



Olathe
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

School News

Special Edition | Spring 2025

DISCOVER THE OLATHE ADVANTAGE

Student Success

Award-Winning Staff

Our Schools Give Back

Community Collaboration



A MESSAGE FROM **SUPERINTENDENT DR. BRENT YEAGER**

Olathe Public Schools Community and Beyond,

As the proud superintendent of this district, I'm thrilled to share the progress we continue to make. While this magazine typically highlights events in our schools, this quarter we want to take a moment

to celebrate the achievements of our district and express our deep gratitude to the community. Your support has been essential to our success, and our partnership with you is the foundation of our growth.

We're also excited to introduce The Olathe Advantage, an initiative that highlights the exceptional opportunities, resources, and educational experiences that set our district apart. The Olathe Advantage reflects our commitment to high standards in the classroom and beyond, ensuring every student is empowered to reach their full potential in a rapidly changing world.

We hope you take pride in our shared accomplishments and help us spread the word about the bright future ahead for our students and community. Thank you for your continued trust, support, and investment in the success of Olathe's students.

Your very proud superintendent,

Dr. Brent Yeager
Superintendent

Discover the **Olathe Advantage**

**LARGEST
DISTRICT IN
KANSAS CITY
METROPOLITAN
AREA**

58

schools and facilities serving almost 30,000 students

\$1

MILLION

a year donated back to schools through the Olathe Public Schools Foundation for each of the past four years

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Olathe Public Schools

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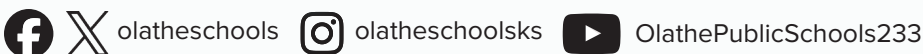
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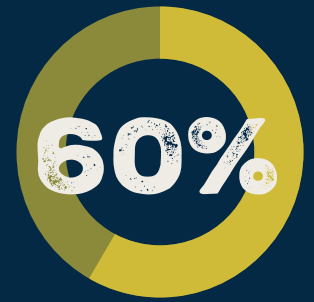
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STUDENT SUCCESS

12

NATIONAL MERIT FINALISTS IN 2024

MORE THAN



OF SECONDARY STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

\$50 MILLION
in scholarships
offered to 2024 graduates

46

COLLEGE NOW COURSES

23

ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSES

SAT AND ACT SCORES

ABOVE

STATE AND NATIONAL AVERAGES

PROUDLY SERVE

6,331

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

CAREER PATHWAYS

01 | Four-year Programs

The Olathe Public Schools offers 15 unique and innovative four-year programs housed within the district's high schools. These programs allow students to build upon their interests and learn specific knowledge and skills they can apply toward their post-secondary experiences and career fields while gaining Market Value Assets through work-based learning.



Public Services

Civic Leadership
Future Educators
Public Safety
Distinguished Scholars

Media & Technology

Computer Science
e-Communications
Distinguished Scholars

Health

Medical Professions
Sports Medicine
BioMedical Engineering
Distinguished Scholars

Design, Production, & Repair

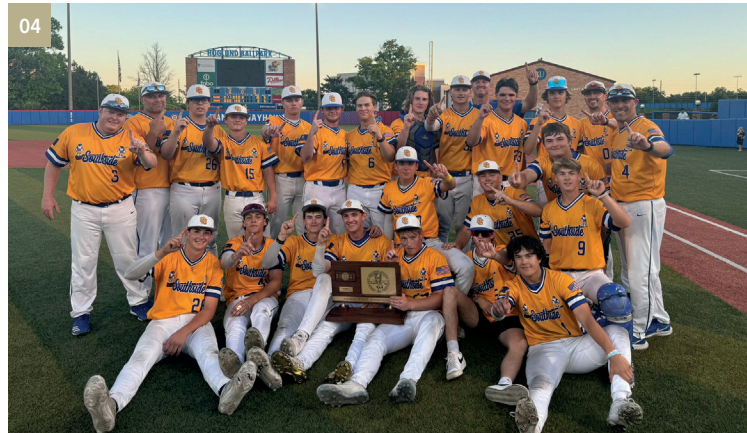
Design
Engineering
Distinguished Scholars

Agriculture

Animal Health
Green Tech
Geoscience

Business

Business Finance
Distinguished Scholars



02 | Olathe Advanced Technical Center

OATC (Olathe Advanced Technical Center) offers eight two-year programs available to juniors and seniors. All programs focus on today's high-demand career fields and help prepare students for the workforce or post-secondary training by combining student interest and learning through hands-on experiences, industry-standard resources and equipment, and real-world partnerships fusing academic and technical skills, knowledge and the training necessary for future careers.

Two-year Programs

- Animal Science & Research
- Automotive Service Technology
- Construction Trades
- Culinary Arts
- Electronics & Avionics
- Emergency Medical Services
- Healthcare Sciences
- Welding Technology

EXTRACURRICULARS

The Olathe Public Schools offers a variety of world-class extracurricular activities that lead to students being well-rounded individuals. Our elementary schools have academic and activity clubs, and our secondary schools provide sports and a long list of activities for students to join. These experiences lead to our students growing academically as well as socially, emotionally and mentally.

03 | Award-Winning Activities

Participating in high school extracurricular activities and clubs is a great way to expand your social circle, explore new interests, and build leadership skills. Secondary students can get involved in activities such as cheer, student council and student journalism or a variety of clubs. From academic organizations like debate and robotics to creative pursuits such as theater, music, and art, these activities help students develop their passions, connect with like-minded peers, and build critical skills like communication, problem-solving, and time management. Beyond the fun, extracurriculars foster responsibility and self-confidence, and often lead to competition at local, regional, state, and national levels, bringing home numerous awards for our schools.

04 | Award-Winning Athletics

Secondary students have the opportunity to participate in team and individual sports, including cross country, football, golf, gymnastics, soccer, tennis, volleyball, basketball, bowling, swimming/diving, wrestling, baseball, soccer, softball, track and field, as well as e-sports. Over the past three school years, we have had an average of 36 state championship titles per year. Participation in sports not only fosters physical fitness but also teaches valuable life skills such as teamwork, discipline, time management, and resilience, helping students build strong character that will lead to success in the future.



NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFICATION

A National Board Certification is often recognized as the most respected professional certification available in education and one of the highest levels of achievement in education. It was designed to develop, retain and recognize accomplished teachers and to generate ongoing improvement in schools nationwide. In Olathe Public Schools, we have a total of 17 National Board Certified Teachers. Our newest recipients are Kayla Rasmussen (Ravenwood Elementary CBR teacher), Meg Shadid (Olathe Northwest Social Studies teacher), and Julia Wenzel-Huguley (Olathe North Language Arts teacher).

AWARD-WINNING STAFF



National Board Certified teachers

Kansas Teachers of the Year



HORIZON AWARD

The Horizon Award is given to 32 outstanding novice teachers across the state who have distinguished themselves through their exceptional performance in their first year of teaching. These educators have demonstrated a passion for student success and a dedication to their classrooms, earning recognition for their commitment to excellence. This year both our elementary and secondary finalists received the award! Before becoming a science teacher at Olathe West High School, Dr. Steven Murray worked in a physics lab. He discovered that he wasn't a physicist but a teacher who was good at physics! He shared, "I feel like I'm able to make a greater impact in the classroom rather than in the lab." Marie Jones, first grade teacher at Scarborough Elementary School, shared that this award goes to her students as much as it goes to her. She said, "anyone can teach a child numbers and letters; it takes a special person to teach a child how to love."



"Anyone can teach a child numbers and letters; it takes a special person to teach a child how to love."

MRS. MARIE JONES
First Grade Teacher
Scarborough Elementary

WELCOME TO OUR CLASSROOM

“Welcome to Our Classroom” is a video series that dives into the vibrant world of education through the eyes of its passionate employees. The series showcases the dedication, creativity, and commitment of teachers and support staff who shape our dynamic learning environments for all students. Each episode highlights the unique teaching philosophies, innovative classroom practices, and deep connections that educators forge with their students.



AVERAGE
OF
14
YEARS

of classroom
experience among
teachers across
the district

85%

of educators hold
a master's degree
or higher

Teachers earned
Presidential Awards
for Excellence in
Math and Science

20

5,000+
STAFF MEMBERS
-serving nearly

30,000
STUDENTS



CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEE EXCELLENCE RECOGNITION AWARDS

Eighteen classified support staff members are awarded the Classified Employee Excellence Recognition Award (CEERA) every year by the Olathe Public Schools Foundation, which rewards outstanding service and excellence. Indian Trail Middle School's administrative secretary Angela March won the most recent CEERA award because she “makes sure students, staff and families feel seen and appreciated every single day.” March is one of nearly 2,000 support staff who go above and beyond every day for our schools.



OUR SCHOOLS GIVE BACK

Our schools are proud to give back to the community that has continually supported and invested in their students, fostering a spirit of gratitude and mutual growth. This commitment to giving back not only strengthens community ties but also teaches our students the value of generosity, service, and the importance of making a positive impact in the world around them. These stories spotlight just a few of our 58 schools' projects that give back directly to their community.

PENNIES FOR SHOES

Pennies for Shoes is a City of Olathe and Olathe Public Schools initiative that helps provide free shoes to children at the start of each school year through the Olathe Mayor's Children's Fund. This year, our schools collected an incredible \$35,310.44 to give back to the students in their schools who are in need of shoes!



PAY IT FORWARD CLUB

Students involved in the Pay it Forward Club at Central Elementary School have a goal to promote kindness and to experience the joy that comes from spreading positivity to others through service projects in their school and in the community.

The Three Wishes project surprised residents at Heritage Avonlea of Olathe by granting their wishes of handmade cards, crafts and art for 38 assisted living residents.

In December, the club led Operation Secret Santa, raising \$5,200 to surprise community members with \$100 bills, spreading holiday cheer to unsuspecting families and local businesses.

"These projects are a wonderful opportunity for students who have received so much support from our community to give back in a positive way," said Principal Brandi Leggett.



GiveAHoot Day

Olathe West High School holds an annual GiveAHoot day, where over 1,500 students chose from 30 service opportunities to give back to the community. With partnerships across local schools, nonprofits, and organizations, students supported various needs while fostering a spirit of connection and service. Principal Jay Novacek shared, “We believe that part of our job at Olathe West is to teach our students to give back and be good members of our community.”



STUDENTS CARE PROJECTS

Throughout the school year middle school students are focused on service.

“We’re committed to teaching students the value of giving back and strengthening our community through compassion and service,” shared Prairie Trail Middle School teacher Tory Macfarlane.

Prairie Trail, along with several other middle schools in Olathe Public Schools, held an All-School Community Service Day, sending students to different locations across the metro area to make a meaningful impact. Olathe Students Care is another initiative focused on giving back. Middle school students from Summit Trail, Indian Trail, Oregon Trail, Pioneer Trail, and Santa Fe Trail middle schools worked in teams sharing their ideas on how to improve their respective communities.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATION



Scan for more information
about Adopt-A-School

COMMUNITY PARTNERS HELP SCHOOLS THRIVE

Our community supports our district every step of the way. Educational partnerships are crucial in bridging the gap between the classroom and the workforce by connecting schools, businesses, industries, and the community to create valuable opportunities for students. These partnerships are mutually beneficial, uniting the public and private sectors to achieve common educational goals. They enable schools to provide high-quality educational experiences while offering businesses a pipeline of well-prepared future employees.

Business and industry partners play a key role in fulfilling the mission of Olathe Public Schools: **“Their Future is Our Future.”** Because 80 percent of graduating students will remain within a 50-mile radius, these partnerships offer businesses a strong return on investment by helping to shape the future workforce and supporting the community’s economic growth.

As a result of these innovative collaborations, both schools and the district are benefiting, with more schools actively seeking partnerships to enrich student learning and strengthen community engagement. Currently, we have 105 Adopt-A-School partners supporting our 58 schools. These partners are business, faith, civic or parent organizations that want to invest their time and resources into a school community. Together, these partnerships are helping to build a stronger, more connected community and prepare students for success beyond graduation.

VOLUNTEERS LEAD TO STUDENT SUCCESS

The Olathe Public Schools volunteer program, Volunteers Serving Schools, offers numerous opportunities for adults who want to make a difference in students' lives. By bringing the community into the classroom, Volunteers Serving Schools strengthens the connection between education and the broader community. Volunteers typically meet with students one-on-one or help in classrooms and schools once a week.

“Volunteers not only help students achieve their academic and personal goals but also provide valuable support to teachers, contributing to a positive and effective learning environment that ultimately makes our community as a whole thrive,” Director of Community Development Heather Schoonover said.

Last school year, volunteers donated a total of 17,828 hours. The volunteer coordinators presented Board of Education members with a check for \$566,930, which is the estimated value of those volunteer hours dedicated to Olathe Public Schools. We are so thankful for our more than 600 volunteers and look forward to adding more throughout the school year.



“Volunteers not only help students achieve their academic and personal goals but also **provide valuable support to teachers...**”

HEATHER SCHOONOVER
Director of Community Development



Scan for more information about volunteering at Olathe Public Schools