



Directors' Report
November 5, 2020

“A healthy social life is found only when, in the mirror of each soul, the whole **community** finds its reflection, and when, in the whole **community**, the virtue of each one is living.”

~ Rudolf Steiner

ADMINISTRATION

Community Events

Knight of the Bedtime Stories

The OCS tradition of Knight of the Bedtime Stories was a big hit with over 100 families participating via zoom! It was heartwarming to see so many children and families snuggled together in their homes as they listened to stories presented by members of the community! We thank Heather Keenan, Dominique DjeDje, and Vivianne Nacif for coordinating our Knight of the Bedtime Stories and to Gib Gerard for serving as our host. We are immensely grateful to our storytellers: Linda Nacif, Dickie Fliszar, Vivianne Nacif, John Wolfson, Longben Guyit, Heather Keenan, Sufi Nematollahi, and Gib Gerard for sharing their talents. What a fantastic way to bring our community together! It was definitely something special to see so many dads jumping in to share their story-weaving, and puppetry talents!

Book Faire

The OCS Book Faire is in the process of being reimagined virtually in 2020! The Book Faire Captains are partnering with our teachers, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee members, and parent-led affinity group leaders to create diverse book lists with the goal of elevating the voices and experiences of historically marginalized authors, characters and communities. Proceeds raised from the Book Faire will be used to purchase books and to maintain student equity through the support of student materials, supplies, field trip funds, and teacher trainings focused on anti-racism and subconscious bias awareness.



Enrollment by grade as of 11/4/20

K=81

TK=27

1st=55

2nd=56

3rd=83

4th=56

5th=56

6th=54

7th=56

8th=53

Total=577

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS:

Open House

Open House is being reimagined virtually in 2020! We are in the process of compiling student paintings, drawings, crafts, sculptures, projects, and main lesson book work to integrate and create a slideshow presentation. The slideshow will be presented to the community with a panel of faculty members to host a live Q and A session on zoom to share the wisdom behind Ocean Charter School's public Waldorf curriculum. The date for the virtual Open House is TBD.

Virtual Recess

Grades 4th – 8th have a scheduled virtual recess every Tuesday from 12:30-12:55pm. The lower grade classes schedule virtual recess time individually as determined by class teachers.

Professional Development Day

During the student free day on Monday, November 2nd, OCS staff and faculty participated in a series of professional development sessions. Class teachers collaborated in preparation for upcoming Parent/Teacher conferences by sharing helpful practices and resources. Teachers also shared practical changes to be integrated into the written conference forms that reflect current distance learning practices.



All faculty and staff participated in the third and final session of diversity, equity and inclusion training with Dr. Patricia Sanco of *The Lighthouse Educational Consulting Group*. The focus of the final session was on Creating Equitable School Environments.

Several faculty members shared their experience and what they learned from taking the Harvard Implicit Bias Test. Most reported that the outcome of the test accurately reflected their biases. One teacher shared the test results of one of her previous instructors indicating zero biases and concluded that one of the reasons was likely related to her instructor being raised without media. Exposure to images via media are powerful and shape our opinions. Adherence to Ocean Charter School's media diet is a healthy step towards reducing biases in our students as well as adult community members. It's also important to note that bias lives in each of us and in every family and community so avoiding media alone does not ensure one is bias free.

We reviewed the Continuum of Cultural Proficiency as OCS strives towards Proficiency. Currently, we fall somewhere between the Pre-Competence and Competence category. We watched a short video clip entitled *The Power of Relationships in Schools* and it was interesting to hear Linda Darling-Hammond, president of the California State Board of Education and a proponent of Waldorf Education, share that emotion and learning are completely connected! OCS teachers and staff prioritize relationship building with students, which is the basis for equity work. We also watched the New York Times video "Growing Up Black" which featured the voices of young black boys and men sharing what their experiences have been growing up black in the US. Faculty and staff members shared how powerful they found the piece and, for those who are black, how true they found it to be. Non-black faculty and staff said it was very helpful and emotional to hear about these boys' and young men's realities.

Finally, we were honored to have Diana Winston, parent and Director of Mindfulness Education at UCLA, lead our faculty and staff in professional development with a focus on self-care, including the practice of mindfulness. Mindfulness meditation is a form of self-care and a tool used to pay attention to present moment experiences with openness. The regular practice of mindfulness reduces rumination as well as going back into the past or into the future. Particularly as faculty and staff focus on supporting students and families experiencing various forms of trauma, it is critical they all understand what compassion fatigue is and how it can affect them, as well as what to do about it. Self care is key in this process; mindfulness is one proven method of self care.



Ongoing Anti-racism and Anti-bias Faculty Work:

A group of faculty members have created an anti-racism/anti-bias task force. This group meets regularly and offers support to faculty and staff working on their own anti-racist and anti-bias practices, particularly in the classroom. They also develop 15 minute activities for every faculty meeting and for roughly 1 hour sessions once a month during faculty meetings to explore and put into practice the Teaching Tolerance Social Justice Standards. Administration supports this work by allocating time in faculty meetings, engaging in the activities, prioritizing this work in our professional development, including it in teacher evaluation, and sharing resources.

Special Education

After vigorous advocacy efforts by OCS administration and with support from the District Special Education coordinator currently working with OCS, we were able to secure:

- 2 additional part-time RST assistants who are in the process of being hired
- 1 part-time APEIS (Assistant Principal Elementary Instruction Services) who is being hired who will work at OCS and other schools in LDW (Local District West)

We are hopeful that these additions to the team will have a positive impact on student services as well as on case management.

CARE Team update

So far, there have been 21 referrals to the general care team for a variety of issues such as tech support, absences/participation, and academic support. The CARE team members provide support to students and families in these areas according to the needs.

There have been 12 referrals specifically for mental health support. Our team of school counselors including Adam Bruno, Holli Leonard and Christianne Cardiche are supporting these students and families with informal counseling according to the needs.

Informal Counseling for Parents/Caregivers with Ms. Holli Leonard

Every first and third Monday of the month, Ms. Holli hosts a parent/caregiver drop in session to support them during these challenging times. Participants set weekly goals usually around self care and support each other through honest conversation.

Reopening Task Force

The Reopening Task Force meets weekly and is composed of 15 members. The membership is as follows:



Faculty: Merrie Schmidt, Marlene Nicholas, Kitty Groom, Amanda Siegel, Emily Smith, Hiromi Matsue, Bray Ghiglia

Parents: Lauren Hall, Avelene Schodorff, Jessica Martin

Administration: Kristy Mack-Fett, Stephanie Edwards, Angela Bass-Rodriquez, Debbie Tripp

Board: Sue Ingles

In addition to countless details the go into our reopening plan, the task force is considering larger issues such as testing for Covid 19 for employees and students and how a hybrid model might work operationally. Updates from the task force will be shared out to the Board, the faculty, the staff, and the parents by members of the group on a regular basis.