

Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools National Benner Presentation Assembly
Archie R. Cole Middle School
Friday, March 29, 2019, 12:00pm

Schedule of Events and Speakers

10:30am -11:45 am: Reception in Cole Library Media Center for Honored Guests

11:45 am: Students transitioning from classrooms to gymnasium, met by cheering Hasbro employees in the hallways, Sit in team areas, chorus in bleachers between Cyclone and Riptide, Jazz band playing music as people enter gymnasium, orchestra sitting in chairs on floor, Unified athletes and partners (Bball & XC) sitting on first row of bleachers near Avalanche area

12:00pm: Start, Cole Principal Mrs. Marcottel to give general welcome and to introduce Dr. Mercurio to the stage. Dr. Victor Mercurio opens assembly, recognizes and thanks honored guests that are not speaking (SC members, TC members, district and school administrators, state reps, SOI/SONA representatives, representative from Senator Whitehouse's office, etc...), Dr VM gives speech and then introduces Ken Bell as MC for the assembly.

12:05 pm: Ken Bell introduces Ms Jennifer Armstrong...Cole Chorus sings National Anthem...colors presented by the East Greenwich Police Department and accompanied by the Kentish Guards' Drum Corp

KB: "How many of you have seen the movie, The Greatest Showman? If you remember, there was a pivotal scene that completely changed the direction of the movie and most notably, PT Barnum, who was played by Hugh Jackman. The scene revolved around the circus performers not being allowed to attend a party that was being held...they were pushed aside for being different, for being a bit odd and for not being what PT Barnum thought was normal...they were bullied to simply go away and not accepted. Then, Lettie spoke up with a song that made everyone realize that we all have something so very special to offer to the world, that we are who we are and that is what makes us all have special abilities that we so desperately need to share with the world....celebrate who you are and show the world your special talents.

Please welcome the Cole Orchestra, under the direction of Ms. Megan Catelli, as they perform, from the movie the Greatest Showman, the 2018 Golden Globe Winner for Best Original Song and a 2018 Academy Award Nominated song, "This is Me"

12:10pm: Cole Orchestra to play, "This is Me"

12:15: KB..."This day is about students and the power that they, and all of you in this gymnasium, have to change the world. Our next speakers are students that, through their involvement with Best Buddies and being involved with our Unified Sports Teams, are changing

the world by their words, their actions and the messages of friendship, respect, inclusion and acceptance, not only here at Cole but throughout the entire town and even beyond the borders of East Greenwich. Please welcome to the stage Cole 8th graders, Alexis Baker, Allison Kazmeer, Pyper Smith and Mia Schenenga

12:20: KB..."Just a few minutes ago, you heard a beautiful rendition of This is Me by the Cole orchestra and we now have a special performance so that you can hear this amazing song in a different way. Before we get to the next performance, think for a second how many times you can say hi to someone....you can actually say the words: hi, hello, hey, what's up?, how are you?, but you can also acknowledge someone by giving a high five, a pat on the back, a fist bump or even just a smile. Music can express the emotions of a song in a very similar way in that hearing it in different ways can help you to learn more about it. Now, please welcome back the Cole Chorus, under the direction of Ms. Jennifer Armstrong, for a vocal rendition of the amazing song, This is Me"

12:25: KB..."As I look out from this podium, it is so great to see this amazing sea of white and maroon as we are here to celebrate Cole being named a Special Olympics Unified Champion School National Banner School. The message on the back of each shirt is the team cheer that is used by all of unified teams at Cole and East Greenwich High School and although a fairly simple one, it sends a powerful message....1-2-3 Unified.....4-5-6 Family. Whenever the teams at Cole or the High School shout out this team cheer, they are not only telling their teammates that they are a family, but they are also telling the world that they are a Unified Family. Please take a look at the right sleeve of the awesome shirt that you are wearing today. Hasbro has been a tremendous supporter of our assembly today and here to share with us Hasbro's message to help change the world through their "Be Fearless...Be Kind" initiative is Mr. Kevin Coleman, Hasbro's Director of Global Philanthropy and Social Impact"

12:30: KB..."Imagine being any sort of musician and making it big. Imagine having a top 40 Hit on the Billboard Hot 100 Song Chart...imagine have a top 20 hit on the Billboard Hot Country Songs Chart..imagine being the youngest artist to ever have a top 40 song on the Country Music Chart...All of this would be an incredible achievement for any person trying to break through in the music industry...now imagine doing it as an 11 year old. Billy Gilman broke into the music scene as a young man from Richmond, RI and has had tremendous success as a performer. In 2001, he was nominated for the Best Male Country Vocal Performer for his breakthrough hit, "One Voice" and he was named the 2001 American Music Awards Favorite Country New Artist.

Many of you may know him from a little TV show on NBC called, "The Voice". In 2016, Billy auditioned for Season 11 of the voice by singing Adele's song, "When We Were Young" and not 1 but all 4 judges....Adam Levine, Miley Cyrus, Alicia Keyes and Blake Shelton, all turned their chairs around in the blind audition and the fight to get Billy on their team started. Billy chose to be on Team Adam and after all of the battle rounds and all of fan voting during the live shows, Billy was named the Season 11 Runner Up of "The Voice"

An incredible musician, Billy also gives back to the community as he is a celebrity ambassador for the Muscular Dystrophy Association, in 2012 he collaborated with 18 other country artists to raise awareness and funds for the charity *Soles4Souls*, which is a shoe charity that donates proceeds to purchase shoes for needy children worldwide and Billy has also been a tremendous supporter of Special Olympics Rhode Island. Please welcome to the stage, from the Voice, Billy Gilman.

12:55....KB...."Remember the team cheer for Cole and EGHS...1-2-3 Unified....4-5-6 Family.....We are a family that works together, that competes on the basketball courts and cross country course and we are a family that sticks together and lifts each other up so that we can all reach our greatest potential. A key component of the Unified Sports Teams at Cole is the tremendous support that we get from our parents and one of our parents, has a very special bond with our unified teams at Cole. Her oldest son, Joe, now an Avenger, was a 3 year varsity athlete here at Cole and was a force to be reckoned with on the basketball court. Her youngest son, Alex, is a partner on the Unified Basketball team and she has a very special message for all of us in this gymnasium. Please welcome to the stage, Ms. Leah Gendron.

1:00...KB...."Ok, now all you Patriots Fans!!!! We have a very special guest for you that knows what it means to do things the Patriot Way. A University of Georgia Bulldog, he was a running back, a quarterback, a receiver and a kick returner and was selected in the 7th round of the 2000 NFL Draft by the New England Patriots as a running back. He is a 3 times Super Bowl Champion with wins in Super Bowl 36, as the Pats beat the St. Louis Rams 20-17, a win in Super Bowl 38 as the Pats defeated the Carolina Panthers 32-29 and a win in Super Bowl 39, as the Pats beat the Philadelphia Eagles 24-21. He knows that it means to be in Patriots Nation. Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome to the stage....New England Patriot, Fullback, #35, Patrick Pass"

1:15....KB.....One of the things that makes East Greenwich such a great place to live is the connection that Cole has with East Greenwich High School, both academically and athletically. Our Athletic Director, Mr. Chris Cobain, continually does an outstanding job in supporting his Lancers here at Cole, and his Avengers up at the High School. He has helped to build a strong Unified Sports program at EGHS with the Unified Volleyball team and the Unified Basketball team. He has also been a huge supporter of the Unified Basketball team at Cole and was so very helpful 2 years ago, as he helped Special Olympics RI and the Principals Committee on Athletics start a pilot Unified Cross Country team and Cole was of only 3 middle schools in RI to say, "Yes, we need a 2nd sport to offer to our athletes...Let's do it!" Chris deserves a huge thank you from the Cole family in helping to get a second sport on the Unified Sports scene in RI so Chris, please stand up and receive a huge ovation from your Cole Lancers.

KB....The Unified Sports Program at Cole has been a tremendous success but it has to continue to move up Middle Road to Avenger Drive in the same manner that, over this summer, our Lancers will move their way up to the HS and become Avengers. Here at Cole, we build the foundation of what the unified sports program is all about but, sadly, we cannot have our

athletes and partners forever...after a few short years at Cole, it then becomes time for them to move up to the high school. Here with us now, are 4 outstanding Avengers to share their experiences of being involved with unified sports at the high school. Please welcome, all seniors from the class of 2019, Delaney Kelley, Sophie Fulgum, Chase Manning and David Norton.

1:20: KB....."Our next guest is one of our country's heroes in Uniform. He is an Avenger, having graduated from East Greenwich High School in 2012. During his time at EGHS, he was a multiple sport varsity athlete and during his junior year, he joined the brand new Unified Volleyball Team. As a junior, he helped to lead the team to the state championship game where they were the eventual runner-ups. Returning his senior year, he once again helped lead the team to the state championship game where they were, once again, the state runner-ups. But it did not stop there, as a senior he was a member of the EGHS Unified Volleyball team that won the 2012 National Championship with a 2-1 win over North Carolina in Salt Lake City, Utah. During his time as an Avenger, he was also a member, and student leader, of the Special Olympics Youth Activation Committee whose mission is" *Youth empowering other youth to encourage the next generation to be inclusive of people with and without intellectual disabilities and not exclusive."*

After graduating from East Greenwich High School, our next speaker decided to serve his nation and attended the United State Coast Guard Academy, where he was a standout star on the lacrosse field and earned a degree in Mechanical Engineering in 2012. Please welcome to the stage, from the United States Coast Guard, Lieutenant Junior Grade Kyle Carosotto and his brother, Matthew"

1:25....KB...We have a very special guest with us this afternoon. This past February, the Ms Wheelchair Rhode Island pagent took place at the Imperial Room at Rhodes on the Pawtuxet. According to their website, the mission of the Ms. Wheelchair competition is to "provide an opportunity of achievement for women who happen to be wheelchair users to successfully educate and advocate for the more than 54 million Americans with disabilities." Please welcome and give a huge congratulations to Miss Ashley Cabrita, the 2019 Ms Wheelchair Rhode Island.

1:30...KB....."Now, it is time to build the momentum to the big event at the assembly today.....the Unified Champion Schools National Banner unveiling. We would never be here without the tremendous support of Special Olympics Rhode Island, whose mission is " to provide year-round sports training and competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy, and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community."

Please welcome to the stage, Mr Dennis DeJesus (pronounced Da---Jeezus), the Chief Operating Officer of Special Olympics Rhode Island.

**After his speech, Denny to ask Dr. Mercurio and Mrs. Marcotte to the stage to publicly acknowledge Cole as a Special Olympics Unified Champion School

1:35....Coach Peter Dion....Introduction of both the athletes and partners from the Cole 2018-2019 Unified Cross Country Team and the Unified Basketball Teams. After being introduced, players will run in from door near the boys locker room doors and to the center of the basketball court.

1:40....KB...."Please take a look at the beautiful banner that was given to Cole by Hasbro and is located just below the American Flag. This pledge on this banner is the "Pledge to Include" that was developed by our Unified Friends at Ponaganset High School, which was named a Unified Champion School in 2017. Please stand and lock your arms as Cole 7th grader, Blake Potoski, leads us in the Inclusion Pledge. Please repeat each line after Blake reads it.

Blake.....

"As a member of the Cole Middle School Community" (crowd repeats)

"I pledge to look for the lonely" (crowd repeats)

"The isolated, the left out" (crowd repeats)

"The challenged and the bullied" (crowd repeats)

"I pledge to overcome the fear of difference" (crowd repeats)

"And replace it with the power of inclusion" (crowd repeats)

Kind of yell this out...."I choose to include!!!!!" (crowd repeats)

1:45: KB....."We are now at the time to unveil our new Special Olympics Unified Champion School that will hang in this beautiful gymnasium forever to show everyone that enters this facility that Cole is a welcoming school that is fully inclusive of all students, both with and without disabilities. Would the members of the Cole Unified Cross Country Team and the Unified Basketball Team please move below the banner with our special guest to unveil the banner. Miss Gracie Kauffman...Cole 8th grader, will provide a drum roll as we all count down together....10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1...banner string is to be pulled on "1" by the special guest

1:50: KB...."To close our assembly, we really need to take the time to thank you, the students and staff, for all that you do, day in and day out, to make Cole a fully inclusive and welcoming school that is well deserving of this tremendous honor of being named a Special Olympics Unified Champion School National Banner School. Please welcome to the stage, for his closing remarks, your Head Coach of both the Unified Cross Country team, the Unified Basketball Team and the Faculty Advisor of our Best Buddies, Coach Adam Scott

2:00: "Organized" dismissal of students back to their team areas. Jass Band playing exit music.
Hasbro volunteers to once again line the hallways as students are leaving