



## Schools identify children in need of special services

The Altus Public School District and surrounding districts have an ongoing Child Find System. The purpose of the Child Find System is to find any child or youth that may have a disability that requires special education services, in order to provide them with an appropriate public education. The school districts are looking for those children and youth, ages birth through twenty-one, who are not currently receiving special education and related services.

The school districts will make sure any child or youth who has a disability that requires special education and related services, is provided an appropriate public education. This education will be at no cost to the parents of the child or youth.

Children and youth with disabilities means (as defined by the Oklahoma State Policies and Proce-

dures for Special Education in Oklahoma) those who have hearing impairments, vision impairments, an emotional disturbance, deafness, blindness (or both), specific learning disabilities, intellectual disabilities, multiple disabilities, speech and/or language impairments, physical disabilities, autism, or traumatic brain injuries. In addition, children and youth with any disability which substantially limits a major life activity may receive modifications and accommodations to allow them access to an appropriate education (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended).

Parents, relatives, private agency employees, and concerned citizens are urged to help the Altus School District and surrounding districts find any infant, toddler, child, or youth who may have a disability and need spe-

cial education and related services. The school district will need to know the name, age, date of birth of the child or youth, and the name, address and telephone number of the child's parents or guardians, the possible disability, and any other relevant information to help determine if special education is needed.

Letters and telephone calls are some of the ways the school districts collect the information needed. The information the school districts collect will be used to contact the parents or guardians of the child or youth to find out if the child or youth needs to be evaluated or referred for special education services.

For information, contact the following persons at their local schools:

- Altus Schools, Diane Chowning, 481-3089
- Blair Schools, Kristin Bagwell, 563-2632
- Navajo Schools, Sherrie Webb, 482-7742

- Eldorado School, Dr. Harold Hayes, 633-2219
- Olustee School, Gaylene Freeman, 648-2243
- Duke School, Reesa Darby, 679-3019
- Hollis School, Jennifer McQueen, 688-3450

As part of the child find efforts, the school districts may use screening information, student records, and basic assessment information collected on all children and youth in their districts to help locate those children and youth who have a disability and need special education.

Educational records containing personally identifiable information collected by schools in the identification, location, screening and evaluation of children are maintained in accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Oklahoma State Policies and Procedures for Special

Education in Oklahoma. School districts develop and implement local policies regarding the collection, storage, disclosure, and destruction of confidential student records. Parents may obtain a copy of the local policy from the local school administrator.

The rights of parents and children regarding personally identifiable information in accordance with FERPA are as follows:

- To inspect the student's education records;
- To request the amendment of education records to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's privacy or other rights;
- To consent to disclose education records, except where consent is not required to authorize disclosure;
- To file complaints with the Family Policy Compli-

ance Office, United States Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202, concerning alleged violations of the requirements of FERPA; and

• To obtain a copy of the FERPA policy adopted by the local school district upon request being made to the local school administrator.

Before any major identification, location, or evaluation, schools shall provide notice to parents. Accommodations for other languages or means of communication may be provided upon request. Such notice shall occur at least annually and shall include the rights of parents under FERPA.

The school districts do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, or veteran status.

## Heiser, Wagoner named Interact Students of the Month

Jessica Heiser and Braden Wagoner have been named as the Interact Students of the Month by the members of the Altus Rotary Club. Both are seniors at Altus High School.

Jessica is the daughter of Dan and Shawna Heiser. An Honor Roll student, she holds above a 4.0 grade-point average and serves as vice-president of the National Honor Society. Also vice-president of KAY Klub and active in Student Council, she plays varsity tennis and has been on the Academic Team.

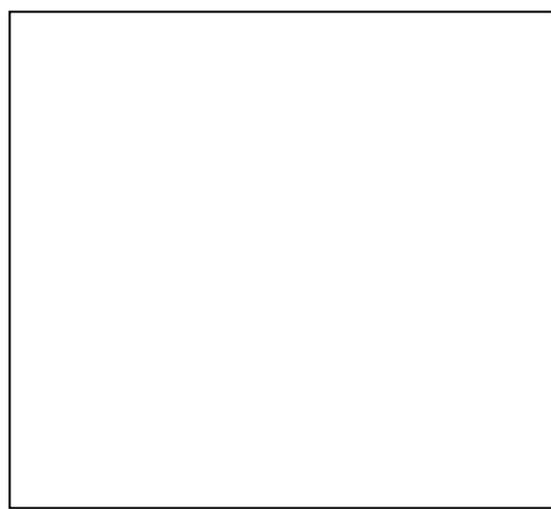
Active in choir, she has been a member of the Sweet 16 Choir, First Ladies Choir, Show Choir, and Chamber Choir. She has participated in three all-school musical productions, and she has been a member of the All-Region Honor Choir. Jessica has also earned superior ratings at choir competitions.

Jessica is also active as an AHS Link Crew Leader, and she was named an AHS Top Dog. She works at Quiznos, where she has been named "Employee of the Month."

A member of First Baptist Church, she has served as a Girls in Action teacher and was selected for Super Supper Youth Leadership Camp two times. She has also served as a God & Country Camp leader and a Junior High Retreat team leader.

An active volunteer, Jessica has spent over 40 hours per year volunteering at community events such as food drives, Breast Cancer Walks, parent-teacher conferences, One-Stop Enrollment, after-school tutoring, and Salvation Army bell-ringing.

She also has helped over nine hours per week at her church, serving food at First Saturday Soup Kitchen, teaching classes, and attending and leading bible studies.

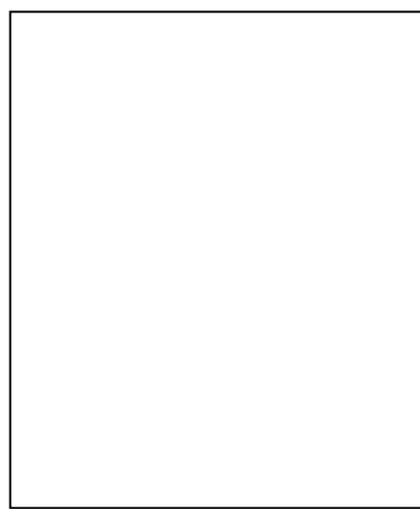


Jessica cites her strongest leadership trait as her heart for others. "I have a huge heart for others, and I always just want to do more and more to help anyone I can in anyway shape or form," she said. "My heart for others extends especially towards younger kids...I think a leader should be interested in bettering the younger generation so they are fully capable of leading once the previous leadership is gone," she added.

With future plans to study Pre-Pharmacy at Southwestern Oklahoma State University, Jessica hopes to be accepted into SWOSU's prestigious College of Pharmacy and in five years earn her Doctorate of Pharmacy. To prepare for this, she has taken advanced placement courses in high school as well as concurrent enrollment in classes at Western Oklahoma State College.

Braden Wagoner is the son of Mike and Janet Wagoner. An Honor Roll student, he has been active in National Honor Society, Varsity Tennis, and Future Farmers of America.

In FFA, Braden has held the offices of President and Reporter. He has participated in the Oklahoma Youth Expo, Jackson County Livestock Show, Blue & Gold Sales, Tulsa and Oklahoma City State Fairs, FFA Alumni



Leadership Camp, State and National Conventions, and the Livestock Judging Team. A Junior State Champion in FFA Sporting Clays, he has also received the Paul Dale "Bud" Leverett Memorial Swine Showmanship Award. Braden was also selected as an AHS Top Dog and as a Ma-

sonic Student of Today. In addition, he has received the Sportsmanship-Leadership Award, the National Honor Roll Award, the Perfect Attendance Award, and the Oklahoma EPAS Scholar Award.

Active in First Baptist Church Youth Group, and Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Braden has at-

Jessica Heiser, left, and Braden Wagoner were named Interact Students of the Month for September by the Altus Rotary Club.

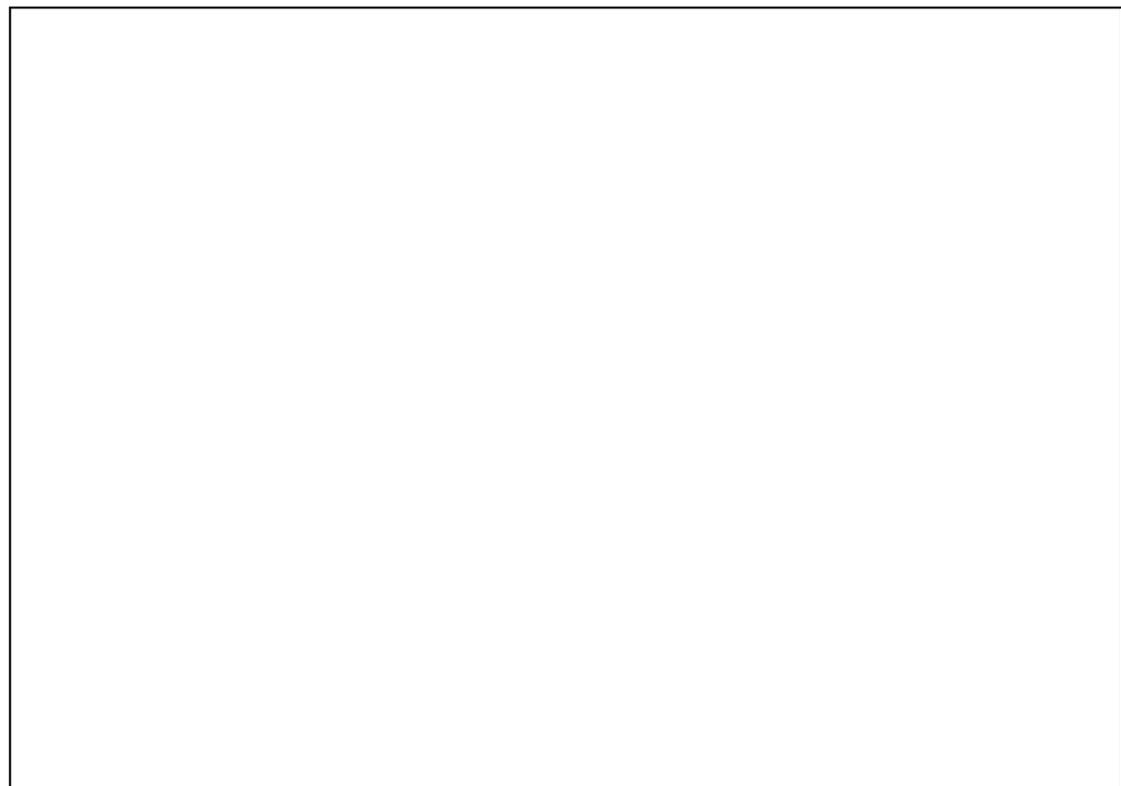
Braden has also been a bell-ringer for the Salvation Army.

An avid hunter and fisherman, he especially loves raising, showing, and breeding pigs.

Braden's strongest leadership trait is his commitment to being a hard worker and an honest person with good, strong morals. "I believe these are important attributes because people will want to be around someone with these qualities and know they will be treated with honesty and respect," he said.

Braden is concurrently enrolled in courses at Western Oklahoma State College, and following high school graduation, he plans to major in Accounting at Oklahoma State University. He hopes to return to Altus and open his own CPA business one day.

## Will Rogers honors Students of the Month



Selected as Students of the Month for August at Will Rogers Elementary School were (front row) William Boren, December Owen, Abriana Renfro, Courtlynn Erb, Korie Beason, Laura Ponce, Cisco Moreno, (middle row) Kylee James, Jose Centeno, DeAndre Bennett, Bethany Garrison, Teena Darden, and Sarah Dowdy. With them are kindergarten teachers Mrs. Courtney Sessions, Mrs. Rhonda Mills, and Mrs. Joyce Frederick. Not pictured are Anabel Valladarez and Elisabet Alanis.