



EXPEDITIONARY LEARNING

The Odyssey School

“When students leave Odyssey ... they are students who can achieve as readers, writers, and thinkers, but they’re also socially aware. They understand what it means to be a citizen and engaged in hard conversations ... that’s what Expeditionary Learning helps foster.”

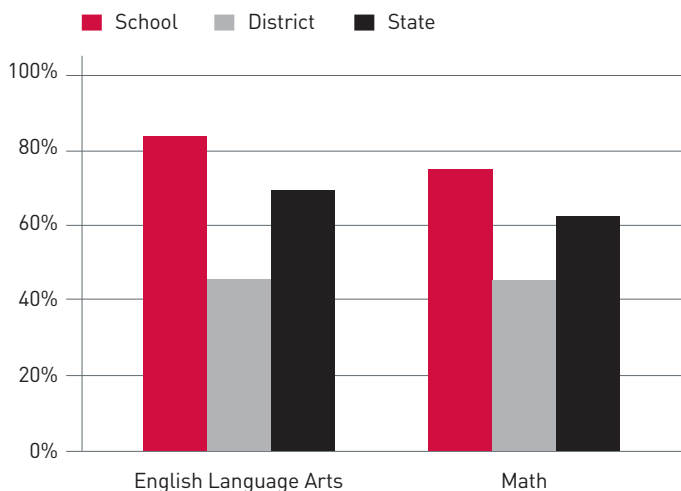
Principal Marcia Fulton

Students at Odyssey beat state and district averages year after year on state tests and are held to high standards for character and personal responsibility.

The emphasis on personal responsibility is a hallmark of Odyssey’s student-engaged assessment practices, which include portfolios, passage presentations, public exhibitions, and student-led family conferences—in addition to standardized tests. Because they participate daily in the process of reflection and self-assessment, Odyssey students are deeply engaged in their own learning and highly motivated to make progress.



English Language Arts & Math
% of Students Proficient (2008–2009)



CITY: DENVER, CO
GRADES SERVED: K-8
STUDENT ENROLLMENT: 221
EL PARTNER SINCE 1998

Expeditionary Learning at Odyssey

EL teamed with the founders of Odyssey to write their charter application. As a result, the EL design principles and core practices are integrated throughout the school.

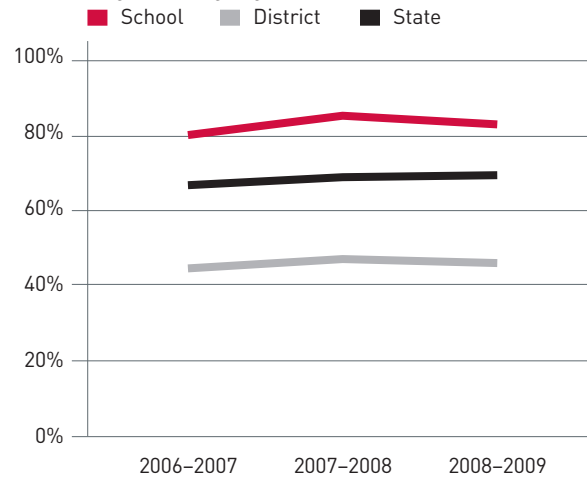
This is what Odyssey looks like now:

- There is a high level of collaboration among teachers, who design interdisciplinary learning expeditions that explore compelling topics and demand high levels of participation from all students.
- Student-led family conferences bring 100 percent of parents into the school for student demonstrations of their learning.
- Ongoing assessments of student learning ensure that all students make progress toward learning targets.
- Instructional practices such as Socratic seminars, protocols, and structured critique push students to think critically and examine their world through multiple perspectives.
- Hallways are lined with beautiful documentation panels that take parents and other visitors on “guided tours” of student learning and exemplify the quality and craftsmanship at the center of the school’s culture.
- The leadership team reinforces EL practices throughout the school with regular observation, coaching, and evaluation.

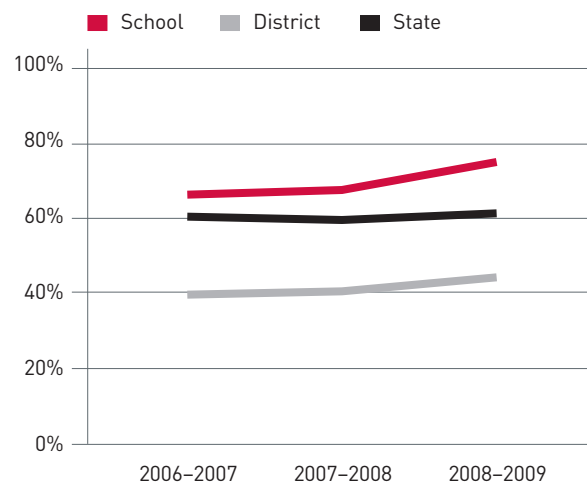
Evidence of Success

- In 2008 Odyssey ranked 12th on the Denver Public School Performance Framework among more than 150 schools in the district. It was second among K-8 schools.
- The Colorado Education Commissioner named Odyssey and seven other schools a “Lighthouse School” in recognition of strong academic gains.
- Teachers have modeled student-engaged assessment practices for thousands of educators at EL professional development institutes and national conferences.
- Odyssey was the first Denver public school to use a weighted admissions lottery to ensure a diverse student body.
- In 2009 Odyssey was one of the Colorado Education Commission’s top 100 schools.
- In 2010 the *Ladies’ Home Journal* chose Odyssey as one of America’s 10 “most amazing schools.”

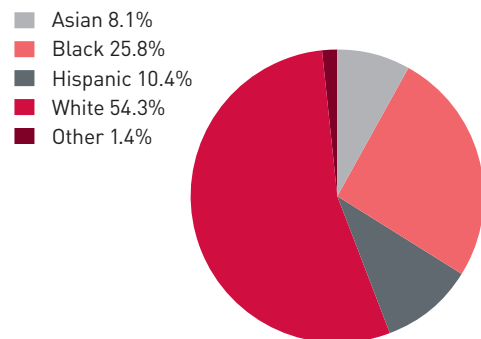
English Language Arts % Students Proficient



Math % Students Proficient



Student Profile (2008-2009)



Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible 32.6%

Special Education 8.1%