



inspired learning in "green" and healthy schools

Summer Newsletter

From Our Founder
July 2026

Our Mission for Every Child

Odyssey's mission is to work in partnership families and our community with the aim of helping each child reach their own unique and wonderful potential--spiritually, academically, emotionally, socially, and physically. Our child-centered programs are selected so that children have multiple opportunities to find and develop their passions.

Dear Odyssey Community,

As we prepare to begin our 27th year of serving students and families, I am filled with gratitude and excitement for what lies ahead.

This past year was one of remarkable achievement across the Odyssey family. Odyssey Elementary and Jr./Sr. High School earned an "A" school grade, Odyssey Preparatory Academy missed an "A" by just three-tenths of one percent, and our graduating seniors achieved an extraordinary 99% graduation rate. These accomplishments reflect the hard work of our students, the dedication of our staff, and the unwavering support of our families.

While we celebrate these successes, we are equally excited about the future. This year brings several important initiatives designed to strengthen our commitment to educating the whole child, including the launch of T.H.R.I.V.E. for sixth graders, an expanded focus on Full Novel Deep Reads, enhanced health and wellness programs, strengthened history and literacy instruction, and continued growth in career pathways.

For 27 years, Odyssey has been guided by a simple belief: children thrive when their minds, bodies, character, and sense of purpose are nurtured together. This whole-child philosophy continues to shape every decision we make and every program we offer.

Thank you for being part of the Odyssey family. Together, we are creating something truly special for the children and families we serve.



With gratitude,

Ms. Constance

CEO, Green Apple School Management
Founder, Odyssey Charter School, Inc.



Use this QR code or click this link [HERE](#) to earn your volunteer service time and participate in our school engagement competition.

Leadership Team Highlights



Principal of Odyssey Elementary – Dr. Brian Dawson

Dr. Brian Dawson returns to Odyssey Elementary with nearly two decades of experience as an elementary principal and seven years in district leadership near Austin, Texas. His student-centered philosophy aligns closely with our Whole School–Whole Child mission.



Principal of Odyssey Jr./Sr. High –Mr. Mike Davis

Mr. Mike Davis returns as Principal of Odyssey Charter Jr./Sr. High School. His leadership has been instrumental in maintaining the school's A-rating and this year's outstanding 99% graduation rate.



Principal of Odyssey Preparatory Academy – Ms. Shelly Miedona

Ms. Miedona brings 28 years of educational experience and has helped expand opportunities for students, including significant growth in the Gifted & Talented program.



Director of District Operations – Mr. Tim Wilson

Mr. Tim Wilson brings extensive educational leadership experience, having served as both a superintendent and high school principal in Michigan prior to joining Green Apple School Management. As Director of District Operations, he oversees transportation, facilities, technology, safety, and operational initiatives, helping ensure that Odyssey schools provide safe, efficient, and well-managed learning environments for students and staff.



Director of Professional Learning – Ms. Wendi Nolder

Since helping open Odyssey in 1999, Ms. Nolder has served as teacher, principal, and mentor. She now assumes the role of Director of Professional Learning, supporting leadership development and instructional excellence.



Executive Director of Quality Schools and Special Projects - Dr. Monica Knight

Following her service as a principal within the Odyssey family of schools, Dr. Knight now serves as Executive Director of Quality Schools and Special Projects for Green Apple School Management. She supports school improvement, instructional excellence, strategic initiatives, and special projects that advance student achievement across the organization.



Chief Academic Officer – Ms. Raquel Espinosa

Ms. Espinosa joined the Green Apple team in 2016 to lead the company through the process of earning Corporation System Accreditation through Cognia, a global accrediting agency. Soon after, she was tasked with assisting Ms. Constance in evaluating our principals and helping to develop the Green Apple Academic Team. Using her 40+ years in education and experience as a high impact principal and educational consultant, Ms. Espinosa has helped our organization establish systemic practices and procedures that have advanced our educational program significantly.



Introducing T.H.R.I.V.E.: A Signature Sixth-Grade Experience

Beginning this year, all sixth-grade students will participate in T.H.R.I.V.E., a new Odyssey-designed course created to support students as they transition into middle school. Scheduled two days one week and three days the next, with Physical Education on alternating days, T.H.R.I.V.E. reflects our commitment to developing both the mind and body during this important stage of growth.

Grounded in Odyssey's whole-child philosophy, the course will help students build essential life skills that are often overlooked in traditional education. Through engaging lessons, discussions, and real-world applications, students will develop habits of organization, goal setting, leadership, personal responsibility, resilience, wellness, communication, and character.

Students will also explore their strengths, build confidence, strengthen relationships, and develop a deeper sense of purpose as they navigate the middle school years. In addition, students will be introduced to age-appropriate concepts in functional nutrition and healthy lifestyle choices, helping them understand the connection between food, energy, learning, physical performance, and long-term health.

Together, T.H.R.I.V.E. and Physical Education create a synergistic combination that supports academic success, physical well-being, emotional growth, and personal development. By investing in these foundational skills early, we are helping students flourish not only in sixth grade, but throughout their educational journey and beyond.

Strengthening Literacy and Historical Understanding

This year, Odyssey is expanding opportunities for students to engage in deep reading, critical thinking, and rich literary discussion. Across multiple grade levels, students will participate in Full Novel Deep Reads, spending extended time with high-quality literature that builds vocabulary, comprehension, analytical thinking, and a life-long appreciation for great books.

In addition, Odyssey is enhancing the Core Knowledge History sequence in grades K-5 by providing a more coherent progression of American history while continuing the rich study of world civilizations that is a hallmark of the Core Knowledge program. This approach helps students make meaningful connections across time, cultures, and events while building the knowledge foundation that supports literacy and learning in all subject areas.



Career and Technical Education Programs

CTE programs bridge academic learning with real-world career preparation. Odyssey offers pathways including:

- Digital Information Technology
- Commercial Art
- Engineering
- Gaming & Simulation
- Web Application Development & Programming
- Robotics
- Business Management & Analysis
- Emergency Medical Responder

These programs help prepare students for high-demand careers while building practical skills and industry knowledge.



Odyssey on the Move: Becoming a National Model for Healthy Schools

Odyssey is launching a transformative initiative focused on four pillars:

1. Building a Healthy School Campus
2. Nurturing School Culture and Student Well-Being
3. Fitness for Life
4. Wise Nutrition and Healthy Lifestyles

New this School Year: As part of this effort, Odyssey continues to improve the quality and accessibility of school meals. This year, Odyssey Jr./Sr. High School will introduce a new breakfast service area featuring both hot and cold breakfast options conveniently located under the gymnasium eave near the bus loop, making it easier for students arriving by bus or car to start the day with a nutritious meal.

We will also continue enhancing breakfast and lunch offerings across our schools with an emphasis on wholesome, nutrient-dense foods that support learning, physical health, and overall well-being.

Our goal is to become a national model for healthy schools by integrating wellness into every aspect of student life.



A Vision 27 Years in the Making

In 1999, Ms. Constance Ortiz founded Odyssey Charter School with 112 students in a church building and a vision to create schools where children could achieve academic excellence while also developing health, character, purpose, and a love of learning.

Twenty-seven years later, that vision continues to guide the Odyssey family of schools. What began as a single charter school has grown into a thriving educational community serving students from preschool through high school, while remaining committed to educating the whole child.

As Founder and CEO of Green Apple School Management, Ms. Ortiz continues to work alongside school leaders, educators, governing boards, families, and community partners to advance Odyssey's mission and create opportunities for future generations of students.

"At Odyssey, we believe children deserve more than an education that prepares them for a test. They deserve an education that prepares them for life—one that cultivates knowledge, character, health, purpose, and the confidence to make a meaningful difference in the world."

— Ms. Constance Ortiz

Fit 4 Life PE Initiative

This fall, Odyssey will continue the Fit 4 Life Physical Education Initiative.

Inspired by research highlighted in SPARK by Dr. John Rathey, the initiative integrates movement, fitness, wellness, and learning. The Science in the Gym curriculum will be phased into grades 3–5, 6–8, and high school HOPE classes, connecting exercise with lessons in physiology, nutrition, and health.

Additional enhancements include expanded PE offerings, structured fitness-focused recess, and professional development for physical education staff.

Parent Involvement – We Need You!

For the 2026–2027 school year, Odyssey is continuing to encourage family volunteer participation across all campuses.

New this year: Families can earn 30 minutes of volunteer credit simply by reading newsletters and completing a brief survey.

Volunteer requirements:

- 18 hours for families with one student
- 25 hours for families with multiple students

Research consistently shows that students thrive when families are actively involved in school life. Thank you for supporting our schools and students.



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