

May 26, 2021

Dear Overbrook Attendance Center Families and Patrons,

What a year we have been through! We accomplished many amazing assignments and activities, sustained our students' health, safety, and opportunities, and we have thrived! We are so proud of everything accomplished by our teachers, staff, and students.

Thank you to our community supporters. As we moved into pandemic management, our community stepped in to help. Please know that our list may be incomplete, and we're sorry if we haven't included everyone! For all things wonderful - the Overbrook Rotary Club, Kansas State Bank, TJ's, Casey's, Shirts & Such, Sowers Designs, The Fancy Whisk Bakeshop, Knox's Sign and Graphics, Flowers on the Trail, Mainstreet Auto Works, City Manager Jim Koger, Police Chief Terry Hollingsworth, and all the car show participants.

Thank you to our Santa Fe Trail Parent Teacher Organization and their leadership Lanae Losson and Melissa Cannon. When all else was shutting down, they quickly shifted to Zoom meetings and continued to provide support and gifts to our teachers, staff, and students. Teachers and staff were thrilled to receive cuddly Charger warm-up pants for Christmas. We had meals and snacks for Parent Teacher Conferences, snacks and water bottles for field day, and a donation toward our 100 Days t-shirt for everyone at OAC.. Zoo to You from the Topeka Zoo was their gift to our students, in place of field trips.

We could not have accomplished so much without our families. Let's just start with donations - playground games and supplies, snacks, teacher meals, classroom supplies, and teacher requests. The year started with mask donations, hundreds of masks for children and adults, homemade and store bought! We will leave someone out if we attempt a list and we didn't even know all the donors - parents, grandparents, church groups, and civic groups. Next came the hand sanitizer - gallons and gallons donated by businesses and families. Above all, our families took the "lock out" in stride and helped us consistently maintain the regulations every day. They missed classroom parties (and came up with fabulous alternatives!), Thanksgiving Dinner, Christmas Dinner, in person Parent-Teacher Conferences, and concerts.

To our students: Thank you. You worked really hard to follow all the rules, even when recess and PE were hard and you missed sitting with your friends at lunch. You participated and strengthened your reading and math skills. Many of you emerged as leaders and mentors. We are hoping you left this school year with many happy memories!

Above all, I want to thank the dedicated adults who showed up every day to support your children. Every pair of hands gave the gifts of encouragement and support. The teachers had to completely rearrange rooms, measure spaces, individualize supplies and activities, change classroom procedures, and ALL this happened before they could start on designing learning that could be delivered in person and online. Their skills were tested, and frankly, they passed with flying colors and gold stars! They flexed, minute-by-minute, and your children were the winners.

In a year when we heard so much in the world about schools not doing well, I burst with pride to think we were in person, we changed to fit our ever-shifting environment, and our students adapted and continued to learn and grow.

Here's to the new year, just around the corner!

Vici Jennings

Overbrook Attendance Center