FALL 2026 NEWSLETTER

LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Onondaga Community,

As the autumn leaves turn and the air grows crisp, we are pleased to share our Fall Newsletter with updates on our district's academic initiatives, facility improvements, seasonal preparations, and student achievements.

Winter Weather Preparedness & Closing Procedures
As we approach the winter months, we want to outline how decisions regarding school delays and closures are made. Our decision-making process begins early—often around 3:00 a.m.—in direct communication with the Town of Onondaga Highway Department, surrounding superintendents, the OCS Director of Transportation, and the Director of Facilities to thoroughly evaluate road safety and weather conditions. The safety of our students and staff is always our highest priority. When inclement weather requires a delay or closure, updates will be shared through ParentSquare, local media stations, the district website, and official social media channels. We encourage all members of our Tiger community to review and update their ParentSquare notification settings now to ensure timely delivery of weather alerts.

Academic Focus: NY Inspires & Prioritized Standards
On the academic front, New York State has launched NY Inspires, an initiative aimed at raising expectations, expanding opportunity, and prioritizing learning standards across the state. By focusing on essential priority standards, this framework empowers educators to deliver deeper, more meaningful learning experiences that help students build lasting knowledge, connect concepts across subjects, and prepare for future success aligned with the Portrait of a Graduate. District implementation will occur thoughtfully in phases supported by guidance, professional learning, and instructional tools. The release of these standards will follow a phased timeline, beginning with high school commencement-level standards in Winter 2027, followed by K–8 elementary and middle-level standards in Early Summer 2027. Scan for a summary of the changes reflected in NY Inspires and Portrait of a Graduate.

Capital Project & Emergency Facility Repairs
Maintaining safe, fully functional facilities for our students and staff remains an ongoing commitment. We are pleased to report the successful completion of two critical emergency repairs: a total replacement of the gas line at the transportation center and a repair of the septic system at the Industrial Arts building. In addition to these completed emergency repairs, our contractors are actively working through the final punch list of items to conclude our ongoing capital project.

Celebrating Fall Athletics & Community Spirit
Finally, as our fall sports season comes to a close, we want to express how proud we are of our student-athletes. Their sportsmanship, resilience, and hard work on the field, court, and course have represented Onondaga Central School District with great distinction. We also extend our heartfelt gratitude to our families, staff, and community members whose enthusiastic support and attendance energized our teams throughout the season.

Thank you for your continued partnership and dedication to keeping our schools safe, strong, and supportive.

Roar On!

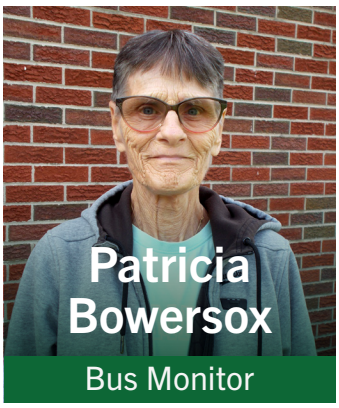
Robert S. Montgomery

Robert S. Montgomery
Superintendent of Schools

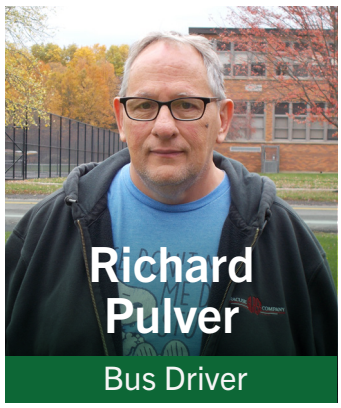
Onondaga Central Schools

SCAN FOR **OCS CALENDAR**

Some New Faces at Onondaga Central School District!









Onondaga Central School District & Liberty Resources Partnership

Onondaga Central School District is pleased to announce a partnership with Liberty Resources to provide accessible, school-based mental health therapy services for our students. This program aims to foster the emotional, psychological, and social well-being of students within an educational setting.



MEET OUR SCHOOL-BASED THERAPIST

We are excited to welcome Deirdre Doherty, LMSW, who serves as our dedicated Liberty Resources School-Based Therapist. Deirdre will be working across the district and is able to support students at Rockwell, Wheeler, and the Junior/Senior High School.

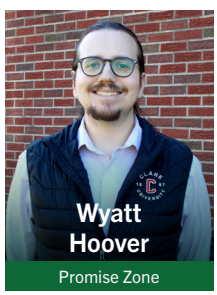
ENROLLMENT AND REFERRAL PROCESS

To refer a student or learn more about accessing services:

1. School Staff & Family Referrals: Reach out directly to your building's school social worker or school counselor.
2. Direct Online Referral: Parents/guardians can submit an online referral directly through liberty-resources.org/schools.
3. Consent & Privacy: Confidentiality is strictly maintained in accordance with HIPAA regulations. All services require parent/guardian consent prior to initiation, and client information is never shared without explicit parent/guardian permission.

Onondaga Central School District & Promise Zone

Onondaga Central School District has partnered with the Promise Zone at Rockwell and Wheeler. The Promise Zone is a program funded through Onondaga County whose mission is to support the success and growth of students through skill-development and social-emotional wellness.



MEET OUR PROMISE ZONE SPECIALIST

We are excited to welcome Wyatt Hoover, who will serve as our Promise Zone Student Engagement Specialist to Rockwell and Wheeler. Wyatt will be working with our students as a social emotional skill builder.

REFERRAL PROCESS

If you are interested in having your student work with the Promise Zone Specialist, please contact your building's social worker or counselor.

SCAN FOR ONLINE REFERRAL

Spotlighting "Tiger Clubs": Bringing Positivity to Life at Our School!

At Rockwell, learning goes beyond the phonics cards, it's about discovering passion, building character, and empowering student voice. This school year, we are thrilled to launch Tiger Clubs, an exciting new initiative designed to tap into student interests, foster student choice, and deliver highly engaging, hands-on learning experiences.

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

Last school year, our school community was honored to be recognized as a Green Shield School for our thorough and dedicated implementation of the Positivity Project. While we were proud of this recognition, it also inspired us to ask a pivotal question: How can we take character education a step further and truly make "Positivity in Action" come alive for our students?

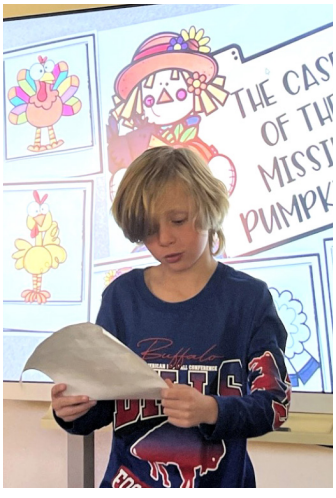
From that question, Tiger Clubs was born!

CHARACTER BUILDING MEETS HANDS-ON FUN

Tiger Clubs uniquely bridge student interests with core character traits. Every teacher proposes a club topic rooted in a specific Positivity Project character trait, allowing students to explore new skills while learning valuable life lessons.

Here are just a few examples of Tiger Clubs in action:

- **Rockwell Cheer Crew:** Teaches students the power of encouraging others and "Cheering on others for their successes."
- **Mad Libs Live:** Combines English Language Arts (ELA) skills with the character trait of Humor.
- **Art Club & Builder Club:** Encourage students to express themselves through Creativity.





EMPOWERING STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

Tiger Clubs give students the power of choice. Students select their top choices and participate in an eight-week club cycle. At the end of each cycle, students will have the opportunity to showcase and celebrate their learning during our Morning Program before rotating into a new club.

This initiative has also created wonderful new connections across our school building. Teachers have the opportunity to step outside their traditional classroom roles, work with different grade-level students, and share their personal passions. By creatively designing unique curricula around topics they love, teacher passion shines through—inspiring students every step of the way.

We look forward to seeing our students grow, collaborate, and put positivity into action through Tiger Clubs all year long!





ROCKWELL WINTER WEATHER REMINDERS

Recess & Outdoor Gear: Students will head outside for recess as long as the "real feel" temperature is 20°F or warmer, even when there is snow on the ground! Please ensure your child comes to school dressed for the cold. In need of extra winter weather gear? Please reach out to our office. We are happy to help!

1-HOUR DELAY:

- **Doors open / Students arrive at 9:30 AM**
- **Breakfast WILL be served.**
- **Friday Delays: Morning Program WILL still take place.**

2-HOUR DELAY:

- **Doors open / Students arrive at 10:30 AM**
- **Breakfast WILL NOT be served *(lunches begin shortly after arrival).***
- **Friday Delays: Morning Program is CANCELED.**



Crunch Time!

Teachers from the surrounding area were honored for being impactful in their communities and classrooms at the Syracuse Crunch's season opener on Oct. 10. Wheeler 3rd Grade Teacher Mrs. Featherstone accompanied defenseman Simon Lundmark onto the ice for introductions to kick off the 34th Crunch season. Students in her class were also given free tickets to attend.

A well-deserved recognition celebrating the lasting impact educators make both inside and outside the classroom!



Reading with the Lunch Bunch Book Club

Lunch Bunch Book Club is off to a great start in Mrs. Matzke's class! We kicked things off with *Make Way for Dyamonde Danie*l by Nikki Grimes. With each new month comes a new book! We are excited for a year filled with great books and growing readers. Seven students joined our first book club, and we can't wait to see where our reading adventures take us next!





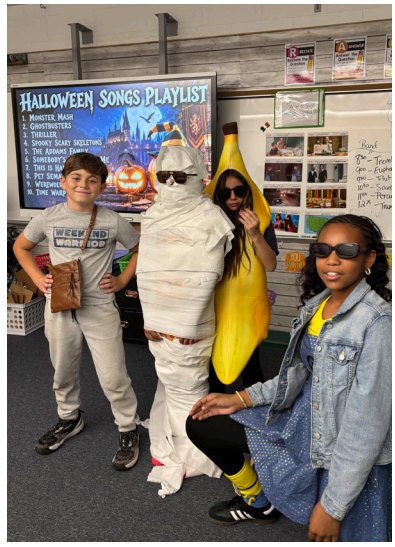


Math and Baking Pies

Ms. Moen's and Miss Devereaux's class got into the fall spirit by making apple pies. The students explored how making apple pies connects to key math concepts, and learned about measuring ingredients, preparing to bake using time and temperature and using fractions to determine how we can fairly share the pies with our classmates. Of course, eating the pies was their favorite part!



















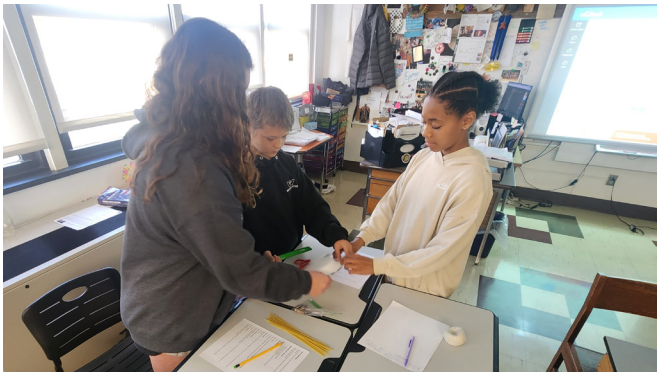


A Spooky Morning!

We had **spooktacular celebrations districtwide!** The day kicked off at Rockwell's Morning Program, where the Jr./Sr. High School Band got everyone in the Halloween spirit with some festive tunes. Next, our Senior class and Rockwell students took center stage to show off their amazing costumes to the friends and families who gathered to watch the annual Rockwell Halloween parade. The Halloween fun continued with one more parade at Wheeler, where students made their way through the school, proudly showing off their creative costumes. What a fun-filled day of Halloween spirit across OCS!

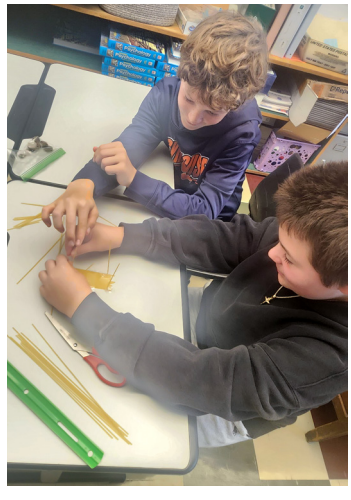
HONOR ROLL

CHECK OUT THE STUDENTS WHO MADE THE JR./SR. HIGH SCHOOL HONOR ROLL FOR THE 1ST MARKING PERIOD









Creativity in Action in Social Science 7!

Students in Mrs. Delgado and Mrs. MacLachlan's Social Science 7 classes recently put the Positivity Project character strength of Creativity to the test! Students were given a specific set of materials and challenged to work with a partner to build a tower sturdy enough to hold the weight of a coin bag for at least 10 seconds. Throughout the challenge, students practiced creative problem-solving, communication, and teamwork as they brainstormed ideas, tested their designs, and worked together to overcome obstacles. Everyone had a great time, and we were so impressed by the students' creativity and collaboration!

Congratulations to Arthur Palmer, Abel Connelly, and Kellin Cunningham for creating the sturdiest structure!

We love seeing our Positivity Project traits in action as students learn, grow, and support one another!





OCS Students Participate in Student Government Swearing-In Ceremony at County Courthouse

Students from OCS recently attended a swearing-in ceremony at the County Courthouse, where student leaders officially took their oaths of office. Participants included class officers from grades 9–12, Student Council members, and students from the OCS Patriotic Club and Key Club.

The oath was administered by the Honorable Deborah H. Karalunas. Following the ceremony, students had the opportunity to meet with the Honorable Julie Cecile of Onondaga Family Court and Dave Knapp, Onondaga County Legislator for the 12th District. Both met with the group to discuss effective leadership and the qualities needed to be a successful leader.

The experience provided students with a meaningful opportunity to learn about leadership, public service, and civic responsibility. By participating in the ceremony and engaging with local leaders, students strengthened their understanding of the importance of commitment, accountability, and representing others in their school and community.

Building tomorrow's leaders, one experience at a time!

REMINDER:
Register for Winter Sports here.

https://www.onondagacsd.org/districtpage.cfm?pageid=1680

Go Tigers!

7th Grade Students Connect with the History of 9/11

On Thursday, October 1, the entire 7th grade class attended Come From Away at Syracuse Stage. The musical tells the true story of the community of Gander, Newfoundland, which welcomed hundreds of airline passengers stranded following the September 11, 2001 attacks.

After the performance, students visited the 9/11 Monument at Ryder Park in DeWitt to see an authentic beam recovered from the Twin Towers. The following day, SRO Steve Smolen visited the 7th grade to share his firsthand experience of 9/11, including how the military plane he was traveling on was diverted to Gander.

These experiences served as a meaningful culmination of our English and Social Studies curriculum of 9/11, allowing students to connect classroom learning with the stories and experiences of those who lived through this important moment in history.







ONONDAGA CENTRAL
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DATES TO REMEMBER

NOVEMBER

Tuesday, November 17:	BOE Meeting at Rockwell, 6 pm
Wednesday, November 18:	PTO Meeting, 6 pm at Rockwell | Wheeler Picture Retake Day
Thursday, November 19:	Rockwell Picture Retake Day
November 20 - 22:	HS Drama Production
November 23 - 24:	1/2 Day Parent Teacher Conferences (Wheeler: 10:30, Rockwell: 11:10 Dismissal)
Tuesday, November 24:	Academic Letter Banquet, 7:45 am in the Jr./Sr. HS Auditorium
November 25 - 27:	Thanksgiving Break (No School)

DECEMBER

Friday, December 4:	HS End of 2nd Marking Period | Wheeler End of 1st Marking Period
Wednesday, December 9:	HS Chorus & Band Concert 6 pm | PTO Meeting, 6 pm at Wheeler
Tuesday, December 15:	BOE Meeting at Jr./Sr. HS Cafeteria, 6 pm
Wednesday, December 16:	Wheeler Winter Concert at HS, 6:30 pm
Friday, December 18:	Rockwell Holiday Sing | Rockwell & Wheeler Report Cards on ParentSquare
December 24 - January 1:	Holiday Break (No School)

JANUARY

Monday, January 4:	Classes Resume
Tuesday, January 12:	BOE Meeting at Jr./Sr. HS Cafeteria, 6 pm
Wednesday, January 13:	PTO Meeting, 6 pm at Rockwell
Monday, January 18:	Martin Luther King Day (No School)
January 26 - 29:	Regents Exams
Friday, January 29:	HS End of 3rd Marking Period | 1/2 Day Wheeler/Rockwell, Superintendent's Conference Day

Important!

Dates and times are subject to change. Please see our website calendar for the most accurate information.



FOLLOW TO STAY CONNECTED!

@OnondagaCSD on Facebook and Instagram!

Created by: CiTi pr Center for Instruction, Technology & Innovation

Non-discrimination Policy: The Onondaga Central School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs, activities, employment, and admissions; and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies: Joseph Sterbank, compliance officer/coordinator, at jsterbank@onondagacsd.org, 315-552-5001, 4466 S. Onondaga Road, Nedrow, NY 13120. Inquiries concerning the application of the Onondaga Central School District nondiscrimination policies may also be referred to the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR), Lyndon Baines Johnson Department of Education Bldg. 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20202, telephone (800) 421-3481 or email ocr@ed.gov.
Any parent who believes his or her child has been denied the benefits of an appropriate education as a result of discrimination based on disability should contact the Superintendent of Schools. Moreover, any person who believes his or her rights have been violated should contact the Superintendent of Schools.