

the
Principal's Corner



“If you dare nothing, then when the day is over, nothing is all you will have gained.”
— Neil Gaiman, The Graveyard Book



Councilwoman Hess reads to Kinder scholars on Dr. Seuss' Birthday



Message from the Principal

March is dominated by the pleasures of Spring Break (no school from the 13th through the 16th), but then comes the rigors of testing season for our 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders. The AzMERIT tests help show how well each scholar has mastered the State Standards, and the results also allow us to compare our program to other district and charter schools. We encourage all scholars to do their best on these assessments, and, in this issue, I will share some tips for how you can help them prepare to show us their best. We firmly believe that **growth isn't always measured by test scores**, but they have their place.

Upcoming Events

Culver's Night
March 21 – 5-8 pm

Staff will be serving delicious treats at the Culver's on Verrado, with a portion of proceeds supporting the school.

Father-Daughter Dance
March 25 – 5-7:30

The name pretty much says it all – contact Amy Nunn for tickets! Volunteers needed.

AzMERIT Tests
March 28-April 5

Sienna Hills scholars get their first opportunity to show what they can do on a statewide stage!

This Month's IB Profile: Risk-Taker

“I am not afraid to try new things, even when I am not sure.”

A risk-taker approaches unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought.

Kudos This Month:
Thursday, March 30 – 7:30
Second Grade will present.



Student Recognition – February 2017
L to R: Jackson Faccio (3); Noah Rudolph (4); Dixie VanOS (3)

Tips for State Testing

Spring has arrived, which means we're already nearing the end of another school year in Arizona. It's time to measure what students have learned and if they are on track and prepared for the next step in their education. This year, our scholars will be taking the AzMERIT tests.

Think of the test as an academic checkup. Just as you would want your doctor to share an honest assessment of your child's health, AzMERIT will give you the most accurate information about your child's academic ability.

We know that taking tests can be stressful and students can experience every emotion from panic to apathy. It is important your child is mentally and physically prepared and there are simple ways to alleviate anxiety and stress.

1. Talk to Your Child's Teacher

Teachers are an excellence resource for details about the skills your child has been working on this school year and what support you can give your child at home to help him prepare for the test.

2. Reinforce Critical Thinking Skills

Your child has been preparing for these tests since the school year began. All of her projects, assignments and discussions have reinforced critical thinking and problem-solving skills. However, you can reinforce those skills at home by reading with your child and asking her to talk about the central idea or theme of book or article. Ask her to explain something she has written. Have her explain the steps she took to solve a math problem.

3. Practice At Home

You can support your child by learning about the skills being assessed on the test, as well as what sample questions might look like and talking with him about it. You can also do sample questions on your computer at home (see end for link).

4. Keep Track of Test Days

If you know when the tests are coming, you can make sure other activities are kept to a minimum. Ensure testing days take priority over practices, appointments and trips.

5. Serve a Healthy Breakfast

Research has shown the impact eating breakfast has on academic performance. Focus on foods that are healthy and a good source of energy, like eggs and whole grain toast, or oatmeal packed with fruit and nuts. Less healthy choices such as donuts and sugary drinks can leave your child feeling tired and hungry just an hour or two later. A nutritious breakfast will help her stay focused and alert.

6. Safeguard Sleep

Make sure your child gets enough sleep the night before exams and in the days leading up to tests. Enforce a "tech curfew" – no phones, tablets, video games, or TV for 30 minutes prior to bedtime. This will help him wind down and prepare to get a good night's rest.

7. Don't Stress

Your stress can carry over to your child. By keeping your own stress levels down, you can help her succeed. Try to emphasize to your child that she doesn't have to be perfect, and that you'll support her no matter what.

8. Stay Positive

Your child can be influenced by your reaction to testing time. Give him a positive send-off in the morning and tell him he has the needed skills, he just needs to relax and pace himself.

Remember, AzMERIT and other standardized tests are not the finish line. They simply serve as check points along every child's educational journey. With very few exceptions, testing results should be used to determine areas of strength and weakness so students can monitor and adjust. Set goals for any skills that need work and celebrate when your child reaches each goal.

To learn more about the test and what your child needs to know to be successful, visit the Department of Education website at:

<http://www.azed.gov/assessment/azmerit/>

AzMERIT Sample Tests can be found at:

<http://azmeritportal.org/sample-tests/>

Core Knowledge Night

Our first annual Core Knowledge Night on February 23 was a huge success. Scholars, parents, and teachers worked together to highlight the cool features of our Language, Science, and Social Studies curriculum. Parents watched

performances of

“Midsummer Night’s Dream”, played games of Core Knowledge Jeopardy, learned about Plate Tectonics, dug for gold in the Old West, saw a Planetarium show, and made Native American vests. Over 400 hot dogs were consumed.



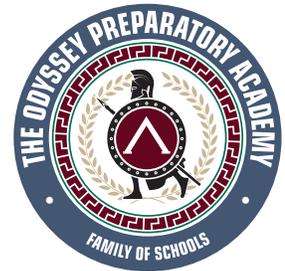
Thanks for your support!



The Principal’s Corner – March 2017

The Odyssey Preparatory Academy - Sienna Hills Campus

2400 N. Sienna Hills Pkwy
 Buckeye, AZ 85396
 (623) 444-9934



Office Hours:
 M-Th. 7AM-5PM

Principal:
Lorrese Roer
 lroer@topamail.com

Assistant Principal:
Hugh Thompson
 hthompson@topamail.com

Office Manager:
Natalie Donegan
 ndonegan@topamail.com

Attendance
 attendancesiennahills@topamail.com