



# TALAWANDA SCHOOL DISTRICT

131 W. Chestnut Street, Oxford, Ohio 45056 | [www.talawanda.org](http://www.talawanda.org)

---

*Educate and Prepare!*

## Community Member Questions FQA 2 Regarding the Bus/Maintenance Garage Project

\*Please note all questions should be sent to one of the contacts below.

\*\*We do not monitor social media accounts 24 hours per day (Facebook, Twitter, TickTok, etc.) where questions are posed. We want to be able to provide the community with information. Please use the contact information below:

Contact: Shaunna Tafelski, Treasurer/CFO [tafelskis@talawanda.org](mailto:tafelskis@talawanda.org)  
Ed Theroux, Superintendent/CEO [theroux@talawanda.org](mailto:theroux@talawanda.org)  
[levyinformation@talawanda.org](mailto:levyinformation@talawanda.org)

### **Question 1: Is it really costing the district \$15 million dollars to build a new bus/facility building at THS?**

No, this is not true. As it is contracted and projected it will cost the district \$4.1 million dollars. It will **NOT** cost \$15 million dollars. If unforeseen issues arise during the construction process there may be a need to increase this budget slightly, but if the need comes to fruition there will be conversations had during our BOE monthly meetings.

### **Question 2: Why are we building a new bus/facility building when we are in fiscal distress?**

A future FQA will also address this issue, but we have received several questions regarding this topic so we thought we would provide you with some of this information sooner versus later.

We need to start with our history. We have been leasing our facilities and maintenance space from Miami University since the sale of the old high school. This has been a solid partnership over the years with a very minimum cost to the district, \$1/year; saving the district considerably throughout the years.

We (TSD) currently owns the fueling station and share the fuel usage with Butler County Regional Transit Authority (BCRTA). The fuel station allows us to purchase larger quantities of fuel at a lower price. This shared process has benefitted both entities over the years through purchasing power/bulk buying.

For years, BCRTA, City of Oxford, Miami University, and Talawanda have partnered and pursued an Amtrak station in Oxford; in addition to BCRTA applying for Federal grants to build and provide a multi modal transportation center within the Chestnut Fields area (our current bus and maintenance space). Although the Amtrak station is not yet a reality... we are close...the grants were awarded to BCRTA; with them in the design stage and working on a land lease with Miami University (COVID time period). BCRTA is now ready to break ground at the start of 2023 which means we had to get the ball rolling on our own space to move into.

We just want to point out that the transportation facility that BCRTA is constructing, with a 40 year lease with MU, will benefit many in our community. Not only will it serve BCRTA, but also serve the AmTrak riders, Oxford residents, Township residents, Miami students/staff, and all of Butler County residents as BCRTA serves all of the county.

**Question 3: Weren't we able to partner in the lease agreement and share in this BCRTA Transportation Hub?**

Yes, that was the original plan and goal. In the fruition stage it was believed that Talawanda's portion would have cost the district \$200K to have all of our bussing and personnel to be housed in this new building.

**Question 4: Then why didn't we join in?**

BCRTA learned that they could not 'supplement' Talawanda using the grant funds and that TSD would need to pay our full portion of the costs to construct. TSD proceeded with all entities involved in the initial design and cost breakout. This is when we learned that it would cost the district over \$3M (projections done prior to COVID) for our bus and maintenance departments to be a part of the project.....with zero ownership as it would only be a 40 year lease.

Our Board of Education asked the Treasurer and Superintendent to investigate the cost of building our own bus/facility building. Prior to the inflation period we are now in, our goal to build was estimated to be \$1.5 million dollars (not \$15M - I think some missed the decimal point). Benefit to TSD - We would own the new building, not have to rent, and have an asset within our ledgers.

As stated above, BCRTA continues to work behind the scenes on their new building. With inflationary costs that have occurred since the start of COVID we can only assume that portion would have increased at the same rate of travel that ours did....roughly 38%. Which means that our estimated cost to participate in their project would have been just over \$4.2M to participate.

The Talawanda BOE made the difficult decision to move forward with the construction of this new building, versus partnering with BCRTA and MU. While we are not pursuing this multi modal transportation bus building with them, TSD does look forward to partnering with them to have the Amtrak goal come to fruition.

Financially, TSD has planned for this building project within its operational budget, it will be reflected as a purchase service on the Five Year Forecast.

The construction trailer is on site at THS and ground will be breaking shortly.

To finalize/reiterate, the cost of this new bus and maintenance building will be \$4.1 million as approved by the Talawanda BOE at its July 7, 2022 monthly meeting.