

Twinsburg

MARCH | 2021
CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT



Inside THIS ISSUE

Progress Continues on District's
Strategic Plan2

Live Streaming Brings Athletics,
Performances Directly to a
Device Near You2

Morning Meetings Give
Students Positive Start to Their
School Days2

Twinsburg Students Collaborate
with University of Akron
Undergrads3

Applications Now Open for
Wilcox Primary Preschool3

Twinsburg Junior Launches Art
for Autism Non-Profit3

From an Intergalactic Voyage
to Honoring Veterans, Bissell
Students Highly Engaged4

Dodge Students and Staff
Continue to Celebrate in the
Midst of Challenge4

Child Find4

RB Chamberlin Adjusts to New
Surroundings at Dodge5

World Language Club Hosts
Record-Setting Annual Food
Drive Event5

Learning Powers Forward in
the Era of COVID-19 6-7

May Renewal Levy is an
Investment in Our Children ...8

Superintendent's *Message*

Dear Community Members,

While we could spend time focusing on the extreme challenges of this past year for our students, staff, and community, I hope we also take time to recognize the acts of kindness, the innovative ideas put into practice, and those who have helped our students rise. There is no doubt the past year has taken its toll on our school district and community, but overall we are very fortunate to have a strong “rising tide” in the Twinsburg City School District. The saying goes that a *rising tide lifts all ships*. I consider all of you to be the rising tide. You have all helped us stay focused on our students as we face these challenges head-on, assured we have a fleet of support. While we still have a way to go, there is no doubt that we are meeting the moment.

In this edition of our newsletter, you will find examples of what our teachers and students have been doing to adjust to this new normal. From new approaches in engaging students in virtual classrooms to hosting annual events in creative ways with a safety-first mindset, our staff continues to demonstrate their commitment to do whatever it takes. You will find highlights and stories about our students and their continued commitment to community service and helping others. You will read about how we’ve leveraged technology and partnerships to bring our athletic and extracurricular events into your homes and onto your devices through live streaming.

We provide an update on the progress being made on the District’s five-year Strategic Plan. Our staff continues to make progress on meeting the goals set forth and adopted by the Twinsburg Board of Education in November 2019.

I hope you are as proud as I am about the unique and innovative ways we are meeting our students’ needs and helping them to achieve during this global pandemic.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, feel free to reach out to me at kpowers@twinsburgcsd.org or 330.486.2000.

Yours in education,

Kathi Powers
Superintendent
[@TwinsburgSupt](https://twitter.com/TwinsburgSupt)

Vision

“Unwavering Commitment – Unlimited Possibilities”

Mission

“Partnering with the community...
Providing excellent educational programs...
Preparing future-ready students.”



Progress Continues on District's Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan, adopted by the Twinsburg Board of Education in November 2019, 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.

At the October 2020 Board of Education meeting, members of the Twinsburg City School District Administrative Team provided an overview of the work completed toward the strategic plan goals during the 2019-2020 school year and an introduction to the focus of the work during this 2020-2021 school year.

Plenty of progress on meeting the goals within the Strategic Plan has already been made including:

21st Century Teaching and Learning

- continued implementation of Blended Learning strategies

Communications

- began implementation of the Comprehensive Communication Plan and finalized a Crisis Communication Plan

Culture/Climate

- adopted Social Emotional Learning Standards

Facilities

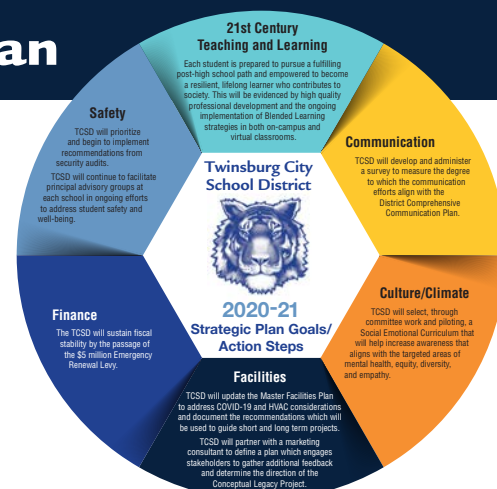
- updated the Facilities Master Plan and the Five Year Facilities/Grounds Plan and updated the Enrollment Study

Finance

- updated the Financial Strategic Planning Flow Chart

Safety

- completed a security analysis and determined the prioritization of addressing areas of concern



Administrators provided further updates about the Strategic Plan to the Board during the December 16, 2020 meeting. While the pandemic continues to provide plenty of distraction and challenges, progress continues on meeting the goals defined in the Strategic Plan. More information about our Strategic Plan can be found at twinsburg.k12.oh.us.

Live Streaming Brings Athletics, Performances Directly to a Device Near You



Like everything else that the pandemic impacted, fans' ability to gather in gymnasiums and stadiums was not spared. The District got creative and turned to Twinsburg High School Multimedia Instructor Casey Kirtley and his students to help solve this problem.

"This year, the need for new ways to showcase our athletes, musicians, and scholars caused us to look for alternative ways to deliver events to our families," said Kirtley. "The Audio Visual (AV) Technical Student crew was a natural fit for stepping into livestreaming. We started in the fall, and with winter sports, concerts, and Awards Programs taking place indoors, we expanded, even more, this winter."

Currently, Kirtley and his crew of students are livestreaming all of the varsity winter home events. Concerts will also be livestreamed. They have also expanded into special events like January's National Honor Society Inductions.

The students are primarily juniors and seniors from the media courses taught by Kirtley. Students who have a keen interest and talent in media can then apply to join the AV Technical Student crew. They are then interviewed for a chance to claim a position. The current crew consists of second-year students Jason Secora, Ian Kirtley, Josh Aponte and Kameron East. This year, new to the crew is Brody Markovitz, Abby Ryan, Michael Noga, Tay Adams, Shawn McCormick, and Andrew Powell.

Equipment is provided by vendors who are partners in the District's Multimedia Project.

All live streamed events appear on one of the three Twinsburg City School District YouTube channels: TCSDstudenteventsCH1 is for events outside of the THS building, TCSDstudenteventsCH2 showcases events from the THS Gym, and TCSDstudenteventsCH3 is for events held inside the THS Auditorium. There are dozens of previously live streamed events on CH1 and CH2.

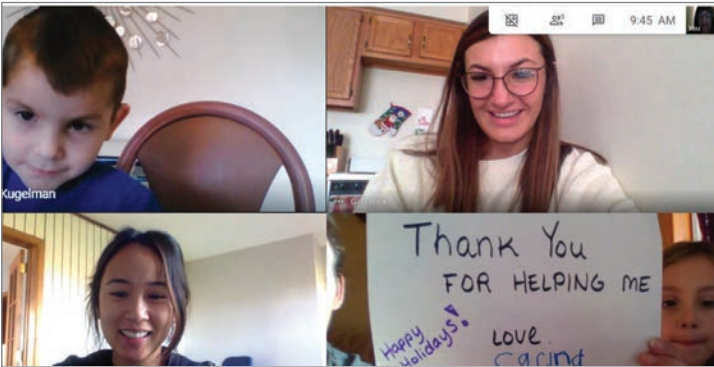
Morning Meetings Give Students Positive Start to Their School Days

This year, the Twinsburg City School District implemented Morning Meetings. This initiative originated from the District's restorative justice training and has become a District-wide practice. Morning Meetings support the idea that our students' social-emotional growth is just as significant as their academic growth.

Our teachers and school counselors adapted their Morning Meetings to fit their classroom needs, using them to create a classroom culture where students feel safe, supported, and ready to learn. The primary advantage of the meetings is the student and staff cohesiveness and reinforced student friendships.

"Morning Meetings provide a calming influence and structure students can rely on to begin their day," stated Dr. Andrea Walker, Director of Student Wellness for the District. "They are relatively short in length (about 10 minutes) but positively impactful in building a community that supports our virtual and on-campus students to build positivity that carries over into the rest of the school day."

Twinsburg Students Collaborate with University of Akron Undergrads



During the Fall semester, students enrolled in Dr. Shelley Houser's Assessment and Instruction in Literacy course at the University of Akron had the opportunity to complete undergraduate fieldwork with groups of Twinsburg City School District students.

Pairs of University of Akron students were teamed up with virtual students in kindergarten through sixth grade. These students met together via Google Meet for their planned literacy activities and occasionally used breakout rooms to complete activities one-on-one. The undergraduate students practiced administering literacy assessments with our students and then worked on reading activities and literacy games to help them with phonics skills, reading with reasonable fluency, and practicing comprehension strategies.

Applications Now Open for Wilcox Primary Preschool

The Twinsburg City School District is in search of amazing typical peer models for the Integrated Preschool Program (IPP) and "young investigators" to join the project-based Kindergarten Preparatory Program (KPP). Both programs are Five-Star, Step Up To Quality rated programs by the Ohio Department of Education and provide high-quality preschool options to our community's families.

Please visit the www.twinsburg.k12.oh.us and visit Wilcox Primary School's 'Preschool' website to complete the program's online application and additional information. IPP applications will close on February 15. KPP applications will be accepted through March 15. Scholarship opportunities based on financial need are available to families who qualify for the Kindergarten Preparatory Program (KPP) only. Additional questions may be directed to Wilcox Primary School at 330.486.2030.



Twinsburg Junior Launches ART FOR AUTISM CARES Non-Profit

www.artforautismcares.com

For Twinsburg High School students, community service and giving back are nothing new. Students give hours and hours of their time to support various community events and organizations. For one THS student, giving back meant the launch of his own non-profit, Art for Autism Cares. The brainchild of junior Bryce Lowry has a particular and inspiring mission: to fund programming to help individuals and families who struggle with Autism and its effects, ensuring they receive resources to succeed in school and their community.

The idea for Art for Autism came home one day in Bryce's backpack at the age of 12. He had just completed a two-week hospital stay, followed by admittance to a two-week intensive behavioral therapy program at Nationwide Center for Autism and Related Disorders Clinic. This was the program that would turn Bryce's life around.

He produced a business plan out of that dirty backpack and emphatically said, "Mom, I see so many kids at my school who need the help I've gotten, and I want to do something. I want to sell my art and give the money to other kids so they can get the help that I've had because I don't want anyone else going through the things I've been through. That's why I'm going to call my business Art for Autism."

Bryce's knack for photography and using it to communicate is now on display through the non-profit, which sells his prints and gives a portion of the proceeds to children's hospitals and Autism centers throughout the state. He launched a website for Art for Autism (ArtForAutismCares.com) in November to showcase his photography and sell his prints. This year Center for Autism and Related Disorders will receive funding from his artwork.



From an Intergalactic Voyage to Honoring Veterans, *Bissell Students Highly Engaged*

In recognition of Veterans Day, Samuel Bissell Elementary School students and staff participated in a week full of activities to honor our brave men and women who have sacrificed so much for our country. Second and third-grade students made patriotic posters to display, showing their appreciation. Students and staff also dressed in red, white, and blue and were encouraged to wear armed forces attire. Students also sang patriotic songs, made cards for Veterans thanking them for their service, and participated in a candy challenge, which led to 28 boxes of candy being mailed to the 16th Engineer Brigade currently serving in Kuwait. This Brigade has a special connection to Samuel Bissell Elementary School as Principal Misty Johnson's husband, CSM Abraham Johnson, is currently serving with this unit there.



NASA Virtual Meeting

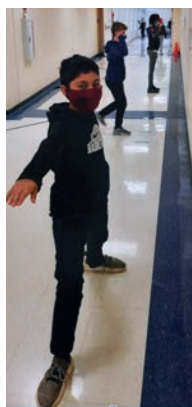
Second-grade students from Ms. Jolly's and Mrs. Ziska's classes had an intergalactic voyage into space earlier this school year, thanks to special presenters from NASA's SCan program, which promotes Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Education K-12. These stellar students learned about the International Space Station, astronaut routines, the Apollo and Artemis missions, radio waves, and so much more.



Dodge Students and Staff Continue to Celebrate in the Midst of Challenge

Fall Team Celebration

Students and staff were invited to participate in the Samuel Bissell Elementary School/George G. Dodge Intermediate School Fall Team Celebration in October. Each teacher and each student decorated a t-shirt and mask and wore them to school. The activity supported our Tiger Day Program, emphasizing team building and character traits.



Movement Hallway

Teachers Abigail Etcher and Kate Cardaman created a movement hallway with various movement activities that classrooms can visit. Students can safely participate in arm circles, jumping jacks, mindfulness, and other ways to stretch and move their bodies.



Teachers Supporting Students

George G. Dodge Intermediate School teachers love their students so much that it was hard to see them leave for Winter Break. Teachers created signs with messages to share with students as the buses pulled out of the parking lot and our students headed home for Winter Break.

Child Find

Child Find is the process to locate, evaluate, and identify all children from birth through 21 years of age with disabilities, regardless of their situations, who have significant, individual needs and require intensive interventions through special education and related services. The Twinsburg City School District provides early childhood programs for children with identified disabilities and comprehensive programs for children with disabilities in grades kindergarten through twelve.

If you know of a child in our District with a disability that is not presently attending school or receiving services from another agency, please contact any school principal, school psychologist, or the Director of Pupil Services.

In addition and in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the American's with Disabilities Act Amendment of 2008, the Twinsburg City School District is participating in Child Find efforts to locate, evaluate and identify all children who have a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits a major life activity who may because of disability, needs or is believed to need special education, related services or aids or accommodations/modifications. If a parent or guardian suspects that a child may be eligible under this federal definition, please contact the building guidance counselor, building principal, or Director of Pupil Services.

RB Chamberlin Adjusts to New Surroundings *at Dodge*

The RB Chamberlin Middle School staff, now being hosted at George G. Dodge Intermediate School, transformed how and where they educate the middle school students in our District. Middle School students attend classes on-campus as well as learning virtually. While much has changed, much has remained the same, including a staff that cares about students. They continue to provide students with the same high-quality education, whether the students are on campus or learning from home.

- The library has books and will travel. Middle schoolers can access a wide variety of high-interest materials from a mobile book cart and socially distanced visits to the library. The SORA by OverDrive eBook library platform gives our students access to over 1,000 eBooks and audiobooks anytime, anywhere.
- Student athletes have been able to compete. Most notably, the seventh-grade volleyball team had an undefeated season. All middle school basketball teams have winning records and are enjoying outstanding seasons.
- The Power of the Pen Writers took part in the district tournament hosted virtually. RB Chamberlin had four writers who placed in the top 10 as individual writers for their grade level among all the schools who competed. Indrani Das Sarma finished sixth among all seventh graders. Among the eighth grade writers, Lee Koehnien finished ninth, Norah Kremer finished fourth (including a first-place Best-of-Round). Rhea Ballani was ranked as the number one individual writer among all eighth-graders for the tournament. Additionally, the eighth-graders were awarded the first place Overall Team Award.
- Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) are still focused on social-emotional awareness. This year, RBC's multi-tiered support systems have been changed to accommodate the virtual and alternate on-campus/blended learning model of learning. We are Tiger Proud of RB Chamberlin Middle School, designated an Ohio PBIS Silver Medalist for the third consecutive year.



World Language Club Hosts Record-Setting Annual Food Drive Event

Twinsburg High School students and the staff at RB Chamberlin Middle School and George G. Dodge Intermediate School came together to donate an incredible number of nonperishable food items for those in need. In November, the Twinsburg High School World Language Club hosted their 11th Annual Food Drive to support The Emergency Assistance Center. Along with food donations, a record total of nearly \$450 was donated.



Learning Powers Forward

It's been nearly a year since the COVID-19 pandemic changed our lives. Schools faced challenges never foreseen, but thanks to our dedicated staff members, along with a very supportive community, the Twinsburg City School District continues to provide our students with a top-notch educational experience.

The Twinsburg Virtual Academy launched during the 2020-2021 school year. Pictured are Virtual Academy teachers from grades 4-6.

Virtual Instruction became the new normal and Twinsburg was ready with our 1:1 Google Chromebook program.

Our special events and annual meetings went virtual as well.



By The Numbers

12

The number of grade levels that were moved, including building changes, to start the school year. This decision allowed for better social distancing protocols.

3,000+

The number of boxes containing teacher supplies and materials that were moved to start the school year with students and teachers in different buildings/locations.

Bus safety protocols allow for only one student per seat. Buses are also disinfected between routes, windows are partially open to allow for cross ventilation, and students boarding the bus use the hand sanitizer station.

1



14

The number of new building/classroom cleaning protocols that were implemented as part of ensuring COVID-19 protocols are met.

2,039

The number of breakfasts and lunches prepared by the Food Service staff through January 2021. Meals are delivered to the classrooms as opposed to students coming to the cafeterias.

A new attendance tracking system was instituted and every student riding a bus was issued a badge. The badge system allows the driver to know if students were on the bus and at what stop they exited.

1



FOOD SERVICE
Current Daily
Participation

663
Daily
On Campus
Breakfasts

239
Daily
Virtual
Breakfasts

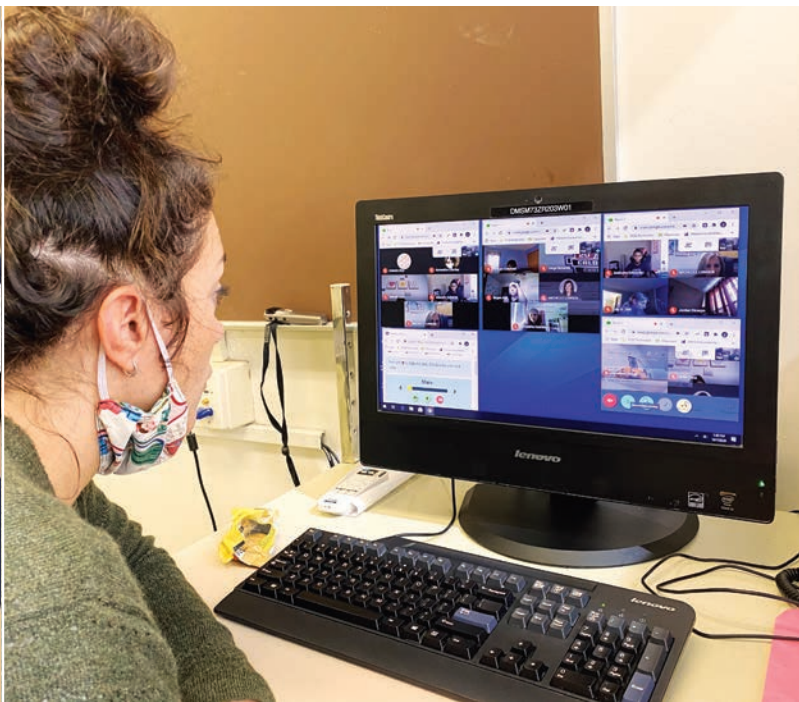
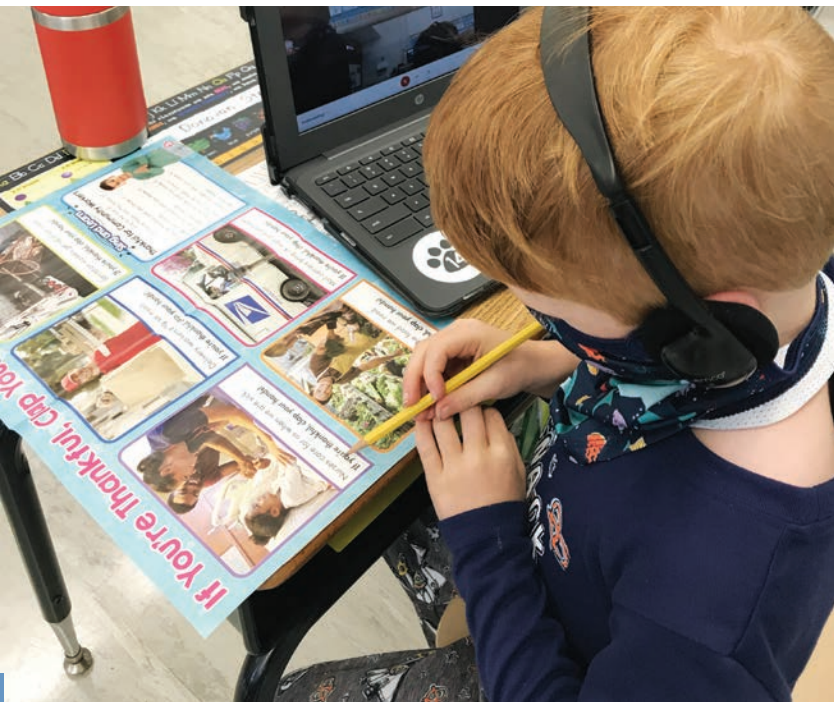
898
Daily
On Campus
Lunches

239
Daily
Virtual
Lunches

in the Era of COVID-19

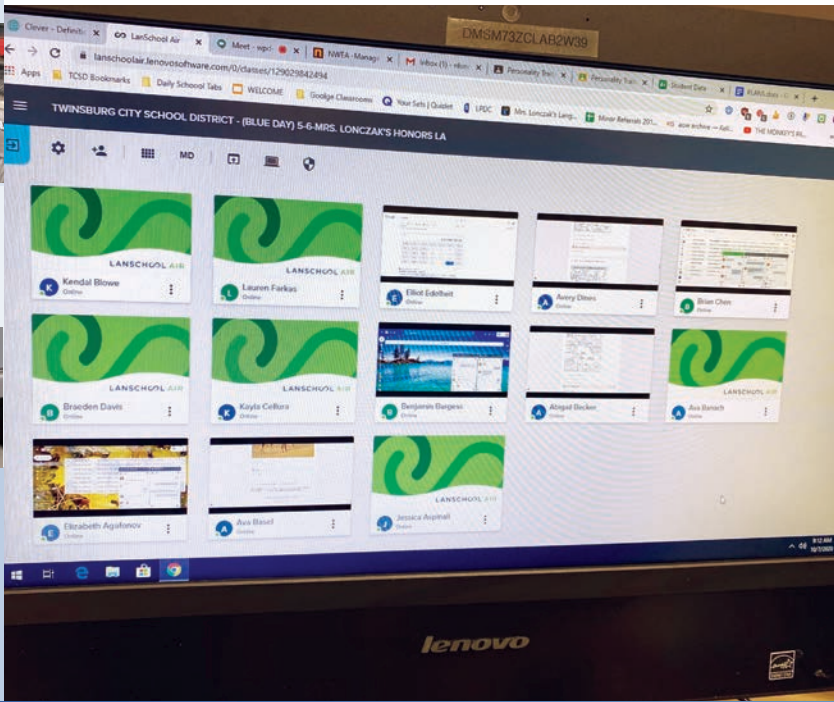
Our classrooms follow safety protocols that require strict social distancing. Here, first graders are able to complete “Buddy Reading” and small group instruction using Google Meet while at their desks.

Online breakout rooms give teachers and students the opportunity for more targeted instruction.



Innovative online platforms like Lanschool Air, which allows teachers to monitor what students are working on remotely, and PearDeck, which provides instant feedback for students, helps everyone stay on task and engaged.

Staff professional development moved virtual with teachers gathering via Google Meet to continue to grow as educators.



May Renewal Levy is an Investment in Our Children

By Martin Aho, Treasurer/CFO

The Twinsburg City School District is placing the renewal of an existing levy on the May 4, 2021 ballot. Please remember this is a Renewal Levy meaning it will not increase taxes. In other words, the familiar - **NO New Taxes**.

This renewal levy will bring in the same \$5,184,569 as it did in 2001 when it was initially approved. However, due to moderate community real estate growth, the levy originally passed at 6.9 mills has been reduced to 5.12 mills, decreasing the tax an individual homeowner pays for this levy by almost 2 mills.

This levy is an investment in our children to continue to excel both in school and after graduation. Today's students are tomorrow's doctors, nurses, electricians, first responders, soldiers, and more that we will depend on to keep us healthy and safe.

For the Twinsburg City School District, about 85 percent of the budget consists of salaries and benefits for the school district's teachers, cooks, bus drivers, janitors and everyone who comes together to create a welcoming, vibrant learning environment for students to succeed. Public education is a service/people business.

The residents of Twinsburg City, Reminderville and Twinsburg Township have been supportive of the Twinsburg City School District, and for that, we are truly grateful. Every day, we strive to provide high-quality educational programming while controlling per-pupil costs and remaining fiscally responsible.

The Ohio Department of Education (ODE)'s latest measure illuminates our efforts. The current ODE's FY2020 District Profile, aka Cupp Report is noted below:

PER PUPIL EXPENDITURES FY20		FISCALLY RESPONSIBLE
Bedford	15,597	Due to the fact that public education is primarily funded through property tax, school districts in Ohio rely on the passage of levies for funding to provide excellent programs and opportunities for our students.
Solon	15,301	
Hudson	14,352	We project the per pupil cost will remain basically stable. According to the Cupp Report for FY20, the Twinsburg City School District spends \$12,344 per pupil. This is \$348 below state average of \$12,692 and \$2,957 less than our neighbors to the north.
Nordonia	13,714	
Aurora	13,150	
State Average	12,692	
Similar Districts	12,502	
Twinsburg	12,344	

Source: ODE CUPP Report

This renewal levy is a critical piece of the Twinsburg City School's funding picture. It provides \$5,184,569 or about 10 percent of the District's operating funds. Revenue from this levy will continue to address five priority areas:

- Support student learning and instruction;
- Provide a source of stable and predictable revenue;
- Maintain high quality innovative educational programs for all students PreK-12;
- Maintain and enhance classroom technology; and
- Maintain appropriate class sizes.

Schools have a direct impact on home values. Finding a home in a community where our kids can attend an exceptional, highly rated school district is an essential priority for many families. Many are willing to pay more for a home located in such a community.

The people of the Twinsburg City School District will determine the quality of our schools. Let's keep our success rate high and our schools and communities strong. An investment in our children's education is an investment in their future and in our community.



Twinsburg City School District

Board of Education

Tina Davis, President

Mark Curtis, Vice President

Angela DeFabio, Member

Rob Felber, Member

Adrienne Gordon, 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

Belinda McKinney
Director of Human Resources

Tajuana Hunnicutt
Director of Pupil Services

Andrea C. Walker
Director of Student Wellness