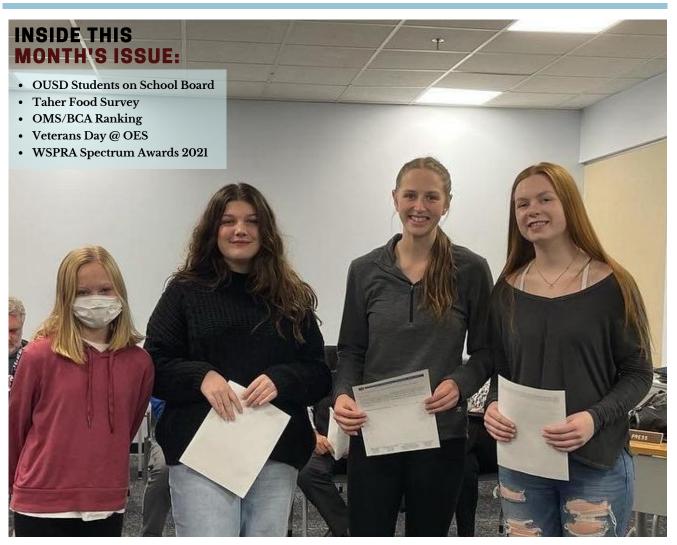


THE BLUE DEVIL BULLETIN



The official newsletter of the Oconto Unified School District





DEDICATED TO EXCELLENCE!

By Superintendent Emily Miller

As the Superintendent, my goal is to provide and maintain our high level of educational programming and excellence and to be fiscally responsible to the taxpayers of this great school district by keeping high academic integrity and spending with the budget in mind. The school board, myself, and the administrative team continually reviews the best options for our school district to succeed in these challenging times in public education.

We will continue to provide the high level of excellence in education in the Oconto Unified School District that we have all come to know and count on. I invite all of you to join me in being an advocate and ambassador for our school district and encourage families you know to visit our school and consider bringing their children here. #ExpectExcellence #GoOconto

OUSD DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION UPDATES



Student Representation to the OUSD Board of Education

By Superintendent Miller

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

 The Oconto Unified Board of Education will include non-voting student representatives who serve in an advisory capacity to represent the interests of students in the Oconto Unified School District. The student advisors represent their peers by communicating student opinions to the Board of Education, and reporting Board deliberations and actions to the student body.

MISSION & PURPOSE

- As Student Advisors on the Board of Education we hope to hear from students about the ways in which we can best serve them, bridge the gap between the Board of Education and students by both advocating for students and communicating Board decisions, and encourage students to be more engaged and have an active role in the school district.
- Students will:
 - Be actively involved in their school community and willing to work to support Oconto Unified schools on behalf of their peers on a regular basis.

Who should apply for the 2022-2023 Student Member of the Oconto Unified Board of Education?

Interested students should be high school and middle school students in good standing and a member of the student council. The students who are appointed to the position by the student council advisor will have the following responsibilities:

- Serve a term from October through May.
- The representatives will attend Oconto Unified Board of Education meetings on the third Monday of the month.
- The time required for the Student Advisor will be 5-7 hours per month. This includes attending monthly Board meetings (2-3 hours) and reviewing materials prior to the meeting each month (approx. 1 hour per month).
- Be willing to represent their peers by communicating student opinions to the Board of Education and reporting Board deliberations and actions to the student body.
- Be available to meet with the Board of Education on a monthly basis, to communicate the concerns of their peers, and make an effort to be at every public Board meeting.

Continued on pg.3

MEET THE STUDENTS SERVING ON THE OUSD SCHOOL BOARD

OMS/BCA

Grace Patenaude: As a proud co-president of the Oconto Middle School Student Council, Grace Patenaude is very excited and optimistic about being a student representative for the school board.

Reese Miller: Reese Miller is a student at the Bayshore Community Academy and a member of the Oconto Middle School Student Council. She expects to have a career that involves finance and public speaking, so she is very grateful to be able to sit on the board and observe people working out financial issues and speaking to the members of our community.



Olivia Brzozowski: She is thankful for the opportunity to be a part of the school board. She is a senior at Oconto High School and is involved in activities including volleyball, basketball, and student council as vice president.

Emberleigh Reed: Emmy is grateful to have the opportunity to represent the student body. Some of the activities and clubs that Emmy is involved in are volleyball, basketball, track, FBLA. She is also the president of the student council, vice president of her class, a member of the National Honor Society, and she volunteers at her church

Click HERE to learn more about them.









WELCOME NEW SCHOOL BOARD REPRESENTATIVES



Olivia Brzozowski
Oconto High School



Student representatives sitting with OUSD Board of Education

2021-2022 OUSD STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES taking Oath of Office

(L to R: Grace Patenaude, Reese Miller, Emmy Reed, and Olivia Brzozowski)







SCHOOL BUDGET AT A GLANCE 2021 - 22



Mrs. Kris Alwin Vice President, OUSD Board of Education



The Oconto Unified School District Board of Education approved the 2021–2022 budget and the mill rate on Monday October 25, 2021. Janean Robenhorst, our school district's accountant, presented the budget report and answered questions at the Budget Hearing prior to the approval.

Here are the highlights from the budget hearing:

- Between full and part time employees OUSD employs an equivalent of 131 full-time employees.
- The student pupil count taken on the third Friday of September, which is reported to the WI Department of Public Education for state aid was 1,043. The number of students who are physically attending OUSD is 954. The difference between these numbers includes factors such as open enrollment.
- Our school district's general fund balance is projected to be at a healthy \$3,188,824.96.
 This is 24% of our expenditures. This range is where the auditors say the district should be at to run fiscally sound.

 The mill rate was approved at \$9.43 which is down from last year's \$9.57. This means that on your property tax bill most people will see a decrease from the school district tax, unless your property was assessed at a higher amount within this year.

The above is all good news for our school district. The budget and the school finances are reviewed monthly by our District Accountant Janean Robenhorst, Superintendent Emily Miller, and the Budget and Finance Committee.

Sincerely, Kris Alwin Vice President of the Board of Education Chairman of Budget and Finance Committee





TAHER FOOD SERVICE SURVEY

Anne Zalubowski
Food Service Director



Since March 2020, the USDA has offered free breakfast and lunch to billions of kids all over the USA. In Oconto alone, we served **over 500,000 meals** to our community. But it is not over, breakfast and lunch is still free until June 30th, 2022. This means any student that goes through the line and takes all the components of a reimbursable meal will receive it for free!





In Oconto alone, we served over 500,000 meals to the community!!

66

What is a reimbursable meal, you might ask? The National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program are regulated by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). USDA came up with guidelines to ensure students get the nutrition needed from school meals. Schools need to follow these guidelines to receive the funds needed to run the school meal program. USDA states that for a student to receive a reimbursable meal they must select 3 out of the 5 components for lunch. This includes fruit, vegetable, grain, milk, or protein.

One of the three components must be a fruit or vegetable. Depending on the school, the student needs to take a half or full cup to count. A complete meal, meeting nutrition standards and portion size requirements, allows Oconto School District to receive benefits (money and USDA foods) to help fund the program. If a student refuses to get a fruit or vegetable or doesn't take 3 components we will have to charge their account for an entree or face getting funds pulled. This is also the same for anyone wanting to take milk. If they do not take fruit and one other item, we will have to charge the student \$0.40. On the flip side, if a student brings a meal from home and only wants a portion of fruit, vegetable, and milk to go along with their meal, that can count! Don't worry, we do try to help each student through the line to ensure they have everything they need on their tray.

Continued on pg. 7





WE do try to help each student through the line to ensure they have everything they need on their tray.



Over the past few years we have been put to the test. From serving lunch in school to school closing and bagging meals. Breakfast has been served in the classroom, on the go, between classes, and before school. We have done March Madness, Menu Throwdown at the middle school and we are starting it at the high school. We have done Pizza parties in the classroom for the Elementary. We try hard to make meals fun while staying within the guidelines of the USDA.

While staying between the guidelines and ensuring every student had a well balanced meal, we understand that we may not be meeting our goals for every student in the district and we want to do better. Please take some time to fill out this survey before November 19th. By doing this you will help understand what we have been doing right and what we can work on. I strongly believe that we can't fix what we don't know. We encourage students, staff and parents to participate in this survey.



OUSD EARNS 3 SPECTRUM AWARDS IN SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS AT WSPRA 2021



By Anindita Neogy Anaam

Communications Specialist



Communications Specialist for OUSD, Andy Anaam, accepting three SPECTRUM AWARDS (WSPRA) for School PR and strategic communications for the school year 2020-2021.

The Oconto Unified School District was recently honored by the Wisconsin School Public Relations Association (WSPRA) with THREE Spectrum Awards of Merit for its work in school communications.

WSPRA presented the Spectrum Awards at its annual conference held November 3–5. The Oconto Unified School District earned Awards of Merit for its 2021 Referendum Campaign, OUSD Website Design Makeover, and Community Newsletter – The Blue Devils Bulletin.

Spectrum Awards recognize high-quality public relations efforts produced by or on behalf of Wisconsin school districts. This year, this statewide competition honored over 40 school districts with awards.

"The work submitted by the Spectrum Award winners is a testament to the importance of school communications and community engagement," said WSPRA President Tracy Habisch-Ahlin. "Projects submitted were a result of work completed during the 2020-21 school year, which was challenging due to COVID. The award winners demonstrated the critical role communication professionals play in education."

""We are thankful to WSPRA for recognizing the work that we put into our communications this past school year. Being acknowledged in three areas gives us great pride. We at OUSD are committed to excellence in all that we do. Communication is a strong portion of that. It is through the work of our communications that we are able to showcase all that we have to offer. Telling our story and celebrating who we are takes time and commitment. We have wonderful people to work with, our students and staff do amazing things every day and we are grateful that we are able to share that with our community." says OUSD Superintendent, Emily Miller.

"It is a great honor to receive recognition for our communications efforts at such a prestigious platform." said OUSD Communications Specialist Andy Anaam who represented and accepted the awards on behalf of the school district.

The Wisconsin School Public Relations Association (WSPRA) is a professional association representing schools, school districts, educational associations, consulting agencies and organizations.

WSPRA is a state affiliate of the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA). The mission of WSPRA is to expand the capacity of its members to provide effective communication management for the purpose of strengthening educational opportunities for all students.

How were the awards 'evaluated'?

WSPRA's Spectrum Awards were judged by members of other school public relations associations in 15 different states, from New York to California. All entries were judged on a 30-point scale in six areas: goals and objectives, research and planning, execution and evaluation, results, language, and design.

Guest Column



SUMMER SCHOOL AT THE LIBRARY





By Amanda Derocha Children's Librarian, Farnsworth Public Library

For over a year, I had been hosting Friday Morning Story Time from my kitchen through Facebook Live. That was fun for a while, but I quickly began to miss the kids and the interactions I had with them during our time together every Friday. So when I was asked if I wanted to have summer school classes at the Library, I was super excited.

I sat down and thought about all the programs that the Library has to offer children; I myself was unaware of all the incredible programs the Library had before I became the Children's Librarian. That's when I began planning; I would put together 2 weeks' worth of activities showcasing the programs we had been unable to do for over a year.

Mondays would be LEGO day, the kids were given a challenge, and the first would be to build a bridge out of LEGOs that could hold books, one bridge held over 30! Tuesdays we would sit down for the Tuesday Tales, reading some stories and making some crafts after. Wednesdays the kids would get to do some STEM experiments, including exploding lunch bags and chicken sounds from a cup.

On the first Thursday, we made Cookie Dough dip, no one left hungry including the volunteers and aides that were helping! The second Thursday, we made postcards to send to residents at the local assisted living homes here in Oconto. On Friday, one group was my studio audience for Facebook Live Story Time and the other group went on a bug hunt through the entire Library, which they were very excited about since they had the Library all to themselves.

I won't lie, I was nervous, but once the kids made their way into the Children's Library and I saw their smiling faces, all the nerves went away. Summer school was a great way to dive back into doing in person programming. I certainly hope the kids enjoyed their time at the Library and I hope to see them all soon!



OCONTO ELEMENTARY

5K









Kindergarten students are mixing primary and secondary colors to make their very own orange hues, which will be used in our jack-o-lantern facial expressions project.









1ST





First graders blended oil pastels to color their iris, and were shocked to learn they'd be painting with chopsticks to create veins on their spooky eyeballs! We compared how similar veins and branches of a tree look.

2ND











Second grade students listened to a story about a Japanese artist named Yayoi Kusama. Yayoi is famous for her dot paintings and for creating art outside of the traditional Japanese style.

ART CLASS

3RD



Students in third grade are learning about the Mexican holiday "Dia de los Muertos" or "Day of the Dead." Celebrated on November 1st and 2nd, this holiday is a celebration of joy and remembrance for the living to pay their respects to those who have passed.



Fourth grade students practiced 5 levels of shading on a graphite drawing before switching over to acrylic paint. They mixed their own tints and shades to create a background of water before adding shark silhouettes. Awesome!

Guest Column



VETERANS DAY AT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



By Mr. Ben Bourassa Principal, OES

On Thursday, November 11, OES welcomed our local veterans to join us for breakfast. This was our third annual Breakfast with the Vets, an event where our 4th Grade class gave musical performances for the vets, and then joined them for breakfast. This has grown to be a very popular event for both our veterans and students alike!









EXTRA-CURRICULAR PAPERWORK IS ONLINE



Bv Mr. Adam Timm. Athletic Director

In an effort to make the athletic registration process easier, all paperwork is now on-line for studentathletes. Go to the district website, click on the Athletics page and go to Registration.

You will find the following documents:



Permission to Treat- This paperwork allows coaches to seek medical assistance for your son or daughter in case of an injury. There is also an agreement that says you have read and understand other rules and obligations for student athletes.



Physical Forms- Athletes need a physical every two years. An alternate year form carries eligibility over from year one to year two. An attached link brings you to both forms on the WIAA website.



Handbooks- OMS and OHS have different eligibility requirements. The handbooks describe and discuss school rules and requirements that Blue Devil student athletes follow.



Concussion Protocols- Brain injuries need to be taken seriously. The concussion protocol discusses warning signs and proper steps to take if an athlete has been concussed.

WIAA Eligibility- There are criteria required by the WIAA that high school athletes must follow in order to be eligible.

We are hoping that on-line paperwork makes the registration process easier for parents, athletes and coaches!



Check the district website to get the latest documents. #GoOconto





OMS/BCA Report

By Mr. Matt Hartin Principal, OMS





🦄 STEAM Update

Students in OMS's STEAM classes have been learning about aerodynamics, flight, and speed. Ms. Anderson has challenged the students to make a paper airplane that will fly far in a short period of time, thus having an incredible rate of speed. Students were able to research paper airplanes.

They found many different styles of planes that had the potential to fly far, quickly. After crafting a plane, the students took to the hallways to test their designs and make any changes to the aircraft that they felt would improve its performance. After improvements were made, the students started collecting data on their planes: distance flew and flight time. This data allowed the students to find how fast their aircraft traveled down the hallway in feet/second. Many students were curious how this speed compared to MPH. Ms. Anderson used this curiosity to extend the students' learning in math by introducing her students to Dimensional Analysis to convert feet per second to miles per hour. Excellent job to everyone involved!



Best Middle School Rankings

OMS and BCA have a reputation for providing a highquality education for our students. Both have been recognized recently by U.S. News & World Report as some of the **best middle schools** compared to 562 schools ranked in Wisconsin.



USNews Best Schools

Bayshore Community Academy 2021 Rankings

Bayshore Community Academy is ranked #31 in Wisconsin Middle Schools. Schools are ranked on their performance on state-required tests, graduation, and how well they prepare their students for high school. Read more about how we rank the Best Middle Schools.

All Rankings

#31 in Wisconsin Middle Schools

#4 in Wisconsin Charter Middle Schools

Oconto Middle 2021 Rankings

Oconto Middle is ranked #157 in Wisconsin Middle Schools. Schools are ranked on their performance on state-required tests, graduation, and how well they prepare their students for high school. Read more about how we rank the Best Middle Schools

All Rankings

#157 in Wisconsin Middle Schools



How U.S. News Calculated the K-8 Rankings?

U.S. News analyzed 102,610 pre-K, elementary and middle schools. Each state gives standardized tests measuring student proficiency in subjects related to mathematics and reading/language arts.

The states and localities look closely at student performance on these tests - most often while also accounting for student backgrounds - to determine whether learning in core subjects is achieved and to review how well schools are educating their students. In total, 47,325 elementary schools were ranked and 23,255 middle schools were ranked.

The elementary and middle school rankings are based almost exclusively on state assessments, with student-teacher ratios applied to break ties in the overall score.

Like the school district rankings, schools' rank order within each state's charter school rankings for elementary schools and middle schools equals their order in the overall state ranking. To know more, click HERE.

OMS/BCA NEWS





VOLLEYBALL - Summary provided by Coach Bucheger

This group of twenty-three 8th grade volleyball players was unbelievable. They soaked in volleyball verbiage and put it into action. This team of young ladies demonstrated leadership, discipline, teamwork, and perseverance throughout the season. I was impressed with their skill development and poise. Besides the fact that they are strong athletes, I appreciated how th<mark>ey genuinely care for</mark> each other. Kindness is a behavior that is needed more than ever in this world. This thread of 8th graders from our community are exemplary models of this, and I am proud to have been able to experience this with them. A special thank you to the parents for providing a wonderful foundation for these ladies. Congratulations to an undefeated season, 13-0!!!!



Summary provided by Coach Walk<mark>owiak</mark>

The fall season of 7th grade volleyball included 17 incredible ladies who are all very talented. These girls portrayed a lot of determination along with exemplary teamwork skills. Beginning with little to no knowledge of skills, they worked their way to becoming great players and will continue their journey to excel in these skills. Individually, they all have their own great assets that, when put together, create an amazing team.

Many of them are also involved in other sports and are excellent athletes. Although missing a few games, they won 6 out of the 9 games they played in, and overall learned a great amount of skills from them. These ladies impressed me and I'm so happy to have been able to coach them and work with them.

Let's go, Blue Devils!



OMS/BCA NEWS



CROSS COUNTRY - Summary provided by Mr. Dennis Miller

The Oconto Middle School cross country team competed in 5 events that included the Oconto Invite, Bonduel, Kewaunee, Menominee Indian, Mishicot and Oconto Falls invite. The Blue Devils worked well together and pushed each other to improve their individual run times throughout the season.

The athletes who participated this year were 8th graders; (Harper Burke and Emily Aerts); 7th Graders (Willa Decker and Ashlyn LeTourneau); 6th Graders (Jaxson Trepanier, Adelyn Martin, Romy Hyland, Emma Malczewski, Alaina Hermes, Isaac Rose, Brynlee Place, Hannah DeHut, Sophie Trepanier, Autumn Longoria, Sophie Nelson, Christopher Ensing, Stella Brzozowski, Maddie Vieau, Kiera Walker); 5th Graders (Payton LeTourneau, Cole Last, Ella Thomson, Charlize Mossakowski, Sophia Farrar, KyLee Schultz, Landyn Cruz, Daniel Porath, Jackson Westphal, Austin Dunks, Bellah Kriescher, Weston Hebert).

Cross country was coached by Jessica Ensing and Dennis Miller.









OMS/BCA ART NEWS

By Ms. Nicole Anderson
OMS/BCA Art Teacher

The middle school students started off the school year creating letter animals using their initials. The students were asked to create two animals that displayed either their first initial or their last initial within the animal of their choice.

Furthermore, they were to create a realistic scene that their animals would live in. Pictured is **Nolan Orlikowski** and his finished piece along with a picture of **Mr. Nelson**.



JOIN OUR OUSD FAMILY

as a Substitute Paraprofessional.



The District has recently increased the Substitute Teacher and Substitute Paraprofessional pay rate!

Substitute Teachers will now receive \$110 per day, PLUS once the substitute has worked ten full days in the District, they will receive a one-time \$250 BONUS. Substitute Paraprofessionals will now receive \$12 per hour.

APPLY TODAY!

If you would like more information, please contact Brenda Walkowiak at (920) 834–7814 ext. 4103 or brenda.walkowiak@oconto.k12.wi.us.

Are you looking for a way to make some extra money? Do you want to pick which days you want to work? Being a Substitute Teacher or Substitute Paraprofessional for OUSD may be the perfect fit for you.

To become a Substitute Teacher:

1. You must have either a Teaching License OR a Bachelor's or Associate's Degree and a Short-term Substitute Teacher License issued through the WI Department of Public Instruction.

 To become a **Substitute Paraprofessional**, you must have a High School Diploma or GED.





OVERCOMING MENTAL HEALTH STIGMA



By Mr. Adam DeWitt Principal, OHS

Today's students are facing challenges that recent generations have never had to face. New challenges often create new emotions when students are confronted with the unknown. Our school is committed to providing a transparent curriculum and support as students experience some of the feelings that they have not experienced.

Supporting students can come in many forms, and we will have two different training sessions beginning in November. **OHS is hosting a keynote speaker, Cory Greenwood.** Cory will talk about the importance of positive conversations on mental health stigmas and suicide prevention. However, one keynote speaker will not be sufficient long term, leading to our next training session.



New challenges often create new emotions when students are confronted with the unknown. The **Hope Squad** is going to be assisting us over the next four years. This longitudinal approach is intended to become a system of support that will be embedded within our school community for years to come. Here is an excerpt from the Hope Squad's website:

"Hope Squad is a peer-to-peer suicide prevention program. Hope Squad members are nominated by their classmates as trustworthy peers and trained by advisors. The program reduces youth suicide through education, training, and peer intervention."

Our students and staff will be trained to provide support as we work to meet six different goals.

- Create a safe school environment
- Promote connectedness
- Support anti-bullying
- Encourage mental wellness
- Reduce mental health stigma
- Prevent substance misuse

I once was told that the smartest person in the group is the group. Together we will become better...as **THE GROUP.**

Oconto High School Art

Education outside of the classroom

The Beyond Van Gogh Immersive Experience is absolutely incredible! The perfect mix of traditional art, augmented by technology. The paintings come to life in an unimaginable way, leaving one in

awe and wonder.









Milwaukee





Field Trip

Michell Park Horticultural Conservatory have thousands of wild and wonderful plants growing and blooming inside our tropical, desert and floral domes, it's no surprise that our living museum is one of Milwaukee's most loved destinations.







Photography Field Trip

Photography students traveled to NWTC to use the studio lighting equipment and props. The lessons included using several different diffusers, continuous lights, strobe lighting, Low-key photoshoot and setting up still life in proper lighting. In the afternoon the students went to the NEW Zoo area to complete a nature walk.lesson. Students could walk around the trails, ponds, and zoo experimenting with their cameras.













Racine Danish Kringles Sales



Thank you for purchasing Racine Danish Kringles. Your support is much appreciated! All the proceeds will be used for art pins, graduation cords,

tassels, awards, plaques, field trips, and other art activities.



SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES



By Dennis Miller
OMS/BCA Counselor

The Oconto Unified School District has partnered with Welk and Associates Family Therapy Center to provide School-Based Mental Health Services to elementary, middle, and high school students and their families. SBMH therapy is separate from our school counseling services but aligns with our goals of providing social-emotional, behavioral, and mental health support to achieve success academically. SBMH therapy sessions will be individualized for each student to address mental health concerns, increase engagement in learning, minimize classroom behavior issues and help improve the overall well-being of each student.

Why provide school-based mental health services?

- Remove barriers for students to access needed mental health services
- Provide services to students in a familiar and comfortable setting
- Reduce out of school time related to travel to therapy appointments
- Increase opportunities to coordinate services with school, staff, and family
- Creates a connected network of caring adults to support the ongoing mental health of students

Who is the mental health provider that will be working with my child?

Amanda Swisher from Welk and Associates in Green Bay will be working with our students to provide counseling services. Amanda is dedicated to helping our students on their journey of healing through building resilience and helping them grow while developing a safe space and fostering a strong therapeutic alliance.

The first appointment with Amanda will be 60 minutes (in person or online) and then follow-up online/Zoom sessions will be 45 minutes.

How do I arrange for school-based mental health services for my child?

Parents and guardians may request SBMH services for their child through completing the School-Based Mental Health Referral Form by clicking the link below or they may contact one of the following school counselors directly.

Is there a cost for this service?

Yes. Therapy sessions are fee-based but may be covered in full or in part through your health insurance plan including BadgerCare. Private pay and reduced fee services are also available.

What's the difference between a school counselor and a family counselor/therapist?

School counselors provide Solution-Focused Brief Counseling intended to help students identify strategies and solutions they can use immediately to manage symptoms and overcome challenges. The SBMH therapists will have more time to spend with individual students and provide more in-depth counseling services over a longer period of time.

Click on the counselor's name for EMAIL or CLICK the Referral form link below:



Mrs. Pebbles Peterson, OES Counselor, (920) 834-7808 x3117



Mr. Dennis Miller -OMS/BCA Counselor, SBMH Coordinator, (920) 834-7806 x2112



Mrs. Sarah Learst
OHS Counselor,
(920)834-7812 x1151

School-Based Mental Health Referral Form



or SCAN the QR Code



Visit the Website



KALEIDOSCOPE













KALEIDOSCOPE















Photos provided by District Photographer -Caroline Laurin Young(LY Photography LLC), Dennis Miller & Andy Anaam **Design by:** Andy Anaam (OUSD Office of

Communications)



<u>@ousd_schools</u>



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