



**OBERLINEIGHTHGRADERS** (above) stayed overnight in Topeka on a field trip, where they got to visit the state Capitol, the Supreme Court building and two museums. They got to meet Rep. Ward Cassidy and Gov. Sam Brownback (below), who shook the hands with (from left) Jeff Juenemann, Luke Koerperich, Tristen Davis, Gatlin Hissong, Quinton Cook and Sierra Hendrickson.

# Taking it to the Capitol steps!

## Students explore museums, government on Topeka field trip

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If ever there was a case for field trips, this is probably it.

The eighth graders from Decatur Community Junior High went to Abilene and Topeka last Monday and Tuesday, where they not only learned about politics and history, but about how the courts work, too.

"We went for the learning experience," said TyLynn Peterson, "and most of us had never been to the Capitol building. We met (state Rep.) Ward Cassidy and (Gov.) Sam Brownback; it was extremely exciting.

"I liked Ward Cassidy (a former principal and teacher). He knew how to make us laugh. We also went to the Supreme Court, and got to make our own case over whether or not we thought field trips are a waste of time. . . . I think it depends on where you're going. I think if it's somewhere close, it's a waste, but like, if we go to the Capitol, then no."

Cade Wurm disagreed.

"I kind of thought it was a waste," he said. "It was a long bus ride. Holiday Inn was probably the coolest part of the trip."

Student Jenna Long, however, said she likes field trips no matter what.

"They're good," she said. "They're not a waste of time. I like them no matter where they are. It's nice to get out of a desk once in a while."

And teacher J.D. Johnson? He's clearly on the side of field trips.

"What they did was split the kids into two

groups," said Mr. Johnson, "so the one group talked about how at field trips they get to see things they never get to see. Out of everyone who went, there were only three of them that had been to the capitol. None had ever been to the Supreme Court building, none at the Air Force Museum (at Forbes Field in Topeka) and four had been to the Eisenhower Museum (in Abilene). They all went to something they'd never been to, so if it wasn't for field trips, probably some never would have."

"I liked the Kansas historical museum," said Ashley Treese. "We got to see how big the teepees were and what supplies (the Plains Indians) had and stuff."

"We got to go inside an airplane and a helicopter," said Tristan Mavis of the air museum, "and then we got to be inside a cockpit and see how all the controls and everything worked. It was fun."

"There were four parent sponsors," said Mr. Johnson, "and there were places they'd never been to either. So it was not only good for the students, but the parents got to do something they'd never done as well. It was a good learning experience for all."

The four parents who went along were Abby Hissong, Jerry Chambers (both members of the Oberlin School Board), Angie Erickson and Jason Ketterl, who drove the bus and also is a teacher.

The trip was sponsored by the school district, the Decatur County Soil Conservation District, the Kansas Farm Bureau Foundation and the Decatur County Feed Yard.



**ONE OF THE HIGHLIGHTS** of the trip was when the kids (above) got to argue their own case in the Supreme Court building – on whether field trips were worth the cost and time away from school. Acting as judges were (from left) Sierra Lohofener, Jillian Peters, Gavin Gomer, Jakoba Blau, Cade Wurm, Evan Shobe and Tabor Erickson.



**Photos by Abby Hissong**