

MARCH 20, 2025 BOARD OF EDUCATION

Opening ceremonies

Mr. Gildea: Called Board of Education meeting to order at 6:46.

ROLL CALL

James Gildea; Dan Foley; Melissa Mongillo; Ken Marcucio; Rebecca O'Hara; Erica Nuzzo; Kim Tovar; Laura Harris; Karla Malerba.

Mr. Gildea: All nine. We have a full committee meeting.

Also Present:

Dr. Matthew Conway, Superintendent of Schools.

ANY ADDITIONS/DELETIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE AGENDA

Mr. Gildea: Seeing none. Before we get to public portion, I would like to make a few recognitions to some of the people here. And I'd also like to say thank you to all the people who are online. That's pretty cool. I don't know if you know this, but it's Board of Education appreciation month. And I see all the Building Administrators are here.

I do want to mention that we have Mayor Joseph DeMartino here. President of the Board of Alderman, George Kurtyka. And I might add a former Board of Education Secretary. Welcome back. Tax Board Chair, Colleen Ezzo (phonetic). Alders representing the first ward, Amy Fetinacci. And our paraeducator of the year, Bethany. Thank you everyone for being here and we appreciate your attendance.

PUBLIC PORTION

Mr. Gildea: Anyone from the public who wishes to speak before the Board of Ed this evening. Anyone from the public wishing to speak before the Board. Anyone from the public three times. Seeing no one from the public.

BIRTHDAY

Jim Hoffman

BOARD OF EDUCATION APPRECIATION MONTH

Mr. Gildea: I'll turn it over to the Superintendent of Schools.

Dr. Conway: Mayor, would you like to join me at the podium. It's an honor to stand before you tonight to recognize your amazing dedication to this great City of Derby and to our entire Derby Family. As the Superintendent, I get to experience first-hand your relentless

commitment, countless hours and deep passion to ensure our students, our staff, our family get nothing but the best. You serve as a voice for every student, every educator, and the entire Derby Community. You ask tough questions, make difficult decisions, advocate for resources, put in countless, countless hours to ensure every child in our schools have the absolute best opportunity to succeed. Your leadership and vision are reserful in the continued progress we are making as a District. On behalf of the staff, the educators, and families, we just want to accept our heartfelt appreciation to your service, your dedication, your grind and grit every day so that our kids can experience their glory. We are grateful for everything you do. Would everyone please join me in recognizing the dedication and commitment for our chairman and our entire Board of Education for everything they do. On behalf of our appreciation, you have in front of you a vest actually that somebody expressed that they really liked. Somebody else was modeling it and expressed they liked it. So, in expression, it's a great gift in appreciation for everything you do for the school. Thank you.

Mayor DeMartino: I just want to say really quick, thank you for everything that you do and for the City. Those of you who are my friends, I've known all of you all my life. Some of you my teachers, my boss. Mr. Marcucio hired me as a softball coach. My respect so much and I thank you for everything you do and the City is very lucky to have all of you. So, thank you.

CABE AREA SEVEN DIRECTORS

Ms. Mongillo: I am here as a CABE Area Seven Co-Director to recognize the efforts of the Derby Public Schools. In order to receive a Bonnie Carney Award of Excellence for Educational Communications, citing off the general criteria. Very happy to present Derby Public Schools with the award for Educational Communication for the Parent/Student Handbook, Derby High School Handbook 2023-2024.

CABE has been honoring school districts with the Award of Excellence for Educational Communications since 1975. In 2016 the award was remained in honor of long-time CABE staff member, Bonnie Carney. In recognition of her 47 years of dedication to education focused on communications. Congratulations.

Ms. Mongillo: In addition, Derby Public Schools has been honored by CABE for two additional awards. Honorable mention, Bonnie Carney Awards for Excellence for Educational Communication for its newsletter. Congratulations.

As well as honorable mention in the Bonnie Carney Awards of Excellence for Educational Communications Program for its Special Project which was Derby Public Schools Strategic Plan.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee: Ms. O'Hara: We met a couple weeks ago. Was that two nights ago, we were down at City Hall. And probably Robbie will go through more when we get to the finance part.

Negotiations and Personnel Committee: Ms. Mongillo: We met in March and began discussions regarding the nurses and para contracts which are coming up.

School Community Relations and Policy Committee: Ms. Harris: Our next meeting is April 11, 5:30 here at the middle school. And you'll hopefully next week, we will have our fourth edition Community Newsletter out and printed online.

Plant and Facilities Committee: Mr. Foley: We met tonight. Robbie pointed out right now on bills. And Mr. Hoffman brought in Blizzards Mechanical, LLC to speak about the problems at the Middle School.

Ms. Mongillo: Just for minutes. I just want to make sure we have it correct. I believe it was 200,000 over on utilities. 200 over on utilities but still under budget. I just want to make sure.

Dr. Conway: Largely over issues due to the turbine issues here at the Middle School, which is hopefully now corrected by Blizzard. Still under budget for the total's facilities budget. Even though we saw a spike in the cost of electricity for the High School due to the turbines not running. We're still under budget by 52,000 for the total facilities budget. That one line item is over budget. But we stopped the bleeding on that one thanks to Blizzard.

Academic and Curriculum Committee: Ms. O'Hara: We met two weeks ago to discuss an exciting opportunity that we are going to be in partnership with Yale to do some like in the Health Department, have a little course on kids' giving what's the best wording to put it.

Dr. Conway: So, we're going to be looking at both heart and stroke for education and Dr. Rafferty is going to explain during his report. Our kids will be gaining the education to bring it out to the community.

Ms. O'Hara: So interesting.

Athletic Committee: Ms. Tovar: We did not meet in March. However, we do plan to meet in April or May depending on what comes up.

Student Health and Safety Committee: Mr. Gildea: We have a meeting scheduled for April 3. Sal is going to give us some presentation on updates and we'll talk with him more about the cafeteria program. Here, 5 o'clock.

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS REPORT

Dr. Conway: You have my report. Lot of highlights or a lot of things happening this month. Still continuing to testify in various specific bills. Great opportunity with one of the Bills that we saw that caught most of the media's attention was the \$49 for excess costs that again the Legislature passed, the Governor vetoed. And then dual agreement with both the Governor and the Legislature. They drafted bill 7163, which then passed. Had a neat opportunity the night before the press conference and the signing of the Bill, I received an invite to speak at the Press Conference and the signing. I actually received a nice pen and we took a copy of the Bill signed by the Governor. So, represented Superintendents.

Ms. Harris: And Doc was right in the picture there with Governor Lamont.

Dr. Conway: Thanks for reminding me of that tonight.

Mr. Foley: Doctor, was there a three million dollar supplement passed also with that?

Dr. Conway: Yes, that was through non-profits. I'm not exactly sure in that particular one. It was a separate building. But that was for very specific non-profit, about eight different non-profit organizations were receiving that money. It was like 2.8 million. What the Governor has authority to do is couldn't – he can either veto a whole Bill. The only time he can veto parts of a Bill, the first Bill the Legislature passed with those two items in it, plus two other items is what it has to do with appropriations. So, those two items in that Bill had to do with appropriations, which allowed him the authority to veto just those two pieces while the other two Sections in the Bill went through.

In any event, today was a neat opportunity thanks to Lucy and the Derby Shelton Rotary. They brought back the pre-Thanksgiving luncheon to honor our seniors, senior football players and cheerleaders for Derby and Shelton. So, it was a real neat program, neat opportunity to continue educating youth on the traditions and the history of that game, 110 year history of that game. So, it was pretty cool to bring that back. So, thanks to Lucy, Sal, unbelievable job catering it for our food service Department as well. So, it was just a real neat event to get back in the Valley. We held it at the fieldhouse. So, it was another exciting piece. And just prior to that, we had our middle of the year, our check-in with the State Department of Ed regarding Alliance District. The meeting went extremely well. And we look forward to continue our partnership with them moving forward. And it gave me an opportunity also to further discuss the priority school district funding as well, which is a big item.

ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS

FACILITIES REPORT

Mr. Gildea: Good evening, sir. And may I say Happy Birthday.

Mr. Hoffman: Thank you. Bradley School, we are compliant with our kitchen grease cleaning. Playground repaired. We replaced the grouted out wood with some two by sixes. Last a little longer. Alarm system was going to be delayed. All parts are on site. So, he's coming in tomorrow at three to install two batteries for us.

Irving we did the grease trap as well.

Derby Middle School, updating the Board on the chiller replacement. Update on chiller replacement. Blizzard Mechanical reached out. Gone through everything in this building with the cogent. Blizzard did come in and found a few hot water valves that weren't hooked up. We were able to hook those up. Put a pump into hands. Further updating the Board on the turbines. Have a lot of piping issues.

Dr. Conway: So, if you're going off the State contract, I believe the language is you're going to – you wouldn't have to go out to bid. Both the companies that already submitted a bid and Blizzard are both on the State contract.

Mr. Gildea: The next tax board meeting is the 25th. What time is the dinner?

Dr. Conway: 6 o'clock I believe.

Mr. Gildea: So, the answer for us is to go to the Tax Board to get the money out of the building account, step one.

Ms. Mongillo: But does it make sense to have Blizzard come and present in case they have very specific questions.

Mr. Gildea: Yeah.

Dr. Conway: Yeah.

Mr. Gildea: We just got to figure out how to get to the tax board. Doc can coordinate the tax board meetings. We'll get to have Blizzard there.

Dr. Conway: I'll get you the exact amount after. This is money in the City Account Building Committee. So, there's still a specific amount in that account according to Brian. I'll give you the exact number though.

Ms. Harris: Off the subject of this building, pavement, LRU and the loading dock. Do you have any idea if it's going to happen this spring?

Mr. Hoffman: I don't know.

Mr. Gildea: That is on the list. The asphalt companies don't open up until the spring. So, the City has since had money to do that.

Ms. Harris: Once you find out, can you email all the Board members to let us know?

Mr. Hoffman: Normally, the asphalt plants don't open until April.

Ms. Harris: Also, a sign up for Irving School Learning Center. Did we ever continue that conversation or look into it? No. That was last year. Have one of the Art Teachers have the students make a sign or Rich.

Mr. Hoffman: I'll have an update at the next meeting on that.

Ms. Harris: All right. Thank you.

Mr. Hoffman: District-wide, we have inspections coming up. I'm worried about Bradley.

Ms. Mongillo: Are you concerned about any of them?

Mr. Hoffman: No, just Bradley. Bradley inspection pushed off for four years. So, we can't push it any farther.

Ms. Mongillo: So, when you say coming up, do you have a date?

Mr. Hoffman: I don't have a date yet. I know it is in April.

Ms. Mongillo: Okay.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Dr. Rafferty: I appreciate all the support you give me in my position. Don't take it for granted. Makes my job easier. With that being said, I think there's a couple of things I will need your support.

Rebecca and Laura and I had our subcommittee meeting. So, we've been developing a partnership with Yale. They did a small research study in New Haven Public Schools but they want to do a much more robust connection with Derby. And at first when we started to have our first meeting, we developed a small cohort of kids to kind of start to learn how to

get better educated on healthy choices, vital signs. The more we got talking to it, there was a neurosurgeon from Yale Medical School. It seems like we should do a much more robust partnership.

First of all, improving health. So, I actually went to the anatomy teacher and she said no, it's a perfect fit in the unit coming up. And there's a whole section of where I'm not a medical person and I feel that I will get lost. So, we met earlier this week and we formulated a like a two-week plan. And part of it and I'm having to share to the research where they did small little experiments in New Haven Public Schools. There's a topic where they are going to do an anonymous survey with kids.

We started to develop a little mini unit with some simulation activities. We brought that to the high school and they were really enthusiastic about it. So, I'm not asking for approval for it yet because I don't have everything in place, but it's coming. We keep moving along with our metric program. We've developed a manual and an action plan. And we're really trying to go for a strong launch this fall but with some work this summer. We're doing kind of a cool activity here at the middle school.

Further updating the Board on the mentoring program. Two other quick updates. PDAC is our Professional Development Evaluation Committee. Plus the other thing that came out of PDAC Dr. Conway and I are trying to reset a lot of things that we do. We spent some time asking well how do you want to reset PDAC. So, they gave us ideas. We want the learning to mean something to our students because we find that they engage much better.

Early in the fall I brought you an MOU around the search study around large scale tutoring. Our partners from West Ed we had a Zoom like two weeks ago. Initial results are promising. Specifically for math too. They visited today and they'll visit tomorrow. Those are my updates.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion the Board of Education approve the minutes from January 7th, 2025 Committee of the Whole Meeting and January 23rd, 2025 Board of Education Meeting. Passed with a motion made by Ms. Laura Harris and a second by Ms. Kim Tovar.

Jim Gildea	Yes
Dan Foley	Yes
Melissa Mongillo	Yes
Ken Marcucio	Yes
Rebecca O'Hara	Yes

Erica Nuzzo	Yes
Kim Tovar	Yes
Laura Harris	Yes
Karla Malerba	Yes

Ms. Harris: Making motion.

Ms. Tovar: second.

Mr. Gildea: Motion carries.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Motion that the Board of Education approve the Financial Report for the period through February 28th, 2025 as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools. Passed with a motion made by Ms. Laura Harris and a second by Mr. Dan Foley.

Jim Gildea	Yes
Dan Foley	Yes
Melissa Mongillo	Yes
Ken Marcucio	Yes
Rebecca O'Hara	Yes
Erica Nuzzo	Yes
Kim Tovar	Yes
Laura Harris	Yes
Karla Malerba	Yes

Ms. Harris: Making motion.

Mr. Foley: Second.

Mr. Trainor: So, we currently are about 33,000 under budget. Last month we were at 136 I believe. We got some high utility bills that we are going to discuss at some point. This does not reflect the excess cost payment that the City received at the end of February. We have not received those funds yet. I did not put that into this report because last year we didn't get the excess cost funds until the end of May from the City. So, I really want to make sure

that we have the cash on hand before I start reporting on it. So, I just want to make that clear.

Mr. Gildea: I appreciate that. We're going to get it, but I appreciate that.

Dr. Conway: There is, there's two schools here. You can make a journal entry. You are going to get it but it's just, we want to make sure that we have the exact system in place to receive it and then journal entry correctly. So, we're working with an individual from another district to make sure ours is set up like his, which was something our auditor wants us to mirror.

Mr. Trainor: I've also reached out to Mike Gray who has a similar role to me in Orange. I asked him, I went to Seymour Business Manager and I was on a meeting this morning and we were all talking about the special ed expenditures and excess costs. There is no uniform method. We all do it differently. So, there's no right. There's no wrong. It would be great if there was a standard. But right now, there is not. So, while we all do it a little bit different, it all hopefully gets to the same place.

Mr. Gildea: We need to make decisions in the beginning of May that we don't want to wait until the end of May if it's a big figure. So, I'm good. I'm just saying at some point we have to be cognitive of the fact that we may want to make decisions knowing that we'll have a higher surplus in 33,000. My only point. I get it but we don't want to wait until June 7.

Dr. Conway: Yeah. So, we're a couple days.

Mr. Gildea: I'm good.

Mr. Marcucio: Are the Special Ed numbers still the same?

Dr. Conway: We're at 22 as of today. It's possible we're still even just not with the same kids. So, for next year's budget as of today while two that were on it will be going out to two or three. Three going out. Two more since we last met are coming on to the list. So, I think we might even be down one since we last talked as of today. But this all literally just happened today.

Mr. Trainor: Any big questions on the financial report before I go into the electricity in regards to the chiller.

Mr. Gildea: Motion carries.

Mr. Trainor: Talk a little bit about the financial impact on the chillers being down. So, year over year last year and this year from July through February. July through October, you know, little amounts here and there. We were up, one month down another month, but it was trivial. It really starts in November through February. So, electricity, we get billed on

per kilowatt hour. The generation of per kilowatt hour from November to December was up 602,000. As I kind of referenced from July to February last year, we only used about 528 kilowatt hours. So, from July to February, eight months, we used an eight-month work of kilowatt per hour in just four months. So, without these turbines, chillers working, we're getting hit with electricity costs across the street.

So, the financial impact over from November to February with supply and delivery is \$169,000 difference from this time last year. So, we really do need to, you know, to talk about this. Now we have a good plan. The presentation in the financial and the Plants and Facilities meeting was a bit over my head in terms of understanding. But the guy spoke from Blizzard Mechanical, the guy spoke very well. He had a presentation. He had a great power point. He had models here.

He explained it very well for someone who doesn't understand. We really need to address this so we don't get hit with these costs.

Dr. Conway: And just to be clear now as people who were at the meeting, the turbines are now running again for us. It's all the other work we need to do moving forward.

Mr. Foley: He said it was a sensor that needed to be replaced.

Dr. Conway: That was one of the things he replaced. I don't know if it was the only thing to get those back online. But he did some other things to get them back running. But at least they're running and sending electricity over. Now we have to be, if we want to, something that was never put in the system was the control and we have a control running or not running or all four are always running versus two and two. So, there's still work to be done but at least they're running and sending electricity to the grid which reduces our costs of the electricity if taken off the grid.

Mr. Gildea: Thank you, sir.

APPROVAL OF POLICIES

Policy 1330 Use of School Facilities as a First Read

Motion that the Board of Education review Policy 1330 Use of School Facilities as a first read as recommended by the School Community Relations and Policy Committee. Passed with a motion made by Ms. Laura Harris and a second by Ms. Rebecca O'Hara.

Jim Gildea **Yes**

Dan Foley **Yes**

Melissa Mongillo	Yes
Ken Marcucio	Yes
Rebecca O'Hara	Yes
Erica Nuzzo	Yes
Kim Tovar	Yes
Laura Harris	Yes
Karla Malerba	Yes

Ms. Harris: Making motion.

Ms. O'Hara: Second.

Mr. Gildea: I did call Laura before the meeting.

Ms. Harris: Mr. Gildea would like to add a sentence in.

Mr. Gildea: I did ask Laura before the meeting. I'm not passing any judgment whether the church should be using the building or not. But they used the building under the guise of, it was a gathering whether it was a worship. I just think as representatives of the community and the building, we should probably know who is using the building. So, I would just like add a sentence in here that there shall be a monthly report to the Board of Education maybe through the Facilities Committee that they give us a report – a monthly report on who is using it. Laura was fine with it.

Ms. Harris: Derby High School, name of company. The date, the time. What he's using, gym, cafeteria, whatever.

Mr. Gildea: Yes, ma'am.

Ms. Harris: Okay.

Dr. Conway: That is correct. We used it two times in February which is what they put on the original application was just to use two. They were called up for a third. And they called up on a Sunday morning. And we weren't prepared for it. Jim simply explained to them. Your forms said for two Sundays. You used the two Sundays. So, we didn't staff for that Sunday that they were calling up for. So, they were told unfortunately, they couldn't use it. That was one of the other concerns of this particular usage. We found on the cameras after the fact that they were in other parts of the building that they shouldn't have been.

Do you want to be the signer of the facilities use final signer of the facilities use. I think what will happen is, we're going to get a request for usage. And the next Board meeting isn't for two weeks.

Mr. Gildea: They said they were using it for a gathering which is different than worship. I think we should just know who is in our schools.

Mr. Foley: Have that put on the facilities report.

Dr. Conway: You got it.

Mr. Gildea: We'll make the addition for the second read. Any further discussion. Motion carries.

Policy 6145.42 Sunday Activities as a Second Read and Adoption

Motion that the Board of Education review Policy 6145.42 Sunday Activities as a second read and adoption as recommended by the School Community Relations and Policy Committee. Passed with a motion by Ms. Laura Harris and a second by Ms. Melissa Mongillo.

Jim Gildea	Yes
Dan Foley	Yes
Melissa Mongillo	Yes
Ken Marcucio	Yes
Rebecca O'Hara	Yes
Erica Nuzzo	Yes
Kim Tovar	Yes
Laura Harris	Yes
Karla Malerba	Yes

Ms. Harris: Making motion.

Ms. Mongillo: Second.

Mr. Gildea: Motion carries.

Policy 5131.911 Connecticut School Climate Second Read and Adoption

Motion that the Board of Education review Policy 5131.911 Connecticut School Climate as a second read and adoption. Passed with a motion made by Ms. Laura Harris and a second by Ms. Karla Malerba.

Jim Gildea	Yes
Dan Foley	Yes
Melissa Mongillo	Yes
Ken Marcucio	Yes
Rebecca O’Hara	Yes
Erica Nuzzo	Yes
Kim Tovar	Yes
Laura Harris	Yes
Karla Malerba	Yes

Ms. Harris: Making motion.

Ms. Malerba: Second.

Mr. Gildea: Motion carries.

ADJOURN

Motion that the Board of Education adjourn its meeting. Passed with a motion made by Ms. Kim Tovar and a second by Ms. Erica Nuzzo.

Jim Gildea	Yes
Dan Foley	Yes
Melissa Mongillo	Yes
Ken Marcucio	Yes
Rebecca O’Hara	Yes
Erica Nuzzo	Yes
Kim Tovar	Yes
Laura Harris	Yes
Karla Malerba	Yes

Ms. Tovar: Making motion at 8:03.

Ms. Nuzzo: Second.

Mr. Gildea: Motion carries.

Marianne Samokar
Recording secretary