



# TROJAN TIMES

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**Andrea Tuttle**  
Superintendent

## Tuttle's Thoughts

During my 25 years in education, I have been fortunate to be surrounded by progressive leaders who proactively move education to the next level. However, never before have I felt more reactionary than in the last couple of months. I am reacting to and making decisions based on the news of the day. Our Owosso leadership team is consumed each day

with thoughts about how to conclude the 2019-2020 school year, what is in store for the future of education, and how do we best prepare to care for our students not only academically, but socially and emotionally. I know my feelings are not unique, but these are definitely uncharted waters. Recently, a dear friend presented me with a book authored by Kobi Yamada titled *Trust Your Crazy Ideas*. In the book, one quote impacted me above all others: "We need to make the world safe for creativity and intuition, for it's creativity and intuition that will make the world safe for us"—Edgar Mitchell. I read it multiple times and thought it was profound, especially given the current predicament of our world.

When I think about our current situation, I am exceedingly proud to be part of an International Baccalaureate World School district where the learning philosophy is based on problem-solving, risk-taking, inquiry, thinking, caring, communicating, reflection, knowledge, being balanced, principled, and open-minded, for in no book did any of us learn the one solution to solving a global pandemic. This time, possibly more than any other in our lifetime, we need to use creativity and intuition and understand the world to find a solution to what is plaguing us. I have told many that I feel like I am a player on a team, but I do not know the rules of the game. It is hard to move forward when we don't know the rules, but we must try and we must trust our crazy ideas. So in today's edition of Tuttle Thoughts, I would like to share some knowns and give you updates on where the district stands with other important topics:

**Food Service:** The OPS Food Service Department, along with our custodians and volunteers have been preparing and distributing 18,000 meals (breakfast and lunch) a week. This represents about 1,150 children each time we distrib-

ute. Food distribution takes place in front of Owosso Middle School on Tuesdays and Fridays from 10 a.m. to noon. Board of Education Treasurer, Marlene Webster organizes the Shiawassee Hope volunteers who have been delivering meals to 150 households on both Tuesdays and Fridays. Our staff has stepped up and continues to work very hard at a trying time to service the families of Owosso. Since the shutdown we have served over 90,000 meals (breakfasts and lunches). I would also like to acknowledge the YMCA and specifically CEO Laura Archer and Senior Program Director Jennifer Lintner for all their work in distributing food during the initial phases of this pandemic. Their partnership has been priceless.

**Remote Learning:** Owosso Public Schools teachers found themselves changing their instructional delivery methods overnight to remote teaching and learning. I am amazed at the genuine concern for students' well-being, creativity of lessons, and different forms of technology that our teachers have embraced to reach their students. A famous child psychologist was quoted, "Teachers are expected to reach unattainable goals with inadequate tools. The miracle is that at times they accomplish this impossible task." Our teachers and students are accomplishing this challenging task.

**Bond Construction:** The construction projects at Owosso's 6th -12th grade campus were moving along ahead of schedule for the 2019-2020 school year due to a mild winter and the outstanding group of contractors working on the project. Then the COVID-19 pandemic forced all projects to a screeching halt with the Governor's "Stay Home. Stay Safe." order. This causes a significant change in plans for the 2020-2021 school year. Before COVID-19, we were on target for the incoming 6th graders to begin the school year in the newly renovated campus. Now, sadly, this will not be our reality, as the project is behind schedule. The incoming 6th- 8th graders will begin and conclude the 2020-2021 school year in the Owosso Middle School building on Water Street. Clark Construction is back to working full force on our campus as of May 7.

**High School Graduation:** With regard to graduation, we continue to wait in anticipation for the time that we can celebrate our seniors in the most profound and worthy way possible. Until the "Stay Home, Stay Safe" order is lifted, all we can do is wait until May 28th when the current order sunsets and we see what the next steps will be. I know people want answers, and so do I, but we are in a holding pattern. An upcoming edition of *Today's Trojans* will highlight all of our seniors and will be mailed to all residents of Owosso and Henderson the week of May 18. This publication will pay

tribute to our seniors and give them a historical piece that includes a message from their leadership about this pandemic. This publication, along with other tributes such as a billboard on M-52 and the letters to seniors, encourage our community to join us in honoring this year's graduates. I would like to thank Wolverine Sign Works and Van Epps & Van Epps for donating the billboard. A tremendous thanks to those of you who have sent letters in for our senior students. We will be distributing those when the time is appropriate to do so.

**U.S. News and World Report Best High Schools Ranking:** Owosso High School consistently earns high rankings in state and national reports such as *Bridge* magazine, the Mackinac Center for Public Policy, and *U.S. News and World Report*. From preschool to high school, Owosso Public Schools' innovative and diverse learning opportunities are complimented by International Baccalaureate instruction that is delivered by an outstanding team of highly-skilled and caring educators who prepare students for academic and personal success. According to *U.S. News and World Report*, Owosso students continue to rank at the top of our county for college readiness index and success on Advanced Placement exams. Owosso High School proudly leads the county in providing students with the greatest number of Advanced Placement and Career and Technical Education courses complimented by a rich tradition of performing arts success. The beautiful thing about Owosso Public Schools is that our curriculum and number of course offerings are extremely diverse to meet the needs of all students to prepare them for success in life.

Last week was Educator Appreciation Week. I want to sincerely thank all of our Owosso team members who serve to not only teach our students the facts they need to know in life, but who encourage them to think and be caring and responsible global citizens. We are fortunate to have an incredible team who genuinely understands the importance of a balanced education and who strive, always, but especially in this time of remote learning, to use their creativity and intuition to make things better, not only educationally, but in the lives of students, parents, and community members. We are with you, we all need to stay #OwossoStrong, and hopefully, come out on the other side better because of our recent life experiences.

Proud to be a Trojan,

*Dr. Andrea Tuttle*  
Superintendent

Owosso Public Schools honors and thanks our employees who have retired this school year. Their dedication to our students, our school district, and our community is appreciated. Please join us in wishing them well!



**Marie Anderson**  
Teacher - Emerson  
33 years of service



**Maureen Cannon**  
Teacher -  
Owosso Middle School  
30 years of service



**Vickie Compton**  
Teacher - Bryant  
17 years of service



**Chris Conrad**  
Custodian III -  
Washington Campus  
23 years of service



**Patricia Coon**  
Teacher -  
Owosso Middle School  
24 years of service



**Fred Fernetto**  
Custodian III -  
Washington Campus  
15 years of service



**Cindy Knight**  
Secretary -  
Owosso Middle School  
26 years of service



**Pam Kurtz**  
Guidance Services -  
Owosso High School  
27 years of service

## Congratulations to these students and all 2020 graduating seniors!

### Owosso High School Highest Honors Seniors Class of 2020



**Avery Peplinski**  
4.4352 GPA  
Parents: Daniel & Jennifer Peplinski  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology or University of Michigan or Washington University Engineering



**Mason Collard**  
4.4304 GPA  
Parents: Jeffrey & Yvette Collard  
University of Michigan Biology



**Lynnae Gilman**  
4.373 GPA  
Parents: Norman & Sheila Gilman  
University of Michigan or Michigan State University Veterinarian



**Kathleen Dignan**  
4.3728 GPA  
Parents: Thomas & Joy Dignan  
Undecided English



**William Scrimger**  
4.3167 GPA  
Parents: Joshua & Mary Scrimger  
University of Michigan Undecided



**Jordan Sowash**  
4.3122 GPA  
Parents: James & Krista Sowash  
University of Michigan-Dearborn Psychology



**Brendan Coffman**  
4.2685 GPA  
Parents: Robert & Tina Coffman  
Grand Valley State University Computer Engineering



**Alexandria Pumford**  
4.244 GPA  
Parents: Robert & Mary Pumford  
Michigan State University Kinesiology



**Abigail Box**  
4.2424 GPA  
Parent: Jennifer Box  
Saginaw Valley State University or Central Michigan University Pre-Med



**Ashtyn Guru**  
4.2236 GPA  
Parents: Satendra & Misty Guru  
Grand Valley State University Nursing



**Hannah Archer**  
4.1911 GPA  
Parents: Jonathan & April Archer  
Michigan State University or Northern Michigan University English major with a photography minor



**Jacob Evon**  
4.1581 GPA  
Parents: Timothy & Michelle Evon  
Michigan Tech University Civil Engineering



**Emily Teunis**  
4.152 GPA  
Parent: Greg & Naomi Teunis  
Michigan State University Zoology or Biology



**Alexander Dallas**  
4.1102 GPA  
Parents: Doug & Elaine Dallas  
Central Michigan University or National Guard Neurology



**Allie Langdon**  
4.0925 GPA  
Parents: Eric & Lindsay  
Grand Valley State University Education



**Andrew Savage**  
4.0789 GPA  
Parents: Andrew & Lindsey Savage  
Grand Valley State University or Central Michigan University Accounting & Business



**Hannah Walters**  
4.0647 GPA  
Parents: Steven Walters & Kari Walters  
Undecided Entertainment Arts: Animation



**Sarah Horger**  
4.0574  
Parents: Mary & Krishna Horger  
Michigan State University Integrative Biology



**Samantha Randall**  
4.0565 GPA  
Parents: Tom & Karrie Randall  
Lansing Community College or Michigan State University Electrician or Veterinary



**Olivia Carlton**  
4.049 GPA  
Parents: Scott & Julie Carlton  
Mott Community College Sign Language Interpretations



**Grace Basso**  
4.0279 GPA  
Parents: Dan & Tami Basso  
Grand Valley State University Illustration



**Maya Manuel**  
4.0231 GPA  
Parents: Jalal Manuel & Nessrine Manuel  
Michigan State University Business & Marketing



**Leah Zaleski**  
4.02 GPA  
Parents: Curtis & Stacie Zaleski  
University of Michigan Pre-Law



**Autumn Merrihew**  
4.0184 GPA  
Parents: Cynthia Merrihew & Sharon Dinkins  
Baker College and Michigan State University Pre-Veterinary Medicine

### 2020 Lincoln High School Top 5 Students



**Jenna McMaster**  
Parents/ Guardians: Taylor and Melissa McMaster  
Saginaw Valley State University Art History



**Dustin Moore**  
Parents: Rane Moore and Brandon Knowlton  
Plans to work in manufacturing and then attend Lansing Community College or Baker College to study Auto Mechanics



**Haley Kenyon**  
Parents: Heather and Michael Kenyon  
Mott Community College Pre-Medicine



**Justin Soldan**  
Parents: Jamieann and Tammy Good  
Plans to work in manufacturing then attend trade school



**Cole Comstock**  
Parent: Kristine Wardrop  
Plans to work in manufacturing then attend Lansing Community College to study Forensic Science

**Susan Weaver**  
Teacher -  
Central  
26 years of service



**Edward Van Strate**  
Skilled Trades  
Plumber  
25 years of service



**Clara Pitt**  
Administrative  
Assistant -  
Administration  
23 years of service



**Joyce Mahlzhahn**  
Bus Driver  
25 years of service

