

## **THIS IS ONEIDA SNOW DAY? NO WAY -- BUT A TWO-HOUR DELAY**

I learned a lot about leadership under the headmaster of the last Christian school where I served in Florida. He is a wonderful Christian man who leads quietly but effectively. When I told him I would be returning to Oneida, he was very gracious and encouraging to me. He said, "Having listened to you talk of Oneida for so long, I knew you would one day return there." I hated to leave him because we had such a great working relationship. I have called him a few times since my arrival back in Oneida to ask for his advice on certain issues. I spoke to him just before Christmas and he asked many questions about Oneida and how it works. He said, "I can't imagine running a school where the kids do not go home after school is over." There are many challenges involved with being a boarding school, but there are also some great advantages.

On a recent Sunday night, we received a blast of winter that I can't recall in Kentucky for some time. The storm started with rain, then ice, and eventually snow. We have a small crew of men who get started on our campus at 5:00 a.m. when our campus roads and sidewalks need to be cleared of snow or ice before school. We do not take snow

days at Oneida. Most of our students are right here on campus and classes continue no matter the weather. At 5:20 a.m. that Monday morning following the Sunday night storm, I received a call from one of those staff members. He informed me that the roads and sidewalks were very difficult to clear because of the solid sheet of ice beneath the snow. After a few minutes of pondering, I decided to put our school day on a two-hour delay. Angie began to work the phone to alert our faculty and staff that we would be starting our school day at 10:00 a.m. rather than the normal 8:00 a.m.

I threw on what little winter gear a guy who has lived in Florida for the last nine years would have and headed over to campus. The Chevy Trailblazer the school provides me did a nice job of getting me safely to school. We already had five staff members and a student working diligently to make our roads and sidewalks functional and safe. I grabbed a shovel and did what little a guy who sits behind a desk every day could do to help out. I later checked in with our food service director to see how things were coming along in our cafeteria. Just because we weren't having school would not mean we wouldn't still have to feed well over 400 people three meals that day. Upon my arrival, I saw several of our teachers and administrators pitching in to help out in the kitchen. Most of our kitchen workers are folks who live locally, but several miles off of campus. They were not able to travel the treacherous roads to work that day.

Breakfast was served from 8:00-9:00 a.m. and school commenced at 10:00 a.m. Our snow crew continued to work the rest of the day to clear the campus. Students were thrilled to get a little extra sleep, and I was thrilled to watch our staff pitch in and work as working unto the Lord because school at Oneida must and will go on!



**Larry A. Gritton, Jr.**  
**OBI President**

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