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ORANGE COUNTY SCHOOLS

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Orange County Schools Invites Families to the Second Annual Back to School Fair and Family Resource Expo on August 8, 2026

Free Backpacks with School Supplies for the First 100 Students, Health Screenings, Family Resources, and Community Connections

July 10, 2026

HILLSBOROUGH, N.C. — Orange County Schools (OCS) invites students, families, and community members to kick off the 2026–2027 school year at its Second Annual Back to School Fair and Family Resource Expo on Saturday, August 8, 2026. As a special incentive, the first 100 students to attend will receive a free backpack filled with school supplies to help them start the school year prepared and ready to learn.

The event will be held from 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Orange High School, located at [500 Orange High School Road](#) in Hillsborough. Admission is free, open to the public, and no registration is required.

Building on the success of last year's inaugural event, which welcomed more than 200 families, Orange County Schools anticipates an even larger turnout this year as families connect with school leaders, healthcare providers, community organizations, and local businesses committed to supporting student success.

Serving as Orange County Schools' official kickoff to the new school year, the Back to School Fair and Family Resource Expo brings together schools, healthcare providers, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and community collaborators in one location to ensure every student begins the year prepared, connected, and ready to learn. The event reflects the district's

commitment to removing barriers, strengthening family engagement, and fostering partnerships that support the whole child.

Families will have the opportunity to:

- Meet the principals from all 13 Orange County Schools, along with leadership from district departments.
- Learn about academic programs, student services, extracurricular opportunities, and family resources.
- Connect with local nonprofit organizations, community agencies, businesses, and vendors serving Orange County families.
- Take advantage of sports physicals, health and dental screenings, and free vision screenings for students. On-site medical providers accept insurance, and sliding fee scale options may be available depending on the provider.
- Submit bus transportation requests before the district's annual deadline.
- Explore educational resources and support services designed to help students thrive throughout the school year.
- Enjoy food trucks and family-friendly activities throughout the afternoon.

"The Back to School Fair and Family Resource Expo reflects our commitment to ensuring every student and family begins the school year with the resources, support, and connections they need to succeed," said Dr. Sheldon Lanier, Chief Equity and Student Achievement Officer for Orange County Schools. "By bringing together our schools, dedicated staff, healthcare providers, community organizations, and local collaborators, we are creating a welcoming environment where families can access essential services, build relationships, and feel confident heading into a new school year. When schools, families, healthcare providers, nonprofits, and the community comes together with a shared purpose, students benefit. That's exactly what this event is all about."

The event also provides an opportunity for families who are new to Orange County Schools to become familiar with district programs, meet school leaders, and learn about the many resources available throughout the school year.

"Our goal is to remove barriers and create meaningful opportunities for families to engage with our schools before the first day of class," said Kim Degraffenried, Student Services Program Coordinator for Orange County Schools. "Whether families need health screenings, transportation information, school resources, or simply want to meet the people who will be supporting their students, the Back to



School Fair and Family Resource Expo brings everything together under one roof. It reflects our shared commitment to ensuring every student begins the school year with confidence, support, and every opportunity to succeed."

Orange County Schools invites all families to join the celebration, connect with valuable community resources, and kick off the 2026–2027 school year prepared for success.

For additional event information and updates, visit the [event page](#) and watch the [announcement video](#). Questions about the event can be directed to Kim Degraffenried at [919-732-8126](tel:919-732-8126) ext 17508.

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Orange County Schools' mission is to educate students in a safe, inclusive environment where we engage, challenge, and inspire them to reach their maximum potential. Orange County Schools serves approximately 6,600 students across 13 schools and is committed to fostering belonging, promoting academic excellence, and building strong partnerships with families and the community to prepare every student for lifelong success.

