

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
About Owyhee-Harbor Elementary School
(Updated 4-1-2009)

1. What is a Harbor School?

Harbor schools focus on kindness, have zero tolerance for bullying, set high academic and behavioral expectations, and use a dynamic interactive teaching style. They provide a “safe harbor” so students can focus on learning. More information about the Harbor Method can be found in the foyer of our school or on our website. Please see “Owyhee-Harbor School Staff Commitments”, “Values and Operating Principles of Harbor Schools” and the “Essential Elements of a Harbor School.”

2. Why did Owyhee become a Harbor School?

Due to declining enrollment, Owyhee's future as a neighborhood school was in jeopardy. At the same time, a limited number of Harbor Schools were available in the Treasure Valley and most had waiting lists. The Boise District adopted a win-win solution to maintain a neighborhood school for the Owyhee attendance area and provide a sought-after option for parents and students from outside the area beginning with the 2004-05 school year.

3. Is Owyhee a charter school?

No, Owyhee is part of the Boise School District. The District's Board of Trustees, not a charter school board, oversees it. All staff members are employees of the District. The same policies and procedures that apply to other Boise schools apply to Owyhee. Owyhee offers comparable services and programs as other District schools including Gifted at Talented Education (GATE), special education and speech/language therapy services, school counseling and nursing services, band and orchestra, boys’ and girls’ basketball, and co-educational track and field.

4. How do I know that Owyhee is a true Harbor School?

When the district decided to adopt the Harbor Method at Owyhee in 2004, it worked closely with the Harbor Educational Institute (HEI) to ensure that administrative, instructional and support staff were trained in the Harbor Method. It also purchased lifetime rights to use Harbor Method curricula, character education programs and the Harbor name. Since dissolution of HEI in 2007, the District has continued its commitment to the Harbor method via ongoing funding, training, and support. In the fall of 2008, Owyhee staff members reaffirmed their commitment to the Harbor Method through a series of team building activities and collaborative meetings. The result was the creation of a document titled “Owyhee-Harbor School Staff Commitments.” This document is an addendum to the Owyhee-Harbor School Student Handbook and is a

stand-alone document that can be found on the school's website. Owyhee continues to use the same curricular materials that are common to all Harbor Schools including:

- * The Harbor School Method Character Education Plan;
- * The Harbor School Method Vocabulary Program;
- * The Harbor School Method Mathematics Program and Saxon (for homework); and
- * Shurley English and Spalding Phonics.

5. What special classes are offered at Owyhee?

Owyhee and other Harbor Schools offer additional classes that enhance student learning and provide additional preparation time for classroom teachers. At Owyhee these include:

- * Special Educaiton Preschool: general music and library
- * Kindergarten: general music, library, computers, and physical education
- * First through Fourth Grades: general music, library, physical education, computers/technology, and hands-on science
- * Fifth and Sixth Grades: general music, instrumental music (band or orchestra), library, physical education, computers/technology, and hands-on science

6. How do I enroll my child in Owyhee?

If you live in the Owyhee attendance area you can register at school weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. You will need a copy of your child's birth certificate and immunization record. If a grade is full, your child's name will be placed on a waiting list and you will be directed to an overflow school, the same as any other school in the district.

If you live outside of the Owyhee attendance area you must apply for Open Enrollment. You can download an application from the District's web site, then mail or fax it to the school. You will be notified of whether your child has been accepted and if not, the reason. If accepted, you need to register and furnish a birth certificate and immunization record. If a grade level is full, your child's name will be placed on a waiting list.

7. Will I have to go through the open enrollment application process every year?

Once accepted, your child can continue at Owyhee from year to year as long as he or she maintains satisfactory grades, behavior, and attendance. Each spring we will ask you to inform us of your intentions for the following year so we can plan appropriately.

8. If my child is on the waiting list, when and how will I know if my child is accepted?

If an opening occurs, a lottery will be held. If your child is selected, we will contact you by phone or mail to determine if you are still interested.

9. What school calendar does Owyhee follow?

Owyhee follows the traditional calendar for the Boise School District. A copy of that calendar is available here.

11. What time does school start and end?

School for 1st through 6th graders is generally in session from 8:45 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. On early release days, 1st through 6th graders are dismissed at 1:15 p.m.

Our regular kindergarten program and our early childhood special education preschool program are generally scheduled from 8:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. or from 12:30 p.m. to 3:15 p.m. On early release days, preschool and kindergarten sessions run from 8:45 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. or from 11:30 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. Kindergarten is five days per week whereas preschool operates Tuesday – Friday.

12. What times can I pick up and drop off my children?

Students should be dropped off after 8:15 in the morning (after 12:15 for afternoon preschool or kindergarten), when student supervision begins. Student should be picked up within 15 minutes after school is dismissed.

13. Is transportation available?

Bus transportation is available for students who live in Owyhee's transportation safety area, which includes the Sunrise Rim area and the Monterra Apartments. On a space available basis, open enrollment students can ride an Owyhee bus from an established stop. We are sorry but the district does not transport students to or from other locations.

14. Does Owyhee have a hot lunch or breakfast program?

Yes, Owyhee has a cafeteria with a school lunch and breakfast program. Free and reduced meals are available for students who qualify. Breakfast is served from 8:15 to 8:35 a.m. School meal prices are the same as other Boise schools.

15. Is before or after school childcare available?

Childcare is not offered at Owyhee but many private childcare facilities provide transportation to and from Owyhee. The office can provide more information.

16. What school supplies will my children need?

School supply lists for Owyhee are slightly different than other District' schools. Lists for each grade level are available at the office or on our website.

17. How can I get more information about Owyhee?

More information is on our web site (<http://www.boiseschools.org/schools/owyhee/>) or you can call 854-5850 to schedule a school tour. Plan to spend about an hour (longer if you like) visiting classrooms, seeing our facility and getting your questions answered.