

# PANTHER PRIDE

School Principals: Shawna Coplen, Lynn Cragg

<http://osb.k12.ok.us/>

## Bee the Change: Give Back Day 2019

By News Staff

This year's theme for Give Back Day was **"Bee the Change"**.

The students divided into groups and went around Muskogee for "random acts of kindness", doing good deeds.

They passed out treats to the **Muskogee County EMS**,



the **Post Office**, the **Fire Department**,



the **Police Department**, and some other "random" places.



Some students planted flowers at **RISE**,



walked dogs at the **local Animal Shelter**,



*(Continued on page 2)*

## RISE

**(R**estoring **I**dentities after **S**exual **E**xploitation) is a new 501(c)(3) organization, registered with the state of Oklahoma as a Not for Profit, Charitable organization, born out of the heart of a mother-daughter team who started an awareness ministry in their local church.

**RISE is a long-term residence for adolescent girls who have been victims of sex trafficking.**

## Oklahoma School for the Blind

2018 - 2019, Issue 7

May 15, 2019

Editor: Maggie Mattox

### Special points of interest:

- ◆ Give Back Day
- ◆ Elementary Fun & Trips
- ◆ National Braille Finalists
- ◆ Jazz Band Update
- ◆ Spring Concert
- ◆ SCASB Track

### Inside this issue:

Give Back Day	2
Soc. Services News	3 - 4
Jr/Sr. Trip	4
Ask A Senior	4
Elementary Fun & Trips	5
National Braille Challenge	5
Jazz Band Update	6
Spring Concert / Awards	6 - 7
SCASB Track	7
O&M Bus Travel	8
Rec. Activities	8
School Year Randomness	9
Going the Extra Mile	10
Birthdays - May & June	11
Birthdays - July & August	12
Staff Changes / Highlights	13

## Students of the 4<sup>th</sup> Qtr.

Elementary - Madilyn Gray  
 Middle School - Rayce Phillips  
 High School - Ariana Richardson

**Honor Roll & Students of the Year were not available yet!**



# Bee the Change: Give Back Day 2019 (continued)

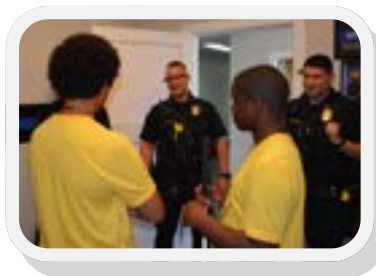
(Continued from page 1)

cleaned on campus, helped do chores at the **Gospel Rescue Mission** and spent time with the residents at a **local nursing home**.



This was a good opportunity for the students to show their appreciation for everything that has been done for them and give back to our community.

## Random Pictures from GBD:



## A few responses:

**EMS Facebook Post:** *The Oklahoma School for the Blind stopped by today just to say Thanks to Muskogee County EMS for their hard work and dedication.*

**Letter received from the Chief of Police, Muskogee Police Dept., Johnny Teehee:**

*Often times in law enforcement we must accept that it can be an extremely thankless job and we do not always see the appreciation and admiration from the citizens and the community we serve. However, sometimes it is one single act of kindness from an organization or group that shows how much we, as police officers, are appreciated.*

*On May 1<sup>st</sup>, your school surprised our Police Department by bringing snacks and drinks to share with all of our officers. What was different about this particular drop off, was the sheer amount of students and faculty involved and the "random act of kindness" that was shown. Typically, things such as this are scheduled and we know ahead of time, but your school went above and beyond to show your appreciation to our officers and the Muskogee Police Department.*

*We are eternally grateful for the kind words, thoughts, and efforts that were made to show your appreciation and concern for our officers and the strides we make to better our community every day. It goes without saying, that our officers enjoyed and appreciated the time and effort that went into the gesture you made for us.*

*Thankfully,  
Chief Johnny Teehee*

# Social Services Department - News, Tips, etc.



## "Caught Being Good"

- ◆ The entire SCASB track team for being great sports, hardworking athletes and making the trip stress and drama free! We had a great time!
- ◆ Priscilla Diaz for holding the door open for another student and for helping another student at the talent show.
- ◆ Zoie Zavala for helping another student by doing a great deed in the cafeteria.
- ◆ Kentrell Wallace for helping a fellow student with their needs.
- ◆ Arianna Richardson – for overcoming obstacles at school.

Tera Webb

Social Services Department  
Sylvia Sterling

## Phrase of the Month for May "Sharpen the Saw"

By Trinity Lewis & Raven Decker  
Seek continuous improvement and renewal professionally and personally.

**"Sharpen the Saw"** means preserving and enhancing the greatest asset you have - **YOU**.

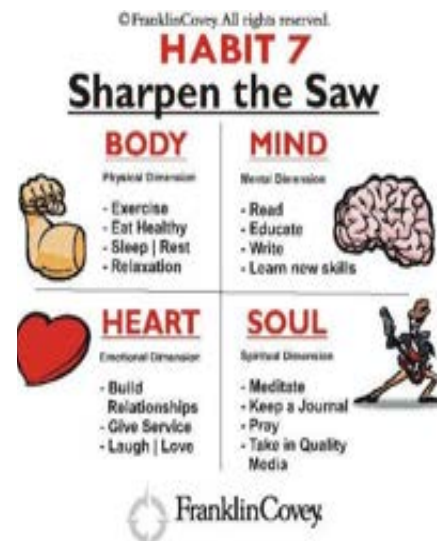


It means having a balanced program for self renewal in the four areas of your life:

physical, social / emotional, mental, and spiritual.

Here are some examples of activities...

- ◆ **Physical:** Beneficial eating, exercising, and resting.
- ◆ **Social / Emotional:** Making social and meaningful connections with others.
- ◆ **Mental:** Learning, reading, writing, and teaching.
- ◆ **Spiritual:** Spending time in nature, expanding spiritual self through meditation, music, art, prayer, or service.



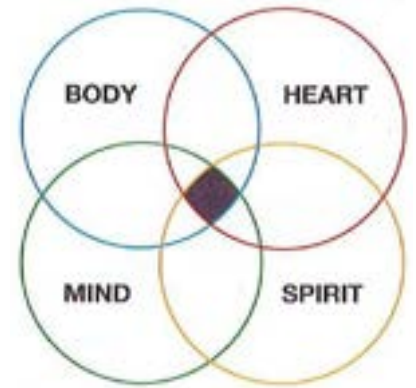
# Social Services Department - Parent Corner

## “Sharpen the Saw” Balance Feels Best

At times, kids become grouchy or hyperactive, or literally start falling apart. I often overreact to their behavior by telling them to “stop acting like little kids”, forgetting that they are just like that. But the other parent knows better. They realize that this behavior usually occurs when the kids are being

out of balance. They’re tired, hungry, or overstimulated. So we can feed them an apple, give them a bath, or read them a book until they turn “normal” again.

The same principle applies to us adults; don’t you think? We all feel better when we’re balanced, when we take time to renew the four parts of who we are: body, heart, mind and soul.



## Jr / Sr Trip

By News Staff

This year the Juniors and Seniors spent the day in Tulsa for their annual trip.

They got up early and had breakfast at **First Watch**, then went on to the **Purple Glaze**



Purple Glaze Art Studio

**Art Studio** to make some original pottery.

Finally, they ended the afternoon with games, pizza, bowling and fun at **Andy B’s**.



Richelle Z.

It was a great day out to celebrate the end of another year.

They would like to thank their sponsors and chaperones for making it such a great day.



Andy B’s

## Ask a Senior

By Thomas Raines



For this final “**Ask A Senior**” article we wanted to give a last bit of advice to the next graduating class.

**Tai’Yauri Thomas:** *My piece of advice for all upcoming seniors is, just because you are a senior, you still have to do your work! If you were a good student all throughout your school life, continue to be a good student throughout your senior year. You will still get in trouble, regardless if you are a senior.*

**Ariana Richardson:** *Some advice that I have for the seniors for next year is to work hard in whatever you do. Focus on your goal ahead and work extra hard to achieve it. Also, don’t let people pull you into a situation that you’re going to regret. This is your time to make an impact on your own life and making the right decisions and not letting anyone run over you is crucial, no matter what or who you may be interacting with. Be a role model for the grades below you and stand up for what you feel is right and for what you believe in, but know when it’s the right time*

*to do so and do it in a respectful manner.*

**Richelle Zampella:** *My advice to the upcoming seniors is to remember who you are. You’re at the peak of your time here, about to transition into the next chapter of your life where your ultimate focus should be you. Don’t let other people influence you to the point you forget what makes you unique. Hold on to your idiosyncrasies - the things that make you special - because no matter what happens in your life, you will be fine if you never lose sight of your roots.*

# Elementary Fun & Field Trips

By Trinity Lewis

The OSB Elementary students were able to participate in a lot of learning through play these past few weeks. Research says that play is a very important part of brain development.

This year the elementary students were able to visit the **Gathering Place** in Tulsa where Blake said his favorite thing was going to the castle and that there were some awesome slides and one slide was in the shape of an elephant.



Gathering Place



Gathering Place  
- Adventure Playground -



Some students were also able to celebrate being good all year by having a day out at **Incredible Pizza**. They got to eat until their tummies were ready to pop and they played games and bowling and even rode the indoor roller coaster.



The lower elementary kids spent a day jumping for joy on bounce houses and obstacle courses in the gym as their end of the year activity. They burned off a lot of energy and had a great time.



# National Braille Challenge - Finalists

Congratulations to Hunter Kelley, Katelynn Zampella, and Richelle Zampella!

Out of the **more than 1000** Regional Braille Challenge contestants across the US and Canada, **these three contestants made the top 10 highest scores** in their category.

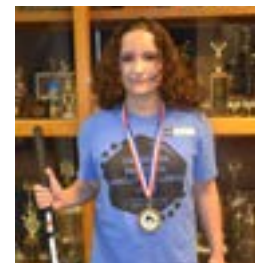
Hunter competed in the Freshman category, Katelynn in Sophomore, and Richelle in Varsity.

Richelle graduates this year, so this will be her last Braille Challenge event.

Join me in cheering on Hunter, Katelynn, and Richelle as they compete at the National Braille Challenge on June 22 in Los Angeles, California.

**Good Luck Finalists!**

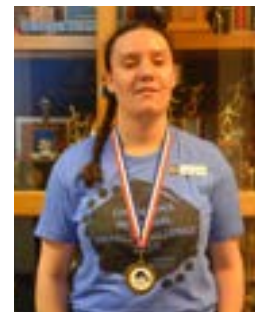
Faye Miller



Katelynn Zampella



Hunter Kelley



Richelle Zampella

# Jazz Band Update: Getting You in the Swing of Things!

by Richelle Zampella

The OSB jazz band has had a busy semester!

After their SCASB performance in January, they started preparing for what should have been their first contest, the Green Country Jazz Festival. Unfortunately, they could not compete due to weather keeping most of the band from getting to school. This was just one minor setback, however; the band had other major plans in store.

On April 23, they traveled to UCO to compete in the State Jazz contest, where they placed 1<sup>st</sup> in class 2A, earning them the State Championship title for the 4<sup>th</sup> year in a row. **Congratulations!**

The following weekend, they took their first ever band trip to Branson, Missouri. It was a



Branson, MO

weekend to never be forgotten. They opened up for the **Oakridge Boys** on Friday night and got the treat of attending the rest of the concert. The next day was spent at Silver Dollar City, and it's safe to say there wasn't a ride in the park that wasn't ridden.

After taking some time to unwind on the trip, they resumed rehearsals for the spring concert (held on Tuesday, May 7) and are also getting ready to showcase their talent at a commissioners' meeting on Monday, May 13.

Here's what they've learned this year:

- ◆ Steinel - Bossa de Cancun
- ◆ Miles Davis - So What
- ◆ Bob Reynolds - Can't Wait for Perfect
- ◆ Cameo (later redone by Korn) - Word Up
- ◆ Panic! at the Disco - High Hopes
- ◆ Bruno Mars - medley of 24 Karat Magic, Finesse, and That's What I Like

This year has been a whirlwind, but nothing can keep you grounded like music.

Mr. Ferrell deserves the utmost appreciation for guiding and helping the band grow and being patient even when he must want to pull his hair out.

It just goes to show out that life becomes more harmonious when we all band together.

## Spring Concert & Activities Banquet

### A Song in Our Hearts, a Spring in Our Step

By Richelle Zampella

The evening of Tuesday, May 7, the OSB panthers congregated at Honor Heights Park for the annual spring concert and activities banquet. The saying "the show must go on" held true that night; after waiting out some rain showers, the band took the stage.



Every year, Mr. Ferrell selects an outstanding student in

each grade based on their effort, grades and attitude, and here were this year's:

- 9<sup>th</sup> grade – John Duong (bari sax)
- 10<sup>th</sup> grade – Levi Smith (trumpet)
- 11<sup>th</sup> grade – Dee Willis (drums)

He honored the senior class as a whole, commending them for their contributions to the band over the years.

After the band performance, Mr. Butler introduced his Ukulele Club (Raven Decker, Ariana Richardson, Kaylee Ragon, Preston Fenton, Ben Middleton, and Dee Willis), who sang a few

songs. They ended with a solo performance from Ariana.



Awards for activities and sports were given out afterward.

### The students receiving awards were:

#### Richelle Zampella

- Academic Team Outstanding Member and
- Cheerleading Academic Award

(Continued on page 7)

# Spring Concert & Activities Banquet (continued)

(Continued from page 6)

## Kaylee Ragon

– Cheerleading Flyer Award

## Malerie Levens

– Outstanding Cheerleader

## Tai Thomas

– Track Top Female Award  
– Randy Chapman Award of Excellence for Wrestling and  
– Wrestling High School Academic Award

## John Duong

– John Simpsons Coaches Award for Wrestling

## Kentrell Wallace

– Most Improved High School Wrestler

## Elbin Carrillo

– Most Improved Junior High Wrestler and  
– Wrestling Junior High Academic Award

## Dee Willis

– Track Top Male Award

The students put their all into these sports and activities, and this night was a time they could get the celebration and recognition they deserve.

Last, but not least, Mrs. Lynn Cragg introduced all of our participating graduating seniors.



## SCASB Track - Unleashing the Panthers

By Tai Thomas

On April 11<sup>th</sup>, the Panthers traveled to Talladega, Alabama to compete in the **2019 Track & Field SCASB**.

Everyone pushed through the heat on field day and ran their hardest, despite the off and on raining on race day. The Panthers really showed their panther pride.

*(Note: Each of the 6 schools could register up to 3 students per event.)*

### Here are the results:

**Class A = blindfolded**

**Class BC = sighted**

### FIELD DAY

#### Long jump - Class A

Tai Thomas 3<sup>rd</sup>

#### Long jump - Class BC

Malerie Levens 6<sup>th</sup>  
Dee Willis 3<sup>rd</sup>

#### Shot Put - Class BC

Malerie Levens 5<sup>th</sup>  
Dee Willis 5<sup>th</sup>

#### Triple Jump - Class A

Kaylee Ragon 4<sup>th</sup>

#### Triple Jump - Class BC

Malerie Levens 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Dee Willis 2<sup>nd</sup>

### TRACK DAY

#### 60 m - Class A

Tai Thomas 4<sup>th</sup>

#### 400 m - Class A

Tai Thomas 4<sup>th</sup>

#### 200 m - Class A

Tai Thomas 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Kaylee Ragon 3<sup>rd</sup>

#### 100 m - Class BC

Dee Willis 6<sup>th</sup>

#### 1,600 m - Class BC

Allen Alender 3<sup>rd</sup>

#### Boys Shuttle Relay

Nick Jackson, Tyler Duong, Elbin Carrillo, and William Winston - 5<sup>th</sup>

#### 4x400 m Relay - Class BC

Dee Willis, Tyler Duong, John Duong, and Allen Alender - 3<sup>rd</sup>

By seeing these outstanding place awards, it is obvious they all

put a lot of effort into the events they participated in.

They made their coach proud and displayed excellent sportsmanship on the field and track. A special **THANK YOU** to Mrs. Webb, Mrs. Munekia, Mrs. Karla, Mr. Bynum, Mr. Butler, and Mr. Billy. Without them, the trip wouldn't have been possible.



## Where There's a Wheel, There's a Way!

by Jake Marsh & Richelle Zampella

Orientation & Mobility (O&M) is one of the most important skills OSB teaches their students.

The wonderful O&M instructors spend countless lessons with the students, teaching them to cross streets and various other skills to ensure their students' independence. One of the skills taught to high school seniors is public transportation.

During the month of April, Faye Miller and Gina Woods took high school seniors out to Tulsa at the Midtown Memorial bus station to give them the chance to experience public transportation firsthand.



Students were divided into groups according to level of useful vision. Some took a bus route to Promenade Mall and others to Woodland Hills Mall.

Upon arriving at the bus station, students were required to purchase their own bus tickets and gather the information about the bus they were to take and had to advocate for assistance. They were responsible for remembering the times of arrival and departure of the bus they were to ride. Communicating with the bus driver to know where and when to meet their departing bus was also expected of the students (unless they wanted to find their way back to school).

Once at the mall, they had time to have lunch and shop before catching their bus back to the station.

It was up to the students to advocate and ask for directions to the stores they wanted to shop at and to the food court.

The O&M instructors intervened as little as possible; the point of bus travel is to encourage students to rely on themselves.

Using public transportation is a very important skill to learn if you are blind or visually impaired because obviously you wouldn't want these students driving.

The O&M instructors do a very good job of making bus travel fun for the students who are old enough to participate by letting them go to the mall, where they can do a little shopping and getting comfortable with advocating.

Bus travel is a great learning experience.

Happy travels to the seniors next year.



## Recreation Activities - A Night Out

by Jake Marsh

During the months of April and May, the recreational activities have mostly been Open Rec, where the students hang out in the Rec Center and socialize with each other.

As it's approaching the end of the year, the students have enjoyed spending time with each other, spending the last few weeks before summer talking and playing

games. There was, however, a night of roller skating, where the students went out to the skating rink. The students were happy to participate and the time just rolled on by.



Also, on April 30<sup>th</sup>, OSB held their **annual talent show**.

The acts consisted of comedy, singing, playing instruments, and

a couple of dancers. The night was full of laughs, and everyone showed that "**OSB Got Talent**".

Everyone in the audience enjoyed watching the students perform.

The recreational activities have been great this year and students look forward to what is in store for next year.



# School Year Randomness ...

## Speech Therapy...

I walked in to ask Mrs. Jeana a question and I received so much more! Oh, the joys of teaching!

Cassie Shelton



Long-term volunteer and Braille teacher Jeanne Meyer being surprised by the students with a picture of a tree, representing all the students she touched throughout the years.

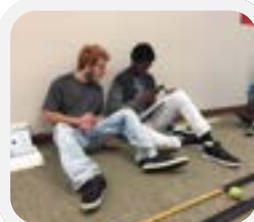
**THANK YOU Ms. Jeanne !**



**FCCLA  
Members  
Volunteering  
at Western  
Hills...**



**Science Projects throughout  
the year...**



## GOING THE EXTRA MILE -



**Following employees were nominated for their devoted support of our students, staff and school:**

I would like to thank...

- ◆ Paul Butler and Mike Bynum for driving the bus for SCASB track and being amazing helpers.
- ◆ Billy O'Neal for driving the van and being an amazing helper for SCASB track.
- ◆ Munekia Moore for helping with anything and everything on the SCASB track trip.
- ◆ Karla Cunningham for being an awesome nurse and keeping us well on the SCASB track trip.
- ◆ The many teachers who offered to help with money for students who needed shoes for SCASB track.

Tera Webb

Thank you to the Hospitality Committee for making each of us feel special throughout the year!

Anonymous

Thank you Mrs. Shelton and Mrs. Barrett (*and anyone else who may have helped*) for reorganizing and cleaning out the Book Depository! That's going "The Extra 100 Miles!!!"

Paul Butler

Thank you to all of the food services staff. They are always willing to help wherever and whenever asked.

Marqueta Culver

I would like to nominate all of the DCS staff! They have had to be flexible and help in numerous areas of the school. We couldn't have made it through all of the illnesses, field trips, outings, meetings and such without them!

Shawna Coplen

Thank you Mr. Culie, Mrs. Cotney, Mrs. Daniels, Mr. Ferrell, Mrs. Garner, Ms. Goins, Mr. Jackman, Mrs. Webb, Mrs. Young Mock, our drivers and all our DCS staff and nurses that allow our students to participate in numerous competitions and events throughout the school year. Thank you, your time and efforts are appreciated.

Also a HUGE THANK YOU to all our Admins, Maintenance guys, Janitors, kitchen crew, clinic staff, and our IT guys for always taking good care of us and our students. Your "behind the scenes" work is highly appreciated.

Maggie Mattox

I nominate Cheryl Daniels and Allison Garner for organizing Give Back Day. It was a great experience for our students.

Lynn Cragg

Thank you Tera Webb, Jeremy Jackman, Quenten Woodard (driver), JoAnn Ramsey (nurse) and Lynn Cragg for helping Cheryl Daniels and I with the Jr/Sr trip.

Laci Goins

**Thank you guys  
for going the  
extra mile.  
It is highly  
appreciated.**



# Birthdays May

## Students

Bloemer, Anthony	5	1
Winston, William	5	8
Eagle, Mykel	5	9
Hunter, Rudy	5	16
Ritchie, Liam	5	19
Hudson, Morgan	5	21
Carrillo, Elbin	5	23
Valdez, Julio	5	28



## Staff

Plunkett, Brenda	5	4
Sanders, Karen	5	6
Brooks, Tonya	5	9
Brice, Nancy	5	12
Adams, Linda	5	15
Webb, Tera	5	15
Sterling, Sylvia	5	16
Woods, Gina	5	17
Bynum, Michael	5	18
Reeves, Darlus	5	25
Johnston, Ronna	5	29
Charles, Samantha	5	30

# Birthdays June

## Students

Davidson, Johnnie	6	2
England, Nathan	6	5
Zampella, Katelynn	6	5
Zavala, Zoie	6	7
Middleton, Benjamin	6	10
Alender, Allen	6	13
Marsh, Jake	6	21
Winter, Shannon	6	25



## Staff

Butler, Paul	6	4
Bynum, Marcella	6	7
Anderson, Tressy	6	10
Pofahl, Vickie	6	14
Carter, Bobby	6	19
Davenport, Traci	6	27
Leatherman, Laura	6	29

# Birthdays July

## Students

King, Gabby	7	5
Diaz, Priscilla	7	8
Matthews, Jillian	7	12
Bradley, Lydia	7	20
Priddy, Blake	7	21
Moore, Mannon	7	24
Culley, Tyanna	7	27



## Staff

Daniels, Cheryl	7	7
Adams, Kathy	7	11
Page, Ann	7	18
Harrison, Sandy	7	20
Givens, Tonya	7	27

# Birthdays August

## Students

Allen, Xane	8	2
Brown, Treysen	8	8
Jackson, Emileigh	8	10
Webster, Ocie	8	12
Henderson, Gabriella	8	18
Minter, Kaylie	8	20
Burnside, Jaylee	8	22



## Staff

Bryan, Karen	8	2
Read, Dennis	8	2
Hinds, Rhonda	8	6
Miller, Robert	8	10
Moore, Munekia	8	10
Barker, Ruby	8	21
Yochum, Lisa	8	26

# OSB's CLASS OF 2019



*Richelle Zampella*  
Muskogee  
Valedictorian, Secretary



*Ariana Richardson*  
Enid  
Salutatorian



*Malorie Lewis*  
Owasso  
President



*Trinity Lewis*  
Oklahoma City  
Stu. Co. Rep.



*Raven Decker*  
Oklahoma City

## Oklahoma School for the Blind Seniors



*Preston Gordon*  
Oklahoma City



*Michael Gentry*  
Spino

**Superintendent:** Rita Echelle  
**Principals:** Lynn Cragg & Shawna Coplin  
**Sponsors:** Cheryl Daniels, Laci Gains

**Class Flower:**  
Pinks: signifies daring and resourcefulness

**Class Songs:**  
"High Hopes" by Piano at the Disco & "Hold on to Me" by Disturbed

**Class Colors:**  
Violet for imagination & Gold for loyalty

**Class Motto:**

"Do not follow where the path may lead. Go, instead, where there is no path and leave a trail." - Ralph Waldo Emerson



*Connor Hillis*  
Koota



*Jillian Matthews*  
Muskogee



*Nicholas Jackson-Morrison*  
Muskogee



*Tai Yvonne Thomas*  
Oklahoma City

## Oklahoma School for the Blind

3300 Gibson Street  
Muskogee, OK 74403

Toll Free: (877) 229-7136  
Voice/TTY: (918) 781-8200  
Fax: (918) 781-8300

It takes more than sight to have vision!

Please check out  
our website at:



## OSB Employee / Staff Changes:

### New Hires:

Polly Shoemake, Nursing Service Supervisor  
- effective April 23<sup>rd</sup>  
Rosanna Coomer, DCS - effective June 2<sup>nd</sup>

**Welcome on board. Glad to have you !**



### Retirement:

Ronna Johnston - effective July 1<sup>st</sup>  
Sherry Crouch - effective June 1<sup>st</sup>



## UPCOMING HIGHLIGHTS !!! - Save the Date/s !!!



Enrollment Sunday for Summer Camp & Reading Program - June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019  
OSB Summer Camp "STEAM" (1<sup>st</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Gr.) - June 3<sup>rd</sup> through June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019  
OSB Reading Program (KG-3<sup>rd</sup> Gr.) - June 3<sup>rd</sup> through June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019

**"Back to School" Enrollment Sunday - August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019 -**

(Enrollment packages will be send via mail,  
please update your address as  
needed. Thank you.)

