

WHEREAS, public schools have been the hallmark of the American education system and the foundation of the nation's democracy; and

WHEREAS, Ohio's schools have traditionally been governed by an elected board of education whose members have been chosen by their fellow community members to make sound decisions about educating their community's children and to determine the most effective use of local tax dollars in pursuit of that goal; and

WHEREAS, the 2010 appointment of an academic distress commission in the Youngstown City Schools and the recent restructuring of that commission to function under a CEO appointed by individuals who may reside outside the Youngstown community — as opposed to being named by those who best know that community — has set aside the ability of the elected board of education to exercise its governing authority; and

WHEREAS, those restructuring changes were contained in a last-minute amendment to House Bill 70, which the Ohio General Assembly passed without any serious input from the Youngstown City Board of Education or Youngstown community; and

WHEREAS, this amendment was adopted by Columbus-based legislators with little or no connection to the Youngstown community and without any genuine effort to engage those most affected by the action; and

WHEREAS, this legislation lays the groundwork for the same restructuring changes to take place in other districts across the state

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the elected members of the Galion School District Board of Education, on behalf of the children and community we serve, do object and protest the manner in which this legislation was passed and question how district reforms and improvements can be achieved without involving and engaging the elected board of education and Youngstown community; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we ask the state superintendent of public instruction, as the manager of the academic distress commission process, to take appropriate steps to engage the elected board of education and community in the school improvement process prior to appointment of the new CEO; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we implore members of the Ohio General Assembly, the State Board of Education, and Gov. John R. Kasich to seek amendments to House Bill 70 and the academic distress commission procedures that will preserve and enhance democracy and local control; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that such amendments should embrace the original intent of House Bill 70: to foster community engagement and collaboration and to create community learning centers to better serve Youngstown's children and families; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Galion Board of Education hereby adopts this resolution and directs the district treasurer to reflect this action in the board of education's meeting minutes and that copies be distributed to the governor, members of the Ohio General Assembly and State Board of Education and state superintendent of public instruction.