



Resolution in Opposition to House Bill 616, 322 and 327

WHEREAS, House Bill 322 (Regards the teaching of certain current events, race, and sex) was introduced in the Ohio House of Representatives on May 25, 2021 and referred to the House State and Local Government Committee on June 10, 2021; and

WHEREAS, House Bill 327 (Prohibits teaching, advocating, or promoting divisive concepts) was introduced in the Ohio House of Representatives on May 25, 2021 and referred to the House State and Local Government Committee on June 10, 2021; and

WHEREAS, House Bill 616 (Regards promotion, teaching-divisive, inherently racist concepts) was introduced in the Ohio House of Representatives on April 4, 2022; and

WHEREAS, all three bills represent an unprecedented intrusion into the ability of local communities through locally elected school boards to determine and regulate curriculum and instruction; and

WHEREAS, the sponsors of the bills have not identified anything within the Ohio state standards for K-12 Education or in any Ohio public school district that prompted the need for these pieces of legislation and instead include false assumptions about curriculum; and

WHEREAS, the language contained in these pieces of legislation is likely unconstitutionally overbroad and vague; and

WHEREAS, the legislation would have a chilling effect on dialogue and inject fear and instability into a system of public education that is already under-resourced, under-staffed, and under tremendous strain; and

WHEREAS, the language contained in these bills would jeopardize the ability of the Gahanna-Jefferson school district to ensure all students feel a sense of belonging and build an egalitarian culture that embraces differences and promotes a safe environment in which all students and educators can be their authentic selves; and

WHEREAS, the language in these bills opposes our American value of equality by intending to censor, marginalize, exclude and discriminate against our diverse communities, including LGBTQ+ and people of color; and

WHEREAS, the result of these bills moving forward risks furthering the current mental health crisis through isolation, silence, and normalizing discrimination by creating a culture where students and educators do not feel valued and respected; and

WHEREAS, educators and students can and should have appropriate conversations about difficult issues, and neither should be punished for doing so; and

WHEREAS, District staff must be able to receive quality training on these and other challenging topics as they work to support the needs of our students, and these bills prohibit such training.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Education of the GahannaJefferson City School District, that the Board formally opposes and rejects HB 322, HB 327, and HB 616 of the 134th General Assembly as an unprecedented and unlawful overreach and intrusion into public education; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Treasurer is authorized to deliver or cause to be delivered a certified copy of this Resolution to members of the Ohio House of Representatives and the Ohio State Senate (including House Speaker Bob Cupp; Senate President Matt Huffman; Representative Scott Wiggam, Chair of the House State and Local Government Committee; State Representative Brigid Kelly, Ranking Member of the House State and Local Government Committee; State Representative Mary Lightbody; State Representative Richard Brown; and State Senator Tina Maharath); and to the office of Governor Mike DeWine.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution shall be in full force and effect from and immediately after its adoption and shall supersede any prior resolution or act of this Board, which may be inconsistent or duplicative with the provisions of this resolution; and

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