

OTHELLO SCHOOL DISTRICT
VISION
Where Everyone Grows SD

APRIL 2022

www.OthelloSchools.org

STATE CHAMPS!

Othello High School's competition drill team placed first in the state in the Hip Hop category.

This story and much more inside!

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Facilities Needs Still a Primary Focus

February's bond election showed that voters in Othello School District weren't quite ready to support investment in much-needed school facility upgrades. But the need for expansion and modernization of Othello's school facilities is not going away. "Our schools have grown," said Superintendent Pete Perez. "Growth requires us to invest in our facilities. The only way we can do that is with local investment by our community."

The measure on the February 8 ballot received 46 percent approval. It would have provided funding to replace the OHS 600 wing and add 11 additional classrooms. McFarland Middle School would have been expanded to accommodate 6th grade students, and gyms would have been added to Lutacaga, Hiawatha, and Scootney Springs - as well as a new competition gym at OHS. Finally, a much-needed food services central warehouse was planned.

The district has not decided how to proceed. "We need to hear more from our stakeholders before deciding how to approach a future bond ask," said Perez. Events are being planned to gather community feedback and share information about the current facilities needs in the district.

"We want to thank the workgroup that helped us identify needs and develop a very cost-effective plan to address them," said Perez.

Facilities issues that need to be addressed

Elementary overcrowding: All of Othello's elementary schools are over 100 percent of designed capacity. A cost-effective solution is needed to relieve overcrowding.

High School Security/Overcrowding: Othello High School is overcrowded, and the open campus is a security risk. The 600 wing building has outlived its expected life span and is no longer adequate for modern education needs. Eleven portable buildings are in use and the main gym cannot accommodate the entire student body for events.

Facility Equity: Our elementary facilities do not provide an equitable experience for all students. Lutacaga, Hiawatha, and Scootney Springs need dedicated gymnasiums to improve building function and program options.

Food Services Needs: Demands on our food services department have grown and they need a central warehouse facility for storage and distribution.



Help us reach you better!

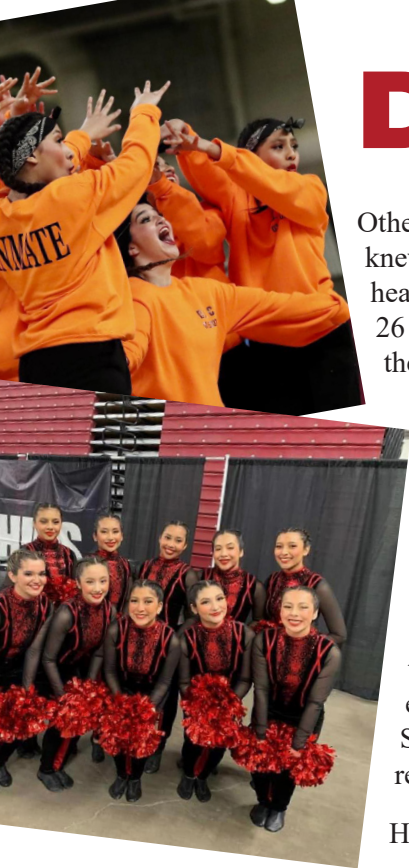
Othello School District is committed to ensuring that we are doing our best to keep our community informed about our schools. Your participation and input are important to us!

Please take a few minutes to take our short communications survey. The information you provide will help us make sure that we allocate time and other resources to the appropriate methods to keep you connected to Othello's schools.



Please scan the QR code to the left or visit www.OthelloSchools.org/CommunicationsSurvey





DANCE CHAMPIONS!

Othello High School's competition drill team knew they faced tough competition when they headed to the state competition held on March 26 in Yakima. The teams they would meet at the Sun Dome were full of dancers with more experience. Many competitor schools were larger, with more resources and better training opportunities. Our Huskies didn't let those thoughts get in their way.

The OHS drill team fought to first place in the Hip Hop category and placed second in Pom category. When the team left town on the 25th, they were given a first-responder escort through town, with lights and sirens. Similar fanfare greeted the team on their return.

Head coach, Anna Martinez, had high praise

for the team. "These girls work hard. Our season isn't just a few months. We started training for this back in November, and they worked almost every day, starting at 5 a.m. to be the best. Their dedication is amazing and there isn't a more deserving team out there." Martinez also said "the team performed very, very well. They danced their hearts out. They represented Othello very well."

The drill team's win was a historic one for both the team and the school. "These kids accomplished something in Othello dance team history that has never been done before. They won state academic, they won the Hip Hop category, and earned a 'superior' ranking, which is the highest awarded.

Othello High School is planning to honor the team at an upcoming assembly.



Scan the QR code, or visit [YouTube.com/OthelloSchoolDistrict](https://www.youtube.com/OthelloSchoolDistrict) to watch the competition drill team's winning hip hop performance!

Snow Makeup Days Added to Calendar

Earlier this school year, the weather caused three school closure days. The district has announced that these dates will be made up on May 27, June 13, and June 14. The last day of school and McFarland Middle School's promotion day have moved to June 14.

May 27 was originally built into our calendar as a potential snow makeup day.

OHS & DOHS Graduation Dates

The addition of two school days in June does not affect graduation ceremony dates for Othello High School or Desert Oasis High School.

OHS will celebrate their graduation on June 3rd in Huskie Stadium.

DOHS' ceremony will be held on June 6 in Huskie Stadium.

Scootney 3rd Grade Student Organizes Campus Cleanup Group

Scootney Springs third-grade student, Mairin Posey, saw a problem at her school. Garbage. Lots of garbage on the playground, and it made her sad. Mairin was spurred to action. She created what has become known as the Trash Team, an informal group of students who use their Friday lunch recess to pick up trash on the playground.

Mairin said that the cleanup helps her feel proud of her school, but she wishes others would feel the same. "We shouldn't be just throwing trash on the ground," she said. "Just wait until you find a trash can and throw it away."



Student Board Representatives Take Othello to National Stage

Othello School District’s student representatives to the board of directors brought some national-level attention to our district at the National School Board Association annual conference in San Diego.

Elise Garza (OHS) and Consuelo Lamilla-Flores (DOHS) participated on a panel with two representatives from South Whidbey to discuss Authentic student engagement between school boards and students. They were among only 11 student representatives at the conference, bringing school board members from around the country together annually. The pair collaborated with their peers from South Whidbey to create their



Left: Elise Garza
Right: Consuelo Lamilla-Flores

presentation and met with them before the panel discussion at NSBA.

“The panel was the highlight for me,” said Lamilla-Flores. “It was great to share what we’re trying to do to help school boards with students.

“We had quite a few questions about our policies for student reps and what we do to get reps onto our board,” said Garza. The reps were also able to attend other sessions at the conference. “I mostly went to sessions on mental health,” said Garza. “So now I have all these ideas I want to bring back.

“I think I learned a lot more about bringing student voice into school boards,” said Lamilla-Flores. “There are a lot of ideas that I think will help the community a lot with schools.”

OSD Seeks Community Schools Volunteers

COVID shutdowns put the brakes on our community schools programs. Now that restrictions are lifted, we want to bring back these important community education opportunities.

Are you interested in serving on a committee to help develop and provide new community education course ideas? Would you like to volunteer to teach a class? Contact Ed Petersen at epetersen@othelloschools.org or call (509)488-2659.

Carlos Gonzalez Hired as new McFarland Principal



Carlos Gonzalez Jr. will take over the lead administrative position at McFarland Middle School in July. He is filling the seat left by Jessica Schenck, who will begin her role as Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning this summer. Mr. Gonzalez has previously served as both principal and assistant principal of Othello High School and as principal at Clarkston High School.

Carlos has worked closely with Jessica Schenck for the past few years at McFarland as the school has undergone some transformative changes,” said Superintendent Pete Perez. “Transitioning him to the top leadership position at the school makes great sense and will ensure the continuity of that important ongoing work.”

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Upcoming Events

MAY 16 OHS Choir Graduation Concert
7 p.m.
@ McFarland Middle School

MAY 24 MMS Band & Choir Concert
7 p.m.
@ McFarland Middle School

MAY 27 Snow make up day
All classes are on their normal schedule.

JUN 3 OHS Graduation Ceremony
7 p.m.
@ Huskie Stadium

JUN 6 DOHS Graduation Ceremony
7 p.m.
@ Huskie Stadium

JUN 13 MMS Promotion Ceremonies
@ McFarland Middle School