

**WESTPORT BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**\*AGENDA**

(Agenda Subject to Modification in Accordance with Law)

**PUBLIC SESSION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

7:00 p.m., Staples High School, Cafeteria B (Room 301)

**HOLIDAY SEASON PERFORMANCE:**

*The Staples High School Orphenians: Choral Director Luke Rosenberg*

**RECOGNITION:**

*Karyn Morgan, 2015 Connecticut High School Assistant Principal of the Year*

**ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM BOARD AND ADMINISTRATION**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS (15 MINUTES)**

**MINUTES:** December 1, 2014

**REPORTS:**

- 1. Advanced Placement Courses: Benefits and Efficacy (Encl.) Mr. D'Amico
- 2. Statutory Graduation Requirements for Class of 2020 (Encl.) Mr. D'Amico
- 3. Multi-Year Strategic Vision for Curriculum/Instruction/Assessment (Encl.) Mr. D'Amico  
Ms. Droller
- 4. Capital Projects Update (Encl.) Mr. Longo

**DISCUSSION/ACTION:**

- 1. Modifications to Kindergarten Program (Encl.) Ms. Droller
- 2. Approval of Monthly Health and Medical Insurance Report (Encl.) Mr. Longo
- 3. Acceptance of Gifts (Encl.) Dr. Landon

**ADJOURNMENT**

\*A 2/3 vote is required to go to executive session, to add a topic to the agenda of a regular meeting, or to start a new topic after 10:30 p.m. The meeting can also be viewed on cable TV on channel 78; AT&T channel 99 and by video stream @[www.westport.k12.ct.us](http://www.westport.k12.ct.us)

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION WELCOME USING THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES:**

- Comment on non-agenda topics will occur during the first 15 minutes *except* when staff or guest presentations are scheduled.
- Board will not engage in dialogue on non-agenda items.
- Public may speak as agenda topics come up for discussion or information.
- Speakers on non-agenda items are limited to 2 minutes each, except by prior arrangement with chair.
- Speakers on agenda items are limited to 3 minutes each, except by prior arrangement with chair.
- Speakers must give name and use microphone.
- Responses to questions may be deferred if answers not immediately available.
- Public comment is normally not invited for topics listed for action after having been publicly discussed at one or more meetings.



*James D'Amico*  
Director of Secondary Education

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TO: Elliott Landon  
FROM: James D'Amico  
SUBJECT: Benefits of Advanced Placement Courses  
DATE: December 15, 2014

In recent years, the efficacy and benefit of offering Advanced Placement courses has come under close scrutiny by students, parents, and educators. Some schools have chosen to remove or reframe offerings at this level, bucking the trend of AP course expansion at most American high schools. At Staples High School, we have continued to offer AP coursework as an option to our students in addition to the other rich offerings that are offered.

Staples High School currently offers twenty-two Advanced Placement course options for our students. These courses are offered across all disciplines, allowing students to choose high-level coursework in areas that they are skilled in and passionate about, not only to fill required graduation courses.

There are clear, measurable benefits to offering students the choice to participate in AP coursework. With college admissions counselors trying to make sense of applicants from the over 19,000 public high schools in the United States, AP courses remain an important indication to admissions officers that a student who has taken an AP course and scored a "3" or higher on the end of course exam has undertaken the most rigorous classes their high school has to offer. In 2012, it is estimated that over 750,000 students submitted over 3,000,000 applications to universities in the United States. In an increasingly competitive admissions environment that our graduates face, this is important information to communicate to prospective colleges.

Performance on AP exams also carries potential benefits for high school graduates. Students can earn credit for college coursework, often including introductory level courses at the university level, that can open up possibilities for them. We can look to examples right here in Connecticut to see the potential benefit to students. The University of Connecticut, a Top-20 national public university and the top public university in the northeast, awards credit for 32 AP exams with a score of 4 or higher, one with a score of 5, and one with a score of 3. The benefits of high achievement on AP exams is not limited to public universities. World-renowned Yale University grants credits for a score of 4 or higher on 10 different AP exams, and for a score of 5 on 6 other exams.

As you are aware, Staples students perform extraordinarily well on these exams. Last year 533 Staples students took 1,133 AP exams, and 92% of those exams were scored at a "3" or higher. It should be noted that while some schools prevent students from taking AP courses, all Staples students have access to AP courses either through teacher recommendation or parental override, as long as they have met the prerequisite course requirement.

This is not to say that AP courses are perfect. The College Board has been revamping almost the entire scope of its offerings to emphasize critical thinking and problem solving over memorization of content in response to criticisms from educators and students from both secondary and higher education. Some educators also question whether AP courses really prepare students for the rigor of college classes, given the wide differences in high school and university learning environments.

AP courses are also not exclusively seen as the only high-quality offerings that can prepare students for college level work. The International Baccalaureate (IB) program, which has grown to over 800 schools in the United States, emphasizes interdisciplinary learning and creativity. Connecticut is also among the States that allow for cross-listed courses, where students can earn college credit while in high school. We offer this type of opportunity at Staples, in World Languages through the UCONN Early College Experience program, and students in the Authentic Science Research (ASR) program can earn science credits through the University at Albany.

Certainly student anxiety and stress, including perceived pressure to load up on AP courses, are issues not unknown to Westport. We are vigilant in helping students make health choices when it comes to balancing schoolwork and their extracurricular and personal activities.

As we engage in continuous improvement of our curriculum, all programs, including Advanced Placement course offerings, are always on the table for discussion in terms of benefit to students and alignment with our mission. At the present time, AP courses offer a large benefit to Staples High School students, and remain an important piece of our curriculum moving forward.

#### References:

- <https://apstudent.collegeboard.org/creditandplacement>
- <https://apstudent.collegeboard.org/exploreap/the-rewards>
- <http://nation.time.com/2013/05/01/as-college-applications-rise-so-does-indecision/>
- Standardized Testing Report, Westport Public Schools, October 2014
- Adams, Caralee J. "Colleges Vary on Credit for AP, IB, Dual Classes". Education Week. Published Online: December 9, 2014

# WESTPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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**ELLIOTT LANDON**  
Superintendent of Schools

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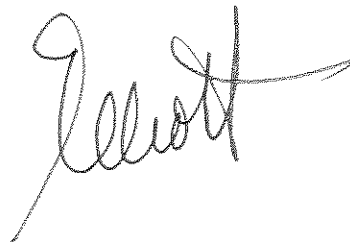
To: Members of the Board of Education  
From: Elliott Landon  
Subject: Statutory Graduation Requirements for Class of 2020  
Date: December 15, 2014

You will find appended to this memorandum another from James D'Amico pertinent to the above-referenced subject.

It is my belief that when James returns to the Board in the Spring of 2015 that he include in his recommendations the following to demonstrate various ways of maximizing the increased graduation requirements in all in both the academic and elective areas for all students:

1. The impact of scheduling Staples on a five day, eight period schedule rather than the current eight period, four day schedule with equalized periods from an instructional minutes point of view.
2. The impact of scheduling Staples on a five day, *rotational* eight period schedule rather than the current eight period, four day schedule with equalized periods from an instructional minutes point of view.
3. Maintenance and expansion of all current offerings both in the academic and elective areas.
4. Seek ways to expand the numbers of credits required for graduation that ensure successful completion by all students.
5. Maintenance of the standardized (in this case SBAC) testing requirement in all components as part of our graduation requirements, with the understanding that the expectation shall be no less than the achievement of goal or its equivalent.

The decisions made by the Board of Education in addressing these new graduation requirements will have a profound effect for many years upon all students entering Staples High School in 9<sup>th</sup> grade.





*James D'Amico*  
Director of Secondary Education

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TO: Elliott Landon  
FROM: James D'Amico  
SUBJECT: Statutory Graduation Requirements for Class of 2020  
DATE: December 15, 2014

As you know, our high school programs will need to be examined in light of the graduation requirements for the Class of 2020, which are outlined in the Connecticut General Statutes (§ 10-221a (2012)). These requirements take effect for students currently in grade seven, so any necessary or desired changes to our requirement structure need to be completed by the Fall of 2015 to allow us time to adequately prepare students for their high school experience.

We have conducted an analysis measuring the credits earned by the Class of 2014 against the new requirements to use as baseline data for generating ideas. In short, we are generally good shape in terms of the ability of Staples students to meet the new requirements, since the data shows that the vast majority of students chose to use their 6.0 elective credits in academic areas. The data also shows, however, that students who tended to concentrate in math/science or the humanities would not have met the new requirements of the other respective areas. It also shows that over 10% of students would not have met the new Fine Arts requirement. It is worth noting, however, that most of the students who would have fallen short in these areas were within a semester (0.5 credits) of meeting the requirement. As we develop new requirements specific to Staples, our clearest areas of concentration will be to maximize the reduced ability of students to choose electives outside of the traditional academic areas, and sustain programs currently categorized as Practical Arts.

At this time, we also need to gain clear direction from the Board of Education on how to proceed with standardized testing requirements as a part of graduation requirements. Currently, the Classes of 2015 and 2016 will be required to meet "Goal" on the CAPT Reading for Information, Interdisciplinary Writing, Mathematics, and Science exams. CAPT Science will remain a requirement for the Class of 2017 and beyond, until a new state Science exam is developed.

As of this time, the State of Connecticut has not directed us to require any specific performance level on the SBAC tests in Reading, Writing, or Mathematics. Students in the Class of 2016, who are currently juniors, are required by the State to take the SBAC tests, even though they sat for the CAPT exams last year as sophomores. We are very sensitive to having these students sit for two state standardized tests, as well as, for over half of the class, Advanced Placement exams. However, the district will be held accountable for SBAC participation and results, so it is important for our ability to plan curriculum that all students take the assessments to the best of their ability. At this time, I would recommend that students be required to take all components of SBAC as a condition of graduation, and to be eligible for the senior internship next year.

As far as the overall picture concerning course credits and total number of credits required for graduation, I have met with the Staples administrative team, and will be attending Collaborative team later this month to begin planning for the new requirements, and lay out design specifications for proposals that use this shift as an opportunity to innovate new courses. I will report back to you in the spring to update our progress.

## ANALYSIS OF CREDITS EARNED BY CLASS OF 2014

|  |            |      |     |   |
|--|------------|------|-----|---|
| <b>4-Year Staples Students</b>   | <b>406</b> |      |     |   |
| <b>Students with 4.0+ Math</b>   | 384        | -22  | 95% | Of these 22 students, 14 earned 9.5-15.0 credits in the Humanities  |
| <b>Students with 5.0+ Math</b>   | 96         |      |     |   |
| <b>Students with 3.0+ Science</b>  | 395        | -11  | 97% | Of these 11 students, 9 earned 9.5-15.0 credits in the Humanities. 4 of those students the same as Math       |
| <b>Students with 4.0+ Science</b>  | 281        |      |     |   |
| <b>Students with 1.0+ Fine Arts</b>  | 356        | -50  | 88% | Of these 50 students, 41 had 8.5+ credits in Math/Science, 22 would not have met their Humanities requirement |
| <b>1.0+ Music</b>  | 113        |      |     |   |
| <b>1.0+ Art</b>  | 267        |      |     |   |
| <b>1.0+ Theater</b>  | 28         |      |     |   |
| <b>Students with 5.0+ English</b>  | 41         |      |     |   |
| <b>Students with 5.0+ SS</b>   | 72         |      |     |   |
| <b>Students with 2.0+ Fine Arts</b>  | 226        |      |     |   |
| <b>Students with 9.0+ Humanities</b>   | 370        | -36  | 91% | Of these 36 students, 32 had 8.0+ credits in Math/Science   |
| <b>Students who would not have met STEM</b><br><i>*Does not include Fam/Consumer</i><br><i>*Includes Comp.Sci, Tech Ed., Media</i> | 51         | -355 | 13% | Of these 51 students, 47 earned 9.25-16.0 credits in the Humanities   |
| <b>1.0+ Career/Life Skills w/o PE</b>  | 198        | -208 | 49% |   |
| <b>1.0+ Career/Life Skills w/o PE, ACS</b>   | 174        | -232 | 43% |   |
| <b>Graduation Credits if new requirements added</b>  |            |      |     |   |
| <b>30 credits (includes Capstone)</b>  | 73         | -333 | 18% |   |
| <b>29 Credits (does not include Capstone)</b>  | 120        | -286 | 30% |   |
| <b>Other Credit Levels</b>   |            |      |     |   |
| <b>Students earning 28.0+ Credits</b>  | 207        | -199 | 51% |   |
| <b>Students earning 27.0+ Credits</b>  | 356        | -50  | 88% |   |
| <b>Students earning 26.0+ Credits</b>  | 394        | -12  | 97% |   |

**Connecticut General Statutes**

**Sec. 10-221a. High school graduation requirements. Student support and remedial services. Diplomas for veterans of World War II and the Korean hostilities. Collection of certain student information.**

...

(c) Commencing with classes graduating in 2020, and for each graduating class thereafter, no local or regional board of education shall permit any student to graduate from high school or grant a diploma to any student who has not satisfactorily completed (1) a minimum of twenty-five credits, including not fewer than: (A) Nine credits in the humanities, including not fewer than (i) four credits in English, including composition; (ii) three credits in social studies, including at least one credit in American history and at least one-half credit in civics and American government; (iii) one credit in fine arts; and (iv) one credit in a humanities elective; (B) eight credits in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, including not fewer than (i) four credits in mathematics, including algebra I, geometry and algebra II or probability and statistics; (ii) three credits in science, including at least one credit in life science and at least one credit in physical science; and (iii) one credit in a science, technology, engineering and mathematics elective; (C) three and one-half credits in career and life skills, including not fewer than (i) one credit in physical education; (ii) one-half credit in health and safety education, as described in section 10-16b; and (iii) two credits in career and life skills electives, such as career and technical education, English as a second language, community service, personal finance, public speaking and nutrition and physical activity; (D) two credits in world languages, subject to the provisions of subsection (g) of this section; and (E) a one credit senior demonstration project or its equivalent, as approved by the State Board of Education; and (2) end of the school year examinations for the following courses: (A) Algebra I, (B) geometry, (C) biology, (D) American history, and (E) grade ten English.

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|                                  |                     |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Humanities                       |                     |
| English                          | 4                   |
| Social Studies                   | 3                   |
| Fine Arts                        | 1                   |
| Humanities Elective              | 1                   |
| STEM                             |                     |
| Math                             | 4                   |
| Science                          | 3                   |
| STEM Elective                    | 1                   |
| Career and Life Skills           |                     |
| Physical Education               | 1                   |
| Health and Safety                | 0.5                 |
| Career and Life Skills Electives | 2                   |
| World Languages                  |                     |
| World Languages                  | 2                   |
| Senior Demonstration             |                     |
| Senior Demonstration/Capstone    | 1                   |
|                                  | 23.5+ 1.5 Electives |





*Julie Droller*  
Director of Elementary Education

*James D'Amico*  
Director of Secondary Education

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TO: Elliott Landon  
FROM: Julie Droller and James D'Amico  
SUBJECT: Multi-Year Strategic Vision for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment  
DATE: December 15, 2014

It gives us great pleasure to share our vision for teaching and learning in the Westport Public Schools for the coming years. This vision builds upon the excellence in curriculum, instruction and assessment that already exists in our school system, due to our commitment to continuous improvement and innovative practice.

Our framework for improvement has been codified with the adoption of the Westport 2025 Lens, which focuses our efforts on student learning in the areas of critical, creative, communicative, and global thinking capacities. As you know, we are engaged in an ongoing effort to expand our framework to include civic, social, and ethical thinking expectations, with the goal of helping students become caring, honest contributors to the communities of which they are members.

At the elementary level, there are two areas of focus for the coming years: improving teacher effectiveness through ongoing, embedded professional development and support; and the shift to an inquiry-based, interdisciplinary, constructivist approach to teaching and learning across all areas of the curriculum.

A school-based coaching model supports our priority for improving teacher quality and assures that we provide students with consistently excellent literacy instruction in all classrooms. The literacy coach's role is to help teachers implement the strategies and practices they have learned during professional development activities, with their students, in their classrooms. Given the amount of federal and state mandates, and new standards and teaching methodologies in all content areas resulting in new curricular initiatives and demands, teachers are challenged with prioritizing their professional learning focus. When follow-up support is provided on-site in the classroom, professional development is practiced and applied, immediate problem-solving and feedback are provided, and the result is improved instructional practice. Teachers become more invested in their own professional growth because it is self-initiated, personalized, and meaningful, and student learning improves as a result.

The second area of focus at the elementary level is to solidify an instructional shift which we have been working towards over the past few years as part of our Westport 2025 initiative, in order to prepare students for a dynamic and changing world environment. Inquiry will be a primary form of instruction in all content areas, with students and teachers crafting investigative questions that matter and persevering in searching for new understandings and solutions. Content, skills, and mathematical/science and engineering/social studies/literacy practices will be integrated in meaningful ways. Real-world learning experiences, with tangible opportunities for students to apply knowledge and skills to "do science", solve challenging problems, and take informed action, is at the heart of this approach.

At the secondary level we are looking to bring coherence to our district goals for 21st Century learning, and ensure that our assessment systems and curriculum reflect the values embedded in Westport 2025.

For the middle schools, there are two areas that we will concentrate on improving over the next few years that will embed and formalize our learning goals for our students: reforming our common assessment and grade reporting structure to reflect student competencies in essential skills and dispositions, and building student independence through increased ownership and choice.

We have worked diligently over the past several years in examining our curriculum and revising as necessary to emphasize the 21st Century capacities outlined in the Westport 2025 Lens. This work has led to changes in curriculum outcomes, the development of engaging units of study and projects that help students become more proficient problem-solvers, the adoption of a new program for the instruction of reading and writing, and the development of new assessment tools by our teachers, designed to capture student progress in developing these capacities. One of the challenges we face, however, is that our progress reporting system does not reflect this work, and in some cases serves to devalue the goals that are represented by the lens. We will work to develop a new way to express student progress based on performance measured by standards and competencies in the thinking skills and dispositions that we value. This will ultimately include those qualities that are a part of the "5th Domain" of the Westport 2025 Lens.

We will also examine ways and develop pathways for middle school students to take more ownership of their school experiences. Three years ago, a group of middle school teachers and administrators conducted an exhaustive study of challenge and enrichment needs, one outgrowth of which was the introduction of the design and engineering program. That committee's work, however, found much more than a recommendation for that one program. It was clear from the work of that group that students, both in middle school and reflecting upon their middle school experience as high school students, felt the need to have more choices during these formative years. While we certainly must balance our goals to provide experiences that assure students have a chance to explore multiple areas of interest, we are also obligated to find better ways for students to choose experiences that they want to pursue based on passion and interest, and challenge themselves based on their abilities. Because the teaming model is central to the middle school experience and supports a healthy learning environment, this will be no small undertaking, and will likely lead to proposals that will change the nature of how the current middle school schedule operates.

At the high school, the vision begun at the elementary level will take form in creating a school that provides students with multi-disciplinary experiences that prepare them for the worlds of college and career. Our already strong program will become deeper with courses that push traditional subject-area boundaries, reflecting the world that they will enter after leaving Staples High School. We will work to create courses unique to Staples, but also work to find models from schools in the United States and abroad that share our goals.

Students, as a matter of course, will be expected to reflect upon, and be held accountable for, their development as caring, ethical citizens, and will produce a capstone work that captures their growth. The self-study being conducted as part of our NEASC accreditation has helped us target areas for improvement, beginning with ensuring that our curriculum offerings and school-wide expectations for student performance reflect our core values and beliefs. As a part of our continuous improvement model, we will continue to examine how well our policies and student rewards related to the academic program, for example GPA weighting and selection of valedictorian, reflect our aspirations.

As we chart this path from Kindergarten through Commencement, it is critical that teachers are engaged as partners in the evolution of our programs, not simply recipients of professional development. Our K-12 program can only be successful if we foster the same dispositions we want for our students: lifelong learners, flexible thinkers, problem-solvers, a willingness to tolerate ambiguity and diverse perspectives, kindness and embracing an inquiry stance. We envision a professional learning environment where teachers have opportunities to demonstrate these dispositions through choice and leadership in professional learning goals and activities. Our district-wide Professional Development Committee is at the beginning stages of leading us in this direction.

We hope this gives you a picture of where we see our program heading in the next few years. We feel that one of the best ways we can encapsulate this vision is to bring to you one last proposal for change. While our titles are respectively Director of Elementary and Director of Secondary Education, our office is often referred to, formally and informally, as the Curriculum Center. Moving forward, and with your approval, we would like to call it the Teaching and Learning Center, as we feel this better expresses the supporting role that curriculum, assessment, and instruction play in the larger picture of student, teacher, and community learning.

# WESTPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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**ELLIOTT LANDON**  
*Superintendent of Schools*

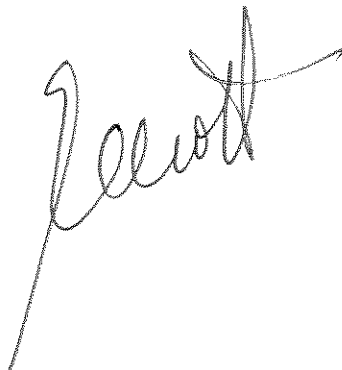
110 MYRTLE AVENUE  
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TELEPHONE: (203) 341-1010  
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To: Members of the Board of Education  
From: Elliott Landon  
Subject: Capital Projects Update  
Date: December 15, 2014

Please find attached to this memorandum updates on capital improvement projects initiated during the 2013-14 school year and continued into the 2014-15 school year. Prepared by Director of School Business Operations, Elio Longo, the format of these reports are consistent with the discussions conducted with the Board of Education previously. The capital improvement projects are:

1. Classroom Door Handle Sets/Locks Projects – All Schools
2. Window Film Security Project
3. King's Highway Elementary School Repointing Project

Mr. Longo will be prepared to speak to each of these capital improvement projects at the Board meeting scheduled for December 15.



**CLASSROOM DOOR HANDLESETS/LOCKS - ALL SCHOOLS**  
**14-013-BOE Project ID: 1016650-578000-10003**

| TOWN CAPITAL  |                | BOE OPERATING |                | TOTAL         |                |
|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| Budget        | Actual to Date | Budget        | Actual to Date | Budget        | Actual to Date |
| \$ 200,000.00 | \$ 150,871.60  | \$ 200,000.00 | \$ 150,871.60  | \$ 400,000.00 | \$ 301,743.20  |
| 100%          | 75%            | 100%          | 75%            | 100%          | 75%            |
|               | Balance        |               | Balance        |               | Balance        |
|               | \$ 49,128.40   |               | \$ -           |               | \$ 49,128.40   |
|               | 25%            |               |                |               | 25%            |

| Item # | Item description       | Budget        | Actual to Date | FY/ Object Code | Balance |
|--------|------------------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|---------|
| 1      | Door Locks all schools | \$ 150,871.60 | \$ 150,871.60  |                 | \$ -    |
|        |                        | \$ 150,871.60 | \$ 150,871.60  |                 | \$ -    |
|        |                        | 100%          | 100%           |                 |         |

| Date      | Invoice #   | Payment       |
|-----------|-------------|---------------|
| 8/31/2014 | A/A Appl #1 | \$ 135,784.44 |
| 10/1/2014 | A/A Appl #2 | \$ 15,087.16  |
|           |             | \$ 150,871.60 |

|                      |                     |     |
|----------------------|---------------------|-----|
| Current Contingency: | \$ 49,128.40        | 25% |
| <b>NET POSITION:</b> | <b>\$ 49,128.40</b> |     |

**NARRATIVE:**

The project was completed on time and well within budget. The cost estimate for this project was \$186,245.20. The project was awarded to BHI on a unit price cost basis. The total handleset conversion/replacement count taken during a field walkthrough yielded a count lower than the original estimate. By awarding the contract on a standard unit price cost basis the final count did not cause a higher per unit cost.

**WINDOW FILM SECURITY PROJECT**  
**Project ID: 10106650-578001-10003**

|                     |                      |                    |
|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| <b>TOWN CAPITAL</b> | <b>BOE OPERATING</b> | <b>TOTAL</b>       |
| Budget 100%         | Budget 100%          | Budget 100%        |
| Actual to Date 88%  | Actual to Date 88%   | Actual to Date 88% |
| Balance 12%         | Balance 12%          | Balance 12%        |
| \$ 500,000.00       | \$ 500,000.00        | \$ 500,000.00      |
| \$ 441,395.00       | \$ 441,395.00        | \$ 441,395.00      |
| \$ 58,605.00        | \$ 58,605.00         | \$ 58,605.00       |

Town PO #: 20150332  
 Vendor: Mozzicato Enterprises  
 Fiscal Year: 2014/2015  
 PO Amount: \$ 435,895.00

| Item # | Item description                        | Budget        | Actual to Date | Balance | FY/ Object Code |
|--------|---|---------------|----------------|---------|-----------------|
| 1      | Furnish/Install Window Film all schools | \$ 435,895.00 | \$ 435,895.00  | \$ -    |                 |
|        |   | \$ 435,895.00 | \$ 435,895.00  | \$ -    |                 |
|        |   | 100%          | 100%           | 0%      |                 |

| Date      | Invoice # | Payment       |
|-----------|-----------|---------------|
| 7/24/2014 | 895-1     | \$ 67,194.00  |
| 7/31/2014 | 895-2     | \$ 50,379.00  |
| 8/7/2014  | 895-3     | \$ 70,000.00  |
| 9/9/2014  | 895-4     | \$ 248,322.00 |
|           |           | \$ 435,895.00 |

Town PO #: 20151301  
 Vendor: Builders Hardware  
 Fiscal Year: 2014/2015  
 PO Amount: \$ 5,500.00

| Item # | Item description                       | Budget | Actual to Date | Balance       | FY/ Object Code |
|--------|--|--------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| 1      | Furnish and replace plexiglass w/glass | \$ -   | \$ 5,500.00    | \$ (5,500.00) |                 |
|        |  | \$ -   | \$ 5,500.00    | \$ (5,500.00) |                 |

| Date      | Invoice # | Payment     |
|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| 7/21/2014 | 07212014  | \$ 5,500.00 |
|           |           | \$ 5,500.00 |

Contingency: \$ 64,105.00 13%

**NET POSITION:** \$ (5,500.00)  
 \$ 58,605.00

**NARRATIVE:**

The original project scope was completed on time and well within appropriation. To date, \$5,500 of the original \$64,105 contingency has been spent. Contingency funds were used to replace first floor plexiglass-equipped windows found at a few schools with glass. Safety film cannot be applied to plexiglass. The Net Contingency amount at this time is \$58,605. The project account remains open at this time. We await recommendations from the school-based safety committees that may include firm applications to areas not included in the original scope.

**Kings Highway Elementary School Repointing  
13-038-RFP**

| TOWN CAPITAL  |                | BOE OPERATING |                | TOTAL         |                |
|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| Budget        | Actual to Date | Budget        | Actual to Date | Budget        | Actual to Date |
| \$ 282,281.00 | \$ 282,273.00  | \$ -          | \$ -           | \$ 282,281.00 | \$ 282,273.00  |
| 100%          | 100%           | 0%            | 0%             | 100%          | 100%           |
|               | 8.00           |               |                |               | 8.00           |
|               | \$             |               | \$             |               | \$             |
|               |                |               |                |               | 0%             |

Town PO #: 20131861-00  
 Vendor: Tecton Architects  
 Fiscal Year: 2012-2013  
 PO Amount: \$ 4,000.00

| Item # | Item description               | Budget      | Actual to Date | Budget | Actual to Date | Budget      | Actual to Date | Balance |
|--------|--------------------------------|-------------|----------------|--------|----------------|-------------|----------------|---------|
| 1      | Architectural services Phase 1 | \$ 4,000.00 | \$ 4,000.00    | \$ -   | \$ -           | \$ 4,000.00 | \$ 4,000.00    | \$ -    |
|        |                                | 100%        | 100%           | 0%     | 0%             | 100%        | 100%           | 0%      |
|        |                                | \$          | \$             | \$     | \$             | \$          | \$             | \$      |
|        |                                |             |                |        |                |             |                |         |

Date: 1/30/2012  
 Invoice #: 32547  
 Payment: \$ 4,000.00

Town PO #: 20134242-00  
 Vendor: Tecton Architects  
 Fiscal Year: 2012-2013  
 PO Amount: \$ 31,350.00

| Item # | Item description            | Budget       | Actual to Date | Budget    | Actual to Date | Budget       | Actual to Date | Balance   |
|--------|-----------------------------|--------------|----------------|-----------|----------------|--------------|----------------|-----------|
| 1      | Construction documents      | \$ 14,550.00 | \$ 14,550.00   | \$ -      | \$ -           | \$ 14,550.00 | \$ 14,550.00   | \$ -      |
| 2      | Prequalify bidders          | \$ 1,455.00  | \$ 1,455.00    | \$ -      | \$ -           | \$ 1,455.00  | \$ 1,455.00    | \$ -      |
| 3      | Bid & negotiation           | \$ 1,455.00  | \$ 1,455.00    | \$ -      | \$ -           | \$ 1,455.00  | \$ 1,455.00    | \$ -      |
| 4      | Construction administration | \$ 11,640.00 | \$ 11,640.00   | \$ -      | \$ -           | \$ 11,640.00 | \$ 11,640.00   | \$ -      |
| 5      | Reimbursable expenses       | \$ 750.00    | \$ -           | \$ 750.00 | \$ -           | \$ 750.00    | \$ -           | \$ 750.00 |
| 6      | Change 1 rebid service      | \$ 1,500.00  | \$ 1,500.00    | \$ -      | \$ -           | \$ 1,500.00  | \$ 1,500.00    | \$ -      |
|        |                             | 100%         | 98%            | 100%      | 98%            | 100%         | 98%            | 2%        |
|        |                             | \$           | \$             | \$        | \$             | \$           | \$             | \$        |
|        |                             |              |                |           |                |              |                |           |





**Kings Highway Elementary School Repointing  
13-038-RFP**

| TOWN CAPITAL  |                |                | BOE OPERATING |                |         | TOTAL         |                |                |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| Budget        | Actual to Date | Balance        | Budget        | Actual to Date | Balance | Budget        | Actual to Date | Balance        |
| \$ 174,800.00 | \$ 166,488.50  | \$ (21,688.50) | \$ -          | \$ -           | \$ -    | \$ 174,800.00 | \$ 166,488.50  | \$ (21,688.50) |
| \$ 22,700.00  | \$ 30,844.60   | \$ (8,144.60)  | \$ -          | \$ -           | \$ -    | \$ 22,700.00  | \$ 30,844.60   | \$ (8,144.60)  |
| \$ 35,000.00  | \$ 5,166.90    | \$ 29,833.10   | \$ -          | \$ -           | \$ -    | \$ 35,000.00  | \$ 5,166.90    | \$ 29,833.10   |
| \$ 232,500.00 | \$ 232,500.00  | \$ -           | \$ -          | \$ -           | \$ -    | \$ 232,500.00 | \$ 232,500.00  | \$ -           |
| 100%          | 100%           | 0%             | 100%          | 100%           | 0%      | 100%          | 100%           | 0%             |

Town PO #: 2014S175-00  
Vendor: GL Capasso  
Fiscal Year: 2013-2014  
PO Amount: \$ 232,500.00

Item #      Item description

- 1 Base bid
- 2 Alternate #1
- 3 Alternate #2

| Date       | Invoice #  | Payment       |
|------------|------------|---------------|
| 8/12/2014  | AIA App# 1 | \$ 166,488.50 |
| 8/12/2014  | AIA App# 2 | \$ 30,844.60  |
| 10/15/2014 | AIA App# 3 | \$ 5,166.90   |
|            |            | \$ 232,500.00 |

Town PO #: 20151795-00  
Vendor: GL Capasso  
Fiscal Year: 2014-2015  
PO Amount: \$ 6,798.00

Item #      Item description

- 1 \*Change Orders 1 through 4

| Date       | Invoice #  | Payment     |
|------------|------------|-------------|
| 10/15/2014 | AIA App# 3 | \$ 6,798.00 |
|            |            | \$ 6,798.00 |

\*Chg #1 So Courtyard - water over door repair  
\*Chg #2 Install Urethan caulk over brick in piece of mortar wash  
\*Chg #3 Lower stucco repairs at 1980 building  
\*Chg #4 New addition - lower block

**Kings Highway Elementary School Repointing  
13-038-RFP**

| TOWN CAPITAL   |                                 | + BOE OPERATING |        |                |                 | TOTAL                |                |
|--|---------------------------------|-----------------|--------|----------------|-----------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Budget   | Actual to Date                  | Balance         | Budget | Actual to Date | FY/ Object Code | Balance              | Actual to Date |
| \$ -   | \$ 3,575.00                     | \$ (3,575.00)   | \$ -   | \$ -           |                 | \$ -                 | \$ 3,575.00    |
| \$ -   | \$ 3,575.00                     | \$ (3,575.00)   | \$ -   | \$ -           |                 | \$ -                 | \$ 3,575.00    |
| 100%   |                                 |                 |        |                |                 |                      | 100%           |
| Town PO #: 20151759<br>Vendor: Offshore Construction<br>Fiscal Year: 2014-2015<br>PO Amount: \$ 3,575.00 |                                 |                 |        |                |                 |                      |                |
| Item #   | Item description                |                 |        | Date           | Invoice #       | Payment              |                |
| 1  | Installation of new cap on dome |                 |        | 10/10/2014     | 9114            | \$ 3,575.00          |                |
|  |                                 |                 |        |                |                 | \$ 3,575.00          |                |
|  |                                 |                 |        |                |                 | \$ 9,631.00          |                |
|  |                                 |                 |        |                |                 | 3%                   |                |
|  |                                 |                 |        |                |                 | <b>NET POSITION:</b> | <b>\$ 8.00</b> |

**Narrative:**

Project completed on-time and within appropriation. A third-party contractor was hired to assess the remaining life of the existing copper cupola. The cupola was found to be in repairable condition and determined not in need of replacement. A new dome cap was installed along with minor patching to prevent water from entering the structure. A cost-benefit analysis led to the replacement of limestone balusters with precast substitutes. Project efficiencies allowed for additional repairs and repointing to stress areas vulnerable to water infiltration.

# WESTPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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**ELLIOTT LANDON**  
*Superintendent of Schools*

110 MYRTLE AVENUE  
WESTPORT, CONNECTICUT 06880  
TELEPHONE: (203) 341-1010  
FAX: (203) 341-1029

To: Members of the Board of Education  
From: Elliott Landon  
Subject: Program Modifications: Kindergarten  
Date: December 15, 2014

Please note the memorandum from Julie Droller to me dated December 1, 2014 that is attached to this correspondence to the Board. Within Ms. Droller's memorandum there is a recommendation supported fully by the elementary school principals and the Superintendent of Schools for an increase in music specials from one 30-minute class per week to two 30-minute classes, effective with the start of the 2015-16 school year.

This proposal to increase music in Kindergarten will have no adverse impact upon the curriculum that is delivered through the instructional minutes assigned to our Kindergarten program. As Ms. Droller stated on December 1, by revising the social studies and social skills programs, the five minutes of instructional time per day devoted to social studies will be integrated into the social skills program and reinforced through the balanced literacy framework. To explain this in non-pedagogical terms, teaching about community is a critical component of the new national social studies framework standards. The social skills program and the balanced literacy program will both integrate the standards related to "community" into their respective curricula, ensuring that the essential elements of social studies will continue to be addressed as they have been previously, and the joys of music can be added to the Kindergarten program.

In making this decision, the Board should know that this proposal is not "budget neutral." It will require the addition of 0.5 additional music staff. Because of contractual obligations with the teachers' union, we cannot reduce the current preparation time for all Kindergarten teachers. Were we to attempt to make this proposal "budget neutral" we would be required to remove another special in an amount equal to 0.5 FTE, e.g., Spanish, physical education or art, a circumstance neither recommended nor desired. Nonetheless, Marge Cion advises that shifts in enrollment will permit us to reduce staff in ESOL and Literacy Support to accommodate this 0.5 increase in staffing for the 2015-16 school year.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION**

**Be It Resolved, That upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education authorizes the offering of music to all Kindergarten classes two times per week for 30 minutes each, effective with the beginning of the 2015-16 school year.**





*Julie Droller*  
Director, Elementary Education  
Telephone: 203-341-1213  
Email: [jdroller@westport.k12.ct.us](mailto:jdroller@westport.k12.ct.us)

TO: ELLIOTT LANDON  
FROM: JULIE DROLLER *JD*  
SUBJECT: KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS  
DATE: DECEMBER 1, 2104

At the June 9, 2014 Board of Education meeting last spring, Cynthia Gilchrest and the elementary principals reported on the success of our 5 Full Day Kindergarten Program Initiative. The presentation included recommendations to consider for the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years, which we will be reporting on this evening.

Update on our recommendations for 2014-2015:

- Plan to check-in/feedback from kindergarten and 1st grade teachers
- Increase paraprofessional time in kindergarten

Program recommendations for 2015-2016:

- Increase music from one 30-minute class to two 30-minute classes per week for our kindergarten students

Included with this letter is a Kindergarten Music Proposal prepared by Thomas Scavone, K-12 Supervisor of Music. Mr. Scavone outlines a determination of need, his recommendation, an impact analysis, timeline for implementation, and a comparison of Kindergarten music times for our DRG and other high performing districts. He will join me and the elementary principals to discuss this recommendation.

The impact of an additional 30-minute music class per week on instructional time in kindergarten is five minutes per day, which will be absorbed through revised social skills and social studies curriculum and improved teacher efficacy at implementing the balanced literacy framework.



## Kindergarten Music Proposal

Thomas A. Scavone  
K-12 Supervisor of Music

9/30/2014

### Introduction:

The Westport Public Schools music program is highly regarded both locally and nationally. As evidenced by our designation as a national Best Communities for Music Education since 2012, we are in the enviable position of being considered among the best. It is the primary responsibility that programs of excellence continually evolve through a combination of quality instruction, the implementation of best practices and through a self-assessment process using nationally-recognized, subject-specific benchmarks. These efforts align with Westport's goal of continuous improvement in the areas of instruction, curriculum and assessment.

### Determination of Need:

One of my first charges was to review the delivery of elementary music instruction to determine if students were receiving appropriate contact time, specifically at the Kindergarten level. Westport is below recommended minimums for Kindergarten music instructional time as outlined in both the state and national opportunity-to-learn standards which recommend between 60 and 100 minutes. We currently provide 30 minutes of kindergarten instruction once a week. At every other elementary grade level, we are within the guidelines.

An articulate, well-sequenced music curriculum must deliver quality instruction taking into account two primary considerations: frequency of class instruction and total instructional time. This is especially important at the early grades. Our elementary music curriculum is diverse, providing musical experiences through varied activities such as singing, singing games, movement, folk dance, and playing both rhythmic and melodic instruments. It concentrates on music understanding, appropriate skills and appreciation for the many forms of music, and seeks to enrich the lives of all students. A single 30 minute class per week presents a number of instructional challenges including:

- > reinforcement and retention of concepts and skills
- > the ability to accurately assess student progress
- > the possibility of weeks passing without instruction due to factors out of the teacher's control including weather cancellations and student absence
- > integration and assessment of movement (kinesthetic) in the development of the whole child
- > the ability to address the goals and expectations of the recently released National Core Arts Standards for Music which states that in addition to the three artistic processes that have driven our instruction: Creating, Performing and Responding (CPR); a fourth, Connections, focuses on the higher-order skills of synthesizing and relating knowledge to CPR

An inadvertent consequence of the current construct is that music literacy skills that are expected to be introduced at the Kindergarten level are pushed into the upper elementary grades. The addition of instructional minutes must be coupled with an increase in frequency of classes. Increasing time to 45 minutes or more in a single class session is not recommended by the Connecticut Department of Education (*Components of an Effective Arts Program*).

### **Recommendation**

Kindergarten music instruction should be delivered through two 30 minutes classes per week for a total of 60 minutes. This year, we are investigating best practices for our Pre-K and Kindergarten music instruction through a combination of Professional Development opportunities. I would recommend that we continue to focus department PD and meeting time on this topic with the goal of developing a comprehensive Kindergarten curriculum aligned to the new National Standards.

### **Impact Analysis**

- **19** - Total Kindergarten Classes District-wide (based on 2014-15)
- **345** - Total Kindergarten Students Impacted (based on 2014-15): CES - 50; GF - 57; KHS - 82; LL - 70; SES - 86
- no more than **+ .5 FTE** - Staffing Needs (this year, music FTE was reduced by .2 FTE)
- Other Budget Implications (i.e. additional supplies) - None
- Scheduling - Principals identified no foreseeable issues except for possible conflicts with KHS' APE and specialized programs
- Facilities - Principals identified no additional facility issues except for possible coordination of music classes at LLS

### **Timeline for Implementation**

- **September - October 2014**
  - Meet with elementary music staff, principals and District Administrators to develop a detailed proposal/impact study
- **November - December 2014**
  - Submit proposal for adoption into the 2015-2016 Budget requests
- **January - June 2015**
  - Determine Scheduling and Facility needs for each building
  - Revise Kindergarten curriculum and assessments
  - Hire appropriate staff
- **August 2015**
  - Begin Instruction

### **Music Education Philosophy of the Westport Public Schools**

To ensure that each child in Westport will create music, perform music, and respond to music with understanding, develop in-depth skills in music, appreciate the importance of music in expressing human experiences, and apply their musical knowledge and skills to make educated musical judgments throughout their lifetimes.

We know that a quality, sequential music education helps students learn to communicate beyond the obvious, appreciate beauty and expression beyond the limits of pop culture, develop powers of concentration and focus, become better citizens, and helps students to know themselves better through enriched lives and experiences.

**Kindergarten Music**  
**DRG A and Comparable Schools (Best Communities Designees)**

| <b>District</b>                                      | <b>Contact Time</b>                     |
|--|---|
| Darien   | 2 forty minute classes per 6 day cycle  |
| New Canaan   | 2 thirty minute classes per 6 day cycle |
| Region 9   | No response                             |
| Ridgefield   | 1 thirty minute class per week          |
| Weston   | 2 thirty-minute classes per week        |
| <b>Westport</b>                                      | <b>1 thirty minute class per week</b>   |
| Wilton   | 2 thirty minute classes per week        |
| <b><i>Schools with comparable music programs</i></b> |   |
| Canton, CT   | 2 thirty minute classes per week        |
| Fairfield, CT  | 2 thirty minute classes per week        |
| West Hartford, CT                                    | 2 thirty-minute classes per week        |
| Lexington, MA  | 2 thirty-minute classes per week        |
| Scarsdale, NY  | 2 thirty-minute classes per 6 day cycle |

Respectfully Submitted,

Thomas A. Scavone

# LET'S BRING BACK THE MAGIC OF SONG FOR TEACHING READING

*Becky Iwasaki ■ Timothy Rasinski ■ Kasim Yildirim ■ Belinda S. Zimmerman*

In most primary classrooms in the United States, reading instruction is increasingly dominated by literature (chiefly stories) and informational texts. Recent calls for reading curriculum reform continue to note the primacy of literature and informational texts (Dorfman & Capelli, 2007; Flowers & Flowers, 2009; Spencer, 2011).

Yet a considerable amount of language activity we engage in as adults involves rhythmical words such as songs. Perhaps it is singing in places of worship, or the beginning of a sporting event, or singing along to the radio while driving, or just listening to one's ipod while walking in the neighborhood. If during these singing episodes we were provided with the written lyrics to the songs, we would be reading!

We think that singing (while simultaneously having a visual display of the words in the songs) could be a very useful instructional tool to teach

reading to beginning readers. A growing body of research and scholarly thought suggests that singing has potential for improving reading (Biggs, Homan, Dedrick, & Rasinski, 2008; Fisher, 2001; Harp, 1988; Hines, 2010; Miller & Coen, 1994; Smith, 2000). For example, Biggs and colleagues (2008) found that the regular repeated singing and reading of songs by struggling middle school readers over a nine-week

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*Timothy Rasinski is a professor of reading education at Kent State University, Ohio, USA; email [trasinsk@kent.edu](mailto:trasinsk@kent.edu).*

*Kasim Yildirim is an assistant professor of elementary school classroom teaching department at Mugla Sittki Kocman University, Turkey; email [kasimyildirim@mu.edu.tr](mailto:kasimyildirim@mu.edu.tr).*

*Belinda S. Zimmerman is an assistant professor of reading education at Kent State University, Ohio, USA; email [bz4literacy@yahoo.com](mailto:bz4literacy@yahoo.com).*

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*"A considerable amount of language activity we engage in as adults involves rhythmical words such as songs."*

period resulted in significantly greater progress in reading achievement (seven months gain on average) than a comparison group of students in an alternative intervention.

When students sing while tracking the lyrics to songs, they are in essence reading. Singing increases time spent reading. Scholarly thought in literacy suggests that the more reading young readers do, the better readers they will become (Allington, 2002; Morgan, Mraz, Padak, & Rasinski, 2008). The joyfulness embedded in singing may motivate students to want to sing (and read) even more.

Certain features are embedded in songs that make them memorable and enjoyable. First, the melody and rhythm of songs makes them easy to learn and easy to remember. One of our goals for beginning readers is to develop a robust sight vocabulary. Sight words are essentially memorized words—by sight and sound. The memorability of the words in songs offers good opportunities for developing young students' sight vocabulary.

Song lyrics (a form of poetry) often are embedded with rhyme, assonance, and alliteration. This playing with the sounds of language through song can be a gateway to the development of phonemic awareness. The rhyming nature of most song lyrics also provides teachers with excellent texts for teaching word families (rimes). When we work on the "-ob" word family, we are sure to teach students "When the red red robin comes bob, bob, bobbing along."

Songs lend themselves to repeated reading, a research-tested method for developing reading fluency (Samuels, 1979; Therrian, 2004). How many of us hear a song in the morning and find ourselves singing it all day long? The repetitious nature of singing (choruses are sung repeatedly in a song) provide opportunities for improving students' reading fluency. Moreover, the melodic nature of songs requires the singer/reader to attend to the prosodic nature of the lyric. Prosody is often the part of reading fluency that is ignored (Dowhower, 1994).

Finally, songs are "a natural way to get children to pay attention to rhymes and a fun way to learn" (Temple, Ogle, Crawford, & Freppon, 2010, p. 116). In essence, the brevity, melody, rhythm, and other features of songs and song lyrics make them easy to learn. Many first graders encounter frustration when they are unable to fluently read lengthy texts. The ability to sing and read a song lyric is an accomplishment that could improve young, struggling readers' confidence in their ability to read.

### **A Year of Singing**

In the 2011–2012 school year, Becky (first author) decided to bring song back

into her first-grade classroom by teaching her students one or two new songs each week. As students sang throughout each week she reminded them to track the words—to read as they sing. Eighteen of Becky's students began and ended the year with her and were assessed using the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA; Beaver, 2012) in September and May. Results of the DRA suggest that all but one of her students made at least a year's growth in reading, and several students exhibited greater than average reading growth.

We acknowledge that we cannot attribute Becky's success solely to the fact that students sang regularly in her class. In classroom-based research, because students receive a variety of forms of instruction, it is nearly impossible to specify an exact cause to any one instructional approach. Yet Becky's results appear to be in line with other scholarship (noted earlier) that supports singing in the classroom.

Reading rhythmical language in the primary grades is not new. Teachers have been singing with students since the days of the McGuffey Reader. However, the recent emphasis on narrative and informational reading has led to a decline in this type of reading (Gill, 2007). Sometimes, perhaps, to go forward in reading instruction, we need to take a look backward at where we have been.

### **Becky's Singing Classroom**

Each week Becky taught her students one or more songs, mostly children's songs. Deciding factors for Becky's song

*"All but one of [Becky's] students made at least a year's growth in reading, and several students exhibited greater than average reading growth."*

selections included those with distinct melodies, simple and regular rhythm, and lyrics that easily fit the melody and rhythm structure and could easily be learned and sung by children. Of course, Becky chose songs that had content that was appropriate for primary-grade students. Becky found most of her songs online and on CD collections of songs for children. Samples of songs she taught her first graders included "You Are My Sunshine," "Yankee Doodle," "Miss Mary Mack," "This Little Light of Mine," "Take Me Out to the Ballgame," "Red Red Robin," "We Shall Overcome," and "A Tisket, A Tasket."

Although Becky attempted to choose songs that tied into a particular curriculum theme or time of year (holiday songs in December; "Take Me Out to the Ballgame" at the beginning of baseball season), most often she chose songs that she felt children would enjoy singing. Several websites (e.g., [www.theteachersguide.com/ChildrensSongs.htm](http://www.theteachersguide.com/ChildrensSongs.htm)) provided Becky with a compendium of songs for children as well as ideas for connecting songs to curricular themes.

Here's a typical weekly routine Becky used for teaching "You Are My Sunshine" to her students. Becky spends approximately 10–15 minutes each day on singing with her students.

### Day 1

- "You Are My Sunshine" is playing as students arrive to acquaint students with the melody and words. Some students call out, "I know this song!" While students listen to the song played several times, the lyrics are charted in front of them. As Becky and her class sing the song several times throughout of the day, often during transition times, Becky points to the words in the charted lyrics to draw

*"The repeated readings [of song lyrics] allowed even the less proficient readers to develop a mastery of the songs that was equal to the more advanced students."*

students' attention to the written words.

- Becky leads her class in a discussion talk about what the song means: "What is this song teaching us?" Some students think it teaches us about sunshine. Some note that it's about love. Becky asks, "Who do you think the sunshine is in this song?" One student notes that it is about a person singing to someone he or she is in love with. Becky asks students to think of other words they know that might refer to love besides *sunshine*. Students respond with *honey, dear, cutie, baby, and sweetie*. Becky writes these on a chart entitled "Words of Love."
  - Next Becky directs students to find words they know in the lyrics. Many are already displayed on the word wall: *you, are, my, some, know, happy, make, take*.
  - Each student receives a personal copy of the song and illustrates it. In the following days, Becky will ask students to read the words from their own copies as they sing. Students take home their copy of the song and sing it to and with their parents several more times.
- the previous day and offer personal comments such as, "I love this song," or "My mom sang this to me last night." Becky asks how many students sang the song the previous night at home. All hands go up!
- Becky and her students sing the song chorally from the chart and from their own personal copies. Becky reminds students to look at the words on the chart as they are sung. She or a student points to the words as the class sings.
  - Becky asks her students to call out more words from the song that they recognize. Any new words that students recognize, such as *sunshine* and *gray*, are added to the word wall.
  - Many teachable moments arise from the discussion of the words. Becky notes the compound nature of *sunshine*. She also points out to students rhyming words, words that begin or end with a particular letter or sound. And she shows students how the "-ay" word family in *gray* appears in other words such as *day, say, stay, may, and bay*.
  - The brief discussion is followed by students singing the song again in varied forms—boys only, girls only, slowly, quickly, and so forth. Again, Becky asks students to share what they think the song might be about. One child notes that it may be about a mom singing about her child. At various times during the

### Day 2

- "You Are My Sunshine" is playing as students arrive. The song lyrics are still on display, and many students gravitate toward them. Most students recall the song from

*"The beauty of singing in the classroom is its simplicity and joyfulness. Songs are everywhere."*

day Becky leads her students in a rendition of the song.

### Day 3

- Students enter the classroom in the morning with the song playing. Many children sing along as they hang up their coats and ready themselves for the day.
- Becky begins the day by asking students to sing along with her.
- Next she draws students' attention to particular words such as *sun* from *sunshine*. She asks students to think of other words that rhyme with *sun* and contain the "-un" word family. Students call out *fun*, *bun*, *run*, and Becky displays the words on the dry-erase board.
- Becky asks students to work in small groups and think of words that contain the "-ake" word family and other words besides *gray* that begin with *gr-*. After a few minutes of work, students call out their responses, and Becky charts the words on the dry-erase board.
- Students chorally read the words they have brainstormed and end with one or more renditions of the song.

### Day 4

- As in previous days, the day begins with students and Becky singing their song together. Students sing as a whole group and in smaller groups.
- Becky asks students to share their favorite parts of the song and to

read the lines (or words) they love most. She asks students to explain their choices.

- The song is sung throughout the day.
- At the end the day, Becky asks students to write in their journals their feelings about learning "You Are My Sunshine."

### Day 5

- The school day begins with one or two renditions of "You Are My Sunshine." By now nearly all students are able to sing the song, read the song fluently without the melody, identify words from the song in isolation, and identify related rhyming words.
- The principal, always an appreciative audience, is invited to the classroom to hear the class sing and read.
- Later that morning, students sing to one or more kindergarten classes. Throughout all the singing, students have visual access to the lyrics, either through the charted lyrics or students' own copies of the lyrics. Becky regularly reminds students to "look at the words as you sing," even though many students are quite proud at having memorized the lyrics.

Each week a new song (or songs) was taught and rehearsed in a similar manner. As songs were mastered, they are added to students' song and poetry binders, and as her class's repertoire of

songs increased, her class frequently reprised songs previously learned. One way to make the singing experience authentic and motivating was to provide a listening audience. Becky's class often took its "show" on the road by visiting and performing for other classes and inviting parents, principal, and other school staff to visit her class for a performance. During monthly school literacy celebrations, Becky's students were often asked to perform songs from their repertoire to parents and other audiences.

Because of the motivational nature of singing, students were willing to engage in repeated reading of the songs throughout the week until all students could read/sing the song fluently. Although the students in her class reflect a range of differences in reading achievement, the repeated readings allowed even the less proficient readers to develop a mastery of the songs that was equal to the more advanced students. Singing allowed all students to participate at a proficient level.

Word study was a big part of the song instruction. Becky often chose words for further study and display on the classroom word wall that were exemplars of word families and other phonics elements the class was studying, high-frequency words that she felt students should learn to recognize automatically, or words that she and her students felt were interesting or unusual and worth exploring in greater detail.

### Your Turn

If Becky can bring singing back into her classroom, you can too. The beauty of singing in the classroom is its simplicity and joyfulness. Songs are everywhere. We hope that Becky's story will inspire you to bring more singing into your own classroom. Teach your children a

## LET'S BRING BACK THE MAGIC OF SONG FOR TEACHING READING

new song every week. Be sure to have the written lyrics available for students to read. Sing the same song repeatedly (repeated reading) until they are able to sing the song fluently. Then have your students perform for an audience. What could be better—children having fun singing while learning to read at the same time!

### REFERENCES

- Allington, R.L. (2002). What I've learned about effective reading instruction from a decade of studying exemplary elementary classroom teachers. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 83(10), 740-747.
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### MORE TO EXPLORE

#### Websites for Finding Folksongs and Songs for Children

- [www.theteachersguide.com/ChildrensSongs.htm](http://www.theteachersguide.com/ChildrensSongs.htm)
- [www.niehs.nih.gov/kids/music.htm](http://www.niehs.nih.gov/kids/music.htm)
- [www.songsforteaching.com](http://www.songsforteaching.com)
- [www.contemplator.com/america/](http://www.contemplator.com/america/)
- [www.scoutsongs.com/categories/patriotic.html](http://www.scoutsongs.com/categories/patriotic.html)

# WESTPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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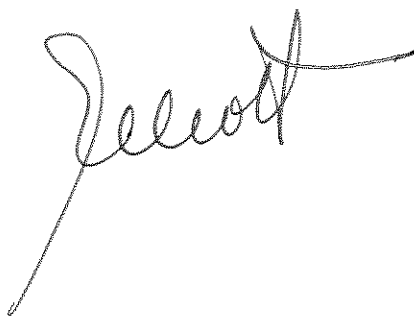
**ELLIOTT LANDON**  
*Superintendent of Schools*

110 MYRTLE AVENUE  
WESTPORT, CONNECTICUT 06880  
TELEPHONE: (203) 341-1010  
FAX: (203) 341-1029

To: Members of the Board of Education  
From: Elliott Landon  
Subject: Approval of Monthly Health and Medical Insurance Report  
Date: December 15, 2014

The monthly projected FY 2014-15 Health and Medical Insurance Fund Report for the period ending November 30, 2014 may be found as an attachment to this memorandum. Prepared by Director of School Business Operations Elio Longo, it provides an update on cash receipts, cash disbursements, ending cash balance, net position end-of-year projection, and claims cash draw against the insurance fund account.

I am pleased to inform you that we continue to project an end-of-year balance in our insurance fund account.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elliott Landon", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

**Medical Health Insurance Fund  
FY 14-15 Projections  
Claims data as of November 30, 2014**

|  | <u>Estimates</u>  |
|--|-------------------|
| <b>Cash receipts</b>                                   |                   |
| General Fund Budget from line 210                      | \$ 14,501,700     |
| Other Fund Contributions                               | 85,000            |
| Employee Contributions (Active)                        | 2,433,811         |
| Flex Spending Accounts                                 | -                 |
| Cobra Participants                                     | 26,008            |
| Retirees under 65                                      | 365,701           |
| State Teachers Retirement (TRB)                        | 146,824           |
| Life Insurance Premiums                                | 25,000            |
| Retirees over 65                                       | 421,847           |
| Other Contributions (FMLA, Retiree Life, etc.)         | -                 |
| <b>Total cash receipts</b>                             | <u>18,005,891</u> |
| <b>Cash disbursements</b>                              |                   |
| Medical  | 10,751,572        |
| Prescription   | 1,988,348         |
| Dental   | 1,007,255         |
| Flex Spending Accounts                                 | -                 |
| Contribution to HSA                                    | 1,329,000         |
| Medical Administrative                                 | 478,224           |
| Network Access Fee                                     | 164,426           |
| Individual Stop-Loss                                   | 681,912           |
| Dental Administrative                                  | 53,903            |
| FSA Administrative                                     | 2,931             |
| Consulting Fee   | 45,000            |
| ERIP & Refunds Less Reimbursements                     | -                 |
| ACA Related Fees                                       | 112,258           |
| Retirees over 65                                       | 675,000           |
| <b>Total cash disbursements</b>                        | <u>17,289,829</u> |
| <b>Change in cash balance</b>                          | 716,062           |
| <b>Beginning cash balance (unaudited)</b>              | <u>930,839</u>    |
| <b>Ending cash balance(deficit)-projection</b>         | 1,646,901         |
| Less: Incurred but not reported claims (carrying FY14) | <u>(808,233)</u>  |
| <b>Net Position(Deficit) end of year-projection</b>    | <u>738,668</u>    |

|                            | <b>Claims Cash Draw Against Insurance Fund Account</b> |                   |                  |                 | <b>Total</b>        | <b>Avg. Monthly Claims</b> | <b>Variance</b> |
|----------------------------|--|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|---------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|
|                            | <u>Medical/Rx</u>                                      | <u>Dental</u>     | <u>Flex</u>      | <u>Other</u>    |                     |                            |                 |
| Jul 2014                   | \$ 940,672   | \$ 94,171         | \$ 6,419         | \$ -            | \$ 1,041,262        | \$ 1,041,262               |                 |
| Aug 2014                   | \$ 1,551,384   | \$ 93,150         | \$ 396           | \$ -            | \$ 1,644,930        | \$ 1,343,096               | \$ 301,834      |
| Sept 2014                  | \$ 1,237,176   | \$ 110,586        | \$ 6,691         | \$ 119          | \$ 1,354,572        | \$ 1,346,921               | \$ 3,825        |
| Oct 2014                   | \$ 680,049   | \$ 58,680         | \$ 7,696         | \$ 1,156        | \$ 757,581          | \$ 1,199,586               | \$ (147,335)    |
| Nov 2014                   | \$ 698,892   | \$ 71,691         | \$ 7,137         | \$ -            | \$ 777,720          | \$ 1,115,213               | \$ (84,373)     |
| Dec 2014                   | \$ -   |                   |                  |                 | \$ -                |                            |                 |
| Jan 2015                   | \$ -   |                   |                  |                 | \$ -                |                            |                 |
| Feb 2015                   | \$ -   |                   |                  |                 | \$ -                |                            |                 |
| Mar 2015                   | \$ -   |                   |                  |                 | \$ -                |                            |                 |
| Apr 2015                   | \$ -   |                   |                  |                 | \$ -                |                            |                 |
| May 2015                   | \$ -   |                   |                  |                 | \$ -                |                            |                 |
| Jun 2015                   | \$ -   |                   |                  |                 | \$ -                |                            |                 |
|                            | <u>\$ 5,108,172</u>                                    | <u>\$ 438,278</u> | <u>\$ 28,340</u> | <u>\$ 1,275</u> | <u>\$ 5,576,065</u> |                            |                 |
| YTD/Estimate               | 40.1%  | 43.5%             | n/a              | n/a             |                     |                            |                 |
| Theoretical YTD Spend Rate | 41.7%  | 41.7%             | n/a              | n/a             |                     |                            |                 |
| <i>variance %</i>          | -1.6%  | 1.8%              |                  |                 |                     |                            |                 |
| <i>variance \$</i>         | \$ (200,128)   | \$ 18,589         |                  |                 | \$ (181,539)        |                            |                 |

# WESTPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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**ELLIOTT LANDON**  
*Superintendent of Schools*

110 MYRTLE AVENUE  
WESTPORT, CONNECTICUT 06880  
TELEPHONE: (203) 341-1010  
FAX: (203) 341-1029

To: Members of the Board of Education  
From: Elliott Landon  
Subject: Acceptance of Gift  
Date: December 15, 2014

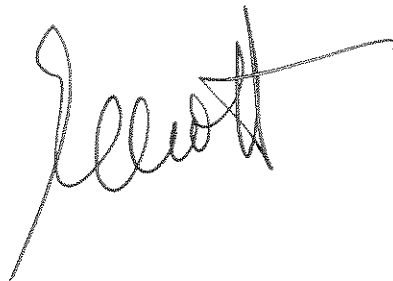
We are quite fortunate to have two exciting gifts presented to us for acceptance by the Board of Education.

The first of these is from the Coleytown Middle School PTA which has offered us the installation of a high quality sound/recording system with wireless capabilities to be placed in the auditorium rehearsal space. This system will provide us with the ability to integrate recording and playback possibilities for large groups, thus providing our students with the opportunity for critical listening, reflection and assessment of musical performances. This gift is valued at \$4,905.

From the Westport Schools Permanent Art Collection (WSPAC) we have a second offer consisting of five works of art with a combined value of \$10,800. These five works have been donated by four donors including Ann Chernow (\$7,000); Staples High School teacher Camille Eskell (\$1,750); Amy Chapel (\$750); and Miggs Burroughs (\$1300).

## **ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION**

**Be It Resolved, That upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts with great appreciation gifts from the Coleytown Middle School PTA and the Westport Schools Permanent Collection, as described in a memorandum to the Board of Education dated December 15, 2014.**



## westport schools art collection | a museum without walls

Established in 1964, and unveiled in 1965, the Westport Schools art collection is a unique educational and community resource, and fifty years later the artwork is still on view in the hallways and offices of our schools and town buildings so our schoolchildren can see them everyday. Great strides are being made to make the collection a resource to support local curricula and classroom projects, with technology, direct access to the database as well as new donations that support these areas. It is with pleasure that I offer the following gifts--5 works of art—with a combined value of \$10,800 for acceptance by the following four donors:

### 1. Donor: Ann Chernow, 2 Gorham Avenue, Westport CT 06880

Robert Arthur Goodnough (1917-2010)

*Movement of Horses*, 1969-70

Oil and acrylic on canvas

Dimensions: 32 x 40 in

Provenance: the artist to Ann Chernow

Value (as provided by donor): \$7,000



Robert Goodnough, a painter whose stylistic evolution from vibrant, Cubist-inspired abstractions to Color Field canvases made him one of the least definable members of the second-generation Abstract Expressionists. He moved among the second-generation members of the school but at the same time stood apart, and his work — kinetic, calligraphic dashes of primary colors in his early career, and subtle pastels beginning in the 1970s — often flirted with figuration. “I like to work freely, to slash with the brush and let loose,” he once told an interviewer. He then added, “I also like to work carefully and with discipline.” Born in Cortland, NY, Goodnough graduated from Syracuse University, and worked in a representational mode while painting in school. He did not receive much exposure to Modernist or Abstract Art until after graduation, when he worked with Abstract painter Hans Hofmann (German, 1880-1966). During the late 1940s, he studied art education at New York University, and later taught at Syracuse and at Cornell University. Often considered a central figure of the “second generation” of Abstract Expressionism, Goodnough painted Abstract works in the 1950s, incorporating both the active brushwork and color-washed, meditative forms found in American Abstract painting—techniques frequently polarized by leading critics of the day. Goodnough also experimented with multimedia and collage, creating works featuring tightly rendered geometric forms, grouped together in animated Abstract compositions exploring properties of illusion and space in painting and two-dimensional works. In addition to painting, Goodnough supplemented his income by writing for Art News, alongside fellow New York School painters like John Ashbery (American, b.1927) and Elaine de Kooning (American, 1919–1989). Goodnough has been honored with a Hiram Gee and a Guggenheim



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Fellowship. His work has been exhibited at the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Venice Biennale.

**2) Camille Eskell c/o Staples High School**

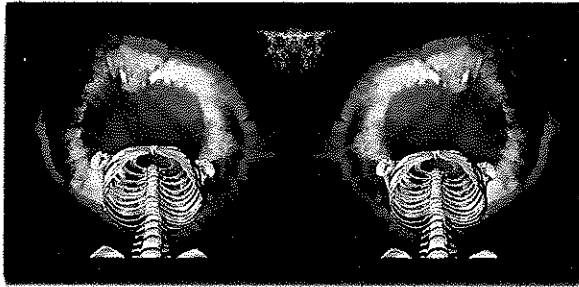
Camille Eskell

*Rude Awakening*, 2013

Series: The Ezekiel Project

Digital print after original oil stick, oil, and wax pencil

Value (provided by donor): \$1750



Ms. Eskell and one of her Staples students, Michael Abrams, who served his senior internship with WSPAC, selected this work for the collection. The Ezekiel Project, works on paper executed in oil stick and wax pencil, embody loss, transcendence and rebirth--rephrasing in contemporary terms Ezekiel's fantastic vision of resurrection in the prophecy The Valley of the Dry Bones. The title also alludes to artist's family name, which was Anglicized to better assimilate into American society of early 20th century.

*Artist's Statement: My work explores duality, transformation, and transcendence in mixed-media series and installations that use the damaged body as metaphor and testimonial. Some time ago, I became absorbed with how familial and cultural dynamics shape our perceptions, motivations, and lives. I began to synthesize a personal history of trauma and redemption to express inner states of being: contradiction, containment, appearance and reality became some of my recurring themes. Integrating opposites formally as well as psychologically, I combine 2- and 3-dimensional techniques with emphasis on a specific medium in each body of work. With drawing remaining a constant component, sculpture, painting, or print elements are juxtaposed with an unlikely mix of ready-mades, found objects, natural materials and fabrics; the design and presentation of the work varies depending on the series, often mimicking other formats to underscore or undercut meaning.*

Award-winning artist and educator Camille Eskell exhibits her work extensively in solo and group shows throughout the U.S. and abroad, including Wales, Mexico, and South America. Notable exhibitions are the recent Fountain Art Fair New York 2014, The New Yorkers at Arthaus gallery/San Francisco, as well as A Book About Death at MOMA/Wales, Verge Art Fair/ArtBrooklyn (NY), Black Madonna /HP Garcia Gallery (NY), The Bold 1980's: A Collector's Vision at The Chrysler Museum/(VA), and Innocence and Experience at the Greenville County Museum of Art/(SC). Group shows include Lines of Vision: Drawings by Contemporary Women, which was seen at contemporary art museums in Mexico City, Bogota, Columbia, Caracas, Venezuela, and more, as well at venues throughout the United States. Beyond Recognition toured throughout New England. Eskell has exhibited with artists Louise Bourgeois, Kiki Smith, Miriam Schapiro, Carolee Schneemann, Komar & Melamid, Donald Baechler, Walt Disney, and many others. Eskell's work is in public and private collections, including the Chrysler Museum of Art/(VA), MOMA/Wales, the Housatonic Museum of Art, (CT) and the Islip Art Museum (NY), and the Westport Permanent Collection (CT). She has received reviews in numerous publications, such as The New York Times, D'artemagazine, Art New England, The Examiner and Artslant online. Among her awards are fellowships in drawing and painting from the New York Foundation for the Arts and the Connecticut Commission

westport schools art collection a museum without walls

on the Arts, and residencies at Weir Farm/National Historic site and the Vermont Studio Center. She holds a Master of Fine Arts from Queens College/CUNY, and lives and works in the greater New York area.

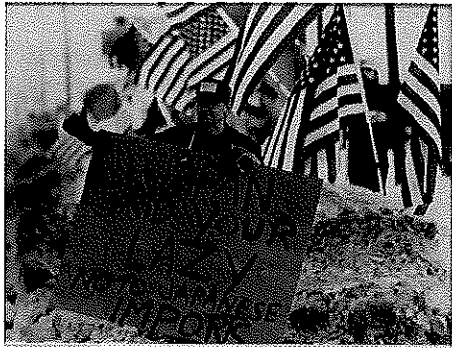
3) Donor: Amy Chapel, 7 Canal Street, Westport, CT 06880

Steve Haines/Detroit News

*"Japan said your lazy -- no to Japanese imports," 1992*

Color photograph

Value (as provided by donor): \$750



Originally published by *The Detroit News*, *The New York Times* published this photograph on Sunday, January 26, 1992, Section 4, page 1, with the caption: *Worker from a Ford assembly plant sending a message last week outside a Toyota dealership near Detroit.* Critics say the Detroit News photographer, who took the picture, probably missed the irony. It shows a Ford Motor Company worker holding a sign that reads: "Japan said your lazy -- no to Japanese imports."

3) Miggs Burroughs, 2 Old Hill Road, Westport, CT 06880



Miggs Burroughs

*My mother's journey from 18 to 95, and back again, 2010*

Lenticular Image

Frame: frameless

Signature (inscription and location): on back

Value (as provided by donor): \$650

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Miggs Burroughs

*Main Street, Westport, Then and Now*, 2013

Lenticular image

Signature (inscription and location): on back

Value (as provided by donor): \$650

Artist Statement: I am intrigued by all the journeys, large and small, that are part of our daily lives -journeys through time, space and emotions. From here to there and back again, lenticular imagery allows me to explore each one in a fresh and somewhat intriguing way. During the time spent with these images in a gallery or on your wall, you are enlisted as a collaborator, controlling the speed, sequence, and ultimately, the significance of what you see. The images are only as relevant as the stories you are willing to bring to them.

Lenticulars are fun, seen in "winky" sunglasses bought at fairs, on album covers and in gimmick advertisements: Stand in one position, a picture can be seen, but rock a little to the side, and another picture appears, back and forth, back and forth. Miggs Burroughs calls it "the lenticular shuffle." When Burroughs was 10, he got a lenticular birthday card from his aunt. He forgot about it for years, but found it again when going through his late father's things. "I was fascinated by the little thing," he said. "You see something 100 times, but the 101st time you see it, something clicks." Today, Burroughs is one of only a few artists in the country who use lenticulars to make art.

For an interview on his images and Journeys visit:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xLTbOL-TVqU#t=16>

and to see the images "shift":

<http://www.miggsb.com/mbpages/lenticular.html#>

A lifelong resident of Westport, and full time graphic artist since 1972, Miggs has designed hundreds of logos, ads, brochures, and now websites, for commercial and non-profit clients throughout Fairfield County. He has created award-winning posters for Save The Children, The American Red Cross and Baskin-Robbins, among others. These, along with the Main Street's Tunnel Vision, Westport Town Flag and an Easter Egg for Reagan's White House (which now resides in the Smithsonian Institution) are among his more celebrated work. His early Pop Art style paintings and prints were shown in galleries in Boston and New York in the 1970's. Early assignments in this style included a U.S. Postage Stamp and 4 covers for TIME Magazine. More recently, as a member of the Silvermine Guild in New Canaan, and of the Westport Arts Center, he has won much acclaim for his cutting edge lenticular imagery - one of only about a dozen artists in the country working in this medium. One of his images—*Brothers* which shows similarities between a Masai safari tour guide and a man walking down the street in Times Square—is in the Westport Schools Permanent Art Collection. Miggs is Staples HS alum, a 1967 graduate of the Carnegie Tech Drama Dept. in Pittsburgh (now Carnegie Mellon University).