

May 11, 2021 School Board Member Comments

1:11:12 Nancy Drees:

I'm happy to make a comment about it. I know the community and the District has been going through the process of looking at our bathrooms. My only wish is I wish we could take every one of you in to show you exactly what these bathrooms are. They are private bathrooms for individuals and I do believe that it is a safe protocol and it allows our teachers to watch our children from the safety of a hallway, rather than the closed door of a bathroom. Unfortunately, because of COVID, and because of our current situation, we hoped to have these tours open for people to actually see these bathrooms. I'm very hopeful that the 10th District Court of Appeals will approve the Windermere Appeal and that we can move on from this issue and get back on education.

1:12:16 Lori Trent

I would like to approach this, I guess, I totally agree with what Nancy said, by the way, and thank you for that. I would like to approach this from a much larger scale. What this says to me is we have some disconnects within our community about accepting people that are different from perhaps who we are. This I find extremely troubling and...(boos from crowd). under breath: (Okay. I guess they like that.) I find it very troubling not only for those of us who are older in this community who believed in something bigger that our community could do. We have lots of forward momentum about acceptance and inclusion and diversity and we really all need to pull together as a community and recognize differences are what make this country and this community special. So, I'm very troubled, again, to say that word three times, that we have to take this step at this point, but I'm hopeful that it will be a short term step to ultimately get to what is best for all of our kids, in all different areas, all different families, all different lifestyles, all different interests, because they're going to be the ones that live with the decisions that we make.

1:13:58 Carol Mohr:

Thank you Lori and thank you Nancy. This is very personal, those of us who've had children go through the schools. I know I've talked to my daughter and son about it and they both understand what is so important about this, and my daughter said, "Mom, I would never go to the bathroom because that's where... the bullies are there." We have an opportunity to create spaces where bullying is not the norm, that bullying is not accepted, that the expected behavior of going to the boys room isn't that song that's probably going through your head right now, "smoking in the boys room," that the expected behavior isn't that you go to the restroom to get away from the teacher's eyes, to create a space where behavior problems are the norm, but to have a space where literally you're going to use the restroom for its purpose and then going about your business. That's all anyone wants. The likelihood of success as I see it with the Windermere all gender restrooms at the 10th District Court of

Appeals, helps me hear the motion that you've made and understand that my goal is certainly what I expect to happen is to have the all gender restrooms which are completely within the law, completely within code, and are already accepted in Grandview and the norm in the building in Grandview, which last I heard is not very far from Upper Arlington. This has been accepted. This will come to pass. But, because of the city coming to us, it doesn't make sense at this time for us to have any kind of legal action, or waste any money on lawyers, because we're going ultimately, I believe, to prevail in the Windermere case and that will bring an expectation of all of the cases following. The City has gone shoulder to shoulder with us to the Board of Building Appeals and they have expressed to us that they are very confident that this is not a safety issue, but we have a difference of opinion on what the code does and does not say. I'm sure that all of you have had children in your neighborhood, or your children's friends who've grown up, know people who have come out as transgender, and it's my hope that we accept people for who they are, the entirety of who they are, and not only accept them as they fit into what we say is acceptable for them. I am for the well-being of all of our students and for creating a culture where it's expected that there will not be bullying. That it's expected that there will be the ability to have supervision, the way that our new bathrooms are designed. That's all that I have. Thank you.

1:18:43 Jenny McKenna:

I would, I mean I guess I would just like to say, I'm disappointed that the City does not interpret the code the same way that we do. This is definitely not the outcome I think any of us were hoping for. We still have the one, our last, you know, our last avenue with the appeal with Windermere, and we are really hopeful that that is a positive outcome for our district. We are really trying to, I think, fight this, what I believe to be, good fight, in the most fiscally responsible way possible. We have spent a lot of time, money, effort to try and do what we as a board believe is in the best interest of our students, that is the safest, that is the most inclusive, caring, thoughtful way, what's been deemed to be educationally the best. So, I guess I would just say that I'm disappointed that this is the outcome where we're at right now, would be a really big understatement, and I think, we really hope that we are able to move forward in a different direction once we hear the appeal about Windermere.

1:20:07 Scott McKenzie:

So yeah, I guess I'd like to also say that we certainly have a difference of opinion with the City, and you know personally, I would like to say I'm angry with it, with the decision and I'm a little confused. But I think that people can see that the resolution from this board is that we will respect the authority of the City, but that we have a difference of opinion. So if anyone else has a comment, if not I'm just going to ask Andy to call the roll. Anybody else have anything to say? Okay. Andy, would you please call the roll on this Board resolution.