



PARENT HANDBOOK

Ile Omode School is an Educational Institution of Wo'se Community Church.

In Pursuit of the Whole African

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Important Facts</i>	<i>Page</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Ile Omode Mission Statement</i>	<i>Page</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Curriculum.....</i>	<i>Page</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Attendance</i>	<i>Page</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Tuition.....</i>	<i>Page</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Tuition Schedule.....</i>		
<i>Pick Up & Late Pick Up.....</i>		
<i>Meals</i>		
<i>Field Trips.....</i>		
<i>TeacherEase.....</i>	<i>Page</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Homework.....</i>		
<i>Teacher Responsibility.....</i>		
<i>Student Responsibility.....</i>		
<i>Parent Responsibility.....</i>		
<i>Books And Computers</i>	<i>Page</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Parent Participation.....</i>	<i>Page</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>Required Service Hours.....</i>		
<i>Family Meetings.....</i>		
<i>Fundraising.....</i>		
<i>Safety.....</i>	<i>Page</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>Illness & Medications.....</i>		
<i>Emergency Medical.....</i>		
<i>Required Immunizations.....</i>		
<i>Calendar And Communications</i>	<i>Page</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>School Dress Code</i>	<i>Page</i>	<i>33</i>
<i>Discipline.....</i>		
<i>After School.....</i>		
<i>PRE-SCHOOL.....</i>	<i>Page</i>	<i>40</i>
<i>Clothing and Bedding.....</i>		

Ile Omode School
 8924 Holly Street
 Oakland, CA 94621
 (510) 632-8230 [voice]
 (510) 632-1286 [fax]



Karibu (Welcome) to the Ile Omode Family,

We have the responsibility to establish and develop our own educational institutions for our children. Every new family strengthens our institution and brings us one step closer to our goal of the restoration of our people to our traditional greatness.

This handbook provides you with basic information about Ile Omode School. Changes may be made during the course of the year, and if this happens we will announce the modifications.

We believe in the importance of the home-school connection, which is critical to the success of an educational program for your child. This handbook will answer some of your questions throughout the year. It describes some Ile Omode policies and procedures. The policies have been developed for the protection of children and the smooth operation of the school. If at any time you have questions, comments or suggestions, please feel free to call or contact your child's teacher or the school's Director.

Asante Sana (Thank You),

Ile Omode School



THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW

This is only a brief summary of the most critical contents of the handbook. Parents must read, and are held responsible for knowing the information in the handbook.

1. Students who are habitually late may be asked to leave the school.
2. Breakfast service begins at 7:30 am and cleanup begins at 8:15 am. We will not serve breakfast after 8:20 am.
3. The general hours of operation are from 7:30 am until 6:00 pm.
4. Monthly tuition is \$725 for middle school students, \$675 for an elementary student enrolled in the afterschool program, and \$705 for preschool children.
5. Materials fee is due in August prior to the start of the new academic year.
6. For enrolled students, there is no daily rate for the afterschool program. Thus if your child is afterschool for one day, you are required to pay the monthly fee. If you do not enroll in the afterschool program it is because you know with absolute certainty that your child will be picked up every day at 3:30 pm.
7. Late pick-up is charged \$1 per minute after 6:00 pm, and is immediately payable to the staff person on duty.
8. Adults are welcome to join us for breakfast, or drop in for lunch. For adults, the breakfast is \$3 and the lunch is \$5.
9. Homework is generally due every day, and elementary children receive a "Homework Sheet" that specifies their assignments; middle school students use a day planner to track their assignments. An elementary parent must review the child's homework and sign the sheet before the next day. Middle school parents should review the day planner.
10. Parents are financially responsible for any lost or damaged books, and for laptops assigned to children (3rd-8th grade).
11. Each family is required to complete 3 hours of Required Service each month, including the required monthly family meeting. Each family parent should be on an Ile Omode Mamas and Babas Organized (IMABO) committee.
12. Each family is required to sell tickets to each fundraiser, and is held responsible for the ticket value whether they sell the tickets or not.
13. Practice good safety, please park your car and escort your children into the building.
14. Don't send your child to school if they are ill. If any medication (including over-the-counter and vitamins) must be administered to your child, you must provide the medication to a staff person with a medication consent form.
15. Students must adhere to the dress code.



INTRODUCTION TO ILE OMODE

Mission

To sustain an educational institute in the best traditions of our ancestors and elders. We will give birth to the genius resident in every child; support parents in their efforts to become models of right behavior and right order for their children; and provide a working environment that allows our educators to follow their passion of teaching and loving our children.

Objective

- Our children will learn a daily rhythm. They will see and feel the consistency which will help them to understand responsibility and self determination.
- Our children will develop their critical thinking skills through exploration.
- Our children will develop their physical selves through regular exercise and proper nutrition.
- Our children will learn to develop their creative spirits through exposure to music, dance and free expression.
- Our children will be introduced to the ideas of promoting peace, reciprocity, community empowerment, self love and respect for elders through the practice of the Ten Virtues and the Nguzo Saba.

History of Ile Omode

In 1986, the members of Wo'se Community Church decided that there was a need to develop an independent, African-centered educational institution in Oakland, California. Major concerns were the mis-education and the culturally and spiritually deficient education of African and African-American youth in the public schools.

The members of Wo'se Community Church established Ile Omode as a manifestation of kujichagulia ("self determination"). Ile Omode means "House of the Children" in Yoruba, an ethnic group in West Africa. Our school is designed to educate and train our young people to become outstanding leaders and workers for our people.

Ile Omode began its formal educational program in 1986 as a licensed pre-school with teachers Oluri Oyin, Okanona Ka Kalungu, and Jasiri Neema Kadiri. In September 1989, after adding kindergarten and first grades, Ile Omode became recognized by the State of California as a private school. During our history, we have served hundreds of children and their families.

Philosophy of Ile Omode

We believe that all children have a right to a quality education, and that genius resides in every child. Thus every spirit is given life to fulfill a purpose, and it is our responsibility to guide and instruct our children on their path to their greatness. Each of us is given a responsibility that extends beyond mere existence, but mandates that we seek our highest purpose – what we refer to as an individual's vocation, or calling. Our responsibility as a



community of conscious and committed persons is to ensure each child is given the tools and provided the opportunity to find their highest calling.

Education must produce persons of the noblest character, and who seek the greatest good in themselves and humanity. The ancient scribe, Kheti, wrote, "It is in the development of character that instruction succeeds." Education must develop persons who are prepared to assume their role as gatekeepers and custodians to our fantastic legacy. Our children must be prepared to embrace and seek strength and fortitude from our people's greatest accomplishment, while also learning from our greatest shortcomings. Our children can not simply extol our ancestor's greatness, but must recognize that they stand in our ancestor's footsteps, and that our collective future lies in the steps that they themselves must forge.

Ile Omode is grounded in academic and cultural principles which provide a foundation for the development of self-determined scholarship and leadership. Our goal is to create a learning environment which encourages creative problem solving, teamwork, and confidence. Through learning experiences that are both challenging and fun, we are preparing our children to compete in a technologically advanced society. Dr. W.E.B. DuBois wrote that "we cannot survive. If we are ...trained not with reference to what we can be, but with sole reference to what somebody wants us to be." Thus we emphasize African values and community as a framework for the utilization of this technology. Our vision is that our students become highly motivated and creative leaders who are both capable and committed to the betterment of our nation.

We stress the development of our students' bodies, minds, souls, and consciousness. We develop our bodies by eating a proper diet and exercising daily. We develop our minds by acquiring knowledge and skills that are useful to our individual and collective advancement. We develop our souls by developing our relationship with the Creator and with our people based on Maat (truth, justice, right-order, and reciprocity), which as Dr. Maulana Karenga points out is both "a standard of rightness and a goal of practice". We develop our consciousness by attaining self-awareness, identity, self-control, and discipline.

Our children, today's children, represent our tomorrow. What they are gives us an indication of our future as a people. Ile Omode joins parents in the development of children who are prepared to become leaders and workers for our people.



ILE OMODE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Ile Omode School's curriculum is based on a cognitive approach to learning. This approach emphasizes creative thinking and problem solving. By cognitive learning we simply mean learning through experience. The classroom experience embodies hands on teaching methods, student directed learning activities and self-motivation incentives - the focus for learning is removed from the usual teacher centered teaching methods. The intellectual development of the student is guided by activities that stimulate their curiosity and ultimately their high critical thinking.

The range of skills to be developed in the following areas will be appropriate to each child's development level, but in general includes language arts (reading, writing and grammar), science, art, math, foreign language, rhythmic expression, social science and skills, community awareness, physical education, and health

The binding threads that run through the entire curriculum are:

Praise to our Creator,
Honor and respect for our elders and ancestors,
Knowledge and love of who we are, and finally,
restoration of our people to our traditional greatness.

Ile Omode's curriculum is designed to meet and exceed standards of achievement outlined by the California State Department of Education. Our curriculum contains elements derived from the Council of Independent Black Institution's (CIBI) instructional guidelines which encourage an African centered approach to education. This assures that our children will learn not only about African culture and traditions that have influenced world history and culture, but will examine and view the entirety of humanity's experience from our own perspective.

We extend the above requirements to meet the specific needs of our students and our community, as we seek to incorporate the best principles and practices from our ancestors and throughout the diaspora. Additionally we offer an extensive array of enrichment programs

Enrichment programs are designed to enhance the core curriculum and serves as an extension of our core subjects. We don't view enrichment programs as "extra curricular", but rather as "required curricular". Music for example, aids in math instruction, and capoeira benefits history instruction. Other programs that run through a typical school week include African dance, drumming, computer training, singing, and martial arts.



NOTE: Due to the lack of resources, our program is not designed specifically for children with special needs.

Religious Instruction

Ile Omode does not provide religious instruction. Although the school was founded by Wo'se Community Church, the staff and parents represent a wide diversity of religious practices. The religions that have sustained African people from the first people to today have taken as many forms as our needs and circumstances have dictated. Through all the manifestations our belief in something greater than ourselves has sustained and nourished us. It is this belief, rather than a specific religious doctrine that Ile Omode embraces – the spiritual integrity of African people.

Ile Omode students must see themselves as spirits called to creation to fulfill a destiny. They must understand and honor ancestors whose “shoulders we stand on”. They must take time to honor the spirit that lives within all of us. As such every morning children pour libation at ancestor altars that they create; this is done for both historic and personal ancestors. Each classroom maintains an altar that reflects each child's family's ancestors. Morning instruction begins after libation, song, meditation and reflection. We want students to reflect on their blessings, and the promise that each day offers.

Furthermore, our school draws from the ethical and moral instructions from the Ten Virtues (Kemetic, or ancient Egyptian), and incorporates the Nguzo Saba (Kwanzaa's seven principles) as a defining standard for our individual and communal expectations.

Achievement and Testing

Ile Omode students are expected to master a given number of skills within each content area during an academic cycle. Students are tested weekly, and the exams are always available for parents to review. Teachers take different approaches when handling exams, so speak with your child's teacher. At the conclusion of each academic year, final exams are administered. These exams reflect the body of work covered during the year, and generally include mathematics, language arts (reading, writing and grammar), and social studies.

Progress Reports

Progress reports are issued to parents at the end of each ten (10) week quarter for elementary and middle school students (4 per year), 2-3 times in the year for pre-kindergarten students, and twice a year for preschool students. Parents should consult the school calendar for specific dates. Parents are required to attend a parent/teacher conference twice a year.



ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Hours of Operation

Ile Omode officially opens at 7:30 am, and closes at 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday. The instructional day for elementary and middle school students begins at 8:30 am and ends at 3:30 pm. The afterschool program begins at 3:30 pm and ends at 6:00 pm. The preschool is open from 7:30 am until 6:00 pm. There is no separate afterschool program for the preschool.

Absences

Ile Omode students are expected to attend class regularly. When your child is absent from school, please notify us with the specific reason on the day your child is absent from school before 9:00 am. Please call the school to report your child's absence and leave the following information:

- Your child's name
- Reason for absence
- Expected return date

Upon your child's return to school, a note from you is required with the date(s) your child was absent and include the reason for the absence. The note will be filed in your child's records by the teacher.

Students who attend less than 85% of the instructional days in a report period due to unexcused absences risk failing that session. In the event of extenuating circumstances, students will be excused. Excused absences are those that have been cleared as legal or valid, i.e., personal illness; medical, dental, and optical appointments; death in the immediate family, and quarantine directed by a county or city health office. Valid absences include funeral for family death, family illness, and other urgent, and/or unforeseeable circumstances.

Unexcused absences include personal business, family business, needed time at home, oversleeping, and vacation, etc. Arriving after 10:15 am or leaving before 1:45 pm is considered a half-day absence.

In the event of unexcused absences, note the following:

- Three (3) unexcused absences are allowed per quarter.
- The fourth unexcused absence will require a conference, documentation of absences, and a signed contract.
- The fifth unexcused absence may result in a dropped grade and a second conference.
- The sixth absence may result in a recommendation for another school.



Tardiness

Classroom instruction begins promptly at 8:30 a.m., and ends at 3:30 p.m for elementary, and 6:00 for preschool. Please bring your child to school on time -- not later than 8:15 a.m. -- so that your child has enough time to prepare to settle down. If you arrive later than 8:30 a.m., your child will be considered tardy. Please write a note to your child's teacher, which will become a part of your child's file. Preschool children should arrive no later than 8:45 am.

- Four excused tardies are allowed per quarter.
- The fifth tardy per quarter requires a conference with the teacher and/or administrator, documentation, and a signed contract.
- For the seventh tardy, the student's grade drops and a second conference is required.
- For the ninth tardy, the family may be recommended to find another program.

Our report cards reflect tardiness and absence for each marking period. Excessive or chronic tardiness will be reported to parents, and students may be asked to make up the instructional time that they have missed.

ABSENCE DUE TO A FAMILY TRIP. Students are discouraged from missing significant school days for family trips. However, if it is unavoidable please notify your child's teacher at least two weeks in advance to coordinate self-guided lessons while they're absent. Preparing these lessons is not always possible, and will be done if time and other circumstances permit. Obviously it falls to you to ensure that children honor their school work even when they're absent from school.

ILLNESS AT SCHOOL. Should your child become ill at school and need to go home, you will be notified by the office. If we are unable to reach you, the person designated on your emergency card will be contacted. Depending on the time the child becomes ill, this may be marked as an absence.



TUITION

The tuition amount is calculated on a yearly basis. The yearly calendar for preschool is twelve months, beginning in September. The yearly financial calendar for elementary and middle school is ten months (August through May). Families may pay the tuition in full prior to the first school day (August), across two payments (August and February), or monthly. A tuition discount is available for families paying in either one or two installments. For families electing to pay monthly the following rules apply:

- Tuition is due and payable on the first day of each month, and must be deposited in the drop box located outside the school's office in the provided envelopes.
- Tuition becomes late on the sixth (6th) day of the month when a \$25 late fee will be assessed.
- By the tenth (10th) day of the month if no tuition has been received, a family will be required to remove their child from the program for non-payment.

Special arrangements for hardships will need to be discussed with and approved by the Financial Administrator. The time to approach the Financial Administrator for special arrangement is well in advance of tuition due dates. A processing fee of an additional \$25 per month will be assessed for special arrangements. Additionally, circumstances requiring special handling and increased administrative time to process will be charged additional processing fees, such as paying weekly.

Tuition will not be prorated due to illness, holidays, or family vacation, as the tuition is based on either a 10-month or 12-month (Pre-School/Pre-K) contract.

Parents or guardians will be given a discount on tuition (not after school nor the meal plan) in the following cases.

- Yearly tuition paid in full at enrollment - 10% discount.
- Payment of yearly tuition in two bi-annual installments - 5% discount.

A sibling discount of 15% for *tuition only* is provided for each child after the first in a family and only if the first sibling continues to be a student at Ile Omode. The sibling discount is always accessed against the lowest tuition.

Unpaid Tuition:

Unpaid tuition may also result in the following:

- You may not have access to your child's progress report
- You may not have access to your child's transcripts



- Your child not participating in graduation exercises
- Your child being removed from school
- Your child's scholarship (if applicable) may be revoked

Families whose accounts have fallen delinquent will not receive their child's progress report or transcript. Additionally, your child(ren) may not be allowed to participate in graduation/promotion ceremonies, and if the tuition balance is unaddressed your children will not be allowed to return to the school. Families on scholarship may lose their scholarship if they don't remain in good financial standings.

As you know, the tuition provides excellent school scholastic programs, teacher salaries, a healthy breakfast and lunch program, books, supplies, music and other materials required to give our students a quality education. When tuition is not paid by our families, our resources are being drained and therefore our programs suffer. We are not comfortable with removing your child/children from this educational nurturing environment however we can not continue to allow your contractual obligation to go unpaid.

Parents who become one (1) month delinquent will be sent a second invoice and a letter from the Financial Administrator. If your child has been removed due to non-payment, the monthly tuition will continue to be charged until your child is formally removed from the school roster (child's placement may be forfeited). Should the financial arrangement be made and not complied with, then the arrangement will be considered void and your child may be removed from the school until such time as your payments have been brought current.

Materials Fee

The materials fee covers all school related materials needed by your child throughout the year, including binder, writing material, textbooks and workbooks, as well as non-compromised musical instruments (see "Other Fees" below). In addition, the fee also covers science and art materials. The fees are higher for K-1st because they require more consumable materials (i.e. one-time use textbooks). Middle school material fees also cover insurance for their laptop computers and music consumables, such as reeds, grease, etc.

We strive to ensure uniformity of materials for our students, which actually aids in the instruction. As many of you know, remaining organized is often a great challenge for young children, and uniform binders and workspace helps teachers to guide students towards taking greater responsibility.



Tuition Schedule

	Tuition		Afterschool (monthly) ¹	Testing (one time)	Application Fee	Materials Fee (once annually)
	Annual	Monthly				
Preschool	\$8,820	\$735	Included	n/a	50.00	\$100
K-1st	\$6,750	\$675	\$50	\$25	50.00	\$150
2nd-5th	\$6,750	\$675	\$50	\$25	50.00	\$150
6th-8th	\$7,250	\$725	\$50	\$25	50.00	\$250

Scholarships and Agency Subsidies

If a student is a recipient of a scholarship, the total annual value of the scholarship will be subtracted from the child's tuition, to determine the parent's obligation. In the event that a scholarship is retracted or terminated, the parent is responsible for the adjusted tuition amount. Parents who receive subsidies are responsible for ensuring the agency or issuing institution's guidelines are followed. Parents are responsible for any difference between their tuition obligation and the agency's contribution, including if the subsidy is modified, terminated, or revoked.

Some agencies may require that your account be current to continue to receive a subsidy. You will be notified by the Financial Administrator if you're past due payments threaten your subsidy. It is best to maintain a current account to avoid this type of action.

Other Fees

UNIFORMS: Uniforms are required for children in kindergarten through 8th grade. See the school's office for the uniform brochure, and see "Uniforms" in this handbook.

MUSIC: Students interested in playing the clarinet (3rd – 5th grades) must pay \$25 to cover the cost of a mouthpiece and reeds. Middle school students must also pay a fee (see the Director for details).

RETURNED CHECKS: Returned (bounced) checks will be assessed a \$25 processing fee. After a second returned check, parents will be required to submit a cashier's check or money order for six months or the remainder of the year whichever comes first.

Departure from Ile Omode

Ile Omode requires formal written notification of the intent to remove a child from the program at least two weeks in advance of departure. Tuition charges continue for two weeks after

¹ Assumes family is in good standing with regard to fundraising requirements and monthly service hours.



notification. The student is required to submit a completed check out form as a condition of withdrawal. All obligations including, but not necessarily limited to, full payment of outstanding tuition and library fees and textbook return must be met before school records will be released. A negative credit rating will be submitted for failure to pay all outstanding debts.

Official student transcripts will be mailed directly by Ile Omode to the student's receiving school upon request, after the checkup process is completed. Official transcripts cannot be transmitted to any receiving school by a parent or any other third party.

PICKING UP CHILDREN

Children can only be picked up by parents (or guardians) or by an approved person designated by the parents. A note or a phone call can serve as authorization for one day, but if the designated person will be a regular pick-up person, that person's name must be added to the informational forms in the office. A phone call will only suffice if the child is clearly familiar with the person, and that person's demeanor, appearance, and conduct are acceptable. Regardless of your arrangements we will not release a child to an adult's care if we deem the situation unsafe. In this circumstance be mindful that you will still be charged a late fee.

Parking your car to pick up your child may be an inconvenience but please refrain from calling the office to ask to locate your child in the building and send them outside or to tell them you are on your way. You should explain to your children the importance of being on time to meet you.

Additionally, children are never allowed to leave the campus, unless accompanied by an adult.



LATE PICK-UP

Ile Omode is open from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Elementary children who are not enrolled in the afterschool program must be picked up at 3:30 pm. A late fee of \$1 per minute is assessed immediately beginning at 6:00 pm.

Late fees are due and payable immediately and in cash to the staff person providing care. If for any reason the parent is unable to pay immediately, the staff person on duty will write in the sign-out time, and the parent must initial the time.

If the parent does not pay by the next day, the parent is billed for the late fee and an *additional \$5 administrative fee is added*. Be aware that the late fees continue until the child is united with the parent or family representative.

Calling to forewarn staff that you're late is a polite gesture and highly encouraged, but does not avert paying the late fee. A parent who is continuously late will need to speak with the Director and may either be charged more for afterschool (\$75), pay an increased late fee (\$2/minute), or be barred from using the afterschool program for a period of time.



MEALS

Ile Omode provides healthy and nutritious breakfast and lunches each day, as well as a morning and afternoon snack. Breakfast is served from 7:50 am until 8:20 am. The stoppage at 8:20 am is necessary to ensure that children have adequate time to prepare for class, as children are escorted to their classroom at 8:25 am. If your child is late for breakfast please make arrangements for your child to eat breakfast before arriving at school. We will not make allowance for children who are late for breakfast. Preschool lunch is served in the preschool classroom at approximately 12:00 pm. Students in kindergarten through 3rd grade eat lunch at 12:00 pm in the downstairs cafeteria, followed by 4th -8th grade students, who eat lunch in the cafeteria at 12:30 pm. During field trips bag lunches are provided.

Children are required to wash their hands before eating, and are expected to say blessings before eating (see the "Pre-meal Ritual" in the appendix). While socializing is allowed, students are expected to conduct themselves properly during meals, and are required to clean their trays/plates when done. Each day, several students are pre-assigned to serve, and also to clean the cafeteria.

The breakfast and lunch are prepared onsite, and caters to meat and vegetarian diets. Ile Omode encourages healthy eating, that is a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, grains, beans, legumes, nuts, etc., and one that minimizes meat (beef and pork is prohibited), sugars, fats, refined flours, and other unhealthy items such as additives. Generally, once each week the entire lunch is vegetarian. Parents of children with dietary restrictions should ensure that the restrictions are adequately noted in the enrollment material, so that we may ensure the best possible support for your child's needs.

Children should not be sent to school with other snacks or food items, as it is difficult to monitor and it creates problems. It is especially problematic for younger children who will occasionally leave food in their desk, cubicle, or locker as this creates infestation problems. A monthly menu is posted outside the kitchen, and is generally available on the school's website. Parents are invited to eat breakfast or visit for lunch. Parents and guests are asked to pay \$3.00 for breakfast and \$5.00 for lunch.

Occasionally, the school has karamu's (potlucks), and it is important for families to honor the community's dietary requirements. Thus please do not bring any pork or beef dishes, and fast food is not allowed.



Birthday Parties

Children's birthdays are a fun and enjoyable aspect of the school year. Often parents wish to hold small birthday celebrations, including cake and ice cream. As some children are lactose intolerant we encourage parents, if their budget permits, to offer soy-based ice cream as well as milk-based. Parents should decide on whether they want to provide cake and ice cream for their child's classroom or the entire school. You should coordinate in advance with your child's teacher to organize a celebration in the child's classroom. Ideally birthday parties should be held in the later afternoon, so as to minimize the instructional impact. If you're expecting a larger school celebration, please consult with the school's Director, well in advance.



FIELD TRIPS

Ile Omode incorporates field study trips in every aspect of the instructional program. Field trips are an important ingredient in the instruction and generally are used to extend classroom lessons.

There are school-wide field trips and classroom field trips. School-wide field trips are generally included on the yearly calendar, and include a trip to the snow in March and an end-of-year field trip to the Santa Cruz Beach and Boardwalk. In order for preschoolers to attend most school-wide field trips they must be escorted by a parent, guardian, or designated adult (over 18 years of age), who fully understands that their role is to watch and monitor the preschooler *at all times*.

Parents are invited to participate whenever they are able, and we will make every effort to notify parents two weeks in advance, and provide longer notice for costlier fieldtrips. Parents are generally responsible for any field trip expenses, although we make every effort to minimize the expense. Lunch is occasionally provided for chaperones, but parent chaperones should be prepared to purchase their lunch or pay for a school provided lunch. Chaperoning a field trip counts towards a maximum of 2 hours of required service for the month, although the field trip may run longer than 3 hours.

We rely on parents to escort and drive on field trips. If you volunteer to drive children, you will need to complete the "**Driver Background Information**" form. The required form is included in your registration packet. All driving parents must submit a current copy of a valid California driver's license and current proof of insurance. When driving, parents are expected to take responsibility for transporting the same children to and from the field trips, as this procedure helps to eliminate any possibility of leaving children behind. Parent chaperones should realize their tasks is to ensure the safety of all children, and therefore will be expected to follow basic protocols to ensure our children's safety, some of which include:

- Minimize or restrict socializing with other adults
- Maintain a post when our children are clustered together
- If you're given responsibility for a group of children, ensure they are within your sight at *all times*
- Minimize cell phone conversations and other distractions
- Speak respectfully to all children at all times, and leave and defer disciplining to staff



TEACHER EASE

Ile Omode introduced TeacherEase program tool in 2010 to increase communication between parent and teacher, teacher to student, and have the parents ability to know instantly how children were doing on a daily basis.

The TeacherEase Program allows parents to log-in and view their child's course assignments, attendance, cumulative average, and daily grades. It allows parents to be more involved which results in students becoming more productive and staying organized.

This program enables parents and teachers to correspond via email when notable events in your child's classes occur instantly. In addition, parents and teachers can better communicate at any time. With TeacherEase, parents can check a student's current assignments, know immediately when homework is due or didn't get completed or turned in. Parents will know what is due, when it is due and not have the surprise of children asking for help at the last minute. If your child were absent, you would know what they would need to make up. This way upon returning to school your child would be prepared and not have missed lessons.

Students have access to their grades, assignments, notes, progress same as parents. This enables students to be more responsible and encourages accountability. At any time during the school year parents can verify their child's current averages and get details on the grades being received.

For a parent to gain access to TeacherEase, their account must be setup the school office. Parents will then receive an email message with your child's log-in and password information.

Upon login, the parent can access their student(s) information only. Improving communication between parents and teachers will result in greater academic achievement of our students.



HOMEWORK

We believe that homework is an essential part of a sound educational program. It serves at least five purposes:

- 1) It reinforces classroom instruction
- 2) It provides feedback to teachers about student progress
- 3) It informs parents about the instructional program
- 4) It promotes communication between parents and teachers
- 5) It stimulates communication between parent and child.

Homework is generally assigned Monday through Thursday nights and may be assigned for the weekend as well (generally for students in the 3rd – 8th grades). Middle school students have homework that requires managing throughout the complete week. Following are minimum guidelines for reasonable amount of time spent on nightly homework.

Preschool	rarely (generally “fun” assignments)
Kindergarten	15 - 20 minutes
Grade 1	20 - 30 minutes
Grade 2-3	30 - 60 minutes
Grade 4-5	60 - 90 minutes
Grade 6-8	90 - 120 minutes

These are guidelines, as more time is probably needed for children who arrive at our school with academic deficiencies. Parents are expected to establish a regular work space and schedule for homework. We understand that parents’ work schedule and children’s extracurricular activities will occasionally make it difficult to properly schedule homework time, however parents should view homework as the highest priority for children after school, and their behavior must reflect it. If a parent or child’s schedule is so impacted that it doesn’t always provide time to complete homework, then parents should utilize the afterschool program for this purpose. Barring significant and unavoidable emergencies, we fully expect homework to be completed and verified by a parent or guardian each day.

Parents ensure that all assignments are complete and legible. Checking and validating a child’s homework is always encouraged, as it keeps parents abreast of the classroom instruction and their child’s performance. At a minimum however, parents must verify the homework’s completion. For example, if a child’s homework requires completing ten math problems, a parent may be not be able to check the child’s accuracy, but can ascertain that ten problems were attempted.



Elementary children receive a homework sheet each day. The homework sheet details the assignments for the day as well as the due date (almost always the next day). After reviewing the homework, parents should sign the homework sheet, and ensure the homework sheet is stored in the child's binder and returned to school the following day. Middle school student's homework is posted differently, and parents should consult with the middle school staff for specifics.

The following are consequences for failure to submit homework in a single progress review period:

- 2 - 3 failures require consultation with parents and a passing homework grade for the parent
- 4 failures require official conference, documentation and a signed contract
- 5+ failures require a second conference and low homework grade for the parent

HOMework	1	2	3	4
Completion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parental Engagement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The elementary progress reports include a section to evaluate homework completion, quality, and parental engagement (see the figure above). Homework completion and quality are letter grades, and "Parental Engagement" is a metric. The metrics are: (+) exceeds expectations, (=) meets expectations, and (-) below expectations.

Homework is a responsibility shared by teachers, students and parents. The following is a guideline for the expectations for each.

Teacher Responsibilities:

- Design homework assignments that prepare students for new content (e.g. collect leaves for an upcoming unit on the four seasons) or practice skills they have learned in class.
- Explain homework assignments so that students understand what is expected.
- Utilize the homework sheets to post homework assignments so that students know the expectations.
- Monitor the completion of homework assignments.
- Provide feedback on homework, when appropriate.
- Communicate with parents when homework is not completed on a regular basis.

Student Responsibilities:



- Ask questions if the homework assignment is not clear.
- Write down homework assignments in a homework journal or notebook, if a homework sheet is not provided.
- Complete all homework assignments independently to the best of his or her ability, with minimal assistance from parents or tutors.
- Do not copy assignments from friends or allow others to copy from you.
- Complete homework assignments according to the same neatness standards as expected in class.
- Complete and return homework in a timely manner as requested by the teacher.
- Work with the teacher in advance if known circumstances prevent the student from completing the homework on time.

Parent Responsibilities:

- Create a study area at home for the student to do homework and provide the necessary supplies.
- Establish specific times and routines for homework.
- Assist the student only if he or she wants help or has specific questions.
- If assistance is needed, help the student arrive at the answer on their own rather than provide the answer.
- Do not correct homework (as opposed to assist) or focus on what the student does wrong; allow the student to get help in those areas from the teacher.
- Ensure the required homework is complete and neat, and sign the homework sheet (elementary parents only)
- Stop working with the student if you become angry or frustrated.
- Communicate with the teacher if the student is consistently unable to complete their homework assignments.



BOOKS AND COMPUTERS

All textbooks issued to students during the school year are to be kept clean and handled carefully. If a student's book is lost, the family will have to pay the replacement cost within a week (the cost will include any necessary shipping and taxes). Most books receive a book cover, and parents, especially for younger children, should help develop a sense of responsibility for books.

Most textbooks, but not all, are assigned to students, and homework is generally assigned from the textbooks. Textbooks which are frequently sent home include math, language arts, social studies, and spelling. Science, writing and Spanish textbooks are used in the classroom and are not sent home regularly. Reading books (literature) are assigned throughout the school year.

Kindergarten and first grade children receive consumables, which are books they'll write in and keep. These include their math, phonics, and language arts books, and although the books will remain with the child, it is just as important that parents begin to iterate the importance of book care and responsibility. Don't allow young students to randomly doodle in their books.

There is a small reading library on site, and we also extensively use the local public library located nearby. We want every child to apply for a library card, since each class will generally visit the library frequently. We strongly encourage parents to keep a library card at school, and request that parents purchase a second library card. An additional library card is usually available from the library for a small fee. Parents and teachers should work together closely to ensure that books are returned to the library before the expiration - especially for younger children. Teachers will take responsibility for escorting the students to the library to return books, but parents should be mindful of library books in their child's possession.

COMPUTERS

Students in the 3rd through 8th grade are assigned laptop/Ipad computers for the school year. Parents must complete an orientation and sign a waiver of responsibility at the beginning of each school year in order for students to take the laptops home. Parents assume financial responsibility for any damage resulting from misuse.

Computer Use Policy

Computers are one of many tools at Ile Omode that can greatly facilitate learning. Students are given many opportunities to use computers and are encouraged to utilize technology for assignments, reports, projects, or any other school related endeavors. However, students are expected to show respect, responsibility, and safety when using computers at Ile Omode. The following policies apply to every Ile Omode computer and computer technology user:



- School computers and related technology are to be used only for school and education-related purposes.
- Computer software copyrights and licensing agreements must be honored.
- Students must not degrade the performance capacity of any computer or computer related technology.
- All documents must be stored only in the user's assigned folder.
- Students are not permitted to access any file or folder not belonging to them.
- Gum, candy, food, and drink are not allowed in the computer laboratory or when students use a computer anywhere in the school.
- Students may not download any file from the Internet without formal permission from the teacher.
- Students must not load any program onto a school computer without explicit permission from the teacher.
- Students must not alter settings, beyond simple customization of the computer's desktop appearance (i.e. backdrop images)
- Students must not make any changes to the computer's interface or operating system, or affix any labels or stickers to the outer case



PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parent participation at Ile Omode is absolutely vital. We are a community-based school, and believe that each family brings talents which will help to strengthen our larger community. This handbook will specify the required service hours, and other expectations, but this can all be synopsized by remembering that your participation is what *creates* community. IMABO which is an acronym for Ile Omode Mamas and Babas Organized was re-established to give parents the opportunity to participate in various aspects of the schools growth.

It is strongly encouraged that each parent become a member of a committee and stays actively involved giving our children the understanding of community service, sharing, giving and commitment that sustains us here at Ile Omode. It is also important that our children are clear that their school is an extension of their family values.

Required Service Hours

Each family is required to complete 3 hours of required service per month from September through June or pay \$45 for each month the required service hours is not completed. This amount is billed, and parents should include the amount in their tuition payment. We would prefer to see families participating in the activities of the school. Unless specific arrangements are made in advance families are expected to complete the three hours each month, and can not accumulate them over several months.

There is a monthly family meeting, which counts towards one hour of the three hours of required service. Be sure to sign-in at these meeting to ensure your attendance is recorded. You can always find a list of tasks posted outside the main office. If you have other ideas for service just speak with someone on the Office staff. The following is just a brief list of ideas for service tasks:

1. Field trip volunteer
2. Classroom aid
3. In-kind donations
4. Preschool laundry
5. Maintenance or repairs
6. Special activity for the children
7. Fundraising Commitments

Family Meetings

Parents are required to attend monthly hour long family meetings. Most meetings begin at 5:45 pm, but the time may change to accommodate the schedule of the majority of parents. Depending on the agenda, the meetings may be divided between preschool, elementary and middle school programs.



In these instances we'll use the first half hour to share information common to everyone, and divide the groups for specific work or further sharing. Since we know some parents have children in both programs, we'll try to ensure that no parent is left out. Minutes are available (either onsite, distributed on the email list, and/or posted on the website), so a parent can consult one of the depositories if their time is split between the two meetings. We know your time is very limited so we'll attempt to have joint meetings whenever possible.

Volunteer hours will be subtracted from a family's account for each attended family meeting. During family meetings important information is shared, and parent committees report and continue their work. Your attendance is vital to remain abreast of upcoming events and coming expectations. Family meetings are chaired by the parent coordinator, with one or two assistants. We expect every parent to provide these persons with full support.

Mandatory Orientation

At the beginning of each year, the Ile Omode Board will hold a mandatory orientation meeting. All parents are required to attend. There is an additional new family's orientation which is held during the first week of the school.

Community Participation

Throughout the year there are activities which are not explicitly school events, but for which our community supports. Often these events are reflective of the values and rituals which we believe are vital to this community, and we will share information about the events as they approach our calendar. Some of the events may be new to your family, but we encourage you to make an effort to participate.

Each year we have lessons preceding the Maafa commemoration (see holidays), and this event of healing and remembrance is an important ceremony even for the youngest children. In December our children generally participate in at least two Kwanzaa events, one is always Umoja, the first day of Kwanzaa. If you're in town during the winter break we hope you'll make time to ensure not only your child's participation, but your family's as well.

From time to time you may receive invitations to spiritual walks, study groups, political events, dance and drum circles, or men or women circles. Some of the events carry important lessons for our children, but often more importantly carry lessons for adults. Ile Omode believes that existing in community requires social, spiritual, and political awareness and engagement. We are a community of differing religious backgrounds (including agnostic) and political affiliations, but we feel it is more important that we *practice* responsible community stewardship regardless of religious beliefs or political affiliations. We provide information table/kiosks, and parents are free to forward information for inclusion in any one of our communication vehicles.

Fundraising



Fundraising is a necessary engagement of any non-profit organization or school. Our operating budget relies on our fundraising events to bring in a significant amount of revenue, and for us to maintain tuition at a reasonable level. All parents are needed to ensure the success of each fundraising effort.

While fundraising is necessary, we don't believe that fundraising should dominate our school calendar nor shackle our interaction; as such you won't find monthly fundraising. We will however encourage our families to always be conscious of sharing information about Ile Omode and recruiting for Friends Of Ile Omode to financially support the school.

Our office administration will be happy to follow up with Friends you've identified and ensure that your Friends will be kept informed of all things relative to "Friends Of Ile Omode".

We have two specific fundraisers each year. The names, description, and general dates are provided below. The ticket prices shown below are just references and may change each year.

Bowlathon (1st Friday in December)

Held at a local bowling "alley", children are **required** to secure at least 20 sponsors for the event. Each child bowls and their sponsors will pledge to donate an amount based on the child's score or a flat fee. This is also a great event for the entire family to enjoy. Prizes are awarded to children based on their collection of sponsors and the total amount of money raised. Parents are instrumental in helping children obtain sponsors and collecting donations after the event.

Spring Fundraiser (Casino Night)

This family fundraiser began in 6252 (2012) and is an adult evening event held at a chosen venue outside of Ile Omode School. Families are required to sell tickets according to the size of the family's children attending Ile Omode. Ticket prices have previously been set at \$25 each. There is a significant parent contribution for this event, and every family is expected to actively participate in a committee in addition to selling tickets.

The ticket sales are required. **Even if a family does not sell the tickets they are still held accountable for the ticket's face value.** Some families have no problem selling the

tickets, while it is initially a struggle for others. If your family falls in the later group, you are encouraged to begin speaking with your friends and family as early as possible.

Individual classrooms or the student governing body may organize smaller fundraisers, such as a bake sale, and of course your participation is encouraged.

SAFETY

Traffic Safety



Traffic safety is always a concern near a school. Thankfully our school is in a designated “slow school” zone, and has street safety bumps. Parents should still exercise normal precautions. **Do not Double Park** as this creates an unsafe condition for children exiting your vehicle as well as other children. It also creates dangerous congestion, and unfortunately careless drivers often respond to congestion by driving more recklessly. Occasionally adults will park in the school’s driveway; as this results in the vehicle obstructing traffic, and is illegal, it should never be done. Take an additional minute and park your car to allow your children to safely exit your vehicle.

Children in the preschool through 3rd grades must be escorted into the building, and handed off to a staff person. Please do not simply sit in your car, watch your children enter the gate, and then drive off. Additionally, you should walk your children across the street, and always watch for, and yield to, all pedestrians.

If you’re to enter the school, be sure to secure your vehicle after parking, and report any unsafe conditions or suspicious persons to the Director or a staff person immediately.

Disaster Drills

Ile Omode engages in regular safety drills that include:

- Monthly fire drills
- Quarterly earthquake drills
- Safety emergency drills

In case of an emergency that prevents occupancy of the school building, emergency survival packs for each class are stored at the school, and students and staff will:

- Be outside well away from danger
- Be at the following location:
East Oakland Youth Development Center
8200 East 14th St., Oakland, CA 94621, (510) 569-8088
- Or a designated Red Cross evacuation center (Notice will be posted)



ILLNESS & MEDICATIONS

Ile Omode staff will not administer unprescribed medications to students. Exceptions may be made for minor conditions which would keep a student home for a lengthy period. Prescribed medications must come with explicit notes from parents regarding exact dosages, and they must have current information regarding the prescribing physician.

In order to decrease exposure to illness and to promote a healthier classroom environment, please review the following guidelines.

Use common sense:

- Don't send your child to school with an illness that could spread.
- Don't send your child if they would be miserable all day or would distract the other children.
- Have "just in case" care arrangements for your child in the event you are unable to stay home with a sick child.

Keep your child at home if they:

- Have a temperature of 100° F or more. Your child should remain at home in bed for the day and should be FEVER FREE FOR 24 HOURS before returning to school. Many children will have no fever in the morning, only to have it return later in the day.
- Have been diagnosed with a strep infection. Your child should be on antibiotics for 24 hours before returning the school.
- Have a sore throat, especially with fever or swollen glands in the neck.
- Have vomited during the night and into the morning.
- Have a persistent cough, chest congestion, or discolored nasal discharge.
- Have persistent diarrhea during the night and into the morning.
- Have a red eye with thick purulent drainage or discharge that has crusted over during sleep. Your child may return to school after the eye is clear, or 24 hours after starting medical treatment, or with written permission from the doctor.
- Have a body rash that you cannot identify, or that is accompanied by a fever.
- Have head lice. Treat with lice removal products and remove all nits before returning to school. Child must be examined by health office personnel upon return.

Students diagnosed with communicable diseases must remain out of school until they have fully recovered. Full recovery will be determined by a physician. Should student's illness last five or more consecutive days, a physician's certificate will be required for re-admission to school.



EMERGENCY MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION

In the event of a medical emergency for which immediate professional attention is required, Ile Omode staff will call 911. If the child must be taken to the hospital, the child will be transported by ambulance to the appropriate facility. Staff will accompany the child. The staff will contact the parent immediately and keep open communication with the parent contacted.

During a medical emergency, the director will take charge of the emergency, i.e., call 911, provide information to paramedics, follow emergency vehicle to medical facility, communicate with school administration about status, and make formal medical emergency report. Parents or guardians of the students will be responsible for all fees associated with the administering of emergency medical care.

NOTE: In order for us to take care of or seek care for your child in the unlikely event of an emergency, it will be essential to have the most accurate and current information about you and your child. Please inform the main office should you change any of the personal information you gave on the "Identification and Emergency Information Form".

EMERGENCY CARD

The school must have a current emergency card for each student.

Please notify the school office manager of any changes in address, home, work, and emergency telephone numbers.

In the event of an emergency or illness at school, it is essential that we are able to reach you quickly.

PLEASE KEEP YOUR EMERGENCY CARD UP TO DATE.

Taking Medication

If your child needs to take any medication (prescription or non-prescription) at school, please observe the following procedures

1. If a child must take medication at school, a medication consent form (available in the office) must be completed by the physician and the parent.
2. Bring the medication in the **original container** to the office with your signed permission and specific instructions for administration.
3. All medication must be kept in the school office and administered by school personnel.



4. Children may not carry **any** medication on their person. This also includes “over the counter” nonprescription medications such as aspirin, vitamins, cough drops, nose drops, etc.
5. Please see the office staff for the consent form if your child needs to keep emergency medication “with them” (i.e., asthma inhaler or EpiPen.)

These rules apply to **ALL** medication for all students.

Physical Examination and Medical History Requirements

All newly enrolled students are required to have a physical examination and medical history taken, with results on file in the administrative office prior to student’s first day of enrollment. Physical examination must be repeated every two years, and as with the original examination, results, signed and dated by the attending physician, must be on file in the office. New student’s medical examination must have taken place within six months of student’s first enrollment day at ILE OMODE. Medical history will be provided directly by parents using Ile Omode’s standard Medical History Form.

Required Immunizations

Prior to the first day of enrollment at Ile Omode, students must be fully immunized against the following: diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, hepatitis B, and any immunizations required by law. In addition to the immunizations above, a TB test (Mantoux or PPD) is required of each student prior to the first day of enrollment. If the TB test is positive, certification by a physician of a negative chest x-ray is required. Parents may waive any or all immunizations, but children will be barred from school in the event of an outbreak.



CALENDAR AND COMMUNICATION

A calendar for the school year is available in August. Any changes are posted throughout the school, or communicated via email, occasionally in the newsletter, and on the calendar located on the school's website.

Holidays and Special Occasions

At Ile Omode we observe several holidays during the school year. See the holiday and dates below.

Holiday	Date of Observation
Labor Day	First Monday of September
Thanksgiving Day	Fourth Thursday and Friday of November
Kwanzaa	December 26 – January 1
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	Third Monday of January
President's Day	Third Monday of February
Malcolm X	The Monday or Friday closes to May 19
Memorial Day	Last Monday of May

For various reasons, both cultural and political, there are national holidays which we do not observe as a school community. These holidays include, but are not limited to, Columbus Day, Halloween, Valentine's Day, and Thanksgiving. For more information about reasons for not celebrating these holidays, read Afrikan People and European Holidays: A Mental Genocide (Book I and II) by Rev. Ishakamusa Barashango.

Although we are closed during the Thanksgiving holiday, our school does not celebrate it as a holiday. Labor Day and Memorial Day are important opportunities for reflection and we encourage families within this community to use the opportunity to recognize enslaved African and labor unions (notably A. Philip Randolph, et. al), and the contributions of Africans in the military, respectively.

We do observe Malcolm X's birthday. While it's not a recognized national holiday, the principle of Kujichagulia requires us to define our own realities, and the influence of El Haj Malik El Shabazz (Malcolm X) has encouraged many Africans in America, and this community as well, to recognize his contribution by taking a day for remembrance.

In school we observe the Day of Atonement. The Day of Atonement was established on October 16, 1995 during the Million Man March. It is a time for us "to recognize wrongs done and make amends, to be self-critical and self-corrective." It is a time for us to renew a "commitment to speak truth, do justice...", and to always be "humble enough to admit mistakes and wrongs," and be "bold enough to correct them" (from The Million Man March/Day of Absence: Mission Statement).



Maafa, which is generally held before sunrise on the 1st Sunday morning in October, is a commemoration of the lives lost during the African holocaust. We strongly encourage all families to make every opportunity to participate.

School Closures

In addition to the holidays outlined previously, the school is closed for one week in April (spring break), and two weeks in December/January for winter break. The school is also closed once or twice each school year for staff development (see the annual calendar).

Communication

If you have a need to communicate with staff you may do so in person, by contacting the school at (510) 632-8230, or via the staff person's email address, which is posted on the web site. Please refrain from attempting extended conversations with teachers during the instructional time period, or contacting staff outside the school day, unless there is an emergency.

Please always feel free to discuss any concerns you have regarding your child's behavior, as well as teacher/parent or child relationship. Parents are always welcome to stay and spend volunteer hours at the school. It is important that you and your child feel at home here. Open communication is important; on the other hand it is also important that personal and casual conversations need to happen when teachers are not engaged in instruction.

Any serious concerns should be handled in private. Please telephone or request a conference. If you need a conference with an elementary teacher you may do so after 3:30 pm, or during the day by appointment. To schedule a conference with a preschool teacher, please schedule an appointment.

School news and information is communicated through several means, including:

- Posting in and around the school
- Notes on the sign-in/out booklet
- Via the school's quarterly newsletter
- Periodically via email

In order to remain informed it is therefore important that you read material mailed to your home, as well as providing the school with an email address that you check regularly. It is equally important you escort your child into the building, for safety purposes, but also because there are handouts, flyers, and other information which may be on or near the sign-in binder.

It is not a good idea to call the office for your child to be interrupted during class instruction



time for non-emergency calls. This causes not only a disruption with the students in the classroom and the teacher who has to stop instruction, but your child misses instruction time as well. For non-emergency calls, the office will ensure that all messages are given to the child at the appropriate time.

SCHOOL DRESS CODE AND PERSONAL EFFECTS

Dress Code

Students in kindergarten through 8th grade must wear school uniforms Monday through Thursday, except on school designated "Free Dress" days. Uniforms must be kept clean. We know that our children play hard and wear and tear of clothes is eminent. Parents are responsible to ensure their child's uniform is in good condition. You may be required during the school year to purchase more uniforms if your child's clothing becomes torn beyond repair.

Preschool students do not wear school uniforms. The school uniform consists of custom designed top and black pants, shorts or skirt for girls. On Friday, children must wear the school P.E. t-shirt and sweat pants or shorts.

Optional undergarments may be worn beneath the top, and parents may purchase school embroidered mock turtlenecks or polo style shirts. Any other undergarment must be a solid color. A boy's shirt must be tucked into his pants at all times.

Boys must wear belts at all times, except when wearing athletic shorts during PE, or when it is *clearly* unnecessary (generally for younger children – K through 1st). Baggy pants, that is pants that fit excessively loose around the legs, are not allowed. "Sagging" pants which may show boy's or girl's undergarments are NEVER permitted. Any student sent to school violating our rule on pants, particularly exposing their undergarments, will not be allowed to leave their desk for the duration of the day except for lunch and bathroom breaks, and parents may be called to bring appropriate clothing to school or take your child home.

If wearing shorts, they must be walking shorts, and not athletic shorts, except during PE on Friday. Generally walking shorts provide loops for a belt, athletics shorts do not. Baggy shorts are never allowed, and shorts should not extend beyond the student's knees. A student's knees should be visible when wearing shorts, and should not be visible when wearing a skirt.

Free Dress Days

Free dress days are generally held on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month. Students who have habitually not honored the school's dress code are not allowed to participate in free dress day. In general parents should heed the guidelines explained under "Dress Code". In addition to these restrictions, during free dress no shirts or blouses with writing and/or graphics



deemed in poor taste should be worn. Girls should never wear articles of clothing that are so tight that the outline of their body is visible.

Students whose clothing and/or personal grooming choices are determined by administration to be in poor taste may be required to sit at their desk for the day (except lunch and bathroom breaks) or be summarily and immediately sent home. In almost all cases this is a reflection of the parent, and not the child.

Shoes and Jewelry

Flip flops are never allowed, unless a field trip warrants it, such as a trip to the beach. During PE everyone is expected to wear athletic shoes, and they are encouraged throughout the week, as they support physical play during recess. Girls should only wear shoes with a modest heel.

Girls are allowed to wear a modest amount of jewelry, as long as it is not restrictive, and doesn't limit their participation in physical play. Generally this is limited to small ear rings. Boys are not allowed to wear jewelry, except where it has a specific religious purpose, and the parent has received clearance from the Director.

Cell Phones, Electronics, and Toys

No electronic devices of any kind are permitted at the school. If you deem it necessary to send your child to school with a cellular phone or other electronic devices for use *after* school, you should ensure that your child understands the use of when and where the phone is appropriate. If any staff person sees a child with a cellular phone at any time when it should NOT be used, it will be confiscated, and the parent will be asked to come in to retrieve the phone from the office or the Director. There is NEVER a need to use a cellular phone during school hours, since the child can simply request the use of the school's phones.

Other electronic devices such as MP3 players and hand-held video games are never permitted at school. These devices distract from the student's participation in the school community and don't promote socialization. Toys are allowed on Friday's with younger children (K – 2nd grade) for teacher-approved "show & tell" days; for older children, parents should use their discretion. A good question to ask is Does the toy promote social play, or is it just for show?

Lost and Found

Ile Omode is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Students are not advised to bring non-school related items to school, such as electronic games, cameras, and so on, as often they are misplaced by the students. Lost items are placed in a container which is generally located on the first floor. Expensive or fragile items such as eyeglasses or watches are turned in and held in the school's office. When expensive items such as wallets, pocketbooks or special



identification cards are lost or stolen, the student should notify their teacher immediately. All unclaimed items are donated to charity at the end of each quarter. Any uniforms left on the school premise will also be placed in lost and found. If you label everything sent to school, especially clothing, with your child's full name, finding lost items becomes easier.



DISCIPLINE

Student Behavior Expectations

ILE OMODE is committed to a school environment where students learn and teachers can teach without disturbance. Students must respect:

- School standards for academic and social conduct.
- Faculty and administration and their authority to teach and discipline.
- Classmates and their right to learn and be free from harassment.

Students at all times are expected to exercise self-discipline. Exhibiting expected behaviors in the presence of teachers and administrators but not elsewhere does not rise to an acceptable level of student behavior.

For minor offenses, children may be temporarily removed from class, have their privileges withdrawn, or receive an assignment whose purpose is to end misbehavior. Examples of minor offenses include:

- Disturbing or disrupting class
- Talking out of turn
- Violating school policies, such as dress code or bringing food to school

The teacher may detain a student during lunch or after school in the case of repeated minor offenses or a major offense. Should the student exhibit a pattern of missed or incomplete homework, the teacher will require the student complete their work during lunchtime and they may forfeit subsequent lunches (social time). Examples of major offenses include:

- Repeated minor offenses
- Disrespect/disobedience to teacher
- Purposely not returning to class promptly
- Lying to school personnel
- Swearing or abusive language
- Damage to school property
- Bullying or fighting
- Harassment of any form

Suspension: In the case of a major offense and, at the Director's sole discretion should an offense be deemed extraordinary, student will be suspended from school for a time period determined by the Director.



In the case of an in-school suspension, the student will be separated from peers for a time designated by the Director. Home suspension may occur in the case of egregious or repeated major offenses.

During the entire designated period, student will be obliged by ILE OMODE to remain home under parent supervision. Student will forfeit all credit for class work, projects, assignments, quizzes, and tests missed during the home suspension period.

If the Director is not convinced the behavior will subside, or can be corrected, the student may be expelled from the school.

Discipline

Discipline begins in the home at an early age. A well-disciplined child will direct his interests, efforts, and abilities toward greater achievement. Those who are well disciplined often take advantage of opportunities offered in school and usually help create an environment conducive to learning.

Parents should expect to be informed of any discipline problem that is serious or persistent. Communication between all persons dealing with the discipline problem is vital, if the problem is to be dealt with effectively.



AFTERSCHOOL

Ile Omode offers a variety of extra-curricular activities during the Afterschool program to students in elementary throughout the school year. Extra-curricular activities vary depending on teacher strengths, interests, availability and other factors. Extra-curricular activities are only open to children who consistently submit their homework on time, since any on-site extra-curricular activity would take place when students normally are completing homework.

Students are often enrolled in extracurricular activities away from the school, such as sports or dance. Many parents will elect to carpool or provide transportation assistance. If you volunteer to do, please be a responsible parent, since others are relying on you. Although these activities would fall outside the school's jurisdiction, we discourage you from volunteering to carpool if your driver's license and insurance are not valid. If you jeopardize our children's safety by driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or having any present in the vehicle, it may result in your family's immediate expulsion from the school.

ADULT CONDUCT AT THE SCHOOL

We expect every adult entering the school's campus to conduct themselves in a responsible manner, embodying the best of what it means to be African. Adults should role model proper behavior. As such adults must refrain from arguing, use of alcohol or drugs (including smoking), and certainly no profanity is ever permitted. Adults are expected to engage in speech that fosters unity and family. Furthermore adults should dress appropriately. Men are expected to wear belts and properly fitting attire, and women should not dress in a manner that overly exposes their bodies or their bodies shape. Any adult who violates these principles will be asked to leave.

THE YEAR – After the Founding of Kemet (AFK)

At the school, you'll frequently see the year indicated as 62## for example, as opposed to 20##, as in 6249, instead of 2009 to indicate the year. Taken literally this means that 2,009 years have elapsed. Well, since when? Any year, is with respect to some event, or base date.

The common year, is of course with respect to the birth of Christ, which is now called the "common era", but actually is more reflective of a shift towards western ideological dominance. The use of the Common Era suggests that modern civilization marks its beginning at this time, and events and civilizations which occurred earlier, are not nearly as relevant nor significant. A struggle to maintain a culturally significant reference point is in fact a fight for contemporary relevance. The Chinese New Year is not simply a Chinese event, but an annual observance of their historical age. For example, February 1, 2003



marked the Chinese New Year, which on their calendar was year 4701. This year is with respect to beginning of the Emperor Huang Di's reign (2698 BC). Similar to Kemet (ancient Egypt), in China, the year was reset to one with each new emperor. Emperor's Huang Di's reign was of course not the beginning of the Chinese civilization, merely an arbitrarily selected reference point, as is true for any calendar system.

In Kemet's early history the country was divided between "upper" Kemet (the south) and "lower" Kemet (the north). Their orientation was with respect to the Nile River, which flowed from the so-called south to the north. Per-aa (pharaoh) Menes was the first per-aa (which means "great house") to unify upper and lower Kemet ushering in the one of the greatest civilizations in history, and African historians have marked this epic event as the calendar basis. The year we use at the school is with respect to this event, and is called AFK (After the Founding of Kemet). This is not to suggest that Africans have only been on the planet since Per-aa Menes unified the two lands, but this represents the furthest we can accurately date our beginnings.

We use AFK as a constant reminder to ourselves and our children that we are an ancient people, with a long legacy. Cress Welsing has said, "If you don't understand white supremacy, everything else you *think* you know will only confuse you."



PRESCHOOL

Preschool families should read their entire handbook. This section however, contains information unique to the Mama Jasiri preschool program.

Preschool Curriculum

LANGUAGE: Communication skills are strengthened through, storytelling, songs, poems, puppetry, cooperative play and circle time meetings and creative expression. Children begin letter recognition, phonetic sounds, and pre-writing skills through visual, auditory and hands on materials. The children will be introduced to Spanish, Ile Omode Swahili and other various languages through auditory materials, computer games and circle time greetings.

MATH: Beginning math is introduced in play forms with hands on materials such as; blocks and smaller manipulatives. Math is often interrelated with other subject areas such as; science and language arts. Children also learn math concepts through songs and poetry that involve finger play and creative movement. They learn measurement and fractions within science and cooking activities. The children are introduced to concepts in geometry, classification, sets, numbers, quantity, length, weight, addition and subtraction in various creative forms.

SCIENCE: Children learn about their environment through exploration and hands on discovery. They are encouraged to ask questions and use their critical thinking skills. Activities include areas of art, cooking, sand and water play, outdoor exploration, field trips, books, plants, animals, sea creatures, space, machines, changes in composition and their own curiosity.

HISTORY: Children are introduced to Great African leaders, activist, workers and inventors throughout the African Diaspora. They learn by singing songs, listening to stories, pouring libation and calling the names of those ancestors who have passed over.

SOCIAL AND SELF HELP/LIFE SKILL: Children learn through trial and error. They are given work jobs such as; sweeping, pouring, and wiping tables to help develop those physical skills. Children are encouraged to feel proud of whom they are, their accomplishments and the history and beauty of our culture.

They learn to work and play cooperatively and are encouraged to help each other and those that are younger. We believe that taking responsibility for the young and respecting your elders is part of our tradition and heritage. We reinforce the principals of the Nguzo Saba (Seven Principals) as they play, learn and work together.

MUSIC /ART /CREATIVE DRAMA: Our environment gives children the opportunity to use

40



creative representations and free expressions. They are provided with materials that promote cultural awareness and art appreciation e.g. musical instruments, progressive African songs and folklore, various colorful materials, new and recycled art supplies.

WHAT TO BRING	WHAT NOT TO BRING
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Two complete sets of clothing change for ages 2-3 years One complete set of clothing change for ages 4-5 years 2. One crib fitting sheet and a small child's blanket or polyester throw blanket. 3. Slippers 4. Something to share on Friday's (Only) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Large sheets and blankets that are too big for their personal cubby container. 2. Do not send too many personal items from home to put in your child's cubby. Please remember it is a shared space. 3. Toys that promote violence 4. Barbie dolls 5. No junk foods or open foods left in cubbies. Please give staff food to put into the refrigerator or put it in an insulated lunch box. 6. No loose fitting boots, sandals or flip flop shoes that limit their mobility.

Clothing and Bedding

Please provide appropriate attire for all weather changes. Children should be able to participate in all activities. It is required by the licensing agency that all preschool student's cots be covered with a sheet. If your child does not have a sheet, blanket or extra clothes you will be contacted immediately and charged a laundry fee for the use of our extra supplies.

Discipline Policy

We encourage children to verbalize their concerns, fears or conflicts. The role of the teacher is to guide rather than punish; so we use the following procedure:

1. Redirection
2. Problem solving
3. Spending some time alone with a teacher or administrator
4. A phone call to the parent
5. Parent conference
6. Possible alternative care



Pledges and Rituals

The Council of Independent Black Institutions (CIBI) Pledge

We are African people struggling for National Liberation.
We are preparing leaders and workers to bring about a positive change for our people.
We stress the development of our bodies, minds, souls, and consciousness.
Our commitment is self determination, self-defense, and self-respect for our race.

We will now say the seven HARAMBEES. What does HARAMBEE mean?

-- "Pull it Together"

Pull what together?

-- "Our Minds!"

Moja, Mbili, Tatu...HARAMBEE! (repeat seven times).

Kuzaliwa (Birthday) Pledge

I am wiser by another year.

I am stronger by another year.

My convictions are firmer by another year

And my love for African people is fuller by a year's expression.

I pledge at _____ years old.

Each year that I grow older, I will mark another step forward in our goal to make a better world for African people.

Pre - Meal Ritual

One hand to give, one hand to receive,

As we eat together in Umoja (Unity)

For the liberation, and the self - determination, of the African Nation,

One mind, one heart, one love,

All praises to the Most High, Ashe.

The Ten Principles of Virtue



1. I must control my thoughts.
2. I must control my actions.
3. I must have devotion of purpose.
4. I must have faith in the ability of my teacher to teach me the truth.
5. I must have faith in myself to assimilate the truth.
6. I must have faith in myself to wield the truth.
7. I must be free from resentment under the experience of persecution.
8. I must be free from resentment under the experience of wrong.
9. I must cultivate the ability to distinguish between right and wrong.
10. I must cultivate the ability to distinguish between the real and the unreal.
(I must have a sense of values.)



Suggested Reading List

1. 2000 Season by Ayi Kwei Armah
2. African People and European Holidays: A Mental Genocide (Vol 1 and 2) by Rev. Ishakamusa Barashango
3. The Book of Coming Forth by Day by Dr. Maulana Karenga
4. The Destruction of Black Civilization by Chancellor Williams
5. The Education of Black People: Ten Critiques, 1906-1960 by Dr. W.E.B. DuBois
6. The Healers by Ayi Kwei Armah
7. The Husia by Dr. Maulana Karenga
8. Million Man March/Day of Absence: Mission Statement
9. Mis-education of the Negro by Dr. Carter G. Woodson
10. Yurugu by Dr. Marimba Ani

