



Odyssey Academy Newsletter

January 30, 2008

Planning for the 2009-10 School Year!

It is hard to believe that we have just past the halfway point for the 2009-10 school year, a year of much change and of a great deal of progress.

First, be assured that Odyssey Academy is a very sound organization and continues to strive to serve the individual needs of each of our students. In that regard, we are particularly proud of the following for this school year:

- Enrollment is as high as it has ever been, currently 276. This compares around 160 last year. More importantly our school enrollment has varied less than 4 percent since September. This is a good sign of the stability we wish to maintain.
- Our sponsor and the State have approved another 3-year charter for our school, following a review of our program and financial status and projections.

- Volunteerism is a hallmark of the Odyssey Academy philosophy, and volunteerism is at an all-time high, thanks to our committed parents and community.
- We have developed systems to assure prudent financial stewardship of the funds we receive. Our annual independent audit was presented to the Board at its last meeting.
- Our improvement plan has been approved by the Minnesota Department of Education. We have implemented Professional Learning Communities for all grade levels. These staff groups meet every two weeks to keep a finger on the pulse of progress on goals and strategies to assure continuous education improvement to Odyssey.

As we begin planning for 2009-10, we look to continuing to build upon that which has made Odyssey the place you to which you have chosen to entrust your children. We have the capacity, the talent, and the will to do so.

RE-ENROLLMENT FOR 2009-10

In order to plan for next year, though, we need to have a clear picture of how many students we will have enrolled. Attached to this newsletter is an Intent to Re-enroll Form. Please read it carefully and return it by the due date.

KINDERGARTEN ENROLLMENT FOR 2009-10

We are also now accepting kindergarten enrollments for next school year. We have three kindergarten classrooms, but spots are filling fast. Remember that all kindergarten students must be five years of age by September 1 to enroll in kindergarten. If you intend to enroll any of your children in kindergarten for next year, now is the time! Please contact Denise in the office at 763-971-8200 if you would like to receive enrollment materials for next year.

Calculators

ALL middle school students MUST have a calculator for math class. If you have questions or need assistance obtaining a calculator please contact Kari Mitchell at 763-971-8200.

Donations Needed!

Ms. Ziemer, our art teacher, needs donations of metal coffee cans, yarn and wire hangers. Please bring donations to the school office.

Audubon Cener of the North Woods Dates Changed

The dates for this year's trip to the Audubon Center of the North Woods have changed. The new dates are May 13-15 for 3rd-5th grade and May 14-15 for 1st-2nd grade.

Winter Carnival / Silent Auction

The preparations for Odyssey's annual Winter Carnival are happening fast and

furiously now! Keep a watch for updates on the fliers that are being sent home in the next few days. Remember to return the Information/Sign-up Sheet on **Monday, February 2**. There are partnership positions available for the set-up time, for working in the kitchen, helping with a game or activity, and/or for helping with clean-up. When we receive your partnership information by the due date you will receive free game tickets and a free food item coupon. We need the support of all staff and families to help make the event as enjoyable and successful as possible. Remember to check out the big sales that are happening at many stores right now for items to donate to the Silent Auction. Items that can be added to baskets for the Silent Auction (such as arts and crafts items, valentines, games and movies, sports balls, ect.) are needed. We also need small prizes for the many games at the carnival, and "dollar store" merchandise for the Bargain Boutique.

Thank you in advance for your support.

Pancake Breakfast and Health & Wellness Fair A Success!

Odyssey's annual family pancake breakfast served almost 200 students and family members this year! We received generous donations from Wellshire Farms (turkey breakfast sausage), Anderson's Maple Syrup (pure maple syrup), and a Costco gift card to purchase organic pancake mix. That allowed to charge a discounted fee of only \$1.00/person!

This year we were pleased to be able to add a Health and Wellness Fair! We had presenters for dental care (Brooklyn Blvd. Dental), water safety (Brooklyn Center Aquatics), nature and family

recreation (Three Rivers Parks), and many, many more!

We are also very grateful to the many Odyssey parents and family members, and staff that volunteered their time at the event and helped to make it a success!

Donation Needed for Breakfast Program

As most of you already know, our breakfast selections are very slim compared to previous years. This is a result of not serving our children high fructose corn syrup, artificial color, modified fats, and chemical preservatives.

We would like to add an additional organic option. We work on such a small budget to provide the children of our community with healthy and natural foods to help insure their academic success and raise awareness of the important roll that HEALTHY MIND, HEALTHY BODY has in this success. In order to provide our newest item (organic instant oatmeal in a variety of flavors) we are asking members of the Odyssey community to pull together to establish a fund for the purchase of hot water dispensing equipment. We want you to know that we are trying to do our very best at providing healthy yet appealing choices for our children and this time we need help from the entire community! Keep in mind that we can also use this equipment at other family and fundraising events that will further benefit our children.

If each of our 300 community members (staff & students) donates \$1.00 we could purchase the necessary equipment needed. As an individual it is a small amount, as a whole cooperative we can raise \$300. It shows just how far

even the smallest effort can go! Please send your contribution with your child(ren) to school or stop in the office to contribute to your family's educational community.

Kids' Club

Kids' Club currently has openings for students in grades k-5. Kids' Club is a convenient child care option – especially during non-school days and early release days. If you would like more information, please contact Kari Mitchell at 763-971-8200.

Odyssey C.A.R.E.S.

The C.A.R.E.S. program is a component of "Responsive Classroom" teacher training and a large part of Odyssey's school climate and character-development for all the students, kindergarten through eighth grade. The letters stand for Cooperation, Assertion, Responsibility, Empathy and Self-control. Every other month each classroom has a discussion about what one of the words means and how we show that characteristic through our behavior. Then the students share who in the class has shown the characteristic, or has worked hard at and improved at the characteristic.

In January the focus was on "Responsibility". The students offered many good examples how to show responsibility. They mentioned taking care of personal and classroom supplies appropriately, being accountable for your own actions, caring about education and many other great ideas. Stop in and check out the C.A.R.E.S. display in the center hallway to see the photos and quotes for the following students:

Mrs. Pouliot – Yini Gandah, Zack Picard, Deante Porter

Miss Bovy – Zoe Chisnell, Ximenaz Hernandez, Trevor Wincek
Mrs. Montray – Hayat Abdullahi, Lavell McGrone, Antayvia Siphapaserth, Josiah Wesseh
Miss Pam – Dasia Baggett, Ryant Freeman, Jaiden Kent, Phebe Nihart-Arango, Ronaldo Rosas, Malee Vang, Johnathan Young
Miss Driscoll – Malik Beasley, Jawein Cosey-Richmond, Usamah Hayes, Joel Horstmann, Makenzie Johnson, Clara Schmidt, Dillion Stai
Miss D. – Javen Killen, Lakisha Massaly, Blessing Morris, Becca Thorstad
Mrs. DeGreef – Francis Johnson, Jacob Lexvold, Dekontee Reeves
Mrs. Grabe – Cassidy Deng, Junior Kai, Nya Macon
Miss Kalmes – Sergio Frias, Ashley Watros, Charles Wylie
Mrs. Rosengren – The Whole Class!
Mr. Skramstad – The Whole Class!
Mrs. Swanson – Bubbles Auld, Brandi Brandner, Jake Peterson, Berenisse Portillo, Lavelle Riser, Joe Sando
Mr. Nordmann – Netta Armstrong, Kaleb Arradondo, Natasha Baker, Todd Cotton, Mikayla Holland, Patrick Kollah, Bobbie Nutter, Elizabeth Weeber
Miss Erickson – Kirk Anderson, Amber Watros, Onell Yalartai, Jenkins Yonly, Jordan Young
Mrs. Hardenbrook – Victor Bovitz, Naomi Chan, Kau Guannu, Marsay Johnson, Brenda Kurth, Kayla Lyles, Delaney Peterson

Help Wanted

These positions are not new, but are still very important. Please keep these opportunities in mind when you are planning your schedule.

Literacy time in all the grades need extra people to either work one-on-one students as they read, or help with small

groups. For 1st and 2nd grades, the time is 10:00 – 11:00, for 3rd – 5th grades, the time is 1:00 – 2:30. The 6th – 8th grades have classes throughout the morning hours. Improving literacy skills helps the students in all the classes and studies and helps to show improvements in the testing scores throughout the school.

We also need extra hands during **lunch periods** for kindergarten through fifth grades. Third through fifth grades eat from 11:50 – 12:15. Kindergarten through second eat from 12:15 – 12:40. Helping students with containers, assisting at the salad table, dispensing condiments and helping staff with dismissal times will be the main tasks.

Please contact your student's teacher or contact Shel Auld at mikauld@aol.com or (763)971-8200, to get more information or schedule a time you can come in and help.

Adventure Trips Are Right Around the Corner!

Remember, all classes, kindergarten through middle school will participate in an adventure trip this spring. If you have questions about the adventure trip for your child's class, please contact the classroom teacher. If you have questions about your student's individual fund raising account please contact Shel at mikauld@aol.com or (763)971-8200.

There are two more opportunities coming up this spring to help your child raise funds for his or her adventure trip. In February students will be able to sell items such as chocolates, coffees, nuts and more through Equal Exchange. In March we will be selling flowers through Malmborg's.

Thank you, Odyssey Partners!

Odyssey partners logged 349 hours in volunteer hours in the month of November! We have accomplished a lot in one month that could not have gotten done without the extra help from Odyssey parents and community members.

This is an increase of 88 hours over the month of October. All Odyssey staff are very grateful for the numerous partners that help us help our students get the best education possible.

Thanks for the help!

Check out this website!

Looking for new choices in food products or places to eat? Interested in healthier food options, but don't know where to go? www.eatwellguide.org is an easy to use, informational guide for food, restaurants and stores. It can even be used if you are traveling to other locations and want to know what is available before you get there. Going out of town for the holidays? Check on this site for places near your destination to find healthy food sources for you and your family.

Donations for Health Office Needed

Our health office is running low on the following items: Tylenol, children's Tylenol, ibuprofen, Kleenex, hand soap, feminine hygiene products. Please send donations to the health office.

Attendance

Remember that it is important for your student to be on time each morning. Late arrivals disrupt the education of not only your student, but the other students in the class as well. Students should be in their classroom ready to learn promptly at 8:10 a.m. Please call the school office with any questions.

Coming Up in February

Black History Month

6th, Friday - Winter Carnival

9th, Monday - CAC meeting, 3:30

11th, Wednesday - Food Committee meeting, 1:30

12th, Thursday - Parent's Night Out! (grades 3 – 5), 3:00 - 8:00

13th, Friday - No School

16th, Monday - No School

20th, Friday - Black History event day

25th, Wednesday - Board Meeting, 6:00

26th & 27th, Thursday and Friday - Science Fair judging