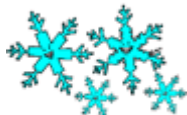


Odyssey Day School Newsletter

JANUARY 2009



From the desk of Lori Conway

Dear Parents,

As we come to the end of our first trimester and look ahead to the New Year and a short break from our school routines, time for rest and reflection is welcome in all of our lives, especially in those of our students.

This holiday season feels unlike any other in recent memory. January 20th will bring us an inauguration that promises change and hope for the future, even in light of these difficult political and economic circumstances. One cannot escape the fact that we are facing perhaps the most difficult economic times since the Great Depression, and that aspects of our lifestyle and prosperity need examining. Odyssey has never been a school that has had an excess of material riches, and thus has been spared some of the harsher consequences faced by other independent schools as a result of the economic downturn. We continue to focus on the children and their education--an education without fancy facilities but with more important riches, like nurturance, substance, and authenticity.

I always take my New Year's resolutions seriously, but rarely discuss them with anyone but those closest to me. Perhaps I am worried about visible failure! But what I do discuss often with my own daughter at this time of year is the need for finding time to consider the rituals of transition to a new calendar year... those of renewal, appreciation, celebration, and reflection. While these manifest themselves in differing ways among the world's cultures, they express the highest aspirations of humankind. Gift-giving and feasting have their place and are enjoyed here and around the globe, but reflection brings us closer to what is truly meaningful.

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Upcoming Events

- ◆ Jan. 12: MLK Assembly 9:30 am
- ◆ Jan. 21: Kindergarten Info Night 7:00 pm
- ◆ Jan. 26-30: International Week
- ◆ Jan. 28 Admissions Open House

Kid News



"It is well to remember that the entire population of the universe, with one trifling exception, is composed of others."

-John Andrew Holmes

So, despite the many problems in this country, and perhaps because of them, I encourage all of you to find time with your children to talk about our shared world, the challenges of our times, and the need for steadfastness, empathy, charity, hope, and vision.

I wish you all a peaceful and restful New Year with family and friends, and a celebration of the days to come.

With Warm Regards,

Fori

Preschool News

Many thanks to the parents of Kim MacDonald's room who provided the delicious staff appreciation breakfast on the Friday before the winter break. Everything was so yummy!

Literacy week was enjoyed by all last month. The Preschool was invited to listen to several visiting authors and it was quite a treat. My treat was being invited to read to the Preschool as a layperson. I hope the children enjoyed "Bob the Snowman," "Sylvester and the magic Pebble," and "It's Not Easy Being a Bunny." They were a terrific audience!

Elementary School News

December, though short in days, was long in activities! Where to begin? First, a huge thank you to our talented Music Director Amy Smid and all of the kids in grades 3-8 who performed the Winter Musical "Snow Biz." What a GREAT show!! And another show—"The Lorax Returns"—was performed by the Young Environmentalist Workshop led by Brian Carpenter and Karen Orlando. Kudos to Anna, Eric, and Mackenzie for writing the entire script!

Several Student Council and classroom fundraisers were recently held. Jeremy, Isabel, Stephanie and Maureen worked on both Hat Day and the food drive for the Wakefield Interfaith Food Pantry. Money raised by Hat Day will go towards food gift cards for those in need, and the boxes of nonperishable food that were collected will be much appreciated by the pantry and those they serve.

The 7/8 class distributed candy grams, while the 5/8 class held a breakfast sale...all to go towards the purchase of new cafeteria tables in the soon-to-be refurbished Gymnasium.

Finally, Literacy Week was also a big hit in the Elementary School. Fireman Mike read to the kids, as did children's author Dan Page, who also shared the details of how one becomes an author and works with an illustrator, agent, designer, printer, and all others necessary to see a book into print. It was very inspiring!



Community News

Faculty & Staff News

Many thanks to Stephanie and Ann Marie for organizing the Limited Childcare Week. The weather did not always cooperate, but these two dedicated teachers deserve a lot of praise for their hard work, organization, and creativity. Brian's hike will be rescheduled; other missed field trips can be attempted again next December!

Welcome back to Kim MacDonald, who spent over a week serving jury duty, and who now knows more about dental malpractice than anyone in the school. Great to have you back, Kim, and may I say you look pleased to be back, children being slightly more interesting than teeth!



For Parents

- ✚ Please be in touch with Doug Mildram if you wish for your child to participate in skiing this year.
- ✚ The Got Books fundraiser will soon begin, once the container for donated books is delivered to the ODS parking lot. Kaye Kittredge has kindly offered to chair this fundraiser, so please be in touch with her if you have any questions. More info will soon be posted on the website.
- ✚ We have an old building, and the heating is at times uneven. Please remember to dress your children warmly and in layers. Also, we do go out in most weather, as long as it is not raining or dangerously cold, so be sure to send your children to school with warm coats, hats, scarves, and mittens.
- ✚ The first issue of our new literary magazine, *The Odyssey Siren*, is in mailboxes, and will soon be posted in PDF format on the website. I hope you all enjoy it—the children worked hard on it!
- ✚ I am still looking for a parent volunteer to help oversee small fundraisers. If you are interested, let me know.
- ✚ Odyssey has won a small grant from the Danvers Bank Charitable Foundation to help with the costs of refurbishing our Gym, but donations are still eagerly sought—both of money and of time. We will get some donated community service labor, but may still need a parent or two to help with organizing the weekend of painting. Let me know if you're interested. We are all very excited about this much-needed enhancement to school facilities!
- ✚ As 2008 becomes 2009, our Annual Fund stands at about \$7000. We remain far short of our goal, and hope that you will consider contributing if you have not already done so—no amount is too small, and all are much needed, and greatly appreciated.
- ✚ Monday, January 12th at 9:30 a.m., please come to our first annual MLK Assembly in the Elementary School if you are free. We hope to honor Martin Luther King and the civil rights movement with readings, song, and reflection.
- ✚ Re-enrollment letters for next year will go out this month, so be on the lookout for them.

*“Childhood is
a journey,
not a race.”
-Anonymous*



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*"Parents and
teachers as
partners"*

We're on the Web!
www.odysseydayschool.org

From O.P.A.

The Odyssey Parents Association wishes to thank all the parent volunteers who helped with the Scholastic Book Fair—setting up, packing up, and cashiering all week. Great appreciation is also expressed to the parents who generously donated books to the classroom wish lists. We also thank the ODS staff for accommodating our use of the Gym. Total sales came to \$3185, with the school receiving \$925 cash in profit from the sale. –Eric Schwartz

Upcoming O.P.A. events: Next meeting 1/8 at 7 pm at The Dockside; Giggles Comedy Fundraiser 2/12 (details to follow); future family events will include bowling and swimming, TBA. –Annie Barr

From the Board of Directors

Now that the school year is well under way, the Board of Directors is ready to entertain ideas for new additions to the Board. Several names are currently under consideration, and the Board welcomes other nominations—self-nominations, or those of other potential candidates. Being a part of the governance of the school is a wonderful stewardship opportunity, and we hope some of you will give it your consideration.

Parent survey results are almost tabulated, and will be shared in anonymous summary format with parents soon. –Joe Jutras



Old man winter came in with a blast. Oh, how I wish he were a thing of the past!

Every time I go to open my door—snow, sleet, wind rush in, and they are predicting more!

