

Waterbury Public Schools News Update

Vol. 10, Issue 1

September 2008

AYP Results Announced: Good News for Several Schools

Waterbury students made some significant gains on both the CMT and CAPT tests earlier this year, and, as a result, our schools made progress in terms of No Child Left Behind. Schools making Adequate Yearly Progress this year were Generali, Brooklyn, Hopeville, Gilmartin, Washington, Regan, Woodrow Wilson, Wallace Middle School and the Waterbury Arts Magnet School (both middle school and high school).

Schools need to show progress two years in a row to be moved off the list. Generali School moved off the list of schools in need of improvement this year, and both Gilmartin and Washington moved off the "watch list." Regan and the Waterbury Arts Magnet School continued their status as schools not on the list. Both Brooklyn and Hopeville Schools made AYP and are "holding" in year one status. Wallace Middle School and Woodrow Wilson School will hold in Year Four.

We are encouraged by the progress our schools have made and are continuing to make. Meeting AYP is an "all or nothing" situation. A school must meet every sin-

AYP continued page 6

Inside this issue:

Project Opening
Doors 2

CMT, CAPT
Results 3

DIP Applauded 4

CommPACT
Schools 5

BOE—Goes Live
—See Listings 7

New Staff 8

Waterbury School District Awarded \$3,111,516 Early Reading First Grant

WATERBURY - School officials have been notified the city's proposal for a three-year \$3,111,516 "We Read First" program to enhance literacy at the pre-school level is among 31 programs that have been awarded money under the 2008 Early Reading First federal grants program.

The "WE Read First" program will enhance literacy instruction for 216 students involved in the city's pre-kindergarten program in nine existing classrooms at six city schools. Using Harcourt's *Trophies for Pre-Kindergarten* and *Breakthrough to Literacy Pre-K* and other supplies and materials along with targeted professional development, the grant will provide classroom teachers with research-proven methods for enhancing instruction, especially for students who are enter-

ing pre-kindergarten at a disadvantage. It will specifically fund a project coordinator, two literacy coaches, two bilingual literacy coaches, a clerical assistant, extended day bussing, professional development for staff, new materials and supplies, and funding for parent involvement activities and field trips for students.

Those nine classrooms are at Bucks Hill School, Bunker Hill School, Driggs School, Sprague School, Walsh School and Washington School. These six schools serve a population of students that include many non-native English speakers. A dual-language approach will be used in some classrooms and a "push-in" English as a Second Language Support model in others.

The funding breaks down into \$1,284,211 in Year One, \$907,056 in Year Two, and \$927,049 in the third and final year of the grant.

Project Opening Doors Kicks Off at Wilby High School

The Project Opening Doors Kick-off occurred September 29 at Wilby High School. The official announcement of this Advanced Placement program at Wilby was attended by many dignitaries, including representatives from Exxon Mobil, the National Math Science Initiative, and the Connecticut Business and Industry Association (CBIA). Local dignitaries included State Senator Joan Hartley, and Representatives Larry Butler, Selim Noujaim, and Jeffrey Berger, along with Mayor Michael Jarjura, several Board of Education Commissioners, and Central Office staff. Many students who will be participating in the program attended as well as parents and school staff.

According to a press release issued by CBIA, Project Opening Doors will help expand Advanced Placement (AP) programs to prepare students for future careers in science and technology. The release states:

The nine schools participating this year are: Ansonia High; Bulkeley High, Hartford; Coventry High; East Hartford High; New Britain High; New London High; Putnam High; Westhill High, Stamford and Wilby High, Waterbury.

These nine schools will receive a total of up to \$4 million over the next six years for training and incentives to increase Connecticut students' participation in AP courses.

"POD is a partnership between the public and private sectors to bring education priorities in line with the demands of the 21 st century workplace by preparing students to excel in math, science and English and encouraging them to explore science- and technology-based careers," said Lauren Weisberg Kaufman, CBIA vice president of education and job training and executive director of the CBIA Education Foundation.

Studies by the U.S. Department of Education show that students who complete more-rigorous classes in high school are more successful in college and the workplace than those who simply meet minimum graduation requirements.

"Project Opening Doors addresses Connecticut 's need for more-rigorous coursework that will help produce high school graduates who have the requirements and education needed to be successful in college and in future careers," said Rathgeber. "It also helps close the achievement gap and gives all students, especially those in underserved minority groups, the opportunity to be successful participants in the future workforce."

CBIA, in partnership with the state, was awarded a grant for the program in September 2007 from the National Math and Science Initiative (NMSI), a nonprofit organization designed to help the U.S. maintain its global leadership position in technological innovation.

"Improving students' performance in math and science is the most effective way to increase U.S. competitiveness in a global market," said Tom Luce, CEO of the National Math and Science Initiative. "Connecticut is one of the states in the forefront of these efforts. Tackling the issue through its Project Opening Doors campaign will significantly improve the skills of our future workforce."

NMSI was created with a \$125 million grant from the ExxonMobil Corp. and is supported by numerous organizations, including the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation.

"ExxonMobil invests in people and communities around the world because we believe that meeting the world's economic, energy and environmental challenges requires the development of the world's most powerful natural resource – the human mind," said Chairman and CEO of Exxon Mobil Corporation Rex Tillerson. "By focusing on programs that are proven to be effective, NMSI holds great promise in fostering the next generation of scientists and engineers."



Connecticut Mastery Test Results Announced

Our results on the most recent Connecticut Mastery Test showed good growth in most areas and most grades in both students scoring at or above proficient and in those scoring at or above goal. There were statistically significant improvements in a number of areas, including grade 3 reading (proficient level), grade 5 reading (goal level), grade 6 math (both goal and proficient level), grade 6 reading (both goal and proficient), grade 7 math (proficient), grade 7 reading (both goal and proficient) and grade 7 writing (goal).

The scores were as follows:

	Math		Reading		Writing	
	06-07	07-08	06-07	07-08	06-07	07-08
Gr. 3	67.5	70.0	45.1	49.2	72.1	72.1
Gr. 4	66.7	69.4	45.3	47.4	73.1	74.6
Gr. 5	71.1	73.0	51.4	53.2	73.7	70.3
Gr. 6	55.8	61.1	44.9	52.0	68.8	58.5
Gr. 7	51.6	56.8	48.0	53.0	58.5	60.3
Gr. 8	57.2	54.3	55.7	52.2	69.8	63.7

This was the first year the state tested Science as a subject. Our scores at or above proficient in grade 5 was 58.4% and in grade 8 it was 42.7%.

Connecticut Academic Performance Test Results Announced

Waterbury students showed improved results in all areas at the proficient level and in three out of four areas at the goal level. Two of these gains were statistically significant: writing at the proficient level and science at the goal level. Our results were as follows:

Math (proficient - up = 48.3% vs. 47.7% last year; goal - up = 14.5% vs 12.8% last year)

Science (proficient - up = 47.9% vs. 46.7% last year; goal - up = 15% vs 10.4% last year)

Reading (proficient - up = 57.2% vs. 55.5% last year; goal - down = 15.4% vs 17.5% last year)

Writing (proficient - up = 76.6% vs. 66.2% last year; goal - up = 29.4% vs 26.1% last year)

We are especially pleased to report that Wilby High School made statistically significant gains in three out of four subject areas (math, science and writing) and improved in all subject areas for proficiency. Kennedy High School and the Waterbury Arts Magnet School made statistically significant gains in two subject areas (Kennedy High School in science and writing and the Waterbury Arts Magnet School in math and science).

There were no statistically significant declines at either the district or school level.

We are also pleased to see that although the state overall made larger gains in some areas than we did, we held our own in many areas within our district reference group. We are still #1 in our district reference group in writing at the proficient level, and #2 in math within our DRG at the proficient level. We are doing slightly better within our DRG for math at the goal level (up one place from #5 to #4) and in science at both the proficient and goal levels (up to #4 this year from #5 last year). We are now #2 in writing at the goal level (we were #1 last year).

District Improvement Plan Applauded

State Education Commissioner Mark McQuillan declared that Waterbury "very clearly has made a lot of strides in the past several years," as he began a brief update of the district's DIP (District Improvement Plan) before the State Board of Education July 2. He called the draft plan a "very workable starting point" and applauded Waterbury for its efforts over the past year in crafting the document. He said he was "confident" the end result will be an improvement in student achievement provided funding remains available for

the district to move forward with its detailed plans. This was the second step in the process of state review. Earlier this year School Superintendent David I. Snead, Board of Education Commissioner Anne Sweeney and Assistant Superintendents Paul Sequiera and Ann Marie Cullinan appeared before the state Board of Education's Ad Hoc Committee. During that session, the Waterbury educators presented the district's response to the Cambridge Report. That answer was detailed within the DIP.

State officials have explained that Waterbury is further along in the process than any other school district in the state. In fact, during the July 2 session, Commissioner McQuillan and state Department of Education officials told members of the state Board of Education that Waterbury's plan was a good example of what other district's plans should look like when they are brought forward.

Opening Doors, continued from page 2

Connecticut was one of only seven states selected from a pool of 28 applicants to receive a NMSI grant to fund initiatives that foster the next generation of scientists and engineers through rigorous academics in school.

"We need to strengthen Connecticut's high schools by engaging students in more-rigorous content. This is critical to preparing all of our young people to achieve success in life. Students who complete more-rigorous and challenging courses are more successful in college and the workplace," said McQuillan. "We are pleased to partner with CBIA on Project Opening Doors and encourage students to take challenging AP courses that will provide them with the academic foundation they will need."

The nine schools will receive training and incentives to help them expand their AP programs through advanced coaching of AP teachers, workshops and other professional development activities. Financial incentives based on academic results will be available to teachers, students and school leaders.

"The combination of high-quality training and financial incentives is designed to create a culture in which academic excellence becomes the centerpiece of a high school student's experience," said Cam Vautour, president of CBIA's Project Opening Doors.

"East Hartford is proud to be one of the first schools selected for Project Opening Doors," said Dr. Marion Martinez, superintendent of schools, East Hartford. "The program will allow us to further improve and offer more AP courses for a larger number of East Hartford High School students and help close the achievement gap that separates students in Connecticut's suburbs from those in its cities."

CBIA's POD partners include Connecticut's departments of Education and Higher Education; the Academy for Education in Mathematics, Science & Technology; and the Connecticut Science Center.

The CBIA Education Foundation is a nonprofit affiliate of CBIA, the state's largest business organization, with 10,000 members.

Washington School and West Side Middle School Join List of CommPACT Schools

Two schools in Waterbury – West Side Middle School and Washington Elementary School – have been named as two of eight schools statewide that will serve as the first cohort of CommPACT schools this coming year. At a press conference in Hartford, Richard Schwab, Dean of the University of Connecticut's Neag School of Education and head of the Connecticut Alliance for CommPACT Schools, said, "Never before in the state or nation, have the primary stakeholders involved in making schools work, set aside their differences to work in unison to tackle the discrepancies between our state's best and most challenged schools. The CommPACT schools will become the kind of learning environment we want for all of our children."

A CommPACT School is an existing public school that is to be reorganized by teachers and administrators. The school will then work collaboratively with experts in education through a partnership with the Institute for Urban School Reform and the Neag School of Education. Consultants will review each school's strengths and challenges and will assist the school in identifying proven, research-based strategies to address its needs.

The name CommPACT comes from the alliance envisioned between the school's various stakeholders: community, parents, administrators, children and teachers. To be selected as a CommPACT School, 90% of the school's teachers, its principal and the district must have agreed, along with the head of the local teachers union.

Several videos were premiered at the press conference in Hartford. To see these videos, go to the [CommPACT schools web page](#) or follow these links:

youtube link:

<http://www.education.uconn.edu/research/commcompact/news/launch/>

But the easiest, highest quality is linked here for the next month:

www.movingpix.com/preview/UConn/ChangingFace/ChangingFace.html

www.movingpix.com/preview/UConn/ForKids/ForKids.html

www.movingpix.com/preview/UConn/village/village.html

www.movingpix.com/preview/UConn/WhyNow/WhyNow.html



AYP, continued from page 1

gle target to be considered making AYP. If a school meets every target but one, it is still considered to be "not meeting AYP." Many of our schools that did not make AYP have done so only because they have missed a target in one or more sub-groups.

It is also important to note that the minimum requirements of making AYP under No Child Left Behind are becoming more stringent (from 68% to 79% in CMT reading, from 74% to 82% in CMT math, from 72% to 81% in CAPT reading, and from 69% to 80% in CAPT math). Our schools have been advancing forward, even if they are not catching up in every category. We continue to do well in comparison to other urban school districts. In addition, we have developed a District Improvement Plan that sets out concrete steps to further our progress. This plan has been reviewed and approved by the State Department of Education and was applauded by State Education Commissioner Mark McQuillan, who declared that Waterbury "very clearly has made a lot of strides in the past several years."

Making AYP:

Generali, Brooklyn, Hopeville, Gilmartin, Washington, Regan, Woodrow Wilson, Wallace Middle School and the Waterbury Arts Magnet School (both middle school and high school).

Watch List:

Barnard, Wendell Cross, Maloney, and Rotella

Year One:

Tinker plus Hopeville and Brooklyn (holding at year one after making AYP)

Year Two:

Bunker Hill

Year Three

Sprague

Year Four:

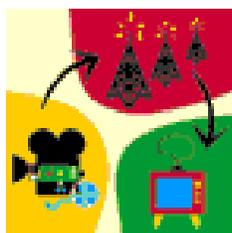
Kingsbury, Walsh, and North End plus Wwilson and Wallace (holding at year four after making AYP)

Year Five:

Bucks Hill, Carrington, Chase, Driggs, West Side, Crosby, Kennedy and Wilby

Generali Principal Kathy Stamp celebrated her school's achievement in moving off the list of schools in need of improvement by allowing students to try to "dunk" her in a dunk tank. Students that scored proficient or better in all areas of the test that was administered last March had the opportunity to give it a try, including students who had moved on to sixth grade at Wallace Middle School.





Board of Education Meetings will now be broadcast LIVE on Channel 21, Comcast Cable. BOE workshops will be taped and broadcast for later viewing on Channel 21. Please note that this is the GOVERNMENT access channel, not Education Access (Ch 16).

Waterbury Board of Education 2008 Meeting Broadcast Schedule

Channel 21

Meeting Date Live (time) Replay date/time

9/15/08 Regular Meeting 6:30 p.m. 9/17/08 – 5:00 p.m.
9/22/08 Workshop n/a 9/24/08 – 5:00 p.m.
9/29/08 Regular Meeting 6:30 p.m. 10/1/08 – 5:00 p.m.
10/6/08 Workshop n/a 10/8/08 – 5:00 p.m.
10/14/08 Regular Meeting 6:30 p.m. 10/15/08 – 5:00 p.m.
10/27/08 Workshop n/a 10/29/08 – 5:00 p.m.
11/3/08 Regular Meeting 6:30 p.m. 11/5/08 – 5:00 p.m.
11/10/08 Workshop n/a 11/12/08 – 5:00 p.m.
11/17/08 Regular Meeting 6:30 p.m. 11/19/08 – 5:00 p.m.
11/24/08 Workshop n/a 11/25/08 – 5:00 p.m.*
12/1/08 Regular Meeting 6:30 p.m. 12/3/08 – 5:00 p.m.
12/8/08 Workshop n/a 12/10/08 – 5:00 p.m.
12/15/08 Regular Meeting 6:30 p.m. 12/17/08 – 5:00 p.m.

Note: All replay times are 5:00 p.m. Tape will come off for live government shows and then back on at 9:30 overnight.

*change due to Holiday



Wilson School FRC FAMILY READ

An interactive and entertaining 8 week book sharing experience that reaches the heart and inspires the mind! Engage in interesting conversations and fun-filled activities with other adults using children's literature. Share the joy of reading with your child!

Open to parents and caregivers of Waterbury Public Schools. Dinner served at each meeting. Childcare provided for children ages 4 and older.

When: Thursdays, Beginning October 16th, 2008

Time: 5-7 pm

Place: Wilson Family Resource Center-Parent Room

235 Birch St.

Waterbury, CT 06704



Space is limited. First come, first serve basis.
For more information, please call 573-6664.

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CONGRATULATIONS TO NEW STAFF!

And a warm welcome to all of our new teachers!

Administrators in new positions or new to the district include:

- Nicholas Albini, Supervisor for Reading / Language Arts (grades 7—12)
- Jason Sconziano, Supervisor, Special Education
- Patience Bonner, SVP, State Street School
- Elizabeth Henson, Vice Principal, Crosby High School
- Donald Rapuano, House Principal, Wallace Middle School
- Marc Ladin, Principal, Driggs School

Also, Mary Ann Marold is the new Education Liaison to Government, Business and the Community.



**WELCOME TO ALL NEW SECRETARIES,
PARAPROFESSIONALS, CUSTODIAL STAFF,
CAFETERIA STAFF, SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS,
PARENT LIAISONS AND EVERY OTHER
CATEGORY!**