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1. Who are Springs Charter Schools?

The new K-8 Otay Ranch Academy for the Arts is part of the Springs Charter Schools family of schools and shares its mission "to empower students by fostering their innate curiosity, engaging their parents, and promoting optimum learning by collaboratively developing a personalized learning program for each student."

River Springs Charter School obtained a five-year charter through Riverside County Office of Education (RCOE) in 2007. After the school was given a second five-year term in 2012, and in response to consistent growth, school administrators began to consider expansion by establishing new charters in San Diego, Orange, and/or San Bernardino Counties. Springs Charter Schools was created and is operated by parents who understand that every child is on a personalized

educational journey. Our talented teachers work hard to incorporate a rich diversity of skills development, curriculum, and extracurricular activity into each day. And our staff works hard to direct our school's resources where our students need them most.

2. What is the Otay Ranch Academy for the Arts approach to teaching?

Arts Integration is a way of life at Otay Ranch School for the Arts. It is not an activity that is reserved for arts classes or something that a teacher may do once a week or once a month. It is a dedication to a philosophy of teaching that relies on providing students with **concrete experiences** to connect their understanding.

"When well planned and implemented, arts integration is one of the most effective ways for a wide range of students with a wide range of interests, aptitudes, styles, and experiences to form a community of active learners taking responsibility for and ownership of their own learning." Renaissance in the Classroom pg. 26

3. What is arts integration?

The Kennedy Center's Definition for Arts Integration: "Arts Integration is an approach to teaching in which students construct and demonstrate understanding through an art form. Students engage in a creative process which connects an art form and another subject area and meets evolving objectives in both."

Accessed May 1, 2014 at The Kennedy Center ARTSEDGE: http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/how-to/arts-integration-beta/what-is-arts-integration-beta.aspx

Arts Integration is instruction combining two or more content areas, wherein the arts constitute one or more of the integrated areas. The integration is based on shared or related concepts, and instruction in each content area has depth and integrity reflected by embedded assessments, standards, and objectives. Integrated instruction is often designed, implemented, and evaluated in collaboration with other teachers, arts specialists, community artists, and institutions; and delivered, experienced and assessed through a variety of modalities: artistic processes, inquiry methods, and intelligences.

Accessed May 1, 2014, at Southeast Center for Education in the Arts: http://www.utc.edu/Outreach/SCEA/artsintegration.php

4. Can arts integration programs truly support student achievement? (Why integrate the arts into education?)

Yes! Research, in recent years, clearly demonstrates the critical role the arts plays in education, through the remarkable relationships between learning, knowing, and the arts. Arts integration is a strategy within the reach of most schools, districts, and communities. In these schools, children are engaged, happy, and learning. In particular, arts-integrated education has been shown to:

- improve student problem solving and communications skills;
- address the needs of all students including ESL, gifted, exceptional and different learners;
- improve student behavior, attendance and achievement;
- provide an alternative method to assess student success;
- increase community involvement in the schools; and
- improve teacher job satisfaction.

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5. Can the arts really impact my child's future?

Absolutely! The arts foster skills important for the workplace. According to a U.S. Labor Department's report (Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills) skills that arts education promotes have been shown to be critically important in the workplace. These skills include creative thinking, problem solving, responsibility, sociability and self-esteem. When students create, they constantly generate ideas and translate them into reality. The arts teach learners to know themselves as capable citizens in a democratic society - observing, creating, reflecting, making choices, and taking responsibility for actions in the world.

6. Is ORAA Kindergarten full day?

Yes, our kindergarten is full-day four days per week with one homestudy day. Since our kindergarten class is arts integrated and project & centers based, please know that students will spend limited time sitting at tables or involved in whole-group instruction.

7. How many days does my child attend school?

The Otay Ranch Academy for the Arts is a wonderful opportunity to have the benefit of amazing credentialed teachers four (4) days per week - Tuesday - Friday - and also have a part in your children's education guided by you as their teacher (1) one day a week - Monday - and having them home with you for homestudy day. The classroom teacher assigns work for the homestudy day and parents guide their child's learning from home on that day. Work is turned in the following school day.

8. Will my child have homework?

Well-designed homework, at the right time in a child's development, can have significant impact on his/her learning. Homework can reinforce skills, inspire out-of-school exploration and learning, teach the basics of responsibility, and help to instill the discipline of learning. Therefore, we take a thoughtful and developmental approach to homework at Otay Ranch Academy for the Arts.

9. Will kids get any other short breaks during the day other than Lunch/PE?

We have not planned for "official" breaks other than a 30-minute lunch and 30 minute PE, but teachers will have the flexibility to offer short breaks, change the type of activity that students are doing, and otherwise be responsive to students' needs.

10. Is there a lunch program?

Yes. There is a nutritionally balanced lunch program provided by Aramark at an affordable cost to parents.

11. Will there be free or reduced-price lunch available?

Yes. This opportunity is the same as in any other San Diego County public school.

12. How often will students take field trips/time out of class?

We have budgeted for one field trip per class every other month. However, that does not include smaller trips in the neighborhood, to the library and the local parks.

13. Will the students take the same mandatory testing that is administered at traditional public schools?

Yes, as a public charter school we are required to do the state testing.

14. What if my child has an IEP or 504 plan?

Children with an IEP or 504 will be served according to their plan. We will have in-class and pull-out services.

15. Do students pay tuition?

No, Otay Academy for the Arts is a public charter school. Since the school is a public school, there is no tuition for students.

16. How do I enroll?

The first step in the enrollment process is completing an application. Enrollment dates are scheduled for students who have been completed the application process.

17. What is the curriculum?

Otay Ranch Academy for the Arts offers a rigorous curriculum that is artistically approached. We will use the arts to enhance each facet of learning.

18. When will Otay Ranch Academy for the Arts open?

The first day of classes will begin August 26, 2014

19. Would you like to Homeschool your child?

Springs Charter Schools provides experienced homeschooling support with hundreds of educational choices for parents, from teaching methods and curricula to classroom experiences, field trips and events. Come discover what Springs Charter Schools can do for your family!

It is estimated that there are close to 2 million children being homeschooled in the nation today. "Very different people are entering homeschooling than did 20 years back" says Mitchell Stevens, author of *Kingdom of Children, a History of Homeschooling*, published by Princeton University Press. According to the federal government, up to three quarters of the families that homeschool today say they do so primarily because they are worried about the quality of their children's education.

20. What are Homeschool Enrichment Classes?

Our enrichment program for K-8 students is intended to complement your child's homeschooling experience. Many classes are thematic in nature, including history, science, and the arts. These classes are offered to Homeschool students one day per week (Mondays). Your child may attend ½ day or enjoy a full day of classes. These optional classes are fun and creative while still teaching necessary skills. For example, one popular class that will be offered at this location is Lego League. Students hone critical thinking, planning, and engineering skills to build and compete within the group.