



2023 APR 13 AM 9:17

*Handwritten signature: Marc J. Curcio*  
MARC J. CURCIO, MPA

**FEBRUARY 7, 2023 COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

**OPENING CEREMONIES**

Mr. Gildea: Called Derby Board of Education meeting to order at 6:35.

Pledge of Allegiance

**ROLL CALL**

Mr. Kurtyka: Jim Gildea; Dan Foley; George Kurtyka; Melissa Mongillo; Jennifer Caruso; Laura Harris; Melissa Cannata; Ken Marcucio and Rebecca O’Hara.

We have a full slate tonight.

**Also Present:**

**Dr. Matthew Conway, Superintendent of Schools**

**ADDITIONS/DELETIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA**

Mr. Gildea: Any additions, deletions or corrections to the agenda?

Mr. Kurtyka: There is. We are going to move 9e to 9a.

**Motion that the Committee of the Whole move 9e to 9a. Passed with a motion made by Mr. George Kurtyka and a second by Mr. Dan Foley.**

Mr. Jim Gildea	Yes
Mr. Dan Foley	Yes
Mr. George Kurtyka	Yes
Ms. Melissa Mongillo	Yes
Ms. Jennifer Caruso	Yes
Ms. Laura Harris	Yes
Ms. Melissa Cannata	Yes
Mr. Ken Marcucio	Yes
Ms. Rebecca O’Hara	Yes

Mr. Kurtyka: Making motion.

Mr. Foley: Second.

Mr. Gildea: Motion carries.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr. Gildea: Anyone from remote who would like to speak before the Derby Board of Education this evening. Anyone remote, going twice. Anyone remote, going three times. Anyone here on site in

person wish to speak before the Derby Board of Education this evening, going once, twice. Anyone from the public going three times.

We now will end a brief public portion.

### **PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS**

Ms. Olson: Good evening, everyone. It gives me great pleasure to come back to you to share an update but three of our students who we introduced you to earlier this year, Josiah Hunter, Brennan Fitch and online, Campion Nguyen (phonetic.) Our students who were put forward as US presidential scholars on behalf of Derby High School.

Their application went back to the State Department of Education back in November. And the Committee read applications from students across the State. And I'm so excited to be able to share all three have been advanced to the national level.

So, this is incredibly exciting. If you think of the number of Districts and High Schools across the State who had the opportunity to submit an application and to have it be reviewed and to have all three of our candidates to go to the 2023 candidates for the US Presidential Scholars is very exciting.

I know that they are very excited. Thank you to our staff who are supporting our students. And the students and families congratulations on this achievement.

Mr. Gildea: I know we're going to take a picture here. It is so nice to see you all here again.

### **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT**

Mr. Gildea: Azariah Smith representing the student representative report.

Ms. Olson: Introducing Azariah Smith, she is a senior this year, Irving alum. Very proud to be able to have her. She's our student council vice present and she's prepared to share a report.

Ms. Azariah Smith: Giving her report.

Mr. Gildea: I had a great time by the way.

Ms. Azariah Smith: Further giving her report.

Mr. Gildea: Thank you very much. Excellent job. Azariah, you're under no obligation to stay for the rest of it.

### **UPDATE ON HVAC PROJECTS BRADLEY AND DERBY HIGH SCHOOL**

Mr. Gildea: Update on HVAC Projects, Bradley School and Derby High School.

Mr. Trainor: Good evening, everyone. Discussing the presentation for HVAC for Bradley and High School. About ten days ago, we submitted the application for the grant. Aaron's team put together the whole grant.

We have applied and our abstract if it gets approved, then we go into the second round.

Mr. Gildea: When you say we applied, where's the money coming from if you apply?

Mr. Trainor: Federally.

Aaron: Renew American Schools federal grant money. Need for energy improvements. Giving presentation on the HVAC projects.

Mr. Gildea: I understand the project and I get that. This is you would be seeking federal grant money for this from which Department. Department of Energy, thank you.

Mr. Foley: How much money are we talking about Robbie.

Aaron: Replacing HVAC system at the High School. At Bradley overall heating and cooling fresh air as well similar to what we did with Irving School.

Mr. Gildea: Any other questions.

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Motion the Committee of the Whole enter into executive session and the Superintendent of Schools is invited to attend. Passed with a motion made by Mr. George Kurtyka and a second by Ms. Melissa Cannata.**

Mr. Jim Gildea	Yes
Mr. Dan Foley	Yes
Mr. George Kurtyka	Yes
Ms. Melissa Mongillo	Yes
Ms. Jennifer Caruso	Yes
Ms. Laura Harris	Yes
Ms. Melissa Cannata	Yes
Mr. Ken Marcucio	Yes
Ms. Rebecca O'Hara	Yes

Mr. Kurtyka: Making motion at 7:03.

Ms. Cannata: Second.

Mr. Gildea: Back in from Executive Session at 7:20.

#### **APPOINTMENT LIST OF NEW HIRES**

**Motion the Committee of the Whole approve the appointment list of new hires as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools. Passed with a motion made by Mr. George Kurtyka and a second by Ms. Melissa Mongillo.**

Mr. Jim Gildea	Yes
Mr. Dan Foley	Yes

Mr. George Kurtyka	Yes
Ms. Melissa Mongillo	Yes
Ms. Jennifer Caruso	Yes
Ms. Laura Harris	Yes
Ms. Melissa Cannata	Yes
Mr. Ken Marcucio	Yes
Ms. Rebecca O'Hara	Yes

Mr. Kurtyka: Making motion.

Ms. Mongillo: Second.

Mr. Gildea: Motion carries.

Ms. McQuart: Introducing and welcoming Christine Churchill as a paraeducator at Irving School.

Ms. Misset: Introducing and welcome Jessie once before. She was the Irving para of the year at Irving School.

Mr. Gildea: Christine and Jessie. Nice to see you in your new role. It is kind of cool to you staying at Irving. On behalf of the Board, I just want to welcome you and Christine.

#### **RESIGNATIONS**

Dr. Conway: You can do them all together.

**Motion the Committee of the Whole accept the letters of resignations presented to the Board as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools. Passed with a motion made by Mr. George Kurtyka and a second by Ms. Melissa Cannata.**

Mr. Jim Gildea	Yes
Mr. Dan Foley	Yes
Mr. George Kurtyka	Yes
Ms. Melissa Mongillo	Yes
Ms. Jennifer Caruso	Yes
Ms. Laura Harris	Yes
Ms. Melissa Cannata	Yes
Mr. Ken Marcucio	Yes
Ms. Rebecca O'Hara	Yes

Mr. Kurtyka: Making motion.

Ms. Cannata: Second.

Mr. Gildea: Motion carries.

## **ADMINISTRATORS REPORTS**

### **DERBY HIGH SCHOOL**

Ms. Olson: Just a couple of things I want to point out as an academic standpoint. I want to be able to recognize the program that we were able to host for our students this year. It was an AP review night. Our AP teachers came in and worked with the students 5 to 7 right before mid-term exams.

Help students set really clear study goals for themselves in preparation for mid-year exam and end of year assessment that will potentially earn them college credits. We set up break rooms for them. We set up group study sessions. Students really benefited from them being able to work independently or with the teachers.

Student advocacy project, Voice for Change. If you remember last year the State launched the program that allowed students to write a proposal. Anastasia's outdoor pavilion that was selected. She received grant money for \$20,000.

Mr. Gildea: I remember the project. I remember the process. She has the funds and the quote and she is selected.

Ms. Olson: You'll hear more about it at the next Board meeting. Be able to share out fully her next steps.

Mr. Baker very successfully wrote a grant for us. We are expanding our AP program for computer science and he wrote us a grant to get us \$5,000 to training teachers and getting materials for the class. Very proud of that.

### **LITTLE RAIDERS UNIVERSITY**

Ms. Conway: So, I'm sure everybody read the report. January was a phenomenal month for LRU. One very exciting that happened, on January 31<sup>st</sup>, we had our reaccreditation visit. It went extremely smooth. The assessor saw all the wonderful things that we do at LRU. Unfortunately, we will not find out our rating or receive a report for three months. I'm sure we did extremely well. It was a very impressive day.

Mr. Gildea: When you looked at your pre-k students. 60 students and then bus 17. Is that all together. Is that your capacity.

Ms. Conway: They say we are very creative with our numbers. As the year goes on, we have to take students from Birth to Three. Minimum of 15, a maximum of 18. As the Birth to Three students come in, students come in, we're able to meet their needs.

Mr. Gildea: Maximum capacity is 60 and we can fit 90. How many can we fit.

Ms. Conway: Honestly 18 is they're squeezing it.

Mr. Gildea: Thank you.

## **DERBY MIDDLE SCHOOL**

Ms. Caggiano: In my report accreditation we had our Commissioner's Network mid-year audit. It happened here last week. My report won't take three months. We have that every year. Greg comes from the State comes every year. We produce a lot of that data to him ahead of time. Then what that date consists of is him meeting with kids and teachers to talk with them and see how we're doing. Him and Iris from the State Dept of Ed was here. That went really well for us.

Our students in January completed I-Ready testing benchmark. We had Harvard watch party for our second course. So, that was a lot of fun. Dr. Rafferty and I held the launch party. We did a day in the life of the people on Harvard Campus. We acted like we actually go there on campus. Mike had shared that we were meeting with Harvard. We got a nice little tweet from Harvard. Dr. Rafferty got a text last night. They're doing an article on our group for Harvard's magazine. We're excited. It was a great conversation with them. It will be cool, we'll be on Harvard's magazine. That will be exciting for the District. When we know more about that article. That is in the works.

We had a winter wonderland dance the student council put on. It was a great night. The kids had a blast. Danced all night. Derby Middle School Unified Sports had a day at Quinnipiac Men's Basketball Game. They had a ball. Last Friday we played Shelton Middle School in a Unified Sports Basketball Game. So, to prepare for the unified sports program that come up, we had a unified sports pre-game ended in a tie. It was a lot of fun by everyone. We had pizza after with Shelton Middle School.

Unified Sports has been huge for us. So, special thanks to Mr. Nichols for making that happen. I'll give you a shout out Mr. Nichols too. Our kids are going to the Best Buddies Ball. It's up at the Aqua Turf. It's happened on a Sunday. It's kind of like a prom, you get really done up. This year's theme is like a hero's theme. They will give you supplies when you get there. We bought our own masks and capes. And we are getting them labeled to say Derby Middle School Best Buddies. So, there are schools from all over. Colleges from all over. It's at the Aqua Turf. So, it's a great night for our kids

National Junior Honor Society kids attended the Leadership Conference at Naugatuck Community College. Then we had a winter chorus band concert. It turned into a rock concert. We are going to be the untied shoes. We're a middle school rock band. It's really cool the kids will have the opportunity. They will perform again. We do a pep rally the kids will be performing there.

Mr. Gildea: Just curious what year we are in the Commissioner's Network.

Ms. Caggiano: We're in year three. Other ways to keep the funding coming.

Mr. Gildea: Thank you.

## **BRADLEY SCHOOL**

Mr. Russo: I appreciate the opportunity to cover for Mario in his absence. It was a wonderful experience. Just a couple of highlights for the February report. The Raiders after-school program session two began mid-January led by our Bradley School Academic Intervention welcomed 170 students after school. That's more than half the Bradley population. We had to revamp the pickup line with so many cars. But otherwise very successful and the kids were having a wonderful time. It's a great addition to the Bradley School Community.

One Academic highlight, it's also culture and climate, one school one book kickoff this past month led by the Bradley School Reading Coach, Lisa Ditora has been a successful endeavor. The entire school participated in a shared reading experience of Gooseberry Park. The children engaged in a variety of activities. They had the opportunity to earn prizes through comprehension trivia each week. Some of the winners included a visit by Brody a therapy dog. Brody is a therapy dog owned by a Derby Public School Teacher. He is a certified therapy dog and is very welcomed at the schools.

Those are just a couple of things that Dr. Ciccarrini wanted me to highlight. Thank you.

Mr. Gildea: Thank you.

## **IRVING SCHOOL**

Ms. Misset: Before I share just a few highlights with you. I do want to take a moment to thank Dr. Russo as he was filling in for Dr. Ciccarrini, COVID kind of got me. We already had a plan in place. I will say, Mark was running back and forth between the two buildings was helping us out between going to Bradley and Irving. I know he was exhausted, but thank you very much.

Mr. Gildea: Very nice.

Ms. Misset: So just a few things. I will highlight in academic. We have to select a new reading program. Our coaches in both schools have been going in and modeling lessons with the teachers. I've been able to go in. We've had meetings with teachers to get some of their feedback on the material. Our coaches are being very thoughtful including our teachers in the process. More to come on that.

We joke about Harvard a lot, I want to say being three weeks in now, with a group of eight staff members at Irving, it has been a great conversation piece. We have teachers who are looking to be mentors in the future official team mentors. It is a nice learning lens for the staff and help supporting one another.

I will just end by saying after school program is going very well. And I can't take any credit for that. It's fun to see the variety the options the kids have. Basketball, art, drama, pokemon cards, dance, hula hoops, story time and homework help. I will try and post more pictures twitters. Really fun stuff going on in the after-school program.

Mr. Gildea: Anything any support you need, you making it work. I'm worried about some of your key losses.

Ms. Misset: We are making it work. We have a very strong support team. We have had some losses of paraprofessionals.

Mr. Kurtyka: You spoke about the reading program at Irving School. I went to a meeting today with the area Superintendents. They are not too happy with this State reading program. A couple of Superintendent's spoke out. Each school is different. You should be able to pick the books you want instead of having the State tell you what books to use. There's five Towns that are applying for waivers. There's only one Department that handles the waivers. I think they might extend this reading program another year.

Ms. Misset: There's pros and cons with every program. We're going to have to use our best knowledge. We'll figure out with our staff to make it very successful for our kids. So, I feel confident we're ready to go. We have a lot of great resources.

Mr. Gildea: Thank you.

## **RAISE ACADEMY**

Ms. Cappiello: Hi, everyone. So, this past month our biggest focus was thanks to your support, we did expand that program. As I mentioned earlier six new students that joined that program yesterday. With the help of our new RBTs. She continues to amaze me. We placed her with those new students. The students seem to be doing well so far in the program. Also, with the expansion of adding five new classes we increased our capacity from 18 students to 28 students. So, we're helping individualized students getting the help that they need.

Mr. Gildea: I'm excited about helping more students. Logistically, it's working. You're happy the way it's going.

Ms. Cappiello: Yes, what we're able to do the Learning Center, that's the Special Ed. That's the self-contained classroom. That's one room that's being utilized. The other two sides of the program are utilizing individuals, general education classes and moving throughout the building, just ten in each classroom. We're using multiple general education classes in our high school.

New things we were starting this year, I have been sending home progress reports along with students' attendance and grades. Last but not least, I'm excited about working with ESS team, middle school and high school faculties.

We added six into the new side of the program. Then we also took on an additional four one for behavioral learning center and then three to the alternative side of the program.

Dr. Conway: She was just referring to those that are mainstreamed into the regular ed classes.

Some of them receive additional support while they are in those main stream classes.

Mr. Marcucio: Can we get a report?

Ms. Capiello: I can do that for you.

Mr. Gildea: Thank you very much.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION REPORT**

Mr. Gildea: Ms. McQuart and Mr. Nichols.

Ms. McQuart: I'm happy to be back this month to report out. Our physical management training and have some in-house trainers. Big shout out to Kaitlyn and Melissa that did finish the second practicum. We have two in-house trainers. Big focus we wanted to build is our in-house behavioral support.

And another fun thing that's coming up is our autism walk. I registered our team for the walk in May. This year at Quinnipiac. One walk starts at 9:30 on May 21<sup>st</sup>. Starting to plan T-shirts and fundraisers. We want to open it up to families. Keep building that awareness.



Mr. Nichols: Secondary level. Obviously, conversations have been ongoing regarding budget. Met with Pastor Joshua who runs the church at Lincoln School.

Dr. Conway: That is correct.

Mr. Nichols: The purpose of that meeting shared an opportunity for us to share in the 2022 program. Early stages of that. Talking about BHCare and what John Saccu said about a mental health clinician. Meeting with them tomorrow.

Mr. Gildea: Thank you.

## **ATHLETIC REPORT**

Mr. Gildea: Mr. Coplin.

Mr. Coplin: So, with the departure of Mr. Cosgriff, we are actively in the hiring process of the new Athletic Director. Our anticipation is having a recommendation for the Board actually next Thursday, February 16<sup>th</sup>.

In the meantime, Mr. Russo helped out with the elementary schools. And now that Jenn is scheduled for surgery tomorrow, I will be helping out.

Mr. Gildea: You're a doctor too now. Dr. Coplin, congratulations.

Mr. Coplin: In the meantime, we have our official director, myself, Ms. Caggiano, Ms. Olson remotely if she can just take a moment to just kind of sit there. In other news, we have a lot going on at the high school. This Thursday is the NBL indoor track championship held at Hillhouse. We have quite a few students looking to bring home more medals. Some great stuff going on especially with the seniors and we're definitely looking forward to NBL Thursday. And we have senior night for wrestling tomorrow.

Mr. Gildea: Thank you, sir.

Mr. Kurtyka: When you came before the Committee last, we requested a survey on what they pay the Athletic Director for various cities. We want to see that before we appoint anybody.

Mr. Gildea: Thank you.

Dr. Conway: Mario had to have surgery, long-time overdo where it was going to rupture. Jen same situation with her knee. She put it off so long. They have to have it done now.

Two long time Derby educators put off having this. But they reached a point where they can no longer do that. Two people that work with them side by side for a number of years now. Now is the time they can do it during the time they know they have confidence in, Dr. Russo, Dr. Coplin, serve in that. A big thank you to both of you for stepping up.

Mr. Gildea: Very nice.

Mr. Marcucio: LRU. Can we get that information now.

Dr. Conway: We can get that information. Tracking kids through their years in Derby Schools. Cohort. Got it.

Mr. Kurtyka: In 2014, that's when LRU started. Okay.

Mr. Gildea: Thank you.

#### **NATIONAL CONFERENCE**

**Motion the Committee of the Whole approve the expenditure for members to attend the 2023 NSBA conference in Orlando, Florida through April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 to April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023. Passed with a motion made by Mr. George Kurtyka and a second by Mr. Dan Foley.**

Mr. Jim Gildea                      Yes

Mr. Dan Foley                      Yes

Mr. George Kurtyka              Yes

Ms. Melissa Mongillo            Yes

Ms. Jennifer Caruso              Yes

Ms. Laura Harris                 Yes

Ms. Melissa Cannata             Yes

Mr. Ken Marcucio                Yes

Ms. Rebecca O'Hara             Yes

Mr. Kurtyka: Making motion.

Mr. Foley: Second.

Mr. Gildea: Motion carries.

#### **ADJOURN**

**Motion the Committee of the Whole adjourn its meeting. Passed with a motion made by Ms. Melissa Cannata and a second by Ms. Jennifer Caruso.**

Mr. Jim Gildea                      Yes

Mr. Dan Foley                      Yes

Mr. George Kurtyka              Yes

Ms. Melissa Mongillo            Yes

Ms. Jennifer Caruso              Yes

Ms. Laura Harris                 Yes

Ms. Melissa Cannata             Yes

Mr. Ken Marcucio                Yes

Ms. Rebecca O'Hara             Yes

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Ms. Cannata: Making motion at 8:17.

Ms. Caruso: Second.

Mr. Gildea: Motion carries.

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Marianne Samokar, Recording Secretary

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