



## Students Welcomed & Celebrated Back to School after Teacher Walkout

All Ponca City Public School students were welcomed back today after returning from two weeks of school closure due to the teacher walkout. Students were met as they arrived outside and inside the buildings with signs, cheering and celebrations in morning assemblies.

Woodlands principal Tim Williams said, "Our students were greeted and welcomed back this morning with teachers wearing party hats, blowing party horns, and giving high fives and hugs. Teachers lined the halls and enthusiastically and noisily welcomed our students back to school. Mrs. Anderson's class went running to her and engulfed her in a group hug when she entered the gym for assembly this morning."

Superintendent Shelley Arrott wrote in an email to all employees saying in part, "Now that the walkout is over, many of us need a time of healing. This movement has been hard on everyone in both positive and negative ways. Our administrators, teachers, staff, parents, students, and community all need some sort of healing."

Arrott continued, "Healing is never a one day event; it is going to take time. However, I believe the challenges and victories of this movement have been a driving force of team building for the district. I have never felt that PCPS has been more of a "TEAM" than we are now."

"The end of the walkout is definitely not the end. It is the beginning of a new found era of advocating for public education in Oklahoma. Thank you for your advocacy for the students of our state and Ponca City Public Schools. We love our students, parents, community and schools, and we are so grateful to live and work in Ponca City, Oklahoma."

*Pictured top left from Union: Teacher Jessica Wyckoff and Willie Wildcat welcoming students in their morning assembly*

*Pictured in middle from Lincoln: Cara Holland, Amy Hollingsworth, Azaria Baker, Tanya Gibson, Aidyn Phillips, Cheryl Nichols, Amy Muegge welcoming students*

*Pictured top right from Woodlands: Teacher Kara Anderson and some of her students*

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