

School Superintendent Dr. Kathleen Ouellette warned parents and staff that with eight "snow days" already spent so far this year and traditional winter weather still to come, the school district may have to add additional days to the end of the school year, change the May 2, 2012 Professional Day to a day of instruction and / or take days away from the spring recess.

(Nov. 15, 2011)

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Waterbury Public Schools News Update

Vol. 13, Issue 1

September / October / November / December 2011

America's Strongest Man Visits Duggan School and Pulls Bus

America's Strongest Man Derik Poundstone visited Duggan School after students and staff collected over \$1,000 worth of canned goods to be donated to local area families. As a motivation to bring in lots of canned goods, Physical Education teacher Cassie Dingwall had arranged for the visit and for Mr. Poundstone to pull a bus loaded with the canned goods up the street. Prior to the pull, Mr. Poundstone, who lives in Waterbury and is a police officer in Naugatuck, met with students who raised the greatest number of donations.



New Superintendent Visits Schools, Meets Community



Waterbury's new Superintendent of Schools is Dr. Kathleen M. Ouellette. Dr. Ouellette's first official day on the job was

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New Duggan School Opens, Ribbon Cut At Newly Renovated Enlightenment School

The new Duggan School officially opened as the city's newest pre-kindergarten through eighth grade school this year, while the Enlightenment Program held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to unveil its newly renovated classroom space at 30 Church Street.

More photos on pages 8 and 9.



New Reed School Rising Up



Work is continuing on the new Jonathan Reed School off North Main Street. The new pre-kindergarten through eighth grade school is scheduled to open in the fall of 2012.

Back to School Rally Attracts Large Crowds



This year's Back to School Rally was one of the biggest yet. Organizers estimated there might have been as many as 2,000 or more parents and students in attendance.

Comcast Offers Low Income Families Internet Essentials

As part of its commitment to help local communities, Comcast is now offering an Internet Essentials package for low-income families with students in school. With the Internet Essentials package, eligible families can receive internet service for just \$9.95 per month plus tax and are eligible to purchase a low-cost computer at \$149.95 plus tax and receive free internet training.

To be eligible, families must meet the following criteria:

- live within a Comcast service area
- have at least one child who is receiving free lunch through the National School Lunch program
- has not subscribed to Comcast internet service within the previous 90 days
- does not have an overdue Comcast bill or unreturned equipment

For more information, contact Comcast at 1-855-846-8376 or visit InternetEssentials.com

Family members will be able to write and receive emails, do homework, share photos, do job searches, pay bills online, watch videos, download music, and more.

School / Staff Successes

Wilby High School has shown tremendous success in increasing the number of students taking Advanced Placement courses as part of the Project Opening Doors Program.

"I want to let you know that all of us at the National Math and Science Initiative are extremely proud of Wilby High School. The increased participation and results in AP math, science, and English courses has made Wilby High School a leader in the state of Connecticut and a great example of what can take place when properly trained teachers, supportive academic leadership, and high expectations for all students are put in place. Yours is a story that needs to be told throughout urban districts in the United States." **Dale R. Fleury**, National Math and Science Initiative Regional Director

THE STATISTICS TELL THE STORY:

Wilby HS in 2010-11:

Ranks 4th in the entire state in terms of total AP MSE QS for African Americans and Hispanics

Ranks 4th in the state in terms of AP Science QS for African Americans and Hispanics

Ranks 4th in the state in terms of AP English QS for African Americans and Hispanics

Ranks 2nd in the state in terms of AP Math QS for African Americans and Hispanics

Since starting the program Wilby HS (first number represents total in 2007-08 which is the year before the program began, the second number is 2010-11 and does not include this year's enrollment):

enrollment in AP MSE for all students has increased 183% (88 to 249)

enrollment in AP MSE for African American and Hispanic students has increased 273% (52 to 194)

QS for all students in AP MSE has increased 229% (17 to 56)

QS for African American and Hispanic students in AP MSE has increased 255% (11 to 39)

Dr. David L. Snead reported to the Waterbury Board of Education, "It was an honor for me to attend last week's AP Awards ceremony at Wilby High School as one of my last official events here in Waterbury. Enrollment in AP courses over the five years of Project Opening Doors has increased from 88 in the first year to 249 last year. Enrollment in AP courses by minority students has increased from 52 in the first year to 194 last year. I was very pleased to shake the hands of those students who were receiving awards, especially those who have received multiple awards."

- Bucks Hill Pre-K at the Annex received a \$500 Books for Schools Grant from Target. The money will be used to enhance classroom libraries and augment the lending library to offer more choices to our children and families.
- Suzanne Dion, an art teacher at Rotella Interdistrict Magnet School, has been recognized by Artsonia, the world's largest online kids' art museum, for her outstanding leadership in the area of arts education at her school. The school's online art gallery at www.artsonia.com/schools/RotellaInterdistrictMagnet - was ranked first in the state and 52nd in the nation, according to criteria developed by the site. During the 2010-2011 school year, the Rotella gallery showcased 3,617 pieces of artwork. This popular collection was visited more than 19,324 times and has received 1198 comments from friends and family.
- The Center for 21st Century Skills at Education Connection has received a State of Connecticut Department of Education Inter-district Grant for two programs involving Waterbury Public Schools. The first program is "Advancing Literacy Development Through Digital Media and Movie Making" at Kennedy High School. This program is a collaboration of three urban districts (Danbury, New Haven and Waterbury) six suburban districts (Berlin, Bethel, Brookfield, East Haven, Plymouth and Simsbury), two rural / regional districts (Region 15 and Region 16), the Public Broadcasting System, the Connecticut College of Technology and the Connecticut Student Film festival, under the guidance of Education Connection. Among many activities, students will be asked to produce short documentary films. The second program is "Literacy Advancement and Innovation Academy" at Crosby High School. Students will participate in a series of workshops at college and industry locations for collaborative, project-based learning.
- The Wallace Middle School band escorted the Macy's Santa to his location inside Macy's on Friday, December 2. The band then played inside the mall, attracting a lot of attention from shoppers.
- Regan School has decided to change its school mascot from the Regan Roadrunners to the Regan Rhinos. Regan Rhinos are: Responsible, Honest, In uniform, Never late, Optimistic about the future, and Safe.

District Implements Governance Councils

Fourteen Waterbury schools that were required to implement School Governance Councils by November 1, 2011 have done so and are now in the process of conducting their first meetings and establishing by-laws and meeting schedules. Some of the fourteen schools will be seeking additional parent or teacher members in the coming months, while one school, Chase, had to seek a State Department of Education opinion on how to handle a seventh-place tie between two parent candidates.

The State Department of Education told Chase that it would have to conduct a run-off election for this seventh place if both candidates wished to pursue a spot, but the school's Governance Council could then vote to amend the by-laws to allow for a non-voting alter-

nate position. The alternate would take the place of any parent member who had to resign mid-term.

Other schools who were not able to elect a full slate of either parent or teacher members will have to hold elections at some point for the remaining seats.

The elections were held during the week of Open House at all schools required to establish Governance Councils. Parents were allowed to drop off completed ballots at the schools prior to Open House or they could bring their ballots to school that evening. As an alternative, parents could also vote at the Family Intake Center. If parents choose this option, they were required to disclose their name, address and the school on the ballot or

an outer envelope so that each ballot could be returned to the appropriate school and no duplicate votes could occur.

The legislation that established the School Governance Councils mandated that there be only one vote per household, so schools had to mark off family names when ballots were returned.

The fully-seated School Governance Council includes seven parents, five teachers, two community representatives, and a non-voting school administrator (principal or designee). High schools are supposed to elect two non-voting students as well. The fourteen schools are: Bucks Hill, Carrington, Chase, Driggs, Sprague, Walsh, Washington, Wilson, North End, Wallace, West Side, Crosby, Kennedy and Wilby.

Wilby SOS Network Continues

Wilby High School's SOS Network (Support Our Soldiers) is underway again for its third year. Students, faculty, and staff are collecting personal hygiene items, snacks, treats, non-perishable foods, socks, and other items for care packages for active duty, deployed soldiers. Students write thank you letters and make holiday cards to include in the packages, and the video technology classes have made lovely, heartfelt DVD's with loving messages from the students and staff. The special education classes also wrote notes describing their favorite teachers, sent out along with photos of themselves. Students in physical education classes participated as well, writing special letters of thanks.

Wilby teacher Lori Stroud began this initiative several years ago when her daughter was deployed to Iraq and it has blossomed into a school-wide community service project, with three collections/mailings each year.

It is especially nice when these soldiers come to visit and thank the students in person, or when they send a hand-written note of appreciation for their care package. Captain Jeff Berwell wrote "I want to tell you that you give me the strength each day to continue my mission... always try to achieve more, follow your dreams, and seize the opportunities that await you."

Waterbury Named A “100 Best” for Second Year in a Row

Waterbury Named One of the Nation’s 100 Best Communities for Young People by America’s Promise Alliance and ING

Competition Recognizes Community’s Efforts to Reduce High School Dropout Rates

On October 12, 2011, Waterbury once again achieved national recognition as one of America’s Promise Alliance’s *100 Best Communities for Young People* presented by ING for its initiatives to help young people. The competition recognizes communities across the country that focus on reducing high school dropout rates and providing service and support to their youth.

America’s Promise Alliance named Waterbury one of its *100 Best* for a second time because of the city’s dedication to confront issues in the community head on and to improve the quality of life for young people and their families through its ambitious Birth to 21 Plan. Special community programs like Afterschool programs, Safe Home, and Safe Places, provide young residents with direction and skills to succeed, while offering venues for young people to go if they have been neglected or abused. Health and dental care are also offered to insured and uninsured young people through the Health

Clinic and the Smile Builders Program. The Waterbury Public School System now has Parent Liaisons at each school who are working to build strong relationships with families in order to increase family engagement and student achievement. Additionally, more than 700 parents, youth service personnel, educators, and youth have been trained to use the *Search Institute* 40 Developmental Assets as Waterbury’s “common language” for positive youth development. Due to this and other efforts, Waterbury now graduates 86.3 percent of students from high school.

“We are proud of Waterbury for being named one of the America’s Promise Alliance’s *100 Best*,” said Honorable Michael J. Jarjura, Mayor of the City of Waterbury. “This award recognizes the hard work of many community members that have dedicated their time to making a difference in the lives of our young people.”

Dr. Dolton James, Chair of the Bridge to Success Partnership, also expressed his pleasure with the city’s honor. “This national recognition for what Waterbury’s parents and organizations have done for the city’s children and youth is greatly appreciated. I am proud to be a part of Bridge to Success, a partnership of people who care deeply about the success of the children and

youth in this city. We still have work to do in achieving all our desired goals for this community, but together we are building and maintaining the bridges that make Waterbury a place where youth will succeed in school, work and life.”

“In a nation where 7,000 students drop out of high school every day, we hope Waterbury’s initiatives inspire other communities across the nation to take action to solve the challenges facing their young people,” said Marguerite W. Kondracke, America’s Promise Alliance president and CEO. Waterbury is especially deserving of this recognition due to their efforts to ensure that their young people graduate high school and go on to lead healthy, productive lives. Waterbury refuses to let the challenges they face determine the future for their young people. Instead, they are helping their youth prosper and become contributing members of society.”

About the award, Waterbury Superintendent of Schools, Dr. David Snead said, “I am delighted that the collaborative work of Waterbury schools, families, and community partners, is being honored for a second time by a “100 Best” designation from the America’s Promise Alliance and ING. This kind of distinction serves as

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My School's Cool Program Offered by Brass Mill Center

My School's Cool, Shopper Rewards Program for Participating Schools



Are you looking for a way to help raise money for the school of your choice?

My School's Cool is a community driven program committed to building relationships with local schools by giving cash to schools!

Schools compete with each other for the highest accumulation of points and earn cash rewards. Participating schools earn points by shopping at Brass Mill Center & Commons and submitting receipts to their school coordinator. So shop Brass Mill Center & Commons today and earn points for the Waterbury Public School of your choice! The 2011-2012 MSC Program is a year long program and will run from

August 24, 2011 - May 31, 2012. Awards will be distributed in June. All Waterbury Public Schools are participating.

Program Overview

My School's Cool is a community driven program committed to building relationships with local schools by giving cash to schools! Schools compete with each other for the highest accumulation of points and earn cash rewards. Participating schools earn points by shopping at Brass Mill Center & Commons and submitting receipts to their school coordinator. Each dollar spent at the mall earns the participating school one point. Receipts will be rounded to the next whole dollar

at .51 cents. So shop Brass Mill Center & Commons today and earn points for the Waterbury Public School of your choice!

How can you help?

Any Brass Mill Center & Commons customer can help a participating school. Bring your receipt to any of the drop off locations (Mall Management Office or give your receipts to your student's Waterbury Public School Parent Liaison). Every dollar spent will add up to points for the schools.

Help your local school of choice today!

For More Information, Contact: 203.755.5603.

CT Association of Public School Superintendents Legislative Platform

The Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents issued a report last Wednesday calling for major changes in education. The CAPSS report made more than 100 recommendations, including better training and accountability for all educators, preschool for all three-year-olds, all-day kindergarten and more use of tech-

nology in the classroom. It also called for more regionalization of school districts and for renewable five-year contracts for teachers, instead of lifetime tenure, and a proposal that local boards of education be limited to policy-making roles, the annual budget and the hiring and supervision of superin-

tendents. The Connecticut Education Association has already criticized the report's recommendation for elimination of lifetime tenure for teachers, saying that could lead to "all kinds of abuses and capriciousness." The proposals will be sent to the State Legislature for consideration this session.

Brief Notes - News From Our Schools

- Walsh School's Camp Ground Partnership project kicked off Friday, October 21, with the first of many planned trips to the Kiwanis Campground. The Waterbury Police Activities League provided the transportation, taking the students in two groups. Teachers volunteered for this project, pledging to "Get the Bugs Out!" Principal Erik Brown explained, "The school is proud of these teachers, the Kiwanis Club, and PAL for coming together to bring education alive for the students at Walsh School. This is one of many approaches towards closing the achievement gap developed by some of the most renowned educators in the country. It delivers instruction through an experiential approach, creating the opportunity for children to internalize the lesson objectives and move on to mastery faster. The approach draws students in by generating interest in the subject."
- This year's Kick-off Event for the Sikorsky STEM Challenge was held on Friday, October 28, 2011 from 3-4pm at the Chester Airport in Chester, CT. Kennedy High School students are participating once again.
- Several ARMY JROTC cadets from Crosby High School received citations from Mayor Michael Jarjura on Tuesday, October 11, at the Aldermanic Chambers. The cadets were recognized for their participation in efforts to restore the flag pole on The Green, the second time the students have done so. The cadets later held a fundraiser in conjunction with Crosby High School Culinary Arts students with part of the proceeds going to purchase a new 15' by 25' flag to fly over The Green. The Crosby unit is an "Honor Unit with Distinction" which ranks the school's unit among the top 10% of all Army JROTC program world-wide. Crosby's JROTC had maintained this distinction since its first Cadet Command inspection in 2004. There are currently 1,731 army JROTC programs.
- West Side Middle School hosted its second annual Community Day in October, drawing a large number of families, students and staff to a day filled with food, raffles and entertainment.
- Generali School teachers Cara O'Brien (special education) and Christopher Chioppo (5th grade) have started a mentoring program at the school, where fifth grade students in Mr. Chioppo's class visit once each week with students in Ms. O'Brien's room.
- An Advanced Clothing class at Wilby is constructing baby quilts that will be donated to Carolyn's Place. Carolyn's Place is an agency that provides assistance to women in need during pregnancy and after. The class uses fabrics that has been donated by the community and pass the gift along to moms and their babies. Anita Watkins is the teacher.
- Wallace Middle School students and staff collected more than 4,000 non-perishable food items for the Greater Waterbury Interfaith Ministries food bank. The schools' annual food drive ran from November 7 until November 22.
- Generali School has raised over \$1,000 for St. Jude's children's Hospital in honor of Kyla Coughlin(5 years cancer-free).
- Waterbury Arts Magnet School celebrated CT Loves to Read with a Book Drive in October. All donations benefited the Literacy Volunteers of Greater Waterbury. It was a great success with over 500 books and magazines donated by students and staff.

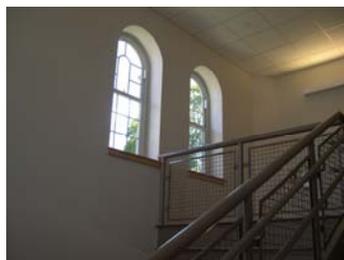




Duggan School Opening, Ribbon Cutting and Dedication

Duggan School is our newest school, located at 38 West Porter Street, Waterbury, CT 06708. Regular school hours are 8:05 AM to 2:20 PM. An early dismissal day (4.5 hours for professional development, open house, etc.) will be 8:05 AM to 12:35 PM. An emergency dismissal day will be 8:05 AM to 11:30 AM.

The main telephone number for Duggan School is (203) 574-8875. The Principal is Dr. Patricia Frageau.



Enlightenment School Renovation, Ribbon Cutting

The Enlightenment School at 30 Church Street has been totally renovated into a modern facility featuring bright classrooms, spacious hallways, and a state-of-the-art gym, making the school a place where students can work out physically as well as mentally.



Dr. Ouellette is New Superintendent

As one of her first acts, Dr. Ouellette sent out a welcome message to staff, parents, students and the community. In the letter, she invited the community to work together with professional staff to develop an "era of excellence" for the 18,000 plus students.

Dr. Ouellette explained, "As a school community, we are entrusted with providing our students with a vast array of authentic learning experiences that will prepare them for a new and different future - one that will require adaptation, flexibility, innovation and creativity - and we are committed to providing students with the broad set of skills they will need to succeed."

November 1st, but she visited the district several times prior to her first day, including an appearance at the annual Title I District meeting.

When November 1st rolled around, she was ready to start right to work despite the fact that Storm Alfred had wrecked havoc on the area and schools were closed due to a lack of electricity. She spent her first week meeting with community leaders and Central Office staff. In the weeks to follow, she has visited several schools, met with local legislators and started to work on school improvement plans with principals, members of the District Improvement Plan Executive Committee and Connecticut State Department of Education consultants.

Dr. Ouellette continues to charm everyone she meets with her smile, willingness to listen, enthusiasm and professionalism. On her tours of schools, she has listened to staff voice their concerns and outline their ideas for improvement, and she has spoken to parents about her goals for their students. She has also spoken to students, asking them what they like best and least about their educational experiences thus far.

She maintains high expectations for all. At a December 6th reception for parents and members of the community, Dr. Ouellette said, "As the new leader of our schools, I promise to challenge our students to always demonstrate acts of courage. I promise to challenge them to practice humility, responsibility and dependability throughout their lives. I hope that, as the messengers we are sending to the future, their messages will always be creative, compassionate and considerate."

In speaking to members of the Connecticut Community Foundation, Dr. Ouellette explained, "I am here as the Superintendent of Waterbury Public Schools to join you in your efforts to make the promise of tomorrow brighter than the reality of today. I am here to partner with you to teach our youth that we want them to 'think big' and to 'follow their dreams' and to understand that their only limitations are the ones they impose on themselves."

Previous to her tenure in Waterbury, Dr. Ouellette served for seven years as Superintendent of Schools in Manchester, CT. She holds a Doctorate of Education from the College of Education, Nursing and Health Professions at the University of Hartford and a sixth year degree in Educational Leadership and Supervision from Southern Connecticut State University. She holds a Master of Science degree in School Health Education from Southern Connecticut State University and a Master of Science degree in Physical Education with a focus in Exercise Sciences from Central Connecticut State University. Her Bachelor of Science degree in Physical Education is from Southern Connecticut State University.

As Superintendent of Schools in Manchester, she was responsible for increasing student achievement and closing the racial achievement gap in the Manchester Public Schools. The district made substantial gains in whole school and in subgroup student performance on the CMT and CAPT tests, allowing the district to be placed in Safe Harbor by the Connecticut State Department of Education. As part of her school improvement plans, Dr. Ouellette established K-12 Accountability Benchmark Standards using formative assessments to close the achievement gap. This initiative required continuous meetings with principals that addressed reading comprehension, math application and assessment of writing. Improved student performance was the direct result of frequent exposure to the testing process and instruction that was aligned to the state's reading, math and science curriculum.

100 Best, continued from page 5

an additional motivating factor to drive our continued efforts on behalf of Waterbury youth.”

At noon EST on Oct. 12, 2011, Kondracke joined America’s Promise Alliance Chair Alma Powell and ING Foundation President Rhonda Mims at the Newseum in Washington, D.C., to officially announce the 100 winning communities in a live webcast.

“The issues surrounding youth education and success are of vital importance to ING,” said Mims. “Our ongoing support for *100 Best* underscores our commitment to the cause and the value we place on recognizing communities that produce measurable results for youth.”

Waterbury will receive a \$2,500 grant, signage identifying the community as one of the nation’s *100 Best Communities for Young People*, and access to America’s Promise Alliance’s community development resources.

First held in 2005, the *100 Best* competition is one of the Alliance’s signature initiatives and is part of its Grad Nation campaign, which is a 10-year initiative to mobilize Americans to end the high school dropout crisis and prepare young people for college and the 21st century workforce. The *100 Best* honors communities large and small, rural and urban, that are making progress to help young people achieve their potential, which includes earning a high school diploma, securing a good job, and playing an active, productive role in America’s eco-

nomie vitality.

All communities entering the *100 Best* competition completed a rigorous application where they provided details on how their existing programs and initiatives help deliver the Five Promises—resources identified by the Alliance as being critical to the development of healthy, successful children: caring adults; safe places; healthy start; effective education; and opportunities to help others. Applicants were also asked to describe how different sectors of their community work together to help children and families overcome challenges. Most importantly, communities were judged on the strength and innovation of their efforts and programs to help young people graduate from high school prepared for college and the 21st century workforce.

This year, more than 300 communities from all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico were nominated for the *100 Best* distinction. Winners were chosen by a distinguished panel of 20 judges that included: Marc Morial, president and CEO, National Urban League, Roxanne Spillett, president and CEO, Boys and Girls Clubs of America, and Michelle Shearer, Chemistry Teacher, Urbana High School, 2011 National Teacher of the Year.

The winners are a diverse group, ranging from small communities to large cities. A list of all 2011 winners can be found at www.americaspromise.org/100best.

Being a *100 Best* community not only demonstrates commitment to local young people; the award fosters local pride, bolsters economic development and shines the spotlight on the people and programs that are building better communities. The competition also facilitates the sharing of best practices among communities nationwide regarding education, access to health care, reading score improvement, youth service and pre-school enrollment, among many other areas.

About America’s Promise Alliance

America’s Promise Alliance is the nation’s largest partnership organization dedicated to improving the lives of children and youth by raising awareness, supporting communities, and engaging in nonpartisan advocacy. Through our Grad Nation campaign, we harness the collective power of our partner network to mobilize Americans to end the high school dropout crisis and prepare young people for college and the 21st century workforce. Building on the legacy of our Founding Chairman General Colin Powell, the Alliance believes the success of our young people is grounded in the Five Promises—caring adults; safe places; a healthy start; an effective education; and opportunities to help others. For more information about America’s Promise Alliance, visit

www.americaspromise.org.

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Woodrow Wilson Students Teach Other Students How to Cook Hispanic Favorites



WOODROW WILSON SCHOOL - Students in Mrs. Molly Mendez's class demonstrated how to prepare favorite Hispanic foods as part of their study of Hispanic culture and their celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month. Other classes watched as the students showed how to make such treats as guacamole, tacos, fruit smoothies and quesadillas. Mrs. Mendez' students then passed out samples of each item, much to the delight of their guests.

PROJECT POETRY LIVE AND WEST SIDE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Now in its 19th season, Project Poetry Live! (PPL!) has affected nearly 25,000 Connecticut students from towns ranging from Litchfield, Morris, Plymouth to Torrington, Thomaston, Watertown, Waterbury and Winsted. The program has been running since the 1990's when it was founded by Executive & Artistic Director of Litchfield Performing Arts, Inc., Vita West Muir, with the desire to bring students together to express themselves and reduce socio-economic barriers using the common thread of art. Each year PPL! brings professional poets, artists, musicians and dancers together with 7th – 12th graders from five participating school districts at no charge to the students. This year the schools are Eli Terry Jr. Middle School (Plymouth), Litchfield High School, Swift Middle School (Watertown) Thomaston High School and West Side Middle School (Waterbury). Through the program, students develop ongoing social, behavioral and personal skills that lead to improved grades and heightened performance at school.

During Phase I of the project in September, 153 students met at the Connecticut Dance Theatre in Waterbury for a 2-day Interdistrict Workshop. Under the direction of poet Cheryl Della Pelle, each student wrote a short poem which they then transformed into art, music or dance. Workshop choices included mask making, sculpture, silk painting, vocal class, lyric writing, music and rhythm, dance and more.

During the week of October 3rd, Phase II of PPL!, New-York based Matthew Westerby Company was in residence at each of the five schools teaching the art of movement, trust and communication through dance. At the end of the residency week, the students auditioned to become part of the student Dance Ensemble or Jazz Big Band led by Matthew Westerby Company and professional jazz musician and composer, Albert Rivera.

During October and early November, the students rehearsed in preparation for three performances at Naugatuck Valley Community College where they performed alongside Matthew Westerby Company, the Naugatuck Valley Community College Dance Ensemble and Albert Rivera's Quartet. There were two student day performances on November 17th and 18th, and a public evening performance and art show on November 18th at Naugatuck Valley Community College Arts Center .