



Odyssey Charter School

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

WELCOME TO SCHOOL 2018 NEWSLETTER

"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.

SCHOOL-BASED LEADERSHIP TEAM

Ms. Constance Ortiz,
Founder

Ms. Wendi Nolder,
Site Administrator

Ms. Deb Berg,
Assistant Principal

Mr. Edward Haber,
Dean of Students

Ms. DeAnna Bernardo,
Instructional Coach

Ms. Suzette Jewell,
Instructional Coach

Ms. Deb Munoz,
Teacher Representative

Ms. Kavel Green,
Family Engagement

Ms. Kara Lujan,
Guidance Counselor

Ms. Kristina Fitzpatrick,
Office Manager/Registrar, Elementary

Ms. Amy White,
Director, Preschool/VPK and Before & After School Care

Parent / Student Handbook

The Parent/Student Handbook can be accessed through our school's website at <http://www.odysseycharterschool.com/OCS-Parent-Student-Handbook.pdf>



Tardy Policy

Elementary students are expected to be in their seats and ready to learn by 8:00 AM. If you arrive at 8:00 or later, parents must park and walk their child into the office, sign them in, and have a tardy slip issued for admittance to class. Parents, please do not park in the fire lane – this is a safety concern. We thank you for making the effort to have your students to class on time each and every day.

Early Check-out for Students

Parents, **we are asking that if you need to check out your elementary student early, that you do so by 2:00 PM on a regular dismissal day and by 12:45 PM on an early release day.** 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 your valid state-issued photo identification at our front office. **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.** 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's 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.**

Save the Date



CALENDAR

AUGUST

- 8/28 OCS Inc. Board Meeting, 5:15pm
- 8/31 Dress out of Uniform Day for Students
- 8/31 Early Release

SEPTEMBER

- 9/3 Labor Day – NO SCHOOL
- 9/5 2nd and 3rd Grade Open House, 6:30pm
- 9/6 1st and 4th Grade Open House and 4th Grade Science Research Information Night, 6:30pm
- 9/7 Early Release
- 9/7 Literacy Day at OCS Elementary
- 9/13 KG and 5th Grade Open House and 4th Grade Science Research Information Night, 6:30pm
- 9/14 Early Release
- 9/18 Interim Reports Issued for 1st – 5th
- 9/20 Parents as Partners (PasP) Meeting
- 9/21 Early Release
- 9/26 OCS Inc. Board Meeting, 5:15pm
- 9/28 Early Release

School Hours and Car Loop Reminders

Safety First at Arrival & Dismissal

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 2:35 p.m. for Grades K-2 and 8:00 a.m. until 2:50 p.m. for Grades 3-5 on regular dismissal days. On Early Release Fridays, Grades K-2 students are released at 1:15 p.m. and Grades 3-5 students are 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
- Always display your **PINK OR ORANGE** car loop pick-up sign in your window.
 - *It is recommended for you to use a clip clothes hanger to hang sign from your rearview mirror so it is easily viewed by staff in the car loop*
- Remember, when turning onto Eldron, RIGHT turns ONLY during arrival and dismissal times
- If you park on Raleigh, please be sure to leave the sidewalk clear. Students and families need the sidewalk to walk safely.
- Please watch out for pedestrians in your moving vehicle
- Reserve disabled parking for vehicles with disabled parking permits
- Always drop off children at the designated orange cones – **nowhere else in the carloop area or on main roads such as Eldron Blvd.**
- Do not use Pineapple Cove's parking area
- When walking with your student on school sidewalks, students are encouraged to walk on the side of the sidewalk AWAY from the driveway/street (closest to the mulch and fence) and parent or other adult chaperone on the side of traffic.

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 10 minutes from the driveway entrance to the driveway exit during the car loop. It takes time at the beginning of the year for our parent, student, and staff community to become accustomed to arrival and dismissal routines. We ask for your patience and understanding during the beginning of the year where these times may be prolonged as we adjust to the school year. **Please note that if you have not entered the driveway by 7:50 your child will likely be late to class.**

Additional Transportation Note: Change of transportation must be submitted in writing in order for the change to be valid. This stipulation is to ensure student safety.

Dress Out of Uniform Day

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 www.odysseycharterschool.com. Dress down days for Elementary students for the first semester are: August 31, September 28, October 26, November 30, and December 21.

OCS Inc. Board of Directors Meetings

Parents and staff are welcome to attend Odyssey's Board of Directors meetings. The next OCS Board meetings will be held on August 28 and September 26 at 5:15 p.m. Board meetings are held on the Eldron Campus in the Media/Library.

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.



Volunteer System – Raptor

All volunteers must complete the volunteer application process and go through a background screening prior to starting any volunteer activity at OCS. As a potential volunteer, you will be asked to provide the information necessary to perform a background check. You may not be on campus as a volunteer until your background check has been completed and you have been approved as a volunteer. OCS is participating in the district-wide Volunteer and Visitor check in system to add additional security to our campuses. The system, called Raptor, scans state-issued photo licenses and ID cards, required for admittance to the building past the front office.

Steps to Becoming a Volunteer

Please go to the Brevard County Schools web Page: www.brevard-schools.org

- 1) Click the Parents & Students heading.
- 2) Scroll down to Volunteer Information and click on the link
- 3) On the left of the screen, click on the Fingerprint link (The volunteer application is at the bottom of the page)
- 4) Complete the Application.
 - a. Cost: \$35 for the first year and \$8 for renewals
- 5) After completing the Application and payment, please visit:
District and School Security
2700 Judge Fran Jamieson Way Viera, FL 32940
Hours: Monday through Thursday 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
(No appointment necessary)
- 6) Please wait five days after being fingerprinted to contact Kavel Green for status or any volunteer related questions.



Volunteering Benefits All of Our Children

When parents get involved in their children's education, it pays off. Research shows that children whose parents are actively involved are more likely to:

- Earn higher grades and test scores
- Enroll in higher-level programs
- Adapt well to school
- Attend school regularly
- Have better social skills
- Show improved behavior
- Graduate and go to college

Read Aloud Program – for Volunteer Hours

The Read Aloud program is a wonderful way for parents to fulfill their volunteer hours while supporting their students academically, socially, and emotionally. In 1983, the U.S. Department of Education report "Becoming a Nation of Readers" found that, **"the single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children."**



To participate in the Read Aloud program, parents should spend at least 15 minutes reading aloud literature to their child that is about two grades above their independent reading level. Then complete the Read Aloud log which can be provided by your classroom teacher or through the front office. Next turn in your log at the end of each month to your classroom teacher or to the front office and you will receive volunteer hours for the time spent reading aloud to your child.

For more information about the importance of reading aloud to your child, please visit Jim Trelease's web site at: <http://www.trelease-on-reading.com/>

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. Please 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, through the Odyssey parent e-mail list from Ms. Kavel Green, our Family Engagement Specialist, and our volunteer sign up system. Ms. Green may 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. Green. As our Family Engagement Specialist, 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 may also reach out to her at 321-733-0442 x131 or email: greenk@odysseycharterschool.com.

International Literacy Day

Saturday, September 8, 2018 - International Literacy Day, is a day to shine a light on "global literacy needs" across our world. Developing conscious citizens that are inspired to make our global and local community a better place is part of the heart at Odyssey. Odyssey is dedicated to helping our students understand the value of literacy. We will join with parents on Friday, September 7th in reading children's books to our students in a variety of languages. If you would like to participate by reading a book in another language, please contact our Instructional Coaches, Ms. Bernardo or Ms. Jewell, at bernardod@odysseycharterschool.com or jewells@odysseycharterschool.com, by Monday, August 27. Our school community has a wonderful opportunity to listen to books read in Spanish, French, Romanian, Hebrew, Greek, Arabic, English, and other languages! What a treat! And this is only the beginning - we hope to foster in our students a love of reading that will extend beyond our own school community!



International Walk to School Day

We are already planning for our annual International Walk to school day! This year the event will be held on October 10, 2018. We will be organizing at Beef O'Brady's in the Publix Plaza at 7:30am. All school bus riders will be dropped off in front of Beef O'Brady's between 7:20 and 7:30 and staff will walk them to the campus for breakfast. We welcome our car riders to meet us at Beef O'Brady's between 7:30 and 7:40am where parents can walk with their child to school. Additional staff, approved volunteers, and safety patrol will be on hand to help ensure that all students are walking safely to school.

5517.01 Policy Against Bullying and Harassment

Odyssey Charter School follows the Brevard Public Schools Student Code of Conduct. In response to state law the "Jeffery Johnson Stand Up for all Students Act," the Brevard County School Board adopted a policy that prohibits bullying and harassment.

The policy defines harassment as any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of data or computer software, or written, verbal or physical conduct directed against a student or employee that: Places a student or employee in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property, has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits, has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school.

Odyssey is committed to providing a safe learning environment and will not tolerate bullying or harassment of any kind. Incidents of bullying or harassment can be reported to:

- Elementary Campus Site Administrator: Mrs. Nolder, nolderw@odysseycharterschool.com, 321-733-0112
- Jr/Sr High Campus Site Administrator: Dr. Knight, knightm@odysseycharterschool.com, 321-345-4117
- Anonymous Reports: Speak-out hotline, 1-800-423-8477
- Bullying Report Form: <https://fl02201431.schoolwires.net/cms/lib/FL02201431/Centricity/Domain/5980/StudentReporting.pdf>

To learn more about bullying and find out what adults can do to help prevent it visit: <https://www.stopbullying.gov/>



Did you know that you can help raise money for OCS when you make purchases?

Do you shop at Amazon?



AmazonSmile will donate 0.5% of your purchases to Odyssey Charter School.

- Go to www.smile.amazon.com (use the same log in that you use for Amazon.com)
- Search Odyssey Charter School Palm Bay, FL
- Select our school and that's it!
- Now 0.5% of your purchase will go to our school.

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: greenk@odysseycharterschool.com.

Substitute Teachers and Substitute Bus Drivers Wanted for Elementary and Secondary

All substitutes must undergo and pass the Brevard County Fingerprinting and Background Checks.

Substitute Teachers

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. Barbara Marcus at (321) 733-0442.

Substitute Bus Drivers

All Bus drivers need a "P" & "S" endorsement and need to have driven in Florida within the last 2 years. If you meet these requirements and you're interested in this opportunity, please contact Mr. Rob Seneschal at seneschalr@odysseycharterschool.com.

SPAR

The annual Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) School Public Accountability Reports (SPARs) will be available for Odyssey Charter School in the near future. The SPARs meet ESEA's requirement for school to provide parents with an annual school status report at the beginning of each school year. The Odyssey SPAR will be posted on the school's website at <http://www.odysseycharterschool.com/reports.html>.

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is committed to
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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

**Ms. Cindy Gilmore 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. Ms. Gilmore can be reached at cgilmore@greenappleschools.com or 321-676-8737.