

Odyssey Charter School Scholar and Family Handbook

2016-2017

Mission Statement:

To provide a challenging, high-quality education that creates an enthusiasm for learning through an innovative, hands-on curriculum while maintaining a focus on the needs of each scholar.

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What is a Charter School?

A charter school is a public school that operates under a charter granted by an educational body. Within the charter, the school sets forth a number of measurable goals and objectives. In return for that accountability, charter schools may operate with flexibility in terms of personnel decisions and educational methods and material, implementing innovative educational philosophies and curricula. Charter schools promote parental involvement in the most straightforward way: by giving parents and guardians direct say in the substantive issues affecting their scholar's education.

Most charter schools in Georgia are district charter schools, approved by a local school board. However, Odyssey Charter School is one of a handful of schools approved through the Georgia State Board of Education. Where this frees the school from any governance by the Coweta County School Board, it does currently limit the school in terms of funding, as Odyssey does not receive local funding over and above what is required by state law.

Odyssey Charter School operates under a charter, or contract, negotiated between Community Education Association, Inc. dba Odyssey Charter School and the Georgia State Board of Education. This contract outlines how our school will be organized and managed. Odyssey Charter School recently received a renewal of its charter. A copy of the charter is available for viewing at the Odyssey Charter School web site and at the school office.

Who is Odyssey Charter School?

We are the Tigers! Our school colors are gold and black, and our mascot is the brave and clever Tiger. You can show your support by purchasing t-shirts, polo shirts, car magnets, etc. that are sold at the school periodically.

Website

Odyssey Charter School's website is www.odysseycharterschool.net and is a great way to stay informed of school happenings. Parents can find a link to the school's charter, the school newsletter, ways to donate time to the school, teachers' websites; staffs email addresses and much more. It is updated often with upcoming events and important announcements. Additionally, it is an easy way to stay abreast of our school board meetings: the board meeting updates are posted, and there are links to each member of our governing board if a parent wants to express concerns or questions about the school's policies.

Constructivism

Odyssey Charter School's curriculum is based upon an approach called constructivism, where scholars assume an active, hands-on role in their own learning with teachers guiding them in the development of higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills.

Teachers

K-1 Cluster	2-3 Cluster	4-5 Cluster	Middle School
Ms. Carter	Ms. Coffee	Ms. DeLosSantos	Ms. Beerbower
Ms. Perkins	Ms. Woods	Ms. Williams	Ms. Dennis
Ms. Cunningham	Ms. Barsky	Ms. Bauer	Ms. Austin
Ms. Roberts	Ms. Luschen	Ms. Moller	Ms. Casey
			Ms. Packer
			Ms. Smith

Schedule of Events for 2016-2017 School Year

July 29th	Teacher Work Days
August 3	Orientation
August 4	First Day of School
September 5	Labor Day (school holiday)
October 10	Columbus Day (school holiday)
November 22-25	Thanksgiving Break
December 21-January 3	Winter Break (school holiday)
January 4	Teacher Work Days
January 5	First School Day of the Calendar Year
January 16	Martin Luther King Day (school holiday)
February 20-24	Mid-winter Break (school holiday)
March 17	Teacher Work Day
April 3-7	Spring Break (school holiday)
May 19	Last Day of School
May 22-24	Teacher Post-Planning

DAILY PROCEDURES

School Calendar and Hours

The school year for Odyssey will begin one-day prior the Coweta County School System and end one week earlier. Although the majority of our breaks coincide with county breaks, please note that several days are different than the Coweta County School System calendar. Important dates are listed in the Schedule of Events or can be accessed on Odyssey Charter School's website. A school calendar is available on the Odyssey Charter School website.

Our school hours do differ from the traditional public school system. Here are the school hours for the current school year:

Grades K-3
8:25 am-2:45 pm Monday-Friday

Grades 4-8
8:25 am-3:25 pm Monday-Friday

Transportation

There is limited bus service provided by Odyssey Charter School to and from designated points throughout the county. Parents are responsible for arranging their scholar's transportation to and from school each day.

Before/After School Programs

Odyssey Charter School maintains both before and after school programs. Scholars may be dropped off as early as 7:00 a.m. for the before-school program. The after-school program is staffed until 6:00 p.m. Monday –Friday. These programs are only available on days that Odyssey Charter School is in session. Both are self-sustaining programs and charge a fee. Prices do not vary according to the length of time scholars are in before school or after school each day with the exception that a late fee is imposed if scholars are picked up after 6:00 pm. Beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, all BSP/ASP fees must be paid in advance or on the day of service. For the current school year, the prices are as follows:

Before School Care	\$6.00 per day	After School Care	\$12.00 per day
Not Paid in Advance	\$10.00 per day	Not Paid in Advance	\$15.00 per day

**Please carefully review the additional documentation provided by the Before School/After School Coordinator regarding policies and procedures for this program.*

Daily Arrival and Dismissal

Scholars should plan to arrive at school in time to get to class and be ready to begin the instructional day promptly at 8:25 am. Any scholar arriving before 8:00 am will be placed in the before school program and charged a before school fee. Scholars are not allowed in their classrooms before 8:00 am without their teacher’s consent. Scholars arriving after the time scholars are dismissed from before school should go to their classroom.

Between 8:00-8:25 am, school rules state that only faculty, staff, scholars, and parents with pre-arranged conferences and/or volunteer assignments enter the building. This is to enable teachers and scholars to prepare for the school day without interruptions. For the first week of the school year however, parents with scholars in the K/1 cluster will be allowed to walk their scholars into the building. Failure to respect this rule could result in a Board hearing, the results of which could mean the dismissal of the scholar and siblings from Odyssey Charter School.

The instructional day ends at 2:45 pm for grades K-3 and 3:25 pm for scholars in grades 4-8. Scholars will remain in the classroom until a parent or guardian arrives. During afternoon dismissal, the same rules apply with regard to building access. Scholars still in classrooms 15 minutes after final dismissal will be placed in the after-school program and charged thusly. **There are no scholar pick-ups allowed between the conclusion of the first afternoon car line and the beginning of the second afternoon car line.**

Parents picking up younger scholars in the second car line should go through the car line. They should not pick up their scholar from inside the building or at the fence line if the scholars are outside.

Transportation Changes

If there are any same day temporary transportation changes, the parent must email the front office at sdooley@odysseycharterschool.net as well as the scholar’s teacher(s). All notifications must be made no later than 1:30pm.

Each family will be supplied with up to 4 car placards that should be displayed on the driver’s side dashboard. Additional placards will be available at a cost of \$1 per placard. These are used for afternoon pick-up. Anyone coming to pick up a scholar without a placard during car line or picking up a scholar from school through the office should be on the scholar’s emergency contact sheet. They must also have a valid picture ID available for verification purposes.

In the case of divorced parents with joint legal custody, please be advised that it is not be school’s responsibility to enforce your custody agreement with regard to scholar pick-up days, holiday arrangements, etc.

Dismissal Note

Written permission from a parent/guardian must be provided if a scholar is to leave school with someone *not* listed on their emergency contact card. Written permission from a parent/guardian must be provided if a scholar is to leave a school field trip with someone other than a parent, even if they are listed on the emergency contact card. Picture identification will be required for verification before the scholar is released.

Early Dismissal

Scholars needing to leave school early are to bring a signed note from a parent or guardian indicating the time and reason for early departure. Scholars leaving early are to be signed out by a parent or guardian. If someone other than the parent or guardian is checking the scholar out, see "Dismissal Note" above.

Scholars should *not* be checked out of school on a regular basis. Early departures should be reserved for occasions such as doctor's appointments and other non-routine instances. Parents should not schedule extracurricular activities (dance practice, drama rehearsals, guitar lessons, etc.) for their scholar during the school day, nor should they check their scholars out for lunch and return them to school at the conclusion of the lunch period. This will be counted as an unexcused absence.

We will *not* release scholars grade **K-3 after 2:15pm** and grades **4-8 after 3:00pm**. This disrupts both the teachers and office staff during their end of day arrangements.

Tardiness

The instructional day begins at 8:25 am each morning. Scholars are expected to be in school on time and ready to learn. Scholars arriving to class late lose preparation time and disrupt the classroom environment.

Scholars not in the classroom at the time the bell rings are considered tardy. After the tardy bell rings, scholars must be escorted by their parents into the building and signed in at the office. Failure of a parent/guardian to sign in their scholar will result in an automatic unexcused tardy.

Scholars acquiring more than five tardies during a semester period will have a letter sent home to their parents. Scholars having more than 5 tardies per year will not be considered for perfect attendance or good attendance awards. Georgia policy also empowers schools to turn the names of excessively tardy scholars over to the court for possible fines. Scholars having at least 5 unexcused tardies in one academic semester will be placed on probation for the remainder of the school year and may receive in-school suspension. Should the scholar acquire 10 unexcused tardies throughout the school year, they are subject to referral to the court system O.C.G.A. 20-2-701.

Attendance

School attendance is not optional. Not only does regular school attendance increase scholar achievement, Georgia state law requires that all scholars under the age of 16 be enrolled in a public, private, or home school program. Unless a scholar is ill or a family emergency occurs, it is expected that your scholar be at school every day. Scholars should not be absent from school for planned events such as family vacations. These should be scheduled during periods when school is not in session. For reporting purposes, a scholar is deemed to be in attendance for the day if they are present for a minimum:

- Kindergarten – 3rd grade - 4.5hrs
- 4th grade – 5th grade - 5 hours
- 6th grade – 8th grade - 5.5 hours

Absences will be classified as excused or unexcused. Excused absences are those due to emergencies such as illness, death in the family, or other extreme circumstances. Excused absences are religious holidays, service as a page in the General Assembly, school-sponsored activities, and voter registration. Unexcused absences are all failures to attend school without proper documentation. A written explanation for all absences is required. The written notice should include:

1. Scholar's first and last name (clearly printed)
2. Date(s) of absence
3. Reason for absence
4. Signature of parent/guardian

If your scholar will be absent more than one day you may contact your scholar's teacher(s) via email and ask for assignments. These assignments will be sent to the front office for pick-up unless another specific arrangement is made between the teacher and the parent. It is not the front office's responsibility to collect this work.

Odyssey Charter School is a public school and, as such, falls under the provisions of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. Each year, the state sets an attendance goal. As a small school, each scholar denotes a higher percentage of the total than at a large school. Therefore, any scholar with 5 or more absences can adversely affect the school's chances of making this attendance goal. Since we operate with a charter that is dependent upon renewal by the state, it is very important that we make this goal in order to increase our chances of being re-chartered.

Scholars missing 10 or more consecutive days of school are subject to being administratively withdrawn from Odyssey for lack of attendance.

Any scholar missing 10 or more school days is subject to exclusion from Odyssey Charter School for the following school year.

Odyssey Charter School follows the attendance policies adopted by the Coweta County School System:

- Georgia Legislation and Board policy indicate that truancy charges may be filed in court after five (5) unexcused absences. These charges can result in fines of \$25 to \$100 per unexcused absence and/or imprisonment of up to 30 days.
- Upon returning to school, scholars *must* bring documentation stating the date and reason for absence with the signature of a parent/guardian, doctor, dentist, or judge. The scholar and/or parent have the responsibility to present the written excuse within three (3) school days of the scholar's return to school. The excuses will be filed and saved for the school year. The principal will resolve any question in determining whether an absence is excused or unexcused.
- The school administration will require an excuse from a doctor, dentist, health center, or court after five (5) consecutive absences, or twelve (12) excused absences related to health, except for mitigating circumstances such as a death in the family. Truancy charges may be filed after 12 excused absences unless there is documentation from a doctor.
- Excused and unexcused absences will result in the loss of full credit for class participation unless scholars arrange to make up the work within (3) school days of returning to school. The scholar must complete makeup work and tests within 3 school days of returning to class.

- Scholars will not be called out of class until the parent arrives to sign them out.
- Odyssey Charter School may file a juvenile complaint for excessive tardies and requests for early dismissals. Scholars with more than 5 tardies/early dismissals WILL NOT be eligible for the Perfect Attendance Awards at the end of the school year.

Scholar Drop Off and Pickup Procedure

Due to the high number of cars both parked and accessing the parking lot in front of the school, cars are to follow the designated route around the parking lot to either park or join the carpool line. In the afternoon carpool line, staff members will call your scholar from the classroom, and escort your scholar to your car for you. You will not be allowed to enter the school to get your scholar. Due to the growth of the school and the limited space in our parking lot, we must prohibit parents from parking and coming to the door to pick up your scholar. If you walk up to the car line, you will not be allowed to get your scholar. Instead, please proceed through the car line. For safety reasons, parents are also reminded to drive slowly through the parking lot.

If you are dropping off your scholar prior to 7:55 am, you must pull into the inside drop off lane and walk your scholar in to the Before School area and sign them in.

Prior to 8:00 am, the inside lane is the lane designate for use by parents dropping their scholars at Before School and then leaving. The outside line is reserved for those parents wishing to remain in line until school personnel begin supervised drop off at 8:00 am.

Please do not drop off scholars at the front of the school unless instructed to do so by a staff member.

Visitors/Signing In

All visitors (including parents) must sign in at the front office and wear a visitor's badge while in the school. This is a security issue and exceptions cannot be made. Our updated check in system requires visitors to scan their driver's license into our system each time they visit campus. Parents must also sign in on the parent volunteer tab on the computer in order to receive credit toward the volunteer service requirement. If you volunteer at a time when the school is closed or you are not able to sign in for some reason, it is the volunteer's responsibility to e-mail their hours to sdooley@odysseycharterschool.net.

Parent/Guardian Involvement

Parental participation is a key component to the success of our scholars at Odyssey Charter School. Charter schools promote parental involvement in the most straightforward way: by giving parents and guardians direct say in the substantive issues affecting their scholar's education. Parents are welcome to help out in the classroom or in the office, provided the following Board policy is followed regarding parental observation and volunteering.

Parental Observation and Classroom Assistance

Parents shall obtain approval from the teacher at least one day in advance if they wish to observe or assist in their scholar's class during instructional time. If a parent does not provide notice, the teacher does have the right to refuse them entry into the classroom. Further, the teacher (or appropriate staff) will have the discretion to remove a parent from the classroom if the parent causes a disruption to scholars or staff, ignores the teacher's instructions, countermands the teacher or if the teacher feels that the parent is hindering the learning process. Parents not abiding by these requests face the possibility of removal from the premises by law enforcement and/or expulsion of their scholar from Odyssey Charter School. Any decision to expel a scholar

must be determined at a scheduled Board hearing; however, the Principal may elect to suspend the scholar pending the hearing.

It is expected that parents contribute at least 18 hours of volunteer service to the school each year. For more information about the Volunteer Service Requirement, see Parental Volunteering.

Pledge of Allegiance

Scholars at Odyssey Charter School shall be afforded the opportunity to recite the Pledge of Allegiance each day. Scholars participating in the recitation of the Pledge will be expected to stand, face the flag, place their hand over their heart and recite the Pledge in unison. Scholars not participating in the recitation of the Pledge may stand and refrain from reciting the Pledge.

Moment of Reflection

In compliance with Georgia Law, at the opening of school on every school day in each classroom, the Principal or his/her designee shall announce a brief period of quiet reflection for not more than sixty seconds with the participation of all the pupils.

This moment of quiet reflection is not intended to be a religious service or exercise, but shall be considered as an opportunity for a moment of silent reflection on the anticipated activities of the day.

Teachers and administrators shall not suggest or imply that scholars should or should not use the moment of reflection for prayer, nor shall they deny to any scholar the right to use it for a moment of quiet prayer.

Scholars and/or staff may not under any circumstances use the moment of quiet reflection to audibly pray, singly or in unison.

Teachers & Administration should simply state: "We will now observe our moment of silence."

Lunch

Scholars are expected to bring their lunch every day. Should a scholar arrive at school without a lunch, the scholar's parents will be notified. If the scholar does not have food by their scheduled lunch time, the school will provide a protein-based item and water.

Scholars will soon have the option to purchase lunches from vendors such as Chick-fil-A and Jimmy Johns several days during the week. The cost for each lunch ranges between \$5-7.

Snacks

Scholars are allowed to bring a healthy snack to school with them daily. These will be eaten in the classroom during a designated time as decided by the class. A water bottle is recommended for use throughout the day.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

Elementary School Dress Standards

Scholars should wear clothing that is clean and suitable for school activities, keeping in mind weather conditions and good taste. Shoes must be worn at all times. Pants are to be worn at the waist and fastened securely with a belt. **No Sagging.**

The following **are not** to be worn at school:

- Halter-tops, tank tops, fishnet tops and midriff blouses.
- Excessively large or baggy clothing.
- Tops and dresses with spaghetti straps.
- Muscle shirts.
- Shirts that advertise alcohol, tobacco, or drugs.
- Short shorts and skirts (Your index finger should touch the hem of the shorts).
- Shorts covered by a full-length shirt.
- Bicycle pants or shorts.
- Clothing with open holes above the knee.
- Clothing that is suggestive, advocates disobedience to society or causes a possible disruption to the school.
- Clothing or attire with statements or symbols which might be deemed offensive to others, violent or of a threatening nature.
- Shoes with cleats and/or wheels (Heelys).
- Hardware chains.
- Caps, hats, visors, any other headgear, and sunglasses.
- No Sagging of pants

Middle School Dress Standards

In the interest of having a safe, orderly school, which minimizes distractions and maximizes the learning environment, a dress code has been established for all middle school scholars in the Odyssey Charter School. Every middle school scholar is expected to dress and be groomed in accordance with acceptable standards of cleanliness and modesty.

Scholars may wear dresses, blouses, shirts, or any other types of clothing appropriate to the sex of the individual that does not violate the intent of the dress code.

The dress standard is as follows:

- If a scholar chooses to wear shorts or a skirt, the shorts or skirt must be of appropriate length. The appropriate measurement will be determined when the scholar is standing erect, hands by his/her side, fingertips not extending below the hem of the clothing, maintaining modesty at all times. Biker shorts, spandex apparel, excessively form fitting shirts, shorts, pants, or skirts are not allowed.
- All shirts, blouses, and dresses must have sleeves. Shirts and blouses must not be excessively long and should not be a safety concern or a disruption. If a shirt is too long, it must be tucked. Clothing should not expose areas of stomach, side, or back. Oversized clothing is not allowed.
- Pants must be appropriately sized for width and hemmed to a safe length. Underwear should not be visible. Pant size should not hinder ability to move about easily and safely. Pants must be fastened securely at the waist. Pants may not have holes or the

appearance of holes above the knees. Overalls or coveralls must be worn properly. No Sagging.

- No items of clothing are allowed that may be affiliated with gang activity, as defined by administration and law enforcement.
- No "hardware chains" may be worn as belts, wallet chains, or jewelry. No chains of this type are allowed on school campus or at any school function. No hats, bandanas, or headbands may be worn or displayed during the instructional day.
- No items may be worn with inappropriate pictures, symbols, or lettering. This includes but is not limited to depictions of alcohol, drugs, or weapons. Statements that might be deemed offensive to others are prohibited. No writing is allowed on the seat of pants or skirts.
- Pajamas and/or house shoes slippers or gliders may not be worn to school.
- Shoes with wheels may not be worn to school. Other shoes that may present a safety hazard should not be worn.
- In an effort to address concerns for scholar safety and welfare, to create a learning environment with minimal distractions, and to reinforce the values of modesty and civility, the administration will be responsible for enforcing this dress code fairly and reasonably. Violations are determined at the discretion of the administration. If scholars are in violation of the dress code, they will be given the opportunity to correct the violation. If they fail to correct the violation, they may be asked to call home for appropriate clothing and/or may receive disciplinary consequences as determined by the administrative staff.

Addressing of Staff Members

Scholars should address teachers and administrators as Mr., Ms., or Mrs., followed by their last name. Scholars should address other Odyssey Charter School staff and administrators as Mr., Ms., or Mrs., followed by either their first or their last name.

Hall Passes

All scholars are required to sign out and carry a hall pass when leaving the classroom during school hours without the teacher or his/her designee. This includes trips to the office, restroom, library, or any other reason why the scholar is not in the classroom. Scholars without a hall pass are subject to receiving a form for a Level 1 discipline infraction.

Scholar Records

School records include all materials directly related to a scholar, which the school maintains. Odyssey Charter School will maintain scholar records in a confidential manner and will comply with all state and federal laws, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, concerning the publication and dissemination of scholar records. Access to a scholar's educational record shall be given to natural or adoptive parents, legal guardians, or individuals acting as a parent or guardian in the absence of the parent or persons with a Consent Form for Non-Parent to Receive and Review Educational Records and Information signed by the legal guardians of the scholar.

Step-parents do not have access to scholar records without the written consent of both biological parents unless the scholar has been legally adopted. In the absence of legal documentation to the contrary, non-custodial parents retain access rights. Parents/legal guardians have access to their scholar's school records.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) (the "Act"), you have a right to:

1) Inspect and review, within 45 days of a request, the education records of a scholar who is your scholar, or in the case of a scholar who is eighteen (18) or older, or those who are emancipated, your own education records. Parents or eligible scholars should submit to the Principal a written request identifying the record(s) they wish to inspect. The Principal will make arrangements for access and provide notice of such arrangements.

2) Request the amendment of the scholar's education records to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the scholar's privacy or other rights. To request the school district to amend a record, parents or eligible scholars should write the Principal, specify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the scholar's privacy or other rights. If the Principal decides not to amend the record, he will notify the parents or eligible scholars of the decision and inform them of their right to a hearing. Additional information regarding the hearing procedure will be provided with the notification of the right to a hearing.

3) Consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the scholar's education records, except to the extent that the Act and the regulations promulgated pursuant to the Act authorize disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is to school officials with legitimate educational interest. A school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member; a member of the school board; a person with whom the district has contracted to perform a specific task (such as attorney, auditor, or therapist); or a parent or scholar serving on an official committee (such as a disciplinary or grievance committee.) A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his/her professional responsibility. Upon request, the school district forwards educational records without prior consent to another school in which the scholar seeks or intends to enroll.

4) Odyssey Charter School has designated the following information as directory information:

- a) Scholar's name, address and telephone number; e-mail address
- b) Scholar's date and place of birth;
- c) Scholar's participation in official school clubs and sports;
- d) Dates of attendance at the Odyssey Charter School, and
- e) Awards received during the time enrolled in Odyssey Charter School.

Unless you, as a parent/guardian or eligible scholar, request otherwise, this information may be disclosed to the public upon request. You have the right to refuse to allow all or any part of the above information to be designated as directory information and to be disclosed to the public upon request. If you wish to exercise this right, you must notify the Principal in writing within 5 days after officially enrolling in school.

5) You are also notified that from time to time scholars may be photographed, videotaped, or interviewed by the news media at school or at some school activity. If you, as a parent/guardian object to your scholar being photographed, videotaped or interviewed, you must notify your scholar's principal, in writing, of your objection within 5 days of enrolling the scholar.

6) File with the United States Department of Education a complaint under 20 C.F.R. 99.64 concerning the alleged failures by Odyssey Charter School to comply with the requirements of the Act or the regulations promulgated thereunder. The name and address of the Office

that administers FERPA is: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 600 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-4605.

Divorced Parents

Parents who are divorced should provide the school with a complete copy of the divorce decree with the legal custody arrangements for the scholar. If any additional court proceedings take place while the scholar is at Odyssey, the school must receive a copy of this documentation. Oral information from one parent, a letter from one parent's attorney or a request filed by the court but not acted upon does not constitute legal documentation.

If the two parents have joint legal custody, both parents have the same rights as far as access to the scholar, ability to see school records, attend conferences, etc. It is not the job of school personnel to enforce custody arrangements for parents who are divorced or no longer together but who have joint legal custody.

If a non-custodial parent wishes to receive a copy of report cards, they will need to provide the registrar with a self-addressed, stamped envelope and a duplicate copy of the scholar's report card will be sent to them.

Scholar Internet Use

Each scholar is required to have a signed Terms and Conditions for use of the Internet form on file in the office before the beginning of the school year. A copy of that consent form can be found at the front office.

Lost and Found

Lost and found clothing items are kept in the gym for scholars to look through. Valuable items will be kept in the office. All items not collected by the end of the last school day prior to winter break and again by the end of the last day of the school year will be donated to charity.

Any items brought to school from home are the responsibility of the scholar. Odyssey is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Lost or stolen items will not be replaced or reimbursed.

****To help us please put your scholar's name on and inside all items. ****

Harassment-Free Environment

Odyssey Charter School is dedicated to maintaining an environment that is free from harassment because of an individual's race, color, sex, religion or disability. The school will act promptly and investigate all complaints formal or informal, verbal or written, of said harassment. If it determines that unlawful harassment has occurred, Odyssey will act promptly to appropriately discipline any scholar, teacher, parent or other school personnel who is found to have violated this policy. Allegations of such harassment should be made to the Principal. Filing of a complaint will not affect the individual's status, future grades, or educational decisions. The right to confidentiality of both parties will be respected until a complete investigation has been conducted and corrective action has been determined.

Telephone Usage

The phones in the school are for business use only. Scholars may not use the classroom phones. In an emergency, scholars may request permission to come to the office to use the phone. A parent wishing to speak with a teacher may leave a message during the school day.

Emergency Information Cards

Emergency Information Cards are needed for each scholar in our school. They list parents' home and work telephone numbers, doctors' names and numbers, and persons to contact in emergencies if parents cannot be reached. In medical emergencies, the school may only give first aid and must be able to contact someone who can make vital decisions about medical attention. Even sending a scholar to the hospital requires parental consent. When a scholar is sick or injured, it may be necessary to contact an adult other than his/her parent/guardian who can assume responsibility for your scholar. It is essential that this person be within a reasonable distance from the school and can pick the scholar up. If there are any changes in this information, parents are asked to contact the school as soon as possible.

Family Emergency

The office will take a message to your scholar's teacher and arrange for any early pickup or other arrangements that need to be made in the case of a personal emergency. Scholars will not be called from the classroom to receive telephone calls.

Inclement Weather

It is Odyssey Charter School's policy to close when the Coweta County School System closes due to weather emergencies. If school systems are forced to close due to hurricanes, snow, ice, etc., tune into a local or metro Atlanta news outlet. If the announcement is made that Coweta County School are closed, then it is safe to assume that Odyssey Charter School is also closed. The school will also place the information on the school web site and send out notification through e-mail and phone. However, if certain individual schools are closed within Coweta County (ex. the power is out at White Oak E.S.), then you should not assume that Odyssey Charter School is closed. If, for any reason, a decision is made to close the school due to a localized emergency, we will contact media outlets and begin to contact as many parents as possible. If you are ever in doubt as to our status, please call the school for additional information.

Scholar Abuse and Neglect

Under Georgia law, school employees are required to report suspected cases of scholar abuse or neglect to the Department of Social Services. This law, which was designed for the protection of scholar, provides immunity from civil or criminal liability in connection to reports, unless malicious intent is proven.

After School Activities

All school-sponsored activities, held after school hours, are under the jurisdiction of the school, and the same rules and regulations govern them as during school hours.

ODYSSEY CHARTER SCHOOL GOVERNING BOARD

The role of the School Board at Odyssey Charter School is to:

- Uphold and revise the school charter.
- Adopt, amend and implement board by-laws internal board policies and procedures consistent with charter.
- Adopt and amend school-wide policies and procedures.
- Ensure adequate resources for the school's programs.
- Oversee the fiscal management of the school.
- Secure and maintain the school site.
- Hire, support, supervise and evaluate the Principal.

- Approve hiring of school faculty and staff.
- Oversee school and parent participation structure.
- Evaluate effectiveness of school programs.
- Act as an avenue of communication for the school community of parents, staff, and scholars.
- Represent the school in the larger community.
- Maintain standing board committees.
- Approve the yearly budget for the school.

The Principal reports directly to the Odyssey School Board and is responsible for the business and financial operations.

The Principal is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school, developing procedures, and carrying out the policies of the Board.

According to the by-laws as amended in August, 2015, the Board is made up of up to thirteen voting members and will include parents, and interested members of the community. Part of the Board is elected by the Board itself and part is elected by Odyssey parents. Each Board member serves a three-year term with elections being held in August.

Board members have authority over school policies only when they are in session as a Board. Board members do not gain any special privileges, compensation, etc. nor do they have authoritative power at the school as individuals.

Parents with a question or concern about policy or procedure that they wish to be brought to the Board, may contact the board directly by a note placed in the School Board mailbox or by email on the Board Member's link on the school's website. Please contact a Board member in writing before the scheduled Board meetings, so the issue can be placed on the agenda. The parent may wish to be present at that meeting so as to provide additional information if needed. It is not necessary, however, to attend.

Parents who have questions or concerns regarding their scholar's education should begin by addressing the matter with the member of the Odyssey Charter School staff closest to their scholar's class - the teacher. Should speaking with the teacher not resolve the matter, the parent may then choose to address the matter with the Principal. If the matter regards school procedures, then the Principal's decision is the final word on the matter. If speaking with the Principal does not resolve the issue and it regards a matter of overall school policy, then it would be appropriate to speak with a member of the Board about bringing it to the Board for discussion.

Sample situation 1: A teacher informs her class that any scholar having three red days in a month will not be able to take part in a pizza party. A scholar gets their third red for the month and has to go to another classroom to do work during the pizza party. The parent disagrees with this policy and wants to speak to someone about it.

In this case, the parent should approach the teacher. This is a classroom rule, not a Board policy. Therefore, it would not be an appropriate avenue to take this matter to the Board for discussion.

Sample situation 2: A teacher brings a scholar to the office for talking in an offensive manner to her. The Principal speaks with the teacher and with the scholar. The Principal

then chooses to suspend the scholar for two days. The parent is informed of the suspension and wishes to speak with someone about it.

In this case, the parent should speak with the classroom teacher if they are questioning the particulars of the incident or may approach the Principal with questions regarding the actual suspension. The decision to implement a short-term suspension is entirely at the discretion of the principal. Therefore, it would *not* be appropriate to approach the Board regarding this suspension. However, if the parent wanted to question the issue of whether to give the Principal discretion to suspend a scholar or whether this type of offense should warrant a suspension, this question would fall to the Board as it is related to the school's overall discipline policy.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Clinic

The purpose of the school clinic is to provide first aid for minor injuries and illnesses, administer medication, and notify parents if specific symptoms appear serious. Parents are expected to arrange for their scholar to go home immediately if the clinic personnel determine the illness to be contagious or if a fever persists.

If a scholar has a fever over 100°F or vomits during the night, the scholar should be kept home a full 24 hours before returning to school.

When a scholar becomes ill or injured during the school day the clinic will determine continued attendance for the day.

Contagious Conditions

As a courtesy to the other scholars, parents are asked to contact the school when their scholar contracts a contagious condition. This includes strep throat, head lice, and pink eye. Parents in the affected classroom can then be notified.

Medication

- The school clinic does not provide medication for scholars except in the case of an emergency.
- A Medication Consent Form must be filled out for any scholar to receive either prescription or over the counter medication.
- All prescription and non-prescription medications will be retained in the clinic to be administered by, or in the presence of, school personnel.
- All prescription medications must be in the original container with the scholar's name, physician's name, name of the drug, and dosage instructions.
- All over-the-counter medications must be the original containers, labeled with the scholar's name and dosage.
- Medications are not to remain with the scholar, except in cases of scholars who require prescription asthma inhalers or Epi-pens and have permission to self-medicate.

School Safety

School safety is of the utmost concern at Odyssey Charter School. During the school day, there is only one entrance to the school to be used – the front door. There is also an interior door with an electronic lock that remains closed during the school day and you must be signed in on the

computer system and buzzed in through the security door. There is a phone intercom system at the school, and all teachers also use walkie-talkies to enhance communication. The school also features a 24 hour monitored alarm system.

Emergency Procedures

In compliance with state law, Odyssey Charter School has developed specific plans for situations such as fire, tornadoes, and other emergency situations. Drills are conducted throughout the year to prepare the staff and scholars for these situations. Emergency lights are located throughout the building as are sprinklers and exit signs.

Odyssey Charter School has also developed specific plans for situations including natural disasters, bomb threats and unauthorized visitor/ hostage circumstances.

Alcohol and Controlled Substances Testing and Drug Free School Zone

Odyssey adopts the following policy, effective on the date that the policy is adopted by the Board. Odyssey values the health and well-being of all scholars. The Governing Board believes that the use or possession of alcohol and other drugs is harmful to their physical, emotional and mental health and has an adverse impact on instruction.

- **Application of Policy to Scholars**

This policy shall apply to all scholars and compliance with this policy is mandatory as per requirements for the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989. It shall further be the policy of School to provide age appropriate, developmentally based drug and alcohol education and prevention programs, which address the legal, social and health consequences of drug and alcohol use and provide information about effective techniques for resisting peer pressure in the use of illicit drugs or alcohol for all scholars in the system. These programs shall provide information about the drug and alcohol counseling rehabilitation and reentry programs available to scholars by the school counselor and/or outside recommended resources.

- **Narcotics, Alcoholic Beverages, and Stimulant Drugs**

A scholar shall not possess, sell, use, transmit, or be under the influence of any narcotic drugs, hallucinogenic drugs, and amphetamines, barbiturates, cocaine, marijuana, controlled substances, alcoholic beverages, anabolic steroids, look-alike drugs, or intoxicants of any kind:

1. On the school grounds during and immediately before or immediately after school hours
2. On the school grounds at any other time when the school is being used by any school group
3. Off the school grounds at a school activity, function or event
4. In-route to and from school or school activity on buses acquired for school activities.

Use of a drug authorized by a medical prescription from a registered physician should not be considered a violation of this regulation. All prescription drugs shall be kept in the original container and housed in the nurse's office according to administrative procedures.

- Procedures for Handling Abuse

Procedures for handling incidents in the schools involving the possession, sale, and/or use of drugs, alcoholic beverages or any other behavior affecting substances shall be as follows:

The police and the parents of any involved scholars shall be contacted immediately and an initial investigation will be conducted. During the investigation, the Principal or other authorized school leader shall have the discretion to temporarily suspend the scholar during the investigation.

If the scholar was found to have possessed, used or sold drugs, alcoholic beverages or drug paraphernalia, the Principal or other authorized school leader has the discretion to continue to suspend the scholar or expel the scholar through Odyssey's disciplinary process listed in the handbook. The parents of the scholar may appeal this decision following the boards adopted grievance policy.

The school will make every effort to help scholars experiencing a problem with alcohol or drugs through counseling and drug abuse education.

Tobacco Products and Tobacco Use Prohibited (including e-Cigarettes)

No scholar, staff member or school visitor is permitted to use any tobacco product at any time, including non-school hours 24 hours per day, seven days per week:

- In any building, facility or vehicle owned, leased, rented or chartered by Odyssey Charter School or any employee of the school.
- On any school grounds and property-including athletic fields and parking lots-owned, leased, rented or chartered by Odyssey Charter School.
- No vehicle being used by an Odyssey staff member to transport Odyssey scholars from the school to Odyssey official events, unless the staff member's relatives are the only Odyssey scholars in the vehicle.
- At any school-sponsored or school-related event on-campus or off-campus.

No scholar is permitted to possess any tobacco product. The policy may permit tobacco products to be included in instructional or research activities in public school buildings if the activity is conducted or supervised by the faculty member overseeing the instruction or research and the activity does not include smoking, chewing or otherwise ingesting the tobacco product.

Tobacco and tobacco-related products are defined to include cigarettes, candy cigarettes, chewing tobacco, blunts, blunt wraps, pre-wrapped blunt cones and tubes, cigars, cigarillos, bidis, pipes, cigarette packages or smokeless tobacco containers, electronic cigarettes, lighters, ash trays, key chains, t-shirts, coffee mugs and any other item containing or reasonably resembling tobacco or tobacco products. Tobacco use includes smoking, chewing, dipping or any other use of tobacco products.

SCHOLAR AFFAIRS

General Expectations

We believe that all scholars want to enjoy school and learn, want to be respected and treated with dignity, and want to be loyal to teachers and classmates. We also believe that all teachers care about their scholars, expect scholars to achieve, desire success, strive to be effective, and want scholars to enjoy learning.

It is the expectation that all scholars will begin their school years completely toilet trained. Scholars not toilet trained should not be enrolled at Odyssey. If an enrolled scholar experiences persistent (defined as an average of at least once every two weeks) soiling, their parents will be called for a conference to address the situation. Continued soiling may result in the scholar being asked not to return to school until toilet training is complete.

For liability and health reasons, teachers and teacher assistants are not responsible for changing diapers, Pull-ups, or training pants. Scholars who need assistance after soiling themselves should go to the nurse or, in absence of the nurse, the office. The scholar's parent will be contacted to arrange a change of clothes (if needed) and to change the scholar if necessary.

Parents of scholars with health issues that prevent complete toilet training should provide documentation of this situation to the administration and the school nurse upon enrollment. Special education scholars having this issue addressed in their IEP will be exempt from this rule.

Lost Books/Agendas

Scholars who have lost agendas will be able to purchase a replacement agenda at the cost of \$8. Scholars who lose textbooks or library books (or who return them in a damaged condition) will be responsible for the replacement cost of a new book.

Communication with Family

Families receive information through daily e-mails. Other communication comes to parents regularly through letters, surveys, etc. that are brought home via the scholars or sent electronically. Parents are encouraged to access PowerSchool on a regular basis to monitor their scholar's grades. Grades are updated weekly.

Addressing Concerns

Scholars/Parents who are concerned about a specific classroom situation should first speak to the teacher. If the issue is not resolved, the scholar/parent should then approach the Principal of the school. Parents should inquire with the front desk about scheduling appointments with the appropriate parties. Since Odyssey's first and foremost priority is the scholars, staff members will be engaged in instructional activities from bell to bell. See also Odyssey Charter School Governing Board section in this handbook.

Behavior Guides

Teachers notify parents of each scholar's behavior through the use of weekly correspondence. If indicated, these behavior guides are to be reviewed and signed by a parent, and returned the next day. Teachers will also contact the scholar's parents if there have been any significant behavior issues within the classroom. These behavior guides are the basis of a scholar's conduct grade.

Cell Phones/Electronic Readers, etc.

Scholars are permitted to bring cell phones to school. However, they must be turned off during school hours and placed in the scholar's book bag or locker. Scholars having cell phones on during the school day (including before and after school) or caught operating cell phones during the day (even to check the time) will have them taken away and a parent will need to come to the school and pick it up. These methods of communication are distracting, and may disturb classroom activities. Odyssey Charter School and staff members are not responsible for any damaged, lost, or stolen cell phones. If a scholar needs to make an emergency phone call, they are to ask their teacher and go to the office.

Scholars are also permitted to bring electronic reading devices such as Nooks or Kindles but these may only be used at the teacher's discretion and for the purpose of academics only. However, each family must sign an electronics waiver form in order for these devices to be brought to school. Odyssey Charter School accepts no responsibility for lost, damaged or stolen electronic devices; scholars bringing them to school assume all risk and responsibility for their use and care.

Gum

Because of health concerns (choking) and possible damage to the school building, no scholar will be permitted to chew gum in the school building or on the school grounds.

Gameboys, Legos, Yu-gi-oh and Pokémon cards

Scholars should not bring Gameboys or other electronic hand held devices, Legos, Yu-gi-oh cards or Pokémon cards to school (even to use in before school or after school). These items are subject to confiscation by the teacher should they be brought to school.

Field Trips

Field trips are educational excursions that are preplanned learning experiences, related to the curriculum and followed by an evaluation activity. Written parental permission is necessary prior to each excursion for a scholar to participate. Parents will be notified in advance of upcoming field trips.

If a parent or family member wishes to accompany a class on a field trip as a chaperone, a successful background check must be completed and on file at least two weeks prior to the field trip. Failure to have this information on file will result in the family member not being allowed to attend the field trip. In this case, no money will be refunded.

In some cases, these field trips are to public places and parents and/or family members arrange to meet their scholar at the field trip, although they are neither signed up to be chaperones nor do they have the required approved background check on file. We actively discourage parents and/or family members from doing this as it can create a problem since these people are not approved to chaperone the trip and will not be allowed to chaperone scholars (not even their own) nor will they be allowed to take part in any specially arranged group activities (like a special behind the scenes tour or educational lesson for example). Failure to adhere to this provisions could result in the inability of members of that scholar's family to chaperone field trips or attend other campus programs.

The following information will govern field trips:

Scholars who have had an out of school suspension of two days or more during the current 9-week grading period will not be allowed to take part in field trips during that term.

At the discretion of the school, participation in field trips may be dependent upon a parent accompanying the scholar on the field trip. In such a case, the parent will be expected to ride the bus with the scholar and pay the field trip fee. If a parent is unable to go on the field trip with the scholar, he/she will not be able to attend.

Grades K-3

Scholars will not be excluded from field trips based upon behavior, except as noted above.

Grades 4-8

Scholars will be excluded from field trips for the current term based upon the following criteria, in addition to the general criteria listed above:

In School and School day field trips:

- Scholar may not have more than 2 Level 3 discipline issues within the 9 week marking period of the field trip.
- Scholars may not have more than 3 days of in school suspension within the 9 week marking period of the field trip.

Overnight field trips (including school-based overnight events):

- Scholars may not have more than 1 Level 3 discipline issue within 6 weeks* of the trip, regardless of the marking period.
- Scholars may not have more than 2 days of in school suspension within 6 weeks* of the trip, regardless of the marking period.
- Scholars may not have had an out of school suspension or sent home for discipline matters within 6 weeks* of the field trip, regardless of the marking period.
- At the Vice Principal's discretion, scholars may be refused access to field trips based on previous behavior issues

* 6 weeks is defined as 6 calendar weeks (or 42 days) prior to the trip.

Birthday Celebrations

A birthday is a special day for a scholar, and a parent is welcome to bring or send in a simple treat for the class. The teacher will tell you the best time or method of bringing in goodies. This should be scheduled at a time that causes the minimum amount of disruption to the instructional day.

Parents may choose to purchase a book for the library as their birthday gift to the school.

CODE OF SCHOLAR BEHAVIOR

It is the belief of Odyssey Charter School that every scholar has the right and ability to reach academic excellence. In order to achieve this objective, it is important that scholars, teachers and parents/guardians work together in order to provide an environment free from the distractions of inappropriate and disruptive behavior. A uniform code of conduct has been installed to enhance the learning experience of all scholars and the teaching opportunity of the staff at the Odyssey Charter School.

Any willful acts of disruption in an Odyssey classroom or learning environment will not be accepted and will be handled immediately. Teachers are responsible for documenting inappropriate behavior and disciplinary action in the classroom. Each teacher has the right to deal with disruptions in the classroom as they occur until the behavior becomes disruptive to learning. The scholar will then be referred to the Principal or Discipline Principal for further disciplinary action.

Infractions of school policy are to be handled at the discretion of the Teacher/Paraprofessional or Odyssey staff involved. Any grievances with how Odyssey staff use this discretion will be handled by the Odyssey Principal. If a resolution cannot be obtained, then a committee made up of the Principal and 2 Odyssey Board members will be formed to take corrective action. In the case of a grievance against the Principal, the Odyssey Charter School board will hold an executive session to discuss the grievance. There are 4 Classes of offenses to be used at the Odyssey Charter School.

- Level 1 offense will be punished by a demerit system. Odyssey staff is to use appropriate judgment when to issue demerits and are responsible for informing the Principal when the demerit limit has been reached.
- Level 2 offenses gather other disciplinary actions ranging from a formal warning through suspension and/or a board hearing.
- Level 3 and 4 offenses will necessitate contact with the parent and could lead up to in school or out of school suspension and could possibly lead to expulsion of the scholar.

Odyssey will always show appreciation to the scholars who set themselves apart in facilitating a learning experience free from distractions. It takes leadership from our scholar body to help minimize distractions and we will recognize those scholars throughout the year.

NOTE: If a returning scholar continues with a pattern of disciplinary problems the parents will be notified and suspension and/or expulsion could be warranted.

Level 1 (including but not limited to)

- 1) Dress code violations
- 2) In hall without a pass
- 3) Eating food outside of designated times and/or areas
- 4) Failure to deliver and/or return communication with parents
- 5) Unprepared for class (assignments, books, writing utensils, etc.)
- 6) Tardiness
- 6) Agenda not signed by parent
- 7) Talking at an inappropriate time
- 8) Off task
- 9) Incomplete Home Work

Disciplinary Action for all Level 1 offenses may vary from the elementary school to the middle school and may include such punishments as silent lunch, loss of recess time and other loss of privileges.

Level 2 (including but not limited to)

- 1) Obscene Language
- 2) Repeated interference with instruction
- 3) Repeatedly targeting a scholar
- 4) Horseplay/ rough housing
- 5) Inappropriate physical contact
- 6) Cheating
- 7) Defiant refusal to do class work
- 8) Disrespect toward an adult
- 9) Personal electronic use violation
- 10) Accruing 30 demerits in one semester
- 11) Damaging another scholar's property

Level 3 (including but not limited to)

- 1) Blatant defiance toward an adult
- 2) Stealing/Hiding
- 3) Fighting**
- 4) Causing bodily harm
- 5) Damaging/Defacing school property
- 6) Vandalism
- 7) Inappropriate sexual gestures or language
- 8) Verbal attack on an adult
- 9) Verbal threats

**Fighting will automatically result in either in school or out of school suspension to all scholars actively involved.

Level 4 (including but not limited to)

The following acts are considered high offenses and will warrant the issuing of *immediate* suspension and possible Expulsion subject to a disciplinary hearing:

- 1) Weapons/Firearms
- 2) Tobacco/Alcohol/Substance Abuse
- 3) Truancy
- 4) Assault
- 5) Harassment/Threatening behavior
- 6) Pornography
- 7) Inappropriate sexual acts

All level 2-4 infractions of school policy will be accumulated over the school year and will not “reset” until the following school year.

The school’s primary goal is to educate, not to punish; however, when the behavior of an individual scholar comes in conflict with the rights of others, corrective actions may be necessary for the benefit of that individual and the school as a whole. Accordingly, scholars shall be governed by policies, regulations and rules set forth in this Code of Conduct.

Scholars receiving a Level 3 or 4 infractions are disqualified from any after school activity for that day.

PHYSICAL CONTACT/THREATS

You have the right to attend school in safety.

- You must respect others. You may not fight, push, shove, or hit another scholar or staff member.
- You may not play-fight or play-scuffle with another scholar or staff member.
- You may not threaten to harm another scholar or staff member.
- You may not throw objects at other people (rocks, snowballs, pencils, etc.) You may not spit.
- You may not threaten to harm or strike any staff member. This will result in immediate removal from class and/or school. The incident will be reported to the Principal.
- You may not ask other scholars to threaten or hurt another scholar or staff member.

Consequences:

You will discuss this with your teacher and the Principal. You may have supervised study, in-school suspension, detention or other consequences as assigned by the Principal or Vice Principal. Your parents will be notified.

Each classroom teacher and his/her scholars, will follow a school wide behavior management plan that builds on scholar self-discipline while maintaining an appropriate classroom demeanor for instruction and learning. If scholars have difficulty following the plan, the following consequences may be implemented. These steps do not have to be implemented in order and are based upon the severity of the infraction as well as behavioral history:

- Silent lunch away from others
- Time out in the classroom
- Name marked on board
- Notification to parents – verbal and/or written
- Work detail
- Individual Behavior Contract (IBC)
- Counseling with Guidance Counselor or Principal
- Parent-teacher conference
- Serving detention after school with teacher / administrator
- Inability to attend School and/or class functions
- Out of school suspension for persistent or serious lack of respect.
- Expulsion.

Discipline Regarding Extracurricular and Co-Curricular Activities

In addition to the regular discipline plan, scholars involved in extracurricular and co-curricular activities (including band, chorus, glee, academic bowl and sports) are subject to the following additional rules:

- **Academic Guidelines:**

In addition to remaining within the behavior point guidelines for participation in extracurricular and co-curricular activities, scholars must pass at least four out of the following five subjects each 9-week grading period: literature/language arts, math, science, social studies and Connections/ Arts, Inc. classes in order to remain eligible. The final grades in the Connections/Arts, Inc. subjects will be averaged to obtain a final grade for this course sequence. Scholars not passing the required number of subjects will be suspended from the sport or activity for the next 9-week grading period.

- **Administrative Involvement**

Teachers are responsible for the ongoing behavior of their scholars. When a scholar's behavior is consistently disruptive or becomes unsafe, the teacher may refer the scholar to the school discipline office. At this point, the Principal and his/her designee will gather information from both Odyssey personnel and the scholar involved and make a determination as far as appropriate punishment. Punishment may range from silent lunch to out of school suspension with a referral to the discipline committee for eventual removal from the school. The discipline procedures for punishment of suspension and above are listed below.

Authority of the Principal

The Principal is the designated leader of the school and, in concert with the staff, is responsible for the orderly operation of the school.

Authority of the Discipline Office

In cases of disruptive, disorderly or dangerous conduct not covered in this Code, the discipline office may undertake corrective measures which he or she believes to be in the best interest of the scholar and the school provided any such action does not violate school board policy or procedures.

Involvement of Law Enforcement

At times, Odyssey administrators may contact local law enforcement due to the nature of a discipline situation. Typically, this occurs when a state or federal law may have been broken. In those situations, the school will attempt to contact the parents of the scholars involved prior to law enforcement speaking with them. However, once law enforcement arrives on the scene, they take over the investigation from the school and Odyssey personnel will follow the directives of law enforcement regarding the situation.

The Governing Board shall require that Odyssey comply with State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.35 concerning "seclusion" and "restraint", as those terms are defined within the rule.

This policy is not intended to prevent the use of physical restraint in limited circumstances where a scholar exhibits behaviors that place the scholar or others in imminent danger and the scholar is not responsive to verbal directives or less intensive de-escalation techniques. The Board recognizes that in determining when and how to implement this policy and any procedures related to it, educators will have to exercise their professional judgment and discretion. Therefore, the policy is not to be construed as imposing ministerial duties on individual employees. Further, it is not intended to interfere with the duties of law enforcement or emergency medical personnel.

In School Suspension

Scholars who display continued disruptive behavior within the classroom and/or the school shall be removed from the situation and subject to an in-school suspension with the school discipline office. Disruptive behavior has two definitions: (1) behavior that interferes with scholar's learning or the educational process of others and requires attention and assistance beyond that which the traditional program can provide, or (2) behavior that results in frequent conflicts of a disruptive nature while the scholar is under the jurisdiction of the school, either in or out of the classroom. The final decision to implement in-school suspension shall rest with the Principal, although the teacher or another administrator may make the referral and be consulted regarding the decision.

The purpose of in-school suspension is threefold:

1. Isolate the disruptive scholars from the regular classrooms and the activities of the school during the school day.
2. Continue the scholar's progress with classroom assignments.
3. Identify possible deficits or obstacles that may contribute to the scholar's adjustment problems.

Detention

Detention will be scheduled as needed in response to discipline issues, and in accordance with the Board policy. Families will be given at least one day's notice regarding the imposition of an after school detention. Failure of the scholar to bring home notification of a detention notice does not constitute an excuse for your scholar to not attend a scheduled detention.

Short-term suspension

Short-term suspension shall mean the denial of a scholar of the right to attend school and take part in any school function for any period not to exceed four (4) days. The discipline office shall have the discretionary power to initiate a short term suspension upon receipt of satisfactory information of a violation by the scholar of any of the disciplinary rules, provided the principal or his/her designee complies with the following regulations:

- The scholars must be notified in writing of the reason for his/her suspension.
- Written or verbal communication must be made to the parent or guardian of the scholars within 24 hours of the suspension becoming effective, providing notification and a brief description of the reason.
- The notice shall offer the parent or guardian an opportunity to discuss the details of the infraction.
- The parent or guardian requesting such a conference will be told the full details of the conduct that formed the basis for suspension.

Long-term Suspension or Expulsion

Long-term suspension means denial to a scholar of the right to attend school and take part in any school function for any period not to exceed ten (10) school days. Expulsion shall mean the denial to the scholar of the privilege of continuing at Odyssey Charter School for the remainder of the school year or longer.

A long term suspension or expulsion will normally follow a short-term suspension. There are exceptions, however, that could prompt the school Principal and/or discipline office to move for the immediate dismissal of a scholar. Examples of such violations include, but are not limited to, bringing a weapon to school, assault on a scholar or Odyssey Charter School personnel, or other chargeable offense. A decision to impose a long term suspension or expulsion will be the result of a tribunal consisting of at least two members who do not work at Odyssey Charter School and the principal of the school. An exception to this rule may occur when a scholar garners a short term suspension and a hearing is scheduled to consider additional punishment. In this case, the Principal or his/her designee may choose to extend the suspension until such time as the hearing can occur. The Principal or his/her designee will present the case for suspension or dismissal to the Discipline Tribunal. In order for a long-term suspension or expulsion to take place, the following steps must be taken:

1. The Principal recommending the long term suspension or expulsion will furnish to the tribunal a written statement of charges against the scholar, accompanied by any supporting affidavits that may be available.
2. The Principal shall notify the scholar or parent or guardian of the scholar the recommendation for long term suspension or expulsion.

3. The tribunal committee shall notify the scholar or parent or guardian by certified mail indicating a time and place for a hearing, and containing a statement of the charges against the scholar.

- **Hearings**

1. The Discipline Tribunal will meet at an appointed time to review the case. At that time, the Principal and/or his designee will present the facts of the case against the scholar as well as the reasons for his recommendation. The scholar, parent, or guardian present for the hearing will be able to ask questions and present arguments against the recommendation.
2. A vote on the recommendation shall be taken at the conclusion of the hearing. A simple majority of those tribunal members present is needed for passage of the recommendation of long-term suspension or expulsion. The members of the tribunal have the right to establish provisions for re-entry to the school, as long as they are in accord with established readmission procedures. If the majority of the tribunal declines to approve long-term suspension or expulsion, they may make recommendations to the Principal for alternative punishments and/or conditions that must be met prior to the scholar's return to school.
3. The decision of the Discipline Tribunal is final.
4. Should a parent wish to challenge the decision of the tribunal, they must indicate this desire in writing by the deadline given to them by the Principal. The Board will be notified and the Board chair will call a special called meeting (if necessary) to reconsider the decision. At that time, the Board will consider whether or not to reconsider the decision of the tribunal. If a change is made to the tribunal's decision, the parents of the scholar will be notified.

- **Notification**

The parent or guardian shall be notified in writing of the decision of the Discipline Tribunal, as well as the right of appeal to the School Board.

In the event that no appearance is made by or for the scholar at the hearing set by the Discipline Tribunal, the parent or guardian shall be notified by certified mail of the decision of the committee as well as the right of appeal.

- **Re-admission Procedures:**

Before any scholar is permitted to return from a long term suspension, Odyssey Charter School shall:

- a. At least one parent or guardian will attend a conference with the Principal or his/her designee to devise a disciplinary and behavioral correction plan. Failure of the parent or guardian to attend this conference shall preclude the scholar from being re-admitted to the school.
- b. Ensure that a notation of the conference is placed into the scholar's permanent record.

Scholars with Disabilities

The following information could be considered whenever a disabled scholar under either Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) commits a violation of a school rule:

1. Short-term suspension or temporary suspensions not in excess of ten (10) days are permitted and do not require special considerations. The use of short-term suspensions may be an appropriate disciplinary technique and will not constitute a change in placement unless the cumulative days of the short term constitute in reality a long-term suspension or expulsion.
2. Before long-term suspension or expulsion can occur, it must first be determined whether the scholar's misconduct was a manifestation of his or her disability. This determination should be made by a group of persons knowledgeable about the scholar. In the case of a special education scholar, this team will most likely be the IEP Placement committee. In the case of a scholar who is considered disabled but not in special education, the school will create a similar team for this purpose.
3. If the misconduct is related to the disabling condition, the scholar may not be expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) school days.
4. If the misconduct is not related to the disabling condition, a Section 504 scholar may be expelled or suspended for more than ten (10) days if a non-disabled scholar in similar circumstances would have received the same punishment.
5. If the misconduct is not related to the disabling condition, an IDEA scholar may be expelled or suspended for longer than ten (10) days. However, complete cessation of special education services mandated by federal law during the time the scholar is suspended or expelled from school is not permitted.

Bullying

For all purposes hereunder, "bullying" shall mean: (1) Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent, present ability to do so; or (2) Any intentional display of force as such would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm.

The bullying of one scholar by another scholar on school property, on school buses, or at any school-sponsored event is hereby prohibited.

Bullying shall result in disciplinary in accordance with the discipline policy.

Weapon Policy

It is unlawful for any person to carry, possess or have under such person's control any weapon or explosive compound within a school safety zone, or in any school building, on school property, at any school sponsored function or activity, on any school bus, vehicle or other transportation furnished by the school, or in a private vehicle parked on school property per O.C.G.A. 16-11-127.1, "(b) (1).

The term "weapon" means and includes any pistol, revolver or weapon designed or intended to propel a missile of any kind; any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, or other knife having a blade of two and one half or more inches; any straight-edged razor; any spring stick, metal knuckles, blackjack, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as a nun chuck, nunchaku, nunchaku shuriken, or fighting chain; any disc of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or any weapon of like kind; and any stun gun or laser; and bat,

club or other bludgeon-type weapon; or any other weapon as such term is defined in Coweta County Board Policy JCDAE.

- **PUNISHMENT**

Violation may result in suspension, expulsion and/or criminal prosecution.

Items defined as "Weapons" owned by the school such as utility knives are an exception to this rule and will be allowed on school grounds provided they are stored in a secure location and used only by school personnel in the normal operation of the school.

Scholars wishing to bring in weapons for display as part of a school project may do so under the following conditions:

The scholar's request to bring in the weapon must be approved in advance by the Principal;

All weapons must be unloaded;

Weapons are to be brought to the office upon the scholar's arrival at school;

Weapons should be either returned to the office or taken home by a parent at the conclusion of the presentation;

Odyssey assumes no liability for any items that are lost, stolen or broken while on school grounds

Guidelines for Conducting Interrogations and Searches

Before a scholar is searched, the school official must have a reason to believe that the scholar has in his or her possession an article or substance which is illegal, prohibited by school rules, or dangerous. This reason may be something the school official has seen, heard from the scholar involved, heard from another scholar, or observed about the scholar. School officials should not base their search on a hunch or belief unless the reason for that belief can be articulated and supported.

All scholar searches must be witnessed by another professional employee of the school system. This is primarily for the protection of the employees involved, but also may provide additional testimony and evidence if such is ever needed in a board proceeding or otherwise.

Scholars must be searched in as unobtrusive a place and manner as possible under the circumstances. Generally, searches should be in private and reasonable efforts should be made to avoid humiliating or embarrassing the scholar involved.

Before any action is taken by the school officials to physically search a scholar, the school official must explain to the scholar his suspicion. (For example, "I believe you have contraband in your possession.")

The scholar must be given an opportunity to voluntarily empty his or her pockets, pocketbook, or otherwise produce the item sought.

If a physical search of the scholar is to be conducted, it should be conducted by a school official of the same sex, and generally, the witness should be of the same sex as well.

Pocketbooks, satchels, and other such items can be searched most easily and with the least restriction. Pat-down searches of scholars are certainly acceptable if conducted by an official of the same sex.

Strip searches of a scholar should never be allowed. Asking scholars to remove certain articles of clothing, such as jackets, shoes, socks, vest, or other such apparel, is acceptable if done in connection with a pat-down search.

If the school official believes that the item is contained within the scholar's clothing and the scholar refuses to produce it, the school official should give the scholar several choices all of which are designed to produce the item. (For example, "You can either let me have the marijuana, prove to me that you do not have it on you, or I will call your parents (or if appropriate, law enforcement officials).") It should be made clear to the scholar that he will not leave the office until the issue is resolved and the school official should be willing to follow through on whatever action he proposes to the scholar.

Guidelines for Conducting Searches of School Property

School lockers, desks and other school property shall be subject to inspection by school authorities at all times without further notice to scholars or parents. Scholars shall be advised (by the scholar handbook or by some other means) each year that the school has reserved this right. Scholar searches shall be conducted by school officials. School officials, at their discretion, may seek the aid of law enforcement officers. At the discretion of school officials, consultation may be sought with the school attorney.

1. Physical searches of scholars' lockers and desks and other school properties will be conducted by school officials based upon the belief that drugs, alcohol, stolen property, weapons, or other dangerous substances, instrumentalities or contraband are contained therein.
2. Searches supported by the use of trained police dogs may be employed for the search of physical facilities and equipment, which are properties of the school system. The use of law enforcement personnel and dogs will be a cooperative effort with the school administration retaining overall control.
3. No scholar shall be searched with the use of police dogs.
4. All searches conducted with the use of police dogs will be accomplished while scholars are absent from the site of the search.
5. In the event that illegal or unauthorized contraband is discovered in the locker or desk of the scholar(s), the following procedures will be implemented:
 - a. Scholar(s) will be removed to a private setting and advised of the findings.
 - b. Scholars will be afforded an opportunity to explain the circumstances surrounding the possession of the identified substance, property, materials or contraband.
 - c. The school or system administrator will determine if the scholar(s) should be processed under the local board policies and procedures or referred to local law enforcement authorities.
 - d. School officials will take action to notify by phone parents or legal guardians of scholar(s) immediately upon the discovery. A letter giving formal notice of the findings and proposed action will be forwarded as soon as practical.
6. In all search procedures, every effort will be made to preserve the teaching and learning environment with minimum disruption to the total program.

Physical and Verbal Abuse and Harassment

Physical and/or verbal abuse and/or harassment or threats of such abuse by any scholar toward another scholar or adult are unacceptable and will be dealt with immediately. Such behavior may result in steps to suspend or expel the scholar from Odyssey Charter School.

Any parent, guardian, or person other than a scholar enrolled in this school who has been advised that minor scholars are present, and berates, insults, verbally or physically abuses any teacher, school administrator, parent volunteer or staff member in the presence and hearing of a pupil while on the premises of this school will, by any of the above designated school personnel:

- 1st incidence: be asked to leave Odyssey Charter School premises.
- 2nd incidence: be asked to leave Odyssey Charter School premises and will be banned from school property.
- 3rd incidence: have their scholar/scholars suspended from Odyssey Charter School pending a hearing, as per school handbook, at which expulsion proceedings will commence.

Illegal Acts

Illegal acts will be reported to and handled by the appropriate authorities. Any scholar involved in such acts is subject to expulsion from Odyssey Charter School.

Behavior Records

Each scholar will have a behavior record in the office, which shall be updated on any occasion when a scholar is sent to the office for disciplinary reasons. Only records of suspensions and expulsions will be passed along to a scholar's subsequent school.

Behavior Contracts:

Based upon the recommendation of the teacher and approval of the Principal and/or discipline office, scholars whose behavior continues to cause classroom problems and disruptions may be placed on an individual behavior contract. In such a case the teacher, parent/guardian, and Principal and/or discipline office will agree to the provisions of such a contract. Scholars violating the contract through continued behavioral problems will be subject to the discipline plan set forth in the contract which may or may not be identical to the overall discipline plan in place for Odyssey Charter School. In the case of parents who are not married, the custodial parent will retain the power and the final decision about whether to sign the contract.

VOLUNTEERING

Parent involvement is essential to the overall success of Odyssey Charter School.

Charter schools depend on the high parent or guardian involvement in the form of volunteering. The Volunteer Coordinating Committee is responsible for not only organizing volunteer opportunities but also monitoring and verifying the number of volunteer hours for each family.

Volunteer Service Requirement

Families are expected to contribute at least 18 hours of volunteer service toward Odyssey Charter School per school year. You must record your hours and turn them in to the office to receive credit for them. If you are volunteering during school hours, please make sure you sign in and out as a volunteer with the office. We will make efforts to keep you informed of the status of your volunteer hours, but please remember that the overall responsibility is yours. 50% of the volunteer time should be accrued prior to the conclusion of the first semester, which ends prior to Christmas/winter break beginning.

Volunteer Orientation

Each year, volunteers will be required to attend a mandatory volunteer orientation program before being allowed to volunteer within the school.

Parent Covenant

The goal of the Parent Covenant is to create the strongest possible partnership between home and the school and to nourish and facilitate the individual abilities of each scholar. To succeed in

our mission and foster intellectual and social growth, education must extend beyond the classroom walls by recognizing and incorporating the family and home as vital parts of success.

Odyssey's Pledge to Parents:

- To provide a program of academic excellence that fulfills the goals expressed in our mission and core beliefs
- To provide a safe and supportive learning environment
- To communicate regularly regarding a scholar's progress and needs
- To continually reflect on, evaluate, and develop the learning environment
- To provide meaningful parent and scholar programs and extracurricular activities
- To communicate effectively regarding school and classroom events and policies
- To be courteous and respectful to parents and work collaboratively to help the scholar find success

Parents' Pledge to the School:

- To read, understand, and support the mission of Odyssey
- To provide all necessary enrollment paperwork including report cards, test scores, and scholar records prior to scholar attending Odyssey
- To provide a home environment that nurtures a love of learning and supports learning (e.g., reading with scholar, checking homework, etc.)
- To ensure scholar is on time with appropriate materials and assignments
- To provide a nutritious breakfast and lunch each day
- To be courteous and respectful to staff and work collaboratively to help my scholar find success
- To stay abreast of school communication, including signing agenda book or similar
- To follow school policies and procedures
- To participate in discussions and/or conferences regarding academic progress and behavior
- To attend extracurricular activities and events to support the scholar or the school
- To volunteer and earn a minimum of 20 credits (see attached list of ways to earn credits)
- To maintain an updated Volunteer Log of volunteer activities

In order to enroll in the school, parents must sign the Parent-School Covenant, that acknowledges that they are in support of these requirements and ensures that the parents are fully involved in their scholar's learning.

Violation of Parent Covenant:

Parents will be notified in writing of violations of the Parent Covenant. Violations include but are not limited to:

- On-going failure to ensure that scholar completes homework, projects, and class work in a timely manner as established by the teacher
- Excessive tardies, early check-outs, or absences as defined by the school's attendance policy
- On-going failure to provide a nutritious breakfast and lunch daily
- Aggressive, disrespectful, or combative behavior towards Odyssey staff
- On-going failure to sign school communication (e.g., agenda book)
- Failure to pay school fees (e.g., forgotten lunch, non-sufficient funds, lost books, ASP, etc.)
- Failure to sign in as a visitor or presence in un-authorized areas of the facility
- On-going failure to follow school policies and procedures
- On-going failure to monitor dress code compliance

- On-going failure to attend conferences related to academic progress and behavior
- Misrepresenting or omitting scholar information/records, credit hours, or other communication requested by the school
- Failure to meet 20 credit requirement (10 by December break) and/or failure to report involvement on credit log

On-going failure of a parent responsibility resulting in a violation notice shall be determined based on significant interference with a scholar's learning or the fulfillment of the school's mission. Violations of Parent Covenants shall carry forth from year to year; documentation shall be maintained throughout the time the scholar is enrolled and may be used in future proceedings when relevant.

Ways to Earn Hours

You may receive volunteer hours in a number of ways. You can help out a teacher, work in the front office, assist with the playground, etc. Odyssey will have scheduled and organized "work days" on selected Saturdays where a parent can earn hours. The Volunteer Coordinating Committee will also have information and sign-ups for volunteer opportunities. If you are early picking up your scholar and have only 15 minutes, you can still help out and put that time toward your requirement.

Reporting Volunteer Hours and Other Guidelines:

We encourage families to work together to participate in the scholar's learning experience and in support of the school. Adults (grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, siblings, etc.) and non-Odyssey scholars over the age of 12 may volunteer and earn credit towards the family involvement credit commitment. Individuals other than parents/guardians are allowed to support this effort and participation is valued, but the provision is not intended to replace the active and on-going participation and support of parents/guardians.

Parent involvement logs are due on established dates each month. Every effort will be made to remind parents of their obligation to report involvement via notes, emails, and bulletin reminders; however, the responsibility for timely communication is with the parent.

Parent involvement logs may be sent to the office or the designated Parent Involvement Representative or may be faxed to the school's fax number at (770) 251-6606.

Credit reported is subject to review by the Parent Involvement Representative or administration. If it does not meet the requirements established, is not able to be substantiated, or does not adhere to the spirit of the Parent Involvement Compact it may be denied. Decisions made by administration are considered final.

What is the "spirit" of the Parent Involvement Compact? It is twofold:

- Active and on-going involvement in your scholar's education
- Support of school operations and the well-being of the school community and its future success.

Even though parents/guardians/volunteers may sign in at the front office or on a sign in sheet credit is officially counted based on the credit involvement logs. Sign in sheets are used to substantiate participation if needed and for reporting in our Charter Schools report.

Credits earned by year may be pro-rated based on partial-year participation as needed. Credit may not be carried over from year to year unless prior authorization is granted in writing by administration. Credit commitments may be modified on a pro-rated basis for scholars who enroll late. Pro-rata figures will be based on whole months the scholar is enrolled. The office staff will confirm enrollment dates if required.

In the case of an extreme circumstance (e.g., catastrophic illness) which impedes a family from meeting the credit commitment established for the year, administration may elect to waive or alter the requirement. Requests should be made in writing to administration and must be approved in writing by the administration.

In the case of divorced or separated households, parents may elect to submit one credit log for the family or credit logs from each parent. The school is not responsible for reporting or maintaining communication between parents related to the credits reported. The school expects parents to work collaboratively in the interests of the scholar relative to meeting the parent involvement requirements. It is the ultimate responsibility of the guardian parent to meet the parent involvement requirements.

*To obtain a volunteer credit log, please see the volunteer section of the website, or request one from the administrative assistant at the front desk.

Classroom Involvement

Your presence is welcome in the classroom and we invite you to come and be a part of your scholar's class. Here are just a few examples of ways you can volunteer in the classrooms:

- Read to the class
- Assist with the class
- Become a class parent
- Chaperone field trips
- Volunteer to teach art, music, or a foreign language
- Tutor a scholar or small group
- Monitor lunch or recess

There are countless ways to volunteer both in the school and at home. If your situation leaves you with sporadic or unusual hours to help, please contact the office. Many jobs can be done at home on your own time with communication via email, etc. If, by some circumstance, you are physically unable to perform volunteer duties, contact Odyssey Charter School's Volunteer Coordinating Committee for guidance as soon as possible.

Serve on the Board

According to the by-laws, the Board is made up of up to thirteen voting members, consisting of parents, instructional staff, and interested members of the community. Part of the Board is elected by the Board itself and part is elected by Odyssey parents. Each Board member serves a three-year term with elections being held during the annual meeting in August.

The Board meets monthly at the school and has the overall responsibility for setting and writing policy for the school and insuring its continued financial solvency. For more information, see Odyssey Charter School Governing Board.

Cell Phones

Parents who are volunteering in the school are asked to either shut off their cell phones (or two way radios) or place them on vibrate/silent mode. This is to help reduce the number of distractions for the scholars.

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Pre-enrollment Assessment

In order to better serve our scholars, prior to the first day of attendance, each enrolling scholar will be required to complete appropriate assessment tests, as determined by the school. These tests will primarily be based upon the scholar's age and grade level. Assessments will be done at no cost to the scholar. Assessment results will not be used as criteria for admission to the school.

*Assessments will not be conducted unless a complete file is on record with the registrar.

Report Cards and Progress Reports

Report cards will be issued at the end of each 9-week quarter, with narrative progress reports issued each 6 weeks (see the school calendar on the website for calendar dates). Our report cards are different from traditional report cards; Odyssey uses a continuum based report card. Although traditional grades may or may not appear for all subjects, the report is designed to offer a greater amount of detail to parents regarding the progress of their scholar.

Curriculum

Odyssey Charter School gives scholars learning opportunities through a hands-on, inquiry-based approach. Odyssey's program offers innovative scholar-centered learning which actively engages scholars in explorations in subjects like math, science, computer technology, social studies, and incorporates reading and writing skills.

Character Education

The Georgia Department of Education has mandated that each school implement a comprehensive character education program for levels K-12. This program should focus on the scholars' development of the following character traits: courage, patriotism, citizenship, honesty, fairness, respect for others, kindness, cooperation, self-respect, self-control, courtesy, compassion, tolerance, diligence, generosity, punctuality, cleanliness, cheerfulness, school pride, respect for the environment, respect for the creator, patience, creativity, sportsmanship, loyalty, perseverance, and virtue.

Conferences

Odyssey Charter School supports both formal and informal conferences between teachers and parents/guardians as the need arises. Conferences allow a forum for both parties to address concerns, share information, and create an environment designed to enhance scholar success. It is strongly suggested that parents have *at least three formal conferences a year* with their scholar's teacher. At the end of each Nine Week Period each teacher will offer conference opportunities. Parents and/or teachers may also schedule informal conferences anytime throughout the year in order to address specific situations pertaining to their scholar.

Staff/Siblings

The scholars of faculty shall not be placed in the same classroom as another adult family member for more than half of the instructional day. This provision shall not apply to any special classes such as PE, art, music, etc. Siblings may be placed in the same classroom after consultation with the parents.

Standardized Testing

As a public school, Odyssey administers standardized testing when appropriate. Grades 3-8 take the new Georgia Milestones in the spring. All results are recorded in the scholar's permanent record.

Arts

Odyssey scholars receive fine art instruction in both music and visual arts.

Library/Media Services

Library materials are provided for the informational needs of scholars, faculty, and parents. Scholars and parents may check out books and back issues of magazines. Other materials, including videocassettes, and computer software circulate only to teachers. Reference books may not be checked out.

- Scholars must respect all materials in the library.

- There is no food, drink, or candy allowed.
- Scholars must speak in low voices.
- All material must be returned on time to avoid fines.
- **Circulation**
 - Scholars may check out a maximum of 1-2 books for one week.
 - Back issues of magazines may be checked out for one day.
 - Parents may check out two books for one week.
 - Items may be renewed once if not on reserve.
- **Loss or Damage of Library Materials**
Scholars will be expected to pay the replacement cost of lost or badly damaged library items. Report cards and school records will be withheld until all financial obligations to the library have been met.
- **Book Fair**
The school sponsors several book fairs throughout the school year. The proceeds from the fair are used to buy award-winning books for the library.

Enrichment Programs

Odyssey offers a number of enrichment programs for scholars. Enrichment activities anticipated for the upcoming school year include chorus, bands (5th grade, middle school beginning and middle school advanced), academic bowl (elementary school and middle school), Helen Ruffin Reading Bowl, and athletics (co-ed soccer, boys' basketball, girls' volleyball, and track and field). Some of these activities are fee-based. Please contact the activity's sponsor or the office for additional details.

Technology

Odyssey Charter School offers scholars a computer lab plus the use of portable chrome books within the classroom. Scholars in the K/1 cluster also have access to computers within their classrooms. Scholars in grades K-5 receive weekly instruction in technology and middle school scholars take technology courses through the Connections program. Additional documentation will be sent home for more detailed information regarding computer usage, fees, etc., by our technology teacher.

Homework

We believe that homework should have a purpose and be related to what the scholar is learning in school. Homework will assist in the development of mastery in specific subject areas. Homework completion is required.

Gifted/Talented (STEP)

Odyssey Charter School offers specific, targeted academic enrichment opportunities for these scholars through a variety of state-approved models. Each year, Odyssey has specific identification periods set aside for testing referred scholars. As scholars previously identified as gifted/talented through state regulated testing transfer to Odyssey, they will have the opportunity to be placed into our program.

Special Education

The Special Education program at Odyssey works on an inclusion model when possible. However, there are times when individual or collaborative instruction by a Special Education teacher may be appropriate. For scholars with existing Individual Education Plans (IEP's), plans will be reviewed and revised as necessary and implemented as completely as possible. Parents of new scholars having IEP's will meet with the special education teacher soon after they begin school to evaluate and amend the scholar's IEP.

When a scholar is identified through past performance, teacher observation, or other avenues as needing additional assistance, he/she may be referred for specialized intervention strategies either within the regular classroom setting or within a small group setting. This is known as RTI or Response to Intervention.

Teacher Requests for the Upcoming School Year

All class placements for the upcoming school year are completed by a team of staff members and are completed during the week of post planning. Any requests for scholar placement must be received **by no later than May 1st of each school year**. While Odyssey will accept a request for scholar placement, this does not guarantee placement. Placements are completed by various factors and all Odyssey staff members want to make sure scholars are in the best environment for potential success.

ADMISSIONS

Admission Requirements

Odyssey is a state special public charter school. Odyssey is tuition free.

Returning scholars are guaranteed a place in the class for subsequent years as long as they adhere to the provisions of the Odyssey Charter School Parent/Student Handbook.

Any new scholar intending to be admitted as an Odyssey scholar must submit a complete enrollment/admissions packet on the day they are to complete intake testing or on the first day of their scheduled start should these days be the same. The only exception which can be made is with the 30-day waiver permitted by law in which the parent has 30 days to submit a copy of the scholar's up to date immunizations and hearing/dental/vision. This waiver will only be given if a scholar is coming to a Georgia public school for the first time or have been homeschooled. If on the 30th day the immunizations, hearing, vision, and dental are not received, then the enrolled scholar is subject to immediate dismissal from Odyssey. All 504's and IEP's must be disclosed during preliminary enrollment or application will not be authorized by the principal.

Transfer and Withdrawals

Odyssey Charter School adopts the following policy which shall be effective on that date that the policy is adopted by the Board. Scholars may formally enroll in Odyssey pending receipt of their immunization record, for a period not to exceed 30 calendar days from initial entry. The 30-day waiver may be extended from the date of the first admittance, whichever is earlier, for up to 90 calendar days, provided the scholar is a transfer scholar from an out-of-state school system to a Georgia school system, or a scholar entering kindergarten or the first grade from out-of-state. The scholar must provide documentation to the school from the local health department or a physician specifying that an immunization sequence has been started and that the immunization time schedule can be completed as specified in the Official Code of Georgia Annotated (OCGA) 20-2-771, "Any responsible official permitting any child to remain in a school or facility in violation of this Code section, and any parent or guardian who intentionally does not comply with this Code section, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$100.00 or by imprisonment for not more than 12 months."

No scholar expelled from a school in another school system may be admitted to Odyssey. No scholar suspended from a school in another school system may be admitted to Odyssey until after an investigation occurs determining whether or not the scholar was successfully transitioned back into the original home school.

An elementary or middle school scholar transferring from a school accredited by a regional or state accrediting agency may be placed in the grade and courses recommended by the school from which he/she is transferring. Alternative placement may be made upon review by the

placement committee (composed of classroom teacher, Sped or gifted teacher, parents, and administrator) if scholar age, maturity level, previous academic record, standardized test scores, and/or placement testing indicate that scholar needs can be better addressed at another grade level. In the event a consensus cannot be reached, the majority vote will prevail.

Lottery Procedures

New scholars are admitted each year through the lottery process. The lottery is held each year in the Spring for the upcoming school year.

Prior to the lottery, a survey is sent to all current scholars regarding their intent to return to Odyssey for the following school year. Scholars who respond they are not going to return have had their spots in next year's class vacated and declared available for the lottery.

Scholars who apply for admission to Odyssey for the upcoming school year are placed in consideration for the lottery. A complete application for admission is required.

Each year stands on its own, so names from the wait list for the prior school year do not carry over into any future school years unless a new application for admission is completed.

Prior to beginning a class lottery, the names of all scholars in that lottery will be called. If your scholar's application has been turned in, but their name was not called, you will need to inform the speaker immediately so the problem can be resolved prior to the beginning of the drawing. If the parent is not present or does not make this error known prior to the start of the lottery for that grade level, then the drawing will continue as normal. Should that scholar be identified later by the parent as missing from that lottery, the scholar's name will be placed at the back of the wait list for that lottery.

Each scholar is assigned a number. Their number corresponds to a number in the container. Numbers will be drawn one by one until the available openings for that class are filled. Remaining numbers will make up a numbered wait list.

Siblings of scholars already attending Odyssey Charter School will have first priority for admission, along with the scholar of staff members. If there are too many siblings for available spots, a sibling lottery will take place first, followed by a wait list for general applicants.

In the case of multiple scholars (i.e. twins, triplets, etc.) from the same household who will be entering the same grade, each sibling will receive a number. When the first of the siblings' numbers is drawn, the other sibling(s) shall be assigned the next number(s) for admission. If one sibling is accepted and the other is placed on a wait list, it will be up to the parents to decide which scholar has priority for admission and communicate that wish to the office.

Families do not need to be present at the lottery to be considered for admission.

There is movement off of the wait list as plans change. When an opening does occur, we will notify the first family on the waiting list and proceed in order until the spot is filled.

The lottery will proceed grade by grade.

Once a family has been assigned a spot in the lottery, any additional required paperwork must be turned into the Registrar within 10 business days of the conclusion of the lottery drawing. Lottery participants will be informed following the lottery of which paperwork is required. Failure to have all paperwork into the Registrar will result in the family moving back down on the waiting list in order for the next family to be called.

Lottery Wait List Families

In order to be entered into Odyssey Charter School, any family who is called from the waiting list will be told by the staff member calling them of any additional documentation that must be turned into the registrar. This additional paperwork must be turned in within 5 business days. Failure to submit all required paperwork will result in the family moving back down on the waiting list in order for the next family to be called.

Admissions Paperwork

All admissions paperwork can be downloaded from Odyssey's website. A complete admission's packet will include the following:

- **Application for Admission**
- **Enrollment Information**
- **Release of Scholar Records Authorization**
- **Immunization Certificate – GA Dept. of Human Resources Form 3231** or notarized affidavit signed by all parents/legal guardians that swears or affirms that immunization(s) required conflict with religious beliefs (however, immunizations may be required in cases when such disease(s) is/are in epidemic or breakout stages.)
- **Hearing-Vision-Dental Certificate – GA Form 3300**
- **State-Issued, Certified Copy of Birth Certificate**
- **Copy of Driver's license of enrolling parent** (for record of parent/guardian ID)
- **Copy of Scholar's Social Security Card** (social security numbers are required for state reporting)
- **Affidavit of Residence** (Must be accompanied by the 2 proofs of residence listed below/needs to be notarized – our school has two notaries)
- **Two Proofs of Residence** (one must be a voter registration card, mortgage, or current lease. The second may be a utility bill)
- **Considerations and Exceptions for Enrollment/Parental Pledge Agreement**
- **Enrollment Assessment Questionnaire**
- **Proof of custody/guardianship/foster/adoption** (if applicable)
- **Authorization to Give Medication at School** (if prescription medication is taken at school)

Affidavit of Residency

All families are required by Georgia law to complete an updated Affidavit of Residency on a yearly basis. New affidavits will be sent home with the first report card of the school year. Failure to return an updated Affidavit by the last day of school prior to Winter Break in December will result in the scholar not being permitted to return to school in January.

Additional Forms

Additional forms will be sent home periodically that we must have on file, however they are not required as part of the admissions packet. Please make sure to check your scholar's agenda, email accounts, and/or the Odyssey website daily.

Right to Amend

Odyssey Charter School reserves the right to amend any part of this handbook for just cause and parents will be promptly notified, in writing, when changes are made.

Right to Know

In compliance with the requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act the **Odyssey Charter School** would like to inform you that you may request information about the professional qualifications of your student's teacher(s). The following information may be requested:

- 1) Whether the teacher has met the Georgia Professional Standards Commission's requirements for certification for the grade level and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
- 2) Whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency or other provisional status through which Georgia qualifications or certification criteria have been waived;
- 3) The college major and any graduate certification or degree held by the teacher;
- 4) Whether the student is provided services by paraprofessionals, and if so, their qualifications.

If you wish to request information concerning your child's teacher's qualification, please contact the Principal / Superintendent, Scot Hooper at 770-251-6111 or via email at shooper@odysseycharterschool.net.

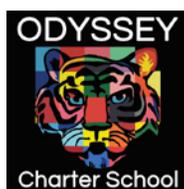
History of Odyssey Charter School

The genesis for Odyssey Charter School began in 1998 with a group of families who decided that the traditional public school system was not meeting the needs of their scholar. Utilizing recently implemented charter school legislation, the group wrote a charter reflecting their educational philosophy and setting forth the framework for Odyssey Charter School. After several years of negotiations with the local school district, the Georgia Board of Education approved Odyssey Charter School's charter in 2001. As a provision of the charter school legislation, the parent group formed a non-profit corporation, Community Education Association, Inc. d/b/a Odyssey Charter School.

After several more years of planning, the school was able to secure an approximately 10,000 square foot space in the White Oak Shopping Center on Highway 34. The dream of Odyssey Charter School culminated on August 12, 2004, when the school began the school year with 119 scholars.

In July of 2008 Odyssey Charter School purchased a building on St. John's Circle in the Shenandoah Industrial Complex. It had previously been occupied by a small private school that had only built out a small portion of the approximately 26,000 square feet. Over the spring and summer of 2009, the rear portion of the building was renovated and the entire scholar body is now housed at this location.

In May of 2014, Odyssey was recommended for accreditation pending further review and final action by the AdvancED Accrediting Commission.



2016-2017 Odyssey Scholar and Family Handbook Acknowledgment Form

We, the _____ family, hereby acknowledge and accept the conditions set forth in this Odyssey Scholar & Family Handbook. We have received and read a copy of Odyssey Scholar & Family Handbook, and understand the rules, regulations, and procedures of the school, and acknowledge our Right to Know. By signing this acknowledgement form I, along with my scholar(s), agree to abide by all rules, regulations, procedures and policies as outlined. Information and policies in this handbook may be updated at any time, as the Odyssey administration may deem necessary.

Date: _____

Parent Name (print): _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____

Scholar (print): _____ Grade: _____

Homeroom Teacher: _____

Scholars Signature: _____

THIS ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM IS TO BE SIGNED AND RETURNED TO YOUR HOMEROOM TEACHER FOR EACH SCHOLAR BY AUGUST 12TH, 2016 OR WITHIN FIVE (5) DAYS OF NEW ENROLLMENT.