

Ban on parents at elementary school lunchrooms roils Connecticut town

By Michael Melia
 The Associated Press

DARIEN, Conn. — One mother shed tears when she read the superintendent's announcement. Another said it felt like a body blow.
 After struggling with growing numbers of parents in school cafeterias, the Darien school system said parents and guardians would no longer be welcome to visit with their children during lunch at the town's elementary schools.
 The decision has stirred strong emotions in Darien, a wealthy shoreline community that prides itself on its high-performing

public schools. While some parents said it was time to stop a disruptive practice, others have protested at town meetings and in online forums that the change has deprived them of cherished time to check in on their children and model good social behavior.
 "It feels like a punch in the gut," parent Jessica Xu, whose oldest child is in first grade, said in an interview. "I chose the town for the schools. I'm so frustrated the schools don't want me there."
 Elementary schools generally set their own rules for parent visits, and policies vary widely. Some allow it on children's

birthdays or other special occasions. In some areas districts say it's not an issue because parents do not or cannot visit because of work or other obligations.
 In a Darien, a town of Colonial-style homes behind stone fences where the median household income exceeds \$200,000, so many parents had begun attending lunch that principals felt they were affecting the day-to-day running of the elementary schools, according to Tara Ochman, chairman of the Darien Board of Education. On a typical day, Xu said, six or seven parents were in the cafeteria of her child's school.
 "We believe that schools exist for children, and we work to develop the skills necessary for students to grow into engaged members of society," Ochman said in a written statement. "We work every day on this mission so that our students embrace their next steps confidently and respectfully."
 The Darien superintendent and elementary school principals declined to comment, but a veteran of school lunchrooms in the nearby town of Weston, Kelly Ann Franzese, said parent visits can

be taxing because children become upset when their parents leave and school staff members feel their every move is being scrutinized. Some Weston parents visited their children every week, she said.
 "From a professional perspective, when we're the ones left dealing with your child when you leave, it wasn't good," said Franzese, who worked for eight years as a special education therapist in Weston until earlier this year. "We would call them helicopter moms."
 One Darien mother, Beth Lane, said at an education board meeting last month that she welcomed the change.
 "It was good because kids have to be able to learn how to work with each other and socialize with each other, and putting a parent in changes the dynamic dramatically," she said.
 But others who spoke up at the meeting said the midday visits allowed them to see how their children were faring and to help them resolve friction with other children. For the youngest children, they could offer helping opening milk cartons and finding items in the lunchrooms.

Proposed rail line from Orlando to Tampa gets boost

By Jim Turner
 The News Service of Florida

TALLAHASSEE — Brightline got the green light Wednesday from the state to negotiate for land to add high-speed passenger rail service from Orlando to Tampa — a link envisioned to eventually connect with Brightline's existing service in South Florida.
 The Florida Department of Transportation's procurement office approved an application from Brightline, giving it 90 days to work out terms with the Central Florida Expressway Authority to build the train service along Interstate 4.
 Brightline President Patrick Goddard said the company looks forward to working with the expressway authority in "strengthening Florida's infrastructure" and called the proposal the company's "next step in our efforts to expand intercity passenger rail in Florida."
 "The private investment we have made has created thousands of jobs and generated substantial economic impact," Goddard said in a prepared statement after getting the Department of Transportation approval.
 "By connecting Florida's major economic centers, Brightline provides a safe, efficient and productive way for residents and tourists to travel the state."
 As part of its application, Brightline projects the 88-mile route, which would require 44-foot-wide spaces mostly

along Interstate 4, would produce about 16,500 temporary jobs during the three years of construction. It would produce about 1,600 permanent jobs, and stations would be expected in Orlando, Tampa and the Celebration and Lakeland areas.
 Additional negotiations are expected by the privately funded rail service with utilities, local land owners and communities along the route — which would go from Orlando International Airport, through Osceola and Polk counties, to downtown Tampa.
 "For us right now, our biggest involvement is this (Wednesday's approval)," Department of Transportation spokesman Ed Seifert said. "Without this, they don't have a line."
 Brightline, which now operates between Miami and West Palm Beach, recently signed a deal with new minority investor Virgin Group, with Brightline planning to rename itself Virgin Trains USA. As part of the move, Virgin Trains USA is seeking Securities and Exchange Commission permission to conduct an initial public stock offering.
 The idea of a rail line linking Tampa and Orlando was rejected by Gov. Rick Scott in 2011 when it was part of a federal expansion of high-speed rail. Scott expressed concerns at the time about cost overruns in the \$2.4 billion proposal.

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 Bernard S. Phillip II is co-owner and President of Phillip & Wiley Mortuary. He was born and raised in Gainesville, FL. He is a graduate of Gainesville High School and Gupion-Jones College of Funeral Service where he earned an AS Degree in Mortuary Science. He has over 15 yrs in the industry. He has worked for and with some of the world's greatest Mortuaries.
 Ronald B. Wiley is the Co-Owner and Vice President of Phillip & Wiley Mortuary. He was born and raised in Gainesville, Florida and attended Gainesville High School. Ronald moved to Atlanta, Ga in 1994, where he attended Gupion-Jones College of Funeral Service. He was a full time employee of Donald Trimble Mortuary, under the tutelage of Mr. Donald Trimble for over 15 yrs. Ronald's passion for funeral service, and love for customer service has brought him back home. He is honored to be of service to you, and your family, in your time of need. **We are pleased to announce the opening of our newest facility and humbled to be able to serve families in the surrounding area.**

PUBLIC NOTICE

A neighborhood workshop will be held to discuss a proposed Development Plan for a building addition located on tax parcel number 07240-044-008 at 3413 SW 47th Avenue in Gainesville. This is not a public hearing. The purpose of this meeting is to inform neighboring property owners of the proposed development and to seek their comments. The meeting will be held at 6:00 p.m. on December 13, 2018 in the Orange Room of the Fairfield Inn & Suites at 3877 SW 37th Blvd., Gainesville, FL 32608.
 Contact: Sergio Reyes, PE
 eda engineers-surveyors-planners, inc.
 (352) 373-3541



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PUBLIC NOTICE OF ENACTMENT OF AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ALACHUA, FLORIDA

Notice is hereby given that the City Commission of the City of Alachua will hold a public hearing on a proposed ordinance. The hearing will be held on December 10, 2018, at 6:00 p.m., in the James A. Lewis Commission Chambers in City Hall, located at 15100 NW 142nd Terrace, Alachua, Florida.
 The ordinance title is as follows:
ORDINANCE 19-05
AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ALACHUA, FLORIDA, RELATING TO THE AMENDMENT OF THE CITY'S LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS ("LDRS"); AMENDING SUBPART B OF THE CITY OF ALACHUA CODE OF ORDINANCES, LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS; AMENDING SECTION 3.7.2 (C), RELATING TO LANDSCAPE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE U.S HIGHWAY 441/ INTERSTATE 75 GATEWAY OVERLAY DISTRICT; AMENDING SECTION 6.2, RELATING TO TREE PROTECTION & LANDSCAPING STANDARDS; AMENDING SECTION 6.2.1, RELATING TO TREE PROTECTION STANDARDS; AMENDING SECTION 6.2.2, RELATING TO LANDSCAPING STANDARDS; AMENDING SECTION 6.2.3, RELATING TO SCREENING STANDARDS; AMENDING APPENDIX 6.2.2.A, RELATING TO THE LIST OF RECOMMENDED TREES/PLANTS AND NUISANCE TREES; AMENDING ARTICLE 10, PROVIDING DEFINITIONS FOR FLORIDA FRIENDLY LANDSCAPING AND QUALITY TREE PROTECTION AREA.; PROVIDING A REPEALING CLAUSE; PROVIDING SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.
 At the public hearing, all interested parties may appear and be heard with respect to the application. Copies of the application are available for public inspection at the Planning and Community Development Department, 15100 NW 142nd Terrace, Alachua, Florida, on any regular business day between the hours of 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Written comments on the application may be sent to the following address: City of Alachua, Planning and Community Development, P.O. Box 9, Alachua, FL 32616. Notice is given pursuant to Section 286.0105, Florida Statutes, that, in order to appeal any decision made at the public hearing, you will need a record of the proceedings, and that, for such purpose, you may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, any persons with a disability requiring reasonable accommodation in order to participate in this meeting should call the City Clerk at (386) 418-6100 x 101 at least 48 hours prior to the public hearing.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE


Tentative Five - Year Work Program
Florida Department of Transportation
District Two & Florida's Turnpike Enterprise

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) will conduct a public hearing pursuant to Section 339.135(4)(c), Florida Statutes, to consider the Department's (District Two and Florida's Turnpike Enterprise) Tentative Five-Year Work Program for Fiscal Years 2019/2020 - 2023/2024, and to consider the necessity of making any changes to the Work Program. All persons are invited to attend and be heard.

Public Hearing - Thursday, December 6, 2018
Open House: 4:30 P.M. to 6:30 P.M.
Video Presentation: 6:00 P.M.
FDOT District Two Urban Office - Training Facility
2198 Edison Avenue, Jacksonville, FL

This meeting will serve as the official public hearing for the Tentative Five-Year Work Program. There will be a brief work program development video presentation at 6:00 p.m., followed by a public comment period. Department staff will be on hand to answer questions or concerns for all projects in District Two.

Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability or family status. Persons who require special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or persons who require translation services (free of charge) should contact James Driggers, Jr at (800) 749-2967 ext. 3722 at least 7 days before the hearing.

All proposed documents are available for review on-line at www.d2wpph.com. If you would like to submit written comments, you may submit them at the hearing or our website at www.d2wpph.com or by mail/email. All written comments need to be received by the Department no later than **December 28, 2018** to be documented as part of the public hearing transcript.

Written comments should be addressed to:

Mr. Greg Evans, FDOT District Two Secretary
 1109 S. Marion Avenue, Mail Station 2000
 Lake City, FL 32025-5874
 (386) 758-3700 or (800) 749-2967
 Email: greg.evans@dot.state.fl.us

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



City of ALACHUA

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Time: 6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m.
Location: Main Street Theatre Park

Please contact Alachua City Hall for additional information.

This activity is neither sponsored nor endorsed by Alachua County Public Schools.