



# South O'Brien High School The Wolverine Roar

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## Student Opens Dress Shop in Paullina

By Edie Oliver

Many high school girls hope to find a dream prom dress for the perfect price, but sometimes formal gowns can be expensive. Amarra, an online prom dress retailer, puts the cost for a prom dress between \$85 to \$700 dollars. However, an affordable formal wear rental shop recently opened in Paullina. Chloe Gergen, a junior at South O'Brien High School, is the owner of a new shop called Bottom Dollar Diva.

"I hope to make prom dress shopping easier for girls with my prices and location," Chloe Gergen said. She hopes her dress shop will be a game changer for those who want to attend prom but are on a limited budget. The dresses are priced between \$25 to \$100 dollars because affordability is important to Gergen. Dresses can be rented or purchased. Private appointments can also be set up to choose a dress. Bottom Dollar Diva will be open Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 3:30 pm to 6:30 pm. Along with the second and fourth Fridays and Saturdays of the month from 3:30 to 6:30pm.

Gergen has been working toward this opening since August when the dresses were donated to her venture by Alyda Haack. "Fashion has always been important to me. I use it as a form of self expression and a way to stay unique," Gergen said.

Gergen is renting the building at 134 North Main Street in Paullina for six months. She would like this business to be a full-time thing. She would like younger sister Aspen Gergen to take over the business when she graduates. "I've definitely thought about being a business owner, but I didn't think it could become a reality so soon. It's been a nerve-wracking experience, but everything is coming together."



Bottom Dollar Diva owner Chloe Gergen proudly poses in her showroom.

## English Department Welcomes Student Teacher from USD

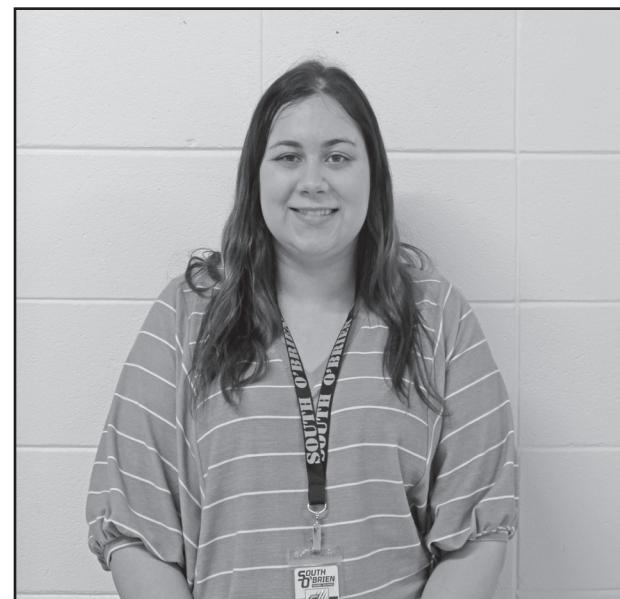
By Reagan Draper

South O'Brien is welcoming student teacher Emily Rigney to the English Department. Ms. Rigney graduated from MMCRU in 2019 and is currently attending the University of South Dakota.

Rigney started student teaching right after Christmas break and will be here until the end of December 2023. This semester she is in Courtney Roskamp's English classes working with the freshmen and sophomores. Roskamp said, "I am excited to have her in my classroom and around the school helping."

Next fall she will be in Kris Faust's English room working with the junior and senior classes. Ms. Rigney said, "Honestly, my favorite part of the school is how nice everyone is. They're all really kind." She said her favorite pastimes are shopping and hanging out with the cats she adopted.

In high school at



Pictured above is Emily Rigney, who just started student teaching in the English Department at SOS.

MMCRU she was involved in choir, dinner theater, NHS, and cheer. Her job was working at P's Pizza House in Lemars and Orange City. It actually inspired her to become a teacher. She trained many people while working there and found that she loved helping and seeing people learn. She started

college as a nursing major and switched to education after realizing how much she likes to see people succeed after being taught.

Emily's future plans are to be a middle or high school English teacher. She will be looking for a teaching job that's the best fit for her after graduation next year.

## History Department Welcomes Student Teacher from Northwestern

By Jinger Nieuwenhuis and Sam Wilbur

Mark Cooley recently began student teaching in the South O'Brien History Department. He will be observing classes and teaching 7th grade geography and 9th grade world history for 14 weeks of the second semester. "I love South O'Brien so far because all of the teachers and students are welcoming," stated Cooley. History teachers Kiley Yates and Kevin Hanlin are Cooley's supervisors. Kevin Hanlin stated, "He is very well equipped already and is exceeding expectations that were put upon him. He knows students' names and can run a classroom efficiently when given the opportunity." Cooley attends Northwestern College and will graduate in May of 2023 with a Bachelor's Degree in History.

Cooley is originally from Plymouth, Minnesota, where he attended high school. He was active in baseball, band, choir, and soccer. He found his



Student Teacher Mark Cooley is currently observing in the history classrooms.

love for teaching when he lifeguarded in the summer months.

Cooley started attending Northwestern in the fall of 2019. He plays baseball for the Raiders and will finish his last season in the spring. He was also involved in student government on campus and organized freshmen orientation in 2021 and 2022.

His future plans entail going back to Minnesota to teach either middle school or high school history. He would also like to get his coaching endorsement to coach either high school baseball or soccer. Cooley has plans to eventually get his Master's Degree in History.

# Meats Team Hits the Road

By Kyan Kruse and Leo Sells

After being delayed by poor weather, the South O'Brien Meats Team was able to head to Colorado to compete in the Western National Roundup Contest on January 5. The main purpose of the trip was to partake in the contest, but they experienced a lot more along the way.

The first place they stopped was the Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado, where they took a scenic drive up the mountainside. There, they saw a lot of animals native to the area. After that, they journeyed down to Estes Park and got a taste of the local culture. Later that night, they continued to Fort Collins where they prepared for the next day's competition.

Both the 4-H and FFA teams competed in the Western National Roundup Competition representing the State of Iowa on January 7. After an all-day contest, the results were in. The 4-H team finished in 5th place overall out of 10 total teams, and they also finished in the top 5 in both the Retail ID and Placings portions of the event. Senior Hudson Oolman led the way as the 8th overall individual, followed by senior Leo Sells in 16th, junior Claire Wagner in 21st, and senior Kyan Kruse in 24th. The FFA team faced some tough competition and placed 11th out of 12

teams.

FFA advisor Eric Kumm said, "I'm proud of both teams. The extra studying and dedication that goes into competing at one of these events takes a lot of commitment on the part of the members. Everytime we compete, it's a learning experience that the members hopefully grow through. Not everybody can be first place, but everyone can be a winner through the learning process they go through."

The following day, the group headed to Denver to visit the renowned National Western Stock Show. Claire Wagner summarized the day when she said, "It was really cool going to the Stock Show. There was a lot to learn, and it was interesting to see some of the top competitors in the country go head-to-head."

On the way home, the group celebrated their efforts with dinner at Ole's Big Game Steakhouse in Paxton, Nebraska. It was a great way to recognize the time they spent practicing over the past years.

Between the 4-H and FFA team, there are 5 graduating seniors who won't return next year. Regardless, there are many underclassmen who will work to follow in the footsteps of past teams.

## Snow Slows School at South O'Brien

By Jacob Van Lith and Dante Johnson

The South O'Brien School District has experienced several disruptions due to inclement weather this school year. The district has had to cancel classes for 7 days and called several other late starts and early outs as a result of the weather. Because of this, the first semester at the secondary building was extended by one week to January 20.

In addition to the canceled classes, several high school basketball games and other activities have been postponed, rescheduled, or canceled. This has caused frustration for students and parents who were looking forward to participating in and attending the



Seniors Dante Johnson and Leo Sells clear the ice and snow off their cars as they prepare to go home from school after a snowy afternoon.

events.

To make weather related decisions, Superintendent Wade Riley and Transportation Director Randy Hofmeyer typically inspect roads and assess road conditions at 5:00 am when bad weather is forecasted or road conditions are uncertain. If school is still in session, emergency bus routes may be implemented to ensure the safe transportation of students. One make-up day is currently scheduled for President's Day, which is February 20. Remaining dates will be determined by the Board of Education.



Meats team after their competition at Colorado State University.  
Front: Eliot Boardman, Bensen Rowher, Abby Stout, Payton Farquhar, Claire Wagner. Back: Gabe Moermond, Hudson Oolman, Brett Evans, Leo Sells, Kyan Kruse, Austin Negus, Eric Kumm.

## Fewer Students Graduate this Year



Senior, Lucas Burmakow, waves goodbye as he leaves on his last regular day of school.

By Ashlynn Tjossem and Jalyssa Joines

Early graduation has become more popular at South O'Brien in the last couple of years. Last year there were 8 students that graduated at semester and only 5 students this year. Denise Phillips, the 7-12 school principal, said, "I wasn't surprised by the number of students who graduated early this year compared to last year. She can usually predict who will, but the number varies by class." In order for a student to graduate early, they are required to have at least 45 credits. They are required to fill out an application and write a letter to the school board requesting an early graduation. Phillips said, "If students have a solid plan and have met all three requirements needed to graduate then it is their decision to take that path."

The South O'Brien School Board of Education decided to raise the credit requirement from 45 to 49 on February 15, 2021. They decided this because South O'Brien's previous requirements were low compared to other Iowa schools. Starting with the Class of 2026, students will have to meet those 49 credits to graduate. The change was made to expose students to more coursework and experience in other classes. That being said, Phillips thinks it is important to get the most out of the high school experience.

Last year Raeonna Rohlfsen chose to graduate in January because she wanted to work and save up money before college. She decided to graduate early so she could save up money for college. Raeonna says, "I do not regret graduating early. Yes, I miss high school, but we have to grow up and move on."

## What is your New Year's Resolution?



**Freshman**  
**Damian Villarreal**

"I want to drop 30 points in a basketball game."



**Sophomore**  
**Ashlynn Gunnerson**

"My resolution is to pass chemistry."



**Junior**  
**Donni Wallinga**

"I want to become closer with my younger siblings."



**Senior**  
**Laci Kenney**

"I want to go on a mission trip this summer to New Orleans."



**Staff**  
**DJ Hansen**

"I am going to stop saying 'early out' everytime it starts snowing."