Dr. Matthew J. Conway, Jr.
Superintendent of Schools

February 26, 2018

Good afternoon Senator Slossberg, Representative Fleischmann, Senator Boucher, Representative Lavielle and members of the Education Committee, I am Matthew J. Conway, Jr., Superintendent of Schools for Derby Public Schools, and I am pleased to have an opportunity to testify before you today regarding a series of important education-related proposals. I will summarize my written testimony and then I will be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Raised Bill No. 186
AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL COUNSELORS.

We support the inclusion of “School Counselor” in raised bill 186.

Raised H.B. No. 5168
AN ACT CONCERNING THE CREATION OF THE SUMMER LEARNING GRANT PROGRAM.

We support Raised Bill 5168 as written. Summer Learning programs have been shown to greatly enhance student performance and provide continued learning opportunities for individuals who might not otherwise be exposed to learning during the summer. Furthermore it is not restricted to specific grade levels or one school and is open to all districts to apply.

Raised Bill No. 5171
AN ACT PROHIBITING THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH FROM MAKING RECISSIONS OR OTHER REDUCTIONS TO THE EDUCATION COST SHARING GRANT DURING THE FISCAL YEAR

We support Raised Bill 5171 which would prohibit rescissions or other reductions to the ECS grant during the fiscal year. The disruption to all students and our staff throughout the year causes many distractions inside and outside of the classroom for all students and staff. I am sure everyone on this committee would agree it is not the way we would like to manage our school funding. The anticipation and then subsequent mid-year reductions resulted in essential support programs being put on hold, reducing vital services to our most needy students. Several district were facing significant reductions, which sparked notification of layoffs to staff, causing great distraction to many in our schools. While they should have be focused on teaching and learning, they were faced with asking
themselves: Will I have a job? Will I be here next week? If I am not here, what happens to my students?

Raised Bill No. 5170
AN ACT CONCERNING STUDENTS' RIGHT TO PRIVACY IN THEIR MOBILE ELECTRONIC DEVICES.

We support Raised Bill 5170 AN ACT CONCERNING STUDENTS' RIGHT TO PRIVACY IN THEIR MOBILE ELECTRONIC DEVICES.

Governor's Bill No. 8
AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING EDUCATION.

We Oppose the recommendation in section 2 of the bill that the new base grant amounts for towns equalization aid grant be based on the mid-year reductions made on 2017-18 school year, as set forth in the language below. We instead propose the base grant amounts be based on the amount the town was entitled to receive for the fiscal year ending 2017.

(48) "Base grant amount" means (A) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2018, the equalization aid grant a town was entitled to receive for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2017, as enumerated in section 20 of public act 16-2 of the May special session, minus any reductions to said equalization aid grant during the fiscal year ending June 30, 2017, resulting from lapses to the funds appropriated for said equalization aid grant attributable to the recommendation made by the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, pursuant to section 12 of public act 15-244, and (B) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019, and each fiscal year thereafter, the equalization aid grant a town was entitled to receive for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2018, minus any reductions to said equalization aid grant during the fiscal year ending June 30, 2018, resulting from any (i) reduction in allotments for the executive branch made by the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, pursuant to section 13 of public act 17-2 of the June special session, (ii) reduction in allotments for any budgeted agency of the state made by the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, pursuant to section 14 of public act 17-2 of the June special session, or (iii) withholding or reduction of state financial assistance by the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, pursuant to subsection (d) of section 12-170f.

Sincerely,

Dr. Matthew J. Conway, Jr.
Superintendent of Schools