

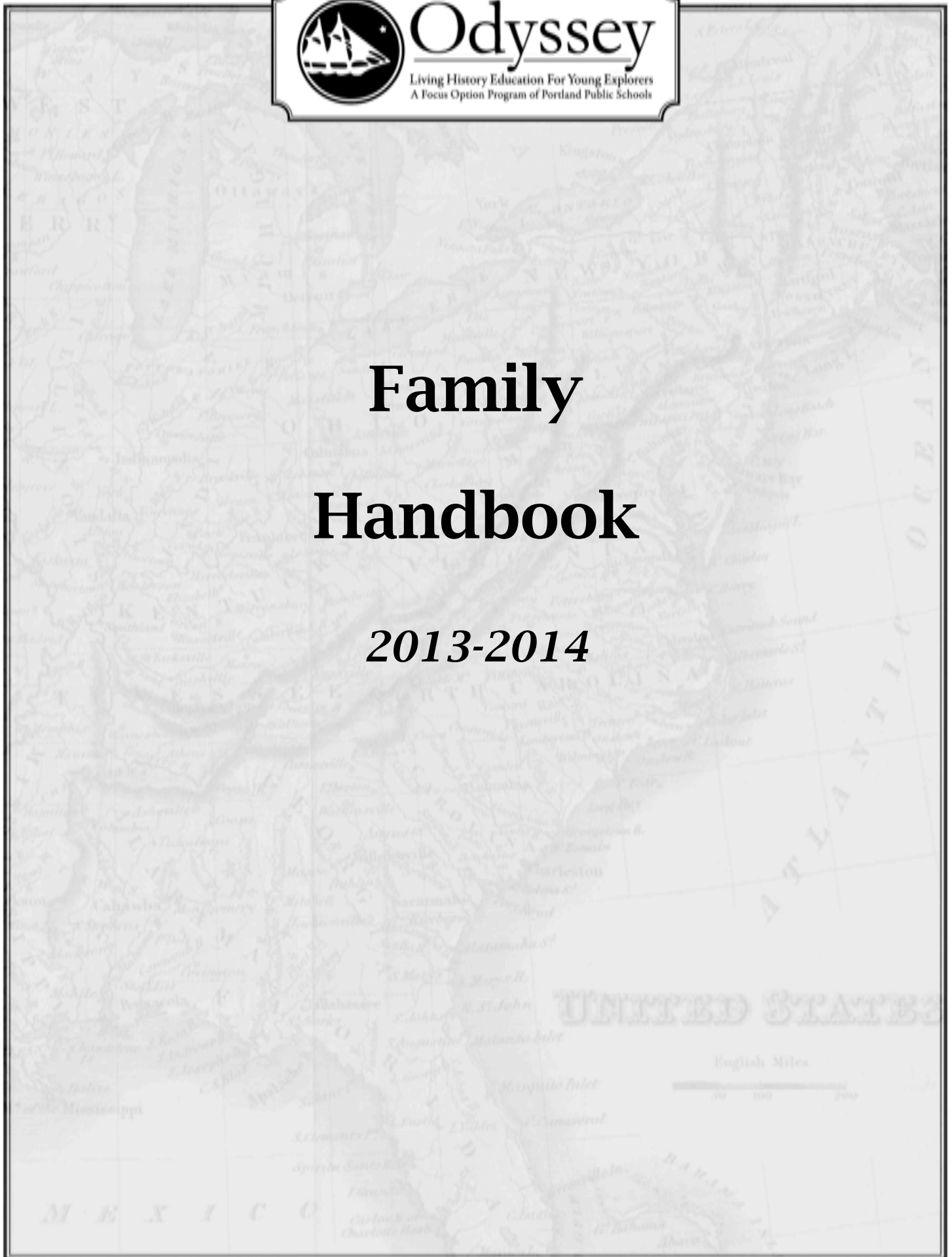


# Odyssey

Living History Education For Young Explorers  
A Focus Option Program of Portland Public Schools

# Family Handbook

*2013-2014*





# *Who's Who at Odyssey*

## **Odyssey's Incredible Founders**

We would like to introduce the founding teachers of the Odyssey Program - Susan Anderson and Marion Grassley; both have been recognized over the years for their creative work in education and were nominated for the Excellence in Education Award from the Portland Public Schools Foundation. Their work was described as "...going far beyond the day-to-day demands of teaching to create an exceptional educational environment for our city's children." They were recognized at the 5th Annual Northwest Examiner's Community Awards Celebration for outstanding contributions to the community. Mike Johnson of *The Examiner* wrote, "These teachers created a unique and highly effective team-teaching approach, bringing multiple grades together to immerse students in enriched history-based experiences."

**Marion Grassley** began her studies with a keen love of history and an interest in Romance languages and social work. She worked for six years with exclusively Spanish-speaking families and children in Pediatrics at Los Angeles County General Hospital (MSW/SS), developing a rich background in human relations and devotion to the welfare of children. She returned to graduate school, receiving an MA Ed. In curriculum development and instruction and has had extensive years of teaching experience with elementary, middle school, and high school students. She continues her involvement with the Odyssey Program by developing curriculum and providing training for the Odyssey teachers through Lewis and Clark University.

**Susan Anderson** developed an early interest in Piaget and Maria Montessori. She traveled to Ireland to study early childhood education, where she received her certificate in Montessori Method Instruction. With a rich background in early childhood development, teaching for many years in Montessori schools, Susan has taught since 1984 in public Kindergarten, first, third and mixed-age classes. Susan continues to take graduate classes each year, dedicating herself to new innovations in learning and to improving our instructional program. Susan is married and has two granddaughters, Sophie, who is a frequent visitor to the Odyssey classrooms, and Evan. We are so grateful that Susan continues to devote her time supporting Odyssey teachers, after her retirement.

# *Odyssey's Wonderful Teachers*

## **The K12 Cluster Team**

***Kate Wilebski, Edie Howard, Heather Mankowski***

**Kate Wilebski:** Kate Wilebski joined the Odyssey Teaching team in 2009. She spent her first three years in the 3-5 cluster. This is her second year in the K-2 cluster and she couldn't be happier!

Kate graduated from Southern Oregon University in 2000 with a BS in Criminology. She then accepted a position with Trillium Family Services as a Child and Adolescent Treatment Specialist where she found her passion and gift for working directly with children. She eventually became a Treatment Team Leader, overseeing nine treatment staff as well as fifteen patients. Kate's eight years at Trillium were spent working with many emotionally disturbed children, a challenging job for anyone. It was here that she discovered her natural ability to build relationships with kids quickly and its immeasurable value in reaching them. She felt rewarded when patients learned skills to cope with challenges, allowing them to be discharged to foster families. As a Day Treatment teacher, Kate combined her love of learning and her own positive childhood experiences in the classroom to teach children.

From her experiences as a Treatment Leader and Teacher, Kate was accepted into the Masters of Arts in Teaching program at Concordia University and graduated in 2008. Before Odyssey, she worked as a fourth grade teacher with North Clackamas School District. Since joining our community, Kate has been mentored directly by Odyssey co-founder, Marion Grassley. She grew up in SW Portland where she lives with her husband of 15 years and their adorable son.

**Edie Howard:** Received her BS Degree from California State University Sacramento in Recreation and Parks Resource Management. Budget cuts turned her path and she eventually found her way back to school at The Roston Montessori Teacher Institute. She taught in private Montessori Schools for 10 years. She moved to Oregon in 1987 living in Government Camp, Sandy, Hammond on the coast and now Portland.

After having two wonderful children, she went to the University of Portland and received her Masters of Arts in Teaching. After graduation, her love for the natural world led her to take a 2 week summer course "Teachers on the Leading Edge" travelling in a school bus to the coast and then crossing the state to the Snake River Canyon, learning about the geology of Oregon all along the way. She just loves rocks!

She lives in SE Portland with her husband Richard, son James and two dogs Sadie and Josiah (both lab-mixes). Her daughter, Dagnie, lives in Boston while getting applications ready for Med School.

This is her eighth year working in PPS and second year with the OdysseyK12 team. She enjoys working with such a wonderful community here at Hayhurst.

**Heather Mankowski:** Coming

## **The 345 Cluster Team**

### ***Angela LeVan, Merry Sexton, DeDe Marron***

**Angela LeVan:** Angela LeVan migrated to Portland Oregon nine years ago from Erie Pennsylvania, where she earned her Bachelors of Science degree in the fields of Early Childhood, Elementary, and Special Education. After graduating she was an assistant teacher within a Montessori Program, and then went on to teach at a residential treatment facility for at risk youth. She received her Masters of Education at Portland State University in the area of Leadership in Ecology, Culture, and Learning. Through her Masters program she focused on ecological education design with Portland Public Schools, assisting in the development of educational programs in relation to garden, farm, nature, and place based curriculum. She recently transferred from Sunnyside Environmental School where she taught Middle School Field Study and Special Education. Along with her love of teaching, Angela has been spending her summers and spare time farming. She cultivates vegetables, medicinal herbs, mushrooms, and provides educational programs to children and adults, and also makes herbal medicinal formulas from what she grows. Angela has been teaching for the past ten years in the fields of outdoor education, special education, and herbalism. Her enthusiasm for working with the medicines of the earth guide her in her practices as a teacher, farmer, and herbalist. She is excited to be a member of the Odyssey Community.

**Merry Sexton:** Merry is a fourth-year teacher for the Odyssey Program at Hayhurst, and is extremely excited about the upcoming year! Prior to receiving a master's degree from Concordia University, Merry taught English as a second language in the Portland area for five years. Before coming to Oregon in 2006, she taught fourth grade at a bilingual school in Costa Rica. Graduating from the University of Tennessee in 2004, she majored in Cultural Anthropology and English.

Merry and her husband Dave have one son, Will, who is currently attending Arleta School as a fourth grader. They live in southeast Portland, and recently bought their first home. They spend our summers camping, hiking, playing in the yard, and visiting new places in the Pacific Northwest.

**DeDe Marron:** DeDe Marron is no stranger to the Odyssey Program or Hayhurst School. In 2009, DeDe taught Kindergarten in the neighborhood school for a long-term leave. More

recently, during the 2011-2012 school year, DeDe stepped in for Kate Wilebski while she was on maternity leave. She immediately fell in love with the students, families, staff, and the excitement of the Odyssey Program. She is thrilled to be back at Hayhurst and can't wait to start the new school year!

DeDe is coming to us from Mary Rieke Elementary, where she worked as a part time core support teacher to the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade team. Prior to that, DeDe had been working as a substitute teacher for Portland Public Schools for five years. She quickly became the “go to substitute” for many teachers throughout the district because of her willingness to go the extra mile, her love of children, organizational skills, and her bright and bubbly personality. DeDe attended Portland State University, where she received her Bachelor of Science in Fine Arts with a concentration in painting and her Masters of Education Degree.

DeDe and her husband Chris have a dog named Stanley, a two-year-old Pointer-Boxer mix, who is constantly getting into trouble and a five year old goldfish named Steve Bijoux. They live in Milwaukie, where they recently purchased their first house. Their weekends now consist of frequent visits to Lowes and Home Depot! When she is not working on home improvement projects, DeDe loves to do anything creative. She enjoys sewing, crafting, making new recipes, and shopping for vintage pieces.

## **The 678 Cluster Team**

### ***Alan Damon, Kristina Rothwell, Harmony Brinks***

**Alan Damon:** Alan Damon begins his tenth year as an Odyssey teacher with over 25 years teaching experience in the Portland Public Schools. From the beginning, Alan has embraced the core values of the Odyssey Program by team teaching with Marion Grassley and Susan Anderson, using cooperative learning, differentiated instructional practices, integration, and other Odyssey essentials, for ten years at Chapman Elementary. For four years, Alan took on the challenging and rewarding task of teaching mathematics to Jackson Middle School students. For the 2003-04 school year, he returned to Chapman to assist with the work of expanding Odyssey to its current configuration as a K-8 program at Hayhurst. For the past nine years Alan has been focused on developing curriculum and teaching in the Odyssey 678 program. He is very excited about beginning Odyssey's 10th year at Hayhurst.

**Kristina Rothwell:** Before Kristina became an Odyssey teacher, she was the program's favorite substitute teacher! Now the program is lucky enough to boast about their fabulous 678 Teacher and Drama Director Extraordinaire, not to mention her always-capable companion, Mr. Rothwell, who builds sets, transports Odyssey goods, and can do, well, just about anything. The Rothwells' two children have both attended Odyssey's 678: their son Jack graduated from Odyssey's 8th grade a year ago and is now beginning his sophomore year at Benson High School, while their daughter Lucy is beginning her sophomore year at Southern Oregon University.

Kristina began her studies of English Literature with a minor in drama, from Middlesex University in London, where she lived for almost 10 years. Odyssey students regularly benefit greatly from her rich performance background! After returning to Portland, with an English husband, Kristina worked in customer service for the Hanna Anderson's children's clothing company and as a paralegal for a criminal defense lawyer. She returned to school in 2002 earning a Masters Degree in teaching from the University of Portland. After teaching reading and Language Arts at Kellogg Middle School for one year, Kristina worked as a sub before joining the Odyssey staff. We are thrilled to be able to count Kristina as both an Odyssey parent and teacher.

**Harmony Brinks:** Harmony returns for her fourth year at Odyssey, where she teaches the algebra class and leads up the science instruction. She is from Las Vegas, Nevada, and graduated from University of Nevada, Las Vegas, where she studied math and secondary education. Harmony taught math at the high school level in Las Vegas before moving to Portland in 2010. She lives in Southeast Portland with her partner, Judah, and their puppy Archie.

**Jack Rainey:** After 5 years teaching within Portland Public Schools and 7 years with San Francisco schools (and many years in business in between), Jack came to Hayhurst last year to offer Spanish 1-2 to students of the 8th grade Odyssey program. The majority of his day is at Jackson Middle School where he teaches classes of 1st and 2nd year Spanish to 7th and 8th graders; then moves to Hayhurst for the mid-afternoon class.

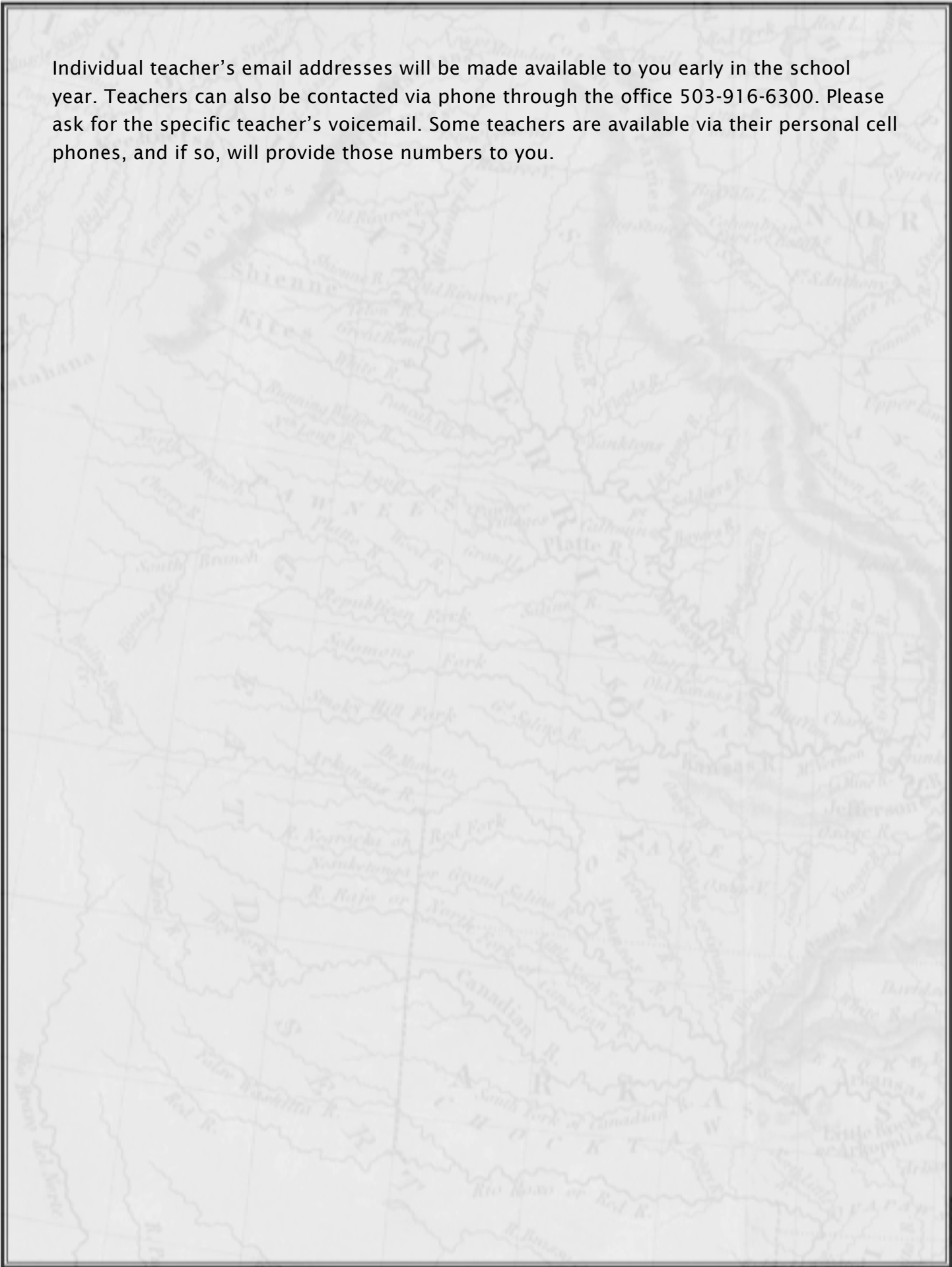
He has collaborated with Wilson High School Spanish teachers and administration to enable his 1-2 and 3-4 program students an opportunity to achieve a full 1 credit (for each course) toward the 2-credit high school foreign language graduation requirement. His Hayhurst 8th grade students will have the opportunity to receive 1 credit toward the foreign language requirements for graduation.

The Odyssey Program teachers sincerely hope you will become familiar with the curriculum and assessment materials in your packet, as it guides both our instruction and evaluation. When you have any questions, comments, concerns or suggestions, please call or email us.

### ***A Word about Communicating with Your Child's Teachers***

The best way to communicate with teachers is via email. This allows teachers time to reflect on your questions and needs and to discuss with the team solutions and options. If you need to schedule a meeting with teachers, please make sure to include all three cluster teachers in your email and multiple times that you are available. The best times for teachers are usually going to be 2:15-4 p.m., but other options may be available. Teachers are not available on Mondays after school, due to a prescheduled, standing staff meeting.

Individual teacher's email addresses will be made available to you early in the school year. Teachers can also be contacted via phone through the office 503-916-6300. Please ask for the specific teacher's voicemail. Some teachers are available via their personal cell phones, and if so, will provide those numbers to you.





# *The Odyssey Philosophy*

## **The Ten Essentials**

The Odyssey Program's educational model is designed around ten essential components which have been developed, tested and successfully implemented since 1994. Please read and become familiar with these fundamental ideas, as they inform the entire curriculum in which your child will be engaged.

### **1. Team Teaching**

- When teachers collaborate, students receive many benefits.
- Two or more teachers working together create the opportunity to pool personal and instructional resources.
- Increases creativity and ability to meet the needs of individual students.
- Allows students to be in flexible groups and teams for art, math, literature and many components of their day.
- Teachers flow between groups, too, allowing them to teach to their strengths.

### **2. Multi-age Classrooms**

- Blended grade levels allow students to progress at their unique developmental rate.
- Student developmental rates are often very different than their chronological rate.
- For math, reading and literature, students are placed in groups according to their assessed needs.
- For all other subjects, students work in mixed-age teams, which include both older and younger students at a variety of academic levels.

### **3. Cooperative Learning**

- Research shows that cooperation is more effective than competition in improving academic achievement.
- Provides the opportunity for older students to learn and practice leadership helping younger children who look up to them.
- Students benefit from:
  - ❖ Constructing knowledge together as a team.
  - ❖ Contributing at their unique level.
  - ❖ Leading in their areas of strength.

- ❖ Receiving assistance in areas where they are less confident.
- Non-threatening environment supports problem solving, and effective communication and collaboration.

#### ***4. Community Support***

- Odyssey welcomes and encourages parent and community involvement in many ways both during and outside of the school day.
- Teachers, students, and families join together to foster learning, creating a community school.
- Parents participate in the way each chooses—everyone is needed and valued.
- This approach creates a strong and engaged learning community.
- Parents connect to what their children are experiencing.
- Dedicated community support helps teachers achieve their educational goals.
- All students feel supported by a group of adults who care about them.

#### ***5. Differentiated Instruction***

- To meet all the needs of a diverse student population, The Odyssey Program differentiates instruction.
- Individual students learn in a wide variety of ways and have different interests.
- Instructions reaches out to students unique learning styles, interests, readiness, and needs in order to create the best learning environment possible
- All learning is designed to use scaffolding activities, engaging students' areas of strength (i.e., visual, auditory, kinesthetic) and moving them to mastery of areas of need.

#### ***6. Open-Ended Curriculum***

- Our learning format has no bottom or top.
- Curriculum fosters the development of creative and critical thinking skills in all subject areas.
- Students at all academic levels experience much growth during the school year.
- Gifted students are challenged, while those needing to master the basics are supported toward success.
- Curriculum helps students view learning as an ongoing, life-long process.
- All students are encouraged to deepen their learning through extensions.

#### ***7. Theme-Based Learning***

- The Odyssey Program is based on integrated curriculum and enrichment.

- Centered around historical themes based on Oregon learning benchmarks.
- Prominent American educator Dr. Mary Beth Klee argues that, "For too many years we have undershot with America's elementary school children.
- "They come to us with their fresh minds, their keen curiosity, their enthusiasm for learning, and for far too long we have served up pabulum.
- "They come to us longing to connect with the broader world, the world they do not know, but hunger to know."
- In our program, we strive to satisfy this "hunger."

### ***8. Enrichment***

- Hands-on learning activities meet the needs of a wide range of students and appeal to their specific interests.
- Art, writing, science, language arts, and social studies are integrated into the curriculum for each unit.
- Singing, dancing, and drama are emphasized in a culmination performance for each unit.
- Extended field studies culminate learning each year in grades 3-8.

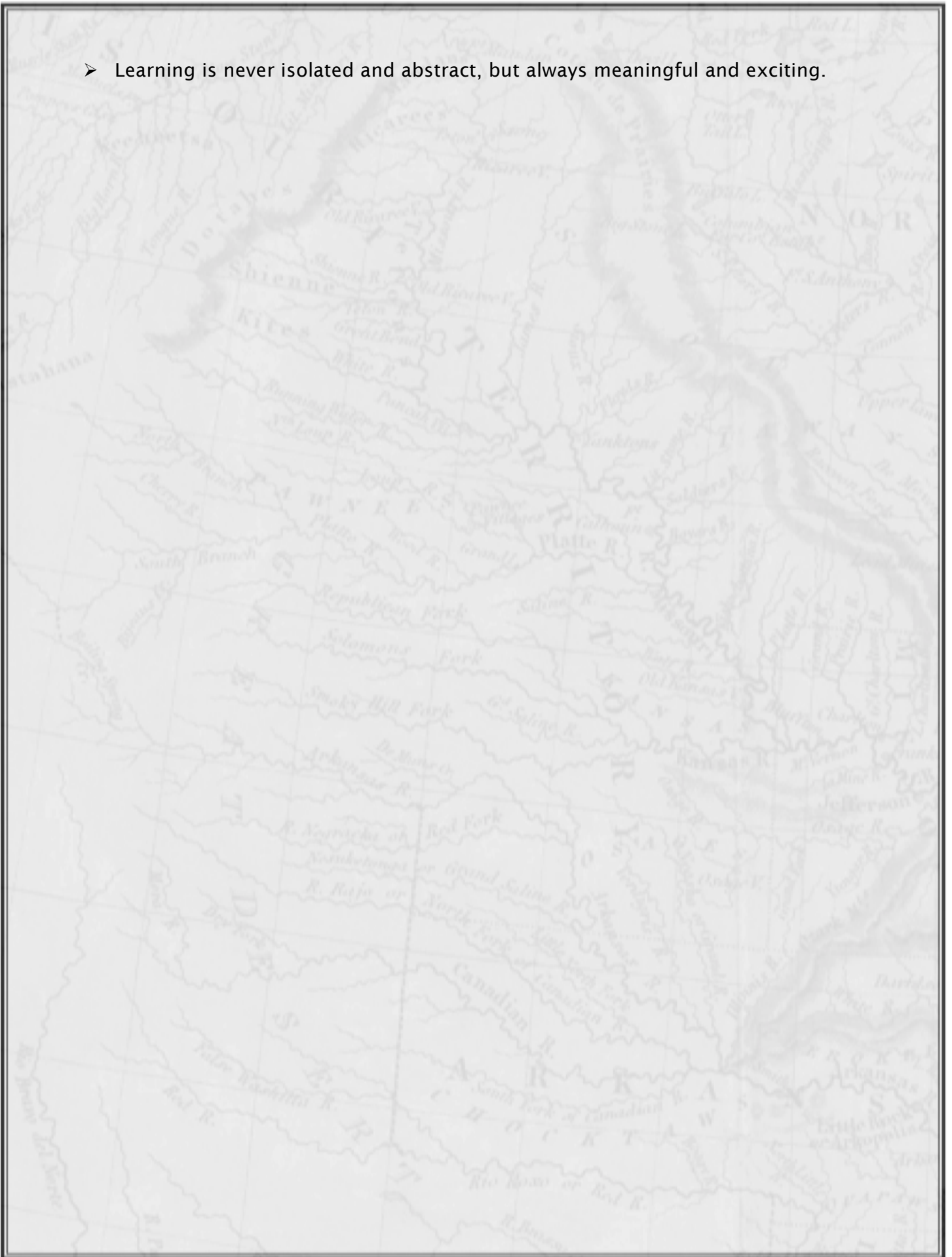
### ***9. Integrated Curriculum***

- Education is more effective when students know why they are learning something, and are offered a context for new information.
- Studying rivers, mountains, and rock formations becomes much more meaningful when a child also learns how this topography affected Lewis and Clark's expedition, or the lifestyles of the Northwest Indian tribes.
- Integrated study at The Odyssey Program mean that subjects will naturally flow together.
- Students won't have to stop thinking about science and start thinking about spelling just because a bell has rung.
- Students might not realize what "subject" they learned on a particular day, but will be able to describe a wealth of knowledge gained and tell a fascinating story of why it is important.

### ***10. Interactive Learning***

- In this educational model, no child is a passive learner.
- During each unit of study, students take on the identities and lifestyles of persons from the theme period.
- Students wear the clothes, learn the music, collect the artifacts, and engage in interactive simulation activities where learning comes alive.
- This approach appeals to the imagination of every child.

➤ Learning is never isolated and abstract, but always meaningful and exciting.



# *Other Fundamentals of the Odyssey Philosophy*

## **Classroom Management**

Odyssey classroom management philosophy is based upon the interweaving of several strands that are the foundation for our planning of the instructional year and each classroom day.

## **Instructional Management**

Well-planned instruction actively involves the minds and bodies of all students and promotes their desire to perform “on task.” The major features of our instructional program are as follows:

- **It is meaningful.** Each instructional unit is integrated so that each piece fits into the larger whole. Students are shown and taught to see connections between curricular areas and their personal learning needs. Curriculum relates to students’ personal interests and backgrounds. Students are also provided with a wealth of new experiences and contexts for learning the curriculum.
- **It is challenging.** Creative and critical thinking and problem solving are a major focus of instruction in all subject areas. Most of the learning activities are therefore open-ended, allowing for a wide range of student response within the assignments. Activities are designed to be challenging, accessible and fun, as well as a catalyst or springboard to further learning. This maximizes opportunities for each individual learner.
- **It is appropriate.** Individual student needs, levels, rates and abilities are considered in the design of the instructional program. Programs are differentiated, or personalized whenever possible. Students are evaluated with a wide range of authentic assessments, embedded within the curriculum. Instruction is provided to meet these assessed individual needs. Students’ personal beliefs and interests also help to shape the evolving curriculum as their personal responses to the learning activities are shared with their teams and the whole class.
- **It is cooperative.** Assignments and classroom activities are designed to encourage cooperation rather than competition. Students are encouraged to take risks in learning and to support each other in their efforts to grow. Individual accomplishment is valued all the more because we all shared in creating the supportive environment that made it possible. Students are encouraged to share insights and learn from and with each other. Cooperative learning activities allow students to achieve beyond their individual effort.

## **Time Management**

Good planning, pacing and sequencing of the instruction and learning activities are important in helping students know what they are expected to do and where they are expected to be throughout the day. This eliminates lag times that help prevent behavior problems. We plan weekly and daily schedules allowing for a logical flow of activities and smooth transitions, offering students the opportunity to perform at their best.

## **Behavioral Expectations**

Behavioral expectations are clearly stated, discussed regularly with the students and posted in the classroom. Students participate in the establishment of guidelines and group goals during daily Cluster Meetings. Clear and meaningful expectations, which are discussed and agreed upon by all, guide students in a positive way towards appropriate classroom behavior. For example, Student Teams, as well as individual students, receive Wealth Units for the successful completion of all tasks.

## **The Four Basic Cluster Laws**

The Four Basic Cluster Laws all students must follow are:

- Each student will help everyone learn.
- Each student will help everyone teach.
- Each student will help everyone to become the best each can be.
- Each student will follow their Team Compact.

In addition to the first three of the Basic Laws, each team discusses, decides by consensus, and creates their own rules by which they will operate their team. This is called the Team Compact. Members who infract any rule are reminded of the rule in question. If the infracting behavior is then repeated, the student will be asked to reflect in writing on making better choices. Infraction of the Cluster Laws in non- team settings will also result in the completion of a reflection. Team behavior that does not comply with the Four Basic Laws or the Team Compact may result in the loss of Team Wealth Units.

## **The Seven Caring Habits**

The Seven Caring Habits are prominently displayed on a poster in each of the Odyssey classrooms, AND are a primary focus of on-going instruction at Town Meetings and Team Leadership Meetings. These Seven Habits are:

- Supporting
- Encouraging
- Listening
- Accepting

- Trusting
- Respecting
- Negotiating Differences

The most basic thing these Seven Habits have in common is that they are all “win-win” ways that people can choose to relate to one another. Add the phrase, “to/with one another”, after each of these habits you will begin to understand how these concepts support a successful community. The Odyssey program promotes the Seven Caring Habits to help create an environment in which cooperative learning (one of our 10 Essentials) thrives.

The Seven Caring Habits posters remind everyone in the community - students, teachers & parents - that we all have a choice when we interact with others. We can choose to act in ways that help our relationships (win-win), or we can act in ways that may damage our relationships (win-lose or lose-lose).

Odyssey’s focus on the Seven Caring Habits is developed from an aspect of **Choice Theory** created by internationally recognized psychiatrist **Dr. William Glasser**. Choice Theory states, among other things, that the only behavior we can control is our own. How we think and how we act are directly in our control. Furthermore, how we feel, both emotionally and physiologically, is deeply influenced by how we think and act.

The Seven Caring Habits are great alternatives to relationship damaging behaviors that we may be tempted to turn to when we feel challenged. These “deadly” habits, such as criticizing, blaming, or complaining, are behaviors do more damage than good to our relationships with others. It is hard work to change habits and focusing on the Seven

Caring Habits during teaming instruction and posting them in the classrooms help to remind us of the choices we have and of our opportunities to develop a caring learning environment and community.

## **Teaming**

Team membership and cooperative learning activities provide opportunities for students to develop positive behaviors, skills and characteristics. By learning mutual responsibility for team tasks and performing member and leadership roles, students acquire valuable life skills. Appropriate group and individual behaviors are rewarded, encouraging students to take responsibility for their own actions and to be aware of the actions of others.

## **Student Government**

Participating and leading Cluster Meetings allows students practical experience in leadership. This also gives students the opportunity of creating, defending, and agreeing

upon rules and laws for their entire cluster and gives them an appreciation for the need to have and to follow classroom standards. Through these experiences, students are instilled with a strong belief that the Odyssey classroom is a place in which they belong, a community or family which sincerely needs them and would be poorer without them.

## **Odyssey Homework Philosophy**

Odyssey's homework model meets all of Portland Public School's requirements.

We believe regular homework is an important and necessary part of a meaningful curriculum. It encourages the development of personal responsibility, accountability and good home-study habits that will help every student experience success throughout life. Therefore, each student will have appropriate homework activities every school night. The activities are individualized, based on concepts and skills learned at school, and are designed to be age-appropriate. These assignments should not require any adult help, although parents are strongly encouraged to monitor the homework, the homework environment, and the student's on-task behavior. Students are required to use their time wisely at school, completing each daily assignment. As sufficient time is allotted for the completion of tasks at school, a student who has not completed an in-class assignment will be required to finish it at home in addition to their homework. Should there be a problem, please let us know as soon as possible so that we can help your child succeed.

In addition to this, we believe that homework should:

- Expand the curriculum, by reinforcing and supplementing school learning experiences.
- Develop independent work habits, encourage responsibility, provide study habits, and increase in complexity and length with student's maturity.
- Can provide a common bond between home and classroom, as parents gain insight into the school's philosophy, curriculum, and objectives.
- Can prepare the student for the following day's activities, provide opportunities to practices newly acquired skills, and extend learning by giving individualized and imaginative pursuits of knowledge.
- Should be related to classroom work, well-defined by teachers, understood by students, promptly assessed and returned, non-punitive in nature, and monitored by parents or guardians.



# *Curriculum Highlights*

History is the perfect lens through which to examine a child's changing world. All academic content is determined by the district and state content standards and benchmarks. Math, language arts and science are enriched with music, dance, performing arts, crafts, foreign language, the fine arts, and field study. Physical education is offered in partnership with our host school, Hayhurst.

The following sections are divided by cluster: K12, 345 and 678. Please refer to the sections relevant to your child(ren) to better understand your child's day, curriculum, homework expectations, etc.

## **K12 Cluster**

***K12 Schedule Overview (based on 2012-2013 schedule, any changes this year will be announced during the Back to School Night)***

The K12 curriculum is differentiated to meet the needs of the individual student. The students will report to their check in room at 8:00am. Students will start working independently. Learning tasks may include shared reading, an estimation game, journal entries, or one of many options that will tie into the theme.

Following check in we will commence with literacy block. This element of the day will be put into place no later than the third week of school. After our initial assessments the students will be placed in flexible groupings according to their reading needs and strengths. Each student will report to his or her assigned flexible literacy room. There will be twelve small grouping with four groups assigned to each teacher. We will constantly evaluate student progress. A child may be regrouped at anytime when it becomes evident that he/she would be better served in another group. During the two-hour block the students will rotate through a series of activities including small group reading instruction with the teacher, computers, and stations tied into the theme and literacy benchmarks.

During the next learning time block of the day we will further explore and expand upon our theme. Theme based activities may be presented in various grouping configurations. Examples of grouping may include: check in groups, large and small groups, indoor/outdoor activity groups, rotation through learning stations in all three class rooms. During these times we will encourage older students to support the younger students.

We will be taking scheduled restroom breaks and some outdoor recesses. We may incorporate food and snacks into our lessons. We would appreciate it if families would send a box of pretzels, crackers, or other treats from time to time. We may have fruit roll

ups or candy treats. If you would like your child to be restricted from any type of treat/food item please discuss that with your student and inform us.

After lunch the students will participate in math activities while the others are in writer's workshop/spelling/poetry/creative dramatics. The groups will rotate at the end of the first hour and the second hour of Math instruction will commence. We will dismiss students from their check in rooms at 2:15pm each day. There will be two types of homework. We ask that each child spend time reading on a daily basis as explained in our reading practice letter that will come home in the reading zip lock bags. **READING PRACTICE IS OUR FIRST PRIORITY.** There will also be homework assignments related to our theme. The expected return date will be listed on the assignment sheet. If for some reason you should feel your child has not had adequate time for the theme-based assignment, please send us a quick note. Additional time to complete the assignment can be given. We do not want the children to feel pressured, stressed or overwhelmed. Our theme-based curriculum will be planned with great care to meet the needs of all children. An open line of communication is crucial to our success. Please contact us with questions, concerns or suggestions. We look forward to growing with you and your children. We are a work in progress. Each step we take will lead us to a new and better understanding if we forge ahead together.

The following chart is a *SAMPLE* schedule for K12. Students move based on developmental abilities and are placed in classes, rather than classrooms. Please note that the schedule reflects what is scheduled by *classroom*—rather than by class. The strength of the Odyssey program is that it affords the teachers the flexibility to work with each student according to his/her needs and instruction time is organized based on many factors, taking into account all students' success. Math, Writing & Literacy groups are determined by developmental levels and group dynamics in order maximize your child's success. Rotation classes; Science, Art & Thematic Simulation are taught to mixed-age teams, allowing for cooperative learning & teaming experiences.

### ***K12 Curriculum Highlights***

Within the framework of Montessori philosophy and practices, the organizing matrix for the Kindergarten through second grade units is Time and Space. Learning is experientially based, with students working independently and in pairs, in preparation for learning how to work together in small multiage teams. Students engage in many hands-on activities, using manipulatives.

Specific units include Families at Home in their Portland neighborhoods and Families Around the World, Communities at Home and Communities Around the World, and Societies in the United States and Societies Around the World.

## ***K12 Behavior Plan***

We believe that appropriate classroom behavior and the development of self-management skills improve the learning environment and help to create a safe place for students to meet their academic potential. Our expectations for student behavior are high and we believe that with the right guidance all students will be able to meet these behavior expectations. The following outlines our general behavior expectations and plan. While all team members will follow these guidelines, it may look slightly different in each classroom, due to the differences in our personalities and demeanor.

The behavior expectations of the classrooms will be clearly explained to the students and will be continually reinforced and reviewed throughout the school year. The following appropriate behaviors are expected of all students:

- Focus on the lessons and learning.
- Follow directions from teachers and assistants.
- Treat class members with respect.
- Participate fully in classroom activities.
- Make appropriate choices.
- Manage personal behavior with minimal guidance.

Students will be taught the expected behaviors outlined through group discussion, posted signs and continual positive reinforcement from team teachers. Students who have difficulty developing these skills will be counseled and encouraged to improve.

If a student continues to show difficulty in mastering behavior skills, students will be asked to stand on a thinking square so that he/she will have time to think of an appropriate action that they might take to eliminate problem behavior. During this time the child is invited to watch what is happening as the lesson or activity progresses. This thinking time is repeatedly referred to as a reminder or an opportunity to get into a problem-solving frame of mind.

If the thinking square time does not produce a change we will send the student for a time out of the classroom. This time out will occur in another team teacher's classroom and student will need to fill out a Think Sheet. Parents will be contacted at this point via email or phone.

Should the steps above fail to improve problem behavior, the K12 team will ask for a conference with family, student, principal and appropriate staff so that we can devise an action plan.

There are behaviors that require immediate attention and will result in a behavior referral and an immediate visit to the principal's office. These behaviors are outlined more

specifically in the parent handbook. The most common for this age group would include physical abuse to another student and bullying.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions regarding our behavior expectations and plan.

### ***K12 Homework Expectations***

Homework is an important part of a student's academic life. The K12 homework will be differentiated to meet your student's specific literacy and math goals. We will also make available monthly projects that will be optional and based on our current thematic study.

Each student will have a reading baggy which will contain your student's practice materials. Every school day the baggie will be brought home in your child's backpack. Please remind your child to return the baggie to school every morning. When students arrive at school they will put their reading baggy into their reading group cart. The symbol on their baggie will match one of the drawers in the cart. Please allow your student to manage this each morning. This will help students become more independent in their learning environment.

This reading homework is designed to allow practice at the student's instructional level.

As students progress, the word lists and reading books will increase in difficulty. A journal will be added to their baggie in which they will respond in writing. These activities are designed to prepare them for thoughtful reading. They may be asked to refer back to the text to find information, formulate an opinion, relate an experience of their own to an event in the book, write questions to challenge their group members or complete an activity designed to expand their vocabulary.

These activities are designed to prepare them for thoughtful reading.

#### **Homework Guidelines:**

- 10-15 minutes - Kindergarten
- 15-20 minutes - 1st Grade
- 20-30 minutes - 2nd Grade

### ***K12 Gathering***

Friday Gathering is usually\* held Fridays from 9:15-9:40 a.m. in the Cafetorium. This is a time when the entire K12 cluster comes together as a multi-aged group to share in various activities. The overarching purpose of Friday Gathering is to prepare students for the end of unit performances. During Friday Gathering students get a chance to:

- Be in front of an audience
- Get used to using the microphone

- Share a special talent
- Share project work from current units
- Special K12 cluster events such as guest performances

Some examples of Friday Gathering activities include:

- Students shared the shakers they made for the Five Senses Unit
- Students played the instruments they made for the Five Senses Unit
- Students receive awards such as Superstar Reading Program Awards

*\*Families are welcome to watch Friday Gathering, but please realize that Friday Gathering is subject to cancellation without notice to accommodate other learning activities.*

## 345 & 678 Clusters

### *345 & 678 Curriculum Overview*

When school begins, students form teaming groups and work hard to prepare their **teams** for the great adventure of becoming the real people of their historical time period by **simulating** their real-life experiences. All Odyssey students are supported to successfully complete their History, Science, Language Arts, Literature and Art studies, which include many exciting Writing, Research, Simulation and Field- Study Activities. Please check for student assignments and schedules on the Odyssey website.

Odyssey students are provided with a rich historical context for their learning. In team-based History Study, teams read historical sources, working cooperatively to respond to the history reading and **Writing Focus** questions. A team writing focus may take more than one class session to finish, as teams work at different paces. Cluster teachers conference with each team, helping the students to arrive at meaningful and complete responses to the questions. Teams finish any **incomplete** responses and are re-evaluated by the teacher, thus ending the team cycle for that writing focus. At the end of each unit of study, a cluster teacher helps each team complete a review of the essential concepts studied. Then every team member individually completes a History **Post Test**.

At the end of each unit of study, the typical cluster schedule, in place from the beginning of the year, is flexed to include time necessary for the **culminating activities** of that unit of study. During these last weeks of the Unit, students complete the remaining enrichment activities for this period, celebrating the culmination of their unit studies with a mid-year performance piece. Students present this program to the entire Odyssey Community. To keep abreast of your child's homework and changes in our schedule please remember to look at the Odyssey website under Classrooms. Here you will find posted the schedule and assignments for each week.

Student teams study two or three **integrated units** each year, developed around an historical theme. Units culminate in **performance**-based activities in winter and an extended **field study** trip in late spring. Students explore the following themes:

- Change and Continuity in American Democracy: Ideas, Institutions, Practices, and Controversies
- Contact and Interaction of Peoples, Cultures, and Ideas
- Economic and Technological Changes and Their Impact on Man, Culture, Ideas, and the Environment
- The Changing Role of America in the World

## **345 Unit Cycle**

### **Year One**

#### ***Historical Period(s):***

- Peoples of North America / The North American Continent Prior to European Contact
- The Exploration and Conquest of the New World / The Role of Spain and Portugal

***Culminating Events:*** Living History Native American Museum and Powwow/Potlatch Celebration

***Field-Study Trip:*** Trek through five Native American reservations in Oregon and Washington

### **Year Two**

#### ***Historical Period(s):***

- England's Turn / Colonial America
- The American Revolution
- Lewis and Clark / The Mountain Men

***Culminating Events:*** Colonial Guild Fair and American Revolution Harvest Celebration

***Field-Study Trip:*** Down the Columbia with Lewis and Clark to Fort Clatsop, and an OMSI plant-animal study

### **Year Three**

#### ***Historical Period(s):***

- The Oregon Trail / The Making of Portland and Oregon
- A Nation Divided / The Union in Crisis
- Civil War

***Culminating Events:*** Industrial Revolution Invention Fair and the Civil War Peace Cotillion

***Field-Study Trip:*** Down the Oregon Trail as Pioneers, from Idaho to Oregon City

## **345 Homework Expectations**

Students at this level are expected to benefit from homework. Thirty to fifty minutes of effort daily, Monday through Friday, is considered appropriate. Students may need occasional help from their parents, especially at the beginning of the year. By the 5th year, most students are working without parent involvement whatsoever. If your child is

spending more than one hour of homework a day, please consult your teacher. Teachers can *scaffold* work for students as they need it. Scaffolding is generally a temporary solution, as your child builds homework stamina throughout the year. Please see the HW schedule given at the beginning of the school year for regular subject due dates.

## ***678 Unit Cycle***

### **Year One**

#### ***Historical Period(s):***

- Early Civilizations of the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and the Americas
- Ancient Civilizations of Greece and Rome
- Medieval Feudal Societies / Renaissance, Reformation, and the Scientific Revolution
- The Age of Exploration / American Empires

### **Year Two**

#### ***Historical Period(s):***

- European Imperialism in the Americas
- The Age of Enlightenment and Revolution
- The New Nation Defends Itself / Jefferson and Westward Exploration

### **Year Three**

- Manifest Destiny / Westward Expansion
- The Civil War and Reconstruction
- The Making of Modern America

## ***678 Homework Expectations***

Students at this level are expected to benefit from homework. Sixty to seventy minutes of effort daily, Monday through Friday, is considered appropriate. Students at this level may also need scaffolding and your student may need occasional parent assistance, although this should not be a regular need. Teachers announce the HW schedule at semester's end and students record the HW in their binders. It's a good idea for parents to check their child's HW schedule from time to time, to make sure daily assignments get recorded.



# *Odyssey Terminology*

Odyssey is a unique program, and as such often has its own unique vocabulary! Knowledge of some basic terms often used at Odyssey will help you and your child better understand and adjust to the program.

**Block Scheduling**—Odyssey uses block scheduling, which means that students receive more time in certain subject areas, allowing their inquiries to be open-ended and complex. An example of blocking is the 2-day a week Literature schedule, where Literature or Language Arts activities are the primary focus of the day (in the 3-5 and 6-8 clusters).

**Costume**—Every cluster requires that students have historical costumes, at least for the culminating event and performance. Some students may have more than one costume, depending on their level of involvement. Some clusters are able to provide costumes for students. Your teachers will provide more information on costumes when the performance and field study approach.

**Enrichment**—At Odyssey, enrichment is integrated into the curriculum, making it integral to the student's learning. Our field studies, field trips, performances, and culminating events are PART of the units, creating a rich and layered curriculum.

**Field Study**—345 and 678 students go on extended, overnight field studies, where they learn first-hand many of the subjects they've been studying all year. Field studies are scheduled in the NW area and require extensive planning, scheduling, and volunteering. The field study is an integral part of the Odyssey curriculum, because students extend their learning from the classroom into the world.

**Gathering**—Gathering\* usually is held weekly in the Cafetorium. This is a time when the entire K12 cluster comes together as a multi-aged group to share in various activities. The overarching purpose of Gathering is threefold:

- Practice public speaking
- Allow for K12 community celebrations
- Group discussions of concern within the K12 educational community

*\*Families are welcome to watch Gathering, but please realize that it is subject to cancellation/change without notice to accommodate other learning activities. Because this is held on the same day each week, you may hear your child refer to this as "Friday (or other day) Gathering" depending on which day they are scheduled.*

**Hayhurst PTA**—The Neighborhood School and Odyssey share a combined PTA, with rotating presidents and dual committee chairs for Enrichment, All-School Events, Marketing/Communication, Fundraising, and Volunteers. The PTA offers many

opportunities for parents from both the NS and OP to work together to look after Hayhurst School's needs as a whole. Attend and join the PTA for more information.

**Identity**—In the 345 and 678 clusters, students study, in addition to many other historical figures, an historical identity to represent. Many units have famous historical figures for students to choose from, but often there are more marginal historical identities that students take on and learn about. Often the units contain more men than women from history, and many girls choose to take male identities. Students may dress, write, or enact aspects to their historical identities, notably portraits, narratives, and speeches.

**Incomplete**—At Odyssey, there are not wrong answers, simply incomplete answers. Students are asked to reinvestigate their texts to find information to complete their answers for individual and group writing focuses.

**Odyssey Program**—The Odyssey Program came to Hayhurst school in 2004, after a successful decade at Chapman Elementary as a 345 cluster only. At that time, the founders—Marion Grassley, Susan Anderson, and Alan Damon—worked with parents to expand the program to a PPS K-8. The district placed Odyssey at Hayhurst school. Odyssey is a PPS program housed at Hayhurst school. We share a PTA, administrator, building, office staff, many events, and several of the same specials teachers; however, as a program, we have a separate leadership group called the Odyssey Strategic Planning Committee (OSPC) that looks after the program's needs and coordinates with the teachers directly.

**Odyssey Strategic Planning Committee (OSPC)**—The Odyssey Strategic Planning committee is a group of Odyssey parents and some teachers that meet monthly to plan, advocate, and support the program. We are comprised of several sub-committees. See the section "Who's Who at Odyssey" for more information about the OSPC.

**Performance**—Every cluster has a performance and culminating event. These performances parallel course work students have been doing in their classrooms, and as such, is not "additional," but part of the curriculum. Performances are directed by teachers but require many volunteers.

- **345 and 678 clusters** require students to try out for parts and practice after school, although any interested student will find some role to play in the performance, whether they work lights, sounds, act, dance, or work as an usher. The culminating event includes ALL 345 and 678 students and varies depending on the unit. For example, the 678 students may perform William Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* and hold a guild fair, as part of their Renaissance Unit.
- **The K12 cluster** performance includes all children and practices are held during school. More information about individual performances will be given by the K12 teachers. In the recent past, K12 students have performed plays about Asia,

Portland and 'We Come From Everywhere' including historical monologues and historical dances.

**Reflection**—The reflection process is a highly positive, win-win procedure used during teaming activities to promote positive behaviors. As opposed to a disciplinary approach that seeks only to eliminate certain behaviors by punishing the offender, the reflection process minimizes fear and coercion, and benefits the entire team. The reflection, developed from William Glasser's model in, **Choice Theory in the Classroom**, is the central document in the reflection process. You can find a copy of the reflection sheet on our website. When an Odyssey student in the 345 and 678 Clusters chooses a behavior that violates the classroom and team rules, hindering the success of the team process, a reflection time and a form are given to the student by the **classroom teacher**. Then the teacher provides the support necessary to help the student to understand what personal need the student was trying to meet and how to choose a more successful way to meet this need. When the reflection form is successfully completed, it is signed and accepted by the student, the classroom teacher and the team. Three signatures are required

**Sandwich Technique**—The sandwich technique is a scripted, eight-step process used by students as they work on team writing focus questions. See the Odyssey website for a full explanation of the sandwich technique process.

**Rotation**—The K12 cluster designates one block a week to "rotations." This consists of 3 different activities: art, science, thematic simulation through which each mixed-age homeroom rotates. Rotations provide the opportunity for the students to interact in multi-aged groups and participate in enrichment activities. Because these are done on the same day each week, you may hear your child refer to this as "Friday (or other day) Rotations" depending on which day they are scheduled. Rotation this year will be art, science and thematic simulation. Students move in mixed-age home rooms.

**Scaffolding**—This term explains how teachers individuate assignments so every student can be successful. Students may have individual work scaffolded or groups may implement scaffolded work. As students mature within the program, they often no longer require scaffolding. For example, a third grade student may need his/her group work scaffolded, meaning they do less writing, but they are still able to participate fully.

**Simulation**—Simulation is a program-wide approach to learning, where students implement actual historic time periods. For example, when 678 students study Ancient Civilizations they actually become Greek city-states, using the money and clothing and taking on the identity of a person from the time period. Simulation activities may include building temples, making flags, or researching an aspect of their tribe/nation.

- **Money Economy**—Within simulation, students work with the money economy of the historical time period. Students earn money for completing the academic and behavioral expectations in the classroom, but they may also lose money. The money economy is more than "token" money because students need a set amount

of money to being simulation activities, like building railroads, setting sail, or buying supplies.

- **Game Model**—Every year, 345 and 678 students have at least one game component to a unit of study. This model allows for teams to compete to accumulate wealth and help their team meet its goal for that unit, whether it is building railroads, setting sail, or moving passengers. These are team competitions that add fun to the overall learning for that unit.

**Specials**—This term refers to any additional classes that Odyssey students take, but are outside of the Odyssey curriculum. These classes may include: PE, counseling, library, or music.

**Team**—For 345 and 678 clusters, students work in small groups of 4-5 students, called teams. Depending on the historical unit, these teams may be Native American Tribes, Greek City States, or an Expedition sailing for the new world. Teams are formed by voting—first for leaders (sometimes called captains, chiefs, governors, etc.) and then for teammates. Students who want to be leaders must give persuasive speeches that highlight their leadership qualities, based on Odyssey training. Students choose teammates based on students they like to help, students who help them, and students they enjoy working with. Team configurations are then made by the teachers to create equitable groups for all learners. Students work in teams for history, science, and simulation. Teaming days are typically 3 days a week. For more information on teaming, see [www.odysseyprogram.org](http://www.odysseyprogram.org).

**Unit**—For the 345 and 678 clusters, they may study 2-3 units per school year. The unit refers the historical time period that the students study for this duration of time. Typically, a unit will also dictate the duration of the student’s current team.

**Writing Focus (WF)**—As you look through the **Odyssey Unit Binder**, you will come across the term “writing focus” used frequently. A writing focus consists of several open-ended questions that encourage readers to support their thinking and answers with the text. As these skills develop, readers move beyond getting the “gist” of an article and learn to read with an eye for specific information, and detailed meanings. In the content areas—Simulation, History & Science—writing focuses are done with the team. Teaming skills are honed as teams use the Sandwich Technique in a supportive, equitable environment.

- **History WF**—completed as a team. Teams work on writing focuses together, at their own pace, and within deadlines.
- **Science WF**—completed as a team. Teams work on writing focuses together, at their own pace, and within deadlines.
- **Literature WF**—completed individually. Students meet for literature twice weekly and are assigned regular homework. This homework usually requires some work daily, although older students are able to complete it in 2-3 sessions. Literature

writing focuses will comprise the majority of homework your student is assigned over the weekend.

