MEDIA STATEMENT

September 21, 2020

"Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools has been working diligently to create a model of learning for our students that relies on our own teachers and curriculum and delivers the best possible outcomes for our students. We recognize that the adjustments that must be made by our teaching teams are not easy, and we firmly believe we have respectfully addressed a number of their concerns and are committed to continuing the conversion.

"Our hybrid model replicates the in-classroom experience for our students as much as possible, while maintaining strong health and safety protocols. Our planning began with our task force work earlier this summer, with more than 70 teachers participating.

"Conversations with our teachers and the union are ongoing, as we help them understand the benefits of our hybrid approach for students and families, which include:

- Assuring our students are able to learn from Gahanna teachers, and from lessons designed by our teachers, without the use of a third-party platform.

- Providing more teacher contact time for students. Most hybrid learning models provide only 50% contact time, which means it will be difficult for students to get through more than 50% of a year's material.

- Enabling teachers to meet with students in small or large groups as they deem appropriate, without the expectation that hybrid and distance learning students will be online all day.

- Reducing the number of teacher and student schedule changes that must be made at the 6-12 grade level.

- Providing teachers with additional planning, intervention and collaboration time.

- Maintaining access to the district's full course offerings.

"It is important to know that as negotiations with the union continue, the current contract with our teachers remains in place, which means the same step raises and benefits also remain. Our teachers are dedicated professionals, and we take their concerns seriously. We are working hard to finalize an updated agreement."