



More than 300 students took part in International Walk to School Day activities at Woodrow Wilson Elementary School on Oct. 7. International Walk to School Day was observed in more than 40 countries this year and four schools from within the Bartlesville Public School District - Oak Park, Richard Kane, Wayside and Woodrow Wilson elementary schools - held special activities to celebrate it. International Walk to School Day helps to promote an active, healthy lifestyle.

Wilson walks tall on special day

The students poured in from throughout the neighborhoods which surround Woodrow Wilson Elementary School. Some walked, while others ran, burning off excess morning energy. Still others glided into campus via skateboards while some coasted in on scooters.

In the three years that International Walk to School Day has been wholly embraced at Wilson, it has proved to be quite popular.

“We had 279 walkers and 27 students who came on bikes, skateboards or scooters for a total of 306 students participating,” notes school counselor Karen Salge, who along with physical education teacher Loy Del Sawyer organized the event, which was observed throughout the world on Oct. 7, at Wilson. “Our current enrollment is 407 students, so we had 75 percent of our student body who participated. That was our goal.”

Within the Bartlesville Public School District, four elementary schools – Oak Park, Richard Kane, Wayside and Wilson – observed International Walk to School Day with special events. At Wilson, there was a special sign-in table set up near the main entrance of the school as students arrived on campus. There, they could sign in and collect a special prize for participating.

International Walk to School Day was observed in more than 40 countries – including the United States – this year. The goal of the special day is to educate people – especially students – about the health benefits of maintaining an active lifestyle.

Within the BPSD, many students live close enough

to their respective schools to walk. At Wilson on Oct. 7, those who don't were still able to participate in the International Walk to School Day festivities. Once they arrived on campus, they were able to make a previously specified number of laps around the playground.

“Participating students were provided with a ‘shoe certificate’ with their name written on it,” says Salge, “which they proudly hung in our front hallway to indicate they had walked to school.”

During International Walk to School Day at Wilson, Bartlesville Police Chief Tom Holland was on hand to greet students as was an officer from the Oklahoma Highway Patrol. Several volunteers were on campus to assist as well. Some helped to sign in those students who walked to school while others worked with those who arrived in cars and buses but were eager to walk laps around the playground in order to participate in the festivities.

The director of Operation Eagle, Melissa Gillman recruited many of the volunteers for the day's activities – including some of her own family members – and found the funding so that each student could have a bottle of water.

The City of Bartlesville provided stickers for the young walkers as well as sign-in sheets while the Oklahoma Department of Transportation offered reflector tags, safety whistle key tags and rulers as participation gifts.

The ODOT provided a banner and poster board for signage promoting International Walk to School Day at Wilson.