

*Principal: Tiffany Cantwell
Assistant Principal: Brian Morgan*



*355 Landrum Lane
Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082
Phone: (904) 547-3760
Fax: (904) 547-3775*

August 4, 2018

Dear Parents and Guardians,

On behalf of the staff at Ocean Palms Elementary, we are happy to welcome you to the 2018-2019 school year! Our mission is to inspire students to explore and develop their strengths and passions. We focus on integrity, leadership, and service above self. We commit to fostering a positive, safe, nurturing environment with an emphasis on academic rigor, the arts, athletics, and technology within a vibrant, caring community. Our focus is the whole child.

Our summer has been filled with hiring the best educators, reading professional books, and attending trainings that will support our school improvement initiatives and continue our trajectory of excellence. Our current enrollment totals 479 students. Amongst our Otter raft, are some new additions we would like to announce:

Please join me in welcoming

- ❖ Brian Morgan – Assistant Principal
- ❖ Michael Marimpietri – Maintenance Coordinator
- ❖ Stacy Howland – PreK Teacher
- ❖ Ashley Bagni – 1st Grade Teacher
- ❖ Kaleigh Kessler – 4th Grade Associate Teacher
- ❖ Jeanne Clavijo – 5th Grade Associate Teacher
- ❖ Kyla Serrano and Jennifer Smith - Varying Exceptionalities Teachers
- ❖ Mia Azotea – Behavior Specialist
- ❖ Pamela Mason, Sayaka Palomba, Carole Taylor, Esther Cotto, Nichole Bridger, and Michael Wiener – Paraprofessionals
- ❖ Chantal Thompson – Nurse
- ❖ Claudia Argueta and Jerry Blount – Custodians

Staff returning to the OPE family in new positions are

- ❖ Jesse Perry – PreK Teacher
- ❖ Katie Byrd – 1st Grade Teacher
- ❖ Jenny Fitch – 3rd Grade Associate Teacher
- ❖ Dana Camadine – Paraprofessional
- ❖ Tiffany Ellis – LEA Clerk

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We are certain the school year will be filled with excitement for all students, parents, and staff. Below, you will find additional information related to the start of the school year. Please review both sides of your student's first day folder for important information, some of which needs to be returned to school as soon as possible. If your child has any medical concerns, please contact our school nurse, Chantal Thompson at 547-3766.

- ❖ **A welcome email from teachers will be sent between 3:00 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday, August 8th.**

A great deal of time and thought has gone into the process of student placement. Careful consideration was given to input from staff and families, as well as, student learning styles. Thank you so much for being positive with your children and helping them understand that it is impossible to place all students with a preferred best friend or teacher. All of our staff works hard to make school a positive experience for all students. We are eagerly looking forward to enriching your child's life. Thank you for understanding that it can take a few weeks for a child to acclimate to a new grade, peer group and teacher.

- ❖ The **"Meet the Teacher"** event, for students in grades PreK through Fifth Grade will be **Thursday, August 9th**. We hope you will stop by to meet your child's teacher, explore the classroom and drop off school supplies between the hours of **(8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.)**. All pre-ordered school supply packs will be located in your child's classroom.
- ❖ All **Kindergarten students** and families are invited to join us for *Popsicles on the Playground*. This event will start at the conclusion of our Meet the Teacher event from **(11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.)**. This is a great opportunity to mix, mingle and meet new kindergarten friends.
- ❖ **PTO** will be set up in our cafeteria during Meet the Teacher with membership information, volunteer opportunities, school spirit wear, mini book fair, and photo area where you can take your child's picture to commemorate their first day of school. Don't forget every Friday is school spirit day. Students and staff will be wearing their OPE gear!



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❖ **Bus Riders** – During Meet the Teacher, SJCS D’s Transportation Department will have a representative and school bus stationed in our bus loop for students to explore. Bus routes are available at <http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/routes/wp-content/uploads/sites/124/2018/07/Ocean-Palms-Elementary.pdf> If you have additional questions regarding buses, please call the Transportation Department at 547-7812.

❖ **Kindergarten Photos at the Bus Loop** – We are asking **all kindergarten families** to visit our bus loop during Meet the Teacher so transportation can take your child’s photo. **The intent is to photograph all kindergarteners even if they do not currently use bus transportation.** Having the photos is important for safety and security reasons.

❖ **Kindergarten Bus Seating** - Operators will seat all kindergarten riders in a designated zone closest to the driver’s seat. These zones are marked by red and white stop sign magnets reading “Stop Kindergarten Only”. Siblings of kindergarten age student riders are welcome to sit in the kindergarten zone. However, kindergarteners may not move to another location in the bus to sit with siblings.



❖ **Car Riders** - All parents will be given car tags that are to be displayed during parent pick up. Please hang or place the tag where it can be easily seen from a distance. We ask that you print the names of your children and their grade levels.



Anyone who does not have a car tag will be asked to park and enter the building with ID to pick up their child. We realize this may be an inconvenience and will slow down our parent pick up line, but our number one priority is the safety and security of our students.

❖ **First Day of School – Friday, August 10th**

- Please review the attached Parent & Student Handbook for details regarding school hours, early release Wednesdays, arrival and dismissal procedures.
- Parents of students in grades (PreK – Fifth) may walk their student to class between (8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.) on the first day of school.
- Parents of kindergarten students participating in staggered start may walk their child to class between (8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.) on their designated day.
- Starting Friday, August 17th all parents shall sign in at the front office before entering the building.

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- ❖ **Access to the building** – Parents and visitors must be cleared volunteers prior to visiting classrooms, eating lunch in the cafeteria, chaperoning or volunteering. This form is available on the school and/or district website at <http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/volunteer/>. If you are unsure whether you have current clearance please contact Kerry Fodor at 547-3760.

- ❖ **Extended Day Program "The D.E.N"** - Registration and information about our After School Program is located on our website at <http://www-ope.stjohns.k12.fl.us/extendedday/>. Please contact Kim LaMondie, our extended day coordinator, with any questions at 547-4150.

It is truly a privilege to provide the leadership at this school. Our excellence rests on the shoulders of our parents and community who partner with us to provide the best for our students. We have missed our students and can't wait to see them.

Sincerely, Your Otter Admin. Team,
Mrs. Cantwell and Mr. Morgan