



# ORTEGA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

## WELCOME BACK PACKET FOR FAMILIES

### 2023-2024

### Welcome Ortega Families

**Welcome to the 2023-24 school year!** We're excited to reunite with returning families and get to know our newest Otters. The mission of the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is to promote open communication and understanding between families and staff at Ortega Elementary to create an environment where teachers can do their best work and students can do their best learning.

The PTO is collectively every parent or guardian of an Ortega student and all teachers and professional staff. The PTO is an independent organization. This allows us to keep all funds that we raise in house for our school and its programs. ***This is especially important in Pacifica School District, one of the lowest funded districts on the Peninsula.*** Through your generosity of donations, we are able to offer enrichment classes like Garden Science Class and Art Class to our children; reimburse teachers for money they spend to create dynamic and exciting learning environments; and host activities like movie nights, the talent show, field day, school assemblies, and more!

We encourage you to become as involved as possible at Ortega this school year. All are welcome at our monthly PTO Meetings on the first Tuesday of the month at 6:30 PM via GoogleMeet or in person. There are many ways to get involved at Ortega. From Drop off Attendant in the AM to Color Walk volunteer on a Friday, Room Parent planning at home in the evenings to Popsicle Sales on Wednesday afternoon, there's a volunteer opportunity to fit every schedule.

The Ortega PTO website is a one-stop shop for information on events, newsletters, school calendar, Otter gear and more.

**[www.ortegapto.org](http://www.ortegapto.org)**

Every hour and every dollar that you donate to Ortega is appreciated and essential. Collectively, the programs that the PTO funds cost between \$250-300 per student. ***This year, our fundraising goal is at least \$100,000 to continue offering these programs and activities.*** If we raise more, we can do more for our students. We hope your involvement helps us reach our goals for students and also deepens your connection to the Ortega community.

For more information and all the latest news about Ortega events, activities, and fundraising opportunities, be sure you are on the email list for Otter Town News (visit [www.ortegapto.org](http://www.ortegapto.org) to sign up or use the QR code on the second page of this packet). And, please join us at Back to School Night on August 31st when the PTO will lay out its plans, including the proposed budget for the 2023-24 school year, to make this school year "Otterly Amazing"!

Dawn Rege (President) & Andriana Antoniou (Vice President)

### Don't Miss Out on Any Ortega PTO News!

#### Page

- 1 Welcome Ortega Families
- 2 PTO Communications
- 3 Fundraising
- 4 Fundraising: Annual Giving Campaign
- 5 Fundraisers: Ongoing
- 6 Ortega School Year Calendar & Bell Schedule
- 7 School Information
- 8 Volunteering at Ortega
- 9 Volunteer Descriptions and Links



# PTO COMMUNICATIONS

Welcome Back Packet  
For Ortega Families



## Otter Town News



Ortega's Weekly Newsletter

**SUBSCRIBE TO THE  
OTTER TOWN NEWS!**



### **\*\*Sign up for the PTO's Weekly Newsletter\*\***

Receive important school emails and the weekly Otter Town News newsletter at [ortegapto.org/subscribe](https://ortegapto.org/subscribe) or scan the QR code above.

### **Submissions to the Otter Town News**

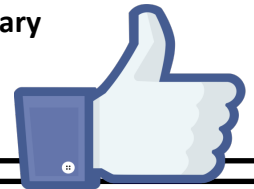
Our weekly newsletter is a useful information tool that contains important school updates, upcoming events, extracurricular activities, and much more. It is emailed every Friday. Submissions are welcome and must be received by Thursday at noon to be reviewed for that week. To submit content or ask questions, email:  
**OtterTownNews@ortegapto.org**

### **Like us on Facebook**

Our Facebook page is a private group that allows Ortega families the ability to connect, find out about up-coming events, and ask questions.

Join the group by searching for:

**Ortega Elementary  
School PTO**



### **Your PTO Meetings:**

The Ortega PTO meets the 1st Tuesday of each month at 6:30 pm via GoogleMeet or in-person. Meeting details are located on the PTO website and in the Otter Town News. Everyone is welcome to attend!

### **YOUR 2023-2024 PTO REPRESENTATIVES**

*President*— **Dawn Rege** [president@ortegapto.org](mailto:president@ortegapto.org)

*Vice President*—**Andriana Antoniou** [vp@ortegapto.org](mailto:vp@ortegapto.org)

*Treasurers*—**Katharine (KC) Fletcher** and **Jenny Gadwah** [treasurer@ortegapto.org](mailto:treasurer@ortegapto.org)

*Secretary of Record Keeping*— **Casey Fromson** [recording@ortegapto.org](mailto:recording@ortegapto.org)

*Secretary of Communications*— **Christina (Chris) Stuart** [communications@ortegapto.org](mailto:communications@ortegapto.org)

*Activities Coordinators*—**Janine Almeida**, **Brandy Petrasunas**, and **Monika Dresner** [activities@ortegapto.org](mailto:activities@ortegapto.org)

*Volunteer Coordinator*— **Monika Dresner** [volunteer@ortegapto.org](mailto:volunteer@ortegapto.org)

*Tech Coordinator*— **David Geller** [tech.coordinator@ortegapto.org](mailto:tech.coordinator@ortegapto.org)

*Parent Council Representative*— **Michelle Gray** [parent.council.rep@ortegapto.org](mailto:parent.council.rep@ortegapto.org)

*TK-2nd Grade Representative*— **Korin Andreatta** [TK-2.parent.rep@ortegapto.org](mailto:TK-2.parent.rep@ortegapto.org)

*3rd-5th Grade Representative*— **Christina Redfield** [3-5.parent.rep@ortegapto.org](mailto:3-5.parent.rep@ortegapto.org)

*Fundraising Coordinators*— **Amanda Gavin** and **Jasmine Sartain** [fundraising@ortegapto.org](mailto:fundraising@ortegapto.org)

*After School Enrichment Program Coordinator*- **Lila Farrington** [asep@ortegapto.org](mailto:asep@ortegapto.org)



# FUNDRAISING

## Welcome Back Packet For Ortega Families

Dear Ortega Families,

Welcome to our 2023-24 School Year! We are proud of Ortega Elementary School and what our school means to students and their families. The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is our collective voice to advocate for the school and raise funds to support the programming that makes Ortega such an amazing place.

**Our fundraising goal this year is \$100,000!**

Ortega's 2023-2024 anticipated fundraisers include Original Art Works (Fall), Color Walk (October), See's Candies Sales (Winter and Spring), Giving Tuesday (November 28<sup>th</sup>), Read-A-Thon (March), and Silent Auction and Raffle (May).

### What does the PTO Fund?

**Garden Science Program!** We are continuing our partnership with Climate Corps Education Outside. **ALL** students will engage in hands-on, inquiry-based science lessons in the Ortega School Garden facilitated by our garden fellow (instructor) Ms. Cami. Ortega is the only PSD school with a Garden Science Program. The lessons are in addition to the districts newly adopted science curriculum for classrooms. Example science experiences include:

- TK & K– Use different senses to explore garden textures, garden scents, and share a snack using herbs from the garden.
- First grade explorers focus on the parts of plants and create a snack using the six different plant parts.
- Second grade investigators focus on the life cycles of plants and animals; and share a salad using plants from the garden in different stages of the life cycle.
- 3rd grade scientists learn different plant parts, dissect a seed, and learn about the different types of seed dispersal.
- Fourth grade botanists model how to support the growth of food by planting, watering, and amending the soil with compost. Students also focus on the food journey - how the food they eat gets from the fields to the store.
- Fifth grade engineers focus on energy flow by asking: What do plants eat? Students also design and build solar ovens and cook with garden produce.

**Playworks (Physical Education)!** Students in TK through grade 5 will participate in weekly physical education experiences in which they actively engage in play through games, dance, yoga, and more.

**Art Class with Ms. Lily!** Students in all grades spend half a year attending class with the wonderful art instructor, Ms. Lily. Students are introduced to and explore different media as they rotate through art centers in drawing, painting, collage, sculpture, ceramics, printing, and fiber arts.

**Library!** All students utilize the Ortega Library every week to read and learn about the world around them.

**Supportive community-focused events!** Community movie nights, ice cream socials, science night & more!

**Celebrate, thank, and support** our amazing Ortega teachers and staff with classroom supply reimbursements and celebratory lunches.

Ortega can not do this alone. Reach out to your network of friends, family, neighbors, and your employer (corporate matching) to help Ortega reach its \$100,000 goal! If we raise more, we can DO MORE for students!



# FUNDRAISING: ANNUAL GIVING CAMPAIGN

Welcome Back Packet  
For Ortega Families

## ANNUAL GIVING CAMPAIGN

We want every Ortega family to be a part of our fundraising program and we want to make it easy! Through the **Annual Giving Campaign** Ortega families and community members can choose to give in a different way. Because your time is important, we suggest that you simply make a single or a recurring monthly tax-deductible donation.

We can not continue to fund our robust enrichment program without your support! Currently, funding for these programs work out to be approximately \$250 - \$300 per student. We understand that situations are different for every family, therefore, we ask that you support the PTO as you are able – whether that is \$10, \$250, or more. If your extended family or friends would like to contribute, we welcome their participation.

Please help us reach our goal of \$100,000 and 100% participation by sending in your tax-deductible contribution today!

**Complete the form below or use the QR code to make your donation today. Checks should be made out to Ortega PTO (write “Annual Giving Campaign” in the memo line) and returned to the office. Thank you!**



### Annual Giving Campaign Donation Form

Donor's First/Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

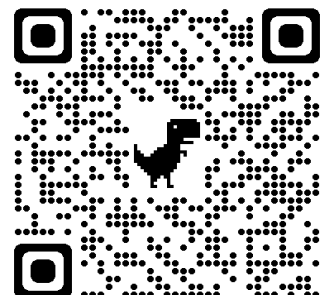
Address \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of Donation \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name and Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Donor's Relationship to the Student(s) \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank You for Supporting Ortega Elementary!**











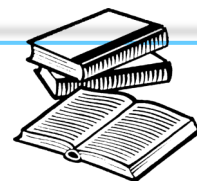
## FUNDRAISERS: ONGOING

## Welcome Back Packet For Ortega Families

There are many ways to assist Ortega with fundraising throughout the year. It can be as easy as shopping in our community and online. Your friends, neighbors, and relatives can participate as well.

	<p><u><a href="#">Box Tops for Education</a></u>: No more clipping. No more sending Box Tops to school. All you need is your phone. Download the Box Tops app, shop as you normally would, then simply scan your store receipts.</p>	
	<p><u><a href="#">Farm Fresh to You</a></u>: Organic Produce &amp; Artisan Groceries delivered fresh from small farms and artisans. Use the Promo Code: ORTEGAOTTERS for 10% of the total you spend to be given back to Ortega Elementary. Sign up, or add the promo code to an existing account at <u><a href="http://www.farmfreshtoyou.com">www.farmfreshtoyou.com</a></u>.</p>	
	<p>When you shop at Sports Basement, mention Ortega Elementary School as the school you wish to have them support and donate. Since Sports Basement opened in 1998, they have donated more than \$10 million in cash, gift cards and in-kind donations to Bay Area NPOs, including over 700 local schools! Their mission is one of a virtuous circle; as their company grows and prospers so too should the communities that patronize their stores.</p> <p>WHAT SPORTS BASEMENT CAN GIVE ORTEGA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10% profit-sharing on all purchases*</li> <li>• 10% discount off all purchases**</li> </ul>	

### Ortega's Birthday Book Program The Gift of Literacy and Commemoration



Ortega families can commemorate their child's birthday by making a donation to the voluntary **Birthday Book Program**. For a minimum donation of \$18.00, your child can choose a book from the special Birthday Book display in the library. Once they choose their book, a bookplate with your child's name will be placed in the book. Your child will be the first allowed to check out the book at the library and when the book is returned, it will be placed into circulation for all students to enjoy. Donations from this program go toward purchasing new books for our library collection. This provides a lasting legacy for your Ortega student.

To participate in this program, fill out the Birthday Book Program form—which can be found in the library or downloaded from the Ortega PTO website—and return the completed form and a check to the front office.



# ORTEGA SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR

Welcome Back Packet  
For Ortega Families

## 2023-2024

All Wednesdays are Min. Days

### AUGUST

- 16 1st Day of School! Minimum Day (PSD)
- 17-18 Minimum Day (Ortega)
- 18 Ortega Ice Cream Social (PTO)
- 31 Back to School Night /PTO Gen. Meeting (Ortega)

### SEPTEMBER

- 01 Minimum Day
- 04 NO SCHOOL—Labor Day (PSD)
- 15 Meet the Principal & PTO Hosted Coffee (PTO)
- 29 Ortega Movie Night (PTO)

### OCTOBER

- 06 NO SCHOOL— Staff Development Day
- 09 NO SCHOOL— Indigenous Peoples' Day
- 20 Ortega Color Walk (PTO)
- 27 Movie Night (PTO)
- 31 Halloween Parade/Creepy Coffee (PTO)

### NOVEMBER

- 09 NO SCHOOL – Professional Development Day (PSD)
- 10 NO SCHOOL—Veteran's Day (PSD)
- 13-17 Parent Conferences—Min. Days (Ortega)
- 20-24 NO SCHOOL—Thanksgiving Recess (PSD)
- 27 – 1 Global Village Week & Celebration (PTO)
- 28 Giving Tuesday

### DECEMBER

- 01-20 Ortega's Giving Tree (PTO)
- 15 PTO Hosted Coffee and Pastries (PTO)
- 22 Minimum Day (PSD)
- 25-31 NO SCHOOL—Winter Recess (Cont. Jan. 5) (PSD)

### JANUARY

- 01–05 NO SCHOOL—Winter Recess (PSD)
- 08 School Resumes– Welcome back, Otters! (PSD)
- 15 NO SCHOOL—MLK Jr. Day (PSD)

### FEBRUARY

- 01 PTO Hosted Coffee & Pastries (PTO)
- 14 Valentine Day
- 16 Minimum Day (Ortega)
- 19-23 NO SCHOOL—Presidents' Week (PSD)

### MARCH

- 04-22 Read-A-Thon (PTO)
- 08 Talent Show (PTO)
- 11-15 Spring Conferences – Min. Day (Ortega)

### APRIL

- 05 Minimum Day (Ortega)
- 08-12 NO SCHOOL—Spring Recess (PSD)
- 26 Carnival (PTO)

### MAY

- 02 Ortega Open House – Silent Auction (PTO)
- 03 PTO Hosted Coffee & Pastry, Min. Day (PTO)
- 06-10 Teacher and Staff Appreciation Week (PTO)
- 27 NO SCHOOL—Memorial Day

### JUNE

- 04-06 Ortega Minimum Days
- 05 Ortega Field Day (PTO) - Minimum Day
- 06 Last Day of School — Minimum Day

*Ortega PTO event dates and times are subject to change.*

## Ortega's Bell Schedule

First bell rings at 8:28 a.m. to alert students to line up with their classes.

	TK/Kindergarten	Grades 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grades 4 and 5
Regular Day	8:30am –12:30pm*	8:30am-2:35pm	8:30am – 2:35 pm	8:30am-2:35pm	8:30am-2:55pm
Min. Day & Wed.	No Min. Day	8:30am-1:35pm	8:30am-1:35pm	8:30am-1:35pm	8:30am-1:35pm
Morning Break	10:20am-10:40pm	10:20am-10:40pm	10:00am-10:20am	10:00am-10:20am	10:40am-11:00am
Lunch	No lunch period	11:45am-12:25pm	11:45pm-12:25pm	11:45pm-12:25pm	12:25pm-1:05pm
Grade 1 Recess	N/A	1:20pm-1:40pm	N/A	N/A	N/A

\* Beginning 11/27/23 Kinders start small reading groups rotating once a week from 12:30—1:30pm.





# SCHOOL INFORMATION

## Welcome Back Packet For Ortega Families

**School Hours:** Ortega serves breakfast beginning at 8:10 AM. Supervision on the yard begins at 8:15 AM and school starts promptly at 8:30 AM. Students who are not eating breakfast should arrive no sooner than 8:15 AM to ensure supervision on the yard.

**Parking Lot Procedures for Drop Off/Pick Up:** Students may not be dropped off earlier than 8:15 AM. The parking lot can get messy at times, but by following these simple guidelines we can make it a pleasant and safe place for you and our children. **\*\*Please always follow the instructions of Ortega's Drop-Off Attendants when present.\*\***

- Drop off/pick up students at designated drop-off/pick-up areas in front of school: marked with red curbs
- Use the right lane to pull as far forward as possible before unloading your passengers.
- Say your goodbyes and have your passengers ready to disembark as soon as the vehicle stops.
- Unload passengers on *right side* of vehicle only.
- Drivers stay in your car. Getting out of the car stops the flow of traffic.
- Once student is dropped off/picked up, drivers are asked to move on immediately to keep traffic flowing.
- Do not double park and leave your car unattended.
- NO LEFT TURN when exiting the school lot between 8:15 AM - 8:45 AM and 2 PM – 3 PM. (Right turn only).
- If you need to enter the school, park on one of the three streets abutting Ortega – Terra Nova Blvd, Lerida Ave, or Alicante Ave- or at New Life Christian Fellowship on Terra Nova Blvd.
- **All spots in the parking lot are for staff only until otherwise notified.**
- Please remember that TTT and the Boy's and Girl's club offer before/after school childcare. If you need to drop of your child before 8:15 AM, please register them with one of these organizations.
- All pedestrians should cross the street within the crosswalks only.
- Please be courteous to other drivers and vigilant in watching out for the safety of our students.

**Visitors:** Per state law, all Ortega visitors must check in at the school office and obtain a Visitor's Button.

**Breakfast & Lunch:** Breakfast and lunch for the 23-24 school year are FREE! Ortega's monthly lunch menu can be found at [pacificasd.org](http://pacificasd.org) under Child Nutrition. All families are requested to please fill out the Alternate Income Form at [pacificasd.org](http://pacificasd.org).

**Room Parent:** Each class needs to have at least one Room Parent. Room Parents are critical to classrooms because they share school information, activities, and teacher updates with families. Room Parents are also needed to help organize class parties, fieldtrips, and gifts. If you are interested in becoming a Room Parent, please let your teacher know or email our Tk-2<sup>nd</sup> Or 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Grade Representatives (contact information is on page 2).

**Lost and Found:** Ortega's Lost and Found is located in the hallway between the multipurpose room and the office.

**Spirit Wear:** To purchase Ortega branded items, please speak to the office.

**After-School Enrichment Program:** Ortega offers a variety of after-school activities run by outside vendors throughout the year. After-school activities can be found at [ortegapto.org/after-school-activities](http://ortegapto.org/after-school-activities).



# VOLUNTEERING AT ORTEGA

Welcome Back Packet  
For Ortega Families

## Ortega LOVES and NEEDS volunteers!

**VOLUNTEER FOR SCHOOL EVENTS:** Ortega needs volunteers for community and fundraising events throughout the year. Volunteers can be part of the planning committee for events or a day of volunteer. Calls for day of volunteers will be made in the Otter Town News and posted on FB. We will need volunteers for: Color Walk, Book Fairs (Fall and Spring), Movie Nights, Silent Auction and Raffle, Art Night, Science Night, Popcorn and Popsicle Sales, and more.

**VOLUNTEER SIGN UP AND PROCEDURE:** To volunteer at Ortega you may fill out this form and return it to the office or sign up on any of the volunteer forms provided in the Otter Town News. When you volunteer, please check into the office for a volunteer badge.

**MANDATORY FINGERPRINTING FOR FIELD TRIP DRIVERS:** During the 2023-2024 school year **ALL** Pacifica School District Schools, including Ortega, require field trip drivers to be fingerprinted. The approval process can take up to four weeks so plan accordingly. Volunteer drivers need to cover their own fingerprinting costs. Ortega will host fingerprinting events during the school year.

**All PTO events depend upon volunteers\* Please volunteer whenever you can!**

## Ortega PTO Volunteer Form



**Help Keep Ortega Strong by Volunteering • Return this half page to the Ortega office**

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Child(ren)& Grade(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate your area(s) of interest below. Please note, checking boxes below is not a commitment; a PTO Board member will contact you if your services are needed. For a description of volunteer opportunities, see page 9.

### Volunteers Opportunities

- ☐ School Garden
- ☐ Morning Drop-off Attendant
- ☐ Movie Nights
- ☐ Popcorn Sales
- ☐ Popsicle Sales
- ☐ Grant Writing
- ☐ Baking for Events

- ☐ Birthday Book Program
- ☐ Book Fairs
- ☐ Junior Olympics
- ☐ Field Day
- ☐ Art Class Assistant
- ☐ Lost and Found Organizer
- ☐ Hearing/Vision Test Assistant

### Ortega Committees

- ☐ Carnival
- ☐ Science Committee
- ☐ Silent Auction & Raffle
- ☐ Talent/Variety Show
- ☐ Staff Appreciation Week
- ☐ Campus Beautification





# VOLUNTEER DESCRIPTIONS

## Welcome Back Packet For Ortega Families

### Volunteers Needed for the Beginning of the 2023-2024 School Year

#### Wednesday Popsicle Sales:

Sell popsicles to students at 1:35.



#### Morning Drop-Off Attendant

Direct traffic and open car doors for students



### Additional Volunteer Opportunities

(Look for these opportunities in the Otter Town News or at [ortegapto.org/volunteer-application](https://ortegapto.org/volunteer-application))

#### YEAR LONG PROGRAMS [Some are year-long commitments and some are needed periodically.]

- **Grant Writer:** Research/solicit grant funding sources; writing grant proposals to help fund programs.
- **Campus Beautification:** Assist with landscaping, pruning, and weeding 2-3 times during the school year.
- **School Garden Help:** Assist in the garden throughout the year with planting, maintenance, and student supervision. Join the garden committee or come on weekend garden days.
- **Lost and Found Organizer:** Organize lost and found area then coordinate with office staff to make announcements to check lost and found. Then coordinate donation drop off of unclaimed items.
- **Birthday Book Program:** Co-coordinate Ortega's voluntary book buying program that supports the school library.
- **Art Class Assistant:** Assist the art teacher with the project of the day.
- **Baking Team:** Supply baked goods for our fundraising events. If you like to bake, this one's for you!
- **Library Aide:** Assist in the library as needed.
- **Popsicle and Popcorn Sales:** Volunteer on Wednesdays to sell popsicles and once a month on selected Fridays to make and sell popcorn.

#### ANNUAL FUNDRAISING EVENTS

- **Color Walk:** Many volunteers are needed to set up, direct kids, spray color, and clean up after the event.
- **Silent Auction and Raffle:** Volunteers needed for soliciting, organizing, decorating, and setting up "baskets" for raffles and silent auction. This is a HUGE FUNdraiser.
- **Book Fair:** Assist students and families in selection and purchase of books by running the cash register; assist in set-up and break down of the event held in the library. There are two book fairs every school year.

#### OTHER AREAS

- **Junior Olympics Coach and/or Crew:** Coordinate, arrange and prepare the participating Ortega Otters for competition during practices and the day of the event.
- **Field Day:** Help set up and run the field events and assist with serving lunch.
- **Staff Appreciation Week:** Assist Activities Coordinators with the planning and implementation of various appreciation events—May 6-10, 2024.
- **Hearing/Vision Test Assistant:** Volunteers will help with bringing students to and from classrooms on testing day.
- **Talent/Variety Show:** Join the Talent Show Committee to plan the overall vision of this amazing production or volunteer to assist with all activities required to make this show a success!

For more information about volunteer opportunities, contact: [volunteer@ortegapto.org](mailto:volunteer@ortegapto.org).

YOUR PARTICIPATION IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!