

Watkinson School Profile

CLASS OF 2020



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Our Mission

Watkinson's mission is to develop in our students the power to shape their own lives and the world around them. Our job is not to make students more like each other, but to help them make the most of themselves. We demonstrate this through our rigorous commitment to individuality.

The Ten Common Principals

This set of simple but powerful ideas reflects more than two decades of careful research and examined practice and is used to guide whole-school reform efforts in the areas of school design, classroom practice, leadership, and community connections. The Common Principles do not provide a fixed approach to change. Rather, they are used to focus each school's effort to rethink its priorities and redesign its structures and practices.

1. Learning to use one's mind well
2. Less is more: depth over coverage
3. Goals apply to all students
4. Personalization
5. Student-as-worker, teacher-as-coach
6. Demonstration of mastery
7. A tone of decency and trust
8. Commitment to the entire school.
9. Resources dedicated to teaching and learning
10. Democracy and equity



Distinguishing Characteristics of a Watkinson Education

- **Student-centered learning**—Students are engaged in and responsible for their own education; teachers are coaches and guides. Our goal is to nurture independent, self-directed learners.
- **Faculty accessibility**—Watkinson faculty challenge and support every student every day. Knowing each student is what we do best.
- **Students going public**—Our students must publicly present their work frequently. This requires students to be prepared to present work in front of peers and an expanded panel of faculty—fostering an increased pride in their own work, and building accountability and preparedness.
- **Student voice**—Every student is encouraged to speak their mind at all times. Whether it be about what they require in order to do a better job in their classes or about the programs and policies of the school, students are taught how to articulate their point of view.

Accreditations and Affiliations

- Member of the Connecticut Association of Independent Schools
- Accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges



About Watkinson School

- Co-ed day school
- Grades 6-PG (The Academy: a unique gap-year program)
- 245 students from 46 towns and 2 foreign countries, reflecting a wide range of academic, personal and socioeconomic backgrounds
- 45 teaching faculty, 23 of whom hold master's or dual master's degrees and 5 PhDs
- Student-teacher ratio is 8:1
- Average class size: 14
- Semester calendar
- Advisor system focuses around the school's core values; each advisor guides 5 - 7 students; advisors and students meet daily
- Students of color: 30%
- 7 Middle School, 13 Upper School interscholastic athletic teams fielded annually; Housatonic Valley Athletic League and New England Prep School Athletic Council

About College Counseling

At Watkinson, College Counseling enables our students to find the right match with a school that truly “fits.” The Director of College Counseling works closely with each student in their junior and senior year to assist with every aspect of the college admissions process. Each student’s college profile is written, reviewed and edited by a team of faculty and administrators to ensure accuracy and balance.

About the Class of 2019:

40 seniors; 3 Academy (post-graduate)

Curriculum Requirements (minimum):

English	4 years
Mathematics	3 years
Science (all labs)	3 years
History	3 years (includes
U.S. History)	
Foreign Language	Level 3 in one language must be attained
Fine/Performing Arts	1 year

Marking System:

90: high honors
85: honors

Watkinson does not rank its students.

Advanced Placement and Honors Level courses are not offered.

Class of 2018 (1600 scale) SAT Middle 50%:

EBRW	Range: 590-700
Math	Range: 535-690

ACT

Composite Range: 21-29

Junior Year Grade Averages:

Median: 88/3.33 GPA on a 4.5 scale

Discipline Reporting Policy:

It is Watkinson's policy NOT to report disciplinary action to colleges on transcripts, in recommendations, or in the student profile. Students are expected to disclose this information to colleges.

The Intangibles...

Comments from Alumni

“At Watkinson, we were encouraged to ask questions and connect with our teachers. At Purdue, my classmates tell me that, at their high schools, asking questions was perceived as a sign of weakness. So, when they arrived at college, they were not necessarily comfortable reaching out to professors who have hundreds of students. Because it was natural for me, by the end of my first semester, I had a working

relationship with my professor who had over 400 students. I had made myself known.”

—Purdue University engineering student

“At Watkinson, the small classes have allowed me to embrace the voices and personalities of my classmates, and the small classes lend themselves to discussion, which is where I thrive. Collaboration is valued over competition at Watkinson, but

the fact that you're so seen means you work to a higher standard.”

—Bryn Mawr student

“Because of [Watkinson], I was able to grow into myself. I found myself as a visual artist, I realized my interest in architecture, and probably most importantly, I developed a concrete plan of who I wanted to be and where I was going.”

— NYU (Tisch)

Points of Difference of a Watkinson Education

Diploma Programs—Watkinson offers two Diploma Programs for students who commit to intensive study in the Creative Arts or in Global Studies. Each Program involves an application process. The Program's Director works closely with students to help shape the program to each individual. Students who successfully meet the requirements of either Diploma Program receive a separate diploma, in addition to the traditional Watkinson diploma, upon graduation.

Creative Arts Diploma Program is designed specifically for students who demonstrate serious interest and strong ability in the arts. CAP diploma students attend master classes and field trips, pursue work in their discipline beyond the regular curriculum for at least 7 hours each week, perform and/or exhibit their work regularly, and take an interdisciplinary research seminar about global arts, aesthetics, and creativity. The CAP director coordinates individual plans with students, who study with an array of private teachers in the area as well as Watkinson mentors.

Global Studies Diploma Program is an intellectually challenging interdisciplinary course of study for students interested in developing leadership and communication skills with a global perspective. Collaboration, cultural competency, research and analysis are key skills students demonstrate while exploring a variety of themes including globalization, human rights, sustainability, technology, religion, the arts, and global public health. Over two years, students have ongoing contact with leading experts in world affairs through campus talks, virtual Skype meetings, and field trips. Students engage in service work locally in

the city of Hartford and are encouraged to travel with the option to participate in one of Watkinson's service learning trips to the Dominican Republic or Uganda. Seniors take our Global Studies Seminar and complete a year-long capstone project deeply exploring a global issue through intensive research, community engagement and experiential learning. This project is guided by the Global Studies director, experts, other students in the program, and university librarians and is presented to the public.

Exhibitions—Watkinson supplements conventional assessments with a long-term, in-depth program of evaluation called Exhibitions, in which students demonstrate their mastery of skills and content in a much more challenging and illuminating way.

Tenth-grade Exhibitions mark a milestone in students' high school careers. In a four-month-long process, all tenth-grade students build individual websites in which they reflect on their high school learning through the lens of Carol Dweck's *Growth Mindset* and Costa and Kallick's *Sixteen Habits of the Mind*. Students collect completed assignments, select pertinent examples, write a series of reflective personal essays, and present their website to a small audience consisting of peers, parents and teachers.

The Senior Year—Through the dual components of the Senior Seminar and the Senior Project, the Senior Year provides each senior a genuine opportunity to learn for themselves. Each member of the senior class will participate in a year-long process intended to deepen, extend, and enrich their high school experience, and present their learning in a capstone project of their

own choosing, in a final, public, assessed exhibition. Students will identify interest in an area of endeavor, actively conduct research to further develop their foundational knowledge and test the strength of their interest, and participate in an experiential learning opportunity away from the confines of the school. When our oldest students occupy the center of their education, they are able to demonstrate to themselves, to the school and to the wider community their capacity for autonomous, complex, and self-aware work, and to highlight the skills and habits they have acquired throughout their years at Watkinson.

Learning Skills Program—A flagship program in the field of education, Watkinson's LSP serves students with high motivation and academic potential who need support in academic and/or study skills. The goal of the program is for every student to develop compensatory skills to become a self-advocate through understanding their strengths and needs.

Interdisciplinary Coursework—Learning experiences co-relate subject areas and emphasize inquiry, investigation, research, reflection and the intentional use of appropriate technology.

Link to the University of Hartford—Qualified Upper School students take college-credit courses at the University through their *College Now* program. Students in The Academy (Watkinson's unique gap-year program for high school graduates) explore the college experience by taking two college classes per semester while maintaining a reduced course load and extracurricular activities at Watkinson.

Student Profiles—Who Comes to Watkinson?

Nate transferred from a competitive private school where he consistently received high honors. Interested in our Creative Arts Diploma program and all of the exposure to pre-professional opportunities it provides, he took advantage of every artistic experience Watkinson has to offer. Now, Nate attends the Savannah College of Art and Design.

Julie was tired of being overlooked at her large public high school, so she transferred to Watkinson in her sophomore year. Seeking a more close-knit community, but unsure if she could afford private school, Julie was admitted to our Head's Scholar Program and enrolled in our Global Studies Dual Diploma Program. With a passion for political science, she now attends George Washington University.

Billy entered as a 6th grader following a disappointing elementary school experience where he felt lost. Our Learning Skills Program and diverse extracurricular opportunities helped Billy manage his learning and find a place in our community. The Watkinson experience literally turned his life around. He attends Lynn University, his first choice college.

Watkinson Recent College Matriculations

Adelphi University
Albertus Magnus College
American University (3)
Bard College (2)
Barnard College
Bates College
Bay Path University
Bentley University (2)
Berklee College of Music
Boston University (4)
Brandeis University (3)
Bridgewater State University
Brown University
Bryn Mawr College
Cazenovia College
Central Connecticut State University (3)
Champlain College (2)
Clark University (3)
Colgate University
College of the Holy Cross
Colorado State University
Connecticut College (2)
Cornell University
Denison University (3)
DePaul University
Dickinson College
Eastern Connecticut State University
Eckerd College (2)
Elon University (2)
Emmanuel College
Endicott College
Fairfield University
Fordham University
Franklin & Marshall College
Fulton-Montgomery Community College
Goucher College (2)
Green Mountain College
Guilford College
High Point University (2)
Hofstra University
Indiana University at Bloomington
Ithaca College
Johnson & Wales University
Lafayette College
Lehigh University
Lesley University
Liberty University
LIM College (Laboratory Institute of Merchandising)
Loyola University Chicago
Lynn University (3)
Manchester Community College
Manhattanville College
Marist College (2)
Marist College

Massachusetts College of Art and Design (3)
Merrimack College (2)
Michigan State University
Morgan State University
Mount Holyoke College
New York University (4)
Northeastern University (4)
Oberlin College of Arts and Sciences
Pratt Institute (2)
Providence College
Purdue University
Quinnipiac University
Rochester Institute of Technology (2)
Roger Williams University
Rutgers University-New Brunswick
Sacred Heart University
Sarah Lawrence College
Savannah College of Art and Design (3)
School of Visual Arts
Skidmore College
Smith College
St. Lawrence University
Stetson University
Stonehill College
Suffolk University

SUNY College at Cobleskill
Susquehanna University
Syracuse University (3)
Temple University
The George Washington University (4)
The New School - All Divisions (Parsons School of Design)
The University of Tampa (2)
The University of Texas, Austin
Trinity College (3)
Tufts University (3)
Tunxis Community College
University of Connecticut (10)
University of Denver (2)
University of Hartford (5)
University of Miami
University of New Haven (2)
University of Notre Dame
University of Saint Joseph
University of San Diego
University of Virginia
Vassar College
Washington University in St. Louis
Wellesley College
Wheaton College MA (2)
Yale University

