

***Watervliet City School District  
Watervliet, New York***

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| <b><i>BOARD OF EDUCATION</i></b> |
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***REGULAR MEETING***

**DATE:** February 11, 2025

**TYPE OF MEETING:** Regular Meeting

**MEETING OPENED:** 6:00 p.m.

**WHERE:** Watervliet Jr. – Sr. High School

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** President, Mary Beth Whited  
Vice President, Brian White  
Heather Soroka  
Victoria Donnelly  
Kyle Daniels

**SUPERINTENDENT:** Dr. Donald Stevens Jr.

**STUDENT COUNCIL REP:** LaJay York

The meeting opened at 6:00 p.m., with President Whited officiating.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no public comments.

**PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS/COMMENTS**

**2023-2024 NYS Testing Data Presentation (3-8 Assessment Data)**

**Kelly Webster**

***Tuition & Transition Plan for Green Island Students Presentation***

**Dr. Donald Stevens Jr.**

*Mrs. Whited asked if the numbers anticipated after next year and going forward will increase.*

Dr. Stevens responded that the numbers increase a bit, but not so much that it will impact class size. He noted that as enrollment continues to increase, aid will increase, which will provide more opportunities for added sections and electives. Green Island would also pay more for non-resident tuition.

*Mrs. Soroka asked if there is a relationship between regionalization and tuitioning.*

Dr. Stevens responded that there is a relationship. Green Island and Watervliet are regionalizing this approach. We have also regionalized with our Riverside agreement with multiple neighboring districts. As outlined in our Regionalization Plan, it is working as a region to offer more opportunities for students. New graduation measures are coming out soon and small districts are struggling with how they are going to attend to many pathways to provide for a student to graduate. At this time, we only know that they are saying “no more regents,” but there will still have to be a pathway through social studies, ELA, etc. A small district will have a hard time creating all of those unique opportunities for student success. For example, Green Island doesn’t have a music program, but now they will have the ability to participate in a music program.

**A. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT**

Dr. Stevens shared the following:

- Thank you to Molly for her presentation on Special Education tonight.
- Upcoming Budget Dates:
  - March 11 @ 6:00 p.m. – State Budget Overview, Assembly Member John McDonald / Budget Presentation at BOE Meeting
  - March 25 @ 6:00 p.m. – Community Budget Workshop in WJSHS Conference Room
  - April 2 @ 6:00 p.m. – Budget Workshop at PTA Meeting
  - April 8 @ 6:00 p.m. – Final Budget Presentation and budget adoption.
- In each Board member’s packet, there is a copy of reports from the Comptroller. The first is the Financial Stress report, and you can see that our district has no designation, which is a result of hard work over the last several years. The second is the Environmental Stress report, which shows that we have significant environmental stress. I want to point out that there are things that are not in our control, such as poverty and English language learners. We did well in other areas including budget approval,

received zero points in percent change in property value. We continue to work on turnover rate of teachers.

- Also in your packet is a course guide, which we purposely completed early this year so we could have it ready for the open house for Green Island. Our students will see these this week, as counselors are going into the high school classes to discuss opportunities and build schedules for next year. Thank you to Mrs. Webster for her hard work on getting the course guide completed.
- Happy Valentines day to everyone. Have a good break!

#### **B. STUDENT COUNCIL REPORT**

LaJay York shared the following:

- Thank you to the school counselors for hosting financial aid night last Wednesday. It was very helpful for families to get a better understanding of the college financial aid process. The assistance with filling out the forms was also greatly appreciated.
- Thank you to Dr. Stevens for the opportunity to serve as tour guides for the families of Green Island and the students of Heatly last Monday. We enjoyed showing them around the building so they could see all the things we have to offer here in Watervliet. We look forward to the students joining us in September.
- Thank you to Dr. Stevens for the snow day last week. That was beautiful.
- We look forward to break next week.

#### **C. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

##### **Audit Committee**

There was nothing new to report.

##### **Policy Committee**

There was nothing new to report.

#### **BOARD DISCUSSION**

Mrs. Soroka ask Miss York about her BOCES Legislative Breakfast experience.

Miss York stated that it was interesting and fun. Students from welding and nursing were there, along with politicians and teachers. They discussed things like enforcing no cell phones in school going forward. She also added that she got her picture taken with the Governor.

**ITEMS REQUIRING BOARD ACTION**

On a motion by Kyle Daniels, seconded by Heather Soroka and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the following:

Due to his untimely death, discontinue the employment of **Edward Upton, Part-Time Night Cleaner**, for the **Watervliet City School District**, effective at the close of business on January 10, 2025. Mr. Upton began working with the district on September 4, 2024. The district extends its deepest condolences to his family.

On a motion by Kyle Daniels, seconded by Heather Soroka and unanimously accepted, the Board **rescinded** the **appointment** of **Ana Hartley** to the position of **Long-Term Substitute General Science Teacher - Grade 8**, at the **Watervliet Jr. – Sr. High School**, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Kyle Daniels, seconded by Heather Soroka and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the **rescinded** the appointment of **Olivia Skylstad** to the position of **Indoor Track Coach**, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Kyle Daniels, seconded by Heather Soroka and unanimously accepted, the Board **terminated** the employment of **Cafeteria Worker, Christina Ploof**, effective January 31, 2025, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Kyle Daniels, seconded by Heather Soroka and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the **emergency probationary appointment** of **Payton Sharby** to the position of **Full-Time Maintenance Worker** for the Watervliet City School District, at a rate of **\$19.00/hour**, effective **January 17, 2025**, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Kyle Daniels, seconded by Heather Soroka and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the **appointment** of the following **Substitute After-School Detention Monitor** at the Watervliet Elementary School effective February 11, 2025 and continuing through the remainder of the **2024 – 2025** school year, at a rate as per contract, as recommended by the Superintendent:

- Geraldine Ferris

On a motion by Kyle Daniels, seconded by Heather Soroka and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the **emergency appointment** of the following **ExTRA Club Advisor** at the **Watervliet Jr. – Sr. High School**, effective **January 28, 2025** and continuing through the remainder of the **2024 – 2025** school year, at a prorated rate of \$1107.00, as recommended by the Superintendent:

- Andrew Hoffman, Cooking Club Advisor

On a motion by Kyle Daniels, seconded by Heather Soroka and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the following **emergency teaching overages**, effective as of the dates outlined below, at the **Watervliet Jr. – Sr. High School**, as outlined in the attached, as recommended by the Superintendent:

- York Bush (move from +.1 to +.2 FTE), effective January 27 – March 28, 2025
- Matt Kellish (+.2 FTE), effective January 27 – March 28, 2025
- Scott Emerson (+.1 FTE), effective January 27 – March 28, 2025
- Jackie Bishop (+.2 FTE), effective January 21, 2025 – March 28, 2025
- Luke McLaughlin (+.2 FTE), effective January 21 – March 28, 2025
- Ashley Redding Coverage period 3 and period 4B (*at class coverage rate*), effective January 21 – March 28, 2025

On a motion by Brian White, seconded by Kyle Daniels and accepted 4-0 (*Heather Soroka abstained*), the Board approved the appointment of the following **Coaches** for the **2024– 2025** school year, pending fingerprint clearance and fulfillment of NYSED coaching requirements, at a rate as per contract, as recommended by the Superintendent:

**WATERVLIET JUNIOR-SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL**

***Coaching Winter:***

Girls' Assistant Indoor Track Coach: Alana Carroll (*50% stipend*)

***Coaching Spring:***

Varsity Baseball: Peter Soroka

Varsity Baseball Assistant: Mark Cady

Varsity Softball: Michael Bendon

Varsity Assistant Softball: Joshua Bagnardi

Volunteer Assistant Softball: Peytan Smeltzer

Volunteer Modified Assistant Softball: Jessica Grogan

Boys' Modified Baseball: Nick Grolley

Volunteer Boys' Modified Baseball: Michael Grolley

Girls' Assistant Outdoor Track Coach: Alana Carroll

On a motion by Kyle Daniels, seconded by Heather Soroka and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the **Substitute Registry** submitted by **BOCES**, as recommended by the Superintendent (packets #9 and #10).

On a motion by Kyle Daniels, seconded by Heather Soroka and unanimously accepted, the Board **accepted the Internal Claims Auditor Report** for the month of **January 2025**, submitted by Michaeleen Backus, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Kyle Daniels, seconded by Heather Soroka and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the following **Treasurer's Reports** for the month of **December 2024**, submitted by Keith Heid, Business Manager, as recommended by the Superintendent:

*Schedule of Warrants & Payrolls*  
*Revenue Status Report*  
*Cash & Investments*  
*Appropriation Status Report*

On a motion by Kyle Daniels, seconded by Heather Soroka and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the **Data Privacy Agreement** between the **Watervliet City School District** and **Perfection Learning Corporation**, effective February 11, 2025, as outlined in the attached, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Kyle Daniels, seconded by Victoria Donnelly and unanimously accepted, the Board **accepted** the **Tuitioning of Green Island Union Free School District Students in Grades 9-12**, for the next five (5) years, beginning in September of 2025, at an estimated cost of \$400,000/year, and subject to an annual tuition agreement between the districts, as recommended by the Superintendent.

*Mrs. Whited welcomed incoming Green Island parents, students and families. She congratulated Dr. Stevens and the rest of the district on this new venture.*

On a motion by Kyle Daniels, seconded by Heather Soroka and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the **abolishment** of the following **inactive extracurricular club**, close the respective account, and move any remaining funds into the Students in Need Fund, as recommended by the Superintendent:

- Class of 2024

On a motion by Kyle Daniels, seconded by Heather Soroka and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the **creation of an extracurricular account** for the **Class of 2028**, to deposit fundraising monies and to pay for class activities, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Kyle Daniels, seconded by Heather Soroka and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the **Board of Education Minutes** for the meeting held **January 14, 2025**, submitted by Bernadette L. Boardman, Clerk of the Board, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Kyle Daniels, seconded by Heather Soroka and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the **Committee on Special Education's** recommendations for the meetings held **November 26, 2024, January 8, January 9, January 13, January 17, January 23 and January 24, 2025**, submitted by Molly McGrath, Veronica Wilson, Rebecca Haws, and Danielle Tetrault, CSE Chairs, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Kyle Daniels, seconded by Heather Soroka and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the **Committee on Pre-School Special Education's** recommendations for the meetings held **January 8 and January 29, 2025**, submitted by Molly McGrath, CPSE Chair, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Kyle Daniels, seconded by Heather Soroka and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the **New Book Request** for the book entitled **"The Road,"** by Cormac McCarthy, to be added to the **Grade 12 English** curriculum at the Watervliet Jr. – Sr. High School beginning in the 2025 – 2026 school year, as outlined in the attached, as recommended by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Kyle Daniels, seconded by Heather Soroka and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the following **Student Teacher/Observer** requests at the **Watervliet Jr. – Sr. High School**, as outlined below, as recommended by the Superintendent:

| <b>Name(s)</b> | <b>Role</b>            | <b>Cooperating Professional</b> | <b>Dates</b>               |
|----------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Imane Nabaovi  | Student Teacher/Intern | Kelsey Logan                    | January 13 – March 7, 2025 |

On a motion by Kyle Daniels, seconded by Heather Soroka and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the following **Student Teacher/Observer** requests at the **Watervliet Elementary School**, as outlined below, as recommended by the Superintendent:

| <b>Name(s)</b>   | <b>Role</b>            | <b>Cooperating Professional</b>                                             | <b>Dates</b>         |
|------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Tyler Prince     | Student Teacher/Intern | Kim Suedkamp                                                                | Spring Semester 2025 |
| Isaac Sievers    | Student Teacher/Intern | Jeanne Lance                                                                | Spring Semester 2025 |
| Alexcia Koons    | Student Observer       | Samantha Walsh                                                              | Spring Semester 2025 |
| Kaitlin Suedkamp | Student Observer       | Joelle Bird,<br>Rebecca Cioffi,<br>Christine Goodell and<br>Jennifer Hoefer | March 17 – 21, 2025  |

On a motion by Kyle Daniels, seconded by Heather Soroka and unanimously accepted, the Board approved the **2025 – 2026 School District Calendar**, as recommended by the Superintendent.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

On a motion by Heather Soroka seconded by Brian White and unanimously accepted, the Board entered into executive session at 6:43 p.m. to discuss matters related to the employment history of a particular person.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Heather Soroka seconded by Kyle Daniels and unanimously accepted, the Board adjourned executive session and adjourned the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,*

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*Bernadette L. Boardman  
Clerk of the Board*

**NOTE: All district appointments are subject to fingerprint  
clearance by the NYS Education  
Department and verification of Permanent or  
Pending Certification by NYS.**