

Open Classroom Community News



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The Principal's Desk

Greetings -

Thank you all for coming out to Parent, Teacher, Kid conferences - while I know you all get to see and talk with your child's teacher on a regular basis, it is



Principal Chris Gesteland playing frisbee with OC kids on the playground - submitted by Melissa Zitting

always nice to sit down to a one-on-one conversation.

Each year we are required to share information about some federal funding we receive here at the Open Classroom. The following provides a description of how funds are generated and the different ways schools work to maintain a partnership between parents and the school. Targeted Assistance Title I Program

We have the opportunity to strengthen our program to meet the needs of all of our students with the federal support of Title I. Title I funds are based on the number of students eligible for free lunch. As a Targeted Assistance Program, the Title I money is used to provide extra support to students who are not yet meeting the academic standards set, regardless of their eligibility for free lunch. We are

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Co-oper Challenge: Love the One You're With!

Here at the OC we love our kids, our school community, and the opportunity to co-op. We're so happy happy happy! But underneath our cheerful demeanor lurks a sinister truth (oh, the horror! Can I say it? Okay, here goes): Sometimes we find ourselves face-to-face with a sweet little cherub that, for whatever reason, we...er, well we, um,...Just...Can't...Stand. (Kudos to those who've never felt this. But maybe you just haven't found The One.)

Whatever can you do if it happens to you?! Since a connection with the li'l darlin' is something you lack, think of ways to make one. Here are some ideas to help (not mine, mind you, since I've never had this problem).

- First off, don't take it personally--neither the kiddo nor your own feelings. The kiddo really isn't looking for ways to make your particular day miserable--they're just being them. (My kingdom for a sensible, grammatically correct,



gender-neutral pronoun.) Likewise, don't beat up on yourself for being human--some people, big or small, just push our buttons. So, be all scientist-like and try to observe the situation detachedly. Or, be all touchy-feely-like and try to observe the situation non-judgmentally. Same thing.

- Be fully present when you co-op. Do this anyway, but especially when it's challenging. Arrive well-rested, caffeinated, and prepared. Leave your other "stuff" (work, phone calls, frustrations, etc.) outside the class, like a faithful dog awaiting your return. Then you are free to engage with your co-opees.
- Pretend it's your kid. How would this change your view? Would the annoying things suddenly seem more endearing? How would you want other parents to kindle this light of your life without snuffing it out?
- Look for the good. Focus on positive behaviors whenever possible, of course, but also re-cast the negative ones as assets. A kid who challenges your authority, say, is unlikely to be a pushover, or may be developing great critical thinking skills. The drama queen may become a great, well, Drama Queen! Remember, too, that sometimes the traits that bug us the most are those that we reject in ourselves.

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The Money Line

Fundraising Update - brought to you by PFOE

Warning: this article is all OVER the map and contains an inordinate amount of parenthesis (don't say I didn't warn you because the word "warn" is embedded in the first word of this sentence).

My son, who shall remain nameless to protect his inability to control who gave birth to him (Scout Fletcher, age 9, Denise's class) was talking on the phone to his granddaddy last night. How I came in from a walk to find him on MY phone talking to MY dad is in itself a long and hilarious story, but this article is NOT ABOUT ME or even SCOUT. I mention it though because I "overheard" (translation: eavesdropped on) some of what they were talking about. At one point, Scout said, "Well Granddaddy, my school isn't really a normal school..."

I LOVE it. Newsflash: the OC is not a normal school. When you start to explain to your friends how your 2nd grader and his cronies have made the request to their teacher (the lovely Christina at the time) to participate in the cooking station ALL on their own with NO old-age-intrusion (translation: parental involvement) and you find yourself talking about how not-terribly-sharp knives and blenders and possibly a hot plate are all actually acceptable tools for your independent 2nd grade chef, you just might find yourself simultaneously thinking, "This is crazy AND amazing all at once, this OC thing we have going here."

So, it's not a normal school. We knew that. We know that. We embrace that. We need to FUND that. And it's all about the PFOE from here on out people, the P.F.O.E. - the way we fund this crazy-brick-building-with-children-drawing-in-Sharpie-on-the-cement-floor-halls that we fondly call the OC.

Did you know... that PFOE (Parents For Open Education - that is US, people) donations are DOWN from this time last year. Down. The opposite of up. Down. Let's get on that. We're at 29% participation people. I know some of you are down on letter

grades, but I'm going to letter grade us for this effort. It's a big fat F for (wait for it) failing. And no one likes a loser - heck, we don't even believe in losers at the OC. Let's prove it.



Did you know... that **Who is this masked fairy?** charter schools receive less money per student than traditional schools? Crazy times. I didn't know that and I even work at a charter school. Someone get right on fixing that disparity... but in the meantime, please realize that the wondrous education the OC provides your school is greatly augmented by the whipping out of the checkbook and the scribbling of the check (in any amount made out to the OC and designated for PFOE). Whip and scribble people. Whip. And. Scribble.

And finally (because I have got to save some of these amazing facts for the next newsletter, whose deadline comes in a mere 341 hours - no rest for the weary - well, I did take that last newsletter off). Ahem, finally. Did you know... that you can donate in oh-so-many-ways? There's the classic ONE-time donation, the all-improved several donations throughout the year, or even (welcome to the year 2011) on the world wide web at www.ocslc.org. We frankly don't care how you do it, we'd even take it in nickels. Just donate it.

In reading this, I realize I have used the word "people" far too often. I hope you take that in the "I-love-you-man" way and not the "YOU-people" way, because I do mean it in the first way and not the second.

Respectfully submitted by your friendly neighborhood run-on-sentence gal, Rachel Fletcher



WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Your Open Classroom Community Connections Newsletter for October, 2011

UPCOMING SCHOOL EVENTS

HALLOWEEN PARTY!

When & Where: Friday, Oct. 28, at school

- ☆ Come at 5:30 pm for trick-or-treating on the school playground!
- ☆ Come at 6:00 for a costume dance in the gym! This dance is for the whole family!

What to bring:

- ☆ Wear your costume!
- ☆ Bring some goodies to give out for trick or treating in the playground!
- ☆ Bring finger foods, drinks for the dance.

Other info: Submit your music requests for the dance at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/OCDance>.

We'll be done by 9pm.

ART AND CRAFT NIGHT

Mark your calendars for the evening of December 2; see more info in the OCCN, and more info to come!

UPCOMING LET'S-GET-TOGETHER (PARENT INITIATED) EVENTS

(These events are not school-sponsored, but have been organized or suggested by and for OC families.)

STAR PARTY!

When: Friday, November 18, time to be announced, but probably about 6pm

Where: Meet in the outside foyer between the east and west parts of the University of Utah "James Fletcher Building" - just go to 1st South at Butler Ave (about 14th East) and you'll see us.

What: Astronomy slide show, followed by a trip to the University's observatory. Come see Jupiter with all its moons, star clusters, nebula and more!

Other info: This star party has been set up just for OC families! If the weather is bad, we'll have to reschedule. Please check www.ocslc.org before heading to the U.

2nd and 3rd grade Geology trip on Oct. 12th



Left to right Shade, Quinn, Roman and Hank - learning to identify the types of rocks.



Eagerly awaiting to pan for the different types of rocks to fill their baggies for a take away



Hands on



Learning about Erosion and Deposition



Roman Inspecting his find

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regardless of their eligibility for free lunch. We are also actively addressing the following parent, guardian and community involvement Title I requirements because we know a working partnership is crucial for our students to succeed.

As a Targeted Assistance Title I school we work with parents and guardians to understand and navigate the school system. We share information about the standards for learning determined by the state, the materials and programs we use to teach those standards, and the tests we use to show how students are progressing. We inform you about your child's academic progress throughout the year. Communication with parents and community is a focus of our district and we value the different ways parents contribute to the success of their children. To enhance the way parents are already supporting their children's academic success at home, we will offer materials and ideas that guardians might additionally use.

We also want to inform you that parents and guardians have the right to request specifics about the qualifications of their child's teachers. If your child's teacher is not considered Highly Qualified, we will notify you.

Parents will be involved in making school decisions, writing school plans, and assessing the effectiveness of school programs.

Our school has a variety of formal ways to develop the home/school partnership such as Back to School Night, Parent-Teacher-Kid Conferences, Steering Committee (SCC), school newsletters, and other such opportunities. Please know that we also value the informal yet important ways we work together through phone calls, emails, and visiting before and after school. We look forward to working with you this year!!

Thanks,

Chris Gesteland, Principal Open Classroom
801-578-8144, Chris.Gesteland@slcschools.org

The Co-oper's Challenge, continued from page 2

- Get help when you need it. If you've stated your expectations and given a single clear reminder for problem behavior, ask the teacher or another co-oper to intervene. Do this before getting so frustrated that you must remove yourself lest you remove someone's face.
- Get to know them--make it your special project. Review your kid-talk notes. Discover their interests--ask them, their friends, their teacher, parents, or other co-ops. Find common ground! Play with them at recess. Listen. Develop a silly handshake. Leave a note in their cubby.
- See things from their point of view. Are they struggling with the subject matter? Are they dealing with

something at home or from recess? Are they tired, hungry, sick? Would they more naturally learn by tracking game and sporting war-paint rather than by listening nicely and following directions? Or perhaps you just drool distractingly?

- Remember that they're little guys with developing brains. They often don't have the maturity to think things through and see other points of view. Help to guide them.
- Wait. Sometimes it takes a while for this all to work out.
- Approach from love. It's a whole child, remember, and you get to be a part. And if you can't be with the one you love, Honey, love the one you're with!

--Submitted by Jen Guillory

The Library Shelf

Thanks to everyone who came to the book fair!! We were able to add **\$1189.54** worth of books to our library collection. The new books will start showing up on the library shelves next week. We will have a new class displaying art in the library this week. Thanks for being such an amazing community!



Hello from the Art Committee!

We're looking forward to seeing all of our students Art evolve over this new year!

Save the date of Dec. 2nd. We're organizing an evening ART & CRAFT BAZAAR.

Bring the whole family for a fun night making a fun Art or Craft project. We will arrange several tables with different projects for someone to try, something for everyone.

More info coming soon, and if you have a fun idea for a project table please contact Beverly Hill with your idea. 801-556-7205



Art Spiral painted on our playground, last year

See you in the halls! Have a Happy Halloween and remember to take photos of your pumpkins to post in the OCCN!

Open Classroom Community News

The Open Classroom Community News (OCCN) is our school newsletter, published approximately every 2 weeks during the school year by a volunteer parent. 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.

The next submission deadline is Monday, October 31 at 9 pm.

Student Flu Clinic Being Offered By Salt Lake City School District Nurses

Where: Open Classroom

When: Wed. Oct. 26, 2011

Time: Beginning 8:15 AM, for parents wanting to bring siblings. At 8:40 AM, we will begin calling down students, room by room who have turned in their permission slip to the main office.

For: Students and Their Siblings

Cost: \$10.00, Cash or Check, Make Check out to SLCSO. We are not able to take Medicaid Cards or bill insurance companies, sorry.

Get permission slips and registration forms in the office