

February 5, 2025

Dear Orange County Families,

Next week, Orange County Public Schools will participate in Kindness Week 2025. As we prepare to celebrate the ways we can positively influence others' lives and experiences, it is an opportune time to highlight our efforts to promote kindness and establish a school culture that uplifts all students. OCPS remains committed to the philosophy of *Every Student, Every Day*. Fundamental components to our approach include establishing high expectations for student behavior and rejecting all forms of discrimination and bigotry.

The School Board has prioritized its focus on nondiscrimination through [Policy AC](#). Our commitment to nondiscrimination exists in all policies and practices concerning staff, students, educational programs, and services. Recently, members of our Strategic Planning Committee reinforced our commitment by identifying safe learning environments as one of our five key areas of focus. In line with our Strategic Plan, we have taken two wide-ranging and tangible steps to help foster safe learning environments in all of our schools.

First, we convened a committee to review, evaluate, and update our [OC Character Education Program](#). This comprehensive K-12 program is interwoven into school procedures and environments so that we can provide students with effective models, examples, and illustrations. Through curricular materials, we emphasize key traits such as trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. Second, we created the [OCPS Code of Student Conduct](#) to clearly define the fundamental rules and expectations for student behavior. This document also identifies a range of administrative responses we can implement to address violations of the Code of Student Conduct and ensure accountability.




OCPS recognizes that an essential component of a safe learning environment is a positive school culture centered on mutual respect and kindness. We understand that there may be instances when expectations are not fully met, and that challenges may arise despite our best efforts as a school community. Therefore, we have created the [OC-Safe Anonymous Tipline](#) to facilitate streamlined incident reporting. Once OCPS officials are made aware of an issue, we will act quickly to address the matter. We have a host of options we can pursue to effectively respond to the situation. These options include engaging with parents/guardians, administering disciplinary consequences, initiating our threat assessment process, pursuing mental health resources and support, and/or partnering with the Orange County Sheriff's Office.





Moving forward, we remain committed to fostering environments in which all members of the school community feel valued, heard, and respected. A positive school culture not only promotes student engagement and connectedness, but also reduces behavior issues. Students benefit from appropriate and trusting relationships with staff members; further, they have access to supports and resources that can help them navigate difficult scenarios. We would like to thank our community for their continued support, and we look forward to our ongoing efforts to promote kindness and mutual respect.

Sincerely,



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