

Newbury Community Update October 2, 2018

As the community knows, we are once again actively discussing becoming part of a neighboring school district. We know that these conversations have been ongoing for a number of years and there may be a sense of wariness about the discussions and some conflicting knowledge and emotion floating around the community about a possible merger. As a Board of Education we are committed to open and frequent communication about this process and the status of our district.

Currently, we have been working through ideas with both West Geauga and Berkshire but NO decisions have been made. While we are working through these discussions, we are collecting data about our district, as well as Berkshire and West Geauga. As we research this data and analyze it, we want to make sure the community sees the same data. To that end, we are going to send a special edition of the *Knightly News* in late October with an overview of the collected data.

The data shows how Newbury as a community and as a school district has changed over the last decade. And, as an organization whose sole purpose is to prepare and educate our youngest citizens, we have to adapt to those changes. One of the ways we have changed is in student enrollment. Since 2009, our student enrollment has dropped from 681 to 387, that is a 44% decline. Many schools in Ohio are facing steep enrollment decreases, but ours is expected to continue declining.

As a result of having less students, our expenditures are no longer in line with our peer or similar districts. Our total expenditures per student are nearly \$6,000 higher than the average for similar districts. Simply stated, our enrollment has declined while our expenditures have increased causing a higher tax burden on our community members.

When we objectively view this data, it is clear that we must make significant changes now so we can focus on our main goal of education. Over the next few months, we will continue to study the financial, operational and educational impact data connected to our district, as well as of various scenarios with both districts.

In the meantime, we will engage parents, staff and the community-at-large to ensure that future plans take into account your expectations and address your concerns. We will work hard to make sure you are informed about our process as we move forward. We will keep you informed with updates on our website and the *Knightly News* special edition coming out in late October.