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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 President called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m.
- A2 Members present: Ms. Arnold, Mrs. Crowley, Mr. Perry, and Mr. Vorst. Mrs. Murdoch attended via Zoom.

***NOTE:*** *The audio recording of the meeting was difficult to decipher, so this document may include several incomplete sentences or inaccuracies. Some of the participant's names may be misspelled.*

## B PROGRAMS / PRESENTATIONS

- B1 Embrace, Empower, Inspire Award Winners: Janeen Robinson and Caitlin Blanc

*Stacy Carter:* Good evening; my name is Stacy Carter. I am the principal at the Hub. And this is Janeen Robinson. She is our Embrace, Empower, Inspire award winner. I've had the privilege of working with Janeen for ten years in a number of capacities, and the one thing that is consistent is Janeen is students first. Whenever she's in a leadership team meeting or just planning, everything is all about the students. So, it's no surprise that a student nominated Janeen. So, I'm going to go ahead and read the nomination.

"Miss Robinson is a perfect example of what an amazing human is. Every day, she helps others and, inspires others, and makes every student, teacher, administrator, and student feel like they matter. She gave me the opportunity and confidence to speak in front of the entire...*(inaudible)*...administration about a topic I was passionate about. She's someone I barely know. We're actually really good friends now.

When I started my 7th grade year in her class, I didn't know what to expect. But because of her amazing personality, attitude, and just a passionate perspective of life, she exemplifies exactly what Hilliard City Schools is. I can confidently say that she has made the most incredible impact on me, and my peers, out of any teacher I have ever had. Every day she walks in and tries to be the best for all of us, no matter how her day is going. The values of a portrait of a learner are shown by her no matter where she is.

When I found out she wasn't going to be an 8th-grade honors core infusion, I was a little sad. However, I still go to her classroom and see her because the advice and the time she gives us is more than any teacher I have ever had. I truly believe that she deserves it."

*Janeen Robinson:* I would just like to say that I appreciate the support of the administration and recognition of this award. After a very long career, there's still nothing more rewarding than hearing a student validate what you do every single day. And they're the ones that make it all worth it, so I appreciate it very much.

*Katherine Hueter:* Good evening. First, congratulations to Janeen and the rest of the Embrace, Empower, Inspire Award winners. My name is Katherine Hueter, and I'm the principal at Weaver Middle School. It's my honor to present this award to Ms. Caitlin Blanc. Caitlin is a social worker for us at Weaver Middle School, and to say that she goes above and beyond is an understatement.

She truly cares and that is felt through her daily interactions with the students and staff at the middle school. It takes a really special skill set to be a middle school social worker. You know, students are navigating life as a teenager. And on the flip side, some students have seen more life than most adults. And how Ms. Blanc is able to transition and navigate those conversations with such sensitivity and care and make sure that everyone feels like they matter through that is truly a gift. She's an exceptional human and an exceptional teammate, and we're very fortunate to work with her.

Similar to Janeen, we had a student nominate Ms. Blanc, and I think it's just a huge reflection of the work that she's doing and the gift that we get to see every day while working with her. This is a nice, solid paragraph here, so it's also impressive work for a middle school student. We're very proud of him for doing this as well but once again, his work captures what it's like to work with Ms. Blanc.

“Ms. Blanc deserves the Embrace, Empower, Inspire Award because she's been a light for so many students, especially during tough times. I honestly don't know how I would have gotten through some really hard stuff without her support. She has this amazing ability to make you feel heard and understood, no matter what you're going through. It's like she has a superpower for empathy. She doesn't just offer advice; she really listens and tries to help you find solutions that work for you.

One of the things I appreciate most about Ms. Blanc is how encouraging she is. Even when I felt like giving up, she believed in me and reminded me of my strengths. She has a thing for seeing the potential in everyone, even when they can't see it themselves. Ms. Blanc genuinely cares about each and every student at Weaver. You can tell it's not just a job for her. She truly wants us to succeed and be happy.”

And I'll go down to the bottom where he says, “She's a true gem and I can't think of anyone more deserving of this recognition. She's helping so many kids at Weaver. We're all so lucky to have her. I know I am.”

*Caitlin Blanc:* I'd like to say thank you. I'm very blessed to receive this award, and I really like working in Hilliard. Thank you for what you do for us and for allowing me to accept this award.

## C ROUTINES

- C1 The agenda is correct, as presented.
- C2 The Board of Education adopted the agenda as presented.
- C3 The Board of Education approved the December 2024 Treasurer's Report.

*Mr. Vorst:* Anything interesting?

*Mrs. Swearingen:* There is nothing substantial to note at this point. There is an appropriation amendment later in the agenda for you to approve that aligns everything with the...(inaudible)...

- C4 The Board of Education approved the minutes from the following meetings:
  - a. December 9, 2024 – Regular meeting minutes
  - b. December 9, 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.

### David Townsend

Good evening. First, due to this pertaining to the topic of transportation, I think we'd all agree that this cannot (be done in) three minutes. And therefore, I respectfully request that if I go a little bit over, you would understand. Secondly, I am not an attorney, and I'm not going to say anything that's true to legal bias. Everything I say is my opinion or my perspective. Nothing is intended to be construed as any kind of threat, blackmail, or coercion toward any school staff or board member. In fact, Mr. Perry, aren't you an attorney? Mr. Perry replied, I am, sir. That's impressive. I know you can get a degree and call yourself an attorney or a lawyer, but are you a member of the bar too? Mr. Perry replied I am a member of the bar. That's great. I appreciate you clarifying.

I have no intention of reading into the reciting events of 12/18. However, I will say that the timeline of events that are received and documented by school personnel does not merit justice. After the event of 12/18, if there are any school teachers, staff, or board members that should ever say that the protocols work or anything similar, that person should resign or be terminated immediately. Because it does not merit justice to ignore the trauma and damage of the events of my family and at least blame themselves for the chain of events.

If Mr. Stewart or anyone else wants to sympathize with the...*(inaudible)*..., we can do a little experiment with your family and see how they react. Just let me know, I already have the protocols outlined. I told Mr. Stewart on 12/19 that the school's primary job is child safety and education. I stand behind that statement today. To take that statement a little further, the Board's members' primary responsibility is to represent the people who elected them to oversee the safety of children within the school district.

Back to the subject of the day, my son was extremely upset after the incident. Some...*(inaudible)*...he didn't want to talk about it because he still doesn't like it. The evening after, he told his mother he didn't want me to get in trouble. He wasn't concerned for his well-being; he was concerned for others.

Mr. Stewart and the board, we, the people, elected to give these positions to hire qualified adults to make sound decisions. And use good judgment to ensure the safety and well-being of every child.

The next day, the bus driver told him don't fall asleep. Mr. Angelo Caputo's email on 12/19 to Mr. Stewart, stated Leanne had to gently wake him up by patting him and saying his name several times. That's how deeply he was sleeping. Using an adverb as such as deeply in this circumstance is simply gaslighting. And for the bus driver to tell the child not to fall asleep, there's nothing else that's inappropriate. But I assure you, from the child's perspective, this statement implies that it was his fault for missing his drop off.

I would like the board to investigate Mr. Caputo's and the bus driver's actions. I received a copy only of one email regarding this incident. I find it hard to believe there's only one email. Where are those notes

and statements and tapes? Did anybody take any notes? Did anybody make any phone calls? Mr. Caputo also says he called Mr. Stewart and left a voicemail.

(The three-minute timer beeped). *Mrs. Crowley:* Sorry, we have to stop you at three minutes. Everybody has three minutes. Thank you so much.

Desirae Clayborn

I'm here on behalf of Davidson High School's Turning Point USA Club. My name is Desirae Clayborn. I am employed by Turning Point USA. My role is a Buckeye Territory High School field rep. My job is to raise student and community awareness of Turning Point as a foundation, facilitate the onboarding of new chapters, and serve as a liaison to the students and the organization. This includes things like providing new chapters with educational materials for free, interactive games to play during their meetings, placing free lunch orders for the chapter meetings, and applying for turning point-sponsored grants to pay for club activities and travel stipends to events.

We cover speaking and travel accommodations for many of our high-profile speakers that the students invited to speak at their events. And they encourage these students to dream without limitations and engage with their local communities without worrying about how to pay for it. My job does not include projecting my own personal viewpoints onto students, promoting or endorsing a political candidate or political party, promoting any form of hate or exclusion of anyone in the community, engaging in an effort to silence, censor, or in any way suppress the voices of any person in the community, whether they love Turning Point or deeply disagree with our values.

I'm here tonight to fight for my students' right to exist. They have a right to assemble with students who share similar interests. They have a right to receive unfettered equal access and treatment from this district as any other club in their school. These students are not asking for funding. Mr. Carney, their advisor, is not asking to get paid. They're not asking for any other clubs to lose access or visibility. These kids, little kids, are just politely asking to be treated equally and without being bullied by adults.

Now, I'm a little less polite than they are, and I'm here to demand from the adults in the room to grow up and stop bullying children. It takes a mighty small and weak individual to stomp on the rights of children. But that stops today. This is your opportunity to publicly course correct to restore access and visibility of all clubs on campus, including the Turning Point Club. And this is a reminder, again, to all the adults in the room that you have a legal obligation and responsibility to respect the rights of every student in your district, including the Turning Point students. Thank you.

Hannah Yockey

Good evening, everyone. My name is Hannah Yockey and I am a current senior at Hilliard Davidson High School. I would first like to thank you all for your time and for the opportunity to speak in front of you tonight. I am a member of Davidson's Turning Point USA chapter and president as well. A student club that was first introduced to Davidson during the fall of last year.

I am here tonight to represent my fellow club members to bring to your attention the specific instances of oppression our club has endured, as well as provide clarity regarding what we as a club are asking for and what we are hoping will change in the near future. The main purpose of our Turning Point chapter is to show support to the veterans in our community, especially since Davidson is honored to be recognized as a Purple Star school. This award signifies the school's significant commitment to serving students and families connected to the nation's armed services.

During the first week of November, you may recall the cup display on the fence of the bus garage that read, we love our veterans, next to an American flag; a message that was put up by our own Turning Point USA chapter. What I find disappointing is that, if it were not for our club's display outside, there would have been no recognition of Veterans Day other than a very brief, two-minute announcement over the school intercom, even though we have been recognized for our significant commitment to the military.

That being said, our Turning Point Club has been restricted by our school administration from hosting nearly every event we have proposed, with the reason consistently being that we are not a district-sponsored club. We had to fight for nearly an entire year for permission to simply advertise Turning Point, let alone host any events. We were denied a bulletin board use because we are not a district-sponsored.

After far too many emails between our club advisor and our administration, we were finally given a slide on our duty announcement displays for our club advertisements. Since then, we have been denied permission to host a spirit week in honor of Veterans Day, once again, because we are not district-sponsored. We also wanted to help our Purple Star Liaison with the Military Appreciation Football Game and other such activities hosted by the Liaison. But we're again denied this request because we are not able to receive funds for the club.

Because of our club status, we have spent nearly all of our time trying to gain access to our own school, even though we had a list of much more productive things we were hoping to achieve in this time. Corrine says we wanted to welcome the Hilliard Veterans Day Parade. We had hoped to write cards to veterans and local nursing homes during the holidays. We wanted to organize a little...*(inaudible)*...drive for local veterans in need. And we would love to partner with our local VFW center to actively and personally connect with our veteran community.

However, we would first like to increase fund membership to help us with these projects. Something we are unable to do because we have been so greatly restricted by our administration. We were, however, recently informed that to receive district sponsorship, Mr. Carney, our advisor, would need to be receiving pay for advising our club. I am asking you tonight to change the district policy to allow any student run club to be considered sponsored by the district without requiring the advisor to be paid.

Once again, I thank you all for your time here tonight, and I genuinely hope that we can work together to solve this ongoing issue.

#### Lisa Chaffee

Good evening. I just want to say, first of all, I'd like to give applause to Hannah...*(inaudible)*...This club is a very wonderful group of young men and women who simply want to be in a safe place together. I think it's incumbent upon you, the board, to look at the policy establishing what a school sponsored club is, and it's incumbent upon you to fix it because that's the whole glitch in this. Yes, we all have our ideological views and being that we are supposed to be big on DEI, the I is inclusion. So they need to be included as well. And I ask you to fix that problem. Thank you.

#### Mike Carney

Thank you very much for having us and honoring Hanna. Hanna, you've done such a wonderful job as president. I'm the advisor, and since last year, I agree with every sentiment and every discrimination piece. And you know it because I've told you all of these things. And I don't want you to do it because, do the right thing, because Hanna just spoke today. I want you to do the right thing because of your heart

and what is really true. Something only God knows, your hearts. But something is compelling you to do the wrong thing. Or to wait and do nothing, which is the wrong thing.

And I agree with Lisa, this is another, ironically enough, DEI-rooted issue. This is contrary to what's been happening here. It's contrary to every one of those concepts. It's not honoring diversity. And the difference is in unique points of view. This is not being equitable. And certainly, like she said, you're being excluded. Just consistently and outright.

Now, again, I don't know why. Maybe it's weakness, fear. I recall and I found a public record that, yes, last year when the club began, a parent wrote you, Stewart, and my principal Ragland, titling a hate group is in Davidson High School. So, whatever response from that, and you did respond rightly, it's not a question of you knowing the Equal Access Act. It's abiding by it, is the problem. You rightly responded to that barrier, that they should receive equal access privileges as every other club. The Equal Access Act does not, correct me if I'm wrong, go away just because I don't get paid as their advisor. That is ridiculous. Something Mr. Walker has shared, explaining what this district-sponsored excuse to these kids actually means.

It bears no fixing. You just say yes to them. That's it. You just have the courage to do the right thing and say yes. And then, as you rightly say, and I believe you, except when you don't honor every student without exception because of their points of view, or your perceived notion of Turning Point, or the values, may be conservative, may be traditional, may be, you know, family focused, may be the military, supportive of the military, whatever it is, you guys got to include all of them. Honor us all, please. I appreciate your time.

## **E CONSENT AGENDA**

The Board of Education approved the consent agenda, items E1 through E4. 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 2024-25 school year:  
Approve the payment of professional development stipends of \$400 (Pathway E) or \$1,200 (Pathways A, B, C, D, G) to certified staff for completion of required professional development prescribed by Ohio House Bill 33 that supports educators in enhancing pedagogy aligning to the Science of Reading and evidence-based strategies for effective literacy instruction.

E4 Approved the following trip requests:

- a. Bradley, Darby, Davidson, Shanghai, China – March 29, 2025
- b. Darby Travel Club, Costa Rica – March 29, 2025
- c. Bradley, Darby, Davidson, France and Switzerland – March 28, 2026
- d. Davidson Baseball, Louisville, KY – March 30, 2025

*Mr. Perry:* Part of the consent agenda includes retirements. We have a couple here today, three from the certified personnel and one from the classified personnel. First of all, we have one in the room today, Mrs. Jill Abraham. I want to say thank you for all your many years of service not just to this district but to education as a whole. We're obviously sad to see you leave, but no sooner than July, so you're still here until the end of the year. But thank you, seriously. Also, Jodi Bates has been with us since 1994, and Randall Bletz has been with us since 1995. So thank you for your many years of service as well, and we scroll down to our classified individual group. Lisa Sigillo has been with us since 2005 as a human resource specialist. Thank you for your many years of service.

**F ACTION AGENDA**

F1 The Board of Education approved the following December 2024 Winter Graduates:

**Hilliard Bradley High School**

Adam Noor Garrett  
Cole Phoenix Hibbs  
Yahya Mohamud – OA

**Hilliard Darby High School**

Takayah Niyona Coleman – OA  
Anna Lucille Gardener  
Kenya Louise Louden – OA  
Ansley Grace Owens – OA  
Mitchell Roland St. Louis – OA

**Hilliard Davidson High School**

Mahdi Ahmed Abdirahman – OA  
Sydney Elaine Alfred – OA  
Ghena Ahmed Al Jabouli – OA  
Landen Bailey Boyle – OA  
Kahlen Ryanne Collins – OA  
Calaeb Joshua Evans  
Ramy Rachid Jr Ouari - OA

F2 The Board of Education approved the Preschool Program of Study.

F3 The Board of Education approved the following resolution:

**AUTHORIZING CONTRACTS WITH WAIBEL ENERGY SYSTEMS FOR THE PURCHASE OF HVAC EQUIPMENT PURSUANT TO O.R.C. 167.081 FOR CONTRACTS PROCURED THROUGH A REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**

The Superintendent recommends the Board authorize an agreement with Waibel Energy Systems (“Waibel”) for the purchase of HVAC equipment through a Regional Council of Governments in accordance with O.R.C. 167.081.

**Rationale:**

1. The District has identified a need to purchase HVAC equipment for the Britton-Norwich Elementary Cooling Tower Project, Crossing Elementary Cooling Tower Project, and the Multi-Campus Cooling Tower Project (collectively the “Projects”).
2. O.R.C. 167.081 allows a school district to participate in a construction contract of a Regional Council of Governments (a “COG”) without the need to engage in competitive bidding. Specifically, O.R.C. 167.081 states that a regional council may enter into a contract that establishes a unit price for, and provides upon a per unit basis, materials, labor, services, overhead, profit, and associated expenses for the repair, enlargement, improvement, or demolition of a building or structure if the contract is awarded pursuant to a competitive bidding procedure of a multistate consortium of which the council is a member. A school district that is a council member may participate in the awarded contract.

3. The Board is a member of the Equalis Group (“Equalis”). Equalis is a Regional Council of Governments that has awarded Waibel a contract pursuant to a competitive procurement procedure. Accordingly, the Board may participate in that contract as an exception to competitive bidding.
4. Waibel has provided proposals for the Projects, based against unit pricing provided under Equalis COG-2124A, as follows (collectively the “Contract Sums”):
  - a. Britton-Norwich Elementary Cooling Tower Project: \$635,860;
  - b. Crossing Elementary Cooling Tower Project: \$635,860; and
  - c. Multi-Campus Cooling Tower Project: \$533,665.
5. The Superintendent recommends the Board authorize agreements with Waibel in amounts not-to-exceed the Contract Sums.
6. The Superintendent also requests authority for the Superintendent, Treasurer, and Chief Operating Officer to enter change orders on behalf of the Board in total amounts not to exceed 10% of the Contract Sums. Change orders in excess of that aggregate amount will be brought to the Board for its approval.

The Board of Education resolves as follows:

1. Based upon the information provided and exercising the authority granted in O.R.C. 167.081, the Board approves the selection of Waibel without the need to engage in competitive bidding.
2. The Board authorizes the Superintendent, Treasurer, and Chief Operating Officer, working with legal counsel, to negotiate agreements with Waibel in amounts not-to-exceed the Contract Sums. The Board further authorizes the Superintendent, Treasurer, Chief Operating Officer, and Board President to execute the agreements with Waibel without additional Board action.
3. The Board grants authority for the Superintendent, Treasurer, and Chief Operating Officer to enter change orders on behalf of the Board in total amounts not to exceed 10% of the Contract Sums. Change orders in excess of that aggregate amount will be brought to the Board for its approval.
4. The Board also authorizes the Superintendent and Treasurer to execute any other documents consistent with the intent of this resolution.

*Mr. Dudgeon:* The resolution that you're about to hopefully approve authorizes the district to prepurchase mechanical equipment for three separate HVAC and mechanical projects that will be done this summer. In doing so, the district will be able to meet the long wait times associated with getting these projects to kick off as soon as school is out. Additionally, the district will save approximately \$150,000 to \$165,000 by not paying the contractors awarded this work the markup. The labor for each project will be competitively bid, and we'll bring the resolution back to the board at a February meeting to approve those contracts.



F4 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, 2025, 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	\$248,671,607
004	-	BUILDING FUND	\$15,344,530
018	-	PUBLIC SCH SUPPORT	\$600,000
019	-	OTHER GRANT	\$72,841
516	-	IDEA-B	\$4,122,473
587	-	EARLY CHILDHOOD	\$86,688

**G REPORTS / INFORMATION / EXHIBIT ITEM**

G1 Committee Reports

*Ms. Arnold:* I've been trying to remember what we've had since the last meeting. It's been a while since the break. But right before the break, we had the discussion for facilities, looking through the construction manager risks, and selecting firms that would advance to our next round. We will have those interviews coming this Thursday.

**H EXECUTIVE SESSION / ADJOURNMENT**

H1 At 7:08 p.m., the Board of Education caucused to executive session preparing for, conducting or reviewing negotiations or bargaining sessions with public employees concerning their compensation or other terms and conditions of their employment.