

Fall 2024

OKEMOS
EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Newsletter



OEF Entering a New Era

Letter from the Chair



OEF Chair - Jennifer Berman

Hello from the new Chair! As you may notice our newsletter looks a little different this year. We have decided to streamline the newsletter but utilize our website oefsite.org more. This way we can make sure even more of our donations are going directly to classroom support.

In this newsletter, you will see some of the grants and programs we support with a full listing on our website. Our Commitment to Excellence banquet is November 20 where we will recognize outstanding educators, support staff, parent volunteer and alumni Tyler Oakley.

Thank you to the individuals and businesses who have donated in the past. Your donation makes a difference! To renew your donation or become a donor, go to oefsite.org or see the Donate to OEF section. We hope to enhance every student's education many times during their journey through Okemos Public Schools.
Onto a New Era of Excellence!





Please replace this photo with a new board photo

OKEMOS EDUCATION FOUNDATION 2024-25 TRUSTEES

Jennifer Berman Chair
Pratin Trivedi Vice Chair
Bidhan Redey Treasurer
Tena Sinila Secretary

Sara Roland
Sue Williams
George Nagle
Tom Buffett
John Hood

OPS School Board
OPS Superintendent

Commitment to Excellence Banquet

Our Commitment to Excellence banquet held on **November 20th, 2024** celebrates outstanding educators, support staff, volunteers and alumni.

This year's recipients are:

Commitment to Excellence

Award Recipients receive \$1000 Grant

Susie Black	Lower Elementary OPM
Susan Long	5th Grade Kinawa
Niki Mann	Student Support Advisor Cornell
Jody Noble	Principal Chippewa
Karen Sanders	World Language OHS
Karen Whittico	7th grade Chippewa

Special Recognition Award

Tina Harmon Custodian Kinawa

Dean Bolton Award

Erica Boyan - Multiple Volunteer Roles

Distinguished Alumni Award

Tyler Oakley

Tyler Oakley is an Okemos graduate, Class of 2007. Tyler is an American YouTuber whose activism has been dedicated to LGBTQ youth, their rights, as well as social issues including health care, education, and the prevention of suicide among LGBTQ youth.



OEF GRANTS!

The OEF focuses on enhancing educational opportunities in the schools by providing grants to staff to support excellence and innovation in their teaching. Last year the OEF committed over \$20,000 in grant money for that purpose.



Micro Grants – up to \$250

See OEF website for our full list of grant and program recipients

Regular Grants – up to \$1,000

- Library Books
- Library Books
- Hockey Sticks – 30
- Building a Thinking Classroom w/standing White Boards
- Holocaust Storyteller
- Reusable Art Frames, Mats, Easels
- Sewing Machines for the Classroom
- CMS Staff Store
- Exploratory Class Hands on Materials
- 3-D Printer 3rd/4th Grade
- Spanish Class Library

Lee Gerard Professional Development Grant – up to \$2,000

- Music Conference
- SS Professional Development
- MTSS District and Building Initiatives

Seeds of Science

4th graders take field trips to MSU yearly to learn about plants and other living things. Classes visit three separate times to observe trees, learn about photosynthesis, parts of a plant and DNA. They also plant lettuce and measure how it grows over their visits.

Science Fairs

Supports elementary and middle school science fairs.



- Sally Langley, Central*
- Amanda DeKatch, Hiawatha*
- Nicole Fitchett, PE, Kinawa*
- Margie McJames, Math OHS*
- Cyndi Webster, CMS*
- Rachel Hollenback/Amanda Welch, Art OHS*
- Lindsay Harrod, Sewing Elective OHS*
- Carolyn Capozzo, CMS*
- Mary Jo Mills, Bennett*
- Christine Batora, Central*
- Kristyn Stierley, Spanish, CMS*

- Elementary Music Teachers*
- Social Studies, 3rd Grade Cornell*
- Christine Skoutelas, MTSS OHS*



AUTHOR Visit



Kevin Kammeraad

OEF brings a well known author to speak at each of the four elementary schools. This is a highlight of March is Reading month as the students love seeing and hearing someone who has actually published a book that can be found in a bookstore, something that seems very daunting to most of them.

In March, Michigan author and puppeteer, Kevin Kammeraad, visited our four elementary schools. Students met and sang with Mr. Kammeraad, his puppets. They also participated in interactive story writing. Mr. Kammeraad is an award-winning artist, performer, and the author of "The Tomato Collection" and "Spinach Dip Pancakes."



GOLF OUTING

Our 2nd annual OEF Golf Outing was held on June 1, 2024 at College Fields. It was a beautiful day for golf! We raised over \$24,000 with the support of our sponsors and golfers. This money funds grants for innovation and excellence in Okemos Public Schools. Next year's Golf Outing will take place on May 31, 2025. Please consider sponsoring or golfing with us!



2023-2024 OEF DONORS

(7/1/23 through 6/30/24)



The Okemos Education Foundation relies on financial donations in order to fulfill its mission. Thank you to our 2023-2024 Partners in Education for supporting Okemos students!

Platinum Donors

Christman Company
CSM Mechanical LLC
Dan McKelvey
Tower Pinkster

Gold Donors (\$1,000 - \$2,499)

Ameriprise Financial
Dean Transportation
Dave & Rashi Gupta
Satish & Usha Gupta
Heat 'n Sweep
Klug Law Firm
Mid-Michigan Oral Surgery
Rod & Therese Poland
Urvish & Hina Shah

Silver Donors (\$500-\$999)

Bruce Alexander
Tom & Desiree Buffett
Mark & Martha Campbell
Barry & Jill Dehlin, Jr.
Sue Hallman & Juris Pagrabs
David & Iris Horner
Dan & Barb Ilgen
David & Sally Langley
Steve & Kristin Schoen
Gordon VanWieren Thrun Law
Paul and Darlene Workman

Copper Donors (\$250 - \$499)

Polly Alexander
Michael & Deb Baughman
Becky Beauchine Kulka Diamonds and Fine Jewelry
Joseph & Beth Bonsall
Joe Dunn
Jennifer & Joseph Everhart
Graff Chevrolet-Okemos
Harkness
Irem & Tunga Kiyak
Todd Kosta
Lansing Tile & Mosaic
John & Kathryn Lanzetta
Brittany Lenertz
Elizabeth Lentz
Samir & Smruti Parikh
Bidhan & Prasanna Redey
Smita Sawai & Punya Mishra
Stephen & Stacey Smith
Michael Unkovich

Friends (\$50-\$249)

Rebecca Adams
Advantage Team
Janet Alleman
Mariana Austrins
Emily Backus
Lisa Backus
Vince & Sara Baker
Christine Batora
Laura Beard
Shawn Belanger
Jeffrey & Jennifer Berman
Kelly Bianchi
Susan J Black

Catherine Blatnik
Dean & Helen Bolton
David Brower
Gerald & Susan Burger
Kathryn & Bill Cavanaugh
Kelly Barrett Cesar
Seonah Choi
Allison Cironi
Giselle Claux
Adam Clements
Morgan Cole
Stacy Cook
Stephanie Coontz
Joseph Corr
Staci Davis
Amanda & Chad DeKatch
Sally Demshur
Elizabeth Derath
Mariama Dada Diakhate
Debbie Doss
Shulawn Doxie
Whitney Duffield
Larry Erdman
Ethan Fahy
Darla Ferracciolo
Sandy Fields
Tracy & Jason Fleming
Rachel Freeman-Baldwin
Sonja Fritzsche
Tara Fry
Cory Gahsman
Stephen Gatecliff
Erin Gould
Brynn Hawks
Chuck & Nadean Hillary
Kathleen Hoag
Lisa Holcomb
Rosalie & James Huber
Amanda Idema
Danielle Ives
John & Meg Janssens
Danny & Jennifer Keith
Seonghak Kim
Manooch & Laurie Koochesfahani
Sandra Kostadinov
Anna Krystyniak
Donald Kulhanek
Wei Lin
Wayne & Melanie Lynn
Jean R Lyon
Gayle Main
Brenda McLean
Marie Miller

Please donate today! Use the donation form on the back page, donate online at www.oefsite.org or scan the QR code.

Your support makes a difference in the lives of Okemos students!

2023-2024 OEF DONORS
Continued...

- Sang Man Moon
- Patrick Morris
- Eric Morrison
- Steven & Jody Noble
- Tracy Ojerio
- Amy Olivarez
- Andrew & Caitlin Pauly
- Michele Parvizi
- Amanda Patton
- Andrew & Amanda Phelps
- Heather Pricco
- Sharanya Puppala
- Jennifer Rapson
- Sara Roland
- Kristin Rosenbrook
- Nathan Russell
- Zane Russell
- Missy Sainz
- Stefanie Sanders
- Lauren Schefke
- Schwab Charitable
- Renee Schwiehorst
- Tracy Sczepanski
- Katie Seidl
- Robb & Courtney Shubel
- Irene Shutt
- Kelly Sieber
- Christine Skoutelas
- Stefanie Solce
- Jennifer Soria
- Jim St. Onge
- Steve & Kristyn Stierley
- Lisa & Steven Swihart
- Xiaobo Tan
- Jayne Taylor
- Pratin & Pratiksha Trivedi
- Steve & Darlene Vagnozzi
- Rachelle VanDeventer
- Suning Wang
- Adrienne Warner
- Susan & Cameron Williams
- Ashley & Philip Wilson
- Yimin & Yin Xiao
- Marco Ungano
- Suchitra Webster
- Amanda Whittico
- Stephanie Winslow
- Ben Woodcock
- Yimin Xiao
- Michelle Zimmerman
- Meghaen Zuzula

Thank you for supporting Okemos students!

Update from the Superintendent

By John J. Hood, Superintendent

2022 Bond Program Update:

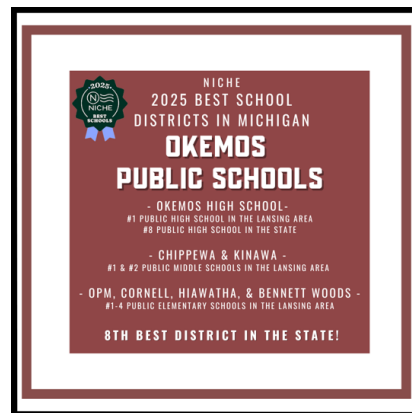
Thank you to our community for supporting the 2022 Bond, prioritizing safety and security, creating future-ready learning environments, and upgrading aging infrastructure. It's exciting to see improvements happening across the district as a result of the bond work.

Construction on the new Chippewa Middle School started in June and work is ongoing. Building will continue for two years, with staff moving into the new school during the summer of 2026.

Construction of new secured vestibules and main office improvements are complete at Hiawatha Elementary and Okemos High School. The renovations bring safety and security, as well as a common look and feel for our school offices across the district. Visit okemosbond.net for more information

New Okemos Public Schools Website:

The district debuted a new website design in October to improve the look and functionality of the site, including calendars and school newsletters. We plan to release a district app to families after Winter Break.



2025 Niche Awards:

I want to congratulate all of our schools for again earning the ranking of top schools in the Lansing area from Niche. Our teachers, staff, and administrators are dedicated to together ... educating with excellence, inspiring each learning for life.



OKEMOS PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOND CONSTRUCTION AT A GLANCE

NEW CHIPPEWA MIDDLE SCHOOL
Construction begins: **Summer 2024**
Construction complete: **Summer 2026**

TEMPORARY CORNELL ELEMENTARY
Students/Staff relocate to existing Chippewa Middle School: **Summer 2026**

NEW CORNELL ELEMENTARY
Demolish existing Cornell: **Summer 2026**
Construction complete: **Summer 2028**
Cornell students start in new school: **August 2028**

UNDER CONSTRUCTION
NEW KINAWA MIDDLE SCHOOL
Demolish existing Chippewa: **Summer 2028**
Construction Complete: **Summer 2030**
Kinawa students start in new school: **August 2030**

STAY UP TO DATE WITH CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS AT OKEMOSBOND.NET

Financials



For the 24-25 school year our budget supports:

- \$20,000+ for teacher grants
- \$5,000 for teacher professional development
- \$5,000 for special projects
- \$5,000 to the Seeds of Science field trip
- \$5,000 to support an author to visit all elementary schools for March is Reading Month

As we work with the district to identify additional needs that allow the OEF to positively impact student learning, your financial support is needed. Please consider making a donation by check to the OEF (4406 Okemos Rd), online at oefsite.org, or you can scan the QR code on the back cover. **THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

DONATE TO OEF

Ways to Donate to OEF to Support Education in Okemos!

- Give Online



- Sponsor a Program or Event
- Include OEF in your will or trust
- Mail in a donation to:

Okemos Education Foundation, 4406 Okemos Rd.
Okemos, MI 48864

- Purchase an Apple Award



- Volunteer your time and talent with OEF

Contact OEF Chair Jennifer Berman at chair@oefsite.org for more information. **Thank you!**

Visit www.oefsite.org for more information.



www.oefsite.org



Join us on Facebook

This newsletter is designed by
smita sawai | avani-design.com

avani-design

Printed by Allegra of Lansing
www.ally-press.com



Fall 2024

Newsletter

WWW.OEFSITE.ORG

Okemos Education Foundation
4406 Okemos Road
Okemos, MI 48864

Non Profit Org
US Postage
PAID
Okemos MI
Permit No 5

Your donation helps the OEF support educational excellence in our schools. **Donate today!**

DONATION FORM

Thank you for supporting the Okemos Education Foundation.

Please include this form with your donation. Donations are tax-deductible, as permitted by law. Please see our website for recognition benefits based on levels of giving. Online donations can be made at **www.oefsite.org**

Name: _____
(as you wish to be recognized)

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please accept my gift of: _____

I would like my gift to be used:

- Wherever Needed Most
- OEF General Fund: Program/Project Support
- OEF Endowment Fund: Future Needs

I wish to honor a special person with this gift:

I wish to remember a special person with this gift

Check all that apply:

- Parent/Grandparent (circle one) of Okemos student
- Parent/Grandparent (circle one) of Okemos grad
- Okemos Alum (year: ____)
- OPS staff (current/former)

Please make checks payable to:
Okemos Education Foundation
4406 Okemos Rd, Okemos, MI 48864
Or donate online at: **www.oefsite.org**



Thank you for supporting Okemos students!