



Olympia Waldorf
SCHOOL

EST. 1985



Family Guide

2022-23 EDITION

Family Guide to OWS

Revised February 2022

Awakening minds, enlivening hearts, and
engaging hands for lifelong learning.

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phone 360 493 0906
web olympiawaldorf.org
email info@olympiawaldorf.org
mail PO Box 130 | East Olympia, WA | 98540
visit 8126 Normandy Street SE | Olympia, WA | 98501

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OWS - DEI STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Olympia Waldorf School is committed to creating a learning environment in which all people are seen, heard, valued, and honored. We strive for fair and equitable ground, united by compassion for our common humanity, as we seek to recognize and celebrate our diverse ways of being. All cultures, races and ethnicities, sexual orientations, gender identities, religions and spiritual practices, bodies, and learning styles are welcomed within our school community. At OWS, we value clear, open, direct and respectful communications in all aspects of our work. Educators and parents are to be leaders in modeling healthy, professional and transparent communications.

LAND OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Every community owes its existence and vitality to generations from around the world who contributed their hopes, dreams, and energy to making the history that led to this moment. Some were brought here against their will, some were drawn to leave their distant homes in hope of a better life, and some have lived on this land for more generations than can be counted. Truth and acknowledgment are critical to building mutual respect and connection across all barriers of heritage and difference. Olympia Waldorf School recognizes we are on the unceded land of the Medicine Creek Treaty Tribes of Nisqually, Puyallup, Steilacoom, Squawskin (Squaxin Island), S'Homamish, Stehchass, T'Peeksin, Squi-aitl, and Sa-heh-wamish. We acknowledge that this land is the territory of the Steh-chass people of the Squaxin Island Tribe. We hope to cultivate our relationship with the Coastal Salish and their homelands where we mutually reside. We welcome indigenous participation and critique as we strive to support indigenous sovereignty and culture. We pay respects to their elders past and present. Please take a moment to consider the many legacies of violence, displacement, migration, and settlement that shape our society and communities. Please join us in our ongoing efforts to uncover such truths as a larger school community.

We are grateful for the U.S. Department of Arts and Culture for the wealth of knowledge they contain as an organization and offer [their site](#) for others to gain similar access and understanding.

SCHOOL SONG

The sun is in my heart,
It warms me with its power.
And wakens life and love,
in bird and beast and flower

The stars above my head,
are shining in my mind
As spirits of the world,
that in my thoughts I find

The earth where on I tread,
lets not my feet go through.
But strongly doth uphold,
the weight of deeds I do

Then must I thankful be,
that here on earth I dwell.
To know and love the world,
and treat all creatures well

SCHOOL VERSE

To wonder at beauty
Stand guard over truth
Look up to the noble
Resolve on the good

This leadeth one truly
To purpose in living
To right in one's doing
To peace in one's feeling
To light in one's thinking

And teaches one trust
In the workings of God
In all that there is
In the width of the world
In the depth of the soul

GENERAL INFORMATION

Phone (360) 493-0906 **Fax** (360) 493-0835

Mailing Address P.O. Box 130, East Olympia, WA 98540

Street Address 8126 Normandy Street SE, Olympia, WA 98501

E-mail info@olympiawaldorf.org

Website www.olympiawaldorf.org

Start and End Times All our classroom programs are based upon rhythms and routines that support children's healthy development in all areas. Please refer to the starting times for each program. Consistent on-time arrival serves your child(ren) as they are able to begin the day in the rhythm of their classroom. Punctuality creates healthy lifelong habits and parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to have their children to school on time to cultivate this capacity.

Preschool: 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Kindergarten: 8:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Grades 1-8: 8:10 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

-**Wednesdays** early release at 1:00 p.m.

School Holidays and Events Check the school calendar on our website, or call the school office.

School Closure In case of inclement weather or an emergency situation, visit www.flashalert.net for up-to-the-minute information. You may also check our social media and then call the school after 7:40 a.m. to hear a recorded message.

Visitors On Campus All visitors on campus, including our parents/guardians, must check in the office first to sign in and receive a visitor pass, then sign out when leaving. This allows us to account for every person on school grounds in the event of an emergency.

Weekly Email "The Chime" Submit timely and newsworthy entries to development@olympiawaldorf.org for electronic publication. Submissions are due the Friday before. The Chime is sent out on Tuesday. Please indicate "The Chime" in the subject line. OWS staff reserves the right to edit all submissions.

SCHOOL POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

Arrival and Pick-Up Parents/guardians of Grades students are dropped off in the round a bout between the middle school and Prairie Hall. Students in Grades 1-5 in the same round a bout and Middle School students are picked up on the gravel road behind the Middle School building.

Kinderhaus families/guardians should park in the northern parking lot, near the play field between the Middle School and the Kinderwoods. Parents/guardians will walk their children into the Kinderwoods and check in with their teacher. Pick up is the same. At pick up check in with the teacher before you leave with your child.

Late Arrival Please make sure your child arrives at school on time as there is a rhythm to the school day that is carefully planned by the teacher. Office staff will record their attendance and be sure they make it to class.

Late Pick-Up All students who do not have pre-arranged Extended Care must be picked up promptly at dismissal time. After the 15-minute pickup period, a \$25 late fee will be applied to the monthly statement, and the child will be taken to Extended Care.

Early Departure Please inform the faculty and staff if you plan to pick up your child early. All students leaving early must be signed out in the Office. Office staff will retrieve the student from class.

Planned Absence Because the Waldorf curriculum is living and dynamic by nature, it may not be possible to adequately make up missed class time. Therefore, we place a high value on consistent and timely attendance. We acknowledge that there will be times when children must miss school for various reasons and ask for your cooperation in facilitating a smooth transition for the children who are absent for multiple days of school. For a planned absence, a written notification is requested.

Unplanned Absence/Illness For unplanned absence, such as illness, please call the school office as soon as possible. In order to ensure the children's safety, office staff will call the families of any

registries. One of the challenges that comes with a historic building is to mitigate exposure to building materials from the past. Our beloved Prairie Hall was built with products that contained asbestos and the original paint contained lead. We have encapsulated all known elements with these items so that there is no exposure to children.

The Environmental Protection Agency regulates Asbestos in Chapter 40 part 763. In this it is our duty to inform you that there is known asbestos completely enclosed in a soffit located on the North wall in the faculty/office and mechanical rooms. To aid in our efforts to keep these items secure please do not alter any part of Prairie Hall and report any new damage to the building promptly to our Facilities Manager. We have also created a 20' buffer zone around this building in which no food will be grown or eaten.

COVID-19 Response The health and safety of our community is our greatest concern. The school has adopted a COVID Health & Safety Plan which is available on the school's website.

All community members will receive and acknowledge these protocols and policies. Our knowledge regarding COVID 19 and its impacts are evolving rapidly, and these policies and protocols may also change. Parents/Guardians are responsible for reviewing and complying with the safety plan and acknowledging the risk of COVID-19. Questions regarding COVID-19 Response should be directed to health@olympiawaldorf.org.

oversight of the financial and legal matters of the school. The Board is comprised of a Faculty Representative, and community members, with each member serving a three-year term. Board members are elected by vote as the terms of their predecessors expire. Meetings are open to the community, though parts of meetings may require confidentiality and may be closed to non-Trustees. The Board holds monthly meetings and also convenes All-School Meetings twice a year, in October and May.

Committees The Board and Administrative staff delegate some of their work to committees that engage faculty, staff, parents/guardians, and Board member participation. The current committees are as follows:

- Finance Committee holds the school's short-term and long-term financial vision and assists the Board of Trustees in the stewardship of the financial resources of the school.
- Festival/Fundraising Committee holds the long range planning for the school and manages activities relating to festivals/fundraising, annual fund drives, and capital development.
- Governance Committee ensures that the Board of Trustees consists of dedicated members that are committed to the long term sustainability and success of the school.

Parent Association The Parent Association is comprised of members of the parent/guardian community and seeks to inspire, inform, and organize the parent/guardian body. The Parent Association nurtures a healthy social network at the school through fostering warmth and communication between all members of the community. The Parent Association is composed of two members from each class who serve staggered two-year terms. There are additional liaisons from faculty and staff.

For more information on our programs, enrollment, tuition, financial policies, discipline and other policies and procedures, please contact our office.

Hazardous Materials Notice in Prairie Hall Prairie Hall is over 100 years old. We are honored to be the stewards of this historic school house. This building is listed on the national and state historical

child absent without notification. All students will be accounted for by school staff at the start of every school day. Additional follow up with staff may be requested in compliance with local health & safety compliance.

Illness at Home Keeping your child at home at the first sign of communicable disease protects your child from additional health problems and protects other students from exposure. Please review health & safety guidelines found on our website for more information on current protocols.

Illness at School When a child becomes ill or injured at school, emergency contacts will be called to pick up the child.

Every faculty and staff member is First Aid/CPR-certified. First aid will be administered appropriately should injury occur. Emergency services may be called without parent consultation when staff deems it emergent and necessary.

Medications at School If your child must receive over-the-counter or prescribed medication during the school day or on any school-sponsored activity such as field trips and overnight excursions, you **must** have a Medications Request Form signed by the parent/guardian **and** health care provider on file at the school. This includes Epi-pens that may need to be administered for allergies, vitamins, and homeopathic remedies. The medication must be in its original marked container and clearly marked with the child's name, medication name, and dosage. Medication must be handed directly to a staff member. All medications will be returned to parents or disposed of at the end of the school year.

Phone Use There is no phone available to students at the school. Office staff can call for a child if there is an important need. Social activities and "play dates" must be arranged in advance and not on school phones after school.

Dropping Off Items To reduce distractions to and interruptions of classes during the school day, please drop off any items for your child at the office. We will ensure the items get to your child.

Home Visits Teachers will contact each new family to schedule a home visit before or near the beginning of the school year. New teachers at OWS may request a home visit. Home visits nurture the new relationship between family and school and allows the teacher a glimpse of the child's rhythms and home life.

6-week Evaluation Period Every new student is subject to a six-week period of evaluation. During this time, the family becomes more familiar with the school, and the teacher is able to observe the student's needs and abilities. At the end of this observation period, the school may terminate the enrollment contract. In rare cases, the student may be transferred to a more appropriate class.

Classroom Observations The classroom is a dynamic laboratory with delicate rhythms that don't always lend themselves to outside observation. Parents of enrolled students who wish to observe should schedule a class observation with the teacher in advance or attend a Tour of the Grades event when classrooms are open to visitors. Classroom visits by parents and guardians are solely at the discretion of the teacher.

Safety Fire and other emergency evacuation drills are conducted in compliance with local and state authorities. All students must have a comfort kit at school in case of emergencies; to include at least 2000 calories of food. During an actual emergency, the school will attempt to provide information on pick up through www.flashalert.net, email, or on social media.

Field Trips Parents/guardians will be notified at least one week in advance in writing that a field trip is planned, including the date, time and place. A permission slip must be signed and returned to school before a child can participate. Provisions will be made for children whose parents/guardians choose for them not to attend. Transportation will be coordinated by the teacher or a class parent.

Lunch and Snacks Parents/guardians will provide a wholesome snack and lunch. No candy and no excessive sugary foods please. Preschool, Kindergarten, and Extended Care will provide supplemental snacks.

on adjacent property.

Community Festivals The Waldorf festival life has roots in Christian culture, but it is cultivated as a means for instilling in children a reverent attitude toward life, not as a dogma or theology. Thus, we use the word "God" without defining it in our poems, songs, and graces before meals and snacks. The attitudes of joy, reverence, and gratitude are apparent during our school-wide seasonal celebrations, which include our Michaelmas Festival, the Winter Faire, and May Faire. Out of our desire to embrace our multicultural community, we may also celebrate Jewish holidays such as Hanukkah, the European festivals of Advent, Santa Lucia, the Indian festival Diwali, the Chinese New Year, we honor Martin Luther King and Indigenous People's Day with acts of service. In this way we hope to reflect for the children the richness and bounty of our many homelands.

Administrative Staff The administrative staff is responsible for the administrative needs of the school. Staff members serve on committees, report to the Business Administrator, and oversee the day-to-day operations of the school. Typical positions within the administrative staff include the Business Administrator, Development Manager, Enrollment Manager, Facilities Manager, Janitorial Staff and Facilities Staff, Extended Care Coordinator, and Administrative Assistants.

Faculty The faculty, under the direction of the College and Pedagogical Chair, is responsible for all educational matters of the school. This includes curriculum, student discipline, and admission of new students. Faculty members are represented on the Board of Trustees, the Parent Association and most committees. The faculty includes a class teacher for each grade and each Early Childhood class, as well as teachers of the specialty lessons which supplement the main lesson curriculum.

Extended Care Our extended care staff administer our before & after school, and break care programs.

Board of Trustees The Board of Trustees is responsible for

Student Dismissal In the case of a student dismissal, parents/guardians are asked to remove a child from the school before the term is expired. Dismissal is a rare event in the life of a school and is only undertaken after careful process and deliberation. The school's process may include a faculty study of the child's situation, meetings with the parents, consultation with the Pedagogical Chair, and an opportunity for appeal of the decision.

HISTORY AND PRESENT STRUCTURE

Olympia Waldorf School is part of an international Waldorf School movement of more than 1000 schools in over 60 countries worldwide. Our educational framework created by Rudolf Steiner is over 100 years old. Our school was founded with the understanding that this type of education will engage and nourish the whole child in body, mind and spirit.

History of Olympia Waldorf School Inspired by an introductory lecture given by Elana Freeland in 1983, a handful of parents set to work to establish a Waldorf school in Olympia. In March 1985, the Olympia Waldorf Education Association was formed and was recognized by the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA). After gaining legal nonprofit status and adopting bylaws, Olympia Waldorf School opened its doors to 17 young children that fall.

The school added grades one by one until in June 2000, when we graduated our first Grade 8 class. Now, each spring we send out into the world a group of amazing young people. Our program has expanded to include parent-child classes, a preschool, two kindergartens, and grades one through eight.

Olympia Waldorf School's Prairie Hall was formerly the home of the East Olympia School and was originally called the Chambers Prairie School. It was built in 1914, and opened its doors in 1916 to 38 students and two teachers in Grades 1 through 8. This homey, wooden building is recorded as the longest continuous running school house in all of Washington State! After five years of renting space, Olympia Waldorf School took a great step forward in 1990 and moved into this beloved historical site. In 1999, our community built a new Middle School building, and in 2007, we renovated and opened the Kinderhaus

Clothing and Accessories The intent of our dress code is to ensure students' health and safety and foster a distraction-free learning environment. Parents/guardians are asked to please ensure that their child is dressed appropriately for the weather, has sturdy play shoes, and at least one full change of clothing in a bag at school, and appropriate outerwear. Waldorf students of every age spend time playing outside, even in the rain. It is imperative that students have dry clothes to change into when they return to the classroom.

Allowable Dress & Grooming

- Students may choose clothing including both a shirt with pants or skirt, or the equivalent and shoes.
- All apparel should have fabric in the front and on the sides while covering undergarments. Fabric covering all private parts must not be see through.
- Headwear must allow the face to be visible and not interfere with the line of sight to any student or staff.
- Clothing will be suitable for all scheduled school activities including games, gardening, science lessons, woodworking, and other activities where unique hazards exist.
- Skirt, shorts, dresses, and similar must reach to mid-thigh where fingertips end when held straight down at sides unless stretch pants are worn underneath.
- Specialized courses may require specialized attire, for example: orchestra/ensemble concerts, medieval games, school dances, or the Greek Games. Check in with your teacher as needed.
- Moderate use of cosmetics, and natural hair dyes are allowed for Middle School students.
- Analogue watches for grades 3 and up.
- Closed-toed closed-back shoes with out heels will be worn for outdoor portions of the school day.

Non-Allowable Dress & Grooming

- Clothing may not use or depict hate speech targeting groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation or any other protected groups.
- Clothing may not advertise or advocate the use of substances and will be free of prominent advertisements and media images, as well as images that may be offensive, disturbing or distracting.

- Apparel/footwear that lights up, jewelry or watches that beep.
- Hats and hoods must be removed inside classrooms and school buildings with the exception of attire worn for cultural or religious observance.
- Hair dyes for grades 5 and below.

Playground Attire Playground clothing requirements vary depending on weather and age of children. We suggest the following as a guide:

- Hot weather: One layer of clothing.
- Warm weather: Two layers (shirt and sweater or jacket).
- Cold weather: Three layers, including warm coat and warm hat or hood.
- Rainy weather: Full rain gear, including boots, for kindergarteners. Waterproof jackets and head protection for grade students.

Playground Behavior

- **Respect.** No forms of physical or verbal abuse by children or adults will be tolerated. Examples of inappropriate behavior: pushing, shoving, hitting, kicking, biting, spitting, use of profanity or derogatory language.
- **Swings.** Swings should be shared in a timely manner. No “push-off” surfaces may be placed near swings. No side-to-side swinging. No wrapping swings around frame to increase height. No twisting the seat to make the swing set higher.
- **Slides.** No pushing or rough play at the top of the slide, going down backwards, creating pileups, or blocking others from going down.
- **Fences.** No climbing on, digging under, or dismantling of fences.
- **Digging.** Allowed in designated areas only. No digging on the hill.
- **Ropes.** Ropes are to be used for jumping or other games and are not to be tied to climbing structures, trees or rocks, unless approved and supervised by a teacher or designated supervisor.
- **Tree climbing.** Tree climbing is allowed only as part of a class activity and under the direct supervision of classroom teachers and other faculty/staff. Tree climbing is only permitted in the

OWS CODE OF CONDUCT

We operate under two guiding principles: **Safety and Respect**

As we live into these ideals, we encourage the following behaviors:

- Use kind words.
- Offer helping hands.
- Be careful and safe with our bodies.
- Include everyone.
- Forgive mistakes and start over.
- Bullying is repeated, harmful behavior and is not acceptable.

Our Approach to Discipline Our philosophy of discipline is rooted in a recognition of and respect for that which is unique and highest in each individual human being. In order to nurture new steps in growth, our school is a place where safety, security and protection, both physical and emotional, are asserted.

Disciplinary Procedures When a student's behavior does not comply with the Code of Conduct or disrupts the healthy flow of school activities, we recognize five levels of response that may be taken: informal consequences, formal disciplinary action, disciplinary conference, suspension, and expulsion. Some acts of emotional or physical violence may warrant swifter, stronger action. In these instances parents/guardians will be contacted as soon as possible and appropriate action will be taken to ensure the health and safety of our community. In some cases, law enforcement may be required to be notified.

Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy Olympia Waldorf School is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our students so they can learn in a comfortable and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind, including harassment or intimidation, is unacceptable at our school and will not be allowed. We are a vigilant, informed school and community. This means that bullying which is known or suspected will be reported. Incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. If you are concerned about possibly bullying towards or by your child, please contact your child's teacher immediately.

This address takes you to the same great products and services but acknowledges that you are supporting Olympia Waldorf School. The school will then receive a donation equal to .5% of your purchase. Fast, easy and no cost to you.

Waldorf Resources There are abundant books and internet resources related to Waldorf education, the curriculum, and aligned practices. Some suggestions to get you started include the following:

General:

Waldorf Education: A Family Guide, Pamela Fenner & Mary Beth Rapisardo

Early Childhood:

You Are Your Child's First Teacher, Rahima Baldwin Dancy
The Way of A Child, A.C. Harwood
The Education of the Child, Rudolf Steiner

Grade School:

The Kingdom of Childhood, Rudolf Steiner
Rudolf Steiner Education, L. Francis Edmunds
Toward Wholeness: Steiner Education in America, M.C. Richards
Education As An Art, Rudolf Steiner and other
Portrait of a Waldorf School, A.C. Harwood

Family Life:

Festivals, Family and Food, Diana Carey and Judy Large
Parents as People: The Family As Creative Process, Franklin G.Kane
Simplicity Parenting, Kim John Payne
Soul of Discipline, Kim John Payne

Websites:

www.waldorfeducation.org (AWSNA's website)
www.waldorftoday.com
www.soundcirclecenter.org
www.simplicityparenting.com

SOCIAL HEALTH

"The healthy social life is found when in the mirror of each human soul, the whole community finds its reflection; and when in the community, the virtue of each one is living." - Rudolf Steiner

Apple Garden by the Main Building and not in the Kinderhaus grounds. Tree climbing is not permitted during recess or Extended Care.

- **Banisters.** No sitting, standing, or sliding on stair banisters.
- **Rocks.** No throwing rocks, sticks, or dirt clods. No crushing pathway or sitting rocks.
- **Food.** No food, beverages, candy, or gum on the playground at recess.
- **Toys.** Children are not to bring toys from home. This includes rollerblades, skateboards, dolls, boomerangs, etc. Sports equipment such as basketballs, baseballs, soccer balls, etc. are allowed with approval of the class teacher.
- **Spitting.** Spitting on school grounds is prohibited to ensure the health and protection of all students, and promote a sense of responsibility and goodwill toward others.

Pets No pets may be on school property (with exception of service dogs and for special pre-arranged school events). Children may not play with, pet, feed, or encourage any unsupervised pet that comes onto school property. Adults must attempt to send the stray animal away. If the animal will not leave, it will be reported to the office and Animal Control will be called for assistance.

Media Guidelines Since the Waldorf curriculum relies on enlivening the imaginative life of children, many faculty members and families in the community find that restricted media exposure for children at the school allows the students to best take up the education. Every family is different, and every year more types of media exposure are available in our culture, so it is impossible to make a blanket statement about how families can or should chart their course through these decisions. The following are some suggestions and ideas you might explore in this arena:

- Limit or eliminate television, videos, or movies, especially for young children.
- Limit or eliminate video game use, especially for young children.
- Many families eliminate these activities completely during the school week and make reasonable limits during weekends and vacations.

- Limit or eliminate computer use until middle grades, and provide training and supervision of students as they begin using computers, especially the internet.
- Develop activities other than media-based ones to share as a family.
- Talk with other parents about their choices, past and present, and share observations and ideas for finding the right balance in your family.
- Keep open communications with other parents about play date activities. Don't assume standards for media exposure are the same from family to family.
- Respect the choices and values of all families; engage in dialogue with open minds and interest, not judgment.

The most important aspect is that parents make conscious choices about their children's media habits or exposures, and that they become keen observers of the effects of these activities on the children. Reading on the subject includes: The Plug-In Drug, Marie Winn; Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television, Jerry Mander; and Amusing Ourselves to Death, Neil Postman.

Cell Phones We prefer that students not bring cell phones to school. In the event that a family decides that a student must have a cell phone while at school, the student must give the cell phone to his or her class teacher upon arrival at school. The teacher will make sure the phone is turned off and will return the phone to the student at dismissal. Students needing to make phone calls during the school day are expected to ask permission in the office. Parents/guardians needing to leave a message for a student during the school day may do so by calling the main office.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Families participate in the life of Olympia Waldorf School in diverse ways. Their participation is critical to ensure a growing and thriving school, and it enhances our sense of community and shared purpose.

by following these guidelines:

- **Maintain a respectful relationship with your child's teacher.** The teacher-student relationship is vital to your child's success at school. Speak positively about your child's teacher in front of your child and approach this relationship as you would any long-term relationship—with a willingness to get to know one another, work on building trust, and with a commitment to working together in the best interest of your child. Address any concerns you have directly to the teacher and keep such conversations in the adult realm.
- **Share your insights about your child with your child's teacher.** Parents/guardians have a great deal of knowledge about their own children. Share this with your child's teacher. Though families and teachers have different roles in a child's life, sharing insights with one another can help build a more accurate picture of your child and support your child's growth.
- **Praise the school in public, air concerns and resolve issues privately with school personnel.** Your positive regard of Olympia Waldorf School is our greatest compliment and most effective advertising tool we have. And with any relationship, misunderstandings and challenges will occur. We are committed to working with families to resolve any issues, so please contact us directly before misunderstandings grow.
- **Share your talent.** Do you have a skill or talent that can be used to support your child's class or the school community in general? Let your class teacher or a member of the administrative staff know and we will look for opportunities to share your gifts with our students and parent body!

Supporting OWS Gifts of time, talent and financial support are always appreciated by our school community. We value our parents and community partners as we create an enlivened, enriched educational experience for children and extend that vibrancy out to the greater community.

One easy way to support OWS is by shopping at Amazon.com. Whenever you make purchases through Amazon.com please use this link: <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/91-1339309>.

Family Mail Most communication will happen via email. Sometimes information will be sent home with the student. Families will have access to the class email list. Please keep conversations clear, open, direct, and respectful. Private and sensitive information about faculty and students should **NOT** be shared via email.

Family Service Hours Families are expected to contribute their time and talent each year towards supporting the classroom, facility, festivals, committees, Board, and outreach efforts at OWS. Many hands make light work and the faculty and staff at OWS are deeply grateful to our families and community partners who help make our school so vibrant. We encourage a thoughtful consideration of the school and class needs in balance with one's family and personal needs. Only when honestly seeking this balance can healthy growth be attained for both the school and its families.

Buildings and Grounds Work Parties The Building and Grounds Committee as well as the Facility Manager oversee playground, garden, and building improvements and maintenance. Work parties occur before school begins, prior to major festivals and as needed. These work parties can involve the broader community but need school families to be successful. Families are expected to participate in at least one work party per year.

Communications Day-to-day feedback, including commendations, questions, and complaints, should be directed according to the following process:

- First, share concerns or questions directly with the person involved, for example, your child's class teacher.
- Second, if a satisfactory resolution was not reached, please bring your concerns to either the Pedagogical Chair, if classroom related, or Business Administrator.
- Throughout this process, we ask that that adults strive to maintain social hygiene by bringing concerns in a direct and timely way and maintaining positive intentions to resolve any issue respectfully.

Building a Strong OWS Community Families are our greatest support and resource! We encourage you to join us in maintaining a mutually-respectful, positive relationship with the school community

Class Meetings Teachers regularly hold parent/guardian evenings for the families in their class to share what is happening in the classroom, to discuss the growth and development of the children, and to plan for class activities. Regular participation in these meetings is an important part of supporting your child's progress at the school.

Classroom Tasks Teachers request on-going support from parents/guardians with specific classroom tasks such as laundry, room cleaning, ironing, and mending. The class teacher and the Parent Association representatives organize and lead the class families in filling these needs.

Encouraging a Love of Reading Reading is a lifelong skill that is essential in our society and can bring much joy throughout a person's life. For young children, a strong foundation for reading is built through a variety of activities based in play including running, jumping, drawing, listening to stories, and building with blocks. For a great description about how to build this strong foundation for reading with our youngest children, refer to the following article by Laura Grace Weldon at: <http://lauragraceyweldon.com/2012/08/07/reading-readiness-has-to-do-with-the-body/>.

As children begin to learn to read in the grades, creating a daily routine for reading can solidify those developing skills. New readers love to show off their new skills by reading aloud to anyone and everyone who will listen! As children gain more skill and confidence in their reading abilities, they are able to follow their interests and begin exploring different genres.

Families can support a love of reading by making reading a family event, encouraging children to read daily, and expressing confidence in your child's ability to become a competent, lifelong reader. For suggestions on age-appropriate reading material, please ask your child's teacher.

Adult Enrichment Activities Faculty and staff at the school organize activities to help parents/guardians understand and experience our unique curriculum in various ways. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to attend these offerings as suits their interest and availability.