



TALAWANDA SCHOOL DISTRICT

131 W. Chestnut Street, Oxford, Ohio 45056 | Talawanda.org

Empowering Every Learner Every Day!

November 2018- Board of Education Meeting Highlights

BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR SESSION

Talawanda High School

7:00 p.m. Executive Session

7:30 p.m. Public Session

Mr. Mark Butterfield, President, Dr. Mary Jane Roberts, Vice President, Dr. Mike Crowder, Mr. Patrick Meade, Mr. Chris Otto

1. Opening of Meeting

A. Roll Call

2. Executive Session

A. Executive Session

3. Reconvene in Open Session

A. Approval of Agenda- Approved 4-1

B. Pledge of Allegiance

Presentations:

C. Native American Guardians Association - Tony Henson

- Tony Henson is the Midwest Regional VP of NAGA. He is ¼ Cherokee. He shared information regarding the use of strong Native American images across the country. He is concerned that in recent years there has been an outcry regarding the use of Native American as mascots. He feels this is an agenda being pushed by radical Indians. He shared some information regarding the Washington Redskins. He shared additional information regarding "leftist" groups that have joined forces with radical Indian groups to try and stop schools and athletic organizations from the use of Native American as mascots. He provided examples of multiple Native American images used as mascots, and he feels the current Talawanda mascot is not disrespectful. He shared information regarding the tactics used to stop the use of Native American mascots across the country. He shared information about a study (non peer reviewed) that he referred to as "garbage" and indicated the study should not be used as evidence. He is worried about the "Not your Mascot" movement and how it impacts Native American students. He is worried that the movement is divisive. He shared information about surveys from Sports Illustrated and the Washington Post regarding

Native Americans and how they favor the use of Native American images as mascots. He shared information regarding reservations and people living there that regularly wear apparel with Native American imagery on them. He shared information regarding the relationship between the University of Utah and a local tribe. He shared a story about local "braves" who fought in the "Battle of 1000 Slain", and the local Native Americans helped win that battle. He suggested that by adding a female image to the current Talawanda logo would make it more balanced because he shared information regarding female braves as well, and said this would add balance to the logo.

- Pat Meade indicated that this group is from Illinois and asked how long that the group has existed and the answer was 5 years. He is concerned that the branding committee should have been the only group presenting on this subject tonight. He shared a story about a former student who experienced some issues due to the mascot and some bullying, and he is offended by references to the possibility that this story may not be true. He indicated that the story is true and she experienced the trauma here. He referenced some other studies. He raised some concerns about some of the research brought up by NAGA.

D. Athletic Update - Wes Cole

- Fall Sports highlights- Sam Robinson (SWOC Athlete of the Year) from Soccer and David Kraushar (SWOC Athlete of the year) from Cross Country (Maddie Iden not present from Cross Country). He shared that 275 athletes with a 3.62 overall GPA and 36% with a 4.0. League champs for Boys Soccer, and Girls Cross Country. Boys/Girls Golf and Girls Soccer also had outstanding seasons. Paul Stiver and Missy Friede were recognized for SWOC Coaches of the year in Cross Country and Soccer respectively. Sam Robinson also was named D1 all-state second team! THS also had several athletic signings this week. Sam Robinson is going to UC for soccer, Sean Mondello is going to Miami University for diving, and Jenna Jarvis is going to King University for soccer. Sophomore, Maddie Iden qualified for the state meet in cross country! Some promotions and marketing strategies have been employed this fall to promote the student athletes and our programs.
- Girls basketball is working with middle school programs.
- Ice Hockey has begun, and beat Alter. They have a tournament this coming weekend.
- Swimming is home on 12/11.
- Turf Field is in year 7 of an 8 year warranty.
- THS did a really neat thing and the whole school went out into the hallways to clap for Maddie Iden as she was coming through the halls to cheer for her to get ready for the state meet.
- Dr. Roberts complimented the kids as great students as well as athletes.

E. THS Student Safety Update - Kari Roberts & THS Students

- Matt Butterfield, President of the FFA Chapter here, and he and Justin Beckner (VP) shared some information about ways to serve the community. This year they decided to work on funding safety blinds as a security feature to help make THS an even safer place. They wrote a grant (and received it) for \$3000 to purchase materials and training. Daulton Norris (FFA member) shared how unique this opportunity was, and is happy they could help THS. The blinds will provide an additional safety feature (flame retardant) in the event of a crisis. They anticipate the arrival of the blinds very soon. Susie Bennison also shared enthusiasm for this project. The students demonstrated use of the blinds. The FFA motto was shared and the chapter really wanted to give back to the schools, and they also thanked Officer Butler for his help!

F. Primary Health Solutions Partnership - Amy Macechko

- The TSD Health Coordinating Council shared information regarding a program to expand healthcare to TSD students. There will be access to a clinic, and access to care during the school day for students who need assistance. Transportation options are being worked on presently. The clinic would also work within the students schedule to identify the best time during the day to help the child. Parent permission is required. Behavioral check ups as well as immunizations can be included.
- Dr. Roberts asked about liability. The model is the same as when students are transported by a regular school bus. This model is used successfully in other communities.

G. Youth Suicide Grant - Amy Macechko

- A \$7000 grant from from Butler County Children First Council will help with suicide prevention. We will use the HOPE SQUAD model. Students will be trained to recognize the signs, and how to reach out and show they care and to help get the student to a caring trained adult within the school community. The Butler County Crisis Hotline will also be supported through this work.
- Dr. Roberts asked is Lakota is currently using this model and the answer is yes.
- Dr. Theroux shared his appreciation for this work.

H. Branding Committee Presentation - Sam Morris & Bonnie Norris

- Presentation/Slides displayed the big screen- Dr Theroux shared the names of the committee and the overview of the process. See link to slides/reports...

<https://www.talawanda.org/district-blog/entry/branding-committee-presentation-222/>

- The committee agreed to present their reports in the same format used by the US Supreme Court (a majority opinion and a minority opinion).
- Sam Morris is presenting the majority report (1999 THS graduate and athlete, current parent/taxpayer).
- Bonnie Norris is presenting the minority report (Athletic Boosters President, parent/taxpayer, the Norris family has been farming in Oxford Twp since 1884).
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I. Welcome to Visitors and Public Participation

- Charles Beckett, Hanover Twp resident, father of 5, and he is concerned about the cost of changing the mascot. He is concerned that changing BRAVES to BRAVE is not a big change and he thinks the issue will just be revisited at a later date.
- Local Native American (name was unclear). He shared that his family has been here since 1492, and he brought the Native American community this evening from within 25 miles of the community. He provided some history dating from 1851, and he talked about how all of this land here is Shawnee land, and 3 reservations were made north of here many years ago. Laws were passed that made it illegal for Native Americans to own land, and then their land was taken. They had to relocate to Oklahoma eventually. He indicated that the Native Americans from here have already been eradicated. He is concerned that the Native Americans in this community are treated like they are not even here. He indicated that when locally we teach about Native Americans, we must go seek the Native Americans from outside of the community. He is concerned about NAGA reporting at this meeting. He wants the Native Americans here to be accepted in this community.
- Kenny Lehman, a student, shared that "if you don't stand for something...you will fall for anything". He's been a student since 7th grade. He likes it here, feels a part of things. He likes the way the student cheer on during the national anthem. He doesn't feel that race/or

position means anything. He feels that at THS everyone is united as BRAVES. He believes tonight's discussion is not about what has happened to Native Americans hundreds of years back, he is worried about how a name/logo change will negatively impact students. He is worried that some people will never be pleased. He is worried about outside influence.

- Guy Jones (a Lakota name) he shared his name is a part of American history. He indicated that before 1492, this land belonged to Native Americans. He shared that as we celebrate this week's meal (Thanksgiving), that it was a gift to us from the original people of this land. Only recently people are beginning to listen to their concerns. He indicated it has not been long since his people were fighting for their existence on their reservations. He indicated that the issue is not racism, but it is privilege. He is concerned about the mockery of what is believed of American history. In 1622, refugees came to American shores, and the Natives helped them, and fed and taught them about the land, but then they turned on them and destroyed 50 million Natives due to greed. He wants his children and grandchildren to walk with the same pride that people here do. He teaches across the country, and it's due to an issue called privilege. He educated himself in American institutions and with American books. When the issue happened at Standing Rock, he prayed about having clean water, it was for the future so future generations have clean water to live. He indicated that the Board has an opportunity to do something good for the children of the community. He indicated that positive change comes from institutions across America.
- Chayse, a student, asked why Dr. Theroux put this committee together? She wants students to be heard on the mascot issue.
- Maya Meade shared a letter with the Board signed by 44 students (gave to BOE). She wants to share about one thing, and concerns of using a mascot can lead to racism. Her personal story, an incident not reported, she was in a classroom with one student (Armenian), and another one student (white) when the topic of race came up. The "N" word was used and the white student told her about "appropriate use of the "N" word. She said she was called the "N" word while the white student was angry. Maya felt unsafe, and she refers back to the research on the use of Native American mascots. She wondered if the THS mascot was different if this still would have happened. She shared PRIDE on the wall, and pointed out that this particular student was not using the "model" we talk about.
- Ella Cope, a student, shared that her father is a THS grad, she is a townie, and she talked about how the word "Talawanda" is for "creek", and is NOT a tribe. She learned about this in a school news publication. She talked about how the name was chosen (Hanover 5th grade student who won an essay contest). She would like Native Americans to be represented in curriculum. She is concerned that there isn't a standard written for this. She is with the Diversity Club, and they had a nice meeting and a Native American student shared some information on good ways this might be done. She is concerned about how the use of Native American mascots are misused in THS. She made a reference to white students wearing a headdress at a game in the district. She agrees with the "don't eradicate" movement, but she feels it must be done better.
- Jody Asher, started a "Save the Braves" page with 151 followers, and they have a petition (1381 signatures). He presented this to the Board. He has questions about how a change would occur and how uniforms will be purchased. He questioned the makeup of the members. He shared his opinion that this is not an educational issue, and the community should decide.
- John Beckett, a student, he has shared with the board before, but he wanted to add some thoughts this evening. He would like for students and teachers to talk about the mascot issue first. He shared how he has been called a racist. He received a letter from NAGA, and they referred to him wearing the headdress at games as similar to a "stolen valor" issue, and this has made him change his mind on doing this. He just intended to bring school spirit. He

thinks being a BRAVE is a good reflection on how brave the Native Americans originally from this land were. He really believes the current mascot is honorable. He shared he does think that Native Americans should have a say, and recognized that we have Native American students here. He recognizes that there are many opinions on this subject.

- Grace Asher, a student, believes the BRAVES logo should be kept. She is concerned that 3 people on the branding committee do not live in the district. She is worried about Mr. Meade's concerns regarding hearing from a NAGA rep from Illinois. She believes in the "Educate not Eradicate" program. She wants a Native American teacher to teach Native American culture. She is worried about bullying. She is also worried about spending.
- Mason and Zach from TMS (students) want the name BRAVES to be kept and would like their opinion to be heard. They think the signatures on the petition should be recognized. They are worried that students have not been asked. They are worried about the cost of a change. They want more money spent on math and ELA.
- Mary Tharp resident for 45 years, shared her thoughts last month. She is with the "Save the BRAVES" group. They have hired an attorney (Tim Melloy) and she read the letter sent by the attorney. In addition, she shared that she is concerned about the cost. She feels the board does not even know what the cost will be, and therefore should not be making a decision. She is concerned about the Native American legacy and pride and she will always be a part of the BRAVES.
- Ron Tilford, graduate and parent, and he referenced the traditions, and talked about the original merger back in the 50's and 60's. He talked about the rich Native American history and thinks this dialogue can be good. He talked about watching Miami basketball games when he was a kid and watching Native Americans do a Native dance at the game. He thinks that people made the "Talawanda BRAVES" with good intention. He is concerned that this has only been going on for about 9 days. He use an example of peeling an onion and looking at this in layers. He thinks this should be studied in more depth, or even letting taxpayers vote on this issue on the ballot.
- 1962 graduate but now lives in Ross, shared about a board meeting in Reily that he thought this issue had been put to rest years ago. He meets each Tuesday with a group of 1962 graduates. He appreciates the heritage that he heard about tonight, and he apologizes to the Native Americans present for the way they were treated in history. He is concerned that someone started this topic and that this was divisive. He spoke directly to Dr. Theroux about his own opinion on this. He shared his experience of sitting on a board and shared that when you have a post like that you will receive many phone calls and he is concerned that Dr. Theroux started this recent discussion of the mascot. He brought a document from his 1962 class reunion, and it says "BRAVES". He said the logo and name is not disparaging against Native Americans. He is concerned about graduates (50 + years) and thinks what the name BRAVES meant to them back then should be honored today instead of the "poison" we hear today.
- Aaron Abbott, resident and parent, and he appreciates tradition and history and he just wanted the board to know that there are parents in the community that support a change in mascot. He hopes that a change comes that will take the district into the future. He is concerned that the mascot is about disrespect and racism and that the district needs to move forward. He supports the proposed phase out over time. He asks the board to do what is right.
- April Rachele, and she wants to share that Native Americans are harmful and damaging to her community. She is worried about what this does to encourage feelings of inferiority. They(Native Americans) do not feel honored by Native American mascots. She shared a story about her grandfather who was in an Indian Boarding school, and terrible things happened there. She again stated she does NOT feel honored.

- Kathy McMahon Klosterman, and she shared that this issue has been going on long before Dr. Theroux came. She wants school boards to make decisions based on facts and evidence based decision making. She thinks that some Native Americans might think it is ok to use Native Americans like animals and mascots, but that does not make it acceptable. She believes that the original intent was to be respectful, but now that we have learned more about American history that we should now do better. She indicated that intent and impact are 2 different things. She referenced a letter from NARF. She is concerned that NAGA was invited to speak tonight. She is concerned that the board does not believe the students who have reported their harm relative to the use of the THS mascot.
- George Ironstrack (shared in Native language first), a citizen of the Miami Tribe, the USA, and this community. He thanked the people who have been respectful tonight. He deeply disagrees with many in this room, but he will listen to others opinions with respect because that is what is expected of him from his tribe. He is teaching at Miami and takes his role very seriously. He is concerned about NAGA talking tonight and how this diminished this evening's presentation and the evidence provided by respected higher education institutions. He is concerned that NAGA was part of the regular meeting, instead of just the public participation part. He feels insulted by NAGA being present this evening. He indicated that the weakest debate is always name calling.
- Sarah Allen, recent graduate, she came from Fairfield. She wants to thank the Native American members who came and spoke tonight. She supports the Native Americans in the community who support a change in mascot. She mentioned that in 1956 the students chose the BRAVES mascot, she mentioned that at that time African Americans could not even sit at the same counter as whites. She urged a change.
- Fritz Wellman, would like to know who invited NAGA? Who paid for Mr. Henson's travel? She would like to know why he was part of the regular meeting? She supports a change in mascot.
- Cara Strauss, she is a Miami Tribe member and member of this community, and she wants to share her idea of creating the best educational environment for TSD students. She said in most communities education on Native Americans is not done well. She gave some past examples of how that was not done well at Miami for many years. Education has to be based in truth, which she thinks is difficult with a Native American mascot. The Miami mascot "Redskin" was retired, and later this led to better education in the Myaamia culture and the Myaamia Center. She shared some personal experiences.
- Janis Dutton, resident of the district, the reason she is speaking is concerning NAGA. She is concerned that the speaker was dishonest, and she is concerned that he downplayed a THS students' negative experience relative to the THS mascot. She shared some information regarding two credentials of experts (from higher ed), and felt Mr. Henson downplayed their credentials and expertise on this topic.
- Mike Dittman, community member, and he is concerned about academics and costs. He is concerned about the per pupil expenditure in this district. He encourages people to come to BOE meetings.
- Donna Baker, resident, and 4th generation graduate. She wants to address Fritz's questions. A group of community members researched the NAGA group and the reasons they have reached out to him is because of shared values. They provided Henson a room and gas money. She feels he has done incredible work. She challenges anyone who says he is dishonest, she believes he is very credible. She talked about the history of Talawanda Creek and the essay contest. She has done some research. She was insulted by people calling her a racist by defending her values and wanting to keep the name of the Braves. She shared her experiences in learning and her educational background. She ended with her thought to keep the current mascot.

- Dick Tharp, and he has been here a long time. He is concerned about people calling him and others racist or rednecks. He is concerned that people have not been kind to Mr. Henson this evening. He is concerned about all of the abuse. He hopes we make a good decision this evening.
- Tiffany Belka, 1990 graduate and athlete and Honor Society student. She organized THS's first diversity fair. She remembers when communities first started talking about changing mascots that were Native Americans. She shared that a change will not change anyone's memories. She said "feelings" really should not matter, and that the clear right thing to do is to look at the facts and she hopes that we can appreciate we now live in a modern era and hopes the board makes a good decision.
- Helaine Alessio, a resident, and she is worried about the "us vs them" issue. She worries about divisiveness and hopes we can come back together. She hopes the board can bring people together in compromise. She supports the majority opinion. She supports compromise. She thanked the committee for presenting a thoughtful discussion. Having "losers" and "winners" does not help anyone. She hopes the board can make decisions that support the big picture.
- Tom Benzman, not a resident, feels a kinship with everyone who shared their schools days experience. He is from St ,Mary's, Ohio, they are the rough riders. He said that mascot didn't make anyone feel like they have hurt feelings. He commends the committee for coming up with a wise option. He likes that is is almost the same/similar in name. He said keep the relationships...everything else is just names. Keep together...not divided.

4. Reports

A. Butler Technology & Career Development School Report - Lois Vollmer

- OSBA Conference took place last week. Butler Tech hosted a partnership luncheon with 25 attendees. Board members and the superintendent met with elected officials to discuss career tech education. Butler Tech reps met with newly elected Sarah Carruthers and provided her a tour. Five BT students were elected to BTA Ohio Chapter. She thanked Mr.Otto and Dr. Theroux for attending the BT All Boards meeting, a great success.
- Dr. Roberts attended the luncheon and she appreciated the success of BT students and encourages THS students to look at BT as an option.

B. Legislative Liaison Report - Pat Meade

- HB 591, SB 330, HB512 all still in committee. He spoke with Senator Coley, and does not think these issues will move any time soon.

5. Report of the Treasurer

A. Approval of Minutes- **BLOCK 5A-F- Approved 5-0**

B. Approval of Gifts

Oxford Community Foundation	Move to Learn	\$1521.78
Oxford Community Foundation	Mindfulness to Reduce Trauma & Inc. Focus	\$1,050.00

Oxford Community Foundation	Space Camp	\$1,000.00
Oxford Community Foundation	Engaging with Diverse Books	\$1,000.00
Oxford Community Foundation	Morgan Fund Annual Distribution	\$1,907.98
Oxford Community Foundation	Tetrix Robotics	\$4,495.00
Oxford Community Foundation	8th Grade Geometry Trip	\$229.19
Oxford Presbyterian Church	Kramer Students in Need of School Supplies	\$300.00

C. Approval of Financial Report for October 2018

D. Approval of Appropriation Modifications (Different FUNC/OBJ)

E. Approval of Appropriation Increases/Decreases (Same FUNC/OBJ)

F. Approval of Then & Now Over \$3,000

G. FY18 GAAP Update- **Required by law to file, and we have met the requirement.**

H. Butler Health Plan/OHI Update- **enrollment is complete. 330 employees signed up. Clinic is operating and there may be an expansion. The 30 day challenge with Anytime Fitness was successful.**

I. Marshall Update- **Schematic design phase is at a stop due to costs.**

J. Other Matters-

- **Shared details regarding the OSBA Conference and info on a funding model.**
- **The Butler County Safety levy did not pass.**

6. Report of the Superintendent- **BLOCK A-C Approved 5-0**

A. Approval of Certificated/Licensed Personnel

B. Approval of Classified Personnel

C. Approval of Supplemental Personnel

D. Approval of Additional 1/2 Time Preschool Teacher (BCESC) and 1/2 Time E.A. (TSD)- **Approved 5-0**

E. First Reading of Policy Revisions - Dennis Malone

- 34 policies (Block), updates to bylaws, licensure, record retention, discrimination issues, school bids and use of credit cards, mandatory employee misconduct by licensed employees

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F. Approval of Consultant Contract with Marianne Marconi for 2018/2019 School Year- **Approved 5-0**

G. Approval of Strategic Plan Service Agreement with HCESC- **Approved 5-0**

H. Approval of Overnight Student Trip Proposal for KES Students Going to Camp Campbell Guard- **BLOCK H-J Approved 5-0**

I. Approval of Overnight Student Trip Proposal for THS Students Going to Columbus, Ohio

J. Approval of Overnight Student Trip Proposal for THS Setting Stone Students Going to New York

K. Approval to Grant One Waiver Day to Bogan Elementary on January 7, 2019- **Approved 5-0**

L. Informational Items

- All staff participated in "Trauma Informed " professional development in November.

7. Items From the Board Members

- Mr. Meade would like to vote on the branding issue.- **Approved 3-2**
- Adopt the name BRAVE, and stop production of the current mascot image and name (apparel/equipment/etc), and use BRAVE on all new purchases
 - Dr. Roberts is in favor of a work session.
 - Dr. Crowder wanted to clarify the motion.
 - Mr. Otto wants to bridge the community.
 - Mr. Butterfield commended the presenters from the committee, shared things he has dealt with over the years in dealing with the mascot, keeping the community together, mental health, modern facilities, valuing the opinions of community members, wants everyone to be thankful for the district and family. He is thankful for the passion of the Talawanda Braves, and what a good place to develop the passion that we have heard from this community. He indicated this is an important decision. He thanked all for their engagement.
 - Dr. Crowder shared that this is his third educational entity that has dealt with this issue of changing from a Native American mascot. He shared his experiences from William & Mary, and Miami, and now Talawanda. He shared that Dr. Theroux did not start this issue, but he inherited it. This is not Dr. Theroux's agenda, and the committee was put together to provide information and advice. He complimented the committee for their work. He feels we have many other needs that need our attention. He is concerned that the mascot issue has distracted the district from many of the other important issues. He shared that his vote will come with much thought and prayer.
 - Dr. Meade thanked Bonnie and Sam for the presentation, along with the committee. He is glad that many tried to think of ways to keep some traditions alive, like with the National Anthem.
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A. Items From the Board Members- None

8. Close of Meeting

A. Future Board Events

Next BOE meeting December 17th

B. Adjournment- 11pm