

# CHICAGO DEFENDER

## Students mourn death of principal

By Ryan Strong  
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A Chicago Public School principal was pronounced dead after having a heart attack during a root canal procedure Monday.

Georgette Watson, 46, of Skokie, was the principal of Brentano Math and Science Academy, an elementary school located in the Northside neighborhood of Logan Square. Watson held that position since 2003, after more than 25 years of teaching.

The Chicago Public Schools dispatched a group of experts to help students mourn.

"We have a team of crisis consolers at [Brentano Math and Science Academy] to help students grieve," said Michael Vaughn, Chicago Public Schools spokesman.

Barbara Eason-Watkins, the chief education officer for Chicago Public Schools, said that CPS is working closely with Brentano Math and Science Academy to help students cope with the sudden loss of their principal.

Watson suffered a heart attack during the medical procedure; however, the actual root canal was not the cause of death, according to Dr. Wenckus, M.D, of the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Dentistry.

"A root canal is simply taking out the root of a tooth and cleaning it, there is no way one could lead to someone's death," Wenckus said.

Watson's passing was not the first dental related medical mishap to occur in the Chicago area.

In 2006, Diamond Brownridge, 5, died from an anesthesia related complication while at the dentist, according to the medical examiner's office.

With the perceived increase of medical related accidents, some Chicagoans have become uneasy when considering a dentist.

One Chicago resident has opted to perform background research on prospective dentists before sitting down in a doctor's office.

"I think people should get online and investigate the dentist they are planning to go to for service," said Leslie Clay, a married mother of two from Chicago, said. "They should look to see if they still have a license to practice [medicine]".

The two dentists who performed the root canal on Watson, Laurence W. Feldman and Joseph D. Feldman, of Feldman and Feldman dental offices, were both unavailable for comment.

At Brentano Math and Science Academy, students, parents, and faculty alike mourned Watson's death Tuesday.

"This is a terrible tragedy and [Georgette Watson] will be deeply missed," Eason-Watkins said.