

Annual Report 2023

Quaboag Regional School District

The mission of the Quaboag Regional School District is to form a partnership with parents and the community to prepare our diverse population of students to be lifelong learners in a nurturing, safe environment with high expectations so they will be responsible, productive citizens in an ever-changing, global society.

Decisions are made in the best interests of our students.

**Quaboag Regional School Committee 2023 Annual Report
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The Quaboag Regional School District ensures equal employment and educational opportunities for its employees and students. All programs, services, courses of study and activities are made available without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or disability, in compliance with federal and state law.

QUABOAG REGIONAL DISTRICT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The school Committee's regular meetings are scheduled for the third Monday of each calendar month and, as necessary, the first Monday of each calendar month. They are held in the Library at the Quaboag Regional Middle/High School, 284 Old West Brookfield Road in Warren, at 6:30 p.m.

Garett Piermarini West Brookfield	Term Expires 2027
Brittany Bousquet Warren	Term Expires 2028
Craig R. Burgess West Brookfield	Term Expires 2025
Megan Sears Warren	Term Expires 2025
Jason G. Morgan Warren	Term Expires 2027
Gregory Morse West Brookfield	Term Expires 2027
Matt Peloquin Warren	Term Expires 2026
Andrew D. Schwenker Warren	Term Expires 2026
Brian Griffing West Brookfield	Term Expires 2025
Angela Menard Warren	Term Expires 2027
Phil Landine West Brookfield	Term Expires 2026
Travis Mathieson West Brookfield	Term Expires 2027

Superintendent and Regional School District Secretary	Steve Duff
Assistant Superintendent of Development	Madeline Smola
Director of Finance	Beryl Wagner TMS: Chris Desjardins
Director of Student Support Services	Dr. Esposito Yumei Yao
District Treasurer	Robert Miner
Administrative Assistant in the Special Education Office	Renee M. Dalve-Contacos
Special Legal Counsel	Attorney Adam Dupere Southampton
Accounting & Grants	Cindy Courtney
Personnel & Payroll	Lesley Howard Drew Damien (Interim)
Principal Quaboag Regional Middle High School	Casey Handfield
Assistant Principal Quaboag Regional Middle/High School	Mike Lavelle
Principal Warren Community Elementary School	Kevin Slattery
Principal (Kellie O'Brien – resigned July 2021) West Brookfield Elementary School	Melissa Provost
School Physician	Dr. James Wilson West Brookfield

Office of the Superintendent of Schools P.O. Box 1538, 284 Old West Brookfield Road Warren, MA 01083	(413) 436-9256 FAX (413) 436-9738
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Quaboag Regional Middle/High School P.O. Box 909, 284 Old West Brookfield Road, Warren, MA 01083	(413) 436-5991 FAX (413) 436-9636
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Warren Community Elementary School P.O. Box 446, 51 Schoolhouse Drive, West Warren, MA 01092	(413) 436-5983 FAX (413) 436-9743
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West Brookfield Elementary School P.O. Box 386, 89 North Main Street, West Brookfield, MA 01585	(508) 867-4655 FAX (508) 867-9208
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SCHOOL COUNCILS MEMBERSHIP 2023-24

WARREN COMMUNITY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (8 Members)

Kevin Slattery	Principal	N/A
Brian Guimond	Dean of Students	N/A
Heather McKusick	Teacher	Term expires 2023
Matthew Jablonski	Community	Term expires 2023
Patrick Cieslak	Community	Term expires 2023
Jayden Jablonski	Student Rep.	Term expires 2023
Alison Pierce	Parent	Term expires 2023
Judy Cournoyer	Teacher	Term expires 2023

WEST BROOKFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (4 Members)

Melissa Provost	Principal	N/A
Amy Bloom	Community	Term expires 2023
Emily Freeland	Teacher	Term expires 2023
Jody Gerulaitis	Community	Term expires 2023

QUABOAG REGIONAL MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL (4 Members)

Casey Handfield	Principal	Term expires 2023
Matt Jablonski	Parent	Term expires 2023
James Gagner	Community	Term expires 2023
Eric Urban (co-chair)	Guidance	Term expires 2023

Senior Graduating Class of 2023

Brandon	Allen	Kacie	Horner	Wylliam	Pennington-Russell
Edgar	Amoros	Madelynn	Huard	Cody	Perron
Thatcher	Atwood	Emily	Hunkins	Chase	Potvin
Olivia	Bagg	Devon	Hurley	Jenna	Pytel
Veronica	Beauregard	Serenity	Kauppila	Carl	Quilitzsch IV
Arianna	Belen	Brady	Koss	Mika	Quintin
Kaitlyn	Bezingue	Jessica	Kupstas	Nathaniel	Rimmer
Jakob	Bond	Noah	LaFlamme	Isabelle	Russell
Carly	Boucher	Tara	LaFreniere	Zachary	Russell
Ian	Bruni	Josephine	Landon	Owen	Ryan
Brendan	Burke	Gage	Lane	Hailey	Samek
Aaden	Caruso	Samantha	Lasky	Lucy	Sanelli
Nathan	Church	Kayden	Lourake	Brandon	Santiago
Phoebe	Clowes	Summer	Mageau	Charles	Schwenker
Preston	Clowes	Hannah	Manzaro	Dylan	Segatore
Julien	Compber	Lynoshka	Martell Martinez	Megan	Shea
Cadel	Courtney	Rebecca	Martin Na`jar	Rhea	Smith
Elizabeth	Czaja	Drew	Martinez	Ethan	Snow
Paige	Dion	Ariana	Masterjohn	Hayley-Marie	Southwick
Ilias	Enetzelis	Adrik	Matys	Ryan	Stearns
Luisa	Feeney	Avery	Maynard	Margaret	Stevens
Declan	Flood	Jane	McCall	Adrieannie	Sullivan
Katelyn	Fountain	Lynne	Merrill	Andrew	Swistak
Andrew	Gagnon	Kadin	Milligan	Samantha	Tetreault
Rachel	Gagnon	Victoria	Morgan	Travis	Waddell
Alexandra	Garrand	Lee	Morse	Adam	Wetnicka
Kiara	Gauthier	Evan	Murphy	Brooke	Whittemore
Jasmine	Geer	Joseph	Novak	John	Wilk
Cody	Goodrich	Kaitlyn	Osborne	Ryan	Wilson
Isaac	Graves	Chloe	Osgood		
Madison	Gray	Gabriel	Paquette	Certificate of Attainment	
Grace	Hannah	Bryan	Para	Riley	Vuelta
DeLijah	Hinton	Angelina	Paradis		

Report from the Superintendent of Schools

Stephen Duff

2023 - 2024

I would like to begin by thanking the Quaboag Regional School District School Committee, Quaboag staff, students and the residents of Warren and West Brookfield for your support during my first year as Superintendent of Schools. Quaboag is a special school district with dedicated staff, focused and kind students, and involved parents and community members. I am pleased to provide the citizens of Warren and West Brookfield the fifty-eighth Annual Report of the Quaboag Regional School District (QRSB). This annual report will provide a brief snapshot of the Quaboag Regional School District. If you would like more information about any aspect of the QRSB, please contact me at sduff@quaboagsd.org or 413-436-9256 extension 1003.

Retired Faculty and Staff Appreciation

It is so important to recognize those individuals who have dedicated their lives to education. This past year, Quaboag Regional had eight retirees:

- **Alton Button** SpEd teacher 22 years
- **Jeffrey Robbins** teacher 16 years
- **Cathy Koslowski** Speech Pathologist 13 years
- **Joan Juszczuk** Paraprofessional 26 years
- **Cynthia Green** Paraprofessional 32 years
- **Roberta Ducomb** SpEd Teacher 16 years
- **Beth Hansen** Teacher 20 years
- **Lisa Gerstel** Paraprofessional/Librarian 31 years

Collectively, the aforementioned retirees represent 17 years of experience in education! These staff members have touched the lives of future generations. On behalf of a grateful school community, thank you for all that you have done for our students.

School Committee Appreciation

These 12 individuals volunteer countless hours to ensure that Quaboag students have the resources and the tools necessary to provide a world class education. The Quaboag School Community is fortunate to have such a dedicated group of hardworking individuals serving on the School Committee.

- **Andrew D. Schwenker** (Warren) Chair of the School Committee and ex office member of all subcommittees
- **Jason G. Morgan** (Warren), Budget Subcommittee Chair, Building Subcommittee and Payroll & Warrants Subcommittee
- **Craig R. Burgess** (West Brookfield) Building Subcommittee Chair & Budget Subcommittee
- **Dustin Atwood** (West Brookfield) Payroll & Warrants Subcommittee
- **Phil Landine** (West Brookfield) Budget Subcommittee, Personnel Subcommittee, Finance and Payroll & Warrants Subcommittee
- **Travis Mathieson** (West Brookfield) Policy Subcommittee
- **Sara Tetreault** (Warren) Personnel Subcommittee Chair and Payroll & Warrants Subcommittee
- **Brittany Bousquet** (Warren) Policy Subcommittee
- **Greg Morse** (West Brookfield) Vice Chair of the School Committee, Policy Subcommittee Chair, Budget Subcommittee and Building Subcommittee
- **Bryan Griffing** (West Brookfield) Building Subcommittee
- **Matt Peloquin** (Warren) Budget Subcommittee and Building Subcommittee
- **Megan Sears** (Warren) Policy Subcommittee

Distinguished Faculty and Staff

The QRSD faculty and staff truly care about all students. They are devoted to providing an excellent education. As our reputation and achievements continue to grow, so does the sense of “cougar pride” amongst our entire school community.

Quaboag is unique because it is truly a student-centered district that focuses on academic achievement and developing a sense of responsibility in our students. Our small size (1051 students total) allows us the opportunity to personalize education for every student. Our teachers, staff and faculty know every student, and we have created an atmosphere where students develop a passion for learning and excel.

Exceptional Students

Our student body is the heart and soul of the Quaboag Regional School District. QRSD students are intelligent, well-mannered, polite members of the community who strive to give back to others. Our students excel in the classroom, on the athletic field, in music and choral competitions, on the drama stage and in countless other venues. The following pages highlight Quaboag’s most important resource - our students.

District Mission

The QRSD mission statement signifies the purpose of education and the fundamental reason why we exist. Our mission statement reflects the purpose of schooling and it serves as the cornerstone for every aspect of decision making. Our mission statement is the guiding light of the QRSD and it remains unchanged:

The mission of the Quaboag Regional School District is to form a partnership with parents and the community to prepare our diverse population of students to become lifelong learners in a

*nurturing, safe environment with high expectations so they will become responsible, productive citizens in an ever-changing global society.
Decisions are made in the best interest of our students.*

Quaboag has a mission driven school culture. Our mission statement is clearly displayed across all schools. More importantly, our mission is widely understood and practiced.

Vision

Mission and vision are clearly different. Mission has come to represent the present state of an organization's purpose, the here and now or why the organization presently exists, while vision signifies the future of where an organization is going. Our vision continues:

Our vision is to provide a safe, supportive, and challenging learning environment in which students may achieve academic success and personal growth.

District Improvement Plan

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1nWl68ieeHWDZN9WKqalS9iB2Gvr4PdLCGFu-ZLHd-Gg/edit?usp=sharing>

The QRSD District Improvement Plan is posted on the Quaboag Regional School District website- www.quaboagrsd.org. The School Committee approved the District Improvement Plan on August 28, 2023.

Student Achievement

Raising student achievement at all levels is the first priority of the Quaboag Regional District Improvement Plan. We consistently strive to increase our academic achievements every year. I am happy to report that Quaboag Regional Middle/HS was, once again, recognized by the U.S. News and World Report as a silver medal high school for 2022. QRMHS also received a silver medal from the U.S. News and World Report in 2013, 2015, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023.

MCAS & Accountability Status

Quaboag Regional school district continues to be in the assistance not needed accountability.

Advanced Placement at QRMHS

Quaboag Regional High School has entered into its twelfth year with Mass Insight. Our partnership has allowed QRMHS to purchase materials for advanced placement classes at a reduced cost, and we continue to receive outstanding professional development for our teachers. As I previously mentioned, QRMHS received a silver award from US News and World Reports whose criteria is largely based on AP results.

The QRSD is committed to providing as many advanced placement classes as possible. In 2010 Quaboag offered only 4 AP classes; we now offer 13. This is an incredible accomplishment and a tribute to our highly qualified teachers.

School Safety

We live in an ever-changing global society and there have been too many high-profile incidents where school safety has been compromised across the United States. Therefore, improving school safety is critical

to the mission of the Quaboag Regional School District and a top priority in the Quaboag Regional District Improvement Plan.

District Wide School Safety Team

The district has a safety team that meets throughout the school year. The members of our safety team include:

- **Andrew Schwenker**, School Committee Representative
- **Stephen Duff**, Quaboag Superintendent
- **Chief Gerald Millette**, Warren Police Chief
- **Chief Nathan Hagglund**, West Brookfield Police Chief
- **Chief Adam Lavoie**, Warren Fire Chief
- **Chief Richard Lapierre, Jr.**, West Brookfield Fire Chief
- **Dan McCall**, President of the West Brookfield Emergency Management Systems
- **Scott Shea**, Massachusetts State Police
- **Mr. Casey Handfield**, QRMHS Principal
- **Mr. Michael Lavelle**, QRMHS Assistant Principal
- **Mr. Eric Urban**, QRMHS Guidance Counselor – Safety Chairperson
- **Mr. Marc Astrella**, QRSD Facilities Coordinator
- **Mr. Kevin Slattery**, WCES Principal
- **Mrs. Melissa Provost**, WBES Principal

The district wide safety team meets monthly throughout the school year to review our Crisis Response Plan, critique our safety procedures and to discuss recent events concerning school safety across the country and what we can discern from them. In addition to the district wide safety team, each school has their own crisis response team that also meets periodically to review safety procedures. Any time there is a safety concern, in or out of school, our teams meet to devise appropriate plans.

A.L.I.C.E. Training

I would like to thank the Warren Chief of Police, Mr. Gerry Millette and the West Brookfield Chief of Police, Mr. Nate Hagglund, for training all staff and students (Grades 7-12) in A.L.I.C.E. (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate). Below is a description of ALICE:

A lert	Get the word out! “There is an armed intruder in the building by the gymnasium,” instead of just “Lockdown”. Use clear, concise language to convey the type and location of the event.
L ockdown	The QRSD continues to implement the lockdown procedure as a good starting point. QRSD has practiced lockdowns for over 8 years.
I nform	Communication keeps intruders off balance and allows for good decision making.
C ounter	Apply skills to distract, confuse and gain control.
E vacuate	As a last resort, statistics prove that evacuating may be the best option.

ALICE training emphasizes survival techniques that can be used in schools, as well as other settings. There is no substitute for being mentally prepared and having been empowered with the authority and ability to act and save others.

This is the tenth year that all students have been trained in the ALICE protocol and the tenth year that all staff have been trained. The ALICE training is age appropriate for students and our techniques vary between schools and grade levels. Feedback from our staff and our students remains overwhelmingly positive. Thank you to the Warren and West Brookfield Police Departments for keeping us safe. Our safety officers are always there when we need them and I cannot thank them enough!

Practicing Emergency Situations

As part of the District's Emergency Response Protocols, we held several lock-down drills as well as state mandated fire drills throughout the 2023 – 2024 School Year.

Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)

WCES and WBES have expanded the PBIS program as we enter into the tenth year of operation. The “cub buck” system is a huge hit with our youngest students, and we have received a tremendous amount of positive feedback about the PBIS program. Our elementary schools are always looking for rewards to fill our school stores, so please contact our principals if you have anything you would like to donate.

PBIS is a framework or approach for assisting school personnel in adopting and organizing evidence-based behavioral interventions into an integrated continuum that enhances academic and social behavior outcomes for all students. PBIS is not a packaged curriculum, scripted intervention, or manualized strategy. PBIS is a prevention-oriented way for school personnel to organize evidence-based practices, improve their implementation of those practices and maximize academic and social behavior outcomes for students.

Improving Collaboration and Communication

Office Hours

Schools cannot be effective without constant communication to the school community. At Quaboag, we do everything possible to get timely information to all stakeholders and it is a vital part of our District Improvement Plan. All administrators, once again, posted office hours throughout the school year. Quaboag's administration is always available to meet with members of our community.

Superintendent's Advisory Council

The Superintendent's Advisory Council (SAC) is open to all QRMHS students. The SAC meets once a month and it is a great way for students to make their voice heard. The SAC fulfills the leadership requirement for the National Honor Society, and everyone is invited to attend. The SAC meets in the Innovation Center immediately after school. All students (grades 7-12 at QRMHS) are eligible to participate.

Facebook, Twitter, Memos & Newsletter

The QRSD has well established Facebook and Twitter accounts. All current events can be followed on social media. A special thank you to Mr. John O'Neill (QRMHS Special Education Teacher), Mr. Tim McKusick (WBES/WCES) and Mr. Maxwell Silverman (QRMHS) for helping to coordinate the Facebook page this past year.

You can follow us on Twitter @QuaboagPride. Principals and other staff also use Twitter to send messages to our school community.

Additionally, the principals publish weekly memos incorporating research-based practices, scholarly articles, current events and important dates. The district-wide newsletter, containing information from all of our schools, is published monthly and archived on our website.

Efficient and Effective Financial Management

The QRSD strives to demonstrate and communicate efficient and effective financial management strategies to the school community by balancing student needs with the community's ability to pay. Rising inflation is cause for concern as we discuss the FY 2025 budget. The cost of everything, from school supplies to utilities, has greatly increased. This must be taken into consideration as we present our FY 2024 budget.

The QRSD has taken on several initiatives over the course of this fiscal year which will hopefully help to lower assessments to the towns over the course of the next five years. These initiatives include heating systems upgrades to increase fuel efficiency, lighting upgrades to decrease electricity consumption and building envelope enhancements to help with fuel. The total of these projects was roughly \$1.6 million and the cost to the towns was \$56,000 (Warren).

Superintendent Duff made it a priority this year to proactively meet with all boards of both towns to present a budget that provided adequate services for our students while keeping in mind the cost of educating our students on the community. The QRSD presented the initial budget to the towns in February allowing for additional time for town officials to ask questions and make recommendations prior to the school committee approving the budget as is required by law. The School Committee voted to approve the FY 2025 budget on March 18, 2025. This year's overall net increase to the assessments is 1.1%. This is by far the lowest increase in some time. The Budget Subcommittee meets monthly during the calendar year to discuss the school's budget. In the weeks leading up to the vote for the next year's budget, the Budget Subcommittee meets weekly. It is our goal to work collaboratively with both towns prior to the annual town meetings and to be on the same page.

Student Opportunity Act (SOA)

The SOA requires each district in the Commonwealth to create a three-year, evidence-based plan for the Commissioner's review and provide annual updates to those plans that describe progress in implementation of evidence-based program areas, progress in closing opportunity gaps and outcomes for student groups, and substantive changes to original plans. This year's plan will be submitted in early April 2023. We will be providing evidence on the following areas:

1. Early Childhood Education Center at QRMHS
2. GLEAM grant-expanding core ELA curriculum
3. Devereaux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA) = SEL work
4. Expanding career opportunities at QRMHS

The updated SOA will be posted on our website.

Rural School Aid

The MA DESE identifies districts eligible for Rural School Aid based on their student density (not more than 35 students per square mile) and their per capita income (less than \$41,794 per capita according to 2018 Census estimates). Based on these criteria, Quaboag has been eligible for the past three years. The amounts are: FY 2020= \$73,592, FY 2021= \$54,177, FY 2022= \$81,000. Rural aid was started by the MA DESE in 2020 to help offset some of the rising costs for rural school districts. Thank you to the tireless

advocacy and the help of our legislators: State Senator Jacob Oliveira, State Representative Todd Smola and State Representative Donnie Berthiame who all deserve many thanks for helping change the rural aid student density factor to ensure Quaboag is eligible.

Innovation

Innovation is the norm within the QRSD, and we are dedicated to providing our students with a world class education. All of our schools are focused on building creativity, fostering curiosity, and infusing technology across all grade levels. One of our goals is to continue on the path of innovation as defined by trying new practices, thinking outside the box, and encouraging creativity for all staff and students.

As such, the QRSD continues to seek alternative sources of funding through competitive grants. The number of competitive grants that the QRSD receives is amazing and can be viewed in the Grant Manager's section of this report. A special thank you to Madeline Smola for her hard work and dedication to securing grants for the QRSD.

Fire Fighting Academy

QRMHS is in the fifth year of offering a course in Fire Science in collaboration with the Warren Fire Department. This course is designed to give students an overview of Fire Department operations and allow students to learn skills and obtain knowledge that will benefit them should they choose a career in emergency services. At the completion of this course, students are able to demonstrate a working knowledge of firefighting skills and techniques. Students are taught many of the same skills and lessons that are currently taught at the Massachusetts Fire Fighting Academy.

This year, the following students were sworn in as on-call firefighters for the Town of Warren and West Brookfield: Bryce Douglas, Charles Smith, Kandace Wilcox, Trenton Benson and Evelyn Doe. These programs have led our students to immediately be employable upon graduation from High School.

A special thank you to the Warren Fire Department, especially Fire Chief Adam Lavoie, Lead Teacher and Warren Fire Lieutenant Paul Russell and Firefighters Seth Blackwell, Adam Walters, and Seth Bealle for their unwavering commitment to providing our students with a top-notch, hands-on Fire Science education that is second to none.

Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Program / Phlebotomy / EKG

QRMHS is in the fifth year of offering the CNA program. The popularity of the CNA Program is growing each year. Upon successful completion of the Certified Nursing Assistant Program (CNA) and passage of the state examination, students will be able to be employed as a CNA. In addition, QRMHS has partnered with Holyoke Community College to offer phlebotomy and EKG certifications this year. As a result, students will receive their Emergency Room Technician Certification upon completion of these courses. This program is open to juniors and seniors who have successfully completed Biology with a B or higher or Honors Biology with a B- or higher. Students are expected to meet the required number of hours set forth by the Department of Public Health. All in-school sessions take place in a Quaboag's simulated medical lab. Topics covered in the CNA program include, but are not limited to: Activities of Daily Living, Infection Control, Geriatrics, Mental Health, Communication Skills, Patient Rights, Nutrition, Mandatory Reporting, Safety and Common Medical Emergencies and CPR Instruction. This year, we are happy to announce that 100% of our students are now certified CNA's and eight students are currently working in this capacity within our towns.

Early Education and Care Program (Chapter 74 approved)

The QRSD has an approved Chapter 74 program! The students in the Early Education & Care Program study the fundamentals of human development up to age 8, with the primary focus on children under 5 years old. In addition to learning about growth and development, students also learn how to meet children's developmental needs. Curriculum planning for children under age 5 includes creating fun activities that foster children's development. Students' training follows state Career Vocational Technical Early Educations and Care frameworks. Their preparation includes, among other topics, following health and safety practices, as well as fostering a culturally responsive classroom. This is a rigorous, college preparatory program for academically talented, technically oriented students, who plan to matriculate to a competitive technical college or institute upon graduation from high school. All learners are challenged to meet high standards and high expectations while receiving the necessary support for success. This program exceeds the state curriculum standards found in the MA Frameworks for Early Education & Care.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephen Duff
Superintendent of Schools

Report from the Quaboag Regional Middle High School Innovation Principal

Quaboag Regional Middle-High School had a very positive and productive 2023-2024. Together with the families of Warren and West Brookfield, our faculty, guidance department, and administrative personnel, we are united in our mission to provide our students with a safe, supportive learning environment in which they may achieve academic success and personal growth. Most importantly, we continually strive to make decisions in the best interests of our students. We are mission-driven, student-centered, and always seeking to improve. That said, we continue to work diligently with our community partners to offer opportunities to students that extend well beyond the classroom. Thank you to our staff, students, and community members for their feedback and support as we transitioned through the school year.

Our mission is to prepare our students to succeed in a competitive college and career environment. We are pleased to report that we have continued our expanded access to and choices of honors, Advanced Placement, Project Lead the Way Biomedical Science and Computer Science, Gateway Engineering, electives, Foreign Language, and robotics opportunities as part of our Program of Studies. Student enrollment in Advanced Placement courses continues to provide them with the challenge they need to be prepared for the rigors of college study.

In addition to our tremendous success with college-bound students, Quaboag continued to improve career education for all students. Project Lead the Way, the Certified Nurse Assistant and Fire Science courses prepare students for careers and can include certifications. The CNA program is articulated with Holyoke Community College, and students can earn college credits upon course completion. In addition, QRMHS implemented a Phlebotomy and EKG course this year for the second half of the CNA Program. Students will be able to earn certifications in these two areas, as well as their Emergency Room Technician certification. The Fire Fighting Academy is run by the Warren and West Brookfield Fire Departments. While students will not receive a direct Level

1 or Level 2 certification for firefighting, they will receive hands-on training that will allow them to work as volunteers and a head start on those entering the fire academy in Stowe. This school year, 3 additional students who participated in the Fire Academy were sworn in as volunteer firefighters by the Town of Warren. Not only will these students participate in regular training through the fire department, but they will also be able to assist in calls. Congratulations to Grayson Patchofsky, and Trenton Benson and Charles Smith for this amazing accomplishment.

Quaboag has identified the need for school-to-career opportunities and has made it one of our highest priorities as we move forward. In 2021, the QRSD transitioned its preschool programs from WBES and WCES to Quaboag. This well-thought-out move provided the district the ability to house all of the services and staff necessary to run this program in one location, which is not only more cost-effective and comprehensive for our student learning and growth. This transition allowed QRMHS to build a Chapter 74 Program for personalized learning. The Early Childhood Education program, which is in year three, will provide students with CPR, OSHA, and Early Childhood Education Certification. In addition, upon completion of the 4-year program, students are eligible for college credit in every Massachusetts Community College with an Early Childhood Education program. While this program directly benefits our students and community, it also brings additional revenue to the District as it is a Chapter 74 program and will help offset our local assessments with the additional funding from the State for such programs.

Finally, the Project Lead the Way Principles of Biomedical Science has run for its fourth year. QRMHS has created a pathway for the Biomedical field by adding Project Lead the Way Biomedical Innovation and Medical Interventions. One8 Foundation and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Innovation Pathway grants fund the Quaboag Biomedical PLTW pathway. Thank you to PLTW teacher Michelle Zawalski for preparing her students for the second year in a row to attend the statewide showcase of Applied Learning projects. These pathways would not be possible without the efforts of our teachers, community members, local businesses, and support from our local representatives. Students in Middle School can also participate in Project Lead the Way's Gateway program, a hands-on group of units that introduce students to engineering, wind turbines, science and technology, and the biomedical sciences. Gateway students presented at the State Applied Learning Showcase funded by the One8 Foundation for the first time, thanks to our new PLTW teacher, James Depace. Our students are being prepared unlike any other time in Quaboag's history by providing exceptional academic opportunities and, more importantly, skills and certifications that can lead to immediate employability with competitive wages.

Our students definitely take advantage of these opportunities: The 2023-2024 school year for students taking Advanced Placement (AP) courses at Quaboag Regional Middle High School (QRMHS) was a very successful year. Students who participate in AP courses take an exam towards the end of the year. If students earn a certain score on the exam, usually a score of 3, colleges typically award college credit for the AP course when the student enrolls in college. This past year, students at QRMHS took a total of 188 AP exams.

Congratulations to Superintendent's Scholar, QRMHS senior Kenady Sloan. Each year, the Worcester County Superintendents Association asks districts to choose an outstanding senior to be recognized at the annual Superintendent's Scholar luncheon. Bryan was selected to attend the

special ceremony with Superintendent Steve Duff this year. Kenady was among the special group whose profiles were shared aloud as each student was given a gift from the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents to commemorate the occasion.

In addition, our entire school community continues to assess what we articulated in a “statement of beliefs” about student learning. This statement, which has taken the form of eleven expectations for student learning, not only helps define our essential learning goals but also creates an opportunity to provide students and their parents with feedback about academic, civic, and social proficiency. These expectations are measured with school-wide analytic rubrics twice a year.

Quaboag Regional Middle-High School Expectations for Student Learning

Academic Expectations:

LE.1: The Quaboag Regional Middle-High School student writes effectively.

LE.2: The QRMHS student reads critically and with comprehension.

LE.3: The QRMHS student listens actively.

LE.4: The QRMHS student speaks effectively.

LE.5: The QRMHS student conducts research using a variety of media.

LE.6: The QRMHS student thinks critically and creatively to solve problems, both as a self-directed learner and in collaboration with others.

LE.7: The QRMHS student uses technology effectively.

LE.8: The QRMHS student understands the importance of physical wellness and emotional well-being.

LE.9: The QRMHS student collaborates effectively to achieve common goals.

Civic Expectation

LE.10: The QRMHS student demonstrates responsible citizenship and service to the school and to his or her community.

Social Expectation

LE.11: The QRMHS student demonstrates social responsibility and respect for themselves and for others.

Quaboag also offers a variety of athletic programs, music, environmental club, Gay and Straight Alliance, Student Council, Math Club, National Honor Society, Fishing Club, and Civic Engagement Club, in addition to the first 21st Century afterschool program at Quaboag for high school students. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education fully funds the 21st CCLC Art and Career Academy program. The program started in the summer of 2021. It allows Quaboag to provide project-based learning, the Quaboag theater program, the cooking club (including pop-up restaurants, the business club (including an online student-run store), 3-D printing and Robotics, Dungeons and Dragons, and more. Students can also make career connections through internships and have additional opportunities for field trips. Quaboag attempts to provide opportunities for all students to engage in after-school activities. The Middle School runs a small ASOST grant-funded program that includes Esports and Chess/Games.

One of our top priorities at Quaboag Regional Middle-High School continues to be to strengthen relationships between the school and the towns of Warren and West Brookfield. We are committed to clear, regular communication with parents and community members through bi-monthly School Council meetings; school notices and announcements, which are posted on our website; occasional One Call Now system telephone messages; information in the district's monthly newsletter, which is distributed to the entire school community; and a weekly newsletter (*The Friday Memo*), which is emailed to all QRMHS parents and students and posted to the QRSD webpage. Parents are notified by automated telephone messages whenever their student is absent. We also work very closely with the police and fire departments of both Warren and West Brookfield to ensure that our students are safe and secure while in school. Each year, drills in fire evacuation, lock-down, and stay-in-place are conducted. Ongoing support from the local law enforcement and fire personnel has been outstanding.

As part of our continuing commitment to provide a safe and supportive learning environment, we look forward to again hosting a system-wide "Step-Up" day to allow 6th-grade students to meet 7th-grade teachers, observe classes, take a tour of the school and see how the middle-high school operates through the course of a school day. In May, 6th-grade teachers at both elementary schools will work with 7th-grade teachers from Quaboag Regional Middle School to discuss strategies to help facilitate a smooth transition to the Middle School. Our annual orientation for incoming 7th-grade parents will again be held in late summer to allow families to meet the administrators and teachers, familiarize themselves with the 7th-grade curriculum and course expectations, and take a tour of the school.

As we conclude the year at Quaboag Regional Middle-High School, we reflect on our many accomplishments and look forward to the coming year as we continually strive for excellence. Our goal remains to provide a safe, supportive, and challenging learning environment where students may achieve academic success and personal growth. It is an honor and a privilege to work closely and cooperatively with parents and community members as we seek to help all of our students achieve their highest potential.

Respectfully Submitted,

Casey Handfield
Principal, QRMHS

Mike Lavelle
Assistant Principal, QRMHS

Report from the West Brookfield Elementary Innovation School Principal

WBES is excited to report another fabulous year of student learning and continued growth. Thanks to the efforts of our QRSD Director of Development, Madeline Smola, we have been the recipient of grant funding that supports all students in a variety of ways. This is our fifth year of partnering with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education through an Early Grades Literacy Grant (EGL) opportunity. The

DESE has provided us with training for our teachers from Kindergarten through Third Grade on the implementation of Evidence-Based Early Literacy – From Research to Practice project. In addition to our EGL Grant, our school was fortunate enough to continue The Afterschool and Out-of-School (ASOST) program. The ASOST grant is able to provide a high-quality, project-based afterschool and summer program that models 21st Century Community Learning Centers. These funds pay for staff, curriculum, art supplies, books, STEM kits and more. QRSD was awarded a \$10,000 Safe and Supportive Schools grant to fund Social Emotional Mental Health Teams to work with DESE and SEL MH Academy and a DESE consultant. This is our second year in the Academy and our work will include implementing our Student Support and Behavioral Health Action Plans with an emphasis on mitigating loss from COVID-19 closures, social distancing and isolation. Our Growing Literacy Equity Across Massachusetts grant (GLEAM) supports our literacy work with a district PreK-5- team of educators and principals to evaluate, field test, and select a new core ELA curriculum. The year-long professional development process will lead to an investment in literacy for the elementary schools. In addition, the grant will fund the consultant, Mary Louise Charette, from Hill for Literacy.

There are many extraordinary things about West Brookfield Elementary Innovation School as we build upon our unique experiences for students each year. This is the fifth year of implementing Project Lead the Way (PLTW) which started with a grant from PLTW and the Mass STEM Hub. Through the grant we were able to purchase more modules per grade level. All of our teachers have been trained in PLTW and they will incorporate these skills into their science curriculum throughout the year. Project Lead the Way is a curriculum that has students work through the engineering design process. Some of the modules include using computer aided design software and all of the units include a project-based learning experience. The modules align with the new MA Science Frameworks and they also integrate many Math and ELA standards. One of the most essential components of these lessons is the real-world connections and applications that students make.

Our teachers continue to implement Eureka Math, and Fountas & Pinnell Literacy. The Eureka math program allows our educators to explore the curriculum and understand how the learning design and lessons build a comprehensive and coherent understanding of mathematics. Our use of the Fountas & Pinnell reading assessment, given three times per year, serves as a guide to understand and support our students through a data driven process. All of this work would not be possible without the guidance of our curriculum leaders, Nicole Jones, Melissa O'Neill, Laura Marino, and Jessica Harder.

The Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA), used three times per school year, is designed to help teachers, administrators, school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, and other youth-serving professionals evaluate the social-emotional competence of children. This screening tool is connected to our District Improvement Plan. DESSA can be used to track the progress of these children in acquiring social-emotional competencies. At WBES, we are now in year four of implementing our universal screener (DESSA) through our Safe and Supportive Schools Grant to identify students in need of additional SEL support.

WBES is proud to have worked closely with the QRSD office of pupil services to implement a new program. The SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results) program was created to support our students in need of Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) services on their Individualized Education Plans

(IEPs). The main focus of this program is to help students increase communication skills, decrease interfering behaviors, and to improve academics, social skills, and focus. With the program, students will succeed to the best of their ability in a specialized setting as well as their general education setting. Over time, students will learn the expectations of the daily routine in a classroom setting and slowly become more integrated into the general education setting.

We are thrilled to welcome some new faces to WBES. The following staff came to us from WCES this year; Emily Freeland, a fifth-grade classroom teacher, Laura Marino, a fourth-grade classroom teacher, Kelli Shipman-Hescock, a special education teacher, and Devon Jones, a SOAR paraprofessional. Our new hires to WBES are Kendra Wilson, BCBA, Brooke Epstein, a SOAR paraprofessional, Monica Cloutier, a SOAR paraprofessional, and Jason Leclair, our school adjustment counselor. We also welcome Lindsay Yaeger who was promoted to lead teacher of our SOAR program. I am also thrilled and honored to be back at WBES, as the building principal, after leaving the classroom 12 years ago.

Safety is our top priority when it comes to students and staff. We work in partnership with the West Brookfield and Warren Police Departments, Fire Departments, Rescue Squads, and MA State Police. We have implemented fire and safety drills including lock down drills through the guidance of the ALICE safety program. We continue to refine our practices and work with students to practice our learned skills in order to reduce any anxieties in an emergency situation.

WBES Parent Teacher Group (PTG) provides incredible opportunities for our students and staff. Through ongoing fundraising, they are able to provide resources and materials for our staff and students including periodicals, headsets, document cameras, teacher reimbursements for classroom supplies, and support for field trips. New membership is encouraged and families can join any time throughout the year.

It is the goal of the West Brookfield Elementary Innovation School to focus on fostering strong relationships with families and community members. Families receive weekly communication via the SMORE newsletter for important curricular and event information and is posted on our social media pages. Together we will help our children succeed. If you would like to learn more about any aspect of the school, or volunteer and become active in our school community please contact the school at any time. Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,
Melissa A. Provost, Principal

Report from the Warren Community Elementary School Principal

With the enthusiastic support of the teachers and instructional support staff at WCES, we continue to provide exceptional instructional lessons across all subjects including various social-emotional programs at our school. We continue to embed the Second Step curriculum into morning meetings to enhance our dedication to the social needs of all students. In addition to the Second Step curriculum, our social skills mentor continues to work directly with students each week in an effort to promote social well-being in all grades. At WCES, we are now in year 6 of implementing our universal screener, Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA) to identify students in need of additional SEL support. The DESSA helps

teachers, administrators, school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, and other youth-serving professionals to evaluate the social-emotional competence of children. We also have continued our partnership with BHN (Behavioral Health Network) to provide private counseling services to those in need during school hours. This provides an opportunity for those who are unable to get services outside of a school setting.

Through partnerships with our PTO and Boosterthon our “fun run” has successfully raised over \$45,000 the past 3 years to assist with playground equipment upgrades and additional school-based programs and assemblies. WCES is lucky to have such a dedicated group of parents and volunteers each year to provide additional opportunities for our children.

Continuing our work with the Department of Education, both elementary schools have worked alongside TNTP (literacy consultants) Ashley Martin, and Adelfha Hegarty, to strengthen and solidify our new core ELA materials (WONDERS) with guidance from our literacy coach and GLEAM leaders. The Growing Literacy Equity Across Massachusetts (GLEAM) grant, professional development, and weekly implementation meetings have helped strengthen the delivery of high-quality ELA instruction in our classrooms. Our staff have also attended numerous professional development opportunities along with the consultants to streamline implementation of all early grades literacy focus areas.

Creatively, we are utilizing a variety of resources to help support our instructional practices here at WCES. Both elementary schools share a literacy coach who has worked diligently assisting all staff with the implementation of high-quality core ELA curriculum. Our GLEAM team and the Title I staff have worked very carefully with grade-level teachers to identify and create specific intervention and instructional practices for our readers. Our Title I program serves grades K-6 at WCES. The money for this program comes from the Title I federal grant, and the funds are used to hire reading and math instructors and tutors who provide very specific instruction to groups of children in grades K-6. In addition to the Title I funds, we receive additional grant funds that help support the 21st Century After-School and summer program. This program, which children and parents elect to participate in, allows us to offer after-school programming for students on a daily basis. The core of this program focuses on Literacy and Science/Engineering activities. Additionally, the after-school program includes Drama, Fitness, Stop Motion Animation, Do Good Be Good and Art Mindfulness, and other Project-based Learning activities. Additionally, WCES has brought back band lessons each Tuesday for all students who signed up to participate. Grant funding has also brought water filling stations to our elementary schools in the past two years. These filling stations allow for a touchless area for students and staff to fill water bottles without points of contact, thus preventing the spread of infectious disease.

WCES is now in year three providing support for students in a sub-separate setting, S.T.A.R.S (Students Taking Active Responsibility for Success) program in the building. In order to join the S.T.A.R.S. program, students must be on an I.E.P. that requires a substantial separate program to support emotional, sensory or health needs. Students who are part of the S.T.A.R.S. program will receive support with their academics. Their academic work is modified according to their I.E.P, “quality vs. quantity.” Students are also integrated into the general education classroom throughout the day in accordance with their I.E.P. The S.T.A.R.S program firmly believes in a four-to-one ratio of praise; four positive affirmations for every one correction. Student’s behaviors are tracked throughout the day, and they are able to “cash” their points in for a prize. This data helps staff maintain the most up-to-date plans. As part of that S.T.A.R.S program, students will also receive daily social skills lessons in small groups. The social skill topic will be decided by the S.T.A.R.S team, as evidenced by the data collected that week. Students also have access to the adjustment counselor inside the S.T.A.R.S room.

We also continue our close relationship with our community partners to make sure we are offering our programs in a safe, secure, and nurturing school building environment. Both Chief Lavoie from the WFD

and Chief Millett from the WPD can be seen in our building on a weekly basis. Both these partnerships focus on maintaining safety throughout the school year. The fire department talks about home fire drills and escape routes, fire safety protocol, and ice and water safety. The fire department also shows the student body all of their equipment, and they conduct and supervise fire drills here at the school. The police department conducts periodic safety walk-throughs of the building, and they have also worked with the school staff to conduct simulated lockdown drills along with training the staff with the now necessary ALICE Training.

Sincerely,
Kevin Slattery,
WCES Principal

Competitive Grant Awards 2023-2024

One8 Foundation—Ignite Reading Grant—\$303,000. The purpose of this grant is to provide 1:1 online tutoring to first-grade students for 15 minutes each day until the student reaches the 2nd-grade reading level.

Fund Code 117 -Student Opportunity Act— Evidence-Based Practice Grant-\$100,000- The purpose of this three-year combined state and trust funded competitive grant is to address persistent disparities in achievement among specific student groups, improve educational opportunities for all students, share best practices for improving classroom learning and support efficiencies within and across school districts.

Fund Code 125-Math Acceleration Academies Grant-60,000- Funds from this grant can be used to support the implementation of math-focused Acceleration Academies for students in grades 3 through 10. The Math Acceleration Academies must occur during the February and/or April school vacation weeks of the 2023-2024 school year. Multiple student data forms (MCAS, benchmark assessments, attendance, etc.) are used to determine which students are invited to participate in an Academy.

Fund Code 185- High-Quality Instructional Materials Implementation Grant-\$90,000- **The High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) Implementation Grant will support districts in implementing recently purchased tier 1 core high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) in mathematics, ELA, science, and digital literacy.** Intended to support evidence-based, culturally responsive, inclusive, and equitable implementation of high-quality materials and to amplify the power of those materials, this grant will provide funding and support to accelerate student learning.

Fund Code 209- Improving Ventilation and Air Quality in Public School Buildings Grant-\$303,592-Deferred to 2023-2024 . This targeted grant program aims to address inequitable school facilities' needs and repairs for improved ventilation and indoor air quality, supporting healthy learning environments in districts and schools with high concentrations of economically disadvantaged students, English language learners, and communities disproportionately impacted by the 2019 novel coronavirus pandemic.

Fund Code 309 - Title IV-A - Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant - \$14,163 – To Support well-rounded educational opportunities, support safe and healthy students, and support effective use of technology.

Fund Code 311- Supporting Students' Social Emotional Learning (SEL), Behavioral & Mental Health, and Wellness -Competitive- - The purpose of this state-funded competitive grant program is to adapt, expand, or strengthen multi-tiered systems to respond to the social-emotional and behavioral health needs of students, families, and educators and to build strong partnerships with community-based mental health agencies and/or providers to create comprehensive mental health systems.

Fund Code 332 -Supporting Students' Social-Emotional Learning, Behavioral & Mental Health, and Wellness - The purpose of this state and federally-funded continuation grant program is to adapt, expand, or strengthen multi-tiered systems of support to respond to the social-emotional and behavioral health needs of students, families and educators and to build strong partnerships with community-based mental health agencies and/or providers.

Fund Code 419 - Innovation Pathways Implementation and Support Grant-\$125000- This targeted grant aims to provide designated Innovation Pathways with resources to support program implementation. Supporting designees in executing their approved designation plan so that the Innovation Pathway program meets all requirements. It funds the Biomedical Pathway, including BM PLTW courses, CNA, EKG/Phlebotomy, and the new Computer Science Pathway.

HSSIEP: High School Senior Internship in Education Project \$19,500- The grant aims to help grow the educator pipeline by engaging aspiring educators with paid internships that provide opportunities to explore the teaching profession authentically and meaningfully. High School student interns will gain valuable experience in a career-readiness program that offers a hands-on opportunity to work with students in a classroom setting and learn instructional methods from mentor instructors.

Fund Code 508 - Growing Literacy Equity Across Massachusetts GLEAM grant- \$96,000- To support a District Team K-5 to participate in the Evaluation and Selection Process led by MA DESE with support from consultants from Hill for Literacy. In addition, a further allocation will cover half the cost of an evidenced-based core literacy curriculum for grades K-5 and an evidenced-based screener. The grant will fund professional development, a DESE consultant, and stipends for teacher teams to participate in year-long PD series and workshops to understand the process and need for a high-quality literacy curriculum for all students.

Fund Code 509 – Pre-school Growing Literacy Equity Across Massachusetts - GLEAM grant \$117,275- To support a preschool team working with DESE and consultants from Hill for Literacy to evaluate and implement a literacy screener working with DESE with support from consultants from Hill for Literacy. The grant will fund professional development, a DESE consultant, and stipends for teacher teams to support implementation.

Fund Code 528 – Afterschool and Out-of-School Time (ASOST) Increased Access Grant - \$90,000
To provide educational and enrichment 4-day after-school and 5-week summer programs modeled after the

21st CCLC. In addition to enhance current afterschool programs at the middle school and Warren Elementary School.

Fund Code 645 – 21st Century Community Learning Center Exemplary Grant – QRMHS - \$200,000

Planning and implementation of additional time for learning for students in grades K-6. Supported by federal funds, these opportunities will help to close proficiency gaps, increase student engagement, and support college and career readiness and success. The grant provides transportation and funds for all staff, supplies, and materials for the Project-based learning summer program and the school year 21st CCLC Afterschool Program.

Fund Code 645 – 21st Century Community Learning Center Exemplary Grant – WCES \$70,000

Planning and implementation of additional time for learning for students in grades K-6. Supported by federal funds, these opportunities will help to close proficiency gaps, increase student engagement, and support college and career readiness and success. The grant provides transportation and funds for all staff, supplies, and materials for the Project-based learning summer program and the school year 21st CCLC Afterschool Program.

Sincerely,

Madeline Smola

Asst. Superintendent of Development

Quaboag Regional School District Financials