

Oakdale Newsletter

Publication Date: May 2025

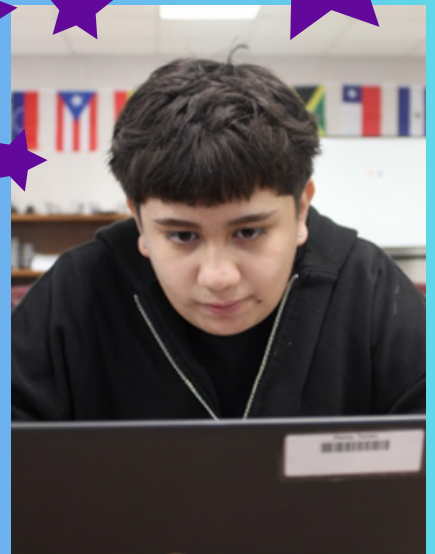
Designed by: Kaylee Barnett

GROWING AT OAKDALE

Do you remember your 6th-grade self? Were you different from how you are now? Maybe you were different in looks, goals and academic focus, but we have all grown in our time spent at Oakdale. "I think one thing that has changed about me is my involvement in school," says Adilene Orrala. "I joined track and cross country, I tried to go to any football games and basketball games, and I think I am more social with other people. I think being more involved in school has helped me make new friends and has been fun to do for my last year at Oakdale."

Another example of someone who grew is Tavian Flores. When asked how he improved academically, he answered, "When I first started 6th grade, I was not taking school seriously. I did not do my homework and would often turn in my assignments late. But over time, I realized that my grades now matter for high school and college. So I tried and put effort into boosting my grades." This is also a good example of becoming more responsible over the years.

Lastly, when asked what goal she accomplished this year, Aylin Lopez answered, "These past two years I have become more comfortable with speaking English, and I understand my classes much more." These students demonstrate how we have all changed and improved since we started middle school. Did you change throughout your middle school years? ~Lindley Ayala



FINAL GOODBYE

Do you find high school scary? This month, Oakdale's very own 8th graders are going off to high school. There are many different people with many different opinions. Some people are scared to go to high school, but some are looking forward to it. For example, Emily Ponce has been here since 6th grade and she says, "I'm very nervous, but at the same time I'm very excited to go to high school because it's a new chapter in my life where I get to meet new people and learn new things."

Some people feel indifferent about going to high school and that's also very normal. There are so many reasons why one would feel excited or nervous to go to high school. People have been in middle school for a long time and have had many experiences that make them want to stay. "Some memories that I got from Oakdale that make me not want to leave are always having my friends, they always make every moment unforgettable. Along with the teachers that always support and help me become a better person," said Alvaro Mejia.

This change is really big, not only for the kids, but also the teachers because they are watching the kids they taught for the past year going off to high school. I can almost guarantee you that most teachers are either proud or sad to see their students moving onto another chapter of their lives. "I started the year thinking this was my last year teaching, I was going to have to find another career, but this 8th grade class rekindled my love for teaching. The kids in this class are some of the best I've taught. I will miss this 8th grade class, but I'm happy to see them growing," shared Mrs. Turner. ~Betzy Alamos



OAKDALE MUST-HAVES

Middle school must-haves are so important to last you the whole day. Everyone in school has at least one thing in their backpack or on them to last 7 hours. It is so important, even if it is something as simple as school supplies. You do not ever want to show up to school empty handed. Do you ever wonder what students are bringing to help with their day? Well I do, so I decided to interview two students to get a couple different opinions.

The first person I talked to was Haven Worsham. "For my middle school must-haves, I always bring 1-2 perfumes in my backpack because I feel way more confident knowing that I smell good and it usually brings compliments! Another one would be having the right friends. My friends made middle school so much more fun than I expected it to be because they made every moment memorable. It's also good to bring snacks if you ever get hungry!"

I then interviewed Christina Fogle, she said, "I like to bring extra must-haves because something might go wrong during the day or you could lose an item in your backpack. One important thing I ALWAYS remember to bring is a water bottle, especially when I have PE for first hour. Some other essentials for me that I bring to Oakdale are ChapStick, a hoodie, extra pencils, and extra erasers, because those are items that I focus on mainly during school time. I also like to bring things that make me feel clean. I don't ever wanna go through a whole day smelling bad, so those must-haves are hand sanitizer, perfume, and lotion." These are examples of what these girls' must-haves are at Oakdale. What are some of your must-haves? ~Kaylee Barnett



PENNY WARS!

The Penny Wars fundraiser was a combined effort between Coach Phung and Coach Aguilar. The coaches wanted a fun new way to do a fundraiser that would help the spirit teams get new uniforms and warmups for our upcoming season. The Penny Wars lasted from May 5th to May 18th. The homeroom with the most amount of points won donuts for their whole class. Pennies added points for each homeroom and nickels, dimes, and quarters dropped their totals.

I asked Coach Phung why her and Coach Aguilar chose penny wars for their fundraiser. "We thought that the homeroom competition would be a great motivator for students to want to actively participate and create some fun mischief for other homeroom teachers. We fully appreciate everyone's support during our fundraiser." The Penny Wars have been very exciting for the students. At times, it has also been very chaotic with the students trying to sabotage the other homerooms.

Mrs. Turner was originally in the lead, but then everyone targeted her and sabotaged her. "I'm not that upset about being sabotaged, but I think it is very sweet that my students are upset about it. It's even sweeter that students that are not even in my homeroom are upset about it. I'm glad that we are raising money for the spirit teams because the cheer and dance uniforms are very expensive." Spirit teams counted the pennies from each homeroom every Friday. If you contributed to the fundraiser, your generosity and participation were very much appreciated! ~Lilliana Barraza

CLASS MEMORIES



Have you ever wondered what other people have experienced that are now memories? Then this article is for you! Memories can impact people in many ways, whether it is building relationships or helping others. Memories can also influence the way we act and our thoughts, but they can also affect us positively. Memories can also inspire others if someone has shared their memories with others.

I interviewed two 8th graders, Alvaro Mejia and Amy Venegas. I asked Alvaro for one of his favorite class memories and this is what he replied with, "In History class this year in 8th grade I became friends with people who always help and motivate each other and we always have fun together." This can impact/influence others to try and help or motivate the people who really need it. I also asked Amy Venegas what her favorite class memory was and this was her response, "My favorite class memory is in 5th hour Spanish laughing with my friends, especially with Alvaro while pronouncing words in Spanish, because it can sometimes sound a little weird." These kinds of memories can help with building relationships with others.

Memories can impact people in so many ways. When Alvaro said that he became friends with people who help and motivate you, that is an example of how memories can really help with who you become and can influence you in so many ways. Similarly, Amy said that her favorite memory is laughing with her friends that can really help her build a better and a closer relationship with her friends. While these are all memories now, they will become stories one day and the people who hear these stories might do the same to help others and build better quality relationships. These memories also affect the way we act and our thoughts so we need to surround ourselves with people who will help build us up. ~Keily Coram



SCHOOL RIVALRIES

Kirra Deal believes that school rivalries are incredibly exciting because when we compete against another school, our team demonstrates a strong sense of school spirit. Whether it is football, volleyball, or any other sport, our school always gives its best effort. "I love watching Oakdale play against other schools because it adds more character to the games and makes them more interesting than when Oakdale plays solo," expressed Kirra Deal. In team rivalries, Oakdale shines because we are persistent and keep trying, which makes the games truly enjoyable.

Other than all of those reasons previously given about why we are the best in school rivalries, Maci Mack has some other thoughts about it. Maci thinks that it is exciting to watch Oakdale play against other teams because it makes the games enjoyable. "I believe our team is better, not because the opposing team is lacking, but because Oakdale students who participate in games like football bring a lot of enthusiasm. Even if Oakdale doesn't win, we always try our best in every game and practice diligently," shared Maci.

Lastly, Timothy Dabney agrees with Kirra and Maci. He believes that Oakdale is the best because we are persistent and continue to try, even when things get tough. "Oakdale doesn't give up!" said Timothy. Oakdale is very tactical during games, and even if all their hard work and practice does not lead to a victory, the Oakdale Patriots keep preparing for the next game by using the lessons learned from their previous performances to improve themselves. ~Ava Hurshman

MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health is a critical component of overall well-being, especially for students navigating the pressures of academic life. Schools are increasingly recognizing their role in supporting the mental health of their students. Integrating mental health awareness and resources into the school environment can lead to a more positive and productive learning atmosphere. This support includes providing access to counseling services, implementing mental health education programs, and training staff to recognize and respond to students in distress. By prioritizing mental health, schools can help students develop the resilience and coping skills necessary to succeed academically and personally.

Students facing mental health challenges often struggle with feelings of being overwhelmed and isolated. Abigail Simmons emphasizes the importance of perseverance and seeking support, stating, "No matter what you do, always push through because if you miss a lot of work, you'll get even more behind and you'll be even more stressed. So just always keep pushing even if it is hard, because hard times don't last forever. Try to keep in mind the good memories or if you have something to look forward to, always think of those things instead of negative thoughts. Remember that you can always ask for help and that there are always people here for you, whether that's teachers, peers, or guardians." This highlights the significance of resilience, positive thinking, and the availability of a strong support system within the school community.

Many schools are actively working to improve mental health support for their students. Mrs. Thomas points out the resources available in Arkansas schools, saying, "Thanks to Arkansas laws, every school building has a counselor. Oakdale has three counselors who help with mental health concerns, school problems, and friendship issues. They ensure families have what they need and keep things confidential unless they must tell someone to keep a person safe." This demonstrates the commitment to providing accessible mental health service and ensuring student safety and well-being. By prioritizing mental health, schools can create a more nurturing and effective learning environment for all students. ~Zuleimy Nava



MAKEUP, HAIR, & BEAUTY

Many teenage girls find hair and makeup interesting, and I am one of them. Who does not like to get up in the morning to look and feel good for school? Certain facial and hair products are very popular, and I would like to get opinions by asking other girls what their favorite products to use are. It could be Fenty Beauty or the Olaplex hair treatments... let's find out!

"My favorite makeup product is ELF because their primer is very good. Also, their eyebrow gel, brushes, and sponges work spectacularly. Another favorite makeup brand is Malani Cosmetics. Their blush and concealers are excellent because they give a smooth application. The two-faced concealers and foundations work wonders. They give you a smooth base and provide full coverage," shared Maya Sierra.

"My favorite hair product is gel because it makes controlling and styling hair easier. I get a lot of my hair inspiration from TikTok. My top favorite hairstyle is curls because they are easy to do and stylish. I get a haircut every month, but I only cut my ends to let my hair grow longer. My hair goals are to have long, shiny hair and not have split ends," expressed Josslyn Agulair. What are your favorite beauty products? ~Esmerie Salinas