



FACILITIES COMMITTEE

Mike McDonough, Deputy Superintendent
Thursday, September 7, 2023, 3:00 PM, Central Office

HILLIARD CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT

Committee Members

Brian Perry, Board of Education
Zach Vorst, Board of Education
Mike McDonough, Deputy Superintendent
Mark Dudgeon, Chief Operating Officer
Rich Boettner, Chief Technology Officer

Derek Farwick, Accountant
Mark Tremayne, Director Innovation & Extended Learning
Matt Middleton, Principal Hilliard Darby High School
Cort Hamilton, Assistant Principal Hilliard Bradley High School
Matthew Sparks, Principal Beacon Elementary

MINUTES

3:00 PM – 3:15 PM Visit Ridgewood Elementary

3:30 PM – Meeting at Central Office

1. Summer '23 Recap

Mike McDonough shared the Summer 2023 Operations document and Mark Dudgeon gave a recap of the projects that were completed.

Hoffman Trails paving was a big capital project. The new chiller we did at Darby High School was a big project. In addition to our capital projects, 810,000 square feet of floors got waxed, 900,000 square feet of carpet extraction and we ended up either paving or sealing 500,000 square feet of parking lots.

We renovated our gym floors and put our new scoreboards in. That was about 35,000 square feet of floors. About 16,000 square feet of new carpet went in and 1,800 cubic yards of playground mulch went down. We changed a little over 7,500 bulbs throughout the district and 300 light ballasts. Not necessarily project related, but our facilities team distributed 100,000 new textbooks around the district to support new curriculum.

Our HVAC team tore down and rebuilt numerous pumps and motors in different mechanical systems around the district as well.

2. Master Facilities Plan Update

We had Steering Committee meeting #4 Wednesday night as a continuation of Phase 2 of our Master Facilities Plan. The first three meetings occurred in the previous school year. There are several new faces on the committee. We had approximately 45 people in attendance.

Mike shared the MFP website and explained that anything we reference as part of that steering committee as well as the smaller group that is an internal group is housed on the website. The middle column will have all of our various presentations from the meetings whether they have been in this meeting particularly or a steering committee meeting or what is basically our cabinet team. Last night's presentation is at the bottom of that middle column. A lot of the data and reference materials that we reference is housed on the right. We will be updating one of these pieces of information here very soon. The facility data sheets will have a little more information later this week or early next week. That will go on the right-hand side and we will make sure we update that

with the date. Any enrollment projections, student potential analysis, facility data sheets, anything we reference as part of the committee, we will soon put the educational adequacy results up there.

Next week we have a two-day work session with our cabinet team and a couple of volunteers from the committee that volunteered last night. One of which is a student. We are excited to have a student be a part of that group next week.

We will be going through a lot of the data, whether it is demographic data which would include the enrollment projections, the development of information we have on record, the educational adequacy, the facility condition. We will be talking about each and every facility within the district. When I say each and every facility, I mean anything from transportation to our school buildings. We will be brainstorming different things that we want to do. I think the biggest challenge, and I referenced this last night, the biggest challenge for that group is going to be how we marry that educational adequacy information alongside the condition. Certainly, those are two very different scores but the art of this process is going to be how we marry those together to make some informed decisions on what we need to do with some of our facilities and create a road map for the future.

After that two-day work session, we will be bringing the steering committee back. We actually bring the steering committee back twice in October. The task of that group will be to vet some of that information that we have created internally and create a community input or community survey. We will send all of this information out to our community at the end of October to get their perspective and their thoughts on the various options that we come up with. We will continue to refine those throughout the process, ultimately leading with some recommendations and some findings to present to our larger Board in late February, early March of 2024.

At that point in time, it will be the Board's task to kind of prioritize some of the things. Certainly, we will have some priorities as part of those recommendations but ultimately, what the Board decides to do with that in terms of a potential bond or levy campaign will be commencing at that time.

I just wanted to give a brief update. Again, all of the data is here. If you have questions, don't hesitate to reach out to myself or to Mark.

Mr. Vorst asked if there is any guidance on direction or preliminary conclusions? Mike explained that Phase 1 ended abruptly in March of 2020. The things that rose to the top at that time were the expansion of all-day kindergarten, the expansion of the preschool, which we did, but probably the next two things that were rising to the top was taking off some of our older elementary buildings. We had some internal conversations around which buildings those may be. How we may be able to, if we could build on those sites, do we need to acquire new land? The other conversation is around the sixth-grade model. One, if it is something we want to continue with but then do we need to start looking at three sixth grades to have that true feeder pattern? Those are from a building as a whole, those are probably the things that rose to the top last time. Certainly, there's other projects that came out of that. Safety and security; Mark and I had a lot of conversations around secure vestibules in buildings. We want to very much make that part of whatever bond or levy campaign that could potentially be out there. Safety and security is one that always resonates and it is one that we are constantly evaluating. We had a meeting today about cameras and access control. It is one that is always on the forefront of our planning and that was heard loud and clear last night in some of the survey results from the survey that we had given to the community.

Mr. Vorst asked if there were any take homes from the educational adequacy study that we didn't

expect? Mike said we are still at the infancy of getting our arms around what all of that educational adequacy means. One of the fascinating things for me was the nine buildings we have that are over the age of fifty are the ones that have the poorest educational adequacy and it makes sense. When I look at an elementary like Beacon, where we are looking at roughly 45,000 square feet, you compare that to Washington, it's hard to be able to do the same things that we can do at Washington as we would do at Beacon.

The things that we need to deliver from a curriculum standpoint have changed so much and I think that educational adequacy highlights some of the things that we knew. Certainly, when you point to our visit today, special education spaces, we were dinged pretty hard in the educational adequacy around that. If you look at some of our older buildings, they weren't designed to have some of those spaces.

We are continuing to peel that onion to see what else we need to do but space is the biggest thing and it's not space for students per se, in terms of capacity in our buildings. It is more of how we want our students to be able to maneuver and work within the building. We have enough capacity in the district to continue to grow. It is the unique spaces, the collaborative spaces that we aren't in abundance of.

3. Playground Update

Mark explained that we brought in an outside firm to go through the district and assess our playgrounds. It is no secret that there's lots of needs with regards to playgrounds.

Just some facts and figures around playgrounds before we go too deep. We have sixteen total playgrounds. The average area size of our playgrounds is 15,000 to 18,000 square feet not counting our asphalt. For comparison, one acre is approximately the size of a football field. One acre is 43,560 square feet. The average size of our playgrounds at 15,000 to 18,000 square feet, we are one third of an acre generally, on the size of our playgrounds. It is a lot of space. The majority of our playgrounds are fifteen to twenty years old. We have a lot of playgrounds that are twenty-five to thirty years old. The average life expectancy of today's playground equipment is twenty years. The average cost of a full playground, not counting perimeters, not counting asphalt and things like that, is around \$140,000 to \$160,000 for a full play unit.

We brought a company in for planning purposes and to help us understand where we need to go with our dollars over the next several years and to understand where our needs are. We brought in a company to go through all our playgrounds and assess all our playgrounds and give us back a report that shows us where the urgent needs are and show us where we are fairing a little bit better. In doing that assessment, obviously they are looking at it through the lenses of safety, average age of the playgrounds, ADA accessibility, the civil aspect, the drainage and overall functionality of the space. We are expecting to have that report back sometime this week. We will use this as a tool to figure out how we want to move forward with allocating dollars and also use it as a tool for our principals as they are having conversations with their PTOs and different members of the community. Our playgrounds get used a ton by our community.

What we have found in conversation with the company that is doing the assessment for us is in some cases we have two, three and even four different manufacturers of equipment represented on one playground. This makes it really difficult to maintain as these playgrounds get older. It makes it difficult for us to get parts and for us to do repairs. We have had to take pieces out of commission in different places and block pieces off. We are really looking forward to seeing this information

because it is going to highlight for us, or help answer questions we had. It is going to help us paint a picture of really what the true need is.

One thing that came early on from this was us deciding to do the work at Darby Creek. We had a drainage issue there for many, many years. The playground company basically pointed out to us that we don't necessarily have a drainage issue, we have a mulch issue. That's why ten days before the start of school we realized we could get that done. We took a chance and obviously the chance paid off for us and now we have twenty thousand usable square feet of space that kiddos can be on the day after a rain whereas previously it was taking five to seven days before they could get on that playground. That is just the result of mulch after mulch after mulch which we do each summer. We got that all cleared out; 1,500 cubic yards of old mulch we cleared out and got the new mulch put down. In that case, it was an easy fix. It was a lot of work but when we are talking about \$100,000 to \$150,000 of investment needed for new equipment, getting that mulch out of there to get that space usable was the easy fix for us.

Mr. Perry asked how we are looking to prioritize playgrounds...inaudible...any order in particular that we will go by? Mark said without seeing what the ranking is, obviously it is about dollars and figuring out how we are going to allocate dollars. There are opportunities to partner with PTOs in some cases. Other cases, an opportunity doesn't exist. We haven't come to the table yet to decide what that is going to be. Most likely, this information is going to feed into the master facilities planning group, especially as we get to the options sessions over the next week or two. We will bring that information to the table so the group can disseminate all of that and use it in part of their decision making.

Mr. Perry asked how much PTOs are investing in playgrounds versus how much we are investing? Walk me through briefly how that partnership works. Is it per school? Mike explained that for years, you can put playgrounds in this bucket, you can put performing arts in this bucket, you can put athletics in this bucket. There are some pockets of our district that just, whether, athletic budgets don't have capital dollars in them. When we are trying to keep up with roofs, paving, transportation, those types of things, we don't have dollars set aside for those.

One of the things I think needs to really be the focus of, or a component of the master facilities planning process is what additional PI dollars could we gain through a potential reduction in millage and no new millage. What potential dollars could we gain to now have a little bit more? We are very fortunate to have five million dollars, but if we have more, we can now say X amount of dollars every year is going to playgrounds, X amount of dollars is going to capital improvements in our performing arts areas and our athletic areas.

We have leaned heavily on PTOs as long as I have been in this district to do the playgrounds. We have had some success here in the last several years with some minor partnerships. That is what we have with Amazon. We are working through that process. Aramark has stepped up to provide funding. They can't fund an entire playground but they are able to help support them.

We very much are in the mindset that we want to partner with PTOs and partner with buildings. I will tell you the number one deciding factor on any of this stuff is going to be through the lens of safety. There has been equipment taken out this year based upon the results of that analysis for safety reasons. Going back through and working with those buildings and those PTOs to replace those are going to be probably the first pass that we do.

The full-scale playground, as Mark mentioned, I think might be on the low end. I think what we did

at the preschool was closer to \$400,000. Obviously, the surface is much different there but I feel no different than a roofing schedule, a paving schedule, a busing schedule, we need to work playgrounds into an annual, we can't do sixteen at once but can we do three at a time? Or can we do parts of three at a time? Those are the conversations that we are having as we get a little further into this MFP, what kind of dollars are available?

Mr. Perry said when we talk about these partnerships, I think it is phenomenal. Our community...inaudible...

Mr. Vorst asked if you wanted to do a playground at each school, what is the median we could get from a PTO? Is ten percent a huge number? Mike said the last example of a fully funded PTO project he could provide, and this just goes to show you how much more playground equipment is now. At Brown Elementary, it was right before COVID, they did the equipment for their playground for ~~\$5,200~~ \$52,000. (corrected 9/22/2023)

Matt Sparks shared that at Beacon in 2019, they put in one piece of equipment that they had saved fifteen years for. It can provide entertainment for nine kids at a time. That was \$24,000.

Mike said our goal would be, as we work through the results of this analysis, we need to have a, no different than carpet or paint or flooring, or anything in a building, have a district standard. If a PTO wants to go above and beyond that to add a special piece of equipment here and there, I think we would partner with PTOs on how that would work. We need to get our arms around what is safe and what is not safe.

4. Safety Update

Mark Dudgeon shared that we have School Safe ID rolled out at five locations in the district. We have one here (Central Office), Beacon, Darby, the HUB, and Weaver.

Rich Boettner said that since school has started, those buildings have actively been getting visitors. We were getting many questions for the first few days but since then it has been pretty much crickets. Everyone is reporting that it is going well with no big issues coming up. As Matt pointed out at the last meeting, it is really great having that badge on the visitors so you know anybody in the building who isn't somebody you know, you can see that they have been in the office and have been checked.

Some stats, we have had about 1200 visitors in those five buildings over the last month. 800 of those visitors were at Central Office for enrollment in the Welcome Center. It's busy season, every time he walks by the Welcome Center it is crazy busy. Elementary, middle and the HUB are all between 50 and 80 people. Darby is about double that with about 160.

Mark said in addition to School Safe ID, just a couple other safety items to update the group on. Cameras, we are in the process right now of planning our camera project for FY24. The way we are going about that is basically, we sent an all call to all of the principals asking them to provide feedback to us on any camera needs they thought they needed. This doesn't mean we will be able to accommodate all of those requests.

The first pass we are looking at is our playgrounds. We have some disparity across our elementary schools with regards to camera coverage on our playgrounds. So first and foremost, we want to make sure we address those blind spots on those playgrounds, where those are at and kind of level set from school to school on those playgrounds. Next, we will be evaluating the requests case by

case across all the locations to make sure if we have a camera in proximity maybe we can rotate or move a camera a little bit to accommodate that. Like Mike said, Mike, Rich and I and some others met today with our primary safety and security contractor. We realized we have some other needs. We have some hard drives that are ready for upgrade. We have some NVR's that are ready for upgrade. We have some server conversations we need to have as well, to make sure the bones of the system are where they need to be. Some of the equipment is starting to age out and like playground equipment, it is not cheap. While we are looking at the camera improvements that need to happen, we also have to factor in those other costs that we might have to accommodate or make provisions for.

The other thing, we did a night lock project a year or two ago where we put the locking mechanisms on the schools. We are going to be launching round two of that project. The first time we just did a first pass with classrooms and maybe some other spaces. This next pass, we will be going to our principals and asking them for their needs as far as night locks, making sure we are level across all the buildings and ensure we have enough.

5. Transportation Update

Mark gave a brief update on some transportation related things. Just going to tough base on where we are currently with our drivers and also give a status update on our electric buses.

On our electric buses, those buses have all been deployed. Those buses are all on routes. Three of the buses are running a Heritage Middle School, a Station bus and each of them are running an elementary school, respectively, as well. One of the buses is running the Watterson and Wellington route. Generally speaking, we have two buses that are running about 70 to 75 miles a day and we have two buses that are running about 82 to 85 miles a day. We have received outstanding feedback from the drivers. The students all love them as well. In addition to the feedback we received from the drivers and from the students, we have also been contacted several times from different organizations around the state about wanting to use our buses but we can't accommodate. They wanted to put one of our buses on display at the Ohio State Fair because I had reached out about wanting to use one of our buses for one of their events. The word is getting out. We are trying to accommodate as many of those things as we can but obviously, having them on dedicated routes makes it really hard to use them as shuttles or other things and still comply with the law. So far, we have had some challenges we have had to address, mostly from the manufacturer with some of the lights and some of the technology on the buses. The manufacturer has been really responsive to those needs.

As far as drivers go, we started the year one driver, basically one driver short. Since that time though, we have had one driver retire with no notice, we have another driver retiring at the end of this month. We have an aide that has retired.

We have eleven substitute bus drivers on staff right now. A few of those bus drivers have other jobs. Three of them are actually custodians within the district and drive in the afternoons. With the driver shortage, we have four open routes but we have been able to cover those routes with our office staff. Our transportation staff has been driving every day.

Good news is we have hired in the last two weeks, we have hired two City of Columbus drivers. I think we will be extending an offer to a third City of Columbus driver tomorrow. Those drivers will be starting on 9/18 and 9/25. If we make an offer tomorrow, we will be able to get that driver in two more weeks. The advantage to those drivers is they are already licensed so we have drivers in the seats right away. We have four other drivers in training right now, looking to be licensed in the next

thirty to sixty days. We have nine applicants also in the portal that are in the process of getting their temporary licenses which means they can start training right away as well. The little bump in the road right now, looks to be short term. It's not long-term major driver shortage. We have a really good backlog in the portal that hopefully we can get in the seats in the next couple of months. Once they have been hired, it means they have already had their fingerprints, they have already had their BCI background check and it means they have already had, we have to do a driver abstract with BMV basically make sure they are eligible to be a commercial driver. Once those things all check out, we extend the offer and they are basically hired. As they go through the training process there is a certain number of hours of training they have to do before they can take their permit test. In the meantime, we are bringing them on as aides so they are still earning some income. Once they have satisfied all of the training requirements, they go take their licensing test. To have nine of those is a really big improvement.

Mr. Vorst asked what is the fallout rate for folks in that situation? Mark said he did not have that data point on hand but could certainly get it. We are getting better. Towards the end of last school year that number was pretty high. We have tweaked some processes internally so we can keep them maintained. We are also doing some continuous outreach to stay connected with them while they are working through that process. We have also made our trainers more readily available to accommodate whatever schedules these folks may have.

Mr. Vorst asked if we got all nine of these drivers through, how many more drivers would we need to feel comfortable? Mike said he would like to have twenty more. We have approval for ten route specialists, basically full-time substitutes, if we could get to where we have that fully staffed, he would feel really good.

Mike said Mark and Angelo have totally revamped the hiring process. We now pay for everything in the process, where in the past we were putting that on the individual applicant and that was turning them away. Bringing them on as an aide certainly keeps them engaged and staying in constant communication are all things they have tried to change in that process.

Mr. Perry asked what he should do if someone were to come to him wanting to be a driver? Mike and Mark said to send them here. We will have someone sit down with them to complete the application.

Mr. Vorst asked if we were four and holding on the electric buses? Any plans to expand that fleet? Mark explained that there is another grant cycle coming around. There are so many grant opportunities coming, if we can leverage those opportunities to offset dollars, it is a better buy for us. One electric bus, if you buy it off the street is \$330,000-\$340,000. The four that we have, we were able to offset the purchase price with grant dollars and we were able to buy those for \$120,000 which is the same price you can buy a diesel bus for. It makes sense to do it that way. We are watching for those opportunities to come around. AEP will probably be coming around with another towards the end of this year beginning of next year. That is who helped fund these. It is something we are looking at.

We are also looking at reintroducing the nine passenger transit vans back into the fleet. The new House Bill 33 made provisions for different uses of those vans that weren't there before. We are anticipating some grant opportunities coming available for electric transit vans as well so we will certainly look for that.

Mr. Perry asked what is the overall cost savings for the electric buses? Mike said it is probably a little

early from an ROI perspective. Mark said the nice thing about our setup is AEP set a dedicated meter for those charging stations. Like Mike said, we haven't gotten enough billing cycles under us to see what the electric cost is but with the dedicated meter we will be able to pull the electric usage for that meter and look at the numbers that way.

6. Preliminary Summer '24 Projects

Mike said one of the big ones is the carryover of the Ridgewood HVAC piece. Mark had a meeting yesterday with contractors about getting an order in sooner than later because there is still significant lead time on the equipment. The other big one he would highlight is the Tharp parking lot. From there, obviously there is still a lot of internal conversations going on. Certainly, we will continue to work through the five-year plan that is part of the budget document. Some of the smaller projects, we are still having conversations around.

7. Next Meeting

Our next meeting is scheduled for 3:00pm on Tuesday, December 12, 2023.