

January Newsletter

BOE



Principal - Mrs. Lorle Bolt

A message from our principal

Third grade students will complete their interim assessments this month. Interim assessments are tests given at specific times throughout the school year to check how well students understand key concepts and use certain skills.

Think of interim assessments as part of a larger system that includes different types of evaluations:

- **Formative assessments** (like classroom quizzes and discussions) help guide daily teaching.
- **Summative assessments** (like end-of-year tests) measure overall learning.
- **Interim assessments** fall in between, providing valuable check-ins on student progress.

Interim assessments play an important role by:

- Helping teachers and students track progress.
- Giving schools useful data to adjust teaching methods and programs to better support student achievement.
- Prepares students for the state assessment

When used effectively, these assessments ensure students stay on track and teachers can tailor their instruction to meet every child's needs.

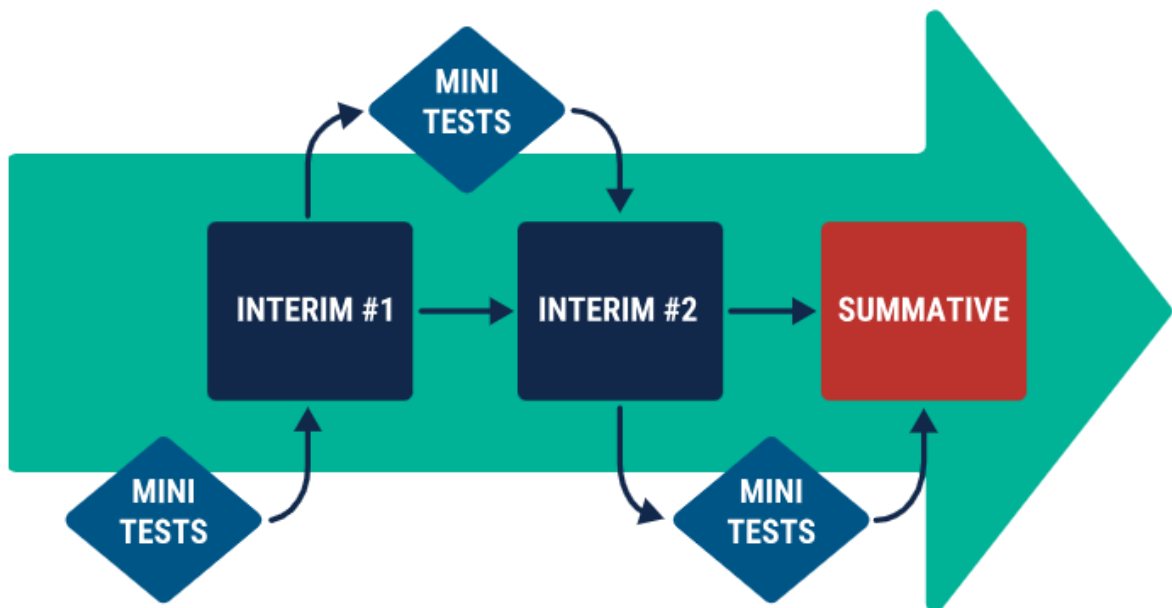


Diagram of Interims relative to the larger assessment system.

Attendance Matters: Partnering Together for Student Success

At Overbrook, we deeply value our partnership with parents and recognize that the success of all our students is a shared goal. If you have concerns about your child's attendance, please don't hesitate to contact your building principal.

We will continue to keep you informed if your child's attendance meets any of the thresholds outlined by state law and our USD 434 policies. As part of this effort, students with less than 90% attendance for Quarter 2 will receive an attendance awareness letter. This letter is meant to provide information and help us work together toward achieving our building attendance goal.

Please note this is ONLY an awareness letter.

We understand that the second quarter falls during illness season, and we appreciate your efforts to balance health and school attendance. As a reminder, it's important to differentiate between excused and unexcused absences. Below is a guide to help clarify:

Excused Absences

- **Personal Illness:** For absences of three or more consecutive days, a doctor's note is required to return to school. The note should include the date of the visit and the date the student can return.
- **Medical Appointments:** Includes medical, mental health, or dental appointments. Students should not miss a full day for routine visits. An appointment card from the doctor/dentist must be submitted to the office upon return.
- **Family Crisis:** Includes serious illness or death in the family.
- **Religious Events:** Includes obligatory religious observances.
- **Funerals:** Parents should notify the school in advance via phone or a written note.
- **Field Trips:** Participation in district-approved or school-sponsored activities.
- **Pre-Arranged Family Requests:** Must be approved by the principal in advance.
- **Military-Related Absences:** Additional absences may be excused for students of active-duty military personnel for visitations during leave or deployment, at the principal's discretion.

Unexcused Absences

Absences not meeting the above criteria are considered unexcused. Examples include:

- Oversleeping
- Car trouble
- Shopping
- Haircuts or photo sessions
- Lost or deceased pets
- Birthday celebrations

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation as we strive to maintain strong attendance habits and support our students' success. If you have any questions or need assistance, we're here to help.

**A whole year has 365 days, while a school year only has 163 days.
We love to have our students in school as much as possible.**

0-8 Absences	9-17 Absences	18+ Absences
100-95% Attendance	94-90% Attendance	Less than 90% Attendance
Best chance of success for your child.	Makes it harder for your child to make progress and stay on grade level.	Your child will have a potential to struggle with their academics, peers, and enjoying school.

Celebrating Student Success at OAC

At OAC, we are dedicated to celebrating the achievements of our students. I am thrilled to share that we exceeded our goal for the FastBridge Universal Screener! Our target was for 80% of

students to show growth or maintain Benchmark and above from the fall to winter assessment. Impressively, 98% of our students met this milestone, demonstrating their hard work and commitment to learning.



To honor this incredible achievement, we will host a school-wide celebration on **January 10th**. The Kansas State Extension Office will join us to provide engaging presentations and exciting hands-on rotations for all grade levels. We look forward to celebrating this fantastic accomplishment together!

Helping All Students Succeed: Understanding Fastbridge Screening and Support

To ensure every student receives the support they need, we use a short screening assessment called Fastbridge up to three times a year. These assessments help teachers identify which students are on track to meet end-of-year learning goals and which ones may benefit from additional help.

Here's how we approach this process:

- **Assessments We Use:**
 - **Grades K-1:** *earlyReading* and *earlyMath*
 - **Grades 2-3:** *aReading*, *CBMreading*, and *aMath*
- After the screenings, teachers carefully review the results alongside other information about student performance.

For students who may need extra support, we provide additional instruction designed to help them meet their learning goals. To monitor progress, these students take short, regular tests (bi-weekly or dependent upon their needs) to track improvement and ensure the extra support is working.

Parents will receive information about their child's progress during parent-teacher conferences or at other points throughout the year. These updates help everyone—teachers, students, and families—stay informed about progress and work together to help each student succeed.

We appreciate your partnership in supporting your child's learning journey! If you have any questions about the screening or progress-monitoring process, feel free to reach out.

Upcoming Dates:

1/6: No School - Teacher Prep

1/7: No School - Professional Development Day

1/8: Classes Resume

1/15: 6pm BOE Meeting

1/20: No School (MLK Day)

Counselor's Corner & Exciting News

Welcome back! We are excited to continue our journey of growth and learning together. This month in the classroom, we are completing our lessons on calm-down strategies and transitioning into conflict resolution. This is a challenging but vital skill for children at this developmental stage. Younger students often focus on their own feelings and experiences when they are frustrated, which is entirely age-appropriate. In class, we emphasize not only expressing their feelings to others but also developing empathy by understanding different perspectives and working collaboratively to find resolutions.

On a personal note, I am thrilled to share that I am expecting a baby boy in mid-February! During my maternity leave, I will not be available to assist directly. If you have any immediate concerns regarding your child, please contact Megan in the front office, and she will help connect you with the appropriate resources. Additionally, our social worker, Maggie Mead, will be supporting my caseload and ensuring that students I work with regularly continue to receive the care they need. We have communicated this transition with the students to prepare them and ensure they are comfortable with the changes ahead. Please know that we have a solid plan in place to support all students during this time.

Thank you for your understanding and support as we work together to help your children grow and succeed! ---Mrs. Metsker

Please take a moment to read what your child has been doing in Art, PE, Music and Explorer!



OAC SPECIALS NEWSLETTER

THIS MONTH IN JANUARY

- **Art-** In January we will be focusing on Pop art while learning about some of the most famous Pop artists such as Andy Warhol.
- **Explore-** Did you know that not all places celebrate New Year on January First? That's right! The Lunar New Year starts on January 29th this year and we will have an opportunity to learn about the Chinese Culture during this time. In January we will learn a lot about Martin Luther King Jr. and the impact he had on the United States. We will discuss how he was able to speak to large groups of people and how he handled confrontation with those that did not like what he had to say. We will also have an opportunity to see what life was like as a pioneer as we celebrate Kansas Day!
- **Music-** What a busy December! Starting back this month, we will continue to focus on rhythms through various cross-curriculum activities and begin to include pitch and note reading. We will also continue to focus on music history and begin learning about different genres. Quaver does an amazing job of implementing all genres, even hip-hop, country, and rap!
- **P.E.-** It's the start of the new year and I hope everyone had a great break. During the month of January, we will be working with parachutes. The skills we will be focusing on during this unit will be working with large groups, and building up cardio, rhythm, and directions. Remember to have your students bring PE shoes to school. Wearing snow boots during PE isn't much fun when trying to run.

EVENTS THIS MONTH

- January 20th:** Martin Luther King Jr. Day
January 29th: KANSAS BIRTHDAY!!!



District Goal 1: Communication

Current Steps to Strengthen Family Partnerships

Our goal is to foster authentic family partnerships by enhancing positive communication between families and school staff. By providing regular and meaningful opportunities for collaboration, we aim to build strong relationships that support students' social, emotional, and academic development.

To achieve this, we have established the following communication expectations:

- **Classroom Teachers:** 100% of teachers will communicate with families quarterly, in addition to school conferences and weekly academic updates. Communication may take any form (e.g., phone calls, emails, newsletters).
- **Specialized Staff (PE, Music, Admin, STREAM, Title, and Counselor):** Each will make 18 positive contacts with families per quarter.
- **Special Education (SPED):** SPED staff will make at least one positive contact per quarter with families of their assigned students.

Monitoring and Accountability:

- Communication will be tracked using a quarterly log document.
- Data will be reviewed quarterly by staff to share ideas, assess progress, and ensure accountability.
- Communication will remain a standing item on PLC agendas to discuss strategies and ensure follow-through.

By prioritizing consistent and positive communication, we aim to create a supportive and collaborative environment for all students and families.

Future Steps to Strengthen Family Partnerships

To further enhance our efforts in building authentic family partnerships, we plan to implement the following steps:

- **Updating Family Information:** Families will be asked to review and verify their contact information in PowerSchool twice a year during parent-teacher conferences to ensure accuracy and up-to-date records.
- **Promoting School Messenger Sign-Up:** Signs with QR codes for easy sign-up to School Messenger will be placed at the front entrance, encouraging families to stay connected with important school communications.
- **Welcoming New Families:** During the enrollment process, signing up for School Messenger and reviewing contact information will be added to our checklist to ensure new families are fully informed and included in our communication system.

These steps will help ensure our communication channels remain effective, accessible, and inclusive for all families, further supporting our goal of strengthening relationships and enhancing student success.



Lorle Bolt

Lorle is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters