



# MEETING NOTES

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

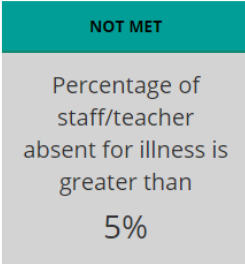
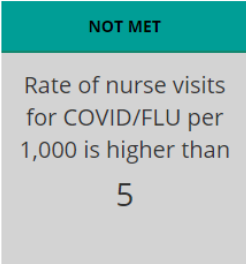
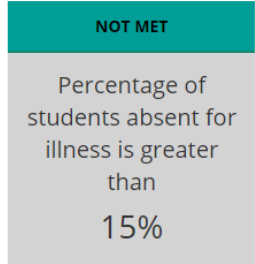
- A1 President called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.
- A2 Members present: Mark Abate, Paul Lambert, Nadia Long, Brian Perry, and Lisa Whiting
- A3 Everyone recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Abate welcomed everyone. We are in a different location this evening because we wanted to get back to being part of the group instead of being up on a big stage.

## B PROGRAMS / PRESENTATIONS

- B1 COVID-19 Update and Information – Dr. Marschhausen

As stated in the Board resolution adopted in September, I am providing an update about where we stand with our COVID-19 numbers. As with most of Ohio, our case count is 412 per 100,000. This is the same (400+ per 100,000) for all Central Ohio school districts. A short time ago, our case count was only 87 per 100,000. We still have not met our dashboard thresholds. Our student absenteeism rate has been 6.5% for the past two weeks. While our nurse visits have hit 5% or more on a few days, this rate has not been sustained for three consecutive days. Also, our staff/teacher absenteeism rate has not been at 5% for three consecutive days.



As do most Central Ohio school districts, we do have an ongoing concern with substitute teachers' availability. This is not a "Hilliard" problem or a "teacher" problem. Most of the retired teachers (often the most consistent substitute teachers) are not subbing for apparent reasons. Additionally, due to many teachers taking a leave of absence or early retirement (because of the pandemic), most of those substitutes have long-term assignments or have been hired for full-time teaching positions. We continue to work with HEA (Hilliard Education Association) and the ESC (Educational Service Center of Central Ohio) to access and recruit substitutes.

As you know, we recently received a letter from Dr. Mysheika Roberts, Columbus Public Health Commissioner, and Joe Mazzola, Franklin County Public Health Commissioner. **They believe students are safe in school so long as we maintain six feet of social distancing and wear their masks.** While we see an increase in county cases, we do not see evidence of spread in classrooms. We do not need to change our resolution at this time. We are continuing to work with the public health director and the Ohio Department of Health to designate teachers and schools to be essential workers and essential services. If schools become defined as essential services, HCSD would remain open even if Franklin County would go to Level IV (purple). As we heard from the mental health professionals, our students are hurting, and they

need us. **While I wish we were “All-In,” it is not an option right now, according to the local health experts and guidelines.** I feel we need to keep our students in Hybrid, so they get at least some in-school time.

Mr. Abate added the Lieutenant Governor recently commented the increase in COVID-19 cases could overrun our hospitals. If our case count continues to increase over the next several weeks, we may have no choice but to go back to eLearning. Lt. Governor Husted also stated that even though students may continue in Hybrid, we may lose athletic participation. Even if schools become designated as an essential service, the public health commissioners have said that athletics will not be considered essential.

## C ROUTINES

- C1 The agenda is correct, as submitted.
- C2 The Board of Education adopted the agenda.
- C3 The Board of Education approved the October 2020 Treasurer’s Reports.
- C4 The Board of Education approved the minutes from the following meetings:
  - a. October 12, 2020 – regular meeting
  - b. October 26, 2020 – work session meeting
  - c. October 12, 2020 – regular meeting notes
  - d. October 26, 2020 – work session notes

## D PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

*The Board of Education of the Hilliard City School District encourages and appreciates citizen interest in meetings of the board. This place on the agenda is especially set aside to hear comments from visitors. Persons wishing to address the board should make written requests in advance of the meeting or complete the Visitor Form found where the agenda materials are located. When called, each speaker is asked to address the board at the microphone so that remarks may be clearly heard and recorded. The speaker should give his or her name and address and limit comments to three minutes.*

*Board members may ask questions of the speaker for information or clarification and may or may not make comments in response to a speaker’s remarks. It should be noted that this section of the agenda is to hear the views of citizens about their schools. 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 the board meeting are being audiotaped.*

Beth Murdoch, 3056 Hemlock Edge Dr.

First, I would like to commend all of you for addressing the stress our children are experiencing due to working alone at home on new content without support from their teachers. As I have emphasized in previous email messages and statements, COVID is only one component to be considered in our children’s overall health. I am happy to hear that you are now addressing one of the most significant adverse impacts of our response to COVID. However, as a district, I am unhappy that the way you choose to handle this stress is to acknowledge that our students will not receive a full year’s education this year.

Despite your reassurances that future teachers and professors expect our students to enter the phase of their education with COVID gaps, I do not accept this. This will not be a universal problem as our children will be at a distinct disadvantage when entering secondary education alongside children educated in private schools or in one of the 371 Ohio school districts that have returned to five-day a week education.

The impact of COVID on gaps and cognitive skills such as math and reading is only part of the story. Non-cognitive skills such as patience, perseverance, and the ability to figure out future consequences to one's behavior are also central to our children's success. These skills are particularly responsive to their environment in their early years and are likely to decline as we continue in our current learning mode. COVID-19 has demonstrated that there is something irreplaceable about students and teachers coming together to learn in person. Online videos, digital content, and discussion forums are very different and often inferior schooling forms.

Economic success today and even more so in the future will require well-educated workers who have mastered a range of cognitive analytical skills and social and communicative skills. When children lose out on education, they lose out on future opportunities, including economic benefits such as additional earnings with far-reaching consequences. A recent paper published by the IZA Institute of Labor Economics estimates that losing one-third of a school year could result in a lifetime earnings loss of 2.6%. Research indicates the adverse effects on earnings of previous pandemics are long-lasting. The 1918 influenza generated an impact that lasted into the 1980s. Some modeling's suggest that the loss of learning during a great crisis of World War II still negatively impacts former students' lives some forty years later.

Like so many aspects of this pandemic, children and young people's impact seems more likely to take the form of a prolonged crisis rather than a short, sharp chop. By your admission, the coronavirus will not disappear in the coming months requiring school leaders to adapt and adjust. I still believe the best educational mode is in school five days a week. However, suppose you are not willing to take that step. In that case, I implore you to look for alternative solutions that address our student's physical and mental health without sacrificing their education, making sure they are ready for tomorrow.

Mr. Abate commented that we had made some adjustments to try to strike a balance between education and time for social-emotional support. Thank you for your comments.

Zach Vorst, 6181 Baumeister Drive, Hilliard, OH 43026

I am the parent of a kindergartner and second-grader at Hoffman Trails Elementary. Like many other parents, I am here to advocate for all-in, five days per week instruction for our kids. First, I would like to state that we support the school district's measures to prevent spread. With distancing, hand washing protocols, and masks, even though some of our luke-warm on a few of these, we are glad everyone is doing what they can to keep our kids in school. We also applaud the recognition by Dr. Marschhausen and the Board about student's mental health. This is very serious, and we see the effects at home all of the time. Just this morning, I was in a Facebook thread where several parents showed pictures of their kids crying and stressed out before another day of eLearning. Our students don't do this before a regular school day.

St. Brendan has been all-in since the school year started. Several other schools in the area are also all-in. As stated earlier, 371 school districts in Ohio are all-in. Spread is not happening in schools. There have been no major outbreaks in any of these schools.

A national study by Quality Metrics of 1,200 schools, including 630,000 students and 7,600 staff, found infection rates of 0.14% for students and 0.35% for staff. That translates to 10 cases per 100,000 for students and roughly 25 cases per 100,000 for staff. A nationwide study of college students found that among 70,000 positive cases, a total of 3 students were hospitalized and all fully recovered.

Ohio's COVID-19 dashboard shows that schools are not a significant source of spread despite the increases in cases. All of you have also stated the same earlier this evening. Governor DeWine explicitly said that schools are not a significant transmission source, and the Franklin County Public Health department agrees. Kids are not super spreaders. It is also worth mentioning that the morbidity and mortality profile among children is exceptionally favorable with COVID-19. Daycares, where kids who have the worst hygiene habits attend, are also without significant outbreaks.

I have to ask you, is your loyalty to the State House and some researchers at OSU, or is it to the kids and parents of the district that you serve? We don't question your motivations, but some wonder if you are concerned with our kids' best outcome. This is not a personal matter, please don't take it that way, but people are saying in private circles. Maturation, education, and the overall growth of our kids are suffering. I have emailed all of you twice in the last six weeks, and I got one response from Mr. Lambert. Are you in touch with what's going on with your parents? The students with the fewest resources continue to be the hardest hit by your school shutdown. We don't care about what you do in your private lives, your political affiliations, or what you like on social media. We want you to have the best interest of our kids at heart and make the decision to give parents the option to send kids back to full, in-school instruction as soon as possible.

Leslie Drexel, 3692 Darby Knolls Blvd.

Thank you for taking into consideration our children's mental health in this challenging time. We are all looking for the answer to a very tough problem. In our district, I have heard about a COVID learning gap our children will experience, and it's not just an Ohio issue but a national issue. I understand that this COVID gap is a term that is trying to explain the drop in learning that is clearly off the pace when gaged against prior years. However, in Ohio, I have learned we have 371 school districts that are all-in, 37 fully remote, and 201 in hybrid. So, some students will be behind, but the majority will not. Over 60% of Ohio's school districts will not have this COVID gap.

I talked to a friend, a superintendent of a public school district in Ohio, and learned that not only all their students all-in (since August), but their county currently has the third-highest case rate in the state. Franklin County is the fifty-third with 412 cases per 100,000. Their case count is 687 per 100,000, and yet their schools are fully open. They are putting children's mental health first and keeping them in school. They have a threshold, and if it's met, they can go to a hybrid model as needed by building. So far, they have been able to keep all grade levels in school since August. The same is true in many states across our nation.

My daughter is looking to attend Indiana Wesleyan next year, and they 100% in-person classes. She will enter as a freshman and is expected to be fully prepared. This is true for primary and secondary schools across the country. So, it seems the learning gap our children will experience isn't universal. Cases are

going down, the virus is not going away, and we know that school is the safest place for our children. We need to put children and their mental health first and get them in school full time. Again, many school districts throughout the country are all-in, including 60% in Ohio.

Rebecca Jacobs, 3416 Ridge Gap Rd., Columbus, OH 43221

Thank you for opening this up for all of us to speak. I have great remarks prepared, and these people already said what I was planning to say for the most part. I don't envy where you are. You have a tough decision to make and have a lot riding on your shoulders.

I just want to voice my support for our students being all-in for all of the reasons already said. We have many discussions in various parental sources about what's going on in Franklin County and all of Ohio. I exchanged voice mail messages today with the Communications Director at New Albany schools. Their elementary and middle school students are all-in, and their high school students are in hybrid. Since they are working with Franklin County Public Health, what is the difference between New Albany other than being on different sides of the county and us? We are dealing with the same public health commissioners, so what is the difference here?

I also want to reiterate that we want our kids' all-in because it is best for them. For example, at my third grader's parent/teacher conference, her teacher said they see that third graders lack the writing stamina we usually expect them to have at this time.

Given all of the specific information about the 371 school districts that are all-in, are you worried about a lack of enthusiasm on the parents and taxpayers' part if a levy is requested next year?

Tiffany Epling, 5379 Taylor Lane Ave., Hilliard, OH 43026

The superintendent began talking about mental health issues. It is a considerable concern within our student population. I think this is an outstanding leadership in tackling and addressing this issue. I know there is a huge taboo, shame, and embarrassment that comes with mental health issues.

As mentioned earlier, private schools opened their doors five days a week back in September. We have our CATS data, but have you been in contact with these schools that are all-in? Are we collecting that data and comparing it to our CATS model? Are our numbers close, or are there vast differences? I think this is something we should be taking into consideration. These schools have waitlists, so we know they are operating at full capacity. Do we know if they have three-foot or six-foot social distancing? What are they doing, and are we able to model that in our buildings? We may also want to compare how their students are doing mentally. I believe that daily interaction with friends, peers, and teachers will help with mental health.

We know that COVID is not going away. There is a "snowstorm of information" available, which is conflicting, depending on the source. The one thing that does remain steady is that kids are safe in schools. I understand you have to take into consideration the guidelines and recommendations of the local health officials. Since our CATS numbers are low and local private schools are all-in, can we use this information to move us forward?

Kim Hartman, 5563 Rubble Lane, Hilliard, OH 43026

I appreciate the effort you are displaying for our kids and staff while our community's mental and emotional health struggles. I have seen these effects on my children and believe we need to get this mental health crisis under control before it gets worse. While the hybrid model was a good start, I don't think it is a sustainable model for the remainder of the school year. It has already proven to be very demanding on our students, staff, and parents. The one model we have yet to try is all-in. We have more hospitalizations related to mental health than COVID. I don't see how knowing this information is not enough to make a change to offer five days of school for our children. Three hundred seventy-one schools in Ohio are full-time. Our border state of Indiana has students in school full-time. I realize we are in an uphill battle on handling our district, but so are the other communities dealing with high case counts.

We will never know if our push for full-time school helps our mental health crisis until we try it. We can always pull back if needed. We often hear discussions about the "what ifs" of how COVID can negatively affect our district if we go all-in. Why not flip that and ask what if the all-in model affects our mental health issues for the better? When something isn't working, such as this hybrid model, it makes sense to try a different solution. What if "see something, say something" works because one student who was in school more than two or three days per week was able to talk to a friend or teacher in a moment they felt there was no hope? I believe the data and circumstances we see now prove that we need to do more than we are currently. Children and young adults are at extremely low risk of this virus. They are at a much higher risk of drinking and driving, abuse, neglect, the flu, drowning, fires, and many other things. Schools have proven to be a low-risk environment for kids and adults. Why are we not doing whatever it takes to get our kids back in this low-risk environment?

Amanda Powers, 5633 Maple Dell Ct., Hilliard, OH 43026

I have a high school student, a middle school student, and a kindergartener, so I see a full scope of what hybrid education has done to our children. First, I want to talk about cases. I have been a nurse for almost twenty years, so I understand case metrics, spread, proper PPE use, and viral load. The appropriate metric to be used during any epidemic is not case count. Many cases can be repeat testers, and any case can have up to a 30% false positivity rate. The metric to follow is morbidity and mortality or death rate. The death rate and hospital utilization of COVID cases have been below the threshold to even consider COVID an epidemic anymore. However, continuing to monitor case counts is all we hear. Secondly, data has shown and continues to show that spread is not happening in schools. Teachers and students are safe in schools. However, it has come to light that our students are not safe at home. Tragedy has hit Hilliard with suicide, suicide attempts, and increases hospitalizations due to mental health decline. To fix this, our superintendent recommends making things easier for our children by decreasing work, performance, and school expectations. I believe a better fix would be to give our students tools to help cope. Our children need to be back in school full-time. No data is showing that having our students back in school full-time is dangerous to their health.

I would like to focus on high school students for a minute. Many of these students are reaching adulthood and will either be entering college or the workforce and will not be ready for tomorrow. They need the tools to learn to cope with and healthily manage their emotions. Please don't make assumptions that colleges will lower their standards and expectations for those going off to college when over a third of our students in this country are in school full-time learning the entire curriculum. ACT, SAT, and AP tests are not going to change. What needs to change is Hilliard City Schools, and to think otherwise would be

completely ignorant. Our kids need to be in school five days a week, learning the entire curriculum and preparing for tomorrow.

I would like to comment on Hilliard’s curriculum on blended learning. COVID does not live on paper. Luckily, my kindergartener is learning to put pen to paper, but I hear of so many older students suffering headaches from staring at screens for six-plus hours a day. This is unacceptable. My children’s spelling due to auto-correct and penmanship is appalling. They are not learning how to work in groups and are lacking any type of hands-on education. I expect to see the assurance of blended learning that Hilliard promises.

Lastly, I want to end with a quote by Harriett Beecher Stowe, “Common sense is seeing things as they are and doing things as they ought to be.”

Todd Sandberg, 608 Denmoor Ct.

I want to start by saying that I have two students in high school. I have come here to share my absolute frustration with how this school year started and how it continues to be handled. I know firsthand the struggles these students face with a split schedule, the COVID restrictions, and isolation from school. My son just came off two weeks of not being able to come to school because someone on the football team tested positive. To my dismay, only the defensive players had to quarantine even though all of the players stood on the sideline together. So, every player had contact on the sideline, but only the defensive players were punished. I say punished because he had zero instruction from his teachers. He got homework on Canvas. I can tell all of you; Canvas is not how you were educated. Assignments in Canvas is not an education but a derelict of duty by the educators in this great district. With that being said, teachers in this district are working in unusual times, but many other Central Ohio districts are going to class five days a week with very few issues. For some reason, this Board lacks the preparation to do the same thing here in Hilliard. After reading the story of twelve Hilliard students struggling so much they required hospitalization, I have personally become saddened by the news. I know there are hundreds of students and parents under the same stress. Some of our parents work to balance their careers and keep their kids from falling further behind in their education and social-emotional development skills.

In conclusion, while this country is blaming the President for 240,000 people dying of COVID, I hold each of you accountable for the mental health issues our students are suffering. In April, you knew that we have students with mental health issues, and you did nothing about it. I say each student should be in school learning from their teachers. You should be ashamed of your ability to lead this great district. I ask each of you to step down and put new people in your seats.

Mrs. Long thanked all of the public participants. I am a mother of three and am making sacrifices similar to yours. My husband and I are essential workers, and I understand where you are. There isn’t an easy answer, and I’m listening. I was at St. Brendan’s last night, checking out what they are doing. I am also watching Butler County very closely. I have seen a sign of hope regarding legislation about quarantining. Don’t think we are taking this lightly; it is all about safety.

## **E CONSENT AGENDA**

The Board of Education approved item E1 through E2, consisting of certified and classified personnel matters. You can find the complete list of personnel matters as an attachment to the *Minutes*.

**F ACTION AGENDA**

F1 The Board of Education approved the following Certified Personnel resolution:

WHEREAS, the Hilliard City Schools Board of Education wishes to authorize the Director of Business to advertise, receive bids, and purchase ten (10) 78-passenger conventional school bus chassis and bodies and two (2) 65-passenger conventional handicap school bus chassis and bodies.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Hilliard City Schools Board of Education wishes to participate and authorize the META Solutions (META) to advertise and receive bids on said Board’s behalf as per the specifications submitted for the cooperative purchase of ten (10) 78-passenger conventional school bus chassis and bodies two (2) 65-passenger conventional handicap school bus chassis and bodies.

F2 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 current expenses and other expenditures of said Board of Education, during the fiscal year, ending June 30, 2021, the following sums be amended 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:

004 – BUILDING FUND                      \$56,624

Mr. Wilson explained this is an increase of a little over \$5,000 that will allow us to close our this building fund.

**G REPORTS / INFORMATION / EXHIBIT ITEM**

G1 Committee Reports

Mrs. Long attended the OSBA voting event. There were more than 300 school board members who participated in this Zoom event. I am very proud of the work OSBA is doing to stay connected to everyone through this pandemic. The Capital Conference is going on this week.

Mr. Abate commented that the Inclusivity and Justice Task Force is continuing its work. Several small groups are working toward meeting our goals.

G2 Enrollment

G4 Superintendent’s Update

a. Doug Maggied reappointment to Tolles Board of Education – 1 Year Appointment

As you may remember from last year, Tolles Board of Education submitted a plan to accept some one-year appointments to stagger the terms of the seven members. I will recommend the reappointment of Mr. Maggied at our December business meeting.



Ms. Whiting supports this recommendation. She knows that Tolles struggles with the same issues we are this year and believes appointing Mr. Maggied would provide continuity in our relationship with Tolles. Mr. Lambert agreed.

Mrs. Long wondered when the Board had received the latest update from Mr. Maggied. Dr. Marschhausen responded that the last update was at the retreat in January. I'm a little concerned with our relationship with Tolles. We need to reinforce our expectations before another appointment. We need to be transparent in our communications regarding our relationship with Tolles. I would also like to receive representative qualifications. Dr. Marschhausen will send the qualifications to all of the Board members.

Mr. Abate commented that he completely supports Mr. Maggied continuing his role as a Tolles Board member. He also agreed that the Board discussed getting more regular updates, but these updates have taken a back seat to the pandemic.

Mr. Perry asked if Dr. Marschhausen would invite Mr. Maggied to the upcoming work session. Dr. Marschhausen will extend an invitation to Mr. Maggied.

b. 2021 Board Organizational Meeting (January 11, 2021)

The date for the organizational meeting and president pro tem needs to be set at the December business meeting. Following our traditional schedule (*2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of each month*), I will be recommending that the organizational meeting and first business meeting take place on January 11, 2021.

**H EXECUTIVE SESSION / ADJOURNMENT**

H1 At 7:27 p.m., the Board of Education caucused to executive session to discuss preparing for, conducting, or reviewing negotiations or bargaining sessions with public employees concerning their compensation or other terms and conditions of their employment. The Board will not take any action following executive session.