**Mary Lang, Talking Points**

- I've been an elementary principal for St. Brendan School in Hilliard for 25 years. I just retired last year.

- I believe children need to learn how to write in cursive because it plays an important part in their motor skills and cognitive development.

- I've seen the benefits of handwriting pay off firsthand in many of my former students, including those with dyslexia and autism.

- Children need to be able to write legibly in cursive and comprehend text written in cursive. We've got to be able to communicate with each other in written form. Technology is great, but it's not always reliable or the best form of communication.

- The biggest obstacle to overcome is the belief that handwriting is not a critical literacy skill. Once the public understands the relationship between handwriting and letter, sound recognition they recognize that handwriting is still relevant and significant for student language and literacy development.

- Taking handwriting out of the classroom is not something that improves overall literacy; it in fact becomes an impediment to some students who need that tactile connection to learning letters - which are a basic building block to overall literacy development.

- There are very few things that students do in schools these days that allow for the fine motor skill development that using cursive handwriting provides.

- Teachers who continue to teach handwriting tout the attention to task that it helps students have when they focus on writing something in extended thought with cursive. They tend to write lengthier sentences and more complete thoughts. They tend to express more creative ideas then you'll get when they are focusing on just printing or typing letters.