

# Cougar Connect

September 20, 2024

## A Note From Mrs. McDonald



### A Note From Mrs. McDonald

Dear Families,

#### Arrival

Please read the details below regarding the car line arrival in the morning.

#### Conferences

Thank you for those who have signed up for a conference this fall. We have many families that did not indicate their method to conference (i.e., in-person or virtual). Additionally, Wednesday is for virtual conferences only, but some families indicated in-person. Please revisit the original message sent, [Fall Conferences | Set Up](#) and the directions shared to indicate your preferred method to conference. Please contact your child's teacher if you have additional questions.

#### Friday, September 27

Next Friday, there will be no school for students K-5. This day is Teacher Collaboration, enabling teachers to collaborate and work cooperatively to accomplish individual and team goals. After Thursday, September 26, we will welcome students back to school on Monday, September 30. For additional details regarding Teacher Collaboration days this year, please see below.

I am looking forward to a busy weekend, celebrating family and dining with friends. I hope you have time to rest, recharge, and enjoy the beautiful weather, families.

Kindly,  
Erica McDonald  
Principal



## Newsletter Table of Contents



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#### Recurring News:

- Save-the-Date
- ✨\*DEI Spotlight\* ✨
- Community Celebrations and Observances
- Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) News

#### Recent News:

- Welcome to Overland Trail Elementary | Tiffany Mohatt
- Update on Arrival Procedures
- Viewing Canvas Courses and Quarter Grades
- Safe Schools Reporting

#### Repeat News:

- Art Studio Volunteers Needed | 9/30-10/4
- Code of Conduct
- Teacher Collaboration Days
- Nut-Safer Guidelines
- Helpful Links (i.e., Kindergarten Tidbits, School Supply Lists, Family Handbook, etc.)

# Save-the-Date



## Save-the-Date

### September

**Tuesday, September 24:** LIFT Field Trip | Olathe Lanes East Bowling

**Wednesday, September 25:** Fourth Grade Field Trip | Johnson County Fairgrounds

**Thursday, September 26:** First Grade Field Trip | Ernie Miller Tipi @ OTE

**Friday, September 27:** No School | Teacher Professional Collaboration

**Friday, September 27:** OTE Carnival; 5:30 PM-8:00 PM

### October

**Friday, October 4:** PTO Board Meeting; 9:00 AM-10:30 AM

**Wednesday, October 9:** PTO Community Service

**Friday, October 11:** No School | End of Quarter 1

**Tuesday, October 15-Thursday, October 17:** Scholastic Book Fair

**Tuesday, October 15:** Family Night; 5:30 PM-7:30 PM

**Wednesday, October 16:** DEI Council Meeting; 4:00 PM-5:00 PM

**Thursday, October 17:** Donuts with Grownups; 7:15 AM-8:15 AM

**Friday, October 18:** Skate Party at Skate City; 5:00 PM-7:00 PM

**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

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](http://otepto.org)

## DEI Spotlight



### ☆☆ DEI Spotlight ☆☆

Did you know that you must have valid identification to accompany a student with a late arrival, dismiss a student early, or enter the building? If you do not have a valid Driver's License, you can also use a passport to verify identification.

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

## 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 | September

### The Eras Carnival | Friday, September 27th

- **Volunteers Needed - 85 volunteer shifts need to be filled!** Volunteers are vital to the success of our carnival. These are three time slots and many different, fun activities available for sign up. There are three main shifts the night of the carnival and we are in need of volunteers. [Please sign up here!](#) Thank you in advance for your time and support!
- **Pop Bottles and Candy Donations:** In order for two of the carnival games to be successful, we are looking for 2-liter pop bottle donations for the "Pop Bottle Ring Toss" and bags of candy





## OVERLAND TRAIL THE ERAS CARNIVAL

donations for the "Candy Walk". Please drop these items off in the bins at the front of the school on Monday, September 23rd or Tuesday, September 24th.

- Carnival Wristband **pre-order deadline is 11:59PM Friday, September 20th.**
- OTE Staff who are PTO Members receive FREE Wristbands for their children. Please use the promo code provided when purchasing your wristbands online. Meal Tickets will still need to be purchased if you plan to eat. Email [carnival@otepto.org](mailto:carnival@otepto.org) if you

have any questions.

- Carnival Swag Bags with pre-ordered Wristbands, T-Shirts, Meal Tickets, and additional Activity Tickets will be sent home with students on Wednesday, September 25th.
- Carnival happens rain or shine. Rain out location is Overland Trail Middle School.
- Weather permitting, the dunk tank is BACK! Don't miss the chance to dunk your favorite OTE staff and teachers!

# DONATE WITH A *Freddy's* DOUBLE

**FREDDY'S IS PROUD  
TO CONTRIBUTE**

# 15%

**OF EVENT SALES!**

**IN-STORE**

**➤ SHOW THIS FLYER  
OR SAY "I'M HERE FOR  
THE FUNDRAISER"  
AT CHECKOUT**

**ONLINE OR MOBILE APP**

**USE PROMO CODE:  
GIVEBACK**



**A FUNDRAISER SUPPORTING:**

## **Overland Trail Elementary PTO**

**COME ENJOY YOUR FREDDY'S FAVORITES WHILE HELPING A GREAT CAUSE!**

**September 25, 2024 | 4PM-8PM**

**7301 W 135th St, Overland Park, KS 66223**

Offer valid only on select date(s). Only non-profit organizations are eligible to participate in the Freddy's fundraising program. Freddy's will donate 15% of qualifying food and beverage sales to the organization. Tax, gift cards, catering and delivery are excluded from the donation. Offer void if flyer is distributed in or near the restaurant. For more information about fundraising, email [fundraising@freddys.com](mailto:fundraising@freddys.com).

### **Freddy's Restaurant Night | Wednesday, September 25th 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.**

Donate with a Freddy's Double. Freddy's is proud to contribute 15% of event sales! Head to Freddy's on Wednesday, September 25th between 4 - 8 p.m., and all you need to do is say "I'm here for the fundraiser." Ordering online? Use promo code: GIVEBACK.

### **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  
BELIEVE  
ACHIEVE

## Tiffany Mohatt

**SCHOOLING:** I GRADUATED FROM EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY THIS YEAR WITH MY BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN ELEMENTARY EDUCATION! I COMPLETED MY STUDENT TEACHING AT NORTHVIEW ELEMENTARY IN 5TH AND 2ND GRADE. AFTER COMPLETING MY STUDENT TEACHING, I SUBSTITUTE TAUGHT IN OLATHE FOR THE LAST SIX WEEKS OF SCHOOL.

**NUMBER OF YEARS WORKING IN SCHOOLS:** THIS WILL BE MY FIRST YEAR TEACHING IN MY OWN CLASSROOM!

**YOUR ROLE AT OTE:** 4TH GRADE TEACHER

**FUN FACT ABOUT ME:** I WAS A STUDENT AT OTE FROM 3RD TO 5TH GRADE!



## Art Studio Volunteers Needed | 9/30-10/4

### Art Studio Volunteers Needed | 9/30-10/4

Mr. Van Leeuwen would love to invite you to volunteer in the art room, with grades Kindergarten through 2nd, the week of September 30th during Art. Parents will be helping small groups of students with a project involving book tape. Please click on this [link](#) to see the schedule, sign up and find other opportunities to help out in the art studio.

Please be mindful that all volunteers will need to complete the volunteer agreement located in the front office. The volunteer agreement is valid for the 2024-25 school year upon completion.

## Update on Arrival Procedures

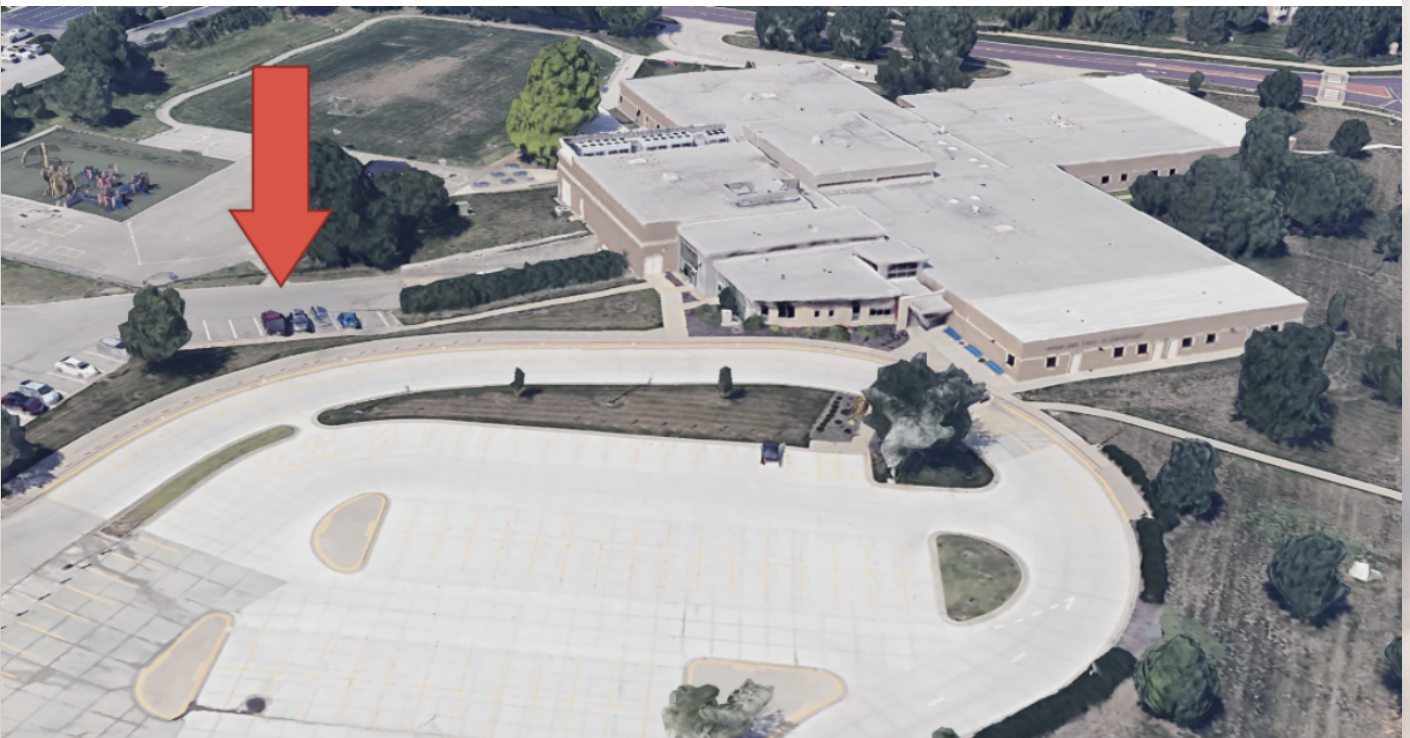
### Update on Arrival Procedures

#### Arrival

- The car line is meant for every car to pull down through the line to the furthest point. This effort removes more vehicles from the main road and allows outside traffic to flow.
- When directed by a staff member to pull forward, pull up until you cannot proceed. Please do not stop at the entrance of the school. You will be directed to continue moving forward.
- Stay in the car line and avoid driving around cars to find a more favorable location to release your child.
- Stay in your car and allow staff to support your child exiting the vehicle.
- If you want to park and walk your child to the front entrance, you must park in the lot south of the building and walk along the front sidewalk (see below). **The crosswalk at the front of the building will be closed to support car line efficiency beginning at 8:25.** Please see the picture below for reference.



We appreciate your support, families, in supporting a safe and efficient car line for staff and students.



## 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](http://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.

## Safe Schools Reporting

### Safe Schools Reporting

Blue Valley Schools is committed to promoting and fostering a safe environment in and around all our schools. We are continuously working to prevent, mitigate, respond to and recover from a wide range of situations. Please check out [available ways to report safety concerns](#).

## 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: September 27 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 September 30.

## 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 \(2024-2025\)](#)

## Family Handbook



### Erica McDonald, Principal

**Email:** [ECMcDonald@bluevalleyk12.org](mailto:ECMcDonald@bluevalleyk12.org)

**Website:** [www.bluevalleyk12.org/OTE](http://www.bluevalleyk12.org/OTE)

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

**Phone:** (913) 239-7000

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



### Alicia Anderson, Assistant Principal

**Email:** [ARAnderson@bluevalleyk12.org](mailto:ARAnderson@bluevalleyk12.org)

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

**Phone:** (913) 239-7000

**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](http://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



