

# Talawanda Middle School

4030 Oxford-Reily Road -- 513.273.3300

December 1, 2008

Dear Parents and Students,

As we close the books on 2008, we look forward, with anticipation and optimism, to beginning a new calendar year and second semester at Talawanda Middle School. First semester ends January 15th, and report cards will be sent home with students on January 23rd. Most students have a schedule change for second semester. If you or your child have questions regarding his/her schedule, please feel free to contact the guidance office.

The students at TMS are amazing! At this point, 57% of our 6th, 7th, and 8th graders have accumulated ZERO POINTS, 28% have earned only 1-5 POINTS, and a whopping 92% of the TMS student body remains BELOW THE 10 POINT mark and have received absolutely no discipline this year! Great job, Tribe! Second semester brings a fresh start for students involved in the TMS Behavior Management System. Students with less than 50 points begin second semester at zero points, and students with over 50 points begin with 15 points. We hope that students will take advantage of this opportunity to improve their behavior with this fresh start!

January is a very busy month for after school activities at TMS! Every nook and cranny in the building is occupied! Students who are participating in after school activities or who wish to attend TMS games to support our various teams, must leave school and return to TMS at the appropriate time. Supervision is not available for students between dismissal and the 4:30 game time, and your child's safety is important to us.

Undoubtedly, Old Man Winter will soon return! Check the student agenda for the television and radio stations that will announce Talawanda School District closings. You may also check our district web site, [www.talawanda.net](http://www.talawanda.net) for up-to-the-minute information, and we will test the new C-Tech Notification System on December 10th at 7:00 p.m. Please do not call the TMS office for closing information; however, if you have questions about your child's bus, you may call Peterman Transportation at 273-3150. A one or two hour delay means that teachers and other staff also report to school one or two hours later. Please do not drop your children off at the regular time due to the lack of adult supervision in the building on delay days.

Friday, December 19th is the last day of school before the winter break, and school will resume on Monday, January 5, 2009. On behalf of the staff at Talawanda Middle School, I extend best wishes to you and your family for a happy holiday and a joyous New Year.

Sincerely,

Sharon Lytle  
Principal

## TMS Events

December	1	School Resumes! Girls' B.B. @ Nagel Blue / 4:30 Boys' B.B. / Home (Scrimmage) / Eaton / 5:00
	2	6th Grade Band Concert / 7:00
	3	Girls' B.B. / Home / Wilmington / 4:30
	4	Boys' B.B. @ Winton Woods / Scrimmage / 4:00 Orchestra Concert / 7:00
	5	Interims Sent Home w/Students Wrestling @ West Carrollton Inv. / Bus Leaves @ 2:15 Feed the Needy Slam Jam / 2:45-4:15 Chorus performs @ Holiday Festival
	6	Wrestling @ West Carrollton Inv. / Bus Leaves @ 7:00
	8	Girls' B.B. / Home / Little Miami / 4:30 Boys' B.B. @ Little Miami / 4:30
	10	Girls' B.B. @ Milford / 4:30 Boys' B.B. / Home / Milford / 4:30
	11	Wrestling / Home / Wilmington & Amelia / 4:30
	15	Girls' B.B. @ Mt. Healthy / 4:30 Boys' B.B. / Home / Mt. Healthy / 4:30 Board Meeting / Marshall / 7:30
	16	Wrestling @ Rapid Run/Lakota Plains / Bus Leaves @ 3:00 8th Grade Chorus Concert / 7:00
	17	Girls' B.B. / Home / Pleasant Run / 4:30 Boys' B.B. @ Pleasant Run / 4:30
	19	Wrestling @ Ross/Winton Woods / Bus Leaves @ 3:15
	22	First Day of Winter Break Boys' B.B. @ Wilmington / 4:30
January	5	Classes Resume
	6	Boys' B.B. / Home / Nagel Blue / 4:30
	7	Girls' B.B. / Home / Edgewood / 4:30 Boys' B.B. @ Edgewood / 4:30
	8	Wrestling @ Pleasant Run / Bus Leaves @ 3:00
	12	Boys' B.B. / Home / Ross / 4:30 Girls' B.B. @ Ross / 4:30
	14	Boys' B.B. @ Norwood / 4:30 Girls' B.B. / Home / Norwood / 4:30
	15	End of 2nd Qtr. Wrestling / Home / Union County & Elder / 5:00
	16	No School / Teacher Workday
	17	Wrestling @ Wilmington Invitational / Bus Leaves 6:30
	19	No School / Martin Luther King, Jr's Birthday Observed
	21	Boys' B.B. @ Mt. Healthy / 4:30 Girls' B.B. / Home / Mt. Healthy / 4:30
	22	PTG Meeting / 6:30 / TMS Media Center
	23	Report Cards Sent Home With Students
	26	Pennies for PTG Fundraiser Begins Boys' B.B. / Home / Pleasant Run / 4:30 Girls' B.B. @ Pleasant Run / 4:30
	27	Wrestling @ National Trail/Arcanum / Bus Leaves 3:00
	28	Boys' B.B. / Home / Edgewood / 4:30 Girls' B.B. @ Edgewood / 4:30
	30	Wrestling @ FAVC Finals in Harrison



Talawanda School District

131 West Chestnut St.  
 Oxford, Ohio 45056  
 Phone: 513-273-3333  
 Fax: 513-273-3113  
[www.talawanda.net](http://www.talawanda.net)

November 20, 2008

Dear Parent/Guardian/Student:

I would like to take this opportunity to share with you a new calling system that Talawanda School District will be launching in the near future. The Cintech Voice Notification System will automatically phone each family with important school information in the event of inclement weather or school related emergencies that result in school closings and delays. We are currently working closely with Cintech to test this system. We are very pleased to be able to offer this tool for better communication and convenience.

We are planning to test the system with all families of students enrolled in Talawanda schools. The test will occur at 7:00pm on Wednesday December 10, 2008. Please note that the phone information for your family will be collected from the district enrollment form that you completed for your child at the beginning of this school year. If you do not receive the phone call, wish to change the phone number called, or wish to delete your name from the calling system please contact your school building to do so.

Talawanda will continue to provide important school information via the district website at [www.talawanda.net](http://www.talawanda.net).

Talawanda's primary goal is to keep our students safe and secure, and we are confident this communication tool will be helpful in achieving this goal during emergencies and inclement weather.

We appreciate your assistance in helping us utilize this important communication tool. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call me at 513-273-3105.

Sincerely,

Holli Morrish

Community Relations

If your phone contact information has changed, please fill in the updated information below and return it to the office at your child's building.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name \_\_\_\_\_

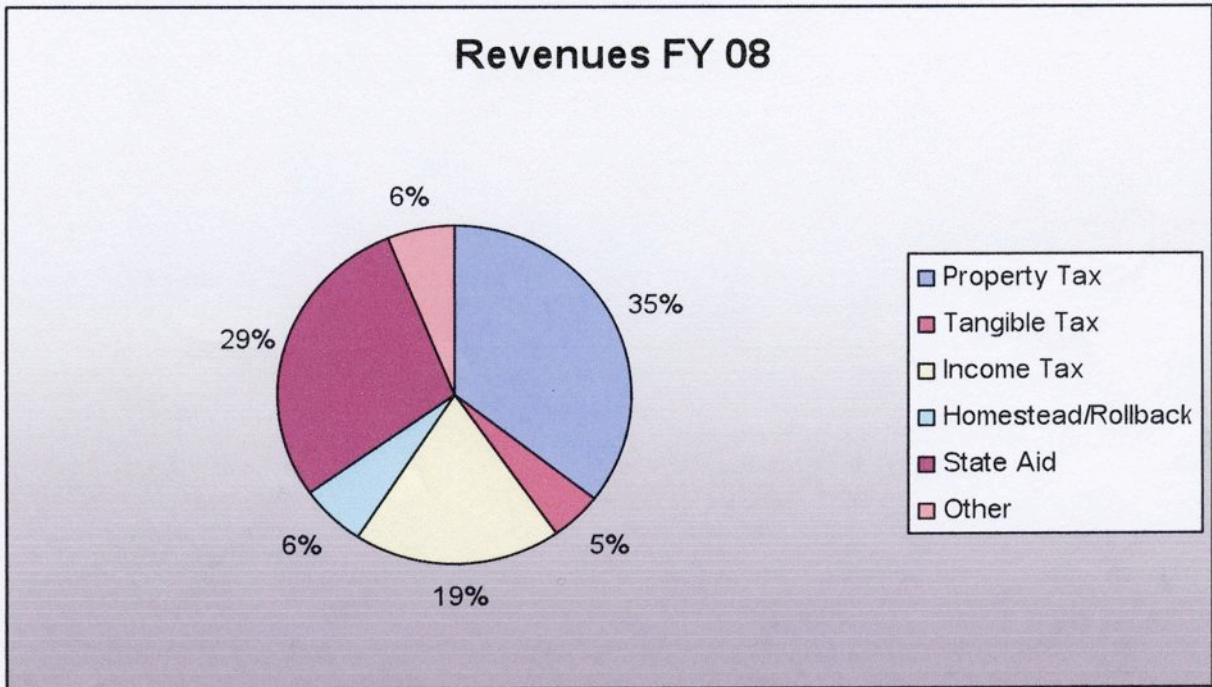
Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Message From the Superintendent Regarding School Finance

Sometimes community members ask me- “What is Talawanda doing with my tax dollars?” I am going to attempt to explain the big picture of Talawanda’s finances in layman’s terms through the three pie charts below.

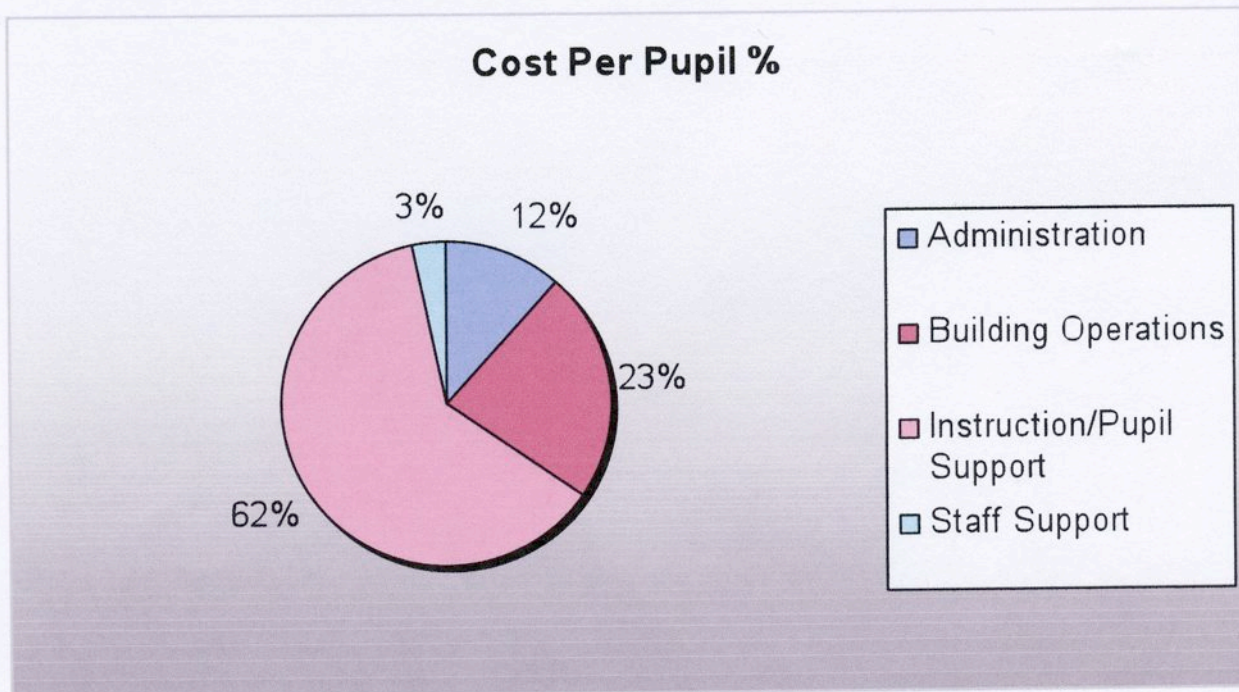
As you can see in the revenue chart below, property, tangible and income taxes comprise 59% of Talawanda’s funding. Our taxpayers vote on property and income taxes, which comprise 54% of our entire budget.



Without local support, we could not provide the quality of education that we have in Talawanda. Because of HB 920 that rolls back property taxes, local school districts are forced to return to the voters on a regular basis for additional revenue just to cover inflationary costs.

The remaining 41% of our revenue comes from state and federal funds. These funds are subject to the economy and legislators’ actions.

Another way of looking at our expenses is how they impact our most important product, Talawanda students. We spend \$9,877 to educate each student in Talawanda, or 2.6% more than the State average.



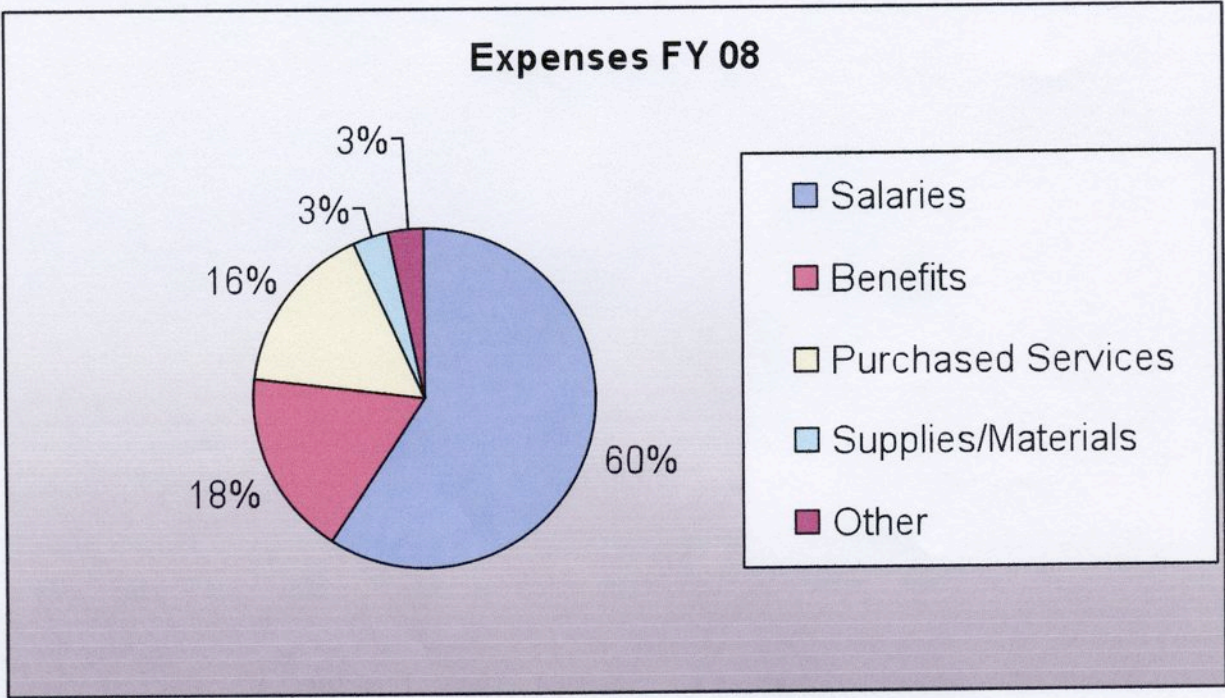
12% or \$1,066 of our cost per pupil is spent on administration – this is more than 5% less than what the average district in Ohio spends.

23% or \$2,076 per pupil is spent for building operations. This amount is 11% higher than the State average. This is largely due to the cost of maintaining and repairing our aging buildings, and the significant cost of transporting students across our 144 square mile school district. We rank in the top 10% of the districts in Ohio geographically. Our buses travel over 3600 miles per day – or the equivalent of New York to California.

62% or \$6,441 is spent on instruction and pupil support. This is the most important part of what we do to provide our students a high quality instructional environment, and is equal to the State average. Finally, we spend \$294.00 per student on staff support, 1% above State average.

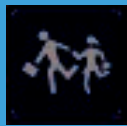
At our monthly board meetings, our CFO, Mike Davis, shares financial updates with the board. These are public records, and I encourage you to contact Mike at 273-3107 if you would like to see more detailed information.

As you can see from this second Expenses Chart, Talawanda's largest expense at 78% is for the salaries and fringe benefits of our 371 employees. Talawanda is the fourth largest employer in Oxford behind Miami University, Square-D and McCullough – Hyde. Before the passage of the income tax in 2004, Talawanda teachers were the **lowest paid** in Butler County. They are now in the **top third** of the County.



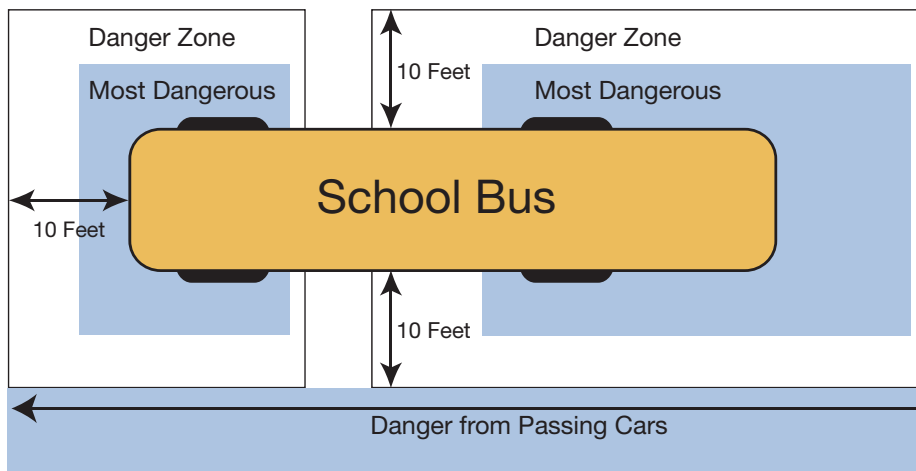
16% of the budget goes to purchased services, the most significant of which is Petermann Transportation (1.9 million dollars) and our various utilities, electric, gas & propane.

6% covers the cost of equipment, materials, diesel fuel, and janitorial cleaning supplies. Daily we clean over 400,000 square feet of space in our school buildings.



**PETERMANN**  
Safety One Person at a Time

## Stay Out of the Danger Zone!



“Stay out of the Danger Zone.” This is a very important rule for school bus safety. Always follow this rule.

### What is the Danger Zone?

The Danger Zone is the area close to the bus in the front, sides, and back where the driver may not be able to see you. You should be able to see the driver, and the driver should see you, before you board the bus or cross in front of the bus. To make sure that the driver sees you, remain on the side of the street and take ten giant steps ahead of the bus. You should be able to see the driver and the driver should see you. If you can see the driver's eyes, that means the driver can see you.

### When you are outside the bus, you must:

- Stay ten feet away from the bus (or as far away as you can).
- Never go behind the bus. Never crawl under, around or near a bus.
- Always make sure the driver sees you and gives you a signal before you board the bus or cross in front of it.

### When you are outside the bus, you must:

- Make sure that the bus driver sees you. To make sure that the driver sees you, while standing on the side of the street, take ten giant steps ahead of the bus. You should be able to see the driver and the driver should see you. If you can see the driver's eyes, that means the driver can see you.

- Wait for the driver's signal. Do not cross until the bus driver signals that it is safe to cross. The driver will raise her or his hand. Once the driver lowers her or his hand, it is safe to start to cross.
- When you get to the middle of the street, stop and look both ways before going any farther. Then cross in front of the bus. If your driver honks the horn, STOP right away and return to the side of the street from which you started to cross.
- After you cross, go to the designated place of safety immediately.

### If you drop something near the bus:

- Do not stop or bend over to pick it up.
- Never run back to the bus, even if you dropped or forgot something.
- First, take ten giant steps away from the bus and out of the Danger Zone.
- Make sure that the driver sees you.
- Ask the driver for help.
- Never stoop or crawl near, around, or under a bus, even if it is stopped. If you have lost something and it is near or under the bus, always ask the driver for help.

**\*\* ATTENTION \*\*****Special Fundraiser for the  
8th grade trip to...  
WASHINGTON DC**

**WHEN:** Monday, December 22  
**TIME:** 7pm - 9pm  
**PLACE:** Buffalo Wild Wings Grill  
and Bar (Uptown Oxford)

Please join us for some Monday Night Football fun, as we celebrate the beginning of Christmas break. A percentage of all **food purchased between 7 - 9pm** will be donated to the general scholarship fund for the 8th grade trip to Washington DC. Come out with Brinck, Hughes, and a cast of other TMS teachers for a great night of fun, football and laughter. If you have any questions or concerns please contact John Brinck at Talawanda Middle School.

**TAKE OUT ORDERS ALSO COUNT SO IF YOU  
CAN'T PARTY WITH US THEN AT LEAST STOP  
BY AND PICK SOMETHING UP!**

**BRING YOUR FAMILIES AND YOUR FRIENDS!!**

# Glen Helen Fundraiser

Thanks to all of the people who helped make our fundraiser a success! We earned about \$3,500 toward our spring trip to Glen Helen. This money helps reduce the per pupil cost for each student that attends. And, if you're looking for a great family holiday service consider donating to Glen Helen. They can always use gift cards from PetSmart and HomeDepot. Send to Glen Helen Ecology Institute, 405 Corry Street, Yellow Springs, Ohio 45387.

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## 6<sup>th</sup> Graders Walk The Appalachian Trail!

Starting in September of 2008, Pam Flowers and her dog, Ellie, are thru-hiking the 2175 mile Appalachian Trail, taking approximately six to eight months to complete their trek. They started in Maine and are hiking south to Georgia. Thru-hiking means that the hiker walks the entire length of the trail. The most fun thing about this trek is that Ellie has her own walking club known as Ellie's Walking Club, and TMS 6<sup>th</sup> graders are participating by logging miles they walk! Our goal is to walk the length of the trail and as far back to Maine as we can while Pam and Ellie head for Georgia. During this time we are also learning about the 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens, starting with the idea of paradigms. Just look at the TMS planner for information about effective teens. Also, our walking club is a family affair! Students can log the miles of family members, friends, and even the family dogs! Go to <http://www.pamflowers.com/apprail/appalachianTrail.htm> or ask your child for details! We hope you'll join us!

## Using Your Head While Searching the Web Talawanda District Library Media Centers December/January 2008

### INTERNET TIP:

There are many internet resources which can be very helpful for students who are doing researching for class projects and papers. Besides helping students find information, there are also sites that help students plan and organize so they get projects or papers done on time.

### WEB SITES: INFOhio's [Research Project Calculator](#)

[www.infohio.org](http://www.infohio.org) Go to: Core Collection / Research Project Calculator (found on the left side of the page under the heading Core Collection Resources).

Students can sign up by typing in their name, the class, and email address (optional). Then students select the type of project they're doing and fill in the date the assignment is due. By clicking on the **Calculate Project Schedule!**, students will get information on the process of completing their assignment. Click on the links to get extra help and information about how to complete each step of the process.

If students add their email address, they can opt to get an email message that reminds them of the schedule and what needs to be done to complete their assignment.

Ask your librarian or email me for the user name and password to access INFOhio at home.

Good luck on your Research Projects!

Don't lose your head – use it – to research wisely on the web!!

Carol Morison

THS Library Media Specialist

TCS District Media Center Coordinator

National Board Certified Librarian

[morisonc@talawanda.org](mailto:morisonc@talawanda.org)

273-3262





## HCC Corner

### *“Healthy Learners are Better Learners”*

The Search Institute has identified 40 Developmental Assets – essential building blocks for healthy youth development. Research suggests that the more assets a young person has, the less likely they are to engage in substance abuse, fighting, bullying, and other risky behaviors. A greater number of assets also increases the likelihood that a young person will be academically successful, seek to help others, and maintain good relationships. (Search Institute)

The Search Institute has designed a website to provide tools for parents related to the Developmental Assets. Please visit [www.mvparents.com](http://www.mvparents.com) for research-based information and resources

Here are a few tips from the website on how parents can be intentional asset builders:

- Reflect on and celebrate your strengths as a parent and as a family. We all face challenges and draw from different sources of strength to get through, so be proud of them.
- Talk about the values, boundaries and expectations you wish to pass on to your children.
- Regularly do things with your child, including projects where you live, recreational activities and service projects. From time to time let your child or teenager choose which activities to do together as a family.
- Introduce your children to other caring adults in your neighborhood, workplace, social network or faith community. Let other caring adults know you’d like them to get to know your child or teen because it’s important that kids have as much support from others as possible.
- Try to eat together as a family as often as possible. The more you can do this, the better for everyone.
- Choose a service project to do together, such as collecting cans for a food drive.
- Give yourself permission to be “good enough.” Nobody’s perfect and that’s okay. Take a deep breath now and then and remind yourself you’re doing the best you can.

Source: A project of Search Institute - [www.mvparents.com](http://www.mvparents.com)

For more information, please contact Amy Macechko, Health & Wellness Coordinator, at 513.273.3390 or at [macechkoa@talawanda.org](mailto:macechkoa@talawanda.org).



# Stay Safe Speak UP!

(Remain Anonymous)

Call or go online today to report harassment, threats, suspicious behavior or other concerns which may jeopardize the safety of students, employees or school facilities.

Your message is very important in helping us maintain a safe school environment.



***It's easy!***

**Phone**

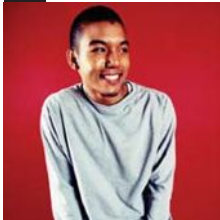
1.866.listen2me (toll free)

**Online**

1. Go to [www.talawanda.net](http://www.talawanda.net)
2. Click on Health & Safety
3. Click on Safe School Help Online

Report these safety concerns:

- Weapons
- Drugs / Alcohol Abuse
- Suspicious Behavior
- Suicide / Self Abuse
- Problem Relationships
- Sexual Assault
- Fights / Violence / Abuse
- Harassment / Threats
- Theft / Vandalism
- Health Concerns / HIV / AIDS



24/7/365

Available all day, every day,  
from anywhere.

online or  
1.866.listen2me



# ideas for parents

Easy Ways to Build Assets for and with Your Child

**FAST FACTS**

**ASSET #16:  
High  
Expectations**

*Youth are more likely to grow up healthy when both parents and teachers encourage young people to do well.*

**49%**

*of youth surveyed by Search Institute have this asset in their lives.\**

**What Are Assets?**

*Assets are 40 values, experiences, and qualities that help kids succeed. "High expectations" is one of six boundaries-and-expectations assets.*

\* Based on Search Institute surveys of 217,277 6th- to 12th-grade youth throughout the United States during the 1999-2000 school year.

## Encouraging Their Best

**W**hen you give a child a helium-filled balloon, it brings great joy. But if the balloon is leaking and gradually deflates, the child becomes frustrated. If the balloon is difficult to hang on to and floats away, the child cries.

A balloon is like expectations. If they're too low or too high, they're not helpful. But if the expectations are high—yet still within reach—the child holds the taut string of the balloon with an arm extended up. Expectations should make our children stretch but still able to see what they're stretching toward.

Expectations should differ based on each child's temperament, abilities, gifts, and talents. A natural-born athlete who is bored in physical education, goofs around most of the time, and still gets an A, doesn't have high enough expectations set on her. The dyslexic child who struggles to keep up with the state standards of reading for his age has expectations placed upon him that are too



high—that may be out of reach.

High expectations can bring out the best in our children, yet expectations constantly need to be evaluated and revamped so that they encourage our children without discouraging them, and challenge our children without frustrating them. What do you expect of your child?



## Helpful Hints

**Tips that make setting high expectations with your child easier:**

- **Don't push your child—let her or him develop at her or his own speed.**
- **Tell your child when he or she is doing well.**
- **Periodically check out your expectations with your child.**
- **Challenge yourself and model the benefits of high expectations.**

## time together

*Three ways to set high but reasonable expectations with your child:*

1. **Expect the best from your child,** keeping in mind her or his abilities and interests.
2. **Ask children what they expect from themselves.**
3. **Encourage your child to tackle subjects and hobbies that are challenging, but not too difficult. Work together.**

## A Progress Report

Examine your expectations of your child in each of the following areas:



EXPECTATION	Child seems stretched	Child seems bored	Child seems overwhelmed
Social skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Academics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Physical health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hobbies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Extracurricular activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Quick Tip:**  
Encourage children not to compare themselves to others.

### talk together

- Questions to discuss with your child:
- What do you think we expect of you—at home, at school, in the community? Are those expectations realistic? Why or why not?
  - Where do you feel bored? Where do you feel defeated? Why?
  - How can we set high expectations together that are realistic, yet challenging?

**What about You?**  
Our expectations of our children often come from the expectations we as parents received when we were children. What did your parents expect of you as a child? As a teenager? How realistic were those expectations? How are those expectations affecting your parenting?

**More Help for Parents**  
**Awakening Your Child's Natural Genius: Enhancing Curiosity, Creativity, and Learning Ability** by Thomas Armstrong. This book suggests creative ways to develop your child's learning ability, curiosity, and creativity to her or his fullest potential. (Published by J.P. Tarcher.)

## FINAL WORD

**"High expectations are the key to everything."  
—Sam Walton**

This newsletter and other asset resources are produced by Search Institute, www.search-institute.org; 800-888-7828. Copyright © 1997, 2003, 2005 by Search Institute. Major support for Search Institute's Healthy Communities • Healthy Youth initiative is provided by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans.

For more information on the Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets, please contact Amy Macechko, Health & Wellness Coordinator, at macechkoa@talawanda.org or at 513.273.3390.

