



# Odyssey Preparatory Academy

1350 Wyoming Drive S.E. • Palm Bay, Florida 32909 • 321-345-4117



## FALL 2019 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  
**Principal/Site Administrator**

Mr. Mike Davis  
**Assistant Principal**

Ms. Pat Carvil  
**Associate Principal**

Mr. Steve Skinner  
**Dean of Students/Music**

Ms. Marie Cimirro  
Ms. Leslie Guevara  
**Instructional Coaches**

Mr. Sean Antonio  
**Guidance**

Ms. Jill Clausen  
**Registrar**

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

### From the Desk of the School Leaders

Happy fall, everyone! We had a strong start to our school year and are eager to share information about some upcoming OPA events: Our Family Glow Dance, our Math Night, our Spelling Bee, and our upcoming After School Clubs. Please read on in our newsletter to find out more. We are also excited to announce the appointment of Ms. Patricia Carvil as Associate Principal. Ms. Carvil will take over more aspects of school leadership at Odyssey Prep, continuing to work closely with our Principal, Ms. Nolder. Our holistic mission to support students academically, socially, emotionally, physically and spiritually remain central to our efforts. This year, we are focusing on the needs of our Gifted and Talented Education (GATEway) students and programs with Ms. Bigwood and acceleration of all students. Our students also have the opportunity to experience Renzulli, an interactive online system providing a personalized learning environment for students, identifying strengths, interests, learning and expression styles. Our GATEway curricula and programs provide our GATEway students with the opportunity to learn and develop the following skills:

- Critical Thinking
- Creativity
- Teamwork/Collaboration
- Leadership
- Innovation
- Problem-Solving
- Responsibility
- Self-Advocacy

We welcome your feedback always. Please share your ideas with us. As partners in your child's education, we count on your feedback. Together we can offer your child an exceptional educational experience. Please feel free to reach out to us any time – [nolderw@odysseycharter-school.com](mailto:nolderw@odysseycharter-school.com), [carvilp@odysseyprepacademy.com](mailto:carvilp@odysseyprepacademy.com), [davism@odysseyprepacademy.com](mailto:davism@odysseyprepacademy.com), or 321-345-4117.

Wendi Nolder, M.Ed.  
Principal

Patricia Carvil  
Associate Principal

Mike Davis  
Assistant Principal

### Family Dance 4th and 5th Grade Dance

Students of all ages and their families are invited to join us for our Family Glow Dance on Friday, December 13th from 6 to 8pm! Students will have a blast dancing around the glowing cafeteria. Feel free to bring your own glow sticks to add to the mood!



The Family Glow Dance is helping us raise money for our annual 4th grade St. Augustine field trip. We are on our way to an amazing trip to St. Augustine again this year, and we couldn't be more excited! We look forward to seeing students and parents on December 13th.



## NOVEMBER

11/25	Interims Issued
11/27-11/29	Thanksgiving Holiday

## DECEMBER

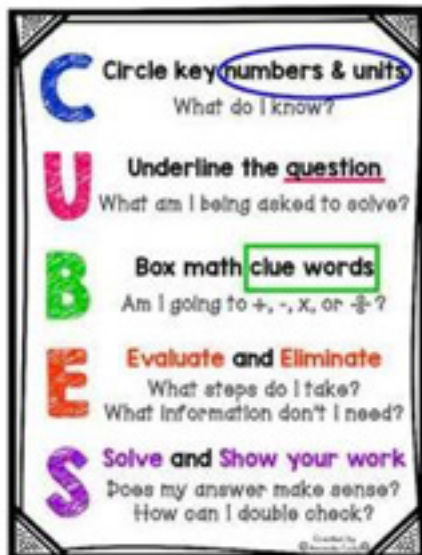
12/6	Early Release Day
12/13	Early Release Day
12/18-12/20	EXAMS Early Dismissal Days
12/20	Dress for Success Day
12/23-1/7	Holiday/Winter Break



We are excited to announce that we will have two sessions of enrichment opportunities for students in grades K-6 beginning in January. Please be on the look-out for flyers that will be coming home with your child in December.

## CUBES Strategy

Use the CUBES strategies to help us figure out what exactly to do in tricky word problems. Please encourage your student to use this strategy on their homework:



## Online Instructional Support

Elementary students will have access to iReady, myOn, Reflex Math and Study Island/Discovery Science online programs to support instruction in the Florida State Standards. iReady provides individualized online instruction that targets each student's individual needs in reading and math.

- Students are encouraged to utilize iReady for 45 minutes per week on both reading and math to progress toward their expected annual growth.
- Students are encouraged to use myOn daily to help with reading fluency and comprehension (don't forget to answer the quiz questions at the end of the book). Reflex Math is an online program that provides students with practice with math fluency in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.
- Study Island (5th grade) and Discovery Science (all grades) provide practice for students in science concepts and supports science instruction taking place in the classroom.

If you need support with any of the programs, contact your child's teachers or our instructional coaches, Ms. Cimirro, [cimirro@odysseyprepacademy.com](mailto:cimirro@odysseyprepacademy.com); or Mrs. Guevara, [guevaral@odysseyprepacademy.com](mailto:guevaral@odysseyprepacademy.com)

## Math Night

On January 28th we will have our Annual Title I Math Night. Come out and enjoy some wonderful math games and take home some activities and strategies, like the one below, to use when supporting your child at home. We hope to see you there!

## Spelling Bee

Make sure your child studies their spelling bee word list over the winter break. Each child in grades 4th – 6th will be able to participate in their class spelling bee on January 14th. The School spelling bee for our classroom winners will be on January 17th. Practice, Practice, Practice! Good luck Olympians!



## FOCUS

If you have not received your FOCUS log in (new students/ parents) please email Mr. Davis at [davism@odysseyprepacademy.com](mailto:davism@odysseyprepacademy.com). There is a new FOCUS app. You can download it to your smartphone and get easy access to grades and communication with your child's teachers.

## 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 safety concern when students are checked out too close to the dismissal time. 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!

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## Parents as Partners



Parents as Partners (PasP) is a collaborative effort between parents, teachers, and administrators. The committee develops ideas and plans programs to support student success. We have four committees being run by our Parents as Partners this year. They are:

- 5K Committee
- Teacher Appreciation
- Fundraising Committee

\*\*Next meeting will be December 13th from 5:30 to 6:00

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## Read Aloud Program Updates – 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. 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/> or you can visit our website at <http://odysseyprepacademy.com/read-aloud.html>.

Parents are invited to check out books from our Media Center for their Read Alouds. Please feel free to contact Kim Cappelen at [cappelenk@odysseyprepacademy.com](mailto:cappelenk@odysseyprepacademy.com) if you have any questions or concerns.

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## Important Weblinks

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) requires for schools to provide parents with an annual school status report at the beginning of each school year. The Odyssey Prep Academy 2018-2019 Report Card can be accessed here: <https://edudata.fl DOE.org/ReportCards/Schools.html?school=6541&district=05>. The Odyssey Parent/Student Handbook, School Improvement Plan, and Parent and Family Engagement Plan can be found on the school's website at <http://www.odysseyprepacademy.com/reports.html>. If you need assistance or questions about the reports please contact the school to set-up an appointment to meet with administration.

## The Mental Health and Wellbeing



One of the main goals of our school is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our students at all times. As such, we wanted to make you aware of a few safety policies that are in place in all Brevard County schools.

If a student reports or is suspected of being abused or neglected, all school personnel are required by law to report those suspicions to the Department of Children and Families. This requirement is in place to ensure the physical health and wellbeing of every one of our students. It is not the schools place to investigate, just to report. An investigation, if the report is accepted, will be conducted by the Department of Children and Families.

If a student reports or is suspected of possible suicide or harm to self, the school is required to complete a Suicide Risk Inquiry, or SRI. It is imperative to safeguard our students who are in crisis or possibly at risk for suicide. As a school, we will take immediate action and use screening tools to determine if your student is at risk. After a determination is made by a Certified School Counselor or School Social Worker, the parents will be immediately notified with further instruction and information to ensure the student gets the help they need.

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## Counseling Connection

In social groups for the first quarter of school (2019) and currently, we are focusing on conflict resolution, respect, kindness and fear (Face Everything And Rise) to help students have a better understanding on how to resolve problems with their peers, show others respect and kindness by having common courtesy and being mindful of each other, as well as learning how to not be afraid of failure for it can influence us to face everything and rise with determination, which can build confidence within them to be successful.

### At Home

Positive Reinforcement: Remind your children about how to solve problems (conflict resolution). Reinforce their behaviors when they are respectful and kind to others (common courtesy). Pay them a compliment when they do well in any area of life. Working with children on how to cope with failure and rise above it will build confidence, strong self-esteem and shape them in a positive aspect (Fear= Face Everything and Rise), which will be necessary for them to attain in the future in this changing world.



## How Important is School Attendance Anyway?

How important is it for a child to attend school each day? According to the National Center for Educational Statistics, school attendance may have far reaching effects for students. Students who regularly attend school have a better chance at achieving academic success than those who are absent for learning. Research shows that "chronically absent Kindergarteners gained 14 percent fewer literacy skills. First grade chronically absent students gained 15 percent fewer literacy skills and 12 percent fewer math skills" (Innis, 2018).

Students are considered chronically absent if they are absent for 10% of active school days. It is important to note that tardiness also counts for being absent for learning. In addition, checking a student out of school one hour early also reduces learning time. If a student is one hour late or leaves one hour early each day for one school week, he/she has missed 4-5 hours of learning, which is almost one full day of learning opportunities. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES), "Chronic student absence reduces even the best teacher's ability to provide learning opportunities."

Keep in mind that if students understand that education is valued within their families, they will also see the value in it. If students perceive that school attendance is a top priority in their families, they will also see it as a top priority, all the way through to college. However, note that the opposite is also true. If parents promote inconsistent attendance for their students, they will view education as low priority and may end up struggling with attendance all the way through to high school. Students who end up dropping out of high school were found to have a higher rate of absenteeism throughout their childhood years than those who graduated from high school (NCES).

What can you do to improve school attendance and academic success for your child? Here are a few suggestions from the Michigan State University Extension:

1. Set a good example for your student "in your daily work habits.
  2. Follow through with commitments
  3. Talk about the importance of a good education for life success
  4. Pay attention to attendance data for your child"
- Here are some additional tips:
5. Plan your family vacation outside of active school days
  6. Bring your child to school each active school day on time and avoid checking him/her out early

**"A missed school day is a lost opportunity for students to learn."**

(National Center for Educational Statistics)

Innis, G., & Michigan State University. (2018, October 02). School attendance is tied to academic achievement. Retrieved from [http://www.canr.msu.edu/news/school\\_attendance\\_is\\_tied\\_to\\_academic\\_achievement](http://www.canr.msu.edu/news/school_attendance_is_tied_to_academic_achievement)

Every School Day Counts: The Forum Guide to Collecting and Using Attendance Data. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2009/attendancedata/chapter1a.asp>

## School Event Highlights

### Veterans Appreciation Breakfast

Thank you to all who organized and joined us for our annual Veterans Appreciation Breakfast on 11/12/19. We were honored to have veterans and their family members attend. We are so appreciative of those who chose and continue to choose to fight for the freedoms we enjoy in our great country.

### 4th Grade Wax Museum

On Thursday, November 7th, the Fourth Grade held their annual in-house Wax Museum. Our fourth-grade students researched, wrote, and presented about a famous Floridian and then "become them" for part of the day. During the event, students had a "button" on their hand, spectators "pressed their button" and listened to the information about the Floridian who greatly impacted our state. The students did a magnificent job with their research and presentations.



### Literacy Night

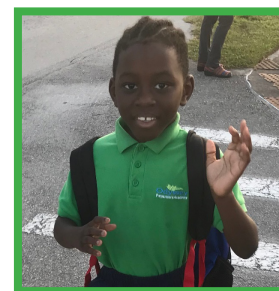
Odyssey Prep Academy hosted our annual Title 1 Literacy Night on October 30th, 2019. During our event, families gathered together to learn about enhancing

student vocabulary and how families can support their children at home. Parents visited various vocabulary-based stations and created make and take activities with their child to practice vocabulary at home. Students looked fantastic as they dressed up as their favorite storybook character! Please continue to promote literacy, vocabulary and love for reading at home.



### National Walk to School Day

National Walk to School Day was Wednesday, October 2nd! It was an amazing turn out of volunteers and parents. We met at the corner of Wildcat and Wyoming at 7:15am and welcomed the students off the buses. We enjoyed our walk to the campus to begin our day. Keeping our hearts healthy is so important and starting our day off with a morning walk to Odyssey was a step in the right direction!



### Arctic Adventure Scholastic Book Fair

Thank you for everyone for coming out to Arctic Adventure Scholastic Book Fair and a special thank you to all our wonderful volunteers, and staff members that helped to make it such a success. Our students had a lot of fun with independent shopping, building their money/counting skills, and helping a friend in need. We will be having another Scholastic Book Fair in the Spring with a new theme, more books, and new featured titles. Be sure to look out for those dates! Some new books and titles are starting to be shelved so have your student stop by to check out all our new books in the Media Center!

**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

\*\*Mrs. 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. Mrs. Gilmore can be reached at [gilmorec@odysseycharterschool.com](mailto:gilmorec@odysseycharterschool.com) or 321-733-0442.