

Community Connections



School District of Oostburg Newsletter

The mission of the School District of Oostburg is to prepare students to be productive and positive contributors to our society and the world.

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8th Grader Wins OMS Geographic Bee

Blayz Wilson, an eighth grader at OMS, won the school competition of the National Geographic Bee on January 16th and a chance at a \$50,000 college scholarship. The school Bee, at which students answered questions on geography, was the first round in the 27th annual National Geographic Bee. Thousands of schools around the United States and the five U.S. territories are participating in the 2015 Bee. The school champions, including Blayz, will take a written test; up to 100 of the top scorers on that test in each state will then be eligible to compete in their state Bee on March 27, 2015.

The National Geographic Society will provide an all-expenses paid trip to Washington, D.C., for state winners to participate in the Bee national championship rounds May 11-13, 2015. The first place national champion will receive a \$50,000 college scholarship, a lifetime membership in the Society including a subscription to National Geographic magazine, and a trip to the Galapagos Islands, courtesy of Lindblad Expeditions and National Geographic. Award-winning journalist Soledad O'Brien will moderate the national finals on May 13. The program will air on television. Check local listings for dates and times. Congratulations



Bee Semi-finalists, from left: Blayz Wilson, Jacob Oppeneer, Conner Verduzco, Nate Hurtienne, Travis Veldboom, Brady Wisse, Owen Wilson, Holli DePagter, Brooke Ripplinger

*"There is no
substitute for
excellence."*



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Blayz Wilson, winner of the 2015 OMS Bee, is congratulated by Mr. Barry Kloeping, Geography Bee Coordinator

to **Blayz Wilson** on winning the Oostburg Middle School Bee, and congratulations to our finalists who also participated.

Thank you to teachers Barry Kloeping, Brian Nyenhuis and Jack Rauwerdink for facilitating this year's Geography Bee. *Article submitted by Barry Kloeping, OMS Social Studies Teacher & Geography Bee Coordinator*

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From the Superintendent's Desk

Greetings,

January 10th was a special night at Oostburg High School as we celebrated the 100th anniversary of the WIAA State Boy's Basketball Tournament. Oostburg has been fortunate to have eight teams qualify for the state tournament during that time. We honored those teams by inviting them back to their alma mater and introducing them at half time of our game against Sheboygan Christian. Tradition is a key part of what makes the Oostburg School District unique, and I am thankful for those who have invested heavily in shaping our district as a leader in educational excellence. Reflecting on our special evening, I find myself thankful for our ability to honor tradition while also focusing forward on our improvement and growth. I believe that the combination of tradition and growth are often in conflict, yet we find ways to bring those opposites together in a way that helps define who we are as a school and community.



Kevin Bruggink

American philosopher and educational reformer John Dewey discussed something similar in 1938: *Traditional vs Progressive Education*.

However, Dewey believes neither progressive nor traditional education is the solution to the opposition that exists in educational theory. He proposes that the problems they present require a resolution based on a new philosophy of experience. As long as the assumption exists that it suffices to reject the ideas of traditional education and to go to the opposite extreme to progressive education, the problem at hand will not even be recognized, let alone be resolved.

Dewey's idea captures the balance that we believe is important when it states that "neither progressive nor traditional" is the solution. We live in a time where most arguments seem to quickly degrade to a staunch defense of this or that. Respected author Jim Collins describes this phenomenon as the "tyranny of *or*" where we must choose between two seemingly contradictory positions. Collins dismissed "this or that" and promotes the "genius of *and*" where he describes the ability to hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time while still retaining the ability to function. We want to be a "genius of *and*" school where the "tyranny of *or*" is pushed aside. We want to embrace our strong traditions while also driving forward to improve and grow.

Oostburg is steeped in tradition yet has a progressive nature, unlike many other small towns. Our active Chamber of Commerce and incredible number of small and medium-sized businesses provide an example of balancing tradition and progress. They model how to grow and stay ahead of the curve, yet still hold true to the values that matter most. I hope our school district reflects those qualities as we serve children.

Daniel Pink, one of my favorite authors / researchers has a quote which I include in my email signature line: "We need to prepare children for their future, not our past." This quote is a necessary reminder as I get a bit older and risk being less open to what our students need most to succeed. The events of January 10th also served as a reminder as we brought together a celebrated past and a promising future which should excite us.

Kevin Bruggink



OES Staff Focusing on Progress in Math

As we continue to work toward improving learning at OES, we have put together a team of teachers that are deeply studying the best way to teach and assess student progress in math. T.J. Michna, Jess Prinsen, Jodi Stubler, Jill Davies, Julie Bieber, and Erin Hoffman have been meeting at least once per month studying various series and resources that will help us achieve our highest math goals. Our focus has centered on a few shifts to improve student learning.

Our teachers are concentrating on teaching a more *focused* set of major math concepts and skills. This will allow students time to master key concepts and skills in a more organized way throughout the year and from one grade to the next. Teachers are also researching rich and challenging math content to engage students in solving real-world problems in order to inspire a greater interest in math. We've appreciated the opportunity to talk with community members and parents about the important work we are doing in math, and we welcome you to contact us with any questions you might have.



BadgerLink – Wisconsin’s Free Online Library

In the last district newsletter I mentioned a website called *BadgerLink*, which I believe is a great resource and warrants a closer look and explanation. As described on the *BadgerLink* website, “*BadgerLink* is Wisconsin’s online library which provides access to licensed content such as magazines, newspapers, scholarly articles, videos, images, and music. These resources are provided exclusively for use by all Wisconsin residents and are materials that are not available through regular search engines such as Google.” You also have access to an online encyclopedia, which can be very helpful when your child has projects or reports for school. Some of the resources that I use with the students and that they learn about are as follows:

Access NewspaperARCHIVE
Wisconsin Media Lab
NoveList K-8

Britannica School - Elementary
Searchasaurus

Kids Search
TeachingBooks.net

There are many, many more resources and they are not just for students in elementary, but span into middle school, high school, college and beyond. For example, in Access NewspaperARCHIVE, I found my parents’ wedding announcement from over fifty years ago. You have access to manuals for vehicles, genealogy information, Sports Illustrated for Kids, and so much more.

BadgerLink is a free resource that you can access at home as well, you just have to have a public library card. When you go to www.badgerlink.net, there is a link titled “Library Card Login“ located directly under the webpage title. Once you enter your local library and barcode from the back of your library card, you have full access to one of the most valuable online resources available. If you have any questions regarding *BadgerLink* and the resources within the site, please feel free to stop by or give me a call.

Janna Heinen

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OMS Welcomes Mrs. Cindy Edge

In January, Oostburg Middle School welcomed Mrs. Cindy Edge to the staff. Mrs. Edge filled the vacancy in 7th and 8th grade math left by the departure of Ms. Gardon. Along with her math certification, she also has degrees in Educational Administration and Psychology. It was very evident during her interview that she is a learner; something we highly value in Oostburg. She is well read and embraces change through learning about best practice.

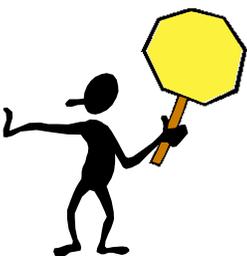
Mrs. Edge taught 7th and 8th grade math for a total of 8 years prior to accepting this position. Therefore, she is familiar with the age level and standards that she will be teaching our students at OMS. To come into a position mid-year, having this knowledge and experience is critical for not losing valuable learning time because the teacher too is learning. She has been able to come in and pick up right where Ms. Gardon left off. The transition has gone well.

In addition to her teaching experience, Mrs. Edge has a vast knowledge base and experience in Response to Intervention (RTI). She served as a Response to Intervention Coordinator where she led the implementation of RTI at several different school districts. Therefore she has a strong knowledge base of research and evidenced based interventions and strategies, as well as procedural and structural knowledge on how to maximize intervention time.

Overall, Mrs. Edge is a team player that embraces best practice and the learning process. She is a positive person and has been a valuable addition to OMS!



Mrs. Cindy Edge



Crossing Guards

With all of our most recent weather related issues, we are especially grateful for our crossing guards. January 12 - 16, 2015, was Crossing Guard Recognition Week in Wisconsin. The Village of Oostburg hires our community crossing guards, and we are very fortunate to have excellent individuals who have filled this role for many years. Please take a moment to recognize their efforts in keeping our children safe as they walk to and from school. Our Oostburg crossing guards include: **Mrs. Pat Koeser, Mr. Glenn Koeser and Mr. Mark Awe.**

Oostburg School District Receives District Grant from WTI

The Oostburg School District has recently received exciting news that Wisconsin Technology Initiative approved our Fall-term grant proposal and has awarded us \$37,000 towards the purchase of specific technology items per our request. These include three SMART Tables, a mobile telepresence unit, a Swivl device, three SMART Boards, and a subscription to the BrightBytes technology integration evaluation tool. "The technology provided through the WTI grant will expand personalized learning opportunities for students from their earliest experiences through graduation," said Superintendent Kevin Bruggink. "The SMART Tables provided through the grant promote collaborative, 21st Century, independent learning, while our second telepresence unit will allow us to connect with learners across the globe. These technologies would be challenging to fund through our regular budget and we are grateful for the support of the Morgridge family and WTI community."

"We knew the Oostburg School District would understand the importance and would put the technology to good use," said Mike Kerr, Executive Director of Wisconsin Technology Initiative. "We are excited to see the positive results that will come from this project."

A special "thank you" to the eleven teachers who attended the WTI conference in Stevens Point this past November. There is no doubt that the presence and involvement of this large group helped our school receive this generous grant from WTI.

All teachers will be encouraged to explore these tools and use them in their classes. We look forward to increasing collaboration internally (among our staff and students) and externally (with other schools and community members) as we embrace these innovative opportunities. *Article submitted by Erica Wray, Technology Integration Coordinator, Oostburg School District*

PTO Postings

Fall Mini Grants: The PTO awarded more than \$ 2200 in mini grants in November 2014. The following is a list of recipients.

- ◆ Ashley Holzer was awarded money for Second Step Curriculum for the kindergarten.
- ◆ Vicki Swart received money for an IPVO Document camera.
- ◆ Erin Hoffmann and Julie Bieber each received money for Cuisenaire Rods.
- ◆ Erica Wray was awarded money for a Canon HFG30 video camcorder.
- ◆ Jill Nyenhuis received an award to purchase books for her classroom.
- ◆ Deb Styles and Morgan Hellmer received money for durable book and binder holders.

The PTO has awarded more than \$87, 000 over the past six years for Educational Enrichment to our district. The next mini grants will be awarded in April 2015.

Family Fun Fair: This was the most successful Fun Fair to date. The PTO had a profit of over \$13,500. This money will be used to support the staff through Mini Grants and classroom supplies as well as in other ways.

Scholarships: Five \$1000 scholarships will be awarded graduating seniors. Applications can be found on the PTO page of the district website or <http://oostburgpto.wikispaces.com/Scholarships>.

Like Oostburg PTO on Facebook to stay up to date with what is going on in the district.

Students to Participate in Solo & Ensemble

Band and vocal students from OHS & OMS are participating in many events at this year's Solo and Ensemble Festival, which will be held on March 21 at Random Lake. Events range from woodwind, brass, percussion and piano solos to ensembles ranging in size from duets to large groups. In addition to Solo and Ensemble, all 7th and 8th Grade Band students will be performing a solo and/or in an ensemble at school during lunch as part of March's annual "Music In Our Schools Month" celebration. Congratulations to all of the Solo and Ensemble participants on their hard work to ensure successful performances and for making music an important part of our school community!



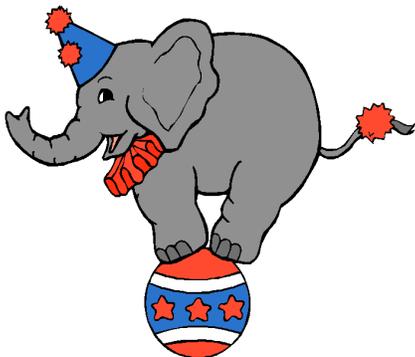


THANK YOU to these "Center Ring" DONORS of the Oostburg School District "Circus" FUN FAIR

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Whisting Straits PGA Championship
Whitewater Outdoors
Wynveen Realty – Cassie Jenson



2015's Fun Fair was again a record breaking success! Thank you to all the OSD families, students, & staff who volunteered and/or attended. Thank you to the Oostburg area community for attending and supporting the Oostburg School District. We hope you had fun and will plan to join us again next time!



WTI Grant Allows SMART Tables for Kindergarten Classrooms

SMART Tables will be located in the three OES kindergarten classrooms to help support students who would benefit from assistance in early literacy and math skill development. These movable, interactive, multimedia tables also offer enrichment opportunities with high-levels of student engagement (e.g. collaborate to create stories, practice math facts, generate patterns, sort clues, solve problems, or work through simulations). The use of these boards will assist teachers in managing time and resources in that they can be used for center-based learning and active collaboration through discussion, problem-solving, and small group activities. They are renowned for their accessibility features, which will make them a benefit to Special Education classes as well. Tactile, play-based learning can take place in small groups working independently and fostering peer teaching skills. *Article submitted by Erica Wray, Technology Integration Coordinator, Oostburg School District. Image from <http://education.smarttech.com/en/products/smart-table>*



Telepresence and Swivl Device for Staff Use

An additional **telepresence unit** (on a movable cart) will be purchased for use in the Oostburg Elementary building. Telepresence technology offers an opportunity to broaden our course offerings as well as provide “real world” exposure and connections to professionals (in an effort to improve college and career readiness). In addition to shared classes, students could collaborate with other schools on common projects or units of study. They can also take part in virtual field trips. Telepresence will assist teachers with professional development pursuits and sharing a resource pool with other school districts. With this telepresence cart we have also received multipoint licensing, which enables us to have up to four simultaneous connections.



The **Swivl device** allows for easy, high-quality filming of the instructor in action by following them around as they present their lesson. We aim to use this device in teachers’ classrooms as a component of professional development and/or to showcase their work to other schools. In conjunction with the telepresence cart, colleagues can use the Swivl device to observe teachers in real time without invading their space or interrupting their class. In addition, several teachers have shown commitment to exploring the flipped learning model in their classes, featuring video-based lectures and demonstrations. Having a teacher’s “presence” embedded into the recorded demonstration, lecture notes, or PowerPoint presentation makes for a more engaging, connected, and memorable lesson. *Information from Erica Wray, Technology Integration Coordinator, Oostburg School District. Images from <http://www.cisco.com> and <http://www.swivl.com>*

Additional Resources to be purchased

SMART Boards will be installed in an Oostburg High School History room, the OMS Band room, and the high school conference room. Students have an active role in their learning when they use these interactive whiteboards, which support multimedia and dynamic presentation and encourage communal participation. In STEM subjects, SMART Boards and applications like Math Tools allow students to instantly create models and graphs with ease. Response systems and document cameras allow students of all ages to receive real time feedback from their peers and also create dynamic presentations.

We will be using **BrightBytes** as an objective technology evaluation tool for all staff and students. District families will be invited to take part as well. This program will provide us an evidence-based framework that will help us analyze our district-wide technology skill level and integration effectiveness. Based on sound research, this tool will help us define our needs and improve student learning outcomes. BrightBytes offers actionable next steps, targeted stakeholder reports, and clear communication of results. *Article submitted by Erica Wray, Technology Integration Coordinator, Oostburg School District.*

No person may be denied admission to any public school in the district or be denied participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be discriminated against in any curricular, co-curricular, student services, recreational or other program or activity because of the person’s sex, race, color, national origin, ancestry, creed, religion, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, handicap or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability in the educational programs or activities operated by the School District of Oostburg.

Bits & Bytes

- For school closing info you may be contacted by the district's **Automated Phone** system. You can also listen to WHBL 1330, WJUB 1420 or WTMJ 620, TV Channel 4 or <http://closings.620wtmj.com>.
- Monthly school calendars are available on the Oostburg District website.
- Check out past newsletters at www.oostburg.K12.wi.us/district/newsletter/NewsletterIndex.html
- Fitness Center hours: Check the current hours and available programs on the District website: www.oostburg.k12.wi.us
- Keep track of the balance of your Oostburg Schools lunch account at: www.ezschoollpay.com.
- We invite your comments and suggestions. E-mail your thoughts to: Karen.Leitzke@oostburg.k12.wi.us.

Coming Up...

<i>March</i>	14	Destination Imagination Regional
	11	District Early Release
	18	School Board Meeting, 6pm
	21	Solo & Ensemble
	24	OES Celebration of the Arts
	27	End of 3rd Quarter
	30 - April 3	Spring Vacation
<i>April</i>	6	School Resumes
	16	District Early Release
	16	School Board Meeting, 6 pm
	16 - 18	Spring Play
	25	State Solo & Ensemble
<i>May</i>	1	No School
	4	OHS Band & Vocal Concert
	11	OMS Band & Vocal Concert
	13	District Early Release

Telepresence Used in Classroom

The WTI grant that made it possible for our district to purchase a telepresence unit has made a big impact in a second grade classroom. Each year, for over a decade, Curt Bretall's second grade students have done an in-depth study of Mexico. This year's study was like no other because they were able to use the telepresence unit to connect, face-to-face, with another class of second graders in Monterrey, Mexico. The kids asked and answered questions of each other. The OES kids also shared a slideshow that they had created about Mexico. Their upcoming plans include using the telepresence unit to share a penguin research project with their Mexican pals. They also plan to share more about what winter is like, however, they are hoping for more snow right now so they can get a few good snow mountain pictures from the playground.



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