ORANGE COUNTY ACADEMY OF SCIENCES & ARTS III

Aliso Viejo Middle School

Parent/Student Handbook

2026-2027

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www.ocasa.org

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Welcome

Mission Statement: OCASA is a joy-filled, student-centered, collaborative community that inspires growth through a personalized learning experience.

Our Approach: OCASA students learn by doing. They are encouraged to ask questions, make discoveries, take risks, observe patterns, exhibit creativity, and reflect on their own work. OCASA schools are designed to help students launch their bright futures.

Principal's Welcome Message

Dear OCASA Middle School Families,

Welcome to a brand new school year at OCASA Middle School! I am thrilled to welcome you and your student to our dynamic and growing community, where learning, character, and connection come together to create an enriching school experience for every student.

This year promises to bring even more opportunities to engage, collaborate, and grow together. Whether your family is returning or just joining us, please know that you are an essential part of our school community, and we value the partnership between school and home!

As we at OCASA Middle School continue to build a culture of academic excellence and student well-being, we invite you to participate in the many opportunities to support your student's journey throughout the school year.. From parent sponsored events and volunteer opportunities to student led workshops and presentations, we hope you'll find ways to get involved that work for your family.

Please take time to review our Parent/Guardian/Student Handbook, which outlines important information about school policies, expectations, and your rights and responsibilities. Reading and discussing this handbook together as a family is a great way to start the year aligned and ready to succeed. If you have questions or would like clarification on any policies, I invite you to reach out directly.

At OCASA Middle School, our mission is to provide every student with a challenging and meaningful education in a safe, supportive environment. We are committed to whole-child development and fostering leadership, curiosity, and confidence in each student. With your partnership, I am confident we'll make this year a great one.

Thank you for being part of the OCASA Middle School family. Let's make it a year to remember!

With appreciation and gratitude,



Nathan Parr
Principal
OCASA Middle School

The Three-Way School Commitment Pact

OCASA Middle School believes that schools have the responsibility to equip their students with the basic skills necessary to be successful in life. However, educating students is a three-way responsibility shared by each individual parent/guardian, the student, and the school. Without the collaboration and cooperation of all three parties, success will be limited.

OCASA Middle School is committed to providing the necessary resources for a sound secondary education program. In turn, students and parents/guardians must fulfill certain commitments if the student is to gain the maximum benefits from the school program. We believe that the school, the parent/guardian and the student commitments should be as follows:

Our School Commitment is to:

1. Employ a highly-qualified certificated staff who know their subject matter and who understand the sociological, physiological and psychological make-up of adolescents and young adults.

2. Provide a positive, constructive, and academically rigorous learning environment.

3. Provide the required standards-based curriculum to meet student needs.

4. Provide materials and equipment necessary for state mandated instruction.

5. Provide a safe learning environment where students can attend school without fear.

6. Establish reasonable expectations regarding student behavior.

7. Provide parents/guardians with regular reports on their student's attendance, academic progress, and school behavior.

8. Provide appropriate, varied classroom learning opportunities to encourage academic progress.

Parent/Guardian Commitment

1. ***Insist that your student attend school every day*** unless illness or a family emergency occurs.

2. Attend school events, participate in volunteer opportunities, and support your child's efforts.

3. Call the school office when the student is going to be absent. Send a note when the student returns from an absence. Please refer to the **ATTENDANCE** section of the handbook for further clarification of this process.

4. See that the student gets the appropriate amount of sleep on school nights to be attentive and alert in class.

5. Ensure that the student is dressed appropriately as *per the school Dress Code*.

6. Provide uninterrupted study time in a quiet and orderly place to study and complete course work. Encourage daily reading time after school for the student.

7. Check with the student daily regarding assignments and monitor completion of assignments. Your student's progress and practice may be monitored through the Summit Learning Platform as well as through the Parent Portal on PowerSchool.

8. Contact teachers immediately to request a conference with the school staff if there is a question concerning student progress.

Student Commitment

1. Attend assigned classes daily unless illness or a family emergency occurs.
2. Turn in completed class assignments on time and follow up with teachers for any make-up assignments due to absence(s). This is the responsibility of the student!
3. Be prepared with the necessary materials each day.
4. Ensure you are dressed appropriately, wearing appropriate uniform/apparel as per the school Dress Code.
5. Seek immediate assistance from the teacher when class assignments are not understood.
6. Be attentive in class and remember it takes commitment to gain the best education possible.
7. Follow all school-wide expectations and rules.
8. Ask for assistance from your teachers and school personnel when academic or personal problems occur which inhibit learning.
9. Use school technology responsibly and respectfully, following all digital citizenship guidelines and using devices only as instructed by teachers.
10. Contribute positively to the school community by treating others with kindness, participating respectfully in class, and supporting a safe and inclusive environment for all.
11. Treat all school facilities, shared spaces, and individuals in our building with care and respect, recognizing that we share this campus with others and are responsible for maintaining a clean, safe, and welcoming environment.

General Policies

School Hours & Contact Information

The regular school day runs from 8:15 AM-2:42 PM. The school office is open from 8:00 am to 3:30 pm Monday-Friday. Parents/guardians are expected to arrange for student transportation to and from school daily. Apart from supervised school activities, students must vacate the premises after school. Students are expected to leave the campus when the school-sponsored activity ends.

- *Regular School Day:* 8:15 AM – 2:42 PM
- *Thursday Early Dismissal:* 8:15 AM - 12:44 PM
- *Office Hours:* 8:00 AM – 3:30 PM (Monday – Friday)

School Boundaries (OCASA Spaces Only)

For safety and supervision, students must remain within designated OCASA areas at all times during the school day. Students may not enter any non-OCASA facilities, unassigned hallways, or spaces outside of the designated school perimeter without explicit staff permission and supervision. Entering non-OCASA spaces or leaving approved areas without staff permission will be treated as a safety violation and subject to disciplinary action.

Safety & Emergency Procedures

Emergency Contact Information

The front office must have a current student Emergency Card, signed by a parent/guardian, on file. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to promptly update contact information, custody documentation, and medical information whenever it changes.

Parent Custody Documentation Requirements

In the absence of a current, certified court order on file limiting a parent/guardian's access to a student, OCASA will presume both legal parents/guardians have equal rights to campus access, records, and student pick-up. Families experiencing a change in custody status must provide OCASA with certified copies of all relevant court orders as soon as possible. Please understand that if we do not have this on file, we have no other choice but to release your child to the other natural parent/guardian upon his/her request.

Arrival, Dismissal & Attendance-Related

Arrival Procedures

Arrival runs from 8:00-8:15am every day. We recommend students arrive no later than 8:10am to ensure they have enough time to get settled before their first class. OMS parents drop-off their student(s) by using the side, front entrance. Please follow the security guard's directions for OMS pick-up/drop-off, as Temple Beth El has other events during the year.

- **Late Drop-offs:** If your student arrives *after 8:30 AM*, you must park and sign them in at the front office. Students not checked in through the office will be marked absent, and you will receive an absence notification.

As parents are directed to drive around the building, the front lane is reserved for pedestrian traffic, and the back lane is reserved for our families to drive in, this is the lane you will use to continue to wrap around the building to get to OCASA's entrance.

The speed limit on campus is 10 miles per hour. Please use caution, as other groups are also entering/exiting TBE during morning drop-off, as this is a shared space.

Dismissal Procedures

Dismissal occurs at 2:42pm on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday and 12:44pm on Thursday. Students will be sent outside to the green play area to await pickup. Please drive with care and caution, as many different groups will be entering and exiting the building at this time, too.

- **Late Pick-Up:** If a student is not picked up *within 15 minutes*, a call is made home. After 30 minutes, emergency contacts are called. If no contact can be established and parent whereabouts are unknown, child protection services and/or police may be contacted.

Closed Campus & Mid-Day Pick-Ups

*OCASA is a closed campus***.** Students may not leave campus during the day without office clearance.

Mid-Day Pick Ups:

If a student needs to leave school early due to illness/other reasons, a parent or guardian must sign out their child in the main office. We cannot bring students out to the curb. Requests for early dismissal must be submitted to Mission Control in advance whenever possible. Students will not be allowed to walk or bike home to meet a parent for an appointment or walk to their scheduled appointment from school. Remember to always bring your ID, as you will be asked to show it. Students will only be released to emergency contacts.

Emergency Preparedness

Our school has a plan should a disaster occur during the school day. Please review the items listed below:

1. The principal and staff will be responsible for all students until a parent or authorized person arrives. **Be sure to bring a photo I.D. in order to pick up a child. Students will not be released to anyone without a photo I.D.**
2. **Please *DO NOT CALL* the school. Information will be shared with parents as soon as possible.**
3. Parents are asked to keep cell phone numbers up to date in Parent Square so that we may text you in the event of an emergency.
4. Maintain a calm appearance and positive attitude in the presence of the students.
5. If the school is evacuated, a sign will be posted on school grounds to inform community members of the evacuation center.
6. In the event of a Lock-Down, students will not be allowed to leave campus until an all-clear is given to the school by authorities.

Campus Visitors & Conduct

Visitor Check-In Requirements

Visitors are not permitted on campus or at school activities without prior authorization and/or a specific purpose. All visitors (including alumni) must report to the office and sign in upon arrival. In order to better protect our students, visitors and staff, all visitors are required to show a valid, government-issued ID. A Visitor's Badge must be worn in clear view if presence is approved by an administrator.

Volunteer Screening Process

Thank you for your willingness to share your time and talents with OCASA, our staff and our students. Without your help, many of our programs would not be possible. Please know that we appreciate your dedication to our school. While we appreciate your willingness to volunteer with OCASA, please be assured that ***parental involvement is not a requirement for acceptance to, or continued enrollment at, the charter school.***

The following information will help to clarify your role in the classroom and at school as well as provide the steps necessary to become a volunteer on the campus.

How To Become Eligible To Volunteer At OCASA

Please contact the front office to obtain a Live Scan fingerprint clearance form. All volunteers must be screened and approved through the Department of Justice and FBI in order to volunteer with students both inside and outside of the classroom. Once your fingerprints have been processed, OCASA will be notified of your status. Please check with the front office to determine your clearance status.

Every time you are on campus, you must sign in through the front office. You must present your Driver's License/State ID. You will be given a visitor's pass which is active for 24 hours.

All volunteers must attend Volunteer Training prior to volunteering on campus.

Health Considerations If you are ill on the day you are supposed to volunteer, please do not come to school. As a courtesy, please notify the school or the teacher if you are unable to complete your volunteer opportunity.

Important Volunteer Guidelines

- **Confidentiality**: When volunteering, you may have access to confidential information. Volunteers are expected to maintain strict confidentiality with any information concerning students, staff or other OCASA families. This includes students' grades, records, and abilities. Should there be any concerns related to the information which is learned, please discuss this information with your student(s) teacher or the Principal. All volunteers will be asked to sign a "Volunteer Agreement" prior to volunteering at OCASA.
- Volunteers DO NOT discipline students. Provide "instruction or redirection" to students regarding behavior. Any discipline problems need to be reported to the teacher in the classroom.
- Volunteers must always be supervised when working with students. They may not supervise a classroom or give permission for a student to leave the classroom. These are teacher responsibilities.
- Volunteers do not diagnose student weaknesses and strengths, prescribe activities for students, or evaluate student progress.
- Volunteers' discussions with teachers must not interrupt class time. Please turn off your cell phones when volunteering.
- **Volunteers are not to bring other children/students into the classroom during instruction time. This presents a liability issue and is disruptive to the classroom.**
- Volunteers should set a good example for students by their manner, appearance, and behavior. They should be well-groomed, appropriately dressed, and maintain professional conduct/language.
- Volunteers may not give any medication to students.
- Volunteer comments should not be written on student papers.
- Volunteers should not laugh at or belittle student answers or efforts.
- Volunteers should contact ONLY school staff members with any concerns regarding students.
- Comparing and criticizing teachers, staff and students is not acceptable volunteer behavior.
- Volunteers may not hold informal parent/teacher conferences or leisure conversations with staff members or other volunteers during volunteer time.
- Volunteers may not conduct personal business at school.
- Volunteers may not take photographs of students, unless permitted by a school administrator or teacher for a school project.
- Volunteers should never touch students in any way that is aggressive, disciplinary, or sexual in nature.
- All volunteers must sign in/out and wear an identifying nametag while on the school campus.

Communicating with Students The following suggestions are provided to help you communicate with the students to get positive results:

- Be sure that the student(s) understand what you are saying. We sometimes use words they do not comprehend.
- Keep your voice as low as possible. The students will get louder as your voice increases in volume.
- Instruct students as though you expect them to comply. Give explicit instructions, sufficient warnings and time. For example, "Stephen, in five minutes, you will need to stop painting and clean up your supplies."
- If students gain your attention and praise ONLY when they behave appropriately, they will soon learn that you expect proper conduct.
- Positive statements greatly influence students' attitudes about themselves and contribute to their success-building experiences.

Examples Of Phrases To Use To Encourage Students

- "I like the way you are working (and include an explicit description of the work)."
- "That's right! Good for you."
- "That's quite an improvement."
- "Good thinking."
- "I'm very proud of the way you worked today."
- "It looks like you put a lot of thinking into this."
- "That's respectful behavior. Thank you!"

Conditions for Classroom/School Visitation and Removal Policy

1. While OCASA encourages parents/guardians and interested community members to visit our campus and view our innovative educational programs, OCASA must maintain a secure, orderly environment for students and staff. Visitors must adhere strictly to the following procedures to maximize safety and minimize disruptions to the instructional day.
2. Parents/guardians, community visitors, and non-enrolled children shall not loiter on school premises, including the parking lot, drop-off/pick-up lanes, and walkways outside school buildings. Visitors are expected to vacate the campus premises immediately upon the conclusion of formal school business or after completing student drop-off.
3. Visitors wishing to view the educational program must abide by the procedures below, developed to ensure safety and minimize instructional disruption, pursuant to California Penal Code Sections 27, et seq.
4. Visits during school hours should first be arranged with the teacher and Principal or designee at least three (3) days in advance, with written approval required before the visit.
5. All visitors shall register with the front office immediately upon entering any school building or grounds during regular school hours, providing name, address, purpose, and proof of identity, and wearing a visitor's badge at all times.
6. The Principal or designee may refuse to register a visitor whose presence would reasonably be expected to disrupt the school, damage property, or facilitate distribution or use of unlawful substances.
7. The Principal or designee may withdraw consent for any visitor whose presence is interfering with school operations, and may direct them to leave; reentry without following posted requirements is a misdemeanor.
8. A visitor whose registration is revoked for fourteen (14) days may request a hearing before the Principal or Board, following the timelines and procedures described in Board policy.
9. No electronic listening or recording device may be used by students or visitors in the classroom without the teacher's and Principal's written permission.

Penalties

1. Pursuant to the California Penal Code Section 626.7, if a visitor does not leave after being asked or if the visitor returns without following the posted requirements after being directed to leave, he/she will be guilty of a crime as specified which is punishable by a fine of up to $500.00 or imprisonment in the County jail for a period of up to six (6) months or both.

2. Further conduct of this nature by the visitor may lead to the School's pursuit of a restraining order against such visitor which would prohibit him/her from coming onto school grounds or attending OCASA activities for any purpose for a period of three (3) years.

Campus Civility & Safety Policies

Members of the Orange County Academy of Sciences and Arts staff will treat parents and other members of the public with respect and expect the same in return. The school is committed to maintaining orderly educational and administrative processes, in keeping schools and administrative offices free from disruptions and preventing unauthorized persons from entering school grounds.

OCASA seeks to promote mutual respect, civility, and orderly conduct among school employees, parents and the public. This policy is not intended to deprive any person of his/her right to freedom of expression but only to maintain, to the extent possible and reasonable, a safe, harassment-free workplace for our students and staff. In the interest of presenting school employees as positive role models to the children of this school, as well as in the community, OCASA encourages positive communication and discourages volatile, hostile or aggressive actions. The school seeks public cooperation with this endeavor.

Disruptions

1. Any individual who disrupts or threatens to disrupt school/office operations, threatens the health and safety of students or staff, willfully causes property damage, uses loud and/or offensive language which could provoke a violent reaction, or who has otherwise established a continued pattern of unauthorized entry on school property will be directed to leave school property promptly by the Principal or designee.
2. If any individual uses obscenities or speaks in a demanding, loud, insulting and/or demeaning manner, he/she will be asked to communicate civilly. If corrective action is not taken by the abusing party, the school employee will verbally notify the abusing party that the meeting, conference or telephone conversation is terminated and, if the meeting or conference is on school premises, the offending party will be directed to leave promptly.
3. Disruptions on the part of a staff member or behavior that would be considered insulting or demeaning towards others by a staff member would be treated as described in number two (2) above. Appropriate disciplinary action is to be taken in accordance with the current collective bargaining agreement.

When an individual is directed to leave under such circumstances as addressed in the above, the Principal or designee shall inform the person that he/she will be guilty of a misdemeanor in accordance with California Education Code Section 44811 and California Penal Codes Sections 415.5 and 626.7 if he/she reenters any district facility within 30 days of being directed to leave or within seven days if the person is a parent/guardian of a student attending the school. If an individual refuses to leave upon request or returns before the applicable period of time, the Principal or designee may notify law enforcement officials. The Principal, upon consultation with the involved parties, will determine if further action is necessary, such as written notification or conference.

Safety and Security

1. When violence is directed against an employee or there is theft of property, employees shall promptly report the occurrence to their principal or supervisor. In addition, any attack, assault, or threat made against an employee on school/OCASA premises at a school/OCASA-sponsored activity should be reported to law enforcement.
2. An employee whose person or property is injured or damaged by willful misconduct of a student may ask OCASA to pursue legal action against the student's parent/guardian.
3. When it is determined by staff that a member of the public is in the process of violating the provisions of this policy, an effort should be made by staff to provide a written copy of this policy, including applicable code provisions, at the time of occurrence. If no written policy is available at the time of the occurrence, the chief administrator may follow the incident with written notification to or a conference with the individual. An employee who is a witness to a violation of this policy will immediately notify his/her supervisor and provide a written report of the incident.

Property & Belongings

Personal Belongings

Children should not bring personal items to school that are non-school related.OCASA accepts zero financial or operational responsibility for the loss, theft, or destruction of non-school-related personal items brought to campus. Faculty and administration retain authority to confiscate these items if they are out during the school day. Confiscated items will be held in the front office for parental pick-up.

Lost or Damaged School Property

If a school textbook, classroom library book, iPad, MacBook, or any other school item is lost or damaged, it will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian to cover the cost of replacement or repair. This policy applies to **all school property**.

The following fees will be assessed:

- **$100** – For broken screens, key/keyboards, cameras, or other damage
- **$800** – For a lost/destroyed MacBook
- **$50** – For a lost or broken charging adapter (either the charging block or cord)

All items should be returned in good condition. Fees must be paid prior to the release of report cards, yearbooks, or participation in end-of-year activities.

OCASA is not responsible for student's lost or stolen personal technology they choose to bring to school. All students will be issued MacBooks. They do not need to bring personal technology items to school.

Lost & Found

OCASA is not responsible for lost or damaged articles. All lost items may be claimed before or after school. At the end of the month, all clothing items remaining in Lost and Found which have not been claimed will be donated to charity.

Student Debts

School debts are submitted to the office and entered into the student's account. This account then becomes "frozen" until all debt is resolved. Examples of debt include, but are not limited to: lost, damaged, non-returned school club fundraising debts, returned checks. To clear this debt, the item(s) and/or payment must be submitted to the office. Additionally, participation in school sponsored extracurricular activities may be prohibited until debt is resolved. If there is a discrepancy, please check with the office.

Returned Checks

Please resolve any returned checks immediately. Cash or money order must be returned to the office to cover the amount of the check, plus the bank fee. Returned checks are a debt on the student's account. Failure to resolve the matter promptly may result in the student's loss of purchased items in order to recover funds from returned checks (e.g. yearbook, ASB activities, etc).

Classroom & Campus Life

Animal Policy

To protect the health, safety, and comfort of all students, staff, and visitors, particularly those with severe allergies, respiratory conditions, or phobias, OCASA Elementary maintains a strict policy regarding animals on school grounds.

Personal pets and companion animals are strictly prohibited on the OCASA campus without express,

written prior approval from the Principal or an administrative designee, including during drop-off, pick-up, classroom volunteering, or field trips.

Service and Emotional Support Animals Service animals, as defined by the American with Disabilities Act, are permitted on campus. A "service animal" is any dog/horse that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability.

The inquiries that can be made when someone shows up with an alleged service animal: (1) if the animal is required because of a disability and (2) what work or task the animal has been trained to perform. However, these inquiries will not be made if it is readily apparent that an animal is trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability (for example, it is usually pretty obvious when an individual is using a seeing-eye dog). A person who knowingly and fraudulently represents that an untrained dog is a service dog may be guilty of a misdemeanor and/or fine. (28 CFR sections 35.104, 35.136, 36.104; 36.302; Cal. Penal Code section 365.7)

A "support animal" whose sole function is to provide comfort and emotional support, does not qualify as a service animal under the American with Disabilities Act. The protections and access granted to service dogs under the law are not also extended to support animals. Therefore, OCASA will deny campus access to emotional support animals unless specified by a student's IEP or 504 plan.

Classroom Changes

School-initiated changes related to class placements or class withdrawals will be made at the discretion of the principal or his/her designee. Any other class placement changes will take place only at the end of each semester in preparation for the upcoming semester.

Nutrition, Snacks, & Nut-Free Policy

Students are to eat only in the designated eating areas on campus, with the exception of approved activities. Any food/beverages removed from designated areas will be confiscated and discarded. Littering is unacceptable. Eating in a teacher's classroom requires prior approval of said teacher. Students are expected to deposit trash in the receptacles provided. Littering is unacceptable.

All outside food must be preapproved by and checked in at the office. Outside food must not be shared with other students without prior approval from an administrator due to allergy safety. Parents may drop off lunches at the front office. **Third-party commercial deliveries (e.g., DoorDash, Uber Eats) are strictly prohibited.**

Nut-Free Campus: OCASA is a completely nut-free facility. Under no circumstances should foods containing tree nuts or peanuts be brought onto campus.

Medications

OCASA cannot guarantee access to a school nurse. If a student is ill, it is the responsibility of the parent to seek medical assistance. In the event of an emergency, the school may contact an appropriate emergency professional for assistance. Only prescribed medication may be administered during class periods, if necessary.

ALL PRESCRIPTION and ALL NON-PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS (aspirin, topical ointments, etc.) must be brought to school in their original packaging, left in the front office and administered by designated school personnel. A student may not take non-prescription medication by himself/herself.

A parent consent form with doctor's approval must be on file in the office for administering ***ANY AND ALL PRESCRIPTION and ALL NON-PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS.*** The school assumes no liability for possible complications which may arise. AT NO TIME is a student or non-authorized faculty or staff member permitted to provide or administer prescription or non-prescription medication to another student.

Posters & Fliers

Any student or group wishing to post or distribute notices or advertisements of any kind on school property must present them to the Principal for approval. Postings without approval will be removed and discarded.

Yearbooks

Yearbook sales will be announced throughout the year, and will be sold during registration and at other designated times.

Student Business

The office is open for student business before school and after school. No student business may be conducted during class hours even if the student has a non-academic class, such as aide or P.E.

Health Office Services, Medical Logs, and Exclusion Standards

OCASA maintains a dedicated Health Office to assist students with basic first aid, minor injuries, and approved routine medical needs.

Clinical Disclaimer: *The Health Office does not feature a licensed school nurse, physician, or clinical practitioner on staff. Health Office tasks are performed by designated, trained school personnel under strict administrative oversight.*

Illness Exclusion and Return Criteria

Mandatory Clinical Exclusion:
A student will be excluded from campus if they exhibit a fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher, active vomiting or diarrhea, or advanced symptoms of an active communicable disease.

The 24-Hour Recovery Rule:
A student sent home for fever, vomiting, or diarrhea may return only after a full twenty-four (24) hours have passed since the last active episode, without the assistance of fever-reducing or anti-nausea/anti-diarrheal medication.

OCASA Mandatory Medical Documentation and Logs

In compliance with California Education Code § 49423, unlicensed school personnel may only assist a student with medication if the school has received explicit, written authorization. The following logs are maintained for any student requiring medication access on campus:

1. **Medical Authorization Log**
    a. A formal OCASA Medication Authorization Form must be signed by both the parent/guardian and the student's licensed physician before any prescription or over-the-counter medication can be received, stored, or handled by staff. This authorization must be renewed annually.
2. **Medication Check-In Sheet**
    a. Filled out by school/program personnel when medication is delivered to campus. Students may not transport or carry medications to school for check-in. All medications must arrive in their original pharmacy container with an intact, legible prescription label showing the student's name, dosage, administration route, timing, prescriber contact information, and expiration date.
3. **Medication Administration Record (MAR)**
    a. Every dose administered on campus is logged immediately, including date, time, dose, administering staff signature, and any notable observations.

Crucial Campus Safety Protocols

A. First Dose Policy

a. The first dose of any new medication or adjusted dosage must be administered at home, so the student can be monitored for adverse reactions in a controlled environment before returning to school.

B. Self-Administration of Emergency Lifesaving Medications

a. In accordance with California Education Code §§ 49423 and 49423.1 (self-administration of asthma inhalers) and § 49414 (epinephrine auto-injectors), students are prohibited from carrying medications on their person or in their cubbies, with the sole exception of lifesaving emergency items such as asthma inhalers or epinephrine auto-injectors (EpiPens).

b. To qualify for independent self-carry and self-administration, families must have on file: a valid, written physician's order certifying the student is trained to self-administer the device, along with parental consent. Approved emergency medications must be kept in a dedicated, clearly marked medical pouch — never loose in clothing pockets.

C. End-of-Year Disposal Mandate

The school will not store medications across summer recess. Any unclaimed medications remaining on campus forty-eight (48) hours after the close of the school year will be destroyed in accordance with state medical waste disposal protocols.

Mandated State Health Screenings

In accordance with California Education Code §§ 49452 and 49455, OCASA conducts mandatory hearing and vision screenings annually for designated grade levels. Parents will receive notice via ParentSquare, and a parent/guardian may file a signed written statement opting out of these screenings at the beginning of each school year.

Field Trips

School-approved field trips are an important extension of class activities at OCASA and are designed to enhance students' learning experiences beyond the classroom. Participation in field trips is a privilege and requires the return of a signed permission slip to the coordinating school staff member by the indicated deadline.

All school rules, including the school dress code and code of conduct, remain in effect during field trips. Attendance criteria (such as academic performance and behavior) may be considered when determining eligibility. Students may lose the privilege of attending field trips as a result of the school's progressive discipline policy.

To make these enriching experiences possible, donations are needed to cover the associated costs (e.g., transportation, admission fees, and other expenses). We encourage families to contribute if they are able. However, no student will be excluded from a field trip based on an inability to donate. If your family is unable to contribute at the time of registering for the field trip, please contact the respective field trip coordinator so we can ensure your child is still able to participate.

Work/Study/Service Policy

Administrators, teachers or staff may assign Work/Study/Service to any student before school, during lunch or after school if they believe such assignment may have a positive effect on the student's behavior or achievement. An approximate twenty-four (24) hour notice will be given to students who are requested to serve either before or after school.

Work/Study/Service is assigned as a result of irresponsible and/or inappropriate behaviors including, but not limited to, truancies, tardies, dress code violations, or electronics violations.

Academic Policies

Academic Honesty Policy

Academic honesty is a fundamental principle of scholarship. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to such things as cheating; inventing false information or citations, plagiarism, and helping someone else commit any such act.

Content of research papers is expected to provide a means to distinguish a student's own work from the

work and ideas of others. Credit must be given to the source of the ideas or words of another. Students are expected to do their own work on tests and on independent homework assignments, giving assistance to other students is only with the permission of assigning teacher and/or peer tutors.

Students will be encouraged to learn together, for example, in study groups furthering their knowledge and understandings by interaction, cooperation and sharing. However, evidence of that learning demonstrated by work to be assessed by the teacher will be the responsibility of the individual student and is to be arrived at independently.

OCASA considers plagiarism and falsification of documents, including documents that are not academically related, a serious matter and will result in disciplinary and/or academic consequences.

Cheating is using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in an academic exercise. Plagiarism is representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in an academic exercise. Any student who helps another student fabricate, cheat, or plagiarize will be considered to have committed the same offense.

Students are expected to use AI within the parameters set out by

Consequences may include and are not limited to:

- Written warning of misconduct by the teacher and/or Administration, parental contact, and a zero on the assignment.
- Call to parent/guardian from teacher and/or Administration.
- Appropriate consequences in accordance with the progressive discipline policy. .

Federal Educational Rights and Privacy (FERPA) Directory Notice & Opt-Out Policy

"Directory information," which is defined as set forth below, may be released to requestors in limited circumstances by Orange County Academy of Sciences and Arts (OCASA), without additional notice to you, unless you timely "opt out" of such disclosures, in writing. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the OCASA to include information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.

State and federal law allow directory information to be disclosed to any requestors, except those who intend to use the information for commercial purposes. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the following information – names, addresses and telephone listings – unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent. With the exception of a release of directory information pursuant to these two federal laws, this school's policy is to not release directory information to any requestor, for any purpose, without specific prior parent/guardian consent in each situation, EXCEPT we may release such information to requestors that engage in political advocacy, lobbying, or information dissemination related to California charter schools.

If you do not want OCASA to disclose your contact and other directory information from your child's records to such requests without your prior written consent, you must notify us in writing at the start of the school year.

OCASA has designated the following information as directory information:

- Parents'/guardians' names;
- Address;
- Electronic mail address;
- Phone number;
- Dates of attendance;
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports;

- Weight and height of members of athletic teams;
- Degrees, honors, and awards received; and
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended

Grading Policy

At OCASA Middle School, grades are intended to reflect a student's academic progress and mastery of grade-level standards. Grades are updated regularly in Gradient and are available for parent and student review. At the end of the semester, final grades (taken from Gradient) will be uploaded into PowerSchool.
The following schoolwide grading scale is used:

- A (90–100%)
- B (80–89%)
- C (70–79%)
- I (0–69.9%)

Teachers provide regular feedback and maintain consistent grading practices aligned with OCASA's academic standards. Students are encouraged to ask questions, seek help, and take an active role in their academic success.

Summative assessments will equal 60% of the student's final grade. Formative work and assignments (homework, classwork) will equal 40% of the student's final grade.

Grades are final once Semester grades are posted in PowerSchool. Students will have multiple opportunities to achieve Rocket Rewards, Rocket Awards and Academic Excellence Awards.

Work Completion Policy

Formative work and assignments are assigned to support skill development, extend learning, and foster responsibility. Students are expected to complete and submit homework on time.

- Formative work and assignments submitted on time will receive full credit.
- Formative work and assignments submitted late but within five (5) school days of due date receive a 1 letter grade drop.
- Homework submitted after five (5) school days late but before the summative assessment may receive up to 50% credit.
- Late work will not be accepted after the unit's summative assessment is completed.

Students are encouraged to speak with teachers about extenuating circumstances. Extensions may be granted at the teacher's discretion.

Academic Reporting Schedule

Individual parent-teacher meetings may be scheduled at any time **after 2:45 pm** Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Friday**.** Please schedule all conferences directly with the teacher so that adequate time is available for the preparation of materials needed for discussion.

Reporting periods during the school year are as follows:

- Fall - There will be one Progress Report in the Fall Semester and then there will be an End of Semester ***Report Card***
    - **The STAR Assessment** will be administered to all students during the Fall semester. Score reports will be sent to parents once finalized.

- Spring - There will be one Progress Report in the Spring Semester and then there will be an End of

Semester ***Report Card***

- **The STAR Assessment** will be administered to all students during the Spring semester. Score reports will be sent to parents once finalized.

Dress Code & Uniform Guidelines

Our Purpose

OCASA implements a uniform policy to nurture "the whole human" — academically, socially, emotionally, and practically. Here's how:

- *Uniformity fosters focus*. Standardized attire minimizes distractions and peer comparisons, allowing all students to engage fully with learning.
- *Preparation for varying real-world occasions*. Just like in life—where we dress differently for job interviews, sports, or casual outings—OCASA teaches that dressing appropriately signals respect, responsibility, and readiness for diverse environments.
- *Encouragement of community identity & belonging*. Uniforms create a sense of unity. They visually reinforce the values of collaboration and shared purpose that OCASA promotes.
- *Emphasis on personal discipline*. Maintaining a neat, well-groomed appearance instills habits of self-care and accountability—qualities essential for adulthood.
- *Supports equitable access*. By eliminating fashion pressures and focusing on uniform standards instead of brand-name distractions, OCASA helps reduce socio-economic comparisons among students.

OCASA intentionally equips students to think beyond appearance, understanding that while clothing preferences may change with context, the underlying values of respect, purpose, and self-presentation are lifelong essentials.

General Expectations

1. Students must maintain a clean, neat, and healthy personal appearance. Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring students leave home properly groomed and dressed.
2. Clothing must fit appropriately, be in good condition (no rips, tears, or fraying), and match approved school colors.
3. A student's appearance must not distract from the educational process or display messages inappropriate for a school environment.
4. Administrative staff hold sole and final authority on the interpretation and enforcement of this policy, including the right to make exceptions or modifications as appropriate.

If students come dressed inappropriately, parents/guardians will be notified of student dress code violations. The Administrative Staff will make the final interpretation of the Dress Code and personal grooming. Students who do not bring dress code PE Uniforms to change into will have their parent/guardian notified, as dress code is one aspect of the grade for Physical Education class. Please refer to the uniform guide to understand PE uniform requirements.

Continued dress code violations will be handled in accordance with OCASA's progressive discipline policy. **It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to support the school dress policy by making sure children leave home properly groomed and dressed for school.**

Prohibited Items

- Non-black Denim or blue jeans of any kind
- Athletic wear as standalone daily attire (sweatpants, joggers, gym shorts, or leggings worn alone) — permitted only as part of the designated PE uniform during PE class
- Cargo-style pockets
- Non-sanctioned graphics or logos
- Open-toed shoes, sandals, flip-flops, house shoes, high heels, or wheeled footwear
- Short-shorts, overly short skirts, see-through tops, or undergarments worn as outerwear
- Accessories that could be considered safety hazards (e.g., spiked wristbands, spiked jewelry, wallet chains)

Grooming & Accessories

- Hats and beanies may be worn to and from school but must be removed before entering the classroom.
- Makeup and fragrance must be applied at home, not in the classroom.

Structural Garment Guidelines

- Skirts/Skorts/Dresses: hemlines no more than four (4) inches above the knee; solid grey or black modesty shorts required underneath.
- Pants/Shorts: must fit at the natural waist, free of sagging; no distressed, torn, or ultra-skinny cuts.
- Undershirts: if visible, must match the color of the outer shirt.

Weekly Uniform Schedule

- **Monday–Friday:**
  - Standard uniform or approved optional uniform pieces.
  - Students dress out into PE Uniform Attire for their physical education class (see PE Uniform Attire, below).
- **Picture Day / Special Events / Field Trips**: Formal Uniform Attire (Option 1, 2, or 3) is required.
- **Free Dress / Themed Days:** At administration's discretion; announced via Parent Square. Must still adhere to general dress code expectations.

Standard Uniform Attire (Everyday)

Tops	**Bottoms**
• **Short-sleeved polo shirts:** royal blue, grey, or white only • **Long-sleeved polos**: royal blue, grey, or white only • School logo preferred, but not required **Outerwear** • Sweaters: black or royal blue cardigans, v-necks, or sweater vests • Jackets: black or royal blue fleece, rain, or insulated jackets • **No non-school logos**; school logo preferred, not required	• **Pants/shorts:** slack-style, grey or black; must fit at the natural waist with no sagging; no distressed, torn, or ultra-skinny cuts • **Skirts/skorts:** grey or plaid; hemline no more than 4 inches above the knee; solid grey or black modesty shorts required underneath • Leggings may be worn under a skirt, skort, or shorts, but never as standalone bottoms **Undershirts** • If visible, must be white or match the color of the outer shirt

PE Uniform Attire

Worn only during physical education class. Students are expected to bring their PE uniform on PE days; PE dress is graded as part of the course.

Tops ● OCASA Spirit t-shirt, or Band Level t-shirt (green for 6th grade, teal for 7th–8th grade) **Outerwear** ● Hooded pullover or zip-up sweatshirt in black or royal blue (**no non-school logos**)	**Bottoms** ● Black mesh gym shorts (elastic waistband) or black or gray pull-on sweatpants **Shoes** ● Grey, black, white, or royal blue closed-toed athletic shoes, non-skid, with laces

Formal Uniform Attire (Picture Day, Special School Events/Field Trips)

Students may choose any of the three options below:

Option 1: Pants & Tie	Option 2: Shift Dress	Option 3: Skirt/Skort
Black or grey trousers, black belt, white Oxford shirt (tucked), plaid tie, grey/white/black socks, closed-toed shoes.	Plaid shift dress, Peter Pan collar shirt, cross-over black tie, modesty shorts underneath required, socks or footed tights, closed-toed shoes.	Plaid or grey skirt/skort, white Oxford shirt (tucked), plaid tie, modesty shorts underneath required, socks or footed tights, closed-toed shoes.

Accessories: plaid or color-matching hair accessories permitted.

Purchasing Uniforms and Vendor Information

Uniform pieces may be purchased from any retailer, provided they match the color, cut, and style requirements above (a school logo is preferred but not required). Families may also order through:

Lands' End Uniform Portal: school number 900206707

- Lands' End Uniform Portal

shopOCASA.org for Spirit Wear

- https://www.shopocasa.org/

School administration reserves the right to make exceptions or modifications to the dress code when appropriate. Students who repeatedly disregard these requirements will be addressed with progressive discipline.

Attendance Policies

Consistent attendance is essential to your child's academic success, personal growth, and social development. Chronic absenteeism and truancy directly disrupt the instructional continuity students need to thrive.

Pursuant to California Education Code (EC) § 48200 and Penal Code § 272, every child between the ages of 6 and 18 is subject to compulsory full-time education, and parents or legal guardians are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular school attendance.

Attendance Verification and Reporting Procedures

Reporting an Absence

When a student is absent, the parent or guardian must notify Mission Control on each day of the absence. Please report your child's absence as soon as possible, ideally on the day it occurs.

To report an absence:

- Call (949) 269-3290 → Press #2 for OCASA Middle School → Press #1 for the attendance line. Please leave your student's name, teacher, and reason for the absence.
- Message Mission Control, through ParentSquare.

Clearing an Absence

An absence remains unexcused until verified by an authorized school official. Upon your child's return, please provide a satisfactory explanation via phone call or ParentSquare message (student's name, dates, and reason), or a note from a licensed healthcare provider certifying medical necessity.

Critical Deadline: Any absence that remains unverified forty-eight (48) hours after a student returns to campus will convert to an unexcused absence, with no administrative exceptions. (**Note:** an uncleared absence becomes unexcused — it does not automatically make a student "truant." Truancy is a separate legal status; see Section VI.)

14-Day Medical Verification Threshold

Once a student's combined illness-related absences and tardies (exceeding 30 minutes), verified only by parent note or phone call, reach fourteen (14) instances in a school year, a medical documentation requirement is triggered: all further illness-related absences must be verified by a licensed healthcare provider's note.

Excused, Unexcused, and Chronic Absences

Excused Absences

Pupils are excused if absent because of illness or other justifiable cause. Please keep your child home if they are running a fever or vomiting, and until 24 hours have passed symptom-free without medication. If your child becomes ill or injured at school, we will call you for pickup.

Excused absences are enumerated under California Education Code Section 48205, and include the following reasons:

- Due to his or her verified illness.
- Due to quarantine under the direction of a county or city health officer.
- For the purpose of having medical, dental, optometric, or chiropractic services rendered.
- For the purpose of attending the funeral services of a member of his or her immediate family, so long as the absence is not more than one day if the service is conducted in California and not more than three days if the service is conducted outside California.
- For the purpose of jury duty.
- Due to the illness or medical appointment during school hours of a child of whom the student is the custodial parent.
- For justifiable personal reasons, including, but not limited to, an appearance in court, attendance at a funeral service, observance of a holiday or ceremony of his or her religion, attendance at religious retreats, or when the student's absence has been requested in writing by the parent or guardian and approved by the principal or a designated representative pursuant to uniform standards established by the governing board.
- For the purpose of spending time with a member of the pupil’s immediate family, who is an active duty member of the uniformed services, and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from, deployment in a combat zone or combat support position.

If your child is absent 3 or more days, you may request classwork from the teacher, and students will be given a

reasonable opportunity to make up missed work.

Unexcused Absences

Examples of unexcused absences include, but are not limited to:

- Family vacations / reunions
- Religious retreats that exceed four (4) school hours
- Theme Park excursions
- Non school-related sports events / competitions
- Acting, movie, or commercial shoots
- Specialty camps (cheer, dance, sports, etc.)
- Other activities not enumerated under California Education Code 48205 that are deemed unexcused by the principal or a designated representative pursuant to uniform standards established by the governing board.

Chronic Absence

Per EC § 60901(c)(1), a student is considered a **chronic absentee** if they are absent **10% or more** of the school days in the year (**excused or unexcused**), roughly 18 days in a standard 180-day school year.

Truancy, Habitual Truancy, and Intervention

Legal Definitions

- **Truant (EC § 48260):** absent or tardy more than 30 minutes without a valid excuse for three (3) full days in a school year.
- **Repeatedly Truant (EC § 48261):** a student previously reported truant who is again absent or tardy more than 30 minutes without valid excuse on any subsequent day.
- **Habitually Truant (EC § 48262)**: a student reported truant three or more times in a school year.

All students ages 6–18 are required to attend school under EC § 48200 et seq. and Penal Code § 272; parents and/or students may be subject to legal consequences for failure to comply, which may include fines up to $500, incarceration, restriction of driving privileges, probation, or community service. These legal consequences apply following the intervention process below, not upon a single uncleared absence.

Note: A student with an unexcused tardy in excess of thirty (30) minutes is truant for that day under EC § 48260.

Homework Request

In the case of extended illness (three days or more), assignments may be requested starting on the 3rd day of absence. Please call or email the front office before 9:00 A.M. to allow time to have materials ready for pick up after school between 3:15– 3:30 P.M. Prior to the 3rd day of absence look for homework online or email teachers.

Short-Term Independent Study

Regular attendance is key to your child's long-term academic success, and we ask families to keep absences to a minimum whenever possible. If your child will miss **four or more days** for a family vacation or other planned reason, please contact the Attendance Office at least two weeks in advance.

Independent Study Guidelines:

- A student may be granted **a minimum of 4 day** and **a maximum of fourteen (14) cumulative instructional days** of independent study per year.

- All short-term independent study requests must be submitted at least 14 school days before the start date. Requests with less notice may be considered only in rare or emergency circumstances, and approval is at the principal's sole discretion.
- Requests during **the first week of school** cannot be approved, since teachers are still getting instruction underway for the year.
- Requests during **the last two weeks of the school** year cannot be approved based on the feasibility of delivering appropriate assignments and support.

To request a contract, message the Mission Control through ParentSquare at least two weeks in advance. The contract will be sent electronically and must be signed by the parent/guardian, student, and supervising certificated instructor before coursework begins.

- **Important:** Attendance credit is granted only in proportion to the volume and quality of academic work turned in upon return. **If assigned work is not completed and returned, those days will be recorded as unexcused absences**.

Cell Phones & Personal Electronics Policy (AB 3216 COMPLIANT)

Policy Overview

In alignment with California's Phone-Free Schools Act (Assembly Bill 3216), OCASA Middle School is committed to fostering a safe, focused, and socially connected learning environment. To support our students' academic success and mental well-being, all student personal electronic communication devices must be turned off (or silenced) and put away out of sight during school hours, from **8:15 AM to 2:42 PM**.

- **Covered Devices:** Smartphones, smartwatches, tablets, and wireless earbuds.
- **Storage:** All covered devices must be stored in a school-provided lock box during the school day. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

Liability Release & Storage Disclaimer

OCASA assumes absolutely **no responsibility or liability** for the loss, theft, damage, or unauthorized use of any personal electronic devices or accessories brought onto school grounds. Students bring these devices to campus entirely at their own risk.

If a student or parent/guardian does not want the device stored in the school-provided lock box, the device must be left at home or in the car upon drop-off.

Legally Mandated Exceptions

Students may use their personal devices on campus only under the following legally protected circumstances:

- **Emergencies:** During an active emergency or threat to campus safety.
- **Medical Needs:** For critical health monitoring (requires a doctor's note on file).
- **IEP / 504 Plans:** As explicitly required by a student's official educational accommodations.
- **Teacher Approval:** For specific, temporary classroom instruction.

Family Communication

- **Urgent Messages:** To contact your student during the school day, please call the front office at **949-269-3290**.

- **Non-Urgent Messages:** Parents may text or email their student, but students may only read and reply after school hours (after 2:42 PM).

Consequences for Violations

Our goal is to support student compliance through positive reinforcement and restorative practices. However, continued failure to follow this policy will result in progressive consequences:

- **1st Offense:** Verbal warning; student stores the device.
- **2nd Offense:** Device confiscated by staff and returned to the student at the end of the school day. Parent notified.
- **3rd Offense:** Device confiscated; must be picked up by a parent/guardian.
- **Repeated Offenses:** Parent-administrator conference to establish a behavior contract.
- **Refusal to Comply:** Refusal to turn over a device to school staff upon request will result in an immediate referral to administration.

School-issued Technology and Academic Devices

School computers and personal devices (teacher/administrator approved) allowed on campus are to be used for **ACADEMIC PURPOSES ONLY**. Guidelines for appropriate computer use include:

- **No Food or Drink:** No food, drinks, or chewing gum are permitted in classrooms/labs when computers/MacBooks are in use.
- **Teacher Direction:** Students may only use the MacBooks or approved personal devices when directed to do so by a teacher. MacBooks/computers and personal devices are to remain closed during passing periods and as otherwise specified by the classroom teacher.
- **Network Access:** Students are to log in to the network using their OCASA Google accounts only. Students are not to connect to the Wi-Fi using personal accounts.
- **No Unauthorized Software:** Downloading or installing programs on the hard drives is strictly prohibited. Any information saved or installed on the system's hard drive will be removed once the MacBook is returned.
- **Headphones/Earbuds:** Wireless/Bluetooth earbuds and AirPods are **NOT ALLOWED** to be used with school equipment. All earbuds/headphones used for academic purposes must have wires that plug directly into the MacBook or personal device.
- **Data Loss:** The school assumes no responsibility for any lost or stolen data, including data on thumb drives. Users are responsible for saving documents on their own media.

Internet & Technology Acceptable Use Policy

OCASA recognizes that local and wide area network services offer a wide variety of opportunities to further goals and objectives and, therefore, provides network access to its staff and students. Access to this vast resource of information is an opportunity requiring responsible use by each individual. As such, every OCASA user should act in an ethical and legal manner consistent with OCASA goals and objectives and should conform to appropriate use and network etiquette that includes being polite, using appropriate language, and respecting the privacy of others.

The local and wide area networks provided by OCASA include networked computers in offices, schools, and other facilities, and the Internet, which gives access to computers around the world. Opportunities provided by this network may include:

- Access to information from sites around the world.

- Discussion groups on a wide variety of topics consistent with OCASA goals and objectives.
- Research and distance learning.
- Development of curriculum-related projects for publication on the World Wide Web.

Confidentiality Notice

Users of OCASA network services should remember that the level of confidentiality of OCASA computers may not be the same as that expected when using their own equipment or Internet services. E-mail files and other Internet records may be examined for educational and administrative purposes and to verify that acceptable-use guidelines are being followed.

OCASA has taken reasonable steps to ensure that network use is only for activities that support OCASA goals and objectives. Use of the OCASA network or the Internet is a privilege which may be revoked at any time for inappropriate conduct.

Online Conduct

Inappropriate conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Using the network for illegal activities, including unauthorized installation, use, storage, or distribution of copyrighted software or materials in violation of copyright laws.
- Using the network for personal financial or commercial purposes.
- Using the network for political activities.
- Accessing or distributing files that contain pornographic materials or obscene or harmful matter as defined in **California Penal Code Section 313 (a)**.
- Using the network for online gaming or non-school related activities.
- Unauthorized use of another individual's name or password or allowing another user access to your account or password.
- Providing another individual's e-mail address or other personal information.
- Violating privacy rights and/or accessing information of other individuals.
- Vandalizing equipment or data.
- Sending or exchanging messages that are inconsistent with OCASA policies.

Online Responsibility

As a user of the OCASA wide area and local area networks, students agree to:

- Report any known misuse of the network to the responsible person.
- Use the network access in an acceptable manner, following all district rules and regulations regarding network use, including being polite, using appropriate language, and respecting others' privacy.
- Use online time and other network resources efficiently and for academic purposes only.

Enforcement: Students who violate the Network/Internet Acceptable Use Agreement, misuse electronic resources, or violate state or federal laws may be subject to disciplinary action, including loss of access privileges and/or legal action.

Student Support Team

STUDENT SUCCESS TEAM

In an effort to support the positive actions of the vast majority of students, OCASA School administrators and teachers are committed to assisting and working with the student(s) and parent(s) as needed to help build strategies for student success. This goal is often accomplished with the assistance of a student success team, which is a compilation of administrators, teachers, counseling department personnel, parents, and students.

What is the Student Success Team (SST)? The Student Success Team is a group of people at the school who utilize a problem-solving approach in an attempt to help students to be more successful in school, at home, and in the community. The philosophy of SST is based on the belief that the school, home and community need to work together to assist the student with obstacles to his/her success in school. The Student Success Team is a group of people at the school who utilize a problem-solving approach in an attempt to help students to be more successful in school, at home, and in the community. The SST often includes the classroom teacher and Administrator. Others may be asked to attend if it is believed they may assist the student in moving forward with their academic or behavioral progress.

What Makes an SST Meeting Necessary? A student should be considered for an SST meeting when there are significant concerns about a student, be they related to education, emotional issues, social adjustment, retention, chronic truancy, tardies etc.

An SST meeting should also be considered when it is seen as useful to bring the significant people in the life of the student together for discussion and planning. Students can be referred directly by their parents/guardian or by their classroom teachers.

The SST is also responsible to look at those students who may be referred for formal assessment and consideration for Special Education services.

POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT PLAN (PBIS):

PBIS is a school-wide framework for preventing, reducing, and replacing problem behaviors. The purpose of PBIS is to explicitly teach positive, appropriate behaviors while creating an environment in which these behaviors are more acceptable than are other negative, inappropriate behaviors.

- Key elements of PBIS include:
- A school-wide focus on the importance of a student's environment and the role it plays in encouraging or discouraging behavior; efforts to continuously strengthen the school climate.
- A team-oriented approach to planning and implementation of interventions and procedures.
- A clear set of behavioral expectations and goals.
- The constant use of data collection and data analysis to facilitate team and staff decision making.
- A tiered approach to interventions (see "Three tiers of intervention" below).
- Direct, explicit teaching of appropriate student behavior in the environments where that behavior is expected.
- A consistent effort to reinforce positive student behavior

Tier 1: Universal Behavior Support

Tier 1 includes the establishment of school-wide expectations. General academic behavior instruction and support is provided to all students in all settings. This includes explicit instruction and modeling of expected behavior.

Tier 2: Targeted Behavior Support

In Tier 2, more targeted instruction and support is provided to students who have exhibited difficulties meeting the school-wide expectations. This instruction and intervention is in addition to and aligned with the core academic behavioral curriculum.

Tier 3 Intensive & Individualized Behavior Support

Tier 3 provides more intensive instruction and intervention based on individual student needs. This instruction and intervention is in addition to and aligned with the core academic behavioral curriculum.

OCASA has established policies, procedures and guidelines to promote an environment reflective of the school's mission, purpose, and core values. The administration of the school will provide the structure, support, and order necessary for students to develop their talents and skills to the best of their ability. Students are able to achieve more and grow when clear and consistent policies and guidelines are established. Our goal at OCASA is to help each student become a productive and effective citizen in our society. We know the vast majority of students will work toward this goal by respecting the rights of others, respecting personal and school property, and by practicing acceptable patterns of behavior and courtesy.

The guidelines and expectations that are found in this handbook are in effect on school grounds, off campus during school hours, at school-sponsored functions, or while traveling to or from school activities.

Discipline

The policy of our school is to expect good conduct and courtesy from our students at school, on the playground, and traveling to and from school. Parents, teachers, and school staff have the responsibility to communicate these expectations with our students.

It is important that we maintain a safe and healthy school/classroom climate conducive to learning. Students enrolled at OCASA are expected to conduct themselves in such a way as to show at all times that they understand and accept school policies and rules regulating student behavior.

To support discipline on our campus, we will be implementing positive behavior interventions, which include positive reinforcement of school-wide expectations and consequences for minor and major offenses as stated below.

Minor Offenses **Consequences and Procedures**	**Major Offenses** **Consequences and Procedures**
● Minor offenses are defined as violations that can be redirected. ● Progressive Discipline will be applied for minor offenses. ● Offenses are cumulative for the current school year.* Past offenses from previous school years will not be calculated when applying progressive discipline for the current school year. *For tardies, progressive discipline will be reset every quarter.	● Major offenses are defined as flagrant violations that warrant immediate administrator attention. ● A single violation could be a major offense if it requires immediate administrative attention. ● The same repeated offense that cannot be redirected ● ● d after 3 or more interventions will be treated as a major offense. ● Offenses are not cumulative for the current school year except for repeated minor offenses that become a major offense when progressive discipline is applied.
Consequences for Minor Violations*: ● Nonverbal cue or verbal warning ● Conversation with teacher ● Lunch detention ● Call home ● Loss of privileges for Field Trips, Fun Days or participation in other activities ● Conference with administrator	Inappropriate student behavior will have consequences. Consequences will be assigned by an administrator and are not progressive (except for repeated minor offenses.) Consequences include, but are not limited to: ● Administrative Conference ● On-campus suspension ● Off-campus suspension

● Conference with administrator and parents/caregivers ● Referral for suspension *Consequences may be applied concurrently at the teacher's/administrator's discretion	● School Placement Meeting ● Expulsion as specified below in accordance with California Education Code Section 48900
Examples of common Minor Offenses: ● Disruption/interfering with classmates' ability to listen and learn ● Failure to comply with rules and specific instructions ● Electronic Device/technology misuse ● Inappropriate language/profanity ● Inappropriate physical contact ● Touching others' property without permission ● Repeated failure to follow dress code ● Tardy/out of class without permission	Examples of common Major Offenses: ● Repeated (3 or more) failures to comply with rules and specific instructions (minor offenses) ● Repeated (3 or more) dress code violations ● Repeated (3 or more) electronic device/technology use violations ● Closed-campus violations ● Fighting ● Excessive Tardies (5 or more per quarter) ● Other major offenses including, but not limited to, those specified below

Rewards/Privileges for Meeting School-Wide Expectations include, but are not limited to:

- Participation in scheduled Fun Days
- Permission to attend Field Trips
- Participation in clubs/lunch helpers/school leadership roles
- Eligibility for Student of the Month or other awards
- Positive calls/notes home

Other Major Disciplinary Offenses:

HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, DISCRIMINATION & BULLYING POLICY

The Board of Directors of the schools believes all students have the right to a safe and civil learning environment. Discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying are all disruptive behaviors which interfere with students' ability to learn, negatively affect student engagement, diminish school safety, and contribute to a hostile school environment. As such, the schools prohibit any acts of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying related to school activity or school attendance. This policy is inclusive of instances that occur on any area of the school campus, at school-sponsored events and activities, regardless of location, through school-owned technology, and through other electronic means, consistent with this policy.

As used in this policy, "discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying" describe the intentional conduct, including verbal, physical, written communication, or cyberbullying, that is based on the actual or perceived characteristics of disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics. In addition, bullying encompasses any conduct described in the definitions set forth in this policy.

To the extent possible, the schools will make reasonable efforts to prevent students from being discriminated against, harassed, intimidated and/or bullied, and will take action to investigate, respond, and address any reports of such behaviors in a timely manner. The staff who witness acts of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying will take immediate steps to intervene, so long as it is safe to do so.

Other types of conduct that are prohibited in school and at school related functions and activities that may constitute harassment include:

1. Unwelcome sexual flirtations or propositions.
2. Verbal abuse of a sexual nature.
3. Graphic verbal comments about an individual's body.
4. Sexually degrading words used to describe an individual.
5. Display of sexually suggestive gestures, objects, or pictures.

6. Any act of retaliation against an individual who reports a violation of the school's harassment complaint.
7. Statements made about gender, race, ethnic group, religion, color, mental or physical disability, or any basis that is contained in the prohibition of hate crimes.

Definitions

Bullying is defined as any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including one or more acts committed by a student or group of students that constitutes sexual harassment, hate violence or creates an intimidating or hostile educational environment, directed toward one or more students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing a reasonable pupil or pupils in fear of harm to that pupil's or those pupils' person or property.
2. Causing a reasonable pupil to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health.
3. Causing a reasonable pupil to experience substantial interference with his or her academic performance.
4. Causing a reasonable pupil to experience substantial interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the school.

Cyberbullying is an electronic act that includes the transmission of harassing communication, direct threats, or other harmful texts, sounds, or images on the Internet, social media, or other technologies using a telephone, computer, or any wireless communication device. Cyberbullying also includes breaking into another person's electronic account and assuming that person's identity in order to damage that person's reputation.

Electronic act is the transmission of a communication, including, but not limited to, a message, text, sound, or image, or a post on a social network Internet Web site, by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone or other wireless communication device, computer or pager.

Reasonable pupil is defined as a pupil, including, but not limited to, an exceptional needs pupil, who exercises care, skill, and judgment in conduct for a person of his or her age, or for a person of his or her age with his or her exceptional needs.

Reporting

All staff are expected to provide appropriate supervision to enforce standards of conduct and, if they observe or become aware of discrimination, intimidation, harassment, or bullying, to intervene as soon as it is safe to do so, call for assistance, and report such incidents. The Board requires staff to follow the procedures in this policy for reporting alleged acts of bullying.

All other members of the school community, including students, parents/guardians, volunteers, and visitors, are encouraged to report any act that may be a violation of this policy to an administrator or designee. While submission of a written report is not required, the reporting party is encouraged to use the report form available in the Office. However, oral reports shall also be considered. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action cannot be based solely on anonymous information.

Students are expected to report all incidents of discrimination, intimidation, harassment, bullying, teasing, or other verbal or physical abuse. Any student who feels she/he is a target of such behavior should immediately contact a teacher, counselor, principal, or staff person so that she/he can get assistance in resolving the issue consistent with this policy.

OCASA acknowledges and respects every individual's rights to privacy. To that end, consistent with legal requirements, all reports shall be investigated in a manner that protects the confidentiality of the parties and the integrity of the process to the greatest extent possible.

OCASA prohibits any form of retaliation against any reporter in the reporting process, including but not limited to a reporter's filing of a complaint or the reporting of violations of this policy. Such participation shall not in any way affect the status, grades or work assignments of the reporter.

Investigation Upon receipt of a report of harassment, intimidation, or bullying from a student, staff member, parent, volunteer, visitor or affiliate of OCASA, the Director or designee will promptly initiate an investigation. At the conclusion of the investigation, the Director or designee will notify the complainant of the outcome of the investigation. However, i***n no case may the Director or designee reveal confidential student information related to other students, including the type and extent of discipline issued against such students.***

Complaints shall be investigated and resolved within thirty (30) school days, unless circumstances reasonably require additional time.

All records related to any investigation of discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying will remain in a secure location on campus.

In those instances when the complaint filed under this policy also requires investigation under the Uniform Complaint Procedures, such investigation will be undertaken concurrently.

Appeal Should the Complainant find the Director or designee resolution unsatisfactory, he/she may within five (5) school days of the date of resolution, file an appeal with the Designated Appeals Committee. In such cases, at least three (3) certificated school employees who are unfamiliar with the case and who have been previously selected and trained for this purpose shall be assembled to conduct a confidential review of the Complainant's appeal and render a final disposition.

Consequences Students who engage in discrimination, harassment, intimidation or bullying may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension and/or expulsion, as outlined in OCASA Student Discipline Policy.

FORMAL SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION POLICY

For detailed information on suspension and expulsion policies and procedures please visit https://tinyurl.com/OMS-POLICY.