

**OCTOBER 7, 2025 COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Gildea: Called to order at 7:00.

**OPENING CEREMONIES**

Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL**

Mr. Gildea: Kim Tovar, absent; Ivey Speight, here; Ken Marcucio, here; Dan Foley, here; Rebecca O’Hara, absent; Erica Nuzzo, here; Melissa Mongillo, here; Jim Gildea, here; Karla Malerba, absent.

Let the record reflect we have six of nine members. We do have a quorum.

**ALSO PRESENT:**

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

**ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA**

Mr. Gildea: This is a special meeting. We did item number ten last meeting. So, we will make a motion to not add to this special meeting. Motion to removed item number ten.

**Motion that the Committee of the Whole remove item number ten, Medical Leave Request. Passed with a motion made by Mr. Ken Marcucio and a second by Mr. Dan Foley.**

<b>Jim Gildea</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ivey Speight</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ken Marcucio</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Dan Foley</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Erica Nuzzo</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Melissa Mongillo</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Kim Tovar</b>	<b>Absent</b>
<b>Rebecca O’Hara</b>	<b>Absent</b>
<b>Karla Malerba</b>	<b>Absent</b>

Mr. Marcucio: Making motion.

Mr. Foley: Second.

Mr. Gildea: Motion carries.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr. Gildea: Anyone from the public who wishes to speak before the Board. First, I'll start remote. Anyone here in person who wishes to speak remotely. Anyone here in person who wishes to speak? Going once. Going twice. Three times. Public Portion is closed.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

**Mario Ciccarini**

**Michael Rafferty**

## **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Ms. Olson: We had our student council elections at the Derby High School. We had a little bit of a different process. Each candidate participated in our pep rally but had to give a speech to the student body. That's a new element of our process. And then also had lunch duty assigned to them where they came into the cafeteria and had a chance to be able to speak directly to all of the students directly individually to talk about their platform, what it is that they would like to be able to do and how they would engage the school community. And I'm going to let Mr. Coplin share some accolades about our very newly elected student council president, Lazarae Delvalle. Lazarae just stood out, was a very visible leader. She is somebody who feels very comfortable in the entire student body. Has really engaged with students and faculty as well. I'm very excited about her potential for leadership and what she's going to bring to our school and to the Board as well.

Mr. Coplin: Just to touch on what Ms. Olson said, Lazarae, her resume is impeccable. She's a four-year cheerleader. Powder puff player. Track athlete. She's been a four-year member of the student council serving as the class rep I think it was freshman year. Has always been very involved. That's just like part of it. So, it's no surprise to run for the president. It was actually Lazarae's idea to kind of make pictures in the cafeteria. So, even prior to being elected student council president, she was very eager to kind of showcase why it was important for her to be the student rep for student council for the Board. And she has many ideas that she intends to bring to the school. She is looking to really set the bar very high for student council.

Mr. Gildea: We welcome you. And we're sincerely, over the course of the year, be interested in your opinion. So, feel free to bring us ideas, thoughts and questions. Looking

forward to working with you. Welcome to the Board. We look forward to great things. Thank you.

Ms. Olson: In the Board packet, there is a copy of Lazarae's speech she delivered that we published in our newsletter. You can see some of the things that she was talking about, but she also did prepare a report for everyone today. She should be able to share a couple of things with you.

Lazarae: My name is Lazarae as you know. And the first thing I want to mention is we had the orientation of the Class of 2029 where the freshman were officially introduced into Derby High School able to get the chance to meet new staff, get familiar with the building. And overall create bond with other students or other peers. And for the next event we had, we had a barbecue. It was right after the orientation where we all came together as one and reconnected with old friends, enjoyed the food and celebrated the new year to come. And it turned out to be very successful where a lot of students did and families did show up.

Then we had the senior, where the Class of 2026 came back early morning and spent time together. And just like overall had that engagement and bond for our last year just to enjoy together. Then we had beginning of school year, our grade level meetings just to go over expectations and just learn about DHS fully and obviously what to expect.

We had our school peer day, which it was before the pep rally. And it really encouraged a lot of student participation with wearing our class colors for each grade level, which led on to pep rally, which really was engaging. And overall, we recognized a lot of things within it, like the sport teams and the players within the team. The cheerleaders hosted this little routine. And overall, just energized the crowd with their performances. And this year, which was different, we invited the 8<sup>th</sup> graders over to come, which they obviously joined the celebration with us. But overall, just to see how Derby High School is and why not, if they wanted to come to Derby High School, which that turned out great. They were really involved, really engaged. And overall, it just made the environment happier and better.

And going back, during the pep rally, all three of us, Sophia, Carter and myself, we all delivered campaign speeches where we shared our vision for DHS and how we can make an impact. And we also kind of like gained first-hand experience on how it would be we kind of held programs, the pep rally and that was also something different that we never tried this year. But we also recognized Dr. Delgado, which it was her last day, and Ms. Jennifer Moffat which was recognized for the National Junior Scholastic Athletic Administrator's Day.

Then for unified sports, the sign ups are currently open and over 80 students had signed up for unified and attended that first meeting, which was great. And the school was recognized as the national banner school, which further details are coming later.

Then we had an open house, which was held this month and provided an opportunity where parents and students were able to visit the school and meet staff. And overall can get the feeling of the environment. Last month, Hispanic Heritage month, where the school was actively just celebrating like Hispanic cultures. We had announcements every day about either a famous person, or overall just a Hispanic like within the school, staff member. And in addition, mostly just decorate this place. We're set up throughout the school. And just honored Hispanic culture and contributions. And then on October 10<sup>th</sup>, this Friday, there will be an enchiladas sale, which we will be having.

Then school picture days and senior portraits where students dressed up very nicely. And took our seasonal photos. And overall for the seniors, this is their last photo at the high school. Then for the cell phone policy where last year it was not lenient but it was more lenient with this year. We went full in force of the cell phone policy where we have all classrooms have cubbies. And you are mandated to put your phones and take your headphones out and put them in the cubbies. And for the uniforms and merchandise, we have fully enforced the uniforms. If you just transferred you don't. But yeah, we fully enforce uniforms. And some feedback from the uniforms were how, the uniforms they are unisex and some people like would rather maybe like maybe like women and men's uniforms with the options of unisex. And students have shown interest in like questions just overall about the school merchandise.

We have a lot of Derby hoodies, shirts and we feel like it's not like accessible to us students because we have to wear uniforms. And especially for sports too, we have a lot of Derby, for example, cheerleading, volleyball, football, hoodies and stuff and we can't wear it. And it's kind of not pointless, but it feels like we should be able to represent and have that in the dress code as well.

Mr. Gildea: So, what I would say real quick about that Lazarae and I appreciate that perspective. So, this is new for us, the dress codes. I love hearing that. I'll also tell you that our Student Health and Safety Committee is going to be meeting in a month or so and we'll be talking a little bit more about the dress code. And so, our Policy Committee as well. We know there's things we have to take care of, buttoning up you know what you can do on school picture days and things like that. I'll let Ms. Olson know when those meetings are. And certainly feel free to let us know your viewpoint of those meetings, attend those meetings if you want and bring some of your peers and your students. I'll let you know

when those meetings are because we will be talking about the dress code over the coming months. Thank you.

Lazarae: That's all I have for today.

Mr. Gildea: Excellent. Very impressive. Very nice. Thank you very much.

Lazarae: Thank you.

## **RECOGNITIONS**

### **NATIONAL CUSTODIAN APPRECIATION DAY OCTOBER 2, 2025**

Dr. Conway: I'd just like to take a moment to recognize our custodians for everything they do every single day to get these buildings ready, so that they're welcoming, safe, clean environments for staff and students to come in to on a daily basis. It's amazing and attentive, the details they give the classrooms, the hallways, everything you see, the windowsills throughout the buildings every single day to ensure that they are shining when we walk through those doors. They're here on their days during the week. And when asked to on weekends. And even holidays in getting ready for the preparation of school, many were here on that Labor Day weekend making sure everything was just spit shine when those doors opened on Tuesday morning. So, from the bottom of my heart, thank you very, very much and on behalf of the Board thank you for everything you do every day to make our classrooms shine.

Mr. Gildea: Doc does a wonderful job. On behalf of the Board, I want to say that we all come to meetings and we go to events and we participate. We recognize every single position, every single role is critical in the educating of our children. And so, again, Doc said it well, thank you for the role that you play. Very important. Thank you.

Dr. Conway: Lou, Ned come on in please.

### **NATIONAL COACHES DAY OCTOBER 6, 2025**

Dr. Conway: Ask Athletic Director Moffat.

Ms. Moffat: Yesterday was National Coaches Appreciation Day. We do have a couple here in the audience with us. Coach Ali, Coach for all time and effort that they put in six days a week from our high school to our middle school, to all of our Youth Programs in the City. Very appreciative for everything that they do for our kids. And we thank them. Our kids wouldn't be able to play for everyone who gives their time and dedication to our kids. Thank you all.

Mr. Gildea: Again, on behalf of the Board. So, that time you spend with students and children are so substantial. So, we recognize that. We're grateful for that. And we thank you for your service.

Ms. Moffat: In your packet, you will find all of our coach's names.

Mr. Gildea: Very nice. Thank you.

## **SPECIAL OLYMPICS UNIFIED CHAMPION SCHOOLS NATIONAL RECOGNITION PROGRAM**

Ms. Moffat: We start talking about Unified Sports. This is our fifth year at Derby High School and Derby Middle School Sports. Since Coach Ali was hired, year four. Each year, the team has grown and grown and grown. Just to see the activity of all of our students, 92 interested athletes. So many kids that were interested. It was so good to see.

Ms. Ali: In order to apply for this you have to be in a program for at least three years. My second year here, we did win a State award. Moff and I spoke to a few representatives at CIAC. They recommended that what we were doing, we did apply. There's ten different criteria that we had to meet. You have to have a certified coach who is assigned to the team who is also in Special Olympics training and also their State certifications. The school have to recognize as a part of their Athletic Program. And it should be part of the high school just the same ways at any other sport. Offer leadership opportunities to both athletes and partners within the team. Last year we did that. We had regular meetings and events. Further updating the Board on the ten criteria that we had to meet.

Mr. Gildea: Very detailed presentation and something to be proud of. I know there were ten standards in the packet. All ten wow that's impressive.

Ms. Olson: First we are at Derby High School one of the schools in Connecticut that's being recognized as National Banners pool. And secondly, our appreciation for Ms. Ali. She completed the initiative for this. Completed the application independently. And was proud to present it. Congratulations. Ask for our unified athletes to stand.

Mr. Gildea: Tonight not only the leadership of the program, when you look at the amount of standards, and how rigorous that is, that's impressive that we're able to do that. And one of eight schools is impressive. Such a remarkable bunch of students who support the program and participate in the program and who are mentors and participators. You guys are amazing. Thank you.

## **DHS UCONN EARLY COLLEGE EXPERIENCE PROGRAM**

Mr. Gildea: Is that informational.

Dr. Conway: It is informational.

Ms. Olson: We are very excited to share with you our UCONN early college experience. We have college placement courses. We have honors courses. AP, and also early college experience. We partnered with UCONN for a number of years. This year is the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UCONN Early College Experience. And Derby High School staff has been recognized as being part of that program. They issued two of our teachers who currently teach the classes. Mr. Sigona, our teacher of the year. Mr. Daly, our art teacher. Arts and World Language courses to get credit from UCONN. Further updating the Board on the Program.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mr. Gildea: Executive session, there's limited hires. There's three stipend positions. Two paraeducators.

Mr. Marcucio: I don't think we will need it.

## **APPOINTMENT LIST OF NEW HIRES**

**Motion that 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 Ms. Melissa Mongillo and a second by Mr. Ivey Speight.**

<b>Jim Gildea</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ivey Speight</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ken Marcucio</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Dan Foley</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Erica Nuzzo</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Melissa Mongillo</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Kim Tovar</b>	<b>Absent</b>
<b>Rebecca O'Hara</b>	<b>Absent</b>
<b>Karla Malerba</b>	<b>Absent</b>

Ms. Mongillo: Making motion.

Mr. Speight: Second.

Mr. Gildea: Motion carries.

Dr. Cicarrini: Introducing and welcoming Angela Grindrod as the new PE teacher at Bradley School. Starting at Bradley School on October 20, 2025. She is currently the head softball coach for Derby High School.

Mr. Gildea: Congratulations, Angela. Welcome to Derby.

Dr. Cicarrini: Introducing and welcoming Isaac Amsel, our new paraeducator at Bradley School for K-2 Academic Learning Center.

Mr. Gildea: Congratulations, Isaac. Welcome to Derby.

**COMPREHENSIVE LEARNING CENTER TRIPS USING PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION (LIFE SKILLS PROGRAM)**

Mr. Gildea: Informational?

Dr. Conway: That is informational.

Ms. Olson: Have Kaylie Hyde come up here and speak about the program. She is going to rejoin the Derby High School Team.

Ms. Hyde: Updating the Board on the Comprehensive Learning Center. This year I would like to teach them how to access public transportation by utilizing the Valley Transit.

Ms. Olson: The actual transportation is actually part of the learning. Thank you.

**OUT OF STATE FIELD TRIP, DERBY MIDDLE SCHOOL TO NEW YORK APRIL 29, 2026**

**Motion that the Committee of the Whole approve the out of State field trip for the Derby Middle School to New York on April 29, 2026. Passed with a motion made by Ms. Melissa Mongillo and a second by Ms. Erica Nuzzo.**

<b>Jim Gildea</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ivey Speight</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ken Marcucio</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Dan Foley</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Erica Nuzzo</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Melissa Mongillo</b>	<b>Yes</b>

**Kim Tovar**                      **Absent**

**Rebecca O'Hara**                **Absent**

**Karla Malerba**                 **Absent**

Mr. Gildea: Pretty much an annual trip.

Ms. Caggiano: Aladdin.

Ms. Mongillo: Making motion.

Ms. Nuzzo: Second.

Mr. Gildea: Motion carries.

## **ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORTS**

### **BRADLEY SCHOOL REPORT**

Dr. Cicarrini: Good evening. Short and sweet this evening. Highlight a couple things. On the 26<sup>th</sup> of September, I had the pleasure of attending a workshop on uses of AI. Carl Johnson was the presenter. There are resources around AI. We've already started doing stuff with our teachers at Bradley. Our newer teachers are familiar with AI. Thanks to Dr. Rafferty I was invited to participate in a Network for Education Family Social Family School Partnership in Connecticut. I did attend a late September workshop up at Rocky Hill. And it was great.

A lot of it really centers around adult attitude towards students. And really getting to know kids. And the importance of a relationship with kids. And being able to understand that kids are capable of a lot more than we sometimes give them credit for. They need the opportunity to show what they can and can't do. It's a good reminder. It was great. But I appreciate sharing it.

### **IRVING SCHOOL REPORT**

Mr. Russo: Good evening, everyone. Just like my colleagues, I want to take a minute to talk about the purpose of planning that we set up for the year. Started with our three first opening days. First Friday meetings. During this day teachers and staff to meet with all of special services groups in the building to talk about plans for each and every kid in the building.

So, we had a full day Friday before school starts, rotate services in Teams. Allows teachers and staff to start the year knowing what they need to know about kids. Meaningful effort to

plan teachers to work with their colleagues. Our PTO, it was a really nice smooth opening. Virtual play is not a new thing.

### **DERBY MIDDLE SCHOOL REPORT**

Ms. Caggiano: Ken, I'm working on those numbers for you in reading. We had September 11<sup>th</sup> activities and social studies. This year for the September 11<sup>th</sup>, the kids were tasked with creating a living memory wall. Understanding the affects of that and the community. There is a memorial on the green. For Constitution day the kids will see it in a context. Our students have opened our Raider Café here at Derby Middle School. So, on Tuesdays and Thursdays they are open. Creamer is not up to the standard that people like.

Mike: Special Ed side, I know the coffee cart at the high school is taking a little bit longer to get started. Kaylie running that. That was in the works last year. This one was started from the ground up. Special Ed human capital side we had training on that first day. I just met with Riverside who does our evaluations from a Special Education standpoint. We're running through a new model next year.

Further explaining the cost of it. Special Education student achievement section. Right now we use a paper copy. Comes with a response booklet and a teacher booklet. It is moving to a digital platform. Post-covid evaluation going to be changed a little bit. The change that's happening, when they go virtual, save a little bit time with the students who will be evaluated. It also saves time in writing the evaluation. It looks like it is going to be cheaper. Looks like it will be 1,500. Those are not concrete numbers. It's a basic idea.

### **EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM REPORT**

Ms. Conway: We started our school year off with a bang. Everybody was happy to be at LRU. We started our curriculum with all about me. So, the students got to know each other and the staff. Got to know the rules. We got Griffing Hospital safe kit. We got a car seat awareness. And she's coming back to the building to anybody who needs car seats. We also are starting to implement how our students will get gym and they'll get art. In October, move to our fall festivities. We're doing another trick or trunk.

### **ATHLETIC DIRECTOR REPORT**

Ms. Moffat: Today I had the privilege of spending the day with 9 of our student athletes at the CIAC conference. Students and administrators. Very exciting day to spend time with them. We touched on the Unified Sports Program. We will be getting our banners soon.

They kicked off at the high school. They kick off at the middle school in winter. Soccer was added. We do have the Youth Activation Counsel. We want to celebrate a student athletes.

Introducing the Derby Athletic Hall of Fame at the football game on October 11, 2025. That will be during half time at the game.

Mr. Gildea: Well deserved, Mr. Marcucio.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION REPORT**

Mike gave report in Middle School Report

### **DERBY HIGH SCHOOL REPORT**

Mr. Coplin: You guys already heard the incredibly great day happening at Derby High School. But I did want to point out a couple of things. I want to give a shoutout to Mr. Butterworth advisory responsibility of our student council. The entire process of elective officers. 12 officers of student council. Going over financial aid programs. Students will be interviewing staff on several topics.

Ms. Olson: Further updating the Board on students who are in foster care in Connecticut. Very much a community project. Funded by Valley Community Foundation. Derby High School students are making blankets. It's a really great project for community service project.

### **ADJOURN**

**Motion that the Committee of the Whole adjourn its meeting. Passed with a motion made by Ms. Melissa Mongillo and a second by Ms. Erica Nuzzo.**

<b>Jim Gildea</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ivey Speight</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ken Marcucio</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Dan Foley</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Erica Nuzzo</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Melissa Mongillo</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Kim Tovar</b>	<b>Absent</b>
<b>Rebecca O'Hara</b>	<b>Absent</b>
<b>Karla Malerba</b>	<b>Absent</b>

Ms. Mongillo: Making motion.

Ms. Nuzzo: Second.

Mr. Gildea: We are adjourned at 8:22.

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Marianne Samokar

Recording secretary