



We asked Team OSDE to tell us what you're thankful for this year. The response was overwhelming! Apparently there's a lot to be grateful for around here.

Here are all of your responses in no particular order.

Also, see what others in the Oklahoma education community are thankful for this November by following the #GratEDtude campaign on the [OSDE Facebook page](#).

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*I am forever grateful for the opportunity to have served as an employee of the State Department of Education. My career has spanned 28 years with the SDE (half of my life), and it is, "the job that built me."*

*I am thankful for all the outstanding folks with whom I have shared experiences throughout this adventure. I take with me infinite memories, for each path I crossed, an imprint was left on my life.*

*I will miss you all, my SDE family home.*

**Joni Younts, Executive Director, Human Resources**

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*I am thankful for free public education that is available to every child in America.*

**Susan Pinson, Executive Director of Professional Development and Technical Assistance, Educator Effectiveness**

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*I'm thankful for my faith, for my husband and two daughters, for a healthy family, for great friends and co-workers and for the dedication and hard work I see in the people I work with! I have much more, but those are at the top of my long list of blessings!*

**Tonya Pogue, Executive Assistant to the State Superintendent**

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*I am thankful for the wonderful benefits we receive for working at SDE which help keep me and my family well all year long.*

**Sid Smith-McCormick, Assistant Director, Human Resources**

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*I am thankful for my Financial Accounting Staff, Iona, Kathy, Kelly, & Pam.*

*I am thankful for my two new grandsons, Kyler and Eli.*

**Nancy Hughes, Executive Director, Financial Accounting/OCAS/Audits**

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*I am most thankful for my beautiful family; my husband and our three girls, Elizabeth (5), Amelia (3), and Audrey (11 months).*

**Angela Kwok, Project Specialist, Special Education**

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*I am thankful for my family, friends, co-workers, job, good health and Fridays. ☺*

**Shelly Perkins, Coordinator, Educator Effectiveness**

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*I am thankful for my new job here with SDE and My co-workers who have made my transition very easy!*

**Rikki Eichler, Administrative Assistant III, Educator Effectiveness**

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*I'm thankful that in my new position, I have the opportunity to serve public education again. Every day, I'm inspired by the tireless dedication of OSDE leadership and staff members who are working on behalf of this most fundamental principle of democracy—a free public education for all.*

**Steffie Corcoran, Executive Director, Communications**

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*I'm thankful for administrators and teachers in our state's public schools who welcome OSDE support as they work tirelessly to improve academic achievement of all students.*

**Deborah Cornelison, School Support Specialist, School Support**

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*I am thankful for my family, the opportunity to travel the state and meet fantastic instructional leaders, and new friends.*

**Janel Cypert, School Support Specialist, School Support**

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*I am thankful for all of the teachers and staff at our schools that come in early and stay late, work what would typically be a day off – even giving time during the summer, to make sure that our students are safe, healthy and learning in our 21st CCLC programs!*

*I am also grateful for parents and community partners that share their time and talents with our schools. Of course, none of this would be possible without a great SDE team and leadership that truly understands and supports “anywhere and anytime learning” for our students!*

*Or if that is too deep...I can just be thankful for turkey, homemade butterhorn rolls and sweetcorn from Iowa!*

**Sonia Johnson, Executive Director, Parent & Community Engagement and  
21st CCLC**

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*There is always, always, always, something to be thankful for. First and foremost, I am thankful for life and good health, a loving supportive family and friends, etc. I may not have everything I want, but I am thankful I have everything I need.*

**Janet Felton, Compliance Data Finance Specialist, Special Education**

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*I am thankful that “Love is measured in the heart, not in dollars and cents.”*

*I am thankful that God saved my soul, and I belong to him.*

*I’m truly grateful for everything – health, friends, job, shelter, etc.*

**Juanita Davis, Customer Service Representative, Customer Service**

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*I am so thankful for all of the well wishes my Oklahoma colleagues and former students have bestowed on me in the last couple of days after it was announced I had been selected as the President-Elect of ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages). It just touches my heart to be supported in such a warm and thoughtful way.*

*Teaching and giving students the keys to global perspectives through language education has always been my passion, and I have found that working with my professional organizations to promote and support effective programs and teaching is very rewarding from all aspects.*

**Desa Dawson, Director of World Language Education, Instruction**

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*Our FREEDOM!*

**Janet Smith, Certification Specialist II, Teacher Certification**

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*I am extremely thankful to have had the opportunity to spend the last 18 years surrounded by people who genuinely care about each other and being a part of something meaningful.*

*Every position is extremely valuable in this process and it's been a privilege to see people, at all levels, being engaged, involved and committed to accomplishing great things for kids, the community and the future!*

**Heather Butler, Coordinator, School Personnel Records**

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*Good coffee, inspiring conversations, and meaningful work with a team who will do whatever it takes to make a difference for every Oklahoma child.*

**Jeanene Barnett, Ed.D., Executive Director, Curriculum and Instruction**

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*I am thankful for the very idea of Early Intervention! Who knows where some of these kiddos would be without it?*

**Becky McGuire, Transition Resource Coordinator, Special Education**

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*I'm deeply grateful this year for Steffie Corcoran, Deana Silk, Annette Price, Peter Wright, Cory Ingram, Marty Fulk and – for 75 percent of the time – Justin Devero.*

**Phil Bacharach, Chief of Communications and Public Affairs**

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*I am thankful for meaningful relationships and work.*

**Megan Clifford, Education Data Management Office**

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*From my amazing wife, to my family, colleagues and friends, I am thankful to have so many fantastic people in my life.*

**Jeff Smith, Executive Director, Teacher Certification**



**Thank YOU, Team OSDE, for your dedication to public service and hard work!!!**

