

Odyssey Charter School

NEWSLETTER

OCS Elementary Campus: 1755 Eldron Blvd. S.E.
Palm Bay, Florida 32909 • 321-733-0442

OCS Jr. / Sr. High Campus: 1350 Wyoming Drive
S.E. Palm Bay, Florida 32909 • 321-345-4117

SEPT • OCT 2014

"Committed to academic excellence and the education of the whole child"

OUR MISSION FOR EVERY CHILD

The mission of Odyssey Charter School is to work in partnership with the family and community, with the aim of helping each child reach their full potential in all areas of life. We seek to educate the whole child with the understanding that each person must achieve a balance of intellectual, emotional, physical, spiritual and social skills as a foundation for life.

OCS Leadership Team

Founder/Head of Schools

Ms. Constance Ortiz

Site Administrator, Elementary Campus

Mrs. Wendi Nolder

Site Administrator, Jr/Sr Campus

Dr. Monica Knight

AP, Technology, Scheduling, Testing

Mr. Jon Chace

Discipline Dean, Jr/Sr and Bus Transportation

Mr. Mike Davis

Discipline Dean, Elementary & Program Coordinator

Ms. Michelle Sutton

Literacy Coach

Ms. Valarie Gonzalez

Science Coach & Board Advisory

Dr. Jane Martin

School Administration:

Guidance Counselor, Elementary Campus

Ms. Jessica Ayala

Guidance Counselor, Jr/Sr Campus

Ms. Bonnie Moravecky

Office Manager, Elementary

Ria Tutzarakis

Office Manager, Jr/Sr Campus

Laura Greenwalt

Preschool and Before & After Care Director

Nina Santos

School Calendar

- Sept 15 SAC Meeting 9:30 a.m. @ Jr/Sr High Conf. Room
- Sept 16 First Interim Ends
- Sept 17 Constitution Day
- Sept 18 Open House, Junior/Senior High – 6:30 pm
- Sept 21 International Day of Peace
- Sept 22 Elementary & Secondary Interim Reports Issued
- Sept 22-26 Celebrate Freedom Week
- Sept 23 Open House, 4th-6th Grades, 6:30 pm
- Sept 25 Parents as Partners Meeting, 6:30 pm
– Elementary Campus
- Sept 26 Dress Down Day
- Sept 27 EcoScape Day
- Sept 24 Early Release Day
- Sept 29 SAC Meeting 9:30 a.m. – SAC officer elections
@ Jr/Sr High Conf. Room
- Sept 30 Open House Kindergarten-1st grades, 6:30 pm
- Oct 2 Open House, 2nd-3rd grades, 6:30 pm
- Oct 7 Head of Schools Coffee and Tea, 8:30
– Elementary Campus
- Oct 8 International Walk to School Day
- Oct 15 Early Release Day/Professional Development
- Oct 16 End of First Nine Weeks
- Oct 17 Student Holiday/Professional Development Day
- Oct 21, Head of Schools Coffee and Tea, 9:30 –
Junior/Senior High Campus
- Oct 21 OCS Board Meeting, 5:15 pm—
Junior/Senior High Campus
- Oct 22 Elementary Report Cards Issued
- Oct 27 Secondary Report Cards Issued
- Oct 29 Early Release Day
- Oct 31 Dress Down Day

Open House



Don't miss Open House evenings for your student! Your child will have the opportunity to share what they have been working on in class. Teachers are looking forward to showcasing the ways they have made learning engaging with each of their students.

Please keep in mind that during Open House nights, teachers won't be able to accommodate individual meetings. If you have any concerns or would just like to speak with your child's teacher regarding his/her progress, feel free to communicate by sending an email or requesting an appointment. The Open House dates for both campuses are:

Thursday, September 18, 6:30 pm – Junior/Senior High Campus
Tuesday, September 23, 2014 6:30pm – 4th-6th grades
Tuesday, September 30, 2014 6:30pm – Kindergarten-1st grades
Thursday, October 2, 2014 6:30pm – 2nd-3rd grades

Parents as Partners Meeting – Fundraising and Community Building



Come join us on Thursday, September 25, at 6:30 pm, on the Elementary Campus as we jumpstart our new school year with our Parents as Partners volunteer support team. Learn about our fundraising focus for the new school year, our “green” and healthy fundraising guidelines,

and sign up to support our annual fundraising and community building events like the Annual Fun Run.

Early Release Dates for 2014-2015

Early Release days will be on Wednesdays, twice monthly during the school year for the purpose of professional development and teacher collaboration. Students at the elementary campus will be dismissed at 1:30 p.m., while students on the Junior/Senior High campus will be released one hour later at 2:30 pm. The Early Release Days for the first semester will be on the following days:

Wednesday, September 24, 2014, Wednesday, October 15, 2014
Wednesday, October 29, 2014, Wednesday, November 26, 2014

Edline and Gradequick

This summer, the Brevard County School District started using Blackboard to improve overall school-to-home communication. Odyssey has opted to use the same to better serve our community and families. As we are working toward interfacing with the school district, we will send home notices when accounts for students and parents are available. When the parent accounts are activated be sure to include your email so that you will receive notices when student grades post. New to Blackboard is the ability for parents to opt to include a text enabled phone number on their account so that they can receive texts from Edline concerning their student(s). Viewing your student's success online (instead of having a paper copy) is one more way that the Mission/Vision of Odyssey Charter School is supported in its aim to produce less of a carbon footprint on our planet. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to email Mr. Jon Chace at chacej@odysseycharterschool.com

Casual Dress Days

Casual dress days are on the last Friday of each month. Students are welcome to dress out of uniform but must follow the Brevard County Dress Code outlined in the Brevard County Student Handbook. A copy of the handbook can be found on our website. Dress down days for the first semester are October 31, 2014, November 21, 2014 and December 19, 2014.

Birthday Policy

Odyssey's Birthday Celebration Policy is solely focused on the essence and uniqueness of each child. At school, birthdays are not celebrated with cake or food. Birthday recognition and any related activities are at the discretion of each teacher. Social and personal growth is encouraged via the sharing of student life histories/timelines, favorite books and/or hobbies, or a special nature walk/outdoor activity. For more information on the school's Wellness Policy or Birthday Policy, please visit our website at www.odysseycharterschool.com

Head of Schools Tea

Ms. Constance, Head of Schools, and the Odyssey Leadership Team would like to invite you to join us on Wednesday, October 7th, at 8:30 am on the Elementary Campus, and Wednesday, October 21st, at 9:30 am on the Junior/Senior High Campus for coffee and tea. Ms. Constance will speak about school improvements and future plans and progress the school is making in the education of our children.

School Advisory Council

The School Advisory Council (SAC) works with our leadership team to support the Mission and Vision of Odyssey Charter School and to make improvements to our school. This team is made up of parents, teachers and community members who come together to support the leadership team by lending their expertise and support. If you are interested in partnering with our school by serving as a member of our SAC committee, please email the Lead Administrator, Ms. Wendi Nolder at nolderw@odysseycharterschool.com, with a brief statement of interest and a short biography.

Members must be able to commit to meeting 4 to 6 times each year. Meetings usually take place during the school day at one of the Odyssey Charter School Campuses and run for about one hour. Our officer elections will take place at our Monday, September 29, at 9:30 a.m. meeting.

New Volunteer System - KeepNTrack

Odyssey Charter School is participating in the district-wide Volunteer and Visitor check in system to add additional security to our campuses. The new system, called KeepNTrack, scans licenses and state issued ID cards, and will be implemented during the 1st quarter of this school year. The new program provides several advantages: a lower cost volunteer screening fee, no requirement for Volunteers to go to the district to be fingerprinted, and a more current security screening. There are two levels of volunteers, Level A (advanced) and Level B (basic). All Volunteers receive a sexual predator screening each time that they check in but Level A volunteers also undergo a criminal background check. This allows Level A volunteers who have passed the security screening to chaperone field trips and assist in the classroom or one-on-one with students. Level B volunteers are able to help our school in many ways such as working on classroom materials or as a member of our Parents as Partners (PASP) group. There is no cost for a basic volunteer screening (Level B). Level A volunteer screening requires a \$25.00 fee to cover the cost of the background screening service. This fee covers the service for 3 years. Please email any questions to Mr. Chace, chacej@odysseycharterschool.com.

Volunteer and Community Service Event



What: Ecoscape Day

When: Saturday, September 27, 2014
9-11 AM

Where: The Ted Moorhead Lagoon House • 3275 Dixie Highway (US 1)
Palm Bay, FL 32905

Attend Ecoscape Day and learn how to live more sustainably by changing the ways you interact with your yard and your surrounding environment. You will experience the importance of native plants, and green landscaping by participating hands on at our on site native gardens. This event will also teach you how to save money and enjoy the great outdoors by living more in harmony with nature. The Ecoscape Day is a great way to earn volunteer hours needed for Bright Future Scholarships, and, to “boost” your college and scholarships applications. For more information, please contact Rodney at irlcoast@gmail.com, 321-750-3374.

New Elementary English Language Arts Curriculum

Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) is a comprehensive, preschool through fifth grade program for teaching reading, writing, listening, and speaking while also building students' vocabulary. The curriculum includes rich content in History, Geography, and Science. In the early grades, CKLA focuses on oral language development through carefully sequenced read-alouds and includes systematic instruction in reading and writing skills. In the older grades, the curriculum continues to advance students' knowledge and vocabulary through read-alouds and in-depth discussions while also immersing students in complex texts and advanced writing assignments that draw on the academic content they've been engaged in since preschool.



Celebrate Freedom

There are several days in September where the school "Celebrates Freedom". On September 11th, Patriot Day, the elementary campus focuses on honoring our police and firemen, as the helpers who come to us in time of need. Secondary social studies teachers handle the topic by discussing some of the after effects by discussing some of the events that occurred afterwards. On Constitution Day and during Celebrate Freedom Week the students and faculty recite the opening paragraph of the Declaration of Independence. The Declaration of Independence and Constitution (and events leading up to the Declaration of Independence) are studied. (Florida Statute: 1003.421 Recitation of the Declaration of Independence and study).

Art Assistant Wanted

Come join the Odyssey team to support the arts. Work with Ms. Karina Warren to make our art program the very best. We presently have a part time position open in our Art department – perfect for the parent or guardian who would like to work during the school hours. Hours are 8:15 – 2:15 and pay is minimum wage. For more information, please contact Mr. Bob Auer, our Human Resources Director, at 321 345-4117.

Substitute Teachers Wanted for Elementary and Secondary -- We Need You!

If you are yearning to make a difference in children's lives and are looking for a part-time job working during your child's school hours, look no further. Odyssey needs you! Won't you please take a moment to apply to become an Odyssey substitute by contacting Ms. Ria Tutzarakis or Ms. Barbara Marcus at (321) 733-0442. All substitutes must undergo and pass the Brevard County Fingerprinting and Background Checks.

OCS Board of Directors Meetings

Parents and staff are welcome to attend Odyssey's Board of Directors meetings. The next OCS Board meeting will be October 21, at 5:15 p.m. To attend, please come to the Jr/Sr high campus and ask for the Green Apple Conference Room.



Bully-Free Zone

Odyssey Charter School is committed to providing a safe learning environment and will not tolerate bullying or harassment of any kind. Throughout the school year, our instructional staff teach tolerance and respect through lessons and activities that increase cultural awareness and celebrate our differences. Please encourage your children to report incidents of bullying so we can stop it in its tracks! Incidents of bullying or harassment can be reported to Ms. Michelle Sutton, Dean of Discipline for the Elementary Campus at suttonm@odysseycharterschool.com or Mr. Mike Davis, Dean of Discipline for the Junior/Senior High Campus at davism@odysseycharterschool.com. A message may also be left at the school at 321-733-0442 for the elementary campus or 321-345-4117 for the junior/senior high campus. A reporting form is available at this link: <http://www.brevard.k12.fl.us/portals/parents/pdf/Form7ParentReporting.pdf>. Anonymous reports can also be made by calling the Speak- Out Hotline at 1-800-423-8477. To learn more about bullying and find out what adults can do to help prevent it, visit the Stop Bullying Now website at www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov.

Springboard

Springboard is a college and career readiness English Language Arts curriculum for students in grades 6 and up from the College Board. It integrates rigorous instruction, performance-based assessment, and professional development. Springboard integrates a variety of proven teaching and learning strategies, relevant and increasing complex content, and innovative methods that engage students on multiple levels. The program emphasizes text complexity, textual evidence, and meaningful tasks, all shifts in education required by the Common Core State Standards.

Do you have a Special Skill or Expertise Area?

We are looking for parents, grandparents, and community members with special skills to help us enhance our learning community. If you are a photographer, speaker of another language, artist, gardener, musician, scientist, cook, elected official, or if you have some other special skill or talent that you can share with our students, please email: info@odysseycharterschool.com

Virtual School

Students in the state of Florida may elect to enroll in Florida Virtual School Part-Time or Full-Time. To learn more about the Florida Virtual School enrollment options, go to <http://flvs.net/Pages/default.aspx>. Students also have the option to attend Brevard Virtual School. For more information visit <http://virtualinstruction.brevardschools.org/virtualenrollmentoptions.html>.



Tardy Policy

Students are expected to be in their seats and ready to learn by 7:55 a.m. each day. Students arriving after 8:00 a.m., will have to be walked into the office by an adult and signed-in to obtain a tardy slip. Parents, please do not park in the front car loop if you are late. This area is used for VPK morning drop off. You may park in our front or back parking lot and walk your student into the front office. We thank you for making the effort to have your students to class on time every day.

Early Check-out for Students

Parents, we are asking that if you need to check out your student early, that you do so by 2 pm. It can become a dismissal safety concern when students are checked out too close to the dismissal time. Students may be checked out of school by their parent or legal guardian. If you are checking your student out, please present to our front office staff a valid form of photo identification. Please remember that we do not take dismissal changes over the phone. All changes made to your child's normal means of transportation home are required in writing. E-mail communication will not be an acceptable form of written notification. We would also like to encourage you to make appointments for your child outside of our school hours in order to maximize your child's learning time and minimize classroom disruptions for all students. We thank you for your partnership!

Student Medication

Any student requiring medication should have it checked into the front office by a parent or legal guardian. Students may not bring medication to school at any time. If a student requires an asthma inhaler or epi-pen on his/her person, the inhaler or epi-pen must be checked in through the office and must be accompanied by a doctor prescription stating the child must carry it with them at all times. Please also notify school administration of any medical conditions your child might have that you believe we should be aware of.



Staff Spotlight

My name is Mrs. Laura Lopez and I am very excited to be the Elementary Mathematics Coach for Kindergarten through Sixth Grade for the Odyssey Charter School Team! I relocated to Florida with my husband in the summer of 2014 to be closer to family. I am

originally from the Poconos in Eastern Pennsylvania, where I taught and coached Title I Mathematics at Pocono Mountain Charter School from 2009-2014. In addition to teaching and coaching, I was also the Director of the Title I Reading & Mathematics Program for three years and the School Assessment Coordinator during the 2013-2014 School Year. I received my Bachelor's in Elementary Education/Mathematics Concentration in 2008 from East Stroudsburg University and my Master's in Curriculum and Instruction in the Fall of 2012 from the University of Scranton. My goal for the Odyssey Charter School team is to help guide teachers in the planning process, delivery methods, and intervention strategies for mathematics to ultimately enhance student interest and create a strong mathematical foundation that can be utilized far beyond the classroom setting.

Technology News Update

Over the past few weeks there have been some exciting new Technology projects going on at Odyssey Charter School. One of the projects is a mobile laptop lab. Once completed, it will be able to safely transport and charge 32 laptops to be used all around the campus. The labs will be used during gifted, enrichment and intervention times along with special activities planned by their classroom teachers.

Parents – Have you started earning your volunteer hours yet?

All of our parents are valued members of our volunteer team and are key stakeholders in their children's success at school. Make sure you are planning how to fulfill your volunteer requirement of 18-25 hours for the school year. Opportunities for volunteering are sent out in our newsletters and through the Odyssey parent e-mail list from Ms. Chris Montefu, our volunteer coordinator. Ms. Montefu can help you find volunteer opportunities that best align with your availability. If your classroom teacher has a volunteer opportunity for you, please make sure you make arrangements to check in with Ms. Montefu. As our volunteer coordinator, she will track your hours and ensure all safety/screening requirements have been met if you will be chaperoning or helping on campus. Stop in and say hello – you can find Ms. Montefu at the front desk on our Lower Campus. She can also be reached by phone at 321-733-0442 x101 or email: montefuc@odysseycharterschool.com.

Volunteer Hours – The Read Aloud Club



The Read Aloud Club is a great way for parents to fulfill their volunteer hours. All that is required is for parents to read to their child every night for 15 minutes, log the time, and turn in your reading log! Reading aloud helps in the building of attention span and listening skills, the development of vocabulary and reading comprehension. Most importantly, reading to your child creates a strong bond between parent and child.

Here's how the program works: Each month your child receives a Read Aloud Recording Form from their Homeroom teacher. The parent may select read aloud books from the Read Aloud List of literature. The parent then spends a minimum of 15 minutes per evening reading literature that is above the child's independent reading level. The forms are collected and parent volunteer hours are logged in. A maximum credit of one volunteer hour per week (4 hours per month) will be given per child. It's a great way to earn your required volunteer hours (18 hours per year for one child; 25 hours for 2 or more children).

Safety First at Arrival & Dismissal - School Hours and Car Loop Reminders

The school's car loop certainly has its limitations and we thank you for your patience and support during arrival and dismissal. Our school hours are from 8:00 a.m. until 2:50 p.m. each day. On Early Release Wednesdays, Elementary students will be released at 1:30 p.m. We appreciate your willingness to share the space with other parents as you travel and merge through the loop. Please continue to exercise caution and safety during arrival and dismissal. Our children are counting on you!

Remember to follow these tips to keep traffic flowing and students safe in our car loop:

- Be sure to honor the 5mph posted speed limit
- Refrain from using cell phones
- Do not use Pineapple Cove's parking area
- Always display your carloop pick-up sign in your window – hanging from your rearview mirror allows for best viewing by all staff in the loop
- Remember, when turning onto Eldron, RIGHT turns ONLY during arrival and dismissal times
- Reserve disabled parking for vehicles with disabled parking permits
- Always drop off children at the designated orange cones – no where else in the carloop area

The car loop is the safest and most efficient way to drop off and pick up your child. During our busiest times, it takes just about 5 minutes from the driveway entrance to the driveway exit during the car loop. The car loop is least busy in the morning from 7:40-7:50 and in the afternoon from 2:50-3:00.

Jr/Sr High Reminders

Jr/Sr High Hours 9am - 4:10pm

We value our instructional time with your student. Please schedule all appointments before or after school when possible and minimize early check out. Thank you!

Odyssey's Jr/Sr High Campus Uniform requirements are:

Odyssey Logo Shirts in the following colors – Gray, Light Blue, Royal Blue, or White.

Black or Khaki pants, shorts, or skorts. At minimum, bottoms must not be shorter than mid-thigh. No "skinny", form-fitting or "baggy" style bottoms.

Any Navy Blue or Black Sweatshirt with, or without, our Odyssey Logo is acceptable. While hoods on clothing are permissible, hoods, hats and headgear are not permitted to be worn while on school property, including while on school buses.

New English/Language Arts Curriculum

This year, we will be implementing a new core curriculum for both 7th and 8th grade English Language Arts using Springboard. Springboard was conceptualized by the College Board, a not-for-profit organization founded in 1900 in order to expand access to higher education, and to prepare students for both college and career-readiness. The 7th grade curriculum is divided into four thematic based units: The Choices We Make, What Influences My Choices, Choices and Consequences, and How We Choose to Act. The 8th grade curriculum is also divided into four thematic-based units: The Challenge of Heroism, The Challenge of Utopia, The Challenge to Make a Difference, and The Challenge of Comedy. All units incorporate close reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language skills so that students may achieve higher-order critical thinking skills, problem-solving skills, deeper conceptual understanding, and expanded academic vocabulary.

New, Expanded Jr/Sr High Science Lab

In addition to working mock forensic crime scenes and digging into the horticulture green spaces around the campus, Odyssey Jr/Sr High students have a chance to participate in hands-on science opportunities in our new, expanded science lab. Our lab is filled with an array of biology, physics, chemistry, and earth science equipment to help students understand and master the rigorous state science standards. Whether they are studying the electromagnetic spectrum during an Earth Science activity, investigating how living organisms acquire energy in a Life Science lesson, designing and conducting their own scientific study during a Nature of Science exploration, or discovering the densities of various materials in Physical Science, the new science lab has everything students need to more deeply grasp and apply their scientific learning. Come visit our lab during the Jr/Sr High Open House in September.



OCS Jr/Sr High Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Corner

Odyssey Charter School Jr/Sr High was honored to have been selected to participate in "Zero Robotics", a prestigious summer program from MIT in collaboration with NASA and other space agencies, that combined Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. Our team, the "AstroTitans", took 1st Place in the Preliminary state competition and finished in 5th Place in the state division for the 2014 COSMOSPHERES International Space Station Coding Challenge! As part of the program, our team learned how to program in C++ and participated in a series of exceptional STEM and Space Science related learning opportunities that included trips to Kennedy Space Center, Florida Tech and Wickham Park. Students were mentored by Astronauts, Aerospace and Mechanical Engineers, and scientists from various fields. Our students demonstrated commitment, enthusiasm and dedication to working together and developing the skills needed to program SPHERES satellites. Odyssey's AstroTitans "Blinding you with Science".....!

We are pleased to report that enrollment in our 9th grade has grown to over fifty 9th students this year. Each year, our program is expanding to meet the needs of students of the school community. Due to community request and our school's high performing status, our innovative and holistic education is in the process of growing through 12th grade. We are establishing new educational and community partnerships with organizations such as NASA, The Solar Energy Center, Florida Tech, and Eastern Florida State College. Stay posted to learn more about our upcoming activities and partnerships that reflect our whole-school-whole child foundations and our rigorous academic focus that also includes exemplary art and music opportunities.

Do you have a friend or family member with a student that is OCS Jr/Sr High age? Do you want to help us expand our programs through grade 12? If so, please refer your friends and family to contact Ms. Greenwalt at Odyssey Charter School Jr/Sr High for more information. We will be sharing ways that our school is expanding through the high school grades during our Open House later this month. Feel free to invite others to join you for the presentation.



Grievance Procedures

- Step 1: Request Teacher conference to clarify issue
- Step 2: Contact Principal if unresolved with the teacher
- Step 3: **Contact Board Designated Parent Representative
- Step 4: Contact the President of the Governing Board
- Step 5: Present issue at the next monthly Board Meeting if unresolved
- Step 6: Seek mediation with the Sponsor

Visit our website at www.odysseycharterschool.com

**Dr. Reggie Revis has been designated by the OCS Board of Directors as the Representative to Facilitate Parental Involvement, provide access to information, assist parents and others with questions and concerns, and resolve disputes according to charter requirements. Dr. Revis can be reached at revisr@odysseyprepacademy.com or 321-345-4117, ext. 122.