

Principal: Tiffany Cantwell
Assistant Principal: Brian Morgan



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

July 26, 2019

Dear Parents and Guardians,

On behalf of the staff at Ocean Palms Elementary, we are happy to welcome you to the 2019-2020 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 580 students. Amongst our Otter raft, are some new additions we would like to announce:

Please join me in welcoming

- ❖ Tia Currie – PreK Teacher
- ❖ Shirley Ely – PreK Teacher
- ❖ Carson Savy – PreK Teacher
- ❖ Maureen Olsen – Kindergarten Teacher
- ❖ Alexandra Astran – 1st Grade Teacher
- ❖ Emily Durrance – 1st Grade Teacher
- ❖ Chelsea Taylor – 1st Grade Teacher
- ❖ Nicole Garner – 4th Grade Teacher
- ❖ Lyndsey Smith – 4th Grade Teacher
- ❖ Keiysha Cornell – 5th Grade Teacher
- ❖ Catherine Timm – Speech/Language Pathologist
- ❖ Danila Elliot – Paraprofessional
- ❖ Wendy Hart – Paraprofessional
- ❖ Sally Pitches – Paraprofessional
- ❖ Mary Ritter – Paraprofessional
- ❖ Patricia Wegener – Paraprofessional

Staff returning to the OPE family in new positions are

- ❖ Jennifer McAfee – Kindergarten Associate Teacher
- ❖ Lisa Blaich – 2nd Grade Teacher
- ❖ Kaleigh Kessler – 5th Grade Teacher

We are certain the school year will be filled with excitement for all students, parents, and staff. At Meet the Teacher, you will receive your student's first day folder with 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 (3:00-3:30) on Wednesday, August 7th.**

Everyday. Everyone. Everything Matters.

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A great deal of time and thought has gone into the process of student placement. Careful consideration was given to the 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. This new school year is an exciting opportunity for students to make new friends and develop new positive relationships. Our staff works hard to make school a nurturing environment for all students. We are eagerly looking forward to enriching your child's life. Please encourage your child as they acclimate to a new grade, peer group, and teacher.

- ❖ The **"Meet the Teacher"** event, for students in grades PreK through Fifth Grade will be **Friday, 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 **(8:00-11:00 a.m.)**. All pre-ordered school supply packs will be located in your child's classroom.

- ❖ **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!



- ❖ **Bus Riders** – During Meet the Teacher, SJCS's Transportation Department will have a representative located in the cafeteria to answer questions. We will also have school buses and drivers stationed in our bus loop for students to explore. Bus routes will be posted on the district website soon! <http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/transportation/> If you have additional questions regarding buses, please call the Transportation Department at 547-7812.

- ❖ **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.



- ❖ **Kindergarteners** - School bus operators are directed to only discharge kindergarteners at a bus stop when the parent/guardian is physically present at the student door of the school bus to receive the student. If a school bus operator does not see the parent/guardian at the student door of the bus, they are instructed to keep the kindergartener aboard the bus and contact dispatch by radio. If a parent or guardian requires a kindergartener to get off a bus with an older sibling or to be met at the student door of the bus by anyone other than the parent/guardian, an approved provisional transportation waiver is required from Transportation.

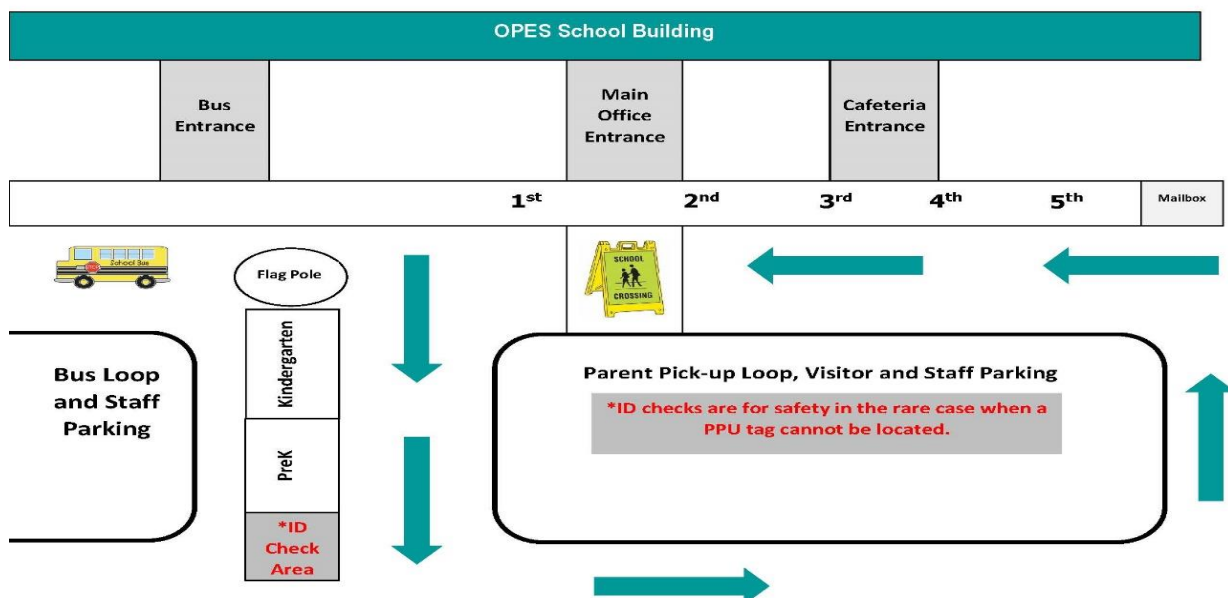
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- ❖ **Car Riders** - All parents will be given car tags that are to be displayed during Parent Pick-Up (PPU). Please hang or place the tag where it can be easily seen from a distance. We ask that you print the names of your children and their grade levels on the tag. Older siblings will wait with younger siblings in the younger siblings designated area during dismissal.
- ❖ **For safety, students may only enter the car on the passenger side of the vehicle. Please place your child's car seat on the passenger side of your vehicle.**
- ❖ **PreK Arrival** - PreK students utilizing the car line shall be dropped off at the front of the car line starting at 8:05. Students will be met by a paraprofessional to be escorted to the classroom. Please pull forward until you reach the front of the PPU line and remain in your vehicle.
- ❖ **PreK Dismissal** – PreK students utilizing the Parent Pick-Up (PPU) line will be picked-up at the front of the line starting at 2:30. Students will be waiting with teachers and paraprofessionals.
 - PreK students with older siblings will wait inside the building until their sibling is dismissed at 2:45. Older siblings will join PreK students in their designated pick up area.
 - Safety Reminder: please ensure that you have your Parent Pick-Up tag hanging from your rear-view mirror and your child's car seat is located on the passenger side of your vehicle. For safety, students may only enter the car on the passenger side of the vehicle.
 - The passenger back door of your vehicle will be opened for you. Please remain in your vehicle. After your child has entered the vehicle and the door is closed, please pull into a parking space if you need to adjust the car seat straps.

Ocean Palms Parent Pick-up Map



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New Biker/Walker Gate



All biker/walkers shall complete a biker/walker roster request and a biker/walker pass if you wish for your child to bike or walk home alone. These forms are located on our webpage <http://www-ope.stjohns.k12.fl.us/> and must be submitted to Kerry Fodor in the front office.

ARRIVAL (8:05-8:25)

- **Biker/Walker students may enter the new biker/walker gate, located on the east field, near the outdoor classroom at 8:05 when the gate is unlocked.**
- **For safety, only students will be permitted beyond the gate. If a parent would like to walk their student(s) into the building we ask that they drive through the Parent Pick-Up entrance, park in the visitor parking, and sign in at the front office with ID.**
- **Students can utilize the sidewalk, bikers can visit the bike rack, and enter the double doors at the end of the kindergarten hallway/community garden.**

DISMISSAL (2:45-3:05)

- **An authorized adult must be at the gate to receive the student(s).**
- **Please remember that in the event of thunder and/or lightning at dismissal, biker/walker students will NOT be released to walk home and will be held at school for pick up in the Parent Pick-Up line by an authorized adult.**
- **Biker/Walkers will exit through the double doors at the end of the 200 hallway near the school community garden.**
- **Bikers will visit the bike rack to get their bikes, put on their helmets, and proceed to the gate just past the outdoor classroom where they will be checked out.**

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- ❖ **Kindergarten Staggered Start Dates: August 12th – 15th**
- ❖ **First day of school for ALL Kindergarten students - Friday, August 16th**
 - Kindergarten staggered start encourages a gradual transition from home to school. Parents will receive a phone call with their child's assigned staggered start date. Kindergarten students will come to school only on that day.
 - During the staggered entry week, students will meet all of the kindergarten teachers and a few classmates on this day to learn classroom rituals and routines.

- ❖ **First Day of School – Monday, August 12th**
 - PreK and 1st – 5th Grade Students
 - Check your Kindergarten staggered start date

- ❖ **Access to the building** – Parents and visitors must be cleared volunteers prior to visiting classrooms, eating lunch in the cafeteria, chaperoning or volunteering.

This includes walking your student to class on the first day of school. This application 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.

- ❖ **Photo ID is required every time you sign in at the front office or when you check your child out of school. No exceptions will be made. Our students' safety and security is our number one priority.**

- ❖ **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. Our teachers and staff are excited to welcome our new and returning otters. We have missed our students and cannot wait to see them.

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