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# MEETING NOTES

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

- A1 The president called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.
- A2 Members present: Ms. Arnold, Mrs. Crowley, Mr. Perry, and Mr. Vorst. Mrs. Murdoch was absent.
- A3 Pledge of Allegiance

***NOTE:*** *Portions of the audio recording of the meeting was difficult to decipher. Therefore, this document may contain many unfinished sentences or incorrect wording.*

## **B PROGRAMS / PRESENTATIONS**

Mr. Stewart said we have a busy night tonight but for a lot of good reasons. We're recognizing a lot of very successful students. So with that, I will invite Matt Middleton and Will Ragland up to recognize some accomplished musicians.

- B1 Darby High School All-State Band: Julie McMahon, Conner Wallen.  
Davidson High School All-State Band: Michael Malone, Lucy Harris, Micah Canastraro.  
Darby High School All-State Choir: Elle Thompson

Good evening. I'm Matt Middleton. If you don't know, I'm the principal of Darby High School. I am here to recognize three of our wonderful musicians and choir. I'll let the students introduce themselves. I'm Connor Wallen. Conner is All-State Band for trombone. I'm Julie McMahon. Julie is All-State Band for Trumpet. I'm Elle Thompson. Elle is All-State Choir Alto.

Good evening. My name is William Ragland. I'm the principal at Davidson High School. I am here to introduce our Allstate Band awardees as well. My name is Lucy Harris. Lucy Harris is All-State Clarinet. Michael Malone. Michael is All-State for the trombone. I'm Micah Canastraro. Micah is All-State for the bassoon.

Mr. Stewart said congratulations to all of you.

- B2 Blue Kids on the Block: Jane Ambrozy, Charlie Bartles, Ella Bradley, Hailey Brainard, Andrew Broadhurst, Cinna Carter, Makayla Clark, Max Deerwester, Sean Elhassan, Norah Erickson, Maria Feicht, JJ Hammond, Maria Lippoli, Michael Malone, Teo Mendoza, Kimberly Muniz, JP Rheinfrank, Kate Schmidt, and Cassidy Shelton.

Good evening again, William Ragland, principal at Davidson High School. I'm here to introduce you to our very own Blue Kids on the Block, our a cappella group. They have most recently been awarded Varsity Vocals Midwest Semi-Finals Champions in Cincinnati, where they earned the spot to be the Midwest representative in New York City. They will introduce themselves to you after they perform their piece arranged by our very own J. P. Ryan Frank, Orange Show Speedway.

*[Blue Kids on the Block sang Orange Show Speedway.]*

The students introduced themselves.

Mr. Stewart said there are some thank yous here. What you don't know about the trip to New York is that it also happened to fall on the same weekend as Davidson's musical. So, I want to thank Mr. Dufford, Mr. Ragland, all of these kids, and all of their families. This group came together and figured out a way to ensure that these guys got to have this great experience in New York City while also continuing an unbelievably good musical at Davidson. So, I want to thank all of you for making that happen.

**B3 Darby State Swimmer: Alexis Peltcs**

Mr. Stewart said I'll invite Mr. Middleton back to the microphone to introduce another accomplished athlete.

Mr. Middleton said before I introduce the athlete, I want to say congratulations to Jeremy Kozman, our band director, and Hannah Sterman, our choir director. Thank you for being here tonight.

Mr. Middleton said I'll let her say her name. Hi, I'm Alexis Peltcs.

Alexis is the first-ever state champion swimmer at Darby High School. She was the state champion in the 100-meter breaststroke and also a state runner-up in the 200 IM. And the best thing is, she's only a sophomore, so no pressure. I also want to say thank you to Coach Bower, who's in the audience today. Alexis, congratulations.

Mr. Stewart asked Alexis to describe a typical practice day and the times you're doing different things as you prepare for the state meet.

Alexis said that during the state meet, there are prelims and finals. Luckily the prelims weren't that early, but we were there, and you have to prepare the whole day because you only swim for a short period. You still have to warm up, and it's really vigorous training on your body every day; luckily, I don't have morning practices during the school year except on Saturdays. I also practice in the summer, and those are not too bad. I'm not a morning person.

**B4 Darby Cheer: Rachel Bayer, Eva Berry, Tylar Booth, Henna Burnham, Alivia Clark, Olivia Clark, Alyssa Delgado-Heaberlin, Katlyn Delgado-Heaberlin, Emma Duffey, Gabriella Finlay, Taylor Gabel, Abigail Giffen, Elizabeth Gloeckner, Carly Gunn, Jenna Hakes, Lauren Hickin, Ally Higginbotham, Hope Knobloch, Mia Masters, Natalie Miller, Ella Orr, Brayden Santos, Kaydence Speelman, and Brittany Wolf.**

Mr. Stewart said, and last but not least, Mr. Middleton is going to introduce another large group of accomplished athletes.

Mr. Middleton said our competition cheer team won their third OHSAA state title this past March. Congratulations to all of you.

Each student introduced themselves.

B5 Embrace, Empower, Inspire Award Winners: Julie Keefer and Denise Estep

Mr. Stewart said I'd bring John Riley up to introduce us to our Embrace, Empower, and Inspire Award winner for this month.

Good evening. I'm John Ryan, the principal at Horizon Elementary School. And with me, I have the privilege of introducing Denise Estep, our third-grade teacher at Horizon Elementary School. I get the privilege because I also get to be her principal, but also the parents of a class in which my daughter, Scarlett, came to see her get this award tonight. Denise has tapped into the creativity and dreams of our kids by working through what they call Taste Test Friday, or Taste of the Garden Friday, this year. She's done the community garden for years in our school. But, she said this group just got into the food, and so this unique experience has gone on every Friday this year. She's brought that to life for our kids. The garden is a place where our kids and community go and enjoy. Denise is one of those people who truly is inspiring for our students and our staff as well. She and Mrs. Richards have been doing the garden for five years. It is my privilege to give you the Embrace, Empower, and Inspire Award.

Mr. Stewart shared a quick story. When we surprise our employees with this award, we always try to go to their work and surprise them. We went to Mrs. Estep's classroom and walked in as they were in the middle of standardized testing on the computer. They had to pause every single iPad. So, I apologize. But I will also tell you it was amazing to see how excited her students were that she was winning this award. So, it was a cool moment.

Mr. Riley said I loved that when we gave the award, we asked who wanted to take a picture, and all the kids jumped in the picture first before the adults did.

B6 Paul Fallon

Mr. Stewart said as you may know, we contract Paul Fallon to do a community survey almost every year. Paul is here to share the results of the survey that was completed back in January. Due to some scheduling conflicts, this is the first date our calendars meshed.

Mr. Fallon said thank you for having me back this evening. We've got a lot of tough acts to follow here. As the superintendent mentioned, this was actually done in January, but because of some scheduling problems, it didn't quite match. This is the first time we've been able to work our schedules so that we could come and present this. I know you've got a busy agenda tonight as well, so I won't take up too much of your time. I'm going to provide a brief overview of the results.

First and foremost, this was a survey conducted using a combination of live telephone interviews and SMS text...surveys of 412 adult residents in the city school district. For 412 surveys, the overall estimated margin of sampling error is plus or minus 4.82% or 5% with rounding. That just means if we asked on a survey, for example, what is your favorite topping on pizza, if 50 percent of respondents said black olives, because of sampling variability, that number could be as high as 55 percent to as low as 45% because we utilized random sampling from the respondent selection.

The interviews and surveys were conducted during the period of January 15 through January 19. So, keep that in mind. That is about four and a half months old now. And some adjustments were made to weight the results to proportions of the district's key population characteristics to prevent under or over sampling of the key groups who could score good results. Lastly, due to computational rounding, not all the results

add up to 100%, and the data is presented in a slightly different order than the questions that were asked in order to create some subjects with specific modules.

First, let's discuss the opinion environment. One of the first questions we asked was, generally speaking, whether you think the Hilliard City School District is heading in the right direction or has veered off course. When we asked this question in January, as you can see, 50% of respondents said the school district was going in the right direction, 28% said it got off onto the wrong track, and 22% weren't sure. Now, ideally, you want the right direction figure to be at or above 60%. And we weren't quite there, but that doesn't tell the whole story.

First and foremost, among parents, 63% said the district was moving in the right direction, which is good news. Presumably, they're the people who should know best. Among non-parents, 43% said it was moving in the right direction. Twenty-eight percent said it had gotten off onto the wrong track, but twenty-nine percent were just unsure. Probably not surprising given the fact that nonparents don't have day-to-day contact with the school system, so it may be a little harder for them to form opinions about matters related to education.

The better news is that when we asked the same question in 2023, 41 percent said the school district was moving in the right direction, and 44 percent said it was moving in the right direction in 2022. So, things have actually increased, which I thought was good news among the other findings.

We also asked, do you agree or disagree with people who say that even if they don't have kids in school, everyone benefits from being in the city's school district? Because it was one of the primary reasons for a good reputation in a strong community and greater civic pride. A whopping 77 percent agreed with that. As you can see by looking at the horizontal bar chart on the right-hand side of the screen, 80 percent of parents agreed with that sentiment. But 77 percent of nonparents agreed. What was most interesting to me was that 53 percent of those respondents who said the district had gotten off on the wrong track also agreed with the sentiment. That is, despite their misgivings, they were willing to concede that the school district is one of the primary reasons for the community's civic pride. Also, when we asked this question in a survey in 2023, 76 percent agreed. So, the numbers have been pretty stable, which is impressive, given how high the level of concurrence was.

We also asked, over the last year, have you seen or noticed any news information or posts about the Hilliard City School District on social media such as Facebook, Twitter/X, or Instagram accounts of friends, parents, or others in the community? This was a filtered question. 51 percent said yes, they'd seen such posts, including 71 percent of parents and just 38 percent of nonparents. When we asked the same question in 2023, 53 percent indicated affirmatively, and 49 percent in 2022. So, the numbers have been pretty stable. But I ask this question in many public school districts throughout the country, and this is a high number. This indicates that a lot of people are being exposed to information on social media.

We also asked those respondents who indicated that they had seen something, a subgroup of 211 respondents. Generally speaking, was most of the information we saw favorable or unfavorable toward the school district? As you can see, overall, 49 percent said it was favorable, and 32 percent said it was unfavorable. Among parents, 57 percent said it was favorable, and 26 percent said the information was unfavorable. Among nonparents, a slightly different story: 43 percent said it was favorable, and 39 percent said it was unfavorable. It is almost a statistical jump ball among parents.

When we asked the same question in 2023, however, 40 percent said the information was favorable, and actually, in plurality, 41 percent said it was unfavorable. When we asked the same question in 2022, 52 percent said the information was favorable, and 28 percent said it was unfavorable. Last year might have been an anomaly of sorts, but nonetheless, social media is treating the school district fairly well right now. It's reassuring because it's a free-wheeling medium that, unlike news and other forms of information, is not refereed or governed by any particular standards. It's a crap shoot of sorts.

We also asked, do you think that the rate of housing growth from the construction of new homes and apartments in the area where you live is too fast, about the right pace, or too slow? Sixty percent said too fast. Twenty six percent said at the right pace. Nine percent said too slow, and five percent were unsure. Now, the way that I interpret this type of scalar data is anytime the extreme response option, in this case it's too fast, equals or exceeds the more moderate response option, which in this case is the right pace. I say to myself, that's an important emotional trigger point; that's a substantial difference. And in this case, the extreme response option is twice as high as the more moderate one.

Also, the data is pretty consistent in the horizontal bar chart on the right side of the screen when you look at the subgroup results, but that wasn't the case with all the results we found here. Among parents, 66 percent said the rate of growth was too fast compared to 55 percent of nonparents. The big difference was between men and women, and this is one of the big gender differences we observed in the survey. 48 percent of men said the rate of housing growth was too fast, compared to 71 percent of women.

Also, there were no statistically significant differences when we compared responses from residents in the Columbus portion of the district, Hilliard, and the other parts of the district. That just means there was an unacceptably high probability that those bias differences were due to chance.

When we asked the same question in 2023, 59 percent said the rate of growth was too fast, and it was 63 percent in 2022. So, this is a sustained concern. It actually extends beyond this, but in the interest of time, I didn't go back too much further.

One of the questions we asked about education and the school system was, overall, how would you rate the quality of education being provided by the Hilliard City School District? 65 percent said very good, 16 percent said fair, 7 percent said poor or very poor, and 12 percent were unsure. Now, ideally, I want my best clients, and I've got a different range of them. Sometimes, I'm 911 for a lot of government agencies and school districts. Not the case here, however. I want my best school districts to be at or above the 60 percent threshold. And you are, as you can see, with 65 percent saying very good or good.

Looking at the subgroup results on the right-hand side of the screen, among parents, 80 percent rated the quality of education as very good or good—that's 4 out of 5. It was 56 percent for non-parents. By the way, I've been using this nomenclature a little bit freely, but non-parents are people who did not have children enrolled in the school system at the time the survey was conducted. That's an important distinction because some of them are parents with children in parochial schools, and some of them are also parents whose children are not yet school-age. I should have mentioned that at the outset. Among them, 20 percent were unsure. Not surprising, again, because they don't have the kind of first-hand opportunities for observation.

Looking at elementary school parents, those whose oldest child was in elementary school, 82 percent said excellent or good. It was 89 percent for 6th-grade school parents, 79 percent for middle school parents, and 78 percent for high school parents. And I should mention that's a fraction of a fraction because they

aren't just parents, but they're parents whose oldest child has reached that level, whether it's elementary school or high school. The subsamples are very small, but nevertheless, they're pretty consistent across the board. When we asked the same question in 2023, 63 percent said excellent or good. You continue to be a tradition of success here.

We also asked how you would rate the job done by classroom teachers in middle-aged schools overall. 63 percent said very good or good, 14 percent said fair, 4 percent said poor or very poor, and 18 percent were unsure. Looking at the subgroup results in the horizontal bar chart at the right-hand side of your screen, 80 percent of parents said excellent or good, and 5.53 percent of nonparents said excellent or good. 31 percent were unsure, however. Among elementary school parents, that is, people who were parents whose oldest child was in elementary school at the time of the survey, a rate of 87 percent said the performance of teachers was very good. It was 94 percent for 6th-grade parents, 83 percent for middle school parents, and 72 percent for high school parents.

When we asked the same question last year, 60 percent said very good. So, once again, we have another consistent result within the same decile as the previous observation.

We also asked how you would rate the job the Hilliard City School District does managing its budget and finances. Before I talk about the results, which you can see on the screen, I want to mention that it's not unusual for the rating for this particular measure to be lower than it is for the rating for the quality of education, and there are a couple of reasons for that. First and foremost, unlike all of these awards, you see kids are given for achievement. There are really no telltale signs to find out when a school system is doing a good job of spending its money. You just don't care about things like the colleges the kids are getting into or the test scores. People tend to be a little bit more conservative. They also tend to be a little less attuned unless there's a problem. It's not unusual to have a disparity such as the one we observed here.

As you can see, 41 percent said the job being done managing finances was very good or good, 20 percent said fair, 13 percent said poor or very poor, and 26%, 1 out of 4, just did not have enough information. As you can see by the horizontal bar chart on the right-hand side of the screen, among parents, 55 percent said excellent or good. It was 36 percent among nonparents with 22 percent saying fair. It was 36 percent among 18 to 44-year-olds, and 33 percent were unsure. And by the way, that may very well not be a byproduct of age, but in fact, it could be the length of residency.

One of the unusual features of survey research is that sometimes, they raise as many questions as they answer. And I looked at this piece of data, and I said, maybe in the future, we ought to be asking about the length of residency. That might be a more telling indication. Nevertheless, among 45 to 64-year-olds, 55 percent rated the job being done in this area as very good compared to 35 percent for respondents 65 and older, with 24 percent rating fair. When we asked the same question in 2023, 45 percent said very good or good, and it's 46 percent in 2022, still within the same decile, another consistent measure.

We also asked, thinking about the amount of information and communication you get from the Hilliard City School District, whether you get too much, about the right amount, or too little. As you can see from the upper score on the horizontal bar chart, 4 percent said they're getting too much. 53 percent said they were getting the right amount, which is impressive. Because it's actually harder to reach people in this day and age. And 30 percent said too little, and 13 percent weren't sure.

As you can see, opinions about this vary greatly. Among parents, 73 percent said they were getting the right amount. But among nonparents, just 41 percent said they were getting the right amount. Among 45 to 64-year-olds, 62 percent said they were getting the right amount. But among respondents 65 and older, 45 percent of the plurality said they were not getting enough information.

People who are not directly affiliated with the school district tend to be hard to reach for a couple of reasons. One is that information is not always available in school districts, and another is that folks like that aren't always paying attention to what's going on at the schools.

One of the questions we asked regarding facilities was: Over the next few years, do you think enrollment in Hilliard City School District schools will increase, stay about the same, or decrease? 86 percent say it will increase. This is probably not surprising when you consider that 60 percent of folks in this community think the rate of housing growth is too fast. It's a logical conclusion. Among parents, 86 percent said it would increase, which was almost identical for nonparents, for whom 88 percent said it would increase.

We also asked how you would rate the conditions of the Hilliard City School District school buildings and facilities. 67 percent said very good or good, 16 percent said fair, just 4 percent said poor or very poor, and 12 percent were unsure. Among parents, as you can see from the horizontal bar chart on the right-hand side of the screen, 67 percent said very good or good. It was almost identical for nonparents at 67%, just 47 percent for 18 to 44-year-olds. Another instance when the length of residency might be a useful variable to analyze. 24 percent said fair. It was 72 percent for 45 to 64-year-olds, who are actually the lion's share of parents in this community. And 77 percent for respondents were 65 or older.

We also asked, looking specifically at the building located closest to where you live, how would you rate the condition? It's true. Home is where the heart is. This was actually higher. 72 percent said the condition of the building closest to them was very good or good. Just 15 percent said fair, 4 percent said poor or very poor, and 9 percent were unsure. As you can see from the horizontal bar chart on the right-hand side of the screen, among parents, 71 percent said very good or good. But 73 percent was actually higher for nonparents. Among those residents in the city of Columbus, 69 percent said very good or good. In Hilliard, it was 73%, but in the other areas, it was 76%. That is those parts of the district that are neither in the city of Columbus nor in Hilliard.

We also asked, do you agree or disagree that even though the school buildings may appear serviceable from the outside, some of the older ones may no longer be suitable to offer modern learning experiences to ensure that students are getting the kind of advanced education needed to prepare them for college or careers and beyond. This is a bit of a head-scratcher, but I'll explain it. 42 percent agreed, 30 percent disagreed, and 28 percent were unsure. Now, think about that. That's on the heels of 67 percent saying the conditions are very good or good. Among parents, 52 percent, a statistical majority agree. Among nonparents, there was a lot of ambivalence. 39 percent agreed, 30 percent disagreed, and 31 percent were unsure. Among elementary school parents, sixth-grade parents, middle school parents, and high school parents, the results were almost identical, all in the 52 to 53 percent range. Among people who said the building conditions were very good or good, 38 percent agreed as well. The very people who gave a thumbs up are also saying they're in good condition but that may not be enough.

In conclusion, some of the key findings for the survey, that is the takeaways, if you will. First and foremost, the key ratings were all consistent with previous ones, which indicates a stable opinion environment. The discord observed in previous years, 2022 and 2023, which appears to have subsided, likely had little to do

with the educational product and the performance of critical functions. Remember, they were all the same.

Since 2023, the opinion environment has improved somewhat, but the majority of residents now say the district is moving in the right direction, which is reassuring. We should allow the public to focus on the things that the district has continually done well, such as the quality of education it has provided the students and the community.

Third, residents and parents alike appear to be bristling at the rate of housing growth and anticipated enrollment growth. So they will be poised for a public dialogue about facilities. None of the discussions you're going to have about proposed facility solutions or remediation are going to come as a surprise to anyone.

Fourth, while the community was largely satisfied with the conditions of the school buildings, paradoxically, they were not content with them. This may be in part due to future demands they expect to be placed upon the facilities and classrooms due to growth.

Lastly, the most remarkable finding may have been that even a majority of residents who said the district had gotten onto the wrong track also agreed that it is one of the primary reasons for its good reputation as a strong community and greater city pride, which illustrates the position of centrality the district holds for both parents and the public.

I want to close by thanking you for the opportunity to come back. I don't know if you know this, but I started my career about 26 years ago doing my first study in this community. With that, I'd like to open the floor for any questions.

Ms. Arnold said I have a quick question on the jurisdictional methodology. When you say that you were looking at the Columbus versus Hilliard, was that self-reported, or was that based on their address? Mr. Fallon said we used geographic information to know exactly what governmental jurisdiction we're in.

Ms. Arnold then asked if your sampling, with male and female participants, was about equal. Mr. Fallon said no, there are more women in the community than there are men.

Mr. Perry said thank you, Paul, for coming back here. I really appreciate the fact that you do come back, year after year because it does give us this kind of expansive ability to track over time that we don't always get to other places. I had a couple of questions, follow-ups, and maybe some things that I would just want to know in the future going forward. The question you asked about new home and apartment growth was a big thing that came up. Did we ever separate that out between the new home and the apartment? Mr. Fallon replied not in this study.

Mr. Perry said I'd be curious to know how many people think that new home growth is going to be a concern versus apartment growth being a concern. I feel like the numbers may be different in this. Mr. Fallon said if you'll remind me, I'll dig that up. I think I have some similar information from a different client that I may be able to share with you.

Mr. Perry said okay, that's actually, that's part of leaning into my next couple of questions. One thing was folks think that more people think we're doing well with our money than think we're doing terribly with our money, but it was still only 41%. How does that number compare roughly to other districts? Is that



similar to what you're seeing? Mr. Fallon said it varies. It's a little lower than I would like, to be honest with you. But it varies from place to place. Mr. Perry said that's good to know. I always like doing comparisons between where we're at compared to ourselves in previous years, but then also, obviously, compared to other districts around us, which brings me to my last question.

I'd be curious to know because you mentioned the longevity of residency. Kind of piggybacking off of that were parents with students from other school districts who have previously gone to a different public school or a parochial school or something that have moved into our district or decided that they're going to take their child from the private school to the public school. I'd be interested to see what their thoughts were because they have that comparison and say, does Hilliard compare, and are they more pleased with how we're doing versus their old school, or are they less pleased? But that would be interesting for me to see, too.

Mr. Fallon said I've done that in other communities. I work in many high-growth places, like Florida and South Carolina, where there are many non-native residents and parents. Some of the information is really fascinating. I didn't do that in this case, but that might be something we'll look at in the future.

Mrs. Crowley said that was really interesting. Thank you.

Mr. Vorst said I have one question piggybacking on top of what Brian said. Do you notice anything that stands out when you look at our results compared to other school districts that you might...I don't want to say red flags, but what are the big differences compared to other districts that you serve? Mr. Fallon replied that I have now worked for about 75 to 100 public school districts in Ohio. In addition to that, I work in a variety of different places. I have now worked in 40 different US states and just signed a client in the 41st state today. As coincidence would have it, the reason I mention that is it varies greatly. It's hard for me to say, this is the archetypal school district and this is an aberration or anomaly that concerns me. But generally speaking, I would say that there are no red flags that I saw.

Mr. Perry asked if there was anything particularly positive that you noticed about it. Mr. Fallon said yeah, consistency. Even though in the right direction figures were lower, people still were very happy with the quality of education, among other things, which I found to be very uplifting.

#### B7 Graduation Rate Update – Jake Grantier

Mr. Stewart said if you remember, we had a number of presentations going back to our school district report card. There was a lot to celebrate in that, and then there were a couple of opportunities that, as a board and as an administrative team, we targeted as opportunities that we wanted to work on. At our last meeting, for example, you heard about our work around attendance. And tonight, you're going to hear from Jake Grantier about our work around increasing our graduation rate.

Good evening, everyone. Thank you for the opportunity to share an update on our current efforts towards improving our district's graduation rate as well as some of the many opportunities and future supports we plan to employ in support of a high school diploma for every student without exception in the Hilliard City School District. It's fitting that tonight, you're going to be approving the graduates for the class of 2024.

So, this work around our graduation rate is an ongoing and collaborative effort across multiple departments and levels. It includes a variety of stakeholders to ensure that proactive and responsive measures are in place to support our learners throughout their educational journey. Before we dig in, I

shared this ahead of time in Canvas so you can follow along. It might be a little bit more difficult to see some of what's on the screen.

As a reminder of our work this year connected to the commitment plan, we responsibly added a goal focused on improving our overall graduation rate to four stars or higher as measured by the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce by the end of this school year. We are currently in the midst of the push to the finish line for our current seniors and leveraging every possible opportunity to meet the complex set of graduation requirements set by the state.

As we look ahead to the work included in our district strategic plan, objectives 1a and 1b under the student learning goal help guide our efforts to ensure every student demonstrates foundational academic skills and is prepared for enrollment, employment, enlistment, and or entrepreneurship. It is our ultimate goal that students in Hilliard not only meet the requirements for a high school diploma but also develop the necessary skills to prepare them for their chosen path after graduation.

**Goal 1: Student Learning**

**Objective 1A: Foundation for Success**

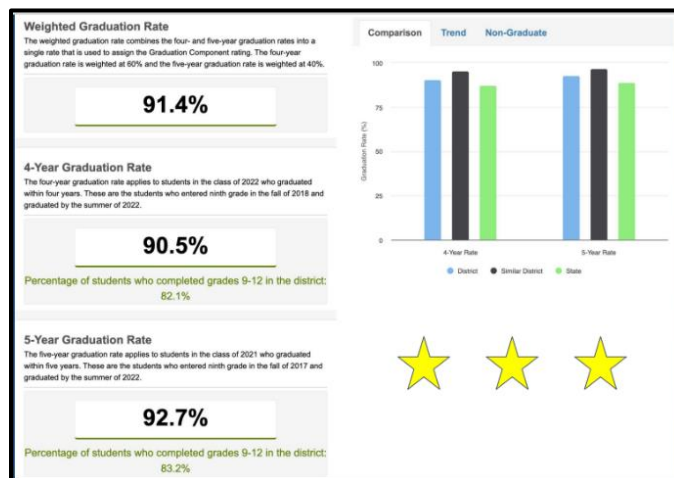
- Ensure every student demonstrates foundational academic skills.

**Objective 1B: Graduate Success**

- Ensure that every student will be prepared for enrollment into higher education, employment, enlistment into the military, or entrepreneurship.

Our academic team shared in the fall that graduation rate and early literacy were two work-in-progress areas for our district. While we have met the state's expectation of three stars in these areas, we recognize that additional steps were necessary to ensure that this measure reflects the expectations of our community, that we prepare our students for their tomorrows, and provide as many opportunities as possible to achieve a high school diploma.

Simply put, the graduation rate for a school district is the number of students who met all state and local graduation requirements in a given year divided by the total number of students in that graduating cohort. Federal guidelines require that students included in a district's graduation count must meet one of the state defined standard graduation pathways open to all students. Students are placed in the appropriate graduation cohort based on the grade level reported in the first year that they are enrolled in any public school with a grade of 9 or higher. Cohort placement is completed in early October of each school year to comply with federal reporting requirements, otherwise known as count week. Students who enroll in an Ohio public school after the October deadline are assigned to their graduating class the following year.



The four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate is calculated by dividing the number of students who meet the state and local requirements and graduate in four years or less, including summer graduates, by the number of students who form the final adjusted

cohort for the graduating class. It is important to note that the final adjusted cohort does include any non-graduates in the denominator of the four-year calculation.

The five-year adjusted cohort graduation rate, likewise, is calculated by dividing the number of students who meet the state and local requirements and graduate in five years or less, including summer graduates, by the number of students who form that final adjusted cohort for the graduating class.

After both the four-year and five-year adjusted cohort graduation rates are calculated, they are weighted to create an overall graduation rate that is used to assign a rating to the graduation component. The four-year graduation rate is weighted at 60% of the overall graduation rate, and the five-year graduation rate is weighted at 40%.

It is also important to note that the graduation rate calculation and rating are lagged by one year to include summer graduates and fifth-year graduates. The rating that will be included on the 2024 report card for the district released this fall will reflect the 2023 graduation cohort. Therefore, our efforts over the past school year will influence the graduation rate on the 2025 state report card. We hope to exceed a 93.5 percent graduation rate, resulting in a 4-star or higher rating.

Graduation and the achievement of a high school diploma represent the culmination of a student's pre-K-12 educational journey. And while our learners don't begin to accumulate credits and demonstrate competency until middle or high school, the skills necessary to meet state and local requirements begin developing as early as the elementary grades. Providing skills, opportunities, experiences, and access to on-grade-level learning should be at the heart of efforts across our system and require the talents and ownership of all our teachers, principals, counselors, and support staff. While our graduation focus each year tends to hone in on our seniors, our continued efforts to get every student to benchmark in all grades help to impact our collective success as a district positively.

As a reminder, Ohio has one of the most complex sets of high school graduation requirements, which fall into three buckets. The first bucket is course completion. State law mandates that students complete at least 20 high school credits across five different disciplines – English, science, math, social studies, and electives, and requires certain experiences of all students. Hilliard's local requirements mandate that students accumulate 21 and a half credits, and in addition, requires all students to successfully complete Future Ready, a freshman-level course designed to allow students the opportunity to explore educational pathways and future careers and develop competency with business technologies, effective research skills and oral communication, as well as a culminating capstone experience during 11th or 12th grade.

**Graduation**

Graduation is a PreK-12 endeavor - while students don't start accumulating credits and demonstrating competency until middle school or high school, the skills necessary to meet state and local graduation requirements begin to develop as early as elementary school.

First	Second	Third
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Earn 21.5 Credits	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Show Competency	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Show Readiness
4 Credits English	Earn a "competency award" on the Algebra I and ELA End of Course Test	Earn 2 Student Seals
4 Credits Math	OR	State Defined
3 Credits Social Studies	Take Career-Focused Activities	Local Defined
3 Credits Science	OR	College Credit Plus
3 Credits History	College Credit Plus	OR
3 Credits Foreign Language	OR	Mississippi
3 Credits Physical Education	OR	Locally Defined
3 Credits Health	OR	Students must have a minimum of 1 State Seal
3 Credits Additional Electives	SAT or ACT Administration Plan Score	
3 Credits Capstone		

The capstone experience is an opportunity for students to challenge themselves outside the traditional curriculum and exploration of a career path and occasion to serve a community, a chance to develop and or explore a particular skill or a preparation for a specific event. Capstone encourages self-discovery and responsibility.

The second bucket of the graduation requirements consists of demonstrating competency in Algebra 1 and English 2 on end-of-course exams. A competency score of 684 is required to check this box on both tests and state law mandates that districts offer remedial support and opportunities to retake these exams to any student who does not demonstrate competency on one or both of these tests. After two unsuccessful attempts, students are able to leverage competency alternatives such as career readiness through at least two career-focused activities, college credit plus, military enlistment, and/or a remediation-free ACT or SAT score.

The third component of Ohio's graduation requirements consists of students' opportunities to demonstrate readiness in at least two areas, resulting in awarded SEALS. Nine of the available readiness SEALS are state-defined, and three, community service, fine and performing arts, and student engagement, are locally defined. Students can demonstrate readiness through employment, earning a 12-point industry-recognized credential, military enlistment, successful completion of an honors diploma, proficiency in English and a second language, and/or proficiency on end-of-course exams in biology, U.S. history, and American government.

Locally defined SEALS allow districts to recognize students for their involvement in school-based opportunities and their communities. Participation in extracurricular clubs, service organizations, performing arts ensembles and productions, and accumulated community service hours can meet the requirements of these seals. Students must demonstrate readiness in at least two areas and attain at least one state-defined seal.

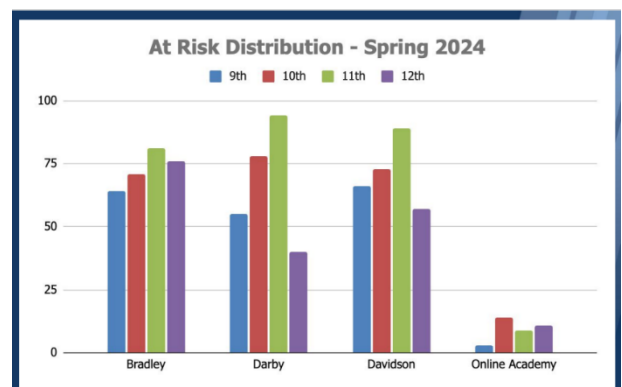
In compliance with state law and board policy IKFC, our district has identified at-risk criteria for each of the three graduation requirement buckets in grades nine to 12 that we use to identify students who are off track for graduation during high school. Leveraging these criteria, we notify families of their student status at least once each year if they are at risk and work in partnership with administrators, counselors, and support staff to implement interventions to help students get back on track. In addition, a collaborative team has worked over the past few months to identify on-track milestones shown in the left-hand column of the table on your screens. This is to ensure that all stakeholders, including students, have clarity regarding appropriate progress towards completion of graduation requirements as they matriculate through high school. These recommendations are meant to help school staff guide scheduling conversations, identify targeted supports, and partner with families to promote academic achievement throughout a student's high school journey.

The graph on the screen shows the number of students in each grade at our district's three high schools and the online academy who are identified as at risk of not graduating on time during the 2023-2024 school year. This population of students, 884 in total, represents a wide variety of profiles and needs.

ON TRACK MILESTONES	CREDITS EARNED	COMPETENCY	READINESS SEALS	Notes and Resources for Intervention
<b>9th GRADE</b>				
4 Core Classes English II Competency 2 of "Frequent Absences" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family Health</li> <li>Health</li> <li>Physical Education or another CE credit</li> <li>Financial Literacy</li> <li>Capstone</li> </ul>	Failed at least one course during the first semester			Individual student success plan developed and implemented by PDR, Educators, or MTSI in partnership with school counselor, administrator, MTSI interventionist, and family.
<b>10th GRADE</b>				
4 Core Classes English III Competency 4 of "Frequent Absences"	Fewer than 6 credits earned for semester	Competency score of 684 or higher not met for Algebra I		Individual student success plan developed and implemented by PDR, Educators, or MTSI in partnership with school counselor, administrator, and family. Remediation and retesting in spring for competency.
<b>11th GRADE</b>				
4 Core Classes At least one state readiness seal 4 of "Frequent Absences"	Fewer than 10 credits earned for semester	Either Algebra I or ELA I competency score of 684 or higher not met	Two readiness seals earned by middle of 11th grade	Individual student success plan developed and implemented by the Graduation and PDR coach in partnership with school counselor, administrator, and family. Capstone Experience should be personalized to support learning goals (CMA and/or Community Service). Remediation and retesting in Spring, with plan to meet Competency Alternatives.
<b>12th GRADE</b>				
2 of 4 Core Classes (as needed) At least one additional readiness seal Remaining required courses (as needed)	Fewer than 10 credits earned for semester Failed at least one course needed to complete graduation requirements during the semester No Capstone credit earned yet either for semester	Either Algebra I or ELA I competency score not met Progress on competency alternatives not met either for semester	SEI have not earned two seals, including a state-defined seal	Individual student success plan developed and implemented by the Graduation and PDR coach in partnership with school counselor, administrator, and family. Capstone Experience personalized to support learning goals (CMA and/or Community Service). Remediation before retesting.

**On Track Milestones and At Risk Criteria**

- Credits Earned
- Competency
- Readiness Seals



As our team dug into this data and connected with building principals, the graduation requirements for competency, Algebra 1 and ELA 2 end of course exams, stood out as a major obstacle to our students remaining on track through high school. As you can see, the number of our at-risk students peaks in 11th grade after students have attempted these two exams.

While we have a number of supports in place for credit recovery, as well as options for SEAL completion, it is often difficult to appropriately remediate necessary skills in a short period of time to ensure success on these state exams. As a result, options become extremely limited at this point in a student's educational career in terms of the ability to have access to courses or experiences of their choice as significant interventions and supports, namely credit recovery, test for mediation and retesting, and alternative pathways are necessary to maintain progress towards graduation.

This also highlights and reiterates the importance of the pre-K-12 focus on graduation. If students do not demonstrate or fall below proficiency in elementary or middle school, it is increasingly difficult to make up for those losses and close gaps in 9th or 10th grade to ensure a demonstration of competency. We see a need for a collective sense of ownership around all learners and their continual progress, growth, and achievement toward the successful completion of these requirements.

I should note that while these students, including 184 current seniors, were identified as at risk in February, this does not mean that they will not graduate. Part of the at-risk process is connecting these students with necessary supports and interventions so that they can recover credits, achieve competency, demonstrate readiness, and meet graduation requirements with their cohort. One of these measures includes leveraging RiseUp which is a set of purchased online modules that provide access to two six-point industry-recognized credentials that provide students who have yet to demonstrate competency an alternative pathway to graduation.

Over the past two years, we have continued to invest time and resources into the development and refinement of structures and supports in response to the needs of our high school learners and potential graduates. These efforts include our district's focus on improved attendance led by Molly Walker and our building attendance teams. The revisioning of our freshman teams as a support system for the transition to high school. At-risk identification and notification processes that encourage partnerships between school and home. Reimagining support for our online learners and leveraging available state support funding to provide transportation to ensure in-person help and accountability for those students who choose to learn remotely. Expanded credit recovery options to include mastery-based online courses available through Apex and a revamped model for summer school that requires in-person learning and support, and our continued use of personal success network coaches in our high schools and at the Innovative Learning Campus to support and encourage some of our most vulnerable students.

In addition, we have continued to expand our offerings for meeting graduation requirements through alternative pathways, including required test remediation and opportunities for achieving a 12-point industry-recognized credential through an approved pre-apprenticeship with the aforementioned Rise Up online modules and partnering with Tolles to ensure access to career and technical educational experiences and recognizing and celebrating those students who choose to enlist in the military after graduation.

While these opportunities do help students meet state requirements, we find that our system continues to be stretched in our ability to meet the wide range of needs of our learners and that our efforts are mainly reactionary rather than proactive at this point.

As we look ahead, we are strategically embedding opportunities to provide all students with access to alternative pathways before they are at risk or off track. By doing so, we hope to improve our graduation rate and instill in our learners a set of marketable and relevant skills to accompany their diplomas. We are currently researching, planning, and developing this holistic suite of opportunities that will expand access to experiential learning for all students. These efforts include embedding industry-recognized credentials in our new middle school career explorations elective, Future Ready, our required 9th-grade course, health as required in 10th grade, and business, visual arts, and engineering electives at our high schools.

A more specific presentation about these opportunities will be forthcoming from Mark Tremayne. Leveraging the Drive to Succeed grant to help students from economically disadvantaged families access car driving instruction in pursuit of a driver's license, also a one-point stackable credential. Promoting access to certification and credentialing opportunities through summer programs like Ready to Earn, Lead the Way Learning Academy, and the PASS Foundation's Power Up Your Potential. This summer we have approximately 180 students participating in those programs. Developing a more robust system of early warning indicators and an at-risk identification process in the middle grades focused on attendance, academics, and behavioral criteria.

Reintroducing middle school teaming in grades seven and eight as a means of creating interdisciplinary learning communities and systems of support in our middle schools. Rethinking our state testing schedules based on feedback from building administrators to be responsive to the needs of students while still maintaining the integrity of and access to instructional time during these adjusted days. And implementing transition processes into grades 6, 7, and 9 to ensure that building administrators, school counselors, teachers, and support staff have timely and relevant information about students' needs before the school year begins. And lastly, supporting continued access to targeted interventions and supports in both reading and math in grades 6 through 12 to help close gaps and support grade-level learning.

Lastly, our continued work is focused on ensuring that every student, without exception, not only meets state and local graduation requirements but also develops the necessary skills to enter higher education, the workforce, or the military. These efforts not only align with our community's Portrait of a Learner but also contribute to a future measure on the Ohio State Report Card. Beginning as early as 2025, the state will measure the post-secondary readiness of graduation cohorts based on criteria that include participation in College Credit Plus, remediation-free ACT or SAT scores, successful completion of an honors diploma, work-based learning experiences, and military enlistment, amongst others.

Currently, 49 percent of our students included in the 2023 report card met one of the 11 opportunities identified by the state as measures of this readiness. While we obviously have room for significant growth in this area, our team is confident that as an interconnected community, we are well poised to provide relevant experiential learning opportunities that not only contribute to student success beyond high school but also reflect the intentional efforts of our system to meet the needs and expectations of our community and our 16,500 learners.

Thank you again for the opportunity to speak with you tonight, and at this time, I'd be happy to answer any questions that you might have.

Mrs. Murdoch said thank you so much. I've been not so patiently waiting for this for a while. The first time I saw the report card come out with our graduation (rate). I was a little taken aback and I knew we could do better. And if we put our minds to it, we would. So, I really appreciate seeing this. Can you tell me a

little bit more about...when I looked at the at-risk distribution, peaking in 11th grade was a little scary because, to your point, that's very late. You touched on a couple of things that we were going to do earlier to find the risk identification and notification, moving that to lower grades, but a little bit more about maybe what we would do pre-high school to identify these kids.

Mr. Grantier said that by looking at those same early warning indicators around those three buckets—attendance, academics, and behavior—we could tell with pretty decent accuracy when a kid is struggling in middle school and whether or not they may struggle in high school. So, that's looking at a wide variety of sources of data. It could be like partially academic grades, the formative assessment data that we gather through Star Reading and Star Math. We can look at OST data, so Ohio state test data from previous years. But by looking at that and digging in a little bit deeper, we can be a bit more responsive in the middle grades to provide that intentional intervention at an earlier point, rather than waiting for when they're sitting in Algebra 1 or English 10, ready to take those exams.

It also helps to inform those transition processes. What we find is that because we have the break at 6th grade, another break at 7th grade, and then a break going into 9th grade, sometimes it takes the better part of a grading period or even a semester to figure out what our students are struggling with as we get to know them, both as individuals and also as learners. So, if we have that information ahead of time and we're able to employ administrators, counselors, and most importantly, teachers, with that information, we feel like the teaming next year will really lend itself to that because we can go to a group of teachers at our sixth grades, our middle schools and our high schools and have them look at their group of 100 to 110 students that they will all share and they'll be able to find what it is those students need much quicker. So, we'll be more agile at the beginning of the year rather than waiting for the first marking period grades to come out to recognize that a kid may be struggling in one of those areas. And the earlier we can intervene as the kids make that turn into secondary out of elementary, the better poised we will all be for them to fill gaps before they get to classes in high school where, for lack of a better word, they start to really count, both in terms of credits towards graduation, as well as those competency measures.

Mrs. Murdoch said great, thank you. I really appreciate that proactive mindset there.

Mrs. Crowley said I'm lucky because this is the second time I have heard this. I got to be a part of the curriculum committee and met with you, Mark, and Jill. So, I just wanted to say that some of the things that stuck out to me at that committee, and again, for your presentation, was the access to opportunities to be successful in the alternative pathways. I love that this plan is proactive and responsive. I loved in the meeting when you said that graduation is a K-12 problem, not just a 12 problem. I love being able to, like Beth said, look way back and see what are some of those early warning indicators making sure the interventions are timely and responsive. Another thing I circled on here is when a kid gets a diploma, it's not just a piece of paper, that it's going to prepare them through college or whatever they choose to do. I think that this plan is really awesome and I think that it's great that you didn't just settle for three stars, that you're reaching for higher, so I commend you guys for that. That's a lot of hard work.

Ms. Arnold said great information here. I have a comment on the middle school teaming. I love that we're bringing that back. My son experienced that, but my daughter did not. I know we dropped the teaming process because of scheduling issues. How do you foresee working around that? Mr. Grantier said it's just a lot of hard work by the adults on the front end. When you've got kids going here, there, and everywhere at our middle schools, it's easy just to say, you know what, it's not going to work for us anymore. But our three middle school principals were really committed to this. They wanted to dig in. I should say four middle school principals because Stacy Carter at the Hub was also a part of that process and integral to

that brainstorming. So, those four principals really wanted to dig in and see how we might be able to bring this back. If you look at the research out from AMLE most of it's coming out of Westerville, Ohio. But all that research says that if you have a middle school the foundational component of that is teaming. You have these schools within a school that serves as these small learning communities where teachers share students. They're able to have conversations with their kids and about their kids. And that the supports and the experience is consistent as a student moves through their academic day. So, it really is just getting us to think differently about how we build out our master schedules. It's about being a little bit more responsive. Doing a bit more hand scheduling than maybe we would like to be doing. Because when you've got all of those moving pieces, the computer doesn't necessarily figure that out for you. And so we're working our way through that. The first year of bringing this back will not be perfect. We will not get to 100 percent in terms of those pure teams in all three of our middle schools to accommodate all those different spaces and places that our kids go. But we're making great strides, and our principals are really excited to lead that work forward with their staff.

Ms. Arnold said as I said, my son experienced it. In fact, one of our retirees tonight, Marianne Best, was part of that team, and having her and her colleagues working with my son was essential for him. I'm really glad to hear that. The other question is, just what is Apex? Mr. Grantier replied that Apex is available through a company called Edmentum. Apex is an online source for credit recovery courses. We've used Apex for a number of years.

As I mentioned, we have to provide remediation for retesting. That's a state mandate. Apex does have that level of test prep, essentially. Just shorter tutorials that help to retool kids as they prepare to retake those tests. But they also have a second tier of credit recovery courses that students do independently online. It was meant really to expand the capacity for our own online courses. We still have students who do a la carte credit recovery through the online academy. This was allowed us to increase that capacity. It started in a few kind of high need subject areas where we could really anticipate where that need would be. But it's expanded beyond that to be a little bit more responsive to where kids are, just based on how those courses are set up. Many districts in the area leverage that as their online option. We're fortunate that we have some homegrown online courses as well. And so that was the kind of the impetus behind that partnership. Ms. Arnold said great, thanks.

Mr. Perry said, first of all, thank you for all the amazing work that you've been doing and that everybody's been doing. It's been a true team effort, and it's not one person; it's several people. But I thought that was very interesting: the at-risk distributions from the different high schools were fairly distinctly different. I know they pulled from different socioeconomic backgrounds. We have different areas they pull from, different administrators, different teachers. But I don't know what kind of best practices we're learning at Bradley and Darby have nothing like each other as far as that is concerned.....what the difference is?

Mr. Grantier said that as we continue to work more like a system, we're looking for better alignment across our three high schools and learning from each other. So, as we look ahead to the next iteration of our commitment plan, we're looking for level-specific goals that leverage each other's strengths to address the challenges that may be common across those three high schools. One of the other pieces that's not reflected on there is the school size. Davidson has upwards of almost 300 more kids than Darby. So, if you look across, there is a little bit of variation there. So, those cohort sizes tend to impact us. What we're most focused on right now when we look at that is the kind of scary peak in 11th grade. And what does the next year and a half look like for those kids who are going to be working to either remediate credits and/or I demonstrate competency, but really looking at the most serious needs around our seniors, making sure that in a couple of weeks they're able to walk across that stage, but then also looking at what



are we going to do about our freshmen? Because we know that when they struggle in that first year and we look at the number of students who are in that bucket, the next three years aren't going to get easier unless we are really intentional about the supports and interventions that we provide. So, it's looking at each of those grades and trying to be as responsive as possible. Also, bringing on this proactive piece so we can get ahead of the problem.

**C ROUTINES**

- C1 The agenda is correct, with a late-breaking item.
- C2 The Board of Education adopted the agenda as presented.
- C3 The Board of Education approved the April 2024 Treasurer's Report.
- C4 The Board of Education approved the minutes from the following meetings:
  - a. April 15, 2024 – Regular Meeting
  - b. April 15, 2024 – Meeting Notes
  - c. April 20, 2024 – Board Retreat
  - d. April 22, 2024 – Work Session Meeting
  - e. April 22, 2024 – Meeting Notes

**D PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Board of Education appreciates citizen interest in meetings of the board. This place on the agenda is set aside to hear comments from visitors. When called, please go to the microphone so that remarks may be clearly heard and recorded. You must give your name and limit comments to three minutes. Comments must be respectful and professional in nature. Board members may or may not ask questions or make comments. No board member has the power or authority to act for the board; therefore, no response from an individual board member should be interpreted as an official action of the board. Portions of this meeting are being recorded.

No public participation.

**E CONSENT AGENDA**

The Board of Education approved the consent agenda, items E1 through E6. Action by the Board of Education in "Adoption of the Consent Agenda" means that all E items are adopted by one single motion unless a member of the board or the Superintendent requests that any such item be removed from the consent agenda and voted upon separately. Employments, where applicable, are contingent upon 1) Verification of education, 2) Proof of proper certification, and 3) Positive results from a criminal records check.

- 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 Employment – Stipends-Non-Contractual – effective for the 2023/2024 school year.

E4 Approved a rate of \$175 per day for staff participating in Title I School Improvement EL Professional Learning and/or Title II-A new curriculum resource Professional Learning.

E5 Employment – Stipends-Non-Contractual:

- \$1,200 stipend for Science of Reading professional development required by the State of Ohio for the following:
  - A teacher of grades kindergarten through five;
  - An English language arts teacher of grades six through twelve;
  - An intervention specialist, English learner teacher, reading specialist, or instruction coach who serves any grades pre-kindergarten through twelve.
- \$400 stipend for Science of Reading professional development required by the State of Ohio for each teacher who teaches a subject area other than English language arts in grades six through twelve.

E6 Approved the following trip requests:

- a. Darby Girls Volleyball, University of Kentucky – July 11, 2024
- b. Darby Cross Country, Louisville, KY – September 13, 2024
- c. Davidson Girls Basketball, University of Findley – June 20, 2024
- d. Darby Boys Soccer, Ohio Wesleyan University – July 12, 2024
- e. Davidson Marching Band, Orlando, FL – June 1, 2025

Mr. Vorst asked if there were any changes in any of these? Mr. Stewart said there was one late-breaking additional item in E1. Mrs. Crowley said I just wanted to give a quick shout-out to my student teacher from last year, who is on here to be hired. She was a long-term sub at Brown, and I'm so proud of her. She was not only my student teacher but she was also in my class in second grade. I'm just really proud of her and have known her since she was seven. She's wonderful. The district will love her.

Mr. Stewart added that before we go any further in that consent agenda, you just hired Kristina Bope as the new principal at Brittonn Elementary. I'd like to invite her to address the board.

I'm Kristina Bope, and I just want to say thank you so much to the board, Mr. Stewart, and all of the leadership team at Hilliard City Schools. I'm so excited and honored to become part of the Britton Norwich community. I can't wait to get to work. I'm a Hilliard girl myself, so I'm just so excited to partner with those families, the students, and the teachers at Britton.

Mr. Stewart said while we promised him he didn't have to speak, you also just approved Josh Stephens as our new special education coordinator.

## **F ACTION AGENDA**

F1 The Board of Education approved the 2024 graduates. A complete list of graduates can be found in the approved meeting *Minutes*.

Congratulations to all our graduates.

F2 The Board of Education adopted the following policies:

- a. IGBEA-R – Reading Skills Assessments and Intervention (Third Grade Reading Guarantee)
- b. IGD – Cocurricular and Extracurricular Activities

- c. IGDJ – Interscholastic Athletics
- d. KGB – Public Conduct on District Property
- e. KMA – Parent/Citizen Organizations

Mrs. Muroch said that confirmed the added legal reference is the one we discussed in the second reading.

F3 The Board of Education approved the May Five-Year Forecast.

Mr. Vorst asked if Melissa had anything to elaborate on. Mrs. Swearingen said no, there have been no changes since we reviewed everything at the last work session.

F4 The Board of Education authorized the Chief Operating Officer to approve the following bid for the 2024 Hilliard Tharp Sixth Grade School Paving Project to the named Vendor for the following project:

Hilliard Tharp Sixth Grade – Complete General Construction, Inc. awarded at a bid of \$1,296,860.00

Mr. Perry asked for an overview of this. Mr. Dudgeon said this project continues to keep us on our replacement schedule with our paving projects across the district. Five bidders participated this year. As you'll notice, the cost of construction this year continues to go up over previous years. However, the contractor that we selected was responsive to all of the requirements for this project.

Mr. Perry asked if we had a previous relationship with this contractor. They have worked for the district before on some of our other paving projects, but they did not get Hoffman Trails last year.

F5 The Board of Education authorized the Chief Operating Officer to approve the Change Order Deduction from Trane Parts and Supply in the amount of \$47,724.00 for the Ridgewood Elementary School HVAC Project.

Mr. Dudgeon explained that the board previously approved our pre-purchase of HVAC mechanical equipment for the Ridgewood renovation project. As the Master Facilities Plan progressed and the potential for some work to be done at Ridgewood became more likely, we decided to pause the mechanical project for now. This resolution will allow us to cancel part of our order and receive some money back.

Mr. Stewart said that before we discuss the next resolution, I'm going to defer to Ms. Swearingen for a minute.

Mrs. Swearingen said, as you recall, at our March work session, we discussed the district's cash balance policy, deficit spending, and the need for additional operating funds. We examined several levy scenarios and discussed their impact on the district's future finances. At the April board retreat, we revisited this discussion and the potential scenarios based on favorable trends that were identified in the May five-year forecast. At our last meeting, we reviewed those forecast updates, and then we just approved the May forecast revisions this evening. Based on our board's cash balance reserve policy and the goal of not returning to voters for additional operating funds for at least four years, we have determined that a millage amount of 6.9 mills is the best option at this point in time. This millage amount is lower than any of the scenarios that we originally discussed. Tonight's resolution is the first step in placing a combined issue on the ballot, and the second resolution will be presented on the June 10th agenda.

We've invited our legal counsel, Matt Stout, from Bricker Graydon, to come up tonight to provide the public with a brief overview of the resolution you have before you tonight and to explain the process that will follow. He can also answer any questions that the board might have regarding the process.

Mr. Stout said thank you, members of the board. As Melissa pointed out, you have the first resolution of a two-step process to put an operating levy and bond issue on the ballot before you tonight. This resolution is what we call Resolution Necessity, where you map out the amount of the bond issue, \$142 million, and the improvements that the bond issue was going to make. It also maps out the 6.9 mills for the operating levy.

If the board adopts this resolution tonight, it will be taken to the Franklin County Auditor. The auditor will certify the millage necessary to pay off the bonds over a 30-year period and the amount that will be raised by a 6.9 mill operating levy. The bond millage is determined by four factors, three of which are variable. Okay, and they will change. The first variable factor is the tax valuation or the assessed valuation of the school district, which will change over time. It's based on an estimated interest rate, which you're required to do by statute, but that will also change. That is 5%.

It is based on the principle that you will pay this debt off in level principal payments, which is not actually how that will happen, but that is also required by statute. You will pay this off like you pay the mortgage on a home. Which means you will have level debt service payments with higher interest at the beginning and less principal, and then over time, it will become more principal and less interest. Okay, but that is what the statute requires.

The fourth criterion is the term of the bonds, which is 30 years, which is conservative in this era for bond issues for school districts. Many districts go further out, 37 or 38 years. Obviously, going further out is going to cost more interest over a time period. That is what the district is set on.

Once those value amounts come back from the auditor, we'll have the board adopt a resolution to proceed. That will basically have the ballot language in it, which sets forth what the voters will see on election day, November 5th. Once the board approves that, we file everything with the Board of Elections, and the issue goes on the ballot.

Questions on any of that, I'm happy to entertain.

F6 The Board of Education approved the following resolution:

RESOLUTION OF NECESSITY OF BOND ISSUE AND LEVY OF A TAX IN EXCESS OF THE TEN-MILL LIMITATION, AND TO SUBMIT THE QUESTION OF THE SAME TO THE ELECTORS; AND REQUESTING STATE CONSENTS IN CONNECTION THEREWITH

(Ohio Revised Code §5705.218; §133.06)

WHEREAS, the Board has determined that it is necessary to finance the construction and acquisition of certain improvements to the School District's facilities; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary for the School District to levy additional taxes in excess of the ten-mill limitation to pay for current operating expenses; and

WHEREAS, a resolution declaring the necessity of levying an additional tax outside the ten-mill limitation must be passed and certified to the County Auditor of Franklin County, Ohio (the "County Auditor") in order to permit the Board to consider the levy of such a tax, and must request that the County Auditor certify to the Board the total current taxable value of the School District, the estimated property tax revenue that will be produced by such additional tax based on such current taxable value, and the amount of the additional tax expressed in dollars for each \$100,000 of county auditor's appraised value;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Education of the Hilliard City School District, Franklin County, Ohio, two-thirds of all of the members thereof concurring, that:

Section 1. It is necessary for the purpose of constructing, furnishing, and equipping three new elementary school buildings, with related site improvements and appurtenances thereto; and improving, renovating, furnishing, and equipping existing facilities, and constructing, furnishing, and equipping new facilities for school district purposes, with related site improvements and appurtenances thereto, to issue and sell bonds of the School District in the amount of \$142,000,000 (the "Bonds"). It is further necessary that there shall be annually levied on all the taxable property in the entire territory of the School District a direct tax outside of the ten-mill limitation (the "Bond Levy") to pay the debt charges on the Bonds and any securities that the Board may determine to issue in anticipation thereof. The Bond Levy shall be an additional levy in effect upon the entire territory of the School District commencing in 2024, first due in calendar year 2025, if approved by a majority of the electors voting thereon. The Bonds shall be dated approximately December 1, 2024; shall bear interest at the estimated rate of 5.00% per annum; and shall be paid over a period not to exceed 30 years, as calculated under Chapter 133 of the Ohio Revised Code (the "Code").

Section 2. It is further necessary to levy on all the taxable property in the entire territory of the School District an additional tax (the "Levy") in excess of the ten-mill limitation for the benefit of the School District to pay for current operating expenses.

Section 3. The question of issuing the Bonds and approving the Levy shall be submitted to the all of electors in the entire territory of the School District at the election to be held therein on November 5, 2024. All of the territory of the School District is located in Franklin County, Ohio.

Section 4. The Levy shall be at a rate not exceeding 6.90 mills for each \$1 of taxable value upon the entire territory of the School District for a continuing period of time. The Levy shall be placed upon the tax list and duplicate for the current tax year (commencing in 2024, first due in calendar year 2025) if a majority of the electors voting thereon vote in favor thereof.

Section 5. The School District requests consents of the Tax Commissioner of Ohio and the Director of Education and Workforce to issue bonds in excess of 4% but not to exceed 9% of the assessed valuation of said School District, all in accordance with Section 133.06 of the Code.

Section 6. The Treasurer of this Board is directed to certify a copy of this resolution to the County Auditor with instructions for the County Auditor to certify to the Board: (a) the total current taxable value of the School District and the estimated average annual property tax levy, expressed in mills for each \$1 of taxable value as well as in dollars for each \$100,000 of county auditor's appraised value, that will be required to pay debt charges on the Bonds throughout the maturity of the Bonds, and (b) the total current taxable value of the School District, the estimated property tax revenue that will be produced by the Levy

based on such current taxable value, and the amount of the Levy expressed in dollars for each \$100,000 of county auditor's appraised value.

Section 7. It is hereby found and determined that all formal actions of this Board concerning and relating to the passage of this Resolution were taken in an open meeting of this Board, and that all deliberations of this Board and of any of its committees that resulted in such formal action were in meetings open to the public in compliance with all legal requirements, including Section 121.22 of the Code.

Ms. Arnold said before we vote, I have a couple of comments here. In 2007, past board president Lisa Whiting and then levy campaign volunteer noted that the state has, in essence, flatlined our funding. In the 17 years since that situation has not changed.

In fiscal year 2023, Hilliard schools received less state funding per pupil than we did in 2015. And while Ohio has implemented a new funding formula, the Fair School Funding Plan, the state legislature has yet to commit to fully funding it. And even then, as noted in our treasurer's forecast, our calculated local capacity will continue this trend of flat funding or decreases.

As many here tonight understand, this is further complicated by the limitations of House Bill 920 passed in 1976, which freezes the amount raised on prior voting levies. While folks are seeing the effects of property tax increases due to re-evaluation, our schools do not see any significant gains. As a result, this requires districts like ours to return to our community regularly to maintain funding to educate our Children.

Hilliard Schools has been fortunate to have steady financial stewardship, which has allowed the district to remain off the ballot for eight years, and continual cost increases and the aforementioned flat funding require us to once again ask our community for additional operating dollars for our public schools. This request and the associated costs do not come lightly. I believe each of us understands the true local capacity of our district families and businesses, and while property values have escalated at an unsettling rate, those gains do not translate into increased wealth for the majority.

We further see the challenges reflected in our growing percentage of economically disadvantaged students, and that weighs heavy on my heart. It is my hope that our community understands the need for this step, not only for the operating funds to continue to provide our students with incredible educational opportunities but also to recognize the responsibility to address our aging facilities and educational adequacy issues with this bond request.

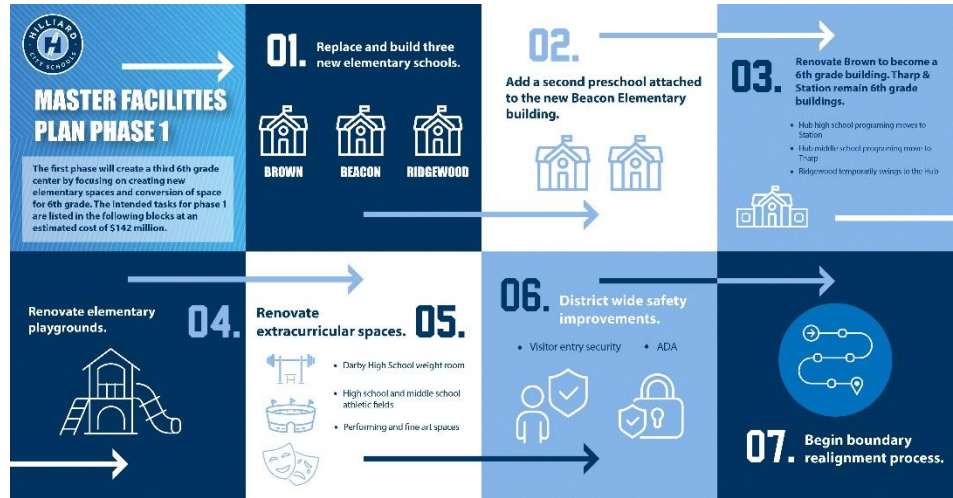
Mr. Stewart said that in this resolution, you're being asked to adopt the modified recommendations from the Master Facility Planning Committee. This resolution does not have nearly the statutory weight that the previous resolution does. To this point, as we have addressed the community and others, we have referred to this plan as a set of recommendations. Therefore, we felt it was important now that we've taken the previous step that the board also bless these recommendations of the Master Facility Plan.

I'm not going to get into the details—this infographic will start to be seen in many different places. But I will go through very quickly some of the highlights of Phase 1 of the Master Facility Plan. It's highlighted by the replacement and building of three new elementary schools: Brown, Beacon, and Ridgewood. As a reminder, the existing Brown Elementary will be renovated and become the third sixth-grade center should we be successful. The new Beacon Elementary will include an added preschool facility.

As I said, we'll renovate Brown as part of that. Brown, Tharp, and Station will initially be our three sixth-grade centers. We will need to use the Hub for swing space when we build the elementary, so we will empty that building.

The high school programming at the Hub will be relocated to the

two-story portion of this building once it becomes a smaller 6<sup>th</sup>-grade building once we move to three 6<sup>th</sup>-grade centers. The middle school programming from the Hub will move to Tharp. There will be a number of other projects. As Matt mentioned, we're talking about \$142 million worth of construction.



So, there will be several other smaller projects that will be highlighted in phase one, including renovating and standardizing our elementary playgrounds, renovating extracurricular spaces, and finally getting an adequate weight room at Darby High School. We're going to look at all of our high school athletic facilities and fields, as well as our performing arts facilities across the district. We're also going to look at safety benefits at all of our schools. So one highlight of that will be taking a look at how visitors enter all of our schools. We may reroute some of those entrances to force visitors into the office before going anywhere else. We're also going to look at all of our ADA compliance across the district.

So, that's the highlights. We'll get into more of the details, but again, we thought it was important that this go from a set of recommendations to a plan that's been blessed by the Board of Education.

F7 The Board of Education approved and adopted the modified Phase 1 recommendations of the Master Facility Planning Committee.

Mr. Perry said before we vote on this resolution, I want to say that I appreciate everyone who has worked on this...*(inaudible)*...This is truly an opportunity for our community to reinvent our district positively. This sets the pathways for generations of students to come through our district. And starting, of course, with those with the most need first, but there really is something in here for everyone in every boundary area that we have. It's really something that I think is appropriate to do now. I worry that we lose this opportunity in the future, so I'm glad we're taking this step now. But truly, this is a big deal, and I don't want to underplay that. This is a big deal and it is positive for our school district. I'm incredibly proud to support this.

Ms. Arnold said I have to echo that as having been a member of that committee and knowing all the folks who put so much time and effort into it. And also as a community member who also participated in the Columbus process. And seeing where that has gone, I am incredibly proud of the work we have done in really understanding our district at the level of our facilities, their conditions, their adequacies, and coming forward with this plan to really renovate and rejuvenate our district is amazing.

Mrs. Crowley said I think this is really exciting, and I like the new graphic. It's nice.

Mr. Vorst said I'll add to that sentiment. I think if there's a correct way to do this process, you guys have done it. You've been working at this for years. You've been extremely thorough. You've asked, I think, everybody in the community who is willing to engage you what they can do. You're doing it in a fiscally responsible way. You're touching every area, so everybody gets something out of it. I'm excited to see what we can do with it.

F8 The Board of Education approved the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Education of the Hilliard City School District, Franklin County, Ohio, that to provide for the current expenses and other expenditures of said Board of Education, during the fiscal year, ending June 30, 2024 the following sums be and the same are hereby set aside and appropriated for the several purposes for which expenditures are to be made and during said fiscal year, as follows:

001 - GENERAL FUND	\$238,637,283
006 - FOOD SERVICE	7,305,000

**G REPORTS / INFORMATION / EXHIBIT ITEM**

G1 Committee Reports

Mrs. Murdoch said HEF met and discussed several grants totaling more than \$25,000. It was great to see the work they're doing to support everything in this district. There were so many great ideas that they actually extended their budget this year. So, great job writing those grant proposals, everyone. And on top of that they awarded about \$26,000 worth of scholarships. Mr. Stewart said we are incredibly fortunate to have HEF in this community.

Mrs. Crowley said Jake already did my Curriculum Committee report, so thank you so much for that. I love being on the Curriculum Committee, and I'm excited because, in the summer, Jill arranged for me to attend part of your Admin Retreat, which I heard there's lunch too. I'm really excited about being there. So I'll get to come to that, and that's really exciting. ISPTO wrapped up their last meeting of the year with Mike presenting the master facilities plan and their officer elections. And we also had our last superintendent's advisory where Dave cleared up some misconceptions about sports betting. We also talked about the homework policy and what kind of to do with the wit and wisdom homework that comes with the program; some questions about the master facilities plan, and no questions about the eclipse anymore. So, it's a nice break from that.

Mrs. Murdoch said the eclipse was stunning. Mrs. Crowley said we didn't have to miss school for the Northern Lights, so that was good. Mr. Stewart asked if there were any other committee reports.

Mr. Perry said the Policy Committee meeting has been postponed because the Ohio School Board Association is getting its policy development quarterly ready, and it is not quite as quarterly as we were anticipating. We'll announce that as soon as we have a date.

**H EXECUTIVE SESSION / ADJOURNMENT**

H1 At 8:05 p.m., the Board of Education caucused to executive session



- a. To consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee or official.
- b. To consider the purchase of property for public purposes, or for the sale of property at competitive bidding, if premature disclosure of information would give an unfair competitive or bargaining advantage to a person whose personal, private interest is adverse to the general public interest.