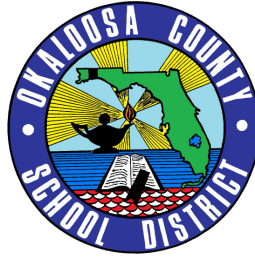


SCHOOL DISTRICT OF OKALOOSA COUNTY

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NEWS RELEASE

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OCSD Offers Back-to-School Tips to Help Students and Families Start the School Year Strong

The Okaloosa County School District is preparing to welcome students back to classrooms on Tuesday, August 11. We encourage families to take a few final steps to help ensure a smooth and successful start to the 2026–2027 school year. From establishing routines and reviewing transportation information to completing required forms and staying connected with teachers and schools, a little preparation can help students begin the year feeling confident, prepared, and ready to learn.

Plan for the First Day

The first day of school can bring excitement and, for some students, a few nerves. Families can help make the transition easier by:

- Establishing a consistent bedtime and morning routine before school begins.
- Laying out clothes, backpacks and supplies the night before.
- Reviewing your child's class schedule and teacher information.
- Discussing expectations and goals for the new school year.
- Arriving at school early to allow extra time for traffic, parking and locating classrooms.

Know Important Dates and School Start Times

Families are encouraged to review their school and district calendars for important dates, holidays, early release days and testing windows throughout the school year.

[View the 2026–2027 School Calendars](#)

Families should also review their child's school start time. School start times indicate when learning begins, so students should arrive on campus with enough time for drop-off and to get to class before the bell rings.

[View School Start Times](#)

Stay Connected Through Focus Parent Portal

The Focus Parent Portal is an important resource for families throughout the school year. Parents and guardians should create or verify their Parent Portal account before school begins. Families will use the Parent Portal to complete required annual forms and access important student information, including:

- Student Medical Information and Parent Consent
- Transportation forms
- Other required student records and acknowledgments

[Student Medical Information & Parent Consent](#)

Keep Contact Information Up to Date

Accurate contact information helps ensure families receive important communications from their child's school and the district. Parents and guardians should make sure:

- Phone numbers are current.
- Email addresses are up to date.
- Each guardian has a unique cell phone number and unique email address on file.

CENTRAL COMPLEX-202 A HIGHWAY 85 NORTH-NICEVILLE, FL 32578
TELEPHONE (850) 833-3100 FAX (850) 833-4237

CARVER HILL ADMINISTRATION COMPLEX-461 W. SCHOOL AVENUE-CRESTVIEW, FLORIDA 32536
TELEPHONE (850) 689-7117 FAX (850) 689-7121

Providing separate contact information for each guardian helps ensure that everyone receives important district and school updates, emergency notifications, event reminders and classroom communications.

Meet Rooms: A New Way to Stay Connected

The district is excited to introduce Rooms, a new communication platform designed to strengthen connections among families, teachers and schools. Through Rooms, families will be able to:

- Receive classroom updates and announcements.
- Communicate directly with teachers.
- Stay informed about assignments, events and important reminders.
- Access conversations in one convenient location.

Additional information about Rooms, including setup instructions and helpful resources, will be shared with families as the school year begins.

Apply for Free or Reduced-Price Meals

Families are encouraged to complete a Free and Reduced-Price Meal Application each school year. Eligibility is based on household size and income and may provide access to additional benefits and programs beyond school meals. The application process is quick, secure, and confidential. Families who were approved for free or reduced-price meals during the previous school year must reapply for the 2026–2027 school year.

[Apply for Free and Reduced-Price Meals](#)

Check Transportation Information

Families whose children ride the school bus should review transportation information before the first day of school.

Parents and guardians should:

- [Verify bus routes and stop locations](#)
- Review pickup and drop-off times.
- Allow additional time during the first two weeks of school as routes and traffic patterns settle into place.

[View Transportation Information](#)

Make Attendance a Priority

Regular attendance is an important part of student success. Families are encouraged to establish routines that help students arrive at school on time each day and ready to learn.

A New School Year Begins

The first day of school marks the beginning of new friendships, learning opportunities and memorable experiences for students across Okaloosa County. By planning, staying connected through Focus and Rooms, keeping contact information current and making attendance a priority, families can help their students start the school year confident, prepared and ready to succeed. The Okaloosa County School District looks forward to welcoming students back for the 2026–2027 school year and wishes students, families, teachers and staff a safe, successful and outstanding school year.



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