



# Odyssey Preparatory Academy

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

## FALL 2020 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/Principal

**Ms. Pat Carvil**, Associate Principal

**Mr. Mike Davis**, Assistant Principal

**Ms. Marie Cimirro**, Instructional Coach

**Ms. Leslie Guevara**, Instructional Coach

**Mr. Sean Antonio**, Guidance

**Ms. Jill Clausen**, Registrar

**Ms. Nancy Gervais**, Office Clerk

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

### CALENDAR

#### NOVEMBER

11/11 Veterans Day Holiday NO SCHOOL  
11/18 Board Meeting @ 9:00  
11/20 Early Release – Dress for Success  
11/25–11/29 Thanksgiving Holiday

#### DECEMBER

12/4 Early Release Day  
12/8 Interim Report Issued  
12/11 Early Release–Dress for Success  
12/16–12/18 EXAMS Early Dismissal Days  
12/21–12/31 Holiday/Winter Break

*Casual Dress Days- Last Friday of each month  
(10/30, 11/20, 12/8, 1/29, 2/6, 3/26, 4/30, 5/28)*

### Message from Our Founder

I hope this communication finds you and your families well. It was absolutely wonderful to see our students and welcome them back to both eLearning and on-site schooling. It brings joy to our world and a sense of normalcy as we work to educate the most important re-source our planet holds – our incredible children. As we navigate this journey together, we pledge to be patient with you and your children. We hope you will continue to remain patient with us as we work through some of the startup challenges and continue to develop processes that work well for all types of learning and all types of learners.

It is an honor to serve our students and families. Please know that I appreciate hearing from you at any time. Every suggestion (or concern) brings an opportunity to improve what we do and what we offer to our community. We have the best children and jobs in the world. If you would like to contact me, please email me at [cortiz@greenappleschools.com](mailto:cortiz@greenappleschools.com). If it is an emergency or timely, please do not hesitate to call me on my cell at (321) 720-4682.

**Ms. Constance Ortiz, Founder**

### From the Desk of the Principal, Ms. Nolder

Happy fall, everyone! We had a strong start to our school year and continue to serve over 400 Olympians in Kindergarten through 6th grade through both brick & mortar and eLearning. Our goal upon returning to school was to ensure the safety of our students and staff and get back to the important business of educating your children.

With the support of our Founder, Ms. Constance, and our OCS, Inc. Board of Directors, we are excited about grand opening of the "Constance Ortiz Wellness and Performing Arts Centre" this year. We look forward to be able to have events and to be able to welcome our Olympian families into our fantastic new facility!

Our holistic mission to support students academically, socially, emotionally, physically and spiritually remains central to our efforts. We are continuing our focus on the needs of our Gifted and Talented students and programs with Ms. Meghan Bigwood supporting these students in both our pull out and Acceleration programs. Students will have experiences with William & Mary Gifted Curriculum and Junior Great Books, and will continue 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 critical thinking skills, teamwork/collaboration, responsibility, leadership, self-advocacy, innovation, creativity and problem-solving. Please feel free to reach out to me any time at [nolderw@odysseycharterschool.com](mailto:nolderw@odysseycharterschool.com) or 321-412-3141.

**Wendi Nolder, Principal**

## A Note from Ms. Carvil

I welcome you back to the 2020-2021 school year. As your Associate Principal, I want to assure you that the faculty, staff and I are all working together to provide a rigorous and positive academic environment for your child. I look forward to getting to know your child and learn about all of his/her talents.

As parents, you are your child's first and most influential teacher. Communication between home and school is critical to your child's academic success. One of the very best things you can do to help your child succeed academically is to read to or with your child every day. Please feel free to reach out to me any time at [carvilp@odysseyprepacademy.com](mailto:carvilp@odysseyprepacademy.com)

**Pat. Carvil, Associate Principal**

## eLearning at Odyssey Prep

e-Learning at OPA Elementary has settled into a solid routine this fall and we are thrilled with the implementation of the Canvas platform. Our teachers, students, and families have really stepped up to the plate to ensure that we are able to effectively educate our students through the distance learning model of education. Below is a reminder of the responsibilities of both students and families while students are engaged in our eLearning to provide each eLearning student with an effective education.

### Student Responsibilities

- Students are dressed properly with acceptable background and ready for eLearning.
- Be prompt – allow yourself extra minutes to get on ZOOM link. Follow the routine and eLearning schedule provided.
- Homework and assignment expectations will mirror Brick and Mortar instruction.
- Complete all work independently or with teacher assistance, not parent.
- Participate in CANVAS eLearning and Welcome meetings and training.
- Students need to be dressed appropriately online without any distracting clothing such as blankets, snuggles, towels or any other distracting clothing.
- Student are expected to follow all classroom and school based behavioral requirements.

### Parents Responsibilities

- Parents must have a high level of involvement.
- Participate in welcome meetings, CANVAS eLearning training, and virtual parent/teacher conferences.
- Set up quiet learning space in the home with supplies & materials.
- Post eLearning schedule and support students daily.
- Assist your child with accessing online instruction.
- Monitor your child to ensure attendance, participation and engagement.
- Communicate concerns with teacher promptly.
- Parents are NOT to assist students on any standardize test.

As we have all heard, patience is a virtue. Please continue to practice patience with our teachers and school during these uncharted times. We are all in this together and we want the best for each of our students and families. If you have any eLearning questions please contact Mr. Davis, Assistant Principal via email at [davism@odysseyprepacademy.com](mailto:davism@odysseyprepacademy.com)

## COVID-19

The Health Department has a process to notify us if there is a positive case of COVID-19 on our campuses. If your child becomes exposed, we also have a process in place to notify you. If your child is home sick, please highly consider having them tested for COVID-19. This careful act could help protect many students within our school community. If you have any questions and concerns regarding our COVID-19 safety procedures, please email our safety contacts for each campus: OPA – Elementary/Wyoming: Mr. Mike Davis, Assistant Principal [davism@odysseyprepacademy.com](mailto:davism@odysseyprepacademy.com)

## NEED TO KNOW INFO!!!

## Water Refilling Station

We have replaced all of our water fountains with water refilling stations. Please make sure you are sending your child with a refillable water bottle each day in order to stay hydrated throughout the day. Water bottles should be labeled with your child's name.

## ID cards

We are excited that all our student will now have ID cards. These will be used for the cafeteria, Media and for the buses. If you have lost or misplaced your ID card, please reach out to Kim Cappelen. We will be happy to assist you in replacing it.

If a card is lost or misplaced there will be a \$3 replacement fee for the first replacement and \$5 for additional replacements cards. Please email [cappelenk@odysseyprepacademy.com](mailto:cappelenk@odysseyprepacademy.com)

## National Walk to School Day

Wednesday, October 7, was International Walk to School Day, a global event that involves communities from more than 40 countries walking and biking to school on the same day. This event began in 1997 and has become part of a movement for year-round safe routes to school. Our buses dropped off students at Wildcat Drive at 7:15 am for our walk to school. Teachers and staff were staged along the route and led students safely to school. Thank you to all who were able to participate!



## ClassLink

Elementary students will have access to i-Ready, myOn, Studies Weekly, Study Island and Discovery Science online programs to support instruction in the Florida State Standards through their single sign on through the Odyssey ClassLink Launchpad. If you have not received your Class link log in please email Mr. Davis at [davism@odysseyprepacademy.com](mailto:davism@odysseyprepacademy.com).



## 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!

## Car Loop

Safety is our number one priority at Odyssey. In our continuing effort to practice social distancing and to minimize the number of people on campus, there will be no parent pick-up by the flag pole beginning Monday (9/21/2020). Families must use the car-loop when picking up their children off school grounds at dismissal time. Thank you for helping us keep our OPA families safe.

## 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 three committees being run by our Parents as Partners this year. They are:

- 5K Committee
- Teacher Appreciation
- Fundraising Committee

Please feel free to contact Jennifer Sutton at [suttonj@odysseyprepacademy.com](mailto:suttonj@odysseyprepacademy.com) if you have any questions or concerns.

## I-Ready

I-Ready testing is nearly completed. Students have been working hard to complete their Beginning of Year Diagnostic Assessment. Be on the lookout for your student's score report going home with the first report card. Please have your students complete 45 minutes on both their reading and math paths every week. This will help strengthen their skills in both academic areas.



## Title I Corner

Available now online for review is our School report card. You can access it at [odysseyprepacademy.com](http://odysseyprepacademy.com) under our school reports section.

## From our Instructional Coaches

### HOW TO HELP YOUR STUDENT PREPARE FOR SUCCESS AT SCHOOL (OR AT HOME)

We know that children function best when they maintain routines as closely as possible. When we talk about schedules and routines, we aren't just talking about one part of the day, we are talking about the whole day. While children are more successful with routines it is important that they have ownership in the routine. Requiring your child to be an active participant in the routine will help the child and family. Give younger students a picture check-list to help them know what needs to be accomplished in what order. Set alarms for older children. Remember to keep directions simple and clear, especially for younger children. Below are some routines to consider adding to your daily schedules.

#### Homework/eLearner Workspace

Many adults have a specific area of the home in which they do work, and it's important that you create a similar pace for your child. Your child will achieve their best work in a quiet, comfortable and dedicated space that is strictly devoted to learning. This space should be a different set-up from where they normally watch television or play games. To maintain breaks, such as stretch breaks, lunch-time and recess, allow your child to reduce screen time – get up, get fresh air, go for a walk or bike ride. Ensure that your child's work-space has all text books as well as necessary materials such as markers, colored pencils, notepads and highlighters. Finally, in this digital age of learning, please ensure that your child has access to their Class-link login information available to them while they work.

#### Bedtime Routine

Bedtime routines can be an enjoyable time for a family. The key to this, is organization and consistency. Maintaining a routine for bedtime procedures not only helps the student's mind and body prepare for sleep, it also supports a calm, morning transition.



Below are some bedtime routine suggestions:

- Shower, brush teeth
- Lay-out uniform for next school day (don't forget SHOES and socks!)
- Place completed homework (or notes to the teacher) in backpack
- Pack lunch & snack
- Lay-out breakfast items (bowls, spoon, etc).

#### Morning Routine

Morning don't always have to be stressful! Children function best if they maintain their routine as closely as possible.

Below are some morning routine suggestions:

- Set alarms (even for eLearners) for various times of the day like when to wake up, eat breakfast, brush teeth, login or leave for the bus, etc.
- If you have set bedtime routines suggested above, packing-up, getting dressed, etc. are already completed.



Finally, help your teachers and school communicate all necessary information to you by providing the most updated contact information. If a phone number, address or email address changes, please send a note or contact the office as soon as the changes occur. Thank you for patience and support as we all navigate and learn these new processes together. Please email [Cimirrom@odysseyprepacademy.com](mailto:Cimirrom@odysseyprepacademy.com) or [guevaral@odysseyprepacademy.com](mailto:guevaral@odysseyprepacademy.com) for support.



## 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 Jennifer Sutton at [suttonj@odysseyprepacademy.com](mailto:suttonj@odysseyprepacademy.com) if you have any questions or concerns.

## 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 via the link below <https://edudata.fldoe.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.

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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](mailto:cgilmore@greenappleschools.com) or 321-676-8737.

## Counseling Connection

In the school year of 2020-2021, the focus would be on social and emotional learning and mindfulness. The social and emotional learning will be key to promoting the well-being of our students to ensure that they are focused on self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship skills and responsible decision making. As mindfulness will help shape the livelihood of our students in all aspects, as it is the ability to pay attention to the present moment, it will be quite beneficial as they grow increased empathy and compassion, improved immune functioning, increased happiness and optimism, improved sleep, greater focus and concentration, and reduced stress and anxiety.

### At Home

Positive Reinforcement: As Odyssey Preparatory Academy is promoting “calm, courageous and compassion,” this school year (2020-2021), we encourage parents to do the same with their children at home. When adults are escalated, they cannot de-escalate an escalated child. Parents are encouraged to remain calm and be mindful in their decision making to support the well-being of the child. Therefore, working with children on how to cope with fear, especially during this pandemic (Covid-19) 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. Please email [antonios@odysseyprepacademy.com](mailto:antonios@odysseyprepacademy.com) for support.

### School Attendance

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).

### 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”
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/attendance/chapter1a.asp>

