

QUARTERS 2 & 3

December 2023/January 2024



# OTTER OUTREACH!



OTTAWA RIVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

## December/January Newsletter

### From the Principal

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As we approach the end of the year, it is with great pleasure that I bring you the December edition of our school newsletter. This month, we have much to celebrate and share with our wonderful Ottawa River community.

As the holiday season is upon us, I extend warm wishes to you and your families for a joyous and festive time. May this season bring you moments of love, laughter, and togetherness. We are grateful for the sense of community that makes our school a special place.

**Academic Achievements:** I am proud to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of our students and teachers. The academic achievements of our students continue to impress, and their commitment to excellence is truly commendable. As we reflect on the past semester, let us celebrate the growth and accomplishments of each student.

Our annual Holiday Concert is just around the corner. Join us on 12/13/2023 at 6:30 in the school gymnasium for an evening filled with festive performances showcasing the talent and creativity of our students. It promises to be a delightful event that brings our school community together.

**Gratitude and Giving Back:**

December is a time to reflect on the importance of gratitude and giving. Our school is proud to participate in The Mustard Seed, Christmas baskets. We encourage families to join us in spreading kindness and generosity during this season of giving.

Lastly, a reminder that winter break begins on December 21st. We wish you a restful and rejuvenating break with your loved ones. School will resume on January 8, 2024.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership in making Ottawa River a thriving and enriching learning environment. As we wrap up the year, let us embrace the spirit of unity and look forward to a new year filled with exciting opportunities and growth.

Wishing you all a festive and joyous holiday season!

Warm regards,  
Mrs. Griffin

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Toledo, Ohio

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### Important dates

December 4th through 8th—Santa Shop

December 13th—Christmas Program

December 20th—Last Day for students before Winter Break

January 8th—Student's first day back from Winter Break

January 15th—NO SCHOOL for Martin Luther King Jr. Day

# Counselor Corner

December /January 2023- 2024

With Thanksgiving behind us and more Holidays right around the corner it's easy for kids to be smitten with the magic of the season. Fun presents. Extra sweets. A vacation from school. There is a lot to like! However, we don't want to forget the lessons we learned from Thanksgiving and being grateful and thankful for all we have. **ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE** (7mindsets)

With the freedom and excess of the season, sometimes kids can get a little carried away. For most families, there will be a point when the kids get overtired and cranky, or greedy about presents, or would rather play a video game than talk to family. Here are some tips to keep kids happy and ready to enjoy whatever the season brings. Let's help our kids be **100% ACCOUNTABLE** (7mindsets)

1. Getting gifts is a high point of the holidays for any kid, but that should not be the only focus. As adults, we know that giving presents can be just as rewarding as getting them, and we shouldn't wait to teach this lesson to our kids. In addition, the season is not only about presents, so teach your child what the holidays mean to you!
2. Let your kids help out, there is a lot of extra work to do around the holidays so let your child help out in age appropriate ways, setting the table, putting up lights, wrapping presents, or baking cookies.
3. Kids love routine and tradition. Try to keep some things constant. Kids still need a snack time, they still need attention from you and they still need a chance to unwind before bedtime. Try to continue any tradition you started in previous years, reading a story before bed, saying what you are grateful for, or just spending quality time together as a family.
4. Help kids recognize any fears or excuses they may have for not wanting to do certain things. Then work through them together to break down barriers and move forward towards positive actions.
5. Remember they are kids. Some holiday traditions depend on kids being on their best behavior and lengthy services, parties with lots of strangers, elaborate meals, this may not appeal to all your kids. Try to keep those to a minimum, and customize festivities for your kids. Do not schedule too much in one day and try to schedule fun things your kids will enjoy.
6. Make sure your child is still getting enough sleep and enough exercise during break. They will be grateful for this and so will you!
7. Practice mindfulness and gratitude with your kids. It can be easy to lose sight of the deep joy of togetherness in the hustle and bustle. Take time to notice moments of love and joy. Point them out to your children, and then reminisce about them later.
8. Set Goals as a Family and Individual Goal for the New Year! Think about cooking more meals at home, or getting outside more, learn a new skill together.
9. Remember to take time for yourself and do things you enjoy. Also, Have Fun and Enjoy this time with your kids!
10. Find Joy in the small moments!



# NURSE'S CORNER

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## Winter Layering Is the Way to Go

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends putting babies and children in one more layer of clothing than an adult would wear in the same conditions. Layering also allows kids to remove a jacket or sweater after walking to school, riding the bus, or coming in from the car into the classroom; instead of having to choose between being overheated or freezing.

Dress children in thin layers with a wicking layer beneath to help children keep dry. Start with the snugger layers on the bottom, like long-sleeved bodysuits or long underwear. Then add pants and a warmer top, like a sweater or thermal-knit shirt. A thin fleece jacket over the top is a good option or a winter coat. Top it off with warm boots, glove or mittens, and a hat.

Keep in mind, layering your child with too much outerwear can actually make them colder. That is because excess layers can cause your child to sweat, which makes their clothes wet, allowing the cold and wind to bring their temperature down.



We are in the midst of winter holiday celebrations from now until mid-January. Our families and friends gather, schedule parties and travel increases. Safety should always be a top consideration to ensure your family remains safe and injury-free throughout the season. When traveling, be prepared by planning, and having your car winterized. Please do not drink and drive or be otherwise distracted while driving.

Decorating is one of the best ways to get in a holiday mood, but emergency rooms see thousands of injuries involving holiday decorating every season. When decorating follow these and other tips from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission:

Keep potentially poisonous plants – mistletoe, holly berries, Jerusalem cherry and amaryllis – away from children and pets.

Place candles where they cannot be knocked down or blown over and ensure they are out of reach of children.

Make an emergency plan to use if a fire breaks out anywhere in the home. See that each family member knows what to do. **PRACTICE THE PLAN.**

## MEDICATION

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Students who must take medication during the school day must have the appropriate authorization form completed by the doctor. All medications will be dispensed from the nurse's office. According to Toledo Public School Board of Education Policy, an adult must bring the child's medicine to the office and the medication must be in the original bottle. We cannot accept medications that are brought in by the child. Please bring in a month's supply of medication at a time. All medications, **PRESCRIPTION AND OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATIONS** (such as aspirin, antacids, cough syrup, cough drops etc.), require a doctor's form and can only be dispensed through the nurse's office!!



## ABSENCES

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Parents of students who are absent from school can notify the school of the student's absence by leaving a message on the Attendance phone at **419-671-6351**. This recorder is on 24 hours a day, so parents may call at any time. Please be sure to call by 9:30 A.M. on the day of the absence. If a parent does not call and notify the school of their child's absence a written note explaining the absence or tardy must be signed by the parent or guardian and sent to school when the child returns to school. Excused absences are for illness, death in the immediate family, and doctor/dental appointments. If doctor/dental appointments are made during school hours, the child should present a written request for excusal, stating the time of the appointment to the teacher. Students may be released one-half hour before the appointment. Excusals for doctor/dental appointments require written excuse from the doctor/dentist. Students who arrive late or are picked-up early, without a written doctor's excuse, are considered absent for a portion of the day. As a reminder, the state allows a total of 10 unexcused absences a year. Please be sure that you use these days sparingly.



## HAVE YOU MOVED?

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If you have moved or changed your telephone number, we are asking that you update your records in Parent Portal and then provide proof to the School office and also provide proof of residency. This will ensure that we will be able to contact you in case of an emergency.



## DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS?

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If you ever have questions or concerns about what is going on in your child's classroom please remember to contact their teacher directly. They will BEST know what is going on as they spend the majority of time with your child. If need be, the teacher will direct your questions/concerns to the principal or other necessary personnel. Please do not use Ottawa River's Facebook page as a place to find answers to your personal questions/concerns. For the most accurate and up to date info – call or email your child's teacher directly.



# VISITORS TO OUR BUILDING

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Parents and other interested persons are always welcome at Ottawa River. To maintain a disruptive free environment all visitors, parents, and guests are required to have an appointment with classroom teachers. On the day of the appointment, for safety purposes, you will be required to report to the office before proceeding to classrooms or other parts of the building. Visitors will be issued a "VISITOR PASS" with their name, destination, and date that they are required to wear. Visits to other parts of the building will require administrative approval and are generally discouraged.

Volunteers will be issued a "VOLUNTEER BADGE" which they are required to wear while working in the school as a volunteer. All students, parents, and visitors to the building must enter through the Main entrance and buzz to be let into the building. **Due to increasing security concerns, parents will not be permitted to walk their children to class. If a parent needs to dismiss their child early an ID must be presented.**

## Kroger Community Rewards Sign-Up

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By making the Ottawa River PTO your Community rewards recipient, a percentage of every shopping trip you make to Kroger will come back to the school!

### Signing up is simple:

- 1) Sign-in or create an account
- 2) Click on My Account
- 3) Scroll Down to Community Rewards
- 4) Click Edit
- 5) Find our organization (Ottawa River Elementary PTO, Organization Number 80037)

## Closing and Delays

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It's that time of year again where occasionally it is necessary to close or delay the start of school due to inclement weather. If there is a possibility of severe weather, please tune into the local television or radio station after 6:00 A.M. If we are closed, it will be announced "Toledo Public Schools are closed." If there is a delay it will say, "Toledo Public Schools are on a two hour delay." A two-hour delay means we will start at 11:00 a.m. rather than 9:00 a.m. Morning busses will pick up two hours later than the normal times. Sometimes a two hour delay may change to a closing, so please watch and listen for an update. Please do not call the school for information on closing or delays.







# LUNCHES

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To ensure that all students are getting the best education they can we will no longer be calling classrooms to inform students of dropped off lunches. If you forgot your child's lunch we will be happy to provide them with a free school lunch. Thank you for helping us to keep our school focus on education.

As a reminder we no longer have an open lunchroom policy. To keep all students safe and lunchtimes running smoothly we ask that if you are volunteering in the building you do not stop to have lunch with your child. Their classmates do not understand and feelings can get hurt.

Thank you for all you do to make Ottawa River a fantastic place to be!

## Winter Break

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The last day for students is Thursday December 20th, 2023 and they return on Monday January 8th, 2024.



## Martin Luther King Jr. Day

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There will be NO SCHOOL on Monday January 15th in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.



# Ottawa River Sprit Wear

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Looking for unique gift ideas for the whole family, including grandparents, that will arrive in time for the holidays? Check out the Ottawa River Elementary School spirit wear sale. FREE SHIPPING on orders over \$75 @1stPlaceSpritwear



## Santa Shop

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The PTO will be hosting the Santa Shop from December 4th through the 8th. Classes will be visiting the Santa Shop and there will be PTO parents in there to help the kids with their shopping.



## Food Drive Results

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Our food drive was a huge success again this year. We collected just under 2500 items for The Mustard Seed. A big thank you to our students and their parents for their generosity. We also sponsored a local family and provided them with food for the holiday.





## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR DECEMBER/JANUARY STUDENTS OF THE MONTH!!!

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Gabriel Sherif  
Giovanni Hunter  
Santino Vasquez  
Leon Turner  
Neon McCastle  
Amir Tucker  
Xavier Burden  
Leah Mikolayczyk  
Sebastian Mata  
Brantley Slinker  
Colt Stang  
Aaliyah Sledge  
Keegan Hamilton  
Penelope Giacalone  
Chance Mangus  
Sally Cook

Maveric Clingo  
Lilyan Pfaff  
Noah Gonzalez  
Makenna Heighland  
Jocelyn Lisowski  
Dominic Rupert  
Kaelyn Murphy  
Demar Samuels  
Riley Snyder  
Layla Hardin  
Sydney Wamsley  
Madeline Kern  
Hannah Hamblin  
Sophia Gonzalez  
Connor McCullough



**Students**  
**OF THE**  
**MONTH**





# DECEMBER AND JANUARY BIRTHDAYS!!!

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Isabelle Manriquez 12/2

Sophia Gonzalez 12/4

Damian Rowland 12/4

Kindsley Heighland 12/7

Jared Hooton 12/7

Mia Mora 12/10

Ashton McCullough 12/11

Trevor Grandowicz 12/12

Bella HineLine 12/14

Connor Slaughter 12/14

Sophia Slaughter 12/14

Jace Jones 12/16

Jacoby Walker 12/18

Gracie Faust 12/20

Dallas Monhollen 12/20

Aria Turner 12/22

Quintrell Caldwell 12/23

Lucas McElwain 12/23

Austin Stephens 12/23

Rylan Rickard 12/27

Carter Whitely 12/29

Aiden Creswell 12/30

Blake Creswell 12/30

Asauna Harris 12/30

Maria Fry 1/2

Penelope Giacalone 1/5

Grayson Fitzgerald 1/8

Braelynn Jacobs 1/9

Landyn Salyer 1/9

Urban Barnett 1/10

Hunter Ausmus 1/11

Addissyn Budd 1/11

Leah Mikolayczyk 1/12

Marissa Mikolayczyk 1/12

Lucas Hanley 1/14

Stella Boberg 1/17

Murphy McKenzie 1/19

Neveah Howard 1/21

Kellsie Swoboda 1/21

Ra'Niyah Richardson 1/22

Keegan Hamilton 1/23

Neveah Hansen 1/23

Aaliyah Pallitta 1/23

Louisa Lawson 1/27

Delaney Howe 1/28

Dominic Newby 1/30



## **Arrival Routine**

**A note to parents/guardians who will be DRIVING/WALKING their student(s):**

- **Doors open at 8:45 AM. If you arrive early, please remain in your car. We are using multiple entrances this year for student entry, so please use the assigned entries for car riders as indicated below. In order to keep the line moving, parents may not get out of their vehicles when dropping off or picking up students.**
- **Students will not be permitted to wait in the front lobby before school or enter the building prior to 8:45., unless they are eating breakfast. Students eating breakfast at school will enter through the front doors at 8:40**

### **Arrival Routine for All Students**

#### **Walkers and Car Riders**

#### **Times and Locations:**

In order to minimize traffic congestion, drop-off times and locations will be as follows:

- Kindergarten, First & Second graders will enter main doors by front office
- Pre Kindergarten, Third & Fourth graders will enter the side doors off of 290th. (bus doors)
- Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, & Eighth graders will enter the Jr. High doors near the playground
- When car riders/walkers enter the building, they will proceed on their designated route directly to their classroom. Doing this will help minimize hallway traffic and lead them directly to their home-room.
- All individuals who will be dropping off students (ex: babysitters, siblings, grandparents) must be made aware of these procedures prior to drop-off.
- **Patience and Kindness:** Please remember that we are an elementary school serving young children. Your patience during school arrival is important as we anticipate an increase in car traffic this year.

#### **Bus Riders:**

- **Seating:** Each bus will have a mandatory seating chart with assigned seats. Students will be seated with siblings whenever possible.
- **Drop-Off Location:** Buses will drop off students in designated locations. The bus lane is on 290th street. Bus riders will use the side doors no matter what age group.

## **Dismissal Routine**

### **Walkers and Car Riders**

• **Walker Dismissal:** Students that will be walking home will be dismissed beginning at 3:10. **Walking means they are walking to their home. Parents should not be parked in the staff parking lot waiting to pick up their “walking” student.**

• **Pick-Up Location:** If you are here to walk with you child please meet your child at their designated location. There will be **no pickup** at the Primary entrance.

Pre-K will be released in the back parking lot.

K-4 will be released at the side entrance - please pay attention to the posted signs

5 -8 walkers will be released from the Jr. High doors - please pay attention to the posted signs

### **Car Dismissal**

**Pre-K students will be dismissed to their parents in the parking lot located behind the building.**

Car dismissal will begin at 3:15. If you are planning to pick your child up, please stay in your car and follow the curb to the marked pick up zone area. Do not park or get out of your car. Please be ready to move with the line to prevent backups. The driveway in front of the school is designated for buses only.

• **Family Names:** Parents/guardians will be given two papers with your family name on them. When you pick up you must have your family name card displayed when entering the parking lot so student(s) are ready when the car line moves. Parents/guardians wishing to meet a student to walk them to the car, must park in a parking space and walk to the waiting area on the sidewalk. Family names/numbers must be displayed while waiting.

Any family needing more than two name/number tags are asked to make their own additional tags by writing their name and number clearly on a large piece of paper.

- **Traffic-** Traffic backs up quickly as cars arrive but begins moving smoothly once we start loading students. Please always be on the lookout for individuals walking in the parking lot, including students, family members, and staff. Remember that “you are right when you turn right”... enter the parking lot by turning right and exit the parking lot by turning right. This will ensure smooth traffic flow and safety.
- **Communication:** All individuals who will be picking up students (ex: babysitters, siblings, grandparents) should be made aware of these procedures prior to picking up students.
- **Patience and Kindness:** Please be patient as traffic volume may increase this year. Our goal is to get all students home safely and in a timely manner.

### **Bus Transportation Guidelines:**

- Students who requested transportation will be placed at a bus stop. Visit the [District Map on our website](#) to find bus stop times and locations.
- Students will have an assigned seat and bus drivers will keep a seating chart

# December 2023

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

					1	2
3	4 <b>Santa Shop</b>	5 <b>Santa Shop</b>	6 <b>Santa Shop</b>	7 <b>Santa Shop</b>	8 <b>Santa Shop</b>	9
10	11	12	13 <b>Christmas Program 7:00</b>	14	15	16
17	18	19	20 <b>Last Day for Students</b>	21 <b>No School</b>	22 <b>No School</b>	23
24	25 <b>No School</b>	26 <b>No School</b>	27 <b>No School</b>	28 <b>No School</b>	29 <b>No School</b>	30
31						

# January 2024

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

	<i>1</i> <b>No School</b>	<i>2</i> <b>No School</b>	<i>3</i> <b>No School</b>	<i>4</i> <b>No School</b>	<i>5</i> <b>No School</b>	<i>6</i>
<i>7</i>	<i>8</i> <b>School Resumes</b>	<i>9</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>14</i>	<i>15</i> <b>No School MLK Day</b>	<i>16</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>21</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>28</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>31</i>			



***District Mission:*** Toledo Public Schools' mission is to produce competitive college and career ready graduates through a rigorous curriculum across all grade levels by implementing Ohio's New Learning Standards with fidelity.

***District Vision:*** Toledo Public Schools strives to be an 'A-rated' school district whose graduates are college and career ready.



**Ottawa River is a Title 1 funded school. Title 1 funds help us to serve our students better. We are able to support the curriculum through professional development for our staff. Our staff is dedicated to the success of each child and each of us work diligently to help each and every student.**