

# Open Classroom Community News



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## From The Principal's Desk

### Financial Support from the Parents and the Community at the Open Classroom

Greetings -

Critical to the success of our program is the generosity of you - our parents - and the community around us. As any of you who have been in Utah for any length of time knows our state has and continues to live by a mantra a doing more with less. Well, sometimes less is too much less. In the case of charter schools this is especially apparent. We do not realize the same the financial benefits that the typical neighborhood public school does. While our teachers and staff do a wonderful job utilizing their limited resources, your support allows us to enhance, extend, and celebrate learning on a deeper and more meaningful level.

It is our goal to provide the best possible learning opportunity that we can and your support can go a long way towards helping us. As you can see from the chart on page 6 – we do a great deal with your donations. We would love to do even more.

We understand the reality of today's world and know that giving can be difficult. Our goal is to seek donations as little as possible this year. Last year we had just over 30% of our families donate directly to PFOE. PFOE donations are a 100% return on investment – they go directly to the education of our students. We have a lofty goal of 100% participation this year and if you cannot afford the \$75 now – you are welcome to donate throughout the year. Many parents break up the

payments throughout the year, and ANY AMOUNT is welcome. Contribute what you can.

Thank you for everything you do to make our community a most remarkable place. Beyond the monetary support your time, energy, and care do so much to grow our educational community.

**Chris Gesteland - Principal, Open Classroom**

**801-578-8144 - [chris.gesteland@slcschools.org](mailto:chris.gesteland@slcschools.org)**

**Donation Chart on page 6**

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# Counseling Corner

What a great first full week! This week started our new Healthy Living Lessons in the 1, 1/2 & 2/3 classes. Tricia Davis covered the Health, Nutrition and Self Awareness portion which included what "healthy living" means in the context of our self, our community, and the earth. A special thank you to the wonderful co-oper from each class who will be leading the next eight lessons that will cover:

- Personal safety
- Internet safety
- Dental hygiene
- Nutrition
- Five senses
- Personal hygiene
- Self Awareness - Stress/anxiety reduction

I am happy to share that Carissa, our counseling intern, and I have gotten into every 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade class, plus Tina and Claudia's class this week and re-connected with all the returning students and met all our new community members. We only have Gaby and Denny Jo's classes to visit before we've met everyone again.

This week I taught the Salt Lake City School District's Policy on Anti-Harassment (a state required lesson.) Please take a look at the policy and the yellow sheet called "What to do if it happens to you" and "What to do if it happens to someone else." I am happy to report that harassment is not a prevalent problem at the Open Classroom, but every student needs to be prepared with tools to handle situations should they arise.



**Rose Evans**  
**OC Counselor**

Next week, I will begin a great Friendship-making curriculum in the 1-3<sup>rd</sup> grade classes. That way we will have healthy friendships as part of our healthy lives.

My hours are all day Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Fridays. Carissa is here the same days in the mornings. Please come say Hi and let us know if we can support you or your student in any way.

My best,  
Rose Evans, OC Counselor

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## After-school Enrichment Classes

Our enrichment classes for Fall/Winter will be starting the week of September 12th. I am excited to have a variety of old favorites and new classes. There really is something available for everyone, all ages. Your child does not have to attend the After Care program to register for a class, but they do need to check in with us and get a snack before heading off to their activity. There is no additional charge for this service.

This year's after-school classes will include tap and jazz/hip hop with Dawn Levinston, learning to draw and paint with Laura Sharp-Wilson, mad science of Greater Salt Lake, chess with Marti Olson, Blocks-4-kids, drums with Darrell McDonald, guitar with Eric Spreng. Daniel Lara will also teach a morning Spanish immersion class, beginning September 6.

A list of the class descriptions and registration forms are available in the main office, right below Barb's desk. Please fill out the registration form and return it to the main office. If you have questions, please send them to [jazairramathis@gmail.com](mailto:jazairramathis@gmail.com)



# A Few Reminders From The Office

Call the office, as soon as possible, when you know your student will be either absent or late. After teachers have submitted their classroom attendance at 9:15, I am required to contact the parents of the unaccounted for students to confirm those absences in order to insure the safety of all our students. Hearing from you before 9:15 would be greatly appreciated.

All students who arrive late to school must check in at the office before going to class.

If you know that your student will be absent due to travel etc., in order for those absences to qualify as excused, you must submit a Request for Absence form (available in the office) at least two days in advance to Chris for approval.

All students who will be carrying/taking medicine, including over the counter medications, during the school day must have an Authorization for Medications form signed by their physician on file in the office. This form is available in the office or online from the district webpage: [www.slcschools.org](http://www.slcschools.org) choose the Health Services tab and click on Medications and Immunizations.

Because we do not interrupt instruction time all calls to classrooms will be sent to those voice mails. Teachers will check for messages throughout the day.

Barbara Zimmer, School Secretary  
801-578-8144 [barb.zimmer@slcschools.org](mailto:barb.zimmer@slcschools.org)

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## Co-oper's Corner

### Ten ways to connect with a kid. (An incomplete list from a co-op vet)

1. Get to know names. We all like to be called by our name, right? Kids of all ages do too.

Once you get to know a child's name, use it. Hallway greetings outside of the classroom are especially big for younger kids or kids new to our school.

2. Ask about a book the child is reading or has read (or been read to them). Share your favorite childhood book. These are really fun conversations.

3. Share food likes and dislikes. Be silly. Go ahead and share you have no love for fried skunk.

4. Ask the rules to their favorite game. I haven't tried this in the oldest set of students and think that perhaps this may not be a winner in that group. Maybe you will get all the ins and outs of World of Warcraft, report back, I want to know.

5. Compare scars. Really. Who doesn't like a good war story?

6. Go out to recess and play.

7. Learn by listening. Self explanatory.

8. Smile.

9. If you want kids to listen use a softer voice.

10. Have fun. If the kids can see you enjoying your co-op time, the attitude is catching.

**Submitted by Keri Sanders**

**More information and resources for co-ops can be found on the OC website [www.ocslc.org](http://www.ocslc.org)**



## For the Teachers

Hi Friends,

I was going to write this as an email and send it just to the teachers, but I think it needs to be shared with our community as a whole. I will try to keep it short and sweet.

I was talking to a new student the other day, and she was telling me how much she loved our school lunches. I then asked her how she was liking our school as a whole. She raved that she loves it! I asked why. "Because all of my teachers are so happy!"

Think about that.....That is a really big deal.....Our teachers are happy. I told her that every child deserves a happy education. She heartily agreed. How great is it to know that our children are spending their days at school with incredibly dedicated teachers who love their jobs?

I feel thankful and fortunate every day to be a part of this community, making a difference in the lives of these children. I think there are a lot of kids out there who don't like school in general because maybe the teachers, administrators, and school staff aren't happy in their jobs.

Kids especially are sponges, absorbing everything they encounter. Not just academics, but also the energy each of us puts out there. We are modeling behavior at all times, and they pick up on all of it.

I loved hearing the fresh perspective of a new student. She is radiantly happy to be a part of our school....largely because we have happy teachers!

Teachers: We all love you and appreciate you! Thank you for ALL you do!

Valerie Hammel - mom to the fabulous Ivy in Gaby's, and part time Lunch Goddess.

*"Here's to the crazy ones, the misfits, the rebels, the troublemakers, the round pegs in the square holes — the ones who see things differently. You can quote them, disagree with them, glorify or vilify them, but the only thing you can't do is ignore them because they change things — they push the human race forward, and while some may see them as the "crazy" ones, we see genius, because the ones who are crazy enough to think that they can change the world, are the ones who do." —Steve Jobs*

## Fundraising Update

On a sweltering evening early in August, five OC moms met under the cover of air conditioning to kick off the monthly Fundraising Committee meetings. An agenda was passed, ideas were discussed, suggestions were made, people not present at the meeting were assigned jobs they might not have signed up for if they'd actually been able to attend the meeting, mini Lara bars were consumed, and then they all went home.

On a similarly sweltering afternoon in September, one mother realized that her duty to report Fundraising Committee updates to the OCCN was upon her. She realized that although ideas were discussed at the aforementioned meeting, she wasn't quite certain what to report to the OC news source. And then it hit her. Just the facts, ma'am.

So these following sentences will cover those facts.

PFOE (I cannot remember at this moment what that stands for, but it's where parents chip in to pay for costs of teachers' supplies and it makes a BIG difference) is a huge part of helping out our school. We are in the process of figuring out options for HOW you can give if you aren't able to give in one chunk. Maybe that will be a highlight of the NEXT OCCN submission - unless I am fired by then.



The Rummage Sale will be on March 24th. Mark your calendars and start thinking about things you can live without.

The Walk-A-Thon will be on April 29th. This year we are snowshoeing around Memory Grove. Just kidding - about the snowshoeing, not the date. Hopefully it will be early enough that the spring runoff/flash flood option isn't a threat to the lives of the wee children who scampered mindlessly around the raging creek this last walk-a-thon. No one was injured in that process.



And that's about it. Coming soon near you: interesting facts posted in an amazing place by the most awesome fundraising committee.

**Submitted by Rachel Fletcher**

# School Start Up

The transition back to school can be especially tough for our children with learning disabilities and challenging behavior. They've been in an environment all summer that is more flexible and usually less overstimulating than the average OC classroom. Once back in school, there are usually more kids to deal with; the day may be longer; the schedule may be less flexible; and the demands on them are greater.

Whatever the diagnosis our kids do better in school when we parents do our share. As stressful as it can be to reinforce learning at home, as difficult as it is to add regular contact with the school to our schedules, as much as we'd like to just let the teachers take on the challenges of our kids for some part of the day, our children are more likely to get more out of the school year if we're enthusiastically involved.

Kids with learning disabilities need organization even more than other kids. External structure helps students feel safe when their internal ability to structure themselves is unreliable. Take the time the night before to help your child make sure everything she needs for school the next day is in that backpack to prevent morning panic. Establishing this habit is a skill that will help them throughout life. Set up a place where supplies for doing homework are readily available. A child who is already stressed about doing homework will only get more worked up if he has to spend half an hour looking for a ruler.

Don't immediately take your child's side if there are complaints about the teacher. Sometimes kids personalize their anxiety

about school by picking on their teacher. Sometimes they are right that the teacher doesn't like them or isn't helping enough. You won't know until you've had a calm and reasonable conversation. Meet with the teacher with an open mind and heart. You both have the same agenda: You both want your child to succeed.

If your child is taking medications, make sure to follow the protocol as exactly as humanly possible. Giving medication too late or too early may not have impact at home but may have consequences in school the next day. Be sure to note any medication changes so the teacher is aware.

Make it clear to your child that school attendance is nonnegotiable unless he is sick or there are appointments that can't be done after school. It's not helpful to the atmosphere at home or to the child's attitude about school if there is an argument about going to school every morning. Simply tell your child that adults have work and kids have school each day. End of story.

Good home-school communication and collaboration are the keys to helping our children with learning disabilities or differences manage the classroom environment and be a success in school. By doing our part, we can do a great deal to set a good school year in motion.

***OC Learning Support Team – Kathy and Christina***

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## What's new with the Mailing Lists...

The OC mailing lists have changed this year! Unfortunately, our old listserve solution has become obsolete and unsupported. After much research and discussion, Google Groups was deemed to be the best and most flexible option for our growing community.

The good news is Google Groups not only give us flexibility but also the opportunity to learn a new technology together. As technology changes constantly, the need to learn keeps us mentally nimble and gives us all a great chance to model learning.

### **Some quick tips:**

To send items to the OC News list, send your item to: [OCNewsPosts@ocslc.org](mailto:OCNewsPosts@ocslc.org) Attachments are okay. Your message will be reviewed by the moderator and sent on to the entire list if it meets these guidelines:

- for school news/items only, community related items should be submitted to the OC Community list
- for items affecting the whole school

If your news item does not meet the criteria, it will be diverted to the appropriate list, or the moderator will let you know what needs to happen next.

**Continued on page 7**

# Where Your School Donations Go

Continued from page 1

Art	Drama	Classroom Support
Spray paint	Production costs, royalties, scripts, music	<b>\$17,474</b>
Paint, Theater Costumes	Music	\$17,474 was shared by the teachers
Sharpies, paint supplies	Paint, scripts, cd's, fabric, costumes,	for classroom supplies, field trips
modge podge, candle holders	Set Painting, rollers, paint, drop cloths	books, etc.
50# clay	Wardrobes	Your child's teacher can tell you
Watercolor pads, craft sticks	Paint, scripts, cd's, fabric, costumes,	how the money was used in the
Poly-fil, gloss, art supplies	Make up	classroom.
Glaze, 2 firings	Graduation	
Scissors, googly eyes, paint, masks	Decorations and supplies for dinner dance	Language & Culture
Watercolor pads	Engraved plaque (flowers for staff)	Culture day, fruit cream
Foam core backs for collages	Flowers for graduation	Asian coin stamps, origami
Snow globe project	Limo, decorations for Graduation	Fruit & yogurt
Pencils, erasers, paper	Dinner dance	Labels for flag stickers
Socks for sock puppets	Food for graduation	Posters, art supplies, culture fair
Glue, fabric, music folders	Sports	Hungry Planet kit
Valentine's boxes	Golf balls and tees	Korean food for culture fair
Fabric Paint for opera	Deposit, Front Climbing Club	Books: Prairie, woods, tundra, tropical,
Rubber cement, card stock	Rock climbing	Rain forest
Art forms, shoes, fabric paint, jewelry,	Salt Lake Capoeira	Food for Culture Fair
Stickers, valentines	Rhythms of Life	Professional Development
Clay pots, ribbon, elastic cord	All-program skate	Wilson Reading System
Supplies for spring fairies	Ice Hockey	Philosophy
Paint	Break dancing	Survey monkey (parent surveys)
Tie dye, plaster	Bowling	Book: No Grades + no homework =
Pinwheels, fishing line, knee highs	Archery	Operations
Felt poster board, const. paper	The Front Climbing Club	Reserve Pavilion at park for fall picnic
Paint glue brushes drop cloth	Wrestling classes	Gift cards for custodians, secretary
Glaze, Spreader, bucket	Fencing	Paper plates, napkins
Clay, pens, WC pads, oil pastels,	Swimming	Flowers for Staff (engraved plaque)
Photo corners		

## OC Community News

We will accept any articles, announcements, artwork, or fliers from school committees, staff, parents and students. We can accept word documents, email text, jpgs, and pdfs. If you do not have an article but you know of something that you would like to see included let me know and I will see if we can research it. Past OCCN issues are available at <http://ocslc.org/community-news/> Please send submissions to [oc.communitynews@gmail.com](mailto:oc.communitynews@gmail.com). The next submission deadline is September 19 at 9 pm.

# **Committee Chairs Welcome Back to School!**

We request that you join us in a  
**Committee Chair Workshop**

**Tuesday, September 13<sup>th</sup>, 6:30-8 pm in the Library at School**

You are encouraged to invite one other person from your committee who might serve as a Co-Chair or whom you feel will help enable the committee to be an effective micro community at the OC.

## **Other invited guests to our workshop will be:**

Steering Chair, Katherine Allred, Gwen Dobson, Steering Co-Chair and Head Teacher, Carolyn Turkanis.

Through conversation and collaboration we will cover strategies toward being an effective Committee Chair including:

**Organization**  
**How to Engage your Members**  
**Committee Vision Statements**  
**Committee Goals, Tasks, and Calendars**  
**Documentation for the Future (your Legacy)**  
**Communication**  
**Accountability**

This workshop is intended to inspire and motivate. We will get to know other Committee Chairs, identify support that we get from each other and Steering Committee, network and collaborate techniques that have worked well in the past, and redirect the ones that have failed in the past. Let's start the school year with strength, confidence, and intention.

Please RSVP to Eva Kauffman, [steva@xmission.com](mailto:steva@xmission.com)

Thank you kindly,

## **Your Committee Coordinating Staff**

Kim Grob-Lee (Miles in O'Lynn)  
Peta Liston (Riley in Leslee)  
Eva Kauffman (Kit in Pam)

## **Mailing Lists ... continued from page 5**

It does take 24-48 hrs to post news items through the system, so please plan ahead.

To add, update, change or delete your name from a school mailing list, please fill out the form found on the website.  
<http://ocslc.org/index.php/family-involvement/oc-mailing-lists/#form>

Submitting the form will speed up your request, as it will route all the correct information to the human that will be helping you. Sometimes the human gets pretty busy, so please be patient, it may take 24-48 hours to process your request.

To subscribe to the Community List, visit this sign up page:  
<http://groups.google.com/group/oc-community?pli=1>

This is not a school regulated site, and is primarily for parent to parent discussion and support.

If you have questions regarding the mailing lists, please feel free to contact one of your friendly, hard-working web chairs:

Chris Reynolds ([Chris@ocslc.org](mailto:Chris@ocslc.org)) or Jodi McRaney Rusho ([JodiRusho@ocslc.org](mailto:JodiRusho@ocslc.org))