



BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING

October 12, 2026 | Tharp Sixth Grade School

MEETING NOTES

Meeting Notes are not official until they are voted on by the Board of Education at its next Regular Meeting.

- A1 President called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.
- A2 Members present: Ms. Arnold, Mrs. Byler, Mrs. Crowley, Mr. Moog, and Mr. Perry.
- A3 Pledge of Allegiance

NOTE: *Portions of the meeting's audio recording were difficult to decipher; therefore, this document may contain several incomplete sentences or inaccuracies. Additionally, some of the participants' names may be misspelled.*

B PROGRAMS / PRESENTATIONS

- B1 Sixth-grade science teachers and students will showcase their stream quality monitoring trip that brings the 5E Instructional Model to life right in our local ecosystems. This presentation highlights how students moved from initial engagement to active exploration, gathering real-world data that they are now using to explain, elaborate, and evaluate human impacts on water systems.

Good evening. My name is Reese Hazelwood on team C, and our sixth-grade crew are going to showcase their stream quality monitoring trip that brings a 5E instructional model to life right in our local ecosystem

Hi, I'm Brecken Grimes on Team S. We would like to share our engagement in active exploration, gathering real-world data to explain, elaborate, and evaluate human impacts on water systems

Hi, my name is Ellie Pandora from Team A. Our Darby Creek unit directly ties to our Ohio science standards regarding watersheds, and the five E model is reinforced throughout the year in our science curriculum service

So at this time, our sixth grade students from our four teams are gonna show you guys how we check the stream quality monitoring system, and we're gonna figure out if Darby Creek was in great condition, poor or fair condition. They're gonna do this, um, thing called the Darby Shuffle. It's a famous thing in Hilliard.

Inaudible at this point....

So just to kind of go over and wrap things up for them, we do this as a science investigation. This is my fourth year doing this after a lot of years teaching. Been on lots of different field trips, science field trips. This is one of the most impressive; not only is it tied to our academics, but it's also a unique experience.

Um, it provides a hook for the science five Es. Um, and then we even [00:06:00] take the data back to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. Um, and just in case you're curious, this, just this group this year got over 1,000 macros from, um, taxa I, which meant you don't... I mean, we try to tell them, but they found out through their science investigation; the last part was finding out how clean Darby Creek is.

So it's really neat that that ties into the Hilliard community too, especially with the runoff at Bradley, so. Yeah. All right. Well, thank you, guys. Thank you.

- B2 Embrace, Empower, Inspire Award Winners: Erik Burkhardt, Caitlyn Schott, Amanda Dowrey

Staci Carter

Honored to be here tonight to celebrate Eric Burkhardt, who is a member of our CATS program, team. That is our life skills program. This is only the second year that we have had that program, and it has just become such an integral part of our community at the hub. Eric is so gentle, kind, and caring with the amount of time that he takes with our students to help them develop these very important skills, and a couple of weeks ago we had a hero on our hands, by the way. Because a couple of weeks ago, one of those students was choking at lunch, and Eric stepped right in and,

delivered the Heimlich maneuver, and he was up telling jokes and making us all laugh several minutes later. So we appreciate you. Thank you for all that you do for our kids

Mindy Colburn

Hey, everybody. So excited to be here with Mrs. Kaitlyn Schott. A parent nominated Kaitlyn for this award. Many of the things she talked about in her nomination were that Kaitlyn is so warm and welcoming to our youngest learners, and really makes that transition to school for some of our students who have been in school for the first time a really smooth one. I will say, this nomination talks not only about how welcoming and positive she is with her students and parents, but also with staff. She's the first one who is there, offering a smile and cheering on her colleagues. So, so very proud to celebrate Kaitlyn.

Mindy Mordarski

Good evening. I am serving a dual role tonight, um, because I would like to recognize Mrs. Amanda Dowry, who is the social worker at Memorial Middle School. As you know, I've spent many, many years in Hilliard City Schools, and she is the best. She created an entire room at Memorial where students in need can go and receive clothing, food, and other essentials. And even more than that, she has created an environment where students are comfortable coming in and asking her for that help. Like I said, I've been working in Hilliard for a long time, and I truly have not seen anything like this. When I was the principal at Memorial, it was something that evolved over the three years that I was there. Now serving as the district wellness coordinator, I truly believe it goes hand in hand with helping students feel well, which enables them to be successful in the classroom, and that is a huge tribute to Amanda Dowry.

C ROUTINES

- C1 The agenda is correct.
- C2 The Board of Education adopted the agenda.
- C3 The Board of Education approved the September 2026 Treasurer's Report.

Melissa Swearingen

I will just mention that a couple of those variances you're seeing from last fiscal year versus the current fiscal year in terms of real estate taxes, homestead and rollback, and the public utility tax are due to the fact that we have not yet received our final settlement from the county; therefore, the homestead and rollback doesn't come in until after the final settlement. We are optimistic that we'll be receiving that in the next couple of weeks. That was the last update that we received from the county auditor's office.

- C4 The Board of Education approved the minutes from the following meetings:
 - a. September 14, 2026, Regular Meeting
 - b. September 14, 2026, Meeting Notes
 - c. September 28, 2026, Work Session
 - d. September 28, 2026, Meeting Notes

D PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Brian Kennel

Good evening. My name is Brian Kennel, and I am the Vice President of OAPSE Local 310, representing our classified staff. Last month, I stood here alongside many other classified employees to speak about the hardships many of our staff are experiencing and some of the concerns we have moving forward. As we wait to see what comes from those conversations, I wanted to take a moment to share something a little different tonight. I am still learning in this role. I will make mistakes along the way, but I will also learn from those mistakes, listen to feedback, and continue trying to become a better representative for the people who look to us for support. Just last week, I had a conversation with Mark and Mike regarding concerns involving Intervention Assistants. They were extremely helpful in explaining who I should contact depending on the issue being addressed. It was a good example of how something can be handled

through simple communication and a willingness to work together. I know there will be times when I may bring something to the wrong person, ask a question that has already been answered, or simply not know the best way to approach an issue. When that happens, I appreciate the guidance, and I will learn from it. Our classified employees, whether they are union members or not, often look to Local 310 for support, strength, and leadership. I take that responsibility seriously, and I will continue doing everything I can to listen to them, advocate for them, and work toward solutions. I am not expecting to get everything right the first time. What I can promise is that I will keep showing up, keep learning, keep communicating, and keep trying to do what is best for our classified staff and this District.

David Townsend

I am frustrated. Is it incompetence or willful intent? Over eight years and \$2 billion ago, billion, bravo. I emailed, called, attended meetings, begged, pleaded with the administration to fix drains at Hillard Crossing. The day after, the administration told me it was too wet to get the trucks in the field; five trucks pulled in the field while it was raining because Channel 6 did an episode on it. We all remember '22, but few can see clearly yet. The school administration threatened to not trespass me on my son's school because I stood up against the mask mandate and told the principal what she was doing was criminal. Then one day, my son was not dropped off at daycare. I won't go into detailed events, but I can state that, in my opinion, it is only by the grace of God that some of us in this room are here today. Shortly after that incident, I came to board meetings, cut off by Ms. Crowley before I finished. During my short speech, I said, "Fix the process." I wasn't blaming any individual. Later, I heard Mr. Stewart stating to one of the other board members, "We are looking at a technological solution." I shook my head in disgust. The administration has spent little time on doing a root cause analysis. We're just throwing money at the problem, and that usually results in transferring the problem elsewhere. I have a video taken on September 8th, 2026, of the backflow in the field, and the drainage is not fixed. Last week, the bus driver failed to motion my son across, closed the door, and stepped on the gas. I shouted at her. Who on the board has integrity? Raise your hand, raise your hands if you have integrity Mrs. Crowley, do you have integrity? You show me an honest attorney, I'll show you a liar. It appears that those pads didn't solve the problems. Speaking of attorneys, Mr. Perry, who are you representing today? The Hilliard Board of Education. You're elected to represent the parents and the taxpayers. It appears those pads didn't solve the bus safety drop-off issues. Do you see any holes in the process now? Fix the process. I asked in the beginning if it's incompetence or intentional. I believe we all have enough evidence that no one in the administration or on the board is incompetent. We must question if someone on the board or in administration are acting willfully or intentionally in disregarding the safety, welfare, and well-being of children in school buildings, school vehicles, and most importantly, the children and the children's safety. For eight years, the school has spent over \$2 billion and has not fixed the drainage issue or the bus drop-off safety issues. Fix the processes.

E CONSENT AGENDA

Mrs. Swearingen

I know there was a question regarding the trip listed as trip K under E3. Um, that is a Spanish student trip, um, and it's actually for Davidson and Darby.

The Board of Education approved the consent agenda, items E1 through E3.

- E1 Approved the following Certified Personnel actions – See attachment to the Minutes.
- E2 Approved the following Classified Personnel actions – See attachment to the Minutes.

- E3 Approved the following trip requests:
 - a) Davidson Girls Cross Country, Terre Haute, IN – November 14, 2026
 - b) Davidson Boys Tennis, Hilton Head, SC – March 20, 2027
 - c) Bradley Model U.N. Club, Columbus, OH – December 6, 2026
 - d) Bradley Orchestra, New York City, NY – June 6, 2027
 - e) Darby Girls Basketball, Orlando, FL – December 17, 2026
 - f) Darby Wrestling, Medina, OH – December 28, 2026
 - g) Darby Wrestling, Alliance, OH – January 14, 2027

- h) Bradley Wrestling, Solon, OH – December 4, 2026
- i) Davidson Wrestling, North Canton, OH – December 18, 2026
- j) Darby Theatre, Cincinnati, OH - April 2, 2027
- k) Davidson, Costa Rica – March 25, 2028

Mr. Perry

Yes ... do we have any retirements? We have a few. I would like to highlight Carol Carpeta, who's been with us since 1996. Also, Dawn Coronas John, who's also been with us since 1996. Let me scroll down here. I believe we have a few of our classified folks. Brenda Russian, who's been with us since 2008, and we thank all of them for their many years of service.

F ACTION AGENDA

- F1 Approved the name of the new 6th Grade school as Wales Sixth Grade Building.

Mr. Perry

I think it's a good throwback to a school that we previously had, so really we're just bringing the name back. I do agree that maybe on today, what I'm calling Italian American Heritage/Indigenous Peoples Day, maybe naming it after an individual has historically not been good long term. So I appreciate that it's for a group of people who are here historically, and a community of folks. And I think it's good to honor them.

Mrs. Swearingen

I would like to recognize that we had three different individuals who submitted the nomination for the building to be called Wales. We have Kim Hall, who is a district staff member and is in attendance tonight. As is, community member Matthew West is in attendance as well. And then the third individual is a Heritage Middle School student, Leo Reed, who is actually in Washington, DC today, with that class trip. He wasn't able to be here, but I wanted to recognize and thank those individuals for participating in that process. So thank you.

- F2 The Board of Education approved the following resolution:

APPROVING A GENERAL TRANSPORTATION SERVICE CONTRACT
FOR NATURAL GAS SUPPLY SERVICES

The Chief Operating Officer recommends that the Board approve the General Transportation Service Contract with Interstate Gas Supply, LLC ("IGS") for the supply and delivery of natural gas to the District facilities identified in Exhibit A to the Contract (the "Contract").

Rationale:

1. The District requires natural gas supply services for its facilities and desires to enter into the Contract with IGS for those services.
2. The Contract provides for a fixed price of \$4.189 per DTH for gas delivered within 80% to 120% of the stated Full Contract Volumes, exclusive of applicable taxes and local distribution and transportation charges.
3. The initial term begins with the July 2027 billing cycle and continues through the June 2029 billing cycle.
4. The Contract applies to the District accounts and facilities identified in Exhibit A.
5. The Chief Operating Officer recommends the Board authorize the Chief Operating Officer to negotiate and execute the Contract in substantially the same form as presented, subject to any nonmaterial revisions made in consultation with legal counsel and necessary to finalize the agreement.

The Board of Education resolves as follows:

1. The Board approves the Contract with IGS for natural gas supply services, substantially in the form presented to the Board, with such nonmaterial revisions as may be approved by the Chief Operating Officer in consultation with legal counsel.

2. The Chief Operating Officer and Treasurer are authorized to execute the Contract and any related documents consistent with the intent of this resolution.

F3 The Board of Education approved the following resolution:

SEPARATION AGREEMENT AND RELEASE AND WAIVER OF CLAIMS

This Separation Agreement and Release and Waiver of Claims ("Agreement") is entered into between Timothy Smith ("Employee") and the Hilliard City School District Board of Education (the "District" or the "Board").

WHEREAS, Employee and the Board (collectively, the "Parties") have determined that it is in the best interest of each of them to agree to a separation by mutual agreement by entering into this Agreement;

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the promises and releases contained herein and other good and valuable consideration between the Parties as provided herein, the receipt and sufficiency of which is hereby acknowledged, the Parties agree as follows:

1. Resignation. By executing this Agreement, Employee irrevocably offers, and the Board accepts, Employee's resignation from all contracts of employment with the Board, effective at the end of the workday on October 13, 2026. The Employee shall use his accrued personal leave on October 9, 12, and 13, 2026.
2. Sick Leave. In further consideration of the mutual promises contained herein, the Board agrees to pay Employee one-quarter (.25) of his per diem rate of pay for thirteen and three-quarters (13.75) days of accumulated but unused sick leave to Employee's credit, less applicable withholdings. Such payment shall extinguish all of Employee's accumulated but unused sick leave from Employee's sick leave balance.
3. Neutral Reference. Should any prospective employer contact the Board office to inquire about Employee's employment with the Board, the Superintendent or designee will respond with the dates of Employee's employment and the position held by Employee.
4. Releases, Waivers, and Other Representations. In exchange for the above consideration and as a material inducement for the Board to enter into this Agreement, Employee agrees as follows:
 - a. Should Employee apply for employment with the Board at any time in the future, the Board may refuse or deny the application without consequence.
 - b. Employee waives his right to file, and agrees not to file, any charge, complaint, or lawsuit in any forum against the Released Parties (as defined below) for any reason, including but not limited to any known or unknown violations of the law, claims of harassment, discrimination of any type, or any other claim or allegation of any type arising prior to the time and date the last of the Parties signs this Agreement.
 - c. Employee, on behalf of himself, his heirs, successors, assigns, representatives and next of kin, completely releases the Board and all of its past, present, and future members, officers, employees, administrators, agents, attorneys, representatives, insurers, assigns, and all other persons, firms, or corporations with whom they have been, are now, or may hereafter be affiliated, in whole or in part (all of whom are hereinafter collectively referred to as the "Released Parties") from all claims, demands, obligations, actions, causes of action, controversies, rights, complaints, charges, liabilities, damages, grievances, costs, claims for interest, losses, claims for attorney fees and expenses, and compensation of any nature whatsoever (other than as specifically provided for in this Agreement), whether based on a tort, contract or other theory of recovery, whether known or unknown, whether at law or in equity, which Employee has or may hereafter acquire arising from the beginning of time to the date the last of the Parties executes this Agreement, including but not limited to any claims for wrongful or constructive discharge, discrimination, retaliation, defamation, slander, libel or unlawful harassment; claims under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; claims under the Civil Rights Act of 1991; the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); the Fair Labor Standards Act

(FLSA); the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA); the Older Worker Benefit Protection Act (OWBPA); the Employee Retirement Security Act (ERISA); the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA); and any claims under Chapter 4112 of the Ohio Revised Code.

- d. Employee represents that he does not have any grievances, claims, complaints, or charges currently pending against the Released Parties with any local, state, or federal department, agency, or court, or complaints against the Board or any of its employees or agents under Board policy. If any department, agency, or court assumes jurisdiction of any claim, grievance, complaint, or charge against the Released Parties relating to Employee, Employee will request, in writing, said entity to withdraw or dismiss the matter. Employee also agrees not to accept any recovery in such a case. If Employee files any claim, complaint, charge, or grievance against the Released Parties, Employee shall indemnify the Released Parties for all legal fees and expenses incurred in defending such claim. Nothing in the Agreement requires Employee to: (1) waive rights or claims that may arise after the date this waiver is executed; (2) waive rights or claims related to a breach of this Agreement; or (3) waive rights or claims that may not, as a matter of law, be waived.
 - e. ADEA Waiver. As this Agreement includes Employee's release of claims under the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, as amended, pursuant to and in compliance with the Older Workers Benefit Protection Act, the Parties agree as follows: Employee affirms that he is entering into this Agreement voluntarily in order to receive the consideration described above. Employee understands that the Board would not provide this consideration without his voluntary consent to this Agreement. Employee agrees that this Agreement is written in a manner that enables Employee to understand fully its content and meaning. In making his decision to enter into this Agreement, Employee recognizes that he is advised to seek advice and counsel from others, including an attorney. Employee acknowledges he has at all times had the opportunity to be represented by counsel and advised by counsel before executing this Agreement. Employee further affirms that he has been given at least twenty-one (21) days to consider this Agreement. If Employee elects to execute this Agreement prior to the expiration of twenty-one (21) days from receipt of this Agreement, Employee warrants that he has done so knowingly and voluntarily. Employee has seven (7) calendar days following his execution of this Agreement to revoke said Agreement. This Agreement shall not become effective or enforceable until this seven (7) day revocation period expires. To revoke this ADEA waiver, Employee should send written notice to the Board actually delivered on or by the seventh day by 5:00 p.m. EST to: Elizabeth Braverman, Scott Scriven LLP, 250 E. Broad Street, Suite 900, Columbus, OH 43215, elizabeth@scottscrivenlaw.com. Nonetheless, the general release of all claims, except for the ADEA waiver, is effective immediately, and not revocable.
 - f. Employee agrees that he will not seek or accept any unemployment compensation benefits related to his separation from employment with the Board.
 - g. Employee represents that he has not suffered any work-related injuries related to his employment with the Board.
5. Return of Board Property. By the end of the workday on October 9, 2026, Employee will return all Board property in his possession or control, including but not limited to electronic devices, badges, and keys, to the Executive Director of Human Resources.
6. No Admission of Liability. The Parties understand and agree that by entering into this Agreement, they do not, in any way, either directly or indirectly by inference or otherwise, admit to any violation of or liability under any law, regulation, ordinance, or contract. Employee promises not to state, suggest, indicate or imply to the contrary to anyone, either directly or indirectly, by inference or otherwise.
7. Entire Agreement. This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement between the Parties regarding the issues outlined herein, and it supersedes all prior employment contracts, agreements, arrangements, and communications between the Parties concerning such subject matter, whether oral or written. This Agreement is binding upon and shall inure to the benefit of the Parties and their respective next of kin, heirs, administrators, representatives, successors, executors and assigns. This Agreement may only be amended by a written document executed by both Parties.

8. Governing Law. This Agreement shall be interpreted, enforced, and governed by the laws of the State of Ohio. The Parties agree that the Franklin County, Ohio Court of Common Pleas will have exclusive jurisdiction and venue over any dispute related to enforcement of this Agreement. If, for any reason, any part(s) or language within any part(s) of this Agreement shall be deemed invalid or unenforceable, all remaining parts shall remain binding and in full force and effect. The Parties further agree that this Agreement is the product of negotiations between the Parties and shall not be construed in favor of or against any party by virtue of any party's role in the drafting of this Agreement or any provisions of this Agreement.
9. Representations. Employee has been fully informed of and understand the terms and effects of this Agreement; has had full and adequate opportunity to consult with legal representation of their choosing concerning this Agreement; has not relied upon any promises or inducements from the Released Parties except as set forth in this Agreement; has executed this Agreement without any reliance upon any statements or representations other than those set forth herein; and has executed this Agreement knowingly, voluntarily and of their own free act and deed without any coercion, undue influence, threat, or intimidation of any kind whatsoever so that the Released Parties may use this paper in court or any other forum to show Employee is not entitled to any further compensation of any kind from the Released Parties. By executing this Agreement, Employee acknowledges that except as provided by this Agreement, he has no contractual right or claim to the benefits described in Paragraph 2.
10. Board Approval. This Agreement is contingent upon formal approval by the Board.
- F4 The Board of Education adopted the following policies:
- a) DJH – Credit Cards
 - b) DJH-R – Credit Cards (new regulation)
 - c) DJI – Purchasing Cards (new policy)
 - d) DJI-R – Purchasing Cards (new regulation)
 - e) JED – Student Absences and Excuses
 - f) JEDA - Truancy
 - g) JHCD – Administering Medicines to Students
 - h) JHCD-R – Administering Medicines to Students

G REPORTS/DISCUSSIONS

G1 Committee Reports

Mrs. Byler

Kara and I attended the first ISPTO meeting of the year in September and met some of the new representatives. Mr. Stewart came and talked about the district, a lot about building and our state report card, and we were able to answer anyone's questions in the room at that time. And then we discussed just, like, topics for the upcoming year. The next ISPTO meeting will be here at Tharp on the 20th at 6:30. I also attended the HEF meeting this last month. We're just encouraging everyone to look into their Five to Thrive campaign that's going on for about another week. And they're trying to just raise money for grants for teachers. So we encourage everyone to go to their website and donate there.

Mr. Moog

I attended the PTO booster meeting luncheon a couple of weeks ago. Nine different organizations were represented there. Dave gave an overview of the master's facility plan update and construction updates, then went through the report card updates as well.

Mr. Perry

We haven't had any committees that I've been a part of that have met since last time I spoke. However, we did schedule an upcoming policy committee meeting for October 23rd because the OSBA has released another PDQ for us to review.

Mrs. Crowley

Superintendent's advisory was canceled this past month. Our curriculum committee met, and I got a sneak preview of the state report card, which was awesome, and I got to ask lots of questions. Our communications committee is having another event towards the end of the month. We're going to the Halloween Haunt in Hilliard.

Ms. Arnold

Just a brief update: the OSBA Capital Conference is coming up November 15th through the 17th, if you haven't already reached out to Christina to register. You can also look online; the planning guide is there, so you can start exploring which sessions might interest you.

H ADJOURNMENT

H1 Adjourned at 6:56 pm.