



Talawanda Community:

In these turbulent times it is important to revisit and communicate with you, the values and commitments that we hold dear in Talawanda Schools. I wanted to take the time to write to our school community to share our thoughts about recent tragic events, like the brutal death of George Floyd. It's important for citizens in our community to know and understand our most important values. It also makes sense right now to reaffirm our commitments to our students, and to make it known that Talawanda School District will stand up to injustice, bigotry and racism. As Talawanda leaders that are white, we know we cannot possibly understand all of the experiences of a person of color, but we want to tell you that we will stand with you and face whatever comes!

Last evening a parent in our school community organized a peaceful demonstration in uptown Oxford in response to injustices that have happened recently to African Americans in our country. Community members young and old, and from every walk of life, came out for this event. We heard from members of the African American community in Oxford, and community leaders such as our Mayor, our Police Chief, and Miami University's President. We also learned last evening that it is important to listen! Citizens showed care for one another by wearing masks and staying in their family groups. It was an important moment as we worked together to promote real change. The event was a courageous act of unity that we hope will inspire acts of kindness and compassion for our fellow human beings.

We know that everyone is unique, with personal life experiences that have shaped them. We commit to understanding the complexity of this and do not seek to hang a label on anyone. We understand that people are more than labels. The one thing that we most want the Talawanda community to know is that we embrace you...no matter where you come from, no matter what color your skin is...we embrace you! We know that 2020 has been very difficult for so many

reasons already, but please know that we will continue to do all we can to support ALL students and families. We will be ready for anything that comes, with a highly trained faculty and staff, and we will provide the tools to prepare Talawanda students for the new world that is emerging. We believe that education is key to effective and long lasting change. It is time to eradicate injustice, hatred, and discrimination. Talawanda School District will continue to educate and be a strong voice in our community, in Ohio, and in our nation to promote truth and justice for all.

One thing we all have in common is that we are part of the Talawanda community, and we want the best for our children. Now is the time to put away old and worn out ideologies and establish common ground so that we can all learn and grow together. Empowering our citizens to fight injustice, unfairness, and inequality is important and should begin in our schools. Talawanda stands united with our community, nation, and the rest of the world to stop racism and discrimination.

In Education,
Edward Theroux
Superintendent