



## BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING

June 9, 2025 | Administration Building

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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 6:30 p.m.
- A2 Members present: Ms. Arnold, Mrs. Crowley, Mrs. Murdoch, Mr. Perry, and Mr. Vorst.
- A3 Pledge of Allegiance

**NOTE:** *Portions of the meeting's audio recording were difficult to decipher; therefore, this document may contain several incomplete sentences or inaccuracies. Additionally, some of the participants' names may be misspelled.*

### B. PROGRAMS / PRESENTATIONS

- B1 Embrace, Empower, Inspire Award Winner: Stephanie Hafner

*Mr. Stewart:* We have one Embrace, Empower, and Inspire Award winner with us tonight, Stephanie Hafner. Rich Boettner and Lauren Barkdull are here to introduce you to her.

*Mr. Boettner:* Alright, good evening. We are very excited to share with you this month's Embrace, Empower, and Inspire Award winner. Her name is Stephanie Hafner. Stephanie goes above and beyond for the staff and students at Horizon. She plans experiences for our students that they might not otherwise have. For example, there is a planned construction project on the road near our school that's starting soon. Stephanie reached out to the city planner to see if our students could somehow be involved in the process, where they could learn about construction. Because of her reaching out, they are planning a way for students to safely participate in this process, and they have been doing so for a couple of months now. She truly cares about the well-being and academic progress of our students, and I can think of no one more deserving of the Embrace, Empower, Inspire award. She works around the clock to plan experiences and lessons in the IDC for our students. So congratulations, Stephanie,

*Mr. Stewart:* Lauren, I'm going to put you on the spot. Do you want to say a couple of words about her?

*Ms. Barkdull:* I can't say enough about Stephanie. She does so much for our whole school community, and she's always working behind the scenes. There's always something in the works for her to share with our students, and she brings a great deal to our school community. We're just so thankful for her.

- B2 Construction Update

*Mr. Stewart:* Alright, shifting gears a little bit, we're going to shift to construction, and we've got Jen Fuller from Fanning Howey, and Mike Mancini from Ruscilli Construction.

*Mr. McDonough:* On the agenda later tonight, we are recommending that you approve the schematic design proposal so that we can keep things rolling. As Dave said, we've got Jen Fuller from Fanning Howey. She's our project executive from the architecture side, and we've got Mike Mancini from Ruscilli

Construction here tonight. Essentially, as you saw on the board update that I sent over the weekend, there are multiple phases in this process. Beginning with the selection of who our partners are going to be. We're very fortunate to have Fanning Howey and Ruscille Construction with us.

Then we begin with the conceptual design. During this phase, we're brainstorming everything that can be incorporated into the building, as well as the various designs and layouts we envision, which will inevitably require some adjustments as we transition from conceptual design. That's what phase we just completed with the schematic design, and part of that process included a lot of value engineering. Still, it also involved removing some square footage and modifying some of the original systems, as outlined in the dream list, and then paring it down to better align with the budgets we had estimated as part of our master facilities plan.

Assuming everything goes well tonight, we will then proceed to design development and be prepared to establish a guaranteed maximum, the top dollar that we would pay for the building as it moves into construction. This is a critical portion of the phase. We thought it would be beneficial to show you some of the site layouts, building floor plans, and site elevations. So I'm going to turn it over to Jen and Mike, and they can discuss some of these points.

*Mr. Vorst:* Since the picture is up, where's the entrance on Walker Road?

*Mr. McDonough:* That's a great question, Zach. So, as of about two o'clock today, we finally got that decision from Franklin County. It will be a four-way intersection with Morris Road. We will build part of that road, probably up to approximately here. And then we will have a driveway into our building. This will be the actual roadway coming in, which was critical for several reasons. One, we knew that we would have to partner with the City of Hilliard to build a portion of that road. Two, that helps determine where we split the lot that we're purchasing from that landowner. So, we can now begin the process of finalizing that purchase agreement. And then that triggers a whole host of other things with annexation. So, again, another critical piece that just happened today. That's where you see this property line that will be the road where it's coming in. As I said, I'm going to turn over to Jen and Mike. We're certainly happy to answer any questions as we go through this presentation. They're the experts on all this good stuff here.

*Ms. Fuller:* I'm starting with the new Brown Elementary at Walker Road. We have been working on all the projects 'cause we're looking at the three elementary schools as prototypes, which will be very helpful. When we look at training staff, when we can use the same systems, same materials, and different things like that across the district of your size and multiple buildings, we want to make sure we're consistent and that you have the best efficiencies down the road and for the long term of the projects. So, we'll talk about Brown today, but a lot of that effort and thought applies to the other ones.

So here on this site, we now finally know where the road is going to come off of Morris Road. We're still looking at the property here and what it can do for us. We're in the Big Darby, so we're going to have some stormwater needs that are different here than they are elsewhere. We've been working with the City on that and what the Big Darby Accord will do for us. Everyone has been great to talk to during these initial conversations, but now that we've identified the direction, we can establish the property lines where they need to be. Then we can begin the annexation process. The traffic study was integral to this. We had to work with Franklin County through that as well. Everyone has been great to coordinate with and discuss the process.

We're familiar with Bradley and Memorial, so we want to ensure we're mindful and plan thoughtfully for the long term.

*Ms. Arnold:* A couple of questions on the site. I noticed that we've the dotted gray line words conceptualized, or is that still fluid now that we know we're coming in from Morris Road?

*Ms. Fuller:* Yeah, it still kind of swoops. Currently, the ultimate goal of the city of Hilliard is to connect Morris to Muir Parkway. So Muir Park isn't exactly in line, so we have to swoop up. So that ultimately can be a connection whenever that happens down the road. That's not what we're doing. That's what their plan is. So that's why we need to follow that strange line to our drive.

*Ms. Arnold:* And the other piece was the drainage. I'm assuming that the current placement of stormwater here is due to the other stormwater basin across the way.

*Ms. Fuller:* Yes.

*Ms. Arnold:* Is there any chance of movement in that at all? I'm looking at that as, in a sense, with it being so close to the building, it's wasted space in terms of when I think of things like field days or times when we want extra space there. And with that basin being so far up there, is there any chance of movement, or are we hemmed in?

*Ms. Fuller:* No, this is some initial thoughts. We have submitted to planning and zoning, so we don't have to finalize our drainage solution now. We have to have an idea of what that might be. We've got a couple of different concepts that we can walk through with them. We have a larger amount to deal with because it's in the Big Darby. We could split that up a couple of different ways, too. Currently, the site drains to that corner, which makes it a little more natural to do so. We can also make those a little deeper and hold more, so they're not as wide, but they still contain the same amount. We can look at some of that stuff. Now that we have some of that input, we can take it back and see what else we can offer you in other areas of the site where you can host field days and let kids run around. If you look closer at this, behind the building is where we've got the playground. So, we might want to share some things where we can, so kids can run off of that instead of running into a pond.

*Ms. Arnold:* Ponds are always challenging. Don

*Ms. Fuller:* I don't know if you've walked the Memorial site at all. We've got some areas that collect water, but they're dry most of the time. So the intent isn't that this is wet all the time, but it has been wet for the last two weeks now. So I get that.

*Ms. Arnold:* So the goal is a dry detention basin?

*Ms. Fuller:* Yeah, as best we can. We'll have to process the water, and so that has to hold for a time. And once we initiate the annexation process, we'll be permitted as a conditional use within the city. And so then we still have to work with the Big Darby on what that looks like. They do give us a little break for being a public entity, which is nice. Therefore, we don't have to collect as much as we would for a different type of building or property, but we still have to manage it. So, I'll gain a little more insight as we go through that process, but that's valuable feedback that we can take back to the team and see what we can do to increase the amount of green space.

*Mr. Perry:* As we talked about extending this, the city, too, but make sure we're having the conversations with them, extending out into Muir Parkway. I know that there are bike paths and walking paths nearby, where the school will eventually end up. Are there discussions about extending that to have a walking option?

*Ms. Fuller:* Yes. The city's ultimate goal is to make all of that walkable and bikeable, so no one has to walk/ride down Walker and Roberts Roads. Their goal is to have everything connect. I think it's going to take some time because right now, it doesn't make sense for the school district to build the road or bike path to nowhere. So we're going to have to find some balance in there. But that is definitely the goal.

For the building, we're looking at a two-story solution. And it started with a two-story being the thought at Beacon and Ridgewood because those sites are so much smaller. We're unable to create a sprawling one-story structure like your current prototypes. So we looked at a two-story. We examined this in a one-story building and then thought, if we're going to create a prototype and capitalize on those efficiencies, allowing contractors to replicate them, then let's consider a two-story building approach everywhere.

The goal was to set this up similar to those elementary schools now, where on the left side of the page is dedicated to public functions, entry, admin space, the gym, and student dining, and then on the right side, we would have the academic space. The brown colors are kindergarten classrooms, and the light orange ones are standard classrooms. And we were separating that too, thinking about compartmentalizing, having doors that could lock things off for after-hours security. We will work with your SRO and the Hilliard Police to ensure that these are set up for security and the best way to handle any emergency in a lockdown situation. These will, based on student counts, have three stairways to access the second floor. We've got the group restrooms. You can probably see where those are located in the public space and the academic area.

As Mike was saying regarding the schematic design, we started with a big wish list of sorts. Then reality set in, and we considered the needs and how they aligned with the budget. There are still many extra spaces in these buildings that serve your community that your existing elementary schools don't have. So, we wanted to build off of that. And then, again, with reality setting in, we're like, we feel really good about the square footage. We feel good about efficiencies, which means we can move into design development and hit the ground running. We've also collaborated with your staff on various systems, including roofing, flooring materials, building materials, exterior brick, mechanical systems, and fire alarms, to ensure they're consistent with other systems in the district, so there's no training over and over for a different system in a different building. Mike Mancini might be able to talk about this a little, too. Depending on when this goes out to bid, we may try to look for efficiencies and purchasing for two or three buildings at the same time. Again, that would ensure we have the same type of system. We're going to install the same thing everywhere. We'll know more as we progress, but right now, the goal is to keep those in mind with each other. I don't know if you have any questions on the first floor.

*Mr. McDonough:* Couple of things that I want to point out. I know we've discussed some of this in the past, but we began with Washington as our basis for design. As Jen said, similar to how we approached Memorial, we wanted to create a public portion of the building and an academic portion so we can lock things down. The public can utilize the facilities to which they have access, unlike our cookie-cutter elementaries, which have academic wings on both sides. We added square footage to this. Those seven elementary schools, similar to Washington, are all approximately 60,000 square feet. This came in at, I think we're at 70,000 or something like that right now. We had crept up to 75,000 at one point, and shaved quite a bit off. To put that in perspective, Beacon and Ridgewood are currently like 45,000 square

feet, so it's still 25,000 square feet larger than their current facility. These buildings have four dedicated kindergarten classrooms, whereas those cookie-cutter buildings have two. These have dedicated special education spaces that our other elementary buildings may not have, as they often lack the types of rooms and spaces that some of our special education units require. There are 24 regular classrooms in those cookie-cutter buildings and 26 regular classrooms in this new design. So, even for additional services, whether it be EL or some other special needs services, we have extra space in these compared to some of those other elementary schools.

We're excited about the design. We've involved our special education department, curriculum department, and building principals to get the voice of all parties. We've had even fine arts and some of our elective staff in the room to discuss these issues.

*Ms. Fuller:* We have a media center, art, music, and gym space. We've added a maker space to this, too. It will be tied to the art room and media center. I think some buildings have spaces like that, some don't. We thought that was a great thing to bring to all elementary schools. That's the public space located across from the student dining area. So we'll be able to compartmentalize this and let people be free in the building, but not too free.

The second floor is nothing too exciting here—mostly classrooms. We also have an interior mechanical space. So we won't have rooftop units or anything like that, which will help maintain the longevity of those systems.

And then some elevations. So, the intent, I guess, what started for us was with the Brown building near Memorial and Bradley. We wanted to ensure it looks like a campus, a Hilliard building that was of nice quality. It was brick. We had the banding. You can start to see that the banding aligns with the other new builds that are out that way. We talked about what do we do at Beacon? What do we do at Ridgewood? It's a prototype, but this is what a Hillard building looks like to all of us. It looks like the Weavers, the Davidsons, and everything original on those builds. So, we wanted to keep that theme going.

We did want to update it a little bit. So, the entrance on this isn't that peak that the elementary schools have, which are very distinctive. We went with a squared-off design because we're located near Memorial and Bradley. As you can see at the bottom, the 3D image is a little better. We wanted to keep a little bit of a canopy. It probably looks a lot more like Memorial than any of the elementary schools. And again, that being a two-story is why that does. We have large windows in the classrooms that are more energy-efficient and meet current building codes. There's more insulation in the walls. The glass is more energy-efficient. It's not top of the line because we had the budget for it, but that's what we need to do code-wise, and it just makes sense to keep those buildings efficient.

We're not trying to obtain a certification for LEED or anything similar, but we want to ensure that the buildings are healthy and last a long time, and that everyone in the building stays healthy as well. So I know past builds, the sixties and seventies, aren't the same as they are now. So, we want to be mindful of that.

Do you have any questions about the exterior, how things look, or any other questions regarding the site plan?

*Ms. Arnold:* Now that we know our intersection and have the traffic study back, is a signal warranted?

*Ms. Fuller:* No. Nothing is coming off Walker, either turn lane-wise. Everything that happens is going to be up near our end of Muir Parkway. I don't know if we're gonna call it that, what we're calling it. But everything we are doing is off that road, so we won't interfere with anything along Walker, which is nice. And we're working with the team on how we connect to the rest of your property. Probably not drivable, but someone should be able to get back and forth for maintenance purposes and other things like that. But nothing to elaborate, I think, traffic-wise. So that's good traffic.

*Ms. Arnold:* Not having a traffic signal saves us money.

*Ms. Fuller:* It saves everybody. And the headache, too, because Franklin County has said, for a 15-minute activity, it might not make sense. Now, as this area grows, who knows what that means, but right now we don't. So we'll take that.

Anything on elevations or the design? And we'll be here at DD, and DD will be a great point to say we've further developed these systems. We know what the market is going to tell us a little bit, too. That might be a point to consider early in the procurement process once we have some designs in place. I don't want to make any promises on that yet. I know Mike's going to promise it later. I think that as we develop things further, gain more knowledge, and can see what the market dictates, we'll continue to move forward and have better answers. It's exciting for us. We've been working with you guys for a little while here, so I hope you're excited too.

I'm going to hand over to Mike Mancini for some costing conversations.

*Mr. McDonough:* So, just to set the stage here, when we initially started to engage with Mike, as I mentioned, we were probably at about 75,000 square feet, and Mike was pressing on us, Do we need all that square footage? And I said What is the problem here? And when you hear some of the cost per square foot, I quickly understood why he was on this. He's a taxpayer, so he wants the building to be done on the budget as well. I would say that, given some of the value engineering measures we took, along with reducing the square footage, we probably shaved close to \$10 million. We did a lot of work to bring this building into line with our original forecast, and we even feel pretty good, given all the uncertainty surrounding some of the issues, such as tariffs, at present. So I'll let Mike talk a little bit, and I'm sure you'll have some questions. Feel free to ask any questions you have as we go.

*Mr. Mancini:* We're at a high level looking at the schematic design, obviously the documents are much further along, but you can view it as a napkin sketch. We always use a funnel metaphor. We want to start broad; we want to start conservative. As the design is refined, we provide even more detail and hone in on that number. And so the space process is very iterative.

Now, the goal of any exercise in providing a price for your buildings is never to diminish the learning facility for the faculty, staff, and students. So, a lot of things that we're looking at when we're talking about value engineering are more efficient. When we're looking at square footage, it's about ensuring that we're still providing the classrooms, the extended learning, and all those areas that you need to function successfully as a district. However, Jen and our respective teams also need to hold each other accountable. And I don't like being a dream killer, but I need to ensure that we're designing within the budget and that we're tracking our progress along the way. Because it's not just one project, right? We've got three prototype elementary schools and a Norwich edition. And so there's a lot built into this program.

At a very high level, when we review schematic design, anytime Ruscilli presents an estimate to your team, we itemize both design contingency and escalation. And those adjust based on the details of the process. You will have a higher design contingency and escalation at schematic design, as we don't necessarily have all systems fully identified. We're a lot farther along than where we typically would be in schematic design. We already have that kind of efficiency established.

When examining how we're compiling this number, we have a 4% design contingency and a 4% escalation. And that's carried within the numbers. And it's in the resolution that we're looking to approve tonight. It's a safeguard we've developed through experience on previous K-12 programs with various districts. How do we safeguard the budget as we navigate the design process to make sure that we're not going backwards, right? We want to start at a point where this is our baseline. And then look at the efficiencies of how we can improve that.

I'm not sure how granular you want to get. I think the only other item I'll add is what Jen alluded to regarding Hilliard's actions. As a taxpayer, I appreciate the opportunity to review a prototype for these three buildings, as there may be numerous efficiencies that we are not currently aware of at this point in time. However, we're trying to consider the market when we go to market with subcontractors, because three projects are much more lucrative to a subcontractor who can take on that work as is one job. And so, there are many opportunities for Ruscilli and our team to leverage those relationships and explore combination bids from certain subcontractors, local subcontractors, or others who can take on two of the three or all three, and examine the resulting efficiencies. So when we look at bulk purchasing, whether it's flooring, various building materials, I think that once we go through the bid process that's where we'll be able to start putting some tangible, benefit to all the hard work that's been done to right size three prototypes on the various sites.

*Mr. McDonough:* Should mention that Jen is also a taxpayer, and both of them have worked on previous projects for us. They're a great team.

#### **C. ROUTINES**

- C1 The agenda is correct with late-breaking action items.
- C2 The Board of Education adopted the agenda with late-breaking action items.
- C3 The Board of Education approved the May 2025 Treasurer's Report.

*Mr. Vorst:* You got anything?

*Mrs. Swearingen:* Everything is tracking well. We talked about the forecast last month. We have an appropriation amendment on the agenda for fiscal year 25—the final amendment for the year, which updates it to match the forecast. So you'll see that reflected in the June report.

- C4 The Board of Education approved the minutes from the following meetings:
  - a. May 12, 2025, Regular Meeting
  - b. May 12, 2025, Regular 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.

##### Maxine Irvin

Hello everyone, and thank you for listening to me. My name is Maxine Irvin, and I'm the parent of two graduates of Hilliard Davidson High School. This once-great country, the United States of America, is shutting down. Once a desirable destination for the oppressed, it is now being shunned by the world. Once a desirable destination for scientists. Now, scientists are being sought by different countries, and they will soon leave the United States if they haven't already. Once a desired destination for tourists. That great stream of people has dried up for fear of being locked up in concentration camps. Once the envy of the world for our public education, we now search outside of Ohio and the US to find institutions that can provide quality education, which will soon not be available in Ohio.

This is a concerted attack against public education that has been ongoing for years, but now public education is being systematically dismantled by both the federal and state governments. We are being attacked on all sides. With money being sent to private schools for the rich and public schools being defunded, our representatives are ignoring us while doing the bidding of the Republicans rather than the people they represent. Moms for Liberty, a group that bans books among other freedoms, recently endorsed two candidates who won school board seats in the Southwestern City School District.

We, the people who know better, can still save the public school districts from destruction and save our children from the ignorance that is espoused by the repressive regime. It means we need to stand up where we can to preserve our schools against the continued war against education, even as I am supporting the Senate Bill One referendum to prevent the destruction of higher education in Ohio. You, as school board members, also have the ability to help save K through 12 by having Hilliard City Schools join the Vouchers Hurt Ohio lawsuit. I'm sure you're aware of how the state of Ohio is ignoring the Fair School Funding Act, and instead, they are sending our tax dollars to support private, mostly religious schools and shortchanging our public school students due to the voucher programs.

If you are paying attention to what is happening in this country right now, time and again, when the powers that are circumventing the law, the courts have stood up for what is legal and right. If you give the powers that be an inch, they will try to take more. Just look at the legislation being introduced to destroy quality public education. They will not stop the destruction until they have an unconstitutional two-tiered education system, one for the wealthy and a second for everyone else.

Joining the Vouchers Hurt Ohio lawsuit is how we can fight to keep our tax dollars supporting public education instead of private schools for the rich. It is past time when Hillard should join the lawsuit. Thank you.



Cindy Rieman

Hi, I'm Cindy Rieman, and I am deeply invested in Hilliard and Hilliard's education. When I moved here, my oldest daughter was almost ready to start kindergarten, which she did at Beacon. Then we redistricted, she moved to Ridgewood, and she got an excellent education. I also became a teacher here in Hilliard, and I taught here since 1990. I'm now retired, and I can tell you how all the teachers I've ever worked with are very hard workers.

This is really concerning, this voucher thing that we are sending our public money to private schools. I understand with Hilliard, it hasn't impacted us maybe as much as some other people, because the people that are getting these vouchers now already have their kids in private schools and parochial schools. When the voucher system first started, it was supposed to be for children in need in schools that were not doing their job. While Hilliard Schools, in my opinion, have always done their job.

I now have one grandson who is in first grade and another who will be going into school soon. I don't want to see programs cut because they don't have enough money to do these extras. As Maxine mentioned with the Ohio State legislation, it seems like every time you turn around they change something with the public school funding. I don't know how you can begin to even plan for five years out when they might change their mind in another two years. I really feel if every school district in Ohio got on board suing them over this voucher, they would say we better listen to the people for a change. So, I hope that you will consider doing that. Thank you.

Debbie Cochran

Hi everybody. I'm Debbie Cochran. Thank you for listening to me today. It's more important than ever, as Maxine has stated, that you, as our superintendent, Melissa, as our treasurer, and our elected school board members stand up and support all of our students regardless of their race, gender, or socioeconomic status. You're appreciated, and I really do thank you for your service.

I would first like to express my appreciation for your support and positive influence through the teacher negotiation process these past several months. I understand it has been a difficult journey. Your upcoming Yes, vote for approving a tentative agreement resolution later in this meeting is an important step to rebuilding and sustaining the positive team relationships that make Hilliard Schools such a special, inclusive, and successful learning environment for our students.

I also understand there are many uncertainties within the current state budget proposal, as well as the federal budget bill, that could negatively impact Hilliard's fiscal outlook over the next couple of years. That uncertainty makes it even more important that you, as our leaders and protectors of public school systems, take steps to restore funding that is being diverted from our students through the EdChoice Private School Voucher program.

By joining the Vouchers Hurt Ohio lawsuit, you are standing up for our students, who are being devalued and represented as less than students attending private schools. The voucher program does not hold any institution accountable for the success of their students, nor is there any accountability for the spending of our tax dollars in the EdChoice program.

Hilliard Schools is losing over \$4.5 million this year to students using vouchers and not attending our schools. Joining the lawsuit will cost Hilliard Schools less than 0.01% of our annual budget. Our Hilliard community, which has supported you and loves our schools, as I know you do, deserves your action on vouchers for Ohio. Thank you.

## **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 2024/2025 and 2025/2026 school years: Approved a rate of \$175 per day for staff participating in Title I Expanding Opportunities and/or Title II-A Professional Learning activities.
- E4 Approved the following trip requests:
  - a. Davidson Boys Soccer, Winston-Salem, NC – July 25, 2025
  - b. Davidson Boys Varsity Basketball, Sandusky, OH – June 23, 2025
  - c. Bradley Girls Basketball, Sandusky, OH – June 12, 2025
  - d. Darby Wrestling, Sandusky, OH – July 9, 2025

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

### Certified Personnel Retirements:

- Richard Boettner has been with Hilliard City Schools since 08/27/1999.
- Mary Fisher has been with Hilliard City Schools since 08/28/1997.
- Melinda Mordarski has been with Hilliard City Schools since 08/29/1994.
- Lori Rausch has been with Hilliard City Schools since 08/29/1996.
- Thad Ricker has been with Hilliard City Schools since 08/20/1993.
- John Santagata has been with Hilliard City Schools since 08/25/2003.

### Classified Personnel Retirements:

- Linda Boyle has been with Hilliard City Schools since 09/07/1989.
- Linda Sowers has been with Hilliard City Schools since 01/24/1989.

## **F. ACTION AGENDA**

- F1 The Board of Education approved the following resolution:

APPROVING SCHEMATIC DESIGN STAGE SUBMISSIONS AND AUTHORIZING THE DESIGN PROFESSIONAL TO PROCEED WITH THE DESIGN DEVELOPMENT PHASE FOR THE WALKER ROAD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SCOPE OF THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT – PHASE I

The Chief Operating Officer (“COO”) recommends the Board approve the design and corresponding estimate for the schematic design phase of Walker Road Elementary School scope (the “Walker Road

Scope”) of the Capital Improvements Project – Phase I (the “Project”) and authorize the design professional to proceed with the design development phase for the Walker Road Scope.

Rationale:

1. The Board’s Design Professional, Fanning Howey, prepared the schematic design stage drawings and specifications for the Walker Road Scope Project.
2. Ruscilli Construction Company, LLC, the Construction Manager at Risk for the Project, (“Ruscilli”), reviewed the documents prepared by Fanning Howey, provided comments, and prepared corresponding estimates for the construction costs.
3. Representatives from the District then met with Fanning Howey and Ruscilli to review the design stage submission documents and estimates for the Walker Road Scope of the Project, performed necessary value engineering, and confirmed that the design aligns with the intent for the Project and the estimates align with the budget sufficiently for this stage of the Project.
4. The COO recommends approval of the schematic design stage submission documents prepared by Fanning Howey and Ruscilli, and recommends authorizing Fanning Howey and Ruscilli to proceed with the design development stage for the Walker Road Scope of the Project.

The Board of Education resolves as follows:

1. The schematic design stage drawings and specifications prepared by Fanning Howey are approved for the Walker Road Scope of the Project.
2. The schematic design stage estimate for the Walker Road Scope of the Project prepared by Ruscilli is approved.
3. Fanning Howey and Ruscilli are authorized to proceed to the design development stage for the Walker Road Scope of the Project.

- F2 The Board of Education approved the tentative agreement between the Board of Education and the Hilliard Educational Association effective July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2028.

*Mr. Vorst:* So, I want to add a thank you to our negotiating team. I know you put in a lot of time, effort, and hours trying to make this work, and it wasn't easy. A big thank you for all the time you put in. I think we all heard suggestions that we weren't necessarily supportive of some of our team members, and I'm glad to show that was not the case, that we were on the side of our team members the whole time. And I think we're going to show that today. I am excited about the bonding time that was added. I think that's a great thing. As many of us know, when you have a newborn or newly adopted child, having that extra time to spend with them is invaluable. So I'm glad you were able to get that in.

*Mrs. Crowley:* I just wanted to say thank you, like Zach said, to both the board's negotiating team as well as the HEA negotiations team. I know, as a teacher myself, that things in the world of education feel a little tumultuous right now. I hope this gives our teachers and educators a sense of security and comfort during this time. I'm happy to approve this.

*Mr. Perry:* Thank you to the team that was there. We worked long nights, and we truly appreciate the work that everyone put in there. I'm excited about the resolution that we came to, not just for our education staff, but also for the community as a whole. I believe this benefits the community at large, extending beyond the broader perspective. That's what we're doing. We're a team. We represent not just

our staff, but also the community itself. And I think this benefits everyone involved. So very happy about it.

F3 The Board of Education approved the following resolution:

**AUTHORIZING CONTRACT WITH ACCENT COMMUNICATION SERVICES, INC. FOR THE MITEL TELECOMMUNICATION SYSTEM REPLACEMENT PROJECT**

The Chief Operating Officer (“COO”) recommends that the Board authorize an agreement with Accent Communication Services, Inc. (“Accent”) for the Mitel Telecommunication System Replacement Project (“Project”).

Rationale:

1. The District has identified a need to replace the current Mitel telecommunication system that is supporting the District’s twenty-seven buildings for inbound and outbound calling with the community at large.
2. Procurement of the Project is not subject to the bidding requirements in R.C. 3313.46, as the procurement is for furniture, fixtures, and equipment.
3. Pursuant to Board policy, the COO attempted to solicit price quotations from at least three vendors by engaging with Telecommunications Technologies Group to request proposals for the Project.
4. Accent provided a proposal for the Project in the amount of \$603,135.50, which consists of a one-time lump sum amount of \$558,537.50 and an annually recurring charge of \$44,598.00, which is subject to annual appropriation by the Board in accordance with R.C. 5705.41.
5. Based on procurement experience, the COO believes Accent’s proposal to be reasonable and of an appropriately competitive nature and requests authority for the COO and Treasurer to negotiate and execute an agreement with Accent in the amount of \$603,135.50 (“Contract Sum”).

The Board of Education resolves as follows:

Based on the information provided, the Board authorizes the COO and Treasurer, working with legal counsel, to negotiate and execute an agreement with Accent in an amount not to exceed the Contract Sum, and to execute any other documents necessary to effectuate the intent of this resolution. Any annually recurring charges will be subject to annual appropriation by the Board in accordance with R.C. 5705.41.

*Mr. Dudgeon:* The resolution you have in front of you replaces the district's current phone system. We have approximately 2,000 phones, and the system we have now is nearing 15 years old. A new system will enable us to stay current with the latest technology and safety features. We're planning to integrate this and bring it online this summer. In partnership with the technology team, we vetted several companies. This was a competitive selection process, facilitated by a third-party consultant who guided us through the process.

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, 2026 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:

<b>Fund</b>	<b>Appropriation</b>
001 - GENERAL FUND	\$259,238,661
002 - BOND RETIREMENT	\$25,176,500
003 - PERMANENT IMPROVEMENT	\$5,957,000
004 - BUILDING FUND	\$100,000,000
006 - FOOD SERVICE	\$8,107,000
007 - SPECIAL TRUST	\$100,158
011 - ROTARY – SPECIAL SERVICES	\$3,748,554
018 - PUBLIC SCHOOL SUPPORT	\$563,960
019 - OTHER GRANT	\$208,310
024 - MEDICAL BENEFITS – SELF-INSURANCE	\$53,200,000
200 - STUDENT MANAGED STUDENT ACTIVITY	\$600,000
300 - DISTRICT MANAGED STUDENT ACTIVITY	\$1,440,160
401 - AUXILLIARY SERVICES	\$1,348,000
499 - MISC STATE GRANT	\$32,000
509 - 21 <sup>ST</sup> CENTURY GRANT	\$112,758
516 - TITLE VI – B IDEA	\$4,048,800
536 - TITLE I – SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	\$164,925
551 - LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY	\$291,000
572 - TITLE I	\$2,930,000
584 - TITLE IV-A	\$176,000
587 - EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION GRANT	\$87,900
590 - TITLE II-A TEACHER QUALITY	\$528,000
<b>TOTAL ALL FUNDS</b>	<b>\$468,059,686</b>

F5 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      \$259,238,661

F6 The Board of Education approved the following resolution:

ESTABLISHING A TERMINATION BENEFITS FUND (USAS 035) FOR THE PURPOSE OF PAYING TERMINATION BENEFITS OR PAYING SALARIES WHEN THE NUMBER OF PAY PERIODS EXCEEDS THE USUSAL AND CUSTOMARY FOR A YEAR; AND AUTHORIZING TRANSFERS TO THE FUND

(Ohio Revised Code Section 5705.13)

WHEREAS, pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 5705.13(B), the board of education of a school district may establish a termination benefits fund for the purpose of paying termination benefits of its officers or employees or paying salaries when the number of pay periods exceeds the usual and customary for a year;

WHEREAS, the Board desires to establish and maintain a termination benefits fund for the purpose of paying termination benefits of its officers or employees or paying salaries when the number of pay periods exceeds the usual and customary for a year;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Education of the Hilliard City School District, Franklin County, Ohio, that:

Section 1. The Board hereby establishes a termination benefits fund (the “Termination Benefits Fund”) to be used for the purpose of paying termination benefits of its officers or employees upon future termination or retirement or paying salaries when the number of pay periods exceeds the usual and customary for a year (within the meaning of Ohio Revised Code Section 5705.13(B)).

Section 2. The Termination Benefits Fund shall be funded by transfers of School District funds for such payments. The Board hereby authorizes an initial transfer of up to \$5,500,000 from the General Fund to the Termination Benefits Fund. Additional transfers of other amounts from such funds and sources as the Board may determine from time to time may be approved by the Board by separate resolutions.

Section 3. It is hereby found and determined that all formal actions of this Board concerning and relating to the passage of this Resolution were taken in an open meeting of this Board, and that all deliberations of this Board and of any of its committees that resulted in such formal action were in meetings open to the public in compliance with all legal requirements, including Ohio Revised Code Section 121.22.

Mr. Vorst: Would you guys be able to interpret for everybody? This is not something that we see.

*Mrs. Swearingen:* This is an option that we've always had. We've just elected not to use it. We typically make all our severance payments, which are essentially accrued sick leave, paid at the rate specified in the contract. We've just made that payment out of the general fund. With the pending cap legislation on the general fund, we felt that it was important to have this option in place. If that cap were to take effect at 30%, it would impact us. These are obligations that we must pay out of our general fund. It would be based on the number of individuals who have 30 years of experience, are eligible to retire at the end of the year, and whose severance had not yet been paid out. So we don't necessarily know exactly what that number will be yet. There is paperwork that needs to be submitted in order for us to process those severance payments. So, this gives us the ability to make that transfer. We would only use this fund if the cap language were to take effect. Otherwise, since we haven't done it in the past, if we don't have to, it will skew our forecast moving forward. Taking those funds out and putting them in another fund will no longer provide an apples-to-apples comparison. We simply want the flexibility to do this if needed.

*Mrs. Murdoch:* Thank you for thinking ahead and preparing for that.

*Mrs. Swearingen:* No problem, and we would not be the only ones who have this. Several districts have been using it for years, while others have made this move in recent weeks and months.

*Mrs. Crowley:* Thank you so much for being proactive.

F7 The Board of Education adopted the following policies:

- a. BCE – Board Committees
- b. BD – School Board Meetings
- c. DECA – Administration of Federal Grant Funds
- d. DID – Capital Assets
- e. DJF – Purchasing/Payment Procedures
- f. DJF-R – Purchasing/Payment Procedures
- g. EDE – Computer/Online Services
- h. GBH (Also JM) – Staff-Student Relations
- i. IGAH/IGAI – Family Life Education/Sex Education
- j. IGBA – Programs for Students with Disabilities
- k. IGBLA – Promoting Parental Involvement (New Policy)
- l. IGCH-R (Also LEC-R) – College Credit Plus
- m. IJ – Guidance Program
- n. JECBB – Interdistrict Open Enrollment
- o. JEFB – Released Time for Religious Instruction
- p. JFCK – Use of Electronic Communications Equipment by Students
- q. JGE – Student Expulsion
- r. JHC – Student Health Services and Requirements
- s. JHCA – Physical Examinations of Students
- t. JHCD – Administering Medicines to Students
- u. JHCD-R – Administering Medicines to Students
- v. JHF – Student Safety
- w. JHG – Reporting Child Abuse and Mandatory Safety Training
- x. KBA – Public’s Right to Know

*Mr. Vorst:* I've had a lot of discussions with people around town for probably the past year about the cell phone policy, and a lot of times it's just people shooting from the hip. Saying, Oh, kids are on their phones all day. We need to quit that. And I see the connection and distraction that kids have with cell phones with my kids. I've spoken with many people, including a former Bradley High School principal who shall remain nameless, about their perceptions of this issue, as well as some others around town. Do you feel like this is the right policy? Do you wish that it were more strict? Do you wish that it were less strict? What challenges do you see with enforcement? What are your overall thoughts as we embark on a new policy with respect to students and cell phones?

*Mr. Stewart:* As I told you, I think that this threads the needle as best as we possibly can. Trying to go more restrictive is unreasonable in terms of enforcement. If you think about, for example, a high school cafeteria, what it looks like at lunchtime, and trying to put a requirement that we monitor that nobody's on a cell phone during that period of time, it's just not reasonable. This policy protects the time it's intended to protect, which is academic time, while acknowledging that cell phones are how we communicate today. And many of our parents expect to have the ability to communicate with their students at some point throughout the day. That may be different from when we were all in school, but that is a reality today. So, I think this threads the needle quite appropriately.

**G. REPORTS / INFORMATION / EXHIBIT ITEM**

**G1 Committee Reports**

*Ms. Arnold:* I took the tour of Hilliard with Hilary and her team last week. It was a great experience. The first stop was at Noor for some information about Noor itself and Islam. We split up into five different groups. And the first group, or the first stop, was a resource center of some sort. Our group went to the Muslim Family Services. I can tell you it wasn't just me, but I know several teachers in the group also had the same experience. It's one thing to hear about some of these services and resources on paper or in an email – I know, as an area commissioner, I see a lot of this as well – but to actually be able to go there and talk to people and understand exactly what they do and what kind of services they offer was very helpful.

After that, each group visited a grocery store. We went to Cam International, one of my favorites, and then lunch at a restaurant, followed by a treat cafe kind of thing. There is such a great diversity in our community, and everybody can take advantage of it and experience those resources. And then we came back to Hillard United Methodist, where there was some information from the food pantry folks. And then Dr. Hassan led a debrief of what we all experienced that day. So it was a great session. Really appreciative of Hilary and her team putting that together.

*Mr. Perry:* We have our policy committee coming up on Thursday at three o'clock.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION / ADJOURNMENT**

**H1 At 7:22 p.m., the Board of Education entered an 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.

*Mr. Stewart:* I do not anticipate any business after the executive session.