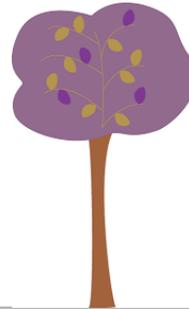




THE PRINCIPAL'S CORNER

“Whether you think YOU CAN or think you can't
– you're right.”

-Henry Ford



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“At the Odyssey Preparatory Academy all scholars will be empowered to use their talents in order to grow emotionally and academically.”

(TOPA Core Value)



One of the core values of our school states that all scholars will be empowered to use their talents in order to grow emotionally and academically. By empowering our scholars, we are giving them the ability to build self-confidence. Confidence will give them permission to celebrate their strengths and more importantly, the ability to face their weaknesses. This confidence is developed through a growth mindset and by helping our scholars understand that mistakes are an important part of learning, instead of having a negative perception of failure.

A growth mindset allows us to perceive our abilities as a work in progress, helps us develop resiliency and can lead to great accomplishments. There are several ways our teachers and staff at Odyssey encourage a growth mindset and support our scholars in taking ownership of their learning. There is no greater victory than witnessing a scholar overcome with joy for accomplishing a challenging task.

- Mrs. Douglass

“I’m not good at this.” becomes “What am I missing?”

Standards based grading provides our scholars information they need in order to monitor their own growth. Scholars can interpret scored rubrics and identify what they are missing or need more practice with, in order to achieve their goals. You can support this growth mindset by learning how to interpret grade book and access teacher provided resources.

Take the [Grade Book Tour](#)

What it looks like:

- Rubrics show scholars what is expected of them to earn a score of 1-4.
- Scholars may have an opportunity to earn several scores on one assignment/assessment. A rubric for each standard graded would be provided.
- Using graded rubrics scholars are able to reflect on specific actionable skills needing improvement or with which they were successful.

What it sounds like:

- “I don’t know what to do?” Becomes... **“I am going to try to earn a 3 by providing 3 details in my answer.”**
- “I can’t do this.” Becomes... **“I can earn more than one score on this assignment.”**
- “I’m not good at this. This is too hard.” Becomes... **“What am I missing? I am going to need more practice.”**



Challenging How We Think about Success:

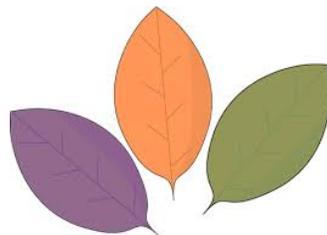
Families may find that their understanding of how and why their scholar is successful in school is deepened by separating the skills grade from the conduct grade.

Challenging How We Talk about Success:

Families may find that the conversation in their home shifts from the end result (the A or the B) to the growth result (from a ‘2’ to a ‘3’ in a particular skill).

Challenging How We Award Success:

The school will shift the celebration of success to be more reflective of our core values by basing awards such as Principal’s List on the academic growth and character development reflected by the scholar.



SCHOOL SUCCESS

Dr. Charles Fay, Love and Logic Institute

Do you want your children to be the ones who easily give up when assignments get difficult... or do you hope they'll have the confidence and grit required to keep going when the going gets tough?

What's going to best prepare them for tomorrow's extremely competitive workforce? Will it be high grades/scores because they took the easier courses...or will it be somewhat lower scores earned by finishing a more challenging course of study?

What's most important: stellar grades or solid perseverance and skills?

As this school year begins, let's give our kids the gift of seeing that satisfaction and growth come from facing challenges.

- **Focus on the strain rather than the brains.**
Instead of praising, "You are so bright," notice their successes and ask, "How did you do that?"
- **Help them blame their success on effort and perseverance.**
Most kids will respond to "How did you do that?" with "I don't know." When this happens, ask a question: "Did you work hard or did you keep trying?"

Both options embedded in this question point directly to strains not brains.

- **Avoid placing them on a pedestal.**
Capable kids often get so much positive feedback about their successes they begin to fear taking risks. It's as if they think, "If I try something challenging, I might not live up to what everybody thinks about me. I'd better take the easier route."
- **Show them that failure is not final...it's informative.**
Many children develop a perfectionistic orientation by watching their rather perfectionistic parents. I've been guilty of this. Sadly, doing so leaves many kids fearful of taking healthy academic risks.

Give your kids...and yourself...a gift. Do your best to laugh about your blunders, while allowing your children to hear you say, "I sure learned a lot from that!"

- **Love them unconditionally.**
When our kids know that we love them...not what they do...they feel safe to make the mistakes required to become truly exceptional people.

