



# MEETING NOTES

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

1. The meeting called to order at 6:31 p.m.
2. Members present: Mrs. Crowley, Mrs. Long, Mrs. Murdoch, Mr. Perry, and Mr. Vorst (via Zoom)
3. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag
4. The Board of Education approved the following resolution:

## **RESOLUTION SUSPENDING POLICY BD-SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS**

**WHEREAS**, The Ohio General Assembly enacted H. B. 51 and the law became effective on February 17, 2022;

**WHEREAS**, H. B. 51 allows a public body, including a board of education, to temporarily meet remotely until June 30, 2022;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, the Hilliard City Schools District Board of Education hereby temporarily suspends **the last sentence of** the policy BD-School Board Meetings and **the second to last** sentence in policy BDDF.

5. The Board of Education adopted the agenda as presented.
6. School Safety Efforts – Mike McDonough, Deputy Superintendent

Mr. McDonough stated he would provide information on our School Resource Officers (SROs) and safety grants. We have had SROs at each of our high schools for several years. A couple of years ago, we implemented a fourth SRO that served our middle school buildings and a part-time reserve officer covering our elementary, sixth-grade, and Innovative Learning Campus. When revising our SRO contract with the Hilliard Police Department a few years ago, we committed to adding two more SROs which began this school year. We now have six SROs – one at each middle school and high school. We also have an HPD liaison for the rest of our school buildings. The liaison checks in regularly with their assigned schools.

In addition to the SRO program, we have a Joint Safety Task Force, including staff from the school district, Hilliard Police Department, and Norwich Township Fire Department. We have been meeting quarterly for the past several years. We have safety plans for each building that require us to do different types of training annually and over a three-year cycle. In the three-year cycle, we must do a full-scale drill, a table-top exercise, and a functional exercise. As part of this three-year cycle, we are preparing for a full-scale drill this coming fall. Some of you may remember we held our first full-scale drill at Darby High School a few years ago. With the help of the Hilliard Police Department and Norwich Township Fire Department, we had an active shooter response simulation. Our drill this fall will not be this elaborate. We are planning some safety training for staff related to the safety grants we are receiving. Norwich Township Fire will also provide additional bleeding control training for staff. Even

though we offer this training each year to all new staff, it has been a couple of years since all staff has gone through it. The Norwich Township Fire Department is a wonderful partner, always willing to provide training to our team. This fall, the Hilliard Police Department, an amazing partner, will also be part of our full-scale drill. They will be doing table-top exercises with our staff. The Joint Safety Task Force also reviews and evaluates all safety initiatives, such as door locking mechanisms. We work collaboratively to ensure all safety initiatives are easy for staff and fully supported by fire and police codes.

Mr. Hetzel, Chief Operating Officer, will now explain the two safety grants we requested. The first is a direct result of a vulnerability assessment performed by the Hilliard Police Department.

Mrs. Long asked about the training requirements in the three-year cycle. Mr. McDonough explained that we must do each drill one-time over three years. So, it is time for the full-scale drill based on where we are in the three-year cycle. The safety plans also have to be formally approved every three years – meaning they are reviewed and approved by Hilliard Police, Norwich Township Fire, and Franklin County EMA. We also review and update the safety plans annually for any personnel changes.

Mrs. Murdoch asked if it would make sense for the board members to participate in these drills. Mr. McDonough replied that board members are always welcome to attend our safety training. In addition, we are also required to hold fire and tornado drills on a routine basis.

Mrs. Long commented that she attended the full-scale drill at Darby High School and felt it was very impactful. She asked if we have many new employees who haven't gone through that type of training. Mr. McDonough responded that Hilliard Police and Norwich Township provide safety training for new staff during induction week. In addition, staff receives more hands-on training at Hilliard U.

Mrs. Long then asked how we get survey results from staff regarding these safety training opportunities. Mr. McDonough replied that we provide an open-ended feedback opportunity for staff to tell us their questions or concerns. The Joint Safety Task Force then reviews this feedback. In addition, we offer follow-up sessions at Hilliard U. Mr. Stewart added this is an example that we are the benefactors of our great relationship with our first responders.

Mr. McDonough stated that the Joint Safety Task Force is planning to present to the board this summer.

Mr. Hetzel stated the support we receive from the Hilliard Police Department and Norwich Township Fire Department has resulted in the vulnerability assessments we used to apply for safety grants. One of the recommendations was to implement a visitor management system. At this time, we have cameras at the front doors, and office personnel buzz visitors into the buildings. We applied for a grant of \$161,520.85 via The Ohio Facilities Construction Commission (OFCC) by SB310 for a visitor management system. While the funding has not been approved yet, we hope to purchase and install the system before the next school year. The visitor management system will provide instant screening against sex offenders and custom databases, including those with custody orders and banned visitor status. The system will also produce detailed visitor badges that show the visitor's role type, photo, destination, and sign-in time.

The vulnerability assessment also identified some blind spots in our current surveillance coverage. As a result, part of the grant from OFCC will go toward purchasing additional video cameras for these areas.

We have also applied and been awarded a \$90,000 grant from the Ohio Attorney General’s Office for door barricades and increased two-way radio communication. In collaboration with HPD and NTFD, we identified a door barricade that will work on inward or outward swinging doors. These barricades would be placed on all classroom doors. These door barricades are affordable and easy to use. There is also a mechanism first responders can use to defeat the door barricade, if necessary. We are in the process of ordering the door barricades, and our staff will install them. We will also be able to purchase some additional two-way radios for our district interoperability network. This system lets us communicate within a building and district-wide as may be necessary.

Mr. Vorst asked if the door stopper was centrally controlled. Mr. Hetzel explained that the door stoppers are operated manually. We are purchasing hardware that will be installed on classroom doors. It is not an automated system. The classroom teacher will be able to secure the room quickly when necessary.

Mrs. Long asked if we were able to interact with the police and fire departments with our two-way radios. Mr. McDonough replied that we could communicate with the SROs with our radios but not with police and fire dispatch. Mr. Hetzel added that our buildings have orange panic button devices that connect directly to police and fire dispatch.

Mrs. Murdoch asked if our SROs have two radios. Mr. Hetzel answered yes. Mrs. Murdoch asked if we could “combine” our system with theirs. Mr. McDonough explained we would have to buy into the Northwest Regional Emergency Communications Center (NRECC) system, which is not easily done.

Mrs. Long asked when we would hear the decision on our grant requests. Mr. Hetzel replied that OFCC did not give him an expected decision date.

Mrs. Murdoch mentioned the SROs talked about cameras covering hallways and common areas of the buildings. Are these some of the blind spots where you’ll be adding cameras? Mr. Hetzel stated that we currently have cameras covering hallways and common areas, but there are some blind spots, such as stairwells, and we’ll add cameras to cover these areas.

Mr. Perry thanked everyone for their work. He commented about meeting with outgoing Chief Grile and incoming Chief Woods about additional SROs. He’s happy we have those in place. The police department feels we now have adequate coverage for the district. His primary purpose as a school board member is school safety. Education is what happens during the school day, but we need to provide a safe environment for that to happen.

7. Data Security – Rich Boettner, Chief Technology Officer & Stacie Raterman, Director of Communications

This past November, I presented the cybersecurity work we had done to that date. I’m here tonight to review this information for the new members and provide an update on our practices. From a technology perspective, the world is changing very rapidly. For example, ransomware, one way an attacker can go after data, is up 104% in North America and up 1800% in government agencies, including education, in the last year.

Our goal is to create a comprehensive Cybersecurity and Disaster Recovery Plan to ensure that Hilliard City Schools can protect against, minimize and respond to incidents and other emergencies that affect

our network and information systems. Following are some of the different ways a cyber-incident can occur:

1. Social engineering (phishing, scams, etc.)
2. Computer viruses/malware/ransomware
3. Unauthorized alteration/defacement of websites or systems
4. Denial of Service attacks
5. Unauthorized access to/modification of data
6. Release of personal or confidential information without consent

Researchers from Stanford University and a top cybersecurity organization found that approximately 88 percent of all data breaches are caused by an employee mistake. Human error is still the driving force behind an overwhelming majority of cybersecurity problems.

This school year, we are reviewing our practices and how we can make them better.

**Review and Planning Process:**

Phase 1 (Oct-Dec) - Assessment and Discovery

Phase 2 (Jan-Mar) - Evaluate Options and Tools

Phase 3 (Apr-May) - Plan Finalization and Rollout

Phase 4 (June and on) - Implementation

**Current Work Highlights:**

- Many improvements have already been implemented, especially in Disaster Recovery.
- In May 2021, we had a cybersecurity assessment and pen test completed by Cerdant Network Security Services.
- We completed an independent review of our cybersecurity posture by the Ohio Cyber Reserve (a service agency of the Ohio Adjutant General's office).
- Our review is guided by the Center for Internet Security national standards for Cybersecurity (CIS Controls).
- Cybersecurity Training for all staff began in January.

One of the highlights of this process was the opportunity of working with the Ohio Cyber Reserve in November. They are a phenomenal organization whose goal and objective are to help schools and government agencies become better at using and handling cybersecurity. We spent three and a half days with them, and they offered recommendations and improvements. We also began cybersecurity training for all staff. This year's project was to take a step back, look at what we are doing, and determine how to do better. We are entering the plan finalization phase.

Our work centered on CIS (Center for Internet Security) controls. These are national standards that have been evolving over the last ten years. They provided excellent guidance on what we should be doing to protect our data and what to do if something happens. We will update the standard operating procedures (SOP) on all of the following:

1. Inventory and control of district hardware (upgrading inventory system)
2. Inventory and control of district software (improve process for testing and approving software)
3. Handling and protection of data (data classification and archiving, revised Public Records Request process)
  - We recently revised our public records request process due to the issue from last month. We developed an online form requiring more detailed information in our requests. In addition, the public records requests will be shared as a pdf document only. As we recently discovered, there is the possibility of data being hidden in other types of

document files. The requested data will be reviewed by at least two department staff pulling the information, and the Director of Communications will do a third review before releasing it to the requestor.

4. Secure configuration of hardware and software (device setup and software deployment)
5. User account management (for newly hired and leaving staff)
6. User access to data and systems (multifactor authentication)
  - We will be implementing multifactor authentication for email and select systems.
7. Continuous vulnerability management (process for monitoring vulnerabilities and managing risk)
8. Audit log monitoring and management (log aggregation and warning system, SAN storage upgrade)
  - As you can imagine, the busyness of a network with 18,000 users, we have a lot of logs. We have ninety servers, and each one generates tons of data every day and monitors what is going on. Finding a specific incident is like looking for a needle in a haystack. So we will add a system that will monitor and aggregate all of these logs.
9. Email and Web browser and protections (spam and malicious code filtering)
10. Malware defenses for computers and devices (anti-virus and anti-malware software)
11. Data and disaster recovery (daily off-site backups, upgrade backup software)
  - We have been doing daily off-site backups for a long time and have improved our process over the past couple of years due to the increase in ransomware. We have backups in the central office, an off-site facility, and Amazon Web Services.
12. Network infrastructure management (network and firewall security improvements)
13. Network monitoring and defense (network sensor system with test notifications)
  - We already have many sensors across our network that monitor what is happening on the network. We will be adding text notifications of items needing immediate attention to this system.
14. Security awareness and skills training (yearly cybersecurity training for all staff)
15. Data management protocols with service providers (standardized provider info and data flow documentation)
16. Software security protocols (monitor, update, and manage software vulnerabilities)
17. Incident response planning (process and protocols for incident response)
  - Our insurance carrier requires a well-written process for responding to an incident. We recently completed a review and update of our plan.
18. Third-party security assessment and pen-testing (regularly scheduled assessments and testing)

Mrs. Murdoch asked if we use “white hats” for testing. Mr. Boettner replied that we did a third-party assessment and penetration test last year. We will continue to have a third-party review our work annually. In addition, we will be using Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) for monthly testing at no cost.

Mrs. Long asked if the public records request form had been released. Mr. Boettner explained that the form is currently in the testing phase and will be available soon.

8. The Board of Education approved the following trip request:
  - a. Bradley/HUB Ethics Bowl, Chapel Hill, NC – April 8, 2022

Mr. Perry commented that he had been part of their mock ethics bowl and wished them the best of luck. Mrs. Crowley also stated that she is excited for them.

9. Policies submitted for a second reading
  - a. BBA – School Board Powers and Duties
  - b. BBF-E – Board Member Code of Ethics
  - c. BDDDB – Agenda Format
  - d. BDDC – Agenda Preparation and Dissemination
  - e. IND/INDA – School Ceremonies and Observances/Patriotic Exercises
  - f. KJA – Distribution/Advertisement/Promotion of Any Kind of Non-School Sponsored Literature
  - g. KJA-R – Distribution/Advertisement/Promotion of Any Kind of Non-School Sponsored Literature

Mrs. Crowley made the following statement: I enjoy working with this school board. I think our differences make us strong and provide dialogue that is reflective of our community. However, before we get into the nitty-gritty of the second reading of these policies, I feel like we have gotten side-tracked and gone into the weeds on some things. I want to remind all of us and our community that we are a nonpartisan school board. Our purpose is to create and amend policies. I want to make it clear that we are not here to serve our community members' political interests and aspirations. Instead, we are here to serve our 16,000+ students.

Mrs. Long stated that she agreed that we need to remember our roles as board members. Let's make sure we stay at the governance level regarding policies.

Mrs. Long asked Mr. Perry to review the recommended policy changes.

Mr. Perry stated he would try to summarize the discussion held at the policy review committee meeting, which was recorded.

#### Policy BBA – School Board Powers and Duties

Mr. Perry suggested adding “follow Board Member Code of Ethics” to the board’s responsibilities. Mr. Perry believes board members should also hold themselves accountable for the policies they adopt.

Mrs. Crowley stated that she supports these policies. It seems pretty clear that we should follow board policy as board members.

Mrs. Long noted that Policy BBA was last revised in May 2015.

Mrs. Murdoch agrees with the recommended changes to Policy BBA.

#### BBF-E – Board Member Code of Ethics

Mr. Perry suggested adding “obey board policies, resolutions and administrative regulations” to the list of responsibilities.

Mrs. Murdoch agrees with obeying board policies but has consternation about resolutions and administrative regulations. If it's important enough to be in the code of ethics, it should be important enough that we have a policy about it. So, what resolutions and administrative regulations are we thinking about, and should we consider those for new policies?

Mr. Perry agreed that some resolutions could be policy, but many resolutions are simply suspensions of board policy for a temporary period. Some resolutions are not policy. We are more or less obligated to follow resolutions anyway; this change just explicitly states it. We had a resolution a while back that said

we would celebrate diversity. We are still under that resolution. It did not have an expiration date, and we are still celebrating diversity.

Mrs. Long asked where all of the resolutions were captured. Mr. Perry replied they are in the board meeting minutes.

Mr. Vorst asked if resolutions and administrative regulations are easily accessible. We know that policies are available on the website. Also, is this change related to a particular event or issue?

Mr. Perry stated that we are already obligated to follow them as far as resolutions are concerned. However, you are correct that they are not the most easily accessible documents, as they are included in the meeting minutes at which the resolution was passed. He would support working on a database to record these resolutions for easy accessibility. A discussion about whether board members are required to follow policies adopted for staff and students: Mr. Perry said that legally board members are not obligated to follow policy. But, maybe if we had an ethical obligation to follow them, it may make the community feel better about our accountability. So, it came from within the community.

Mrs. Crowley asked if board members are considered employees of the school district. Mr. Perry replied no, we are not.

When asking if board members have to follow policy, Mr. Vorst asked what the community was referencing.

Mr. Perry stated the community spoke about many things but believed it was more of a generic request. In general, are board members required to follow policy, and the answer is no. So, I'm proposing that we add explicit language that we will follow the adopted policies.

Mrs. Long referenced a resolution before the election, a time-stamped resolution. She thinks that is what's being described as a resolution. So, it's not really policy. Mr. Perry interjected that tonight's agenda included a resolution suspending a portion of policies BD and BDDF. Mrs. Long added that we approve this resolution at every meeting because it is time-stamped. Mr. Perry explained that this resolution is automatically time-stamped because policy BFF states that every resolution that suspends policy automatically expires at the end of the meeting.

Mr. Perry stated we have some continuing resolutions like the one saying we will celebrate diversity because it doesn't suspend or alter any current policy. It's an affirmative statement to the community. Mrs. Long stated that to everything in one spot, it seems we should do it in policy. Mrs. Murdoch agreed and said it makes sense to gather those resolutions and create the appropriate policies. Mr. Perry stated that then the question becomes what is a resolution for. I think you're asking why we have resolutions. Some may be due to timeliness, especially since the policy review committee only meets quarterly.

Mrs. Long stated that we have more work to do on what constitutes a resolution and administrative regulation. Therefore, she recommends removing that part of the suggested change and adding only "obey board policies." Mr. Perry stated, so you don't think we should obey resolutions and administrative regulations? Mrs. Long responded that it's not that we shouldn't obey them; I don't know how we manage them.

Mrs. Murdoch added that while this is jumping ahead to our policy about policies, I believe we should have a process around that. For example, we could include instructions for resolutions becoming policy to memorialize those important things in policy.

Mr. Perry said a policy allows us to adopt certain things in an emergency. He believes resolutions are typically policy suspensions or affirmative statements of board intent. He is willing to add only “obey board policies,” with the understanding that we add resolutions and administrative regulations once they are clearly defined.

Mrs. Long asked if there was any more feedback on the recommendation to add only “obey board policies” until the board clearly defines resolution and administrative regulation. Mrs. Crowley isn’t opposed to the change and understands there needs to be clarification. However, she is willing to follow the policies, resolutions, and anything else the board expects of district staff. We are professionals and should follow the policies adopted by the board. Mr. Perry is willing to scratch resolutions and administrative regulations with the understanding they will be added once they are clearly defined. Mrs. Long said that they could check how others handle this issue. Mrs. Murdoch stated she believes board members follow policies even without this recommended change. However, she’s nervous about adopting a policy that we are not completely clear on how we define those two pieces.

#### BDDB – Agenda Format & BDDC – Agenda Preparation and Dissemination

Mr. Perry stated this change was requested by Mike to align BDDB and BDDC. Board agendas and supporting materials will be distributed to board members two business days before the meeting. Mrs. Murdoch added that these two policies contradicted each other, and this change fixes them – one said one business day, and the other said 48 hours.

Mrs. Long stated that one policy was reviewed in 2015 and the other in 2019. It sounds like Mike caught that for us.

#### IND/INDA – School Ceremonies and Observances/Patriotic Exercises

Mr. Perry stated the recommendations for this policy are to amend the patriotic exercises. He explained that a request to add language about having a flag in every classroom was removed from the policy since administrative and operational standards remedied this issue. We added “or staff” to the sentence stating, “The board prohibits the intimidation of any student (or staff) by other students or staff aimed at coercing participation in reciting the pledge.” He also stated something about adding “any individual” to cover staff, parents, and volunteers. He stated that Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 3313.602(a) says you have to specifically and explicitly state whether or not you are doing any school program and the time and manner. He recommends leaving “time and manner” to be determined by the superintendent. For example, an announcement could be made over the loudspeaker that it is time for the pledge. Then any individual can decide whether they want to recite the pledge, a first amendment right for American citizens. Mr. Perry noted there was some confusion because some folks in the community were using words such as compulsory, mandatory, and required, but that’s illegal. We cannot compel someone to recite the pledge.

Mrs. Long asked Mike to bring up ORC 3313.602(a) on the screen.

Mr. Perry recommends stating in policy that saying the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag is part of the school program at a time and manner determined by the superintendent.



Mrs. Long stated she thinks this is what the ORC is asking us to do. So, it will be there, and the flags will be there too with taking this policy into ORC. Time and manner is the second part of that first sentence.

Mrs. Murdoch shared her thoughts on what to add to policy – “Oral recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag will be part of the Hilliard City Schools program, and every classroom must display the flag. Daily oral recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance shall be conducted at the time and manner established by the superintendent.”

Mrs. Crowley commented that this is where we have gotten into the weeds. I know that out of more than 1,000 classrooms, there were only 42 that did not have a flag. Most of these flags had been lost or damaged due to moving and non-classroom spaces being turned into classrooms. These types of things happen quite a bit in old buildings and new construction. I also know that flags for those classrooms have been purchased and installed. At this time, we don't have any classrooms without a flag. So, this seems like a non-issue because it was solved quickly and without issue. I feel there is a false narrative in the community with people thinking the administration was resistant to displaying flags in all classrooms, but they were not.

Mrs. Crowley continued with thoughts regarding The Pledge of Allegiance. A survey showed that all but two schools had been reciting the pledge weekly or daily. Some teachers were leading the pledge in individual classrooms in the other two schools. There was no pushback when we talked to them about reciting the pledge. I feel like this is being twisted in our community. These are issues that were solved with phone calls. I don't believe we need policy to dictate the time and manner and what teachers are doing during the instructional day. Every teacher knows that what you intend to do in the morning sometimes gets pushed back to the afternoon. Putting these things in policies requires consequences if they are not followed. I don't believe this is appropriate either because things come up, and student needs take priority over everything. Dictating time and manner makes me nervous because I don't feel this is the board's job. It will make the teachers feel like we are micromanaging the instruction day and don't trust them to do what we are asking them to do.

Mrs. Murdoch stated that she knew flags were ordered once we discovered some were missing, but the American Legion also gifted us some flags. I thank them for providing us with some flags. I know they were put up in classrooms recently.

Mrs. Long asked for ORC to be displayed again. She thinks all members are at the same spot here, but when you read ORC, you have to declare if the pledge will be part of our school program. She believes the current policy is confusing. Mrs. Crowley pointed out that the current policy encourages reciting the pledge on a regular basis. There were only two schools that were not reciting the pledge regularly. The administration reached out to those schools, and they are willing to do it regularly. She doesn't have a problem with reciting the pledge or displaying the flag. The time and manner piece makes her feel like the board is micromanaging the instructional day.

Mr. Perry explained that if a board includes language that requires the recitation of the pledge, it must include the time and manner.

Mrs. Crowley agrees with leaving time and manner to the superintendent and building leadership. She asked Mrs. Murdoch to read her proposed language again – “Oral recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag will be part of the Hilliard City Schools program, and every classroom must display the flag.”

Daily oral recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance shall be conducted at the time and manner established by the superintendent.”

Mr. Perry read his proposed language – “The Board requires the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag as part of the school program, the time and manner of which shall be determined by the superintendent.” And add – “The board prohibits the intimidation of any student **(add) or staff** by other students or staff aimed at coercing participation in reciting the pledge.”

Mrs. Murdoch proposed - “The board prohibits the intimidation of any **individual** by other **individuals** aimed at coercing participation in reciting the pledge.”

Mr. Perry read the “Patriotic Exercises” section with the newly proposed language:

“The Board requires the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag as part of the school program, the time and manner of which shall be determined by the superintendent. The District is prohibited from preventing a teacher from having students recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag in the teacher’s classroom. All individuals are prohibited from altering the words of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

The Board recognizes that beliefs of some persons prohibit participation in the pledge, the salute to the United States flag, or other opening exercises. Therefore, such persons are excused from participation.

The Board prohibits the intimidation of any student, staff, or individual by other students, staff, or individuals aimed at coercing participation in reciting the pledge.”

Mr. Vorst said he doesn’t think the time of day is relevant. What happens when Mr. Stewart is gone. He would like to memorialize that teachers will make a reasonable attempt to recite the pledge daily. He thinks it’s important to make this a priority and to add language that is not ambiguous. I think everyone knows that we would not go after a teacher for forgetting one morning or because another issue arises. We intend to make daily recitation of the pledge a priority. He also thanked everyone for their quick attention to getting flags in the rooms that needed them.

Mrs. Long explained that the board supervises the treasurer and superintendent. We can hold the superintendent accountable but holding staff accountable is the superintendent’s responsibility.

Mrs. Murdoch asked Mr. Vorst if he said he wanted it to be a “daily” program. Mr. Vorst said he thinks it should be in writing that they make a daily effort to say the pledge. Mrs. Long doesn’t think “daily” needs to be put in the policy. She believes it is clear the superintendent understands the board wishes the pledge to be recited daily.

Mrs. Murdoch stated going with Mr. Perry’s version with the addition of a statement that every classroom will display the American Flag.

This policy will move to the third reading and adoption with the modifications discussed this evening.

KJA – Distribution/Advertisement/Promotion of Any Kind of Non-School Sponsored Literature

The changes proposed for KJA are for the distribution of campaign literature when schools are used as polling places. He stated this policy had not been appropriately enforced. These proposed changes allow us to continue approving resolutions for football games and ISPTO meet-the-candidate events. The changes to #8 would permit candidates to distribute campaign literature at a district facility designated as a polling place.

Mrs. Murdoch stated that if the board has been passing resolutions for over a decade permitting candidates to distribute literature at football games, why not just put it in the policy? Mr. Perry commented that the resolution had been a little different each time. This is because different boards permit different activities. Essentially, the resolutions have been temporary suspensions of policy, but they have been different each time.

Mrs. Murdoch asked if we received any feedback about being permitted to campaign at the football games but not pass out literature. Mr. Perry doesn't believe we heard any complaints.

Mrs. Crowley agrees with allowing campaign literature on election day at the polling locations but doesn't like the idea of campaigning at football games. These events should be focused on the students.

Mrs. Long proposed adding "midnight to midnight on election day" as the time limit for literature at polling places. Mr. McDonough and Mr. Perry said that signage is not permitted, and signage is not considered to be literature. Mr. Perry said that we don't need to designate a time because that is set by the Board of Elections, which governs polling locations. Mrs. Long was concerned about the language stating literature needs to be picked up within 12 hours of the polls closing. She wants to make sure literature is removed before the start of the next school day. She disagrees that literature does not include signs, which are permitted at polling locations. Mr. Perry stated that other polling locations prohibit signs. Mr. Stewart recommended prohibiting signs.

Mr. Perry said he ran this by legal. Someone had a question about the legality of restricting speech. We are not a public forum, we are a limited public forum. Therefore, we can limit content. However, all campaign literature would still have to comply with the rest of this policy, such as no obscenities or profanities.

Mrs. Long wants #8 to say "for the calendar day when the school is designated as a polling place" or something like that.

Mr. Perry explained that #7 allows literature to be distributed at events such as ISPTO events, at Hilliard versus Hilliard football games, etc. The board can approve a resolution for each election or not. Mr. Vorst asked if this puts the board in a position of voting to play favorites. Mr. Perry responded that it always does. Mr. Vorst said it seems like a conflict of interest. He said these events should be part of policy instead of waiting to pass a resolution that may be a conflict of interest for board members.

Mr. Perry said he prefers the board have the option instead of explicitly stating particular events in policy. He proposed that #7 be revised to state the following: "Literature that promotes or opposes any political figure, candidate or issue, including ballot issues of any kind, shall not be approved for distribution/advertisement/promotion. Exceptions may be granted by the Board via resolution or as listed in #8." Mrs. Long would rather see it in the policy. Mrs. Murdoch said she is also team policy. Mrs. Long wants the second sentence to retain – "for issues that directly affect Hilliard City Schools including but not limited to, District levies and bond issues." She then suggested the second sentence should

simply read as – “The Board allows issues that directly affect Hilliard City Schools and District levies and bond issues.” This way, we don’t need any resolutions.

Mr. Perry said that if exceptions would be granted, there needs to be a process. The process is approving a resolution. Mrs. Murdoch suggested, “Exceptions may be granted for issues that directly affect Hilliard City Schools and District levies and bond issues.” Mr. Perry said if we want to put exceptions in the policy, we should be specific. For example, we don’t want to open every part of our school grounds for everything.

Mr. Stewart suggested the board add language stating it will consider any exceptions that may be made in every election year. The policy would direct the board to have the conversation each election year. Mr. Perry accepts this language. Mr. Stewart then suggested if there is agreement on a couple of exceptions, they could be listed in the policy.

Mrs. Long suggested the exceptions be decided at the organizational meeting every year.

KJA-R – Distribution/Advertisement/Promotion of Any Kind of Non-School Sponsored Literature

There are no proposed changes to this regulation. It was provided as a reference for the discussion of KJA.

10. Discussion of other policy proposals (policies are not currently part of the reading/adoption process)

Mrs. Long asked if the notes from tonight would be part of the supporting documents for the April 11 meeting. Mr. Stewart agreed that we need a more clearly defined policy development process. Instead of that, and with our attorney’s interpretation, what ends up on the agenda is the purview of the board president in consultation with the superintendent. Therefore, the answer to your question depends on what you tell me as we develop agendas down the road. Mrs. Long asked if they would get the notes from tonight. Mr. Stewart responded that yes, the notes would be available.

Remember that we attempt to do the first reading at a business meeting, a second reading with a discussion at a work session, and the third reading and adoption at the next business meeting. Therefore, policies may not be submitted to the first business meeting following the policy review committee meeting. It depends on the timing of the meetings.

Mr. Perry stated that we have four policy development and adoption policies and want to consolidate them into one policy.

1. BF – Board Policy Development and Adoption
2. BFB – Preliminary Development of Policies
3. BFB-E – Preliminary Development of Policies
4. BFC – Policy Adoption

This policy did not make it to the reading adoption process because of the extent of the proposed changes. Mrs. Murdoch spoke about a proposed process she created and distributed to the other board members. This is just a place to start the conversation. Mrs. Long mentioned that the next policy review committee meeting is scheduled for May 13. We don’t have a work session scheduled for May, June, or July. Mr. Stewart said that all of the readings could occur at a business meeting. However, we prefer to have the second reading and discussion at a work session. Mrs. Murdoch asked if it was necessary to

wait until the May 13 policy review committee meeting to consider the policy development process. Mr. Stewart stated that our policy development service and our attorney should review these proposed revisions. We want to make sure we haven't missed anything.

Mrs. Long asked if the proposal is to revise BF and rescind BFB, BFB-E, and BFC. Mrs. Murdoch answered yes.

Mrs. Long asked if this proposal could be ready by the work session in April. Mr. Perry thinks that it should go back to the policy review committee with many proposed changes. Mr. McDonough stated he could schedule an additional policy review committee meeting. Mrs. Crowley agrees that the committee should review these changes. Mr. McDonough asked for clarification on when the board wants to see this policy on the agenda for a first reading. We currently have two reading/adoption cycles going, and I don't want to create a third one. Mr. Stewart suggested that the policies ready to be considered on the "second cycle" should be held until the proposed changes to BF are ready for a first reading. Therefore, you should most likely see BF for the first reading on May 9, the second reading and discussion on June 13, and the third reading and adoption on July 7.

#### JEFB – Release Time for Religious Instruction

Mr. Vorst asked if this policy was adopted. Do we have any plans on how we would approve an organization to be a participant in this program? We should have a process to determine what organizations students could attend to take advantage of this option. Mr. Stewart answered that this is part of the caution of adopting this policy. The danger being would we run into open access kind of issues. For example, when we allow specific organizations to rent our facilities, it becomes very difficult for us to exclude other organizations. That same concept applies to this policy. So we are concerned about how we could manage it or possibly lose control. Mrs. Murdoch said the policy outlines requirements to be met for a release program to be considered. It does not establish or approve any programs or dictate a process for how that would happen. Mr. Stewart stated that is correct.

Mrs. Crowley said that she does not support this policy. She believes it is an administrative and liability nightmare. As a teacher, I have many safety concerns with putting students on a shuttle bus, having them leave school property, and sending them to unknown adults. Also, I cannot think of when this would fit during the academic day. Every minute of our academic day is essential, including our unified arts, recess, and lunch. We know we have a lot of work to do on academics. If they take forty minutes per week, students will miss thirty-five hours of instruction during a school year. As a teacher, this is unacceptable.

Mr. Perry noted that many logistical concerns were discussed at the policy review committee meeting. The building principals had questions about how this would work and what additional duties might be required. The secondary principals were also concerned about students having different schedules. I believe there are other options for folks who want their students to receive religious instruction. I also worry that this would distract from our academics and undervalue our related arts teachers since students cannot miss any core classes. We don't have forty minutes of fluff time in our academic day. He talked with some teachers who said this might push some over the edge. Teachers are working to help students recover academically following the pandemic. He has a fundamental problem with religious instruction during the academic day. It can be done before or after the school day, on weekends or on holidays.

Mrs. Murdoch asked if the logistics needed to be addressed in the policy. Mr. Perry responded that the logistics are incompatible with the school day and that this policy shouldn't move forward. Mr. Vorst asked how other Ohio districts manage the logistics. Mr. Perry replied that he doesn't doubt we could pull this off. However, he believes we shouldn't do it. Any additional duties associated with this program could be a contractual issue (HEA contract). For example, payment for these duties could not be made by the organization. Teachers would have to be paid by the district or unpaid because we cannot provide funding for this program. This could be considered a change in working conditions by the union. Mr. Vorst asked if districts that have adopted this policy have encountered contractual issues. Mr. Perry did not know.

Mrs. Crowley asked what part of the school day was worth missing. Mrs. Murdoch stated that is not for us to say. It is a parent's decision. Students could not miss any core classes to participate in this program. Mrs. Crowley asked what part of the school day isn't considered core instruction? Mrs. Murdoch thinks it's the parent's choice what electives their student misses. Mrs. Crowley added that art, music, and physical education are important for the whole child's development. Those teachers are required to prepare report cards too. How can we expect them to do that when students miss these classes? I fully support religious instruction outside of the school day. Mrs. Murdoch stated that our legislature clearly thought it was important. Mrs. Crowley said she thinks this is a misinterpretation of the law. She believes the law was written so that students who don't follow a Christian calendar could receive an excused absence to miss school for their religious holidays. Mrs. Murdoch responded that the law literally states release time for religious instruction; it's more than holidays.

Mrs. Long asked if this policy came from OSBA. Mr. Stewart explained that the district was approached by a group requesting we adopt this policy. The sample you have is from OSBA. Mrs. Long said that at the bottom of the sample is a note about a new opinion that was released on April 17, 2019. Has there been any action by the legislature since April 17, 2019? Mr. Stewart replied that he was not aware of any additional action. The legislature has not compelled districts to adopt this policy. They simply gave districts the option to allow it. Mrs. Long wants to research if there has been any additional action on this issue. Our students have changed since 2019.

Mrs. Long stated we need to determine if we are willing to cut out a piece of instructional time for this policy. It doesn't have anything to do with any specific organization, group, or part of our community. Do we feel our students are academically ready for us to add another layer to the curriculum? Mrs. Murdoch asked whether the answer to that was a vote by the board.

Mrs. Long commented that the board received a curriculum update at the last work session. Is it necessary to adopt this policy before the end of this school year? She would like to hear the next academic progress report before voting on this policy. Our teachers are doing amazing work and feel we should give students more time to recover academically following the pandemic. When would we get the next academic progress report?

Mrs. Murdoch suggested having legal review the policy and submitting it for first reading with the others on May 9. She doesn't believe anything would be gained by sending this back to the policy review committee. It sounds like you want a final legal opinion.

Before voting on this policy, Mrs. Long wants to know where we stand on our curriculum goals. Mr. Stewart said we won't have concrete data until the fall.

Mrs. Murdoch asks that the policy be brought to the board for a vote. Then, each board member can vote as they wish.

Mrs. Long believes this policy could be brought to the board for the first reading at the August business meeting. The following work needs to be done before August:

- Need to understand the legislation and the current status
- Needs reviewed by legal counsel
- Progress on current academic goals
- Community feedback (Fallon survey)
- If/how this policy would affect the HEA contract

Mrs. Murdoch also wants to know how we are doing on our goals but doesn't believe these results are needed to vote on this policy. She agrees that legal counsel should review this policy. I don't understand why this can't be done before August. Mrs. Long suggested processing pause and doing more research.

In response to Mrs. Crowley's statement about what this law means, Mrs. Murdoch read from ORC 3313.6022 that "release time," as used in this section, means a period of time during which a student is excused from school to attend a course in religious instruction conducted by a private entity off school district property. Mr. Perry agreed the legality is accurate, and this is a permissive, not a required, policy.

Mr. Vorst agrees the concerns should be addressed, but there is community support for this policy.

11. Superintendent's Update
  - a. None
12. The meeting adjourned at 8:49 p.m.