key to academic success and global opportunity. Ms.

Rodriguez Velez inspires growth by fostering strong relationships, promoting a growth mindset, and using innovative methods like project-based learning and instructional technology.

As a teacher leader, she drives school-wide cultural initiatives, such as bilingual theater productions and community events, strengthening student confidence and connections between school and the community. Ms. Rodriguez Velez is a TEAM-trained mentor and supports fellow educators by sharing resources and building a collaborative professional community. With her positivity, creativity, and commitment, she uplifts the entire school environment, inspiring students, staff, and the greater community.

Ms. Rodriguez Velez will be considered for the title of Connecticut Teacher of the Year, which is traditionally announced in the fall.

Superintendent Student Recognition Awards

Each year, the Superintendent honors a select group of 5th, 8th and 12th graders from across the district who have demonstrated academic excellence, integrity, leadership and a commitment to their community. The recipients of the Superintendent Student Recognition Award for the 2024-2025 school year are:

Elementary

Bucks Hill Elementary School- Amy Milla-Perez

Bunker Hill Elementary School- Kael Sanchez-Mendoza

B.W. Tinker Elementary School- Viana Gizzie

Carrington Elementary School- Brayden Riley & Marvin Fernandez

Driggs Elementary School- Amina Brown

F.J. Kingsbury Elementary School- Dean Stroud-Raffile

Frank G. Regan Elementary School- Dylan Martinez

Gilmartin Elementary School- Dylan Ernest & Ashley Cuenca

Hopeville Elementary School- Eurick Lopes-DePina

Roberto Clemente International Dual Language School- Makenzie Robinson

H.S. Chase Elementary School- Arianna Little

John Duggan Elementary School- Jaylah Cruz & Kianna Carter

Jonathan E. Reed Elementary School- Alexander Fraticelli & Emely Valencia

Maloney Interdistrict Magnet School- Obianuju Nwadukwe

M.M. Generali Elementary School- Luna Lewis

Rotella Interdistrict Magnet School- Desiray Maysonet

Sprague Elementary School- Ava Santos

Walsh Elementary School- Arieckx Ramos-Negron

Washington Elementary School- Nelma Raghunandan

Wendell L. Cross Elementary School- Christina Cross & Rion Shuki

Woodrow Wilson Elementary School- Naomi Lopez

Secondary

Crosby High School- Lenizveth Rivera-Agosto & Lerizbeth Rivera-Agosto

Crosby High School-Early College High- Jaidalynn Alicea

Enlightenment School- Aaliyah Johnson

John F. Kennedy High School- Kaylyn Rivera

North End Middle School- Jensel Marti

State Street Program- Brady Hartford

Wallace Middle School- Jeremy Maldonado

Wallace Middle School-Academic Academy- Leigh Llewelyn & Darrion Boyle

Waterbury Adult Continuing Education- Sara Pereira

Waterbury Arts Magnet School- Chalsie Bhadrasain & John Rush

Waterbury Career Academy High School- Randy Ramdin

West Side Middle School- Violet Watkins-Daniels

Wilby High School- Andrea Garcia



Respectfully Submitted,

Dr. Darren M. Schwartz

Interim Superintendent of Schools

August 2025

