

Journey School Highlights
September 8, 2009 /Issue 4

Dear Journey School Community,

I wanted to drop a quick note to share that we had a wonderful time launching the school year with you and your children this morning on the front lawn! You were a wonderful and festive audience and the children seemed to have a ball! Following the morning festivities, the rest of the school day also ran smoothly as the teachers started to work their magic in the classrooms. As I walked through campus and the classrooms the students seemed engaged, happy, and excited about all the possibilities the new year holds. Let the fun begin! I also wanted to reiterate some important announcements so we're all on the same page:

Reminders

Early Dismissal: Please remember that school is over at 12:30 on Wednesdays so teachers can collaborate. Thank you for being timely at pick-up.

Parent Cabinet Picnic: Please join us tomorrow, Wednesday September 9th at 12:35 on the front lawn for a friendly picnic after school (bring your blanket and lunch).

Administrative Orientation/Class Meetings—Grades 1-4: We will start at 6:00 p.m. sharp on **Wednesday, September 9, 2009** in the multi-purpose room where Mr. Shaheer will provide a brief leadership overview. Then, class meetings will occur after a short break. You will have two opportunities to catch a grade-level meeting to avoid scheduling conflicts for families with siblings.

***Important:** Please work out child care on your own for this adult event. IF you cannot find babysitting arrangements, we are working hard to provide very limited child care on a first-come, first serve basis. Donations are kindly appreciated. You may sign up at the picnic for limited space.*

Administrative Orientation/Class Meetings—Grades 5-8: We will start at 6:00 p.m. sharp on **Thursday, September 10, 2009** in the multi-purpose room where Mr. Shaheer will provide a brief leadership overview. Then, class meetings will occur after a short break. You will have two opportunities to catch a grade-level meeting to avoid scheduling conflicts for families with siblings.

***Important:** Please work out child care on your own for this adult event. We are working hard to provide very limited child care on a first-come, first serve basis. Donations are kindly appreciated. IF you cannot find babysitting arrangements, you may sign up at the picnic for limited space.*

Parent Handbook: You deserve a current and accurate handbook which contains pertinent information, expectations and agreements. The good news is that we are nearly complete. The bad news is you don't yet have it in your hands and may not for 1-2 weeks. In the meantime, the school administration will provide a summary of key highlights from the handbook during our orientations on August 9th and August 10th.

Parking/Pick-up: Please know that students will meet you at the main entrance near the marquee for pick-up after school. Please bring lots of patience and cheer until we smooth over early traffic challenges.

Teacher Support is Needed: One of our teachers is in need of a ride from Irvine to Aliso Viejo on M, W, and F early evenings. Please contact the office at 949-448-7232 if you might be able to help. Thank you!

Lunches: Please include cold-packs so that your children's lunches can stay cold in case there is no fridge access in your classroom. Thank you.

DRESS CODE

The objective of our school is to nurture and protect childhood. The Dress Code is established to promote the school's mission and to avoid disruptions in the classroom. We would like to create a simple environment that is truly childhood-friendly. Please hold these thoughts in your consciousness as you and your child are making wardrobe selections.

- Dress should be conducive to school work/activities and should be weather-appropriate.
- Clothing, backpacks, lunch boxes/baskets and any other accessories must be free of media advertisements, references to drugs, alcohol, racism, sexism, violence, slogans, cartoons, and caricatures.
- Commercial logos should be smaller than standard shirt pocket size. Sports jerseys are not allowed at school.
- Tops and dresses with straps at least 1" wide are acceptable.
- Midriff tops and undergarments that "show" are prohibited.
- Dresses, skirts, shorts and shorts may be no shorter than mid-thigh.
- Shorts need to be worn under dresses and skirts in grades K-3 for active play.
- Jackets and sweaters should be labeled with first and last name.
- Hats are acceptable when worn outside.
- Sandals must have a heel strap and footwear must be as flat as possible. Shoes w/ wheels are prohibited.
- All grades 1-8 students should wear, bring daily, or keep in class a pair of closed toe, closed heel athletic or sneaker type shoes for games classes. Shoes with laces are preferred in kindergarten.
- Lipstick, make-up, tattoos (permanent and temporary) and body piercing other than ear piercing are prohibited with the following exceptions: grades 5 and up may wear nail polish and grades 7 and 8 may wear light make-up (per staff discretion).
- Stud earrings are allowed in all grades. Grades 7 and 8 may wear other jewelry and/or dye their hair (so long as the color is not considered an educational disruption by school officials).

ABSENCES AND TARDIES

Journey School's daily goal is 100% attendance with no tardies. Each day of school is part of a sequential learning process; therefore missing even one day without good cause should be avoided to the greatest extent possible. Thank you for protecting our children's instructional time!

Support the School's Media Expectation

Our philosophy includes a commitment to understanding and nurturing each child's unique inner development. For reasons thoroughly defined in the Media section of the handbook, we believe that significantly reducing or eliminating children's television viewing will further enhance their ability to fully develop. We request that our families significantly reduce or eliminate the use of media (television, videos, video games, computer games, i-pods, CD players, movies, etc.) for their children. We ask for complete elimination of electronic media during the school week, Sunday late afternoon to Friday after school, for grades K-5. In recognition of the maturing capacities and needs of the 12-14 year-olds, we encourage and will support parents to dialogue with their children in grades 6-8 about the appropriate use of electronic media. We support the use of appropriate technologies for study aides, word processing, and research for grades 7-8 as determined by their teachers. We also support the use of technologies for students who need such accommodations as determined by the student's teachers, in conjunction with parents.

Support the Snack and Lunch Guidelines

Nurturing our bodies as well as our minds and spirits is important at Journey School. Meals and snacks eaten at school provide additional opportunities to acknowledge our appreciation for the natural world. For example, snacks prepared in the Kindergarten offer wholesome ingredients and encourage reverence for healthy bodies and a healthy earth. Families are encouraged to support this philosophy at home by following these guidelines:

- Send snacks, lunches, and celebration treats to school that use wholesome ingredients free of artificial dyes and preservatives, (organic if possible) fruits and vegetables, and as little sugar as possible. Gum, candy, soda, juices, drinks, and other and any other unhealthy foods are not allowed.
- Pack only water for your child to drink at school. Drinking fountains and purified water are also available at school.
- The avoidance of commercialism and excessive food packaging is another aspect of our commitment to environmental consciousness. Please try to send snacks and lunches in reusable containers with reusable utensils. Lunch baskets/ boxes should also be void of media/commercial images. We request cloth napkins.

Support Ecological Awareness

The school strives to teach children to develop love and respect for the earth. Children come to learn that we are part of a much larger macrocosm that needs to be kept in balance while they learn about life cycles and the seasons through planting and composting in our school garden. We promote recycling, reusing, repairing and sustainability with the students. As this philosophy is respected at home, the awe and wonder evoked in our children will serve to promote a desire for wholesome living, and the development of ecological awareness.