MEETING NOTES

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 6:30 p.m.

A2   Members present: Ms. Arnold, Mrs. Crowley, Mrs. Murdoch, Mr. Perry, and Mr. Vorst.

A3   Pledge of Allegiance

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   Presentation on STEAM experiences in our Innovation and Discovery Center, highlighting grant-funded enhancements such as hydroponics and advanced microscopes

Mr. Stewart: Okay, to start off tonight, we have a presentation from Scioto Darby. Principal Holly Meister will introduce some of our guest speakers.

Ms. Meister: Good evening. Thanks so much for giving us an opportunity to share a little bit about Scioto Darby. It's hard to choose just one thing you can squeeze in five minutes to bring a little light to your day and your evening. I have Dr. Tabitha Stover, our innovation and discovery specialist, with me. And then we have three fourth graders with us. We will talk a little bit about what the IDC means to them and what they're learning through their experiences there. Dr. Stover has written several grants that have brought in additional opportunities. I will let them tell you all about it.

Dr. Stover: Hello, good evening. Thank you so much for joining us. We are excited to share our innovation and discovery center with you. If you have time when the meeting is over, you're welcome to come up and check it out. If you don't have time this evening, you're welcome to stop by anytime and check it out. Anyone out here in the audience, if you would like to come up and check it out, it's on the second floor. If you need elevator assistance, there's one right down the hall.

I just want to point out that this slide deck and video were student-made with a little direction from myself. I want to give Ella, Henry, and Edgar a big shout-out.

Henry: The IDC focuses on people's interest in collaboration where we talk with each other, and you don't yell at someone if you don't like their idea. We use the words "yes and" as in, yes, I like your idea and I can add on to it. We have nature in the IDC, so if it's a snowy day outside and you don't get to go outside, we have nature in the IDC, which you can touch and you can learn.

Ella: The IDC also focuses on our creative thinking of what we want to do. We also like to collaborate together, but we don't always just take each other's ideas. We take some, and then we can get better out of them. One of my favorite zones is the creative zone because I like to create things…*(unintelligible)…*

Edgar: My favorite zones to do is coding and creativity. But, the experiences I love to do the most and collaborate with the most in survival, like I'm building a shelter or something.

Dr. Stover: So, Edgar can you explain a little bit more about the experience? Who did you do that with?

Edgar: I did it with uh, I forgot.

Dr. Stover: Did you do it with your whole class, or just alone in the IDC? Edgar's response was unintelligible.

Dr. Stover: Here is the video the students created sharing all about our IDC. I apologize ahead of time; the volume is as high as possible.

Played video

Student: Thank you for joining us. Do you have any questions?

Ms. Arnold: No questions, but I will just say, Dr. Stover, you've done an amazing thing upstairs with the hydroponics and all the creative spaces up there. The hallway is just amazing to walk through. I felt so relaxed and calm, but at the same time, I was so engaged with everything. I wanted to sit there. I even stopped to read a book just because I was like, oh I've never seen that one before. Thank you so much for what you do for all these kiddos and you guys did a great job with your presentation. Really showed off some of the different things up there. Thank you so much.

B2   Embrace, Empower, Inspire Award Winners: Marcy Baker and Kylie Bell

Mr. Stewart: We have two Embrace, Empower, Inspire Award winners. We'll start with Mr. Snyder, Principal Hilliard Tharp Sixth Grade School.

Mr. Snyder: I'm Scott Snyder, principal of Tharp, and Marcy Baker will join us as our first award winner. Marcy runs our ACE program at Tharp and the lunch chats at Tharp and Station. She does a remarkable job with the ACE program and goes above and beyond initiative outside her time at both buildings. She has partnered with all three high schools and will even involve her family, and it can sometimes get pretty heated with the trivia. It's a blast. She's a difference-maker, and our district is fortunate to have her.

So congrats to Marcy, and thank you for all that you do for our district.

Mr. Stewart: Next up, we have Kylie Bell and Matt Middleton from Darby High School.

Mr. Middleton: I don't think I need to use the microphone. I'm here to talk about Kylie Bell. Kylie is in her third year at Darby High School. She started as a hall monitor and is now an intervention specialist. From day one, when she stepped foot at Darby, she has just gone beyond her role–the relationships she builds with students and staff. What I like most is she's a problem solver, not a problem reporter. She does and goes over and beyond whatever we ask her to do. And she is very deserving of this award. So, congratulations.

Mr. Stewart: Kylie was nominated by a student who wrote about her impact.

Mr Middleton read the student's nomination letter: Ms. Bell deserves this award because she is there for every student and helps those in need with the Panther Corner. *(Our Panther Corner is what we have, like our food pantry and clothes for students in need.)* She also encourages me to see the good in myself. She helps me on my decisions and making my choices that are hard, to help me through and explain my choices better. Lastly, she gets along with everyone and helps a variety of kids in and out of school.

B3   Technology Strategic Plan Update

Mr. Stewart: Okay, for our last presentation, Mr. Boettner and Mr. Pohlman will update us on the technology portion of our strategic plan.

Mr. Boettner: It's hard to follow all of what has been shared already, especially those kids. They were amazing tonight. We want to share with you this evening an update on a few different technology pieces we've been working on and our strategic plan.

There are four goal areas for the strategic plan in technology. The first one is the integration of educational technology and emerging technologies. The second one is infrastructure and connectivity. The third is data-driven decision-making. And the fourth is community engagement. Our strategic plan is a five to seven-year plan. So, we're working on some things this year, and we'll be working on other things as we move through the coming years.

So, our first goal is to do some of the things we are planning to do or are currently working on in integrating educational and emerging technologies. We revisit digital platforms every once in a while. Sometimes, technologies grow old, they fall behind, and companies don't keep up with their work. And so occasionally, we have to make improvements by replacing or upgrading.

The second one is about evaluating emerging technologies. For as long as I've been here, we have been very focused as a district on checking out new technologies that have the potential to make a difference in kids' lives and in learning. And we are, as technology continues to accelerate over time, it feels like they come faster and faster all the time. We'll talk about a couple of those here in just a moment.

The other thing I wanted to mention in the work was the fourth one, Designing Interactive Learning Experiences. I was going to talk a little about the IDCs, but you just saw the amazing things that kids and teachers are doing in the IDCs and the building. Scioto Darby is no exception. They've got amazing stuff. The zones they're have a bias toward action. They want kids to learn by doing so that they learn as they move and work. Then, the one that is on the horizon is providing innovation grants; we'd like to use some grant dollars to provide opportunities for teachers to try out specific technologies that they may have a passion for and would like to investigate.

I forgot to mention I've coded the different goals of our strategic plan in green, yellow, and blue. Green is the stuff we're currently working on right now. Yellow is midterm work. Then, the blue is long-term work over five to seven years.

The second category is infrastructure and connectivity. We have been spending a lot of time improving our cybersecurity over the last few years. That's become very important. We'll talk more about that here in just a few minutes. One of those areas that has increased is MFA use in the district, such as multifactor authentication. If you're familiar with your bank, it's most likely doing it already. You may be doing it with other systems as well. We've been doing it with email for a while. This past year, we increased the number

of our systems with sensitive data through our VPN connection. An automated account management system is on the horizon for us in the next few years. Right now, we blend some things that are automated with some of that manual work. Anytime we can find a way to automate something and make that manual work faster, it helps provide time for our team to continue to do important things that need to be done beyond that.

Student access to technology. About 12 to 13 years ago, Hilliard City Schools was one of the first large districts in Ohio. We were the first large district in Ohio to start a one-to-one program. And we're very proud of that. We worked very hard to find a way to provide devices for students because access equals opportunities for people and we want to provide that to our students from an early age.

And then, finally, the City Fiber Project. We have been working for several years on our City Fiber Project. Working in partnership with the city to build a fiber network around the city. It connects the city's offices and departments and will also connect our school district by this summer. We'll be switching over to that network, and it's been an amazing partnership with the city, a great opportunity to build that connection, but as well, we're going to be sharing services, and we have lots of dreams on things we can improve there.

The other two categories. In data-driven decision-making we do a lot with data analytics and data integration systems. Some of the stuff we will be doing further down the road is continuing to reduce data input further. Anytime you can find a way to ensure that people do not have to spend time manually inputting information provides time for them to do more important things. We're always looking for opportunities to do that. And then I'll talk in a moment about a data aggregation system.

And then, finally, community engagement. A communications platform was one of the systems that had grown old, and it was time to start looking. I'm not gonna spill that message cause we're working on that right now. Stacie and several of us on the team, along with some teachers and admin, just met last week, and we've got some news for you coming up soon.

Coming up in the short term, we will continue to partner with some high-end tech companies. Columbus has been a hotbed of growth. If you watch the news, it's amazing how many technology companies have moved to the central Ohio area. That's an opportunity for Hilliard City Schools. We can build partnerships and opportunities to learn from them and bring innovation to the district. We will also continue to visit innovative organizations, and in the long term, we'd like to build an advisory team in the industry.

Alright, artificial intelligence. Big news: two years ago, ChatGBT came out and hit the world by storm. It's one of the fastest adoption rates of any system ever introduced. Most systems take several years to reach a million users. ChatGPT had a million users in three days. AI is here, big, and many companies are racing to add AI to their tools. This is important for us, and we must keep our eyes on it.

We need to pay attention to it. Our kids need to learn how to use, interact, and deal with it positively. There are three levels that we look at it from. I will talk about the district level, and then Mark will talk about our building and student levels.

At the district level, many systems are working to embed AI into their existing systems. For example, the other day, we were looking at a project management tool, and three out of four companies that we were talking to were showing off how they were embedding AI into the work that they're doing. Every company

is working hard to add components because it saves people time, makes their time more efficient, and increases the quality of their work.

We have a dream. It's called a data aggregation system. We have data in so many places. And it's great data. We keep track of where kids go on the bus, what kind of food they have, their schedule, test scores, and their grades. We have a lot of information on students. The problem is that when you have 16,000 students and all of this data in these separate systems, it is hard to aggregate that information to come up with decisions that are best for our district.

It's called a data lake, and in the long term, we hope to start to build something called a data lake where we can bring all of the data into one protected, safe space where we can query that information with artificial intelligence. It is very hard for a human being to go through 16,000 student data sets across many systems. You don't always see the connections and the different things affecting other people through the system.

What if we could ask a data system, an AI, what professional development programs yield the best improvements in student learning? It's hard sometimes when so many different people are taking PD, and so many students are doing other things in other places to see connections between them. Another question we might ask is, how can we better personalize learning for each student based on their historical information, such as all the tests they've ever taken, all the teachers they've ever had, and all the classes they've ever taken? What are the commonalities between those that show success for students? That would be extremely difficult for a human to do. It could be done very powerfully through an AI.

Mark's going to talk about the next one.

Mr. Pohlman: Hi everybody. I have the distinct pleasure of working with 23 coaches in our district, our innovation discovery specialists like Dr. Stover, and our edtech coaches at the secondary level.

When artificial intelligence and ChatGPT came into place, many people were very nervous because it was brand new. And it is still fairly new to a lot of people. We have learned the approach on our end that we don't want our heads in the sand. How do we help educate our staff so that they can have intelligent conversations with those students?

So we started about a year and a half ago or so reaching out to some of our colleagues across the state, working with our partner with Apple to come in to help train our coaches around some artificial intelligence tools that are out there and how we can leverage them with our staff members. When we kicked this off with secondary buildings, Rich and I and the edtech coaches, all went out and met with staff members at all the secondary buildings to introduce artificial intelligence and talk about some of those pros and cons that I'll get into in just a minute.

So, when we look at artificial intelligence and what it can do for our staff members, we look at how it can help improve their lives. We're providing professional development from our coaches to our staff members. However, artificial intelligence also lets people tailor their professional learning to what interests them, and they can use it to help themselves grow professionally on their time and their agenda.

Job task efficiency. So, I'm going to show you a couple of examples tonight. Helping our teachers be more efficient and effective at daily work, like creating lessons. A lot of teachers have lessons they've used for a while, but AI can help them reimagine those lessons in different ways to meet the needs of all of our

various learners. It allows them to write class letters, helping them formulate better responses to parents through family emails they want to send out. Or, some teachers are asked to write letters of recommendation for students, and they can spend quite a bit of time generating those where an AI tool can help them get started with information, and then they can flush through that and make it what they want to make it.

We talk about teaching smarter, not harder, and again, I'll show you a couple of those tools tonight just to help our teachers and the work that they do every day. The last three bullet points are about helping students. The first is helping students understand how AI works, which means we must help our teachers understand how AI works so that they can have those conversations with kids. The second bullet is helping students understand what AI is and when it is and is not appropriate for AI tools to be used. For example, for this upcoming lesson or unit, I'm okay with you using AI for X percent of your project to help get you started, to help you think about what your writing is going to look like and to help improve what you're going to be submitting later on.

The last bullet is helping students understand the writing process. This helps teachers understand that as well. It's very easy for anybody in the room to go to ChatGPT, put in a prompt, have it give you a response, copy it, paste it, turn it in, and make it look like your own. We talk to our staff members about how you, as a professional, get to know your students' voices before you introduce an AI tool. That way, when kids leverage AI, you still can hear through their revision process along the way, your checkpoints with them, that it is their voice in the work.

Next are some of the uses of AI at the classroom level. So, at the classroom level, again, we started this out with secondary. I found this graphic online. I thought it was appropriate because I like to think of tools like AI to be used for good, but we have students and others who sometimes want to use it for something that is not so good. We talked to our teachers about how to have constructive conversations with students. How do we help them leverage the tools positively to help them grow as learners? Mitigating misuse, a plagiarism thing: How do we have those conversations, train our teachers to work with students, and have those intelligent conversations along the writing path to ensure we get the student's voices in the work they submit? And then investigate integration into computer science. So we look at things like data analysis, writing code, debugging, automation, and app development as we help span out our computer science work moving forward.

At the elementary level, we do nothing with AI with students. We have just wrapped up with a team of people at the elementary level a special presentation for elementary staff around AI use at elementary. Again, we will do more PD, helping staff understand how to leverage the tools. But we're starting to investigate, and as Rich said, AI is just going so quickly. So many systems are looking to put it into their platforms. It's already starting to find its way into our kids' tools. How do we help leverage that? Also, where is the cost of letting kids have access?

Professional development for teachers on this slide. Just an overview intro for educators. Again, Rich and I went to all the secondary buildings with our edtech coaches a year and a half ago to talk with them. We've asked the elementary principals to allow the IDS folks to come in. Rich and I…*(unintelligible)…*we're invited. But also to have conversations with elementary people. What is AI? How can it benefit you more as a professional? And then making an awareness around what's coming as far as students are concerned.

Two specialized tools. Tools you may have heard of or seen one or both of those. Khanmigo is a tool we've had in our Learning Management System, Canvas, for more than 10 years already. Khanmigo is already a

tool built into the platform to help teachers do those day-to-day tasks, and some specialized things will appear more efficiently. Magic School is a heavy hitter across our district, not just at secondary but also elementary. Again, a whole suite of AI tools to help teachers be more effective in their work. We had a team put together as well. What we put on the table in front of all of you is our list, our document of guidelines to help our teachers understand where we as a district stand with artificial intelligence, some of our expectations, as well as some guardrails and best practices to help them in their use of technology where AI is concerned.

So, here are a couple of things I'll show you quickly. This is Canvas and Khanmigo. When a teacher logs into their Canvas class, all they need to do is open up one of their courses, and along the navigation system, they'll see a new option called Khanmigo. There are probably about 30 tools in Khanmigo right now that let teachers go in and utilize these tasks very quickly. I'm going to switch devices just for a second. So, I will show you the examples on the right. I will show you how a teacher can use an AI tool to help them leverage a lesson plan. Creating an outline or a very detailed lesson plan. And then also another Khanmigo…*(unintelligible)*... Sometimes, teachers struggle with how to help the content relate to third graders in the world that they live in. Or through the lens of a ninth grader, in the world they live in, the way they see our world.

This is a sample course of mine. Here are the Khanmigo teacher tools on the left-hand side. And this is what this suite of tools looks like. And again, this is just for teachers at this point. Tools that they can leverage and build. So one of the ones I want to show you is the Lesson Plan. If you look down here, it says, Create structured, detailed lesson plans tailored to your curriculum and your student's needs. I did this earlier to save us just a little bit of time.

This is a 9th-grade microbiology lesson. I entered the course description from our program of studies into the AI tool. I then added that I wanted to include two hands-on activities to help extend the learning and make a real-world connection to help them better understand the topic. Then, I chose a five-part format, which includes objectives, an introduction, instruction, a practice, and an assessment. At the bottom of this, I can choose if I want something of great detail, where the AI tool gives me tons of suggestions and targeted time amounts to give each of those for your lesson, or just give me an outline. And again, I did all this earlier today, so I won't bore you with the 32 seconds that it would probably take, if that, for this to pull it up.

This is what Khanmigo came up with today. And here's the lesson. It gives you an overview and objective, warm-up activities, direct instruction, and all of this is editable. A teacher can redo this and say, I have time for this. I want to add this activity, which I've done for years. They can modify this in any way that they want. And then, down here at the very bottom, I will show you this. It doesn't just give them definitions and a guide, but also a lesson summary, helping teachers to give them a target time frame for what they might have in class.

The other one I'll show you quickly is a Make It Relevant tool. So that was one I did today. Also, using the same 9th-grade microbiology. And in this particular one, I said, I want this lesson on microbiology to connect with kids in my 9th-grade classroom because so many of them are in the band. Who would ever try to figure that out? AI did that for me. So here, microbiome marching patterns. Who would have thought that was even a thing? Science was not my thing growing up. But here, the objective is to have students analyze and compare the growth patterns of microbiome colonies to marching band formations. I was in marching band in high school, so the thought of formations, and if you watch college bands and

their formations, it relates to microbiology very easily as far as how those formations and transitions happen over time.

So those are just two very fun learning tools. With that, I'll turn things back over to Rich.

Mr. Boettner: Mark Tremayne, Mark, and I were on a call this afternoon with the state AI adoption task force, and one of the statements made was that companies are placing hundreds if not thousands of workers in large companies in this country on this project. It's that big and that important to companies. If that's the case, it's here to stay. So, we're working very hard to make sure that our teachers understand they know how to use it constructively and they know how to teach kids to use it for positive and not for negative.

Alright, the last one. We're in the home stretch. Cybersecurity. Microsoft keeps track of cybersecurity incidences across the nation regularly, and they're always making this graph for us, which is somewhat helpful and a little bit scary at the same time. So, if you're looking at this graph, you may not be able to read the words, but the top line says education. And then all the other industries fall below that.

Unfortunately, hackers have found that schools are a target-rich environment for data, so they are doing everything they can to act against that. One of the things you may have heard in the news recently is that PowerSchool, as a company, was attacked by an incident, and many school districts across the country were affected. We do have PowerSchool tools. We do not have the PowerSchool cyst that was attacked by the hacker. Thank goodness we were not affected by that. We did participate in all of their webinars related to identifying it. But then we also took our own precautions and did a significant look into our logs, our systems, our servers, and our monitoring systems to make sure that we were safe and we were, in fact, safe.

In addition to that, as I mentioned earlier, we've increased our MFA use. This year, we are encouraging our staff to begin using something called a password manager. Nothing is worse in life than trying to keep track of the 600 passwords you have for every silly system out there. And it's hard. And so we get it that people get frustrated by that. But you probably also know I'm the first to complain and tell people to stop saving passwords in browsers. It's not safe to do. So, we finally have a solution that will allow them to save and keep some convenience in their lives while having a safe environment where they can save those things. They're encrypted, and every staff member in the district can utilize them, and so we're pushing that now.

And then our cybersecurity training, which you're very familiar with. 'cause I make you do it too, just like the staff. And then, finally, here are some of our future plans. We revise our cybersecurity plan every single year. I gave you a copy of the executive summary of that plan. We follow national standards that outline all of the requirements of things that you should be doing to protect your organization. We do all of that and plan to continue to improve, increase, and get better every day.

Finally, pen testing allows an organization like a school district to have a third-party check to ensure you are safe and can get into your systems. If they find anything, they report it to you, and then you make improvements, which we've done for about three or four years. This year, we're starting what's called internal pen testing because, normally, that starts as an external exercise outside of your network. Now, we will do it as if there was an insider threat inside our district and whether our systems are safe and protected.

So we're very excited about that. It's an interesting exercise to go through, and you see where things need improvement and growth. Thank you for your time. I appreciate it. I know it's so exciting to talk about some of this stuff. But we get pretty jazzed about some of it. Do you have any questions for us?

Mrs. Murdoch: Yeah, I know you can control what websites and apps can be downloaded on school devices. What LLMs have been white-listed to be used on school devices?

Mr. Boettner: Yeah, so large language models are the basis of an artificial intelligence system. We have reviewed about five or six. At this time, we have allowed secondary students access to ChatGPT and Canva again. Teachers can access those plus Microsoft Copilot, Google's Gemini, Khanmigo, and Magic School. We continue to evaluate, just like we do with all tools now. We are now reviewing all curriculum, special ed, and technology systems. We look at all the systems before we open them up to use in the district.

Mr. Vorst: That is a ton of information on something I know almost nothing about. Thank you, guys, for making it somewhat digestible. And I'm glad you're on top of it and finding ways to use this for good, like you mentioned. I knock on wood and ask you the question I always ask you: do you have a high degree of confidence that we're prepared in case there's some kind of backdoor attack through any of these new tools coming into our system?

Mr. Boettner: Yeah, I am very proud of our team, the district, and our staff. We make every staff member go through cybersecurity training. Eighty-five percent of all hacks start because a staff member does something they probably shouldn't. Click on something, enter their credentials somewhere they shouldn't, and stuff like that. And our staff's been really good about learning and doing those things. I'm very happy with the products and tools we're using now and what we've learned. Can we guarantee we'll never have an issue? Absolutely not. Unfortunately, there are so many threats out there, and you have to be perfect every day to protect yourself, but we have grown a lot and are doing many great things, like focusing on all of the national standards. There are a lot of places that can only handle doing what's required of them by law or by their insurance carrier. It's important to us to ensure we look at the whole set of standards.

Mrs. Crowley: Thank you guys so much. And Mark, I will need you to show me how to use that lesson planning tool. Anybody else?

Ms. Arnold: I just wanted to say thank you. I appreciate this. Brian and I attended a seminar on this topic at OSBA in November. It was a law workshop. So it also covered that aspect of student data and their privacy, as well as making sure that they're not inputting that information while you're creating some of this generative product. You're creating something personalized for your student but at the same time staying within the bounds of the law. I had to grab my notes because one thing that stood out when the lawyer spoke about this was how some of the Ohio courts have standing orders against the use of generative AI. So, it's important for our students to know exactly when they can use it because, at some points, it's even against the law based on what some of these courts have determined. Thank you guys so much.

Mr. Perry: Actually, I have a quick follow-up as well. That's exactly what I thought of when I thought of this, too. But I remember when I was in college, we used to have professors running plagiarism checks. There's a certain percentage, like you mentioned. A certain percentage can be used within an AI, and we'll do a plagiarism check for already generated language that came out of a service or something to that effect. However, the issue with AI is that it's generated organically. There isn't a way to my understanding

of maintenance to do that. That's the question. What services will we be using to know if a student is using it over the required percentage and whatnot?

Mr. Pohlman: We will keep a close eye on what continues to come out to help us look at AI and its use with our students. Again, we tell our teachers there's no silver bullet out there. You can't just take a student's work, put it in AI, and say, okay, tell me how much AI was used for this because you don't know if it's true or not. So we, again, emphasize to our teachers that you need to get to know your students' voices. That means maybe doing something without technology early in the semester to get to know how they write as a writer and how they think. And then have those periodic check-ins with them. Don't just say, here's the prompt, here's the unit; turn this in two weeks. I'm going to meet with you every other day. I want to see the revisions on your work. If you use Google, let's talk about the revisions. How did the AI tool help you? And where did you leverage it? And then also, how did you research the data that the AI gave you? Even though you're using AI, and it's getting information for you, how do you know that's real, legitimate information? So, we will keep talking about that process and keep our ears open to see what else is coming up that will help us.

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 January 2025 Treasurer's Report.

C4 The Board of Education approved the minutes from the following meetings:
   a. January 13, 2025, Organizational Meeting
   b. January 13, 2025, Organizational Notes
   c. January 13, 2025, Regular Meeting
   d. January 13, 2025, Regular Notes
   e. January 27, 2025, Work Session Meeting
   f. January 27, 2025, Work Session 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.

<u>Karen Brunner</u>
My name is Karen Brunner, and I have been a taxpayer in the Hilliard area for over 30 years. And I've never had any children that have gone through the school. I never had any kids. And so my tax money has been helping others go to school. This last school levy was rough with the increases because they increased significantly along with the county's increase the prior year.

And what I want to know is where has all of our tax money been going? I know there's an accountability process and everything and maybe this is discussed at some other board meetings. This is the first meeting I've ever been to. I would like to know. Where is all of this money going? We have more and more people moving into the area. The tax basis is insane. So that's my one concern.

The second concern is everything I've been hearing about Davidson in the last few weeks. It's very alarming to me, and I don't have children, and if I did, I would be afraid to send them to that school. As a principal, and as a vice principal, it is their job to ensure that the children at the school are being educated, and that the teachers and the children are in a safe environment. I don't feel that's happening at that school. This shows that some people aren't doing their jobs, and I feel an investigation needs to be done. Maybe that's ongoing already, I don't know. But, I feel that if people aren't doing their jobs, and protecting the people that are at that school, they need to be replaced.

I've been seeing with some of the children who are posting on social media, and it breaks my heart like I can't imagine having to go to school and face violence every day. That harms children in many ways, especially psychologically, and a lot of times you can't get over that. They're afraid, and they need to be protected.

There's no excuse why the kids starting fights and threatening violence, bullying others, etc., are still allowed to be in that school. It sounds like a lot of these things are brushed under the carpet. And again, I'm not involved with the situations. I don't know what's happening. But I'm seeing it on social media, and hopefully, what I'm reading is true. These children that are causing this violence, they need expelled. They shouldn't be in that school.

I don't know, and I apologize, I've been; I went to 16 years of Catholic school, so I'm not sure how public schools work exactly. But we used to have a school, like if you got kicked out of the Catholic school, you went to public school. If you got kicked out of public school, you went somewhere else. Now, this is many years ago, but I would imagine…*(timer beeped)…*Okay, I just feel that something needs to be done to protect these children. Thank you.

<u>Debbie Cochran</u>
Hi, I'm Debbie Cochran, and I've lived in Hilliard for over 30 years. I would first like to say thank you for hearing me today. It is important, more than ever, that you, as our superintendent, treasurer, and elected school board members, stand up and support all students, regardless of race, gender, or socioeconomic status. You are appreciated, and I thank you for your service.

I'm here today to ask Hilliard schools to join the hundreds of public school districts across the state that are part of the Vouchers Hurt Ohio Coalition that is challenging the constitutionality of the private school voucher program. A dollar more for private school vouchers is a dollar less in state funding for Hilliard because the money for vouchers comes from the same line item in the state budget as state dollars for our district.

This year, the state is expected to spend more than one billion dollars on vouchers. We support our schools, we pass our levies, but there will be more financial pressure for more and more tax levies as the state shifts the burden of paying for local schools to local homeowners and businesses. This is unconstitutional, and it is not fair.

Hilliard Schools is not losing students to the voucher program. Most students who are taking advantage of this money have never attended Hilliard Schools. Yet, they are valued at a higher rate than students attending our public schools. Please reference Hilliard's financial details in my email I sent earlier this week.

Vouchers Hurt Ohio has sued on five accounts. I will sum them up quickly because they are important. Number one, vouchers created a separate and unequal system of schools. One for the haves and one for the have nots. The Ohio Constitution is clear. One system of common schools open to all children for the common good. Number two, over reliance on property taxes. I think we had our point made there. Number three. Voucher school operators discriminate. They have a litmus test for admission, like family finances, race, academics, disabilities, genders, and more. Public schools like Hilliard open their doors to all children. Number four, the Ohio Constitution and our framers were crystal clear. No tax dollars for religious schools. Number five, when Vouchers Hurt Ohio wins the lawsuit, the state will no longer be able to fund private school vouchers.

State lawmakers are destroying the public school system. We need you, the board members, our superintendent, and our treasurer to stand up for students, families, and taxpayers. Please consider joining the lawsuit. It means so much to all of us. Thank you.

Sarah Byler
Hi, my name is Sarah Byler. I have a 4th grader and an 8th grader in the district. And I am a long-time board meeting attendee. This is my first time speaking. I'd like to tell you that fights happen in school. Violence is never acceptable. Full stop. However, today's fights are amplified by the accessibility to phones with cameras and social media. Fights were happening when I was in school. Fights were happening when you all were in school. No matter which district you attended.

I'm grateful for the close working relationship that Hilliard City Schools has with the Hilliard Police Department. They respond and act quickly to violence. I trust our law enforcement to hold the violent offenders accountable. I'm also grateful for violence protection efforts that are put into place by the district. You can't prevent all violence. But giving our students tools for expressing their emotions in a positive way and strategies for comfort resolution is the best prevention. Our counselors and social workers are actively doing the work every day.

Social and emotional intelligence is the key to fostering peace and healthy relationships. Social-emotional learning is happening in our morning meetings at the elementary level, where students like my fourth grader get to share about being upset that his beloved chief's lost. While learning to accept the elation of another kid that says, finally, the chief's lost. Both express valid emotions and with respect and empathy by talking face to face. Conversations like this enforces the dignity of each student. When you lead your students in this way, violence is less likely to occur. There are many other examples of this. Morning meetings are my favorite.

Unfortunately, the recent behavior by some in our community is not aiding in the silence prevention. It is the height of hypocrisy to call our students out about violence while bullying people online as adults. Listing names, addresses, and phone numbers of minors on Facebook. This principal and her family attend our schools, are active in our community, and live here. Claiming to trust insiders at our schools over the Hilliard Police Department. Blaming diversity, equity, and inclusion for violence. Stating that there has been 300 police runs to our schools this year. But leaving out the context that every time a school

resource officer checks in at a school for duty, or even someone is pulled over in a school zone, that is considered a police call.

And lastly, a city council member stoking the fears of outrage and fear by contacting news organizations to get headlines and clicks. All of these actions stoke fear, outrage, and anger in our community instead of encouraging peace and community collaboration to prevent violence. I am grateful…*(timer beeped)…*

LaToya Spetnagel
Good evening; my name is LaToya. I have two students at Davidson High School. So when a community call is made to speak to the violence there, I feel like I should come speak. I don't understand where people who don't have children in our school, Davidson, are commenting on it. And why we're making it so hateful.

When comments are made that say there are gangs in our schools and they're all racially motivated, that's just not true. When community people are saying that the administration doesn't want to punish any child who is not white, that is not true. The statistics at Hilliard show that children of color are suspended at a higher number of days per incident than any white child.

I've talked to my children. I've talked to my children's friends. My kids are not afraid to go to school because of gangs. My kids are not afraid to go to school because of fights. I have girls. They like to gossip. If there were dangerous fights going on at Davidson, I promise you, I would know. What I can tell you my kids are afraid of is House Bill 8 that just got passed because their friends will no longer be safe and their friends will be outed.

Please, community, stop spreading the hate. These are the people, spreading these, saying things like this on social media is what's creating the racial divide in our community. And we're, I'm here to say. My kids are here to stay. People that look like me are here to stay. But we're no longer going to sit back and let you attack our kids and say things like, Illegal kids are taking away from the legal kids.

No one other than who is punishing the kids knows what the punishment is because FERPA said you cannot give that information out. What I can tell you is, no one knows the immigration status of any of the students in the school, except those people that are supposed to know. So stop spreading false information. Thank you.

Dawn Larsen
Hello, my name is Dawn Larsen, and I have been the proud parent of two Darby grads and a current freshman at Bradley. I'm also here to address the fighting that's happening at school.

I graduated more than 30 years ago from a really little tiny school in northwest Ohio. I graduated with 60 kids. It was a public school, and we were a big class. While I was there, I remember a fight between two girls that ended up with an ambulance being called. I remember a boy attacking a teacher. I remember several fights with boys. I'm gonna ask: did anyone that attended public school not see a fight while they were in high school? Hm. Because it happened back then.

The difference is there weren't cell phones, and there wasn't social media. Violence is not right, ever. Hard stop just like Sarah said. But the reality is that hundreds of students, lots of hormones, lack of impulse control will continue as will fights. We can work to reduce violence, and should. The biggest difference, again, is social media and cell phones.

One-room schoolhouse has had fights just like Darby, Davidson, and Bradley do. Let's be honest, though. This incident wasn't on the news to try and create a solution. It was on the news to rile people up and get a small, very vocal group of people something to use against our schools and school board.

What this is really about, and what needs to stop, is a failed school board campaign posting minors' names and race-baiting on social media. She blames DEI. My school was about as homogenous as you could get. We had one student of color. That was K-12. One student of color. Guess what? Still had fights. She is very anti-levy and has repeatedly said that. So, she's using this incident to try and get people upset.

What also needs to stop is City Councilman Les Carrier going to the media versus working through our administration. Keep in mind that Mr. Carrier represents less than 40 percent of our students. Remember, the majority of Hilliard isn't in Hilliard proper as far as our students are concerned. He has also repeatedly stated he's against the levy. Stop and think for a minute. A man who was very comfortable calling those that live in apartments peasants and working against fully funding our schools has the best interest of our students in mind. I don't think so. More like he's concerned about his seat and trying to save Hilliard 3.0.

As a parent, I am absolutely concerned with school safety. And I realize I can only do so much. So much like the speaker before me, I actually choose to speak to my child versus going on Facebook. I talk to her and much like the prior speaker, she also likes to gossip. Trust me, I know when there are fights. They've been happening forever, and she in no way feels unsafe going to school. She loves her schools, and she loves her teachers…*(timer beeped)…*On that note, I did wanna give a final thanks to our teachers and our admins because you guys are who protect our students, and it is appreciated, even though you often aren't told.

E.   CONSENT AGENDA

The Board of Education approved the consent agenda, items E1 through E3. 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   Approved the following trip requests:
a.   Bradley Varsity Softball, Ontario/Ashland, OH – April 18, 2025

Mr. Perry congratulated and thanked the following retirees for their service:

Certified Personnel Retirements:
- Carrie Duckworth has been with Hilliard City Schools since 08/24/1992.
- Jennifer Feeney has been with Hilliard City Schools since 08/31/2001.
- Kevin Feeney has been with Hilliard City Schools since 08/29/1996.
- Heather Marshall has been with Hilliard City Schools since 08/16/2017.
- Janet Monseur-Durr has been with Hilliard City Schools since 08/25/1995.
- Angelia Schmidt has been with Hilliard City Schools since 08/24/1992.

- Steven Starner has been with Hilliard City Schools since 08/24/1992.
- Bruce Stephanic has been with Hilliard City Schools since 08/24/1992.
- Tammy Stephanic has been with Hilliard City Schools since 08/31/1990.

Classified Personnel Retirements:
- Sheree Balogh has been with Hilliard City Schools since 08/18/2020.
- Jonathan Hatch has been with Hilliard City Schools since 07/18/1994.
- Louise Joyce has been with Hilliard City Schools since 10/16/2000.
- Carla Smith has been with Hilliard City Schools since 09/24/1987.

F.   ACTION AGENDA

F1   No action items tonight.

G.   REPORTS / INFORMATION / EXHIBIT ITEM

G1   Committee Reports

Ms. Arnold: Just facilities, our next meeting will be in April, and hopefully, we'll have some more reporting on some of the items that have happened or will be coming up, hopefully over the summer construction projects. And the big news, which I'm sure everyone has seen, is we've selected our construction manager at risk, Ruscilli Construction, to get started on our fabulous master facilities project.

Mrs. Crowley: Alright, I will go ahead and go next. I have a…*(unintelligible)…*report. The ISPTO meeting was canceled in January due to the weather. Our next meeting is on February 8th at Bradley High School. Alex Beekman will be speaking about managing behaviors from elementary to high school. The ISPTO is also still collecting donations until tomorrow, February 11th, for conference night at the ILC and the Hub. I checked their sign-up sheet, and they still have some openings if you want to donate some Diet Coke or string cheese. I'm sure they can use the help. They do have two drop-off locations for that, and if anybody's interested, I'd be happy to send you the signup.

I also had superintendent's advisory committee. There were questions about conferences, money for consumables, substitutes, class sizes, and professional development geared toward EL support materials for Wit and Wisdom. The minutes for that will be sent out probably later this week.

Then my last committee, which is an exciting one, is my curriculum committee. I met with Jill and Mark and learned about a culminating lifestyle and future readiness expo happening here in Hilliard in May, including all Hilliard 8th graders. It aligns with our college career workforce and military readiness and falls under our career connections framework. The framework for K-5 brings career awareness. 6 through 8 is the exploration piece, and 9 through 12 is the planning and doing phase. So this focuses on the 6 through 8 exploration phase.

So they introduced me to a website, which I've been obsessed with every night for the last two weeks. It's called Find Your Grind. It was developed by some skateboarders. What I loved about it is…I'm going to read their little expo and I'll tell you a little bit about it. It says: "Find Your Grind delivers future ready learning experiences that empower administrators and educators to support students in navigating the future of work and develop the skills and confidence to thrive in a rapidly changing world."

So, what students technically do is go through an experience instead of answering the question: what do they want to do when they grow up? It helps them answer the question of what type of lifestyle they want. It gears them more towards a lifestyle choice first, and their strength second, and then what careers would be good for them. It helps them, a lot of students if you ask them what they want to be when they grow up. It's a very anxiety-prone question. A lot of students don't know. They don't know what careers are available to them. So, they go through this program, and it helps them identify their strengths.

Personally, I was a connector, an explorer, and a leader. They get bracelets to match those skills, and they can find other students with similar skills to them to make connections between different students, or they can find students with different colored bracelets. And say, oh, we're doing a project, and we really need a connector, and I see that your bracelet matches that and that you could be good to bring in. And so it's just a very immersive experience, and it builds connections and helps students develop their strengths, helps them see what those strengths are, and then guides them towards careers versus just saying, what do you want to be when you grow up?

I think it's going to be an amazing expo. I'm super excited about bringing this into Hilliard. I love that they have that lifestyle focus since many students will not just choose one career and stay in that for the rest of their lives, but it will give them many different career choices throughout their lives as they make choices.

Sorry, that was a lot, but I was really excited. I could go on and on. If you want to hear more, ask me about it after the meeting. And I can show you my app, too.

Mr. Perry: I'm just going to talk about the Policy Committee. I feel like I've just had a golden retriever describe a tennis ball. I don't know how that happened. So, we had our Policy Committee, and really nothing terrible happened. It's mostly just updates to the language in the OCRC. A very short meeting. You can see the policies for a first reading in a few minutes.

G2   Policies submitted for a first reading
   a.   AFC-2 (Also GCN-2) – Evaluation of Professional and Certificated Staff
   b.   BDC – Executive Session
   c.   GCB-2-R – Professional and Certificated Staff Contracts and Compensation Plans
   d.   IGBI – English Learners
   e.   IKEB-R – Acceleration
   f.   IKF-Graduation Requirements
   g.   JHCC – Communicable Diseases

Mr. Stewart: As Brian pointed out, we have a list of policies for a first reading. This is for notification only. They'll be back on for a second reading at the next meeting.

H.   EXECUTIVE SESSION / ADJOURNMENT

H1   At 7:41 p.m., the Board of Education caucused to executive session:
   a.   preparing for, conducting, or reviewing negotiations or bargaining sessions with public employees concerning their compensation or other terms and conditions of their employment.
   b.   to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion or compensation of a public employee or official.