



OCEAN CITY PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK 2026-2027

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Acting Principal**

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OCEAN CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT — COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME!	3
OUR PHILOSOPHY	4
OUR MISSION	4
OUR DISTRICT GOALS.....	4
OUR PRIMARY SCHOOL CORE VALUES	5
OUR CHARACTER PRINCIPLES.....	6
SECTION 1: IMPORTANT CONTACTS & RESOURCES.....	7
SECTION 2: ATTENDANCE	8
School Hours.....	8
Reporting an Absence	8
Types of Absences.....	8
Tardiness	9
Planned Absences & Family Vacations	9
Make-Up Work	9
SECTION 3: SCHOOL DAY SCHEDULE & ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL PROCEDURES.....	10
Our Day	10
Morning Arrival	10
Afternoon Dismissal	11
SECTION 4: ACADEMIC PROGRAMS & CURRICULUM	13
Our Commitment to Learning.....	13
Preschool	13
Grades Kindergarten through Third	14
Special Education Services	16
Technology & Digital Learning.....	17
Homework.....	17
SECTION 5: BEHAVIOR, EXPECTATIONS & DISCIPLINE	18
SECTION 6: COMMUNICATION & FAMILY INVOLVEMENT	20
SECTION 7: FOOD SERVICES, HEALTH & WELLNESS	22
SECTION 8: TRANSPORTATION & SAFETY.....	24
SECTION 9: GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES	25
Birthdays & Celebrations.....	25
Dress Code.....	25
Lost & Found.....	25
Photography & Social Media.....	25
SECTION 10: ACKNOWLEDGMENT PAGE.....	26

WELCOME!

Dear Ocean City Primary School Families~

Welcome to the 2026-2027 school year! On behalf of our dedicated faculty and staff, I am thrilled to welcome you to what promises to be an incredible year of learning, growth, and community.

At Ocean City Primary School, we believe that every child deserves a safe, inclusive, and engaging learning environment- one where curiosity is celebrated, kindness is practiced, and every student feels valued and supported. Our school is built on three core values that guide everything we do:

- ❖ Communication- Open, honest, and respectful dialogue between students, families, and staff
- ❖ Collaboration- Working together to support every learner's success
- ❖ Community- Building meaningful connections that extend beyond our classrooms

This handbook is your essential guide to life at Ocean City Primary School. Inside, you will find important information about our programs, policies, procedures, and the many ways you can be an active partner in your child's education. I encourage you to read through it carefully and keep it as a reference throughout the year.

We are also proud to foster a school community where every student feels safe and respected. Please take a moment to review our Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) policy, which is outlined in detail later in this handbook.

Additionally, I invite you to connect with our amazing Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)- a wonderful group of families and staff who play a vital role in making OCPS such a special place. Information about how to get involved can be found in the pages ahead.

My door is always open. Whether you have a question, a concern, or simply want to share a success, please do not hesitate to reach out. Together, we will make this an extraordinary year for every child in our school community.

Your partner in education~



Mary Beth Libro
Acting Principal



OUR PHILOSOPHY

At Ocean City Primary School, we believe that every child is capable of greatness. Our school exists to nurture that greatness academically, socially, and emotionally in an environment where every student feels safe, valued, and inspired to learn.

We are guided by the belief that education is a shared responsibility. When students, families, and educators work together with purpose and mutual respect, extraordinary things happen. This belief shapes every decision we make, every classroom we build, and every relationship we foster.

OUR MISSION

The Ocean City School District is committed to providing a high-quality education for all students in an inclusive and supportive environment. We strive to prepare every learner for success in a diverse and ever-changing world, while making responsible use of the resources our community entrusts to us.

At Ocean City Primary School, we bring this mission to life every single day... in our classrooms, our hallways, our playgrounds, and our partnerships with families.

OUR DISTRICT GOALS

Everything we do at Ocean City Primary School is aligned with the goals of the Ocean City School District:

Goal 1: Academic Excellence

We are committed to continuously improving student academic performance, ensuring every child has access to rigorous, engaging, and meaningful learning experiences.

Goal 2: Communication

We are committed to strengthening communication among students, families, staff, and the broader community- because when we stay connected, our children succeed.

Goal 3: Responsible Stewardship

We are committed to making thoughtful, cost-effective decisions that honor the trust our community places in us and maximize resources in service of our students.

OUR PRIMARY SCHOOL CORE VALUES

Three core values serve as the heartbeat of Ocean City Primary School. They guide how we lead, how we teach, how we learn, and how we grow together.

Communication~
We listen. We share. We stay connected.

We believe that clear, honest, and caring communication is the foundation of trust between students and teachers, between school and home, and among members of our community. We are committed to keeping families informed, hearing every voice, and creating space for meaningful dialogue.

Collaboration~
We are stronger together.

We believe that the best outcomes for children happen when everyone works as a team. Our students learn to collaborate with their peers. Our staff collaborates across grade levels and disciplines. And our school collaborates with families and community partners because no one succeeds alone.

Community~
We belong to each other.

We believe that a strong school community is built on respect, kindness, inclusion, and shared purpose. At Ocean City Primary School, every student belongs. Every family matters. Every contribution counts. We celebrate our diversity, support one another through challenges, and hold high expectations for every member of our school family.

OUR CHARACTER PRINCIPLES

In addition to our core values, Ocean City Primary School is proud to cultivate character principles in every student. Each month, our school will focus on one character trait to help students learn, practice, and grow. With the support of our guidance counselor, all students will explicitly learn each trait and have opportunities to use it in everyday routines and interactions. We will also celebrate individual students who demonstrate the monthly trait through positive recognition and encouragement.

September- Excellence I can try my best & keep learning.	October- Respect I can use kind words & listen.	November- Courage I can tell the truth & be brave.
December- Discipline I can make good choices.	January- Responsibility I can help & take care of things.	February- Compassion I can show kindness.
March- Integrity I can do the right thing.	April- Perseverance I can keep trying when something is hard.	May/June- Inclusivity/Teamwork I can include others & work together.

OUR PROMISE TO YOU

Ocean City Primary School promises to...

- ❖ Hold high expectations for every student, every day
- ❖ Provide a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment
- ❖ Maintain open and consistent communication with every family
- ❖ Welcome and value family involvement and partnership
- ❖ Deliver engaging, meaningful instruction that meets every learner where they are
- ❖ Support the whole child- academically, socially, and emotionally
- ❖ Foster a strong sense of community in everything we do

In return, we ask that families and students join us in upholding these values because together, we are Ocean City Primary School!

SECTION 1: IMPORTANT CONTACTS & RESOURCES

Ocean City Primary School

Name:	Title/Role:	Contact Information:
Mrs. Mary Beth Libro	Acting Principal	mlibro@ocsdnj.org 609.399.3191 ext: 8741
Ms. Michelle Johns	Supervisor	mjohns@ocsdnj.org 609.399.3191 ext: 6501
Mrs. Stacy McCarron	Principal's Secretary	smccarron@ocsdnj.org 609.399.3191 ext: 6516
Mrs. Lisa Barber	Transportation Secretary	lbarber@ocsdnj.org 609.399.3191 ext: 6400
Mrs. Rosemary Millar	School Nurse	rmillar@ocsdnj.org 609.399.3191 ext: 8749
Mr. Joel Dougan	Guidance	jdougan@ocsdnj.org 609.399.3191 ext: 6402
Mrs. Carrie Merritt	Mental Health & Wellness	cmerritt@ocsdnj.org 609.399.3191 ext: 6533
Mrs. Ivory Williams	Social Worker	iwilliams@ocsdnj.org 609.399.3191 ext: 4705

District

Name:	Title/Role:	Contact Information:
Dr. Brian Latwis	Superintendent of Schools	blatwis@ocsdnj.org
Dr. Lauren Gunther	Director of Curriculum & Professional Development	lgunther@ocsdnj.org
Mrs. Jackie Kulinski	Director of Student Services	jkulinski@ocsdnj.org
Dr. Curt Nath	Director of Data & Assessments	cnath@ocsdnj.org
Mr. Timothy Kelley	Business Administrator	tkelley@ocsdnj.org
Mr. Andrew Nelson	Director of Facilities	anelson@ocsdnj.org

SECTION 2: ATTENDANCE

At Ocean City Primary School, we know that every day counts. Research consistently shows that regular school attendance is one of the strongest predictors of academic success. When students are present, engaged, and ready to learn, great things happen. We ask every family to make school attendance a top priority. Our goal is for every student to be present, on time, and ready to learn every single day.

School Hours

Pre School	8:35 AM-2:55 PM
Grades K-3	8:35 AM – 3:00 PM

Main Office Hours

7:30 AM – 4:00 PM Daily

Reporting an Absence

If your child will be absent, please notify the school before 9:00 AM on the day of the absence. You are welcome to call our absentee hotline at 609.399.5622 or email the school at ocpsattendance@ocsdnj.org. When notifying, please provide:

- ❖ Your child's full name
- ❖ Your child's grade level and teacher(s)
- ❖ The reason for the absence
- ❖ The expected date of return

Please Note: If we do not receive a call by 9:00 AM, our office will attempt to contact a parent or guardian to verify the absence. This is for the safety and well-being of every student.

Types of Absences

Ocean City Board Policy [#5200](#)

A student's absence from school will either be excused (as categorized by N.J.A.C. 6A: 32-8.4 (e)), verified unexcused, or notified unexcused, or unexcused.

1. Excused Absences- per the state of New Jersey, an absence is excused for one of the following reasons:
 - ❖ Religious observance, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:36-14, 15, and 16
 - ❖ Participation in observance of Veterans Day
 - ❖ Take Our Children to Work Day
 - ❖ Closure of a busing school district that prevents a student from having transportation to the receiving school
2. Unexcused: Absent Verified- an absence is verified for one of the following reasons:
 - ❖ Student illness, supported by medical documentation
 - ❖ Student's required attendance in court, supported by court documentation
 - ❖ Death in the family, supported by appropriate documentation

3. Unexcused: Absent Notified- the school is notified of an absence with a call/email to the Main Office before 9:00 AM
4. Unexcused: Unverified/Not notified- absent from school with no acceptable notice

All unexcused notified and unexcused absences will count toward truancy as outlined in Policy/Regulation #5200. Attendance letters will be shared with families after four, seven, ten, fifteen and twenty days of unexcused absences. A student who misses 10% or more of the school year (approximately 18 days out of 180 days) is considered chronically absent.

Tardiness

We understand that life is unpredictable, and occasional tardiness happens. However, arriving on time matters. Students who arrive late miss critical instructional time, morning routines, and community-building moments that set the tone for the entire day.

Students arriving after 8:45 AM must report to the Main Office for a late pass before going to class. A parent or guardian must sign in the student upon late arrival. Repeated tardiness will be addressed collaboratively with the family to identify solutions and support.

Planned Absences & Family Vacations

We recognize that families sometimes need to schedule travel or appointments during the school year. If you anticipate an absence of three or more days, please:

- ❖ Submit written notification to the classroom teacher and Main Office at least one week in advance
- ❖ Work with your child's teacher to arrange any make-up work
- ❖ Understand that make-up work is the student's responsibility upon return

Please be aware that family vacations taken during the school year are considered unexcused absences under district policy. We encourage families to plan travel during scheduled school breaks whenever possible.

Make-Up Work

Students who are absent have the right and responsibility to complete missed assignments. While teachers will do their best to work with returning students to ensure a smooth transition, it is also the expectation that families provide support at home as well.

SECTION 3: SCHOOL DAY SCHEDULE & ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Our Day

Individual class schedules will be shared with families at Back to School Night; however, a general schedule follows:

8:25 AM- Doors Open for Breakfast
8:35 AM- Doors Open/Student Arrival
8:45 AM- Morning Announcements & Morning Meetings
- Learning Day (Preschool):
20-30 minutes of Whole Group Instruction (literacy & math)
20-30 minutes of Small Group Instruction (literacy & math)
45-60 minutes of Choice Time/Learning Centers
45 minutes Outdoor/Gross Motor Activity
30-45 minutes of Rest/Quiet Time
20-30 minutes of music, movement & transition
30 minutes for meals/snacks
- Learning Day (Grades K-3):
180 minutes of ELA Instruction
60-75 minutes of Math Instruction
25-30 minutes of Science/Social Studies Instruction
45 minutes of Special Area Instruction
45 minutes for Lunch/Recess
2:55 PM- Preschool Dismissal Begins
3:00 PM- Grades K-3 Dismissal Begins

Morning Arrival

A smooth, safe, and positive start to the day sets the tone for everything that follows. Please help us make every morning a great one!

Doors open at **8:25 AM** for breakfast. Any student eating breakfast should proceed to the cafeteria upon arrival. Doors open at **8:35 AM** for students not eating breakfast. Please do not drop students off before this time, as supervision is not available. Upon arrival, students will proceed directly to their classrooms.

Bus Riders:

Bus transportation will be provided for students who live more than two miles from the Ocean City Primary School. Parents may elect to opt out of school provided transportation via a waiver. Bus information will be provided through the Power School portal prior to the start of school. All bus riders will enter the building from the 5th Street Entrance.

Bike Riders/Walkers:

Students riding or walking to school should use designated crosswalks and follow the guidance

of crossing guards. All Preschool students will enter the building at the 6th Street Entrance on West Avenue. All other students may enter through either the Main Doors or 6th Street Entrance (both on West Avenue).

Car Drop-Off:

Please use West Avenue or the parking lot across the street when dropping your child off each morning. For everyone's safety- only have them exit your vehicle once you are safely on the curb and only have them exit from the right side of the vehicle. All Preschool students will enter the building at the 6th Street Entrance on West Avenue. All other students may enter through either the Main Doors or 6th Street Entrance (both on West Avenue).

Afternoon Dismissal

Preschool dismissal begins at **2:55 PM** and grades K-3 dismissal begins at **3:00 PM**. All students will be dismissed according to their transportation method noted in Power School.

Bus Riders:

Bus information will be provided through the Power School portal prior to the start of school. All bus riders will exit the building from the 5th Street Entrance.

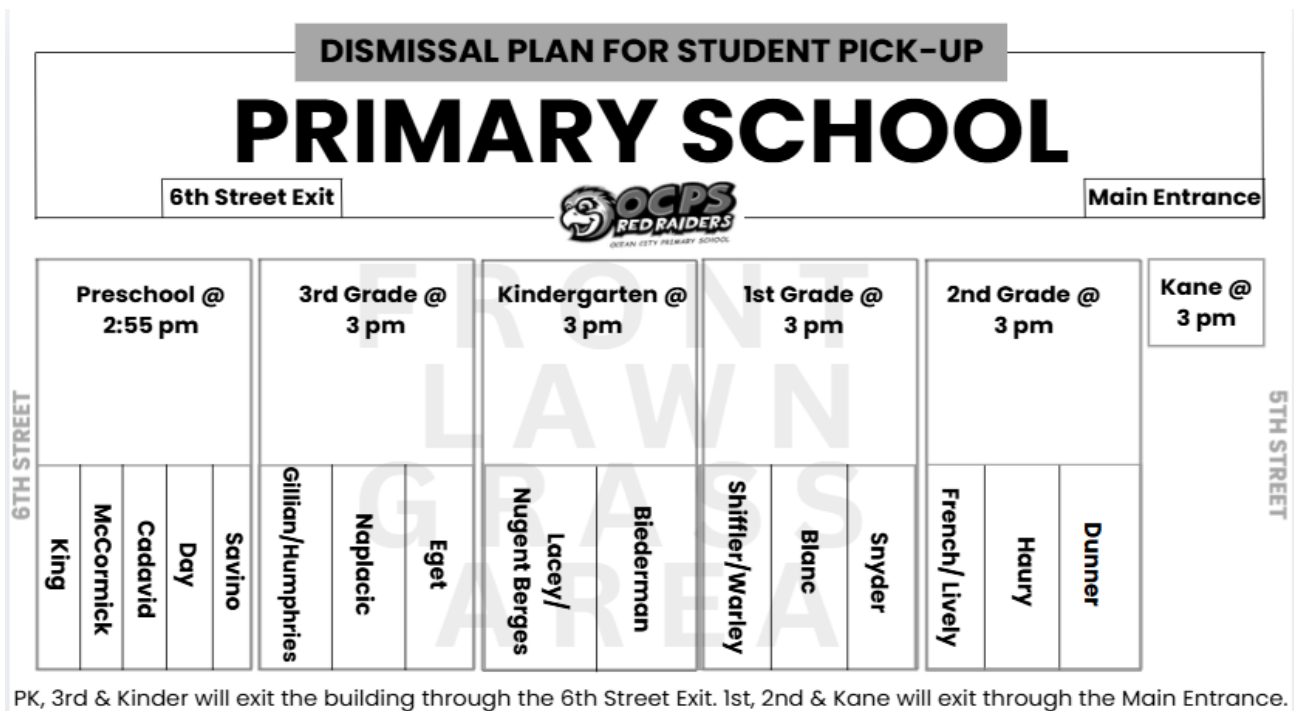
Bike Riders/Walkers:

Students riding or walking home from school should use designated crosswalks and follow the guidance of crossing guards.

Car Pick-Up:

Please use West Avenue and the parking lot across the street when picking up your child. For everyone's safety only have them enter your vehicle once you are safely on the curb.

All Preschool students will exit the building at the 6th Street West Avenue Entrance. Students in grades K and 3 will exit at 6th Street West Avenue Entrance. Students in grades 1 and 2 will exit at the Main Doors.



Changes to Dismissal:

Changes to your child's regular dismissal routine must be communicated to the classroom teacher(s) and the Main Office in writing, by email, or by phone before **2:00 PM**. For the safety of your child, we cannot accept last-minute dismissal changes.

Early Pick-Up:

We ask that early pick-ups be minimized whenever possible to avoid disruption to your child's learning day. If you need to pick up your child before 3:00 PM, please come directly to the Main Office and bring a valid photo ID each time you arrive.

Please Note:

Students will only be released to authorized adults on file. It is the responsibility of the family to update Power School with any changes throughout the school year.

SECTION 4: ACADEMIC PROGRAMS & CURRICULUM

Our Commitment to Learning

At Ocean City Primary School, we are committed to providing every student with a rigorous, engaging, and joyful learning experience. We believe that academic excellence and a love of learning go hand in hand and we work hard every day to cultivate both.

Preschool

Ocean City Primary School is proud to offer a high-quality preschool program that lays the foundation for a lifetime of learning. Our program follows all state mandates, including the Preschool Program Implementation Guidelines and the Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards, ensuring that every child receives a developmentally appropriate, engaging, and enriching early education experience.

Curriculum:

Our preschool utilizes The Creative Curriculum, a research-based program designed to support the whole child across all developmental domains and content areas. Grounded in best practices and aligned with comprehensive early learning standards, The Creative Curriculum provides meaningful, intentional learning experiences that nurture children's intellectual, social, emotional, and physical growth. Each day, children engage in a thoughtfully structured schedule that includes:

- ❖ Morning Meeting- building community and setting the tone for the day
- ❖ Small Group Instruction- focused literacy and mathematics learning
- ❖ Choice Time- intentional play experiences that foster creativity and exploration
- ❖ Large Group Time- shared learning and whole-class connection
- ❖ Gross Motor Time- movement and physical development
- ❖ Snack & Lunch- building independence and social skills
- ❖ Rest Time- supporting overall health and wellbeing
- ❖ Shared Reading & Writing- developing early literacy skills in a collaborative setting

Studies:

One of the most exciting features of The Creative Curriculum is its study-based approach to learning. Studies are hands-on, project-based investigations of topics that connect directly to children's everyday experiences and natural curiosity. Through studies, children raise questions, explore ideas, and discover answers through firsthand investigation. This approach allows for deep, meaningful learning that integrates skills across all developmental domains. Current studies include (but are not limited to): Buildings, Clothes, Cameras, Gardening, Exercise, Light, Reduce/Reuse/Recycle, Simple Machines, Tubes & Tunnels, Wheels, Boxes, Balls, Sand, Trees, Music Making, Pets, Roads, Signs, Water, and Bread.

Assessment:

In our Preschool program, assessment is an ongoing, integrated part of teaching and learning. The Creative Curriculum is built around 38 research-based objectives for development and learning that span:

- ❖ Broad developmental areas
- ❖ Core content areas
- ❖ English language acquisition

These objectives guide teachers in understanding each child's individual strengths and needs, allowing them to scaffold learning experiences.

How We Assess:

Our preschool uses formative assessment through Teaching Strategies GOLD- a comprehensive, research-based tool that captures the full picture of each child's growth and development.

Assessment is gathered through a variety of meaningful sources, including:

- ❖ Classroom observations
- ❖ Checklists
- ❖ Photographs
- ❖ Work samples
- ❖ Family input

Teaching Strategies GOLD is grounded in widely held expectations for early childhood development while allowing for meaningful differentiation- honoring the fact that every child grows and learns at their own pace and in their own way.

Sharing Your Child's Progress:

We believe that families are essential partners in their child's learning journey. To keep you informed and involved, we offer the following opportunities to connect:

- ❖ Trimester Report Cards- issued at the end of each trimester, providing a snapshot of your child's growth across all developmental areas
- ❖ Parent/Teacher Conferences- held in the fall and winter, giving families dedicated time to connect with their child's teacher
- ❖ Development and Learning Report- shared with all families during conference time, offering a detailed look at your child's progress across the 38 objectives

All families are encouraged to sign up and attend Parent/Teacher Conferences. These meetings are a wonderful opportunity to celebrate your child's growth, ask questions, and strengthen our home-school partnership. We look forward to seeing you!

Grades Kindergarten through Third

Ocean City Primary School is proud to offer a rigorous and engaging K-3 academic program that builds on the strong foundation established in our Preschool. Our curriculum is fully aligned with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS) and is thoughtfully designed to challenge, inspire, and support every learner- ensuring that each child has the opportunity to grow, thrive, and reach their full potential.

Core Academic Areas:

All students in grades K-3 receive daily instruction in the following core areas:

- ❖ English Language Arts (ELA)- reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language skills
- ❖ Mathematics- conceptual understanding, problem-solving, and mathematical reasoning

- ❖ Science- inquiry-based exploration aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)
- ❖ Social Studies- community, culture, history, civics, and geography

Specials & Enrichment:

In addition to core academics, all students in grades K-3 participate in specials classes that enrich their education and develop the whole child:

- ❖ Art
- ❖ Health & Wellness
- ❖ Library & Technology
- ❖ Music
- ❖ Physical Education
- ❖ Spanish

Support Services:

We are committed to meeting every learner where they are. Ocean City Primary School provides a range of support services to ensure all students can access and succeed in our curriculum:

- ❖ Counseling Services- Our mental health staff member and school counselor are both available to support students' social-emotional wellbeing
- ❖ English Language Learner Support- small group and individual support for identified students in grades K-3
- ❖ Intervention & Support- small group and individual support for identified students in grades K-3 needing additional assistance in reading/foundational skills
- ❖ Occupational Therapy Services- small group and individual support for identified students in grades PreK-3
- ❖ Physical Therapy Services- small group and individual support for identified students in grades PreK-3
- ❖ Primary Enrichment Program (PEP)- small group enrichment opportunities for identified students in grades 1-3
- ❖ Speech & Language Services- small group and individual support for identified students in grades PreK-3 needing additional assistance

Assessment:

At Ocean City Primary School, assessment is an ongoing and essential part of our teaching and learning process. In grades K-3, our teachers use a variety of tools and strategies to gain a clear and comprehensive understanding of each child's strengths, growth, and areas for development. Assessment is not just about grades, it is about understanding the whole child and using that knowledge to guide instruction, celebrate progress, and ensure every student is supported on their unique learning journey.

How We Assess:

Screeners

All students in grades K-3 will complete beginning and mid-year foundational skills screeners in ELA. The results of these screeners will be used to determine small group placement and intervention supports.

Progress Monitoring

Based on screener results, identified students in grades K-3 will be monitored regularly.

End of Module/Topic Benchmarks

All students in grades K-3 will complete end of module/topic common assessments in both ELA and Mathematics. Results will be shared by your child's teacher.

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Growth

All students in grades K-3 will take the MAP Growth Assessment in reading and mathematics three times per year (fall, winter, spring). Results of these assessments will be reviewed with families at fall and winter conferences. Spring reports will be sent home with final report cards. Families are encouraged to learn more about MAP Growth by visiting the [NWEA Family Toolkit](#).

Standardized Assessment- New Jersey Student Learning Assessment-Adaptive (NJSLA-A)

All students in grade 3 will take the NJSLA-A in reading and mathematics in the spring. Results of these assessments will be mailed home to families. Families are encouraged to learn more about NJSLA-A by visiting [the New Jersey Assessments Portal](#).

Sharing Your Child's Progress:

We believe that ongoing communication about student progress is essential to every child's success. To keep you informed and involved, we offer the following opportunities to connect:

- ❖ Trimester Report Cards- issued at the end of each trimester, providing a snapshot of your child's growth across all academic areas
- ❖ Parent/Teacher Conferences- held in the fall and winter, giving families dedicated time to connect with their child's teacher

All families are encouraged to sign up and attend Parent/Teacher Conferences. These meetings are a wonderful opportunity to celebrate your child's growth, ask questions, and strengthen our home-school partnership. We look forward to seeing you!

Special Education Services

Ocean City Primary School is committed to providing a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) to all eligible students with disabilities in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and New Jersey Administrative Code (N.J.A.C. 6A:14).

Students who are identified as eligible for special education and related services will receive an Individualized Education Program (IEP) developed collaboratively by a team that includes educators, specialists, and most importantly, the student's family. Our Child Study Team works closely with classroom teachers to ensure that every student receives the support, accommodations, and modifications needed to thrive in our school community.

Ocean City Primary School provides a continuum of placement options to meet the unique needs of each student with a disability. Depending on the goals and recommendations outlined in a student's IEP, services may be delivered through a variety of settings, including:

- ❖ Inclusion/Co-Teaching- Special education support provided within the general education classroom alongside peers
- ❖ Resource Room- Small group or individual instruction provided outside of the general education classroom for targeted skill development
- ❖ Self-Contained Settings- Specialized classroom environments designed to meet the needs of students who require a higher level of support

Placement decisions are always made on an individual basis by our team, with the goal of providing each student with the least restrictive environment (LRE) in which they can learn and grow successfully.

Technology & Digital Learning

Technology is an important part of 21st-century learning. Students at Ocean City Primary School use technology as a tool for learning, creativity, and collaboration. All students in grades K-3 are issued a Chromebook device in the fall. They are expected to follow our Acceptable Use Policy, which is available to review under your Power School forms.

Homework

Homework at Ocean City Primary School is designed to reinforce learning, build independence, and encourage family connection to classroom content. It is not meant to overwhelm. Grade level specifics are shared a Back to School Night each year. General guidelines:

- ❖ Homework should be completed independently by the student
- ❖ Families are encouraged to provide a quiet, consistent time and space for homework
- ❖ If your child is consistently struggling with homework, please reach out to the teacher

SECTION 5: BEHAVIOR, EXPECTATIONS & DISCIPLINE

Our Belief About Behavior

At Ocean City Primary School, we believe that positive behavior is taught, not simply expected. We are committed to creating a school environment where students feel safe, respected, and empowered to make good choices and where they receive the support they need when they don't. Our approach to discipline is restorative, consistent, and compassionate. We focus on helping students understand the impact of their choices, repair relationships, and grow as members of our community.

School-Wide Expectations:

We ask every student to demonstrate our core character principles every day. Our simple school-wide motto: Make it a great day, OCPS!

Classroom Behavior:

Each teacher establishes clear, consistent, and positive classroom expectations at the start of the year. These expectations are shared with students and families and are aligned with our school-wide values. Students are expected to:

- ❖ Listen respectfully and follow directions
- ❖ Treat classmates, teachers, and all staff with kindness and respect
- ❖ Come prepared and ready to learn
- ❖ Advocate for themselves appropriately when they need help
- ❖ Take pride in their work and their community

Consequences for Behavior:

When students make choices that do not align with our school values, we respond with fairness, consistency, and care. Our goal is always to help students learn and grow not simply to punish.

A progressive approach to discipline may include:

1. Teacher-student conversation- addressing the behavior directly and privately
2. Family contact- partnering with home to address concerns early
3. Behavior support plan- collaborative plan developed with student, family, and staff
4. Administrative referral- for repeated or serious behaviors

We always prefer to solve problems together. If you are concerned about your child's behavior or social-emotional wellbeing, please don't wait. Reach out to your child's teacher or our school counselor. We are here to help.

Prohibited Items & Behaviors:

The following are not permitted at Ocean City Primary School:

- ❖ Weapons or dangerous objects of any kind
- ❖ Tobacco, alcohol, drugs, or any controlled substances
- ❖ Bullying, harassment, or intimidation in any form
- ❖ Theft or vandalism

- ❖ Disruptive or threatening behavior
- ❖ Unauthorized use of personal electronic devices
- ❖ Inappropriate or offensive language or materials

Harassment, Intimidation & Bullying (HIB) Policy

Ocean City Primary School is committed to providing every student with a safe, caring, and respectful school environment. Harassment, intimidation, and bullying (HIB) of any kind will not be tolerated, whether in person, online, or in any other form.

We take every report of HIB seriously, and we respond promptly, thoroughly, and with the wellbeing of all students at the center.

What Is HIB?:

Under New Jersey law (N.J.S.A. 18A:37-14), harassment, intimidation, or bullying is defined as any gesture, written, verbal, or physical act, or any electronic communication that:

- ❖ Is motivated by actual or perceived characteristics such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or other distinguishing characteristics
- OR-
- ❖ takes place on school property, at a school-sponsored event, or through school equipment and substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students
- AND-
- ❖ which a reasonable person should know will physically or emotionally harm a student, insult or demean a student or group of students and create a hostile educational environment

Reporting HIB:

Every member of our school community has a role in keeping our school safe. Staff are required to report all suspected HIB incidents to the principal immediately. Families are encouraged to report concerns directly on the district's website. Students are encouraged to tell a trusted adult (a teacher, counselor, or administrator) if they experience or witness HIB.

Investigation Process:

Upon receiving a report of HIB,

1. The Anti-Bullying Specialist will initiate a formal investigation within one school day
2. The investigation will be completed within 10 school days
3. Families of all involved students will be notified and kept informed throughout the process
4. Findings will be reported to the principal and, if applicable, to the Board of Education
5. Consequences and support will be determined based on findings and the needs of all students involved

Note: The full HIB Policy is available on the district website at OCSDNJ.ORG.

SECTION 6: COMMUNICATION & FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Our Belief About Communication

At Ocean City Primary School, communication is a core value not just a practice. We believe that when families and schools stay connected, children thrive. We are committed to communicating with you regularly, clearly, and warmly and to making sure you always feel informed, welcomed, and heard.

For urgent matters, please contact the Main Office directly at 609.399-3191 ext. 6400.

Buildingwide:

We use a variety of channels to keep our school community connected, including the district website, Facebook, email, and phone. Be on the look out for Weekly Updates which are sent electronically from the Main Office each Friday afternoon.

Grade Level Specific:

All students in grades PreK-3 will receive a take home folder, which will be used for daily communication between teacher and home. Please make a habit of checking this folder regularly. Families are also encouraged to email teachers directly with any questions or concerns they may have. Please allow 24-48 hours for a response. Teachers are engaged with students during the school day and will respond to messages as promptly as possible.

Power School & Schoology:

All families are encouraged to visit the parent portal in Power School to update contact information, access attendance and trimester report cards. All families are encouraged to link themselves to the Schoology portal as well. Directions will be shared at Back to School Night.

Our Belief on Family Involvement

We believe that family involvement is one of the greatest gifts you can give your child. Research consistently shows that students whose families are engaged in their education perform better academically, have better attendance, and feel more positive about school. There are many ways to be involved at Ocean City Primary School:

- ❖ Join the PTA (see below for more information)
- ❖ Attend school events such as performances, family nights and conferences
- ❖ Read with your child every day (even 15 minutes makes a difference!)
- ❖ Talk to your child about school- ask about what they learned, who they played with and what made them smile

Parent Teacher Association:

The Ocean City PTA is a vibrant and welcoming community of families and staff who work together to enrich the lives of our students. The PTA organizes events, raises funds for school programs, and provides invaluable volunteer support throughout the year. We encourage every family to join the PTA. Your voice, your time, and your support make our school stronger.

National PTA Standards for Family Involvement:

Ocean City Schools are guided by the National PTA's Six Standards for Family Involvement:

1. Communicating- creating two-way communication between home and school
2. Parenting- supporting families in building the skills to help their children succeed
3. Student Learning- engaging families in supporting learning at home
4. Volunteering- welcoming and organizing family volunteers
5. School Decision Making & Advocacy- including families in school decisions
6. Collaborating with the Community- connecting families with community resources and support

SECTION 7: FOOD SERVICES, HEALTH & WELLNESS

Ocean City Primary School is committed to providing students with nutritious, balanced meals that fuel their learning and growth. Information about our food services, including monthly menu options as well as Free/Reduced applications can be found on our website at OCSDNJ.ORG. Student accounts can be managed through [My School Bucks](#).

Students are also welcome to bring lunch from home. Please note that we encourage healthy choices that will keep your child energized throughout the afternoon.

Cafeteria Expectations:

The cafeteria is part of our school community, and our values apply here too! Students are expected to:

- ❖ Use indoor voices and kind words
- ❖ Remain seated until dismissed
- ❖ Clean up their area before leaving
- ❖ Be inclusive and welcoming to all classmates
- ❖ Show respect and appreciation for cafeteria staff

Health & Wellness

The health and wellbeing of every student is a top priority at Ocean City Primary School. Our school nurse is available throughout the school day to support students, families, and staff.

Rosemary Millar, MSN-NE, CSN, RN rmillar@ocsdnj.org 609.399.3191 extension 8749

In accordance with New Jersey state law:

All children between the ages of 6 months and 5 years enrolled in a preschool program receive an annual seasonal influenza (flu) vaccine. Please note the following important guidelines:

- ❖ Influenza vaccines administered before September 1st will not be considered valid for the current school year
- ❖ All influenza vaccine documentation must be received by December 31st
- ❖ Documentation may be submitted to the school office or directly to your child's teacher

Additionally, all students are required to have the following on file with the school nurse:

- ❖ Universal Child Health Record- completed by your child's pediatrician and submitted annually via Power School following your child's yearly well visit
- ❖ Up-to-date Immunization Records- required upon enrollment and updated as needed throughout the school year

When to Keep Your Child Home:

To protect the health and wellbeing of all students and staff, please keep your child home if they are experiencing any of the following:

- ❖ A fever of 100°F or higher (child must be fever-free for 24 hours without medication before returning)
- ❖ Vomiting or diarrhea (must be symptom-free for 24 hours before returning)
- ❖ Pink eye (until cleared by a doctor)

Medication at School:

If your child requires medication during the school day, please be aware of the following important guidelines in accordance with New Jersey state law:

- ❖ All medication- including over-the-counter products such as cough drops, antacids, and pain relievers- must be brought to the nurse's office by a parent or guardian
- ❖ Students may not carry or self-administer medication of any kind while on school grounds
- ❖ Prescription medications require written authorization from both the prescribing physician and a parent or guardian before they can be administered by the school nurse

Physical Education & Recess

Physical activity is an essential part of a healthy, balanced school day. Preschool students participate in gross motor play daily. Students in grades K-3 participate in Physical Education classes once during a 6-day rotation as well as daily recess.

Please ensure your child comes to school dressed appropriately for outdoor activity, including weather-appropriate clothing. Students will go outside for recess unless weather conditions are unsafe.

Social-Emotional Wellness

At Ocean City Primary School, we care about the whole child, not just their academic growth, but their emotional health and sense of belonging.

Our school counselor works with students individually and in small groups to support social skills and friendship, emotional regulation and coping strategies, goal-setting and self-advocacy, and character development and leadership. If you have concerns about your child's social-emotional wellbeing, please do not hesitate to reach out to the counselor.

Joel Dougan
jdougan@ocsdnj.org
 609.399.3191 extension 6501

We are also fortunate to have additional mental health and wellness supports that might benefit your child.

Carrie Merritt
cmerritt@ocsdnj.org
 609.399.3191 extension 6533

SECTION 8: TRANSPORTATION & SAFETY

Bus Transportation

Transportation information, including bus routes, stop locations, and pick-up/drop-off times, will be provided in the Power School portal prior to the start of the school year.

Bus Safety Rules:

Riding the school bus is a privilege that comes with responsibility. Students are expected to follow these rules at all times:

- ❖ Remain seated at all times while the bus is in motion
- ❖ Use appropriate language and volume- no yelling or distracting the driver
- ❖ Treat all riders and the driver with respect and kindness
- ❖ No eating or drinking on the bus
- ❖ No throwing objects of any kind
- ❖ No bullying, teasing, or inappropriate behavior
- ❖ Wait for the bus to come to a complete stop before standing or exiting

Bus misconduct may result in loss of bus privileges in accordance with district policy.

School Safety

The safety and security of every student and staff member is our highest priority. Ocean City Primary School maintains comprehensive safety protocols in partnership with the Ocean City Police Department and the school district:

- ❖ All exterior doors are locked during the school day.
- ❖ All visitors must enter through the main entrance and be buzzed in by the Main Office
- ❖ All visitors must present a valid photo ID, sign in, and wear a visitor badge at all times

Emergency Procedures:

Ocean City Primary School conducts regular drills throughout the school year to prepare students and staff for a variety of emergency situations. Fire and lock down drills are conducted monthly in accordance with state requirements. In the event of a real emergency, families will be notified promptly via our emergency communication system. Please ensure your contact information is current in Power School so you receive all alerts.

Internet-Enabled Personal Devices:

Ocean City Board Policy [#5516](#)

According to New Jersey state law, internet-enabled personal devices (such as cell phones, smart watches, or smart glasses) are not permitted during the school day. If a student brings an internet-enabled device to school, it should be powered down and stored in their backpack upon arrival and may not be accessed until dismissal. The school is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal devices.

SECTION 9: GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES

Birthdays & Celebrations

We love celebrating our students! Families wishing to send in a birthday treat should coordinate with the classroom teacher in advance. Class party invitations may not be distributed at school unless every student in the class is included.

Room coordinators will work with classroom teachers to plan three class celebrations each school year. Two family members are invited to attend these parties. Older/younger siblings may not attend. Dates and times will be communicated at the classroom level.

Dress Code

Ocean City Board Policy [#5511](#)

Ocean City Primary School prides itself in its appearance. Students should dress appropriately for the weather, especially on particularly hot or cold days. Additionally, clothing should be clean, neat, and appropriate for a school setting. Clothing with offensive language, images, or symbols is not permitted. Closed-toe shoes are required for Physical Education and daily recess.

Lost & Found

Our Lost & Found is located in the Main Foyer. Included in the Weekly Update is a Lost & Found slideshow for families to view weekly. A Google form is included so families can easily claim belongings. Unclaimed items will be donated to charity at the end of each marking period.

Please label all belongings- backpacks, lunchboxes, jackets, and other items- with your child's name to avoid the Lost & Found.

Photography & Social Media

The school may photograph or video students for educational and promotional purposes. Families who do not wish their child to be photographed should note this in Power School. Parents and visitors are asked not to photograph or video other students without consent.

Ocean City Primary School maintains official social media accounts to celebrate our school community and share important information. We encourage families to follow our official accounts to stay connected and celebrate our students' achievements!

SECTION 10: ACKNOWLEDGMENT PAGE

Ocean City Primary School
Student & Family Handbook 2026-2027
Family Acknowledgment Form

Please sign and return this page to your child's teacher by **September 29, 2026**.
Please return one form per child.

We have received, read, and discussed the Ocean City Primary School Student & Family Handbook, including the:

- ☒ District Philosophy, Mission & Goals
- ☒ Primary School Core Values & Character Principles
- ☒ Important Contacts & Resources
- ☒ Attendance Policies
- ☒ School Day Schedule & Arrival/Dismissal Procedures
- ☒ Academic Programs & Curriculum
- ☒ Behavior, Expectations & Discipline
- ☒ Harassment, Intimidation & Bullying (HIB) Policy
- ☒ Communication & Family Involvement
- ☒ Food Services, Health & Wellness
- ☒ Transportation & Safety
- ☒ General School Policies

We understand and agree to support the policies, expectations, and values of OCPS.

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____

Parent/Guardian Printed Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

*By signing this form, you confirm that you have reviewed this handbook with your child and agree to support our school community's values and expectations. Thank you for being our partner!