MEETING NOTES

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

1. President called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Members present: Ms. Arnold, Mrs. Byler, Mrs. Crowley, Mr. Moog, and Mr. Perry.

3. 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.*

4. Construction Update

Mr. Stewart
We have a whole host of folks here from our construction project. We have Mike Mancini, um, Adam Gregor, Bill Mullet, um, all from Roselli. Jen Fuller is here from Fanning Howey. Um, and Sarah Mallory in the back is with In Compliance.

Ruscilli
We're happy to be here, and we will answer any questions. So ask them as we go through it, ask them at the end, whichever way you want to go through it. The first slide is obviously just giving you a quick update of where we stand overall. Thank you. Construction. Beacon, we started construction. If you haven't been past, you're gonna see some pictures here real soon of it, but moving along, anticipating completion in October, basically a year from now. So that's us being done, ready to start doing some training, ready to start moving in some technology, ready to start moving in things for the mid-year move as we feel that come up with that plan at that point in time or as we approach that point in time. We've got a year to do this and figure out how we do it and do it right. Norwich, uh, if you haven't been past, I know that we've started construction a little bit more recent over there. Um, and it's hard to see what's coming, going on there, but again, pictures here shortly will show you what's going on there. August of next year, completion. Getting it completed right before the school year starts, getting you going and, and starting functioning in the preschool, uh, next school year. Brown Elementary, this is the new Brown, Walker Road. We're anticipating starting construction here next month. Again, April completion of '28. This is on track to keep the overall Grand program going and for the pro- project. So, um, we have to be completed and moved into there that summer and started on, uh, Ridgewood that summer so we can get everything done. So that's what's going on with that. We'll start going through some pictures, and I'll let Adam do the talking here a little bit more as I'm going through.

Adam Greger

* INAUDIBLE Please reference the below link for presentation information.

https://www.hilliardschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/10/Hilliard-Board-Meeting-Prez-V2-1.pdf

Mr. Stewart
I will tell you that we are constantly amazed at how this building is towering over the existing building and really even that neighborhood. Between the size of the building and them building up that site, and there's still more to go. It really is going to be a focal point in that neighborhood.

Ms. Arnold
I don't suppose the dirt pile remains as a new playground element?

Mrs. Crowley
What happened with the water over at the Britton Norwich buildings that it had to get shut off for a day?

*Response inaudible

5. Gifted Services:

Jake Grantier and Erica Boone

Well, thank you very much for the opportunity to share a little bit more with you about our current gifted services. I had the opportunity to be in front of you in April to share about the results of our audit. Erica Boone is our new gifted service coordinator. As Dave mentioned, we shared this last week at ISPTO, and we're happy to speak tonight about some of the work that we've already done to actualize our gifted service or gifted audit recommendations.

Before we really dive into some of that, we felt like it was important to tell you what gifted means. So in the Ohio Revised Code, gifted is defined as students who perform, or show potential to perform, at remarkably high levels of accomplishment compared to others of their age, experience, or environment. And just kind of hold that what we're talking about when we, when we say gifted identified students or advanced learners. So, to give you an idea of where we stand, we currently have just under 4,000 students in our district who are identified in at least one area as a gifted learner. Keep in mind that this data is compared to end-of-year benchmarks, so the remaining data points on that graph are all end-of-year.

We would anticipate that that number will increase. If you remember last year, we had, over eleven hundred newly identified students as gifted in a single school year. And this is a trend that we're seeing not only throughout central Ohio but across similar districts in the state. Students who come into school with high opportunities typically demonstrate gifted identifications at a higher rate as compared to their peers. So this is not anything that is kind of new. It's newer to us but many of our similar districts are already experiencing this similar trend. So what happens once a student is identified, and how do we identify those students? So the whole grade screening that we provide is offered at first grade and fourth grade, and that's the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test. We also have referral windows for anyone to refer for additional assessment, for superior cognitive identification. In addition to that, we have our whole-grade screening. We use our STAR assessment for math and for reading. Now, Ohio sets the criteria for gifted identification and the range of which students can be identified. You'll notice in math we can start identifying with STAR in first grade, continuing through third grade, but that reading assessment starts in third grade. We also identify students in math and reading with the PSAT in 10th and 11th grade, and then reading by referral in seventh grade. In addition to these three main ones that we're talking about, other areas of identification include creative thinking, science, social studies, and the visual and performing arts. You'll notice in asterisks gifted services. So if a student is identified in one of those areas with asterisks, we then provide gifted services to those students. Services range. Then in second grade through fifth grade, our gifted service is through the cluster grouping model, where we group three or more students together with similar abilities in a, in a classroom where the classroom teacher is then the gifted service provider. Um, at this point in time, we have 153 gifted cluster teachers across our 14 elementaries, and we have seven gifted intervention specialists that support that classroom teacher. What that support looks like varies based on the need of the building, but all of it includes at least six hours of ongoing professional development in gifted education. In addition to that cluster group at the sec- at, at grades four and five, we have the AERO program Specialist in a self-contained, um, full-day program. Gifted services really are provided through self-selecting into courses that they take. So in sixth through eighth grade, honors and advanced courses taught by the classroom teacher are the gifted service. And then in grades nine through 12. A student who demonstrates that potential from the beginning in that definition, what does it take to get them all the way to that end of being a creative producer in their area of talent? You know, we, we need to provide opportunities for students to, um, grow in their area of talent because, you know, we know that ability is not take that ability. It's not just providing the opportunity. Students then and, and individuals need to be motivated to practice and, and to grow in that. I imagine as an athlete, like you don't just naturally throw, jump out on the, on a court somewhere or a field and have the. That eventually turns into expertise and then that end goal.

So as I shared last spring, our audit kind of brought forth a few areas of focus that, as a department, we knew needed to be kind of how we stepped forward to, Erica's point into thinking about gifted education differently and not as innate ability that is fixed, but it-- that is malleable over time given experience and opportunities.

And so our feedback from our staff, our audit committee, and our caregivers allowed us to, um, craft vision statements ensuring that all students, not just those who are gifted-- identified as gifted, have access to rigorous and engaging experiences that grow that talent over time, uh, that we're engaging with students, caregivers, and stakeholders in meaningful communication about gifted services in our district and what students are entitled to receive once they have one of those areas of identification, um, supporting the social and emotional needs of students who are identified as gifted, as well as in providing equitable access to those learning opportunities, environments, and staff, who are trained to provide opportunities for advanced learners. So from that came a list of recommendations, and we've already started to make many of these actionable. Um, we've expanded our team of elementary gifted intervention specialists so that we have more equitable support for our gifted service providers and our teachers, specifically at the elementary level. We continue to improve our communication with caregivers, leveraging ParentSquare as well as a series of newsletters that our gifted intervention specialists have begun to craft that will be going out to families of students who are identified as gifted. As well as working to redefine the role of the gifted intervention specialist such that they are becoming more so a coach coming alongside the classroom teachers, to ensure that those teachers not only have the support, specific to their gifted identified learners, but that they can more effectively differentiate for all the learners in their space and contribute positively to the achievement of all students.

And with that, we just have some frequently asked questions that we put together for last week's presentation, and then Erica mentioned, like, "Why, why don't we just send these out to parents?" So these are now included in our gifted notifications that go to parents. So they talk about how students are identified as gifted in Ohio, whether or not a gifted identification expires. It doesn't. Once you're gifted, you're always gifted. Services are not necessarily guaranteed, however. Those are locally defined, so while a student's gifted identification would travel with them from district to district, there is not necessarily that guarantee that they would receive specific or equitable services compared to what we provide here in Hilliard. New services begin in a subsequent school year, so a student is identified in one school year, and then they begin the following year so that we can plan adequately and ensure that those students exist or are placed within a cluster group in the elementary level, or that they have the opportunity to self-select into courses at the secondary level.

Erica mentioned our written education plan. That is the required yearly communication with caregivers to ensure caregivers and teachers have an open line of communication about a student's academic and social and emotional goals, the services the student is provided, and an opportunity to progress-monitor their growth over time. If a student is twice exceptional, and so has a gifted identification but is also receiving special education services through an IEP or a 504, that student is entitled to receive both. Because we know that our students have a wide variety of needs, and while they have strengths in one area, they may have weaknesses in another. We'll support the whole child and not just one part of them. Then lastly, kind of where should parents go first if they have questions? Obviously, that gifted service provider is the best person to reach out to first, and in many cases, that is the classroom teacher. Any additional questions about a student's gifted service could then be directed to either the gifted intervention specialist or the building principal. And with that, we would be happy to answer any questions.

Mr. Perry
First of all, thank you for the presentation. As always, thorough, and I think the bullet points in bold definitely help me quickly identify what's going on here. Question about the secondary education level. I know we said that a lot of these gifted students are getting services through self-identifying and self-selecting the AP courses. What do we do if, say, there's a student who moves into our district in high school? Are they then identified and encouraged by, like, a counselor, or what if we notice that they have previously qualified and are not selecting these courses?

Mr. Grantier
Yeah, I think that would be true for any student, whether they move into our district or are new in high school or not. So one of the challenges that we find in gifted education is ensuring that students persist in seeking out those challenges all the way through high school graduation. We obviously want students who are identified as gifted as well as other advanced learners to take advantage of those higher level honors, advanced, and AP level courses because we know that it provides them really age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate stretch and enrichment. So when we look at a student, whether they've been with us for 10 years or they're brand new, we would wanna make sure that we are aware of their gifted-identified area and work with them either through a school counselor, a teacher recommendation, um, or partnering with the parents through that web process to ensure that we're connecting them to the gifted services that are available to them. We've had situations in the past where, um, parents weren't even aware that their child was identified as gifted, or if they were identified as gifted and they knew that, they didn't realize that that child wasn't being served, um, because the child wasn't sitting in a course. Um, maybe they had scheduled or requested it at the beginning but then elected not to take it. So opening those lines of communication is really important to ensure that students are active members in that conversation and that they are where they want to be. And also that caregivers understand that once you get into that secondary level, we want to continue to support students specifically at those transition points so they keep seeking out those opportunities for enrichment and stretch.

Mrs. Crowley
Is there any support for kids who, like you're mentioning, lack that motivation but really should be in some of these honors and AP classes?

Mr. Grantier
I, I don't know if it's necessarily a lack of motivation. I, I think it's a lack of knowing, um, and, and knowing who those kids are. So, one of the things that we're doing for the first time this year, um, and I think I've mentioned previously, we've expanded the use of our PSAT to include all students in grades eight, 10, and 11. One of the most powerful outputs is an AP potential report. It would allow us to identify students earlier who are not already in a kind of advanced pathway, to encourage them to get in there and to try that out before they get to an AP-level course. Um, that, that's true for a student who is identified as gifted as well as anybody who is demonstrating that potential, um, because as Erica said, like, just because you don't have the identification doesn't necessarily mean you don't have the potential to grow in your ability over time. And then alongside that, I think we have to continue to invest in our teachers, in our gifted service providers, to ensure that they're providing those challenging, enriching experiences because we know that our brains love a challenge. Like, that's why we come to school, that's why we sit in classrooms, because we want to, um, have something to solve.
Um, and if we continue to invest in our teachers and support our teachers in a way that creates engaging experiences for our students, um, not only in, you know, grade-level-specific courses, but e- especially in those, those accelerated or advanced courses, I think that more students will be motivated or driven to continue in those pathways.

Mr. Moog
What do gifted services look like for the performing and visual arts?

Ms. Boone
*Response was inaudible

Mr. Perry
Pure curiosity question, piggybacking off of Tony here. Just looking at the course offerings, symphonic choir's not, and is there a reason for that being different than band and orchestra, or am I just missing it?

Mr. Grantier
That might be Choir 400. I think that it's named differently than in the actual program of studies; it's listed as, like, that- that's the code name. They're called differently, but then it's referred to as symphonic.

Ms. Arnold
Question on the WEPS. So, remembering back, I'd received them, and I just received them. I wasn't included as part of that. Has that evolved and changed, and is it much more consistent? 'Cause I remember a WEP maybe, like, early on for one of my kids, and it seemed rather inconsistent. So has that process improved?

Ms. Boone
So the WEP will go to the families, and as part of the goals on the WEP. Teachers will be asked to provide a couple of times a year just about how students are progressing towards that goal. At the elementary level, you know, there's an opportunity to be a little bit more collaborative with families, I think, during conferences and different times like that at the secondary level.

Ms. Arnold
And I think that's the part that I, I hope we can move forward on getting a little more collaboration with parents on it, because I know when I receive it, the goals were not as rigorous as I would've expected for some of the content areas from the past.

Mr. Grantier
And I really have to give Erica a lot of props, because she has worked with different groups of teachers across the secondary levels to ensure that the groups or the goals that end up on a WEP are not generic. I think specifically at the secondary level, it was pretty much the same as you went through. If you had this goal, this gifted identificated area, the goal is pretty much the same whether you're in seventh grade or 12th grade. So Erica has done a really nice job of working to provide a little bit more of a personalized document to explain kind of what the expectations are at a particular grade level or a particular course at the secondary level, and then working with teachers to kind of explain to them, you know, the next step is to provide that progress monitoring specific to the goals that are on the WEP. So that's somewhat of an iterative process. We're working through that. But we've been able to engage our secondary teachers in a little bit different way than we have previously. So bringing them up to speed about what that process is has been part of that as well.

Ms. Arnold
Great, because yeah, I looked at it and it was, it was inconsistent. It didn't have quite that rigor. And I think having a WEP goal, at least for one of mine, would've helped, 'cause that self-selection process- there were years where we self-selected not to do certain things and then bounced back in depending on how the experience went. But having that, uh, goal throughout would've helped a little bit more, I think, in that. So- yeah... just being able to have that conversation with parents and making sure it's a document that's really transitioning along with how they actually do those self-selections, too.

Mr. Grantier
And I'll be honest, prior to Erica stepping into this role, we've engaged our secondary gifted service providers in a very intentional way that we have not in the past. Even to the point of, like, explaining to the teachers what is going out on their behalf. In the past, WEPs at the secondary level just mailed, like, mailed from the main office, and the teacher was not a part of that process. So just engaging them from the beginning, letting them know, "Hey, this document is going out. Here's what's gonna be explained to parents," so that when they do get questions, because they are the front line, they are the gifted service provider, they might be able to speak to that a little bit better.

Mrs. Crowley
How do they get identified in science and social studies?

Mr. Grantier
That's a great question. Some of that is a little bit of a holdover. If a student takes the ACT, that's also an identifier in science because it has a science-specific section. And then beyond that, it would be finding some of those nationally normed assessments. If a student expressed an interest to be identified in that area, while we don't have whole screeners, we would then kind of go out and search out what the state of Ohio has approved as an assessment of that identified area.

Mrs. Crowley
Because the ACT they don't take till later.

Mr. Grantier
Correct. Right. Yeah. Are, are they still offering... I think it was sixth grade is when my kids took it for that, the, the national something. NUMAT. NUMAT, thank you. Yeah. So we don't have that. Um, we, we don't have that as part of our kind of assessment suite right now. Um, and that's where, like, it's kind of science and social studies have kind of fallen into that referral bucket. Again, it's not as common. We don't necessarily see a lot of requests for that. Um, but if a, if a parent, um, or a teacher was to reach out and say, "Hey, I, I think that there's, there's a lot of potential here," um, we would definitely come alongside that family and that student and figure out the best way to, um, assess them and see if that is also an area of talent.

Mr. Stewart
I just want to commend both of them on a couple of things. One, and I think they're going to be back in front of you fairly regularly because Jake doesn't have it in him to do an audit and then let it sit on a shelf somewhere. So there will continue to be growth. But as I said this morning, Jake and Erica have been a big part of this as well. I distinctly remember from that audit, where one of the biggest messages was around communication and clarity around what it meant to be gifted in the Hilliard City Schools, and I feel like they've made huge strides on that already, in a very short period of time. So thank you both.

6. The Board of Education adopted the agenda.

7. Adjourned 7:06 om