



# Odyssey Charter School

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

## FALL 2021 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

**Founder** - Ms. Constance Ortiz

**Principal/Site Administrator** - Ms. Wendi Nolder

**Assistant Principal** - Ms. Deb Berg

**Assistant/Principal/Dean of Students** -  
Mr. James Monds

**Guidance** - TBD

**Social Worker** - Ms. Francesca Privette

**Instructional Coaches** - Ms. DeAnna Bernardo,  
Mr. Michael Senick, Ms. Amanda Gayle

**Office Manager/Registrar, Elementary** -  
Ms. Kristina Snelling

**Director, Preschool/VPK and Before & After  
School Care** - TBD

### From the Desk of the Principal:

Happy fall, Titan families! We had a strong start to our school year and remain honored to be serving your children. We are happy to be back to the important business of educating students. Odyssey is thrilled to report that in spite of all of the challenges, our students, teachers, and staff's hard work last year paid off with a school grade of "A"! Odyssey Charter School is considered a high performing public charter school as defined by the Florida Department of Education.

Our holistic mission to support students academically, socially, emotionally, physically and spiritually remains at our forefront. Students will have experiences in Art, Media, Music, PE, PLTW, and Spanish to round out their academics. This year, we welcome Ms. Gloria Hermes to our Spanish program to provide Spanish education to children in kindergarten through 5th grade. She is excited to share Spanish culture, language, and music with our students. In addition, we welcome Ms. Shelby (Flynn) Hruska to our art program. She has already worked with your children to produce art to add beauty to our hallways! Ms. Jeannette Russell will continue on our specials team providing experiences with Project Lead the Way (PLTW) for all students. Through PLTW, students engage in hands-on activities in computer science, engineering, and biomedical science, as they become creative, collaborative problem solvers ready to take on any challenge. Ms. Melissa Procter, our Media Coordinator, will continue to offer instruction in the media center on book genres, handwriting (including cursive), Core Knowledge enrichment, Greek and Latin Roots, and Science Vocabulary. She is also our Read Aloud Program contact and can support book checkout for families desiring some great books to read. More information on our Read Aloud Program can be found later in this newsletter.

We are also continuing with our focus to meet the needs of our Gifted and Talented Education (GATEway) students. Ms. Suzette Jewell Ventura supports these students with pull out and Acceleration programs. Students will have experiences with William & Mary Gifted Curriculum, Junior Great Books, and additional Project Lead the Way (PLTW) modules. GATEway students will also have an 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. Ms. Ventura also works with our classroom teachers to support compacting the curriculum and offering choice board activities for students who have already demonstrated mastery of specific standards.

As always, we thank you for the honor of serving your child. As we partner to educate your child, please know we value and welcome your feedback. Feedback on what we have done well or where we need to improve helps us to continuously improve and serve our students better. Working together, we can offer your child a wonderful educational experience. Please feel free to reach out to me any time at [nolderw@odysseycharter-school.com](mailto:nolderw@odysseycharter-school.com) or 321-412-3141.

Wendi Nolder, Principal



## CALENDAR

**1:15p.m. Friday Early Release Days** –  
K-5th dismiss at 1:30p.m.

**Casual Dress Days** – last Friday of each month  
(October 29, November 26, December 17, January  
28, February 25, March 25, April 29, May 20).

### OCTOBER

10/26 – Fall Picture Day (in uniform)

### NOVEMBER

11/3-12 – Elementary Book Fair  
11/5 – Family Book Fair 3:30-7:00p.m.  
11/10 – Veterans' Day Event  
11/10 – Wax Museum (evening event)  
11/11 – Veterans' Day / Holiday for All  
11/12 – Second Interim Ends  
11/18 – OCS Board Meeting  
11/19 – Elementary Interim Reports Issued  
11/24 – 26 Thanksgiving – Holiday for all

### DECEMBER

12/22-31 Winter Break  
1/3 – Holiday for All  
1/4-5 Winter Break

### JANUARY

1/6 – Students Return

## Orlando Science Center Family Science Night

The Orlando Science Center will be visiting on Thursday, November 4, to host a Family Science Night. Students, parents and teachers attending will participate in an exciting cooperative learning opportunity including 15 hands-on activities based on physical science. All activities are aligned with the Florida State Standards for Science. Families who attend will be entered to win tickets to the Orlando Science Center. Please note: there are limited seats for 3rd through 5th grade students, so when you see the sign-up form, please complete it quickly and turn it into your child's teacher.



## GATEway



Our Gifted and Talented (GATEway) program is well underway this fall. GATEway is designed to provide gifted and talented students with learning experiences that are integrative, inquiry-based, and problem-centered. By participating in GATEway programming, students have a chance to acquire knowledge and skills that transfer across content areas. Students work independently and in collaborative groups to research their interests, investigate and analyze real-world problems, and work in partnership with other students on hands-on projects that demonstrate their growing skills and knowledgebase. Below are some of the exciting things our students have been experiencing and learning with Ms. Ventura in the GATEway program.

- **2nd grade** GATEway students have investigated and classified different kinds of materials by their observable properties, including color, texture, and heat conduction. After analyzing data from materials testing, the students will design an insulating cover for an ice pop to prevent melting. Every material has unique properties of insulation. The better a material is at insulating, the more it keeps an object at its starting temperature. Our young GATEway engineers and designers will then use their new knowledge to select materials that have properties that are best suited for the intended purpose.

- **3rd grade** GATEway students have been learning about forces and their interactions with each other. In our Project Lead the Way (PLTW) module, students have been exploring, designing, sketching, and building both simple and compound machines that demonstrate the use of forces. Next, they will work in teams to explore the interaction of magnetic poles so they are ready to design process along with the skills and knowledge gained in this module to create a compound machine model to rescue a trapped tiger at their local zoo animal.

- **4th grade** GATEway students have been learning about speed, energy and collisions. Through the example of real-world experiences, like riding in bumper cars, students are introduced to energy transfer and conversion in collisions. The students are applying new skills and knowledge to collaboratively problem solve, design, and build a restraint system to protect a passenger in a vehicle collision. The passenger will be represented by an egg. The vehicle rolled down an inclined plane and collided with a solid object such as a wall. With the design project, the students will explore how mechanisms change energy by transferring direction, speed, type of movement, and force, demonstrating their mastery of these high-level math and science concepts. These student engineers then will leverage their project to explain to others a variety of ways that potential energy can be stored and released as kinetic energy.

- **5th grade** GATEway students have been exploring robotic history and learning more about a particular type of robot. These scientists are teaming up to apply their developing skills and knowledge using Robotics VEX IQ equipment. During this unique research, problem solving, and design problem, students work with a collaborative group to design, model, and test a robot that can remove hazardous materials from a disaster site. This applied experience will help them begin to think about possible future opportunities to use robotic technology to address other societal problems.

## Student ID Badges

Odyssey student ID Badges are now considered a part of the everyday uniform. Please ensure your child has their ID badge daily. Badges have a variety of uses at our school. Students wear their badges for safety purposes, as well as for entry on our school buses, purchase of school breakfast/lunch, and book checkout in our media center. We are happy to report we have about 90% of our students following our school uniform policy and wearing their Student ID Badge daily. If your child loses their ID, replacements are \$5. Please send ID replacement money with your child's name and the name of their homeroom teacher. Please cash or a check or money order made out to Odyssey Charter School. Families, we ask that you help your child develop a system where they remember to wear their ID badge every day. We appreciate your support!

## FOCUS

**FOCUS for Parents** – if you have not received your FOCUS log in (new students/parents) please email Ms. Berg at [bergd@odysseycharterschool.com](mailto:bergd@odysseycharterschool.com). FOCUS for students who returned to OCS Elementary is the same for both students and parents from last year. If you have questions, please email Ms. Berg. FOCUS App – 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.



## Read Aloud Program Updates – for Volunteer Hours

The Read Aloud program is a wonderful way for parents to fulfill their required annual volunteer hours while supporting their student’s academic growth. 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.*”

We make it easy for parents to volunteer at our school by spending your time in the comfort of your own home with your child. To participate in the Read Aloud program, parents spend 15 minutes reading aloud quality literature to their child. Find a book that both you and your child will enjoy. Then log your time on the Read Aloud log which can be provided by your classroom teacher, or through the front office, or from the school’s 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.

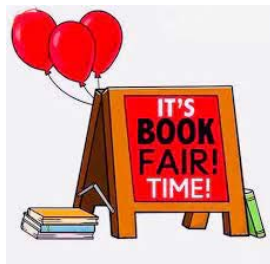
For more information about the importance of reading aloud to your child, please visit Jim Trelease’s web site at: <http://www.trelease-on-reading.com/> or you can visit our website at <http://odysseycharter-school.com/readaloud.html>.

Our media center has many books recommended by Jim Trelease. Parents are invited to check out books from our Media Center for their Read Alouds. Please feel free to contact Ms. Melissa Procter at [procterm@odysseycharterschool.com](mailto:procterm@odysseycharterschool.com) if you would like to come a check out a book or have any additional questions.



## Fall Book Fair is Coming!

Harvest a Good Book, Fall in Love with Reading at our upcoming Scholastic Book Fair! Our fall book fair will be held on November 3rd-12th. Our family event will be held on Friday, November 5th from 3:30-7pm. Each family will receive one free reusable tote bag with any purchase (quantities limited). Don’t forget to purchase from your teacher wish list bucket to help their classroom library.



Our teacher wish list will be located by the front registers. Families can round up their change for All For Books which helps students in our school win free books. It is estimated that when children have a home library, as few as 20 books of their own at home, they may achieve three more years of schooling than children who don’t have books at home. Our Scholastic book fair can help your family find the latest and greatest books your child will love to read. For more information or to set up an eWallet- a cash free way for your child to shop the book fair- please visit [www.scholastic.com/bf/odysseycharterlowerschool](http://www.scholastic.com/bf/odysseycharterlowerschool).



## Masks

We are happy to see the COVID numbers declining and hope we will continue to see the numbers reduce. Just a reminder that masks are optional, but are highly encouraged on buses and in small group settings.

## ClassLink – Odyssey Launchpad. Online Instructional Support

Elementary students will have access to Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA), i-Ready, Studies Weekly, Study Island, Discovery Science, and Renzulli online programs to support instruction in the Florida State Standards through their single sign on through the Odyssey ClassLink Launchpad at <https://launchpad.classlink.com/odysseyfl>. Their user-name is their 7-digit student ID number (i.e. 1234567) and their password is their birth date in the form of Month, Day, 2-digit Year (i.e. MMD-DYY).

**CKLA** is our core Language Arts program that is rich in literature, history, geography and science. Your child has access to the CKLA content via the Launchpad and can read (or re-read) stories at home that they have learned at school.

**i-Ready** provides individualized online instruction that targets each student’s specific needs in both reading and math. Students take a diagnostic 3 times per year to set their learning path and they work their path in between. Students are encouraged to utilize i-Ready for 45 minutes per week in both reading and math to progress toward their expected annual growth.

**Studies Weekly** is an online program supporting Social Studies instruction.

**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.

**Renzulli** is an online program that all students have access to. Students take an interest inventory upon first using Renzulli, then engage in self-directed learning specifically matched to their individual profile. Renzulli places a strong emphasis on problem-solving, creativity and critical thinking skills to help ensure learners are developing thinking and reasoning skills that will prepare them for college and careers.

We encourage parents to take an active role monitoring students’ progress on these programs, and to remind students to utilize these programs weekly. If you need support with any of the programs, contact your child’s teachers or our instructional coaches: Mr. Senick [senickm@odysseycharterschool.com](mailto:senickm@odysseycharterschool.com) Ms. Gayle [gaylea@odysseycharterschool.com](mailto:gaylea@odysseycharterschool.com)



## Parents as Partners

Parents as Partners (PasP) is our school’s parent/teacher organization that supports our school. The PasP team supports the school by working on its goals supporting student success. Our Fundraising committee will be raising funds not only for school-wide initiatives but also for Teacher Appreciation and to support students who may need additional support to go on field trips.

**Note that ALL Parents are our Partners.** However, in order to become an active member, please join us at the meetings held via ZOOM or in person. Mark your calendar for our upcoming PasP meetings:

- November 4 Science Night supported by the Orlando Science Center
- January 27 ELA/Math Parent Night
- February 24 FSA Parent Information Night
- April 21 Bingo for Books and At-Home Reading Night
- May 12 Data Review and Parent Input Night

Please contact Ms. Wendi Nolder for more information at [nolderw@odysseycharterschool.com](mailto:nolderw@odysseycharterschool.com).

## Title I Corner

Odyssey Charter School is a Title I school holding the highest academic expectations for your child. Title I documents are available online for your review and are accessible at [www.odysseycharterschool.com](http://www.odysseycharterschool.com) under the "about us" section under school reports: <http://odysseycharterschool.com/reports.html>.

Odyssey Charter School es una escuela de Título I que tiene las expectativas académicas más altas para su estudiante. Los documentos del Título I están disponibles en línea para su revisión y son accesibles en [www.odysseycharterschool.com](http://www.odysseycharterschool.com) en la sección "acerca de nosotros" en los informes escolares: <http://odysseycharterschool.com/reports.html>.

## National Walk to School Day

National Walk to School Day was Wednesday, October 6, 2021. Our students, teachers, and staff (and parents) enjoyed a lovely walk to school from the nearby plaza. Walk to school day is a great way to get some exercise, fresh air, and to reduce our carbon footprint.



## Transportation

We would like to thank all the Odyssey families that have signed up for transportation. For our buses, we are highly recommending that all students continue to wear masks and use the hand sanitizer when getting on the bus. We want thank you for helping us keep all our bus drivers and students safe.



Just a reminder few reminders:

- 1) If you would like to sign up for one of our bus routes, and live 2 miles or more away from your child's campus, please contact our transportation department and they will be happy to assist you.
- 2) We would like to kindly remind all parents that Transportation changes may not be made over the phone. You may, however, submit these requests in writing to your child's teacher or to the front office.
- 3) If your child loses their ID, replacements are \$5. Please send ID replacement money with your child's name and the name of their home-room teacher. Please cash or a check or money order made out to Odyssey Charter School. Families, we ask that you help your child develop a system where they remember to wear their ID badge every day. We appreciate your support!

To request bus transportation, visit [www.EZrouting.com/Odysseyfl](http://www.EZrouting.com/Odysseyfl). Please feel free to contact our transportation department with any questions at: Transportation office 321-345-4117 Opt. 3 or Email [greerr@odysseycharterschool.com](mailto:greerr@odysseycharterschool.com).

## Water Bottles & Refilling Stations

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.

## Tardy Policy

Students are expected to be in their seats and ready to learn by 8:00 AM. Students miss important beginning of the day instruction and cause a disruption to the classroom when arriving to class after 8AM. If students arrive at 8:00 AM or later, parents must park and walk their child into the office, sign them in, and receive a tardy slip 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.

### 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.

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