

2024-2025

REDWOOD CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT



ORION
ALTERNATIVE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

MANDARIN IMMERSION

Welcome Packet



GET TO
KNOW YOUR
NEW SCHOOL!

- Meet our Staff
- School Communications
- School Organizations

LEARN MORE
ABOUT OUR
PROGRAM

- Fundraising
- Fundraising Calendar
- Volunteering
- Parent Co-OP Program
- MI Community & Vision
- In Summary

MEET OUR STAFF



WINNIE CHEN - PRINCIPAL WINNE 校长 (WINNIE XIÀOZHǎNG)

Winnie began as a Mandarin Immersion teacher and quickly took on roles as a curriculum development specialist, teaching coach, and vice principal before becoming principal in 2023. She is dedicated to creating a positive school culture where every student can feel a strong sense of belonging at Orion. Connect with Winnie: ychen@rcsdk8.net

BRIANNA TURNER - VICE PRINCIPAL 副校长 (BRIANNA FÙ XIÀOZHǎNG)

Brianna has over a decade of experience as an elementary educator in both teaching and literacy specialist roles. She is committed to providing students with high-quality educational experiences that promote their academic, social-emotional, and physical development. Connect with Brianna: bturner@rcsdk8.net



ELIZABETH ARIAZA OFFICE MANAGER

Elizabeth has worked at the school for nearly a decade. She knows everything and makes sure our school keeps running on a daily basis. She speaks Spanish as well as English. Connect with Elizabeth: earaiza@rcsdk8.net

CRISTINA RYFFEL - LIBRARIAN

Cristina Ryffel is a long time veteran of Orion Alternative. She brings an unmatched passion for literacy (in all languages) that is reflected in our core curricular events such as Author Illustrator Fair during November literacy month.





SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

EMAILS GALORE

- **Weekly Teacher Newsletters** - Teachers will share classroom specific updates & learning resources. These emails are a great way to know what your child is learning and get an idea of what's going on in the classroom.
- **Principal Winnie Chen's Orion Gazette:** School news pertaining to curriculum, events, and school-wide initiatives
- **Dr. Baker - Superintendents Newsletter:** Giving general information that applies to all schools including Orion/MI.
- **Class coordinators emails** - Class/teacher specific, organizes volunteer opportunities and social opportunities
- **RWCMI(classnumber)@googlegroups.com** - MI grade level google groups, any member of the grade or community can use to share MI specific info.

CLASS WHATSAPP GROUP

Join your class Whatsapp group (keep an eye out on an invitation from your class coordinator). Share playdates info, photos from fieldtrips and more!

KONSTELLA

Sign up for Konstella App or emails to get access to classroom chats, the school calendar, and notices about school wide events and meetings!



*Konstella pro tip:
On your desktop, link the Konstella calendar with your personal calendar to stay up to date on all events
[Download here](#)

Check out the school calendar and early release dates here: Resources tab on the PTO website: <https://www.starshiporion.org/>

SCHOOL ORGANIZATIONS



Redwood City Mandarin Immersion Scholars (RCMIS)

RCMIS was founded as a fundraising nonprofit organization to support Mandarin Immersion in Redwood City. Volunteer with us or join our board to make an impact on Mandarin Learning at Orion. If you are interested, reach out to info@rcmis.org for more information.

Starship Orion Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

Starship Orion PTO is looking for MI family representatives to help out across many committees ranging from community building events, budgeting and more. Commitments range from 1-5 hours per month. Fill out your preferences in the PTO Volunteer Survey (QR code below).

Mandarin Immersion (MI) Advisory Council

The MI Advisory Council is made up of parents, Orion administrators and MI teaching staff. Council goals include strengthening and upholding Orion's Redwood City Mandarin Immersion Program as a distinguished, world-class immersion program. Council members:

- Facilitate and support academic excellence and Mandarin language fluency
- Host events to foster community building and cultural appreciation across PTO and RCMIS
- Develop and iterate on our program missions and values
- Recruit and support incoming families for continued growth and expansion of the program

Attend these meetings to give feedback to Principal Winnie and school administrators about the MI Program.

School Site Council

Attend monthly School Site Council meetings to get an idea of how Orion is run. Council members work closely with Principal Winnie and Vice Principal Brianna to direct the vision of the school as a whole.



PTO Volunteer Survey



PTO FUNDRAISING

\$700 per Family

FUNDRAISING SUPPORTS

- School wide enrichment programs including STEAM, Music, Art & Garden
- Classroom Supplies
- Tutoring
- Fieldtrips

Donate to the PTO
here



OUR 2024-2025 STARSHIP GOAL

Our goal for this school year is \$260,000.

Donations are voluntary. We encourage generosity for those that have more, to lift up others to help them succeed in our wonderful school community.

PAYPAL DIRECT DRIVE DONATIONS

The PTO direct drive runs from the start of school to October 31st. Funding commitments for the following year are made based on the amount of funding the community contributes by December 31st.

FUNDRAISING EVENTS

- Direct Donations
- Thursday Bake Sale Market
- Read - A - Thon
- Spring Auction
- Dine Outs



All donations are
tax deductible
EIN: 94-3179780

Ask if your company
matches donations

RCMIS FUNDRAISING

\$2,000 per Student

FUNDRAISING SUPPORTS

- Two Mandarin-Speaking Teaching Aides (K-5) critical for modeling fluency in the classroom
- Mandarin Reading Intervention Support
- Curriculum Development
- Teaching Coach for Mandarin Immersion staff

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Give - Visit *RCMIS.org* to donate.

Volunteer -
Contribute your time on an events committee, the board, or one of our volunteer roles.
Contact *info@rcmis.org*.

Donate to RCMIS
Here:



Ask if your company
matches donations

All donations are
tax deductible
EIN: 82-3449819

FUNDRAISING EVENTS

Donations are welcome anytime (even outside of direct drives). Like the PTO, donations received earlier in the school year help to ensure the following year's staffing commitments can be made in alignment with the school district's schedule

- **August - September:** RCMIS Mid-Autumn Festival Direct Drive runs from the start of school to September 17th
- **January - February:** RCMIS New Year to Lunar New Year Direct Drive

2024-2025 FUNDRAISING CALENDAR

While donations are accepted year round, here are the major fundraising drives across Starship Orion PTO & RCMIS:

- **August - October 2024** | PTO Fall Direct Drive Fundraising
 - Kicks off at Maze Day August 9th and runs through October 31st
- **August - September 2024** | RCMIS Direct Drive - Mid-Autumn Festival
 - Kicks off at Maze Day August 9th and runs through September 17th
- **November 2024** | PTO Read-a-Thon
 - November 1st - 30th
- **January - February 2025** | RCMIS New Year to Lunar New Year Direct Drive
 - Kicks off on January 7th and runs through February 12th (Lantern Festival)
- **March 2025** | PTO Spring Auction

Note: Please support your class by contributing to class funds. Ask your class coordinator for more information. Your chosen after-school program may have donation drives of their own.

VOLUNTEERING

Talk to your class coordinator about signing up!

DISTRICT VOLUNTEER FORM AND REQUIREMENTS

New Volunteers



Returning
Volunteers



Espanol



VOLUNTEER WITH STUDENTS

Examples:

- Lunch/Yard Duty - 11:00-1:00
- Library - 11:00-12:00pm
- Art Volunteer
- STEAM Volunteer: Science Olympiad
- Math Festival volunteer: Julia Robinson Math Festivals
- Field trip chaperones
- Help prepare Teacher materials
- Assist with Teacher-led lessons
- PTO Community Building Events

Certain volunteering opportunities require fingerprinting clearance
unless closely supervised by a teacher.

Get your fingerprinting done today!
Look for the fingerprinting station
available on Maze Day

Orion is home to two programs. Get to know our neighbors:



ORION

ALTERNATIVE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Parent Co-op Program



Orion Alternative Elementary School's Parent Cooperative Program offers a nurturing learning environment where students develop positive values of self-reliance, initiative, kindness, resourcefulness, courage, creativity and joy.

Orion's strength is built on the participation and commitment of families. We request each PP family to contribute 72 flexible hours of volunteering time per school year, in or out of school hours.

Cornerstone Programs:

- Author Illustrator Fair
- Multicultural Studies
- Art in Action Classes

Culture of Orion

- Prioritizes Whole Child Education and Social-Emotional Skills
- Global Citizen Curricular Focus
- Teacher and Family Collaboration
- Community Building with Whole School

Volunteer Opportunities:

- Library Support and Readthron
- Art Docents/Aides
- Event Planning
- In-Class Support
- Weekend Garden Days



Learn more at:
<https://www.starshiporion.org/>



MANDARIN IMMERSION

社区合作带给我们成功

"Community collaboration brings us success"

VISION

Orion MI Students will:

- Express themselves in Mandarin
- Understand and appreciate Chinese Culture
- Become lifelong-resilient learners

Visit our website
for more info:



Mandarin Immersion Culture

- Community engagement through school-wide events like the Mid-Autumn/Harvest, Lunar New Year, and Dragon Boat Festivals
- Developing Mastery in Mandarin
- Cultural Immersion & Outreach
- Encouraging global citizenship



MANDARIN IMMERSION

In Summary

VOLUNTEER

Parent volunteers drive the success of the MI program. Volunteering is a great way to meet fellow families and make friends! Talk to your class coordinator or representatives from RCMIS or Starship Orion PTO.

All skills and interests are welcome!

FUND THE PROGRAM

PTO

\$700/family

[Donate here](#)



RCMIS

\$2000/student

[Donate here](#)



Your donations maintain a high level of educational enrichment for your MI student(s). All donations amounts are welcome. Maximize your impact by checking with your employer about corporate matching. Please also support your class by contributing to class funds. Ask your class coordinator for more information.