“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 100th 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 100th anniversary of the school.

The Class of 2023 will have the distinction of being the 100th class to graduate from Agawam High School.

*See
The Case for the Class of 1924.”

by L. Scherpa (AHS ’65)
The First 100 Years

Principals / Assistant Principals
Superintendents / Assistant Superintendents
Illustrated and Annotated

“Sent to the Office” / Table of Contents

Using the data Base / Editor’s Notes

Part 1

Principals / Superintendents Overview

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

The Old and New High School
Women of AHS – Making History

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
Editor’s notes

100th 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 99th class to graduate, has the distinction of graduating during the 100th anniversary of Agawam High School.

The 100th 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

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

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 1st 100 years*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Principals</strong></th>
<th><strong>Assistant Principals</strong></th>
<th><strong>(Short List)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1922 – 25</td>
<td>Benjamin Phelps</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926 – 1927</td>
<td>Elmer F. Davenport</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928 – 1938</td>
<td>F. Earl Williams</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939 – 1967</td>
<td>Frederick T. Dacey</td>
<td>1949 – 1955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1963 – 1972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971 – 1972</td>
<td>Paul Tatro</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1973 – 1981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994 – 1995</td>
<td>Russell Furtado</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Paul Cavallo</td>
<td>2001 – 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2005 – 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>2006 Dr. Linda Prystupa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Dr. Linda Prystupa / Ralph Zavarella / Steven Lemanski</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2008 –</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2011 - 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2015 – 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018 – 2021</td>
<td>Thomas Schneppe</td>
<td>2018 –</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>James Blain</td>
<td>2022</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 Schnepp 2018 – 2021
James Blain 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 Schnepp 2008 - 17

Susan Feyre 2008 –
Sheila Hoffman 2011 -2014
Susan Schoenberger 2015- 21
Timothy Karetka 2018 -
Chad Joyal 2022 –
### Agawam High School / The 1st 100 years

**Agawam Public Schools** 1922 – 2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Superintendents</th>
<th>Assistant Superintendents</th>
<th>(short list)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1923 – 1946 Benjamin Phelps</td>
<td>1923 – 1925 Nathalie Moulton</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1946 Clifford Granger (Interim upon death of Phelps)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1946 Paul Adams (Acting Interim upon death of Granger)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1946 Warren Bodurtha (as School Committee Chair Interim Superintendent)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1946 Stanley W. Wright appointed in June of 1946</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947 – 1949 Stanley Wright</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950 – 1953 A. Jerome Goodwin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Goodwin resigned in November of 1953</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954 George L Reynolds</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reynolds was superintendent from November of 1953 – June of 1954</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955 – 1971 James Clark</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977 – 1979 Dr. Ernest J. Cannava</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Bruno retired in November of 1992)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993 – 1996 Bernard F. Ryder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997 – 2002 Dr. Frank Ameruoso</td>
<td>2000 – 2003 Dr. Mary Czajkowski</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003 – 2011 Dr. Mary Czajkowski</td>
<td>2003 – 2008 John Kane</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2003 – 2011 William Sapelli</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018 – 2020 Steven Lemanski</td>
<td>2019 - 2020 Sheila Hoffman</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021 - Sheila Hoffman</td>
<td>2020 - Cheryl Solomao</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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

### The First 100 Years

#### The 1920s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Superintendent of Schools</th>
<th>Assistant Superintendent</th>
<th>Principal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1919 - 1920</td>
<td>Walter E. Gushee</td>
<td>(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.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ralph Waterhouse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920 - 1921</td>
<td>Walter E. Gushee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joseph R. Burgess</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921 - 1922</td>
<td>Walter E. Gushee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joseph R. Burgess</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**1920s**

Agawam High School opened in September of 1922

| 1921 - 1923               | Benjamin Phelps*         | Benjamin Phelps |
|                           | Nathalie F. Moulton **   |               |
| 1924                      | Benjamin Phelps          | Benjamin Phelps |
|                           | Nathalie F. Moulton      |               |
| 1925                      | Benjamin Phelps          | Benjamin Phelps |
|                           | Nathalie F. Moulton      |               |
| 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

Superintendent of Schools

1930  Benjamin Phelps

1931  Benjamin Phelps

1932  Benjamin Phelps
1933  Benjamin Phelps
1934  Benjamin Phelps
1935  Benjamin Phelps
1936  Benjamin Phelps
1937  Benjamin Phelps
1938  Benjamin Phelps
1939  Benjamin Phelps

Principal

1930  F. Earl Williams

1931  F. Earl Williams

1932  F. Earl Williams
1933  F. Earl Williams
1934  F. Earl Williams
1935  F. Earl Williams
1936  F. Earl Williams
1937  F. Earl Williams
1938  F. Earl Williams*
1939  Frederick Dacey**

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

1938 was his 11th 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 50th 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.

All Administrators and faculty are pictured in yearbooks from 1930 on.
Agawam High School Administrators
The First 100 Years

The 1940s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Superintendent of Schools</th>
<th>Principal</th>
<th>Assistant Principal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>Benjamin Phelps</td>
<td>Frederick Dacey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>Benjamin Phelps</td>
<td>Frederick Dacey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>Benjamin Phelps</td>
<td>Frederick Dacey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943</td>
<td>Benjamin Phelps</td>
<td>Frederick Dacey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>Benjamin Phelps</td>
<td>Frederick Dacey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>Benjamin Phelps</td>
<td>Frederick Dacey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>Benjamin Phelps</td>
<td>Frederick Dacey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clifford Granger (Interim upon death of Phelps)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paul J. Adams (Acting Interim upon death of Granger)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Warren Bodurtha (Interim upon election as new Chairman)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>Stanley W. Wright</td>
<td>Frederick Dacey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>Stanley W. Wright</td>
<td>Frederick Dacey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>Stanley W. Wright</td>
<td>Frederick Dacey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

* Raymond Harris (above) was the 1st 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.

Harris became AHS principal in 1967

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

He was Superintendent for three school years from 1947-1949
### 1950s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Superintendent of Schools</th>
<th>Principal</th>
<th>Assistant Principal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950 A. Jerome Goodwin</td>
<td>Frederick Dacey</td>
<td>Raymond Harris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951 A. Jerome Goodwin</td>
<td>Frederick Dacey</td>
<td>Raymond Harris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952 A. Jerome Goodwin</td>
<td>Frederick Dacey</td>
<td>Raymond Harris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953 A. Jerome Goodwin</td>
<td>Frederick Dacey</td>
<td>Raymond Harris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(resigned November of 1953)</td>
<td>Raymond Harris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954 George L. Reynolds</td>
<td>Frederick Dacey</td>
<td>Raymond Harris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Nov. of ‘53 – June of ‘54)</td>
<td>Raymond Harris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955 James Clark</td>
<td>Frederick Dacey</td>
<td>Raymond Harris*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Superintendent</th>
<th>Principal</th>
<th>Assistant Principal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>James Clark</td>
<td>Frederick Dacey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>James Clark</td>
<td>Frederick Dacey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>James Clark</td>
<td>Frederick Dacey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>James Clark</td>
<td>Frederick Dacey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reynolds AHS ’28 was the first AHS graduate, and the first with AHS faculty experience to be appointed Superintendent
### 1960s

#### The 1960s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Superintendent of Schools</th>
<th>Principal</th>
<th>Assistant Principal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>James Clark</td>
<td>Frederick Dacey</td>
<td>Paul Langlois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>James Clark</td>
<td>Frederick Dacey</td>
<td>Paul Langlois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>James Clark</td>
<td>Frederick Dacey</td>
<td>Paul Langlois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>James Clark</td>
<td>Frederick Dacey</td>
<td>Dave Theodorowicz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>James Clark</td>
<td>Frederick Dacey</td>
<td>Dave Theodorowicz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>James Clark</td>
<td>Frederick Dacey</td>
<td>Dave Theodorowicz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>James Clark</td>
<td>Frederick Dacey</td>
<td>Dave Theodorowicz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>James Clark</td>
<td>Frederick Dacey</td>
<td>Dave Theodorowicz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>James Clark</td>
<td>Raymond Harris</td>
<td>Dave Theodorowicz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>James Clark</td>
<td>Raymond Harris</td>
<td>Dave Theodorowicz</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 1970s

#### The First 100 Years

**The 1970s**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Superintendent</th>
<th>Principal</th>
<th>Assistant Principals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>James Clark</td>
<td>Raymond Harris*</td>
<td>Dave Theodorowicz, James Bruno</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>James Clark</td>
<td>Paul Tatro**</td>
<td>Dave Theodorowicz, James Bruno</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Dr. Robert Gardner***</td>
<td>Paul Tatro</td>
<td>David Theodorowicz, John Morrissey, James Bruno</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>Dr. Robert Gardner</td>
<td>David Theodorowicz</td>
<td>John Morrissey, James Bruno, David Bates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>Dr. Robert Gardner</td>
<td>David Theodorowicz</td>
<td>John Morrissey, David Bates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>Dr. Robert Gardner</td>
<td>David Theodorowicz</td>
<td>John Morrissey, David Bates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Dr. Robert Gardner</td>
<td>David Theodorowicz</td>
<td>John Morrissey, David Bates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>Dr. Ernest J. Cannava</td>
<td>David Theodorowicz</td>
<td>John Morrissey, David Bates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>Dr. Ernest J. Cannava</td>
<td>David Theodorowicz</td>
<td>John Morrissey, David Bates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>Dr. Ernest J. Cannava</td>
<td>David Theodorowicz</td>
<td>John Morrissey, David Bates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*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 1st 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Superintendent</th>
<th>Assistant Superintendent</th>
<th>Principal / Assistant Principals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>James V. Bruno, Jr.</td>
<td></td>
<td>John A. Morrissey David K. Bates Mary M. Charest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>James V. Bruno, Jr.</td>
<td>Donald Charest</td>
<td>John A. Morrissey David K. Bates Mary M. Charest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>James V. Bruno, Jr.</td>
<td>Donald Charest</td>
<td>John A. Morrissey David K. Bates Mary M. Charest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Superintendent</th>
<th>Assistant Superintendent</th>
<th>Principal / Assistant Principals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>James V. Bruno</td>
<td>Donald Charest</td>
<td>John Morrissey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>David Bates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mary Charest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>James V. Bruno</td>
<td>Donald Charest</td>
<td>John Morrissey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>David Bates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mary Charest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>James V. Bruno</td>
<td>Donald Charest</td>
<td>John Morrissey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>David Bates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mary Charest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>James V. Bruno / B.F. Ryder</td>
<td>Donald Charest</td>
<td>John Morrissey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>David Bates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mary Charest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Bernard F. Ryder</td>
<td>Donald Charest</td>
<td>Russell Furtado</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>David Bates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gabrielle Charest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Bernard F. Ryder</td>
<td>Donald Charest</td>
<td>Russell Furtado</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>David Bates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gabrielle Charest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Principals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Principal</th>
<th>Deputy Principal - Dean of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Bernard F. Ryder</td>
<td>Paul Cavallo – Bernadette Conte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joseph Zabielski</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Dr. Frank Ameruoso</td>
<td>Paul Cavallo – Bernadette Conte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joseph Zabielski</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Dr. Frank Ameruoso</td>
<td>Paul Cavallo – Bernadette Conte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joseph Zabielski</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Dr. Frank Ameruoso</td>
<td>Paul Cavallo – Bernadette Conte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joseph Zabielski</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Agawam High School

Superintendents

1990s

James V. Bruno
Superintendent
1982 – 1993

Bernard F. Ryder
Superintendent
1994 - 1996

Dr. Frank Ameruoso
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
- **2000**: Dr. Frank Ameruoso
  - Assistant Superintendent: Donald Charest, Dr. Mary Czajkowski
- **2001**: Dr. Frank Ameruoso
  - Assistant Superintendent: Paul Cavallo
- **2002**: Dr. Frank Ameruoso
  - Assistant Superintendent: Donald Charest, Dr. Mary Czajkowski
- **2003**: Dr. Mary Czajkowski
  - Assistant Superintendent: William Sapelli, John Kane
- **2004**: Dr. Mary Czajkowski
  - Assistant Superintendent: William Sapelli, John Kane
- **2005**: Dr. Mary Czajkowski
  - Assistant Superintendent: William Sapelli, John Kane
- **2006**: Dr. Mary Czajkowski
  - Assistant Superintendent: William Sapelli, John Kane
- **2007**: Dr. Mary Czajkowski
  - Assistant Superintendent: William Sapelli, John Kane
- **2008**: Dr. Mary Czajkowski
  - Assistant Superintendent: William Sapelli, John Kane
- **2009**: Dr. Mary Czajkowski
  - Assistant Superintendent: William Sapelli

### Principal / Deputy Principal / Dean of Students
- **2000**: Joseph Zabielski (Paul Cavallo, Bernadette Conte)
- **2001**: Paul Cavallo (Kathleen McSweeney, Bernadette Conte)
- **2002**: Dr. Linda Prystupa* (Kathleen McSweeney, Bernadette Conte)
- **2003**: Dr. Linda Prystupa** (Kathleen McSweeney, Bernadette Conte, Joseph Fitzgerald (Acting), Margaret Shinkle (Acting))
- **2004**: Dr. Linda Prystupa (Kathleen McSweeney, Bernadette Conte)
- **2005**: Dr. Linda Prystupa (Steven Lemanski, Bernadette Conte)
- **2006**: Dr. Linda Prystupa (Bernadette Conte, Steven Lemanski, Thomas Schnepp)
- **2007**: Dr. Linda Prystupa (Bernadette Conte, Steven Lemanski, Thomas Schnepp)
- **2008**: Steven Lemanski (Bernadette Conte, Susan Feyre, Thomas Schnepp)
- **2009**: Steven Lemanski (Bernadette Conte, Susan Feyre, Thomas Schnepp)

### Assistant Principals
- **2006**: Steven Lemanski (Bernadette Conte, Thomas Schnepp)
- **2007**: Steven Lemanski (Bernadette Conte, Steven Lemanski, Thomas Schnepp)
- **2008**: Brian Lemanski (Bernadette Conte, Susan Feyre, Thomas Schnepp)
- **2009**: Brian Lemanski (Bernadette Conte, Susan Feyre, Thomas Schnepp)

---

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

**Dr. Mary Czajkowski was the first woman appointed Superintendent.
Agawam High School
Superintendents / Assistant Superintendents
Early 2000s

Dr. Frank Ameruoso
Superintendent
1997 – 2002

Donald Charest
Assistant Superintendent
1986 - 2002

William Sapelli
Assistant Superintendent
2003 – 2011

Dr. Mary Czajkowski
Assistant Superintendent
2000 – 2002

John Kane
Assistant Superintendent
2003 - 2008

Superintendent
2003 - 2011
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*

Steven Lemanski  
Principal  
2007* - 2017

* Served less than a full academic year

Kathleen McSweeney  
Students / VP  
2001 – 2004

Bernadette Conte  
Vice Principal  
1996 - 2011

Thomas Schnepp  
Vice Principal -  
2006 - 2017

Susan Feyre  
Deputy Principal / VP  
2008 –
# Agawam High School Administrators / “20 Teens”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th><strong>Superintendent</strong></th>
<th><strong>Principal</strong></th>
<th><strong>Assistant Principal</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Dr. Mary Czajkowski</td>
<td>Steven Lemanski</td>
<td>Susan Feyre Thomas Schneppe Bernadette Conte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>William Sapelli</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Dr. Mary Czajkowski</td>
<td>Steven Lemanski</td>
<td>Susan Feyre Thomas Schneppe Sheila Hoffman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>William Sapelli</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>William Sapelli</td>
<td>Steven Lemanski</td>
<td>Susan Feyre Thomas Schneppe Sheila Hoffman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dr. Allison LeClair</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>William Sapelli</td>
<td>Steven Lemanski</td>
<td>Susan Feyre Thomas Schneppe Sheila Hoffman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dr. Allison LeClair</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>William Sapelli</td>
<td>Steven Lemanski</td>
<td>Susan Feyre Thomas Schneppe Sheila Hoffman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dr. Allison LeClair</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>William Sapelli</td>
<td>Steven Lemanski</td>
<td>Susan Feyre Thomas Schneppe Susan Schoenberger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dr. Allison LeClair</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>William Sapelli</td>
<td>Steven Lemanski</td>
<td>Susan Feyre Thomas Schneppe Susan Schoenberger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dr. Allison LeClair</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>William Sapelli</td>
<td>Steven Lemanski</td>
<td>Susan Feyre Thomas Schneppe Susan Schoenberger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dr. Allison LeClair</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Steven Lemanski*</td>
<td>Thomas Schneppe</td>
<td>Susan Feyre Susan Schoenberger Timothy Karetka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dr. Allison LeClair</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Steven Lemanski</td>
<td>Thomas Schneppe</td>
<td>Susan Feyre Susan Schoenberger Timothy Karetka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sheila Hoffman</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Susan Feyre

Susan Schoenberger

Timothy Karetka

2021

Sheila Hoffman

Thomas Schnepp

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  
Susan Feyre  
Timothy Karetka  
Chad Joyal

*Principal*  
*Assistant Principals*
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
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.
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 1st woman in 76 years to be appointed Assistant Superintendent. (The 1st was Nathalie Moulton 1925 – 1928)

In 2003 Dr. Czajkowski became the 1st 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)
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

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.

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.

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.
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 7 — Dept of Schools Resident, Benjamin J. Phelps, 54, was critically injured late tonight and is in a critical condition at Wesson Memorial hospital where he was taken after a fall from a truck. He was struck by a load of brush on Main street near Lloyds Hill. The accident is believed to have occurred about 11:45 p.m. in the vicinity of Wesson Memorial hospital.

The victim is believed to have received a fractured skull in the fall from the vehicle, which police said was driven by one of his pupils, John J. Thompson, Jr., of the Cooper street group. Hospital authorities said Phelps's name is on the danger list.

Police said, through the aid of Phelps's head of brush to the latter's head street, taken and transported by ambulance along Main Street where police were present. When some of the brush was removed, a hole was created with a large part of the head. pupils and Phelps's head of brush to a car on which he was sitting. When marking the street, the truck of the moment, Mr. Phelps tripped to the inside of his head, the victim seemed to have a special route.

Police reported the accident happened at 11:45 and hospital authorities said Phelps was brought in at 11:45.

FINAL TRIBUTE TO B. J. PHELPS IS IMPRESSIVE
Agawam School Supt.'s Services Widely Attended by Pupils, Teachers, Officials.

Agawam, April 8 — School children, town officials, the school superintendent and other noteables throughout Western Massachusetts today paid final tribute to Benjamin J. Phelps, superintendent of schools since 1948, who died Sunday, as funeral services were held this afternoon in the auditorium of the high school.

All schools in the town, which closed for other unusual occasions yesterday, remained closed today during the last rites for the school superintendent, with the Rev. Mr. Schmitz, pastor of Second Baptist church, officiating at the services in his memory.

The services were attended by Wesson Memorial, Raymond Harris, Edward Fuller, Robert White, Charles Harker, James Smith, Warren Jesup and J. H. White.

PHelps Succumbs to Head Injuries Sustained in Fall

Agawam School Superintendent, Was Prominent Educator and Writer — Funeral Tomorrow

Agawam, April 7 — Superintendent, Franklin J. Phelps, 54, superintendent of schools and one of the large school personnel, died yesterday evening at Wesson Memorial hospital of head injuries sustained in a fall from a truck.

School Board Resolution Pays Tribute to Benjamin J. Phelps

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

"That the entire personnel of the Agawam schools through their school committees and students to express their sorrow because of the death of their beloved superintendent, Benjamin J. Phelps."

That they will always remember the memory of a dear friend, whose abiding council and guidance in the association will always serve as a permanent marker in their journey through life's troublous

PHELPS RITES HALT AGAWAM SCHOOL WORK

Town Pays Respects to Memory of Education Superintendent, Accidental Victim

Agawam, April 8 — Memorial services were held at agawam high school, with services attended by Wesson Memorial Hospital, Raymond Fuller, head of the newspaper, and police department.

The funeral will be held at Wesson Memorial Hospital, under the direction of the superintendent, who was present at the time of the accident. The funeral will be held at the hospital and a wreath will be presented to the superintendent, the family of the deceased, the family of the deceased, and the family of the deceased.

The funeral will be held at the hospital and a wreath will be presented to the superintendent, the family of the deceased, and the family of the deceased.

The funeral will be held at the hospital and a wreath will be presented to the superintendent, the family of the deceased, and the family of the deceased.

The funeral will be held at the hospital and a wreath will be presented to the superintendent, the family of the deceased, and the family of the deceased.
Newspaper Headlines of Clifford Grangers’ death.

**Springfield Republican** April 16 – June 10, 1946

---

**Agawam School Head Collapses**

Clifford Granger, 64, acting superintendent of schools in Agawam, was reported only in fair condition last night at Wesson 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. Darcy gave the opening remarks while James Finn, president of the student body, read a poem by Tommy G. “Crossing the Bar.”

Schools will be closed tomorrow to allow teachers and pupils to attend the funeral at the Congregational church in Springfield Street cemetery, Westfield Hills. The body of Mr Granger is at M. J. funeral home in Suffield, Ct, where it may be viewed tonight and tomorrow from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m.

---

**New Agawam School Head is Near Death**

C. M. Granger, 64, collapsed; had been on job one week.

Clifford M. Granger, 64, of 467 South Westfield street, Feeding Hills, chairman of the Agawam school committee, is seriously ill at Wesson Memorial hospital and his name has been placed on the danger list, hospital attendants said today.

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 15—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. He 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 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.

---

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

Cheshire School Head is Well-Known Football Official.

Agawam, June 16—Stanley W. Wright was appointed school official for Agawam by the school committee. Mr Wright has been head football coach at Cheshire High School, where he was also athletic director. He is the successor of the late Clifford Granger, who was named superintendent of schools in this town.

Mr Wright was formerly head football coach at the University of New Hampshire. He has been a member of the athletic committee at Cheshire High School and has served as chairman of the school committee. He is well known among the Cheshire community.
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
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 deflected 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.
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

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!

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 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 1st 100 years
Anecdotes and Trivia

During the last 100 years since its opening in September of 1922
16 people have been AHS Principal –

15 men, one woman

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 Schnepp

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 Ameruoso 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 1st 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 19th 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 1st 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 Schneppe are the only AHS Principals to also be APS Middle School Principals.

Paul Cavallo currently serves on the Agawam Town Council
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:

- Susan Feyre: 15 years and still active as of 2023.
- Bernadette Conte: 15 years.
- Mary Charest: 13 years.
- David Theodorowicz: 10 years.
- John Morrissey: 9 years.

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 Schnepp.

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.
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 2nd 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 at 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 of Superintendent (Sheila Hoffman) and Assistant Superintendent (Cheryl Solomao).

Jerome Goodwin is the only Superintendent to resign during the school year (November of 1953) and 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 1st 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 1st 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 2nd “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.
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.

Natalie 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 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).
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 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 3rd 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 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.

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
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 1st 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 2nd 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 2nd 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 4th 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.
**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)
lischerpa@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”
On a Personal Note

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.
Acknowledgements

Thanks to

...the staff of the Agawam Public Library, particularly Jerome Walczak, Cher Collins, and Maria Yacavone for their friendly professional assistance.

...my wife Marica (Cebrelli) Scherpa ‘AHS 69 for her love, support and (almost) unlimited patience

ahsarchive.info

website coming soon!