



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.

B PROGRAMS / PRESENTATIONS

- B1 Return to School Plan – Dr. Marschhausen

On March 13, it will have been a year since Governor DeWine ordered schools to shut down. I am pleased to present our plan for returning students to all-in school. My recommendations are based on the data and the direction that things are moving right now. I also want to clarify that I am not asking for any action on this recommendation at tonight's meeting. This presentation is for discussion over the next two weeks for you (Board), our staff, and our community to weigh-in as we develop a plan that will significantly impact our district and our students.

My recommendation is based on the following four pillars:

- 1) Successful vaccination of teachers and staff

I am incredibly proud of the work and the partnerships we established over the past week. Kroger Health vaccinated over 17,000 Franklin County educational staff at Davidson High School and Reynoldsburg High School. This plan is predicated on the second vaccination dose arriving on schedule the last week in February. We are very thankful that Governor DeWine recognized the importance of education to the fabric of our society.

- 2) A continued decline in positivity rate

We need to see a continued decline in the positivity rate. Several weeks ago, our positivity rate was 17%. We are now down into single digits, and we continue to see improvements.

- 3) A continued decline in cases in Hilliard School District

You will see in the data I will share later in this presentation, we have a significant decline in cases and are headed in the right direction.

- 4) Internal school data proportional to community data

I am proposing new metrics to measure how our students are doing in proportion to the community at large.

We know our students need us and that many students are struggling with remote and hybrid learning. That struggle isn't only academic. That struggle is also the impact of isolation and the social-emotional well-being of our students. We understand that our students need to return to a routine. I recently met with my student advisory team, and they noted the most challenging change for them would be getting up every morning. Our high school teachers have shared that most assignments are being submitted at 1:00 a.m., at 2:30 a.m. We need to get students back on a regular schedule.

We will be completing individual assessments to identify any academic gaps. As we will share at our February 22 meeting, our students have grown academically over the past year. Our math data for our K-8 students is very impressive. Mrs. Walker will give you a presentation on where our students are academically. But academics are only one part of the plan. We know our students are struggling with their social-emotional well-being. I have read email messages from and had conversations with many parents about their students' are hurting in this environment. As we have said throughout the pandemic, we want to return students to the classroom as safely as possible.

We also know that the mitigation efforts we have implemented have been successful. There is a low incidence of school transmission during community spread. According to Mr. Abraham and our nurses, we can count on two hands the number of transmissions in our schools (through contact tracing). Our mitigation strategies' effectiveness is predicated on our staff and students wearing masks, six feet social distancing, frequent hand washing, and our cleaning, disinfecting, and sanitizing schedule. Today, six feet of social distancing is still the recommendation of Franklin County Public Health (FCPH) and Columbus Public Health (CPH). We also just added the vaccination of staff as additional protection.

I am proposing to the Board that we rely more on local data and less on the county-level data. We want to continue to monitor the three district thresholds – student absences, staff absences, and clinic visits for COVID-19/flu. Our goal when we return to all-in is to maintain similar outcomes in all three thresholds. Since January 18, student and staff absences have been less than the threshold (student absence threshold is 15% and staff absence threshold is 5%). Our student nurse visits have also been well below the threshold. Continuing to monitor this data will help us determine if our mitigation strategies are effective for an all-in modality.

We also need to set some goals and understand some realities as we move to all-in:

- **Monitor impact of athletic programs on schools** – We have seen high levels of transmission and quarantines in our athletic programs. I am 100% in favor of athletics and want to keep them going. Our athletes and parents have chosen to accept the risk of possible exposure to COVID-19 and possible additional quarantines to participate in athletics. We experienced this a couple of weeks ago when our CATS data raised a flag at Weaver Middle School with over ninety students absent. After further investigation of the data, we found that Weaver Middle School had quarantined five of their six basketball teams due to positive COVID-19 cases.
- **Impact of staff absences on any of our operations** – We had a shortage of bus drivers before the COVID-19 pandemic and continue to have a shortage of bus drivers now. Therefore, a staff absence situation in our transportation department could cause a disruption. We also have a substitute teacher shortage. Fail-to-fills is an issue. We will continue to work on how we fill teacher absences.

We also need to acknowledge that things may change. At this time, I am proposing we return to all-in on March 15. This is still five weeks away. In the news today, we are hearing about variants that are

spreading across the country. If a variant causes our numbers to move in the wrong direction, we may need to reevaluate our plan. We need to continue to be able to adapt and adjust to what is happening in our community.

Other considerations:

- We may have to pivot and change our instructional modality again. As Mr. Lambert says, this is our flexible learning mode. We will adapt, adjust, and shift based on the science and the numbers. At the beginning of this school year, we recommended that anyone who wanted consistency enroll in our Online Academy.
- We will need to look at our staffing impact and class sizes, especially in our larger classes at our high schools, such as band, choir, and orchestra. Dr. Sholl has already started creating a plan.
- We will need three to four weeks to move furniture back into our buildings and classrooms. Right now, our buildings are set up to accommodate only fifty percent of our students. It will take time to reset our buildings and classrooms for all students with as much social distancing as possible.
- We have to finalize cafeteria plans with each school. One of our biggest concerns is lunch because you have students sitting in a smaller space without masks. We need to create a plan to spread out students during lunch to reduce the risks.
- Our high school principals are working on options for outdoor graduation and opportunities for other senior events. I don't foresee holding a sizeable indoor event for the remainder of this school year.
- All other school events will remain as shutdown as possible. I am proposing that we still not allow visitors in our buildings. We don't know who has been vaccinated and who has not, and we don't need the risk. We will not be able to have large group activities. If our purpose is to get all students back in school, we need to be as restrictive as possible to accomplish this goal.

All of the recommendations and decisions are based on data. If there is a variant of the virus that impacts Central Ohio, case counts begin to rise, or the positivity rate increases, we will amend these plans. After our return to all-in, we will continue to track our internal data trends and make any appropriate changes.

We are targeting our return to all-in for Monday, March 15. According to our partners at The Ohio State University (OSU), it takes two weeks for the vaccine's second dose to be effective. If the last of our staff vaccinations are done on Saturday, February 27, the first day the vaccine will be effective is on Saturday, March 13. Norwich Township Fire Chief Baird shared that when first responders received their second vaccination, fifty percent of them were unable to work the next day due to the vaccine's side effects. Therefore, I am proposing that we have all remote learning on Thursday, February 25, and Friday, February 26.

I also propose that we return to in-person Board of Education *Business* Meetings in March. I specifically asked FCPH and CPH last Tuesday if we can have in-person Board meetings. Their recommendation was no because indoor groups of greater than ten are not recommended. I know some call us cowards, but I don't believe we are cowardice for following our local health commissioners' recommendation. We will talk about our Work Session meetings at our Business meeting in March. If we continue our Work Session (*typically no public participation*) meetings at Central Office, our conference room is not large enough to accommodate additional attendees. We can invite the public to attend via Zoom, or we will have to consider moving the Work Session meetings to another location.

Our return to school plan will be submitted to Franklin County Public Health (FCPH) for their feedback. FCPH has the authority, by law, to determine our quarantine and isolation practices. Unlike other county

public health departments in Ohio that state three feet social distancing is permissible, FCPH continues to recommend six feet social distancing. In Ohio, the local health department has jurisdiction over local school districts. This is not debatable. While the Board has the authority to go all-in counter to the health department's recommendation, the public health department still determines who has to quarantine and isolate. We have been and will continue to be prudent in making our decisions. By listening to and following our public health officials' recommendations, we are being prudent and doing right by our students.

Changes in our decision-making framework – Rather than looking at case count per 100,000, I'm proposing that we look at the proportion of positive COVID-19 cases by grade level compared to its proportion of the total population in the Hilliard City School District. At this time, our district has approximately 97,000 residents, and 20% of them are school-aged children. If the county's COVID-19 positivity rate is proportional to our district population's COVID-19 positivity rate, we do not see community spread in our schools. If the proportional positivity rate begins to increase and outpace the county's positivity rate, we will likely have some problems. So, I propose that if the proportion of the cases in our school district is less than 20% (threshold), we will consider all-in. If it's 1.5 times the threshold (20-30%), we will consider all-in or hybrid. If we are greater than 1.5 times the threshold (more than 30%), we will consider hybrid or eLearning.

We will also continue to monitor our three indicators tracked by our CATS team – student absences due to illness greater than 15%, staff absences due to illness greater than 5%, and student clinic visits due to influenza or COVID-like symptoms greater than 5 per 1,000 per day. Meeting two indicators is a warning, and meeting all three indicators, the Board would consider action and a possible change.

Finally, I would like the Board's permission and authority to change our instructional mode if staffing issues arise. We will continue to consult with our local health departments. If Franklin County returns to "Purple" on the Ohio Public Health Advisory System, we will shift to eLearning as outlined in our current MOU.

Decision-Making Data Factors

The week of January 13 – 26, our district case count was 800 per 100,000, and we are now down to 450. For the same period, 18.5% of our district cases are school-aged children below the district's proportion (<20%) that is school-aged children. This week we are down to 16% of the cases are school-aged children, and we are not meeting the absence or clinic visit indicators.

Proposed Next Steps

- Community Zoom on Thursday, February 11 at 7:00 p.m. I will review this same presentation and take questions and comments from our community.
- Staff Zoom Session on Thursday, February 11 at 4:00 p.m.
- Plan to be submitted to Franklin County Public Health for review. FCPH has committed to working as active partners with all school districts. FCPH has the ultimate authority on quarantine and isolation decisions.
- Work with the Ohio Department of Health for clarification on expectations regarding new quarantine guidelines.
- Board of Education discussion and potential action, at Board Work Session on February 22, 2021.

Questions/Comments/Concerns from the Board

Mr. Lambert asked for clarification on the conditions of getting back to all-in. Dr. Marschhausen explained that if the cases continue to decline, even if we don't get below 100 per 100,000, I still believe we can get to all-in on March 15. I'm proposing that we replace the case rate (# per 100,000) with our community's proportion. If we are not outpacing the population proportion, we are not showing transmission in our schools.

Mr. Lambert also stated that he has been advocating for getting students back to school as soon as safely possible. You have presented several reasons why it is important to get students back in school. I want to add that we recognize the role the school district plays in providing a safe place for kids while their parents are at work. This being said, we also can't run a school district without healthy teachers and staff. I'm glad we have been able to do this accelerated vaccination program. It's great that we were able to facilitate this program at one of our high schools.

Mr. Lambert asked if spring break was just one week after getting students back in on March 15. Dr. Marschhausen responded that spring break is the week of March 29, two weeks after getting students back into school. Mr. Lambert pleaded to students, parents, and staff to stay safe during spring break, so they don't become infected with COVID-19.

Ms. Whiting added her thanks to everyone involved in the use of Davidson High School as one of the county vaccination sites for educators. I know there were a few bumps with the registration process, and everyone worked through the issues to get staff scheduled. She also thanked Dr. Marschhausen and the administrative team for all of their work and efforts to get our students back in school as soon as safely possible. I know there are many metrics used in your considerations and a lot of ever-changing information as we move through this pandemic. Thank you for all of your efforts on our students' behalf.

Dr. Marschhausen commented that the new studies mentioned by parent letters are addressed by our staff and the health department officials in our weekly meetings. At times, the health departments and our CATS team have shared conflicting medical research. There are no easy decisions. We need to consider the risks associated with a virus that is killing people and the risks associated with the isolation that is also creating harm in our community. We are doing our best to try to balance two competing issues to find the best possible solution.

Mr. Perry echoed the comments by both of his colleagues. He believes it is essential to thank the team especially considering the enormous amount of stress. He disagrees that there is not a 100% correct solution. He thinks this is as good as we can do given the information we have. I'm incredibly excited to be able to get students back in school. He noted some speculation that we would wait until after spring break for the restart, but we have always followed the facts and the data. The facts and data show that we can get our students back two weeks earlier, so that is what we will do. We (the Board) promised to get students back into school as soon as is safely possible. You have expressed why this is possible with the vaccination schedule that has been provided. He is glad that we can facilitate the vaccination of Franklin County educators.

Mrs. Long is interested in how transportation is preparing for the restart. She mentioned that at the beginning of the school year, we provided many different videos to help parents and students transition from eLearning to hybrid and wonder what we are doing to help everyone prepare for all-in.

Mr. Abate expressed his thanks to everyone involved with setting up and running the vaccination clinic at Davidson HS. It was a huge undertaking, and it went reasonably smoothly. Based on tonight's presentation, we are happy to get our students back in school very soon.

C ROUTINES

- C1 The agenda is correct, as presented.
- C2 The Board of Education adopted the agenda as presented.
- C3 The Board of Education approved the January 2021 Treasurer's Report.
- C4 The Board of Education approved the minutes from the following meetings:
 - a. January 11, 2021 – Organizational meeting minutes
 - b. January 11, 2021 – Organizational meeting notes
 - c. January 11, 2021 – Regular meeting minutes
 - d. January 11, 2021 – Regular meeting notes
 - e. January 25, 2021 – Work session meeting minutes
 - f. January 25, 2021 – Work session meeting 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 in 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 audio taped.

Note: The following letters are printed as written by the author.

Lisa Chaffee, 5981 Lakefront Ave., Hilliard 43026

We have a school board meeting on the 8th. If I am able to speak this is what I am going to say.

Where Has Common Sense Gone?

According to Merriam-Webster, common sense is defined as "sound and prudent judgment based on a simple perception of the situation or facts."

Our children are our most precious commodity. And we have let them down. By keeping them out of school full time they have fallen even further behind academically. The most important issue though is their mental health.

For many children school is the one place they can be safe physically and emotionally. They can be themselves. For some school is a refuge from abuse suffered at home. Per the data from the CDC, suicide is the second leading cause of death among young people aged 10 to 24. The CDC has also now stated it is safe to reopen schools even without the vaccination.

Children are social by nature. The effects of the isolation and social distancing have been detrimental and have exacerbated mental health issues. Let's face it, being a teenager is the most difficult times in one's life. This is the time our bodies are going through the most changes between the physical aspects of puberty such as how the body is changing in appearance to the hormonal effects. Truth is teens are a hot mess. They are trying to adjust to their new bodies while dealing with the social issues of fitting in, making friends, figuring out who they are and to add to that pressure deciding what they want to do after high school. Teens today have 100 times for stressors than my generation did due to social media. They are deluged with messages from all different angles.

School is the one place they can be with their peers who are going through the same things for the most part.

According to the CDC director Robert Redfield, suicides and drug overdoses have surpassed the death rate for the China virus among high school students. That was published in July 2020. The total numbers won't be released for two years for 2020. I do know from an email sent by the Superintendent last fall that at one point we had 2 confirmed suicides in Hilliard and 11 attempted that were hospitalized. How many attempts are we not aware of? How many kids are turning to drugs, alcohol, food or other things for comfort?

We have allowed the China virus to take away from our children the face to face contact desperately needed. Not to mention the extracurriculars kids thrive on such as clubs and sports. Kids are confined to their homes which has increased the rates of anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideation.

Where is the common sense in that?

My son is on the wrestling team. The OSHAA mandated that prior to and after each match the wrestlers are not permitted to shake hands. But they can roll all over each other on the mat. Where on God's green earth is the common sense in that?

It is way past time to get back to normal. There are parents who can't work because they have no child care for the time their child is in school.

It is time to stop listening to the fear mongering media and we decide what is best for our community. The China virus has a 99.9% survival rate.

If families want to keep their kids at home then let them remain in the online academy. If there are teachers who are afraid of being in the classroom in person then find other opportunities for them. But for those of us who want our kids in school full time let us. My son has ADHD and needs to be in the classroom. There are many other children with various abilities that need to be in school full time. As parents and members of this community we CANNOT continue to allow people who are miles and miles

away to make decisions for us. It is beyond time to bring common sense back into the picture. It is time for you school board members to get off your high horse and listen to us. And believe me when I tell you that all the choices you make as members of this board will not be forgotten come election time.

Beth Murdoch, 3056 Hemlock Edge Drive, Hilliard, OH 43026

I have stood in front of you virtually and in person nearly every month for almost a year now. In addition to my public statements, I have sent numerous emails to each of you citing facts and scientific studies in an attempt to convince you that it is safe for our children to attend school in person 5 days a week. You clearly haven't been swayed by logical fact-based arguments so it's time to pull out all of the stops. I was looking forward to the opportunity to look you in the eye and speak to all of you directly. You need to hear the fury and heartbreak in my voice, not just words read from an email. Despite the difficulty inherent in conveying these feelings of despair and frustration in writing, this is important enough to make an attempt. I am tired. I'm tired of feeling hopeless and helpless in making the changes my child and so many others desperately need. You claim to care about our children's mental health but short of a PR video, I haven't seen any evidence that you have made any appreciable changes to address the anxiety and depression exacerbated by your decisions. You claim to care about equity, but the fact is that many affluent families have fled the public school disaster for homeschooling or private schools. You claim to care about education and the "Covid gap" yet I have seen zero evidence that you have taken steps to "adapt and adjust."

Keeping kids out of school and asking kids to protect adults is despicable. There is no justification for losing even one more day of in-person instruction! The enumeration of COVID 19 deaths, is always available. It's at the top of the New York Times webpage and Governor DeWine talks about this statistic every week. I don't want that number to be that high, it's outrageous. But where is the ticker up there with kids who were abused, with kids who have failing grades, with kids who will never be able to be an engineer, or a doctor, or a lawyer because they have fallen too far behind? Where are the statistics about teen pregnancy, suicide, or kids who got shot on the streets when they should have been safely in school? Where are the counters for that all of that? There is no visibility to those impacts. If these struggles tugged on your heart the same way, we wouldn't be having this conversation.

How you can continue to claim you are following the science and still hold our children hostage for political purposes is beyond me. I've read the emails exchanged between yourselves and the teachers union. Clearly, the educational system is powerfully influenced by organizations that don't seem to believe in critical thinking, adjusting beliefs according to the evidence, or combating fear with science. The unions are not reflecting reality. Instead of addressing legitimate fears with facts and evidence, they are using their political muscle to inflame those fears. Children, the most vulnerable people in society, are the victims. The drive to stay remote or hybrid is nothing more than fear-based. It has become an emotional and political conversation and I don't know how you end that.

What I do know is that it takes leadership and courage and you are a bunch of cowards. You will be held accountable as you are failing the children of Hilliard. Distance education is neither a high-quality mode of learning, nor an equitable one. A quality in-person education is not a privilege, it is a right. When did you lose sight of that? Your lack of leadership is costing us and I'm asking you to quit. Quit giving in to fear, quit making our children a slave to their screens, and if you can't do that, quit your role here on the school board. Because you know what? There are a lot of other people, just like me, who are willing to take your place and put the children first.

Zach Vorst, 6181 Baumeister Dr., Hilliard, OH 43026

My name is Zach Vorst. My family and I live at 6181 Baumeister Drive here in Hilliard. I'm writing to you all again to advocate that you stop choosing to keep our kids out of all-in school and decide to give parents the option of sending our children to all-in five day per week instruction. I understand it's been a challenging year. There have been obstacles in our lives that none of us have ever dealt with.

Please remember the morbidity and mortality profile of COVID 19 in children and healthy adults under 65 is extremely favorable. The risk of transmission in schools is extremely low. The lack of the all-in option for our students is hurting them. You have employed several mitigation strategies. The teachers and staff are getting vaccinated. American Academy of Pediatrics confirms that it is acceptable for desks to be a minimum of three feet apart to maintain social distancing in schools. All these signs point to going back to all-in school.

What are you waiting for?

I have collected several articles about how this policy is hurting students and included the links to them below. I'll give a brief synopsis of each.

American Academy of Pediatrics and Duke University: "In the first 9 weeks of in-person instruction in North Carolina schools, we found extremely limited within-school secondary transmission of SARS-CoV-2, determined by contact tracing, in a study of over 100,000 students."

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children: "With our kids isolated, vulnerable, and online at home more, reports of online enticement by sexual predators have doubled in 2020."

New York Times: "A surge in student suicides has pushed Clark County Nevada, the fifth largest school district in the country, to reopen their schools"

Columbus Dispatch: "The study of 728 students found that there was "no discernible difference" in the infection rate of students who were in close contact with a pupil who had tested positive for the virus and those who were not exposed, said Dr. Bruce Vanderhoff, medical director for the Ohio Department of Health."

New York Times: "On Tuesday, federal health officials from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) weighed in with a call for returning children to the nation's classrooms as soon as possible, saying the "preponderance of available evidence" indicates that in-person instruction can be carried out safely as long as mask-wearing and social distancing are maintained."

Those are five different articles explaining different angles of how this policy of not having students in school is hurting them.

Mason and Lakota schools, two of the biggest districts in Ohio have been all-in since the fall. The quarantine requirement that kept a lot of their students out has recently been revised by the Governor. Students who are masked and exposed to a positive case while at school no longer have to quarantine. This new rule has helped these large school systems slash their quarantine numbers. The fear of having high quarantine numbers as a reason to keep us from going all-in is no longer a valid excuse!

Those facts aside, quarantines and virus transmission due to exposure at Mason City Schools were extremely low. In that system only 4% of COVID-19 positive cases in their staff were from in-school exposure. The staff who caught COVID-19 were getting it outside of school! On top of that only 3.75% (roughly 1 out of 27) of those students in January 2021 who were forced to quarantine due to a close contact had experienced that close contact while at school. Students and staff usually spend half of their waking hours, or more, at school! Those needing quarantine aren't being exposed at school! The risk of transmission of COVID-19 has always been higher outside of school than inside of school.

New Albany is going all-in now. Dozens of Central Ohio parochial schools and hundreds of public schools all over the state have been all-in since August. Soon several other schools should follow. The kids from disadvantaged backgrounds and with special needs are the ones hurting the most! Show that you care about them! Are you going to be leaders or followers?

I want to thank the individual front-line teachers who have been striving to make this work. My daughters' teachers, Ms. Henman and Ms. Gilmore at Hoffman Trails, have been amazing!

I'm an anesthesia provider, I've intubated COVID-19 patients. I understand the risks of this disease. I hope you all understand the risks to our kids of keeping them out of school and choose to do the right thing by giving parents the option to send our kids to all-in five day per week instruction. Thank you.

Robert Murdoch, 3056 Hemlock Edge Drive, Hilliard, OH 43026

I have a few points I'd like to make to the Hilliard City School Board of Education.

1. It is a shame that as cases and deaths decrease, this Board continues to hold most of its meetings online. One cannot help but think that, given the few times the Board has allowed people to speak in person, the way the Board has been roundly shamed for its actions has led to the Board trying to avoid directly facing the public. Virtual meetings are the cowardly way of conducting the business of education. I have been to Board meetings during 2020 and with so few public participants each month, there is absolutely no valid reason for not holding these meetings in person.
2. I saw from the minutes of the last Board meeting that there quite a bit of discussion about diversity and equity. It was suggested that it was somehow the Hilliard City School District's job to teach students about equity. There was a reference to pushback from parents that was misconstrued by this Board. I don't think the Board understands what parents object to at all. I have absolutely no objection, nor do many other parents, to students being taught about diversity and equity. What I strongly object to is the use of Critical Race Theory in education. Anybody who has researched the topic of critical race theory immediately sees all the logical flaws in it. This Board and this school district should focus on teaching our students the basic subjects, not worrying about race theories that I'm pretty certain this all-white Board knows very little about.
3. I'm not going to belabor the statistics and policy positions that demonstrate how wrong Hilliard City School District's approach — and fear of — in-person learning has been. At this point, I'm no longer willing to accept the standard educator argument that you're just following the science. Nothing could be further from the truth. Last week, the head of the Centers for Disease Control publicly stated that vaccination of teachers should not be an impediment to in-person learning. Is this Board going to follow the science and the policy recommendations from the federal and state governments to get students to in-person learning

as soon as possible? I think not. I want everybody listening to this Board meeting to watch what this Board actually decides to do. I'm going to make a prediction that I really hope is wrong. This Board is going to take the position that, as much as it would like in-person learning to happen right away, teachers are still being vaccinated, there are still masking and social distancing issues with all students returning to class five days a week, and so, what the heck, why don't we just put off the in-person return of students until after the spring break?

I want this Board to prove me wrong about that prediction but I have absolutely no confidence that this Board truly cares about educational instruction anymore. This Board pretends to care and states that it cares, but every single ACTION this Board takes belies its claims. If you cared about children and education at all, you would immediately switch to in-person instruction for all students five days a week. There is no science to support waiting any longer. But I'm sure you'll find a way to delay actually helping our children. You always do.

Laura Tucker, 5758 Whispering Oak Blvd.

Dr. Marschhausen and Hilliard City School Board,

Good evening, I hope you all are here tonight with the highest priority of getting our children back to all-in school in the fore front of your minds. We can not wait any longer without an all-in option. Quite frankly, we are tired of your meritless excuses. You say you must follow the science. You say you want what is best for our children. It is beyond time for your actions to match your words.

In the words of the American Academy of Pediatrics, school is the essential business of childhood. Teachers and school staff are essential workers. To do essential work you have to show up on site. Many occupations have done this without complaint throughout the entirety of the pandemic. For many of our kids to learn, including my own, they need teachers in front of them; engaging them, guiding them, understanding them, cheering for them, providing constructive criticism for them. A high five, a hug, an encouraging facial expression. You just can not attain these things from online assignments. Our kids are hurting and you, the public education system, are failing them.

Open your doors and get back to essential business. It is safe to do so and it is BEYOND time to start making policies based on facts and not out of fear. There have been numerous studies showing transmission of Covid 19 in schools to be very low. There have also been studies showing that closing schools has no significant effect on decreasing community spread and that opening schools has no significant effect on increasing spread. We know that mental health visits to pediatricians and ERs are well above pre-Covid times. Suicide rates are up. Grades are falling and dropouts are increasing. Kids are lost and giving up. Millions of kids across the country unaccounted for. How do you sleep at night and not feel complicit in all of this? And when our kids ask you "why?" what do you tell them? When the kids know the science and the experts say it's safe and you still say "no", what do you tell them?

Did you know that there is even a study with Brown University's Annenberg Institute for School Reform, that looked at Public Education's Response to COVID-19? It indicated that partisanship as well as the strength of local teachers' unions drove reopening plans "far more" than public health conditions. The truth is if you look across the country you will find that private and parochial schools are more likely to be open and public schools closed, schools in blue voting districts closed and red districts open, schools with strong unions closed, schools open for the rich and schools closed for the poor and marginalized. How did something like providing opportunities and educating children become a political game? It is hard not to

speculate politics and teachers' unions are playing a role here in Hilliard and with other Franklin County public schools.

You have put in place mitigation strategies such as masking. The American Academy of Pediatrics has stated that 3 feet apart is acceptable to maintain social distancing in schools. You are no longer quarantining low risk exposures when both parties are masked. Teachers and staff are getting vaccinated. What more could you possibly demand as a stipulation to meet before going all-in?!

Centers for Disease Control (CDC) continues to weigh in with a call for returning children to the nation's classrooms as soon as possible, saying the "preponderance of available evidence" indicates that in-person instruction can be carried out safely. Other large districts in Ohio have been all-in since the fall. Large districts much like Hilliard, such as Mason and Lakota, have been open all-in since the beginning of the school year. Those students are moving forward with educational, emotional and social gains while ours are being left behind.

The risk of transmission of COVID-19 has always been higher outside of school than inside of school. Nearly a year in and it is well known that morbidity and mortality in children who get Covid 19 is extremely rare. What are you waiting for? Our kids are suffering and being forced to make monumental sacrifices at your hand.

As a medical provider I understand the risks of this disease. There is no where in medicine you would get away with prescribing an intervention with such significant adverse effects without proven efficacy. Yet here we are. Schools are shuttered causing devastating harm without any known benefit. Do what is right for our children, be a leader for other public schools in the region, listen to the facts and evidence based data, and open your doors with an all-in option.

Amanda Powers

Good evening. As many of you know, I have been very open and brutally honest with my feelings concerning how this school year has been handled. I also have not received a response from any of the elected board members in months. However, I will not apologize for my blatantness. As a parent, it is my job to protect the rights of my children. And a proper education is one of those rights. I have been incredibly disappointed in the decisions this board has made over the last few months concerning all in school and the indoctrination of the leftist agenda on our children. Asking you to respect the conservative values and Judeo- Christian morals should not be an issue. Your job is to teach- not to indoctrinate. The need to send out an email to defend your actions only points more towards your guilt. I graduated from Dublin Coffman High School. I use to joke that there was no way I could live in Hilliard and send my children to what was once my rival school. However, over the past 8 years, I have been so proud of the Hilliard School System. I would brag to my Dublin friends about our schools and teachers. That has all changed this year. If there were openings in private schools, I would be pulling my kids immediately. You are heading down a slippery slope. I am afraid to see what will be taught in the coming years to my kindergartener.

Secondly, I must address the issue concerning the return to full time school. Many parents will be sending you articles and research that proves school is safe. However, you choose to ignore these facts and side with the teacher unions. I know this is a fact because I had the privilege to observe a zoom meeting with Governor DeWine, Husted and a few others. Gov DeWine said, and I quote, "We are not in school because

of the teacher unions. Kids are doing well with masking, it's the parents who are not." That statement was followed with a chuckle. You may think you can pull the wool over our eyes, but we are a group of very intelligent parents. We have our ears to the ground, and our finger on the pulse. We know what is happening. And the culture that is being set comes from you. Teachers refuse to work because you allow that behavior. Therefore, I hold all of you responsible for the joke of an education my children have received this year. In person time is precious. And you take that away to turn the school into a clinic. There are dozens of empty Columbus city schools that could have been used for this purpose. You also plan to cancel more in person days towards the end of February, yet have not informed the parents.

Luckily, we have some amazing parents who will be stepping up to the challenge and will be replacing the board members who's term are coming to an end. Hilliard is in desperate need of real leadership provided by individuals with skin in the game. It's time to Make Hilliard Great Again.

Kim Hartman, 5563 Rubble Ln. 43026

Dear Superintendent and members of the school board. Thanks for allowing me to share my comments.

It appears we've reached the point where all I have left in me is to beg for you to open our schools full-time for these children. You all are failing them. They have become victims and this hybrid path we are on is not good enough. I have heard numerous experts and seen study after study after study showing that in person school is safe. I can only assume as dedicated school board members and evidence that supports in person school, we are still not all in 5 days a week. Why is this? Full-time education is happening in 350 other Ohio school districts. It's happening in our private schools just a few miles away. It's happening in other states all over the country. The only logical conclusion I can draw is that our teachers union is standing in the way of this happening in Hilliard, and our board is allowing this one small group to dictate our kids' future. This is extremely disappointing and it makes me so incredibly sad to know we have individuals who have chosen a profession that involves teaching our youth, yet they are not standing up for our kids to be in classrooms fulltime. Once again, we know our schools are the safest place for our students and teachers to be in our community. This fact alone should be more than enough for the district to do what's best for them. Anything other than what's best for them is WRONG. Teachers are essential and I expect them to be held accountable to that title.

I've had to make the difficult decision to pull my 3 children from Hilliard City Schools this coming fall. They will attend a school that puts their students social-emotional, and educational needs first. I can't speak for others but something tells me I won't be the only one who is looking at alternative options for school next year. I can no longer support a district who denies the data. I am excited for them to attend a new school with more in person learning to meet all their needs. However, what scares me the most for my children is they are going to be academically behind students who have received more instruction than them this year. I have a second grader who's reading and writing stamina has plummeted. While he is incredibly bright, he lacks the endurance to complete basic reading and writing assignments without total frustration which then spirals into lack of motivation to put forth quality work. My kids without a shadow of doubt will not be "ready for tomorrow" when they start next year at a new school.

With the delivery of the vaccine to our teachers that took away precious class time, and also bypassed a more vulnerable at-risk population, I expect nothing less than 5 days a week of in person learning starting March 1st. Quarantine restrictions have relaxed, teachers have been vaccinated, and our cases are going down because the flawed PCR test cycles have been identified as too high. There are now no more excuses left. It's time for our school board to speak up for these kids or to step down from their seat. 2020

has placed a bright spotlight on all of our elected officials. Please get these kids in classrooms 5 days a week where they belong, or we can and will find others who will fight for our most important asset - our children.

Andria Hudson, 6865 Bluebird Pl., Hilliard, OH 43026

Mr. Marschhausen and Board members,

I am very disappointed in the Superintendent, some of the board members, and some of the teachers in the way you have handled COVID and Political situations. Our children need to be in school 5 days a week. The data does not support keeping kids out of the classrooms, You guys know that as well as I do, because you can find the same data that I can find. Everyone keeps saying to follow the science, right? Well Hilliard schools are not following the science. The schools are pushing fear, and not only that, now you are pushing things that should not have anything to do with my children's public school education. It is very obvious from the email we all received from you, Mr. Marschhausen, that you and the district are ready to teach our children what you want them to be taught whether you have the support of the community or not. How disappointing to know that you don't care whether you have our support or not, but I guess that shouldn't come as a surprise due to the fact that most of us have not supported how you have handled COVID19 and the mental illness crisis we are seeing in our children. I'm seeing and hearing about so many kids struggling to get through this school year, and the mental toll it is taking on our children is heartbreaking. When the school year is over I will be pulling both of my children from Hilliard Schools and moving them only an hour and half away where children have been in school 5 days a week the whole school year and where they make sure their teachers remember that their job is to teach my children Math, Language Arts, History etc... not POLITICS and teach our children to think with their heads not their feelings. When it comes to COVID, VACCINES, ELECTIONS and many other topics Teachers are supposed to always stay neutral, they have never been allowed to push their personal beliefs on our children, but it is definitely happening, and you guys are ignoring parents concerns! Many of us do feel this is leaning more towards indoctrination instead of education! Not only are you ignoring our concerns but now you are saying you don't care that you don't have community support! You will be losing two wonderful kind, smart children due to your actions, and I know for a fact you are going to see the affects of your decisions in your enrollment next school year. Parents will only take so much before we fight back, and this is my way of fighting back!

I came to a few in person Board Meetings and to say I was disappointed in the way you, Mr. Marschhausen, conducted yourself is being kind. You would not even look up from your computer and make eye contact with the parents and a child when they were addressing you directly. I knew at that moment that you did not care about the parents thoughts and feelings or the children's! I watched a brave young man address you and you couldn't even give him the respect of looking at him, that tells me a lot about the person you are. I sent you, the Vice Principal and the Principal an email in regards to a concern I had regarding my child and what happened during one of her classes, and would it surprise you to know that I never received any kind of email from you. I received a phone call from both the Vice Principal and Principal but not even an email from you. GET OUR KIDS BACK IN SCHOOL 5 DAYS A WEEK, AND QUIT PUSHING POLITICS ON OUR CHILDREN! Do the right thing for our children!

Mr. Perry expressed his appreciation to the parents for reaching out with their concerns. There has been some speculation that the Board is somehow acting out of political interests rather than the interests of our students and staff. I cannot speak for the Board, but this personally offends me. It offends me when someone impugns my integrity and suggests that I'm not acting in the best interest of our students. We

have been following the science, facts and data. What we are doing is working. As far as indoctrination on race, I draw the line there. Calling COVID-19 the “China virus” is a racial epithet towards our Asian-American students, and we will not tolerate it. The good thing for our Asian-American students and staff, they don’t represent the district, we do. We stand behind our diverse students and staff unequivocally. A parent mentioned “critical race theory.” I don’t know what they are talking about, not from a lack of knowledge, but as in we are not doing that. I think when the parent said we misunderstood the parent’s anger perhaps the parent misunderstood our purpose. Our purpose has only been to increase appreciation for diversity, equity, and inclusivity in our school district.

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 adopted the following policies:

- a) BDC – Executive Sessions
- b) DH – Bonded Employees and Officers
- c) DM – Cash in School Buildings
- d) GBRA – Family and Medical Leave Act Expansion (rescind policy)
- e) GBRA-A – Family and Medical Leave Act Expansion (rescind policy)
- f) GBRAA – Emergency Paid Sick Leave (rescind policy)
- g) GBRAA-A-R – Emergency Paid Sick Leave (rescind policy)

F2 The Board of Education approved the following resolution:

AMENDED

RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE AMOUNTS AND RATES AS DETERMINED BY THE BUDGET
COMMISSION AND AUTHORIZING THE NECESSARY TAX LEVIES
AND CERTIFYING THEM TO THE COUNTY AUDITOR

(CITY, VILLAGE OF LOCAL BOARD OF EDUCATION)
OHIO REVISED CODE, SECTIONS 5705.34, 5705.35

WHEREAS, This Board of Education in accordance with the provisions of law has previously adopted a Tax Budget for the next succeeding fiscal year commencing July 1, 2020; and

WHEREAS, The Budget Commission of Franklin County, Ohio, has certified its action thereon to this Board together with an estimate by the County Auditor of the rate of each tax necessary to be levied by this Board, and what part thereof is without, and what part within, the ten mill tax limitation; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the Board of Education of the Hilliard City School District, Franklin County, Ohio, that the amounts and rates, as determined by the Budget Commission in its certification, be and the same are hereby accepted: and be it further

RESOLVED, That there be and is hereby levied on the tax duplicate of said School District the rate of each tax necessary to be levied within and without the ten mill limitation for tax year 2020 (collection year 2021) as follows:

SCHEDULE A

SUMMARY OF AMOUNTS REQUIRED FROM GENERAL PROPERTY TAX APPROVED BY THE BUDGET COMMISSION, AND COUNTY AUDITOR’S ESTIMATED TAX RATES

Fund	County Auditor’s		Estimate of Full Tax	
	Amount to be Derived from Levies Outside 10 Mill Limitation	Amount Approved By Budget Commission Inside 10 Mill Limitation	Inside 10 Mill Limit	Outside 10 Mill Limit
General Fund	\$136,228,529.84	\$15,290,758.48	4.45	80.50
Bond Retirement	\$16,938,935.72			4.95
Permanent Improvement Classroom Facilities	\$5,211,911.16			2.00
TOTAL	\$158,379,376.72	\$15,290,758.48	4.45	87.45

and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Treasurer of this Board be and is hereby directed to certify a copy of this Resolution to the County Auditor of said County.

Discussion

Mr. Wilson stated that this is a routine procedural matter required by Ohio Revised Code. Of note is that our bond millage is decreasing from 6.8 mills to 4.95 mills (resulting in a savings of \$35 per \$100,000).

F3 The Board of Education approved the following resolution:

Because of the unprecedented situation surrounding the COVID-19 situation, various Administrative staff were needed on the job and were not able to take vacations in 2020. This effectively precludes these Administrators from using the earned and accrued vacation days last year, and it is recommended that the Board adopt the following resolution with respect to these staff members:

1. Any such Administrator with an earned and accrued vacation balance as of February 1, 2021, in excess of twenty (20) days may opt to cash in, at his/her then current rate of pay, up to but not to exceed ten (10) vacation days.
2. In all cases, the Administrator wishing to cash in vacation days shall make that fact known via email (or other writing) to the District Treasurer not later than March 1, 2021. The Treasurer and Superintendent have final authority to approve or disapprove any Administrator’s request.
3. This resolution is valid only through March 1, 2021 and is not precedent setting. This resolution does not supersede any other resolution, policy or individual contract already in existence.

Discussion

We have some administrative staff who could not take a vacation last summer because we needed them at work to get things done. Several staff members are at or near the number of vacation days they can carry. We cannot afford these staff members to use all of their vacation days this upcoming summer because we will need them here again. We will encourage everyone to take their traditional vacations. Still, I think it's also important we recognize these staff members have worked incredibly hard and given a lot of themselves during this crisis.

G REPORTS / INFORMATION / EXHIBIT ITEM

G1 Committee Reports

There were no committee reports.

G3 Enrollment

Current enrollment is included in your Board packet.

G4 Superintendent's Update

a. Assistant Superintendent Search Update

We will be conducting the first round of interviews this week. The ESC of Central Ohio handled the search for us and have provided us with eight candidates. Mr. Perry and Mr. Abate will join us for the second round of interviews that will take place the week of February 15. We have a diverse pool of candidates, and I'm excited about the potential of these candidates.

b. Scheduling and Staffing Update

One of the things that give us great excitement about returning to all-in is also planning for next school year. We believe the direction we are heading will allow us to be all-in for the next school year. We will continue to offer the Online Academy.

c. Thank you and appreciation for the vaccine clinic

Dr. Marschhausen thanked Mr. McDonough and Mr. Hetzel, and their teams for all of their work to get ready for the vaccination clinic at Davidson HS. As our partners at Kroger tell us, we were notified about four days ahead of time that it would happen. The early planning for vaccinating Franklin County educators was to spread it out over three weeks. It was initially going to take place at COSI. The plan evolved into getting all Franklin County educators vaccinated in one week.

Contrary to some of the public participation letters read earlier this evening, our hosting of the event had nothing to do with our kids being in school. Our fieldhouse was able to be cordoned off. Our partners at Norwich Township Fire Department and Hilliard Division of Police were amazing. They helped with planning meetings, traffic control, and security at the door when people showed up at the end of every night looking for vaccines. I am so proud we were able to make it happen.

- d. I have had some conversations with Mrs. Kennedy about calamity days versus eLearning days versus snow days. There's a potential for 2-4 inches of snow tonight. I am mindful that tomorrow is a "B" day, but if the roads are not passable tomorrow, we will have another snow day. We will do what is safe for students. We have had some conversations about extremely cold days. If we know that extreme cold is coming, maybe we could schedule an eLearning day instead of canceling school. Is this something we might consider? I think we need to look at this for the future.

H EXECUTIVE SESSION / ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Perry thanked the community for their overwhelming support throughout this difficult situation.

- H1 The meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m.