



# TALAWANDA SCHOOL DISTRICT

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

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*Talawanda School District EMPOWERS Every Learner Every Day!*

FQA7 What have we done?

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## **Question 1: What has Talawanda done so far?**

Starting in 2009, the previous administration made reports to the community and Board of Education regarding the fiscal state of Talawanda. It was stated that Talawanda (due to how schools were funded, including the student funding formula and wealthy designation for Talawanda) would need to ask the taxpayers for an additional levy in 2014. The district took proactive measures to reduce costs through attrition, negotiating external contracts, creating savings (without jeopardizing Talawanda's educational opportunities), while eliminating the need to ask the community for additional funding. The current Board of Education members, Treasurer, and Superintendent have echoed these same sentiments in our current Board of Education meetings. TSD recognized and stated at Board of Education meetings, as well as to legislators, that TSD would need to go back to the taxpayers and ask for additional revenue as the funding formula creates a fiscal distress issue for Talawanda. Through these efforts, the Board of Education and staff were able to push back the negative cash balance through 2020. Again, the Board of Education and staff continued to look at every expenditure, maintaining Talawanda's excellence, offer the myriad of programming to meet the needs of all students, continue the outstanding extracurricular and athletic programs, provide social emotional supports and resources, and prepare students for life beyond high school (employment, military, college) as contributing citizens and leaders and extend the request for a levy until now (2022).

During this time, Talawanda has also built the last 2 (Kramer and Marshall) elementary buildings without an additional bond levy. There are very few school districts who have built 1 school let alone 2 school buildings without asking their taxpayers for additional funding.

Talawanda has invested and scrutinized its spending for many years. The current Board of Education, as well as, previous members have focused on reducing costs, making plans, and cutting without lowering Talawanda's standards. TSD has done this for the last 10+ years while other districts did not realize this time would be coming so soon. Some districts have asked their taxpayers for additional revenue every 2-3 years. TSD has not had the need to ask for additional levies since 2004. TSD has, and continues to advocate at the state level to fix unconstitutional school funding.

To be proactive, the BOE contracted with the Ohio Auditor of State to conduct a Performance Audit in 2019 (completed in 2020). The Board of Education and Administrative staff analyzed

the audit and were able to implement some of the recommendations. Unfortunately, some of the recommendations were misleading or would result in the elimination of programs and activities that would negatively impact the Talawanda student population. Information was presented to the Board of Education and community at the September 2021 and March 2022 Board of Education meetings. If interested, you may watch the Board of Education meetings [HERE](#).

Talawanda has eliminated 12.5 teaching positions, 1 administrator, 1.5 central office staff, and 1 assistant food manager position. The start and end times were also adjusted on all buildings resulting in a decrease of overtime for our bus drivers (approximately 30 drivers each day were 1-15 minutes over established routes resulting in excess charges to the district). Building budgets have been frozen for the last three years. Through negotiations with both associations and administrators, all staff have agreed to the following raises: 2% in 2021-22, 1% in 2022-23, and 0% in 2023-24 resulting in additional cost savings.

The audit also recommended the elimination of Teaching and Learning staff, Technology staff, outsourcing of custodians, Gifted and Talented staff, Counselors, Social Workers, Psychologists, and other positions. When comparing Talawanda to other comparable schools who spent less per student, the audit recommended these staff and services be eliminated. While we may need to make different decisions in the future if the levy does not pass, we believe in the premiere Talawanda experience/excellence. Providing services to our students and families who need academic, social emotional, extra curricular, athletic, parent mentoring, overall wellness and health, extra time and help, alternative school, and supports and resources to meet the unique learning needs of all students (gifted, alternative, college prep., employment bound, or military bound). Again, some of the audit recommendations have not been implemented to continue and maintain these services.

Additional Information may be found at:

\*<https://reportcard.education.ohio.gov/>

\*\*[www.talawanda.org](http://www.talawanda.org) or

<https://www.talawanda.org/departments/treasurer---finance-42/understanding-school-finance-395>

\*\*\*AG Audit at:

<https://www.talawanda.org/media/treasurer/TSD-%20Audit%20March%202020.pdf>

\*\*\*\*Our website: [www.talawanda.org](http://www.talawanda.org) or

<https://www.talawanda.org/departments/treasurer---finance-42/understanding-school-finance-395>

\*\*\*\*\*DeRolph Decision at:

<https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/rod/docs/pdf/0/2002/2002-Ohio-6750.pdf> or

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/DeRolph\\_v.\\_State#:~:text=State%20is%20a%20landmark%20case,funding%20public%20education%20was%20unconstitutional](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/DeRolph_v._State#:~:text=State%20is%20a%20landmark%20case,funding%20public%20education%20was%20unconstitutional)

\*\*\*\*\*Board of Education Meeting videos (  
<https://www.talawanda.org/departments/board-of-education-30/virtual-boe-meetings-links-314/>  
or [www.talawanda.org](http://www.talawanda.org) Click Departments Click Board of Education Click Videos)

\*\*\*\*\*CUPP Report November 2021 at:  
<https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Finance-and-Funding/School-Payment-Reports/District-Profile-Reports>