



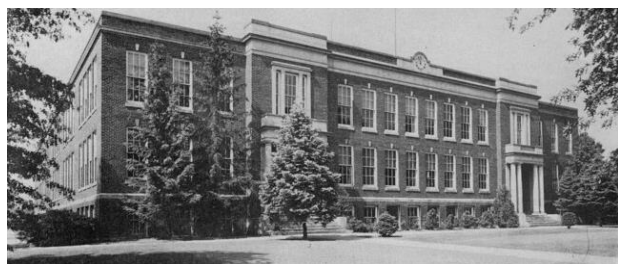
***"Sent to the Office!"***

***Agawam High School  
The First 100 Years***



***September, 1922 / June, 2022***

***Principals/ Assistant Principals  
Superintendents / Assistant Superintendents  
Illustrated and Annotated***



Compiled and annotated by  
Lawrence A. Scherpa (AHS'65)



March 2023  
v. 2.0

You can have great  
teachers, but if you don't  
have a good principal, you  
won't have a good school.

Eli Broad

Agawam High School welcomed its first students in September of 1922.  
Agawam High School celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary during the 2021-2022 school year.

The documented historical record is clear, convincing, and conclusive  
***there was no graduating class in 1923.***

***The first class to graduate from Agawam High School was the class of 1924.\****

The Class of 2022 had the distinction of graduating during the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the school.

***The Class of 2023 will have the distinction of being the 100<sup>th</sup> class to graduate from Agawam High School.***

***\*See  
The Case for the Class of 1924."***

***by L. Scherpa (AHS '65)***

***Agawam High School***

## ***The First 100 Years***

***Principals / Assistant Principals  
Superintendents / Assistant Superintendents  
Illustrated and Annotated***



### ***“Sent to the Office” / Table of Contents***

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Principal / Assistant Principal Chronological Listing (Short List)

Superintendent / Assistant Superintendent Chronological Listing (Short List)

Composite Photo – AHS Principals

Composite Photo – AHS Assistant Principals

Composite Photo – APS Superintendents

Composite Photo – APS Assistant Superintendents

#### **Part 2      *Chronological, Integrated , Illustrated, Annotated Listing of Principals and Superintendents***

#### **Part 3**

##### ***Appendix***

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The Legend of Assistant Principal Ken E. Hassle

The Dual Tragedies of 1946

Principal / Assistant Principal - Anecdotes and Trivia

Superintendent / Assistant Superintendent – Anecdotes and Trivia



##### ***Principals-selected profiles***

Benjamin Phelps   F. Earl Williams   Frederick Dacey   Paul Tatro   Raymond Harris  
David Theodorowicz   John Morrissey

##### ***Superintendents – selected profiles***

James Clark                  James V. Bruno, Jr.                  Steven Lemanski                  Sheila Hoffman  
Dr. Mary Czajkowski                                  William Sapelli

##### ***The Future of Agawam High School***



"Sent to the Office!"

Editor's notes

**100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**



Agawam High School opened in September of 1922.

The first "school year" ended in June of 1923.

Thus, in June of 2022 Agawam High School completed

**100 years** of service to over 20,000 graduates

There was no documented graduating class in 1923 –

the first documented class graduated in 1924.

The class of 2022, the 99<sup>th</sup> class to graduate,  
has the distinction of graduating during the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Agawam High School

***The 100<sup>th</sup> class to graduate will be the class of 2023***

***The School Year***

A "year" of service represents a "***school year***" typically from September to June

For example, Elmer Davenport is listed as having served as Principal from 1926 – 1927

This means Davenport was Principal from September of 1925 through June of 1927.

He was Principal for the 1926 school year and the 1927 school year.

Thus, he served two "years" as Principal.

***Documentation***

Most of the photographs and basic chronological data was derived from AHS yearbooks.

Yearbooks are posted on line on the Agawam Public Library Website and are also available at

[imagemuseum.smugmug.com / Agawam-High-School-Yearbooks](http://imagemuseum.smugmug.com/Agawam-High-School-Yearbooks)

To view the complete recently scanned editions from 1927 to 2022 available on the Agawam Library

website go to the link below

<https://archive.org/search?query=creator%3A%22Agawam+High+School+%28Agawam%2C+Mass.%29%22&sort=-date>

Data was also obtained from Annual Town Reports  
(also available on line on the Agawam Public Library website)  
and internet searches of Springfield and Agawam newspapers.

Sadly, in some cases, biographical data was obtained from obituaries posted on the internet.

***Corrections***

Send any corrections, comments or suggestions you may have to [lscherpa@comcast.net](mailto:lscherpa@comcast.net)

Hope you have some fun with this!

***Part 1***

***“Sent to the Office”***

***100 Years of Agawam High School***

***AHS Principals and Superintendents***

***AHS Assistant Principals / Assistant Superintendents***



***1922 – 2022***

***School Years***

***Overview***

***Chronological Listing***

***Composite Photos***

\* Part 1 gives a basic overview of Principals and Superintendents and their Assistants

# ***“Sent to the Office”***

## ***Agawam High School / The 1<sup>st</sup> 100 years***

<b><i>Principals</i></b>		<b><i>Assistant Principals</i></b>		<b><i>(Short List)</i></b>
1922 – 25	Benjamin Phelps			
1926 – 1927	Elmer F. Davenport			
1928 – 1938	F. Earl Williams			
1939 – 1967	Frederick T. Dacey	1949 – 1955	Raymond Harris	
1968 – 1970	Raymond Harris	1960 – 1962	Paul Langlois	
		1963 – 1972	David Theodorowicz	
1970 – 1971	James V. Bruno, Jr.			
1971 – 1972	Paul Tatro			
1973 – 1981	David Theodorowicz	1973 – 1995	David Bates	
		1973 – 1981	John Morrissey	
1982 – 1993	John Morrissey	1983 – 1995	Mary Charest	
1994 – 1995	Russell Furtado			
1996 – 1999	Joseph Zabielski	1996 – 2010	Bernadette Conte	
2000	Joseph Zabielski / Paul Cavallo	1996 – 2000	Paul Cavallo	
2001	Paul Cavallo	2001 – 2004	Kathleen McSweeney	
		2005 – 2007	Steven Lemanski	
2002	2006 Dr. Linda Prystupa			
2007	Dr. Linda Prystupa / Ralph Zavarella / Steven Lemanski			
2008 – 2017	Steven Lemanski	2008 – 2017	Thomas Schnepf	
		2008 –	Susan Feyre	
		2011 - 2014	Sheila Hoffman	
		2015 – 2021	Susan Schoenberger	
2018 – 2021	Thomas Schnepf	2018 -	Timothy Karetka	
2022	James Blain	2022	Chad Joyal	

## ***Agawam High School Principals***



***Benjamin Phelps***  
**1923 – 25**



***Elmer F. Davenport***  
**1926 – 27**



***F. Earl Williams***  
**1928 – 38**



***Frederick Dacey***  
**1939 - 67**



***Raymond Harris***  
**1968 – 70**



***Paul Tatro***  
**1971 – 72**



***David Theodorowicz***  
**1973 – 81**



***John Morrissey***  
**1982 - 93**



***Russell Furtado***  
**1994 – 95**



***Joseph Zabielski***  
**1996 – 00**



***Paul Cavallo***  
**2000 – 01**



***Dr. Linda Prystupa***  
**2002 – 2006**



***Ralph Zavarella***  
**2007**



***Steven Lemanski***  
**2007 – 17**



***Thomas Schnepf***  
**2018 – 2021**



***James Blain***  
**2022**



Principals  
1923 -



2022





## ***Agawam High School / Assistant Principals***



Raymond Harris  
1949 – 55



Paul Langlois  
1960 – 62



Dave Theodorowicz  
1963 – 72



James Bruno  
1970 – 71



David Bates  
1973 – 95



John Morrissey  
1973 – 81



Mary Charest  
1983 – 95



Bernadette Conte  
1996 – 10



Paul Cavallo  
1996 – 00



Kathleen McSweeney  
2001 – 04



Steve Lemanski  
2006 – 07



Thomas Schnepf  
2008 - 17



Susan Feyre  
2008 –



Sheila Hoffman  
2011 -2014



Susan Schoenberger  
2015- 21



Timothy Karetka  
2018 -



Chad Joyal  
2022 –

***“Sent to the Office”***

***Agawam High School / The 1<sup>st</sup> 100 years***

***Agawam Public Schools      1922 – 2022***

***Superintendents***

***Assistant Superintendents***

***(short list)***

1923 – 1946	Benjamin Phelps	1923 – 1925	Nathalie Moulton
1946	Clifford Granger (Interim upon death of Phelps)		
1946	Paul Adams (Acting Interim upon death of Granger)		
1946	Warren Bodurtha (as School Committee Chair Interim Superintendent)		
1946	Stanley W. Wright appointed in June of 1946		
1947 – 1949	Stanley Wright		
1950 – 1953	A. Jerome Goodwin Goodwin resigned in November of 1953		
1954	George L Reynolds Reynolds was superintendent from November of 1953 – June of 1954		
1955 – 1971	James Clark		
1972 – 1976	Dr. Robert Gardner	1972 – 1982	James V. Bruno, Jr.
1977 – 1979	Dr. Ernest J. Cannava		
1980 – 1981	Louis Hebert	1982 – 1984	Paul Tatro
1982 – 1992	James V. Bruno, Jr. (Bruno retired in November of 1992)	1986 – 2002	Donald Charest
1993 – 1996	Bernard F. Ryder		
1997 – 2002	Dr. Frank Ameruoso	2000 – 2003	Dr. Mary Czajkowski
2003 – 2011	Dr. Mary Czajkowski	2003 – 2008 2003 – 2011	John Kane William Sapelli
2012 – 2017	William Sapelli	2012 – 2018	Dr. Allison LeClair
2018 – 2020	Steven Lemanski	2019 - 2020	Sheila Hoffman
2021 -	Sheila Hoffman	2020 -	Cheryl Solomao

***Agawam Public Schools Superintendents 1922 - 2022***



Benjamin Phelps  
1922 -46



Stanley Wright  
1947 – 49



A. Jerome Goodwin  
1950 - 53



George Reynolds  
1954



James Clark  
1955 – 71



Dr. Robert Gardner  
1972 – 76



Dr. Ernest Cannava  
1977 – 79



Louis Hebert  
1980 - 81



James V. Bruno, Jr.  
1982 – 92



Bernard F. Ryder  
1993 – 96



Dr. Frank Ameruso  
1997 – 2002



Dr. Mary Czajkowski  
2003 – 2011



William Sapelli  
2012 – 17



Steven Lemanski  
2018 – 2020



Sheila Hoffman  
2021

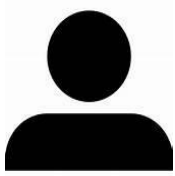


Superintendents 1923 - 2022



# ***Agawam Public Schools 1922 - 2022***

## ***Assistant Superintendents***



Nathalie Moulton  
1923 - 1925



James V. Bruno Jr.  
1972 - 1982



Paul Tatro  
1982 – 1984



Donald Charest  
1986 – 02



Dr. Mary Czajkowski  
2000 – 02



John Kane  
2003 – 08



William Sapelli  
2003 – 11



Dr. Allison LeClair  
2012 – 18



Sheila Hoffman  
2019

Cheryl Solomao  
2020 –





***Part 2***

***“Sent to the Office”***



***100 Years of Agawam High School***

***AHS Principals and Superintendents***

***AHS Assistant Principals / Assistant Superintendents***

***1922 – 2023***

***School Years***

***A***

***Chronological, Integrated, Illustrated***

***Annotated***

***Listing***

***\*Part 2 provides an annotated, integrated review of Principals, Superintendents and their Assistants***

## ***Agawam High School Administrators***

# **1920s**

### ***The First 100 Years The 1920s***

#### ***Superintendent of Schools Assistant Superintendent***

#### ***Principal***

1919 - 1920	Walter E. Gushee Ralph Waterhouse
1920 - 1921	Walter E. Gushee Joseph R. Burgess
1921 - 1922	Walter E. Gushee Joseph R. Burgess

***(Walter Gushee served the Agawam Public Schools for over twenty years as the Superintendent of the joint Agawam / Ludlow school district. The joint district was dissolved in 1922.)***

#### ***Agawam High School opened in September of 1922***

1921 - 1923	Benjamin Phelps* Nathalie F. Moulton **	Benjamin Phelps
1924	Benjamin Phelps Nathalie F. Moulton	Benjamin Phelps
1925	Benjamin Phelps Nathalie F. Moulton	Benjamin Phelps
1926	Benjamin Phelps	Elmer F. Davenport
1927	Benjamin Phelps	Elmer F. Davenport
1928	Benjamin Phelps	F. Earl Williams
1929	Benjamin Phelps	F. Earl Williams



***\*Benjamin Phelps is the only person to hold the dual position of Superintendent and Principal.***

***Phelps was the first principal of Agawam High School.***

***Phelps would remain Superintendent until his tragic death in a motor vehicle accident in 1946.***

***\*\* Nathalie F. Moulton was the first woman to serve as Assistant Superintendent.***

***She resigned in June of 1925 and shortly thereafter married Agawam Selectman Preston Worden.***


***She would be the last woman to serve in a system wide administrative position until the year 2000!***

**Agawam High School Administrators**  
**The First 100 Years**  
**The 1930s**

**1930s**

**Superintendent of Schools**

**Principal**

1930	Benjamin Phelps	F. Earl Williams
1931	Benjamin Phelps	F. Earl Williams
	1932 Benjamin Phelps	F. Earl Williams
	1933 Benjamin Phelps	F. Earl Williams
	1934 Benjamin Phelps	F. Earl Williams
	1935 Benjamin Phelps	F. Earl Williams
	1936 Benjamin Phelps	F. Earl Williams
	1937 Benjamin Phelps	F. Earl Williams
	1938 Benjamin Phelps	F. Earl Williams*
	1939 Benjamin Phelps	Frederick Dacey**



***\*In 1928 Williams married former AHS English teacher Ruth Bugbee –  
a marriage that would last for over 60 years.***

***1938 was his 11<sup>th</sup> and final school year as AHS principal.***

***He became a confidant, collector, and archivist of the artist Robert Strong Woodward***

***He was the guest of honor at the 50<sup>th</sup> reunion of the AHS class of 1931!***

***\*\* Frederick Dacey was the first AHS faculty member to be appointed AHS principal.***

***He would serve as Principal for the next 29 years until his retirement in 1967.***



MR. FREDERICK T. DACEY  
Principal

***All Administrators and faculty are pictured in yearbooks from 1930 on.***

**Agawam High School Administrators  
The First 100 Years**

**The 1940s**

**1940s**

**Superintendent of Schools**

**Principal  
Assistant Principal**

1940	Benjamin Phelps	Frederick Dacey
1941	Benjamin Phelps	Frederick Dacey
1942	Benjamin Phelps	Frederick Dacey
1943	Benjamin Phelps	Frederick Dacey
1944	Benjamin Phelps	Frederick Dacey
1945	Benjamin Phelps	Frederick Dacey
1946	Benjamin Phelps Clifford Granger (Interim upon death of Phelps) Paul J. Adams (Acting Interim upon death of Granger) Warren Bodurtha (Interim upon election as new Chairman)	Frederick Dacey
1947	Stanley W. Wright	Frederick Dacey
1948	Stanley W. Wright	Frederick Dacey
1949	Stanley W. Wright	Frederick Dacey



Raymond Harris\*

***Benjamin Phelps was killed in a motor vehicle accident on April 7, 1946.***

***\* Raymond Harris (above) was the 1<sup>st</sup> AHS***

***Assistant Principal***

***He was the first principal of AHS and served as Superintendent from 1922 until his death. Benjamin Phelps Elementary School named in his honor.***

***He was the 1<sup>st</sup> AHS faculty member appointed Assistant Principal***



***Harris became AHS principal in 1967***

***Stanley W. Wright was only the 2<sup>nd</sup> Superintendent of the Agawam Public Schools (Grades 1-12)***

***He was Superintendent for three school years from 1947 -1949***



**Agawam High School Administrators**

**The First 100 Years**

**The 1950s**

**1950s**

**Superintendent of Schools**

**Principal  
Assistant Principal**

1950	A. Jerome Goodwin	Frederick Dacey Raymond Harris
1951	A. Jerome Goodwin	Frederick Dacey Raymond Harris
1952	A. Jerome Goodwin	Frederick Dacey Raymond Harris
1953	A. Jerome Goodwin (resigned November of 1953)	Frederick Dacey Raymond Harris
1954	George L. Reynolds (Nov. of '53 – June of '54)	Frederick Dacey Raymond Harris
1955	James Clark	Frederick Dacey Raymond Harris*



**The “new” High School opened in September of 1955**

**\*Raymond Harris became the Principal of the “new” Agawam Junior High**

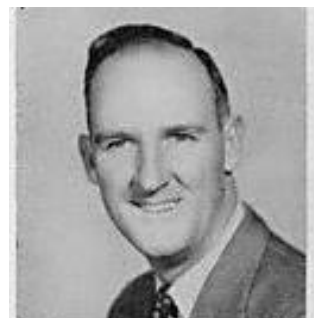
1956	James Clark	Frederick Dacey
1957	James Clark	Frederick Dacey
1958	James Clark	Frederick Dacey
1959	James Clark	Frederick Dacey



Mr. A. Jerome Goodwin  
Superintendent



George Reynolds



Mr. James Clark  
Superintendent

**Reynolds AHS '28 was the first AHS graduate, and the first with AHS faculty experience to be appointed Superintendent**



Agawam High School Administrators

The First 100 Years

*The 1960s*

1960s

***Superintendent of Schools***

***Principal  
Assistant Principal***

1960 James Clark

Frederick Dacey  
Paul Langlois



Paul Langlois

1961 James Clark

Frederick Dacey  
Paul Langlois

1962 James Clark

Frederick Dacey  
Paul Langlois

1963 James Clark

Frederick Dacey  
Dave Theodorowicz

1964 James Clark

Frederick Dacey  
Dave Theodorowicz

1965 James Clark

Frederick Dacey  
Dave Theodorowicz



Dave Theodorowicz

1966 James Clark

Frederick Dacey  
Dave Theodorowicz

1967 James Clark

Frederick Dacey  
Dave Theodorowicz

1968 James Clark

Raymond Harris  
Dave Theodorowicz

1969 James Clark

Raymond Harris  
Dave Theodorowicz



James Clark



Frederick Dacey



Raymond Harris

**Agawam High School Administrators**

**The First 100 Years**

**The 1970s**

**1970s**

	<b><i>Superintendent Assistant Superintendent</i></b>	<b><i>Principal</i></b>	<b><i>Assistant Principals</i></b>
1970	James Clark	Raymond Harris*	Dave Theodorowicz James Bruno
1971	James Clark	Paul Tatro**	Dave Theodorowicz James Bruno
1972	Dr. Robert Gardner*** James Bruno	Paul Tatro	David Theodorowicz John Morrissey
1973	Dr. Robert Gardner James Bruno	David Theodorowicz	John Morrissey David Bates
1974	Dr. Robert Gardner James Bruno	David Theodorowicz	John Morrissey David Bates
1975	Dr. Robert Gardner James Bruno	David Theodorowicz	John Morrissey David Bates
1976	Dr. Robert Gardner James Bruno	David Theodorowicz	John Morrissey David Bates
1977	Dr. Ernest J. Cannava James Bruno	David Theodorowicz	John Morrissey David Bates
1978	Dr. Ernest J. Cannava James Bruno	David Theodorowicz	John Morrissey David Bates
1979	Dr. Ernest J. Cannava James Bruno	David Theodorowicz	John Morrissey David Bates

\*Raymond Harris' final year in a 38 year career of service to the Agawam Public Schools.

\*\*Paul Tatro was the first AHS graduate (1940) to serve as principal.

At the end of his tenure as AHS Principal, Paul Tatro became the 1<sup>st</sup> Principal of the "new" AJHS.

He served in this position from 1972 – 81. He then served as Assistant Superintendent from 1982 - 84

\*\*\* Dr. Robert Gardner was the first Superintendent with a doctorate.

## ***Agawam High School / Superintendents***

***1970s***



***James Clark***  
***1955– 1971***



***Dr. Robert Gardner***  
***1972 – 1976***



***Dr. Ernest J. Cannava***  
***1977 – 1979***



***James Bruno / Assistant***  
***1972 - 1981***

***Agawam High School Principals / Assistant Principals  
1970s***



Raymond Harris - Principal  
1968 – 1970



Paul Tatro - Principal  
1971 - 72



John Morrissey - Assistant Principal  
1972 – 1982

David Theodorowicz - Principal  
1973 – 1981



James Bruno - Assistant Principal  
1970 – 71



David Bates – Assistant Principal  
1973 - 95

*Agawam High School Administrators*

*The First 100 Years*  
*The 1980s*

**1980s**

***Superintendent***  
***Assistant Superintendent***

***Principal / Assistant Principals***

1980	Louis J. Hebert James V. Bruno Jr.	David Theodorowicz	John A. Morrissey David Bates
1981	Louis J. Hebert James V. Bruno, Jr.	David Theodorowicz	John A. Morrissey David Bates
1982	James V. Bruno, Jr.* Paul Tatro	John A. Morrissey	David K. Bates
1983	James V. Bruno, Jr. Paul Tatro	John A. Morrissey	David K. Bates Mary M. Charest**
1984	James V. Bruno, Jr. Paul Tatro	John A. Morrissey	David K. Bates Mary M. Charest
1985	James V. Bruno, Jr.	John A. Morrissey	David K. Bates Mary M. Charest
1986	James V. Bruno, Jr. Donald Charest	John A. Morrissey	David K. Bates Mary M. Charest
1987	James V. Bruno, Jr. Donald Charest	John A. Morrissey	David K. Bates Mary M. Charest
1988	James V. Bruno, Jr. Donald Charest	John A. Morrissey	David K. Bates Mary M. Charest
1989	James V. Bruno, Jr. Donald Charest	John A. Morrissey	David K. Bates Mary M. Charest

\*James Bruno is the second AHS graduate (AHS' 58) to be appointed Superintendent.

\*\*Mary Charest was the first woman to be appointed Assistant Principal.



## ***Agawam High School / Superintendents***

### ***The 1980s***



Louis Hebert  
Superintendent  
1980 – 1981



James V. Bruno, Jr.  
Superintendent  
1982 - 1993



Paul Tatro  
Assistant Superintendent  
1982 – 1984



Donald Charest  
Assistant Superintendent  
1986 - 2002

## ***Agawam High School Principals / Assistant Principals 1980s***



David Theodorowicz  
Principal  
1973 – 1981



John Morrissey  
Principal  
1982 - 1993



David Bates  
Assistant Principal  
1973 – 1995



Mary Charest  
Assistant Principal  
1983 - 1995

**Agawam High School Administrators**

**The First 100 Years  
The 1990s**

**1990s**

**Superintendent  
Assistant Superintendent**

**Principal / Assistant Principals**

1990	James V. Bruno Donald Charest	John Morrissey	David Bates Mary Charest
1991	James V. Bruno Donald Charest	John Morrissey	David Bates Mary Charest
1992	James V. Bruno Donald Charest	John Morrissey	David Bates Mary Charest
1993	James V. Bruno / B.F. Ryder Donald Charest	John Morrissey	David Bates Mary Charest
1994	Bernard F. Ryder Donald Charest	Russell Furtado	David Bates Gabrielle Charest
1995	Bernard F. Ryder Donald Charest	Russell Furtado	David Bates Gabrielle Charest

**Principal      Deputy Principal - Dean of Students**

1996	Bernard F. Ryder Donald Charest	Joseph Zabielski	Paul Cavallo – Bernadette Conte
1997	Dr. Frank Ameruoso Donald Charest	Joseph Zabielski	Paul Cavallo – Bernadette Conte
1998	Dr. Frank Ameruoso Donald Charest	Joseph Zabielski	Paul Cavallo – Bernadette Conte
1999	Dr. Frank Ameruoso Donald Charest	Joseph Zabielski	Paul Cavallo – Bernadette Conte

***Agawam High School***  
***1990s***



James V. Bruno  
Superintendent  
1982 – 1993



Bernard F. Ryder  
Superintendent  
1994 - 1996



Dr. Frank Ameruso  
Superintendent  
1997 – 2002



Donald Charest  
Assistant Superintendent  
1986 - 2002

## ***Agawam High School Principals 1990s***



John Morrissey  
Principal  
1982 – 1993



Russell Furtado  
Principal  
1994 – 1995



Joseph Zabielski  
Principal  
1996 - 2000



David Bates  
Assistant Principal  
1973 – 1995



Mary Charest  
Assistant Principal  
1983 – 1995



Bernadette Conte  
Dean of Students  
1996 – 2011



Paul Cavallo  
Deputy Principal  
1996 - 2000



## ***Agawam High School Administrators / Early 2000s***

### ***Superintendent Assistant Superintendent***

### ***Principal / Deputy Principal / Dean of Students***

2000	Dr. Frank Ameruoso Donald Charest Dr. Mary Czajkowski	Joseph Zabielski	Paul Cavallo Bernadette Conte
2001	Dr. Frank Ameruoso Donald Charest Dr. Mary Czajkowski	Paul Cavallo	Kathleen McSweeney Bernadette Conte
2002	Dr. Frank Ameruoso Donald Charest Dr. Mary Czajkowski	Dr. Linda Prystupa*	Kathleen McSweeney Bernadette Conte
2003	Dr. Mary Czajkowski** William Sapelli John Kane	Dr. Linda Prystupa	Kathleen McSweeney Bernadette Conte Joseph Fitzgerald (Acting) Margaret Shinkle (Acting)
2004	Dr. Mary Czajkowski William Sapelli John Kane	Dr. Linda Prystupa	Kathleen McSweeney Bernadette Conte
2005	Dr. Mary Czajkowski William Sapelli John Kane	Dr. Linda Prystupa	Steven Lemanski Bernadette Conte
2006	Dr. Mary Czajkowski William Sapelli John Kane	Dr. Linda Prystupa	<b><i>Assistant Principals</i></b> Bernadette Conte Steven Lemanski Thomas Schnepf
2007	Dr. Mary Czajkowski William Sapelli John Kane	Dr. Linda Prystupa Ralph Zavarella Steven Lemanski	Bernadette Conte Steven Lemanski Thomas Schnepf
2008	Dr. Mary Czajkowski William Sapelli John Kane	Steven Lemanski	Bernadette Conte Susan Feyre Thomas Schnepf
2009	Dr. Mary Czajkowski William Sapelli	Steven Lemanski	Bernadette Conte Susan Feyre Thomas Schnepf

\*Dr. Linda Prystupa was the first woman appointed Principal and the first Principal with a doctorate.

\*\*Dr. Mary Czajkowski the first woman appointed Superintendent

***Agawam High School  
Superintendents / Assistant Superintendents  
Early 2000s***



***Dr. Frank Ameruso  
Superintendent  
1997 – 2002***



***Donald Charest  
Assistant Superintendent  
1986 - 2002***



***William Sapelli  
Assistant Superintendent  
2003 – 2011***



***Dr. Mary Czajkowski  
Assistant Superintendent  
2000 – 2002***

***Superintendent  
2003 - 2011***



***John Kane  
Assistant Superintendent  
2003 - 2008***

## ***Agawam High School Principals / Early 2000s***



Joseph Zabielski  
Principal  
1996 – 2000\*



Paul Cavallo  
Principal  
2000\* - 2001



Dr. Linda Prystupa  
Principal  
2002 – 2007\*



Ralph Zavarella  
Principal  
2007\*

*\* Served less than a full academic year*



Steven Lemanski  
Principal  
2007\* - 2017



Kathleen McSweeney  
Students / VP  
2001 – 2004



Bernadette Conte  
Vice Principal  
1996 - 2011



Thomas Schnepf  
Vice Principal -  
2006 - 2017



Susan Feyre  
Deputy Principal / VP  
2008 –

## ***Agawam High School Administrators / “20 Teens”***

	<b><i>Superintendent Assistant Superintendent</i></b>	<b><i>Principal</i></b>	<b><i>Assistant Principal</i></b>
2010	Dr. Mary Czajkowski William Sapelli	Steven Lemanski	Susan Feyre Thomas Schnepf Bernadette Conte
2011	Dr. Mary Czajkowski William Sapelli	Steven Lemanski	Susan Feyre Thomas Schnepf Sheila Hoffman
2012	William Sapelli Dr. Allison LeClair	Steven Lemanski	Susan Feyre Thomas Schnepf Sheila Hoffman
2013	William Sapelli Dr. Allison LeClair	Steven Lemanski	Susan Feyre Thomas Schnepf Sheila Hoffman
2014	William Sapelli Dr. Allison LeClair	Steven Lemanski	Susan Feyre Thomas Schnepf Sheila Hoffman
2015	William Sapelli Dr. Allison LeClair	Steven Lemanski	Susan Feyre Thomas Schnepf Susan Schoenberger
2016	William Sapelli Dr. Allison LeClair	Steven Lemanski	Susan Feyre Thomas Schnepf Susan Schoenberger
2017	William Sapelli Dr. Allison LeClair	Steven Lemanski	Susan Feyre Thomas Schnepf Susan Schoenberger
2018	Steven Lemanski* Dr. Allison LeClair	Thomas Schnepf	Susan Feyre Susan Schoenberger Timothy Karetka
2019	Steven Lemanski Sheila Hoffman	Thomas Schnepf	Susan Feyre Susan Schoenberger Timothy Karetka

\* Steven Lemanski is the only AHS Principal to ever be appointed Superintendent

# ***Agawam High School Superintendents***

## ***20 “Teens”***



Dr. Mary Czajkowski  
Superintendent  
2003 – 2011



William Sapelli  
Superintendent  
2012 -2017



Steven Lemanski  
Superintendent  
2018 – 2020



Dr. Allison LeClair  
Assistant Superintendent  
2012 – 2018



Sheila Hoffman  
Assistant Superintendent  
2019

# Agawam High School Principals

## “20 Teens”



Steven Lemanski  
Principal  
2008 – 2017



Thomas Schnepf  
Principal  
2018 – 2021



Susan Feyre  
Assistant Principal  
2008 – present (2022)



Sheila Hoffman  
Assistant Principal  
2011 – 2014



Susan Schoenberger  
Assistant Principal  
2015 - 2021



Timothy Karetka  
Assistant Principal  
2018 – Present (2022)

## ***Agawam High School Administrators / 2020s***

2020	Steven Lemanski Sheila Hoffman	Thomas Schnepf	Susan Feyre Susan Schoenberger Timothy Karetka
2021	Sheila Hoffman	Thomas Schnepf	Susan Feyre Susan Schoenberger Timothy Karetka
2022	Sheila Hoffman Cheryl Solomao	James Blain	Susan Feyre Timothy Karetka Chad Joyal
2023	Sheila Hoffman Cheryl Solomao	James Blain	

### ***AHS Principal / Assistant Principals 2022***



James Blain

*Principal*



Susan Feyre



Timothy Karetka

*Assistant Principals*



Chad Joyal



**Part 3**

***“Sent to the Office”***

***100 Years of Agawam High School***

***AHS Principals and Superintendents***

***AHS Assistant Principals / Assistant Superintendents***



***1922 – 2022  
School Years***

***Appendix***

- A. The “Old” and “New” High School***
- B. Women of AHS – Making History***
- C. The Legend of Assistant Principal Ken E. Hassle***
- D. The Dual Tragedies of 1946***
- E. The Curious Demise of Superintendent A. Jerome Goodwin***
- F. Anecdotes and Trivia – Principals / Assistant Principals***
- G. Anecdotes and Trivia – Superintendents / Assistant Superintendents***
- H. Selected Profiles – Principals***
- I. Selected Profiles – Superintendents***
- J. The Future of Agawam High School***
- K. On a personal Note / Acknowledgements***

## ***The "New High School" – 1922***

## ***Appendix A***



Prior to 1922 there was no Agawam High School.

In 1895 the Town meeting rejected a proposal to build a high school.

The Town of Agawam did provide education from grades 1 through grade 9 in elementary schools located in the three main sections of town.

From 1915 to 1921 "Graduation" ceremonies were held awarding "diplomas" to all of those who completed grade nine.  
(Class lists can be found in the Annual Town Reports 1915 - 1921)

By law, the Town was required to pay the tuition of any student who wished to attend a high school.

Most Agawam 9th grade graduates who chose to continue their education went to West Springfield High.  
Some chose to attend one of the High Schools or Vocational Schools in Springfield.

By 1920 the town was paying over 10,000 a year in outside tuition (roughly \$138,000 today)

In 1920 the Town Meeting authorized the expenditure of  
250,000 for the construction of a high school.

By 1921 construction of the new high school was underway.

In 1922 ***Agawam High School*** opened its doors to students in September as a Junior- Senior High.



In 1929, to alleviate overcrowding, an addition was completed.

The "Main Street " building served as Agawam High School  
from September of 1922 until June of 1955

***Benjamin Phelps*** was the first AHS Principal in the building, ***Frederick Dacey*** was the last.

All Superintendents and Principals listed as serving from 1923 to 1955 did so at the original AHS.

All Principals at the "old" high school were responsible for grades 7 – 12

With the construction of the "new" High School in 1955, the building continued to house the  
***Agawam Junior High***, grades 7 - 8 from 1955 until 1970.

The "old" High School is now the ***Roberta G. Doering Middle School*** - grades 5 and 6 -  
named in honor of a long serving member of the School Committee.

### *The "New "High School - 1955*

Anticipating the arrival of the post World War II "Baby Boom"  
The "new" Agawam High School on Cooper Street opened to students in September of 1955.



*The class of 1956 was the first to graduate from the "new" High School.*

*The first Principal of the "new" AHS was Frederick Dacey,*



*All subsequent Principals in the data base served in the Cooper St. building.*

*The school opened with a grade 9 - 12 configuration*

*From 1976 until 1991 the school housed only grades 10 - 12.*

*During those years, Freshmen attended the "new" Agawam Junior High on Springfield Street.*

*Additions to the original building were completed in 1961, 1980, 1997, and 2001.*



The new entrance pictured above was completed in 2001.

In February of 2021 school officials petitioned the State of Massachusetts  
to consider funding the replacement of Agawam High School.



## ***Women of AHS -Women Making History***

## ***Appendix B***



In 1983 **Mary Charest** became the 1st woman to be appointed **Assistant Principal**, a position she would hold until 1995



In 2002 Dr. Lynda Prystupa became the 1st woman to be appointed **Principal** a position she would hold until the fall of 2006.

She remains the only AHS Principal to have earned a doctorate.



From 2001 – 2005, for the 1st time, two women **Bernadette Conte** and **Kathleen McSweeney** served as the assistant to the Principal administrative team. (at the time they held the positions of **Dean of Students** and **Deputy Principal** respectively)

Kathleen McSweeney was also the 1st woman to serve as **AHS Athletic Director** (1992 – 2000)



In 2000 Dr. **Mary Czajkowski** became the 1<sup>st</sup> woman in 76 years to be appointed **Assistant Superintendent**.

(The 1<sup>st</sup> was **Nathalie Moulton** 1925 – 1928)

In 2003 Dr. Czajkowski became the 1<sup>st</sup> woman to be appointed **Superintendent**

From 2003 – 2005 four women comprised the administrative team **Superintendent Dr. Mary Czajkowski, Principal Dr. Susan Prystupa, Deputy Principal Kathleen McSweeney, Dean of Students Bernadette Conte**



In 2019 **Sheila Hoffman** became the first female AHS graduate (AHS '92) to be appointed **Assistant Superintendent**

In 2021 **Sheila Hoffman** became the first female AHS graduate to be appointed **Superintendent**

For the first time in the history of the Agawam Public Schools (2023) women concurrently hold the positions of Superintendent (**Hoffman**) and Assistant Superintendent (**Cheryl Solomao**)

**The Legend of  
Mr. Ken E. Hassel - Assistant Principal**

**Appendix C**



Mr. Hassel is pictured in the yearbook along with Superintendent Cannava, Principal Theodorowicz and Assistant Principals John Morrissey and David Bates.

The ***Sachem*** staff of 1979 brought a sense of humor to the pages of their yearbook. Among the photographs of the graduates of 1979 were fictitious students including



Apparently, according to the '79 Yearbook, Santa Claus  
was also a 1979 graduate of Agawam High School – who knew!  
(I always thought Santa was AHS '23)

(Editor's note - There is no Santa Claus, there was no class of AHS '23,  
and there was no Mr. Hassel but I was fooled for a while.  
Say the name aloud to appreciate the humor)

To the *Sachem* staff of 1979 (now in their sixties) -- the joke lives on

# ***The Dual Tragedies of 1946***

## ***Appendix D***

In 1946 two of the most trusted and beloved men in the civic history of Agawam suddenly died with days of each other:  
Superintendent Benjamin Phelps and School Committee Chairman Clifford Granger.

Granger had served on the School Committee since 1914.  
Phelps became Superintendent in 1921.

The two men were most responsible for guiding the Agawam Public schools throughout the “Roaring Twenties”, The Great Depression and the World War II eras.

Most Agawam citizens know that elementary schools were name after them, but the memory of their contributions to the Agawam Public schools has faded with time.  
A brief biography of the two follows.



Benjamin Phelps

### ***Parallel Lives***

Clifford Granger was born in Agawam (Feeding Hills) Massachusetts in 1881.  
Benjamin Phelps was born three years earlier in the nearby town of West Suffield, Connecticut in 1878.

Both attended and graduated from the Connecticut Literary Institute now called Suffield Academy.  
Whether they were friends or acquaintances at Suffield Academy is not known.

After Suffield Academy, Phelps graduated from Yale University in 1902.  
Phelps went on to receive a Master’s Degree from Columbia University in 1913.



Clifford Granger

After Suffield Academy, Granger graduated from Brown University in 1904.  
By today’s standards both were well educated men.  
In their time, both were *very well educated* men.

Both men had a personal commitment to education.  
Upon graduation from Yale, Phelps began his teaching career in New Jersey.

Upon graduation from Brown, Granger began his teaching career in California.

Both became school administrators.  
Phelps became a Principal and Superintendent in a number of townships in New Jersey.  
Granger became a Dean at Suffield Academy.

In 1913, the same year Phelps got his Master’s degree from Columbia,  
Granger returned to Agawam to take over the family farm.

In 1914 Granger was elected to the Agawam School Committee  
and would serve on the School Committee for the rest of his life



***The Lives of Phelps and Granger Intersect in 1921.***

As Granger had returned to Agawam in 1913, Phelps returned to the area in 1921.

That year Phelps was hired by The School Committee, Clifford Granger Chairman, to serve as the 1st Principal of the new Agawam High School as well as simultaneously serve as Superintendent of Schools. Whether Granger remembered his older Suffield classmate is not known.

Phelps would remain as Superintendent for the rest of his life.

A warm friendship developed between the two over their two and a half decades of service to the schools.

***Both men died suddenly within days of each other.***

***Phelps was killed in a truck accident on April 7, 1946.***

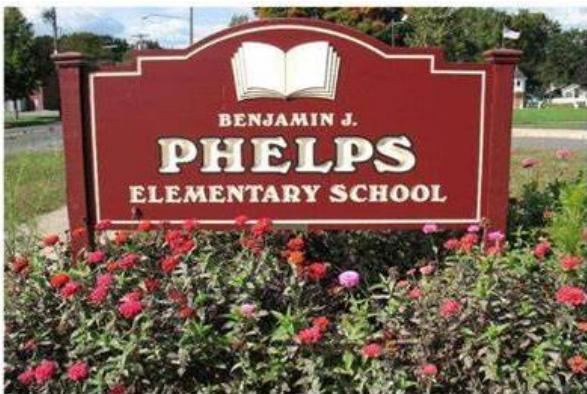
Granger, as Chairman of the School Committee, became Interim Superintendent.

***Sadly, Granger died a few days later of a cerebral hemorrhage on April 16, 1946.***

Whether the stress of the loss of a close friend and the demands of being Interim Superintendent contributed to his death will never be known.

The newspaper headlines on the following pages chronicle the tragedy.

The two elementary schools named in their honor, Benjamin Phelps Elementary and the Clifford Granger Elementary attest to the esteem in which they were held by the community.



Upon Granger's death School Committee Secretary Paul J. Adams became "Acting Interim" Superintendent. Within a matter of days, the School Committee elected Stanley Bodurtha to be the new Chairman.

"Interim Superintendent" Bodurtha announced that the Committee as a whole would assume the duties of Superintendent while a search was conducted for a new Superintendent. (Chapter 71, Sec. 52 of Massachusetts Statutes prevents school committee members from being Superintendent) Newspaper accounts referred to Granger, Adams and Bodurtha as acting in that capacity and they are so listed in this document.

After considering 35 applicants, In June of 1946, the School Committee hired ***Stanley Wright*** to be the next Superintendent.



Newspaper headlines of Benjamin Phelps' death  
*Springfield Republican* April 7 - 10, 1946

## SCHOOL HEAD HURT IN AGAWAM FALL

Supt Benjamin J. Phelps in Critical Condition After  
 Hitting Head On Pavement When Load of Brush  
 Falls From Truck

Agawam, April 8 — Supt of Schools Benjamin J. Phelps, 54, was still unconscious late tonight and in a critical condition at Western Memorial hospital where he was taken after a fall from a truck this afternoon on Main street near Lloyd's hill.

The educator is believed to have sustained a fractured skull in the fall from the vehicle, which police said, was driven by one of his pupils, Fred J. Humm, 17, of 186 Cooper street.

Hospital authorities said Phelps' name was on the danger list. Police said Humm and Supt Phelps were transporting a load of brush to the latter's head street home and proceeding slowly along Main street when some of the brush Phelps was sitting on in the rear of the truck came away and tumbled to the street.

Emergency aid Phelps landed on his head when he fell to the pavement along with a large part of the load. Humm said Phelps wanted the brush to cover a new lawn he was planning.

When notified of the mishap, Mrs Phelps hurried to the bedside of her husband and arranged to have a special nurse.

Police reported the accident happened at 4:15 and hospital authorities said Phelps was brought in at 4:35.

### Fall Is Fatal



BENJAMIN J. PHELPS

## PHELPS SUCCUMBS TO HEAD INJURIES SUSTAINED IN FALL

Agawam School Superintendent Was Prominent  
 Educator and Mason—Funeral Tomorrow

Agawam, April 9—Benjamin Judah Phelps, 54, superintendent of schools for one of the town's most popular citizens, succumbed to a fractured skull sustained Saturday afternoon when he fell from a truck on Main street, Lloyd's hill. According to eyewitnesses, a load of brush on the truck slipped from the vehicle, throwing the superintendent to the road.

## PHELPS RITES HALT AGAWAM SCHOOL WORK

Town Pays Respects to Memory  
 Of Education Superintendent,  
 Accident Victim

Agawam, April 8—Solemn memorial services were held at Agawam high school this morning for Benjamin Judah Phelps, 54, superintendent of schools, who died early yesterday at Western Memorial hospital, Springfield, from injuries received Saturday in a fall from a truck.

High School Principal Frederick T. Dacey presided at the brief services for the late school head, following which all schools in the town were closed in his memory. School sessions will be suspended tomorrow, the day of the funeral, with classes resuming Wednesday morning.

The body of the Supt Phelps will lie in state in the high school tomorrow from 11 a. m. to 2 p. m., at which time the funeral services will be held in the school. Burial will follow in Woodlawn cemetery, Suffield, Ct.

Mr Phelps, one of the town's most popular citizens, succumbed to a fractured skull sustained Saturday afternoon when he fell from a truck on Main street, Lloyd's hill. According to eyewitnesses, a load of brush on the truck slipped from the vehicle, throwing the superintendent to the road.

Born October 4, 1891, at West Suffield, Ct., son of the late Judah and Ellen (Channon) Phelps, the educator was graduated from the Connecticut Literary Institute, now Suffield academy, in 1918, and from Yale university in 1922. He received his master's degree at Columbia university in 1924.

Mr Phelps began his educational career at Pennington seminary in Pennington, N. J., where he served as vice-principal from 1922 to 1927. He later became principal of North Plainfield high school, North Plain-

## FINAL TRIBUTE TO B. J. PHELPS IS IMPRESSIVE

Agawam School Supt.'s Services Widely Attended by Pupils, Teachers, Officials

Agawam, April 9—School children, town officials, and school superintendents throughout Western Massachusetts today paid final tribute to Benjamin Judah Phelps, 54, superintendent of schools since 1920, who died Sunday, as funeral services were held this afternoon in the auditorium of Agawam high school.

All schools in the town, which closed after memorial exercises yesterday, remained closed today during the last rites for the school superintendent, with Rev Dr E. Scott Farley, pastor of Second Baptist church, Suffield, Ct., officiating at the services in his memory.

Active bearers were Harmon Smith, Raymond Harris, Frederick T. Dacey, Edward White, Oscar Barker, James Snell, Warren Jewett and Roland White.

## School Board Resolution Pays Tribute to Benjamin J. Phelps

The Agawam school committee, acting a few hours after services were held in the high school for Benjamin J. Phelps, into superintendent of schools, adopted the following tribute to his memory:—

"That the entire personnel of the Agawam schools through their school committee wish to express their deep sorrow because of the death of their

beloved superintendent, Benjamin J. Phelps.

"That they will always cherish the memory of a dear friend, whose abiding counsel and guidance in his association with them will always serve as a permanent marker in their journey through life's troublesome maze.

"That they will always remember

## Agawam School Head Collapses

Clifford Granger, 64, acting superintendent of schools in Agawam, was reported only in fair condition last night at Weason hospital. Mr Granger, who is also chairman of the town school committee, collapsed during the evening at his home on South Westfield street and was admitted to the hospital about 7.45. He became acting superintendent last week after Supt Benjamin Phelps died of injuries received in a fall from a truck.

## PUPILS PAY TRIBUTE TO CLIFFORD GRANGER

Pupils of Agawam high school stood in silent tribute at an assembly yesterday in honor of Clifford M. Granger, school board chairman and acting school superintendent, who died Tuesday. High School Principal Frederick T. Dacy gave the opening remarks while James Finn, president of the student body, read a poem by Tennyson, "Crossing the Bar."

Schools will be closed tomorrow to allow teachers and pupils to attend the funeral at the Congregational church at 2 p. m. Burial will be in Springfield Street cemetery, Feeding Hills. The body of Mr Granger is at the Cooper funeral home at Suffield, Ct., where it may be viewed tonight and tomorrow from 10 a. m. until 1 p. m.

## AGAWAM OFFICIALS AT GRANGER RITES

The funeral of Clifford M. Granger of Feeding Hills, chairman of the Agawam school committee, was held at the Feeding Hills Congregational church yesterday afternoon. The eulogy was read by Rev Alfred E. Bradford. Town officials serving as active bearers were Henry Barker, Giles W. Halladay, Raymond Harris, John Quirk, Paul Johnson, Raymond Montagna, Jasper DeForge and Frederick Dacey. Honorary bearers were Henry Bodurtha, Adolphus Provost, Arthur Taylor, Walter Kerr, Harold Davis, Warren Bodurtha, Edward Johnson, Paul Adams, Edson Ferrell, H. M. Cooley, Alvin Kellogg and Police Chief Percy J. Hewey. Burial was in Springfield Street cemetery, Feeding Hills.

## NEW AGAWAM SCHOOL HEAD IS NEAR DEATH

C. M. Granger, 64, Collapsed;  
Had Been On Job  
One Week

Clifford M. Granger, 64, of 67 South Westfield street, Feeding Hills, chairman of the Agawam school committee, is seriously ill at Weason Memorial hospital and his name has been placed on the danger list, hospital attaches said today.

Granger collapsed last night at his home, victim of a cerebral thrombosis condition. He was ordered removed to the hospital by his physician, Dr Robert J. Klein.

Granger has been serving as acting superintendent of Agawam schools since the untimely death last week of Supt Benjamin J. Phelps, who died of injuries received in a fall from a truck.

## AGAWAM

## W. C. Bodurtha Heads Agawam School Board

Agawam, April 25—Warren C. Bodurtha has been elected chairman of the school committee to succeed the late Clifford M. Granger, who died suddenly last week, victim of a cerebral hemorrhage, it was announced today.

Bodurtha was named chairman at a meeting of the committee at the high school Tuesday night.

Granger had been appointed acting superintendent of schools on the sudden death two weeks ago of Benjamin J. Phelps, who succumbed to injuries suffered in a fall from a truck.

Chairman Bodurtha said today the school committee would take over the duties of the superintendent's office until such a time as an appointment could be made. He said the committee did not propose to make a hasty appointment, but meant to give the matter a good deal of consideration.

## C. M. GRANGER, 64, OF AGAWAM DIES; SCHOOL CHAIRMAN

Had Been Acting Superinten-  
dent for Week Following  
Accidental Death of Supt  
Benjamin J. Phelps

Clifford M. Granger, 64, chairman of the Agawam school committee and acting superintendent of schools for the past week, died last night at Weason Memorial hospital. He collapsed Monday evening at his home, 667 South Westfield street, Feeding Hills.

Mr Granger had been serving as acting superintendent since Supt Benjamin J. Phelps died nine days ago as the result of injuries received in a fall from a truck. Both men had attended Connecticut Literary Institute and had worked together for many years in the Agawam school system, with Mr. Granger a member of the board which approved Mr. Phelps's appointment 24 years ago. Friends for more than 60 years, they died in the same hospital.

Born in Feeding Hills

Mr Granger was the son of William Horace and Sarah (Moore) Granger and was born in the house at Feeding Hills where he lived until he was removed to the hospital Monday night after collapsing from a cerebral thrombosis condition. He received his education at the Connecticut Literary Institute (now Suffield academy) and Brown university, where the degree

## S. W. WRIGHT SCHOOL SUPT. FOR AGAWAM

Cheshire School Head Is Well-  
Known Football  
Official

Agawam, June 10—Stanley W. Wright, 33, well-known football official in Berkshire county and former superintendent of schools in Cheshire, was today appointed to succeed the late Benjamin J. Phelps as superintendent of schools in this town.

Although Warren C. Bodurtha, recently appointed chairman of the school committee, refused to comment on the issue, appointment was confirmed by the appointee and the Cheshire school committee.

The new school head will take over in the near future. The finding of

Newspaper Citations

***School Head Hurt in Agawam Fall  
Supt Benjamin Phelps in Critical Condition After  
Hitting Head on Pavement When Load of Brush Falls From Truck***

*The Springfield Union / Republican*      Sunday, April 7, 1946      p.1

***Fall is Fatal***

***Phelps Succumbs to Head Injuries Sustained in Fall  
Agawam School Superintendent Was Prominent Educator***

*The Springfield Union / Republican*      Monday, April 8, 1946      p.1

***Phelps Rites Halt Agawam School Work***

*Springfield Daily News*      Monday, April 8, 1946      p.14

***Final Tribute to B.J. Phelps is Impressive***

*Springfield Daily News*      Tuesday, April 9, 1946      p.1

***School Board Resolution Pays Tribute to Benjamin J. Phelps***

*Springfield Daily News*      Wednesday, April 10, 1946      p. 14

***Agawam School Head Collapses***

*Springfield Daily Republican*      Tuesday, April 16, 1946      p. 1

***New Agawam School Head is Near Death***

***C.M. Granger, 64 collapsed; Had Been on Job One Week***

*Springfield Daily News*      Tuesday, April 16, 1946      p.1

***C. Granger, 64, of Agawam Dies***

***Had been Acting Superintendent for Week***

***Following Accidental Death of Supt. Benjamin Phelps***

*Springfield Daily Republican*      Wednesday, April 17, 1946      p. 8

***Pupils Pay Tribute to Clifford Granger***

*Springfield Daily Republican*      Thursday, April 18, 1946      p. 10

***Agawam Officials at Granger Rites***

*Springfield Daily Republican*      Saturday, April 20, 1946      p. 4

***W.C. Bodurtha Heads Agawam School Board***

*Springfield Daily Republican*      Friday, April 26, 1946      p. 4

***S.W. Wright School Supt. For Agawam***

*Springfield Daily News*      Monday, June 10, 1946      p. 1



**“...they belted the hell out of me everywhere I went.”**

On November 11, 1953 Superintendent A. Jerome Goodwin suddenly resigned.

Goodwin claimed that his health was at risk because of a “...heavy and constant barrage of public criticism.”

Goodwin confirmed reports that his administrative policies had met with considerable opposition.

He said that he was hounded everywhere he went “even on Sundays and holidays by people who had complaints to make.”

Goodwin’s letter of resignation said “...due to the increasingly severe demands of my position upon my physical strength and nervous system I find it impossible to continue the work. Consequently I hereby submit my resignation....”

Some questions come to mind.

Was it policy changes or personnel changes that caused such an uproar?

Was it a case of policy or personality?

He had been Superintendent since June of 1949, what was the duration of the animosity

Was this intimidation or citizens expressing their freedom of speech?

Could a healthier more confident man deflect his critics?

Was criticism spontaneous or orchestrated?

Agawam was, at one time, infamous for its “rough and tumble” politics -- is this an example?

Was this paranoia or persecution -- or a little bit of both?

Coup d’etat?

This was not Agawam’s finest hour!

Expressing no empathy or gratitude for past service, the resignation was accepted by School Committee Chairman Paul Adams . Adams chose not to comment on the matter other than saying it was “just one of those things” and that the entire matter should “be left alone.” (Nothing to see here folks – move on!)

The resignation is not mentioned in the 1953 Agawam Town Report.

It was as if he never existed.

It seems apparent that the School Committee, for whatever reason, was eager to see him go!

Hopefully, A. Jerome Goodwin found respite elsewhere.



# ADAMS CAN'T ACT AS SUPT. OF SCHOOLS

Law Says School Committee  
Members Ineligible for  
Position

The School Committee now had the task of finding a new Superintendent. The day after Goodwin's resignation the School Committee announced that School Committee Chairman *Paul Adams* would serve as temporary superintendent.

However, in a ruling by Massachusetts Commissioner of Education John J. Desmond Jr., Adams, or any other member of the School Committee was prevented by law from assuming the duties of Superintendent. (Chapter 71, Sect. 52)

Faced with this ruling, Adams said that "he will definitely not act as Superintendent but in the capacity of School Committee Chairman..."

The School Committee now had a dilemma.  
November is not exactly a good time to go searching for a quick replacement.

They found a solution – ***George Reynolds***

As noted in the 1953 Annual Town Report

Mr. George Reynolds was appointed Superintendent of your schools in November, 1953. His full-time appointment becomes effective January 1, 1954, and in the interim he is serving in a consulting capacity on a part-time basis without compensation. The School Committee is happy about the choice of Mr. Reynolds and from reports we know that his choice is a popular one. We look forward to a continuance of a broadening educational program for the children and young people in our school system.



**Reynolds New  
Superintendent**  
Named Successor to Goodwin  
in Agawam

George Reynolds was no stranger.

A town resident, Reynolds graduated from Agawam High School in 1928.

A Pro Merito honor student, he was Class President as well as President of the Student Council.

A three sport athlete, he was captain of the baseball team and President of the Agawam Athletic Association.

He also found time to be Sports Editor of the Mirror.

Reynolds went on to graduate from Amherst College.

He was among the first AHS graduates to join the AHS faculty.

He coached baseball and was the school's first hockey coach.

After serving on the AHS faculty from 1935 - 1939 he left for teaching positions in Suffield and later Springfield.

Active in the civic affairs of the town, he resigned his position on the Agawam High School Building Committee to accept the position of Superintendent.

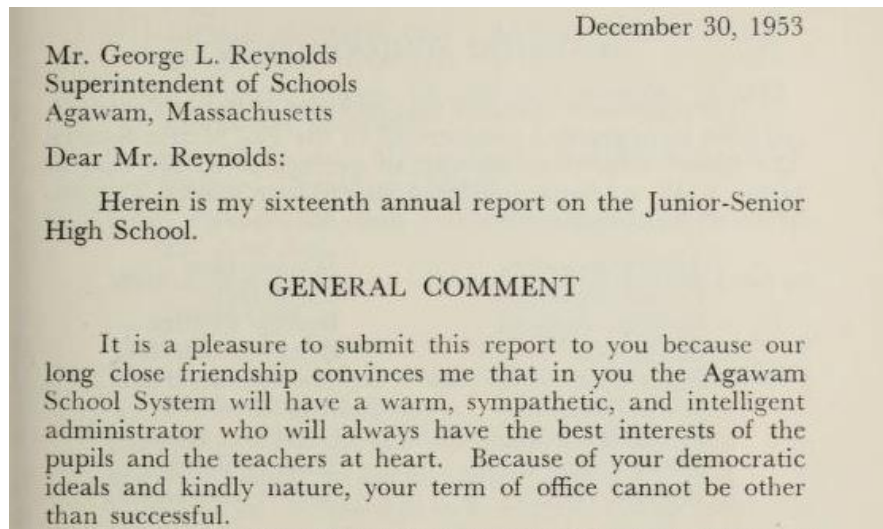
He was the first AHS graduate to be appointed Superintendent

He was the first person, with prior AHS faculty experience, to be appointed Superintendent

Reynolds was, in the very best sense of the word, a "townie".

*As noted in the School Committee report "...from reports we know that his choice is a popular one."*

*The sentiment is expressed in Frederick Dacey's report to the Superintendent found in the 1953 Annual Town Report*



*Dacey's intent may have been to flatter his new boss,  
however, the sentiment seems genuine. Reynolds was a friend.*

*If Reynolds was warm, sympathetic, and intelligent is he implying that Goodwin was not?*

*Despite the fact that Reynolds was acting as a non paid "consultant" until he officially took office on January 1, 1954.*

*Reynolds did write the Superintendent's report for the 1953 Annual Town Report attaching his name as Superintendent.  
Dacey's letter of December 30 also refers to Reynolds as Superintendent.*

*This begs the question, was Reynolds intent on a long term tenure as Superintendent, or was he just doing his civic duty by filling in for the remainder of the school year to give the School Committee time to conduct a search for a candidate.  
The School committee did need someone to "sign the checks" so to speak.*

I suspect the latter



If he had wanted the position on a long term basis his friends on the School Committee would have given it to him.  
His other business interests in town would have prevented him from being interested in the full time job.

Thank you to George Reynolds for filling the gap as he did.

Reynolds retired as the head of the Industrial Education Department at Technical High School in 1972.

He was also a contractor building over 25 homes in Agawam.

His public service included terms on the Board of Assessors, Planning Board, Housing Authority, and Board of Selectmen.



Now the search for a new candidate was on!

## **CLARK IS NAMED AGAWAM SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT**

Has Similar Post in Coventry, R. I.; Harris Appointed Principal

Agawam, April 25—James Clark, 46, of Coventry, R. I., has been named superintendent of the Agawam school system, Chairman Paul Adams announced tonight after a special meeting of the School Committee at the high school this afternoon.



JAMES CLARK

In April of 1954, the School Committee announced the appointment of James Clark as the new Superintendent effective June 30.

Clark made his first public appearance at the 1954 Agawam High School Commencement ceremony.

Clark was to be chosen to deal with the onslaught of the baby boomers into the already overcrowded public schools!

James Clark was Superintendent from June of 1954 to June of 1971.

James Clark would prove to be the right man at the right time!

The information for this section was compiled from the 1953 Annual Town Report, AHS 1928 Yearbook, an obituary of George Reynolds that appeared in the May 6, 1993 edition of the *Agawam Advertiser News* and the following newspaper accounts

### **“Hell Beat Out of Him”**

#### **So Agawam School Superintendent Quits**

*Springfield Daily News*, November 11, 1953, p. 1

#### **Adams Can't Act as Supt. Of Schools**

*Springfield Daily News*, November 12, 1953, p.31

#### **Reynolds New Superintendent**

*Springfield Daily News*, November 23, 1953

#### **School Council to Welcome Reynolds**

*Springfield Daily News*, December 31, 1953

#### **Clark Is Named Agawam School Superintendent**

*Springfield Union*, April 26, 1954, p.8

#### **Band to Play at Graduation**

*Springfield Union*, June 16, 1954 p.31

**Agawam High School Principals / The 1<sup>st</sup> 100 years  
Anecdotes and Trivia**

**Appendix F**



**Benjamin Phelps** was the first AHS Principal - 1922

**James Blain** is the current AHS Principal - 2023



Six AHS Principals were at one time AHS Assistant Principals

**Raymond Harris, David Theodorowicz, John Morrissey, Paul Cavallo,  
Steven Lemanski, and Thomas Schnepf**

The longest term as AHS principal was **Frederick Dacey** - 29 years. ( 1939 –67 )  
As teacher and Principal he served AHS from 1923 – 1967 a total of 45 years!

(Fredrick Dacey's son, Thomas Dacey was an Agawam Jr. High and Middle School teacher for 42 years!)

Also serving lengthy terms as AHS Principal were

**John Morrissey (12) F. Earl Williams (11) Steven Lemanski (10) David Theodorowicz (9)**



Principals **F. Earl Williams** and **Frederick Dacey** served a span of 40 years!  
(1928 –1967)

The shortest term as AHS Principal was **Ralph Zavarella** (2007) – 4 months.

**"The year of the Two Principals" – 2000**

In March of 2000 **Joseph Zabielski** resigned  
Superintendent Dr. Frank Ameruso appointed Deputy Principal **Paul Cavallo** as Principal

**"The Year of the Three Principals" - 2007**

At the end of October of 2006 Principal **Prystupa** left AHS.  
In November of 2006 Superintendent Mary Czajkowski appointed  
Middle School Principal **Ralph Zavarella** to be AHS Principal.  
Ralph Zavarella (AHS '60) is the second AHS graduate to serve as AHS Principal.  
(**Paul Tatro** (AHS '40 was Principal 1971 - 72) - was the first.)  
Ralph Zavarella was retiring and wanted to serve out his final months at the  
Agawam Middle School where he had been Principal for many years.  
He transferred from AHS back to the Agawam Middle School in March.  
His brief tenure as Principal - 4 months - is the shortest in AHS history.  
AHS Assistant Principal **Steven Lemanski** was appointed to complete the year as Principal.

There were **five** Principals in a span of 8 years –**Zabielski, Cavallo, Prystupa, Zavarella, and Lemanski** ( 2000 – 2007)

**Frederick Dacey** was the 1<sup>st</sup> AHS faculty member to be chosen Principal

**Benjamin Phelps** was the only administrator to hold the dual position of AHS principal and Superintendent.

**Steven Lemanski** was the only AHS principal to subsequently be appointed Superintendent. (2018)

**Paul Tatro** was the only AHS Principal to subsequently be appointed Assistant Superintendent. (1982)

The youngest Principal was **F. Earl Williams** – age 26 (1928)

The oldest Principal was **Frederick Dacey** – age 70 (1967)

**Benjamin Phelps** was a Yale graduate, **Paul Tatro** was a Harvard graduate

**Paul Tatro** (AHS '40) was the first AHS graduate to be appointed AHS Principal

**Ralph Zavarella** (AHS '60) was the only other

**Frederick Dacey** was a veteran of World War I (Army)

**Paul Tatro**, was a veteran of World War II (Navy)

He was a Lt. Commander in the United States Naval Reserve while Principal

**David Theodorowicz** was a veteran of World War II (Marine Corps)

**John Morrissey** was a veteran of the Korean War (Air Force)

**Frederick Dacey** was the last AHS administrator born in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

**Frederick Dacey** was the only Principal to finish the decade he started – he did it twice – the 40s /50s

**David Theodorowicz** was the last principal to have had a teaching connection with the “old” high school.

**David Theodorowicz** presided over the largest senior class in AHS history –  
the class of 1980 (over 400 students!)

**Steven Lemanski** and **James Blain** had both been Athletic Directors for the Chicopee Public Schools

**Dr. Linda Prystupa** was the first female AHS Principal – she was also the first to have earned a doctorate

Four women were the administrative team for AHS from 2003 – 2005

Superintendent **Mary Czajkowski**, Principal **Dr. Susan Prystupa**,

Assistant Principal **Kathleen McSweeney**, Assistant Principal **Bernadette Conte**

**Raymond Harris** and **Paul Tatro** are the only AHS Principals to have also been Agawam Junior High School Principal. **Harris** – the “old” Junior High on Main Street, **Tatro** the “new” Junior High on Springfield Street

Upon completion of his tenure at AHS, **Paul Tatro** was appointed the 1<sup>st</sup> principal of the “new” Junior High in 1971 -- a position he would hold until 1981 when he was appointed Assistant Superintendent.

**Ralph Zavarella** and **Thomas Schnepf** are the only AHS Principals to also be APS Middle School Principals.

**Paul Cavallo** currently serves on the Agawam Town Council



## Agawam High School / The 1<sup>st</sup> 100 years

### Assistant Principals Anecdotes and Trivia



During the last 100 years since its opening in September of 1922  
17 people have served as AHS Assistant Principal -

11 men and 6 women



There was no AHS Assistant Principal position for the first 27 years

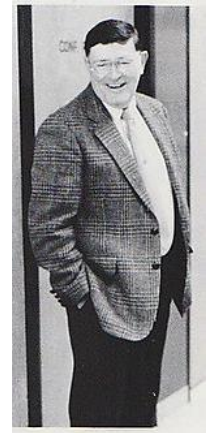
**Raymond Harris** was the first AHS Assistant Principal -- 1949  
**Susan Feyre** is the longest serving of the current Assistant Principals - 2023

The Assistant Principal position was vacated from 1956 - 1959

Serving the longest term of Assistant Principal was **David K. Bates** -- 23 years!  
(1973 -- 1995)

Also serving lengthy terms as Assistant Principal

<b>Susan Feyre</b>	15 years and still active as of 2021
<b>Bernadette Conte</b>	15 years
<b>Mary Charest</b>	13 years
<b>David Theodorowicz</b>	10 years
<b>John Morrissey</b>	9 years



David Bates

Promoted to Principal during the 2007 school year, **Steven Lemanski** served less than three years as Assistant Principal

**James Bruno** (AHS '58) was the first AHS graduate to be appointed AHS Assistant Principal



**Mary Charest** was the first female Assistant Principal (1983)

Six Assistant Principals would go on to be appointed AHS Principal --

**Raymond Harris, David Theodorowicz, John Morrissey, Paul Cavallo, Steven Lemanski, and Thomas Schnepf**

Three Assistant Principals would go on to be appointed Superintendent --

**James Bruno, Steven Lemanski, and Sheila Hoffman**

The longest serving administrative team was **John Morrissey / David Bates** -- 12 years



Two women, **Kathleen McSweeney** and **Bernadette Conte**,  
served as the Assistant Principal team\* from 2001- 2004 .

(\*From 1996 -- 2005 the terms "Deputy Principal" and "Dean of Students"  
replaced the term Assistant Principal)



**Joseph Fitzgerald** and **Margaret Shinkle** served as additional "acting" Assistant Principals in 2003

Agawam High School / The 1<sup>st</sup> 100 years  
Superintendent / *Anecdotes and Trivia*

Appendix G



Fifteen people have served as full time APS Superintendent in the history of Agawam High School -13 men, 2 women

**Benjamin Phelps** was the first Superintendent in the history of AHS - 1922

**Sheila Hoffman** is the current Superintendent - 2023

**Benjamin Phelps** was the only person to hold the dual position of AHS Principal and Superintendent



**Benjamin Phelps** was the longest serving Superintendent – 24 years  
(He would have served longer if not for his tragic, accidental death in 1946)

Other Superintendents who served “lengthy” terms

**James Clark** 17 years  
**James V. Bruno, Jr.** 11 years  
**Dr. Mary Czajkowski** 9 years



**George Reynolds** had the shortest (full time) tenure as Superintendent – 6 months

**George Reynolds** (AHS '28) was the first AHS graduate to be appointed Superintendent –

Other AHS grads appointed Superintendent include **James Bruno** (AHS '58)

**William Sapelli** ( AHS '72) and **Sheila Hoffman** (AHS ' 92)

**Sheila Hoffman** (AHS '92) is the first female AHS graduate to be appointed Superintendent

**Dr. Robert Gardner** was the first Superintendent to have earned a doctorate

**Dr. Mary Czajkowski** was the first woman to be appointed Superintendent

**Steven Lemanski** is the only AHS Principal to be appointed Superintendent

Three AHS Assistant Principals would eventually become Superintendent –

**James V. Bruno Jr., Steven Lemanski, and Sheila Hoffman**

Since his retirement as Superintendent in 2017, **William Sapelli** has been elected to multiple terms as Mayor of Agawam.

Superintendents **Benjamin Phelps** and **James Clark** have elementary schools named in their honor

**James Clark** was a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in the Army during World War II, **Dr. Ernest Cannava** served in the Marines

Both **James Bruno** and **William Sapelli** have been inducted into the AHS Athletic Hall of Fame



For many years **James “Turk” Bruno** held the Western Massachusetts football scoring record

**Sheila Hoffman**, a member of the National Honor Society, was the Valedictorian of the AHS class of 1992

To meet the demands of the “Baby Boomers” **James Clark** oversaw the construction of four schools during his tenure  
Agawam High School (Cooper Street), Agawam Junior High School (Springfield Street)  
Robinson Park School and South Street School (later renamed James Clark Elementary School)

For the first time in the history of the Agawam Public Schools women concurrently (2022) hold the positions  
Superintendent (**Sheila Hoffman**) and Assistant Superintendent (**Cheryl Solomao**)

**Jerome Goodwin** is the only Superintendent to resign during the school year (November of 1953)  
**James Bruno's** planned retirement took place during the school year (November of 1992)

Because of the tragic events of 1946 ...the following facts are noted

**Benjamin Phelps** was the 1<sup>st</sup> Superintendent to die in office (April 1946)

Upon the death of Phelps, The School Committee, **Clifford Granger**, School Committee Chair, assumed the duties of Superintendent. News accounts at the time referred to him as the “Acting Superintendent, though prohibited by state law.

Technically, **Granger** was the first Agawam resident to assume the duties of a Superintendent although **George Reynolds (1954)** is the 1<sup>st</sup> to fill the job full time, and James Bruno (**1982 -92**) was the first to fill the job for an entire school year.

**Clifford Granger** became the 2<sup>nd</sup> “Superintendent” to die in office (April 1946)  
(8 days after the death of Phelps)

**Granger** was the 1st School Committee member to serve as de facto Superintendent. Because of his death days after the death of Phelps, the legalities under State Law became moot.

Upon the death of **Granger**, School Committee Secretary **Paul J. Adams** assumed the role of “Acting Interim” Superintendent until the election, six days later, of **Warren Bodurtha** as new Chairman / “Interim Superintendent”  
*The election took place on Tuesday, April 22, 1946  
but was not announced in the press until April 26, 1946*

Following state law, **Bodurtha** stated that the Committee as a whole would handle the responsibilities of Superintendent until a new, full time, Superintendent could be appointed.

In June of 1946, **Stanley W. Wright** became only the second to be appointed Superintendent

In the six weeks following the death of Benjamin Phelps multiple individuals served as, what the newspapers termed “interim” Superintendents -- **Granger, Adams, Bodurtha** prior to the appointment of **Stanley Wright** as permanent Superintendent.



The 1953 – 1954 school year saw two individuals serving as Superintendent  
***Jerome Goodwin*** and ***George Reynolds***

The 1992 – 1993 school year saw two individuals as Superintendent  
***James Bruno*** and ***Bernard Ryder***

***Benjamin Phelps, Clifford Granger, (along with James Clark)***  
have elementary schools named in their honor.

Only ***Sheila Hoffman*** has officially held the title Interim Superintendent

Technically, “Acting” Superintendents ***Clifford Granger*** and ***Paul J. Adams***  
tenure in the Superintendent’s chair is the shortest – 9 days and 6 days.  
(Although, technically, by state law, they could not serve in the position.)

Others with short terms as Superintendent included

***George Reynolds*** 7 months - during the 1953 – 54 school year  
***Louis Hebert*** - 2 years 1980 and 1981 school years

***George Reynolds*** and ***James Bruno*** are the only Superintendents with prior  
experience on the AHS faculty.

**Agawam High School / The 1<sup>st</sup> 100 years**  
**Assistant Superintendent / *Anecdotes and Trivia***

Nine people have held the position of Assistant Superintendent –  
5 women and 4 men

**Nathalie Moulton** was the first Assistant Superintendent appointed in 1922

**Nathalie Moulton** left the school system in 1925 prior to her marriage to Agawam Selectman Preston Warden. The position remained unfilled for the next 47 years, until the appointment of **James V. Bruno, Jr.** in 1972.

**Nathalie Moulton** was the first female Assistant Superintendent,  
78 years would pass before the appointment of  
**Dr. Mary Czajkowski** -- the second female Assistant Superintendent.

**Donald Charest** was the longest serving Assistant Superintendent - 17 years

Other long serving Assistant Superintendents were

**James Bruno** – 11 years

**William Sapelli** – 9 years

**Dr. Allison LeClair** – 7 years



**Sheila Hoffman** served only 1 year as Assistant before being appointed Superintendent  
**Donald Charest**

**Sheila Hoffman** was the first female AHS graduate (AHS '92) to  
to be appointed Assistant Superintendent

Four Assistant Superintendents went on to become Superintendent

**James V. Bruno Jr., Dr. Mary Czajkowski, William Sapelli, and Sheila Hoffman**

Five Assistant Superintendents were AHS graduates –

**Paul Tatro (AHS '40), James V. Bruno Jr. (AHS '58), Donald Charest (AHS '63)**

**William Sapelli (AHS '72) and Sheila Hoffman (AHS '92)**

Two AHS Assistant Principals went on to become Assistant Superintendents

**James V. Bruno Jr., and Sheila Hoffman**

Two Assistant Superintendents had doctorates –

**Dr. Mary Czajkowski and Dr. Allison LeClair**

**Paul Tatro** is the only AHS Principal, and the only Agawam Junior High School Principal to  
subsequently be appointed Assistant Superintendent.

William Sapelli was Principal of Robinson Park Elementary School prior to being appointed Assistant Superintendent  
The current (2022) Assistant Superintendent **Cheryl Solomao** was formerly the Principal of Granger Elementary School

For the first time in the history of the Agawam Public Schools, (2023)  
women concurrently hold the positions of  
Superintendent (**Sheila Hoffman**) and Assistant Superintendent (**Cheryl Solomao**)

## ***Principal Profile***

**Agawam High School's First Principal**

***Benjamin J. Phelps***

## ***Appendix H***

*In 1921 the Agawam School Committee had the task of choosing the first principal of the newly proposed high school.  
As noted in the 1921 Town Report*

***"We sought a man of thorough training, broad scholarship,  
proven ability and strong personality."***

*The man they chose was **Benjamin J. Phelps**.*



*Benjamin Phelps was a Yale graduate with a Master's Degree from Columbia Teachers College.  
Prior to Agawam, he had five years of teaching and fourteen years of high school administrative experience.*

*He was chosen to fulfill the dual of role of Superintendent of Schools **and** High School Principal.*

*In his dual role he  
oversaw the completion and provisioning of the new high school  
hired the original Agawam High School faculty members  
designed a four year high school curriculum with 3 courses of study  
implemented a new grade structure for the school system  
advocated for "progressive" teaching methods of the day  
initiated a varsity sports program for both boys and girls*

*He hired a woman, **Nathalie Moulton**,  
to be his Associate Superintendent.  
Another woman would not be hired for this position for over 75 years!*

*With Agawam High School firmly established, he stepped down as Principal in 1925  
but remained Superintendent until his untimely death in a motor vehicle accident in 1946.*

*Benjamin J. Phelps was in charge of the Agawam Public Schools during  
"The Roaring 20s, "The Great Depression", and World War II.*

*The Benjamin J. Phelps Elementary School is named in his honor.*

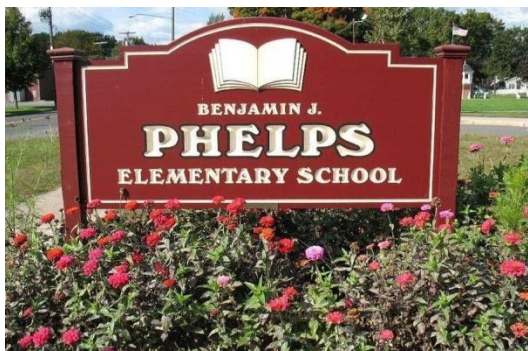


Photo above shows Benjamin Phelps in the 1924 class photo

## ***Principal Profile***

### ***F. Earl Williams***

(Although he was principal a long time ago, there is a substantial amount of information about the life of Principal Williams on the internet. Much of the information below was found on the [robertstrongwoodward.com](http://robertstrongwoodward.com) website.)

F. Earl Williams was born in Sunderland, Massachusetts in 1902  
“...in the house right behind the largest sycamore tree in Massachusetts.”

After graduating from the University of Massachusetts, F. Earl Williams became the  
3<sup>rd</sup> Principal of AHS in September of 1927.

At age 26 he was the youngest Principal in the history of Agawam High School.

He was AHS principal for 11 years – the third longest tenure in the history of AHS.



He married Smith College graduate and AHS English teacher Ruth Bugbee in June of 1928.  
Their marriage lasted until Ruth's death sixty years later.

Upon leaving AHS, Williams became the principal of Gardner High School where he served for many years.

In the mid 50s he accepted a position at the University of Pennsylvania.  
Eventually in the late 60s Earl and Ruth returned to the Amherst area.

Williams was a noted photographer --  
his photographs being published in many magazines including a cover of Life magazine.

During the 1930s he and Ruth became the close friends of noted American artist Robert Strong Woodward.  
Earl became a confidant, photographer, archivist and collector of Woodward.

Williams donated several of Woodward's paintings that he had collected over the years as well as artifacts related to their close friendship to the Smithsonian Museum.

Learn more about his fascinating life at the [robertstrongwoodward.com](http://robertstrongwoodward.com) website

**Principal Profile**  
**Agawam High School's Longest Serving Principal**  
**Frederick T. Dacey**

1967 was Frederick T. Dacey's 29th and final year as Principal --  
the longest serving principal in AHS History!

Fred Dacey served in the United States Army during World War I

Fred Dacey was one of the original AHS faculty members hired in 1922.  
He began his career as a Manual Training instructor .



Fred Dacey is pictured 2nd from the right in this early faculty photo from 1931.  
He had already been working at AHS for 9 years when this photo was taken.

He was appointed principal in 1938 – 39 school year, the first AHS faculty member, to hold the position.

He was on staff at AHS from the "Roaring 20s", The Great Depression, World War II,  
the Cold War, The Korean War, the Vietnam War and everything in between.

He was on staff when the first AHS on Main Street opened its doors in 1922.  
He was Principal when the "new" high school on Cooper Street opened its doors in 1955.



*Frederick T. Dacey*  
Principal

**Overall he served AHS for 45 years!**

***The Frederick T. Dacey Auditorium is named in his honor***

## ***Principal Profile      Raymond Harris***

1970 was Raymond T. Harris' final year as Principal of AHS.



Mr. Harris, first hired in 1935, was a teacher, was the first AHS guidance counselor, and became the first AHS Assistant Principal in 1949 serving in that position until 1955.

With the construction of the "new" high school, he was appointed as the first principal of the Agawam Junior High School, a position he held from 1955 until 1967.

He was the first Assistant AHS Principal to be appointed Principal

After three years as Principal of AHS, he retired in 1970 having served in the Agawam Public Schools for 36 years.



## ***David Theodorowicz***

David Theodorowicz was a Marine Corps Veteran of World War II



Mr. "T" as he was called by his students began his teaching career at the "old" High School in 1955. He was the last Principal to have taught there.

He served 10 years as Assistant Principal before becoming Principal in 1973.

He served a total of 9 years as principal from 1973 to 1981.

His combined service as an AHS administrator was 19 years.

The following is a tribute from the 1981 yearbook, his final year as Principal.

*"For 19 years Mr. T was the driving force behind Agawam High School. He was a man of great intellect, charm and wit. No matter what the event Mt. T was always involved either as a spectator or participant. No one person will ever be able to touch the hearts of those who were part of Agawam High as deeply as he did."*

*Mr. T... a principal,...a leader ...friend."*

Sadly, Mr. Theodorowicz died at age 60 only two months after retiring as Principal



## ***Principal Profile***

### ***Paul Tatro***

Paul Tatro was the first AHS graduate (AHS'40) to be appointed AHS Principal. He served as Principal for two school years 1971 – 1972.

Paul Tatro, a Harvard Graduate, was a Navy veteran of WW II. He also served as a Lt. Commander in the United States Naval Reserve while Principal.

He began his career as an AJHS faculty member, taught in Springfield for many years, Became AHS Principal in 1970 and eventually rose to the position of Assistant Superintendent in Agawam.

Because of his years of experience as a Junior High School administrator in Springfield, he transferred as Principal of the High School to become the 1<sup>st</sup> Principal of the “new” Agawam Junior High School in 1973.

During his tenure at AJHS, because of overcrowding at AHS, the Freshman class was housed at the Agawam Junior High from 1976 -1991.

He served as AJHS Principal for 9 years before ending his career as Assistant Superintendent.



### ***John Morrissey***

As a student athlete at Westfield High he played in two “Peanut Bowl” victories in 1948 and 1949 for legendary coach Bill Moge whom he credited for inspiring him to become an educator.

John Morrissey served in the United States Air Force from 1952 – 1956 achieving the rank of Staff Sergeant.

A father of seven, he held a variety of jobs in construction before graduating from Westfield State College to pursue a career in education.

John Morrissey began his career as a History teacher at the Agawam Middle School. He then served 9 years as AHS Assistant Principal.

He was AHS principal for 12 years, the 2<sup>nd</sup> longest tenure in the history of AHS.

The administrative team of Principal Morrissey and Assistant Principal David Bates lasted for 12 years – the longest in AHS history.

Overall, he served the students of Agawam as a teacher and an administrator for a period of 29 years.



## ***Superintendent Profiles***

### ***James Clark***

James Clark was a 1930 graduate of Dartmouth College.

He began his career as teacher, coach and administrator in several towns in Vermont

During World War II he served as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in the United States Army Air Corps.

While in the service he taught flight physics to Air Corps pre-flight cadets.

He also taught flight theory to French “Maquis” air cadets – in French!



After the war, he served in a variety of administrative positions in Rhode Island and Connecticut.

He was appointed Superintendent in Agawam in 1955 and served through the 1971 school year – a total of 17 years!

(Second only in longevity to the 24 years of Benjamin Phelps)

He was Superintendent during a period of tremendous growth in the Agawam School System

At the height of the “baby boom”, he oversaw the building of four schools --

the “new” Agawam High School,  
Robinson Park Elementary School, South Street Elementary School and  
the “new” Agawam Junior High School

While in Agawam he was very active in community and civic organizations.

After his retirement, South Street Elementary School was renamed

the ***James Clark Elementary School***



## ***Superintendent Profiles***

### ***James V. Bruno, Jr.***

James V. Bruno Jr was Superintendent from 1982 to 1992 – 11 school years  
the third longest tenure among Superintendents

He had been Assistant Superintendent from 1972 – 1981

His total of 21 years in the “central office” as Assistant or Superintendent  
is the second longest in the APS



Prior to his appointment as Assistant Superintendent in 1972  
the position had been vacated since the departure of  
Nathalie Moulton in 1925

Mr. Bruno was the first AHS graduate (AHS '58)  
to hold the positions of  
***AHS Assistant Principal***  
***Assistant Superintendent***

He was the second to be appointed  
***Superintendent.***

He along with George Reynolds (AHS '29) are the only  
Superintendents to have once been on the AHS faculty.

During his Agawam High School playing days he was known as “Turk” Bruno  
“Turk” Bruno was one of the best football players not only in the  
history of Agawam High School, but also in the history of Western  
Massachusetts.



"Turk" Bruno was captain of the legendary 1957 AA Championship football team.

During the season the team outscored its conference rivals 267 – 43

Bruno set a Western Mass scoring record of 174 points,  
a record he would hold until 1995.

(He broke a record previously set by another AHS graduate Joe Pisano in 1940.)

Not only was chosen for the 1957 Western Mass All Star Football Team  
he was also chosen by *Scholastic Magazine* for the nationwide  
High School All American Football Team

In 2016 James V. Bruno, Jr. was inducted into the  
AHS Athletic Hall of Fame



## ***Superintendent Profiles***

### ***Dr. Mary Czajkowski***



Dr. Mary Czajkowski began her career at East Longmeadow High School.

At ELHS she was a teacher, department chair and curriculum coordinator.

She was hired in 2002 to be the Assistant Superintendent in the APS.

She was the first woman to hold the position of Assistant Superintendent since 1925!

– She was appointed Superintendent in 2003  
– the first woman to hold the position!

She served as Superintendent for a total of 9 school years – the 4<sup>th</sup> longest tenure among Superintendents

### ***William Sapelli***

*William Sapelli graduated from Agawam High School in 1972.*

*He became a teacher in the school system and was eventually appointed as Principal of Robinson Park Elementary School.*

*He served as an Assistant Football Coach at AHS and Head Hockey Coach for many years.*

*He was the coach of the 1978 Championship Hockey Team that was inducted into the Agawam Athletic Hall of Fame.*

*He was appointed as Assistant Superintendent in 2003 and appointed Superintendent in 2012.*

*Upon his retirement in 2017 he has been elected Mayor of Agawam for multiple terms.*

*He currently (2023) serves as Mayor*



*In 2021 he was inducted into the Agawam Athletic Hall of Fame*



## ***Superintendent Profiles***

### ***Steven Lemanski***



Steven Lemanski began his career in education working for the DYS, as he said “ ...I worked in a jail basically for kids for 10 years.”

He moved on to the Chicopee school system working over the years as teacher, mediator, Department Chair and Athletic Director.

He briefly served as AHS Assistant Principal in 2007

In the “ Year of the Three Principals” (2007)  
He was last of the three -- Prystupa, Zavarella and Lemanski

He served as AHS Principal from the end of 2007 until 2017 –  
the fourth longest serving of the AHS Principal

Steven Lemanski was Superintendent from 2018 – 2020

He is the only AHS Principal to be subsequently named Superintendent.

As Superintendent he had to make very difficult decisions regarding the health and safety of students and staff with the onset of the Covid – 19 pandemic.

### ***Sheila Hoffman***



Sheila Hoffman, appointed in 2020, currently serves as Superintendent.  
She had previously held the positions of  
Assistant Superintendent and AHS Assistant Principal

She is the first female graduate of  
AHS to hold the position of  
Superintendent

She is only the second woman to hold the position of Superintendent

Sheila Hoffman excelled as a student at Agawam High School.  
She was a member of the National Honor Society and  
Valedictorian of the AHS class of 1992

She became Superintendent during the midst of the Covid  
epidemic and has had to make the difficult decisions regarding the  
health and safety of students and staff.





In 2017 a 7.5 million dollar renovation to the athletic fields was completed.

In 2020 the New England Association of Schools and Colleges accreditation team issued a warning to AHS for “...the inability to implement the science curriculum given the facility’s condition...”

For some time, the Town Council and the School Committee have been exploring the possibility of either repairing or replacing the current High School building.

According to Mayor (and former Superintendent) William Sapelli

**“Aside from Springfield’s Commerce High School constructed in 1913  
Agawam High School, built in 1955, is one of the oldest school structures in the area.”**

Preliminary estimates of repairs to the existing structure – 26 million

Preliminary estimates to construct a new school – 125 million

On January 24, 2022 the Town Council voted  
unanimously to authorize the expenditure of a 1.25 million  
dollar feasibility study for the replacement of Agawam High.

This a necessary first step to secure funding from the  
Massachusetts School Building Authority for the construction of a new high school.

As Councilor George Bitzas said regarding the vote of the Town Council

**“It’s well overdue. It’s about time we act, and now is the right time to do it.”**

Stay tuned.



***Other AHS Data Bases***

***"Joyous and Ever Loyal" – A Data Base of AHS Graduates  
1924 – 2022\*  
Chronological  
Illustrated and Annotated***



***"Joyous and Ever Loyal" – A Data Base of AHS Graduates  
1924 – 2022\*  
Alphabetical  
Illustrated and Annotated***

***\*Will be updated to eventually include the Class of 2023 and 2024***

***Available on request from Lawrence Scherpa (AHS '65)  
[lscherpa@comcast.net](mailto:lscherpa@comcast.net)***

***Coming Soon***

***The Case for the Class of 1924  
The First to Graduate from AHS***

***"The Teachers of Agawam High School  
The Main Street Years"  
1923 – 1955"***



*Spanning the years...*

*Fred Dacey was on the faculty when my father graduated from AHS in 1937 and was Principal when I graduated from AHS in 1965.*



*John Morrissey*

*David Theodorowicz*

*retired as Principal during my son's Junior year of high school in 1993*

*was Vice Principal when I graduated in 1965*



*As a teacher, Paul Tatro was my first principal.  
(AHS Substitute teacher 1970-71)  
Wearing his "stealth" sneakers he seemed to be everywhere!  
I had the privilege to work for many excellent administrators  
during my 43 year teaching career (East Longmeadow).*

*Paul Tatro was one of them.*

*Paul Tatro*

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***website coming soon!***

