

TIGER TRIBUNE

Waterloo Central School District

ALL STUDENTS. ALL STAFF. ONE FAMILY.

A Message From The Superintendent:

DEAR WATERLOO FAMILIES

With the holidays approaching and the school year well underway, now is as good a time as any to share how grateful I am to be superintendent of schools at Waterloo Central School District. The 2025-26 school year is off to a great start, with excitement in all of our buildings and within our district departments.

Engagement is one of the most important metrics when it comes to the success of a school district. Beyond students engaging with their studies and interests, staff and community engagement is essential to positive outcomes during the school year. Thankfully, we are off to an excellent start on this front.

We continue to see positive data regarding student attendance. Community participation in fall events such as homecoming and building open houses has been high, and it has been nice to see so many smiling faces. Thank you to our community members and our staff for showing the same commitment to our students as they are to fulfilling their curiosity and learning without limits.

The beginning of every school year comes with challenges, too, and I appreciate the patience of the community as we sorted some things out regarding transportation routes, work on our facilities, and the new pickup loop at Skoi-Yase Primary School. I believe these challenges have created opportunities for us to learn and grow, and that we are geared for success for this school year and many more to come.

The school year is only just



beginning, and I am beyond excited to see what comes next for our students and staff. Every day has brought new adventures, with new opportunities for learning, growth, and to make meaningful connections and memories.

On behalf of the Waterloo Central School District, happy early holidays. Thank you for your continued support of our schools.

With Tiger Pride,

Sarah Cupelli

Superintendent of Schools

INSIDE

New PlaygroundPage 2

Facility Dedication.....Page 3

New Lunch Zones and NHS.....Page 4

Staff SpotlightPage 5

Athletic and Arts HighlightsPage 6

NJHS Courtyard Mural.....Page 7

Key DatesPage 8



NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL PLAYGROUND

The Waterloo Central School District officially cut the ribbon on a new playground at Skoi-Yase Primary School on Sept. 2, signifying a crucial milestone in the district's ongoing capital project. The ceremony was hosted by the Skoi-Yase Parent Teacher Group, and members were joined by school administrators, community members, Skoi-Yase staff, Waterloo students in a range of grade levels and their families.

"As your principal, I'm so excited for you to be the first to enjoy this brand-new playground," said Mr. Jon Roberts, principal of Skoi-Yase Primary School. Skoi-Yase students William Ryan and Kennedy Roshia were then invited to join Mrs. Sarah Cupelli, superintendent of schools, in the cutting of the ribbon. After the ceremony, the assembled families were able to enjoy the playground for the first time.

The new playground features two new swing sets, jungle gyms, a climbing wall, slide, and kid-safe turf. It is a kid-friendly, fun environment where students can stay active during the day and strengthen bonds with classmates. The new playground is part of the district's capital project, which was approved in winter 2023 to provide upgrades and health and safety improvements to all four school buildings, Tom Coughlin Stadium and the transportation office.



WATERLOO CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT DEDICATES TRANSPORTATION FACILITY TO LONGTIME BUS DRIVER

The Waterloo Central School District dedicated its recently refurbished transportation facility to retired bus driver Mr. Dale Buck on Oct. 27. Mr. Buck recently retired from driving buses after 54 years of service to the district and its students.

Mr. D'allah Laffoon, who previously served as transportation supervisor for the district and who worked closely with Mr. Buck, pushed for the facility to be dedicated in Mr. Buck's name.

"Mr. [Buck] has been such a pillar in not only the Waterloo community, but in the busing world at large, especially here in the Finger Lakes," said Mr. Laffoon. "We would hear from parents all the time: 'I rode with Mr. Buck, my kid is riding with Mr. Buck, my kid's kid is riding with Mr. Buck.' I'm glad his name can now be associated with the building."

"Throughout his tenure, Mr. Buck served with unwavering dedication as both a school bus driver and transportation supervisor," said Mrs. Sarah Cupelli, superintendent of schools at Waterloo CSD. "His commitment to student safety mentorship, driver leadership, and daily operations have made a profound and lasting impact on the district and the Waterloo community. His career reflects the highest standards of professionalism and integrity, and we are so grateful for his five decades of service."

Mr. Buck was flattered by the dedication and the kind words from community members and district personnel. However, his greatest source of pride is the transportation department's safety record.

"Our district hasn't had a serious injury on a school bus since 1963," said Mr. Buck. "I'm very proud of that fact."

The transportation facility was recently refurbished as part of the district's ongoing capital project. Some of the upgrades include a new fuel management system, enhanced drainage, and a gate at the entrance to assist with traffic flow.

"None of this would've been possible without the dedication of our facilities committee," said Mr. Lance McFetridge, director of buildings and grounds at



Waterloo CSD. "Now that all the work is said and done, the end result is a very nice facility."

The Waterloo Central School Transportation Department was recognized in 2024 as one of the best school transportation teams in the

nation by Transfinder Corp. With their brand-new facility and dedicated personnel, the team plans to continue maintaining its reputation as an award-winning department dedicated to student safety and engagement on its buses.



LAFAYETTE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL INTRODUCES LUNCH ZONES TO TARGET INDIVIDUAL STUDENT NEEDS

LaFayette Intermediate School is piloting a unique “zone” model during lunch periods, giving students different ways to enjoy an important social period of the school day.

Zones include the social zone, with circular tables that allow students to interact with friends; the movie/music zone, where students can don headphones to block out the loudness of the cafeteria with comforting music and educational tv shows and documentaries; and the nature zone, which is set up to allow students to enjoy reflective time with views of the outdoors.

“We wanted to make lunch periods smoother, better, and safer for students,” said Ms. Molly Lahr, principal of LaFayette Intermediate School. “We know that students have different sensory needs, and might need a little bit more support in how to appropriately communicate with each other. These zones

address those different needs, and students can choose which ones they want to enjoy.”

The idea for lunch zones came from other school districts in the region doing something similar. They have also experienced successful outcomes in creating orderly and safer lunchroom environments.

Waterloo students have embraced the opportunity, such as third-graders Mila Bree and Peyton Youngs. Their favorite zones are the social and movie/music zones. Some days, they welcome the chance to talk with friends outside of class. Other days, they welcome a break from the noise and the chance to watch documentaries about animals or an episode or two of familiar content such as *Bluey*.

“I like having the choice,” said Mila.

WATERLOO HIGH SCHOOL INDUCTS 20 STUDENTS INTO NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY



The Waterloo High School chapter of the National Honor Society (NHS) added 20 new members to its ranks on the evening of Nov. 3. Inducted students must meet a set of criteria in four pillars of achievement: scholarship, service, leadership, and character.

The induction ceremony included an address from guest speaker Mr. Scott Maloney, who serves as the department chair for math instruction at Waterloo High School and head coach of the varsity football team. NHS inductee Andi Corsner

sang a rendition of *Somewhere Over the Rainbow*, with piano accompaniment by Nicholas DeMillo.

Congratulations to inductees Keylianie Alamo Ubiles, Mackenzie Messina, Logan Schoenheit, Samantha Smith, Mackenzie Tam, Alexis Westmoreland, Kloï White-Shoots, Henry Benjamin, Andi Corsner, Nathan DiSanto-Simon, Axel Dressing, Hazel Enslow, Emily Howard, Allison Laird, Gwyneth Panek, Danielle Poormon, Jillian Robinson, Vivian Santiago, Cherokee Uerkvitz, and Tangel Williams.

11 QUESTIONS WITH TRANSPORTATION SUPERVISOR MRS. VERONICA SMITH

Mrs. Veronica Smith was named as Waterloo Central School's transportation supervisor in September. A long-time bus driver in the district, Mrs. Smith will now take the helm of Waterloo Central School's award-winning transportation department. We caught up with Mrs. Smith to learn more about her, and what she is looking forward to most in her new position.



What are the responsibilities of your new job?

Safety will always be the number one responsibility. However, there are many responsibilities that are included in my day. Vehicle maintenance, scheduling staff and bus routes, compliance with all state and federal regulations and record-keeping, mandatory refreshers and training, communication with families and staff at all the school buildings, and so much more.

What are your top priorities?

My top priority is to ensure safe and reliable transportation for all students and staff.

What aspects of your new job are you most looking forward to?

I look forward to working with my team to continue to be one of the best transportation departments around!

What characteristics of the Waterloo CSD impressed you the most?

Waterloo is a district that puts students first. I see our staff consistently going above and beyond to help each student along their journey, and I find that impressive.

How will your previous roles help you in this one?

My previous roles in the district have helped me gain so much knowledge about our district. I have a great understanding and familiarity with our students, their families, and our community.

Who or what inspired you to pursue your current profession?

I came to a point in life where I needed to make a change, and that big banner that we hang on a bus saying "Drivers Wanted" caught my attention. I've been going strong ever since.

What is your favorite book?

I enjoy reading self help books. Anything about ways to make progress in life.

What is your favorite food?

I have always loved pizza. I could eat it every day!

What is your favorite sports team?

The Las Vegas Raiders. Being a Raiders fan is a family tradition in our house. Fun fact: my youngest son's middle name is Raider.

What hobbies do you enjoy in your spare time?

Attending my son's sporting events.

What is the best advice you have ever received?

It's OK to make mistakes as long as you learn from them.

WATERLOO CSD NAMES TEACHER AND STAFF MEMBER OF THE 2024-25 SCHOOL YEAR

The Waterloo Central School District recently honored two staff members for their contributions to the district during the 2024-25 school year. Both staff members were nominated by their colleagues for recognition.

Waterloo Education Association Teacher of the Year: Mrs. Beth Bruni

Mrs. Bruni has inspired students at LaFayette Intermediate School for 25 years through her dynamic and engaging teaching style. Known for making learning fun and interactive, Mrs. Bruni seamlessly integrates technology into her lessons to spark curiosity and creativity.

Mrs. Bruni builds meaningful connections with her students, and supports them both in the classroom and at afterschool activities. Her peers describe her as "a dedicated team leader and collaborative coworker, who uplifts everyone around her."

Her love for dogs and Tina Turner adds a joyful touch to her vibrant personality that both students and colleagues admire. Congratulations to Mrs. Bruni on her well-deserved recognition and her many years of service at Waterloo CSD.



Waterloo Non-Instructional Employee Association Employee of the Year: Mr. Andrew Belding

Mr. Belding serves as the district's sole school bus mechanic, and plays a key role within Waterloo CSD's award-winning transportation office. Mr.

Belding has maintained a near-perfect Department of Transportation inspection rate over 11 years. He approaches his important work of keeping the district's 25 buses in top operating condition with a great deal of professionalism and enthusiasm.

His colleagues describe him as an "all-around good person and worker," and a "true team player, with unwavering dedication to our district."

The district is incredibly grateful for his years of service, his dedication to his work, and his companionship.



ATHLETIC HIGHLIGHTS

- Congratulations to the varsity golf team for being named co-champions of the Finger Lakes East League! They finished the season with a 10-2 league record, and a 13-2 overall record. In addition, all six starters on the team qualified for the Finger Lakes Golf Championship at Wayne Hills Country Club.
- Each player on the girls varsity tennis team notched an individual win this season. Additionally, doubles pairing Rebecca Schalck and Hazel Enslow finished the season with a winning record.
- The boys cross country team finished in fifth place out of 20 teams in the Finger Lakes region. The girls finished ninth out of 20 teams.
- The boys varsity soccer team hosted Kick Cancer Night on Oct. 9, a special night honoring family, friends, and members of the WCSD community impacted by cancer. The program and boosters also dedicated the game to Nico Hadyk, their teammate and friend who was able to join the team on the field as their honorary captain.



MUSIC AND PERFORMING ARTS HIGHLIGHTS

- Congratulations to Jason Leisenring, Mason O'Connell, Andi Corsner, Hudson Grillone, Nicholas DeMillo and Alek Mooneyhan for being selected for Area All-State performances!
- The Waterloo Music Department inducted nine students into its chapter of the Tri-M Music Honor Society! Congratulations to Keylianie Alamo Ubiles, Nicholas DeMillo, Kevin Evans, Marie Evans, Margaret Gahn, Isabella House, Allyana Scott-Grabatin, Ashton Westmoreland, and Kole Wheeler-Acton on their inductions, and to honorary inductee Mrs. Holly Blueye!
- The Waterloo Drama Club put on its performance of *The Outsiders* on Nov. 14, 15, and 16. Congratulations to all who took part in this rousing performance, and a special thank you to Stephanie and Matt VanNostrand for volunteering their time on set design and costumes.
- Our pep band had a busy fall, with performances at all of Waterloo's home football games. They also performed with members of the marching band and varsity choir at Homecoming on Sept. 26.
- Waterloo Central School honored its armed services veterans in the community with a dinner and special concert, honoring their contributions to the safety, security, and freedom of our country.



NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY CELEBRATES COMPLETION OF COURTYARD MURAL

The Waterloo Middle School chapter of the National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) unveiled a vibrant new mural in the school's courtyard in September.

The celebration was attended by several district leaders including Middle School Principal Ms. Christal Kent, Assistant Middle School Principal Mr. Vincent Vitale, Superintendent of Schools Mrs. Sarah Cupelli, Secondary Executive Principal Mrs. Katie Tucker, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Mrs. Christine Taylor, and other invited guests.

The mural was the vision of Anna Gray, who served as a NJHS member during her eighth-grade year.

"We wanted to make something that people could look at and appreciate," said Gray. She and her NJHS peers decided to base the mural on heroes that students could look up to. The final design incorporates the likenesses of Abraham Lincoln, Michael Jordan, Amelia Earhart, and more.

Work on the mural began in March 2025 under the guidance of the club's advisors, Mrs. Hope Brown and Mr. Joe

Demetro. Twenty-three NJHS members met after school throughout the year to sketch and paint on the brick facade of the courtyard's western wall.

"It was great for them to celebrate the completion of such a big project," said Mrs. Brown.

The Waterloo chapter of the NJHS was formed during the 2022-23 school year. It consists of seventh and eighth graders who are dedicated to elevating the school's commitment to the values of scholarship, service, leadership, character, and citizenship.

ASSEMBLYMAN JEFF GALLAHAN RECOGNIZES WATERLOO TRAP TEAM

New York State Assemblyman Jeff Gallahan attended practice for the Waterloo Trap Team in early October at the North Seneca Sportsman's Club. He recognized the team for their first place finish in their conference for the 2024-25 season, and bid them good luck on their 2025-26 campaign.





WATERLOO CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT MAPLE SYRUP PROGRAM RECEIVES CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE AWARD

Skoï-Yase Primary School students who participated in the district's student-run maple syrup program were recently presented with a New York State School Boards Association (NYSSBA) Champions of Change Award for their hard work and dedication to farm-to-school education.

Mrs. Jean Ritter-Gaylord, in concert with educators from Seneca County Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE), spearheaded the program. Ms. Anne Morgan, former NYSSBA Area 2 Awards and Recognition Committee member and current member of the Wayne-Finger Lakes Board of Education, presented the honor during the district's Oct. 20 Board of Education meeting.

"This recognition is not just given out to anyone," said Mrs. Ritter-Gaylord, a sentiment that was shared by Ms. Morgan. "It is a well-earned

demonstration of the value of farm-to-school education, and the hard work of our students."

Students in the district's maple syrup program learned about all the steps in the syrup-making process, from tree tapping and drilling to concentrating the sap. High school students in Mrs. Robin Allen's class then learned how to boil the sap down.

"The main message of farm-to-school is teaching kids about healthy nutrition, eating whole foods, and how to grow foods from start to finish," said Mrs. Candace Riegel, a nutrition educator with Cornell Cooperative Extension who has worked closely with the Waterloo maple syrup program. "With these programs, we hope students can perhaps grow up to be the next generation of farmers or professionals in agriculture."

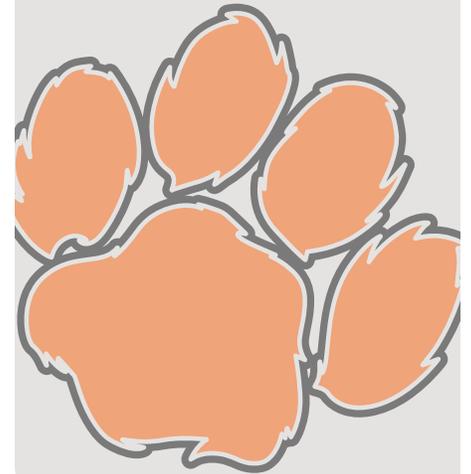
KEY DATES

DECEMBER

- 4 Skoi-Yase Frozen Fun Festival
- 9 Middle School Winter Concert and Art Exhibit
- 10 High School Winter Concert
- 15 BOE Regular Meeting
- 16 LaFayette Winter Concert
- 22 Holiday Recess Begins

JANUARY

- 2 Holiday Recess Ends
- 19 Martin Luther King Jr. Day
No School
- 26 BOE Regular Meeting



WATERLOO CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
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