



OEF News

Spring 2014

A publication of the Okemos Education Foundation www.oefsite.org

Introducing the OEF APPLE Awards Thank Okemos Staff, Support Okemos Students

A new way to thank teachers and staff...the APPLE award!

The Okemos Education Foundation (OEF) is giving families and community members a new way to honor and say "thank you" to teachers and staff, while also supporting our district through the OEF's general fund.

An APPLE award recognizes an Amazing Performance in Promoting Learning and Education. It is a nice way to honor teachers, paraprofessionals, administrators, office staff, food service workers, custodial staff, bus drivers...any of the many amazing people in Okemos Public Schools who make a difference in a student's education.

Each APPLE Award costs \$20, which is a tax-deductible donation to the Okemos Education Foundation. The OEF provides funding to support excellence and innovation in our school district through classroom grants and extra-curricular clubs and student organizations. Donations to the OEF support the entire school district.

When you purchase an APPLE



Each APPLE Award recipient will receive a color 5x7 certificate. If preferred, the certificate's reason for recognition can be personalized. APPLE Awards can also be given on an anonymous basis.

award, your honored teacher or staff member will receive a personalized, color 5x7 certificate to remember your appreciation, and the OEF will receive \$20 to use toward its support of Okemos schools. In addition, your gift will be recognized in the OEF newsletter and on our website.

APPLE Awards can be purchased at any time of the year...anytime you want to say "Thank You!" for a job

well done. These awards are a great way to publicly honor our fabulous Okemos Public School teachers and staff, while also helping the OEF give financial support to all seven of our schools.

Thank you for your support and for taking the time to recognize excellence in Okemos Public Schools.

***Who has made a difference in your student's life?
To order an APPLE Award visit www.oefsite.org***

Okemos Education Foundation

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Message from the OEF Chair

From that heart-aching morning in September when they first cross the threshold of their kindergarten classroom to the pride-filled chest-bursting afternoon in June when they cross the stage to receive their high school diploma, we send our children off to school 2,340 times.



Dean Bolton - OEF Chair

And on every one of those mornings, along with their backpacks crammed with textbooks, homework assignments and permission slips, they carry with them our hopes as parents that each day they will become a little more excited about the world they are discovering, a little more confident of their special talents and a little more prepared for the challenges we know they will face throughout their lives.

Fortunately, Okemos teachers and staff are just as deeply committed to making our hopes come true.

Every teacher I know is constantly searching for ways to make their subjects come alive for our children, for ways to help them grasp new ideas faster and retain them longer, for ways to challenge their brightest students and for ways to help other students catch up.

As important as core academics are, important and memorable learning also takes place outside the classroom and after the school day is over. Many of our teachers spend extra hours leading extracurricular clubs and other student activities that provide students with additional opportunities to pursue their interests, to strengthen their talents, and to acquire important personal and interpersonal skills.

Often these innovative approaches cost money, and it is worth it. And often there

“Can we count on YOU to help to make the hopes we have for our children a reality?”

are not available funds in the district’s budget, and that is when the OEF and its donors step in.

Since 1984, thanks to the tax-deductible donations by people who care, the OEF has helped close funding gaps that would otherwise deny our children valuable learning opportunities. We help teachers provide exceptional learning experiences inside and outside the classroom.

The grants we make are small – often less than a thousand dollars – but they make a big difference in the educational experiences of our children. As you will see on page 6 and 7 of this newsletter, we have been able to give \$101,881 of support to our children’s education this year.

The OEF hopes to continue this level of support next school year and beyond, ***but we need your help.***

Can we count on you to help to make those hopes we have for our children a reality?

You can make a tax-deductible donation using the form on page 11 or you can visit our website www.oefsite.org to make a secure donation or set up a recurring donation.

But hurry. They will be crossing that stage with their diploma before we know it. **OEF**

OEF Donations

A gift to the Okemos Education Foundation helps fund excellence in educational programs and services for Okemos students now and in the future. The OEF is a 501(c)(3) organization and donations are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law. For your convenience, we accept online credit card donations at www.oefsite.org, or you may use the form included with this newsletter.

OEF Partners in Education are donors who contribute \$50 or more annually with recognition and benefits at various levels of giving. More information about OEF Partners in Education recognition can be found at www.oefsite.org.

Now more than ever before, it’s up to all of us to maintain the quality of education for Okemos students. Thank you for considering a gift to the OEF!

Message from Our Superintendent

Our Continued Journey to "Success for All"

In the fall OEF newsletter article "Our Journey to Success for All", I acknowledged that the concept of "promoting the success of every child" is multifaceted. I highlighted four initiatives or areas of focus to positively impact the educational experience for all of our students:



*Dr. Catherine J. Ash,
Superintendent of
Schools*

- Creating a culturally responsive environment;
- Enhancing our technology, security and bus fleet;
- Addressing substance abuse and our youth; and
- Promoting the academic achievement and growth of all of our students.

In this article, I want to reflect on the impact and outcomes of these initiatives during 2013-14, offering evidence of how we continued our focus and commitment to "Success for All".

Culturally competent and responsive school environment (Strategic Goal: Diversity and Curriculum and Instruction) - Okemos Public Schools is a diversity enhanced district. It goes far beyond acknowledging and accepting our diverse population, but actually recognizing and appreciating that diversity adds great value to our school environment and community. Our diversity includes, but is not limited to: gender, race, ethnicity, socio-economic, sexual orientation, religion, limited English proficient learners, and special needs learners (including special education and gifted and talented). Together, we are committed to promoting the academic, social, emotional and behavioral success of every child. We are committed to creating a culturally competent and responsive school environment where students, staff and community recognize, embrace, celebrate, appreciate and value the diverse attributes and identities of each other. The 2013-14 school year involved foundational work to continue to create a safe environment

to reflect and engage in open and honest conversations regarding this topic.

Throughout the year, we continued to examine and reflect on our relationships, the environment or culture within our schools and community, curriculum, pedagogy, policies and practices. As part of this continued focus and to inform our thinking and action, I established a "Cultural Diversity Advisory Committee". It is comprised of parents, community members, faculty and students who are truly reflective of our broad range of diversity. They will advise me, through their diverse perspectives and experiences. Ultimately, the committee will serve to enhance our understanding and to promote our intended outcome, the success of every child!

I would like to highlight one other important and impactful initiative at Okemos High School. This year, we had a group of diverse student leaders commit to enhancing the culture in their school by "Uniting in Social Progress". The desired outcome for their work is to continue to increase awareness about the differences and commonalities within the OHS family in order to support a culture within the high school that is open to and thrives on social diversity. They recognize the importance of creating a safe environment in which students can explore and address issues that create social tension within their school. These amazing student leaders planned meaningful all-school events, designed "public service announcements," and identified "opportunities" to promote such an environment that respects and values a diverse student population. In 2014-15, they will continue their work, making a genuine difference in the lives of their peers by influencing the thinking and behaviors of others . . . including the adults!

It is through our conscious and deliberate focus on promoting a culturally responsive environment this year and beyond that we can continue our commitment to promoting the success of all of our students.

Substance Abuse and Our Youth (Strategic Goal: Social Issues) - Our commitment to addressing the issue of substance abuse and our youth remains strong. The Okemos

Substance Abuse Prevention Committee continued to develop and initiate strategies to promote awareness and to engage our school community in efforts to "establish a culture that promotes healthy and informed choices". Most recently, an email was sent to the parents/guardians of juniors and seniors reminding them, "It's a fact, your sons and daughters listen to you! What messages about alcohol and drug use do you want them to hear?" The impetus for this communication was the time of year. In May and June, our students are engaged in significant social events (prom) and celebrations of great accomplishments (graduation). While it is an exciting time for our juniors and seniors, their families and our school community, it is also a time when young people can be at great risk associated with their choices, potentially resulting in significant and unwanted consequences. Parents/guardians are the most influential adults in their sons/daughters lives. It is essential that there is a strong partnership in our efforts to keep our students safe and informed on this topic.

The conversations will continue, additional strategies will be implemented, and our efforts will be sustained with the goal of positively impacting lives!

Technology/Security/Transportation Bond (Strategic Goals: Technology and Finance) - Recognizing that we must prepare our students for the 21st century, the district engaged in an in-depth analysis to identify our current and future technological needs. We also identified gaps in our existing security processes and procedures, and considered our aging bus fleet. The Board decided to seek approval from our community for a \$7.5 million bond to address all of these needs. On November 5, 2013, Okemos voters overwhelmingly supported the \$7.5 million bond proposal for the purpose of purchasing technology and school busses, as well as enhancing our security.

With this technology, we will be better able to deliver relevant and meaningful educational programming and efficient practices and services. Additionally, we will be able to enhance our existing security processes and procedures, promoting the continued safety

See Supt., page 4

(Supt.- Continued from page 3)

of our students and staff. Finally, we will be able to maintain a safe and efficient bus fleet, while being fiscally responsible. This source of funding alleviates the need to utilize our general fund for these expenditures, maintaining these funds for our existing programs and services.

The passage of this bond proposal is having a positive and profound impact on the educational experience of all of our students. The magnitude of the “yes” vote is certainly a reflection of the continued support Okemos Public Schools receives throughout the community, as well as the value our community places on a quality education. Thank you to the Okemos Public Schools’ community! Your continued support and commitment to educating our students has not gone unnoticed and it is greatly appreciated!

Note: Additional information regarding bond purchases and the positive and

impactful implications for our students can be found on page 5 of this newsletter.

Academic growth and performance (Strategic Goal: Curriculum and Instruction and Technology) – We have continued to promote academic proficiency for all of our students, supporting the low performers and challenging the highest performers. We consistently and conscientiously use data to inform our instruction. Professional learning communities offer a structure for our staff to collaborate and engage in relevant conversations, critical problem solving and meaningful professional development, all with the intention of positively impacting student performance (academically and behaviorally). Teachers engaged in “data days”, promoting a deeper dive into the data to identify the individual needs of students and/or gaps in curriculum and instruction. We reviewed and analyzed the data from a variety of performance measures, then

planned and implemented focused strategies to help each child reach his/her potential, including our most at-risk learners in identified subgroups. We also continued to focus our efforts on decreasing the gap between our lowest performing students and our highest performing students.

As I stated previously, I truly believe that we all have good intentions to bring about the changes needed in an educational environment that desires to promote the success of all students. Good intentions and awareness are wonderful qualities. However, this “good will” is also accompanied by our enhanced understanding of cultural impacts, a broadened instructional knowledge, as well as the courage to embrace and commit to the belief that “we can do better!” We remain as one of the top performing districts in the State of Michigan because of our commitment to this very concept, “we can do better”, as we consistently strive for excellence! **OEF**

Okemos School Board Candidates Needed!

Three seats on the Okemos School Board of Education will be on the ballot for the November election with the following terms of office:

- • *Three four-year terms expiring December 31, 2018 based on current board policy.*

Terms of office on the Okemos School Board of Education begin January 1 and end December 31. Interested citizens must file an Affidavit of Identity and a nominating petition (minimum 40 signatures) at the Meridian Township Clerk’s Office (Central Park Drive/Marsh Road) **by 4:00 p.m. July 22, 2014** to be placed on the November 4, 2014 school election ballot. A \$100 nonrefundable fee may be filed in lieu of a petition.

Nominating petition forms may be obtained from the school board office (Okemos Road at Mt. Hope) or from the township clerk’s office. You may also obtain a copy of the Affidavit of Identity from the Secretary of State’s website at www.mich.gov/sos. Meridian Township Deputy Clerk Joan Horvath is the Election Coordinator for Okemos Public Schools. Citizens may call 853-4300 with questions concerning the election process.



The Advanced Placement Art Class at Okemos High School received an OEF Micro-Grant this year to purchase 25 frames that will be used to display student’s artwork year after year at local art exhibits and competitions. These grants of no more than \$250 are available for smaller projects or needs in classrooms or for extracurricular clubs or activities.

Okemos Public Schools Technology Update

Personal Learning Devices and Building Security

On November 5, 2013 Okemos voters approved a bond for technology, security, and transportation improvements for Okemos Public Schools. Deputy Superintendent Patricia Trelstad has provided the following update in order to keep the community informed about the use of bond funds.

Personal Learning Devices

During the 2013-14 school year, a representative committee from Okemos High School and Chippewa Middle School have been engaged in planning for the implementation of the "Personal Learning Devices" (PLD) beginning in the fall of 2014. Teachers were selected from the four core academic areas (English, Math, Science and Social Studies), World Language, and Special Education to participate on the Technology Steering Committee.

The Technology Steering Committee met from January through May to complete the following tasks:

- Discussed opportunities and challenges for both teachers and students and methods to address each
- Shared information with and sought feedback from each department at CMS and OHS
- Explored technology-enhanced student experiences in each academic subject area
- Increased knowledge regarding examples of low, medium, and high level technology integration activities
- Previewed and tested hardware for both teacher and student devices. The preferred features for each device includes: touch screen, keyboard (grades 2-12), long battery life, adequate speed/memory/storage, quality screen (minimum 9.5 inches wide), photo/video capabilities, wireless networking, and Bluetooth capability.
- Recommended changes of district policies and procedures for managing personal learning devices to be included in student handbooks
- Identified technology tools to be used for management and productivity
- Established timelines and procedures for distributing the devices to teachers and students
- Created a plan for professional development utilizing an "instruction technology coaching" model whereby teachers will receive a personalized learning approach that focuses on effective integration of technology for modern learning

Thanks to the supporters of the Technology/Transportation/Security bond, we will be able to accomplish our goals of developing students as

modern, 21st century learners. This technology initiative allows us to provide opportunities for the following:

- Equal access to all students
- Personalization of learning and teaching
- Increased student engagement and achievement
- Development of "universal" skills and competencies for the global workplace
- Just-in-time student assessment, data gathering, feedback, and adjustments
- Communication between home and school

The district is planning to distribute the teacher devices throughout the month of August so that professional development can be provided to prepare teachers for the potential changes to teaching and learning resulting from this initiative. We anticipate distributing devices to students in grades 7-12 beginning in late October or early November. We will hold parent orientation sessions ahead of the distribution to students to familiarize parents with the actual device, student responsibilities, and potential liabilities for damage or misuse. When the actual details of device distribution are known, the information will be shared through multiple formats to keep students and parents up-to-date. As a reminder, the students in grades K-6 will receive personal learning devices during the 2015-16 school year, utilizing a similar planning process.

As we continue to invest the time and hard work for implementing the personalized learning devices, we understand that technology can profoundly affect the way our students and teachers work, collaborate, communicate and succeed. Through this technology initiative we believe our educational community will be strengthened in both teaching and learning and remain focused on the mission of our district: Together...educating with excellence, inspiring learners for life!

Technology – Security

Security Cameras-

The Technology and Operations Departments will be installing an additional one hundred and fifty (150) high resolution security cameras throughout the district. These cameras will provide surveillance of school entries, as well as hallways, cafeterias, parking lots and playgrounds. We will have the ability to access the cameras through our network, utilizing computers and "smart" devices. Video images will be stored for a minimum of two weeks. While the district will not have an individual monitoring the cameras at all times, they will certainly provide us the ability to monitor specific situations should they arise, or review isolated incidents to gain information and inform action.

Electronic Locks –

The exterior electronic lock system will be expanded to include more building entry doors throughout our district. Further, the system will be connected to our network, allowing for immediate lockdown of all exterior doors from one location. These locks can be accessed by a card, a key fob, a code or any combination of these options.

Based on our research and analysis, the district has made the determination to purchase a wireless internal lockdown system for all classroom and office doors. The electronic locking system will provide a more efficient way of locking down entire buildings in the case of an emergency, enhancing our security for students and staff. We will have the ability to lock internal doors from a central location, or at each specific classroom. Further, with computer access, administration or law enforcement can monitor whether or not doors are in a locked state. Should there be a loss of electrical power, each individual door has a battery backup system. Finally, this system will offer the district a wide range of implementation options and increased versatility for security and monitoring, beyond the threat of an intruder.

The expanded security system with electronic locks and security cameras will provide Okemos Public Schools with a more secure environment. In emergencies, it can help outside agencies manage the situation. The district will have the ability to utilize "real time" monitoring of our buildings and grounds, as well as a "historical perspective" to review isolated events.

Technology – Scoreboards

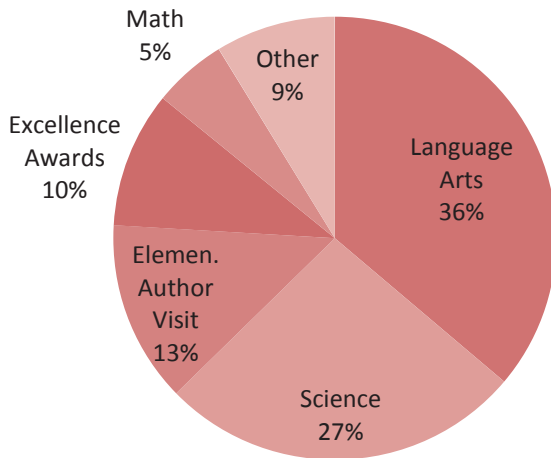
The new scoreboards for the baseball, softball, football and soccer fields are in the process of being identified through a bidding process. We expect to begin the installation process during the summer months so they are ready for fall sports. Our initial timeline was to have them installed for spring sports, but were unable to do so with the length and harshness of our winter.

Transportation

The district was able to purchase three new buses during the 2013-14 school year, enabling us to remove from service three buses that were over 11 years old. We anticipate adding two new buses to the district's fleet in each of the subsequent years (2014-15 and 2015-16) for a total of seven school buses purchased with the bond funds. With the purchase of these buses, the district is able to operate its fleet with optimum efficiency in fuel consumption, experience fewer mechanical break downs, and be more environmentally friendly as the new buses are equipped with the most up to date emission controlled engines.

The OEF gave \$101,881 to Okemos Schools in 2013-2014

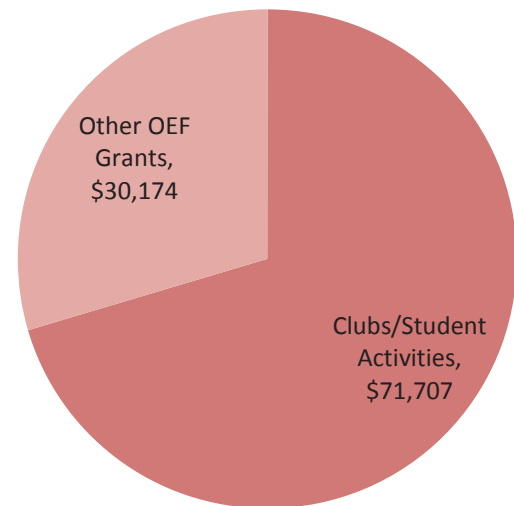
So far this school year the OEF has provided \$101,881 to support academic and extra-curricular programs district-wide, helping Okemos Public Schools achieve its mission of "Together...educating with excellence, inspiring learners for life."



2013-2014 OEF Grants

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| Clubs and Student Activities | \$ 71,707 |
| Other OEF Grants: | |
| Language Arts | 10,916 |
| Science | 7,995 |
| Elementary Author Visit | 4,000 |
| Excellence Awards | 3,000 |
| Math | 1,618 |
| Other | 2,645 |
| Other OEF grants, total: | \$ 30,174 |
| Total 2013-14 OEF grants | \$ 101,881 |

Each of our 7 schools benefited from this financial support.



Any Okemos Public School teacher or administrator may apply for our grants in order to provide expanded educational opportunities for their students.

OEF Grants enrich educational opportunities and promote innovation in the classroom. OEF Micro-Grants provide funding for supplies and transportation for classrooms or extracurricular activities. Strategic Fund Grants provide funding for extracurricular clubs and student activities that

have been reduced or eliminated from the district's budget. Connie Osborn Deits Science Enrichment Fund Grants increase the understanding and appreciation of science for our students. Lee Gerard Professional Development Fellowships provide opportunities for our teachers to conduct projects focused on improved learning for all students. Commitment to Excellence Award recipients are awarded a grant to support their continued contributions to education.

These grants would not have been possible without the generous support of our donors ... people just like you!

Please donate today at www.oefsite.org

2013-14 Grants and Awards

As of May 15, 2014

OEF Grants

- Seeds of Science Books - Ivy Schmidt - Bennett Woods 3rd Grade - \$1,000
- Take-Home Leveled Readers - Cora Zink - OPM at Central PPK - \$1,000
- Chapter Books for Advanced Good Fit Groups - Christine Batora - OPM at Central 3rd/4th Grade - \$979
- Reading Street Leveled Readers - Michelle Beck - Cornell - \$980
- Geometry Learning Materials - Susan Black - OPM at Central - \$1,018
- Joyful Reading Library - Marsha Chance - Cornell - \$1,000
- Corrective Reading Intervention Program - Holly Heie - Kinawa - \$970
- Beginning to Read Library Collection - Julie Keller - Cornell - \$1,000
- ELL Weekly Readers - Alicia Stain - Cornell/Bennett Woods - \$865
- Sensory Items to Support Struggling Students - Kristin Rosenbrook - Bennett Woods - \$1,000
- Literature Extension Books - Molly Francis - Kinawa - \$860
- Joyful Reading Library - Marsha Chance - Bennett Woods - \$1,000

OEF Micro-Grants

- Safety Patrol Walkie-Talkies - Don Mowry - Cornell - \$200
- Raz-Kids Reading Program - Stacey Cook - Hiawatha 1st Grade - \$99.95
- Raz-Kids Reading Program - Lisa Hall - Hiawatha 1st Grade - \$99.95
- Raz-Kids Reading Program - Lori Howe - Hiawatha 1st Grade - \$99.95
- Reading A to Z Program - Trisha Garvey - Hiawatha 2nd Grade - \$99.95
- SmartMusic Software - Mark Stice, Joel Schut, Deb Borton-McDonough - OHS Band, Orchestra, Choir - \$140
- SmartMusic Software - Kevin Culling, Jean Lee, Yatidi Lightfoot - Chippewa Band, Orchestra, choir - \$140
- Big Zoo Lesson Supplies - Jill Hoort, 3rd/4th Grade - OPM at Central - \$250
- eBooks - Sandy Fields, Gina Farnelli - LMC Director, Reading Consultant, OHS - \$140
- LINKS Program games - Christine Skoutelas - OHS Resource Consultant - \$250
- Home Wiring Project - Laura Richter - OHS Science - \$250
- Music Program Lighting - Liz Reed - Hiawatha Music - \$250
- Good Fit Reading Group Supplies - Christine Batora - OPM at Central - \$247

- Story Champs Intervention Kit - Anita Messerschmidt - Bennett Woods/Hiawatha - \$205

Strategic Fund Grants: Extracurricular Clubs & Student Activities

- Bennett Woods Safety Patrol - Denise Nelson - \$3,239
- Bennett Woods Student Gov't. - Linda Yaske - \$1,131
- Bennett Woods Chieftain Champs - Elizabeth Gauthier, Nicki Mann - \$1,131
- OPM at Central Safety Patrol - Jennifer Schlicher - \$3,239
- OPM at Central Student Gov't. - Christine Batora - \$1,131
- OPM at Central Culinary Club - Susan Black - \$1,131
- Cornell Safety Patrol - Don Mowry - \$3,239
- Cornell Student Gov't. - Paula Pulter, Christena Sinila - \$1,131
- Cornell Chieftain Champs - Ashley Andersen, Nichole Berridge - \$1,131
- Hiawatha Safety Patrol - Vicki Pursley, Elizabeth Reed - \$3,239
- Hiawatha Student Gov't. - Karen Casler - \$1,131
- Hiawatha Chieftain Champs - Julie Bellinger, Lisa Hall - \$1,131
- Kinawa Archery Club - Andy Sheufelt - \$1,131
- Kinawa Cross Country Club - Marian Murembya - \$1,131
- Kinawa/Chippewa KMO - Cyndi Webster - \$1,131
- Chippewa Student Gov't. - Donna Kachmarchik - \$1,131
- Chippewa Yearbook Advisor - Stacy Christensen, Teresa Mayes - \$3,742
- Chippewa Art Club - Stacy Christensen - \$1,131
- Chippewa Homework Club - Alison Evenson, Donna Kachmarchik - \$1,131
- High School ACTION - Rachel Freeman - \$7,125
- High School Class Advisors - Andrea Hallead, Stacy Christensen, Katy Gilchrist, Brian Williams - \$9,016
- High School Quiz Bowl - Andrew Floyd - \$3,394
- High School Student Council - Lindsay Harrod - \$5,393
- High School Yearbook - Lindsay Harrod - \$4,993
- High School Asian Club - Diane Dockus - \$1,131

- High School Connect Club - Lindsay Harrod, Rachel Hollenback - \$2,261
- High School Drama Club - Chad DeKatch - \$1,131
- High School Earth Club - Dave Chapman - \$1,131
- High School Gay/Straight Alliance - Rachel Hollenback - \$1,131
- High School SADD - Katy Gilchrist - \$1,131
- High School World Language Club - Kari Hiner - \$1,131

2014 Visiting Author

Co-sponsored by Horizon Bank

- Robbyn Smith-vanFrankenhuyzen - Bennett Woods, OPM at Central, Cornell, Hiawatha - \$4,000

Connie Osborn Deits Science Enrichment Grants

- MSU Seeds of Science Field Trip - 4th Grade - district-wide - \$2,700
- Respirometers - Colleen Palmer - AP Biology, OHS - \$945.28
- Bennett Woods Hands - On Family Science Night - Noelle Palasty - Bennett Woods - \$700
- Kinawa Science Night - John Hood - Kinawa - \$500
- OHS Robotics Club - Samantha Shears, Scott Jorgensen - \$1,500.
- OHS Science Olympiad - Amita Das, Yue Li - \$1,500
- Okemos Summer Playground Program Science Field Trip - Elizabeth Clifford - \$310

Lee Gerard Professional Development Fellowships

- Writing with Common Core State Standards - Christine Batora, Corey Nieland, Jill Hoort, Jennifer Schlicher - Upper El., OPM at Central - \$1,340
- Think Through Math Training - Lee Ballor, Josh Coty, Brian Guggemos, Michelle Filipiak, Tracy Fleming, Megan Frantz, Kathy Sheufelt - Math, Chippewa - \$600

Commitment to Excellence Awards

- Lee Ballor - Chippewa - \$1,000
- Nichole Berridge - Cornell - \$1,000
- Karen Canestraight - Okemos High School - \$1,000

Thank You 2013-2014 Partners in Education!

The Okemos Education Foundation thanks our Partners in Education – the many individuals, professionals, and businesses that so generously supported the Foundation in 2013-14. Donors who contribute \$50 or more are recognized as Partners on an annual basis for different levels of giving. Our Partners play a key role in supporting the OEF grants, Strategic Fund grants, Connie Osborn Deits Science Enrichment grants, Lee Gerard Professional Development Fellowships and Commitment to Excellence awards that supplement the excellent staff and programs at Okemos Public Schools. Donors, as of May 15, 2014, are listed below.

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Mid-Michigan Oral Surgery - Drs. Mark Beckman and Vince Benivegna

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Okemos Education Foundation

mission statement:

*“Recognizing excellence and promoting innovation
 in Okemos Public Schools.”*

New OEF Officers

The OEF Board of Trustees is pleased to welcome two new trustees and announce some changes to our leadership for the 2014-15 school year.

Current OEF Trustee Martha Hentz will be taking over as Chair of the OEF. New OEF Trustees Antoinette Tessmer and Karen Brown will be taking over as Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer respectively.


Martha Hentz relocated to Okemos in 2008 along with her husband, Chris, and their two sons, Evan and Phill. She has enjoyed working on various volunteer projects in the district including Hiawatha's science fair, harvest festival and book fair, has served on the PTO boards of both Hiawatha and Kinawa, and has represented Kinawa on the district-wide Parent Council. She is currently serving as the president of the Okemos District Parent Council.

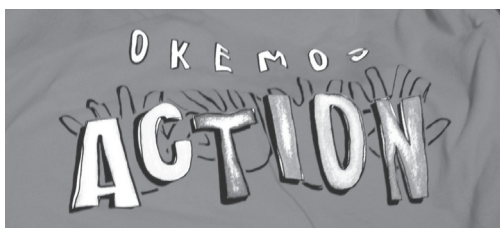
Martha received an undergraduate degree from Gettysburg College in Pennsylvania and a Master of Social Work degree from the University of Washington in Seattle. Her husband, Chris Buck, is the principal of CJBuck Consulting in Okemos.

Antoinette Tessmer grew up in French speaking Belgium where she earned a bachelor degree in Applied Economics/Computer Science and a PhD in Finance. Antoinette was an exchange graduate student at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign where she met her husband, Stuart, a native of Seattle. Stuart and Antoinette moved to Okemos with their two sons, Oliver and Simon, in 1998 from Boston, MA. Simon and Oliver both graduated from Okemos High School and are currently studying at MSU. Antoinette is a Professor of Practice with the Department of Finance, in the Eli Broad College of Business, at Michigan State University. She has taught undergraduate and graduate courses in many different Finance areas for over 15 years. She also leads an MSU summer study abroad program in Global Finance Studies, in Belgium. Antoinette was involved with BSA for 14 years, was the treasurer for BSA Troop 64 for 8 years, and the treasurer for the Sierra Vista Homeowners Association for 12 years. She was also the treasurer for OHS Band boosters and OHS Choir Boosters.

Karen Brown and her family moved to Okemos in 1997. In 1999, Karen began

working at Hiawatha Elementary School when her youngest son Ryan started first grade. She continues to work at Hiawatha today, where she has spent the past 11 years in Food Service—a position she loves and complements her background as a Registered Dietitian. Her sons, Jonathan, Brendan, and Ryan, graduated from Okemos High School in 2003, 2007, and 2007 respectively. Karen is joining OEF as Assistant Treasurer and brings with her 12 years of experience as the Outdoor Treasurer for Boy Scout Troop 125, where all three of her sons obtained the rank of Eagle Scout. Currently, Karen also serves on the Mission Committee and teaches Early Elementary Sunday School at Okemos Community Church.

While Dean Bolton will be remaining as an OEF Trustee, we would like to extend our deep appreciation to Lori Koons and Pamela Kliever who are stepping down at the end of June. We thank both Lori and Pam for their hard work and dedication to the foundation and wish them well in the future! 



The OHS ACTION club is one of the 34 extracurricular clubs and student activities that were sponsored by the OEF's Strategic Fund this year. ACTION (All Connecting To Improve Our Neighborhood) is a community service group open to all high school students. One of their annual programs is Chieftain Champs, an after school mentoring program where ACTION volunteers mentor elementary and Kinawa school students.



This is the fifth year that the OEF's Connie Osborn Deits Science Enrichment Fund has provided a grant for all fourth grade students in the district to participate in a 3-day field trip to the Michigan 4-H Children's Garden at Michigan State University. Led by MSU staff and docents, these trips engage the curiosity of students with the study of plant parts, plants with problems, plant life cycles and why plants are important.

OEF Donation Form

The OEF is grateful for donations in any amount. Credit card donations may be made online at www.oefsite.org. If you donate \$50 or more you become an OEF *Partner in Education*, with recognition and benefits at each level of giving. The OEF is a 501 (c)(3) organization and donations are deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

I/We wish to support the OEF in the amount of: \$

Unrestricted donations to the OEF enable us to apply funds where they are most needed. However, if you wish to direct a portion (or all) of your donation to be used in a specific fund, please indicate below. Donations not designated for a specific fund will be considered unrestricted and will be applied where most needed.

| | | |
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| General Fund | \$ <input type="text"/> | To support classroom grants, awards, and program costs |
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Donations of \$500 or more qualify for complimentary tickets to the OEF Awards Banquet on Nov. 20, 2014.

I would like complimentary tickets.

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Thank you for supporting the Okemos Education Foundation!

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Okemos Education Foundation

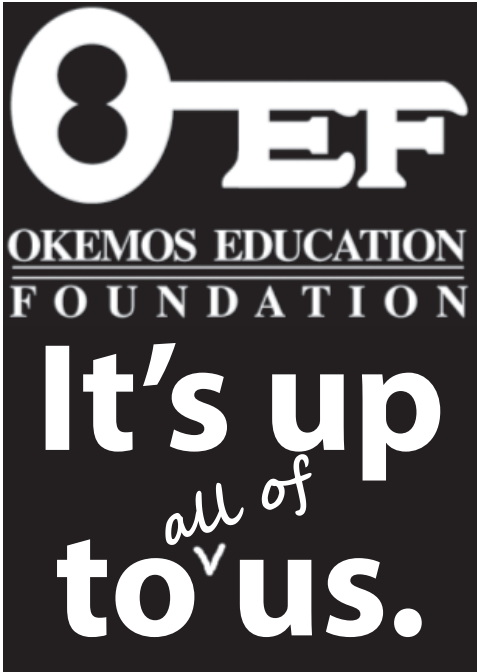
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The Okemos Education Foundation recognized teachers, staff and volunteers for their outstanding service to Okemos Public Schools at the annual OEF Awards Banquet last fall. Front Row (L-R): Karen Canestraight, Okemos High School Science Teacher; Nichole Berridge, Cornell Elementary Intervention Teacher; Lynn Atkins, Kinawa 5-6 Special Education Teacher (retired); Ingrid Yarbrough, Hiawatha Elementary 4th Grade Teacher (retired). Back Row (L-R): Cari Thomas, Okemos Band Boosters; Christine Burgess, Okemos Band Boosters; Lee Ballor, Chippewa 7-8 Math/Science Teacher; Catherine Hickey, Hiawatha Elementary At Risk Aide; Kathy Maki, Hiawatha Elementary Library Media Specialist.



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Your support makes a difference for Okemos students,
now more than ever!

The OEF thanks Allegra of Lansing (Brad and Shirley Naghtin, owners) for their generosity in helping defray the printing costs of this newsletter.

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