



2025–2026 Annual Report



Board of Education

2025-2026

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Message from the Superintendent of Schools

Dear Waterbury Public Schools Community,

As we bring the 2025–2026 school year to a close, I find myself looking back with immense pride, profound gratitude, and a renewed sense of excitement for our future. This year, our classrooms were filled with energy, breakthrough moments, and a shared belief in what we can achieve when we stand together, united as one Waterbury Public Schools.

This past year, we built on our momentum. Here are a few of the incredible milestones we reached together:

- **Elevated Academic Growth:** Thanks to the relentless dedication of our educators and the hard work of our students, we saw continued districtwide gains in achievement. By leaning into high-quality instruction and meeting students exactly where they are, we've unlocked new levels of academic success.
- **Future-Ready Learning:** We successfully expanded our modern, rigorous curricula and grew our hands-on robotics programming. Seeing our students collaborate, problem-solve, and build skills for the future has been one of the greatest joys of this year.
- **State-Leading Achievements:** Our students shined bright on local, state, and national stages across academics, the arts, athletics, and leadership. Notably, our high schools, led by the incredible efforts at Waterbury Career Academy and Waterbury Arts Magnet School, continue to be state leaders in FAFSA completion, proving that our community is deeply committed to opening doors for every graduate.
- **A Culture of Care and Focus:** We continued to foster safer, more connected learning spaces. From the ongoing success of our distraction-free phone initiative to the vital academic and emotional support, we remained dedicated to the safety, well-being, and dignity of every single student.

None of these victories happen in a vacuum. They are the direct result of the partnership between our teachers, administrators, dedicated support staff, and our incredibly supportive families and community partners.

As we transition into the summer and look toward the 2026–2027 school year, I am filled with genuine optimism for what the upcoming year holds. We have shown what we can do when we dream big and work together. The foundation we built this year is strong, and the possibilities ahead of us are limitless.

Thank you for your continued trust, your partnership, and your unwavering belief in the potential of Waterbury's youth.

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

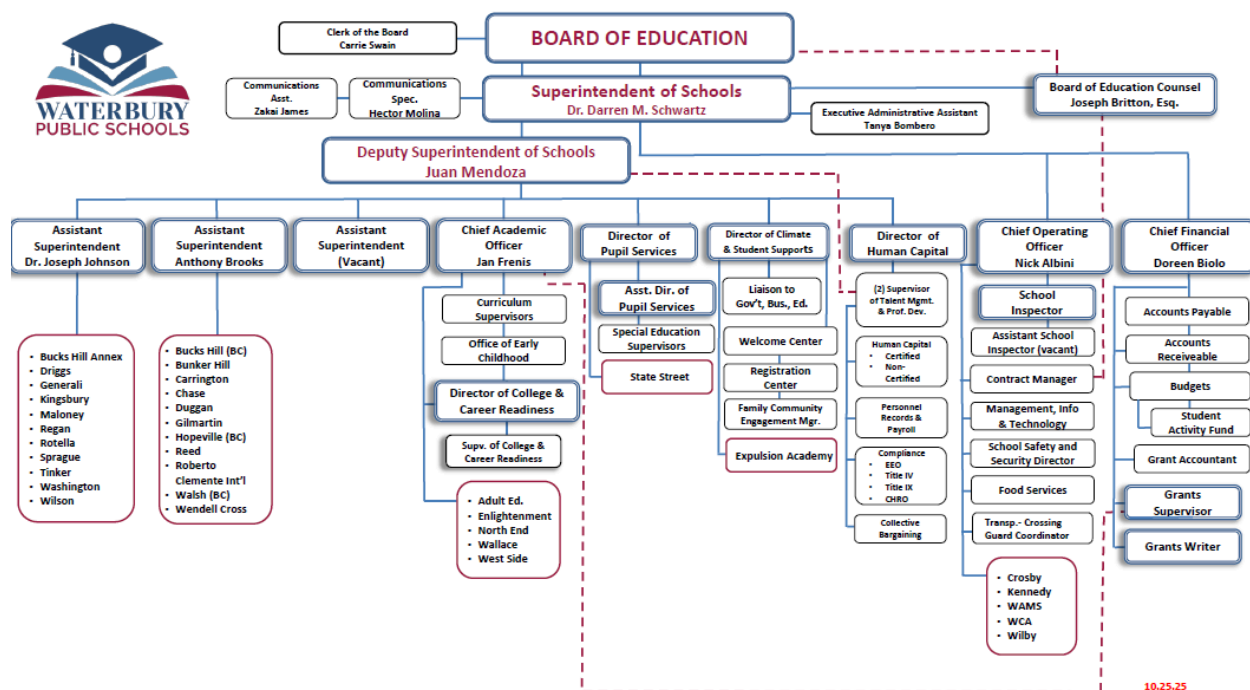
The mission of Waterbury Public Schools is to inspire and prepare every student to be successful in and beyond school.

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

Superintendent

Deputy Superintendent

Chief Academic Officer

Chief Financial Officer

Chief Operating Officer

Assistant Superintendent

Assistant Superintendent

Assistant Superintendent of Human Capital

Director of Pupil Services

Board of Education Attorney

Supervisor of Management, Info. and Tech.

Dr. Darren Schwartz

Mr. Juan Mendoza

Mrs. Janet Frenis

Mrs. Doreen Biolo

Mr. Nicholas Albini

Mr. Anthony Brooks

Vacant

Vacant

Ms. Wendy Johns

Attorney Joseph Britton

Mr. Will Zhuta

Director of Climate and Student Supports
Director of College and Career Readiness
Director of Safety and Security

Jaclyn Davis
Mrs. Nyree Toucet
Mr. Daniel Barry

TEACHING AND LEARNING SUPERVISORS

Career and Technical Education
College and Career Readiness
Fine Arts (PreK-12)
Health & Physical Education
Math (PreK-5)
Math (6-12)
Multilingual Learners Education
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. Michael Merati
Dr. Vira Boatright
Vacant
Mr. Joseph Gorman
Mr. Robert Shagensky
Ms. Elizabeth Corbin
Mr. Manuel Zaldivar Barahona
Ms. Melissa Calabrese
Ms. Jennifer Sarja
Ms. Tara Battistoni
Ms. Lindsay Davenport
Mrs. Veda Harris
Dr. David Lucian

RECRUITMENT & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Talent & Professional Development Supervisor
Talent & Professional Development Supervisor

Ms. Marissa Waters
Ms. Carli Carpentieri

SPECIAL EDUCATION SUPERVISORS

Ms. Donajean (DJ) Belcher
Dr. Michelle Cormier
Ms. Allison Finley
Mrs. Nancy Hill
Ms. Patricia (*Patty*) Ferrare
Ms. Jamie Miller
Ms. Chayna Nath
Dr. Nicole Rivers
Ms. Wendy Santarsiero (*Owen- via email*)
Kaitlyn Siena
Jillian Slater
Mrs. Tracy Menzies (Assistant Director)

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

Mr. Adam Shaban

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

Mr. Kenny Pierresaint
Ms. Angela Joyce
Mr. Hugh Aird
Ms. Elizabeth Henson

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. Melissa Thompson (Int)

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 Copperthite
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

Elizabeth C. Brown - President

LaToya R. Ireland - Vice President

Yarixa Lopez - Secretary

Margret Heyward-Bowen

Anthony Ireland

Jacqueline A. Jackson

Terence Lott, Jr.

Kay Munoz

Rocco F. Orso

Thomas Van Stone, Sr.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Aiden Mejia, Crosby High School (Grade 12)

Erhan Ismaili Crosby High School (Grade 11)

Jayden Acevedo, Kennedy High School (Grade 12)

Yuri Thomas, Kennedy High School (Grade 11)

Braelyn Mae McDougall, Waterbury Arts Magnet School (Grade 12)

Maria Hopkins, Waterbury Arts Magnet School (Grade 11)

Analyah Baez, Waterbury Career Academy (Grade 12)

Jayden LaVasseur, Waterbury Career Academy (Grade 11)

Milan-Renee Tumba, Wilby High School (Grade 12)

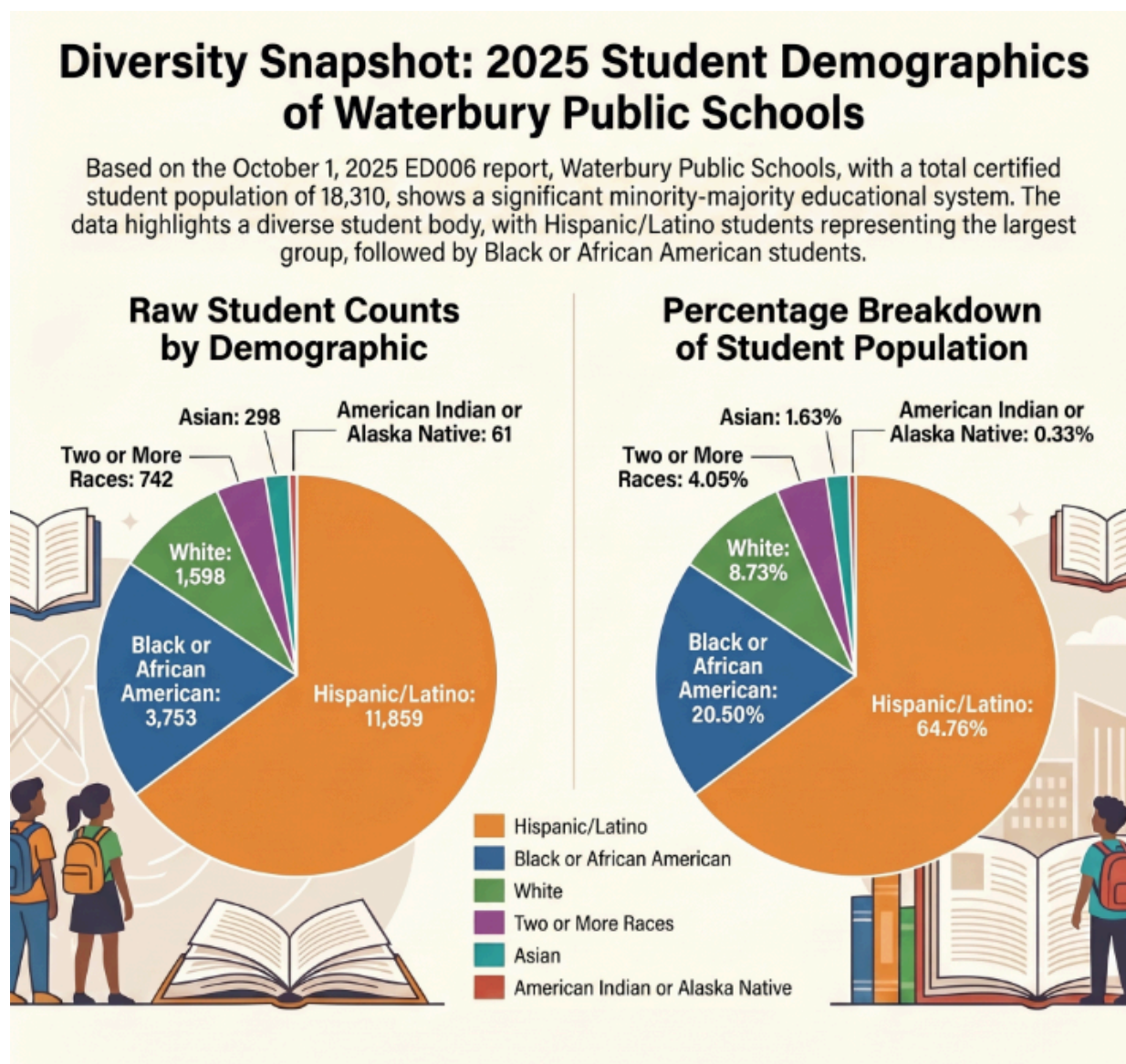
Naneska Figueroa, Wilby High School (Grade 11)

Demographics at a Glance

Students

Total Enrollment (October 2025) **18,310**

District Student Demographics



Student Enrollment	
Ethnicity/Race	Count
American Indian or Alaska Native	61
Asian	298
Black or African American	3,753
Hispanic/Latino	11,859
Two or More Races	742
White	1,598

Enrollment Trends

School Year	Total Enrollment	Special Education	MultiLingual Learners	Pre-K
25-26	18644	4049	4062	991
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

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

Waterbury Public Schools takes a comprehensive approach to education by balancing academic, emotional, and physical growth. Through personalized learning plans and data-driven, targeted instruction, the district ensures all students can reach rigorous academic benchmarks. Access to high-quality learning is expanded via robust STEM initiatives, creative arts integration, and advanced college-readiness courses. These diverse enrichment activities and tiered support

systems work together to spark curiosity, foster resilience, and prepare every student for future success.

- **Educating the Whole Child** - Central to this mission is supporting students' emotional well-being. By embedding social-emotional learning into the curriculum, utilizing restorative practices, and offering robust mental health and counseling services, the district helps students navigate stress and build resilience. Physical wellness is equally prioritized through nutritious meals and daily activity. 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. Furthermore, by actively partnering with families and local community organizations, the district creates a unified network of support that extends far beyond the school walls. These collaborative efforts ensure that every young person possesses the emotional stability, physical health, and cultural confidence necessary to thrive in an interconnected world.
- **Expanding Access, Choice and Equity** - The district is committed to ensuring equitable access to rigorous educational opportunities for all students. By expanding pathways—including advanced coursework, dual enrollment, magnet programs, and career and technical education (CTE)—students are empowered to explore their interests, prepare for future success, earn college credits or participate in internship opportunities. In order to remove barriers to achievement, resources are dedicated to improve student outcomes for our multilingual learners and students with disabilities. Resource allocation is prioritized to guarantee fairness across all school sites. Additionally, the district has built robust family and community partnerships, providing tailored outreach and comprehensive language access services so families can actively champion their child's education. In addition, strong community partnerships allow us to plan for expansion of career pathways that will include on the job training. Through expanded choice and systemic access, the district ensures every student has the platform to thrive. These collective initiatives are designed to bridge the opportunity gap and create a level playing field for every learner. By continuously evaluating data and listening to community feedback, the district refines its programs to meet the evolving demands of the modern workforce and higher education.
- **Ensuring Safe and Healthy Schools** - The district views a safe, healthy environment as the essential foundation for academic success. Comprehensive safety strategies include modernized security protocols, robust emergency preparedness plans, and continuous facility upgrades designed to keep campuses secure and welcoming. Through regular training, all staff members are fully equipped to manage and respond to safety concerns effectively. Prioritizing student well-being, the district embeds social-emotional learning into the school culture, maintains dedicated mental health personnel, and champions

anti-bullying initiatives to ensure a respectful, supportive climate. These proactive measures cultivate the strong relationships between students, staff, and families that build community trust. Furthermore, by actively expanding partnerships with local health organizations, businesses, and social service agencies, the district secures vital external resources for physical and emotional wellness. These collaborative initiatives ensure students have the holistic support they need to arrive at school healthy and ready to learn.

- **Investing in the Future -**

- *Evaluation and Professional Learning-* This year marks the district's second year of implementing the Teacher and Administrator Evaluation Plan and System through PowerSchool's Unified Talent Perform platform. Building on a successful first year, the district has continued to leverage the online system to streamline evaluation processes, provide timely and meaningful feedback, and support educator growth and development.

During the second year, the district discontinued use of the PowerSchool Professional Learning platform and transitioned professional development resources to an internally managed Google Drive system. This change provides a more cost-effective and accessible solution while allowing the district to maintain local control over professional learning materials.

Unified Talent Perform continues to provide school and district leaders with valuable tools for collecting, analyzing, and reporting evaluation data, supporting consistent implementation and data-informed decision-making. As familiarity with the system has increased, leaders have been able to strengthen instructional support, identify professional learning needs, and promote continuous improvement across schools.

The evaluation system remains an important component of the district's commitment to professional growth, accountability, and instructional excellence, helping ensure positive outcomes for both staff and students.

- *Leadership Support-* This year, the district continued its commitment to instructional excellence by partnering with Cormier Associates, led by Dr. Kathryn Serino, to focus on maintaining cognitive lift and ensuring students engage in rigorous, standards-aligned learning tasks. Through task walkthroughs conducted across schools, administrators and instructional leaders examined the level of cognitive demand present in classroom assignments and activities, providing valuable feedback and support to strengthen instructional practices.

- This work has helped build a shared understanding of high-quality, engaging tasks and has supported school leaders in identifying opportunities to increase rigor, student engagement, and meaningful learning experiences. The ongoing partnership reinforces the district's commitment to continuous improvement and to ensuring that all students have access to challenging and intellectually engaging instruction.

Budget and Finance Highlights



Education Budgets for FY 2025:

General Fund Operating Budget

The General Fund Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2025–2026 totaled **\$158,375,000**, remaining flat-funded with no increase from the prior fiscal year. Through disciplined financial management and careful cost control, the district has achieved consecutive year-end budget surpluses while maintaining educational programs and services with minimal impact to students.

Education Cost Sharing (ECS) Funding

The district received **\$201,118,542** in State Education Cost Sharing (ECS) funding, including **\$87,501,360** in Alliance District funding allocated to the Education Department. Fiscal Year 2025–2026 marked the completion of the State's ECS phase-in, resulting in an increase to the Alliance funding component.

State Grant Funding

The district received **\$21,582,945** in State grant funding to support a wide range of educational initiatives, including 21st Century Community Learning Centers, School Safety and Security Grants, Priority Schools, Family Resource Centers, Magnet Schools, Early Start programs, and other state-funded initiatives.

Commissioner's Network Funding

An additional **\$2,785,783** was received through the Commissioner's Network grant program to support improvement efforts at Crosby High School, Kennedy High School, and Wilby High School. During Fiscal Year 2025–2026, West Side Middle School successfully met the required Reading and Mathematics performance benchmarks and exited Turnaround School status.

Federal Grant Funding

The district received **\$31,602,123** in Federal grant funding. Major entitlement grants included IDEA, Title I, Title II, Title III, Title IV, and 21st Century After-School Programs, providing critical support for instructional services and student achievement.

ESSA School Improvement Grants

For the ninth consecutive year, the district received **\$892,544** through Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) School Improvement Grant for Opportunity Districts. These funds supported West Side Middle School, Crosby High School, Kennedy High School, and Wilby High School by providing additional resources to strengthen student achievement and school improvement efforts.

District Repair and Improvement Project (DRIP) Grant

During the fourth quarter of Fiscal Year 2025–2026, the district received **\$1,442,160** through the State's District Repair and Improvement Project (DRIP) grant program, established by Public Act. This two year grant funds will allow us to enhance our facilities that are designated for minor capital improvements and repairs to public school facilities, helping preserve school buildings, improve safety and accessibility, and reduce the need for costlier future renovations.

Financial Stewardship

The Education Finance Department continues to demonstrate exceptional fiscal stewardship through strong financial oversight, accountability, and compliance. The district has earned consecutive clean independent audit reports with no findings or significant comments for multiple years, reflecting its ongoing commitment to transparency, sound financial management, and responsible use of public resources.

Operations

The Operations Departments—Technology, Facilities, Security, Food Services, Transportation, and the Welcome Center—have completed and initiated numerous projects throughout the 2025–2026 school year. These efforts continue to build on recent successes while focusing on

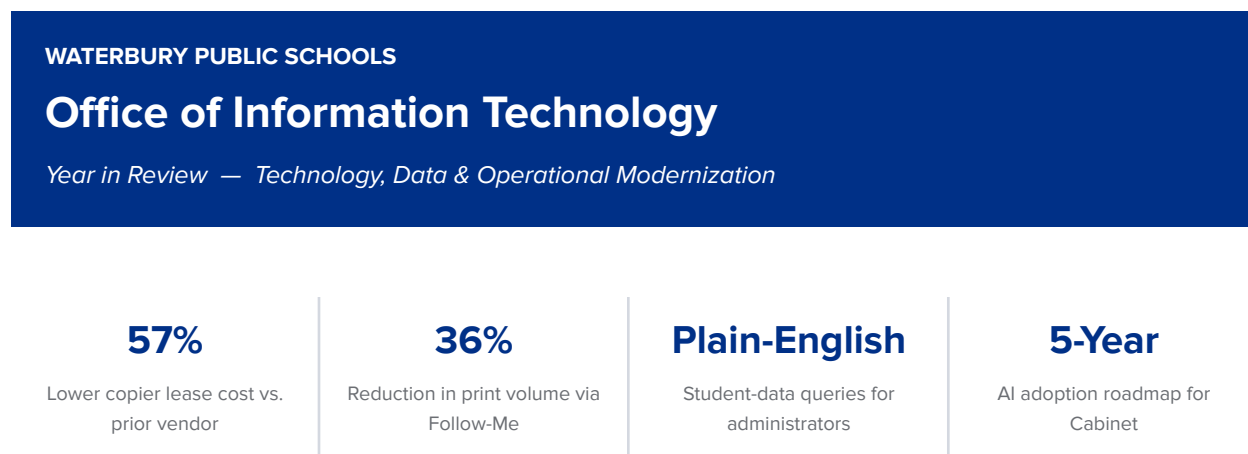
cost-effectiveness, efficiency, and the delivery of high-quality support aligned with the District's educational goals, mission, and vision.

Creating and sustaining healthy, safe, cost-effective, and efficient infrastructure and support services for students and staff remain guiding principles of the Operations Departments. Through research, investigation, and collaborative planning, departments have successfully advanced projects utilizing a variety of funding sources and strategic partnerships.

Working closely with all Education Departments, Operations has continued to develop and implement initiatives that strengthen District operations, enhance student and staff support, improve efficiency, and promote the safe and effective delivery of educational services. These collaborative efforts reflect the District's ongoing commitment to responsible stewardship of resources and to providing the infrastructure and services necessary for student success.

A summary of the many projects and efforts by the Operations Divisions is as follows:

Computer Technology Center



Overview

Over the past year, the Office of Information Technology has led a portfolio of initiatives that extend well beyond traditional technology operations into fiscal optimization, data modernization, artificial intelligence readiness, and district-wide procurement and process reform. Taken together, this work positions Waterbury Public Schools as a district that not only maintains modern infrastructure but uses disciplined data and analysis to govern it — converting everyday operational decisions into measurable savings and better service for students, staff, and administrators. The sections that follow summarize the major workstreams, the benefits they deliver, and why each matters to the District's long-term sustainability.

Copier Fleet Optimization & Managed Print

A signature effort this year was a comprehensive copier fleet and managed print analysis conducted in preparation for the Canon contract renewal. A device-by-device review of 175 copiers across 38 buildings surfaced concrete, defensible savings opportunities: standardizing lease pricing on identical models, retiring idle and underutilized devices, consolidating oversized sites, and tightening color-printing governance — where color accounted for under ten percent of pages but nearly half of total click costs. This analysis directly supported a five-year managed print agreement at approximately \$400,680 per year, delivering a 57% reduction in lease costs compared to the previous vendor, while Follow-Me printing has already cut total print volume by 36%.

This work matters because it converts a recurring, easily-overlooked operating expense into a transparent, right-sized, and fiscally accountable program. Over 123 million copies in five years is infrastructure, not luxury — and it is now governed with full visibility into who is printing what, where, and at what cost. The result is a defensible contract the Board can approve with confidence and a print environment that will continue to generate savings throughout its term.

District Data Platform & Operational Dashboards

Equally transformative is the District's data platform work. A Streamlit-based natural-language analytics platform, built against the District's data warehouse, now allows administrators to query student data in plain English without technical expertise — democratizing access to information that was previously locked behind reports and specialists. Alongside it, a suite of district, school, and Special Education dashboards delivers real-time visibility into enrollment, attendance, discipline, and state accountability metrics, all grounded in rigorous FERPA compliance and data governance.

For the first time, the Superintendent, Cabinet, and building leaders can see the District's performance picture in one place and make informed decisions daily rather than waiting on quarterly cycles. The Special Education dashboard is especially significant, supporting one of the most compliance-intensive areas in K-12 education, where timely data directly protects students' rights and the District's legal standing. This platform is the operational backbone of a more transparent, accountable, and evidence-driven district.

Operations, Procurement & Records Management

A substantial body of operational and procurement work rounded out the year. The Office formalized a multi-lane FOI Request Playbook establishing clear ownership across IT, Legal, and program areas, with defined redaction authority and search protocols that make records-request handling faster, more consistent, and more defensible. The Office also coordinated the City of

Waterbury's municipal relocation from the Chase building to Exchange Place, including detailed vendor evaluation under RFP #8780, and supported the Forerunner VOIP maintenance agreement (RFP #8663) and City personnel documentation.

Much of this work spans both the school district and city government, reflecting the increasingly cross-functional role the Office plays in the broader Waterbury community — coordinating shared infrastructure, procurement, and operational projects that serve residents as well as students.

Why This Work Matters

Collectively, these initiatives share a common thread: disciplined analysis applied to real operational decisions, in service of fiscal responsibility, equitable access, transparency, and a district built to adapt to whatever comes next. Each dollar saved on print, each decision informed by real-time data, and each governance framework put in place ahead of need strengthens the District's ability to deliver high-quality education sustainably. The foundation laid this year ensures that Waterbury Public Schools remains efficient, accountable, and forward-thinking — serving students, educators, and the community today and for years to come.

Food Services

The 2025-2026 school year saw a reorganization at the central office for the department. There was a new Director, and 2 new leadership positions, Registered Dietician and Site Coordinator Supervisor. This reorganization allowed us to successfully attain our goals of providing the students of Waterbury nutritious meals that comply with the regulations of the USDA and CSDE, while increasing our daily participation for breakfast from 26.09% in year 25-26 to 26.45% this past year and increasing lunch from 70.27% to 70.70%, far above the national average of 54.3%. These increases allowed us to add \$186,724.84 to the Food Service fund balance. This was additionally impressive given the loss of serving days due to the water main break and additional costs associated with the emergency. The money returned to the fund balance account is nearly half of what was used after last year's loss of \$436,573.42 .

We can attribute the increase in participation to a few factors. We continue to conduct surveys and tracking of daily participation that allowed us to pivot our meal planning to fall in line with the preferences of the student population. We introduced new menu items changing the product based on the viewed participation rates, and conducted a number of menu training sessions with chefs from our suppliers giving us ideas on how to enhance products the students may have grown tired of. The piloted salad bars at: Gilmartin Elementary School, Waterbury Arts Magnet School, Kennedy High School and North End Middle School were a welcome addition to the program and plans are in place for expansion to additional schools to be added.. 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 2026-2027 we hope to continue to see an increase in the number of students participating in the various programs and are happy to announce we are recertifying for the CEP program which allows for free meals to our students at a 100% reimbursement rate. Our latest bidding process has presented an opportunity for 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. We have also begun the process of bidding a new POS software system which will hopefully enhance both the student experience and our back end operational procedures. All of these advancements and our continued partnership with suppliers will allow us to continue to grow our participation while meeting the standards set by the USDA and the department in supplying nutritious meals to our student body.

Welcome Center

The Waterbury Welcome Center continues to serve as a one-stop resource that helps families and community members remain informed, supported, and actively engaged in their children's education. During the 2025–2026 school year, the Welcome Center welcomed 3,178 in-person visits, reflecting its continued role as a trusted resource for families throughout the district.

Beyond student registration, the Welcome Center provides timely updates on important school and district information, and creates meaningful opportunities for family and community engagement. Through these efforts, the Welcome Center strengthens partnerships between families, schools, and the community, helping to support student success.

During the 2025–2026 school year, the Welcome Center continued to modernize its enrollment and orientation processes to make services more accessible and family-friendly. The Welcome Center website was redesigned to reduce the number of clicks needed to access student registration, make information in different languages more prominent, and improve the website's visual appeal.

The district expanded access to Kindergarten registration by hosting Pop-Up Registration events at Duggan, Chase, Wendell Cross, two Easterseals locations, Children's Academy, the YMCA, Catholic Charities, and TEAM, Inc. Extended Welcome Center hours were started in April and will continue through September to provide greater access for working families. Collectively, these efforts made the registration process easier for parents and guardians to navigate and expanded Kindergarten outreach.

The Registration Office successfully processed and enrolled a total of 2,017 students for the 2025–2026 academic year, including 1,606 students in grades K–8 and 411 students in grades 9–12. Among the students enrolled in grades K–8, 304 were placed in a bilingual education program, while 113 high school students were enrolled in bilingual programming. Additionally, 216

students in grades K–8 were identified as requiring special education services, along with 78 high school students who were identified as eligible for special education services.

Transportation

Waterbury Public Schools had over 18,310 students enrolled last year. The Education Department transported 15,763 Regular Education students over 125 routes with 125 propane powered buses in the 2025-2026 school year. All Regular Education buses are equipped with a total of three interior and exterior recording cameras with audio. The camera systems have an additional exterior camera located near the Stop Sign 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 1,905 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 1,956 for the 2025-2026 school year.

For the upcoming 2026–2027 school year, families can look forward to an enhanced GPS bus-tracking system that will provide parent-friendly, real-time access in multiple languages. This improved technology will give families greater visibility into their child's bus location and help strengthen communication around transportation.

In addition, 50 brand-new 2027-model school buses equipped with air conditioning will join the fleet, providing students with a safer and more comfortable ride throughout the year.

The modernization of the fleet will continue with the addition of 50 new buses in 2028 and another 50 in 2029. By the end of 2029, the district expects the entire fleet to consist of buses that are three years old or newer. This multi-year investment reflects the district's ongoing commitment to providing students with safe, reliable, comfortable, and modern transportation.

Facilities and Construction

Waterbury Public Schools is committed to providing safe, effective and enjoyable learning environments to all students, parents and the community. The 2025-2026 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 2026-2027 will continue this trend of incredible upgrades provided to all schools. Here is an overview by content areas and schools:

Boiler Replacement

- **Waterbury Career Academy:** Replaced boiler.

Security System

- Installed a new state-of-the-art alarm/intrusion system in all school and BOE facilities.
- IdentiMetrics implementation.
- CLEAR ID Confirm implementation.
- Municipal Stadium: Installed 4 cameras for added safety and security at football games.

Indoor Air Quality Survey

- **Crosby, Duggan, Gilmartin, Kennedy, State Street, Wallace, and Wendell Cross:** Began the 5-year IAQ Survey of 20% of schools per year.

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. New floor at main floor and main office

Gymnasium Floor Maintenance

- Restoration across several schools with polyurethane coating applied to improve durability, appearance and traction for enhanced playability.
- **Tinker:** Removal of old gymnasium floor and replace a new flooring system with lines.

Flooring Projects

- **Rotella Magnet School:** New Barn Oak LVT (Luxury Vinyl Tile) installed in main and conference offices to enhance aesthetics and functionality.

- **Carrington:** Removal of old playground base material and replaced with new Pre-K playground surfacing and additional landscaping creating a safer and more inviting playground.
- **Tinker:** Installation of new floor in the main office.

District-Wide Painting Initiative

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

Specialized Learning Spaces

- **Crosby High School:** Created a new band room which did not previously exist.
- **Crosby High School Library:** Reconfigured space into a student and staff learning center.

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

- **Chase:** Installed new teacher bathroom.
- **Carrington Elementary School Gym:** Repairs and waterproofing to stop water intrusion.
- **Generali Elementary School:** Insulated heating/steam pipe installed underground to prevent heat intrusion into SPED classrooms.
- **Generali and Regan Schools:** New exhaust fans installed.
- **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.
- **Roof Repairs:** Addressed leaks at various schools.
- **Waterbury Career Academy:** Intercom system upgraded.
- **Waterbury Career Academy:** Upgraded Arctic chill controllers.
- **Waterbury Career Academy:** Upgraded ALC controllers.
- **Waterbury Career Academy:** Installed new fire protection level sensors for underground tanks.

- **Driggs:** Replaced classroom ceiling (removed old plaster/lath and installed new sheetrock and lights).
- **Driggs:** Completed build-out for school-based health clinic.
- **Driggs:** Completed bathroom separation in lower level.
- **Driggs:** Installed new front-entry floor.
- **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.
- **Crosby and Wallace:** Replaced failing boiler tubes in steam boilers.
- **Crosby:** Installed 2 new laundry rooms and robotic room plumbing.
- **Driggs:** Replaced main burner control for boiler #1.
- **Driggs:** Replaced 40 feet of condensate piping.
- **Kennedy:** Replace boiler room condensate piping from condensate tank.
- **State Street:** Replaced circulator heating pumps for HW boilers
- **West Side:** Replaced chilled water and condenser water pumps.
- **West Side:** New sink upgrades in blue, red, and gold house.
- **Wallace:** Installed new front-entry floor.
- **Wilby:** Installed new chiller controllers for chiller #1.
- **Wilby:** Installed new compressors for pneumatics.
- **Wilby:** Installed DDC valve for HW heat exchanger.
- **Wilby:** Installed new shut off valves for school heating loop in lobby.
- **Wilby:** Installed new condensate lines in the tunnel.
- **Wilby, Crosby and West Side:** Installed new backwash valves, new pumps and new filtration media.
- **Wilby and Kennedy:** Installed 2 new automatic chlorinators for pools.
- **Kingsbury:** Refurbished auxiliary gym space.
- **Kingsbury:** Replaced condensate main tank.
- **Regan:** Replaced dampers for boiler room.
- **Kennedy, Driggs, and Wilson:** Installed Elkay fountain upgrades.
- **Rotella, Driggs, and Chase:** Replaced HW tank.
- **Rotella:** Installed new gas regulators for generator.
- **Bunker Hill:** Built-out laundry room.
- **Washington:** Installed ADA compliant bathroom fixtures for NAEYC accreditation.

Upcoming Projects 2026-2027

- Crosby and Wallace Schools roof replacement.
- Driggs and Wilson Schools elevator additions.
- Driggs and Wilson man-trap doors installation.
- Driggs and Washington Schools parking lot paving.

- Fire panel upgrades.
- Driggs partial sewer line replacement.
- West Side Middle School HVAC upgrade phase II.
- Kennedy pool deck support system repair.
- Kennedy pool surge tanks replacement.
- Bucks Hill, Walsh, and Wilson roof replacement.
- Bunker Hill intercom installation.
- Bunker Hill library floor sand and polyurethane.
- Enlightenment intercom installation.
- Tinker intercom installation.
- Carrington, Maloney, North End, Reed, Rotella, Waterbury Arts Magnet, and Wilby Indoor Air Quality Survey (Year 2) – 20% of schools (State Mandated).
- Generali, Sprague, Tinker, Wendell Cross, and West Side solar photovoltaic technology installation
- Gilmartin and Waterbury Career Academy solar panel repair
- North End/Wilby emergency communication upgrade.
- Waterbury Arts Magnet HVAC controls replacement.
- Rotella parapet repair.
- Roberto Clemente reconfiguration for grade 6 students.
- Waterbury Arts Magnet drama classroom lighting upgrade.
- Replace 3 hot water heaters.
- Purchase 3 new floor scrubbers.
- Purchase a front loader with snow thrower attachment.
- Install new HW heat exchanger at Waterbury Arts Magnet.
- Renovate main floor bathroom at Tinker.
- Replace all the sinks in student bathrooms in Maloney.
- Install new floor in Maloney cafeteria.
- Masonry work on façade of Walsh School.
- Repair/replace underground condensate pump outside Sprague School.

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. All major upgrades for camera and access installation are now complete. All schools have comprehensive camera interior and exterior camera coverage which

is utilized for building emergencies. 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, middle and K-8 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 including bathrooms and locker rooms.
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 Department of Emergency Services and Homeland Security. ALL HAZARD PLAN for the district submitted to the DESSPP annually.
8. Daily assistance of ongoing safety and security needs is provided to all schools including support for camera, access and radio issues.
9. All school facilities equipped with STARLINK Fire Panel Systems.
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.
11. IDENTIMETRICS deployed at all high and middle schools at arrival to verify students enrollment school prior to entrance into the building.

12. CLEAR ID utilized to support residency verification for the district.

Human Capital

Juan Mendoza, Deputy Superintendent

Highlights

In the fiscal year 2025-2026, the Human Capital Office supervised the recruitment, selection, and appointment of **one hundred and fifty (150) highly qualified teachers** and **eight (8) 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 **\$70,051** and **\$138,867** 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 (2024-2025) 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 2025-2026 school year compared to the previous year. Also, the number of FMLA related approved leaves rose in 2025-2026. Approved FMLA leaves counted **378** based on a variety of potential qualifying reasons which is a **8.94% increase** from the previous year.

Under the direction of the Superintendent, the Human Capital Office undertook and/or subsequently completed **sixty-four (64)** 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 2025-2026 totaled five **(5)** which was a five **(5) or 50% 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 **one (1)** CHRO and **zero (0)** EEOC complaints this year.

In the 2025-2026 academic year, **WTA** filed **four (4)** grievances on behalf of its nearly 1577 members. Of those five grievances. Similarly, **SAW** filed only **one (1)** grievance for the 2025-2026 academic year on behalf of its nearly 102 members.

WPS New Teachers

Our district is committed to fostering teacher success through comprehensive onboarding, mentorship, and ongoing professional support. Although not required by state statute, every newly hired teacher was assigned a TEAM mentor, including educators serving under DSAP permits, ensuring all new staff received consistent guidance, reflection opportunities, and individualized support regardless of certification status.

New teachers participated in a comprehensive orientation that introduced district policies, expectations, and instructional priorities. In collaboration with the Academic Office, the Director of College & Career Readiness, and the Director of Pupil Services, the program addressed instructional best practices, classroom management, professional responsibilities, multilingual learner support, special education procedures, and CT-SEDS training. Dr. David Cormier of *Cormier Education Consultants* facilitated professional learning on effective lesson design, while the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) introduced staff to available wellness and work-life resources, including counseling, coaching, financial guidance, child and elder care support, and mental health services.

To strengthen teachers' understanding of the community they serve, the two-day orientation included the district's annual citywide bus tour, culminating at the Mattatuck Museum. This experience provided valuable historical and cultural context to support meaningful student relationships and positive classroom environments.

A midyear survey was administered to assess the experiences of new teachers and identify emerging needs. Feedback from this survey informed ongoing adjustments to district supports, reinforcing our commitment to providing a responsive, supportive, and nurturing environment that enables new educators to thrive and succeed.

New Teacher Retention

Our goal is to maintain a high new teacher retention rate, and current data demonstrates continued success in achieving this objective. Of the 150 new WPS teachers hired, 135 (90%) were retained, a slight decrease from 91.3% the previous year. Retention among teachers of color remained similarly strong, with 46 of 52 (88.5%) continuing in their roles.

These outcomes reflect the district's comprehensive approach to supporting early-career educators through high-quality professional learning, a robust new teacher orientation, targeted midyear check-ins, and structured mentorship. Together, these supports foster a positive and resilient teaching environment that contributes to strong retention outcomes.

Advertising

The Human Capital Department continues to implement targeted recruitment strategies to strengthen the quality and quantity of effective educators across the district. Through a comprehensive approach to recruitment, support, and retention, we are building a diverse, high-performing workforce.

From July 2025 through May 2026, the Talent Team participated in 12 in-person and virtual career fairs hosted by colleges and universities, the Connecticut State Department of Education, and community organizations, expanding our network of prospective candidates and strategic partners.

To broaden our recruitment reach, we utilize multiple platforms, including CT REAP, CSEES, Handshake, Indeed, Frontline, K12JobSpot, and EdWeek TopSchoolJobs. Vacancies are also promoted through targeted email campaigns to more than 60 community partners. Outreach efforts to certified educators in high-need subject areas feature district highlight videos and QR codes linking directly to our application portal. In addition, visually engaging recruitment materials created in Canva are shared across the district's social media platforms.

The department continues to promote and host informational sessions for our Grow Your Own (GYO) initiatives, encouraging non-certified staff to pursue educator certification. By investing in employees who are already committed to the district and community, GYO serves as an effective strategy for both recruiting and retaining high-quality educators.

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

We have developed strategic partnerships with 17 Educator Preparation Programs and Grow Your Own (GYO) initiatives as a key recruitment and retention strategy. Our partners include the University of Pennsylvania, 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 33 aspiring educators across a range of certification areas through these programs. Additionally, 133 WPS high school students participated in the EdRising program. The chart below provides an overview of 2025–2026 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.

2025–2026 Placement of Student Teachers, Residents, and Apprentices		
GYO Program	Certification Areas	Number of Participants
CT Teacher Residency	Special Education (2), Middle School Math (1)	3
WPS Teacher Apprenticeship	Elementary	1
NextGen Educator	World Language Spanish (1), Elementary (2)	3
Central Inspire Teacher Residency	Special Education	2
Educator Preparation Program	Certification Areas	Number of Participants
CCSU Student Teaching	Art (1), Dance (1), Social Studies (1), Special Education (1), TESOL (1)	5
ECSU Student Teaching	ELA (2), Elementary (1)	3
SCSU Student Teaching	Early Childhood (1), Elementary (4), ELA (1), School Counseling (1), Science (1), Speech & Language Pathology(2),	10
UConn Student Teaching	Elementary (1), Social Studies (1), Special Education (1)	3
Uhart Student Teaching	Elementary	1
UPENN School Counseling	School Counseling	1
USJ Student Teaching	Special Education	1
	Total	33

2025-2026 Teacher Hires by Subject Area

School/Dept.	Grade/Subject	Number of New Teachers
Elementary	Art	5
Elementary	Bilingual	8
Elementary	Computer Education	1
Elementary	Grades Pre-K Through 5	19
Elementary	Health & Physical Education	3
Elementary	Library Media Specialist	5
Elementary	Literacy Facilitator	2
Elementary	School Psychologist	2
Elementary	School Social Worker	1
Elementary	Special Education	20
Elementary	Speech Language Pathologist	5
High School	Art	2
High School	Business	1
High School	English Language Arts	3
High School	English Second Language	1
High School	Family Consumer Science	2
High School	Health & Physical Education	6
High School	Library Media Specialist	1
High School	Math	3
High School	Sr. ROTC	1
High School	School Psychologist	1
High School	School. Social Worker	1
High School	Science	2

High School	Social Studies	5
High School	Special Education	12
High School	Technology Education	3
High School	World Language (Spanish)	4
Middle School	Computer Education	1
Middle School	English Language Arts	10
Middle School	English Second Language	1
Middle School	Family & Consumer Science	1
Middle School	Math	4
Middle School	School Psychologist	1
Middle School	Science	8
Middle School	Social Studies	1
Middle School	Special Education	4
	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 2025-2026, twenty-eight (28) new teachers were hired through DSAP with the State of Connecticut. This represented 18.7% of all new teachers hired in 2025-2026. DSAP teachers were hired in the content areas listed below. Six (6) of the 28 DSAPs were processed for certified teachers serving in a cross-endorsement shortage area including: bilingual, library media, and

special education.

Certification Area	Number of DSAPs
Bilingual (Elementary)	6
English Language Arts	1
Library Media	2
Math	2
Science	2
Special Education	13
World Language Spanish	2
Total	28

Northeastern Reciprocity

To remain competitive in addressing educator shortage areas, Waterbury Public Schools continues to strengthen its recruitment and retention strategies to attract and retain highly qualified, diverse educators. A key component of these efforts is leveraging the Connecticut State Department of Education's Enhanced Educator Certification Reciprocity Policy for the Northeastern Region. This streamlined certification process has enabled the district to successfully recruit and hire five (5) certified educators from Puerto Rico and New York in high-need areas, including bilingual education, early childhood education, and special education.

Waterbury U

To support professional growth and career advancement, Waterbury Public Schools continued to offer Waterbury U, a micro-credential program providing job-embedded professional learning aligned with instructional best practices. The program strengthens educator effectiveness, improves student outcomes, and supports teacher retention.

The partnership has yielded strong results. Between Fall 2022 and Spring 2023, 90 educators participated in professional learning through BloomBoard. Of those, 23 continued into graduate studies through Oklahoma Christian University, with an additional 70 educators enrolling directly between Fall 2023 and Spring 2025.

To date, participants have completed more than 800 courses, and 55 WPS educators have earned a Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instruction, including 23 graduates in 2026. Degree

concentrations aligned with district priorities, including Social Emotional Learning, Teaching English Learners, Mathematics, and Teaching Students with Disabilities. An additional six educators earned a graduate certificate or accumulated sufficient credits for salary advancement.

Funded through ESSER, Waterbury U concluded in Spring 2026, with the 2025–2026 school year serving as the program's final phase.

Teacher & Leader Evaluation

This marks the second year of implementing the district's Teacher and Administrator Evaluation Plan through PowerSchool's Unified Talent Perform system. The fully online platform continues to streamline the evaluation process by providing timely, consistent feedback that supports educator growth and professional development. Integrated with existing district systems, it equips school and district leaders with tools to collect, analyze, and report evaluation data, enabling informed decision-making, strengthened instructional practices, and targeted support for each campus. As implementation continues, the system reinforces the district's commitment to continuous professional learning, collaborative leadership, and instructional excellence.

During the 2025–2026 school year, 101 of 104 (97%) certified administrators completed a full evaluation cycle. Three administrators began the process but were unable to complete it due to approved medical leave. Additionally, 1,540 of 1,566 (98%) certified teachers completed a full evaluation cycle, while 26 teachers were unable to complete the process due to approved medical leave.

These high completion rates reflect the district's strong commitment to implementing a consistent, meaningful evaluation process that supports educator effectiveness, promotes continuous improvement, and advances student success across all campuses.

Relevant Salary Data for Teachers Hired During 2025-2026

The average starting salary for teachers hired during 2025-2026 was \$70,051. 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 2025-2026

Degree Held	Number of New Teachers
Sub Pending certifications	2
Bachelors	53
Masters	65

6 th Year	29
Doctorate	1
Total	150

Teacher & Administrative Hires by Race/Ethnicity During 2025-2026

Race/Ethnicity	Number of Teacher New Hires	Number of Admin New Hires
Asian	1	0
American Indian	1	0
Hispanic	21	0
Black/African American	22	3
Two or More	6	0
White/Caucasian	99	5
Total	150	8

Approximately **34.8%** of all new hires during 2025-2026 were diverse staff of color.

Teacher Resignations/Teacher Deceased During 2025-2026

Total Resignations: 92

This is an increase of **3** staff resignations from the previous year 2024-2025. 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 2025-2026

Total Retirements: 32

Non-Renewals: 0

Administrator Hiring/Promotions/Lateral Transfers 2025-2026

Three (3) administrative vacancies occurred for 2025-2026 as a result of retirements, resignations, transfers, promotions, and expansion positions. Administrative vacancies were filled with qualified staff and 37.5 % 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

During the 2025-2026 school year, the Career and Technical Education Department empowered and inspired students to discover their strengths, develop in-demand skills, and confidently pursue their postsecondary goals that led to the development of a competitive edge. Curriculum, instruction, assessment and teacher professional development and alignment have improved student outcomes. Student achievement data results have yielded significant increases in industry recognized credential and work ready graduation cord attainment. The department also continues to expand student access to competitive after school robotics programs through partnering with the UConn Waterbury Robotics Institute. Lastly the department engaged teachers in training to launch a new Cybersecurity pathway.

New CTE Career Clusters

Student Achievement Data

- 6,346 YouScience content-specific, industry standards-based exams completed
- 3,676 YouScience exams met proficiency score
 - 58% of exams completed met proficiency
 - 241% increase since 21/22 school year
- 420 students earned CTE Work Ready Graduation Cord.(357 previous school year)
 - Increase of 18% from previous school year

UConn Waterbury Robotics Institute

- FIRST Robotics Competition high school teams participated in training provided by UConn grad student
- Conducted middle and high school Robotics City Championships
 - Wilby and North End City Champions

Cybersecurity Pathway

- Planned to launch new pathway, secured curriculum, trained teachers

Professional Learning

- Foundations of Cybersecurity CodeHS
- Future of Education Technology Conference (FETC)
- NEACEP Conference - The Dual Credit Challenge: Expanding Access While Upholding Standards
- Game Developers Conference
- South by Southwest EDU Conference
- Teaching and Learning with Technology Conference
- Using AI to Support Teaching and Learning Conference
- CBIA: Connecticut Workforce Summit: Reimagining Career Pathways
- YouScience Training
- Drone Technology

Elementary Reading and English/Language Arts

Elementary Education Overview

The 2025–26 school year marked the second year of implementing the Benchmark Education K–5 curriculum. Increased teacher and student familiarity with the program’s layout and instructional components contributed to a 12% increase in overall mCLASS composite assessment scores. Additionally, all schools implemented a "Walk to Read" model in select K–2 grades to differentiate Tier 1 foundational skills, resulting in a 22% growth in composite scores for those specific grade levels.

Curriculum and Instruction

- Continued implementing six Common Core State Standards and SmarterBalanced-aligned lessons for each grade three through five for a total of 18 lessons.
Continued Benchmark Education K-5 core program
- Continued Enhanced Core Reading (ECRI) for supporting foundational skills in K-2 to increase practice and word reading.
- Curriculum is available on Atlas

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

- Continued Data-Based Individualization (DBI) for Tier III students.
- Walk to Read Model K-2 in Foundational Skills based on benchmark data.

Professional Learning

- Benchmark Education: Backwards Mapping Units and Lesson Preparation
- The Writing Revolution- Sentence Level Strategies & Single Paragraph Outline
- Reading Staff: Differentiating Tier 1 Instruction and Data Based Individualization

Secondary Education Overview

The 2025–26 school year marked Year Two of the myPerspectives curriculum implementation across grades 6–12 English classrooms. Capitalizing on increased teacher and student familiarity with the program, the department curriculum team successfully customized the scope and sequence, reintegrating whole novel studies to enrich both middle and high school courses.

Curriculum and Instruction

- Focused instructional coaching on individualized teacher training, including robust data analysis to support the effective implementation of core programs, including *iLit20* and *iLit45* in middle school classrooms.
- Expanded use of *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.
- Increased usage of Quill (middle & high schools combined)
 - Students crafted 2,967,831 sentences using a wide variety of sentence structures and design (a 66% increase).
 - Student learning hours increased by 50% to 35,798.
- Launched the Nutmeg Challenge, an independent middle school reading initiative encouraging students to read nominated books and then place their vote for Connecticut's 2026 Middle School Book of the Year.
- Returned to handwritten writing assessments for grades 9-12 midterms and finals.

Professional Learning

- Writing & Spoken Communication with SAVVAS
- On-Site teacher-training in *iLit20* and *iLit45* reading program.
- Using Data to Drive Instruction

Mathematics

During the 2025–2026 school year, the Mathematics Department focused on strengthening curriculum implementation and instructional consistency across grades K–12. The year marked the district's first full year of implementing i-Ready® Classroom Mathematics ©2024 for K–8, resulting in increased teacher confidence with the curriculum, stronger instructional routines, and improved student outcomes.

The department supported teachers by revising and refining the district curriculum in Atlas, ensuring that both lessons and assessments align with instructional pacing. This work focused on

creating resources that promote consistent, standards-based instruction across all classrooms. Emphasis was placed on mathematical tasks to demonstrate cognitive rigor, student reasoning, mathematical discourse, and problem-solving to deepen student understanding. Through regular classroom walkthroughs and ongoing collaboration with school and district leaders, the department gathered feedback to continuously improve implementation. Additionally, expanded course offerings and new instructional resources have further strengthened math learning opportunities for students.

Curriculum and Instruction

Elementary:

- Implemented i-Ready® Classroom Mathematics ©2024 as a blended learning core curriculum resource. (K-8)
- Embedded Building Thinking Classrooms Curricular Tasks into math pacing guides to support student discourse, problem-solving, and mathematical thinking. (K-5)
- Conducted regular Math Tier I Task Walkthroughs in collaboration with building administrators and assistant superintendents to monitor the implementation process. (K-5)/(6-12)
- Implemented four Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) aligned to the i-Ready® Classroom Mathematics ©2024 units throughout the school year. (3–5)

Secondary:

- Implemented i-Ready® Classroom Mathematics ©2024 as a blended learning core curriculum resource. (K-8)
- Conducted regular Math Tier I Task Walkthroughs in collaboration with building administrators and assistant superintendents to monitor the implementation process. (K-5)/(6-12)
- Updated Atlas with the new core curriculum program embedded in middle school math courses. (6-8)
- Implemented four Interim Assessment Blocks throughout the school year that were intentionally selected to be embedded in the new curriculum's pacing. (6-8)
- Used i-Ready® Classroom Mathematics ©2024 resources to create a pacing guide and detailed curriculum for Accelerated Math grades 6 & 7 and Numeracy, which was implemented with success. (6-8)
- Implemented Savvas: enVision and Demana core curriculum program. (9-12)
- Midterms and finals were fine-tuned at the district level for Algebra 1, Geometry, Algebra 2, and Pre-Calculus to reflect student data from the previous year. (9-12)
- Focus on Building Thinking Classrooms strategies paired with the curriculum. (9-12)

- Rolled out Statistics 1 and 2, a senior-level math course, and created project-based midterm and final for the course. (12)
- Adjustments made to curriculum based on student data, teacher feedback, and walk-through data. (6-12)
- Created curriculum and Building Thinking Classrooms look for building administrators, as well as one-page pacing references for each course. (6-12)

Additional Supports

Elementary:

- Additional instructional time for Tier 2 Small Group Intervention.

Secondary:

- Second annual Middle School Math Competition held. (6-8)
- 530 Club ran successfully at the five high schools with an enhanced curriculum. (11)

Professional Learning

Elementary:

- Transitioning to i-Ready® Classroom Mathematics ©2024 (K-1)
- Making Mathematics Accessible Through Purposeful Questioning (2-5)
- Building Thinking Classrooms: Curricular Tasks (K-5)
- Bridging Prerequisites and Grade-Level Instruction to Maximize Success in i-Ready® (K-5)
- i-Ready® Classroom Mathematics New Teacher Virtual Training Sessions (K-5)
- Instructional Data Teams Protocols Training (Elementary District STEM Coaches)
- Instructional Coaching Training (Elementary District STEM Coaches)

Secondary:

- i-Ready® Classroom Mathematics ©2024 Training – Preparing to Teach i-Ready® Classroom Mathematics ©2024 (6-8)
- i-Ready® Classroom Mathematics ©2024 Training – My Path Training and the Usage of the Program for Intervention (6-8)
- i-Ready® Classroom Mathematics ©2024 Training – Developing Mathematical Thinkers Through Instructional Routines (6-8)
- Algebra Tiles – best ways to use them to enhance conceptual understanding (6-8)
- Building Thinking Classrooms – Unpacking Toolkit #1 (9-12)
- Savvas Training – Developing Mathematical Discourse (9-12)
- Savvas Training – Modeling with Interactive Digital Tools Powered by Desmos (9-12)
- Building Thinking Classrooms – BTC Experience with author, Peter Liljedahl (9-12)
- Savvas Training – Modeled lesson with BTC strategies and curriculum (9-12)
- Performance Matters (6-12)

Science

The 2025–2026 school year marked a year of significant progress for the Waterbury Public Schools Science Department. Through continued curriculum development, the successful implementation OpenSciEd, targeted professional learning, strengthened community partnerships, and ongoing refinement of instructional resources and assessments, the department advanced its commitment to providing all students with high-quality, NGSS-aligned science instruction. As the district looks ahead, the Science Department remains committed to building on this momentum by expanding access to engaging, phenomenon-based learning experiences that foster curiosity, critical thinking, scientific literacy, and college and career readiness for every student.

Elementary Science

Kindergarten- Grade 3:

- The district continued implementing and refining its phenomenon-based, NGSS-aligned K–3 science curriculum by incorporating teacher feedback to strengthen lesson sequencing, instructional supports, and overall usability. The Elementary STEM Coaches and Science Supervisor developed comprehensive instructional slide decks for all K–3 science units to support consistent implementation across schools and reduce teacher preparation time.
- Through its partnership with Flanders Nature Center, the district provided grade 2 students districtwide with hands-on field experiences focused on habitats and ecosystems.

Grades 4 and 5:

- Chase and Bucks Hill Elementary Schools successfully piloted the OpenSciEd science curriculum in preparation for districtwide implementation.
- Throughout the pilot, the Science Supervisor, STEM coaches, and pilot teachers collaborated to review lessons, identify implementation successes and challenges, and develop instructional supports for districtwide rollout.
- The Elementary STEM Coaches and Science Supervisor enhanced OpenSciEd instructional materials to include visual supports, language supports, discussion protocols, and differentiation strategies.
- The district began translating OpenSciEd instructional materials into Spanish to increase accessibility for multilingual learners and families. Translation work will continue during the 2026–27 school year.

- Through its partnership with STARBASE, the district provided grade 5 students districtwide with 25 hours of hands-on STEM instruction at no cost.

Secondary Science

- The district continued preparing for the Grade 6 OpenSciEd pilot through curriculum planning, teacher collaboration, and implementation support for teachers at Duggan, Waterbury Arts Magnet School, and Wallace Middle School.
- A district teacher curriculum team was established to revise secondary benchmark assessments with a focus on measuring student growth in science practices and skills. This work will continue during the summer of 2026.
- Access to high-quality digital science resources was expanded through the reactivation of Pivot Interactives for all high schools and the continued implementation of Gizmos for secondary teachers at State Street.
- Secondary science teachers participated in comprehensive laboratory safety training to ensure safe and compliant laboratory instruction.

District-wide

- The district's multi-year OpenSciEd implementation plan for grades 4-8 was presented to the Board of Education Curriculum Committee on February 24, 2026.
- Curriculum resources within the ATLAS curriculum management system were refined to strengthen alignment among the written, taught, and assessed curriculum.
- Ongoing professional learning for teachers strengthened instructional practices, deepened content knowledge, and supported curriculum implementation across elementary and secondary science classrooms.
- The Science Supervisor and Elementary STEM Coaches completed two days of OpenSciEd professional learning to strengthen their capacity to support districtwide implementation.

Preschool

Preschool Overview: The 2025-2026 school year demonstrated continued learning for all preschool students. A streamlined approach to the Creative Curriculum was implemented for all part-day programs that provided improved data and provided key information for student growth throughout the school year. This data will be used for future programming for the part day three and four- year old programs. School day Pre-k 4 students began the first year of the revised Pre-k4 curriculum with more focused and intentional instruction in the areas of literacy and math. By Spring 2026, the overwhelming majority of students migrated out of “Below Expectations” and successfully crossed the threshold into mastery for all developmental domains of learning..

Programmatic Initiatives

- Instituted comprehensive data accountability system aligned to the district curriculum for part day preschool programs
- Provided professional development for community site leaders for administering Speed DIAL 4 screening assessment.
- Attended statewide meetings with the CT Office of Early Childhood to increase understanding of Early Start CT program requirements

Curriculum

- Provided all preschool building administrators with classroom progress reports for each marking period
- Developed curriculum related materials for specialized programs to ensure implementation of the curriculum with fidelity.
- Monitored 52 classrooms monthly for implementation of new Pre-k curriculum
- Provided resources to to increase learning for EL students enrolled in the Pre-k program

Professional Development

- Participated in the implementation of the new Pre-K curriculum
- Provided professional learning on the new PRe-K part day instructional and assessment procedures for part day programs.
- Collaborated with the UCONN STARS Task Force to increase learning and awareness opportunities in the community for early childhood programs and assistance

Parent Engagement

- Held monthly meeting with the Family Resource Centers of Waterbury to increase resources to families, businesses and school families in the community
- 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

The district has successfully completed the second year of implementation of its core multilingual language arts programs across K–12. At the elementary level, **Benchmark Adelante** continues to serve as the Tier 1 core Spanish language arts program, providing a comprehensive literacy framework aligned to the Science of Reading, while **Benchmark Express** supports K–5 ESL pull-out instruction by strengthening English language development through culturally responsive, research-based instruction. At the secondary level, **myPerspectives** serves as the core English language arts program for ESL and bilingual sheltered classrooms, offering

engaging grade-level content, scaffolded instruction, and flexible resources to meet the needs of diverse learners.

To further strengthen support for multilingual learners, the district has also identified and implemented supplemental resources targeted to students with varying levels of English proficiency, particularly newcomers. **Benchmark Hello!** provides Grades 3–5 newcomers with integrated survival English, English language development, and social-emotional learning during their first 0–10 months of services. **iLit ELL** supports middle and high school beginner and intermediate English learners by accelerating language development through rigorous texts, first-language supports, and embedded SIOP strategies. Additionally, **Palabras a su paso/Words Their Way** builds foundational Spanish phonics, spelling, and vocabulary for Spanish-speaking newcomers, promoting literacy skills that transfer to English instruction. Together, these core and supplemental resources ensure a comprehensive, research-based system of support for multilingual learners across the district.

Professional Learning

Ongoing professional development provided on topics of:

- **ESL teachers:** Oracy, writing, assessments, and newcomer supports
- **Sheltered instruction teachers:** Cooperative learning and engagement strategies
- **Bilingual teachers:** Transferring language and literacy skills
- **Walsh regular education teachers:** Language acquisition stages and instructional practices
- **K–5 regular education teachers:**
 - Writing instruction and ML strategies
 - Walsh Elementary School- Language Acquisition stages and best instructional practices.
- **Administrators:**
 - Implications related to ML/EL programming and instruction
 - Multiple Entry Points for Multilingual Learners and Principal Leadership Practices.
- **New teachers to the district:** Implications related to ML/EL programming and instruction
- **Middle and high school ELS teachers:** iLit ELL and *Words Their Way* training
- **All ML staff and testing proctors:** LAS Links training

The Connecticut State Seal of Biliteracy: The Seal of Biliteracy recognizes high school graduates who demonstrate proficiency in English and at least one additional language. It celebrates bilingualism and biliteracy, honors the achievements of multilingual learners, and

highlights the value of multilingual skills for success in college, careers, and an increasingly diverse global community.

- **226** Seals of Biliteracy were awarded to **12** different languages to the 2026 graduating class
- **10** students earned the seal in two languages
- **126** students (55.7 %) were **proficient in** English.
- **146** students (64.6%) of the Seal recipients are **Former** ELs. Among those 146 Former ELs, **49** students (33.5%) have met the exit criteria for English language proficiency.
- **100** students have been identified as English Learners/Multilingual Learners (ELs/MLs). This year, 4 of these students successfully met the exit criteria for English proficiency.
- Seals were earned in the following languages: **Arabic, Albanian, Bengali, French, Greek, Guyanese Creole, Haitian Creole, Italian, Jamaican Patois, Portuguese, Spanish, and Urdu.**

Parent Empowerment/Community Partnerships

- The district, schools, and teachers actively promote family engagement through events such as parent-teacher conferences, open houses, award ceremonies, cultural celebrations, and workshops. ParentSquare supports communication in families' preferred languages, and many schools have bilingual staff and parent liaisons available to assist. The district also partners with Linguistica International Interpretation Services to ensure all families feel welcomed, informed, and connected to their school community.
- The Multilingual Learners Education Department held its first 'Cafecito Night' to engage, educate, and connect with parents across the district. Topics included: Social-emotional supports at home, immigration laws and regulations, overview of Multilingual programs and services in Waterbury Public Schools.

Data Highlights:

- The 4-year EL cohort graduation rate for 2025 (most recently released data) for Waterbury Public Schools' ELs is **6.4 percentage points higher than the state average for the same population**. Additionally, Connecticut's graduation gap between ELs and non-ELs is 14.6 percentage points, but Waterbury's is only **2.5 percentage points**.
- **226** Students earned the Seal of Biliteracy in **12** different languages.
- **196** students met the Connecticut English Mastery Standard, which is **13** more students than last year.

Physical Education/Health

The Health and Physical Education Department focused on three (3) primary goals in 2025-2026: (1) delivering standards-based instruction with fidelity to the 2025 National SHAPE America standards, (2) applying research-certified principles of exercise science to all physical fitness activities and (3) embedding opportunities for positive social and emotional learning experiences within all Tier I instruction. It should be noted that 2026 was a transitional year for the district Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessment (CPFA) testing due to changes in reporting protocols mandated by the CSDE. In 2025, the district needed to test all grade nine and grade ten students as well as grades 4, 6 and 8. In 2026, grades 4, 6, 8 and 9 were exclusively assessed. This development did affect both the district participation rates at the high schools as well as the passing rates since student performance data for any particular student can only be submitted once during their high school career. As such, data entries for previously tested students were disallowed, and the actual district performance in 2026 appears to be even better than our numbers indicate.

Notable Highlights:

- July 2025 to June 2026 - Collaborated with the the Supervisor of Technology for Teaching and Learning and the Supervisor of Research, Development and Testing to refine our reporting protocols for the 2026 Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessment (CPFA) individual student reporting requirement
- June 2026 – Finalized CPFA (Fitness Testing) results indicate that WPS achieved a 93.6% participation rate and a 50.3% passing rate district-wide. This represents a 5.1% decrease in the participation rate, and an 8.1% increase in the cohort of grade 4, 6, 8, and 9 students meeting or exceeding the health fitness level standards on all four (4) assessment items
- July 2025 to July 2026 - ongoing revision, updating and transfer of curricula for High School Health and Physical Education Elective Courses into the Atlas Curriculum Platform
- July 2025 to June 2026 - Continuous upgrading of all health and physical education instructional equipment and supplies at all 33 schools

Staff Professional Development

- August 20th, 2025
 - American Red Cross Adult and Pediatric First Aid, CPR, and AED recertification training at West Side Middle School for all Health and PE staff not requiring Lifeguard recertification.

- August 21st, 2025
 - Therapeutic Approaches to Student Warmup and Strength and Conditioning activities with Neuro Fit Therapy, LLC
 - Sports Injury Prevention strategies with Waterbury Health Partnership / Access Rehab / Waterbury Hospital Orthopedic Group
 - Grades PK-12 Physical Education Grade Band Progressions - Review and Teacher Collaboration for Rigor and Coherence
- October 8th, 2025
 - Quality Health & PE Instructional Tasks
 - Novice to Advanced Swim Instruction Strategies with Amanda Clark
 - Heart Healthy Programs/Resources for Elementary PE – Chris Bacote (AHA)
 - Ignition: Digital Wellness and Safety – Victoria Giannotti, Everfi
 - The Compassion Project – Victoria Giannotti, Everfi
 - Vaping: Know the Truth – Victoria Giannotti, Everfi
 - November 2025 - Lifeguard certification / re-certifications with secondary teaching staff at Crosby, Wilby, Kennedy, North End, West Side and Wallace
- August 2025 to June 2026 - Conducted performance evaluations in Powerschool Unified Talent Perform platform of first/second year Health and Physical Education teachers assigned at all levels throughout the district

Curriculum Work:

- August 2025 to June 2026 - Continued to coordinate the following curriculum writing committees tasked with continued refinement of Health and Physical Education curricula and their transfer into the Atlas Curriculum platform:
 - High School Health and Physical Education Required Courses Gr. 9-10
 - High School Health and Physical Education Elective Courses Gr. 11-12
 - 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
 - SEL crosswalks embedded in Health and Physical Education in all model unit and lesson plans at all levels

School Support Activities:

- Partnered with the Connecticut Association of Schools and collaborated with elementary principals to provide six Elementary Unified Sports programs - up two schools from 2025. The participating schools were Gilmartin, Reed, Chase, Walsh,

Kingsbury and Washington Schools, and the programs were, once again, implemented at zero cost to the district

- Collaborated with the HS athletic directors to help facilitate the third season of High School Intra-district Boys' Volleyball in the Spring of 2026. Participation rates and overall quality of play exceeded expectations, and Kennedy HS won the City Championship, unseating two-time defending champion WCA
- Collaborated with the athletic directors to launch a partial third season of High School Intra-district Girls' Soccer in May 2026. Due to lack of an available coach at Crosby, only Kennedy, Career and Wilby were able to field teams in 2025-2026; participation rates have not met expectations for the third consecutive year
- Leveraged Title IV funding to acquire large/durable Physical Education instructional equipment and re-supply item upgrades at all 33 schools
- Continued to coordinate the "Save a Life Tour" distracted driving prevention program for all high schools at zero cost to the district
- Continued to help coordinate 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. This year, 5,745 elementary students were screened, and 1,514 students (26.4%) were referred for additional vision testing/treatment.
- Coordinated the 27th annual First Tee of Ct in-school Golf Clinics in all K-5, PK-8 and middle schools at zero cost to the district
- Continued to help 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
- Provided initial First Aid/Adult and Pediatric CPR/ AED management certification training for select staff members of the Early Childhood Education (ECE) Department

Social Studies

During the 2025–2026 school year, the Social Studies Department remained focused on strengthening instructional practices through high-quality, evidence-based professional learning. The department prioritized inquiry-based instruction, student discourse, primary source analysis, and instructional strategies that promote higher levels of student engagement and critical thinking. Professional learning shifted from traditional presentations to application-based experiences, allowing teachers to immediately implement new strategies and technology into their classrooms. Teacher feedback, classroom observations, and participation data

demonstrated increased confidence and implementation of evidence-based instructional practices that support student-centered learning.

Professional Learning & Instructional Improvement

- Department goal focused on strengthening teachers' capacity to implement:
 - Inquiry-based learning
 - Facilitating academic discussions and debates
 - Primary source analysis
 - Evidence-based instructional strategies that promote student engagement and critical thinking
- Professional learning was intentionally designed to model the instructional practices expected in classrooms.
- Professional learning emphasized:
 - Gallery Walks
 - Hexagonal Thinking
 - Evidence Chains
 - Inquiry-based learning activities
 - Primary source analysis
 - Structured academic discourse
- Teachers experienced these strategies as learners before implementing them in their classrooms.
- Department Chairs incorporated ongoing discussions about student discourse, higher-level questioning, student engagement, and instructional practices into department meetings throughout the year.
- Professional learning shifted toward application based experiences, including a district working session with Kami and Canva representatives where teachers used AI supported tools to revise and enhance their own lessons in real time.
- Teacher feedback indicated strong appreciation for professional learning that had an immediate impact on classroom instruction.

Evidence of Impact

- Teacher surveys, classroom observations, department discussions, and curriculum walkthroughs demonstrated increased implementation of evidence-based instructional practices.
- Teachers reported:
 - Increased student engagement
 - Greater classroom discussion and collaboration
 - Stronger student analysis of historical content

- Increased confidence in implementing instructional strategies introduced during professional learning
- These instructional improvements directly supported the district's vision of creating student-centered classrooms where students actively construct understanding through inquiry and discussion.

Curriculum & Assessment

- Completed curriculum development for:
 - Contemporary Issues
 - Law and Society
 - AP United States History
 - AP United States Government & Politics
 - Secondary Summer School Social Studies
- Updated district high school common exams based on teacher feedback.
- Revised curriculum to align with the new Connecticut Social Studies Standards.
- Added Portrait of a Graduate competencies to all completed Grades 6–12 social studies courses in Atlas.

Student & Teacher Accomplishments

- Six Waterbury Public Schools students were selected as Regional Finalists in the National Civics Bee®, competing against students from Bethel, Ridgefield, Torrington, Bristol, Meriden, Granby, and Kingswood Oxford in West Hartford.
- Three social studies teachers were approved as UConn Early College Experience (ECE) instructors, expanding opportunities for students to earn college credit while in high school.

Research & Testing

The **Research, Development, and Student Testing Department** provides comprehensive leadership in the administration, management, analysis, and reporting of student assessment data across the district. The department delivers training and technical support to district and school-based staff and oversees all aspects of state test administration, including accommodations and data integrity.

State assessments coordinated by the department include:

- Kindergarten Inventory
- Smarter Balanced
- Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)
- Connecticut SAT (CT-SAT)
- Alternate Assessments

The department also prepares, manages, and analyzes data for a wide range of district, state, and national assessments, including:

- mCLASS
- PSAT
- Advanced Placement (AP)
- LAS Links
- Connecticut Physical Fitness Assessment (CPFA)
- i-Ready

In addition, the department compiles and reports data for several ongoing district, state, and federal initiatives, including:

- Next Generation Accountability Model
- Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
- Waterbury Promise
- Alliance District Grant
- Commissioner's Network

The department oversees every phase of the assessment process, from planning and administration through reporting and analysis, while ensuring appropriate testing accommodations and maintaining the highest standards of data quality. This work is supported through close collaboration with the Special Education, Multilingual, and Information Technology departments to ensure accuracy, compliance, and effective data management.

Each year, the department reviews and approves numerous doctoral research proposals seeking to conduct continuing education studies within the district. The department supervisor actively contributes to state and national assessment committees, helping to inform policy and best practices in educational assessment.

New and Expanded Initiatives, 2025–2026

- Served as the only district representative on the Connecticut State Department of Education's Connecticut Cohort Verification System (CCVS) Planning Team, contributing to the development of statewide graduation rate reporting and certification procedures
- Collaborated with the Information Technology Department to prepare and validate data for the district's new artificial intelligence platform, enabling users to query multiple databases at once using plain language
- Compiled longitudinal trend data for Career and Technical Education students to support the Perkins Grant Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment
- Partnered with the Connecticut State Department of Education to host school site visits and a district debrief as part of the federal peer review process for state test

administration, in partnership with the Center for Connecticut Education Research Collaboration (CCERC)

- Prepared and submitted the Connecticut State Department of Education Postsecondary Readiness Grant application

Technology for Teaching and Learning

Professional Learning

This past year, the department introduced new AI tools throughout the year to assist teachers with our constantly evolving platforms. The department of Technology for Teaching and Learning conducted several professional development opportunities in the district, including:

- AI tools on Atlas Curriculum program
- Google Gemini Training for Teachers
- Google Classroom Update Training AI in Education for Teachers in March 2026.
- LanSchool Training for teachers in April 2026, Projects and Accomplishments

Curriculum and Instruction

- Continued expanding the district's Atlas Curriculum Management platform, including the launch of AI curriculum tools.
- Introduced a new elementary Library Media Specialist curriculum aligned with ELA Benchmark instruction and library-based research projects.
- Maintained and updated the High School Program of Studies.

Educational Technology

- Managed all district educational technology programs through Clever.
- Developed and implementation plan utilizing AI in the classroom

Data Management and Reporting

- Created district websites that provide administrators and Central Office with streamlined access to data reporting.
- Managed district data systems, including the Performance Matters platform.
- Created documents and dashboards for the academic department
- Collaborated with the Health and Physical Education and Research and Testing departments to improve state testing data collection and provide more accurate student rosters.

Leadership and District Initiatives

- Ensured all new educational programming to comply with student data privacy policy
- Created the district's School Improvement Plans and supported the implementation of School Climate Committees.
- Organized and led the Mastery-Based Learning Leadership Team to develop the ongoing assessment plan, managed Mastery-Based Learning credit data, and facilitated Lead Panelist meetings.
- An active member of the Professional Development and Evaluation Committee (PDEC), contributing to the development of the new Educator and Leader Evaluation Plans.

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, PMT (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**
 - Xello training
 - Section 504 Plans-
 - Wellmore
 - The Cove Center
 - AI in school counseling

- **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

2026 Excellence in Education Award Winners



2026 Building Level Teachers of the Year (Elementary)

Bucks Hill Preschool- Christine Boampong

Bucks Hill Elementary School- Dolores Rivera Bambus

Bunker Hill Elementary School- Kristina Martinez

B.W. Tinker Elementary School- Maria Guerrero

Carrington Elementary School- Shabana Carroll

Driggs Elementary School- Marissa Dorso

F.J. Kingsbury Elementary School- Nicole L. Signore

Frank G. Regan Elementary School- Allison Nicole Anulewicz

Gilmartin Elementary School- Stephen J. Campbell*

Hopeville Elementary School- Mark Mancini Jr.

H.S. Chase Elementary School- Savannah Elise Marchetti

John Duggan Elementary School- Marcy M. Pogodzienski

Jonathan E. Reed Elementary School- Cynthia Rinaldi

Maloney Interdistrict Magnet School- Katie Barbieri

M.M. Generali Elementary School- Gina Sodano

Roberto Clemente International Dual Language School- Liridona Bizati

Rotella Interdistrict Magnet School- Stephanie Colon*

Sprague Elementary School- Patrick Murphy

Walsh Elementary School- Elizabeth Fac

Washington Elementary School- Stacy Gray

Wendell L. Cross Elementary School- Angelina Irizarry

Woodrow Wilson Elementary School- Leocadia Quinones

2026 Building Level Teachers of the Year (Secondary)

Crosby High School- Ilea Gonzalez*

Enlightenment School- Renee Sileo-Pettway

John F. Kennedy High School- Joseph Del Debbio

North End Middle School- Raymond Santovasi*

State Street Program- Lisa Bleau

Wallace Middle School- Linda Ligi

Waterbury Arts Magnet School- Tracy King

Waterbury Career Academy High School- Keith Morin

West Side Middle School- Dr. Kimberly Kulesza*

Wilby High School- Antonio Ursino

**WPS Teacher of the Year Finalists*

2026 Paraprofessionals of the Year

Elementary Paraprofessional of the Year- Donna M. Butterworth, Duggan Elementary School

Middle School Paraprofessional of the Year- Becky Scott, Wallace Middle School

High School Paraprofessional of the Year- Edward Hamilton, State Street Program

2026 Waterbury Paraprofessional of the Year

Donna M. Butterworth, Duggan Elementary School

2026 Support Staff of the Year

Parent Liaison- Evelyn Devin, North End Middle School

2026 Central Office Staff of the Year

Network Administrator- Vitto Caligiuri

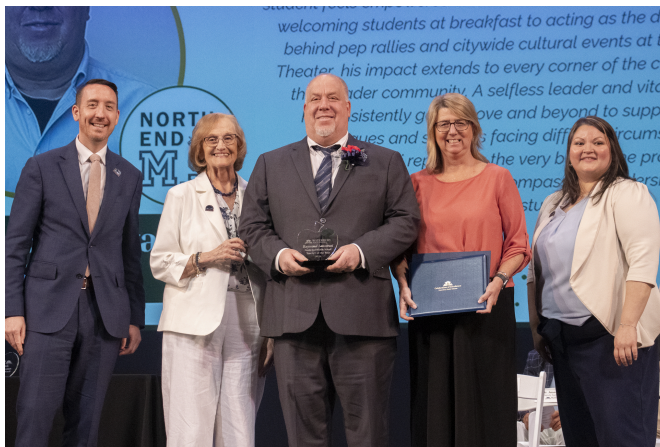
2026 Impact of the Year

Principal- Diurca Lugo-Tomasella, Roberto Clemente International Dual Language School

2026 Administrator of the Year

Principal- Melissa DiGiovanni, Duggan Elementary School

2026 Waterbury Public Schools Teacher of the Year



Waterbury Public Schools is proud to honor Mr. Raymond Santovasi, Music Teacher at North End Middle School, as the 2026 WPS Teacher of the Year.

An extraordinary educator, Mr. Santovasi cultivates an inviting, orderly, and safe environment where every single student feels empowered to take academic and creative risks. His positive impact resonates across the entire campus and extends deep into the broader community;

he can be found welcoming students with a warm smile every morning, and he serves as the driving force behind high-energy school pep rallies as well as major citywide cultural events at the Palace Theater. A selfless leader and a vital mentor, Mr. Santovasi consistently goes above and beyond to support both his colleagues and his students when they are facing difficult circumstances. Through his unique blend of compassion, steadfast leadership, and a relentless focus on student achievement, Ray truly represents the very best of the education profession.

Mr. Santovasi 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 2025-2026 school year are:

Elementary

Bucks Hill Elementary School- Ayah Manchour

Bunker Hill Elementary School- Diego Roach-Soto

B.W. Tinker Elementary School- Elisa Velo

Carrington Elementary School- Lesley Marin

Driggs Elementary School- Lidia Cruz

F.J. Kingsbury Elementary School- Anh Vu

Frank G. Regan Elementary School- Nina-Simone DaGraca

Gilmartin Elementary School- Hillary Borja

Hopeville Elementary School- Azania Mokgosi

Roberto Clemente International Dual Language School- Cataleya Munoz

H.S. Chase Elementary School- Alex Aceves

John Duggan Elementary School- Janeliz Cotts

Jonathan E. Reed Elementary School- Gavriel Espinoza

Maloney Interdistrict Magnet School- Abraham Martinez-Frias

M.M. Generali Elementary School- Dayvid Loja-Sigua

Rotella Interdistrict Magnet School- Felipe Tavares

Sprague Elementary School- Davion Robertson

Walsh Elementary School- Jacy Garcia-Coronado

Washington Elementary School- Shirley Remache-Magin

Wendell L. Cross Elementary School- Reese Philips

Woodrow Wilson Elementary School- Faith Rodriguez

Secondary

Crosby High School- Yashwanie Sookhu

Crosby High School-Early College High- Aiden Mejia

Enlightenment School- Yafreysi Contreras

John F. Kennedy High School- Kerly Pila-Yanez

John F. Kennedy High School SOAR Program-Ashley Garcia-Martinez

North End Middle School- Shiv Motipersaud

State Street Program- Ashton Ardito

Wallace Middle School- Nachele Lumfuakiadi

Wallace Middle School-Academic Academy- Jonairy Rosario-De Paula

Waterbury Adult Continuing Education- Vinisha Seenaraine

Waterbury Arts Magnet School- Sophia Nicolasora & Richard Ellis

Waterbury Career Academy High School- Zachary Fitzgerald

West Side Middle School- Violet Watkins-Daniels

Wilby High School- Milan-Renee Mukeina

Wilby High School ATOMS Program- Maryluz Ramos-Hernandez



Respectfully Submitted,

Dr. Darren M. Schwartz

Superintendent of Schools

August 2026

