

# Watervliet W-A-Y Program

As the Watervliet W-A-Y program begins its eighth year, we have many things to look back upon, and much more to look forward to. Everything we do contributes to someone earning their diploma and/or meeting the objectives and goals we set in our school improvement plan. This (new) year is certainly no exception! Our online application has generated over 80 new applicants to the program! Our numbers are very strong and continue to climb as we look to the horizon.

One hundred four! That is the number of students who have earned their diploma through Watervliet W-A-Y High School. The W-A-Y program, like the traditional model, has many moving parts. There are many variables that go into each diploma earned, but hard work and dedication to finish are two of the most important. Still more to come for our December 19th graduation!!

The staff in our building is what really makes this program so successful! Heather Winter and Greg Chisek deserve accolades for their tireless efforts. Since we are “on-call” almost 24 hours a day in an online environment, this team finds ways to meet students where they are and give them the help they need. “Help” takes many forms: coaching, motivation, help on a project, advice, and counseling. We wear many hats.

Each year we strive to do things just a little differently. Some changes are very subtle, but have resounding impact! We have built and foster a caring, positive and engaging learning environment. Enlisting the help of parents, staff, as well as the students themselves, enable us to build partnerships and relationships that create a network of support to meet students where they are at. Engagement is a key component for this to happen. This allows us to help them eliminate barriers while continuing to meet their educational goals.



Chili/Soup Day was a huge success! Each W-A-Y staff member put their culinary skills to the test and brought in a soup or type of chili for the students to enjoy. On a chilly October 17th, a warm cup of soup or chili really hit the spot. This encourages progress and attendance - both of which go hand in hand. Plus, it is great to be able to sit down with the students and share stories and a warm cup of soup and build relationships which we have found to be so important.

One of the most rewarding parts of this program is to experience the success and progress so many students make as they work through the many projects, work from home or the lab and reach out to ask questions to advocate for themselves.

We are also looking forward to our holiday celebration on December 12th! We will have many treats and goodies to choose from. Students can come in and enjoy some activities we have planned and a few treats!

Open enrollment begins soon so we will be accepting new applications and interviewing prospective students and their families towards the new year!

We look forward to another terrific year! And on behalf of the W-A-Y staff, we want to wish everyone (staff, students, parents, the community) a joyous holiday season!