

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford**

TO BE PROPOSED:

June 3, 2020

RESOLVED, That the State Board of Education, pursuant to Section 10-223h of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended by Section 258 of Public Act 15-5, adopts and approves the Turnaround Plan for Derby Middle School in Derby for the Commissioner's Network, subject to the conditions noted in the Commissioner's June 3, 2020, Executive Summary to the State Board of Education, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action, including, but not limited to, expending such funds as may be necessary to execute and implement the foregoing.

Approved by a vote of _____ this third day of June, Two Thousand Twenty.

Signed: _____
Dr. Miguel A. Cardona, Secretary
State Board of Education

CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Dr. Miguel A. Cardona, Commissioner of Education

DATE: June 3, 2020

SUBJECT: Approval of Commissioner's Network Turnaround Plan: Derby Middle School, Derby

Executive Summary

Introduction

Section 10-223h of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) establishes the Commissioner's Network to provide new resources and flexibilities to improve student achievement in a subset of the state's lowest-performing schools. The Network represents a commitment between local stakeholders and the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) to empower teachers and leaders to implement research-based strategies in schools selected by the Commissioner to participate in the Network for a period of three years with the potential for a 1 or 2 one-year extension beyond the initial 3 years. Network schools remain part of their local school districts; the districts and the CSDE secure school-level autonomy for the schools in exchange for heightened accountability.

Successful school turnaround requires flexible policy conditions and targeted investments in high-yield reform strategies. There is a demonstrated need for support, financial and otherwise, to fully implement the Turnaround Plan for Derby Middle School (DMS) located in Derby, CT. This will require efforts at the state and local levels to secure conditions that are conducive to scalable and sustainable reform.

Background

On April 5, 2019, the CSDE received an *Expression of Interest Form* from the Derby Public Schools (DPS) volunteering DMS for participation in the Network. On May 23, 2019, the Commissioner initially selected DMS for possible participation in the Network based on the following factors: (a) the district's expression of interest; and (b) the academic and developmental needs of the school's students and the capacity of the district to address those needs. The school was approved for one year of planning to develop a turnaround plan. Following initial selection, DMS and the Derby Education Association appointed members to serve on the school's Turnaround Committee, and the CSDE conducted an Operations and Instructional Audit on October 7, 2019. The Turnaround Committee developed the Turnaround Plan for DMS in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-223h (d).

Turnaround Plan for Derby Middle School

DMS, identified as a Focus School for High Needs Growth Math under the Next Generation Accountability System, serves 347 students in Grades 6 through 8. Approximately 72 percent of students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Approximately 21 percent of the students are identified as needing special education services; 0.08 percent are English learners (ELs); 33 percent of the students are Hispanic; and 17 percent are Black.

The goal of the DMS Turnaround Plan is to cultivate a strong professional learning community with a focus on rigorous teaching and learning that is student focused. The Turnaround Committee and the DMS staff are committed to creating a cohesive vision, shared sense of urgency for improvement, and common expectations for high levels of professional performance, perseverance and continuous growth. The Turnaround Plan includes the development of an instructional coaching model to increase teacher capacity and effectiveness, the implementation of a rigorous, standards-aligned curriculum with supports for students through a tiered Scientific Research Based Intervention (SRBI) model, implementation of the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) model and establishment of a school culture focused on achievement, as well as creating school structures and systems to maximize instructional time and create extended learning opportunities.

The following strategic components in the domains of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations speak to the transformative potential of the DMS Turnaround Plan. Specifically, the school, in collaboration with the DPS, will:

Talent:

- Develop an instructional coaching model to increase teacher capacity and effectiveness by:
 - Developing focus areas for coaching and capacity building that are aligned to district tenets for high quality instruction;
 - Creating a structure and system to provide in-class coaching support;
- Create a pathway for teacher leadership through Lead Teacher positions and the addition of Literacy and STEM Instructional Coaching positions;
- Strengthen the teacher evaluation process and professional learning culture by:
 - Developing capacity for administrators to assess high quality instruction;
 - Developing a system for timely evaluation sessions and feedback for teachers;
 - and
 - Improving the onboarding process for new hires, including a mentorship program and professional learning opportunities.

Academics:

- Implement a rigorous curriculum that is aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards, including a common curriculum map and curriculum implementation guides;
- Utilize i-Ready as the universal diagnostic assessment for math and reading to identify student strengths and learning needs;
- Contract with SERC to develop a system and structures for academic intervention, data review and analysis, and the development of SRBI plans for academics, attendance, and behavior; and
- Hire a Reading Interventionist, Math Interventionist, and four tutors to ensure a robust SRBI model is in place with targeted instruction and data to drive the process.

Culture and Climate:

- Develop a strong, student-centered culture with a deep understanding of students' academic, social and emotional needs, a shared sense of responsibility and accountability, and a learning environment rooted in community connectedness. Development of adult beliefs and mindset will be supported by professional learning on the Developmental Relationships Framework;
- Utilize the PBIS model as the foundation for clear, school-wide expectations of student conduct and behavior. Implementation will be supported by the addition of a PBIS Coach and contracting with SERC to provide training and technical assistance; and
- Promote positive relationships and connectedness including:
 - Monthly Community Meetings, daily student-led video broadcasts, and a school store;
 - Establishing student leadership programs such as student ambassadors, Link Crew, Best Buddies and Unified Sports; and
 - Engaging families as partners in their children's learning by developing strategies for family engagement and communication, including updating the school website, establishing a family resource room, and increasing opportunities for family involvement.

Operations:

- Contract for technical assistance to revise the master school schedule in PowerSchool to allow for greater flexibility of student scheduling;
- Create school structures and systems that maximize instructional time and create extended learning opportunities; and
- Create clubs and after school activities for students.

The CSDE shall make a final determination regarding the allocation of funds, following the Turnaround Plan's approval by the State Board of Education. The Turnaround Office will collaborate with district leadership and the Turnaround Committee to prioritize expenditures identified through the planning process.

Through this budgeting process, DMS will work to evaluate and repurpose existing funding streams (e.g., local, state, federal, and grants) to support Network reform efforts and foster long-term sustainability. Funding for DMS is contingent upon the availability of funds and will be based on the transformative potential of the Turnaround Plan, as well as the size of the school.

DMS will benefit from increased flexibility and additional resources in exchange for heightened accountability. Over the course of the school's participation in the Network, the Commissioner and/or CSDE Turnaround Office will review: (a) school progress relative to implementation of the Turnaround Plan and annual plan amendments; and (b) school performance relative to identified goals and leading and lagging performance metrics. DMS will participate in periodic monitoring sessions, including school and classroom walkthroughs, progress monitoring, NetStat sessions, and annual school audits. In addition, the CSDE will provide ongoing support and technical assistance to support DMS through site visits and targeted support based on the Turnaround Plan.

Recommendation with Conditions

I recommend that the Board approve the Network Plan for DMS, which would be subject to the successful completion of the following items:

1. By September 30, 2020, DPS shall commit to specific transformation expectations outlined here in the areas of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations as part of participation in the Commissioner's Network.
2. The Superintendent, on behalf of the DMS Turnaround Committee, shall submit plan amendments to the CSDE Turnaround Office on an annual basis in the spring, following school audits, detailing proposed strategies, budget requests, and implementation timelines for the following school year. The Commissioner or his designee may reconvene the Turnaround Committee to consider annual plan amendments, as appropriate and necessary. If the Turnaround Committee does not enact plan amendments or if the amendments are unlikely to result in sufficient progress or adequately address implementation concerns, the Commissioner may take appropriate actions to ensure sufficient progress at DMS, including, but not limited to, developing a revised Turnaround Plan and/or exercising any and all authorities prescribed in C.G.S. Section 10-223h.
3. DMS shall comply with all fiscal and programmatic reviews, provide any information requested by the CSDE in a timely manner, and report progress against goals and metrics in the format and frequency established by the CSDE.

Materials

Please see enclosed:

1. DMS Audit Report resulting from the Operations and Instructional Audit conducted on October 7, 2019.

2. Turnaround Plan developed and agreed to by the Turnaround Committee.

Prepared by: Jennifer Webb
Education Consultant, Turnaround Office

Approved by: Lisa Lamenzo
Division Director, Turnaround Office

Commissioner's Network Operations and Instructional Audit Report

Derby Middle School
Derby Public Schools
October 7, 2019



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Part I: Introduction

On May 23, 2019, the Commissioner initially selected Derby Middle School to participate in the Commissioner's Network, pending legislative authority to extend and expand the Commissioner's Network to include a ninth cohort of schools. Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) § 10-223h(b), the Derby Board of Education established the Turnaround Committee. On October 7, 2019, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) conducted, in consultation with the board of education, the Derby Middle School Governance Council, and the Turnaround Committee, an operations and instructional audit of the school in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-223h(c). The purpose of this report is to present the findings of the audit.

The audit team would like to express its sincere appreciation to the Derby Middle School community for its hospitality on the day of the school visit. We appreciate the openness and transparency demonstrated by members of the school community. There is a willingness and desire on the part of the staff, parents, students, and community partners to improve the school.

Commissioner's Network Overview

The Commissioner's Network is a commitment between local stakeholders and the CSDE to dramatically improve student achievement in up to 25 schools. The Network offers new resources and authorities to empower teachers and school leaders to implement research-based strategies in schools selected by the Commissioner. Network schools remain part of their local school districts, but the districts and the CSDE secure school-level flexibility and autonomy for the schools in exchange for heightened accountability. Schools are accepted into the Network for a minimum of three years. Subsection (h) of C.G.S. 10-223h establishes that the Connecticut State Board of Education may allow schools to continue in the Commissioner's Network for an additional year, not to exceed two additional years, if necessary. At present, 8 Cohort (IV, V, VI, VII, VIII) schools are participating in the Commissioner's Network.

Network schools make targeted investments in the following areas:

- **Talent:** Employ systems and strategies to recruit, hire, develop, evaluate, and retain excellent school leaders, teachers, and support staff.
- **Academics:** Design and implement a rigorous, aligned, and engaging academic program that allows all students to achieve at high levels.
- **Culture and Climate:** Foster a positive learning environment that supports high-quality teaching and learning, and engages families and the community as partners in the educational process.
- **Operations:** Create systems and processes that promote organizational efficiency and effectiveness, including through the use of time and financial resources.

As part of the operations and instructional audit, auditors identify school strengths and weaknesses in the areas of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations. Audits are conducted by impartial and experienced educators who produce unbiased and objective reports supporting school planning and transformation efforts.

Operations and Instructional Audit Overview

Pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-223h(c), the operations and instructional audit shall determine the extent to which the school:

- (1) Has established a strong family and community connection to the school.
- (2) Has a positive school environment, as evidenced by a culture of high expectations and a safe and orderly workplace, and has addressed other nonacademic factors that impact student achievement, such as students' social, emotional, arts, cultural, recreational and health needs.
- (3) Has effective leadership, as evidenced by the school principal's performance appraisals, track record in improving student achievement, ability to lead turnaround efforts, and managerial skills and authority in the areas of scheduling, staff management, curriculum implementation and budgeting.
- (4) Has effective teachers and support staff, as evidenced by performance evaluations, policies to retain staff determined to be effective and who have the ability to be successful in the turnaround effort, policies to prevent ineffective teachers from transferring to the schools, and job-embedded, ongoing professional development informed by the teacher evaluation and support programs that are tied to teacher and student needs.
- (5) Uses time effectively, as evidenced by the redesign of the school day, week, or year to include additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration.
- (6) Has a curriculum and instructional program that is based on student needs, is research-based, rigorous and aligned with state academic content standards, and serves all children, including students at every achievement level.
- (7) Uses data to inform decision-making and for continuous improvement, including by providing time for collaboration on the use of data.

Audit Process and Methodology

The operations and instructional audit involves three phases of data collection and review:

- (1) The CSDE obtains and auditors review school artifacts, data, and documentation to gain a better understanding of the school's history and context. The CSDE collaborates with school and district leaders to administer a teacher survey.
- (2) The auditors conduct a school site visit to observe school systems and classrooms, and meet with members of the school community. During the on-site visit, auditors conduct interviews and focus groups with a representative set of school and community stakeholders, including school and district administrators, staff, students, family members, community partners, and members of the School Governance Council and Turnaround Committee.

- (3) The auditors synthesize and use all available data to generate the operations and instructional audit report, identifying strengths and growth areas around talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations.

Please note that while this Audit Report identifies areas for improvement, it does not prescribe interventions or offer recommendations. The Turnaround Committee is responsible for developing a Turnaround Plan that addresses the deficiencies identified in the audit.

Part II: School Information

Derby Middle School serves 347 Grade 6 through Grade 8 students in Derby. Approximately 17 percent of the students are Black and 33 percent of the students are Hispanic. Twenty-one percent of the students are identified as needing special education services, and 0.08 percent are English learners. Seventy-two percent of the students in the school are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Student achievement at Derby Middle School is well below state averages in all grade levels and subject areas tested. The current principal is in her second year at Derby Middle School having previously served as an assistant principal, athletic director, special education director, and special education teacher within the district.

School Data Profile

The following chart provides a summary of Derby Middle School's current and historic data, including information about student enrollment and demographics, personnel, school climate, school performance, and student academic achievement. All data below is self-reported except where indicated with **.

Enrollment Data (2019-20):				
Grades:	6-8	5-Yr Enrollment Trend:		+2.3%
Student Enrollment:	347	Mobility Rate:		17.5%
Personnel Data (2019-20):				
# of Administrators:	2	% of Teachers “Below Standard”:		0
# of Teachers:	27.5	% of Teachers “Developing”:		10
# of Support Staff:	2	% of Teachers “Proficient”:		87
# of Psychologists:	0.5	% of Teachers “Exemplary”:		3
# of Social Workers:	1	3-yr Teacher Retention Rate:		64%
School Day Per Year (2019-20):				
Total # of Student Days Per Year:	183	Instructional Minutes/Day:		360
Total # of Teacher Days Per Year:	186	Extended Day Program:		No
Student Demographic Breakdown (2019-20):				
% Black:	17.0	% Male:		50.7
% Hispanic:	33.1	% Female:		49.3
% White:	41.5	% EL:		0.08
% Other:	8.4	% Students with disabilities:		20.75
% F/R Meals:	71.8			
School Climate Data:	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
Student Attendance Rate:	94.0%	94.7%	94.0%	94.6%
Chronic Absenteeism Rate**:	13.2%	13.2%	14.2%	12.6%

Suspension Rate**:	20.8%	24.3%	23.4%	NA
Teacher Attendance Rate:	95.9%	95.1%	94.2%	92.3%
School Performance Index**:	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
SPI:	54.6	53.7	54.5	NA
Smarter Balanced Assessment Level 3 and 4 Data**:	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
Grade 3 – Reading				
Grade 4 – Reading				
Grade 5 – Reading				
Grade 6 – Reading	25.9%	24.0%	27.2%	26.0%
Grade 7 – Reading	28.4%	*	46.5%	*
Grade 8 – Reading	40.4%	26.4%	38.8%	33%
Grade 3 – Math				
Grade 4 – Math				
Grade 5 – Math				
Grade 6 – Math	20.5%	24.0%	18.4%	19.5%
Grade 7 – Math	11.1%	*	21.6%	*
Grade 8 – Math	15.6%	10.4%	17.4%	20%

* Data suppressed to ensure confidentiality.

NA = Data is not yet available.

Part III: Audit Findings

Part III of the Audit Report provides a summative analysis of audit findings in the areas of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations.

Talent				
Indicator:	1	2	3	4
1.1. Instructional practice		✓		
1.2. Evaluation and professional culture		✓		
1.3. Recruitment and retention strategies		✓		
1.4. Professional development		✓		
1.5. Leadership effectiveness		✓		
1.6. Instructional leadership		✓		

Summary of Growth Areas:

Instructional Practice

The Next Generation Accountability indicator for ELA Performance has shown limited growth over time as the rate slightly increased from 55.4 in 2015-16 to 56.1 in 2017-18. The Math Performance Index is static at a rate of 47.3 over three years. Forty-three percent of survey respondents agree that “instructional quality and academic rigor are consistently high at this school.” The audit team observed 19 randomly selected classrooms across grade levels and content areas. Auditors saw primarily teacher-led lessons with low levels of rigor, limited student discourse and small group instruction, a lack of differentiation, and surface level questioning. District leadership expressed that teachers need “additional support and practice” in effective teaching practices. School leadership described instructional practice as “improving,” noting that with a formalized curriculum being rolled out there are resources supporting accessibility for all students and collaborative components built in. Student performance on Smarter Balanced Assessments are significantly lagging behind state averages. While math proficiency scores have shown some growth increasing from 15.9% in 2015-16 to 20.4% in 2018-19, ELA scores have trended downward over time from 31.4% in 2015-16 to 28.4% in 2018-19.

Professional Culture

School leadership reports that “professional culture is changing. Historically, there were low expectations for adults” which was evidenced through a “lack of plans for the substitute when a teacher was absent... and poor participation in professional development.” The leadership team expressed that “There is evidence of emerging growth in professional culture, but we’re not doing enough yet.” The school leadership focus group relayed that “Two groups are emerging - one that sees this initiative as a catalyst to improve and the other group is wondering what’s going on and why.” The principal described a shift in school culture, in part

due to staffing changes in which people “not productive or willing to be assets for the direction we are headed were removed.” Derby Middle School “is now a group of people who work together.”

The teacher evaluation process is described as “a work in progress” by school leadership. On the teacher survey, 60% (N=17) of teachers strongly agreed or agreed that “administrators provide regular, helpful, and actionable feedback to staff.” Teachers and leadership both agree that the formal evaluation process is clear and follows a specific timeline. Informal walkthroughs have become more frequent this year, but teacher focus group members report that feedback is inconsistent. The superintendent voiced concerns with the teacher evaluation process as “the intent is not getting us the outcomes we desired.” This is supported by low student achievement on state assessments.

Recruitment and Retention

Derby Middle School has a 3-year teacher retention rate of 64%. School and district leadership report that strategic and intentional changes were made in order to best match teacher effectiveness and needs. Currently, there is one open position for a special education teacher. Teachers report that contributing factors to low teacher attendance last year were feelings of being “overworked due to no team time and covering classes” as well as a “lack of support from administrators.” Teacher focus group members shared that there appears to be a change in approach this year with the addition of common planning time each day with team members and increased support and recognition from administration. While the support of new teachers is a concern for the teacher focus group as they report that “we don’t support new teachers because we don’t have time” and a novice teacher shared that “no one mentioned TEAM to me or gave me support with it”, district leadership shared a comprehensive plan to support new teachers including year-long Peer Learning Network Sessions for Beginning Teachers, sharing of resources and supports through the CSDE Talent Office, and communications of supports for beginning teachers through the district newsletter. District administration stated that the “talent that has left Derby Middle School is attributable to the culture and climate of the building. We have made changes...with more appropriate personnel fits.”

Professional Development (PD)

Teacher survey results demonstrate that 39% (N=11) of teachers positively responded to the statement that “the professional development I received this year has improved my professional practice and allowed me to better meet the needs of my students.” Teacher focus group participants report a gap “between what the [Professional Development Advisory Committee] PEDAC agrees to at the meetings and what actually happens for professional learning.” Teachers report that the approach has changed from past years, but they do not have a yearly calendar developed that outlines professional learning session topics in advance. Administration reports that changes were instituted this year and teachers “are getting used to the way PD is delivered.” Topics are decided on a monthly basis and mandatory trainings were moved to a web-based platform so teachers could engage in the content during their planning time in order to free up time for more school and content based trainings. District leadership shared that “there needs to be a change in how PD is perceived. We provide a lot of one-to-one embedded coaching that sometimes people don’t associate with professional learning.”

Leadership Effectiveness

The School Performance Index has remained essentially static over time, decreasing 0.1 percentage points over three years to a current index score of 54.5. On a teacher survey administered prior to the audit site visit, 79% of teachers strongly agreed/agreed on the survey that “school leadership effectively communicates a clear mission, vision and set of school wide priorities,” yet teacher and parent focus group participants struggled to define the specific strategic priorities of the school. All agreed there is a sense of urgency to improve the school. Eighty-two percent of teacher survey respondents agreed that “I am professionally respected and supported by the leadership team.” Teacher focus group participants shared that one of the school’s greatest strengths is the school principal as “she is positive and energetic” and “has great

relationships with students and families and it motivates teachers to live up to that example.” Parent focus group participants also praised the principal’s responsiveness to any concerns and her friendly, engaging demeanor.

Instructional Leadership

The Derby Middle School leadership currently consists of the building principal that is in her second year in the role. Although there are plans to hire an assistant principal, the superintendent stated “the right fit” hasn’t been found yet and they are continuing to post the position and review potential candidates. The superintendent shared that the principal is supported by district level personnel such as the Director of Teaching and Learning with respect to instruction and the Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment’s “persistence regarding curriculum expectations” supports the principal so “she is free to focus on relationships and operations.” On a teacher survey administered prior to the audit site visit, responses to the survey statement “there is a common vision of what effective instruction looks like at this school,” were mixed. While 50% strongly agree/agree, 35% strongly disagree/disagree and 14% are neutral. Although teacher focus group participants agree that there is “definitely a sense of urgency” to improve Derby Middle School, teachers struggled to provide a clear definition of the school’s vision regarding what effective instruction looks like, with much hesitation before a response was shared. Teachers did articulate that current leadership wants to see “kids actively engaged, small group instruction, active listening, sharing out,” another shared that “in years past the focus was on survival. Now things are starting to come into focus, but we’re not all the way there yet.”

Academics				
Indicator:	1	2	3	4
2.1. Academic rigor		✓		
2.2. Student engagement		✓		
2.3. Differentiation and checking for understanding	✓			
2.4. Curriculum and instruction aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards		✓		
2.5. Supports for special populations		✓		
2.6. Assessment system and data culture	✓			

Summary of Growth Areas:

Academic rigor and Differentiation

Forty-three percent of survey respondents agree that “instructional quality and academic rigor are consistently high at this school” and 53% agree that “teachers at this school engage students in higher-order thinking and push them toward content mastery.” Teacher focus group participants report that the school is not meeting academic standards for rigor outlined by the Common Core and share that the new curriculum “has no differentiation and we have to figure it out.” Teachers and leaders recognize the need to adjust the curriculum to fit the needs of the students at Derby. District leadership agree that the new resources selected are rigorous in nature, but “we must stay in contact with teachers who are struggling so they don’t ‘de-rigorize’ it. Some teachers are uncomfortable about the rigor and the fact that it takes longer to get

through the content. Pacing is a remaining issue.” During classroom walkthroughs when auditors looked for evidence of instructional rigor and differentiation such as student-focused instruction, opportunities for student-to-student discourse, small group instruction and higher-order questioning, the evidence was insufficient. In only five of the 19 observed classrooms were students involved in any collaborative learning, but it was mainly parallel independent work with group seating rather than interactive group learning. Only two observed classrooms provided small group instruction. In the majority of the observed classrooms, higher-order Depth of Knowledge questioning was lacking and remained at the surface level. Student voice was also limited to call-and-response to teacher questioning and student discourse to reveal reasoning and evidence was not observed.

Smarter Balanced proficiency levels at Derby Middle School, as shown in the chart below, are significantly below the state and district averages for both ELA and Math.

Percent Proficiency (Levels 3+)				
2018-19 SBAC	State Average	District Average	Derby Middle	Difference between State and School Averages
ELA	55.7%	36.1%	28.4%	-27.3
Math	48.1%	32.1%	20.4%	-27.7

Average Percent of Growth Target Achieved				
2018-19 SBAC	State Average	District Average	Derby Middle	Difference between State and School Averages
ELA	59.9%	48.8%	39.8%	-20.1 pts.
Math	62.5%	55.7%	42.6%	-19.9 pts.

Student Engagement

In response to the survey statement that “students are engaged in their classes,” results were mixed. While 43% agreed, 29% disagreed and 28% were neutral. Auditors observed mainly passive engagement in which students listened to teacher directions and were on-task with classroom work, however, meaningful student engagement was lacking. School and district leadership, as well as teacher focus groups, also characterize student engagement as being low. Teacher focus group participants equated engagement with behaving, supporting the perception that further professional development is required to understand authentic engagement. Teacher focus group participants specified that “All of us here are very engaging. I see some students behave for some teachers they have relationships with.” Four out of six student focus group participants reported being “bored” in class due to “pacing that is too slow” and teachers that “talk and talk and don’t let us work together and learn together.”

Curriculum and instruction aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards

While only thirty-seven percent (N=10) of Derby Middle School staff reported on the teacher survey that “the school has curricula for all grade levels and content areas aligned to the current content standards,” teachers, school leaders, and district leaders focus groups all report that, as of this school year, all core content areas have curricula that is aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards or other relevant content standards. Teacher focus groups revealed that while professional development sessions focus on implementation of the new curriculum, little time is spent on instructional strategies that support rigorous instruction. While teachers believe they have high expectations for their students, there is limited evidence from auditor

observations to support that instruction is rigorous. Pacing of instruction was also revealed as a concern as one teacher expressed that the “new curriculum has too much content and we don’t have enough time to cover it. We’re a month into school and I’m only on lesson 6.”

Supports for Special Populations

Derby Middle School has 20.7% of students identified as receiving special education services with 3 special education teachers on staff with caseloads of approximately 22 students. Responses to the survey statement that “the school adequately meets the needs of its special education students and English Learners” were divided. While 50% of teachers agreed, 43% disagreed and 7% were neutral. The principal shared that special education programming includes smaller instruction classes for reading and math and a learning center has been added this year for students with behavioral needs. Teacher focus groups stated that “we often don’t meet their needs. Service hours may not be getting met because paras are often pulled.” Teachers also shared that lack of consistency in programming from elementary to middle and then to high school is viewed as “disruptive” as transitioning from the elementary school learning centers to mainstream classrooms at the middle school is “ineffective.” Derby Middle School needs further development in creating an organizational culture that is inclusive and committed to all students learning at a high level.

Assessment System and Data Culture

Fifty-seven percent of survey respondents agreed that “this school has a comprehensive assessment system to measure student progress, identify necessary interventions, and provide teachers with data to inform instruction.” Although Derby Middle School has benchmark assessments in place, with a change this year from NWEA MAP to iReady, data collection is just the first step. While 54% of teachers surveyed support that “teachers at this school use student assessment data to check for understanding to differentiate instruction,” teacher focus groups revealed that teachers rarely meet to discuss and analyze data in order to make improvements to instruction.

Derby Middle school also lacks cohesive and systemic SRBI protocols and interventions to support struggling learners. Conflicting information was provided from teachers and leadership as to whether interventions were provided with teachers stating a process was not in place while leadership identified that a reading teacher and math tutors work with small groups. Though the school has benchmark assessments, the data is not utilized to determine intervention placement and programming. District leadership reports that “the model for intervention is changing” and “full support is not yet in place because they are still testing. The role of the interventionist is not formalized. We anticipate the program will be in place in late October.” The school lacks a focus on prevention and early intervention in regard to academic and behavioral supports, evidenced by a lack of differentiated instruction in Tier 1 classrooms and an absence of Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention strategies and programs that are monitored for effectiveness and fidelity.

Culture and Climate				
Indicator:	1	2	3	4
3.1. School environment			✓	
3.2. Student attendance			✓	
3.3. Student behavior	✓			
3.4. Interpersonal interactions		✓		
3.5. Family and community engagement		✓		
3.6. Community partners and wraparound strategy			✓	

Summary of Strengths:

School Environment

Thirty-seven percent (N=10) of the teacher survey responses support that “the school environment is conducive to high-quality teaching and learning.” Derby Middle School has taken steps to create a safe, clean, and welcoming environment that has engaging visuals that identify school values and inspirational quotes such as “Attendance Matters” and “#WeAreDMS”, though they are primarily on the main school floor. Classroom observations reveal classrooms that are clean, but with limited visual supports related to current instructional content. Some student work is displayed in the hallways and classrooms, but large expanses of the building are devoid of any celebrations of student work or achievement. The principal shared that an upcoming project engaging families is planned to create murals in the hallways. It is evident that students and staff take pride in the school as evidenced by auditors witnessing students picking up food items that had spilled in the hallway without any adult direction. Parent focus group members shared that they believe the school environment is “welcoming...and intimate. It feels like a family.” Families, students, and teachers shared the increased social media presence communicating current happenings at the school. Of note, the principal moved her office out of the main office suite into a classroom location and has created a welcoming and visually stimulating environment that others can emulate.

Student Attendance

The percentage of students chronically absent has shown improvement, decreasing from 14.2% in 2017-18 to 12.6% in 2018-19, yet it is still above the state and district rates. Derby Middle School has an attendance team consisting of the principal, social worker, guidance counselors, and culture and climate specialist that currently meet monthly, with a plan to increase to bi-weekly as the year progresses. Leadership reports that staff are more aware of who is in attendance, and when a student is absent the outreach is immediate. Teachers report a “shift to improve attendance by working with parents to help them understand the importance of school attendance.” Parent focus group members agreed that “sending our kids to school every day is important. If my child is out, I get a phone call right away.” The school implements several strategies focusing on attendance including participation in the CSDE Community of Practice sessions, posters throughout the school encouraging attendance, monthly attendance awards, as well as speakers and field trips to incentivize students coming to school.

Community Partners and Wraparound Strategy

Focus groups revealed that Derby Middle School has fostered positive partnerships with community groups. These partnerships include the Derby Police Department and Parent/Family Resource Center, in which officers come into schools to interact with students and foster relationships, United Way, and the Boys & Girls Club, and wellness is supported by VITALS, a community health-based organization. There is also a school community liaison from the Derby Bureau of Youth Services that helps with services for families, conducts home visits, and connects them to resources as needed. Focus groups shared that a more consistent and coordinated effort between community partners would be beneficial.

Summary of Growth Areas:

Student Behavior

Seventy-one percent of teachers disagreed with the survey statement that “the school implements an effective school wide behavior management system.” Derby Middle School’s suspension rate in 2017-18 was 23.4%, well above the state average of 6.8%. The principal reports that in the previous year many students were walking out of classrooms and physical altercations were an issue, but structures have been put in place at the start of this school year to address those concerns. Student focus group participants revealed a need to address behaviors. Teacher focus group participants shared that “there is no behavioral system in place here. We used to be PBIS [Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports] and then we moved to Restorative Practices, but there was not enough training and people started making up their own rules.” Two grade levels in the school utilize a strike system. Due to a lack of a consistent school-wide systemic approach to behavior and discipline, students report they “don’t know what is expected of them” and would like “the teachers to follow-up with their consequences.” Teachers report that “this year we are trying to be more consistent and clear with expectations...we feel like we’re working toward a common goal now” and “discipline is not so haphazard this year.” District leadership expressed a need for “behavioral interventions to be in place so kids don’t need to be sent out of the room and miss instruction.” A new “Derby Stars” initiative, in which positive behavior is highlighted and student attendance is celebrated, was started in September. Students shared that they enjoy the recognition in which they receive a special breakfast, choose a reward such as extra time outside, and have additional incentives such attending sporting events for free and can participate in pep rallies at the high school. District leadership agree that “behaviors are now being addressed in a more supportive and immediate way.”

Interpersonal Interactions

In response to the statement “Interactions between students and staff are positive and respectful,” 37% of survey participants agreed. District leadership reports that the school has had a series of leaders, over 10 individuals in the past 7 years, which has caused issues with respect to daily operations of the school and feelings of connectedness by students and staff, although “a feeling of community is starting to emerge now under this administration.” Leadership reports that “some teachers are still struggling with the culture and climate in their classrooms. It’s improving, but slowly.” The auditors observed positive interactions between staff and students at the start of the school day as students were greeted as they entered school by the principal and several staff members and teachers had warm conversations with students about events from the previous night. Although the principal shared that advisory occurs on a bi-weekly basis and the curriculum was provided through Southern Connecticut University, teacher and student focus groups report that advisory time is not effective and is not focused on building positive relationships. Students report advisory was changed this year “because students were getting

low grades so now we do a lot of test prep.” Parent focus group members shared, “the data is not so great, but the school makes kids feel at home.”

Family and Community Engagement

Teachers expressed that family engagement is relatively low. Teacher survey data supports this as only 14% agreed with the statement “Families are engaged in the school.” Currently, the school is lacking a parent organization, though several members of the parent focus group expressed interest in re-starting one at Derby Middle School. Teachers report that families are involved through “sporting events, parent teacher conferences, Open House, and informational meetings.” Parent focus group members express satisfaction with the communication they receive from administration and teachers, sharing that they reach out by telephone, postcards, and emails to share positive happenings and concerns and there is an active social media presence on Twitter. While relationships have improved, parents would like to see greater involvement by other parents and increased attendance at events.

Operations				
Indicator:	1	2	3	4
4.1. Adequate instructional time		✓		
4.2. Use of instructional time		✓		
4.3. Use of staff time		✓		
4.4. Routines and transitions			✓	

Summary of Strengths:

Routines and Transitions

Sixty-seven percent (N=16) of teachers agreed with the survey statement that “the school has clear routines and procedures in place that are consistently followed by students and staff to help create a smooth and orderly environment.” Auditors observed beginning of the school day and lunch transitions in which operations were efficient and systems and structures were in place to maintain a peaceful environment. Teachers and students report the middle school hallways to be less orderly, but expected conduct is generally understood by students as evidenced by a lack of need for constant reminders and teacher presence was evident during transition times.

Summary of Growth Areas:

Instructional Time

Sixty-seven percent (N=18) of survey respondents agree that the school schedule and calendar maximize instructional time. Students receive 90 minutes of English language arts instruction and 45 minutes of math instruction daily. As noted previously, students would benefit from increased intervention time. The current schedule does not include opportunities for an intervention/enrichment period during the daily schedules; therefore, students receiving interventions do so in lieu of other coursework. Teacher focus group members also expressed a desire for additional specials/unified arts offerings as “we don’t have enough options for students.” In response to the statement “Teachers are adept at managing and maximizing instructional time

within the classroom,” 61% of teachers agreed. The audit team observed loss of instructional time in many classrooms due to poor pacing, limited student engagement, and missed opportunities for interactive learning.

Use of Staff Time

Teachers express a need for collaboration time in order to develop instructional plans and materials and review data. Twenty-one percent (N=6) of teachers agreed that “teachers have enough time to work with each other to develop instructional materials, review student data, and improve instruction.” While school leadership reports issues trying to find common planning time, administration is working with PowerSchool in reviewing the schedule in order to accommodate this need. The principal also shared that she is “constantly looking for ways to be more effective with scheduling.” Though teachers have a daily common planning time with their grade-level team as well as a personal preparation period, due to scheduling difficulties teachers do not meet with their content area colleagues to develop instructional plans and align content instruction. Teachers report that there is also no time for vertical collaboration.

APPENDIX A: OPERATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONAL AUDIT RUBRIC

TALENT				
Indicator	1-Below Standard	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Exemplary
1.1. Instructional Practice	Teacher effectiveness is inconsistent and highly variable from classroom to classroom. There are significant concerns about instruction. Staffing decisions do not reflect teacher effectiveness and student needs.	Instructional quality is moderate; however, teacher effectiveness is variable from classroom to classroom. Staffing decisions do not always reflect teacher effectiveness and student needs.	Most classes are led by effective educators, and instructional quality is strong. There are some systems in place to promote and develop teacher effectiveness and make appropriate staffing decisions.	100% of classes are led by deeply passionate and highly effective educators. There are strong systems in place to promote staff efficacy and make staffing decisions driven exclusively by student needs.
1.2. Evaluation and Professional Culture	There are significant concerns about staff professionalism. Staff come to school unprepared, and there is little sense of personal responsibility. There is a culture of low expectations; individuals are not accountable for their work. Evaluations are infrequent, and few if any staff were formally evaluated 3 or more times in 2018-19. Instructional leaders do not provide regular feedback to staff.	There are some concerns about professionalism. Some staff come to school unprepared. Some teachers feel responsible for their work. Some teachers were formally evaluated at least 3 times in 2018-19, but most were not. Leaders communicate some expectations for and feedback on performance, but do not consistently follow-up to see whether or not the feedback is acted upon.	The school is a professional work environment. Most staff are prepared to start the school day on time with appropriate instructional materials ready to go. Most individuals feel responsible for their work. Most teachers were formally evaluated at least 3 times in 2018-19 in alignment with SEED expectations. Leaders provide feedback and hold individuals accountable for effort and results.	100% of staff are prepared to start the school day on time with appropriate instructional materials ready to go. The vast majority of staff feel deep personal responsibility to do their best work. All teachers were formally evaluated at least 3 times in 2018-19. Leaders conduct frequent informal evaluations and provide meaningful feedback. Individuals are held accountable for their performance.
1.3. Recruitment and Retention Strategies	The school and/or district lack systems to recruit and attract top talent. Retention of high-quality staff is a significant concern. The school lacks systems and strategies to retain top teachers and leaders.	The school and/or district have components of a plan for recruitment and retention of quality educators (e.g., mentoring, induction). The plan is not fully developed or consistently implemented.	The school and/or district have systems for strategic recruitment and retention. Efforts are made to match the most effective educators to the students with the greatest needs. Retention of high-quality teachers is high.	The school and/or district effectively implement a long-term plan for recruitment and retention. Efforts are made to match the most effective educators to the students with the greatest needs. Deliberate, successful efforts are made to retain top talent.
1.4. Professional Development	Professional Development (PD) opportunities are infrequent and/or of inconsistent quality and relevance. PD does not align to staff's development areas and/or students' needs. As a result, teachers struggle to implement PD strategies. There is no clear process to support or hold teachers accountable for the implementation of PD strategies.	PD opportunities are provided; however, they are not always tightly aligned with student and adult learning needs. The quality of PD opportunities is inconsistent. Sometimes, teachers report that PD improves their instructional practices. Teachers are not generally held accountable for implementing skills learned through PD.	The school offers targeted, job-embedded PD throughout the school year. PD is generally connected to student needs and staff growth areas identified through observations. Most teachers feel PD opportunities help them improve their classroom practices. Most teachers are able to translate and incorporate PD strategies into their daily instruction.	The school consistently offers rich and meaningful PD opportunities that are aligned to student needs and staff growth areas identified through observations. Teachers effectively translate PD strategies into their daily instruction. The school has a process for monitoring and supporting the implementation of PD strategies.
1.5. Leadership Effectiveness	Leadership fails to convey a school mission or strategic direction. The school team is stuck in a fire-fighting	The mission and strategic direction are not well communicated. A school improvement plan does not	Leadership focuses on school mission and strategic direction with staff, students, and families. The school is	Leadership focuses on school mission and strategic direction with staff, students, and families. The school has

TALENT				
Indicator	1-Below Standard	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Exemplary
	or reactive mode, lacks school goals, and/or suffers from initiative fatigue. The school community questions whether the school can/will improve.	consistently guide daily activities and decision-making. The community generally understands the need for change, however actions are more often governed by the status quo.	implementing a solid improvement plan and has a clear set of measurable goals. The plan may lack coherence and a strategy for sustainability. Leadership conveys urgency.	a manageable set of goals and a clear set of strategies to achieve those goals. The plan is being implemented and monitored with fidelity. Leadership conveys deep urgency.
1.6. Instructional Leadership	Few staff can articulate a common understanding of what excellent instruction looks like. Instructional leaders do not demonstrate a commitment to developing consistent and high-quality instructional practice school-wide.	Some staff can articulate a common understanding of what effective instruction looks like. School norms and expectations are enforced with limited consistency. Instructional leaders demonstrate some commitment to improving instructional practice school-wide.	Most staff articulates a common understanding of what effective instruction looks like. School norms and expectations are consistently enforced. Instructional leaders consistently demonstrate a commitment to improving instructional practice school-wide.	All staff articulates a common understanding of what effective instruction looks like. Educators relentlessly pursue excellent pedagogy. Instructional leaders have communicated and enforced high expectations school-wide.

ACADEMICS				
Indicator	1-Below Standard	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Exemplary
2.1. Academic Rigor^{*1}	Most observed lessons are teacher led. Teachers rarely engage students in higher-order thinking. Most students demonstrate a surface-level understanding of concepts. Observed lessons are indicative of low expectations and little sense of urgency.	Some observed lessons are somewhat student-centered, challenging and engaging. Teachers engage students in some higher-order thinking. Many students demonstrate only a surface-level understanding of concepts. Teachers demonstrate moderate expectations and some urgency.	Observed lessons are appropriately accessible and challenging for most students. Teachers engage students in higher-order thinking, and students are pushed toward content mastery. Lessons begin to engage students as self-directed learners. Teachers communicate solid expectations.	All observed lessons are appropriately accessible and challenging. Teachers push students, promoting academic risk-taking. Students are developing the capacity to engage in complex content and pose higher-level questions to the teacher and peers. Teachers promote high expectations.
2.2. Student Engagement[*]	Few students are actively engaged and excited about their work. The majority of students are engaged in off-task behaviors and some are disruptive to their classmates. Few students are truly involved in the lessons. Observed lessons primarily appeal to one learning style.	Some students exhibit moderate engagement, but many are engaged in off-task behaviors. Some observed lessons appeal to multiple learning styles. Students are involved in the lessons, but participation is more passive than active. Students are easily distracted from assigned tasks.	Most students are engaged and exhibit on-task behaviors. The observed lessons appeal to multiple learning styles. Students are involved in the lesson, but participation is, at times, more passive than active. A handful of students are easily distracted from the task at hand.	All students are visibly engaged, ready to learn, and on task. Students are clearly focused on learning in all classrooms. Students are actively engaged in the lessons and excited to participate in classroom dialogue and instruction. The lessons appeal to and seem to support all learning styles.
2.3. Differentiation and Checking for	Most teachers take a one-size-fits-all approach and struggle to differentiate their instruction to meet individual learning needs. There is no evidence	Some teachers are differentiating at least part of the observed lessons; however, the practice is not consistent or widespread. There is some	Most teachers employ strategies to tier or differentiate instruction at various points in the lesson. Most teachers use data or checks for	Teachers consistently and seamlessly differentiate instruction. Teachers use data and formal/informal strategies to gauge understanding, and

¹ Ratings for the four sub-indicators marked with an asterisk (*) are largely based on a composite or average score generated from all classroom observations.

ACADEMICS				
Indicator	1-Below Standard	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Exemplary
Under-standing*	around the use data to inform instruction and minimal efforts to check for student understanding.	evidence of the use of student data to adapt the learning process. Some teachers use strategies to monitor understanding.	understanding to differentiate the learning process on the fly. Teachers take time to support students struggling to engage with the content.	differentiate the learning process accordingly. Teaching feels individualized to meet students' unique needs.
2.4. Curriculum and Instruction Aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards	The school lacks a rigorous, standards-based curriculum that is aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards (CCS) and/or the curriculum is not being implemented with fidelity. As a result, pacing is inconsistent. The percentage of students at or above goal on state assessments is ≥ 10 points below the state average.	The school has curricula for some grades and content areas, some of which are rigorous, standards-based. Curricula are implemented with some fidelity. Teachers struggle with consistent pacing. The percentage of students at or above goal on state assessments is 6-10 points below the state average.	Rigorous, standards-based curricula exist for almost all grade levels and content areas, and are being implemented consistently across classrooms. Teachers demonstrate consistent pacing. The percentage of students at or above goal on state assessments is within 5 percentage points of the state average.	Rigorous, standards-based curricula exist for all grade levels and content areas. Curricula are aligned with the CCS and are being implemented with a high degree of fidelity throughout the school. The percentage of students at or above goal on state assessments meets or exceeds the state average.
2.5. Support for Special Populations	The school is inadequately meeting the needs of its high-needs students. IEP goals are not regularly met. Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) is not fully considered when making placements. The school lacks appropriate interventions and supports for ELs. There are significant achievement gaps between subgroups and non-identified students as measured by state assessments, and no evidence of progress.	The school typically meets the needs of its high-needs students. Most special education students meet their IEP goals, but LRE is not always considered when making placement determinations. The school typically meets the needs of its ELs, and attempts to track progress and set content and language mastery goals. There are significant gaps between subgroups and non-identified students as measured by state assessments and marginal progress over time.	The school consistently meets the needs of its high-needs students. Special education students regularly meet their IEP goals and LRE is a critical factor in placement determinations. The school meets the needs, tracks progress, and sets content and language mastery goals for all ELs. There are small gaps between subgroups and non-identified students as measured by state assessments, and some signs of progress toward closing the gaps.	The school is successfully closing the achievement gap for its high-needs students. General and special education teachers work collaboratively to support students. The school tracks the effectiveness of language acquisition instructional strategies and adjusts programming accordingly. There is no achievement gap between subgroups and non-identified students as measured by state assessments.
2.6. Assessment Systems and Data Culture	The school lacks a comprehensive assessment system (including summative and benchmark assessments). Teachers rarely collect, analyze, and/or discuss data. The school lacks or fails to implement SRBI protocols linking data to interventions.	The school has some consistent assessments; however, there are major gaps in certain grades and content areas. There are some efforts to collect and use data. SRBI systems and processes are somewhat present.	The school implements a clear system of benchmark assessments. Some teachers are developing familiarity with regularly using formative assessments to differentiate instruction. The school has emerging processes in place to use the data to inform interventions.	Teachers consistently administer assessments throughout the year. Assessments are standards-based and provide real-time data. Teachers embed formative assessments in their daily lessons. The school has strong processes to collect, analyze, and use data to inform interventions.

CULTURE AND CLIMATE				
Indicator	1-Below Standard	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Exemplary
3.1. School Environment	The school fails to create a welcoming and stimulating learning environment. Communal spaces and classrooms may be unkempt, rundown, unsafe, or sterile. Many classrooms are neither warm nor inviting and lack intellectual stimulation. Little to no student work or data is displayed to help convey a sense of pride and high expectations.	The school struggles to provide a welcoming environment conducive to high-quality teaching and learning. Large sections of the school are not clean, bright, welcoming, or reflective of student work. Though the school has some data and student work displayed, efforts to brand the school and convey high expectations are very minimal. Sections of the school need significant attention.	The school generally provides a welcoming learning environment. Most of the facility is in good repair and conducive to teaching and learning. Most classrooms and common spaces are bright and clean, displaying data and student work; however, some sections lack visual stimulation. The school has made an effort to foster school identity through branding and consistent messaging in classrooms and communal spaces.	The school provides a welcoming and stimulating learning environment. Common spaces and classrooms are bright, clean, welcoming, and conducive to high-quality teaching and learning. Data and student work are visible and present throughout the school, inspiring students and teachers to do their best work. There is clear branding and consistent messaging throughout the school, promoting school identity and pride.
3.2. Student Attendance	The school has few, if any, strategies to increase attendance. Average daily attendance is $\leq 88\%$ and/or chronic absenteeism is $> 20\%$.	The school has some strategies to increase attendance. Average daily attendance is $> 88\%$ and $\leq 93\%$ and/or chronic absenteeism is $> 15\%$ and $\leq 20\%$.	The school has multiple, effective strategies to increase attendance. Average daily attendance is $> 93\%$ and $\leq 97\%$ and/or chronic absenteeism is $> 10\%$ and $\leq 15\%$.	The school implements effective strategies to increase attendance and on-time arrival. Average daily attendance is $> 97\%$ and chronic absenteeism is $\leq 10\%$.
3.3. Student Behavior	A school-wide behavior management plan may exist, but there is little evidence of implementation. Student misbehavior is a significant challenge and creates regular distractions. Disciplinary approaches appear to be inconsistent; students and staff do not have a common understanding of behavioral expectations. Discipline is mostly punitive. The rate of suspensions/expulsions as a proportion of student enrollment is greater than 20% (total # 2018-19 incidents/total enrollment).	A school-wide behavior management plan is in place, and there are some signs of implementation. Student misbehavior is a challenge and creates frequent disruptions. There may be confusion among students and staff regarding behavioral expectations. Discipline is mostly punitive, and there is inconsistent reinforcement of desired behaviors. The rate of suspensions/expulsions as a proportion of student enrollment is between 15% and 20%.	A school-wide behavior management plan is in place and effectively implemented most of the time. Student behavior is under control. Misbehavior is infrequent with periodic distractions to instruction. Most students behave in a calm and respectful manner. Students and staff have a common understanding of the behavior policy. There is positive reinforcement of desired behaviors. The suspension/expulsion rate is between 10% and 14%.	A school-wide behavior management plan is consistently and effectively implemented. All students behave in a calm, orderly, and respectful manner throughout the school day. Classroom distractions are minimal, and immediately and appropriately addressed. Rewards and consequences are clear and appropriate, and are consistently applied across the school. The suspension/expulsion rate is $\leq 10\%$.
3.4. Interpersonal Interactions	There is a weak sense of community. The quality and types of student, adult, and student/adult interactions raise concerns. There are signs of divisiveness or hostility among students and with staff. There are minimal signs of connections between students and staff; interactions are	There is a moderate sense of community. Students are somewhat respectful toward one another and adults. There are some concerns around climate and tone. There is some teasing and divisiveness; however, it does not define school culture. Communication between	There is a good overall sense of community. Students are generally respectful toward one another and adults. Interactions are mostly positive. There is minimal teasing and divisiveness. Communication between students and staff is generally positive and respectful. There are signs of	There is a strong sense of community. Students are respectful and courteous of one another and adults. Student interactions are overwhelmingly positive and polite. The school is an inclusive and welcoming environment. Student/Adult interactions are positive and respectful, demonstrating

CULTURE AND CLIMATE				
Indicator	1-Below Standard	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Exemplary
	largely transactional or triggered when students are off task.	students and staff is somewhat positive. There are some connections between students and staff.	connections between students and staff. Most staff seem invested in their students.	strong relationships. Staff seems invested in the well-being and development of students.
3.5. Family and Community Engagement	The school offers infrequent opportunities to involve parents in the school community. Family involvement is minimal. Teachers rarely reach out to families regarding their child's academic progress.	The school offers several family events throughout the year. Roughly half of families participate in school activities. More than half of all teachers reach out to families regarding their child's academic progress.	The school offers periodic, meaningful opportunities for parents/families to engage in student's education. Most families participate in school activities. Most educators communicate regularly with families.	The school frequently engages parents/family as partners in student's education. Almost all families participate in school activities. Nearly all educators communicate with families on a regular basis.
3.6. Community Partners and Wraparound Strategy	The school offers inadequate supports to address students' nonacademic needs. There are limited wraparound services. The school makes little or no effort to engage community partners to expand services offered through the school.	The school offers some support to address students' nonacademic needs through wraparound services. Community and partner engagement is spotty and event-specific.	The school offers a range of wraparound services to address students' nonacademic needs. The school has several sustained community partnerships.	The school has a clear process for evaluating students' needs and connecting students to appropriate wraparound services. The school has sustained community partnerships to help address student needs.

OPERATIONS				
Indicator	1-Below Standard	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Exemplary
4.1. Adequate Instructional Time	There is not enough time in the school schedule to appropriately meet students' academic needs. There is a significant amount of wasted time in the school calendar and daily schedule. The schedule includes ≤ 5 hours of instruction per day, and ≤ 60 minutes of ELA time. ²	Students would benefit from increased instructional and/or intervention time. The school calendar and daily schedule could be improved to increase time on task. The schedule includes > 5 and ≤ 5.5 hours of instruction per day, and > 60 and ≤ 90 minutes of ELA time.	The school has taken steps to increase instructional time on task through extended learning opportunities. The school calendar and daily schedule are well constructed. The schedule includes > 5.5 and ≤ 6 hours of instruction per day, and > 90 and ≤ 120 minutes of ELA time.	The school has multiple extended learning opportunities available to students. The school implements a thoughtful and strategic school calendar and daily schedule. The schedule includes > 6 hours of instruction per day, and > 120 minutes of ELA time.
4.2. Use of Instructional Time*	Staff and students use time ineffectively. Misused instructional time results from misbehavior, poor scheduling, and inefficient transitions. There are missed opportunities to maximize time on task. Observed teachers struggle with pacing and fail	Staff and student use of time is somewhat effective. Some students are off task and there are missed opportunities to maximize instructional time. Lesson schedules are moderately well planned, paced, and executed. Teachers could be	Most staff and students use time well. A handful of students require redirection; however, the majority of students transition quickly to academic work when prompted by the teacher. There is minimal downtime. Lessons are well planned, paced, and	Staff and students maximize their use of time. There is no downtime. Transitions are smooth and efficient. Teachers meticulously use every moment of class time to prioritize instructional time on task. Students transition promptly to academic work

² The total amount of ELA instructional time per day at the secondary level can include reading- and/or writing-intensive coursework.

OPERATIONS				
Indicator	1-Below Standard	2-Developing	3-Proficient	4-Exemplary
	to use class time in a constructive manner.	more skilled and/or methodical in the use of class time.	executed. Teachers are adept at managing and using class time.	with minimal cues and reminders from teachers.
4.3. Use of Staff Time	Educators lack adequate and/or recurring professional development and/or common planning time. Common planning time is currently disorganized and the time is not used effectively. As a result, staff members are unable to develop and/or share practices on a regular basis.	Most academic teams have common planning periods (less than 1 hour/week); however, the school has failed to secure vertical and horizontal planning. Collaborative planning time is used at a basic level (e.g., organization of resources or topics not directly related to classroom instruction).	All academic teams have common planning periods (1-2 hours/week) and they are seldom interrupted by non-instructional tasks. Staff members use this time to discuss instructional strategies, discuss student work, develop curricular resources, and use data to adjust instruction.	All educators have weekly common planning time for vertical and horizontal planning (more than 2 hours/week). Common planning periods are tightly protected and only interrupted by emergencies. The school has established tight protocols to ensure that common planning time is used effectively.
4.4. Routines and Transitions	The school is chaotic and disorderly. The safety of students and staff is a concern. The school lacks critical systems and routines. Movement of students is chaotic and noisy with little adult intervention. Adults are not present during transitions; therefore, this is very little direction.	The school is somewhat chaotic and/or disorderly, particularly in certain locations and during certain times of day. Some staff make an effort to maintain procedures and routines; however, staff presence is also an issue and redirection of misbehavior is lacking.	The school environment is calm and orderly in most locations and during most of the day. Rules and procedures are fairly clear, consistent, and evident. Routines seem somewhat apparent and institutionalized. Adults are present to reinforce norms.	The school environment is calm and orderly. Rules and procedures are clear, specific, consistent, and evident. Routines are largely unspoken and institutionalized. Adults are consistently present to reinforce norms.

The Commissioner's Network Turnaround Plan Application | Cohort IX

Form Number: ED 708
Section 10-223h of the Connecticut General Statutes

Date Issued: August 9, 2019

Dr. Miguel A. Cardona
Commissioner of Education
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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

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Levy Gillespie

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PART I: COMMISSIONER'S NETWORK OVERVIEW

A. Commissioner's Network Overview

The Commissioner's Network (the Network) is a commitment between local stakeholders and the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) to dramatically improve student achievement in up to 25 low-performing schools. The Network offers new resources and authorities to empower teachers and school leaders to implement research-based strategies in schools selected by the Commissioner. Network schools remain part of their local school districts, but the districts and the CSDE secure school-level flexibility and autonomy for the schools in exchange for heightened accountability. Schools participate in the Network for a period of three to five years.

Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) § 10-223h(a), the Commissioner may select a school that has been classified as a category four or five school, as described in C.G.S. § 10-223e, to participate in the Network. The Commissioner shall give preference for selection to schools: (1) that volunteer to participate in the Network, provided the local board of education and the representatives of the exclusive bargaining unit for certified employees mutually agree to participate in the Network; (2) in which an existing collective bargaining agreement between the local board of education and the representatives of the exclusive bargaining unit for certified employees will have expired for the school year in which a Turnaround Plan will be implemented; or (3) that are located in school districts that (A) have experience in school turnaround reform, or (B) previously received a school improvement grant pursuant to Section 1003(g) of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 20 U.S.C. 6301, et seq.

C.G.S. § 10-223h (2019):

- authorizes the Commissioner to establish, within available appropriations, a Commissioner's Network of schools to improve student academic achievement in low-performing schools;
- authorizes the Commissioner to select not more than 25 schools in any single school year that have been classified as a category four school or a category five school pursuant to Section 10-223e to participate in the Network; and
- provides that the Commissioner may select not more than five schools in any single school year from a single school district to participate in the Network.

After the Commissioner initially selects a school to participate in the Commissioner's Network, the local board of education shall establish a Turnaround Committee pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-223h(b). Following the establishment of the Turnaround Committee, the CSDE shall conduct, in consultation with the local board of education, the School Governance Council, and the Turnaround Committee, an operations and instructional audit of the school in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-223h(c). Once the audit is performed, the Turnaround Committee shall develop a Turnaround Plan for the school by completing this application. As stated in C.G.S. § 10-223h(d), if the Turnaround Committee does not develop a Turnaround Plan, or if the Commissioner determines that a Turnaround Plan developed by the Turnaround Committee is deficient, the Commissioner may develop a Turnaround Plan for the school. If the Commissioner deems it necessary, the Commissioner may appoint a district improvement officer for a school to implement the provisions of a turnaround plan developed by the Commissioner.

B. Turnaround Plan and Framework

The Turnaround Committee, in consultation with the School Governance Council, shall develop the Turnaround Plan in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-223h(d) and the guidelines issued by the Commissioner. Accordingly, the Turnaround Plan must:

- Provide a rigorous needs analysis informed by the operations and instructional audit.
- Identify an evidence-based turnaround model, aligned to school needs and growth areas.
- Provide robust strategies to secure, support, develop, evaluate, and retain top talent.
- Summarize the school's academic model, including curricula, assessments, and data-driven instruction.
- Outline a comprehensive approach to build a positive school culture and climate.
- Develop operational structures to effectively utilize time and resources.

Pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-223h(d), the Turnaround Plan may include proposals changing the hours and schedules of teachers and administrators at the school, the length and schedule of the school day, the length and calendar of the school year, the amount of time teachers shall be present in the school beyond the regular school day, and the hiring or reassignment of teachers or administrators at the school. If provisions of the Turnaround Plan alter the collective bargaining agreements applicable to the administrators and teachers employed by the local board of education, the local board of education and the exclusive bargaining unit for the affected certified employees shall negotiate concerning such provisions in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-153s. See C.G.S. § 10-223h(g).

The State Board of Education (SBE) must approve the Turnaround Plan before the school may implement it. Once the Turnaround Plan is approved, Network school leaders will work with the CSDE Turnaround Office, and/or other partners, to operationalize the Turnaround Plan by planning and designing tools, systems, and/or policies including, but not limited to:

- School bell schedule.
- School calendar.
- Annual assessment calendar.
- Staff evaluation schedule.
- Professional learning calendar.
- Scientific Research-Based Interventions processes and protocols.
- School organizational chart.
- Curricular materials (e.g., lesson plan template, unit plans, pacing guides).
- School budget.
- School Climate.
- Calendar of family and community engagement opportunities.

PART II: TURNAROUND PLAN APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

A. Instructions

Review and follow all directions carefully when completing this application. Complete all of the required sections. The application will be deemed incomplete and/or deficient if required sections are not submitted. The specific timeline for this application will be determined by the CSDE. District leadership must participate in, at minimum, two benchmark meetings with the Turnaround Office to provide updates on elements of the draft Turnaround Plan as it evolves and receive formative feedback. Be prepared to share draft Turnaround Plan components prior to these meetings.

B. Timeline Summary

Consistent with C.G.S. § 10-223h, the Commissioner's Network process is outlined below. As noted, the extension and expansion of the Commissioner's Network requires new legislative authorization; therefore, initial planning activities for a ninth prospective cohort of Network schools are underway, pending legislative authorization.

1. Commissioner initially selects the school for the Network.
2. Local board of education forms the Turnaround Committee.
3. CSDE conducts the operations and instructional audit of the school.
4. Turnaround Committee, in consultation with the school governance council, develops the Turnaround Plan and budget proposal.
5. Turnaround Committee reaches consensus or the Commissioner may develop a plan.
6. SBE votes to approve or reject the Turnaround Plan.
7. Local board of education negotiates Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with collective bargaining units for certified staff, if necessary, to establish the working conditions for the school during its turnaround period.
8. Certified staff identified and/or selected to work at the school ratify MOUs on working conditions, if necessary.
9. CSDE awards resources to the school depending on available funds.
10. Network school begins implementation of the Turnaround Plan with support from the CSDE.

C. Freedom of Information Act

All of the information contained in a proposal submitted in response to this application is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), C.G.S. Section 1-200 et seq. The FOIA declares that, except as provided by federal law or state statute, records maintained or kept on file by any public agency (as defined in statute) are public records and every person has a right to inspect such records and receive a copy of such records.

D. Questions

All questions regarding the Commissioner's Network should be directed to:

Lisa Lamenzo
Turnaround Office Bureau Chief
Connecticut State Department of Education
E-mail: lisa.lamenzo@ct.gov

PART III: COMMISSIONER'S NETWORK TURNAROUND PLAN

Section 1: Cover Page

Name of School District:	Derby Public Schools		
Name of School:	Derby Middle Schools	Grade Levels:	6-8
Name of School Principal:	Rachael Caggiano	# of Years Serving at this School	2
		# of Years in Total as Administrator	7
Turnaround Committee Chairperson: ¹	Jennifer Olson, Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment		
Phone Number of Chairperson:	203-736-5027		
E-mail of Chairperson:	jolson@derbyps.org		
Address of Chairperson:	Street Address:	35 Fifth Street	
	City:	Derby	Zip Code: 06418
Name of School Board Chairperson:	Mr. Jim Gildea		
Signature of School Board Chairperson: ²		Date:	
Name of Superintendent:	Dr. Matthew Conway, Jr.		
Signature of Superintendent:		Date:	

¹ Pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-223h(b)(1), the superintendent, or his or her designee, shall serve as the chairperson of the Turnaround Committee.

² By signing this cover page, the chairperson of the local board of education affirms that the board has established the Turnaround Committee in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-223h(b), and that the superintendent has informed the board of the content of the Turnaround Plan.

Section 2: Setting the Direction

An organization needs to know where it is and where it wants to be in order to improve. Effective organizations have a clear direction that informs the work of all employees. An organization's direction is used as a filter for all work. As noted in *Turnaround Leadership Domain* (Center on School Turnaround, 2017), turnaround leaders set the direction and expectations, and articulate the commitment to school turnaround. The leadership team also engages all employees and stakeholders in the process of sharing and gathering feedback and making needed revisions to finalize and communicate the direction to others. Each person needs to own the direction and understand how his or her role supports the mission. Setting a direction is important for any organization and it is particularly critical for those seeking to make rapid improvement—as is the case for the lowest-performing schools. To improve rapidly, the school needs to be willing to identify and address the root causes of its successes and failures to transform its systems and practices.

Instructions: Using the space provided, identify the district's and school's vision and theory of action. (Please note for this section there is a limit of 200 words per response box.)

A **vision statement** serves as a common direction of growth for your organization and its stakeholders. This one-sentence statement describes the organization's clear and inspirational long-term desired change resulting from its work.

Theory of Action uses the "If we do X then we can achieve Y" construct for transformative outcomes. For example, if the state education agency (SEA), local education agency (LEA) or school focuses on implementing effective instructional practice, then the organizational goal of improved student performance is supported. Thinking through a theory of action allows organizations to more clearly see the chain of changes that will have to happen for the intervention to be successful. This can help in the planning stage to be sure the solutions that are chosen truly align with the impact that would like to be seen.

District Vision Statement (limit 200 words)

The Derby Public Schools rigorously prepares all students for high achievement and success and provides all students with a high quality, challenging education in a safe, supportive environment, in which to become independent lifetime learners. The district works to develop a shared understanding and application of high quality instruction, a research-based (tiered) model for intervention, and assessments that inform instruction, then our students will graduate with the following qualities: creativity, collaboration, grit, independent, empathy, and local and global awareness.

District Theory of Action (limit 200 words)

- If we create a shared understanding, and application of, high quality instruction, a tiered model for intervention, and assessments that inform instruction, then student learning and growth will be evident and accelerated. **(Academic)**
- If we develop a trusting, collaborative team culture throughout the district that celebrates growth, then everyone will be invested, committed and engaged in the work of supporting the learning and development of students. **(Human Capital/Talent)**
- If we create systems and structures that best allocate our resources, then we can provide a highly effective delivery of services in support of district goals. **(Operations)**
- If we develop positive and meaningful relationships with all students, then they will become more confident, motivated and engaged in their learning. **(Culture)**

School Vision (limit 200 words)

The Derby Middle School learning community is committed to developing healthy, productive, and contributing members of 21st century society who are prepared to embrace, enact, and lead positive change.

School Theory of Action (limit 200 words)

- If we create a shared understanding, and application of, high quality instruction, a tiered model for intervention, and assessments that inform instruction, then student learning and growth will be evident and accelerated. **(Academic)**
- If we develop a trusting, collaborative team culture throughout the district that celebrates growth, then everyone will be invested, committed and engaged in the work of supporting the learning and development of students. **(Human Capital/Talent)**
- If we create systems and structures that best allocate our resources, then we can provide a highly effective delivery of services in support of district goals. **(Operations)**
- If we develop positive and meaningful relationships with all students, then they will become more confident, motivated and engaged in their learning. **(Culture)**

Section 3: Leadership

One of the clear keys to successful turnaround is strong leadership at all levels (Herman et al., 2008). The objectives for both school and district leaders are to articulate a clear and compelling vision, create attainable short-term goals, define high performance expectations, hold faculty and staff accountable for those expectations, and continually celebrate wins (Leithwood, 2012). Research points to the importance of having a strong leader who can change culture and influence staff efficacy (Meyers & Hitt, 2017) and who demonstrates an intense focus and direction on academic outcomes (Picucci, Brownson, Kahlert, & Sobel, 2002). In addition, the district needs to embrace the turnaround effort as a district-led initiative. One study finds that the “district instructional leadership builds capacity by coordinating and aligning work of others through communication, planning, and collaboration” (Rorrer, Skrla, & Scheurich, 2008, p. 318). Throughout the turnaround process, the district must coordinate the work by setting high performance expectations, sharing those expectations in a transparent way, continually checking progress on those expectations, and — with the school — co-developing further interventions, as needed, based upon the school’s progress (Leithwood, 2012). These types of leadership focuses can contribute to a productive, supportive and energizing school culture that enables adults in schools and district offices to collaboratively work toward improved outcomes for students (Kruse & Louis, 2009).

Instructions: In the boxes below, address the following:

Describe the process to ensure an exceptional school principal with a track record of success, preferably in school turnaround and/or an urban school environment, is in place.

Derby Middle School has selected an exceptional school principal with a record of success in a range of school and district leadership roles to lead the turnaround work at DMS. Rachael Caggiano began serving as Principal of Derby Middle School in July 2018. She was from a competitive applicant pool of over 30 candidates by a diverse selection committee comprised of teachers, parents, students, school leaders, central office administrators, and board of education members. The interview process was rigorous and included a series of questions to identify turnaround leadership competencies, a hands-on performance task to demonstrate effective communication, and an informal Q&A session led by students. Mrs. Caggiano was the committee’s top choice for the position. Prior to being appointed as the Derby Middle School Principal, Mrs. Caggiano was a highly respected leader in the district, who held multiple roles at Derby High School and Central Office. She began her career with Derby Public Schools in 2011 as a Special Education Resource teacher and Learning Center Life Skills teacher at Derby High School. In July 2013, she was promoted to Secondary Supervisor of Special Education for grades 6-12+ where she was responsible for overseeing programming for 225 students with IEP’s, 504’s and out-of-district placement, supervising 27 pupil personnel staff, managing state reporting databases, and developing a departmental budget. When an opportunity arose at Derby High School in July 2015, Mrs. Caggiano was recruited for the Assistant Principal/Athletic Director position. During her tenure, Mrs. Caggiano led the implementation of the School Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) with a goal of building the school’s capacity to establish a continuum of academic and behavioral support. As Athletic Director, she was responsible for overseeing athletics at both Derby Middle School and Derby High School. She supervised 20 coaches and approximately 160 student-athletes participating in 19 varsity/junior varsity programs. She was an active committee member for a large scale, community project responsible for building a \$21 million Fieldhouse and Athletic Field Complex consisting of a new track, multipurpose football/soccer field and a multipurpose baseball/softball field. She held this highly visible, hands-on role successfully for three years before being appointed Principal at Derby Middle School.

Mrs. Caggiano has a strong background in special education, tiered interventions, and understands how to provide personalized support to exceptional learners. She received training in Therapeutic Crisis Intervention, Boys Town Behavioral Model, Physical & Psychological Management Training (PMT), and Risking Connections while employed in

two private, special education facilities. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Special Education, a Masters of Science in Special Education (Emotional Disabilities), and 6th Year in Educational Leadership. Mrs. Caggiano is an active member of the district's Professional Development, Evaluation and Assessment Committee (PDEC), TEAM Beginning Teacher Program, and District Attendance Team. Over the past two years, she has participated in a wide range of professional learning, including: High Quality Instruction (HQI) Strategy Mapping, Portrait of a Graduate, Creating Safe, Equitable, and Engaging Schools, Chronic Absenteeism Peer Learning Network, EdSight Secure & Early Indicator Tool (EIT) Training, Teaching and Learning with Illustrative Math (Grades 6-8), Accountable Conversations: Keys to Effective Change, Contemporary School Law Issues, and Student Disciplinary Offense Data Collection (ED166). Over the past nine years in the district, Mrs. Caggiano has worked tirelessly to create lasting relationships with all stakeholders. Her ability to connect positively with staff, students, parents, and community members has made her transition as Derby Middle School's Principal seamless and successful. According to the Commissioner's Network Operations and Instructional Audit Report conducted in October 2019 by the CT State Department of Education, the teacher focus group participants shared that "one of the school's greatest strengths is the school principal as she is positive and energetic, and has great relationships with students and families and it motivates teachers to live up to that example" the report also indicated that the Parent Focus Group participants "praised the principal's responsiveness to any concerns and her friendly, engaging demeanor." The relationships, which are built on trust, are a key lever for helping Principal Caggiano create the right conditions for instructional leadership needed to accelerate change and manage resistance. The results of the school climate survey administered in December 2019 is convincing evidence of Principal Caggiano's clear vision, high expectations, commitment to feedback, clear communication, and positive relationships with stakeholders:

- **91% of staff members** agree or strongly agree that, "The principal sets a clear vision for the school."
- **90% of staff members** agree or strongly agree that, "My principal provides me with useful and timely feedback on my practice."
- **85% of staff members** agree or strongly agree that, "The principal recognizes teachers/staff for a job well-done."
- **98% of staff members** agree or strongly agree that, "The principal communicates regularly and effectively with staff."
- **96% of staff members** agree or strongly agree that, "I feel supported by my administrator."
- **94% of staff members** agree or strongly agree that, "the principal maintains a positive rapport and good working relationship with staff."
- **91% of parents** agree or strongly agree that, "The principal sets high expectations for learning at this school."

The district has complete confidence that Mrs. Caggiano possesses the leadership competencies and sense of urgency necessary to be a highly effective turnaround principal. To accelerate the comprehensive school change reflected in this plan, the district will also provide support to Principal Caggiano with embedded coaching/mentoring, individualized professional development opportunities.

Explain how administrators will be evaluated on an annual basis to inform leadership staffing decisions.

All administrators will be evaluated annually in accordance with the Derby Public Schools (DPS) approved principal evaluation system. Administrators will participate in the evaluation process as a cycle of continuous improvement and growth towards their leadership potential and student learning objectives (SLO's). The following meetings and observations will be held to inform leadership staffing decisions.

- **Goal-setting conference** - Prior to the start of the school year, the superintendent and administrator will meet to develop the evaluation plan and set goals. The principal will identify three SLO's and one survey

target, drawing on available assessment data, climate survey results, the superintendent's priorities, their school improvement plan and prior evaluation results.

- **Mid-year formative review** - By February 28, the superintendent and administrator will review the progress towards the principal's goals and performance measures.
- **End-of-year review** - The principal will complete a self-assessment on all 18 elements of the CCL: Connecticut School Leadership Standards, and the Superintendent will complete a summative review.

The evaluation and support system for administrators consists of multiple measures to paint an accurate and comprehensive picture of administrator performance. All administrators will be evaluated using the following measures:

Leadership Practice and Student Outcomes

1. Leadership Practice Related Indicators: An evaluation of the core leadership practices and skills that positively affect student learning. This category is comprised of two components: a) Observation of Leadership Performance and Practice (40%) as defined in the Common Core of Leading (CCL): Connecticut School Leadership Standards. b) Stakeholder Feedback (10%) on leadership practice through surveys.

2. Student Outcomes Related Indicators: An evaluation of an administrator's contribution to student academic progress, at the school and classroom level. This category is comprised of two components: a) Student Learning (45%) assessed in equal weight by: (a) progress on the academic learning measures in the state's accountability system for schools and (b) performance and growth on locally-determined measures. b) Teacher Effectiveness Outcomes (5%) as determined by an aggregation of teachers' success with respect to Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)

Scores from each of the four components will be combined to produce a summative performance rating of Exemplary, Professional, Developing or Below Standard. The Superintendent ensures leadership staffing decisions are made based on leadership effectiveness and student need, and works to assign the highest performing leaders to the lowest performing school.

Describe the district's role in supporting and monitoring school administration in regards to implementation and monitoring of the improvement plan and budget, if approved.

Derby Public Schools will take an active role in supporting and monitoring school administration in regards to implementation and monitoring of the Commissioner's Network Improvement Plan and Budget, if approved. To monitor the implementation of the Improvement Plan, the following steps will be taken:

- **Superintendent:** The Superintendent will conduct weekly School Improvement Plan Meetings with the Principal and Turnaround Committee Chair to monitor the progress towards the identified priorities, strategies, and indicators of success, and ask: *"Are we doing what we said we would do in the Improvement Plan? Is it making a difference? If not, then why not?"*
- **Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment/Director of Teaching and Learning:** The Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment and the Director of Teaching and Learning will participate in regular conversations and focused learning walks with DMS teachers, and administrators to drive a cycle of continuous improvement, and measure the effectiveness of instruction, intervention, and school culture. The Director of Teaching and Learning will be responsible for supporting the use of district-wide coaching protocols, including a formalized coaching cycle with observation and feedback protocols, an adult teaching/learning focus, action planning, artifact review and next steps. The Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment is the Turnaround Committee Chair, and will be responsible for tracking the plan's progress on a regular basis and recommending mid-course adjustments to change strategies that are not yielding results.

- **Secondary Special Education Supervisor:** The Special Education Supervisor will ensure students' needs are met through the most appropriate program/service delivery model (co-teaching, learning centers, pull out/resource), in order for all students to engage in rigorous core instruction. The SPED Supervisor will monitor the development of IEPs and 504s, student achievement, and disciplinary data for students with disabilities. The Special Education Supervisor will also be responsible for developing a continuum of special education services for Grades 6-8 to strengthen the transition from the elementary Learning Centers to the middle school.
- **Business Manager:** The Business Manager will be responsible for ensuring all budgetary requests are submitted and processed in a timely manner to ensure spend down of funds are in compliance with the grant. The Business Manager, Principal and DMS Administrative Assistant will meet monthly to review all spending.
- **Human Resources Coordinator:** The Human Resources Coordinator will be responsible for recruiting top talent, and participating in minority teacher recruitment events to develop a racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse teaching staff at Derby Middle School.

To support the implementation of the Improvement Plan, the following steps will be taken: The district will also support Mrs. Caggiano in her turnaround leadership with embedded coaching and mentoring with an experienced school turnaround leader. Prior to taking on a district leadership role for Derby Public Schools, the Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Jennifer Olson, led comprehensive school change in chronically underperforming schools while Principal at Irving Elementary School (2012-2018) and Assistant Principal at Brennan-Rogers School in New Haven (2009-2012). Mrs. Olson participated in the LEAD CT Turn-Around Principal Program (TPP) Summer Institute and yearlong Community of Practice, as well as the TPP Alumni Program for two years. Additionally, she participated in the New Leaders Instructional School-Wide Leadership Practices Improvement (LPI) program, and the UCONN Administrator Preparation Program (UCAPP) Mentor Series. From 2010-2012, she received significant job-embedded turnaround leadership coaching with Expeditionary Learning to build a visible culture of achievement, critical thinking, and community. Mrs. Olson was Connecticut's finalist for the 2017 NAESP National Distinguished Principal and 2014 CT Association of Schools William Ciesluski Outstanding First Year Principal Nominee. Irving School was awarded the 2017 CT Association of Schools Exemplary School Climate Practices Award for their positive school-wide culture.

Describe stakeholder (parent, community, student, other) engagement processes and structures (planning and development, implementation, and revising of plan to meet current needs).

The Commissioner's Network Turnaround Committee was formed in the Spring of 2019 and included parents, teachers, community stakeholders, a board of education member, and administrators. All stakeholders were informed of the intent to apply to the Commissioner's Network. At the annual Open House in September, the Principal delivered a presentation to parents about the Commissioner's Network, including the application process, funding opportunities available, and support provided. That evening, numerous parents volunteered to be a part of the committee and assist in the work of developing a Turnaround Plan for Derby Middle School. Historically, stakeholder engagement structures at Derby Middle School have been limited and informal. Engagement efforts will be intentional and include the creation of an active Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO). Parents have recently begun participating in fundraisers and events, and a few have expressed interest in serving on the Executive Board. The school will assist in holding an election this spring to identify officers for the 2020-2021 school year, and promote participation from all families. In addition to the PTO as a structure to engage families, Principal Caggiano has planned monthly "Coffee And" events with the Administrative Team and teachers for the upcoming school

year. This will ensure school leaders and staff are more visible and accessible to all families, while engaging parents and community members in informal conversations.

Stakeholder feedback is an important tool for monitoring the effects of the Turnaround Plan. Currently, feedback is gathered formally through the School Climate Survey administered in December and May. This survey is given to parents, teachers, staff, and students, and measures satisfaction levels for: Parental Engagement/Support, Relationships and Belonging, Teaching and Learning, Safety and Emotional Environment, Physical Environment, and Administrative Support. This year, the district is also piloting the Panorama Equity and Inclusion Survey which was developed in partnership with the RIDES (Reimagining Integration: Diverse & Equitable Schools) Project at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. This survey is being administered to students in Grades 6-12 to help the district better understand how students are thinking and feeling about diversity, equity, and inclusion in school. The data will help Derby Middle School identify specific areas for celebration and improvement for inclusion, and communicate the district's commitment to equity and inclusion. As part of the Commissioner's Network Plan, technical assistance from SERC will be used to improve the structures for positive family engagement through the "Welcoming Schools" initiative. This would address the physical environment, school-wide practices and policies, written materials, and customer service provided to families by school staff. Throughout the Planning Year for the Commissioner's Network, Derby Middle School has provided updates on the turnaround initiatives via Twitter, newsletters, all-calls. This year numerous events have been held to promote the new focus on teaching and learning within Derby Middle School that will be continued or enhanced via Commissioner's Network, including: Open House, Back to School Night, Parent Teacher Conferences, i-Ready Family Nights, International Night, PSAT/SAT Night, and DMS/DHS Grade 8 Transition Family Night, Junior Achievement Manufacturing Fair, and a 5th grade Stepping Up Day for all incoming students and parents to learn about DMS. Upon acceptance into the Commissioner's Network, the Turnaround Committee will remain intact and serve as an advisory board to the Principal. Quarterly reviews will be held to engage the Turnaround Committee in a process of review and revision to the plan.

Section 4: Data and Needs Analysis

PERFORMANCE TARGETS

Instructions: Network school progress will be compared to the leading and lagging indicators identified in the chart below. Under the “Baseline and Historic Data” columns, please enter school data for each of the past three years. The indicators with an asterisk must be in alignment to Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Milestone targets.

Performance Indicators	Baseline/Historic Data				Performance Targets		
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20 YTD	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Student enrollment	321	351	351	361	360	360	360
Accountability Index	53.7%	54.5%	54.2%	N/A	60.9%	63.3%	65.7%
English Language Arts (ELA) School Performance Index (SPI)*	55.4%	56.1%	52.8%	N/A	59.9%	61.4%	62.9%
ELA Smarter Balanced Growth Model*	41.2%	49.6%	39.8%	N/A	54.8%	59.3%	63.8%
Math School Performance Index (SPI)*	47.6%	47.3%	46.3%	N/A	53.9%	56.0%	58.1%
Math Smarter Balanced Growth Model*	40.8%	39.8%	42.6%	N/A	54.5%	59.0%	63.6%
Average daily attendance rate	94.7%	94.0%	94.6%	96%	97%	97.5%	98%
Chronic absenteeism rate*	13.2%	14.2%	12.6%	15.8	11.3%	10.7%	10.0%
Teacher attendance rate	80%	82%	92.3%	95.6%	96%	96.5%	97%
Suspension rate	24.3%	23.4%	25%	12.8%	20%	16%	12%
In-school suspensions (count)	41	83	100	52	90	72	56
Out-of-school suspensions (count)	40	45	96	41	86	68	54
Expulsions (count)	1	0	1	1	1	0	0
Grade 3 ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment-“Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grade 4 ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment-“Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grade 5 ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment-“Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Performance Indicators	Baseline/Historic Data				Performance Targets		
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20 YTD	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Grade 6 ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment-“Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	24%	27.2%	26%	N/A	30%	36%	44%
Grade 7 ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment-“Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	35%	47%	28%	N/A	31%	37%	45%
Grade 8 ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment-“Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	28%	41%	33%	N/A	36%	40%	44%
Grade 3 Math Smarter Balanced Assessment- “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grade 4 Math Smarter Balanced Assessment- “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grade 5 Math Smarter Balanced Assessment- “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grade 6 Math Smarter Balanced Assessment- “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	24%	18%	20%	N/A	22%	26%	32%
Grade 7 Math Smarter Balanced Assessment- “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	21%	22%	22%	N/A	24%	29%	35%
Grade 8 Math Smarter Balanced Assessment- “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	11%	18%	20%	N/A	22%	26%	32%
Grade 5 NGSS Science Assessment- “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grade 8 NGSS Science - “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	N/A	N/A	30%	N/A	33%	41%	49%
Grade 11 NGSS Science - “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level”	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grade 11 ELA SAT- “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Standard”	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Grade 11 Math SAT- “Meets or Exceeds Achievement Standard”	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of Students enrolled in dual enrollment or AP courses	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Performance Indicators	Baseline/Historic Data				Performance Targets		
	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20 YTD	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
4-year Cohort Graduation Rate (HS only)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
6-year Cohort Graduation Rate-High Needs Students (HS only)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

* Indicators with an asterisk must be in alignment to ESSA Milestone targets

Root Cause Analysis

Using the school data, along with the school audit findings reported by the Turnaround Office as a foundation, the turnaround committee will conduct a root cause analysis. Root cause is defined as “the deepest underlying cause or causes of positive or negative symptoms within any process that, if dissolved, would result in elimination or substantial reduction of the symptom” (Preuss, 2003, p. 3). A root cause analysis addresses the problem (weak demonstration of an effective professional practice), rather than the symptom (low student achievement), eliminates wasted effort, conserves resources, and informs strategy selection (Preuss, 2003). There are several resources available to conduct a root cause analysis. Two of the most common methods are the “5 Whys” model or the Fishbone Diagram. Identifying the root cause will help determine which practices are most appropriate to address weaknesses. *Root Cause Analysis: A School Leader’s Guide to Using Data to Dissolve Problems* (Preuss, 2013), provides additional examples specific to schools. **The root cause findings should serve as the basis for school improvement plan development.**

Section 5: TURNAROUND MODEL

Instructions: Please select one of the following turnaround models described in C.G.S. § 10-223h(d). Using the space provided, describe the core components of the model that pertain to talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations.

Model E (Turnaround Committee creates their own model): Derby Middle School's Turnaround Committee developed a turnaround model that will utilize strategies, methods and best practices that have been proven to be effective in improving student academic performance, including but not limited to strategies, methods and best practices used at public schools, interdistrict magnet schools and charter schools or collected by the commissioner. One of the core tenets of Derby's plan (Model E), is to cultivate a strong professional learning community with a focus on rigorous teaching and learning that is student-focused, and joyful. The December 2019 School Climate Survey revealed that:

- **91% of teachers** agree or strongly agree that "The principal sets a clear vision for the school"
- **77% teachers** agree or strongly agree that there is a shared sense of responsibility for improvement.

Principal Caggiano will use the positive momentum to create a cohesive vision, shared sense of urgency for improvement, and common expectations for high-levels of professional performance, perseverance and continuous growth.

The Derby Middle School turnaround model includes a systematic and intentional approach to talent, academics, climate/culture and school operations, as defined below:

Talent:

Derby Middle School will work to recruit, hire, develop, evaluate and retain excellent school leaders, teachers, and support staff to support school turnaround efforts. Under this turnaround plan, the length of the school day and year for staff, including additional time before and during the school year for professional learning and/or common planning, will remain unchanged and in line with the district's calendar and collective bargaining agreements. Staffing decisions for the 2020-2021 school year will be aligned with the Derby Education Association (DEA) contract while ensuring teachers are thoughtfully assigned to create high-performing teams whose individual experience, skill set and strengths complement and support specific student needs and the grade-level. Retention of top talent will be central to the improvement plan, as progress is difficult to achieve without quality and consistency in staffing. Currently, teachers participate in daily team collaboration, daily wrap-around time, and afterschool PD two times per month. The district also plans an additional monthly early release PD around High Quality Instruction (HQI) and student engagement. As part of this plan, DMS will offer high quality, individualized, professional learning opportunities designed to build the capacity of teachers, staff and leaders needed to accelerate school improvement. An annual calendar of school-wide PD will be published prior to the start of school, and teachers will be able to self-select sessions related to their professional practice goals for high-quality instruction (HQI). DMS will provide teachers with regular opportunities for job-embedded coaching, mentoring and collegial observations to bring the district's vision of high-quality instruction to life. In an effort to leverage the effectiveness of high-performing teachers and create a pathway for teacher leadership, new Literacy and STEM Instructional Coaching positions will be introduced through this plan. Lead Teacher positions, with a stipend attached, will also be developed to promote shared leadership and build the capacity of the faculty. These roles will help provide teachers with an embedded, multi-level professional development plan to strengthen the Tier I core and the instructional shifts of the new resources and curriculum, particularly Expeditionary Learning (EL) Language Arts, Illustrative Math and CREC Consortium NGSS Science Units. This will be accomplished by working directly with teachers to unpack the units and plan for the delivery of high-

quality instruction. The school will continue to contract with ACES for technical assistance and professional development for Illustrative Math to ensure teachers are able to implement the instructional shift in their practice and use the materials with fidelity. A contract with SERC will be used for School Personnel Development, which is outlined in more detail under the Academic and Culture/Climate sections of this plan. This plan will require:

- 1.0 FTE STEM Coach and 1.0 FTE Literacy Coach (teacher salary)
- 4 @ Stipends for Lead Teachers (one per grade-level and unified arts)
- Contract with ACES for math PD and technical assistance (20 days)
- 3 year technical assistance contract with SERC for School Personnel Development (PBIS, SRBI, Ed Benefit, Welcoming Walkthrough: Year 1: Off Site: 6.5 days; On Site: 5.5 days)

Academics:

Derby Middle School's plan will ensure high academic standards and promote access for all students by utilizing rigorous standards-based curricula in math, reading, science and social studies. The academic program will include a common curriculum map and curriculum implementation guides, which will be accessed electronically by teachers on a new district curriculum website developed by Derby's Director of Teaching and Learning. All teachers, including special education and ELL teachers, will have access to the same instructional materials, and professional development. Embedded classroom support will be provided to students with identified learning needs. These instructional resources will be developed to promote the qualities reflected in the district's Portrait of a Graduate. Under the Commissioner's Network Plan, a contract with SERC will be developed to create the structures for academic intervention, data review/analysis, and the development of SRBI plans for academics, attendance, and behavior. Currently, SRBI at DMS is limited to push in services within the classroom delivered by one Reading Specialist. The teacher pushes into all grade level reading classes and provides support to students in small groups. The support provided is often related to the curriculum, not targeted based on individual student need. This plan reflects the addition of a Reading Interventionist, a Math Interventionist, and 4 tutors to ensure a robust SRBI model is in place at DMS with targeted instruction and data to drive the process. As part of the technical assistance from SERC, Derby Middle School will complete/create an SRBI self-assessment, assessment inventory, decision-making inventory, SRBI team implementation checklist and the development of recommendations for data tracking. The school will use i-Ready as the universal diagnostic assessment for math and reading to identify students' strengths and learning needs. The assessment will be administered three times per year (fall, winter, and spring) and used to measure growth and to develop individualized lessons to put all students on a pathway to proficiency. The SRBI intervention model will utilize highly qualified Interventionists and tutors to deliver targeted Tier II and Tier III instruction to those students not meeting grade-level benchmarks. Teachers, interventionists, and tutors will use data to systematically monitor progress and increase/decrease the intensity of interventions. As part of this plan, a portion of the library and computer lab will be repurposed and redesigned as the "Learning Lab" for intervention. Presently, the school has 2 math tutors, and 0 reading tutors; the goal is to have 3 math and 3 reading tutors. The SRBI plan will include training for teachers on the data team process. Without a process to analyze and understand data, it is difficult to identify the root cause for why students struggle, or provide the appropriate differentiation to address student needs. This embedded coaching and technical assistance will support the data cycle and help teachers embed formative assessments into their instruction, consistently check for understanding, and adjust their instruction to ensure all students learn. As part of the Turnaround Plan, classroom spaces at DMS will be redesigned with furniture that encourages and facilitates student-to-student discourse, collaboration, teamwork, and problem solving. This is the first step in aligning the academic programming to ensure the qualities found in the Derby's Portrait of the Graduate. Through a systematic process, the district has identified the following characteristics that graduates will demonstrate: creativity, collaboration, independence, empathy, grit, and global awareness. The use of new furniture will help

promote creative learning environments, more collaborative learning, and improved independence. The development of a new learning environment provides for additional tools and resources for students to develop independence for their own learning and to demonstrate grit and persistence to reach their learning goals. This plan will require:

- 1.0 FTE Reading Interventionist and 1.0 FTE Math Interventionist for SRBI instruction
- 3 @ 0.75 FTE reading tutors and 1 @ 0.75 FTE math tutors to provide tiered intervention
- Site license for i-Ready Math and Reading Diagnostic Assessment and Online Instruction
- Instructional resources for intervention to create customized Tier II and Tier III plans for students experiencing specific reading difficulties (comprehension, fluency, decoding, etc.)
- Consumable materials and workbooks for Expeditionary Learning (EL) ELA and Illustrative Math
- Consumable materials for NGSS Science bundles
- Furniture, fixtures and equipment for classroom redesign with flexible seating for 18 classrooms (moveable tables, chairs, soft seating, classroom carpets, lighting) to support Derby's Portrait of a Graduate
- Create and brand the Learning Lab as the hub for reading and math intervention in the space currently used as a computer lab/library.

Culture and Climate:

Principal Caggiano's leadership has brought a much-needed sense of stability and consistency to the school after frequent changes and turnover in school administration over the past seven years. This made it difficult to sustain any lasting changes, and negatively affected the school culture and climate. To create the right conditions necessary for school turnaround, the faculty and staff will develop a strong, student-centered culture. This will begin with a deep understanding of student's academic, social and emotional needs, a shared sense of responsibility and accountability, and a learning environment rooted in community connectedness. Professional learning to develop the adult's beliefs and mindset will be supported through a deep, yearlong study of the Developmental Relationships Framework from the Search Institute. This framework is tied to adult actions and relationships with students as they:

- **Express Care:** Show me that I matter to you,
- **Challenge Growth:** Push me to keep getting better,
- **Provide Support:** Help me complete tasks and achieve goals,
- **Share Power:** Treat me with respect and give me a say,
- **Expand Possibilities:** Connect me with people and places that broaden my world.

Derby Middle School will utilize the Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) Model as the foundation for clear, school-wide expectations of student conduct and behavior. Teachers and school leaders will explicitly model, teach and reinforce the desired behaviors and will use common routines and procedures to make the learning environment predictable across all settings. Training and technical assistance will be provided through SERC. To ensure rapid implementation of the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports framework, this plan includes the addition of a dedicated PBIS Coach. In 2019-2020, Derby Middle School moved from a Dean of Students position to an Assistant Principal position in an effort to attract and retain top leadership to support the turnaround work. The DMS Assistant Principal supports the vision for a positive school climate by setting/maintaining high expectations for student learning and behavior. This will result in improved student outcomes, reduced exclusionary discipline, and stronger teacher practices. In addition to supporting the climate/culture of the building, the Assistant Principal also supports the work to transform teaching and learning with a focus on rigor, engagement, and high-quality instruction. The AP has been a high performing teacher, Resident Administrator, and Instructional Coach in Derby and received significant training from Hill for Literacy, Literacy How, and the Connecticut Center for School Change. The Turnaround Plan includes

funding for the difference between a Dean salary and Assistant Principal salary as defined in the Derby Administrator's Association Agreement.

As part of the new PBIS model, Derby Middle School will build school-wide traditions and plan events, which promote positive relationships and belonging and embody the spirit of *#WeareDMS*. This will include a school store, daily student-led video broadcasts, student ambassadors, Unified Sports, and Best Buddies. Students will play a leadership role in developing the school community and traditions to recognize students, celebrate teaching and learning, and cultivate school pride. A cornerstone of this work will be monthly Community Meetings held in the school gym to build a sense of unity, pride, school spirit, and celebration of learning. DMS will focus efforts to improve daily attendance and reduce chronic absenteeism by developing a culture of regular school attendance. The School Climate Specialist will lead the School Attendance Committee using tools and resources available in Attendance Works to communicate proactively with students and families, and take action before a student's attendance rate dips below 90%. The school will also create systems and structures to provide universal "breakfast in the classroom" as a practical tool to reduce chronic absenteeism and develop opportunities to build positive student-adult relationships. Currently, free breakfast is available to all students, but only 25% of the students participate. By moving breakfast to the classroom, and providing more time for students to eat, we expect to see participation rates rise. School discipline data confirms that there is a need for stronger transition programming for students, particularly incoming 6th graders and newly enrolled students.

- In the first quarter of 2019-2020, the largest number of disciplinary infractions at DMS came from Grade 6 (14 OSS/20 ISS) which resulted in 55 days of OSS for 10 students. Violations included verbal threats of physical violence, physical aggression/fighting, threats of violence with a weapon, sexualized comments, and repeat Level I/II disruptions (disrespect, non-compliance, policy violation). A similar trend exists at Derby High School, with the largest number of disciplinary incidents coming from students in Grade 9.
- In SY 2018-2019, 42 students enrolled at DMS after the start of the school year, and 20 students withdrew during the school year. Overall, this reflects a 17% change in student enrollment during the course of a school year. In the current model, new students and families receive an informal orientation from the guidance counselor while the student/family reviews their class schedule.

To address this need, Derby Middle School will participate in LINK Crew WEB, a national middle school peer-mentoring program. WEB, stands for "Where Everybody Belongs," and is a formal, yearlong, student-led orientation and transition program that welcomes 6th graders and transfer students. Two trained staff advisors will lead the program, and 8th grade students will be trained as WEB Leaders. These positive peer role models are responsible for helping students successfully transition to middle school. Additionally, to develop a building-wide sense belonging, DMS will utilize the Best Buddies Program in conjunction with Unified Sports to promote inclusion. This program will pair students with intellectual and developmental disabilities with a peer(s) to participate in extracurricular events, athletics, and social programs. These programs develop friendships, empathy, and create student leadership opportunities. The school will engage families in a meaningful manner by hosting regular family events, providing access to wrap-around services and encouraging increased parent participation in the PTO. Parent climate surveys will serve as a tool to improve the school. DMS will work to create strong partnerships with community agencies and local nonprofits to provide families with a network of resources to address basic needs, family health services, food, hygiene and development of a Family Resource Room. During the summer students will receive individualized postcards from the grade level welcoming them to DMS. This plan will require:

- 1.0 FTE Assistant Principal Salary Differential (Difference between Dean of Students and AP salary)

- 1.0 FTE PBIS Coach (teacher salary)
- Substitute teachers for PBIS and SERC PD
- Contract for Panorama Climate Survey Platform
- Installation of a laser projector and screen in gymnasium for school assemblies, Community Meetings, and presentations
- Installation of broadcasting studio equipment, including a green screen, video camera, sound and lighting package
- Interior and exterior signage for PBIS and Welcoming Walkthrough
- Training and stipend for LINK Crew WEB Program Advisors
- Training and stipend for Best Buddies Advisor
- Training and stipend for Unified Sports Coach
- Establish a Family Resource Room in the Nurse's Office
- Establish a School Store

Operations:

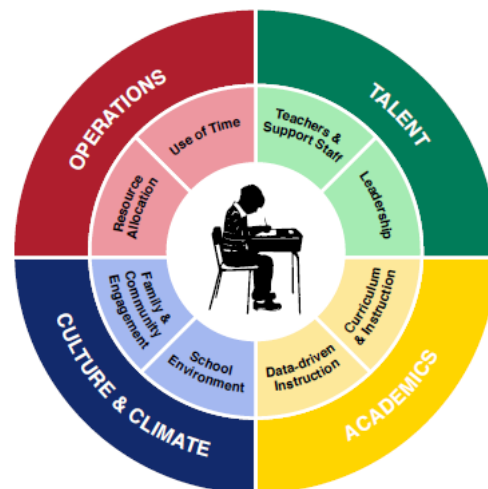
Derby Middle School's master schedule will be revised to reflect the priorities of the improvement plan. For students, the school schedule will include traditional instructional blocks, accelerated and differentiated learning experiences, enrichment activities, and college and career readiness programs. The teacher schedule will continue to include daily common planning time and regular team collaboration. The Administrative team will establish protocols and procedures for team collaboration meetings. The school will establish an intervention or acceleration period during the school day so that all students receive intervention and/or enrichment based on need, as identified by data. DMS will develop a contract for technical assistance to revise the master school schedule in PowerSchool. This will allow for greater flexibility of student scheduling, and create efficiencies in operations. Work will also be done to strengthen transitions, and provide professional development in the academic settings to ensure lesson pacing and instructional time is maximized. Derby Middle School will promote extended learning with a robust after school program that will be offered in addition to athletic programming, and provide remediation, support and enrichment experiences for students. The school will plan an extensive offering of after school clubs and programs to address academic, social/emotional and behavioral needs, as well as a standalone Homework Center staffed by certified teachers and peer tutors. Students have expressed interest in drama/theater, rocket club, and coding. Although enrollment will be available for all students, the school will use targeted recruitment strategies to enroll students who would benefit most from these programs. The extended learning program will be thoughtfully planned to ensure high quality staffing, transportation, snack, high quality programming, community partnerships and plans for long-term sustainability. Currently DMS offers a late bus two days per week on Monday and Thursday. This plan includes adding one additional day of late bus service. The school will request flexibility from established district policies and/or procedures as justified by the data, turnaround plan and school capacity. This plan will require:

- 6 @ stipends for certified teachers to staff an after school Homework Center
- 8 @ stipends for after school club advisors
- 1 after school bus 1 day per week
- Contract for technical assistance to revise master schedule in PowerSchool

Section 6: Turnaround Framework for School Improvement

The Commissioner's Network Plan is based upon the framework centered around four key overarching and research-based leverage points for school improvement: Talent, Academics, Culture and Climate, and Operations (TACO). Each of these domains play an integral role in the realization of school's goals to increase student outcomes.

- **Talent:** Systems and strategies to recruit, hire, develop, evaluate, and retain excellent school leaders, teachers, and support staff.
- **Academics:** Rigorous, aligned, and engaging academic program that allows all students to achieve at high levels, including aligned curricula, instruction, and assessments.
- **Culture and Climate:** Positive learning environment that supports high-quality teaching and learning, and engages families and the community as partners in the educational process.
- **Operations:** Systems and processes that promote organizational efficiency and effectiveness, including through the use of time and financial resources.



Plan Development

☐ Prioritize

As a result of the needs assessment and root cause analysis, the turnaround committee should engage in a prioritization process to identify key priority areas for each TACO domain. Although more can be identified, going deeper in improving fewer areas is often more effective. In the table below, list 1-3 priority areas for each domain based on the needs assessment.

Talent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an instructional coaching model to increase teacher capacity and effectiveness • Strengthen the teacher evaluation process and professional learning culture 	Academics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a rigorous curriculum that is aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards to ensure all students are college and career ready • Develop a tiered SRBI model for early, targeted intervention to ensure success for all students
Culture and Climate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the PBIS model with fidelity to improve behavior and decrease rates of suspension/expulsion • Establish a school culture focused on achievement and engage families as partners in their children's learning 	Operations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create school structures and systems that maximize instructional time and create extended learning opportunities

➤ Plan

Now that the priority areas have been identified in each of the TACO domains, a rigorous, yet attainable plan is created based on the needs assessment and root cause analysis. Each of the four domains will include two parts:

- **Part One** - A series of domain specific questions which provide an overview of high-level thinking regarding future actions.
- **Part Two** - An action plan which includes the following components:
 - **Goal:** A goal should be developed for each of the four domains including indicators, data source, baseline, and targets spanning three years. A goal performance measure is a means by which progress toward a goal is gauged.
 - **Root Cause:** Statements describing the deepest underlying cause, or causes, of performance challenges that, if dissolved, would result in elimination or substantial reduction of the performance challenge.
 - **Strategies:** A strategy should address the identified root cause. Strategies should take two or more years to implement, often much longer (Layland & Redding, 2016). If a strategy can be accomplished in one year, then it is too narrow and is most likely a useful milestone within a broader strategy. **Strategies are powerful, high leverage work that builds capacity and changes practice, behavior, and belief so students are more successful.** One bold strategy can have more impact than a litany of poorly implemented strategies.
 - **Timeline:** The strategies (effective practices) to address root causes should be outlined over the course of three years.
 - **Indicators of success:** Indicators of success help to monitor how well the strategies are working to address the root cause, i.e. If we do what we said we were going to do, how do we know it made a difference?
 - **Owner:** Who is in charge of ensuring the plan is implemented?

Domain 1: Talent

Part One

Instructions: The Talent domain focuses on systems and strategies to recruit, hire, develop, evaluate, and retain excellent school leaders, teachers and support staff. In the boxes below, address the following:

Explain how the review of school data, school audit findings, and the completion of the root cause analysis will inform staffing decisions.

Staffing Decisions: During the 2018-2019 school year, Derby Middle School teachers were notified of the school's application, and acceptance into a planning year for the Commissioner's Network. In June 2019, three teachers voluntarily left the district. In 2019-2020, one teacher requested a transfer within-district at the start of the year, and another resigned mid-school year. These vacancies created opportunities to recruit and retain talented teachers who are invested in turnaround schoolwork, and are eager for the opportunities available for students and staff alike. In preparation for the 2019-2020 school year, the teachers' classrooms were moved strategically throughout the building in an effort to change the physical environment, cluster instructional teams, make student support services/administration more visible and accessible, and signal a bold shift from the status quo at Derby Middle School. This provided every teacher and support staff member with an opportunity to rearrange their learning spaces, redecorate their classrooms, and reenergize themselves for the start of a new school year and a new vision. Derby Middle School will use school data, school audit findings and the completion of the root cause analysis to inform future staffing decisions. The 2020-2021 staffing plan, which was created by the Principal and Director of Curriculum/Turnaround Committee Chair, included a review of the active certifications held by teachers at Derby Middle School. It also included a review of student needs, particularly IEPs, 504s, behavioral needs, academic remediation, and enrichment. Because the Operations and Instructional Audit identified differentiation, checks for understanding, and implementation of a strong SRBI system as high priority needs, the staffing plan for DMS will include interventionists to deliver a comprehensive, multi-tiered response to student learning needs. Additionally, a need exists to strengthen the delivery of services and support for special populations to close the achievement gap for its high-need students. School achievement data confirms that there is a need to strengthen the delivery of services and support for all students and to close the achievement gap for special populations. The 2018-2019 Accountability Index Report indicated that:

- The ELA Performance Index for all Students decreased 3.3% to 52.8
- The ELA Performance Index for High Needs students decreased 4.8% to 47.5
- The Math Performance Index for all students decreased 1% to 46.3
- The Math Performance Index for High Needs students saw a 1.5% decrease to 41
- The ELA Academic Growth for All students saw a 9.8% decrease to 39.8
- The ELA Academic Growth for High Needs students saw a 11.5% decrease to 36.6
- The Math Academic Growth for All students saw a 3.8% increase to 39.8
- The Math Academic Growth for High Needs students saw a 8.4% increase to 41.1

Final staffing decisions for the upcoming year will be driven by student needs by matching the most effective educators with the students with the greatest needs, while adhering to the Derby Education Association (DEA) contract.

How will the district and school cultivate a professional learning environment to attract, support, develop, and retain high-quality teachers?

Talent Management Plan: Derby Middle School cultivates a professional learning environment to attract, support, develop and retain high-quality teachers using the following talent management plan:

ATTRACT/RECRUIT:

New teachers applying for positions at DMS participate in a rigorous selection process that includes an interview with a hiring committee comprised of teachers, parents and admins; a demo lesson and lesson debrief with the committee and final interview with the superintendent. There is a new emphasis on finding teachers who are the right "fit" for

the school, and demonstrate personal and professional competencies, such as: high expectations, growth mindset, strong determination, and an ability to build positive relationships, rather than teaching experience alone. The school is also placing a priority on minority teacher recruitment to promote diversity in the workforce. The HR Coordinator will work with the ACES Minority Teacher Recruiting (MTR) Advisory Council to attract teachers of color at Derby Middle School.

SUPPORT:

Presently, in addition to the TEAM mentoring program for beginning teachers, the district is also supporting new teachers with a monthly Peer Community Learning Network designed to share ideas and information, avoid teacher stress/burnout, provide targeted PD, and serve as thought partners. Derby Middle School currently has three beginning teachers participating in this program. These support meetings are held during the school day with sub coverage provided, and include guest speakers based on teacher requests, such as: creating class routines/structures to strengthen paraeducators work, handling difficult parent phone calls, managing teacher stress, etc. To further support teachers, the Turnaround Plan includes the addition of a 1.0 FTE Literacy Coach and 1.0 FTE STEM coach to provide job-embedded professional development. The coaches will work with teachers individually and in small groups on delivery of differentiated, high-leverage engagement protocols and side-by-side coaching. The Literacy Coach's time will include working with teachers to observe, model, and plan (70%) and working directly with students delivering Tier III interventions (30%). In addition, the plan includes a 1.0 FTE PBIS Coach to support teachers with the development of rules, expectations, classroom management. The coach will also demonstrate how to implement the Developmental Relationship Framework in teacher practice. The Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Director of Teaching and Learning, and the Principal will establish a structure for regular peer-to-peer inter-classroom visitations to observe best practices and make teaching and learning visible. The creation of classroom lab sites will be determined through an application process, observational feedback, and address all four domains of the Danielson Framework for Teaching, including classroom environment, planning and preparation, instruction, and professional responsibilities. A second tier of support the district will provide will be in the area of creating a lab site professional learning system to support high-quality instruction. A lab site learning system allows teachers to access support in developing their ability to understand and deliver the district's vision for high quality instruction in every classroom, including engagement, feedback, questioning, self-assessment, classroom discussion, and student/teacher relationships. The creation of a group of lab site leaders, who will serve as models for these strategies, will be developed through an application process that spells out the roles and responsibilities of the lab site leader. These support/lab sites will also serve as a career path for teachers to grow professionally without leaving the classroom.

DEVELOP:

According to the Operations and Instruction Audit, the Derby Middle School teacher focus group reported a gap "between what the PDEC Committee agrees to at the meetings and what actually happens for professional learning" and "do not have an outline of professional learning topics in advance." In response to this feedback, the following actions were taken to cultivate a strong professional learning environment at Derby Middle School:

- The principal moved her office from the administrative offices in the front of the school, to a classroom in the main hallway to be visible and accessible to both staff and students. She transformed her office and made it a professional learning center where grade level meetings, data team meetings and attendance committee meetings are held. The artifacts of these meetings can be found in the data walls, anchor charts and posted survey results. The principal's office is the hub for adult learning, and plays an integral role in elevating the professional culture, as well as staff morale.
- The district PDEC Committee began designing the monthly Early Release Professional Development Days to intentionally define, model, and engage teachers in the use of high-quality instruction protocols. Teachers are provided with an agenda in advance and links to learning resources. The goal is to prepare teachers to try the strategies in their classrooms to increase engagement, and provide an entry point for all learners to the instruction. On the most recent February 2020 exit survey, responses from teachers across the district describe the learning in positive terms, including "informative, collaborative, positive, interesting, fun, excellent, and organized." Additionally 73.5% (77/98) agree or strongly agree that "The engagement strategies used in today's PD gave me a good sense of how to facilitate these activities in my classroom."

- In partnership with the Connecticut Center for School Change, the district has developed a draft Strategy Map to ensure the continued development of teacher capacity. A major initiative within the strategy map is the research, design, and shared understanding of what high quality instruction looks like in every classroom in Derby Public Schools. The first action step the district undertook to develop the capacity of teachers to deliver high quality instruction is to create a Guiding Coalition of staff who will help shape the agreed elements that constitute high quality instruction. This coalition will study the most effective teaching and learning instructional techniques. After researching and practicing these techniques, they will be charged with developing the capacity of their colleagues within their building. Recent professional learning has been developed and implemented by the coordinated planning and implementation by administrators and teachers from the Guiding Coalition.
- The district will develop a summer professional learning opportunity (HQI Live!) to assist in the shared understanding of high quality instruction in Derby Public Schools. The learning opportunity will be five days long and afford teachers and administrators the opportunity to observe, discuss and develop ways to bring these instructional strategies back to their own setting. Staff participating in the summer learning opportunity will apply for the experience with an understanding and commitment to try the strategies in their classroom. Participants will be compensated for their time that they engage outside the contractual yearly commitment.
- Through a partnership with SERC in 2020-2021, the school will assemble a Teacher Leadership Team to participate in professional development, on-site technical assistance, job-embedded coaching, and self-evaluations to:
 - build a system of instruction, assessment and decision-making;
 - ensure the quality and effectiveness of core instruction;
 - determine the intensity of intervention needed to accelerate student progress;
 - analyze and monitor data for improved student performance;
 - develop a system of academic and behavioral interventions and support;
 - strengthen family engagement.

RETAIN:

As of June 2018, Derby Middle School's 3-year teacher retention rate was 64%. Under the leadership of Principal Caggiano, there has been an intentional effort to strengthen the morale, improve the professional culture, and create conditions to differentiate DMS as a great place to work and learn. To retain top talent, Derby Middle School will continue to create positive working conditions, plan social-emotional professional learning for adults, provide public acknowledgements for staff, and schedule events to bring the faculty together. This includes monthly staff breakfasts, team building activities, Staff Shout Out boards, etc. The district presently provides opportunities for teacher leadership opportunities. The district's Guiding Coalition for high quality instruction (HQI) allows teachers to develop their capacity to lead their colleagues in professional learning experiences. It helps them learn the most effective teaching strategies as well as practice them with colleagues. This Guiding Coalition will welcome new teachers each year thereby creating a structure to improve morale, capacity and retention of the staff while creating a trajectory for teacher leadership. The Turnaround Plan also includes growth opportunities and stipends for teachers who serve as instructional coaches or team leads, in an effort to retain top talent at the school. Although this cultural change is in its early stages, word is spreading across the district about the positive momentum at Derby Middle School, and for the first time in recent memory, DMS has received informal inquiries and transfer requests from teachers working in other schools in the district. This is evidence of cultural transformation at DMS and "buzz" around the district about the important work underway. Derby Middle School is committed to retaining and hiring highly effective staff who are dedicated to a continuous cycle of improvement to raise student performance.

How will teachers be evaluated to inform professional learning offerings and staffing decisions?

According to the Operations and Instructional Audit dated October 2019, 60% of DMS teachers agree or strongly agree that "Administrators provide regular, helpful and actionable feedback to staff." At the time, the school leadership team identified it as "a work in progress." There is evidence of growth in this area, as 90% of teachers and staff in December 2019 on the school Climate Survey agree or strongly agree that " My principal/administrator provides me

with useful and timely feedback on my performance.” There has been an intentional effort by Principal Caggiano to ensure feedback is provided to teachers, not only about their individual performance via the teacher evaluation process, but also feedback from school-wide Instructional Rounds, climate surveys, and district or CSDE walkthroughs. The staff voiced that teachers historically were not provided feedback from administrators about how the school performed on walkthroughs, observations and Instructional Rounds. Principal Caggiano strategically used the feedback given by the visiting Instructional Rounds team, as well as her teachers’ voice, to develop a school strategy map, series of actions steps, and professional learning needs. To help lead the charge, Principal Caggiano, in partnership with her Guiding Coalition, delivers high quality professional learning opportunities for staff in these areas. Effective modeling of teaching and learning is shared with the staff by the leadership team. The Guiding Coalition models high quality instructional protocols (collaborative learning sequencing, jigsaw, gallery walks, etc.) which align with the district’s Portrait of the Graduate. The annual evaluation process at DMS between a teacher and an evaluator is anchored by three conferences, which guide the process at the beginning, middle and end of the year. These conferences are intended to be collegial conversations to clarify expectations for the evaluation process, provide comprehensive feedback to each teacher on his/her performance, set development goals, and identify development opportunities. These conversations are collaborative and require reflection and preparation by both the evaluator and the teacher in order to be productive and meaningful.

- **Goal Setting & Planning: (Sept/Oct)** Orientation on process, teacher reflection, and goal-setting
- **Mid-Year Check-In: (Jan/Feb)** Review goals and performance to date
- **End-of-Year Review: (May/June)** Teacher self-assessment, review of data

Derby’s SEED model for evaluation and support system consists of multiple measures to paint an accurate and comprehensive picture of teacher performance. All teachers will be evaluated in four components, grouped into two types of major categories: Teacher Practice and Student Outcomes.

- 1. Teacher Practice Related Indicators:** An evaluation of the core instructional practices and skills that positively affect student learning, including: (a) Observation of Teacher Performance and Practice (40%) as defined within the Danielson Framework for Effective Teaching 2014, (b) Parent Feedback (10%) on teacher practice through surveys
- 2. Student Outcomes Related Indicators:** An evaluation of teachers’ contributions to student academic progress at the school and classroom level, including: (a) Student Growth and Development (45%) as determined by the teacher’s Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) and associated Indicators of Academic Growth and Development (IAGDs) (b) Whole-School Measures of Student Learning as determined by aggregate student learning indicators or Student Feedback (5%)

Scores from each of the four components will be combined to produce a summative performance rating designation of Exemplary, Professional, Developing or Below Standard. The performance levels are defined as:

- Exemplary – Substantially exceeding indicators of performance
- Professional –Meeting indicators of performance
- Developing –Meeting some indicators of performance but not others
- Below Standard – Not meeting indicators of performance

Per the Derby Model for Teacher Evaluation (TEVAL) each teacher shall be observed between three and eight times per year through both formal and informal observations, and reviews of practice.

Teacher Categories	Derby Model
First and Second Year Novice Teachers	3 formal in-class observations; 2 of which include a pre-conference and all of which include a post-conference; and 3 informal observations
Below Standard and Developing	3 formal in-class observations; 2 of which include a pre-conference and all of which must include a post-

	conference; and 5 informal observations
Professional and Exemplary	A minimum of one formal in-class observation not less in frequently than once every three years, and three informal in-class observations conducted in accordance with Section 2.3 (2)(b)(1) and 2.3 (2)(b)(2) in all other years, and shall complete one review of practice every year. Teachers with Professional or Exemplary designations may receive a formal in-class observation if an informal observation or review of practice in a given year results in a concern.

Describe ongoing support and coaching opportunities for staff and school leadership.

Derby Middle School will utilize a coaching model to support staff and school leadership. In addition, the school will continue to provide common preparation times for grade levels and daily team time for data teams, curriculum meetings, and child study reviews. Currently, all DMS teacher schedules include seven 48-minute periods, consisting of: five instructional blocks, one team time, and one planning prep. Data meetings are scheduled monthly during one of the daily team times. Currently, this process is informal and most often includes a superficial review of i-Ready data, attendance data, or behavioral referrals. The meetings lack a clear structure or focus on changing practice, and serve little purpose beyond information sharing. Training will be needed for teachers to understand how to interpret data, diagnose difficulties and develop instructional strategies. A contract with SERC will provide training to build school-level data team capacity. The administration team and the Director of Teaching and Learning will work with instructional coaches to develop a calendar, protocols, and expectations that will be supportive of the "Coaching Model" implemented at Derby Middle School. Coaches will provide embedded support through model lessons, co-teaching, observations, walk-throughs, and debriefing sessions. Additionally, to further promote staff and school leadership effectiveness, Derby Middle School will collaborate with the CSDE and the CT Center for School Change to plan meaningful learning experiences. In order to build the capacity of school leaders the following areas of growth will be addressed:

- Developing and implementing a coaching model with feedback loops;
- Using teacher evaluation to develop teacher capacity to deliver high quality instruction;
- Using effective data teaming to provide stronger student centered instruction;
- Learning how to facilitate lab sites for studying and developing teacher capacity.

In order to build the capacity of staff the following areas of growth will be addressed:

- Delivering authentic, engaging and varied learning experiences that contain choice, exploration, risk taking and an appropriate level of challenge;
- Using explicit learning intentions and protocols in whole group, small group and individual teaching settings;
- Engaging in formative assessment structures (self-assessment, success criteria, rubrics etc.)

To support the new math curriculum, DMS math teachers will continue to receive embedded coaching on the new Illustrative Math instructional design through a contract with ACES. Embedded coaching will support planning, use of math instructional routines, lesson delivery, and reflection.

Part Two

Instructions: Using the table below, identify the Talent three-year goal including indicators of success, data sources, and three annual targets.

Three-Year Talent Goal:

Indicator	Data Source	Baseline Year: 18-19	Target 1 Year: 19-20	Target 2 Year: 20-21	Target 3 Year: 21-22
Develop a Coaching Model to Increase Teacher Capacity and Effectiveness	<i>ESSA Milestones: Accountability Index</i>	58.5	60.9	63.3	65.7
Strengthen the evaluation process and professional culture <i>Number of teachers scoring at the Professional and Exemplary level</i>	My Learning Plan End of Year Summative Rating	88%	90%	92%	95%

Action Steps:

Instructions: Using the table below, describe key action steps which will be implemented across three years in order to achieve the three-year Talent goal.

Talent Priority: Develop an instructional coaching model to increase teacher capacity and effectiveness					
Root Cause: The school lacks a defined professional learning plan for teachers to ensure the use evidence-based best practices, and delivery of high-quality instruction to students					
Person(s) Responsible: Principal, Assistant Principal, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Director of Teaching and Learning, Instructional Coaches and PEDAC Committee					
Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
Develop a Common Coaching Model	Create common intake forms to develop agreed upon shared focus for coaching and capacity building Align the focus coaching/ building capacity to district tenets for high quality instruction (HQI)	Assess and revise forms to ensure equity for staff access to developing their capacity to deliver HQI Develop and implement action plan to develop capacity of coaching moves (i.e. co-teaching, modeling, etc.)	Provide continued training for teams engaged in coaching Inventory continued needs for both teachers and coaches	Completed handbook for Derby's Instructional Coaching Model developed and used by staff School can produce an inventory of coaching cycles and focus areas addressed Walkthroughs find evidence of high quality instruction	Jim Knight Instructional Coaching Resources 1.0 FTE Literacy and Coach 1.0 FTE STEM Coach
Develop a Structure and System to	Create a calendar for grade levels and coaches to regularly meet to enact	Use walkthroughs to assess the implementation of strategies teachers	Survey staff on coaching experiences and adjust coaching	Meeting Artifacts for weekly implementation meetings	4 @stipends for lead teachers (one p/grade

Provide In Class Support	coaching cycles with designated topics for building teacher capacity Create a calendar for coaches and admin to regularly meet to support coaching cycles	have learned in coaching Develop administration's ability to assess the impact of coaching model Assess and update new areas for coaching	systems and structures	Walkthrough Evidence supporting and naming the impact and evidence of high quality instructional techniques	and unified arts) Contract for math coaching and technical assistance from ACES
Assess and Revise Coaching Focus Based on Formative Assessment Structures	Develop a system to engage staff in a collaborative review of student data	The collaborative data review system is reviewed, assessed and modified if necessary	Conduct a coaching audit to measure equity for reaching teachers and topics	Artifacts from program changes made using assessment data	State modules on data decision making Contract for technical assistance from SERC for School Personnel Development

Talent Priority: Strengthen the teacher evaluation process and professional learning culture					
Root Cause: There has been a history of inconsistent leadership at the school over the past seven years, which impacted the fidelity of the teacher evaluation process					
Person(s) Responsible: Principal, Assistant Principal, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Director of Teaching and Learning, Instructional Coaches					
Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
Develop capacity for administrators to assess high quality instruction	Ensure all administrators are trained in the district's evaluation system	Engage administrators in professional learning checkups to develop calibration of observation skills	Provide individualized learning opportunities for administrators based on	Administrators are well calibrated on recognizing high quality instructions	Teachscape platform 1.0 FTE Assistant Principal Salary Differential (Difference between Dean of Students and AP salary)
Develop a system for timely evaluation sessions and feedback for teachers	Develop and share with all staff a calendar for evaluation cycles	Assess and adjust cycles for evaluation to ensure timely goal setting meetings, observations, and conferences	Provide support system for administrators who looking to improve their efficiently	All staff are evaluated on a fair and timely fashion	
Ensure new hires are on boarded well	Develop a committee to improve onboarding of new staff in regards to the processes and	Provide a mentor system for new teachers and veteran educators	Develop a series of professional learning opportunities for	New hire satisfaction surveys run at no less than 90%	

	procedures in the teacher evaluation system	Survey staff to assess learning needs in regards to the evaluation system	staff based on results of survey		
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Domain 2: Academics

Part One

Instructions: The Academics domain focuses on how the school will redesign and/or strengthen curriculum, instruction, and assessment to increase student achievement. In the boxes below, address the following:

Describe the school's academic program and instructional philosophy, including the process to align the curricula and academic program to the rigor of the Connecticut Core Standards.

According to The Commissioner's Network Operations and Instructional Audit, "On a teacher survey administered prior to the audit site visit, responses to the survey statement 'there is a common vision of what effective instruction looks like at this school,' were mixed. Although teacher focus group participants agree that there is 'definitely a sense of urgency' to improve Derby Middle School, teachers struggled to provide a clear definition of the school's vision regarding what effective instruction looks like, with much hesitation before a response was shared. Teachers did articulate that current leadership wants to see 'kids actively engaged, small group instruction, active listening, sharing out,' another shared that 'in years past the focus was on survival. Now things are starting to come into focus, but we're not all the way there yet.'"

Instructional Philosophy:

If Derby Public Schools develops a shared understanding of high quality instruction, a research-based (tiered) model for intervention for all grades, and assessments that inform and drive instruction, then our students will graduate with the following qualities: creativity, collaboration, grit, independence, empathy, and local and global awareness. The district has a core belief that in order to have an expectation for high quality instruction there needs to be a thoughtful set of systems and structures to develop the talent of the staff. By learning effective instructional techniques partnered with an assured and rigorous curriculum, students will develop skills that promote post-secondary success in both college and career. To this end, the district will map the learning standards and progressions for the core curriculum over the next two years. This mapping work will allow assured curricular experiences to be delivered across years and levels. The creation of learning progression maps allows students to experience the standards in a developmental fashion that allows the district and staff to monitor students' growth towards these standards.

Process to Align the Curricula: The district began a process to articulate a high-quality standards-based curriculum sequence for all subjects that clearly defines what students should know and be able to do in each grade. In spring 2019, Derby Middle School assembled a team of teachers to research, review and select high-quality instructional resources aligned to the rigor of the Connecticut Core Standards. Teachers were engaged in the process and included a site visit in partnership with the CSDE Academic Office to a neighboring district currently using the resources, and phone conferences with curriculum directors to discuss the strengths and lessons learned from their implementation. There was an urgent need to increase the rigor, engagement, and access to learning for all students. This was evident in stakeholder feedback from the December 2019 school climate survey:

- **72% of teachers** agree or strongly agree that, "Students in this school are receiving a high-quality education."
- **63% of parents** agree or strongly agree that, "Teachers at this school assign high-quality work that helps my child learn."
- **62% of parents** agree or strongly agree that, "Students in this school are receiving a high-quality education."
- **35% of students** agree or strongly agree that, "Most students in my school try to do their best, even when the work is difficult."

Raising the Rigor: According to the Commissioner's Network Operations and Instructional Audit report, "The audit team observed 19 randomly selected classrooms across grade levels and content areas. Auditors saw primarily teacher-led

lessons with low levels of rigor, limited student discourse and limited small group instruction, a lack of differentiation, and surface level questioning. District leadership expressed that teachers need “additional support and practice” in effective teaching practices. School leadership described instructional practice as ‘improving,’ noting that with a formalized curriculum being rolled out there are resources supporting accessibility for all students and collaborative components built in. Student performance on Smarter Balanced Assessments are significantly lagging behind state averages. While math proficiency scores have shown some growth increasing from 15.9% in 2015-16 to 20.4% in 2018-19, ELA scores have trended downward over time from 31.4% in 2015-16 to 28.4% in 2018-19. In response to the statement ‘Teachers are adept at managing and maximizing instructional time Derby Middle School within the classroom,’ 61% of teachers agreed. The audit team observed loss of instructional time in many classrooms due to poor pacing, limited student engagement, and missed opportunities for interactive learning.” At the start of SY 2019-2020, DMS began using new curriculum resources for ELA, Math and Science. In Grades 6-8, teachers are using Expeditionary Learning (EL) for ELA. According to Ed Reports, Expeditionary Learning is highly rated for alignment and usability. The report states, “high-quality texts are the central focus of lessons, are at the appropriate grade level text complexity, and are accompanied by quality tasks aligned to the standards of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language in service to grow literacy skills. Materials build knowledge through integrated reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language. The instructional materials also meet expectations for use and design, teacher planning and learning, assessment, differentiated instruction, and effective technology use” (EdReports, 2020).

Illustrative Math, a problem-based curriculum, is being used in Grades 6-8 mathematics. The instructional routines invite all students to engage in problem solving, and build conceptual understanding. Ed Reports rates the instructional materials highly for Illustrative Math and meets the expectations for focus and coherence, rigor and mathematical practice, and usability. “The instructional materials show strengths by being well designed and taking into account effective lesson structure and pacing, supporting teacher learning and understanding of the Standards, offering teachers resources and tools to collect ongoing data about student progress on the Standards, and supporting teachers in differentiating instruction for diverse learners within and across grades” (EdReports, 2020). In Science, DMS is using the NGSS Science Bundles from CREC Consortium. These bundles include phenomenon-based units, lesson plans and supporting materials, which shift away from students “learning about a topic” to “figuring out why or how something happens.” The unit development process followed a research-based curriculum writing protocol. Each published unit has been edited and assessed with the EQuIP rubric to ensure alignment to NGSS. Science teachers participated in training with CREC in 2019-2020 when the units were introduced in the district. There are revisions underway to define the social studies curriculum, which is currently aligned to the 2015 Connecticut Secondary Social Studies Framework. This turnaround proposal recommends redesigning the physical environment with flexible classroom furniture to foster peer-to-peer learning and increase collaboration. These instructional changes involve shifts in teacher practice, which presents one of the biggest justifications for adding instructional coaches, and providing job-embedded professional development. In addition to raising the rigor, teachers need to be equipped with the strategies to increase engagement and raise expectations for student work. This was evident in stakeholder feedback from the December 2019 school climate survey:

- **63% of students** agree or strongly agree that, “Students have to work hard and put in a lot of effort to be successful in this school.”
- **48% of students** agree or strongly agree that, “My teachers make learning interesting and challenging.”
- **71% of students** agree or strongly agree that, “My teachers provide me with lots of chances to be part of class discussions and activities.”

Engage families: Derby Middle School will promote parental engagement in support of student learning by building in additional parent-teacher meetings during the school year. Currently, the district calendar includes one parent-teacher report card meeting after the first marking period. In an effort to partner more closely with parents, and communicate more regularly, this turnaround plan includes scheduling two additional parent teachers conferences after the second and third marking periods. This strategy is designed to offer early intervention, and give teachers the opportunity to share resources available, including participation in the after school program or Homework Center. Once the district’s curriculum website is complete, parents will be able to view the DPS Curriculum Overviews in an effort to engage

families as partners in learning. This will allow families to be able to effectively help their students or be able to ask better questions about learning when they reach out to the schools.

Describe how staff will use data to inform lesson plans, differentiate instruction, and provide remedial support to meet the academic and developmental needs of all students.

Meeting the Academic and Developmental Needs of All Students: The Commissioner’s Network Operations and Instructional Audit Report revealed an urgent need to strengthen support for special populations. “Derby Middle School has 20.7% of students identified as receiving special education services with 3 special education teachers on staff with caseloads of approximately 22 students. Responses to the survey statement that ‘the school adequately meets the needs of its special education students and English Learners’ were divided. While 50% of teachers agreed, 43% disagreed and 7% were neutral. The principal shared that special education programming includes smaller instruction classes for reading and math and a learning center has been added this year for students with behavioral needs. Teacher focus groups stated that ‘we often don’t meet their needs.’ Service hours may not be getting met because paras are often pulled.’ Teachers also shared that lack of consistency in programming from elementary school to middle school and then from middle school to high school. This programming practice is viewed as ‘disruptive’ as the transitioning from the elementary school learning centers to mainstream classrooms at the middle school is ‘ineffective.’ Historically, teachers at DMS have used an informal data team process to review student performance. Teachers often share anecdotal observations or general comparisons of one or two data points. In the review of district data, student performance does not grow significantly between the administration of diagnostic assessments, which suggests teachers did not know how to analyze data thoroughly, or did not know how to change their practice in response to the data. There is a need to create a structured, more meaningful data review to identify “root causes” of why students struggle. Presently, the Child Study Team meets monthly by grade. Members of the CST Team consist of the principal, assistant principal, grade level guidance counselor, all grade level core academic teachers including the grade level special education teacher, the social worker, and the school psychologist. Teachers and parents can make a referral to the CST team if there are academic, behavior, or social emotional concerns they want to examine further. With the recent hiring of a dedicated Secondary Supervisor of Special Education, the CST process is currently under review (including the referral process and delivery of services), to ensure coherence and consistency across the district. The Special Education Supervisor will be responsible for creating a continuum of special education services based on instructional and behavioral data to meet the developmental needs of all students.

Describe ongoing professional learning opportunities to build staff capacity around the collection, analysis and use of data to drive and differentiate instruction.

According to the Audit Report, “District leadership shared that “there needs to be a change in how PD is perceived. We provide a lot of one-to-one embedded coaching that sometimes people don’t associate with professional learning.” Derby Middle School will provide ongoing job embedded professional learning opportunities to build staff capacity around the collection, analysis and use of data to drive and differentiate instruction. To promote a data culture, the school will post data on student attendance, benchmark assessments, and behavioral data throughout the building to create awareness, monitor progress, and celebrate growth. Given the wide range of student learning needs, teachers will need more support in the use of data to inform lesson plans, differentiate instruction and provide remedial support. Derby Middle School teachers, staff and the leadership team will work with the Director of Teaching and Learning to ensure there are effective and purposeful checks for understanding. The district is working to embed these formative assessment structures inside the curriculum resources. This turnaround plan includes professional development from the Instructional Coaches and technical assistance from SERC to engage fully in a data cycle. i-Ready benchmark assessments and progress towards typical and stretch goals will be one measure of student performance. As a first step, toward building the capacity of staff around the collection, analysis and use of data to drive and differentiate instruction, teachers participated in three half-day training sessions about i-Ready’s diagnostic math and reading assessments and online instruction. These sessions demonstrated how to:

- Administer the diagnostic and get reliable data to drive instruction
- Use i- Ready Online Instruction to address student needs
- Use Data to Plan Instruction based on student/class needs

- Access lessons and instructional resources for remediation and reteaching at individual, small group, and whole class level of instruction
- Set Individual Growth/Stretch Goals and Measuring Growth
- Analyzing Diagnostic Growth
- Engage Students through Data Chats
- Prepare for Small Group Instruction
- Plan and Evaluate Small Group Instruction

Part Two

Instructions: Using the table below, the Academic three-year goal will include School Performance Index and Smarter Balanced Growth Model (as applicable) indicators for ELA and Math. The baseline and targets should reflect the ESSA Milestone Targets.

Three-Year English Language Arts Goal:

Indicator	Data Source	Baseline Year: 19-20	Target 1 Year: 20-21	Target 2 Year: 21-22	Target 3 Year: 22-23
ELA School Performance Index	EdSight and ESSA Milestones	59.9	61.4	62.9	64.4
ELA Smarter Balanced Growth Model	EdSight and ESSA Milestones	54.8	59.3	63.8	68.3

Three-Year Math Goal:

Indicator	Data Source	Baseline Year: 19-20	Target 1 Year: 20-21	Target 2 Year: 21-22	Target 3 Year: 22-23
Math School Performance Index	EdSight and ESSA Milestones	53.9	56.0	58.1	60.2
Math Smarter Balanced Growth Model	EdSight and ESSA Milestones	54.5	59	63.6	68.1

Action Steps:

Instructions: Using the table below, describe key action steps which will be implemented across three years in order to achieve the three-year Academic goals.

Academic Priority: Implement a rigorous curriculum that is aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards to ensure all students are college and career ready					
Root Cause: The school lacked a defined curriculum across all subject areas, and support for special populations was limited and sometimes inadequate					
Person(s) Responsible: Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Director of Teaching and Learning, Secondary Supervisor of Special Education, and Principal					
Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
Write new curriculum maps to align the grade level progressions PK-12	Write and approve Math and English Language Arts curriculum maps	Write and approve Social Studies and	Write and approve special area content	Curriculum maps are approved and	District website Google sites

		Science curriculum maps	maps (Art, music, etc.)	posted to district website	
Develop district repository system to house curriculum implementation resources	<p>Assessment and use of resources will be graded against their alignment to the standards inside the curriculum maps</p> <p>Resources for ELA and Math will be organized and posted to Teaching and Learning website</p> <p>Administrators will develop calendar and protocols for team time meetings</p>	<p>Resources for Social Studies and Science will be posted to district teaching and learning resource website</p> <p>Provide professional learning to staff to access and unpack instructional resources</p> <p>Administrators will review protocols for team time for revisions or modifications</p>	<p>Add special area content resources that will be posted to the district teaching and learning resource website</p> <p>Revise core curriculum resources based on student data and feedback from staff during team time meetings</p>	<p>All staff utilize the new teaching and learning website that will house and organize resources for implementing assured curriculum experiences</p> <p>Administrators can find evidence of the curriculum resources in the classroom teaching</p>	<p>Expeditionary Learning ELA Workbooks</p> <p>Illustrative Math (IM) Workbooks</p> <p>Consumable materials for NGSS Science Bundles</p> <p>Social Studies Frameworks</p>
Embed supports for special populations	<p>Audit of all IEPs / 504s and ELL plans to ensure appropriate programming</p> <p>Audit to determine paraprofessional staffing needs</p> <p>Expand the continuum of special education services available to meet the educational needs of all students</p>	<p>Train staff on effective techniques to scaffold and personalize learning to reach all learners</p> <p>Implement a continuum of special education services / placements to meet the learning needs of all students</p>	<p>Review student assessment data to consider revising or adding new training for staff</p>	<p>Reduction in the number of referrals for Special Education</p> <p>Higher percentage of mastery on student IEP goals & objectives</p> <p>Fewer students referred for outplacement</p> <p>Increased Scores on LAS Links Assessment</p>	<p>Contract for SERC Ed Benefit training</p>

Academic Priority: Develop a tiered SRBI model for early, targeted intervention to ensure success for all students					
Root Cause: The school lacks appropriate interventions and there are significant achievement gaps between high-need subgroups and non-identified students					
Person(s) Responsible: Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment, Director of Teaching and Learning, Principal, and Supervisor of Special Education					
Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
Review of current SRBI protocols and intervention tools	<p>Review and revise SRBI District Handbook (update assessment list, resources utilized, etc.)</p> <p>Audit Grs. 6-12 SRBI systems and structures for strategic improvement changes</p> <p>Establish Learning Lab to deliver Tier II and Tier III instruction</p>	<p>Publish protocols and systems for running SRBI data analysis teams</p> <p>Have a library of instructional resources available for students needing intervention in Grades K-12</p> <p>Review effectiveness of discontinuing rates for students in intervention</p>	<p>Continue to assess and adjust protocols systems & structures to meet the needs of all students</p> <p>Adjust resources and intervention tools based on student data and/or teacher feedback</p> <p>Audit K-12 SRBI system for consistency of protocols and tools to ensure adequate student growth and high functioning teams</p>	<p>Derby PS will have fully formed and documented SRBI systems with common systems and structures for meeting student needs</p>	<p>1.0 FTE Reading Interventionist</p> <p>1.0 FTE Math Interventionist</p> <p>Instructional resources and materials for Tier II and Tier III intervention (based on individual instructional needs)</p> <p>Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment to create and brand the Learning Lab and redesign classrooms with flexible seating</p>
Implement a new assessment system and support school teams to effectively analyze data	<p>Provide training on the assessment system to determine instructional foci, benchmarks and cut offs for students entering and exiting interventions</p>	<p>Compare student assessment data across various data points to measure effectiveness</p> <p>Survey staff to target and provide professional learning in data teaming and or data analysis</p>	<p>Evaluate use of data protocols in all buildings</p> <p>Provide continued training for school data teams</p>	<p>Assessment data can be analyzed for measuring student growth within and across years</p> <p>Schools will use a data team protocol to monitor student progress into and out of intervention</p>	<p>3 @ 0.75 FTE Reading Tutors</p> <p>1@ 0.75 FTE Math Tutor</p> <p>Site licensing for i-Ready Math and Reading Diagnostic and Online Instruction</p>
Implement new intervention resources/programming	<p>Inventory and understand how to link data with program implementation</p> <p>Determine effective program</p>	<p>Create a schedule for structured visits to assess fidelity of implementation</p> <p>Modify programming</p>	<p>Take status of fidelity of resource implementation in relation to equity of access for students to receive</p>	<p>Programs are implemented with fidelity and students are successfully responding to intervention</p>	<p>Variety of Reading Intervention Materials (Ex: Quick Reads, Really Great Reading, Achieve 3000</p>

	resources for Grs. 6-12 intervention Survey and catalogue all intervention resources	based on student data Investigate / gather additional resources if necessary	intervening services	All staff feel adequately trained	The Reading Edge)
Create a system and structure to provide intervention support	Monitor group size and frequency of teaching sessions regarding access to accelerative intervening Evaluate how comprehensive the interventions are for addressing student needs Provide training on accelerating progress for students in interventions (understanding effective instructional moves in intervention)	Systematize a calendar to ensure colleague visits focused on providing learning and support for teachers providing intervention Train administrators on effective intervention structures and techniques Create a classroom transition program for students entering / discontinuing intervention to build capacity of staff to continue making progress with students	Survey and assess status of colleague visitations as well as professional learning needs of staff delivering interventions Provide administrator training to calibrate understanding of effective intervention programming Survey staff to understand what training to provide training in delivering effective tiered instruction	Students in intervention are making accelerated progress Fewer referrals to special education	Team Time Child Study Team (CST) Time

Domain 3: Culture and Climate

Part One

Instructions: The Culture and Climate domain targets creating a safe, nurturing, and supportive environment for all students and staff, and engages families and the community as partners in the educational process. In the boxes below, address the following:

Describe the school's behavior management system and strategies to shape positive school culture.

Behavior Management System: Positive Behavior Intervention & Support: In an effort to strengthen the school's behavior management system and strategies to shape positive school culture, Derby Middle School will implement the Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) system. As a systemic approach to our PBIS model, Derby Middle School will establish positive incentives to reinforce positive behaviors, and clear and consistent expectations for undesired behaviors. This two-pronged approach will simultaneously decrease misbehavior, while promoting and recognizing positive behaviors. Several data points from the December 2019 School Climate Survey support this need:

- **70% of teachers** agree or strongly agree that, "This school has clear rules and expectations for student behavior."
- **68% of teachers** agree or strongly agree that, "Teachers at this school hold each other accountable for consistently maintaining school-wide expectations."
- **60% of teachers** agree or strongly agree that, "Students speak about our school in proud positive terms."
- **88% of students** agree or strongly agree that, "My family holds me accountable for my behavior in school."
- **50% of students** agree or strongly agree that, "The rules for student conduct/behavior are consistently enforced at this school."
- **16% of students** agree or strongly agree that, "Most students in my school are well-behaved and follow the rules."
- **23% of students** agree or strongly agree that, "Students in my school treat each other with respect."

A dedicated PBIS Coach will be responsible for the overall implementation and management of the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports framework. This will include training and technical assistance to teachers and school leaders to maintain and develop strong school-wide PBIS systems. This individual will work with the Administrative team and Culture/Climate Specialists to ensure the school environment is positive, structured, consistent, caring, and disciplined. This individual will also work with members of the PBIS leadership team to accelerate the implementation of a robust PBIS model. Specifically, the coach will ensure:

- School-wide behavior expectations are defined and posted in all areas of building
- Teaching plans for school-wide expectations are developed
- School-wide behavioral expectations are taught directly & formally
- System in place to acknowledge/reward school-wide expectations
- Clearly defined & consistent consequences and procedures for undesirable behaviors are developed
- Discipline data are gathered, summarized, & reported at least quarterly to the whole faculty
- Discipline data are regularly available to the team in a format and depth needed for problem solving
- Intensive, student support team structures are in place.

Staff will receive training on classroom behavior management, including job-embedded training and coaching in PBIS from the PBIS Coach. In order to create clear expectations and consistency in implementation, Derby Middle School's behavior management system will articulate common infractions and consequences, aligned to the district's behavior matrix. During data team meetings, staff will review office referral data from PowerSchool to track the locations and frequency of behavioral incidents and adjust staffing/programming

accordingly. The school will work to maximize learning and minimize loss of instructional time due to discipline by holding and maintaining high expectations for student conduct.

Strategies to Shape a Positive School Culture: Derby Middle School will create a culture that expects and celebrates positive behaviors and interactions to build a sense of belonging and pride. According to the December 2019 School Climate Survey:

- **22% of students** agree or strongly agree that “Students speak about this school in positive terms.”
- **38% of teachers** agree or strongly agree that “Students at this school treat adults with respect.”
- **53% of parents** agree or strongly agree that “My child has encountered harassment or teasing this school year.”
- **72% of students** agree or strongly agree that “Students are recognized often at my school (examples: academics, attendance, behavior, athletics, extra-curricular, etc.).”

Derby Middle School will communicate with all stakeholders and community partners around positive behavior management, to ensure home-school-community consistency and reinforcement. Throughout the school day, staff will find ways to model expected behaviors (morning announcements, video clips, social media), and to build positive student-staff relationships. The STARS (Striving Together and Reaching Success) program will be used to recognize and reward student success in and out of the classroom. To shape a positive school culture, a priority in this proposal will address the need to upgrade Derby Middle School’s student assembly space. Currently, the cafetorium is the only space with the appropriate technology large enough to assemble the school. The gymnasium is an ideal space to support the school’s climate and culture with regular school-wide Community Meetings, International/Multicultural performances, interactive theater, band/choir concerts, art shows, student Honors Reception events, award ceremonies, parent workshops, and student specialty performances (talent shows, plays, concerts, etc.), but lacks the necessary presentation technology. These events support the overall academic program by providing students with an extension to classroom instruction with creative experiences in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and performing. It also supports the school-wide goal to engage stakeholders in the life of Derby Middle School and increase parental involvement. To use the gymnasium space, a presentation projector and drop down screen need to be installed.

Explain how the school will promote strong family and community connections to support school goals.

According to the Commissioner’s Network Operations and Instructional Audit, “Teachers expressed that family engagement is relatively low. Teacher survey data supports this as only 14% agreed with the statement ‘Families are engaged in the school.’ Parent focus group members express satisfaction with the communication they receive from administration and teachers, sharing that they reach out by telephone, postcards, and emails to share positive happenings and concerns and there is an active social media presence on Twitter. While relationships have improved, parents would like to see greater involvement by other parents and increased attendance at events.”

Strategies Promote Strong Family and Community Connections to Support School Goals: Derby Middle will improve and develop new approaches for welcoming, educating, and engaging all stakeholders, particularly parents and family members. In order to establish strong school/family connections, Derby Middle School will:

- Participate in the Welcoming Walkthrough Training through SERC to ensure DMS is welcoming to families;
- Utilize multiple and regular means of communication with families (website, email, Twitter, all-calls, newsletters);
- Host fun and engaging family events at the school that are scheduled and communicated in advance (student performances, cultural events, academic celebrations, community meetings);
- Maintain an updated and easily accessible school website (in multiple languages);
- Create school-wide expectations that parent emails and phone calls are returned within 24 hours;
- Assist families in signing up for the Parent Portal in PowerSchool to provide families with easy access to their child’s attendance and grades;
- Support the development of an active PTO and executive board;
- Develop partnerships with local nonprofits and community organizations to host family workshops;
- Host events to support parents and guardians (Literacy, Math, i-Ready, How to utilize PowerSchool);

- Host monthly “Coffee And” events monthly with the Administrative Team.

Derby Middle School will promote parental engagement in support of student learning by building in additional parent-teacher conferences during the school year. Currently, the district calendar includes one parent-teacher report card meeting after the first marking period. In an effort to engage families, and maintain clear lines of communication throughout the year, DMS will add two additional parent/teacher conference days in the winter and spring.

Stakeholder feedback from the December 2019 school climate survey supports this strategy:

- **67% of parents** agree or strongly agree that “The school provides resources or strategies that I can use to support my child's learning at home.”
- **73% of teachers** agree or strongly agree that “I have met with, spoken to or communicated with most of my student's parents/guardians this year.”

Describe the school’s attendance intervention system.

Student Attendance Intervention System and Attendance Strategies: Student daily attendance and chronic absenteeism are areas of focus at Derby Middle School. DMS employs a number of strategies to increase a sense of belonging to promote increased daily attendance and on-time student arrival. According to the Commissioner’s Network Operations and Instructional Audit, “Parent focus group members agreed that ‘sending our kids to school every day is important. If my child is out, I get a phone call right away.’ The school implements several strategies focusing on attendance including participation in the CSDE Community of Practice sessions, posters throughout the school encouraging attendance, monthly attendance awards, as well as speakers and field trips to incentivize students coming to school.” The December 2019 school climate survey indicates a range of beliefs that can be linked to student attendance patterns:

- **75% of students** agree or strongly agree that, “If I do not come to school, there is a teacher or other adult at school that will notice my absence.”
- **50% of students** agree or strongly agree that, “I feel like I belong at this school.”
- **80% of parents** agree or strongly agree that, “The adults in this school really care about my child.”

Using the Attendance Works resources, the Culture and Climate Specialist will develop a strong attendance awareness campaign monitored through regular attendance team meetings focused on decreasing chronic absenteeism by identifying students exhibiting early warning indicators, providing personalized outreach, removing barriers to regular attendance, and recognizing good and improved attendance. The following tiered model is adapted from Attendance Works and outlines the actions Derby Middle School is taking to promote regular student attendance and decrease chronic absenteeism:

TIER I: Prevention for all Students:

- Create an engaging school climate
- Develop positive relationships with students and families
- Monitor attendance data
- Create arrival and dismissal policies that promote on-time attendance
- Recognize good and improved attendance
- Identify barriers and address needs

Tier II: Early Intervention (students missing 10-19%)

- Provide personalized early outreach
- Create an action plan which addresses barriers and increases engagement
- Provide students with mentors

Tier III: Specialized Supports (students missing 20% or more)

- Establish coordinated school and interagency response
- Referral to Derby Youth Bureau for additional family supports

The school Attendance Team, which consists of Principal, Assistant Principal, Culture and Climate Specialist, School Guidance Counselors, School Nurse and Guidance Secretary, meet bi-weekly to review data and implement strategies to improve student attendance. Parents are notified about their child’s attendance record

via PowerSchool, personal phone calls and letters. An Attendance PPT is held for students who are identified as moderately chronic, chronic or truant. Daily attendance data is displayed throughout the building. The Derby Youth Bureau collaborates with the school to conduct home visits and schedule meetings with hard to reach families. The school needs to strengthen and formalize this process to ensure regular multi-disciplinary team participation in Attendance Team Meetings. Chronic absenteeism at DMS for the 2018-2019 school finished at 12.6% for all students (down 1.6% from prior year) and 14.6% for high need students (down 4.5% from prior year). In Summer 2019, the Culture and Climate Specialist conducted **18 home visits** to all DMS students identified in the previous school year as chronically absent. The attendance team developed action plans with the families, stressed the importance of regular attendance, set up interventions, and planned targeted follow up during the school year. Presently, there are 50/364 (13.7%) students with 9 or more absences who are identified as chronically absent at Derby Middle School as of February 1, 2020.

Describe how the school will address students' social and emotional well-being.

Derby Middle School currently has a full-time social worker, two school counselors, a part-time school psychologist, and two Culture/Climate Specialists. To integrate the positive behavior model into the academic core and address students' social and emotional well-being, the school social worker and PBIS Coach will be responsible for training teachers to understand and use the Developmental Relationships Framework. This framework is tied to adult actions and relationships is directly linked to student motivation, effort, and self-efficacy.

- **Express Care:** Show me that I matter to you,
- **Challenge Growth:** Push me to keep getting better,
- **Provide Support:** Help me complete tasks and achieve goals,
- **Share Power:** Treat me with respect and give me a say,
- **Expand Possibilities:** Connect me with people and places that broaden my world.

Data from the December 2019 school climate survey supports the need for addressing students' social emotional well-being:

- **51% of teachers** agree or strongly agree that, "Most students in this school are easily able to work out disagreements with other students."
- **29% of students** agree or strongly agree that, "Students at this school respect each other's differences (for example: gender, race, culture, etc.)"

Students' social and emotional well-being will be addressed through the start of a new LINK Crew WEB program. WEB stands for "Where Everybody Belongs" and is a yearlong transition program specifically designed to support 6th graders and transfer students to successfully transition to middle school. Trained staff advisors oversee the program, but a group of 8th grade students will be trained to lead the work and serve as peer mentors. There are three components to LINK Crew WEB program that are central to its success:

- **Middle School Orientation-** WEB Leaders and 6th graders start building the mentor relationship and receive information about how to be successful in middle school before the school year begins.
- **Academic Follow Ups-** WEB Leaders support 6th/7th grade academic success and character development through classroom visits and lessons.
- **Social Follow Ups-** WEB Leaders and 6th/7th graders connect outside the classroom at school sponsored social events to increase student engagement and promote positive school climate.

LINK Crew WEB also acts as an anti-bullying program by providing a large group of student leaders who look for bullying behavior and help stop it. LINK Crew WEB gives students permission to be aware of and report any negative behavior they see to adults, which creates a safer school environment. Unified Sports, in conjunction with CT Special Olympics, is dedicated to promoting social inclusion through shared sports training and competition experiences. Unified Sports joins people with and without intellectual disabilities on the same team. It was inspired by a simple principle: training together and playing together is a quick path to friendship and understanding.

Derby Middle School will pilot Unified Sports for the 2020-2021 school year, and will participate in statewide events through CIAC. The goal of Unified Sports is to make practices fun and games challenging and exciting for all. In addition, Derby Middle School will establish a Best Buddies Chapter. Best Buddies is dedicated to ending the social, physical and economic isolation of students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The goal of a Best Buddies program is to empower the special abilities of people with disabilities by helping them form meaningful friendships with their peers of the same age. Staff will learn and participate in professional development related to social emotional learning. Specifically, staff will receive training to allow them to incorporate the following into their practices.

- Incorporate trauma-informed school practices, which will assist staff in identifying and supporting students who may have been exposed to traumatic or stressful events in their lifetime.
- Utilizing positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS), which will establish positive incentives to reinforce positive behaviors, and clear and consistent expectations for undesired behaviors.
- Incorporate mindfulness, and social and emotional learning into classroom curriculum via structured advisory lessons.

Part Two

Instructions: Using the table below, identify the Culture and Climate three-year goal including indicators of success, data sources, and three annual targets.

Three-Year School Culture and Climate Goal:

Indicator	Data Source	Baseline Year: 18-19	Target 1 Year: 19-20	Target 2 Year: 20-21	Target 3 Year: 21-22
Suspension Rate	EdSight	25%	20%	16%	12%
Chronic Absenteeism Rate	ESSA Milestones Chronic Absenteeism	12.6%	11.3%	10.7%	10%

Action Steps:

Instructions: Using the table below, describe key action steps which will be implemented across three years in order to achieve the three-year Culture and Climate goal.

Culture and Climate Priority: Implement the PBIS Model with fidelity to improve behavior and decrease rates of suspension/expulsion					
Root Cause: The school has not fully established common, school-wide, tiered behavioral expectations and a consistent system for responding to behavior incidents					
Person(s) Responsible: Principal, Assistant Principal, Faculty, Staff					
Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
Implement a school-wide PBIS model with fidelity	Establish clear and consistent student behavioral expectations, a positive climate rooted in mutual respect, and a formal program to	Implement school-wide behavioral lesson plans with fidelity and consistency Expand student ambassador roles	Strengthen the delivery of school-wide Tier III interventions, and consistent implementation of individual Behavior	Reduction in office discipline referrals Reduction in suspension / expulsion rates Increase in daily attendance;	1.0 FTE Assistant Principal Salary Differential Interior and exterior signage Physical environment upgrades to

	<p>recognize and reward desired behavior</p> <p>Develop school-wide behavioral lesson plans</p> <p>Introduce Developmental Frameworks</p> <p>Launch student news broadcasts</p>	Partner with community agencies	Intervention Plans (BIP)	<p>Reduction in chronic absenteeism</p> <p>Growth on annual School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET)</p> <p>Bi-annual school climate survey</p>	<p>foster school identify and branding</p> <p>Laser projector and screen in gymnasium for school assemblies, presentations</p> <p>Broadcasting studio equipment</p> <p>Supplies to establish school store</p>
Provide embedded professional development for teachers / staff to support PBIS	<p>The school will identify a PBIS Leadership Team and participate in Year 1 PBIS Training through SERC (6 days)</p> <p>The school will provide PD on evidence-based practices for classroom management and routines for all teachers</p>	<p>The PBIS Leadership Team will participate in Year 2 PBIS Training through SERC (3 days)</p> <p>Provide PD and embedded coaching on evidence-based practices for classroom management for new teachers and those in need of support</p>	<p>The PBIS Leadership Team will participate in Year 3 PBIS Training through SERC (3 days)</p> <p>Provide PD and embedded coaching on the functions of behavior</p>	Growth on annual PBIS Self- Assessment Survey (SAS)	<p>1.0 FTE PBIS Coach (lead teacher salary)</p> <p>Substitute teachers for PBIS and SERC PD</p>
Utilize data to monitor PBIS implementation, response to intervention, and changes in student behavior	Create a formal child study team process to deploy additional multi-tiered social, emotional, and/or behavioral support for students in need of interventions	Establish systems and routines to regularly review and share data about student's behavior particularly those accessing Tier II and Tier III supports	Refine the use of data to examine and address any disproportionalities in discipline data among defined subgroups		Contract for Panorama Climate Survey Platform

Culture and Climate Priority: Establish a school culture focused on achievement and engage families as partners in their children's learning					
Root Cause: There is a moderate sense of community and belonging, and a limited number of focused approaches to engage families as partners in their children's learning and school experience					
Person(s) Responsible: Principal, Assistant Principal, Faculty, Staff					
Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
Develop a coherent strategy for family engagement and communication	<p>Update and maintain a rich, accessible school website</p> <p>Increase participation in PowerSchool Parent Portal for easy access to grades and attendance data</p> <p>Employ multiple modes of communication using social media, text, email, School Reach, newsletters)</p> <p>Create a calendar of Family Engagement Nights, "Coffee And's" and parent workshops</p> <p>Establish Family Resource Room in Nurse's Office</p>	<p>Continue to update the website based on stakeholder feedback</p> <p>Develop and hold stakeholder committee meeting to assess and possibly adjust communication methods</p> <p>Strengthen and expand community partnerships to support Family Resource Room</p>	<p>Refine family engagement plan</p> <p>Implement feedback received from parents and families</p>	<p>Data from Welcoming Walkthrough</p> <p>Reduction in Chronic Absenteeism</p> <p>Increased student attendance rate</p>	<p>Contract with SERC for PD and Technical Assistance</p> <p>Materials to run Literacy and Math Nights (books, manipulatives, etc.)</p> <p>Supplies for Family Resource Room</p>
Establish Student Leadership Programs	<p>Select and Train Student Leaders for LINK Crew, Best Buddies and Unified Sports</p> <p>Conduct student surveys to develop a list of topic / events that are of interest to students</p>	<p>Establish system for student leaders to make a series of opportunities for new and transitioning students to feel connected to the school</p>	<p>Survey stakeholders in the Best Buddies and Unified Sports programs to design future learning experiences</p> <p>Continue to offer learning experiences to ensure all students feel connected and welcomed (i.e. classroom lesson, sporting events, school social, etc.)</p>	<p>Student surveys indicate a high satisfaction around areas of being connected to the school and that people care in my school</p>	<p>Training and stipend for LINK Crew WEB, Best Buddies and Unified Sports Program Advisors</p>

		<p>Make a calendar of events for students enrolled in Best Buddies to engage in meaningful, socially connecting activities</p> <p>Make a calendar of sporting events for the Unified Sports participants to engage with peers in other communities across the region</p>	<p>Survey stakeholders for future programming</p>		
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Domain 4: Operations

Part One

Instructions: The Operations domain focuses on systems and processes that promote organizational efficiency and effectiveness, including through the use of time and financial resources. In the boxes below, address the following:

Propose the length of the school day and year for students, and describe how the proposed schedule will maximize instructional time on task for each major instructional/content area.

Length of Day- Students: All Derby Public School students attend 183 school days* (2019-2020 school year includes one furlough day, thereby reducing the school year to 182 days). The student school day is from 8:30 am - 2:55 pm (6 hours, 25 minutes). In the 2020-2021 school year, the length of the student school day will remain unchanged, but the number of school days is expected to return to 183 days.

Student Schedule: Presently, students in Grades 6-8 are enrolled in five core classes: reading, ELA/writing, math, science, and social studies. Derby's model of standalone reading and ELA courses provides students with access to an extended literacy block. Student schedules also include two electives and/or unified arts classes, such as: health, physical education, music, band, chorus, Spanish or Italian. All classes are 48 minutes long and students have a 25-minute lunch break. Transition time between classes is 3.5 minutes. Within this present schedule, a need exists to increase math time, provide time for a true intervention/enrichment block for SRBI, and a student advisory period. The Commissioner's Network Operations and Instructional Audit indicated, "students would benefit from increased intervention time. The current schedule does not include opportunities for an intervention/enrichment period during the daily schedules; therefore, students receiving interventions do so in lieu of other coursework. Teacher focus group members also expressed a desire for additional specials/unified arts offerings as 'we don't have enough options for students.' Though the Commissioner's Network plan, Derby Middle School's instructional schedule will be revised to reflect the priorities of the improvement plan, and maximize instructional time on task for the core content areas. To achieve these changes, a contract for technical assistance is needed to revise the master schedule in PowerSchool to increase math instruction, eliminate inefficiencies, and add the following:

- **SRBI Model:** Develop an accelerated intervention/enrichment block in place of one unified arts block. This change will ensure delivery of Tier II and/or Tier III intervention and protect Tier I instructional time. It will also add 240 min per week of core instruction time (8,784 min per year).
- **Unified Arts/Electives:** Evaluate the unified arts/elective course schedules and consider benefits of half-year courses to maintain access to the arts for students, and increase the number of elective experiences throughout middle schools.
- **College & Career Readiness:** Develop a regular, formal advisory schedule using the Comprehensive School Counseling lessons developed in partnership with Derby Public Schools & Southern CT State University.

Breakfast: In Fall 2019, Derby Public Schools became a Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) district, which allows the schools to offer free, nutritious school meals to all students through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP). Breakfast at Derby Middle School is served before school from 8:15 - 8:30 AM. Although it is currently available at no cost to all students, only 25% of students participate. Under this proposal, the school will create systems and structures to provide universal "Breakfast in the Classroom" that is available before school and through the first bell. By moving breakfast to the classroom, and providing more time for students to eat, we expect participation rates to rise. More importantly, breakfast in the classroom will be used as an intentional strategy to build positive student-adult and student-student relationships, while supporting regular on-time school attendance.

Extended Day Program: Presently, after school clubs are limited and include a Rocket Club with two students, and a running program. The school offers late bus transportation two days per week for informal extra help and after school detention. According to the December 2019 school climate survey,

- **67% of students** agree or strongly agree that, “Adults in the school are usually willing to make time to meet with a student, give extra help, get involved in clubs, or attend student activities.”
- **73% of parents** agree or strongly agree that, “Students have lots of chances in my school to get involved in sports, clubs, and other school activities outside of class.”

Under this Turnaround Plan Proposal, the school will plan an extensive offering of after school clubs and extracurricular activities to address academic, social/emotional and behavioral needs, as well as a standalone Homework Center staffed by certified teachers and student/peer tutors. The Extended Learning Program will be thoughtfully planned to ensure high quality staffing, transportation, a nutritious snack, community partnerships and plans for long-term sustainability. A need exists for direct homework help, including access to adults who can re-teach materials, and a quiet space. The Extended Learning Program will run from 3:00 - 4:00 PM three days per week and will increase time on learning. Students in the Extended Learning Program will have access to the two late busses already available by the district. The Turnaround Plan includes an additional day of late bus service so the after school program can run three days per week. Bus transportation is necessary to ensure access and equity in after school program participation.

Propose the length of the school day and year for staff, including additional time before and during the school year for professional learning and/or common planning time.

Length of Day- Staff: All Derby Public School teachers are contracted to work 186 school days* (2019-2020 school year includes one furlough day, thereby reducing the contractual work days to 185). The Derby Middle School teacher work hours are 8:15 am - 3:25 pm (7 hours, 10 minutes), which includes 30 minutes of wrap around time after student dismissal. Under this turnaround plan, the length of the school day and year for staff, including additional time before and during the school year for professional learning and/or common planning, will remain unchanged and in line with the district’s calendar and collective bargaining agreements. The number of workdays is expected to return to 186 days in 2020-2021.

School Schedule: Presently, Derby Middle School’s teacher schedule includes five teaching periods, a common preparation/planning period, and a team time collaboration period. These blocks are all 48 minutes long. One strength of the current schedule is the amount of time available for teacher collaboration during the school day. In addition to a common preparation period with grade-level partners, all teachers have 240 minutes per week for team collaboration, parent meetings, student conferences, and common planning; this was a change implemented at the start of the 2019-2020 school. On the December 2019 school climate survey,

- **88% of teachers** agree or strongly agree that, “The school schedule allows adequate time for teacher collaboration.”

A need exists to formalize the structure for daily team time to include targeted professional learning facilitated by the PBIS Coach, Instructional Coach, Principal, or self-directed by the team. This will be addressed with the creation of an annual team calendar, schedule, and template to record activities completed.

Professional Learning: Presently, DMS teachers remain after school for an additional 60 minutes for meetings and targeted professional development two Wednesday’s per month. The principal is responsible for planning the content of these meetings. The principal will have the support of the Central Office to assist in the development of professional learning at the school. There are also two full day professional development days and nine early release days throughout the school year, which are planned by the district’s PDEC Committee. A need exists to formalize the structure for collaborative planning and professional learning during preparation periods as allowed by the current teacher contract three times per month.

Family Engagement: As part of this turnaround plan, the school will add two more report card conferences. Currently, teachers only meet formally with parents at the end of the first marking period. The additional parent-teacher meetings will be scheduled after the second and third marking period to communicate early and often with families, particularly when students are having difficulties.

Part Two

Instructions: Using the table below, identify the school Operations three-year goal including indicators of success, data sources, and three annual targets.

Three-Year School Operations Goal:

Indicator	Data Source	Baseline Year: 19-20	Target 1 Year: 20-21	Target 2 Year: 21-22	Target 3 Year: 22-23
School breakfast participation rate	Cafeteria POS	25%	70%	75%	80%

Action Steps:

Instructions: Using the table below, describe key action steps which will be implemented across three years in order to achieve the three-year culture goal.

Operations Priority: Create school structures and systems that maximize instructional time and create extended learning opportunities					
Root Cause: The school struggles to maintain a consistent, cohesive academic schedule that maximizes instructional time					
Person(s) Responsible: Principal, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Director of Teaching and Learning					
Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
Examine and revise school schedule	Revise the school schedule to maximize time in core instruction by restructuring the schedule for interventions, the arts, and support services	Evaluate the new schedule and revise and refine the school schedule (if necessary) to ensure maximization of time in core instruction, interventions, the arts and support services	Maintain a school schedule that ensures maximization of time in core instruction, interventions, the arts and support services	Instructional time is maximized for students access to high quality learning	Contract for Technical Assistance with Power School Scheduling
Establish after school activities and clubs for students	Survey students to determine interests in after school offering Schedule and place after school programming within the building	Assess and survey student participation to ensure progress towards having equity in accessing after school offerings Provide resources to staff to enrich after school offerings		Increased enrollment of After-School clubs and activities	Stipends for after school club advisors 6 @ stipends for teachers to staff Homework Center 8 @ stipends for after school club advisors 1 after school bus 1 day per week

Section 7: Sustainability Plan

Instructions: In the box below, describe the sustainability plan which addresses the following:

- How will the school build its capacity in order to sustain progress made using Commissioner's Network funds during Commissioner's Network participation years?
- How will the district support and monitor plans and activities subsequent to the end of Commissioner's Network participation?

Building Capacity: According to the Mass Insight Education and Research Institute (2007), sustainable change is possible when these conditions are created:

- **Readiness to Learn** (safety, discipline, and engagement)
- **Readiness to Teach** (shared responsibility for achievement, personalization of instruction, and professional learning culture)
- **Readiness to Act** (resource authority, resource ingenuity, agility in the face of turbulence)

The district believes that DMS is ready to learn, teach and act in order to improve teaching and learning for our students. In order to continue the progress made using the Commissioner's Network funds, Derby Middle School will build our capacity to ensure the talent, academic, climate, and operations strategies outlined in this plan are systemized and entrenched in the school's culture. Following the 3-5 years in the network, the heavy lift of the turnaround will be completed and the school readiness to learn, teach and act will be fully integrated. Derby Middle School will sustain the growth and momentum by maintaining a high performing school administrative team that embraces distributed leadership. This sense of shared purpose and collective understanding of the community the school serves will be the foundation for sustainability. The team will have established a long-range plan to put teaching and learning for all front and center. There will be a series of progress monitoring systems to check on the fidelity and growth of the systematic change efforts around curriculum development, teacher leadership, SRBI, climate and culture and family engagement. The developed structures and systems created will continue to promote teacher leaders who will have a firm understanding and drive to continue the work and vision started in the first years of the grant. In addition to teacher leaders, the district's Guiding Coalition will remain intact as we continue to review and enhance the district's model for high quality instruction. Additionally, they will remain instrumental in creating and facilitating professional learning opportunities in conjunction with the district professional development team (PDEC). This system of learning requires no additional funding or change to our present systems, but will be essential as we continue to propel Derby Middle School forward following 3-5 years in the Commissioner's Network.

By the end of the school's participation in the Network, we will have mapped and aligned the curriculum to the dispositions and traits of the Derby Public Schools graduate. More importantly, the teachers will have the appropriate tools and resources to continue to grow themselves and the students of Derby Public Schools with a rigorous curriculum that is aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards that ensures that all students are college and career ready. The school will continue to be intentional about hiring staff that are committed to the turnaround vision and goals of Derby Middle School. The district understands that moving forward the roles and responsibilities for new positions added in the turnaround plan will need to be redefined, or shared into positions funded by the operating budget and/or other grant funds. The mission of the school's future work will be communicated with clarity to the Board of Educations, district leaders, teachers and staff as well as families. There will be a concerted effort to build the capacity of school leaders to develop and empower teacher leaders. Leaders will learn effective ways to facilitate learning for adults. The Central office will develop a multi-year plan for growing school leaders in their ability to facilitate professional learning within their schools by using systems and structures and the Guiding Coalition as a resource. The new structures and protocols of PBIS to impact the climate of Derby Middle School will ensure teachers and leaders can focus on academic outcomes for all. The proactive work will allow DMS continued growth and the ability to appropriately plan and budget for future needs. DMS will continue to seek grants and funding to and realign positions and responsibilities from the district-operating budget to align with the mission and theory of action.

Supporting and Monitoring Activities Subsequent to the End of Commissioner's Network Participation: The systems and protocols put into place at Derby Middle School during the 3-5 years of the Commissioner's Network will remain the foundation of the DMS talent, academics, climate/culture and operations strategy after participation in the Network ends. Ongoing Professional Development will continue to occur within the master district schedule to ensure teacher capacity remains at the forefront. In addition, staff will continue to have building wide professional development twice monthly. The Professional Development will be tailored to the whole school focus as well as individual teacher needs derived from ongoing surveys. The district will continue to support and monitor plans and activities by ongoing planning meetings with:

- **Superintendent:** The Superintendent will continue to conduct monthly meetings with the Principal to monitor the progress towards the identified priorities, strategies, and indicators of success, and identify next steps for continued growth.
- **Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment/Director of Teaching and Learning:** The Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment and the Director of Teaching and Learning will continue to participate in regular ongoing conversations and focused learning walks with DMS teachers, and administrators to continue to drive a cycle of continuous improvement. The Director of Teaching and Learning and the Principal will be responsible for supporting the ongoing use of district-wide coaching protocols. Additionally systems will be in place to ensure regular team meetings to enable the curriculum implementation to continue in all content areas. The district will have a multi-year professional development plan for professional learning around high quality instruction.
- **Secondary Special Education Supervisor:** The Special Education Supervisor will ensure students' needs are met through the most appropriate program/service delivery model (co-teaching, learning centers, pull out/resource), in order for all students to engage in rigorous core instruction. The SPED Supervisor will monitor the development of IEPs and 504s, student achievement, and disciplinary data for students with disabilities.
- **Human Resources Coordinator:** The Human Resources Coordinator will be responsible for ongoing recruitment of top talent, and participating in minority teacher recruitment events to develop a racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse teaching staff at Derby Middle School.

Section 8: Budget Proposal

8.1 BUDGET PROPOSAL

After the SBE approves the Turnaround Plan, the school is eligible to receive a Network grant in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-223h(a).

Instructions: Using the Excel workbook provided, please create a one-year budget proposal outlining new costs associated with the Turnaround Plan and leveraging all available funding sources.

- Budget Cover Page:** Please enter the school name on the cover sheet. The remaining cells summarizing the entire budget workbook will be auto-generated as you complete the Network proposal, bond request, and Wraparound Grant proposal. Please do not enter cost information on the cover page.
- Part I: Commissioner's Network Year 1 Budget Proposal:** Please insert information pertaining to the proposed Commissioner's Network budget for the school. The budget should reflect all new expenditures contained in the Turnaround Plan and show the proposed funding source(s) for each new cost. Possible funding sources include, but are not limited to, the school's local operating budget, the federal budget, the Alliance District grant, the Priority School District grant, the Commissioner's Network grant, and/or other grants. Please categorize proposed expenditures by Uniform Charts of Accounts codes (see Appendix B). For each expenditure, provide the following information in the appropriate columns: (a) label the position/service/item; (b) provide cost information and/or a budget justification (e.g., summary of the expense, # of units, cost per unit, etc.); (c) enter the total cost; (d) list all funding sources; and (e) show how the investment is strategically aligned to the Turnaround Plan by identifying the section of the plan that describes the corresponding strategy. The budget proposal will be evaluated for strategic alignment and anticipated impact as the award amount is determined by the CSDE after the State Board of Education approves the Turnaround Plan. When adding personnel through the Commissioner's Network grant, please use the following formula for all salaries and benefits built into the plan.

Year 1: 75 percent paid through Commissioner's Network funding/25 percent paid through alternative funding

Year 2: 50 percent paid through Commissioner's Network funding/50 percent paid through alternative funding

Year 3: 25 percent paid through Commissioner's Network funding/75 percent paid through alternative funding

Year 4: 0 percent paid through Commissioner's Network funding/100 percent paid through alternative funding

Section 9: Modifications

During the term of the school's participation in the Commissioner's Network, the Commissioner shall review the progress of each school. The Commissioner or designee may, on the basis of such review, convene the Turnaround Committee to, as part of its monitoring responsibility, address a lack of sufficient progress or other implementation issues at the school. The Turnaround Committee may consider and enact changes to the Turnaround Plan by consensus. If the Turnaround Committee does not enact changes or the changes are unlikely to result in sufficient progress or adequately address implementation concerns, the Commissioner may take appropriate actions to ensure sufficient progress at the school, including, but not limited to, finding the Turnaround Plan deficient and developing a revised Turnaround Plan.

PART IV: APPENDIX SECTION

Appendix A: Turnaround Committee Signatures Page

Please Note: Applicants should not sign this section of the application until the Turnaround Committee reaches consensus on the Turnaround Plan and is ready to submit a final copy of such plan to the CSDE.

We, the undersigned members of the Turnaround Committee, on the basis of a consensus agreement, submit this Turnaround Plan to the Commissioner for final selection of the school into the Commissioner's Network.

Signature of Superintendent, Non-Voting Chair

Date

Dr. Matthew Conway, Jr

Name of Superintendent (*typed*)

Signature of Board of Education-appointed Parent

Date

Janine Netto

Name of Board of Education-appointed Parent (*typed*)

Signature of Board of Education-appointed Administrator

Date

Rachael Caggiano

Name of Board of Education-appointed Administrator (*typed*)

Signature of Union-appointed Teacher

Date

Jennifer Andrews

Name of Union-appointed Teacher (*typed*)

Signature of Union-appointed Teacher

Date

David Nuzzo

Name of Union-appointed Teacher (*typed*)

Signature of Union-appointed Parent

Date

Erica Ruggerio

Name of Union-appointed Parent (*typed*)

Signature of Commissioner of Education

Date

Dr. Miguel A. Cardona

Name of Commissioner of Education (*typed*)

Turnaround Committee Participation

In the table below, please input the names and titles of the additional stakeholders not referenced above that were involved in the development of this turnaround application:

Name	Title
Mrs. Jennifer Olson	Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Turnaround Committee Chair
Detective Benjamin Bartone	Derby Police Department, Detective/Community Member
Dr. Michael Rafferty	Director of Teaching and Learning

Appendix B: Budget Information

As noted in Section 8.1, please code all expenditures in accordance with the state's Uniform Charts of Accounts as summarized below.

CODE:	OBJECT:
100	PERSONNEL SERVICES – SALARIES. Amounts paid to both permanent and temporary grantee employees including personnel substituting for those in permanent positions. This includes gross salary for personnel services rendered while on the payroll of the grantees.
200	PERSONNEL SERVICES – EMPLOYEE BENEFITS. Amounts paid by the grantee on behalf of employees; these amounts are not included in the gross salary, but are in addition to that amount. Such payments are fringe benefit payments and, while not paid directly to employees, nevertheless are parts of the cost of personnel services.
300	PURCHASED PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL SERVICES. Services, which by their nature can be performed only by persons or firms with specialized skills and knowledge. While a product may or may not result from the transaction, the primary reason for the purchase is the service provided. Included are the services of architects, engineers, auditors, dentists, medical doctors, lawyers, consultants, teachers, accountants, technical assistance support organizations, school management partners, etc.
400	PURCHASED PROPERTY SERVICES. Services purchased to operate, repair, maintain, and rent property owned or used by the grantee. Persons other than grantee employees perform these services. While a product may or may not result from the transaction, the primary reason for the purchase is the service provided.
500	OTHER PURCHASED SERVICES. Amounts paid for services rendered by organizations or personnel not on the payroll of the grantee (separate from Professional and Technical Services or Property Services). While a product may or may not result from the transaction, the primary reason for the purchase is the service provided.
600	SUPPLIES. Amounts paid for items that are consumed, worn out, or deteriorated through use; or items that lose their identity through fabrication or incorporation into different or more complex units or substances.
700	PROPERTY. Expenditures for acquiring fixed assets, including land or existing buildings, improvements of grounds, initial equipment, additional equipment, and replacement of equipment. In accordance with the Connecticut State Comptroller's definition equipment, included in this category are all items of equipment (machinery, tools, furniture, vehicles, apparatus, etc.) with a value of over \$5,000 and the useful life of more than one year and data processing equipment that has unit price under \$5,000 and a useful life of not less than five years.
800	OTHER OBJECTS. (Miscellaneous Expenditures) Expenditures for goods or services not properly classified in one of the above objects. Included in the category could be expenditures for dues and fees, judgments against a grantee that are not covered by liability insurance, and interest payments on bonds and notes.

Appendix C: Statement of Assurances

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION STANDARD STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES | GRANT PROGRAMS

PROJECT TITLE: Commissioner's Network

THE APPLICANT: Dr. Matthew J. Conway, Jr. **HEREBY ASSURES THAT:**
Derby Public Schools
(insert Agency/School/CBO Name)

- A. The applicant has the necessary legal authority to apply for and receive the proposed grant;
- B. The filing of this application has been authorized by the applicant's governing body, and the undersigned official has been duly authorized to file this application for and on behalf of said applicant, and otherwise to act as the authorized representative of the applicant in connection with this application;
- C. The activities and services for which assistance is sought under this grant will be administered by or under the supervision and control of the applicant;
- D. The project will be operated in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and in compliance with regulations and other policies and administrative directives of the State Board of Education and the Connecticut State Department of Education;
- E. Grant funds shall not be used to supplant funds normally budgeted by the agency;
- F. Fiscal control and accounting procedures will be used to ensure proper disbursement of all funds awarded;
- G. The applicant will submit a final project report (within 60 days of the project completion) and such other reports, as specified, to the Connecticut State Department of Education, including information relating to the project records and access thereto as the Connecticut State Department of Education may find necessary;
- H. The Connecticut State Department of Education reserves the exclusive right to use and grant the right to use and/or publish any part or parts of any summary, abstract, reports, publications, records and materials resulting from this project and this grant;
- I. If the project achieves the specified objectives, every reasonable effort will be made to continue the project and/or implement the results after the termination of state/federal funding;
- J. The applicant will protect and save harmless the State Board of Education from financial loss and expense, including legal fees and costs, if any, arising out of any breach of the duties, in whole or part, described in the application for the grant;
- K. At the conclusion of each grant period, the applicant will provide for an independent audit report acceptable to the grantor in accordance with Sections 7-394a and 7-396a of the Connecticut General

Statutes, and the applicant shall return to the Connecticut State Department of Education any moneys not expended in accordance with the approved program/operation budget as determined by the audit;

L. REQUIRED LANGUAGE (NON-DISCRIMINATION)

References in this section to “contract” shall mean this grant agreement and to “contractor” shall mean the Grantee.

(a) For purposes of this Section, the following terms are defined as follows:

- i. “Commission” means the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities;
- ii. “Contract” and “contract” include any extension or modification of the Contract or contract;
- iii. “Contractor” and “contractor” include any successors or assigns of the Contractor or contractor;
- iv. “Gender identity or expression” means a person’s gender-related identity, appearance or behavior, whether or not that gender-related identity, appearance or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person’s physiology or assigned sex at birth, which gender-related identity can be shown by providing evidence including, but not limited to, medical history, care or treatment of the gender-related identity, consistent and uniform assertion of the gender-related identity or any other evidence that the gender-related identity is sincerely held, part of a person’s core identity or not being asserted for an improper purpose.
- v. “good faith” means that degree of diligence which a reasonable person would exercise in the performance of legal duties and obligations;
- vi. “good faith efforts” shall include, but not be limited to, those reasonable initial efforts necessary to comply with statutory or regulatory requirements and additional or substituted efforts when it is determined that such initial efforts will not be sufficient to comply with such requirements;
- vii. “marital status” means being single, married as recognized by the State of Connecticut, widowed, separated or divorced;
- viii. “mental disability” means one or more mental disorders, as defined in the most recent edition of the American Psychiatric Association’s “Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders”, or a record of or regarding a person as having one or more such disorders;
- ix. “minority business enterprise” means any small contractor or supplier of materials fifty-one percent or more of the capital stock, if any, or assets of which is owned by a person or persons: (1) who are active in the daily affairs of the enterprise, (2) who have the power to direct the management and policies of the enterprise, and (3) who are members of a minority, as such term is defined in subsection (a) of C.G.S. § 32-9n; and
- x. “public works contract” means any agreement between any individual, firm or corporation and the State or any political subdivision of the State other than a municipality for construction, rehabilitation, conversion, extension, demolition or repair of a public building, highway or other changes or improvements in real property, or which is financed in whole or in part by the State, including, but not limited to, matching expenditures, grants, loans, insurance or guarantees.

For purposes of this Section, the terms “Contract” and “contract” do not include a contract where each contractor is (1) a political subdivision of the state, including, but not limited to, a municipality, unless the contract is a municipal public works contract or quasi-public

- agency project contract, (2) any other state, including but not limited to any federally recognized Indian tribal governments, as defined in C.G.S. § 1-267, (3) the federal government, (4) a foreign government, or (5) an agency of a subdivision, state or government described in the immediately preceding enumerated items (1), (2), (3), or (4).
- (b) (1) The Contractor agrees and warrants that in the performance of the Contract such Contractor will not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons on the grounds of race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, intellectual disability, mental disability or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by such Contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved, in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States or of the State of Connecticut; and the Contractor further agrees to take affirmative action to insure that applicants with job-related qualifications are employed and that employees are treated when employed without regard to their race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, intellectual disability, mental disability or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by the Contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved; (2) the Contractor agrees, in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the Contractor, to state that it is an “affirmative action-equal opportunity employer” in accordance with regulations adopted by the Commission; (3) the Contractor agrees to provide each labor union or representative of workers with which the Contractor has a collective bargaining Agreement or other contract or understanding and each vendor with which the Contractor has a contract or understanding, a notice to be provided by the Commission, advising the labor union or workers’ representative of the Contractor’s commitments under this section and to post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment; (4) the Contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this Section and C.G.S. §§ 46a-68e and 46a-68f and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said Commission pursuant to C.G.S. §§ 46a-56, 46a-68e, 46a-68f and 46a-86; and (5) the Contractor agrees to provide the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities with such information requested by the Commission, and permit access to pertinent books, records and accounts, concerning the employment practices and procedures of the Contractor as relate to the provisions of this Section and C.G.S. § 46a-56. If the contract is a public works contract, municipal public works contract or contract for a quasi-public agency project, the Contractor agrees and warrants that he or she will make good faith efforts to employ minority business enterprises as subcontractors and suppliers of materials on such public works or quasi-public agency projects.
- (c) Determination of the Contractor’s good faith efforts shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following factors: The Contractor’s employment and subcontracting policies, patterns and practices; affirmative advertising, recruitment and training; technical assistance activities and such other reasonable activities or efforts as the Commission may prescribe that are designed to ensure the participation of minority business enterprises in public works projects.

- (d) The Contractor shall develop and maintain adequate documentation, in a manner prescribed by the Commission, of its good faith efforts.
- (e) The Contractor shall include the provisions of subsection (b) of this Section in every subcontract or purchase order entered into in order to fulfill any obligation of a contract with the State and in every subcontract entered into in order to fulfill any obligation of a municipal public works contract for a quasi-public agency project, and such provisions shall be binding on a subcontractor, vendor or manufacturer unless exempted by regulations or orders of the Commission. The Contractor shall take such action with respect to any such subcontract or purchase order as the Commission may direct as a means of enforcing such provisions including sanctions for noncompliance in accordance with C.G.S. § 46a-56, as amended; provided if such Contractor becomes involved in, or is threatened with, litigation with a subcontractor or vendor as a result of such direction by the Commission regarding a State contract, the Contractor may request the State of Connecticut to enter into any such litigation or negotiation prior thereto to protect the interests of the State and the State may so enter.
- (f) The Contractor agrees to comply with the regulations referred to in this Section as they exist on the date of this Contract and as they may be adopted or amended from time to time during the term of this Contract and any amendments thereto.
- (g) (1)The Contractor agrees and warrants that in the performance of the Contract such Contractor will not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons on the grounds of sexual orientation, in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States or the State of Connecticut, and that employees are treated when employed without regard to their sexual orientation; (2) the Contractor agrees to provide each labor union or representative of workers with which such Contractor has a collective bargaining Agreement or other contract or understanding and each vendor with which such Contractor has a contract or understanding, a notice to be provided by the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities advising the labor union or workers' representative of the Contractor's commitments under this section, and to post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment; (3) the Contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this section and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said Commission pursuant to C.G.S. § 46a-56; and (4) the Contractor agrees to provide the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities with such information requested by the Commission, and permit access to pertinent books, records and accounts, concerning the employment practices and procedures of the Contractor which relate to the provisions of this Section and C.G.S. § 46a-56.
- (h) The Contractor shall include the provisions of the foregoing paragraph in every subcontract or purchase order entered into in order to fulfill any obligation of a contract with the State and such provisions shall be binding on a subcontractor, vendor or manufacturer unless

exempted by regulations or orders of the Commission. The Contractor shall take such action with respect to any such subcontract or purchase order as the Commission may direct as a means of enforcing such provisions including sanctions for noncompliance in accordance with C.G.S. § 46a-56 as amended; provided, if such Contractor becomes involved in, or is threatened with, litigation with a subcontractor or vendor as a result of such direction by the Commission regarding a State contract, the Contractor may request the State of Connecticut to enter into any such litigation or negotiation prior thereto to protect the interests of the State and the State may so enter.

- M.** The grant award is subject to approval of the Connecticut State Department of Education and availability of state or federal funds.
- N.** The applicant agrees and warrants that Sections 4-190 to 4-197, inclusive, of the Connecticut General Statutes concerning the Personal Data Act and Sections 10-4-8 to 10-4-10, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies promulgated there under are hereby incorporated by reference.

I, the undersigned authorized official, hereby certify that these assurances shall be fully implemented.

Superintendent Signature: _____

Name: *(typed)* _____ Dr. Matthew Conway, Jr.

Title: *(typed)* _____ Superintendent of Schools

Date: _____

PART V: REFERENCES

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