

Cougar Connect

October 18, 2024

A Note From Mrs. McDonald



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Dear Families,

As we worked this week to get back into a safe and effective routine for dismissal procedures, I request that you continue to adhere to the guidelines in place. We understand the mission to release over 500 students from a building can be daunting; however, it is methodically considered to ensure everyone can exit the building safely, consistently, and effectively. As we see practices begin to arise that do not align with her dismissal procedures, we will be sure to provide clear and kind reminders

about following the guidelines in place.

Reminders:

- Car riders must access their car from the car rider line. All car riders will enter their vehicle from the car rider line. Any walker aiming to exit through the walker doors and access a vehicle in the car line will be redirected to return to the front of the building to enter their vehicle.
- The front parking lot is not meant for a separate car line of traffic aiming to access the small lot during the car line process.
- Walkers must exit through the west side of the building and cross at the roundabout. Students who enter car line traffic to cross the street will be redirected.
- The crosswalks at the front of the building are closed during the car line. You may not park in the front lot and walk across to pick up a car rider.

We appreciate your attention to ensuring the safety of students, staff, and families.

We look forward to seeing you next week to discuss your child's first quarter progress. I wish you a restful weekend in the beautiful, fall weather.

Kindly,
Erica McDonald
Principal

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Save-the-Date



Save-the-Date

October

Tuesday, October 22: Fall Conferences; 4:00 PM-7:40 PM

Wednesday, October 23: Fall Conferences; 4:00 PM-7:40 PM

Thursday, October 24: No School EC-8 | Fall Conferences; 8:20 AM-3:40 PM

Friday, October 25: No School | District-Wide Break

Thursday, October 31: Fall Celebration

November

Friday, November 1: No School | Teacher Professional Collaboration

Friday, November 1: PTO Board Meeting; 9:00 AM-10:30 AM

Monday, November 4: BLT Meeting; 4:00 PM-5:00 PM

Tuesday, November 5: Picture Retake Day

Monday, November 6: PTO Restaurant Night | Goodcents, 3:00 PM-8:00 PM

Friday, November 8: All Staff Meeting; 8:00 AM-8:20 AM

Friday, November 8: Veteran's Day Assembly; 9:15 AM | Breakfast 10:00 AM

Monday, November 11: Support-A-Cougar Holiday Drive Begins

Wednesday, November 13: PTO Community Service

Thursday, November 14: Fourth Grade Field Trip | BV Wilderness Science Center

Thursday, November 14: Third Grade Music Program; Dress Rehearsal 2:30 PM; Performance 6:00 PM (OTMS)

Friday, November 15: Fourth Grade Field Trip | BV Wilderness Science Center

Friday, November 15: PTO Bingo for Books

Monday, November 18: Hearing and Vision Screening

Monday, November 18-Friday, November 22: American Education Week

Monday, November 25-Friday, November 29: Thanksgiving Break

The PTO is already in full swing for the year ahead. Follow these simple steps to ensure you don't miss any of the fun!

otepto.org

DEI Spotlight

☆☆ DEI Spotlight ☆☆

What is a Parent-Teacher Conference? You've asked, and we are delivering the information to you in a more clear format. Click [here](#) to learn more about Parent-Teacher Conferences and the purpose behind this valuable experience.

Are you interested in joining OTE's DEI Council? If so, please submit your contact information here: [DEI Council | Family Interest](#).

What to Expect:

- Teacher will talk about how your child is doing in class.
- Go over some test scores with you.
- Time to discuss any questions or concerns.
- **STUDENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO ATTEND CONFERENCES.**



In-Person or Virtual:

If your conference is in person please be on time to be respectful to the parents attending before and after you. Please realize that if you're attending on zoom, the teacher will join the meeting no earlier than 2 minutes before your Zoom time.



Reminders:

Intervention Teachers, ESOL, Counselor, Social Worker, and Principals may attend certain conferences. If you would like a Specials Teacher to attend please reach out to your teacher.

Community Celebrations and Observances



Community Celebrations and Observances - to promote awareness and appreciation of our Blue Valley families.

Some October Celebrations & Observances:

- **Down Syndrome Awareness Month** - celebrates those with Down syndrome and raises awareness of their abilities and accomplishments. The colors blue and yellow symbolize support for the Down syndrome community.
- **National Bullying Prevention Month and Bullying Prevention Day (October 2nd)** raise awareness about the harmful effects of bullying and promote kindness, acceptance, and inclusion.
- **Filipino-American Month** - celebrates the heritage and achievements of the second-largest Asian American population in the U.S.
- **Rosh Hashanah** - the Jewish New Year. The observance begins at sundown on Wednesday, October 2, and continues through the evening of October 4. Some families will attend synagogue services, eat apples and honey for a sweet new year, and/or abstain from work, school, activities, and technology use.
- **Yom Kippur** - the Jewish day of Atonement (Forgiveness). The holiest day of the year starts at sundown on October 11. For some, families may fast for 24 hours, attend services at synagogue, and/or abstain from work, school, activities, and technology use.

OTE | PTO



PTO Events | October

Veteran's Day Assembly

Calling all Veterans!

Veterans Day Assembly: We are honored to invite all veterans and their families to join us for our annual OTE **Veterans Day Assembly on Friday, November 8th at 9:15 am**. Coffee and pastries will be served in the library starting at 10:00 am for our veterans and their families to enjoy following

the assembly. RSVP at otepto.org/veterans by November 1st to ensure we can prepare a special welcome for you!

Veterans Honor Wall: Do you have a veteran in your life you'd like to recognize? We are creating a Wall of Honor in the halls of OTE and would love to feature them! Please submit their information and photo at otepto.org/veterans.

We can't wait to celebrate and honor the bravery and service of our veterans!



The Eras Carnival T-shirt: Now in Adult Sizes!

You asked, we listened! For a limited time, the exclusive Overland Trail **The Eras Carnival T-shirt** is now available for purchase in *adult* sizes, along with remaining youth sizes. This is your last chance to get one—we will only print one additional run!

Don't miss out on this unique piece of school spirit. **Order by November 1st** to secure yours!

[Order your T-shirt today!](https://otepto.org/carnival)



BINGO for Books | Friday, November 15

Join us for an evening of fun, BINGO, and book prizes at this **FREE** family event on Friday, November 15. Keep an eye out for more information as we get closer to the date.

We hope to see you there!

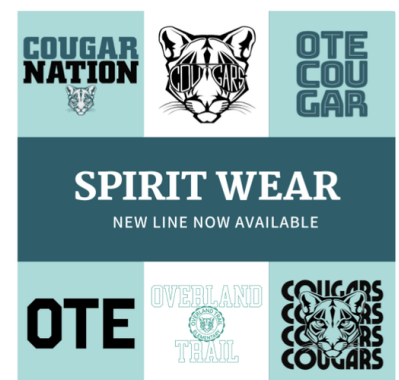


New Spirit Wear Line Now Available!

We're excited to announce the launch of our brand-new Spirit Wear line, and trust us—you're going to love it! With multiple designs, products, and price points to choose from, you can show off your school pride in style! Best of all, the store is 100% online and open 24/7, so you can browse and shop whenever it's convenient for you. Orders will ship directly to your house. Visit the store, grab your gear, and get ready to rock that school spirit from head to toe.

Happy shopping!

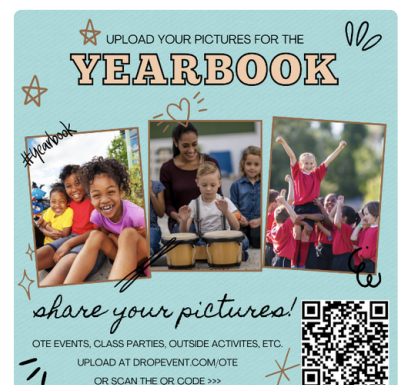
[Spirit Wear Online Store](https://otepto.org)



Upload your pictures for the Yearbook!

Your picture uploads throughout the year make the yearbook extra special. Please use the link below to upload pictures from school events, class parties, extracurricular activities, etc. Be sure to choose a folder for your pictures to help us keep them organized. Only the PTO will be able to see and access the photos you share.

[Click here to upload pictures from the Carnival and other events!](https://dropevent.com/ote)



PTO Calendar of Events

For a complete list of all upcoming PTO events, visit [Overland Trail Elementary PTO - Upcoming Events \(otepto.org\)](https://www.otepto.org).

Welcome to Overland Trail Elementary

Welcome to OVERLAND TRAIL ELEMENTARY!

WELCOME TO

Overland Trail Elementary

DREAM it
BELIEVE it
ACHIEVE it

Neelima Musuku

SCHOOLING: BACHELOR'S DEGREE EARNED IN INDIA

NUMBER OF YEARS WORKING IN SCHOOLS: 1ST YEAR AS A LUNCHROOM AIDE IN AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

YOUR ROLE AT OTE: LUNCHROOM AIDE

FUN FACT ABOUT ME: I ENJOY PLAYING WITH CHILDREN



Every Child Can Read Act Information

Every Child Can Read Act Information

On July 1, 2023, the Every Child Can Read Act went into effect in Kansas. The intent of this legislation was to address literacy initiatives with a target of ensuring students reach grade level benchmarks by third grade. In Blue Valley, we prioritize partnership with families in conjunction with high quality, evidence-based instruction rooted in the science of reading. This has been and

remains a large area of focus for professional learning. Rather than limit conversations about reading progress to 3rd grade, it is our practice to do so at each grade level. KSDE has provided a summary of this Act which can be found [here](#). Our teachers look forward to talking with you about your child during Parent-Teacher conferences.

Canvas Family Resources

Canvas Family Resources

The Family Resources Canvas Course is now available for Blue Valley families. This course is designed to help families navigate Canvas, whether beginning or looking for a reminder. Additionally, the course includes Canvas guides for Observers (the role assigned to parents).



Enroll in this course: <https://bvusd.instructure.com/enroll/73CN87>

Blue Valley Unmuted | Understanding Threats and Their Consequences

Blue Valley Unmuted | Understanding Threats and Their Consequences

In the latest Blue Valley Schools' BV Unmuted podcast episode, Dr. Katie Collier, Deputy Superintendent for Learning, is joined by Overland Park Interim Police Chief Simon Happer and Director of Safety and Security Dan Carney to discuss school safety and the importance of understanding threats and their consequences.

To learn more about how families can partner with the district to ensure a safe and secure environment for our students and staff, listen to the podcast: [BV Unmuted: Understanding Threats and Their Consequences](#).

Halloween Celebration

On Thursday, October 31, we will have our school-wide Halloween celebration. We are excited to welcome our families to the school parade, but due to space constraints, we will only have room parents and three volunteers per class to enter the building to facilitate class parties. Additionally, we discourage siblings who do not attend OTE to attend. Please look forward to communication from your room parents soon providing more details about volunteering for this year's class celebrations.

Food

Provided food will need to come from our district-approved [Nut-Safer Guide](#). Please refrain from bringing homemade items for class celebrations. Additionally, goodie bags will need to be non-edible. Any edible goodie bags received will be returned.

Costumes

All students look forward to the Halloween Celebration; we have specific guidelines for these parties.

1. At classroom parties where costumes may be worn, violent or gory costumes are unacceptable.
2. Costumes should not take away from instructional time. If a costume distracts self and others, the student will be asked to go to the nurse to change.
3. No costume "weapons" or look-alike weapons may be brought to school, e.g., light sabers, swords, or toy guns.
4. Costumes will be worn to school and should not depict violence or gore.
5. Students should have costumes that do not require time-consuming assistance with makeup, dressing, etc. Also, masks and face paint should not be worn or brought to school.
6. Costumes must respect the Blue Valley dress code policy – BOE policy 3513.

Halloween Parade and Celebration

1:45 PM: Room Parents Enter and Parade Prep

- Room parents and three volunteers for each class will be invited to begin setting up for the class party and supporting costume adjustments. Please look forward to communication from room parents, who will facilitate communication with families to gather volunteers for this year's celebrations.

2:15 PM: Parade

- We will have a school-wide parade that includes the fifth grade leading all grade levels out the bus-cut doors, walking on the west side of the Early Childhood playground, and circling the track counterclockwise before entering the exterior gym doors. Families are invited to watch the parade from the field.

2:30 PM: Monster Mash

- Teachers will guide students into the gym for the Monster Mash, a short sing and dance-along led by specialists. When the Monster Mash concludes, students return to class for the class celebration. Parents and caregivers will not enter the building for the Monster Mash.

2:55 PM-3:25 PM: Class Celebration

- The class celebration will consist of one game **or** craft and treats. Only room parents and their volunteers can attend the class celebration. Room parents and volunteers will submit dismissal changes through PUP if they apply. In addition, you will need to sign out on the provided sign-out sheet in the room you are supporting.

Viewing Canvas Courses and Quarter Grades

Viewing Canvas Courses and Quarter Grades

End of Quarter Information - Viewing Canvas Courses and Quarter Grades

At the end of each quarter, courses in Canvas will conclude and will no longer be visible on the Canvas app. However, a concluded course remains visible through the Canvas website by selecting ALL COURSES and then PAST ENROLLMENTS.

How do I view my child's report card?

- Log in on [ParentVue](#).
- Select the student's name
- In the left navigation bar, choose Report Card

Each new quarter, classroom teachers will publish the next quarter's Canvas course. As courses are published, students and families will again be able to see current courses on the Canvas app and Canvas website. For Canvas parent resources, visit www.bluevalleyk12.org/canvas.

Important dates for families:

	Courses Conclude on Canvas	Grades Viewable on ParentVue (after 4pm)
Quarter 1	Friday, October 11	Tuesday, October 22
Quarter 2	Friday, December 20	Friday, January 10
Quarter 3	Thursday, March 13	Wednesday, April 2
Quarter 4	Thursday, May 22	Wednesday, June 4

Please note: The dates are subject to change based upon calendar updates or technology needs.

Teacher Collaboration Days

Teacher Collaboration Days

As we kick off the 2024-25 school year, I want to remind families about the teacher professional collaboration days designed for teacher plan and collaboration time. These eight days, which occur throughout the school year, are non-student attendance days for K-5 students. These days are vital to ensure the best possible preparation for our elementary students and key to quality teacher retention.

The following days, which can be found in the [2024-25 calendar](#) on the district website, have been designated as teacher professional collaboration days:

- August 30
- September 27
- November 1
- December 6
- January 31
- February 28
- April 11
- May 2

Reminder: November 1st is a K-5 non-student attendance day for teacher collaboration time. During this time, elementary educators will be in their buildings and classrooms working to ensure the best possible preparation for our elementary students and supporting student learning outcomes.

School will be back in session on November 2nd.

Nut-Safer Guidelines



Nut Safer List 24-25

Nut-Safer Guidelines

At OTE, we have a wide variety of food allergens and restrictions. To remain safe and to prevent exclusion, we don't accept food, including items from the Nut-Safe List, to serve in school or send home with students for birthday celebrations. This complies with our **non-edible birthday celebration**. Essentially, we must remember that sending food home is a risk for children as they transition between school and home, putting our families in an undesirable position when they cannot eat what is provided.

Blue Valley (BV) School's Nut Safer Guidelines for daily snacks will be implemented throughout the school year.

- Classroom snacks must be from the Nut Safer list.
- Nut Safer seating is available in the café during lunch.

We appreciate your support as we work to be more preventative with food safety measures to enhance student and staff safety.

The complete **Nut Safer Foods** and BV Guidelines can be found [here](#).

Helpful Links

School Supply Lists

District Calendar (2024-2025)

Overland Trail Elementary's Homepage

Family Handbook

Erica McDonald, Principal



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Alicia Anderson, Assistant Principal

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Location: [6335 West 135th Street, Overland Park, KS, USA](#)

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Twitter: [@OTEAnderson](https://twitter.com/OTEAnderson)



Office Staff

- Robin Warren, Administration Assistant/Bookkeeper
- Yolonda Merritt, Administration Assistant/Registrar
- Debby Alexander, Attendance

Website: www.bluevalleyk12.org/OTE

Location: [6225 West 133rd Street, Overland Park, KS, USA](#)

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Erica McDonald

Erica is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters