

Ottawa Area Center Parent Link

January 15, 2026



OAC Administrators

JoAnne Thorsen

Director

Julia Plaggemeyer

Assistant Director

Chelsea Dykstra

Assistant Director



Ottawa Area Staff



**Click Above for OAC
Website**

Important Upcoming Dates at OAC

- January 21 & 28 Early Dismissal
 - January 19 - No School for Students or Staff
 - January 23 - No School Students - All Staff PD Day
 - January 26-30 - Winterfest
 - January 27 - Winterfest Spirit Day - Wear your Favorite Color Day
 - January 29 - Winterfest Spirit Day - Wear Flannel Day
-

🔊 Penny War Winners Announcement

Thank you to all the classrooms who participated in this year's Penny War. Everyone who involved including the students brought so much energy and fun to the competition, and we truly appreciate everyone's involvement.

We're excited to announce our top three classes:

🥇 **1st Place:** Mike Joynt's Class

🥈 **2nd Place:** Jackie Burdo's Class

🥉 **3rd Place:** Kim Boelema's Class

We will be connecting with each of these classrooms to decide **how they would like to be celebrated**, ensuring their reward feels meaningful and fun for their students.

\$288 was raised, and the funds will be used to celebrate the top 3 classrooms and fund future student incentives.

Thank you again to all staff and students for making this event a success!



✎ Reporting Student Absences

If your student will be absent from school, please **call both Dean Transportation and the school office at 616-738-8960** to let us know.

When you notify the school, please **include the reason for the absence**.

If your student is out due to illness, please tell us whether they are experiencing **vomiting, diarrhea, or a fever**.

During cold and flu season, our nurses are required to **report illness numbers to the Health Department**, so your information helps us keep our school community healthy.

Thank you for your help and cooperation!

School Closure Information

☁ Winter Weather Closure Reminder ❄



As winter weather settles in, we want to share important information about weather-related closures:

✎ Transportation Updates:

- If your local school district is closed due to inclement weather, Dean Transportation will not provide service for students in that district.
- However, parents may choose to transport their students to OAC if their local district is closed but OAC remains open.
- The OAC will remain open even if some districts within our boundaries are closed.

✎ Closure Decisions:

- The OAISD Superintendent makes the final decision to close OAC in collaboration with Dean Transportation and local school districts.
- OAC closures will be communicated through Infinite Campus Messenger: phone calls, and text messages.
- OAC Closure will also be shared on our social media.

✎ Local School District Closures:

- OAC does not notify parents if individual local school districts close.
- We recommend subscribing to your local school district's notification system or signing up for Wood TV8's alerts to stay informed about district-specific closures.

✎ Stay Connected:

- Please ensure your email and phone numbers are up-to-date with our office so you don't miss these important alerts.

Thank you for your attention as we work together to navigate the winter season safely! 🌨

📷 Photo & Video Opt-Out Forms

Each year, Ottawa Area Center families have the opportunity to opt out of photo, video, or media publication for their student.

Throughout the school year, we love to highlight student learning, community outings, and special activities through photos and videos used in school publications, social media, newsletters, and

promotional materials.

If you do not want your student to be photographed or videotaped, please complete and return the [Opt-Out Form](#).

- A separate form is needed for each student in your family.
- Forms are valid for the 2025-2026 school year only and must be renewed each year.

If you're comfortable with your student being included in photos and videos, no action is needed.

Thank you for your continued support as we celebrate our students and their amazing experiences here at Ottawa Area Center!

Flu & Cold Season Reminder 🧑🏻

Flu and cold season is here! Please help us keep our students and staff healthy by following these illness guidelines from our [Parent Handbook](#):

Students should **stay home or will be sent home** if they have:

- A fever over **100.4°F** (must be fever-free for 24 hours without medication before returning)
- **Vomiting** (1 time at school or 2 times in 24 hours) or **diarrhea** (3 times in 24 hours or 2 times at school)
- **Unexplained rash** or **open sores with drainage**
- **Persistent cough** that affects learning
- **Contagious conditions** such as pink eye, strep throat, chicken pox, impetigo, head lice, or COVID-19

➡ **Note:** COVID-19 is now treated as a regular respiratory illness. Students may return when symptoms are improving and they've been fever-free for 24 hours.

Thank you for helping us keep everyone healthy and learning together!

Ottawa Area Center Volunteers

All volunteers must complete the volunteer form and undergo **a background check** before helping in a classroom, joining any school outing, attending school events during the school day, or taking a field trip.

The background check can take **3–5 days** to process, so please turn in your forms to the office or your child's teacher **well before** the date you plan to volunteer.

This process must be completed every school year.

If you'd like volunteer forms sent home in your child's backpack, please contact the office.

[Volunteer Form](#)

Parent Resources

Zeeland Recreation Adaptive Open Swim

adaptive OPEN SWIM

All Ages

Our Adaptive Family Open Swim program provides a welcoming and inclusive environment where people of all abilities can enjoy unstructured pool time with their families. This program is designed to support individuals with disabilities or adaptive needs as they explore, play, and enjoy the water at their own pace in a comfortable and encouraging setting. Lifeguards are on duty to ensure safety and adaptive equipment are available for participants who may benefit from them. Parents, guardians, or caregivers are encouraged to join participants in the water at no additional charge and are responsible for offering any personal support their family member may need. Participants should bring a swimsuit, towel, and any preferred personal flotation devices.

- **Registration:** Not required - Just show up!
- **Cost:** \$3 per adaptive participant | Caregivers swim for free | Included in [Fitness Memberships](#) | Free for current Swim Lesson participants
- **Dates:** Saturdays | Jan 10, 24, Feb 7, 21, Mar 7, 21
- **Time:** 11:00 AM-12:30 PM
- **Location:** Zeeland Recreation - East Warm Pool



Leadlight Counseling

Leadlight Counseling is a West Michigan private practice dedicated to providing compassionate, evidence-based mental health care. Our licensed clinicians and counseling interns create a safe and supportive space where students and families can find hope, healing, and practical tools for growth.

We partner with schools to make mental health care more accessible. Our services include: Weekly or biweekly therapy sessions tailored to each student's needs. Support for children, teens, and families, as well as adults and couples when family support is needed. Care for a wide range of concerns including anxiety, depression, stress, grief, trauma, behavioral challenges, relationship issues, and life transitions.

[Leadlight Flyer](#)

[AutPlay Flyer](#)

[Leadlight Referral Form](#)

♥ Need Help with Food or Basic Needs?

We understand that times can be challenging, and some families may be experiencing food insecurity or other basic needs concerns. If your family could use some support, there are resources available:

Option 1: 211 Helpline

Call 211 or visit www.call-211.org for free and confidential assistance with food, housing, utilities, and other community resources.

Option 2: CarePortal

Contact Michelle Brothers here at Ottawa Area Center, and she can help connect you with local resources that can provide additional support.

Option 3: [Feeding America Interactive Tool](#)

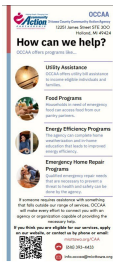
Option 4: [Community Action House - Food Club](#)

Option 5: [The Mobile Food Pantry](#)

Please don't hesitate to reach out — help is available, and you're not alone. ♥

OCAA - Weatherization Program

Please see the flyer below for more information!



English Version - OCCAA Information

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1we25P-64i7ukf9eHwgDauKKzeNinyLX/view?usp=sharing>

Spanish Version - OCCAA Information

OAC Social Work/OCSN Parent Resources

This is your one stop location for parents/guardians to go for community supports and resources. Please check out this resource at [Social Work/OCSN Resource Warehouse](#). Bookmark this resource on your computer and refer back often. It will be continually updated with fresh and new information.

Disclaimer:

All outside resources and links featured in this newsletter are provided for informational purposes only. Ottawa Area Center does not endorse, sponsor, or assume any responsibility for the content, accuracy, or reliability of these resources. Please use your discretion when accessing and utilizing any external materials.

Important Links

[OAC Student Handbook - Click Here](#)
[2025-2026 OAC Calendar - Click Here](#)

2025-2026 School Hours

Full Day – 8:33am-3:05pm

½ Day – 8:33am-11:50am

Early Dismissal – 8:33am-2:05pm

Student AM Bussing begins at 8:23am

Student PM Bussing begins at 2:55pm

Early Dismissal Bussing begins at 1:55pm

1/2 Day Bussing begins at 11:40am



About Us

Email: bseymour@oaisd.org

Website: www.oaisd.org/schools/ottawa-area-center

Location: [10160 96th Avenue, Allendale, MI, USA](#)

Phone: [\(616\)738-8960](tel:(616)738-8960)

Facebook: facebook.com/OttawaAreaCenter/



Brenda Seymour

Brenda is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters