

Morgan

Continued from 8

staff, students, families and community stakeholders; develop a clear, concise vision for the building moving forward; and support staff in the building to ensure students are supported in their learning. Overall, I will strive to create an effective, collaborative, and caring environment in which all OCHS students know they are valued and are ready for college or the career of their choosing after graduation.

In my free time, I enjoy training bird dogs, hunting, fishing, and spending time with family and friends. I am an avid sports fan and outdoorsman, as well.

Something interesting about me is that I learned to drive on a Farmall H.



Michelle Motsinger

My name is Michelle Motsinger, and I have been hired as the sixth grade English Language Arts teacher at Osage City Middle School. This will be my 28th year as a teacher.

I am a 1991 graduate of the University of Saint Mary in Leavenworth, with a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education, holding a K-9th grade teaching license. I also hold a master's degree in Teaching and Learning from Avila University in Kansas City, Mo. This fall, I am completing required coursework from ESU for adding a Reading Specialist certification endorsement to my teaching credential.

I have been married to my husband, Jay, who works at Foley Caterpillar, since 2019. We have lived in Burlingame since 2021, but are in the process of relocating to Osage City. We each have two adult children from previous marriages, Nick and Jessica Motsinger, graduates of Atchison High School, and Joey and Jessica Lewis, gradu-

ates of Burlingame High School. We are currently raising two of our granddaughters, Cami Boyle, who is 11 and will attend Burlingame Junior High this fall as a sixth grader, and Raivyn Smith, who is 7 and will attend Osage City Elementary as a second grader. We also have three other grandchildren, Ryker, 9, Harper, 4, and Hayden, 1 month. We also have a slobbery Bassett Hound, Maggie, who has been with us since she was a puppy in 2017.

I previously taught at Most Pure Heart of Mary Catholic School in Topeka, and Burlingame Elementary, leaving in 2016 to teach five years of fifth grade at Pauline South. I returned to Burlingame the past five years, teaching some middle school ELA and science, fifth grade, and for the past four years, I worked there as the Title I reading interventionist.

My plans for this year include diving into the sixth grade ELA content and completing my final ESU class, focusing on reading intervention in grades K-12. I am excited to be teaching units about mythology, chocolate, and the Titanic as part of the Amplify reading curriculum. I am looking forward to becoming part of this learning community.

In my free time, I enjoy reading and relaxing, when I'm not spending time with my grandkids. I also enjoy camping and traveling with my husband, when we get the chance to get away.

Something interesting about me is that I have had Scranton, Lyndon, Burlingame, and soon, Osage City addresses. I spent some time this summer working early mornings at Casey's in Burlingame, confusing many students who were surprised to see me there. Also, both my stepdaughter and my daughter are named Jessica Lyn. Weird coincidence, huh? Both my son and my stepson have been or are currently volunteer firefighters as well.

Melinda Patterson

My name is Melinda Patterson, and I have been hired as principal at Osage City Elementary School. This will be my 28th year in education, 17th year as an administrator.



I am a graduate of Kansas State University, with a degree in Elementary Education. I also hold a master's degree in Educational Administration from Emporia State University.

I live near Auburn. I have two children, a son, Brady, who is finishing his last semester at Pitt State University and lives in Pittsburg, and a daughter, Raegan, who is a paraprofessional at Auburn Elementary School and lives in Auburn. I also have a Himalayan cat named Poe, a short-hair cat named Daisy, a rat terrier named Harlie, and a rat terrier/Chihuahua mix named Tito.

Previously, I was the principal at Auburn Elementary School for 12 years. Before that, I held the position of middle school principal at Eisenhower Middle School in Topeka. Before I became a principal, I taught middle school math and science at the School of the Magdalen in Wichita, and Chase Middle School in Topeka, and held the positions of middle school curriculum coordinator at Chase Middle School in Topeka, and student achievement coordinator at Highland Park High School in Topeka.

My hope for the coming year is to build strong relationships with our students, staff, families and community, while continuing the great work already taking place at Osage City Elementary School. My goal would be for every child who walks through our doors to feel safe, valued, supported, and excited to learn.

In my free time, I enjoy traveling in my RV and exploring new places. I like to hike, kayak, bike, explore trails in my Jeep and on my four-wheeler, garden, and do pretty much anything having to do with the outdoors. I also enjoy music and attending concerts when I can.

Something interesting about me is that I like

to try and learn about new things, and I enjoy meeting new people. To relieve stress, I like to spend time in my craft room, sewing and creating.



Allison Railsback

My name is Allison Railsback, and I have been hired as the agriculture teacher and FFA advisor at Osage City High School. This will be my seventh year as a teacher.

I am a 2020 graduate of Fort Hays State University, with Bachelor of Science degrees in Agriculture and Education. I also hold a Master of Business Administration degree in Agribusiness from Fort Hays State University.

Originally from the Miller area, I recently moved from Prairie View to Lebo.

I previously taught agriculture education and advised FFA at Scott Community, Russell, and Southern Valley (Nebraska) high schools.

As the first full-time agriculture teacher and FFA advisor at Osage City High School in 20 years, my goals are to continue growing the agricultural education and FFA program that Mr. Smith and Mr. Rice started, connecting students of all backgrounds with agriculture, strengthening community partnerships, and helping students develop leadership and career skills while finding success at district and state FFA competitions.

In my free time, I enjoy attending livestock shows, visiting Kansas attractions, and spending time with my niece and nephews.

Some other things to know about me are that I was active in Osage County 4-H growing up; earned the American FFA Degree; served as a Kansas FBLA state officer for two years; and have coached an FFA state champion individual, team, or chapter-level competition in each of my previous six years of teaching.



Josh Yoho

My name is Josh Yoho, and I have been hired as the director of choirs for grades six through 12 at USD 420 Osage City. This will be my 18th year as a teacher.

I am a 2004 graduate of Washburn University, with a bachelor's degree in Vocal Performance and Music Education. I also hold a master's degree from Kansas State University in Music Education with an emphasis in Choral Conducting.

I live in Topeka, where I was born and raised. I have one sister who lives in Kansas City, and I am an uncle to triplets, Sam, Julia and Sophia. My girlfriend, Nicole, lives in Manhattan and works at Big Lakes.

I really enjoy high school sports, so I am excited to attend games here at OCHS. I especially enjoy watching football and basketball. I am a big fan of KSU, the Kansas City Royals, and the KC Chiefs. I am a member of the National Association for Music Education and also the Kansas Music Educators Association. I am also a member of the American Choral Directors Association and the state chapter (KCD). In addition, I am a founding member and serve on the board of directors for the Kansas Youth Chorale (KYC), a children's choir based in Topeka.

I previously worked at

St. Marys Grade School and St. Marys Junior/Senior High School from 2019 to 2026 and taught vocal music to grades K-12. Before that, I worked in Topeka at State Street Elementary Performing Arts Signature School from 2009 to 2019, teaching general music to grades K-5.

My hope for this year is to provide students with a high-quality choral music experience. My philosophy in a nutshell is 'Engaging their minds and welcoming their hearts.' Singing together in a choir can be a beautiful experience and allows students to work together, create beautiful music, and communicate a message to the listening audience. I am looking forward to working with the students at OCHS, the school play, concerts, music festivals, and making memories with my students. My message to the students is this: All are welcome and all have a place in the choir; If you have never been a part of the choir, and you enjoy singing, consider joining this year.

In my free time, I enjoy swimming, traveling (especially to Lake Burton in Georgia), and playing tennis. Occasionally, you will hear me in the orchestra pit at Topeka Civic Theater playing guitar. I have also been a member of the Topeka Festival Singers since 2003. A hobby that I enjoy is collecting sports cards. I have a big collection of baseball, football and basketball cards.

Something interesting about me is that when I was in college, my choir traveled to New York City and performed Mozart's Requiem at Carnegie Hall. It was truly a memorable experience!

Bond

Continued from 1

of operating multiple buildings had prompted the district to consider consolidation.

"We cannot afford to have elementary schools in every town and have them separated," Flory said in a July interview with WIBW.

The district had said

the bond would increase property taxes by about \$13 per month for each \$100,000 of property valuation. Flory acknowledged before the election that the tax increase would be a deciding factor for some voters.

Scranton Attendance Center was already slated to remain closed regardless of the election's outcome, with those students moved to Overbrook for the 2026-27 school year.

AAA urges bike, e-bike safety as school year approaches

WICHITA — With summer winding down and students preparing to return to school, AAA is encouraging cyclists, e-bike riders and motorists to share the road safely as bicycle traffic increases across Kansas.

The reminder comes as national bicyclist fatalities remain near historic highs. According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, 1,075 bicyclists were killed in crashes involving motor vehicles in 2024, the third-highest annual total on record. Fatalities have increased 73% since 2010. Nearly seven in 10 cyclists killed last year were not wearing helmets.

"Summer is an ideal time to enjoy biking, and more students will soon be biking to school, but safety must always come first," said Shawn Steward, AAA Club Alliance public affairs manager in Kansas. "By following basic safety guidelines and staying alert, drivers and riders can help reduce crashes and save lives. We encourage everyone — cyclists, e-bike users and drivers — to share the road responsibly."

AAA recommends that

bicyclists wear a properly fitted helmet, use lights or reflective clothing when visibility is limited, obey traffic laws, ride with the flow of traffic and remain alert for hazards. Riders are also encouraged to make eye contact with motorists at intersections before crossing.

The organization says e-bike riders should take time to learn how their bicycle accelerates and brakes before riding in traffic. Riders should inspect brakes, tires and batteries regularly, avoid distractions and yield to pedestrians. Parents are encouraged to supervise younger riders and ensure children are using an e-bike that matches their age and experience.

Drivers also play a key role in preventing crashes. Motorists should watch carefully for cyclists at intersections and while turning, leave at least three feet when passing, check mirrors and blind spots before changing lanes or opening vehicle doors, and avoid distracted or impaired driving. Drivers should also remember that e-bikes often travel

faster than traditional bicycles.

The growing popularity of e-bikes has also led to more injuries nationwide. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission reports an estimated 155,200 e-bike-related emergency department visits between 2017 and 2024, along with 310 fatalities.

Under Kansas law, electric bicycles are classified into three categories based on speed and operation. Riders must be at least 16 years old to operate a Class 3 e-bike, which provides pedal assistance up to 28 mph. No statewide minimum age exists for Class 1 or Class 2 e-bikes, and Kansas does not require a driver's license, registration or insurance for e-bikes that meet the state's legal definition.

State law generally allows e-bikes anywhere traditional bicycles are permitted, although local governments, parks and trail operators may adopt additional restrictions. AAA encourages riders and parents to review local rules before heading out and to make safety a priority on every ride.



WE'RE NOT "THE MEDIA"

There's a lot of talk about "the media," the talking heads on cable TV who pander to political views for profit. That's not the news, and it's certainly not this newspaper. Our goal every day is to fully and fairly report the news about this vibrant community and the people who live here.

That's at the heart of American newspapering—preparing timely and insightful reports about what matters most, prepared by hometown journalists who love this town and care about its future.

That's our pledge and our purpose.

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