[Cite as *State v. Chiles*, 2026-Ohio-4618.]

IN THE COURT OF APPEALS OF OHIO
SIXTH APPELLATE DISTRICT
LUCAS COUNTY

State of Ohio — Court of Appeals No. {48}L-26-00054

Appellee — Trial Court No. CR0202501054

v.

Thomas Chiles — **DECISION AND JUDGMENT**

Appellant — Decided: November 20, 2026

* * * * *

Julia R. Bates, Lucas County Prosecuting Attorney, and
Randy L. Meyer, Assistant Prosecuting Attorney, for appellee.

Michael H. Stahl, for appellant.

* * * * *

MAYLE, J.

{¶ 1} Defendant-appellant, Thomas Chiles, appeals the February 4, 2026 judgment of the Lucas County Court of Common Pleas, convicting him of rape and gross sexual imposition and sentencing him to a total stated prison term of 11 to 16 years. For the following reasons, we affirm.

I. Background

{¶ 2} Thomas Chiles was indicted on two counts of rape, violations of R.C. 2907.02(A)(2) and (B), first-degree felonies (Counts 1 and 2), and one count of gross

sexual imposition, a violation of R.C. 2907.05(A)(1) and (C)(1), a fourth-degree felony (Count 3). The victim was a 13-year-old girl who was staying at Chiles's house with her mother. The case underlying this appeal was a reindictment; the initial indictment misstated the year of the offenses (2025), which was corrected in the second indictment (2024).

{¶ 3} On January 12, 2026, Chiles entered a plea of no contest to Counts 1 and 3. The trial court accepted Chiles's plea and found him guilty. The matter was continued for a presentence investigation, and sentencing occurred on February 2, 2026. The court imposed a minimum prison term of ten years and a maximum prison term of 15 years on Count 1, and a definite prison term of 12 months on Count 3, to be served consecutively. The conviction and sentence were memorialized in a judgment journalized on February 4, 2026.

{¶ 4} Chiles appealed. He assigns the following errors for our review:

> I. The trial court erred in accepting a plea of no contest where Mr. Chiles indicated illiteracy to the point of requiring the terms of the plea agreement to be read to him, where the plea agreement required alteration, the charges against Mr. Chiles were never read in open court and Mr. Chiles indicated the plea was not what he wanted to do, contrary to the Constitutions of Ohio and the United States[.]
>
> II. Trial counsel provided ineffective assistance through a failure to investigate, a failure to consult with experts, failing to request a bill of particulars and advising a no contest plea despite Mr. Chiles' protestations of innocence rather than a plea pursuant to *North Carolina v. Alford*[.]

II. Law and Analysis

{¶ 5} In his first assignment of error, Chiles argues that the trial court erred in accepting his no-contest plea. In his second assignment of error, he argues that trial counsel was ineffective.

A. The court properly accepted Chiles's plea.

{¶ 6} In his first assignment of error, Chiles argues that the trial court did not take adequate steps to ensure that his plea of no contest was voluntary and intelligent. He complains that (1) during the plea colloquy, he "indicated illiteracy to the point of requiring the terms of the plea agreement to be read to him;" (2) "the plea agreement required alteration;" (3) the charges against him "were never read in open court;" and (4) he indicated at the plea hearing that the plea "was not what he wanted to do." Chiles insists that because these alleged inadequacies "impact[] the right against self-incrimination," he need not demonstrate resulting prejudice.

{¶ 7} The State responds that (1) Chiles is not illiterate; (2) his attorney read the plea agreement to him and discussed the evidence with him; (3) the trial court explained the alteration to the plea agreement; (4) Chiles confirmed that he understood the nature of the charges against him in the indictment; (5) Chiles indicated that he wished to enter the plea; and (6) Chiles did not protest his innocence at any time before the trial court's acceptance of his plea. The State disagrees with Chiles's assertion that he need not show prejudice.

{¶ 8} Chiles entered a plea of no contest. A "plea of no contest is not an admission of defendant's guilt, but is an admission of the truth of the facts alleged in the

indictment[.]" Crim.R. 11(B)(2). "Where the indictment . . . contains sufficient allegations to state a felony offense and the defendant pleads no contest, the court must find the defendant guilty of the charged offense." *State v. Bird*, 81 Ohio St.3d 582 (1998), paragraph one of the syllabus.

{¶ 9} "Due process requires that a defendant's plea be made knowingly, intelligently, and voluntarily; otherwise, the defendant's plea is invalid." (Internal citations and quotations omitted.) *State v. Fontanez*, 2026-Ohio-3281, ¶ 10. To ensure that a plea is made knowingly, intelligently, and voluntarily, Crim.R. 11(C) provides procedures the court must follow before accepting a plea in a felony case. *Id.* Under Crim.R. 11(C)(2), "[i]n felony cases the court . . . shall not accept a plea of . . . no contest without first addressing the defendant personally . . . and doing all of the following:

> (a) Determining that the defendant is making the plea voluntarily, with understanding of the nature of the charges and of the maximum penalty involved, and if applicable, that the defendant is not eligible for probation or for the imposition of community control sanctions at the sentencing hearing.
>
> (b) Informing the defendant of and determining that the defendant understands the effect of the plea of . . . no contest, and that the court, upon acceptance of the plea, may proceed with judgment and sentence.
>
> (c) Informing the defendant and determining that the defendant understands that by the plea the defendant is waiving the rights to jury trial, to confront witnesses against him or her, to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in the defendant's favor, and to require the state to prove the defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt at a trial at which the defendant cannot be compelled to testify against himself or herself.

{¶ 10} Literal or verbatim compliance with this rule is not required, however, the dialogue between the court and the defendant must demonstrate "that the defendant

understood the consequences of his plea." (Internal citations and quotations omitted.) *Fontanez* at ¶ 24. A defendant who wishes to vacate his plea must typically show that he was prejudiced by the omission of any part of the Crim.R. 11 colloquy. *Id*. The test for whether a defendant has suffered prejudice is whether he would have otherwise entered the plea. *Id.*

{¶ 11} Under Crim.R. 11(C)(2)(a), Chiles does not contend that the trial court failed to advise him and ensure that he understood the maximum penalty involved or that he was not eligible for probation or the imposition of community control sanctions. Under Crim.R. 11(C)(2)(b), he does not contend that the trial court failed to advise him and determine that he understood the effect of his plea and that it could immediately proceed with judgment and sentence. And under Crim.R. 11(C)(2)(c), he does not contend that the trial court failed to inform him and determine that he understood that by entering his plea he was waiving the rights to jury trial, to confront witnesses against him or her, to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in the defendant's favor, and to require the state to prove his guilt beyond a reasonable doubt at a trial at which he could not be compelled to testify against himself.

{¶ 12} This leaves only one Crim.R. 11(C)(2) deficiency: the trial court's purported failure under section (a) to determine that Chiles was making the plea voluntarily, with an understanding of the nature of the charges. But Chiles's claim is not that the trial court failed to literally comply with this rule—indeed, it cannot be disputed

that the court literally complied with Crim.R. 11(C)(2)(a).[1] The trial court specifically asked Chiles if he understood the nature of the charges:

> THE COURT: Do you understand the nature of the charges against you and the potential penalties associated with each one of them?
>
> THE DEFENDANT: Yes.

And it specifically asked whether Chiles's plea was voluntary:

> THE COURT: Are you entering into these guilty -- these no contest pleas voluntarily?
>
> THE DEFENDANT: Yes, sir.

{¶ 13} Chiles's specific challenge here is that he was not informed that "force" was an element of the offenses to which he entered a plea, thereby calling into question whether the court properly determined that his plea was entered voluntarily with an understanding of the nature of the charges. He questions "how the State would have

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[1] In *State v. Dangler*, 2020-Ohio-2765, the Ohio Supreme Court sought to move away from characterizations such as whether the trial court "partially," "substantially," "strictly," or "literally" complied with Crim.R. 11(C)(2), and to clarify when a defendant must demonstrate prejudice. It identified a "straightforward" three-part inquiry for appellate courts to undertake when a defendant challenges his plea as having been entered unknowingly, unintelligently, or involuntarily: "(1) has the trial court complied with the relevant provision of the rule? (2) if the court has not complied fully with the rule, is the purported failure of a type that excuses a defendant from the burden of demonstrating prejudice? and (3) if a showing of prejudice is required, has the defendant met that burden?" *Id.* at ¶ 17. A showing of prejudice is not required only if (1) "a trial court fails to explain the constitutional rights that a defendant waives by pleading guilty or no contest" under Crim.R. 11(C)(2)(c), or (2) a trial court "*complete[ly]* fail[s] to comply with a portion of Crim.R. 11(C)." *Id.* at ¶ 14-15. Neither of these exceptions applies here.

demonstrated [that] Mr. Chiles purposely used force to compel" the victim's submission. Chiles acknowledges that the court need not "always" state the elements of an offense when accepting a defendant's no-contest plea, but he claims that it was required to do so here because of his purported "illiteracy," alterations to the plea agreement, his waiver at arraignment of the reading of the indictment in open court, and his indication at the plea hearing that entering a plea was "not exactly" what he wanted to do.

{¶ 14} First, Chiles contends that during the plea colloquy, he "indicated illiteracy to the point of requiring the terms of the plea agreement to be read to him." This is not what Chiles said. What Chiles said was that he is dyslexic, it takes him a long while to read things, and if he has trouble reading something, he has people read to him:

> THE COURT: Can you read, write, and understand the English language?
>
> THE DEFENDANT: I'm dyslexic.
>
> THE COURT: Okay. Are you still able to read, despite that dyslexia?
>
> THE DEFENDANT: It takes me a long while to read something.
>
> THE COURT: If you have trouble reading something, do you have people read things to you?
>
> THE DEFENDANT: Yes.

Chiles indicated that his attorney read the plea form to him:

> THE COURT: The plea form today that you signed, did your attorney read that to you?
>
> THE DEFENDANT: Yes.

Chiles also confirmed that his attorney had gone over the evidence with him, she answered any questions he had, and he was satisfied with her advice and representation. Chiles denied that anyone had threatened him or promised him anything to persuade him to change his plea. And he acknowledged that by pleading no contest he was admitting the truth of the facts alleged in the indictment. Under these circumstances, Chiles's preference to have the plea agreement read to him does not support his present claim that he was not aware of the nature of the charges or that his plea was not entered voluntarily.

{¶ 15} Second, Chiles points out that "the plea agreement required alteration." The original plea form contained a misstatement of the maximum indefinite prison term. The trial court corrected this error both orally and on the plea form. It asked Chiles to initial the changes that were made to the plea form, which he did. Chiles concedes that "it seems that Mr. Chiles understood the alterations that were made to the plea form in open court due to an indefinite sentencing issue," so it is not clear why Chiles believes that it is significant that the plea form was corrected during the plea hearing. The alteration to the plea form does not support his present claim that he was not aware of the nature of the charges or that his plea was not entered voluntarily.

{¶ 16} Third, Chiles complains that while he entered a plea of no contest—thereby admitting the truth of the facts alleged in the indictment—he waived the reading of the indictment at arraignment. He insists that although the court recited the offenses and the degrees of the offenses to which he was entering his plea, he was not informed of the elements or the specific facts that he was admitting to, and this information was also not contained in the plea form. Under these circumstances, Chiles claims, he should have

been informed of the elements of the offenses in order to ensure that he understood the nature of the charges.

{¶ 17} The Ohio Supreme Court has recognized that Ohio courts generally hold that "'a detailed recitation of the elements of the charge is not required under Crim.R. 11(C)(2)(a).'" *State v. Fitzpatrick*, 2004-Ohio-3167, ¶ 57, quoting *State v. Swift,* 86 Ohio App.3d 407, 412 (11th Dist. 1993), citing *State v. Rainey,* 3 Ohio App.3d 441, 442 (10th Dist. 1982). Nor does the Constitution require the trial court to explain the elements of the charges where the record indicates that the nature of the offense has been explained to the defendant. *Id.* Rather, courts look to the totality of the circumstances in considering whether the trial court properly determined that the defendant understands the nature of the charges against him. *Rainey* at 442.

{¶ 18} Here, Chiles accurately represents that he waived the reading of the indictment in open court. But this is just one of many facts to be considered in determining whether the court properly ensured that Chiles understood the charges against him. Other facts suggest that Chiles *did* understand the nature of the charges.

{¶ 19} For example, Chiles told the court during the plea colloquy that his attorney read the plea agreement to him, he consulted with her, she explained the evidence, and she answered his questions. The plea agreement he signed—which, again, his attorney read to him—states: "The charges have been explained to me by my attorney and the Court. I understand the nature of the charges and the possible defenses I might have. I

am satisfied with my attorney's advice, counsel and competence."[2] Additionally, the State responded to discovery requests in both the present case and the first-filed case, assuring that the defense was aware of the evidence the State possessed and, therefore, the defenses Chiles could assert. And significantly, the court specifically asked Chiles if he understood the nature of the charges against him and he said that he did. The waiver of the reading of the indictment does not support Chiles's present claim that he was not aware of the nature of the charges or that his plea was not entered voluntarily.

{¶ 20} Finally, Chiles emphasizes that during the plea colloquy, he indicated that the plea "was not what he wanted to do." He characterizes that he expressed "uncertainty" about whether he wanted to enter the plea.

{¶ 21} At the plea hearing, the court confirmed that Chiles was entering his plea voluntarily:

> THE COURT: Are you entering into these guilty -- these no contest pleas voluntarily?
>
> THE DEFENDANT: Yes, sir.

The court then asked whether resolving the charges was what Chiles wanted to do. His response was somewhat equivocal:

> THE COURT: This is what you want to do to resolve these charges today, correct?

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[2] Chiles points out that the plea form also indicates that the prosecutor provided a statement "about the evidence which would have been presented at trial," when it is clear from the record that no such statement was made at the plea hearing. This is a fair point. However, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, we will not presume that trial counsel did not explain the charges to Chiles when he signed a statement saying that she did.

THE DEFENDANT: Not exactly but yes, sir.

Given that Chiles's response was equivocal, the trial court probed further to ensure that while Chiles did "not exactly" *want* to enter a plea to the charges, he had determined that it was in his best interest to do so:

> THE COURT: Did you determine that it's in your best interest to plead no contest to these charges today instead of going to trial?
>
> THE DEFENDANT: Yes, sir.

{¶ 22} In *State v. Gowdy,* 2025-Ohio-5575, just before his jury trial was scheduled to begin, the defendant decided to enter a guilty plea to an amended count of the indictment because the court announced that it probably would not instruct the jury on self-defense. When the trial court inquired about the voluntariness of his plea, the defendant expressed that he felt like he was "in a box" and in a "lose-lose situation." *Id.* at ¶ 12. Notwithstanding these statements, the Ohio Supreme Court found that the record did not establish that the defendant was "unable to rationally weigh the advantages of going to trial against the advantages of" entering a plea. *Id.* at ¶ 42. The Court explained that a defendant's "dissatisfaction with his predicament" does not render a plea involuntary.

{¶ 23} Similarly, in *State v. Rexroad,* 2023-Ohio-356, ¶ 32 (4th Dist.), the court rejected the defendant's claim that his plea was involuntary even though the defendant responded, "I'm going to have to say yes," when the court asked whether he understood and wanted to accept a plea with a jointly-recommended sentence that would waive his right to appeal the sentence.

{¶ 24} Here, the record demonstrates that Chiles made a reasoned decision to enter a plea of no contest. Although Chiles was displeased with the predicament he was facing, nothing about the plea colloquy suggests that he did not understand the nature of the charges or that he was entering his plea involuntarily.

{¶ 25} Given our conclusion that the trial court complied with Crim.R. 11(C)(2)(a) and properly determined that Chiles was entering his plea voluntarily, with an understanding of the nature of the charges, we need not proceed to consider whether Chiles suffered prejudice. We find his first assignment of error not well-taken.

B. Trial counsel was not ineffective.

{¶ 26} In his second assignment of error, Chiles argues that trial counsel was ineffective because she failed to investigate, failed to consult with experts, failed to request a bill of particulars, and advised Chiles to enter a no-contest plea rather than a *North Carolina v. Alford* plea.[3] Chiles acknowledges that while claims of ineffective assistance of counsel are typically difficult to advance on a record such as this, the PSI and hearing record support his claim.

{¶ 27} In order to prevail on a claim of ineffective assistance of counsel, an appellant must show that counsel's conduct so undermined the proper functioning of the adversarial process that the trial court cannot be relied on as having produced a just result. *State v. Shuttlesworth*, 104 Ohio App.3d 281, 287 (7th Dist. 1995). To establish ineffective assistance of counsel, an appellant must show "(1) deficient performance of

[3] *North Carolina v. Alford*, 400 U.S. 25 (1970).

counsel, i.e., performance falling below an objective standard of reasonable representation, and (2) prejudice, i.e., a reasonable probability that, but for counsel's errors, the proceeding's result would have been different." *State v. Hale*, 2008-Ohio-3426, ¶ 204, citing *Strickland v. Washington*, 466 U.S. 668, 687-88 (1984). "A reasonable probability is a probability sufficient to undermine confidence in the outcome." *State v. Sanders*, 94 Ohio St.3d 150, 151 (2002).

{¶ 28} Properly licensed Ohio lawyers are presumed competent. *State v. Banks,* 2002-Ohio-4858, ¶ 16 (9th Dist.). To establish ineffective assistance of counsel, the defendant must show that counsel's performance fell below an objective standard of reasonableness and that the deficient performance prejudiced the defendant so as to deprive him of a fair trial. *Strickland* at 688-692. As recognized in *Strickland,* there are "countless ways to provide effective assistance in any given case." *Id.* at 689. "Judicial scrutiny of counsel's performance must be highly deferential." *State v. Bradley*, 42 Ohio St.3d 136, 142 (1989), quoting *Strickland* at 689.

{¶ 29} Moreover, in matters involving trial strategy, "courts will generally defer to the judgment of trial counsel, even where 'another and better strategy' might have been available." *State v. Newsome*, 2005-Ohio-3775, ¶ 8 (11th Dist.), quoting *State v. Clayton*, 62 Ohio St.2d 45, 49 (1980). "A court will only consider reversing on these grounds where the choice of trial strategy so deviates from the standard of reasonableness 'that ordinary trial counsel would scoff at hearing of it.'" *Id.,* quoting *State v. Burgins*, 44 Ohio App.3d 158, 160 (4th Dist. 1988).

{¶ 30} Chiles complains that trial counsel failed to employ an investigator to interview witnesses, failed to retain an expert to explain the DNA evidence, and failed to explore Chiles's alibi claim. He also criticizes trial counsel for failing to request a bill of particulars and counseling Chiles to enter a no-contest plea instead of pursuing an *Alford* plea. Chiles suggests that an *Alford* plea would have required the State to assert the facts surrounding the charges, thus ensuring that Chiles understood the elements of the offenses.

{¶ 31} The State responds that it is speculative to conclude that trial counsel failed to investigate. It acknowledges that trial counsel indicated that she believed there was a "potential witness" who may need to be interviewed, that there "may be some exculpatory evidence," that she had sought a quote from an expert, and that she was considering motions for fees for an investigator and an expert witness. The State emphasizes, however, that the existence and need for additional witness interviews and experts were tentative and whether the court would have granted such motions was speculative. The State maintains that trial counsel requested and received extensive discovery, and there is no evidence in the record that the State possessed any additional or more specific information such that a bill of particulars would have been useful. It insists that Chiles was not prevented from asserting his innocence at the plea hearing, and given that Chiles affirmatively stated that he understood the nature of the charges against him, there is nothing in the record to suggest that an *Alford* hearing would have provided Chiles information he did not already have. The State contends that Chiles also cannot demonstrate prejudice here.

{¶ 32} As to trial counsel's alleged failure to employ an investigator to interview witnesses, retain an expert to explain the DNA evidence, and explore Chiles's alibi claim, we agree with the State that counsel was tentative about whether she would be seeking to retain an investigator or expert. Moreover, it is possible that trial counsel interviewed witnesses herself, that the expert she consulted (but did not retain) reported that he could not support any defense theory, and that follow-up revealed no merit to Chiles's alleged alibi. But all we know for certain is that counsel chose not to file motions for investigator and expert fees and Chiles decided to enter a plea after consulting with counsel. As alluded to earlier, counsel is presumed to be competent, and we defer to counsel regarding matters of trial strategy. As such, we cannot say that counsel was ineffective for failing to employ an investigator, retain an expert, or explore Chiles's alibi claim.

{¶ 33} Turning to the failure to request a bill of particulars, under Crim.R. 7(E), when a defendant makes a written request within 21 days after arraignment but at least seven days before trial, "the prosecuting attorney shall furnish the defendant with a bill of particulars setting up specifically the nature of the offense charged and of the conduct of the defendant alleged to constitute the offense." While the State must provide a bill of particulars if properly requested, the Ohio Supreme Court recognized in *State v. Haynes*, 2022-Ohio-4473, ¶ 26, that not every case demands a request for a bill of particulars, and "a defendant is free to decide not to request a bill of particulars." *Id*.

{¶ 34} Here, trial counsel, in her judgment, apparently deemed that a bill of particulars was unnecessary to her preparation of a defense. Perhaps this is because she requested—and received—extensive discovery from the State. This included recordings

of interviews of the victim, search warrant materials, the victim's medical records, police reports, and body-worn camera recordings.

{¶ 35} Ohio courts have explained that "'[a] bill of particulars has a limited purpose—to elucidate or particularize the conduct of the accused alleged to constitute the charged offense.'" *State v. Blanton*, 2025-Ohio-237, ¶ 46 (4th Dist.), *appeal not allowed,* 2025-Ohio-1846, quoting *Haynes* at ¶ 23. It is not designed to specify the evidence or to substitute for discovery. *Id.* In the absence of information indicating that "a bill of particulars would have provided [] additional facts such that [the defendant] was precluded or hindered from effectively presenting a defense," Ohio courts have rejected claims of ineffective assistance of counsel based on counsel's failure to request a bill of particulars, especially where counsel requested detailed discovery. *Id.* at ¶ 47. *See also Cleveland v. Traylor,* 2023-Ohio-4314, ¶ 25 (8th Dist.) (finding no ineffective assistance in counsel's failure to request bill of particulars where discovery put defendant on notice of particular allegations against him). Chiles has cited no information indicating that a bill of particulars would have provided him additional facts necessary for an understanding of the nature of the charges here.

{¶ 36} Finally, concerning Chiles's suggestion that trial counsel should have advised him to enter a plea of guilty under *North Carolina v. Alford* rather than a no-contest plea, Crim.R. 11(B)(2) provides that a "plea of no contest is not an admission of defendant's guilt, but is an admission of the truth of the facts alleged in the indictment . . . and the plea or admission shall not be used against the defendant in any subsequent civil or criminal proceeding." In a guilty plea under *North Carolina v. Alford*, a defendant is

permitted to plead guilty while maintaining his actual innocence. *State v. Griggs,* 2004-Ohio-4415, ¶ 13. An *Alford* plea is procedurally indistinguishable from a guilty plea in that it severely limits the errors that may be claimed on appeal. *State v. McDay,* 1997 WL 243584, *2 (6th Dist. May 9, 1997). It differs, however, in that before accepting an *Alford* plea, "the trial court must evaluate the reasonableness of the defendant's decision to plead guilty notwithstanding the protestation of innocence," thereby requiring "a presentation of some basic facts surrounding the charge from which the court may determine whether the accused has made an intelligent and voluntary guilty plea." *State v. Drzayich,* 2016-Ohio-1398, ¶ 13 (6th Dist.), citing *State v. Krieg,* 2004-Ohio-5174, ¶ 14 (9th Dist.).

{¶ 37} The crux of Chiles's argument here is that if he had been advised to accept an *Alford* plea instead of a no-contest plea, the State would have been obligated to recite the facts surrounding the charge, including the fact that "force" had been alleged by the victim. This, of course, is premised on Chiles's unsupported assertions that he did not already understand that "force" had been alleged. Given our conclusion that the trial court properly ensured that Chiles understood the nature of the charges against him and entered his no-contest plea voluntarily, we find no merit to Chiles's claim that trial counsel's performance was deficient for failing to advise in favor of an *Alford* guilty plea.

{¶ 38} Because we find that trial counsel's performance was not deficient, we need not consider whether Chiles suffered prejudice. We find Chiles's second assignment of error not well-taken.

III. Conclusion

{¶ 39} The trial court properly accepted Chiles's no-contest plea without reciting the elements of the offenses after determining that Chiles understood the nature of the charges and was entering his plea voluntarily. Chiles's dyslexia and preference to have the plea agreement read to him do not support his claim that he was not aware of the nature of the charges or that his plea was not entered voluntarily. He concedes that he understood the alterations that were made to the plea form during the plea colloquy. While Chiles waived the reading of the indictment, other facts suggest that he understood the nature of the charges. And although Chiles stated that entering a plea was "not exactly" what he wanted to do, the record demonstrates that Chiles made a reasoned decision to enter a plea of no contest. We find Chiles's first assignment of error not well-taken.

{¶ 40} Counsel was not ineffective for failing to employ an investigator, retain an expert, explore Chiles's alibi claim, request a bill of particulars, or negotiate an *Alford* guilty plea instead of a no-contest plea. Counsel is presumed to be competent, we defer to counsel regarding matters of trial strategy, counsel obtained extensive discovery, Chiles cited nothing to indicate that a bill of particulars would have provided additional facts necessary for an understanding of the nature of the charges, and a recitation of the facts surrounding the charge was not needed to ensure that Chiles understood that "force" was an element of the offenses. We find Chiles's second assignment of error not well-taken.

{¶ 41} We affirm the February 4, 2026 judgment of the Lucas County Court of Common Pleas. Chiles is ordered to pay the costs of this appeal under App.R. 24.

Judgment affirmed.

A certified copy of this entry shall constitute the mandate pursuant to App.R. 27.

Christine E. Mayle, J. _____
JUDGE

Gene A. Zmuda, J. _____
JUDGE

Charles E. Sulek, J. _____
CONCUR.
JUDGE

This decision is subject to further editing by the Supreme Court of Ohio's Reporter of Decisions. Parties interested in viewing the final reported version are advised to visit the Ohio Supreme Court's web site at: http://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/ROD/docs/.