

Hello Art Vistas Presenters/Docents,

I am so excited for another Fabulous year of Art Vistas at Oster. Thank you to all of you returning volunteers and welcome to all of you who are new to Art Vistas. Art Vistas is a Parent led Art Education program that has an established curriculum and art projects that was developed by parents in the Union School District. I have been involved in Art Vistas at Oster for the past 6 year, and I always have a great time with the program. I am the organizer for the program but I am interested in recruiting some people to work with me and to eventually take over the program. I will be here through next school year and then my son will be moving on to Dartmouth Middle school, so I would love to begin the training process now. The Head Docent position can be done by a team which would spread the responsibilities out. Please let me know if you are interested in getting involved with organizing the overall program.

You are getting this email because you volunteered as a Presenter/docent for your child’s class. There are several classes that have **multiple** people who volunteered to be class docents. Generally, it works best if there are 1 or 2 main docents for each class. Please review the attached document and contact the other docents listed with you to see if you can narrow the number of volunteers down for each class.

Ok, so here comes the information…Please allow me to apologize to you in advance for the lengthy email, but I have lots to info to share with you all.

As the class docents your jobs include Leading the lessons for the students and working with your helpers to lead the art project with your class.  You will also be the main point person responsible for scheduling the lessons with your teacher based on the schedule below.  You will be the responsible to notifying your helpers of the schedule as well. You and the teacher must agree on the time and day that you would like to schedule the lesson in their classroom. You are a guest presenter, so you will have to work around the general classroom routine.

*Oster Docents Meeting:*  Thursday, **September 21** at **8:30am** or at **2:00pm** outside the cafeteria, please join me for a quick meeting about the program.  This meeting is especially important for new Docents, but veterans are also welcome, since you can help share your experiences with the other volunteers. I will answer any questions and give a quick tour of the supply closet so you can become familiar with how things work.  If these time don’t work for you I am happy to arrange another time that works for you, just shoot me an email.

***TRAINING:***

Training is offered by the District Art Vistas Board. General Training will be help in the DARTMOUTH MIDDLE SCHOOL Library this year. Grade Level Training will be held at the Union School District Office for each grade level.  It’s is a wonderful opportunity to familiarize yourself with the presentations and the art project that you will be leading.  It is amazing how much you’ll learn from these trainings and how much more comfortable this knowledge will make you feel.  You’ll get more valuable classroom management tips here, too. Several Grade Level projects have changed over the last few years (1st, 2nd and 5th) so attending the grade level training may be beneficial if you’ve already attended for a specific grade.

***General Training***:

All new presenters/docents will need to attend General Training.  This training is for NEW docents who have no previous experience with Art Vistas.  General Training covers basic art terms and background knowledge to help with Grade Level Training.

General Training will be held at Darmouth Middle School, Library 5575 Dartmouth Dr.

* Wednesday, September 6th from 7:00 pm. to 8:30 p.m.

OR

* Saturday, September 9th from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

You only need to attend 1 of the training classes and only if you are a new presenter/docent.

***Grade Level Training:***

Grade Level Training occurs twice a year and covers three lessons in detail: you see a few of the prints that you will be presenting and a demonstration of the hands-on projects.  If you have already attended the training, it is not necessary to attend again, unless you would like a refresher, so if you would like to see the project changes

You need to attend twice during the year to cover all 6 lessons (for grades K – 5).  Training is from 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. on the days below:

**Grade Set A,B&C Set D,E,&F**

Fifth 9/12/17 1/16/18

Fourth 9/13/17 1/17/18

Third 9/14/17 1/18/18

Second 9/19/17 1/23/18

First 9/20/17 1/24/18

Kinder 9/21/17 1/25/18

All of our Grade Level Training will be held in the Art Vistas office, which is in the maintenance yard behind the Union School District Office, 5175 Union Avenue, San Jose, 95124 (corner of Los Gatos-Almaden Road and Union Avenue) from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.  To get there, pass the main district office and drive down the hill to the right of the office and park.  Training is in the building closest to Union Ave, next to the big roll-up door.  There will be signs to help you out.

**If you are unable to attend Training, don't worry!  The grade lesson is very detailed with step by step instructions on how to complete the presentation and project.  I am always available to help you walk through the lesson plan if needed.**

***Rotation Schedule and Portfolios:***

The Rotation Schedule refers to the six times we receive the art prints.  Art prints are stored in large black portfolios and we have them for 1 to 2 weeks at a time.

Oster’s Rotation Schedule is as follows:

 **Set                   Date**

Set A 9/25 (Mon) – 10/6 (Fri)

Set B 10/24 (Tue) – 11/3 (Fri)

Set C 12/5 (Tue) – 12/15 (Fri)

Set D 1/29 (Mon) – 2/9 (Fri)

Set E 3/6 (Tue) – 3/23 (Fri)

Set F 4/17 (Tue) – 4/27 (Fri)

***Calendar for Classroom Presentations:***

My apologies, but I have not set up the scheduling calendar for signing up for your sessions that you’ve agreed on with your teacher. I will send out the schedule over the Labor Day Holiday.

Because there is only one set of prints and supplies for each grade level, this calendar is used to avoid double booking for the materials.  Ideally, you will pick a day and time that will remain as consistent as possible through all the sets.  For example, if you pick Monday mornings, you will enter the grade, the teacher’s name and time scheduled to start (i.e. 5 Sinclair 10:30 a.m.) so that no docent in the same grade will schedule their class at the same time.  Only edit the yellow areas below the date you have arranged with your teacher.  We recommend that you remind your teacher the week before and again the day before that you will be coming into the classroom.

It is extremely important to use the portfolios only when you have scheduled your class so that we avoid scheduling duplications or conflicts.  Scheduling your lessons is on a first come first served process, so get organized early and please be sure that the calendar is always updated with your coordinated day and time. Confirm with your teacher first and then email the helpers in your class of the time that works best during the rotation period.  If you have a lot of helpers, rotate the helpers so everyone has a chance to be in the classroom.  Only 2 to 3 additional helpers are usually needed depending on the project, but there are a handful of projects where you should call all everyone available to help out.  I will be sending a separate email to the helpers that you will contact them directly to communicate dates and times that you have scheduled with your teachers.  Docents are the only Art Vistas representative that should be communicating with teachers, not helpers.

Please pay close attention to rotations that fall right after winter or spring break or are during testing or conference weeks.  It is important to work closely with your teachers during these times to ensure that you are working with their schedule.

The main thing that comes up as an issue with the teachers is, that there isn’t enough time to complete the lesson and projects. I recommend that you a lot at least 1 hour and fifteen minutes if not more for the entire lesson and project. Some teachers have said that docents take too much time with the art presentation.  Please be sensitive to the students and teachers when presenting the fine art prints. Move on when the students are ready and/or fidgety.  On average, the presentation portion should not take longer than 25 - 30 minutes; more like 15-20 in the lower grades. Remember that the lesson plans are merely guidelines for you and every question and topic need not be discussed.  Please try not to take longer than necessary.

**Art Print Etiquette:**

**Only Post-Its can be used on the back of the prints \*NEVER TAPE OR GLUE\***Please do not let the children touch the prints.  A feather can be used to allow the children to point out things since the oil on their fingers will degrade the prints over time.  Feathers will be available in the supply folder in the carts and inside the sleeve of the portfolio if you’d like to use one.  After your presentation, please place the prints in order of the lesson plan for the next class and have them all facing in same direction.  Taking a bit of extra care will help in keeping the prints nice for the future.

**Supplies:**

**The Art Vista’s storeroom, directly next to room 13, and is where the portfolios and all the supplies for the hands-on projects are stored.**  The closet is generally locked, but this year we are planning to have the door unlocked in the morning and lock at the end of the day during the art rotations. If you need to enter the room on a day outside the art rotation, the keys are available to sign out in the office any time during school hours.  Please remember that the key is not allowed to leave the campus, so please be sure to return it to the office.  Your hands-on project materials will be prepared a few days in advance of the rotation and will be marked by grade in storage bins.  The bins are filled with enough supplies for all classes in each grade to complete the project. We recommend you double check the supplies, including paper, before leaving just to make sure enough is there. With so many classes using the supplies and bins, this is the only way we can stay on top of the mess and restocking issues.

On the day and time of your presentation in the classroom, presenters generally pick up the bin, with the appropriate grade number on it, and your grades portfolio/prints.  If your project involves paints, brushes, oil pastels, clay or glue, **please return the bin with the tools cleaned, organized, dry, and ready for the next class.**  Smocks and t-shirts are also available for particularly messy projects.  Again, with so many classes using the supplies and bins, I will need your help in keeping the bins organized. This is the only way we can stay on top of the mess and restocking issues.

We strongly encourage you to come to the Art Vistas room and look at the supplies prior to your presentation day. It will make it easier to explain the project to the children if you have reviewed it prior to class.  You may contact me and I will be happy to meet with you personally or walk you through the project if you have any questions.  You may also take home a few supplies to practice the projects, however, please leave the bin. I try to stock the bins with sufficient materials to accommodate the number of students plus a few extras. Please encourange to take their time so that they don’t waste materials.

**Art Show/Open House/Silent Auction:**

Our Art Show and Silent Auction is scheduled for May 16th (the evening of Oster’s Open House).  Please save all artwork from the hands-on projects and store it at home or in the classroom. A selection of the student’s artwork will be displayed at the Art Show. Please record the titles of the art work that your students complete either on the provided list or you can complete an art card at the time of the lesson.

We also ask that each Classroom does a class art project to be auctioned off that evening in the media center.. Generally this is done by the Art Vistas Docent or volunteers, but you are welcome to work with any parents from your class to get the project completed. There will be more information about this later in the school year. However, now is the time to think about the amazing creations that can be auctioned off to the highest bidder!

**Website:**

Oster Art Vistas has a website that you can access with lots of information for docents, as well as a complete calendar, in case you lose this email!  Check it out at https://artvistasoster.weebly.com The schedules and other important information is listed there.

There is also a general <http://www.artvistasinc.com> for the district wide program if you are interested in getting more Art Vistas information

I want to thank you for your commitment to Art Vistas.  You are providing the children with a valuable learning experience that will truly last a lifetime and you will find that you get as much enjoyment out of this program as the children do!  Please feel free to contact us at any time with questions or concerns.

Thank you and have a great year!

Petra Menard

Art Vistas Head Docent, 2015-2016

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