



Twinsburg

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CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Superintendent's *Message*

Dear Community Members,

As our students wind down the first half of the school year that has seen them excel academically and in their extra-curricular activities, we have simultaneously been busy preparing for the future of the Twinsburg City School District. We have been meeting with community members to gather feedback about our *Conceptual Legacy Project* to envision and plan the future of our school district's facilities. And, just last month, the Board of Education approved the new five-year Strategic Plan. These two major initiatives will chart the course for the future of our students, our staff, and our community.

This edition of our District newsletter goes in-depth about both the *Conceptual Legacy Project* and the Strategic Plan. You will read about the process and the purpose of the Strategic Plan, which focuses on the areas of 21st Century Teaching and Learning, Communications, Culture/Climate, Facilities, Finance, and Safety. You will discover the possibilities available to the District when it comes to the future of our facilities. This includes possible construction and renovation projects that will set the Twinsburg City School District up for excellence in providing our students with a world-class education that prepares them to be future-ready.

Whenever a school district tackles big projects such as these, the feedback we receive from the community is vital. We had tremendous community involvement in the process of Strategic Planning that helped shape the goals that will chart our course over the next five years. We have also had significant interaction and ideas shared from the community as it relates to the *Conceptual Legacy Project*. Your voice matters when it comes to shaping our future. I want to thank everyone who was involved in the Strategic Planning process. I also want to remind you that your thoughts and opinions are always welcome as we continue to work toward tomorrow.

Feel free to contact me at kpowers@twinsburgcsd.org or 330-486-2002.

Yours in education,

Kathi Powers
Superintendent



New Strategic Plan Set to Take the Twinsburg City School District *Into the Future*



During their regular November meeting, the Twinsburg Board of Education voted to approve the District’s new Strategic Plan centered around a new vision and mission statement.

The Board approved
“Unwavering Commitment – Unlimited Possibilities”
 as the District’s new **vision statement** and
“Partnering with the community... Providing excellent educational programs... Preparing future-ready students”
 as the **mission statement**.

“The new vision and mission statements reflect what we learned during our strategic planning process. They will guide us with a strong sense of purpose as we begin implementing this plan,” said Twinsburg City School District Superintendent Kathryn Powers.

With the expectation of achieving district-wide improvement, the process of strategic planning began officially in February of 2018 with a focus on the critical areas of academics, communication, school culture and climate, facilities, finances, and school safety.

“The strategic planning process is such a valuable experience for any school district,” said Powers. “Listening to our stakeholders always provides us with tremendous insight that we take seriously. Throughout this process, we listened, we learned, and created a new Strategic Plan that will lead us into the future.”

Following 13 focus groups with key stakeholders, including business leaders, parents, teachers, and community members, Action Teams were formed consisting of these stakeholders. The Action Teams gathered in October 2018 to work toward the development of a Strategic Plan to serve both internal and external audiences in moving the District forward in the years to come. The Action Teams presented their initial work in a forum in January 2019 and continued to fine-tune their plans into the spring and summer. Their recommendations were then finalized. The draft Strategic Plan was presented to the Board in October 2019.

“We were impressed by the dedication of the members of our community who put in a lot of hard work formulating this Strategic Plan,” said Rob Felber, Board President. “The Board does not doubt that the District will be well-served by this Strategic Plan.”

The final Strategic Plan includes a focus on 21st-century teaching and learning, communications, culture/climate, facilities, finance, and safety with each area working toward achieving specific goals over the next five years.

“The community was critical in helping develop the goals we will be working toward, and I think that comes across clearly when you look at each area,” offered Powers. “We know our community has high expectations for teaching and learning, for how we communicate, manage our resources, and create a culture of serving the whole child. But they are also committed to ensuring that our staff and students have excellent facilities that are safe and create a strong sense of wellness.”

21st CENTURY TEACHING AND LEARNING

Goals

- Equip students with foundational knowledge and skills across the curriculum.
- Empower students to be visionary leaders with superior reasoning skills.
- Support the holistic well-being of each child.

COMMUNICATIONS

Goals

- Implement District comprehensive communications plan.
- Develop a crisis communications plan.
- Enhance the District’s brand.

CULTURE/CLIMATE

Goals

- Increase mental health awareness for District and community members.
- Support a culture of equity where all students and staff are represented and respected through holistic and creative approaches.

FACILITIES

Goals

- Update the facilities master plan to ensure proper and strategic annual expenditures.
- Update the facilities master plan and options for the *Conceptual Legacy Project* to engage the community.

FINANCE

Goals

- Complete the financial plan to maintain fiscal stability through the fiscal year 2023, which shall include strategies for passing \$5 million renewal levy in November 2020.
- Continue to operate in a fiscally responsible manner by utilizing the benchmarks identified in the Financial Strategic Planning Flow Chart to support educational opportunities.
- Enhance financial communication to all stakeholders.

SAFETY

Goals

- Facilitate student-oriented groups at each building to discuss creating a safer culture and address concerns.
- Research and develop intervention and diversion programs to address the needs of students dealing with substance abuse.
- Determine the impact of later start times on school transportation, cost efficiency, and student achievement.
- Perform a security analysis/safety audit for each District building.



Twinsburg Alum Returns as First-Ever *Director of Student Wellness*

The Board of Education unanimously approved Dr. Andrea C. Walker as Twinsburg City School’s first Director of Student Wellness, a role she officially began in October. Dr. Walker brings almost 20 years of experience in progressively responsible positions within K-12 education and has demonstrated that she is passionate about student wellness, access, and inclusion.

“I’m dedicated to supporting and leading innovative teams to advance the success and well-being of students,” stated Dr. Walker, who will focus on building a strong, resilient, and healthy school community. “By creating proactive strategies to help the student population achieve improved wellness, enhancing student access to resources and skills to manage stress and promote resiliency, and by promoting a healthy school culture, the students of the Twinsburg City School District will have the opportunity to thrive.”

Additionally, Dr. Walker will collectively engage, plan, and coordinate cross-functional connections and collaborations to create health and well-being across the District.

Dr. Walker is a 1996 graduate of RB Chamberlin High School. She obtained her undergraduate and graduate degrees from Kent State University in elementary education and family studies, respectively. Dr. Walker earned her doctorate in leadership and professional practice from Trevecca Nazarene University (Nashville, Tenn.).

Safety, Security, and Positivity All Part of Dodge Experience

George G. Dodge Intermediate School partners with the Twinsburg Police Department to bring quality lessons about safety to our students. Twinsburg City School District School Resource Officers visit each grade level and present tips for school safety and security. The sixth-grade classes also receive instruction on DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education).



As part of the focus on the social-emotional well-being of our students, which impacts the safety and security of the school, George G. Dodge Intermediate School began the Quarterly Awards Program. The program highlights the hard work and positive choices students make. Grade levels meet in the gymnasium for assemblies that showcase our students through 14 different awards categories. Approximately 180 awards are given at each grade level.

The students at George G. Dodge Intermediate School also participate in Mix it Up Day in correlation with Start with Hello Week from the organization Sandy Hook Promise. Instead of mixing up the lunch tables like last year, students are assigned to different recesses. They are engaged with a variety of team building activities and interactive and cooperative games.



Random Acts of Kindness in the Air at Samuel Bissell Elementary School

Second-grade student Reese Fernengal was featured in the Akron Beacon Journal as a “Kid of Character.” She performed an awesome act of kindness by making special friend bracelets for all of her classmates. Third-grade student Allante Simmons was also featured in the Akron Beacon Journal as a “Kid of Character.” He helped a younger student find his way around the building. Treating others the way they want to be treated is an important kindness trait for our students to show.

Kindness Club, which consists of 30 students, has a mission to spread kindness around the school. These students made welcome cards for every new student as the school year began. The cards displayed positive messages for all the new students in the building.

Students who show acts of kindness receive Random Acts of Kindness Doves. When a student is seen doing something kind for someone else, they are recognized during announcements and receive a special phone call home to share the great news with family members.



Conceptual Legacy Project

Charts Course for Future



EXISTING HIGH SCHOOL SITE
TWINSBURG CITY SCHOOLS
FALL 2019
CONCEPTUAL DISCUSSION DRAFT



EXISTING DODGE SITE
TWINSBURG CITY SCHOOLS
FALL 2019
CONCEPTUAL DISCUSSION DRAFT



NEW MIDDLE SCHOOL AT HIGH SCHOOL SITE
CONCEPTUAL PLAN
TWINSBURG CITY SCHOOLS
FALL 2019
CONCEPTUAL DISCUSSION DRAFT



RB CHAMBERLIN RENOVATIONS
TWINSBURG CITY SCHOOLS
FALL 2019

The future of the Twinsburg City School District's facilities is the focus of the *Conceptual Legacy Project*, launched earlier this year by the Board of Education and Superintendent Kathryn Powers.

"We have spent time listening to the community over the past couple of months and will continue to do so as we look to chart the course for our District's future," said Superintendent Powers. "The ultimate goal is to determine the best way to create facilities that are current, safe for our students and staff, and support the education of 21st-century learners."

The *Conceptual Legacy Project* is the outcome of the 2016 facilities assessment commissioned by the District and completed by two top facilities and construction firms in the state of Ohio. The firms provided an assessment that developed facility priorities. The assessment also reported that the cost to maintain George G. Dodge Intermediate School would be a staggering 22 million dollars while an option to re-align grade levels and build a brand new three-grade school would cost 31.5 million.

"Generally, if the cost of renovating a building is two-thirds the cost of constructing a new building, it is recommended to build new," said Chad Welker, the District's Business Manager.

The *Conceptual Legacy Project* includes not only recommendations for the future of George G. Dodge Intermediate School but also options for a possible new PK-3 elementary school building and renovations for RB Chamberlin Middle School that would renovate into a facility for grades four and five. There are also options for flexible furniture, relocating transportation, the abatement and demolishing of George G. Dodge Intermediate School, Wilcox Primary School, and Samuel Bissell Elementary.

"We are at the beginning stages of discussing what our school district might look like in the future. Nothing is set in stone, and that is why we value the input of the community, our staff, our partners, and of course, our students," offered Powers. "This is an exciting opportunity to create facilities that meet the needs of our students to best prepare them for what's ahead, and we look forward to seeing where the *Conceptual Legacy Project* leads us."

Blended Learning Embraced *in the Twinsburg City School District*

The Twinsburg City School District has warmly embraced an innovative educational practice to meet the needs of each learner. Introduced to the District in the form of a pilot program last school year, Blended Learning has proven to be an effective means for relevant instruction in a personalized format.

This year finds Blended Learning classrooms for learners as young as kindergarten. In these classrooms, curious scholars in kindergarten through sixth grade participate in a wide variety of both independent and collaborative activities using Google Classroom and many innovative educational applications. Blended Learning is in addition to all the best practices of a traditional classroom environment but in a modern and engaging setting. Picture books, chapter books, novels, math manipulatives, and hands-on opportunities still abound in this new approach, but it adds in innovative digital programs and the use of devices. Blended Learning takes all the best parts of teaching and learning. It puts them together in a comprehensive strategy to deliver the curriculum in meaningful ways and prepare students for the real world.



Flexible Seating Contributes to Learning at Wilcox Primary School



Learning environments have a direct impact on student achievement. Recently, teachers at Wilcox Primary School have been learning more about flexible seating and offering students a choice about where to sit to be fully engaged in a lesson or activity.

Each classroom looks and functions differently, depending on the furniture and how students and teachers operate in that environment. Classrooms with flexible seating help the young students at Wilcox Primary School participate in and take ownership of their learning. Incorporating movement into the school day promotes better oxygen flow to the brain and helps students who struggle with sustaining their attention for long periods. Flexible seating encourages student choice, communication, collaboration, and critical thinking.

Increasing the variety of seating and learning spaces at Wilcox Primary School has been a gradual and deliberate process led by teachers who are interested in creating workspaces that lend themselves to collaborative and problem-based learning. Teachers have decided to reconfigure desks from traditional rows to table groups so students can work together. With the strategic guidance of their teacher, students learn how to make wise choices about what works best for their learning style.

Comfortable classrooms promote a sense of calm and well-being that helps Wilcox Primary School students be available for learning and empowers them to become responsible, active learners.

Wilcox Primary School Support the Wounded Warrior Project



For the last 17 years, Wilcox Primary School's "Bring a Veteran to Lunch" program has welcomed our nation's military veterans and active-duty personnel to visit the school and enjoy a meal with students. The school day begins with the Pledge of Allegiance and a flag-raising ceremony, and is assisted by veterans from Twinsburg VFW Post 4929. Students display military-themed artwork, perform songs, and create "thank you" cards to send to our troops overseas.

This year, to make the event more special, Wilcox Primary School staff and families are collecting donations to support the *Wounded Warrior Project*. The *Wounded Warrior Project* is a non-profit charity and service organization that offers several programs and events for wounded veterans. Find more information about the *Wounded Warrior Project* at www.woundedwarriorproject.org.



Photo courtesy Twinsburg High School Yearbook Class

RB Chamberlin Students Selected for OMEA District 6 Honor Band

RB Chamberlin Middle School Band members Logan Lockemer (8th Grade-Percussion) and Cavin Xue (8th Grade-Trumpet) were chosen for the OMEA District 6 Honor Band Festival and performed at the event, held on the College of Wooster campus, in early November.

The students were selected from a pool of over 300 musicians from OMEA District 6, which includes Summit, Portage, Medina, and Wayne Counties. The group rehearsed throughout the day, and the event concluded with an afternoon rehearsal and evening concert the next evening at the McGaw Chapel on campus at the College of Wooster. Both Lockemer and Xue are four-year Tiger Band members.

Band and Orchestra Firing On All Cylinders

The Twinsburg High School Band and Orchestra have performed their way into the top-level competition. Deepthi Naruka (violin) and Rebecca Mold (viola) were selected for the OMEA Northeast Region Orchestra. Also, Rebecca Mold was chosen to be a performing member in the 2020 OMEA All-State Orchestra. The All-State Orchestra only accepts 15 violas, which makes Mold one of the finest in the state of Ohio, and one of the top three in Northeast Ohio. The Orchestra will perform January 30 - February 1, 2020, at the OMEA Conference in Cincinnati. In addition to playing the viola, Rebecca is a pianist in the Symphony and Jazz Band.

Students Recognized as National Merit Students



Five Twinsburg High School students have been named National Merit Scholarship Semi-Finalists, representing the most significant number yet from our District. Three students were named National Merit Commended Scholars.

Students named National Merit Scholarship Semi-Finalists include:

Joshua Maluyao
Hannah Moeliono
Deepti Naruka
Krishna Patel
Caleb Simon

Students who earned National Merit Commended Scholar status include:

Sahaj Bhambra
Rebecca Mold
Kevin Onion

Commended Students were selected on the basis of a nationally applied Selection Index score. Although Commended Students do not continue in the competition for National Merit Scholarships, some of these students do become candidates for special scholarships sponsored by corporations and businesses.

To be considered for a Merit Scholarship award, semifinalists must fulfill several requirements to advance to the finalist level of the competition. Over 1.5 million juniors in about 21,000 high schools entered the 2020 National Merit Scholarship Program and represented less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors.



Deeds' State Appearance Highlights Successful Fall Sports Season

Senior Alyssa Deeds earned her spot at the OHSAA State Cross Country meet, placing 66th in the Division I race. This was her second appearance in the state competition after qualifying during her freshman year, as well.

Fall Sports *Highlights*

- Girls Cross Country team qualified for Regionals for the seventh consecutive year.
- Sophomore Aiden Cain placed 55th in his first Regional cross country meet appearance.
- Freshman Lyndsey Stephens qualified for District play in Girls Golf.
- The Volleyball team won the Sectional Championship.
- Girls Soccer finished with an impressive 14-3-1 record, won the Sectional title and finished as District runners-up



Looking Ahead

Upcoming Events

To view all building/district events please visit www.twinsburg.k12.oh.us

December 2019

December 20 End of Second Quarter

December 23 - January 06 No School Students & Staff (Winter Break)

January 2020

January 06 No School Students (Teacher Work Day/Professional Day)

January 07 School Resumes

January 08 Twinsburg Board of Education Meeting

January 10 Report Cards

January 20 No School Students & Staff (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)

January 22 Twinsburg Board of Education Meeting



Twinsburg City School District

Board of Education

Robert Felber, *President*

Tina Davis, *Vice President*

Matt Cellura, *Member*

Mark Curtis, *Member*

Angela DeFabio, *Member*

The Twinsburg Board of Education meets in regular session at the Twinsburg Government Center in Council Chambers on the first and third Wednesdays of each month with the exception of June and September when the meetings are on the first and fourth Wednesdays. All Regular and Special Board Meetings are open to the public.

Administration
330.486.2000

Kathryn Powers
Superintendent

Martin Aho
Treasurer/CFO

Chad Welker
Business Manager

Jennifer Farthing
Director of Curriculum

Timothy Sullen
Director of Human Resources

Denise Traphagen
Director of Pupil Services

Andrea C. Walker
Director of Student Wellness