

RESUME

ROBERT C. WATSON, SUPERINTENDENT EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANT SERVICES

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EDUCATION

Former Ed.D. Candidate, Educational Administration, Columbia University,
Teachers' College, New York, NY;

Doctorate Comprehensive Examination - passed

M.Ed., Columbia University, Teachers' College, New York, NY; 1995

M.P.A., Marist College, Poughkeepsie, NY; 1992

B.S.W., Marist College, Poughkeepsie, NY; 1988

Albany State University, Albany, NY; 83-85

CERTIFICATIONS

School District Administrator (SDA)

School Administrator Supervisor (SAS)

N.Y.S. Teachers Certification / School Attendance Teacher

CERTIFICATES

Harvard University Professional Certificate for Superintendent of Schools (NYCOSS & the
H.O.P.E. Foundation)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANT, Poughkeepsie, NY

2006-Present

Superintendent Consultant Services:

- *New York State 21st Century winter/spring Consortium Conference*
- *The Proposed Hudson Valley Charter School*
- *Sussman & Associates (Superintendent Consultant), Goshen, New York*
- *Lincoln Hall Residential Facility (Superintendent Consultant) Somers, New York*
- *New York State Office of Children and Family Services (Superintendent Consultant);
Goshen Secure Center, Goshen, New York.*

Educational school consultant:

- Analyzing effective administrative and teaching “best practices” for excellent school success and maximum student achievement.

Educational Leadership Coach:

- Helping Educational leaders design, implement and measure personal leadership skills for daily application in personal life and educational settings. Core consultant outcomes are customized to personal knowledge, understanding and effective demonstration of “impact skills” to benefit self, students, faculty and educational communities at large.

POUGHKEEPSIE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT, Poughkeepsie, NY

1988-2006

Dynamic eighteen (18) year career advancing through progressively responsible positions within this Urban City School District.

Superintendent of Schools;

2000-2006

- **Chief Administrative Officer** providing strategic leadership and direction for the implementation of educational programs and services within available funding limits and School Board policy.
- **Oversee district-wide strategic planning, financial administration, personnel administration, educational program implementation and communications with School Board members, staff, and the public regarding pertinent educational issues and related services.**
- **Successfully achieved a \$27 million dollar *Bond Referendum Vote* for a district-wide building plan.**
- **Formulated and devised an alternative school (*Circle of Courage Learning Community*) serving 120 students with special needs to facilitate educational and fiscal initiatives (*this school serves as a progressive educational model throughout New York State*).**
- **Develop and implement "*School Safety*" plans to safeguard students, staff and district facilities.**
- **Settled in advance all Union Contracts.**

Principal, Poughkeepsie Middle School;

1998-2000

- **Spearheaded the rebirth of a "*school-in-crisis*" statistically reducing suspensions, detentions and Superintendent's Hearings, while creating a safe school environment for students and staff.**
- **Coordinated daily building management and administration for 917 students and 150+ staff members.**
- **Provided strategic leadership and direction in school improvement, instructional excellence, staff supervision and development, student achievement and student discipline.**

- Implemented quarterly assessment reports to serve as a benchmark for student performance.
- Developed and administered a building budget to support program planning and growth.
- Initiated and supported a building-level team for shared decision-making.
- Nationally recognized for creating a safe school environment for students and staff.

Assistant Principal, Poughkeepsie High School;

1996-98

- Key member of administrative team assisting with planning, organizing, guiding and directing implementation of all school activities including overseeing daily building operations and administration, classroom instruction and communication with students, staff and parents.
- Faculty representative for district-wide Curriculum Committee.

HONORS / AWARDS / RECOGNITION

- Harvard University Superintendent Conference Certificate
- Poughkeepsian of the Year Award
- Marist College President's Award
- "Comprehensive Planning for Safe Spaces and Learning Places - A NYS Example"; Video Release
- Black Prestige Award
- Youth Community Development Award
- Outstanding Young Men in America Award
- HARAMBEE Balanced Person Award
- Poughkeepsie JAYCEES Appreciation Award
- Area Fund of Dutchess County Award

AFFILIATIONS

- Harvard University Alumnus Parent
- University of North Carolina Alumnus Parent
- Siena College Alumnus Parent
- Columbia University Alumnus
- Marist College Alumnus
- Albany State University Football
- New York State School District Superintendents Association
- School Administrators Association of New York State (SAANYYS)
- Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)
- Former S.F.B. Morse Historical Site, Board of Trustees
- Columbia University African-American Students in Education
- Poughkeepsie Day School Board of Education Member

PENDING BOOK WORK

“Be the Light...” Truth telling and seeking in Faith, Forgiveness and Perseverance (In progress)

“*Harvard Think*”: A Guide to Inspire and Academically Prepare Students to Attend College including Ivy League Institutions (In progress)

ADDITIONAL PROFESSIONAL CONSULTING EXPERIENCE

Serve as an Educational Consultant to districts throughout New York State and national forums on education. Focus included creating a design for safe school buildings and training teachers to create safe and effective learning environments for students to achieve proficient academic excellence.

SUPERINTENDENT PRESENTATIONS:

- **Courageous Leadership for School Success**, Chicago.
- **Conference presentations at Vassar College**, New York.
- **Annual Superintendent’s Conference at Harvard University**, Cambridge, MA
- **Keynote Speaker**, BOCES Teachers Convention, Syracuse, NY.
- **Keynote Speaker**, Leadership Conference, Cleveland, OH.
- **Keynote Speaker**, National Convention on Courageous Leadership, Mont Tremblant, Canada.
- **Keynote Speaker**, SUNY at New Paltz, Prospective Administrators Conference, NY.
- **Keynote Speaker**, Marist College, H.E.O.P Program, NY.
- **Keynote Speaker**, IBM Corporation. , NY.
- **Keynote Speaker**, Hudson Valley Federal Credit Union, Black History Presentation, NY.
- **Keynote Speaker**, Central Hudson Gas & Electric Company on Diversity, New York.
- **Keynote Speaker**, Vassar College, NY.
- **Keynote Speaker**, Regional Chamber of Commerce, NY.
- **Keynote Speaker**, Dutchess Community College, NY.

PRINCIPAL PRESENTATIONS:

- **Presenter**: Newark Valley High School, Newark Valley, NY.
- **Co-Presenter** with Jonathan Kozol and Miriam Wright Edelman for **Teacher for America**.
- **Presenter**, Third National Summit on Best Practices for Enhancing Student Achievement and Safety: Courageous Leadership for School Success, sponsored by The Hope Foundation, Bloomington, IN.
- **Co-Presenter** with Dr. Garbarino of Cornell University at the National Issues in Education Forum, Whitesboro Central School District, NY.

Be the light...

Consultant's Transformative Experiences

...and the truth shall set me free.

Robert Watson was born one of eight children in an urban underperforming school district in Poughkeepsie, NY. He was retained in first grade and was in Special Education resource classes during his primary and middle school years.

In his freshmen year at the Poughkeepsie High School, he was completely unaware of the fact that he was accidentally placed in honors classes; hence, he severely struggled and performed significantly lower than his classmates. Mr. Watson excelled as an athlete in high school. Crew, tennis, football and basketball kept him attending high school each day.

As a sophomore in high school, Mr. Watson went to a summer missionary program in impoverished Mendenhall, Mississippi. The experience of helping others in poverty changed his life forever. However, while in Mississippi he was threatened and then chased by several Ku Klux Klan members. This profoundly informed his understanding of overt racism. Upon his return home from Mississippi, he started a community based Pre-k-5 grade academic oriented organization called "Harambee of Poughkeepsie, Inc." with three other teenagers and a pastor community organizer.

Mr. Watson received no college course credits during his freshmen year at Albany State University because he lacked sufficient academic skills to be placed in credit courses. Playing college football at Albany State University under an inspiring coach named Bob Ford helped him focus and become a disciplined person. He left Albany State to become the Executive Director of Harambee in Poughkeepsie, New York.

At 19 years old, he was one of the youngest community based organization Executive Directors in our Tri-County area. He was responsible for approximately 50 teenage tutors and more than 230 children. While Executive Director, Mr. Watson was also enrolled full time in classes at Marist College in Poughkeepsie where he received a phenomenal education and completed his BA in 1988.

After leaving Harambee, he was recruited to a job as an Attendance Teacher with the Poughkeepsie City School District. Mr. Watson has stated that this was the most profound and enjoyable job of his entire career; meaningfully engaged and informed with parents and students at their homes.

Mr. Watson continued on and enrolled in graduate school at Marist College where he solidified a lifelong relationship with a key mentor and later professional colleague. One of his leadership examples, Dr. Dennis Murray, was the President of Marist College for almost four decades and he transformed Marist College to be one of the most competitive, academically progressive and reputable colleges in the United States. Mr. Watson completed his Master's Degree in Public Administration in 1992 at Marist College and progressed into a highly effective and successful professional career.

Mr. Watson's first official teaching job was teaching inmate classes for the Marist College Prison Program at Green Haven State Maximum Prison. This was a profound experience... to see where so many former inner city students could end up without appropriate supports, guidance and education.

Next, he attended post graduate college at Columbia University and received a second Masters in Education and passed his doctorate examination. While at Columbia that summer, on August 4, 1993, his hero, family mentor and brother who was a student and basketball player for Syracuse University and who attended Howard Law School was killed in an automobile accident. This devastating tragedy focused his commitment to live life with greater purpose and fortitude.

Also, while at Columbia University, he was recruited to become an *Assistant Principal* at the Poughkeepsie High School where he graduated. After two years as an Assistant Principal, the then Superintendent of Schools asked him to become the *Principal* of the failing Poughkeepsie Middle School. He and his staff created a new vision and mission and completely turned a failing school into a school on target to be identified as a "Blue Ribbon School" in a few years.

After only two years as Principal of the Poughkeepsie Middle School, the Board of Education of the Poughkeepsie City School District recruited and offered him the awesome job of *Superintendent of Schools* for the entire 5,000 student district. At the time, he was the youngest Superintendent of Schools in

New York State. While Superintendent, his son attended Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. A few years later, his daughter attended Siena College in Loudonville, New York.

After serving more than five (5) years of an eight (8) year second contract as Superintendent of Schools in Poughkeepsie, a number of bias events started occurring including racism towards him. As a result, he requested that they consider negotiating a separation agreement with him. Mr. Watson and the Board executed a mutually agreed upon Separation Agreement. The Board received substantial negative community response for their support of the agreement payout.

During this time period, Mr. Watson turned all of his energy towards helping others through professional development and school district overhauls by providing expert Superintendent consulting. Two years after he had moved on from the Poughkeepsie City School District, he was falsely charged with misappropriation of funds and on November 17, 2008, after a bench trial, he was completely acquitted of all charges. In March 2009, Mr. Watson filed civil suit against the district, its representatives, and others.

Also in 2009, after graduating from Harvard University, his son served in the Peace Corps. for three years in Paraguay where he worked with the President of Paraguay and other institutions. On May 24, 2018, Mr. Watson's son graduate from graduate school at Harvard University and will start his next post graduate program at Harvard in the summer of 2018. After completing undergraduate school at Siena College, his daughter graduated from graduate school at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in North Carolina. Today, she works for the North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence in Durham, NC.

In a serendipitous twist, Mr. Watson's sister Felicia Watson was voted overwhelmingly by a diverse community and became a cornerstone Board of Education President for the Poughkeepsie City School District in 2017.

After all these many years, in 2017, Mr. Watson's civil lawsuit case eventually did get to the Supreme Court of the United States where the Court hears about 80 cases out of 7,000 annually and his case was not one of the cases heard. Mr. Watson says he learned that seeking truth and justice requires unwavering faith and perseverance without knowing the outcome.

Today, with so many excellent and profound years in life and education behind him, Mr. Watson's sustained faith and courage continues to propel him. He has chosen to continue his calling in strategic consulting to meaningfully engage parents, create sustainable professional development for educators and most important, be a dream creator, sustainer, and deliverer for all the deserving students that he is privileged and blessed to serve.

Finally, as you are a courageous leader, let Mr. Watson work with you to achieve and sustain your organizational goals and objectives by helping your entire administration and staff to “**Be the Light...**” in the lives of your parents and students. Please feel free to give us a call or email if you believe we can strategically work together. Thank You.

*Robert C. Watson,
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