Parent/Student Handbook

**2024-2025**

**Osceola Elementary School**

1605 Osceola Elementary School Road

St. Augustine, Florida 32084

(904) 547-3780

Web site: [http://www-oes.stjohns.k12.fl.us](http://www.oes.stjohns.k12.fl.us)

School Start/End Times

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

8:25AM – 1:45PM – Wednesday

**Mr. Jessley Hathaway, Principal**

Email: [Jessley.Hathaway@stjohns.k12.fl.us](mailto:Jessley.Hathaway@stjohns.k12.fl.us)

**Ms. Lisa Bielefeldt, Assistant Principal**

Email: [Lisa.Bielefeldt@stjohns.k12.fl.us](mailto:Lisa.Bielefeldt@stjohns.k12.fl.us)

**Mrs. Amanda Devany, Assistant Principal**

Email: [Amanda.Devany@stjohns.k12.fl.us](mailto:Amanda.Devany@stjohns.k12.fl.us)

Dear Families of Osceola Elementary School,

On behalf of Osceola Elementary School, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the 2024-2025 school year. For those of you whose children have attended our school in the past, we are so glad you are choosing to return. For those of you whose children are just entering Osceola, we are pleased that you are joining the Wildcat Family.

Let me also introduce myself. My name is Mr. Jessley Hathaway, and I am honored to serve as your principal. Our leadership team had the pleasure of connecting with many of our returning families this summer while also meeting several of our new families. We look forward to meeting everyone else soon.

Osceola Elementary is an “A” rated school, committed to excellence. Academic achievement, character development, commitment to safety, and a sense of belonging and community are our highest priorities. Please be assured of my commitment to honor our accomplishments and contribute to even greater success in the future.

Please be sure to read through your child’s handbook as it will provide you with information regarding upcoming events, classroom updates, and parent/community activities.

Again, we want to welcome all of you to what we know will be the best school year yet. Please stop by the office, call, email, or Dojo and tell us if we can assist you. Together, this is going to be an incredible 2024-2025 school year.

Go Wildcats.

Sincerely,

Mr. Jessley Hathaway

Principal

**Contacts:**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Principal | Mr. Jessley Hathaway | Receptionist | Mrs. Alisa Hendry |
| Assistant Principal | Ms. Lisa Bielefeldt | Data Entry Operator | Mrs. Amy Matthews |
| Assistant Principal | Mrs. Amanda Devany | Food Service Manager | Mrs. Mary Grasso |
| Behavior Interventionist | Mrs. Faye Jenkins | School Nurse | Mrs. Krystle Kelley |
| Secretary/Bookkeeper | Mrs. Susan Lynch | Extended Day Coordinator | Mrs. Heather O’Mara |
| Guidance Counselor | Mrs. 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 and is based on the needs of each child
* provide an inviting, orderly, and safe learning environment
* assist parents 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
* provide support for learning such as setting a quiet place and time for homework with the necessary supplies, assist and check homework daily

**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 andthe 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](mailto: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, truancies, 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, special circumstances, and the occasional dental and medical appointment. *Requests for absences of special circumstances or pre-authorized absences, including dental and medical appointments 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 discouraged between 2:20-2:45pm. 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 email updated information to Mrs. Hendry. [Alisa.Hendry@stjohns.k12.fl.us](mailto:Alisa.Hendry@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 2:20 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 principles, may result in an oral or written plan describing [ways](https://sjschools-my.sharepoint.com/personal/e011735_stjohns_k12_fl_us/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7BE0D45B8C-D478-488C-8521-12B0D4180631%7D&file=Self-Contained%202023-20241.xlsx&action=default&mobileredirect=true) to prevent the action and identify replacement behaviors. Please see the St. Johns County District Conduct Code for further information regarding student behavior.

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| **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 first Tuesday of every month is CHARACTER COUNTS! Celebration 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](http://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, *School Messenger,*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 planners are used in all grade levels, and we ask that you check them every day. Your teacher will share email and/or Dojo information during Meet the Teacher Night, and you can also find staff email addresses on our web page.

**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 such as store-bought cookies, cupcakes, healthy snacks, frozen juice bars, etc. may 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. 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. Should we ever need to vacate our school site we would go by school bus the Soloman Calhoun Community Center.

**FIELD STUDY EXPERIENCES**

Educational field study experiences are planned throughout the school year. It is school and district policy that all field study experienced 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 SJCSD **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.

**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.

**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 GRADING SCALE - KIND. - 2nd Gr.**

**Grade/Percent Definition Marking Code Definition**

**A** 90-100Outstanding progress **M** Meeting Florida Standards

**B** 80-89 Above average **P** Progressing toward Florida Standards

**C** 70-79 Average progress  **I** Improvement needed

**D** 60-69 Lowest acceptable progress

**F** 59 and below Unacceptable progress

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.

**SPIRIT DAY**

Every Friday is 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, 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 in KeepNTrack (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**

Please set aside time each evening to read or complete assigned homework. Homework should extend classroom learning and provide opportunities for children to demonstrate the CHARACTER COUNTS! Pillars of Responsibility and Citizenship. Homework expectations will vary by classroom.

**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 our website 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 need volunteers 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 weeks for the form to be processed.

When volunteering, log in to KeepNTrack 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.**
* 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.