

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

Our Mission For Every Child

The mission of Odyssey Preparatory Academy 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.

From the Desk of Reggie Revis

Dear OPA Families:

It is hard to believe that we are close to the winter holidays. I am pleased to report that our environment is calm, orderly, and supportive of student learning. Of course we have our ups and downs like any family, but OPA parents support us through those times. Every time we have reached out to our OPA families, you have provided support and we thank you for that. We hope that our community voice mails and community emails are helpful to you. We also hope that classroom teacher emails summarizing the week are helpful also.

I would like for you to take a moment and go to the following website: www.fsassessments.org. On that site, you will see examples of the test we will take this coming spring. Please show this site to your children and talk to them about this upcoming test. It is important that our children do well in third through sixth grades this year. If you have questions or concerns about anything at all, just call or email. Our number is 321.345.4117 and my direct email is revisr@odyssey-prepacademy.com.

CALENDAR

- Nov 20** Harvest Luncheon
- Nov 24** Elementary and Secondary Interim Reports Issued
- Nov 26** Early Release Day
- Nov 27-28** No School- Holiday for All
- Dec 6** Palm Bay Holiday Light Parade 6:30pm
- Dec 9** Yearbook picture retakes
- Dec 10** OCS Board of Directors Meeting
- Dec 22-Jan 2** Winter Break
- Jan 5** No School- Teacher Work Day
- Jan 6** Students Return to School
- Jan 12** Elementary Report Cards Issued
- Jan 14** Early Release Day
- Jan 19** No School- Martin L. King Jr. Day
- Jan 29** OCS Annual Board Meeting

OPA Leadership Team

Founder/Head of Schools

Ms. Constance Ortiz

Site Administrator

Dr. Reggie Revis

AP, Technology, Scheduling, Testing

Mr. Jon Chace

Discipline Dean

Mr. Mike Davis

Curriculum Coach

Mrs. Paulette Brancaccio

Literacy Coach

Ms. Alexis Rotstein

Guidance Counselor

Ms. Bonnie Moravecky

Family Engagement in Education Month

November is Family Engagement in Education month and November 20th is the Annual National Parent Involvement Day. Since a parent is a child's primary educator, we ask that you please pledge and commit to becoming involved in your children's education. Research indicates that schools that involve families in student learning at school and home outperform similar schools that do not. We would like to encourage all families to build a strong relationship and work collaboratively with Odyssey Preparatory Academy to promote students' academic success.

Here are some ideas for getting involved in your child's education:

- Participate in Odyssey's Parent Read Aloud Program
- Volunteer at school
- Set aside time to talk about your child's day
- Help with homework

Important Info from the OPA Clinic

BPS Medication policy states ALL prescription and over-the counter medicines MUST be signed in by a parent. (This includes inhalers, cough drops, aspirin, and prescribed meds)

Medications that are not signed in by a parent CANNOT be administered to your student and will be brought to the attention of the site administrative team.

Look for the pink clinic passes for details on your student's visits to the school clinic. If you feel your child is visiting the clinic too often, feel free to contact the school so that we may partner with you to keep your child from missing instruction time.

Just a reminder that the office staff at each campus are trained to care for your students by the health department nurse. We do not have a registered nurse on staff; however we will notify you if there are any concerns that may be best handled by your family doctor.



Help stop the spread of germs! If your child is sick with a fever, vomiting, diarrhea, or illness that can be spread to others, please keep him/ her home until they are symptom-free for 24 hours. If your student is sent home from school exhibiting these symptoms, we will request they be kept home the following school day.

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 Preparatory Academy 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. Directions for activating your account can be found here. (<http://eec2.edline.com/products/edline/documentation/how-do-i-start/activating-your-account/>)

Read Aloud Program

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, the front office or downloaded on from our website. 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 our website at: www.odysseyprepacademy.com or visit Jim Trelease's web site at: <http://www.trelease-on-reading.com/>

Enrichment and Intervention Time at OPA

Odyssey Prep Academy has implemented an enrichment and intervention plan in which educational support staffs are able to guide and coach students on varying abilities in a variety of academic areas. Enrichment and intervention groups were created by the classroom teachers, and three times per week students get the opportunity to work with groups of four (4) to eight (8) students on mathematical concepts, standards, and theories and the areas of reading such as listening, phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and comprehension.

Since enrichment and intervention groups have begun, we have found that students are becoming more aware of their own mathematical and reading needs/deficiencies and students are thrilled when they see themselves succeeding, not only in enrichment and intervention class, but within their general education class as well. We look forward to the progress and achievements that students can make as the academic year progresses.

New Volunteer System - KeepNTrack

Odyssey Preparatory Academy 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 \$20.00 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.

Casual Dress Days 2014-2015

Odyssey Preparatory Academy will have 9 Casual Dress Days during the school year. The students may dress out of uniform in regular clothes on these days. Students must follow the Brevard County Dress Code on Casual Dress Days which can be found in the Brevard County Student Handbook. PLEASE NOTE: Shorts should be no shorter than 3 ½ inches from the knee. Dress down pants may not be skinny jeans 'or' tight leggings. Off-the-shoulder shirts, tank tops, and mesh shirts are not allowed.

November 21, 2014 • December 19, 2014 • January 30, 2015
February 27, 2015 • March 20, 2015 • April 24, 2015 • May 29, 2015

Early Release Dates 2014-2015

Odyssey Preparatory Academy will have 10 Early Release Days during the school year for the purpose of professional development, planning and teacher collaboration. Students will be released at 2:30pm on the following days:

November 26, 2014 • December 17-19, 2014 • January 14, 2015
January 28, 2015 • February 11, 2015 • February 25, 2014
May 28-29, 2014 • June 1, 2014

Yearbooks

Odyssey Prep Academy is announcing that our 2014-2015 school yearbooks are going to be available for pre-order! Each yearbook has a soft cover with 48 full-color pages that will feature many things about this school year including all of our students! The yearbook will cost \$17. A yearbook order form will be sent home with your student in mid-November.

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.



Spotlight on our Staff: Erin Convery

Erin Convery always knew she wanted to be a teacher. In college, she studied education at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She realized she had a passion for teaching students in areas that especially needed great teachers and resources to match the amazing potential of their students. She applied to a program called Teach for America, which places teachers in schools in traditionally underserved areas nationwide. When she was accepted, she moved to New York City and began teaching in central Harlem, and later, East Harlem. Both experiences taught her so much about education and she believes she learned just as much from the students as they did from her. She worked to help them to grow their character as well as their test scores, and one of her fourth grade classes made the second highest growth of any charter school in New York City on their state tests. Ms. Convery recently moved down to Florida to be closer to her family and her mom, who is a kindergarten teacher at Odyssey Charter School's lower campus. She already loves her group of students here and really enjoys it when they are able to see how their hard work pays off. She believes that no matter what a student's background is, that student can achieve their goals through perseverance and dedication.

Uniform Requirements

Odyssey Preparatory Academy Uniform requirements are:

- Odyssey logo shirts in blue or green
- Khaki pants, shorts, or skirts
- 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 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.

Retired Teachers Needed

We are looking for retired teachers to volunteer to work with students on phonics/phonemic awareness. If you would like to support our school by donating some of your time each week to work with children, please let us know. You may contact the Site Administrator, Dr. Revis at 321-345-4117 ext. 122 or email him at revis@odysseyprep-academy.com

Walk to School Day

Walk to school day in USA began in 1997 as a one-day event aimed at building awareness for the need for walkable communities. In 2000, the event became international and on October 8th our school walked to school. The children were able to enjoy the beautiful weather. With the help of the entire school staff students were able to understand the benefits of walking to school or riding their bikes to school. Some of the benefits of walking or riding to school is stress reduction, boost brainpower, sharpens memory and allows students to enjoy the great outdoors!



Grade Level Happenings

Kindergarten

On September 26, 2014 Kindergarten celebrated Johnny Appleseed Day. We learned about different types of apples and had a taste test to determine which kind was liked best. We made fresh applesauce in a crockpot. The children enjoyed exploring the applesauce using their five senses.

On October 31st Kindergarten explored pumpkins. Each child brought in their own pumpkin to investigate. We measured them, ordered them by size, discussed their life cycle and decorated them. We also cut open one to look inside and count the seeds. It was a fun filled day!

First Grade

First grade has been working very hard on an animal unit in science the past few weeks. We learned about hibernation by playing a fun game in which students act like animals in the spring-time...until the lights go out! Then, they go into their shelter and pretend to snore and be asleep, like our hibernating animal friends.



We even made a healthy bear snack made with bread, peanut butter, bananas, and blueberries to introduce hibernating!



We discovered that animals have offspring, and that offspring grow up to eventually be like their parents. Check out our chicken life cycle posters!



(First Grade Continued)

Mr. Back came in to give a presentation on tadpoles and how they later change and grow up to be frogs. He even brought in live tadpoles for us to make observations of their changes and growth!

On Thursday, October 9th, we welcomed a special guest speaker. Mr. Back came in and spoke about metamorphosis. The children were able to see tadpoles up close and personal. They were intrigued on how these little creatures would one day develop into frogs.

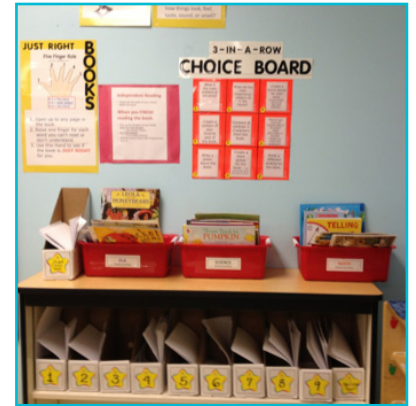
Second Grade

2nd Graders have Core Knowledge Scholastic Library!!!

The 2nd grade classes each have a classroom library of books aimed at the Core Knowledge topics of: English/Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, Math, and Music/Art!

The students have been enjoying independent reading from these new selections!

Here is a picture of a part of the library from Mrs. Reeves' classroom. After the students have read a book, they pick three activities from a Choice Board to complete, showing their understanding of the book.



Third Grade

In the month of November, the third grade will be working hard in our English Language Arts (ELA) blocks. We will learn how to use information gained from illustrations such as maps and photographs and the words in a text to demonstrate our understanding of the text. We will learn about the different parts of stories and dramas. We will learn about terms such as chapter, scene, and stanza. We will learn how to describe how each successive part builds on earlier sections. We will learn about word relationships and nuances in word meanings. We will distinguish the literal and nonliteral meanings of words and phrases in context. We will identify real-life connections between words and their use. This will be a very busy month of academics for the third grade.

In our math block during the month of November, the third grade will learn about division and fractions. We will learn about the terms division, dividend, divisor, and quotient. We will learn that division problems can be solved by using equal groups and sharing. We will continue to practice our multiplication skills because the relationship between multiplication and division will greatly benefit us in solving future problems. When we return from our Thanksgiving break, the third grade will start working with fractions. We will learn about how we can understand fractions and their use in our everyday lives. We will use fractions with number lines as well as comparing fractions to one another. The third grade will develop two very important math skills this month.

Fourth Grade

November 3, 2014, Ms. Convery's and Mrs. Severance's 4th grade classes participated in the Indian River Lagoon Quest. This program sponsored in partnership with Brevard County and the Brevard Zoo is a program in which all Brevard County 4th graders are invited to participate. Odyssey Preparatory Academy's 4th grade classes participated in their Lagoon Quest Program at Long Point Park, one of Brevard county's three park sites.

Students were transported to Long Point Park early on Monday morning. Program sessions included informational discussions on water quality and plant and animal life, question and answer sessions, an enviroscape demonstration to show how runoff affects water quality in the Indian River Lagoon, and a hands-on opportunity to wade in the lagoon to catch juvenile organisms such as fish and crabs.

The air was crisp and the water cold, but smiles were on the faces of all!

Fifth/Sixth Grade

Sixth Grade Rainbow Lab

Sixth grade took an in-house field trip to the upstairs science lab to participate in the Rainbow Lab. Dr. Jane Martin worked with the students, demonstrating proper lab safety techniques, lab safety materials and equipment, and proper disposal of chemicals. The students were engaged in creating the colors in a rainbow by following procedures set forth in the lab instructions. Not only were the students highly engaged in the lab but each team had great success in creating the test tube rainbow.



NASA Visits 5th Grade

Fifth grade had a NASA Education Specialist visit our class. The students learned about the future space exploration goals and our solar system (planet placement order and the size difference between the planets). Students took part of a hands-on lab using space dough to create our solar system. The lab included team building, mathematical skills of fractions, division, and addition, and relied on the student's ability to listen to instructions to complete the assigned steps of the lab.

The 5th grade class at OPA will participate in Horse Tales Literacy Project (formerly The Black Stallion Literacy Foundation.) The project focuses on literacy through the winning combination of live horses and classic horse literature. Because our school is new to the program, we will receive "The Black Stallion" and "The Black Stallion Returns." We will wrap up the lesson with a field trip to Wickham Park or Harmony Farms to see and ride horses. The students are very excited!



The photo is from Harmony Farms, Florida, 2013. Visit the Web site for more information and photo galleries from around the country. <http://horsetalesliteracy.org/>

Fifth Grade Lab- Monster Lungs!

5th grade took a trip upstairs to the lab and experimented with "Monster Lungs." The students learned how to use graduated cylinders, triple beam scales, and beakers. Excellent lab safety procedures were followed by donning protective eyewear while mixing chemicals. Teamwork skills were reinforced when each member of the team had specific jobs that had to be completed in exact steps. The students learned that by mixing vinegar and baking soda, a gas – carbon dioxide – is generated. The experiment was to simulate how oxygen is taken into the lungs and carbon dioxide is expelled. Many thanks to Dr. Martin for working with the students to demonstrate the lab.

Specials

What's happening in the computer lab:

Our kindergarteners will start the Successmaker program this week. Successmaker is an intuitive learning program for Math and Reading. The program determines the needs of the student and meets them where they are in the learning process. It also prepares them for future success by introducing more advanced concepts a little at a time and in a fun, visual style the students understand naturally.



The first grade is continuing their foray into storytelling through the website, Storybird.com. Storybird allows the students to choose the artwork for a picture book first. Then they imagine a story that goes with the pictures. When they have completed their story, the students will have the opportunity to share them their family and friends.

Both the second and third grades are in the middle of their touch typing segment. They have learned the importance of posture and position as well as the proper motion for striking all the letter keys. After weeks of letter exercises they excitedly started typing actual words this week. Making capital letters and typing the numbers are up next. After that it is all just a matter of practice, practice, practice to get faster without losing accuracy.

Microsoft Word has been the program of choice for the fourth graders. They have been using the computers to prepare the final draft of their personal narratives.

Both the fifth and sixth grades are honing their internet research skills. They are learning to locate and identify reliable sources on the internet. This is a key skill for upcoming research projects.

What's happening in P.E. :

Grades K-3 : Procedure and safety; Listening and follow directions, body control; Locomotor and non-locomotor movements; Coordination, hoop and educational gymnastics

Grades 4-5: Team work, safety procedures, activities that reinforce locomotors and non-locomotors movements; Travel game, coordination hand, leg, eyes; Scooter activities

Grade 6: Educational dance, educational gymnastic; Sports, football, soccer, basketball, striking games, team work activities; Educational gymnastic II, invasions games, chasing, fleeing and dodging; Health relating to Physical Education.



The 2013-2014 School Public Accountability Report (SPAR) can be viewed on our website at www.odysseyprepacademy.com under "About Us" and then "School Reports"

OPA Grievance Procedures

- Step 1: Request Teacher conference to clarify issue
- Step 2: Contact the Site Administrator 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

**Mr. Jon Chace 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. Mr. Chace can be reached at chacej@odysseycharterschool.com or 321-345-4117.