

Parent/Student Handbook

2026-2027

Osceola Elementary School

1605 Osceola Elementary School Road

St. Augustine, Florida 32084

(904) 547-3780

Web site: <http://www-oes.stjohns.k12.fl.us>

School Start/End Times

8:25AM-2:45PM – Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

8:25AM – 1:45PM – Wednesday

Mrs. Jessica Mead, Principal

Email: jessica.mead@stjohns.k12.fl.us

Mr. BJ Esguerra, Assistant Principal

Email: bj.esguerra@stjohns.k12.fl.us

Dear Wildcats,

Welcome to the 2026-2027 school year! We are honored to partner with you as we support your child's growth, learning, and success. At Osceola Elementary, we believe that every child has unique strengths and unlimited potential. Our shared commitment is to provide a safe, supportive, and engaging learning environment where students are encouraged to take risks, build confidence, and develop the skills they need to thrive.

Growth is at the heart of everything we do. We celebrate progress, perseverance, and the understanding that learning is a journey. We encourage our students to embrace challenges, learn from mistakes, and recognize that effort and determination lead to achievement. Together, we will nurture not only academic excellence but also kindness, responsibility, resilience, and a love of learning.

Families are an essential part of our school community. Your encouragement, involvement, and partnership play a vital role in your child's success. We value open communication and look forward to working alongside you throughout the year to ensure every student feels known, supported, and empowered to reach their full potential.

This handbook is designed to provide important information about our school policies, procedures, and expectations. We encourage you to review it together as a family and refer to it throughout the school year. Thank you for entrusting us with your child. We are excited to learn, grow, and celebrate many successes together this year.

Go Wildcats!

With appreciation,

Ms. Jessica Mead

Proud Principal of Osceola Elementary School

Contacts:

Principal	Ms. Jessica Mead	Receptionist	Ms. Megan Smalley
Assistant Principal	Mr. BJ Esguerra	Data Entry Operator	Ms. Amy Matthews
		Food Service Manager	Ms. Sue Grasso
Behavior Interventionist	Ms. Faye Jenkins	School Nurse	Ms. Krystle Kelley
Secretary/Bookkeeper	Ms. Susan Lynch	Extended Day Coordinator	Ms. Heather O'Mara
School Counselor	Ms. Keri Cortez	Maintenance Coordinator	Mr. Joey Strickland

Mission:

Osceola Elementary will be a family of learners working to become successful in academic and social settings. By nurturing determination, grit, and a growth mindset in every student, we will create lifelong learners.

Vision:

Better Never Quits!

As an Osceola Wildcat student, my responsibilities are to:

- practice the CHARACTER COUNTS! pillars
- strive for excellence and do my best
- attend school every day and be on time
- come to school prepared with all materials and assignments
- obey the instruction/directions of all Osceola staff members

As an Osceola staff member, it is my responsibility to:

- exemplify the CHARACTER COUNTS! pillars
- provide a quality instructional program which inspires a love of learning based on the needs of each child
- provide an inviting, orderly, and safe learning environment
- assist families in helping their children develop self-respect, self-discipline, self-confidence, and a desire to be of service to others and our community
- develop activities/programs based on the social, emotional, personal and physical well-being of each child

As a parent of an Osceola student, it is my responsibility to:

- model the CHARACTER COUNTS! pillars
- communicate regularly with my child's teacher regarding academic needs, health and social issues
- send my child to school each day on time, well rested, and ready to learn
- read to and listen to my child read every evening

ATTENDANCE

The importance of regular attendance cannot be over-emphasized. Children should be in school EVERY DAY they can attend. It is difficult to meet grade level expectations if scholars regularly miss school.

Florida Law Regarding School Attendance

Illness or other legitimate causes will be excused with the permission of the parent/guardian and the school principal, **up to 15 days within the school year.** **After 15 days of absence, excused or unexcused, a student must have a doctor's verification for all subsequent absences due to illness.** Parent/Guardian knowledge of the absence does not require school personnel to record it as an excused absence.

The Osceola Elementary attendance policy aligns with the St. Johns County School District's policy as stated in the Student Conduct Code. It promotes student achievement and growth and improvement in our school. Regular attendance sets scholars up for success. Thank you for your support.

Reporting Absences

- Please call our front office, email (Amy.Matthews@stjohns.k12.fl.us) or visit our website to report an absence before 10:00 AM. A note (with signature) regarding the reason for the absence must be sent the day your child returns to school.

Excused Absences

- Excused absences align with the St. Johns County School District's attendance policy. Refer to Student Code of Conduct.

Unexcused Absences

- Shopping trips, car trouble, suspensions, trancies, appointments without prior approval, vacations or other avoidable absences shall result in an unexcused absence. Field study experiences are an important part of the school curriculum and failure to attend will be considered unexcused.
- Parents will receive a letter from school after 5 unexcused absences. Once 10 have accumulated, a referral will be made to Student Services as per district policy.

Special Exceptions / Getting Approval

Pre-authorized absences will include religious holidays, or other special circumstances. *Requests for absences of special circumstances or pre-authorized absences must be submitted in writing to the Principal prior to the absence.* The Principal or Assistant Principal will review each request. When the absence is approved, the teacher will be notified and will assign work.

Tardies and Check-Outs: Students should be on time. Students who are tardy miss important instructional time.

Tardies

- A student who is tardy **MUST** be signed in at the front office by his/her parent or guardian.
- If a student is tardy for more than 3 days in a nine-week grading period, the parent or guardian may be contacted by the school via phone or letter and may be asked to meet with administration. Student Services will also be contacted for possible home visits.

Check-Outs

- Parents are encouraged to make appointments after school or during non-school days. If your child must leave early, check-outs are not permitted after 2:10 pm. It is important that students receive a full day of instruction, and teachers use the end of the day to summarize and review assignments.
- If after school transportation plans change, please send a written note to the teacher in the morning. If plans change during the school day, a parent **MUST** use the transportation change link on our school website <https://www-oes.stjohns.k12.fl.us/>. Changes will not be accepted over the phone.
- Anyone picking up a child must be listed on the emergency card and provide picture ID.
- Excessive checkouts before 2:10 pm may result in the need to meet with the administration.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

DISCIPLINE / SCHOOL RULES

Our school is a PBIS school. Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a nationally recognized process that helps create safer and more effective schools. Through PBIS, teachers and other school staff are taught to focus on improving the ability to teach and support positive behavior for all students. PBIS includes school-wide procedures and processes to help all students and staff in classroom and non-classroom settings. The PBIS process also focuses on those students that present the most challenging behaviors. The most important thing about the PBIS process is that it is a team-based process, centered around problem-solving, planning, and evaluation. Students are expected to be responsible for their own behavior, learn from their mistakes, and increase the amount of quality work they do in school. Failure to follow classroom rules and/or school expectations may result in an oral or written plan describing ways to prevent the action and identify replacement behaviors. Please see the St. Johns County District Conduct Code for further information regarding student behavior.

P.A.W.S. **Core Values**

P.A.W.S. is an acronym with each letter standing for a core character value that we encourage in each student. These core values are associated with good behavior attributes, and students are awarded for displaying these exemplary behaviors. P.A.W.S. = **P** – Personal best, **A** – Act responsibly, **W** – Work and play safely, **S** – Show respect.

CHARACTER COUNTS!

St. Johns County is a CHARACTER COUNTS! School District. At Osceola, every child is encouraged to exhibit the six pillars of character at school and at home. (Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Trustworthiness, Caring, and Citizenship). CHARACTER COUNTS! is integrated into classroom lessons and activities throughout the year. Each month a pillar is learned and reviewed. The 1st Tuesday of every month is CHARACTER COUNTS! Day. Everyone is encouraged to dress in the color of that month's pillar.

BULLYING & HARRASSMENT

SJCSD recognizes the serious nature of these offenses. Please contact the school immediately if you have questions or concerns about your child's safety. More detailed information can be found in the District Conduct Code and at www.stjohns.k12.fl.us.

ITEMS RESTRICTED FROM SCHOOL

Please refer to the Code of Conduct.

STUDENT DRESS CODE

Students must follow St. Johns County School District guidelines, which are in the SJCSD Code of Conduct. Scholars must wear closed toed shoes to participate in recess or Physical Education.

(Please refer to the SJCSD Code of Conduct)

COMMUNICATION – EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Please contact the front office with any changes in address or phone numbers (home, cell, or work). We rely upon the information in our database to be current so we may quickly contact you in case of an emergency.

Our district parent communication system, *Parent Square*, enables Osceola and our district office to contact parents via phone, email, and text. The system saves our school and district time and eliminates miscommunication. **Phone numbers and email addresses must be correct in our system to receive these messages.**

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

To schedule a conference, please send a note in the planner, call, e-mail, or Dojo your child's teacher. A conference provides updates and involves you in the learning process. We expect parents and teachers to hold a conference twice a year.

Student agendas are used in all grade levels, and we ask that you check them every day. Your teacher will share email and/or Parent Square information during Meet the Teacher Night and will be put on the cover page of this agenda.

SCHOOL PHONE

We do not interrupt instructional time, but if you need to leave a message for the teacher, we can connect you to their voicemail or our front office team can relay a message.

MISCELLANEOUS

BEFORE / AFTER SCHOOL DAY CARE

Osceola Elementary School offers a before and after school care program at our school. If you would like information about this program, please contact our Extended Day Coordinator, Mrs. Heather O'Mara at (904) 547-3789.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthday celebrations are for non-instructional times. Birthday treats must be store-bought items such as cookies, cupcakes, healthy snacks, frozen juice bars, etc. These must include the nutritional label. Birthday treats will be shared during lunch. We ask that you contact your child's teacher for specific arrangements. Please do not send balloons or flowers to school.

Birthday invitations to parties outside school are only allowed to be distributed at school if every child in the classroom is invited to the celebration.

CAFETERIA

We are pleased to inform you that Osceola participates in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs called the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). Schools that participate in the CEP provide healthy breakfasts and lunches at **NO** charge for **ALL** students at Osceola during the school year. The cafeteria manager follows the District, State and Federal guidelines on portion sizes and nutritional menus. Students may keep a separate account for ice cream. Please call the cafeteria manager at (904) 547-3790 for information on your child's account.

Although lunch is a time to relax and socialize, students are expected to use inside voices and follow cafeteria expectations. Approved volunteers are invited to eat lunch with their child. We have outdoor picnic tables for visitors. In case of inclement weather, a visitor table will be designated inside the cafeteria. Soft drinks and glass containers are not permitted. Students are invited to eat breakfast every day but are expected to be in class by the 8:25 AM tardy bell.

CLINIC

Scholars who do not feel well may be sent to the clinic. If our school nurse reaches out and the situation requires that you come to school and pick up your child, we ask that you send someone as soon as possible. It is important that the front office has updated phone numbers and contact information.

EVACUATION (FIRE, TORNADO, BUS AND CRITICAL INCIDENT PLAN) PROCEDURES

To provide a safe environment for our students, we conduct regularly scheduled safety drills. Volunteers and visitors are reminded to check the evacuation procedures posted in each room. We also maintain a Critical Incident Plan for specific incidents.

FIELD STUDY EXPERIENCES

Educational field study experiences are planned throughout the school year. It is school and district policy that all field study experiences are grade level standards based. Detailed plans for the field study experiences will be provided to parents. Written permission must be returned, and fees paid at least one week before the date of the trip. Children must ride the school bus to and from the field trip activity. Parents are not allowed to "check out" their child from the field study activity. A child will be unable to go on the field trip if the permission slip is not signed by the parent/guardian. Deadlines for payment are set for all trips and must be adhered to. Please do not ask to submit payment for a trip once the deadline has passed. If tickets are purchased before the field trip date, refunds cannot be made. Otherwise, refunds for the cost of admission for field trips will be given only if requested in writing by the parent. Refunds will NOT be given for the cost of transportation.

Please be advised that any fees leftover from a field trip in a particular class account will be carried forward to offset the cost of a future trip. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our school bookkeeper, Mrs. Lynch at 547-3782. All chaperones must be approved as volunteers for SJCSO **prior** to participating in any school activity...**No exceptions.** Only those children who are part of the group for whom the trip was arranged may attend a field trip. Siblings and other children are not permitted to attend field trips with chaperones.

LOST AND FOUND

Found items are sent to the office or placed in our designated lost and found area. Book bags, lunch boxes and jackets brought to school should be marked with the scholar's first and last name. Unclaimed items will be donated at the end of each semester.

MAKE-UP WORK

Tests, quizzes, and projects must be completed when a scholar returns to school. Students who are absent 2 or more days may request homework through the Front Office or email the child's teacher.

MEDICATION

If a scholar needs prescribed medication during the day, a parent must bring the medication IN THE ORIGINAL MEDICATION BOTTLE to the clinic and complete a parent authorization form. Please keep our school nurse updated on

any medical condition your child may have. Medication may not be sent on the bus. Cough drops and other “over the counter” medications may not be brought to the classroom.

REPORT CARDS

GRADING SCALE - 3rd, 4th, 5th Grades

Grade/Percent Definition		
A	90-100	Outstanding progress
B	80-89	Above average
C	70-79	Average progress
D	60-69	Lowest acceptable progress
F	59 and below	Unacceptable progress

GRADING SCALE – K, 1st, 2nd Grades

Marking Code Definition	
M	Meeting Florida Standards
P	Progressing toward Florida Standards
I	Improvement needed

All report cards are standards based and are issued every nine weeks to inform you of your child’s progress. Interim grades are issued at the mid-point of each quarter. We want your child to be successful.

RETURNED CHECK INFORMATION

St. Johns County School District is under contract with EnVision to pursue all its returned checks. Banks now redirect all returned checks to EnVision who will electronically re-present returned checks. EnVision will add service charges and processing fees as permitted by Florida State Law to all checks written and returned to all St. Johns County Schools. Osceola is not allowed to collect any fees associated with a returned check. This includes all checks written to the school, cafeteria, and Extended Day.

SCHOOL COUNSELOR

Osceola has a full-time school counselor who serves as part of our Student Service Team. Students may request time with the counselor, and parents are also encouraged to call with any guidance concerns. Small group and class guidance lessons are offered through our program.

SPIRIT DAY

Every Wednesday is “Wildcat Wednesday” spirit day at Osceola. Children and staff are encouraged to wear their Osceola gear. Osceola t-shirts may be purchased at Meet the Teacher Night, Open House, during any PTO sponsored event, or by stopping by the front office.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Each class has a scheduled Art, Music, Physical Education, STEM and Media resource period. The Media Center may be utilized by all children and their parents. There is a parent section with materials to help parents help their children.

TEXTBOOKS

Scholars are responsible for lost or damaged textbooks or library books. As per State Statute, extracurricular activities may be withheld until proper reimbursement is received.

WITHDRAWALS

Should you plan to withdraw your child please notify the front office as quickly as possible. This will allow ample time to complete the transfer/withdrawal process.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

CAMPUS VISITATION

All visitors are expected to present a valid photo ID. Before entering the building and/or visiting during the school day, all visitors must have a School Access Form on file and be an approved volunteer. This includes visiting the cafeteria during lunch. Volunteer approval information is in the Volunteer section of this handbook. All parents and visitors **MUST** present a valid picture ID, and log into Raptor (located in the front office) during the school day. Visitors must always wear a printed badge while on campus. This is in accordance with state statute and enforced for the safety of our children and staff.

HOMEWORK

To support the academic, social, and emotional well-being of our elementary students, routine homework will not be assigned. Instruction, guided practice, and opportunities for independent application of skills are expected to occur during the school day through high-quality, standards-based instruction. Home should serve as a place for students to engage in reading, family interactions, play, creative activities, and adequate rest, all of which contribute to healthy child development and readiness to learn.

Teachers may assign optional enrichment projects, no more than 2/year, that extend classroom learning but are not required, graded, or used to determine student achievement. Students will not be penalized for not completing optional enrichment activities. Reading with a family member, independent reading, or engaging in authentic real-world learning experiences is encouraged but not required.

When a student requires additional support or practice to address a specific learning need, teachers may provide individualized activities in collaboration with families. Such assignments should be purposeful, limited in scope, and directly connected to the student's learning goals.

This policy reflects the school's commitment to providing equitable learning opportunities during the instructional day while fostering a healthy balance between school, family, and childhood.

P.T.O. (Parent Teacher Organization)

Our Parent Teacher Organization serves as a tremendous resource. PTO is a fund-raising organization which sponsors family-oriented activities and enhances learning for all our scholars. We hope to have 100% participation in PTO. Visit the PTO website (<https://osceolapto.membershiptoolkit.com>) or PTO's Facebook page for meeting dates and events.

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL (SAC)

The School Advisory Council (SAC) serves as an advisory capacity for the school principal. SAC includes parents, teachers, and business community members. In addition, SAC develops and monitors the School Improvement Plan (SIP). The SIP is created based on our needs assessment survey and overall performance data. The completed SIP is presented to the community for input, then shared with the school board and DOE for approval. The school board determines if adequate progress is made, and changes are implemented at the beginning of each school year. Parents are vital partners in the learning process, and we encourage you to attend our monthly SAC meetings.

VOLUNTEERS

We encourage you to volunteer in the classroom, clinic, cafeteria, office, media center, to serve as mentors, and chaperone field trips. Please visit the district website and complete a School Access Form. Before entering the building and/or visiting during the school day, all visitors must have a School Access Form on file and be an approved volunteer. Please allow two-four weeks for the form to be processed.

When volunteering, log in to Raptor as a "volunteer" and always wear your badge while on campus. The classroom teacher will determine when volunteer opportunities will be scheduled, and your time will need to be pre-arranged with the classroom teacher. Unplanned and unexpected class visits interrupt instructional time and momentum. While volunteering on campus, and during field trips or school activities, children who are not enrolled in Osceola will not be allowed on campus. It is important that, while volunteering for the school, you can give your undivided attention to the activity.

STUDENT DROP OFF AND PICK UP PROCEDURES

MORNING STUDENT DROP-OFF (8:00-8:25 AM)

Parent drop off procedures

- The Parent drop off gate opens at 7:55 AM. We ask that your child remains in their vehicle until staff arrives for morning duty at 8:00 AM.
- Please have your child exit from the door nearest to the curb. Arrange car seats accordingly so the student can safely get out of the passenger side.
- Pull up directly behind the car in front of you.
- CROSS ONLY IN THE DESIGNATED CROSSING AREA (the yellow lines) and do not cross until you have been given the "OK" from Osceola staff.
- As vehicles leave the parking area, please exit to the right during pick up and drop off hours.
- **DO NOT USE CELL PHONES WHILE IN THE DROP-OFF OR PICK-UP LINES.**
- Drop off is NOT permitted in the bus loop unless directed by a staff member or after 8:25 AM.
- After 8:25 AM, students are considered tardy. You must park and escort your child into the front office.

AFTERNOON PARENT PICK-UP (2:45-3:05PM)

Parent pick up procedures are as follows:

- Any person picking up a child should always have a photo ID in case their identity needs to be verified.
- Vehicles will enter the Parent Pick Up circle and wait for staff to release students.
- Drivers should follow the staff directions to be in place for the children to get into the car.
- Student name cards **MUST** be visible on the passenger side of the dashboard until your child is in the car.
- Only adults listed as emergency contacts can pick up students. Adults must have a valid ID, and it will be checked/verified by Osceola staff before a student can get into the vehicle.