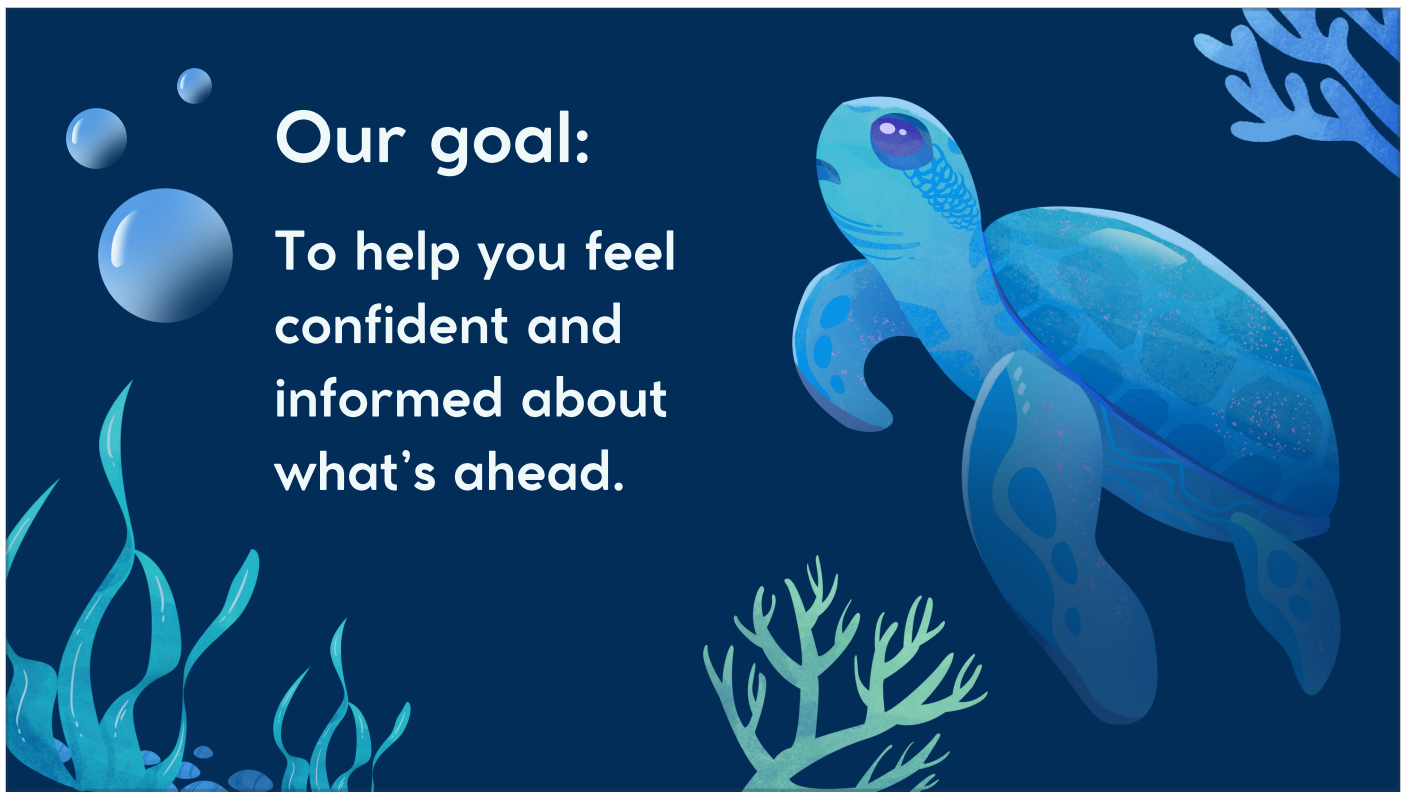




We are so excited to have you here. I would like to know who I am speaking to you. If this is your first time with a kindergarten student, raise your hand? If this is your first time with a kindergarten student at Odyssey, raise your hand. If you've done kindergarten at Odyssey before, raise your hand.

Kindergarten is a big milestone, and we are honored to be a part of it.

Our goal today is to help the parents feel confident and informed about what's ahead. We want the students to get to know their teacher and their classroom.



We are so excited to have you here. My name is Ms. Austin, I am the director here. I have been here since we opened our doors in 2005. I started out teaching kindergarten - in a district school prior to here. Then I moved up to Assistant Director for 11 years and this coming year will be my third year as Director. I LOVE kindergarten - it will always hold a special place in my heart. I was the only kindergarten teacher for a lot of years here at Odyssey, and now we have 4!

I would like to know who I am speaking with today. If this is your first time with a kindergarten student at Odyssey, raise your hand. Keep your hand up if this is your first time with a kindergarten student. If you've done kindergarten at Odyssey before, raise your hand.

Wherever you are on your voyage, Kindergarten is a big milestone, and we are honored to be a part of it.

Our goal today is to help you feel confident and informed about what's ahead. We want the students to get to know their teacher and their classroom.

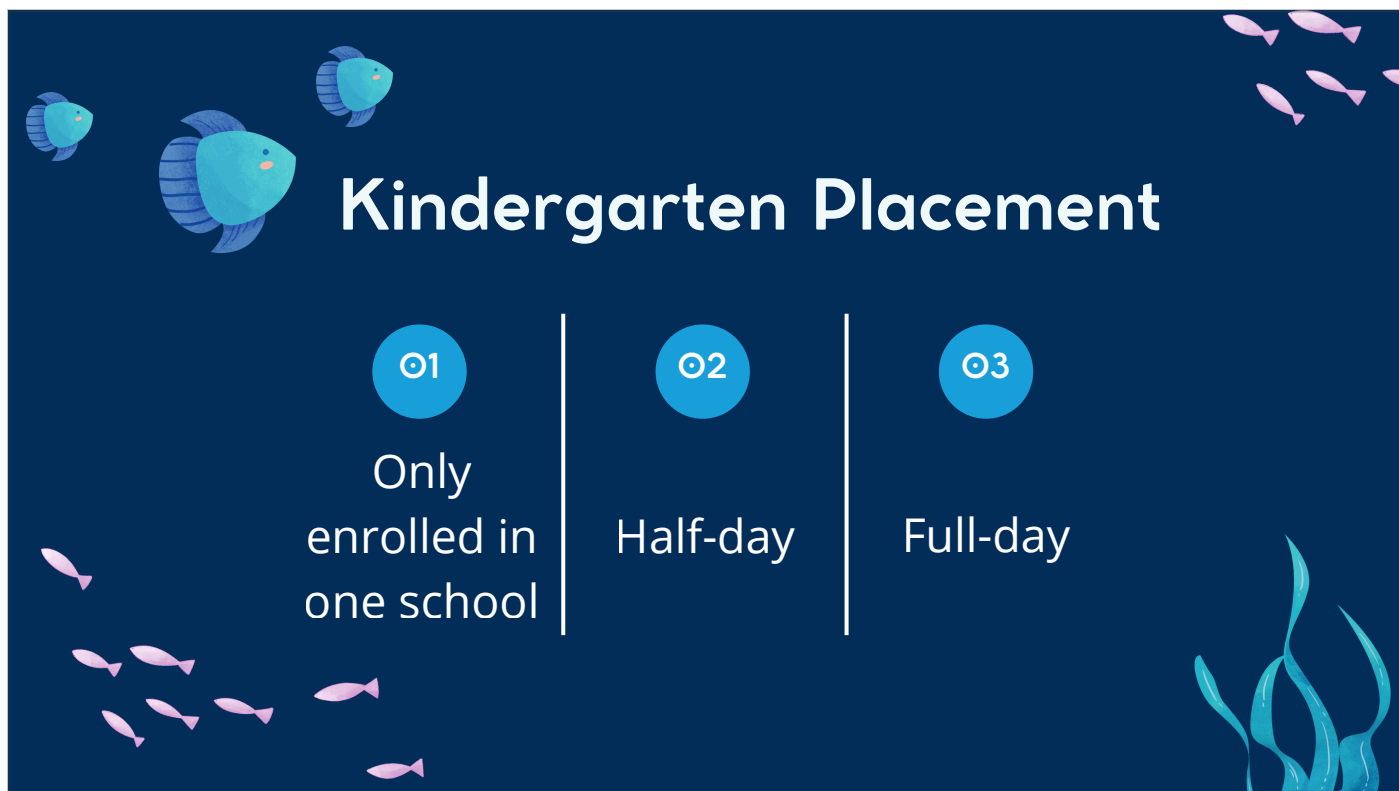


Our Team

- Ms. Smith
- Ms. Yorgason
- Ms. Carpenter
- Ms. Wright

Our team is amazing and I would trust any of them with any student. This is a list of our teachers. We also have instructors. Here at Odyssey we call our teacher's aides instructors because we often ask them to teach small groups or even whole group sometimes. They are also the ones who sub for us when the teacher is gone. Every single one of these people bring unique strengths and skills to the kindergarten team. You'll get a chance to hear more from them in a bit.

Also introduce other team members there that evening.



Alright parents, we get to get down to the nitty gritty now.

I've got a lot of information for you today - so it's going to be like a firehose. Don't worry, we are here to help and answer any questions.

We really are so excited that you have chosen Odyssey. Your student is going to have the best start here, not only academically but also socially, emotionally, character wise and so much more.

But first things first - by state law, you can only be enrolled in one school. This means if you have accepted a position at a another school, and a position at our school, you are breaking the law. You have to choose one, and if there's any way I can influence your choice to be here let me know. I've been here for 20 years and absolutely love it, love the community, love the parents, love our staff, love our students.

We have 4 full day kindergarten classrooms. Those of you who have opted to go half day will pick up your student at 11:15 am. We will walk them out to the front, just like regular after school pick up.

Half day students will get core academics (which is language arts and math) during their time here. Depending on which class they are in, they may or may not get to participate in specials.

Our specials include library, PE, music, and art for kindergarten students.

Full-day students stay here for lunch, and then in the afternoon they get a lot of small group instruction, personalized instruction, deeper enrichment, art projects, extended learning and more. This is usually when class parties take place as well. If you want your child to participate in these things, they will need to be enrolled as full-day students.

Now something to note, if your child is a half-day student and you find they are adjusting well, you can switch them to full-day. But this needs to be done before October 1st. Unless we have a dedicated 1/2 class, then that stays 1/2 day, there are no changes that can be made in that class.

We had all but one of our half-day students this year end up going full-time for various reasons, one of them being the extra support, as they found they were falling behind their peers in learning. Another because students didn't want to leave once they made those connections and relationships with the teacher and their friends.

Our Philosophy

Mission/Vision

Odyssey Charter School teaches students how to learn using a classically based curriculum...

PCBL

Personalized Competency Based Learning



Read our mission statement.

Classical education is about teaching students how to think, how to take ownership of their learning, how to think critically about the information they intake regardless of the format of that information. We want all of our students to be culturally literate when they leave Odyssey. This means they know history of the world and American, they know the different movements that have happened around the world to influence our current lives. Classical education is a very history rich lens on content. Think about the image you get when you think of classical education. Think of Socrates, Aristotle, sitting in front of student that adore and respect that teacher. Our teachers are compassionate and passionate about every student. They work hard to ensure the growth and learning of every student, they deserve respect from you and your student.

We believe in students knowing about the world around them. Much of our language arts is taught through science and history concepts. It's called background knowledge and the more background knowledge a student knows, the better readers they will become.

PCBL is an initiative we have been working on for a few years now. It is our goal to honor every child's journey, provide the support and resources they need to be successful, but letting them guide some of that learning by choosing between different options for assessments, This is still a work in progress, and it looks different for every grade level, but that is the direction we are going. It's about students taking ownership of their learning, setting goals, and monitoring their own progress.



It starts with our amazing team. We have four teachers who each add unique strengths and qualities to our program. I would trust my child in any of their classrooms. Some are more experienced in the classroom and some are still young in their careers, but I have hand-picked them for our community.

Each of them have instructors - or teacher's aide's in their classrooms all day. So there are two adults in the classroom with your student. The instructors are the amazing people who take your students out to recess and supervise during lunch. They also teach small groups and assess skills and knowledge. They know your student, they know who they play with, and what they play. They know the social side of your student.

Our classrooms are all different sizes, ranging from large to small. The size of a classroom does not determine the quality of a student's experience. Some teachers prefer the smaller classrooms, it creates a cozy feel and is easier to manage the noise and sometimes chaos that 25 little bodies bring into a classroom. Others like the bigger classrooms, mostly for storage of items. Teachers accumulate a lot of "stuff", but I want to assure you that no matter the size of your student's classroom, it is their teacher who will make the difference. It's the nature of our building - we were retrofitted to be a school and as we grow, we work with the space we have.

We focus a lot on building relationships and a good solid foundation. Our teachers have high expectations for behavior and academics. We believe that all students can learn and we believe that all students can succeed if given the right tools.

Our curriculum is rich in content, rich in depth, rich in exposing your child to the wide world around them through nursery rhymes, a study of history such as the colonial times, learning about our first presidents, motion and force, and so much more. Next month, our kindergarteners are delivering oral book reports for their final book report in class. It is on American Symbols.

It's also a time when we are teaching social skills and emotional regulation. Two very important skills for kindergarten students to be successful.

While it may seem like the curriculum is easy, we spend the first bit really identifying what students know and need to know. What are their strengths, what are their challenges, how can we best meet their needs and then we hit the ground running. We have had many students return who have gone elsewhere only to discover that they learn so much more within the walls of our classrooms.



These are our school-wide expectations and we would love for you to start using this terminology at home so that there is consistency. These apply in almost every situation.

Self-control, are we managing our feelings and actions, regardless of the circumstance.

Accountability: we take responsibility for our actions, we admit when we did something right, we admit when we did something wrong and we learn from it and if we did something wrong, we try to fix it by restoring relationships, fixing things, making apologies, etc.

Integrity, we are honest in all we say and do, we do the right thing even when no one is watching. We tie this one in a lot to trust - and the trust it can build or break between people.

Loyalty and Respect. We want students to stand up for each other, to be a loyal friend and student, to show respect to people and things.

We recognize that kindergarten students are still learning how to behave. They do make poor choices sometimes, imagine that, and consequences do need to be provided. We ask that you support our staff when a disciplinary action must be taken. We do not tolerate bullying, we not tolerate aggression and physical harm. Students will be sent home for this. If there is repeated misbehavior, we may ask you to come in and sit with your child, we may put them on a behavior plan, we may shorten their school day if they are struggling to make it all day. All of these steps are taken in conjunction with teaching the correct behavior. It's not too early to be talking to your students about SAIL.

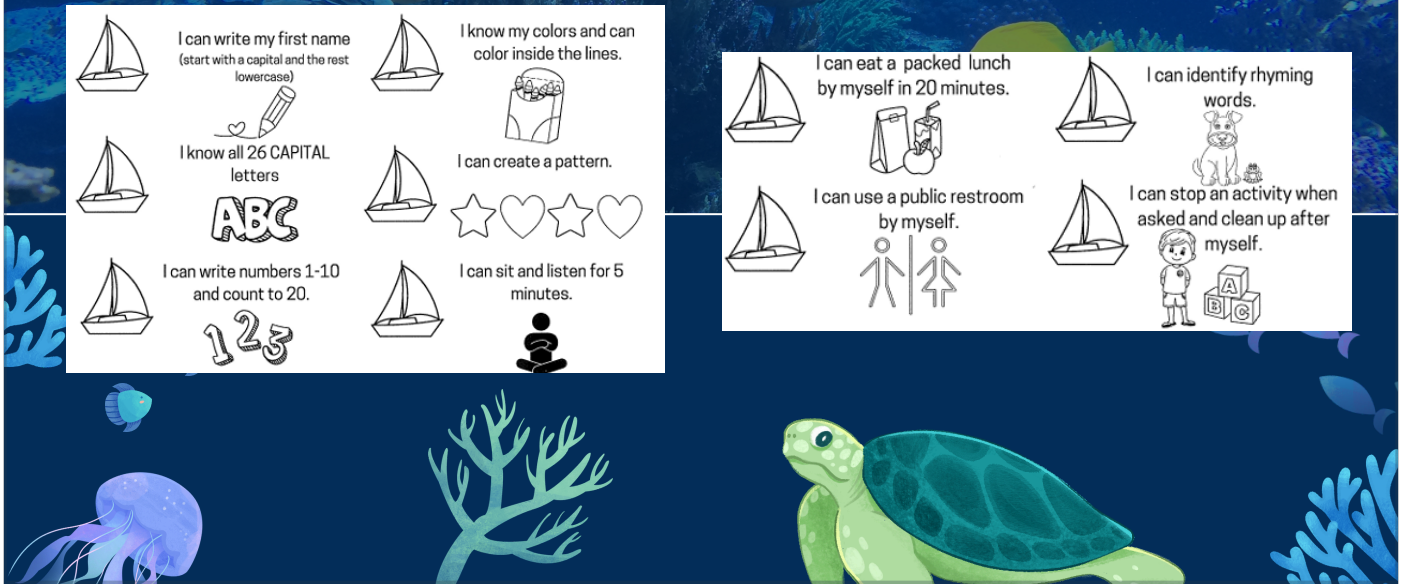
A Day in the Life of a Kindergarten Student



Morning routine (Ms. Carpenter)
Literacy instruction (Ms. Yorgason)
Math (Ms. Wright)
Science & History (Ms. Smith)

Have teachers introduce themselves, a little bit of history, and what they love about teaching kindergarten.

What should I expect from my student?

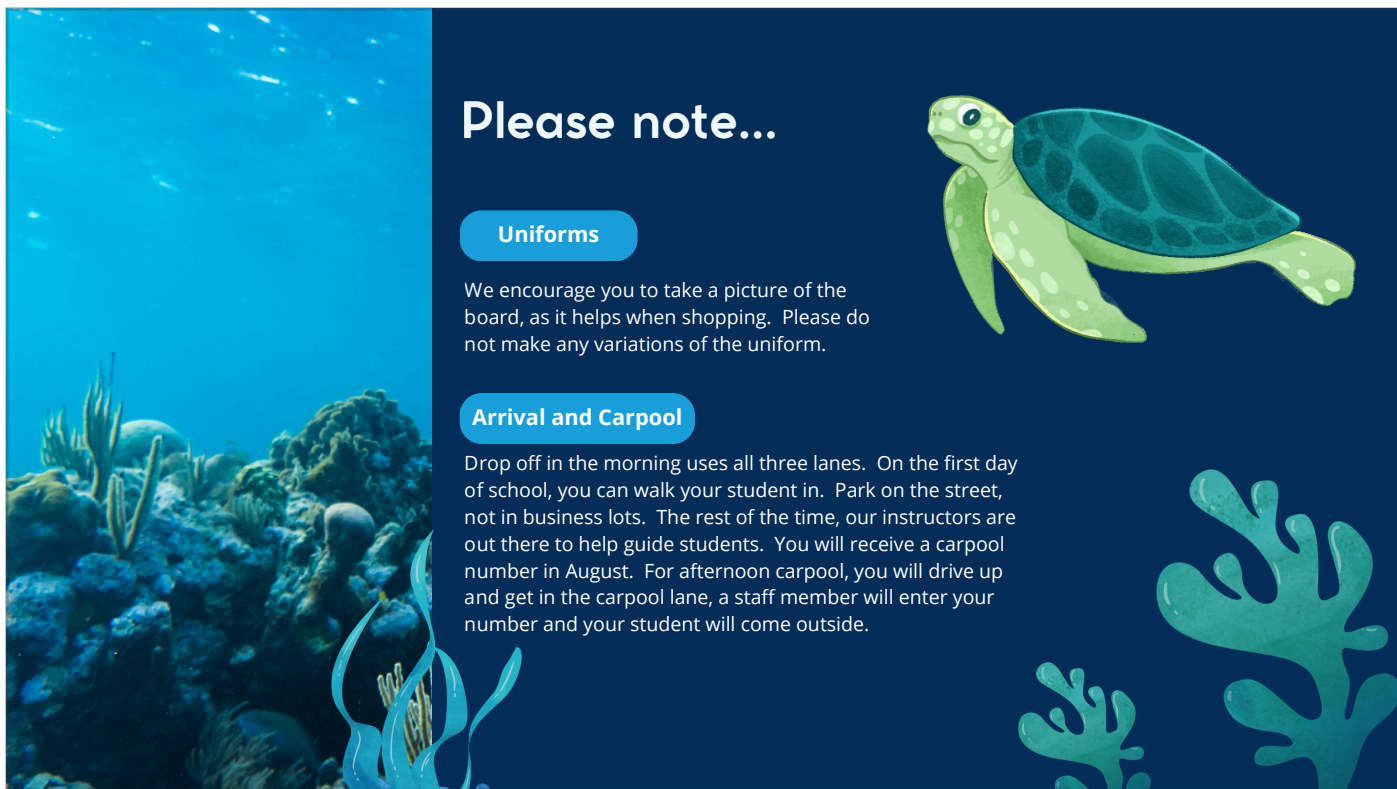


These are things that we would LOVE for all our students to come into kindergarten knowing and doing.
(Go through each one.)

The students have 20 minutes for lunch, beware of how much food you pack. Also, school lunches have a lot of food in them. Encourage your student to focus on eating. Please be sure anything you send with your child they can open by themselves. First few days we would love some extra hands.

Practice stopping an activity in the middle of what they are doing and have them clean up. These transitions can be tricky when they are used to playing with something until they are finished. Those are all skills you can practice during the summer.

Rhyming!! Play with language, songs, their name, and more.



I want to introduce you to a person you will want to get to know well; Ms. Schelin. We encourage you to take a picture of the uniform board - it helps when you are shopping. What is on the board is correct, please don't make any variations of it. The soft-knit jeggings are not allowed. No logos, proper socks and shoes, correct colors and styles. Just because a store carries our colors may not mean it is uniform approved.

Contact Deb Lott at the front office if you have any questions.

Arrival and carpool. In the morning, you will drop off in one of three lanes (and don't worry, you'll hear about this again later as school approaches). It doesn't matter which one, the biggest thing we ask is that you follow the directions of our staff who are out there leading traffic in all types of weather, so be kind to them. We have instructors out there to open the door and let your student out. I try to stand at the doors most mornings and greet the students - and let them know how excited I am that they are at school.

After school is a little different. You will receive a carpool number in August. This number needs to remain in your pick-up vehicle. You will get in the carpool line when you arrive, it's long, but it goes relatively quickly. We have someone outside who enters that number into our system and it will pop up in your child's classroom letting them know you are here. They will then come directly outside and find you. Stay in your car and we'll help get them to you.

Uniforms



Uniform Tops

Navy, white, light yellow (not gold) or light blue long or short sleeve polo uniform style shirt with no visible logos.

Uniform Bottoms

- Navy or khaki twill uniform pants, shorts, or skirts – no “pull on” style pants, joggers, or pants with visible back pockets or cargo pockets.



Accessories

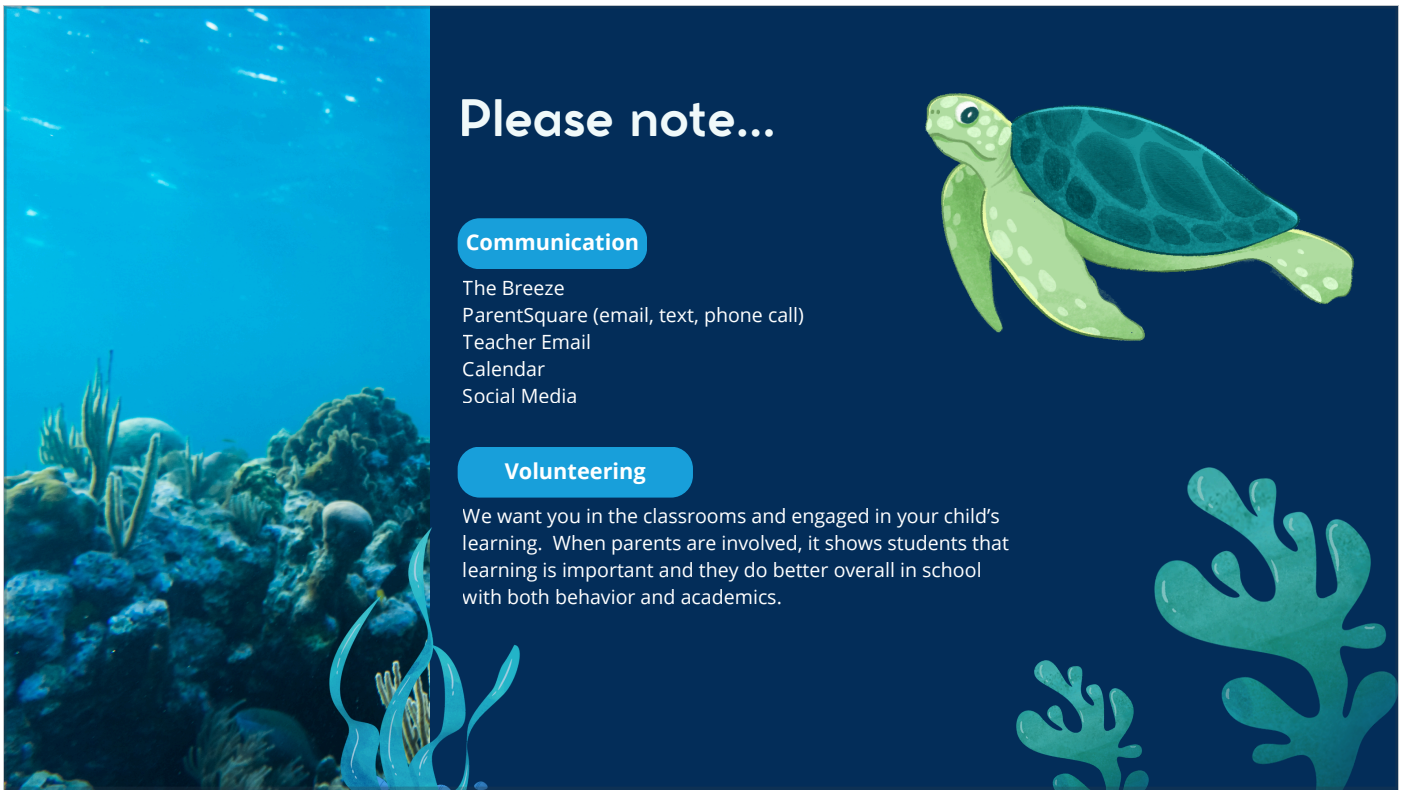
Black or brown belts are required for grades 3-6. Socks can be white, navy blue, khaki, or black. Shoes need to be neutral with no distracting designs.

Outerwear

For extra warmth during the school day, students may wear the OCS hoodie or OCS sweatshirt, a plain navy zip up sweatshirt, or a solid navy or white sweater.







These are all the different ways you will receive communication and information from the school. Please familiarize yourself with them, follow us on Social Media so you can stay up to date on events and happenings at the school.

We love having parents in the classroom. It's such an important factor in helping your child succeed. When they see you volunteer, they know that school is important. And it takes a village. We want to partner with you.



How can you help

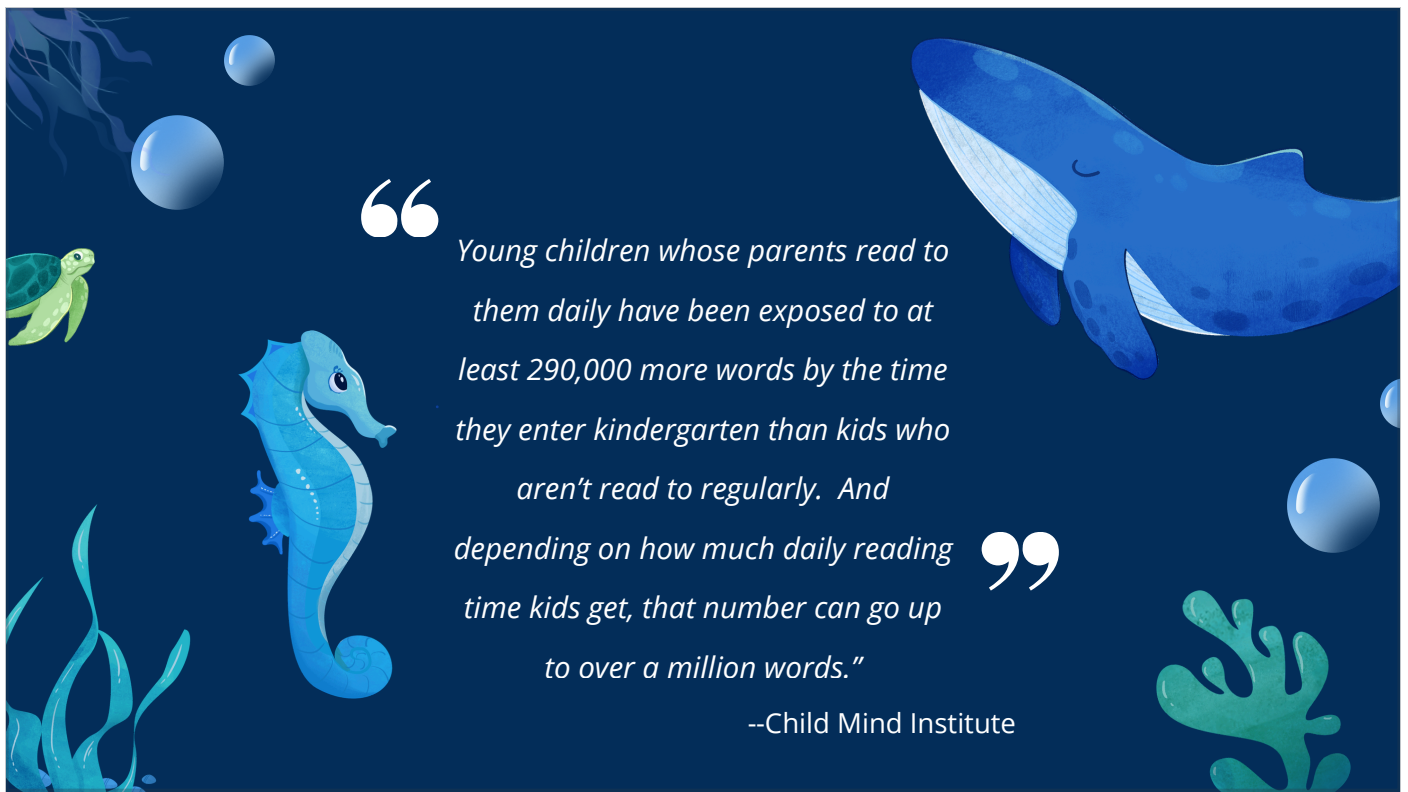
At home - read, read every day for at least 20 minutes, picture books, signs,

I'll get on my soapbox here and plead with you to not put your child on screens as a babysitter or a soother, or entertainer. I know it's hard - I have an 8 year old and it's still hard - but students need screen free time to be creative, invent, be bored. Sing with your child, play with rhyming words, sounds, talk with them. Point out things while you are driving and talk about what they look like, what could possibly be in that diesel we are passing, and so forth. It is so important and I'll show you on the next slide why.

Attendance - another soapbox. Yes, kindergarten is important, yes being in kindergarten every day is important. Skills are being taught every day and when one day is missed, there is a hole in their understanding. If they are missing multiple days, it has a severe impact on their learning. But not just their learning, their ability to build relationships and connections with their peers. The worksheets that are sent home are only a small fraction of what students are learning each day. Please schedule things outside of school hours as much as possible. Save vacations for holidays as much as possible. If your child says they don't feel like coming to school, get them to school anyway and have a conversation with the teacher. Every child, every day - it matters, please help us with this. And not just being here, but being on time. Our doors are now always locked. For every child that is tardy the teachers have to stop, let the student in, help them get settled in for the day. It takes time away from other's learning.

Teachers want you as their partner. Please don't hesitate to reach out and ask for help or offer help. We believe in the power of parents helping in the classroom. It sends a strong message to the students that school is important. Now we understand that is not always possible. So how can you help at school - there are a myriad of ways to volunteer. You can spear head committees, just participate in class parties, plan events, help with teacher appreciation, offer to cut things at home for teachers - it saves them time.

I would even put attendance on this one as well - be here on time every day, show your child that school and learning is important.



Read quote

And the reason why that is so important is because the more words students are exposed to, even just conversationally, the better they are able to learn to read. Now there are rare exceptions. We've been told that 90-95% of all students should be able to read with the right instruction. Those with disabilities may have a more difficult time, but give them the best head start you can by reading to them, talking with them. Please don't put them on a screen or tablet.

We are at right around 80% of students who are reading at grade level or above. This is amazing considering the state is right above 40%. We know how to teach students how to read. But we need your support - the more we see parents supporting our efforts at home, the faster their students make progress. So please read with your students, put books in their hands, not devices, even when they are educational, they are made to be addictive.



Dates to Calendar

- May 1st, Explore the 7 Seas
- June 23rd @ 9:30 American Fork Library Park
- July 16th @ 5:30 AF Rotary Park
- August 17: Back to School
- First two days of school, August 18 & 19
½ days

These are important dates to remember.

If you have not signed up for May 1st, please do so ASAP. We will be working together after this day to assign students to teachers. If we are missing a few students, it's not that big of a deal, but if we are missing a classroom full of students, it is going to make creating classes very difficult and may end up in classes that are not equal. These assessments may seem easy this day, but they give us a good understanding of where the students are at with academics, behavior, socially, separation from parents and more.

We have a couple of play dates scheduled. This is important because we want our students and you to start associating with the people they are going to spending their year with. So as you arrive at those playdates, we will give you a colored nametag (each color will be a different class) so you can encourage your kids to find other kids with the same color of nametag. And we will also give parents a nametag. We want you to also start associating with parents here at our school. We want to help create a community in which you feel comfortable knowing who is helping in the classroom, who your child is playing with, who can you call if you need help.

August 17th is our Back to School event and Popsicles on the Playground. There will be a new parent meeting that day - it will be much the same as this one, so you don't need to attend that one again, unless you want to, we won't turn you away. But that afternoon you will bring your supplies - you can find the list on our website - see the classroom, find their desk, and then go out on the playground and play for a bit with other students and get a popsicle.

The first two days of school are half day school days for all students. But it's going to look a little different for kindergarten. Once we get all the students assigned, we will divide the classes into two equal groups. One group will attend the first day and one group will attend the second day. This helps ease the transition as there are fewer students, help ease the separation anxiety. Helps teachers in teaching routines and procedures to a smaller group. We will let you know what group you are in as soon as we know.



What can you do during the summer.

Immunizations all need to be done and turned in before you can start school - so the sooner the better. Remember that you are not fully registered until we receive a birth certificate and completed immunization/exemption form.

We have a Bingo paper for you to do. This paper has some great ideas for you to do. But if you don't do any of these, please read every day - this will set your child up for success.

Also, pay attention to the park dates and the location. We want to meet our families at the park at those times and dates to build connections before the school year starts and just have some fun together.

You're one of us now - a Voyager!



Any questions?

Phew - that was a lot! And there's going to be more so keep an eye on your emails. You are one of us now, you are a Voyager and that's something you can be proud of.



Thank you for coming. Thank you for sharing your evening with us. Please don't hesitate to ask questions of me or the teachers or any staff member. We are here to help you. There are a lot of handouts for you if you want that information.

It's going to be a great year! Thank you!

Feel free to ask questions and visit or you can get back home to your families.