

Ashbrook Compass



December 10, 2021

Dear Ashbrook Family,

As you may know, the local school district, following an ODE mandate, has made the decision to “detrack” or to no longer offer out of grade level mathematics classes in the middle grades. In joining what is being referred to as the “woke math movement” motivated by equity concerns, all local public schools have joined a national trend that has inspired [an open letter signed by over 1200 mathematics professors](#) objecting to this model and pointing to its perils. If you have a moment, take a look at the language of point 2. from this letter, almost identical to Ashbrook's Mission Statement. You can also view last night's special school board meeting [here](#) (the discussion about this model starts at 2:10 into the meeting). I am truly saddened by this decision because it denies opportunity to public school students, the vast majority of students in this country, who might otherwise catch fire about mathematics, were their curiosity and interest to be challenged and nurtured.

Please know that Ashbrook School, as an independent school, is not obligated to follow ODE mandates or local School Board guidelines on this or any other matter of curriculum or pedagogy. Furthermore, it is my hope that if you know of families who are looking for a more challenging and nurturing environment for their children, and one in which joyous engagement is inherent in all we do, you are able to act as an ambassador for Ashbrook, in terms of the opportunities we provide students to pursue out of grade level mathematics study, or because of some other aspect of our program. Trust me: if you wear your Ashbrook swag to the grocery store, you will be asked about our school, so here are some talking points:

- If you are interested in seeking growth challenges in mathematics, our teachers will get you there, even if you come into Ashbrook with gaps in what you have been taught in other schools.
- Ashbrook School continues to offer advanced, out of grade level mathematics opportunities for students who are interested, are motivated, and who demonstrate ability/promise.
- This means that we sometimes run classes with as few as 4 students.
- Our "grade level classes" are above grade level when compared to other schools.
- Ashbrook students are passionate about everything they study because their teachers are passionate, kind, inviting, and understand kids as well as they understand their subject.

Our mission to challenge and nurture means that we will always meet children where they are and take them as far as they can go. **Ashbrook School: Explore Extraordinary!**

Be well, Doc

Dr. Christopher A. Schoberl, Head of School

Next Week:

Dec. 13-17 -- Spirit Week (see below for more info)

Dec. 16 -- MS Music Concert

Dec. 17 -- No After School Program

Dec. 17 -- 2nd-4th Grade Movie Night, 5:30-8 pm

Upcoming Dates:

Dec. 18 - Jan. 2 -- Winter Break

Jan. 3 -- First day back to school

Jan. 14 -- MLK Celebration and MUN WinterCon

Jan. 17 -- MLK Day; No School

[2021-22 School Year Event Calendar](#)

[Family Volunteer Opportunities](#) -- 8 opportunities available!

Spirit Week is Dec. 13 - 17!

Monday: Plaid Day

Tuesday: Color Block Day with Buddies

- Kindergarten/Mrs. Washburn: Red
- First/Dr. Steckler: Blue
- Pre-K/2nd/Mr. Wilson: Black
- Preschool/3rd/Mr. Washburn and Ms. Kelley: Green
- 4th/Mr. Hunt: Orange

Wednesday: Explorer Day (come as your favorite explorer or your interpretation of an explorer) OR AIS spirit wear

Thursday: Dress for Success (something where everyone can dress fancy or look "professional")

Friday: Cozy-Up/Comfy Day

Explorers Fund annual drive starts this week

By now, you should have received a letter from Doc Schoberl and Tze-Yiu Yong about the annual Explorers Fund drive. Money raised by the Explorers Fund this year will go to defray the cost of student experiences such as extraordinary field trips, over-the-top electives, and a student government; faculty experiences such as the most highly sought professional development experiences heretofore out of reach; family experiences such as Ashbrook Parent Connection Nights designed to galvanize our school community; whole community and regional events such as our creation and hosting of the Rube Goldberg Machine Contest; and admission outreach events such as info evenings in the homes of current and alumnae families.

Our goal for the 2021-2022 Explorers Fund is \$150,000 and 100% participation. The Board of Trustees has generously offered a matching challenge of \$30,000. This drive, along with the planned Ashbrook Tagsale in April and a seated dinner in May, will comprise a significant part of our fundraising efforts this year.

Fundraising Update from Krista Lindberg, PTO President

Thank you to everyone who participated in the See's Candy Yum-Raising fundraiser benefiting the Ashbrook PTO. With your help, the PTO raised over \$660 to be used for community building events, mini-grants, staff appreciation and much more. Your continued support is very much appreciated. Thank you!

Volunteer Opportunity Highlight

We are planning to start using lockers for grades 6 through 8 (with some extra distance between each student's locker) when we return from Winter Break. Ms. Rachael is looking for a volunteer to help test the combination locks of lockers! There are 40 lockers total that need to be tested and inspected for damage. **This task needs to be completed by Friday, December 17th.**

If you are interested in helping, please email Ms. Rachael. We appreciate our parent volunteers! Thank you!

Admission Visits from Prospective Students

Please be aware that Ashbrook will begin inviting prospective students to visit for the day prior to signing an enrollment agreement. This has been a staple part of the admission process for many years prior to COVID, and we are bringing it back in the context of an increased number of inquiries for this time of the year.

Prior to opting to spend time in our classrooms, prospective students will confirm that they have not been exposed to a person who has tested positive and agree to take a rapid test confirming negative status that morning. They will also, of course, abide by all COVID protocols including masking, frequent handwashing, and social distancing. Please be in touch with Doc if you have any questions.

We want to extend a warm Ashbrook welcome to our new Kindergarten family, Ashley and Jeffrey Flint, and their son Dylan!! Thank you for choosing to become a part of the Ashbrook Community!

Congratulations to Teddy and Jin!

Last Saturday, Parents for Education Plus (PE+) held a PE+ Scholastic K-5 Chess Tournament in Corvallis. Fifth graders Teddy and Jin attended, and we were thrilled to find out that Teddy placed 2nd and Jin placed 3rd in the tournament. Congratulations!!

Harry Potter Club starting in January

Calling all 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grade Harry Potter fans! Join Miss Ulrich on Fridays after school starting in January to end your week with a little bit of magic! We will be reading the first installment of the Harry Potter series. Along the way we will do some fun Potter themed activities. Even if you've read the book before, come join your friends to experience the joy of the Hogwarts universe again! Parents, please see your inbox for an email from Miss Ulrich with more details and the permission slip.

New Family Referral Stipend from Doc Schoberl

There is nothing better than word of mouth advertising, especially in the nonprofit world of independent schools. If you find yourself in a conversation about Ashbrook, feel free to use my "top ten reasons to brag about Ashbrook" doc for ideas, [HERE](#). For an entire page of talking points, click [HERE](#). And if we end up enrolling a new Explorer family you refer to our school, you will earn a \$100 referral stipend.

Of course, if an experience you have had as an Explorer is preventing you from speaking positively about our school, I want to hear about that, so please give me a chance to address your concern and hopefully to re-earn your support.

Do you know a dynamic speaker?

As a part of our fundraising efforts (you will soon hear more about the whole plan), Ashbrook is currently planning a formal dinner in Corvallis. As a part of this event, we are searching for just the right speaker to keynote the evening. If you know someone who you think would be a great speaker, or know someone who knows someone who might be a great speaker, please contact Doc or Ms. Tynon. Even if you do not have a connection, but think you have a great idea for a speaker or for a topic for a speaker to address, please be in touch.

Ashbrook Admission Ambassador REIMAGINED

I recently heard from several parents that the requirements to be a part of AAA (particularly the photo and bio blurb) were obstacles to participating, so we made it simpler: Would you like to help fill our school with even more awesome kids? If so, AAA (Ashbrook Admission Ambassadors) may be your chance!

As an AAA, you would respond to emails from applicant families interested in hearing a parent perspective on Ashbrook. Simply answer the five questions on [this form](#) to indicate the Ashbrook topics you would be comfortable speaking about, and it will contact you with an alias email address (an AAA address that forwards to your actual address so we are not broadcasting your personal email address). That's it... No photos, no bios... Just your availability to answer a few emails a month! The information you provide will be posted on the Ashbrook webpage and look something like this:

- Call Chris S (Chris' family has been at Ashbrook for 4 years and is currently in the 6th grade) if you'd like to know more about: financial aid at Ashbrook, the theatre arts program, or parent involvement.
 - Call Mary J (Mary's family has been at Ashbrook for 8 years and is currently in the 7th grade) if you'd like to know more about: science curriculum, community life, or electives.
-

Graduate or undergraduate Engineering students needed

Are you connected with OSU Engineering? The 10 teams of X6 middle school students each, and their teacher-coaches, competing in the Ashbrook Rube Goldberg Machine Challenge, are meeting on the OSU campus in January. As a part of this meeting, we would love it if a couple of could greet them and spend a couple of hours speaking with them about such concepts as transfer of energy and other aspects of the rules of the contest, as well as how to talk with their young students about the opportunities and challenges of the materials they are being asked to use in building their “complex simple machines.” These two students will be paid a stipend of \$200 each. If interested, please have them contact Doc Schoberl.

COVID News

Because there is no practical way for us to ensure that our students remain socially distanced while at recess, please know that Ashbrook will continue masking in outdoor settings.

Please visit the [Benton County COVID-19 website](#) for upcoming vaccination and testing events. Benton County Health encourages community members with access to a pediatrician to seek vaccination at their provider's office or local pharmacies.

Ashbrook has enrolled in Oregon Health Authority's COVID-19 Screening Program for K-12 students. This weekly testing program is entirely optional. You can pick-up a barcoded test kit on Monday mornings from the orange bucket just outside the front door, test your child that night or Tuesday morning, and return the test Tuesday morning. You will receive confidential results in 1-2 days. For more details, click [HERE](#).

