



TALAWANDA SCHOOL DISTRICT

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

Empowering Every Learner Every Day!

October 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

B. Pledge of Allegiance

- Dr. Theroux shared that during this school year, each school will come and share some information regarding activities taking place in each building.

C. THS Update - Tom York

- Mr. Lykins shared information regarding the annual PRIDE DAY event. The purpose of the day is to build relationships, self esteem, and empathy for others. The event is for sophomore students, with some seniors serving as mentors. A student shared that the day went well!
- Mr. York shared the P-R-I-D-E stands for People Respecting Individual Differences Every Day! The THS motto is "Relationships Before Tasks!".

D. "STEM is a Game Changer" Presentation - Mary Jane Roberts

- The TSD STEM Team will present at the Ohio Conference (Ryan Barter & Sarah Roche). Dr. Roberts congratulated them and presented them with a certificate. See photo-



E. Resolution to Extend Graduation Options to the Class of 2019, 2020, and 2021

- Dr. Theroux explained the pathways/eligibility for seniors to graduate. The state has not approved the final plans yet. Dr. Theroux has requested that the board approve a resolution that outlines the requirements/qualifications that will be used by TSD for now to reward diplomas.

F. Welcome to Visitors and Public Participation

- Mr. Brinck and several TMS Student Council members (Tyler Hazelwood & Jordan Gresham) request improvements to the TMS gym sound system. The system is outdated (1989). There is some difficulty with sound/hearing. Students shared specific examples. Mr. Brinck has asked if the board will let them know if this can be considered in the budget.
- Cathy Brinkman, Oxford resident, is concerned about the Native American mascot. She wanted to address supporters of keeping the mascot...she wants them to understand that Native Americans living in the community, attending TSD schools (in the past and now), that they view the mascot as harmful and disrespectful. She made reference to a letter that came to the district some months back from an organization named NARF (Native American Rights Fund). She urged the board to have courage to make a change in mascot. She referenced several examples of poor treatment or disrespectful behavior that is happening in our time to Native Americans by our country's leaders.
- John Beckett, THS Senior, asked students supporting keeping the current mascot to stand (a group of students stood). He indicated that these students want to keep the mascot and that it is meaningful to them.
- Jean Pateman, THS sophomore, wants to remind people that the way someone "intends" something and the way something is "perceived" are different things. She is concerned about using a Native American mascot. She made reference to Miami's mascot change, and talked about how this helped build relationships with the Miami Tribe and Native Americans. She is concerned about the disrespect and lack of understanding of Native Americans. She is concerned about racism. She is concerned about things people do unconsciously that demonstrates racism. She is worried about the culture in THS. She urges the board to change the mascot.
- Jennifer Fisher, TSD parent, shared a personal story about her choice to change her last name when she married. She indicated that by changing her last name, this did not change the person that she is. She shared that school/students will be fine even if they choose to re-brand the THS mascot. She urges the board to make a change.
- Grace Asher, THS student (Butler Tech), is concerned about the discussion of the mascot. She believes the mascot should be kept. She made reference to an organization NAGA (Native American Guardian Association), who supports keeping the Native American mascot. She urges the board to "educate not eradicate".
- Jody Asher, TSD resident, shared that his grandmother was a Cherokee Indian, and he has documented lineage of his family's relation to Pocahontas. He believes the mascot at THS is of pride and honor. He does not believe the image is harmful or racist. He indicated that a

majority of Native Americans do not wish that Native American mascots should be eliminated. He indicated a group that he is a part of has a facebook page and a petition with many signatures.

- Mary Tharp, shared her husband is a graduate, her children and grandchildren are also graduates/students. She encourages the board to keep the name the BRAVES. She read from a letter that she has previously sent to the board. The letter supports keeping the BRAVES mascots. The letter shared multiple examples of professional sports that use Native American mascots. She also shared that many Native Americans do not disapprove of Native American mascots. She is concerned about keeping historical memory of Native Americans alive. She wants to honor the Native Americans from the area.
- Amy Shaiman, TSD resident/parent, shared some information regarding privilege, and shared that we may not understand correct information regarding Native American history. She would like the board to live up to the district mission...centered around empowerment. She understands tradition, and shared some examples from her own family and traditions of their Jewish faith, but she is concerned about the history and actual treatment of Native Americans who once occupied this area.
- Mike Wright, he is a graduate from THS, and shared that for over 60 years he is proud to have been a THS Brave. He read from the dictionary the definition of Brave.
- Cara Strauss, TSD resident, she is part of the Myaamia Project, (shared a greeting in a Native American language). She shared some information regarding her identity as a Native American. She shared some personal experiences. She talked about her lost heritage due to the Myaamia people being forced from this land. She is proud today to help college students understand their identity, and her culture that is vibrant and alive. She is worried about the Native American mascot being associated with a school as a mascot, but does not equate to Native Americans. She referenced the change in mascot at Miami University. She shared information regarding education about Native Americans, and asked that the board change the current mascot.
- Jacob Schulte, recent THS graduate, is proud of of the warrior mascot. He shared things that he has been told regarding the current debate on this issue. He shared that he does not feel that the mascot is derogatory. He understands why Miami changed the name "Redskin", but he does not feel that the THS mascot is the same issue as Miami had. He thinks the symbol we have is powerful. He shared some information about the different races that live in the community, and acknowledged that most are white.
- Aliza Jones, THS student (one of 8 kids), and she is concerned that people do not believe that current students deserve to be called BRAVES, and she thinks the mascot should stay and remain BRAVES.
- Hannah Lightfield, THS student, does not want to get rid of the current mascot. She thinks there should be education. She thinks removal of the mascot will end the sense of pride she feels exists in the school.
- Laura Cowman, THS graduate/parent, speaking on behalf of TBFA, and she read the definition of Brave from a dictionary/letter. She does not believe that the mascot is disrespectful, and she feels it provides a sense of pride in our schools. She shared that her son is proud to be a "Little Brave", and shared the thrill of being a part of the TBFA program. She shared that the current youth still want to be the BRAVES.
- Diana Ramsey, Hanover Twp resident, she read a letter sharing a story about a high school, and in the story she shared this school did not have a mascot. In her story the mascot chosen was a "tiger", and a person objected to the mascot in her story, a man who did not like the tiger because tigers are carnivores, because the man is a vegetarian. The story goes on to say that later an eagle was selected...and the story goes on through other animals, and reasons why each one is not appropriate for a variety of reasons. Later in her

story, the American flag is chosen as a mascot...but yet this offends someone as well. The finale of the story is that the mascot turned out to be nothing...the "Talawanda Nothings".

- Megan Kuykendoll, TSD resident, she defended Native Americans who have indicated they are harmed...and indicated she does not feel that people get to decide for others whether they are harmed or not. She is dismayed by the stories tonight, and does not understand why people do not understand the harm, and she feels it is disrespectful to compare animals to people. She is concerned about oppression, and the history of kicking Native Americans off this land. She is upset about the dialogue this evening...it troubles her.
- KJ Leman, senior at THS, he plays sports, and is proud of his letter jacket. He is concerned about people who say that students don't own the name BRAVES when you earn a letter jacket.
- Matt Butterfield, a senior at THS, read from a letter. He shared that he has been a student since kindergarten, this school has shaped him. He shared how one might feel when they look back, on the experience of high school. He supports the image of the Talawanda Braves, and gestured to the students here tonight supporting the current mascot. He feels like the current mascot, represents strength and power. He shared that football is popular, and he shared he worries about attempts to erase the past if the name is removed. He shared information about costs to make changes to the mascot. He is worried about images being taken down, and erasing history. He just wants to support Talawanda. He said being a "BRAVE" is not something that anyone can just take away. He shared that he, friends, family, will always be a BRAVE.
- Janis Dutton, TSD resident, and mother of graduates, she shared that she gets the sentiment in the room. She shared some information to current research (current from June of 2018), she shared excerpts from the research. She is worried about civil rights, and also worried that this evenings display could be boiling down to a popularity contest. She is also part Native American, but she does not feel this gives her the right to use a Native American mascot. She will share the research with the board.
- Mary Richardson, TSD graduate and resident, and entire family are graduates, she shared she and her family do not feel that this mascot is a racist symbol. She shared that there have been other attempts to change the mascot, and she wants to know when this will stop? She wants the mascot to be left the BRAVES. She cannot help what others think. Her husband's family is Native American, but they are not offended. She is not in support of change at the urging of just a few people. She thinks the current image is strong. She is proud of the image, and has been for many years. She is not happy that some people have been called racist, and she urges the board to leave the current image.
- Charlie Ramsey, TSD resident, (parent/grandparent) reads from a letter. He talks about when the white man came to this country for noble reasons, but found Natives here, and he shared how whites took their land and way of life. He talked about removal from their land and the slaughter of buffalo and Indians. He thinks this is a shameful part of history. He feels people want the image removed to forget their shame. He shared an example of statues removed from the south. He shared examples from professional sports teams and attempts to change their Native American mascots, and how this has trickled down to high schools. He named many schools with Indian mascots (79 in Ohio). He said this is because Ohio chooses to remember. He shared Adidas has offered money to support change, but no schools in Ohio have used the money. He shared some statistics regarding Native Americans from NAGA, and how they would like to preserve Indian mascots. He shared the motto "Educate...not Eradicate". He shared the definition of Brave from a dictionary.
- Susie Bennison, THS student, shared that she is concerned that anything can be found to offensive, and she personally is a soccer player, and is proud to be a BRAVE. She does not understand the controversy

- Grace Suit, Junior at THS, she said every day she is told to accept differences, and by removing the mascot, we are not accepting differences. She said she does not believe people have been hurt. She speaks passionately about her support of the current mascot. She feels a change would be wrong.

4. Reports

A. Legislative Liaison Report - Mary Jane Roberts-

- Shared information regarding graduation requirements, and steps the board is taking to help seniors.

5. Report of the Treasurer

A. Approval of Minutes

B. Approval of Gifts- Block A-FApproved 5-0

Kroger Rewards	Marshall	\$157.20
Oxford Community Foundation	Flexible Seating at Bogan	\$1,766.48
Butler Rural Community Foundation	Standing Desks for Bogan	\$1,000.00

C. Approval of Financial Report for September 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. Resolution to Approve the Five-Year Forecast- It's the last year of the Kasich budget and funding is currently flat. The election could change the budget. There may be a work session during the 4th quarter. Approved 5-0

H. Update on AFIS & FY18 GAAP Requirement- Comprehensive Overview, required to file with the FCC.

I. Update on BHP & Butler Advantage Clinic- Mr. Davis thanked Dr. Roberts for attending the ribbon cutting and Bob Ratterman for covering the story. They are tracking zipcodes and use. Shared the Anytime Fitness Challenge information (23% participation).

J. Marshall Elementary Update- Mr. Davis shared a spreadsheet with the board. He indicated that structurally the numbers are not currently balanced. More items to come before the board for a discussion, and Mr, Butterfield suggested a work session.

K. Update on BOR Complaints (Board of Revision)- TSD saved \$83K.

L. Other Matters

- The Hardy will situation is still in progress.

6. Report of the Superintendent

A. Approval of Certificated/Licensed Personnel- Approved 4-0, 1 abstains

B. Approval of Classified Personnel- B & C- Approved 4-0, 1 abstains

C. Approval of Supplemental Personnel

D. Approval of Overnight Student Trip Proposal for TMS Students Traveling to Washington

D.C.- Block D & E Approved 5-0

E. Approval of Overnight Student Fundraiser at Marshall Elementary

F. Informational Items

- Congratulations to Sarah Roche on IGNITE!
- Branding Committee is making progress for recommendations. The plan is to share a majority report and a minority report in the same fashion as the Supreme Court.
- State Conference coming up November.

7. Items From the Board Members

A. Informational Items

- Dr. Crowder does wish to look into the TMS sound system. Is their building funds available? He also wishes to thank students who came forward to share on this. Mr. Davis will look into it.
- Dr. Roberts shared that THS Boys Soccer won the SWOC!

8. Close of Meeting

A. Future Board Events- BOE Meeting -November 19th (need to schedule 2 work sessions)

B. Adjournment- 9:31pm