

**OCALI CHARTER HIGH
SCHOOL
CURRICULUM GUIDE AND
HANDBOOK
2025-2026**

3850 West Anthony Road

Ocala, Florida 34479

352-322-2797

Ocali Charter High School Staff Directory

Principal: Elizabeth Brown

Assistant Principal: Teula Bondank

Dean of Students: Charles Chinn

School Counselor: Noemi Laiz

Receptionist/IPC: Jen Tigay

Testing and Assessment School Based Lead: Christopher Morin

Student Activities: Linda Burkey

Clear Choice Academies Staff and Board Members

Executive Director: Teecy Matthews

Chairman of the Board of Directors: Susan Kile

Director of Student Services and Assessment: Elias Posth

Executive Secretary: Karen Moats

Public Relations: Sierra Sippel

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PROJECT BASED LEARNING

The Teaching Philosophy of Ocali Charter High School

Project Based Learning is a teaching method in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging, and complex question, problem, or challenge.

Students work on a project over an extended period of time – from a week up to a semester – that engages them in solving a real-world problem or answering a complex question. They demonstrate their knowledge and skills by creating a public product or presentation for a real audience.

As a result, students develop deep content knowledge as well as critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and communication skills. Project Based Learning unleashes a contagious, creative energy among students and teachers.

PBL is becoming widely used in schools and other educational settings, with different varieties being practiced. However, there are key characteristics that differentiate "doing a project" from engaging in rigorous Project Based Learning.

We find it helpful to distinguish a "dessert project" - a short, intellectually-light project served up after the teacher covers the content of a unit in the usual way - from a "main course" project, in which the project *is* the unit. In Project Based Learning, the project is the vehicle for teaching the important knowledge and skills student need to learn. The project contains and frames curriculum and instruction.

In contrast to dessert projects, PBL requires critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, and various forms of communication. To answer a

driving question and create high-quality work, students need to do much more than remember information. They need to use higher-order thinking skills and learn to work as a team. (Information from resource listed below)

[What is Project Based Learning? | PBLWorks](#)

Student Activities Guidelines

- Student activities are designed for the educational experience and enjoyment of all students. Some activities will require a certain GPA (grade point average) and students will have certain guidelines to meet regarding attendance and discipline. These guidelines when present are non-negotiable and mandatory. Guidelines for activities will be communicated clearly before each activity with students and parents/guardians. Contracts will be issued well ahead of any activity with guidelines. Contracts must be signed by both the student and the parent/guardian. Students will not be allowed to participate without a signed contract for activities requiring one.
- Activities will include educational field trips, field trips for enjoyment, club days, club trips, mentoring opportunities, and community service activities.
- A calendar with all student activities will be issued at the beginning of the school year for planning purposes. Dates are subject to change and additional activities may be added.
- Parent volunteers that wish to chaperone need to complete a volunteer application and pass a background check.
- If the activity end time falls outside of normal school hours and a parent is picking up their student, pick up must occur no later than 15 minutes after the scheduled time. Students that are not picked up in a timely manner will not be able to participate in future activities.
- The Code of Conduct will be strictly enforced during all school activities and trips. Violation of the Code of Conduct will result in the parent/guardian having to pick up the student at the location of the activity immediately upon being notified of the violation.
- Permission slips and medical release forms are required for all off campus activities.

- If a student requires medication during the trip, our trained staff will be available to administer the medication. If the staff is not able to attend the activity the parent of the student will need to attend to administer the medication for students under the age of 18. Any medication administered to a student must be registered through the school clinic prior to the activity.
- For trips, there is the possibility of scholarships to cover the cost of the activity. Please contact Ms. Brown for more information if needed.

Student Guidelines

1. Students should wear appropriate clothing and engage in activities of a group nature only.
2. When a student is assigned to a group or a chaperone, the student is to remain with the group at all times unless the student has made special arrangements. Students will return with the group unless other traveling arrangements are made with the Sponsor. A written request including a parent/guardian signature is required.
3. No student should be permitted to visit relatives or friends while on a trip unless arrangements have been made in writing between the student's parents and the Sponsor in charge. Any student requesting a deviation from the planned itinerary must submit a written request with a parent/guardian signature in advance. The Sponsor will make personal contact with the parent/guardian prior to approval.
4. Use of illegal substances is prohibited (MCPS Student Code of Conduct).
5. Hotel rooms are bedrooms. Under no circumstances should students of opposite sex entertain guests in their hotel rooms.
6. A curfew will be set by the Sponsor.

Graduation Requirements

Students receiving a standard high school diploma from OCHS must meet the requirements according to the year the student enters Grade 9 (also referred to as “cohort” year) as required by FLDOE graduation requirements.

Definition of a High School Credit (1) One full credit for high school graduation is defined as a minimum of 135 hours or two semesters of 67.5 hours (with the exception of summer school) of bona fide instruction in a designated course that contains student performance standards. Except as otherwise provided by the Credit Acceleration Program (CAP), students must be enrolled and in attendance for the minimum hourly requirement of each course.

(2) Any student who has been enrolled but not in attendance for instruction for the minimum hourly requirements may not be awarded credit.

(3) The principal will determine credit for students who enroll after the start of the school year. c)

Course Waivers/Substitutions (1) Please consult with the high school counselor regarding waiver/substitution options. (2) Students using a waiver or substitution may need to substitute other courses to meet the required number of credits for graduation. (3) A course that has been used to substitute in one subject area may not be used to substitute for any other subject area. Course substitutions may not count toward State University System admissions requirements.

d) Financial Literacy (1) Beginning with students entering Grade 9 in the 2023-2024 school year, all students must earn one-half credit in personal financial literacy and money management as an elective. [§1003.4282, Fla. Stat. (2022)]

e) Computer Science (1) A student who earns a computer science credit may substitute the credit for up to one credit of the mathematics requirement (except for Algebra I and Geometry) or up to one credit of the science requirement (except for Biology I).

CLEAN THIS UP AND INSERT GRAD CREDIT REQUIREMENTS HERE WITH PROGRESSION PLAN

Bright Futures Scholarship Information

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

- The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program provides for tuition and fee reimbursement for undergraduate studies at a public or private university, community college, or Career and Technical school. [§1009.531, Fla. Stat. (2022)]
- The four scholarship awards within the Bright Futures Scholarship Program are the Florida Academic Scholars (FAS) award, Florida Medallion Scholars (FMS) award, Florida Gold seal Vocational Scholars (GSV) award, and Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars (GSC) award.
- For information regarding specific eligibility criteria that must be met for each award, refer to: <http://www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/ssfad/fb/>
- To qualify for a Florida Bright Futures Scholarship, students must complete a program of volunteer service work, which encourages students to develop a sense of responsibility for others within the community and fosters an understanding of the value of volunteerism. Volunteer service hours will be properly documented on the MCPS Student Volunteer Service Hours Form (eGTR13 REV 05/2016), which is also available from each school's School Counseling Office.

Valedictorian and Salutatorian Decision Formula

The cumulative grade point average (GPA) at the end of the fourth nine weeks of the Grade 12 year will be used for determining high honors and honors at graduation.

Each school may have a valedictorian and a salutatorian with other special honors recognition optional. The honor of becoming a valedictorian or salutatorian falls to the students with the highest and second-highest GPA (respectively), using the specified credits and weighting

Eligibility In order to be eligible for valedictorian or salutatorian, the weighted GPA will be determined by the following core courses based on 24 high school and dual enrollment credits. Coursework cannot be retaken to improve a grade, and failure of any core course will disqualify the candidate. High school courses taken in middle school count toward the 24 credits required for valedictorian and salutatorian

. 4 credits in English

4 credits in Mathematics

3 credits in Science

3 credits in Social Sciences

2 credits in the same World Language

8 additional credits (to be chosen from the best remaining semester credits taken)

All high school courses, including courses requiring state-mandated End-of-Course (EOC) exams, are designated semester courses.)

The best semester credit that fills the specific subject area or elective requirements should be used to best benefit the student. For example, if a student takes nine semesters of English, received a “B” for one semester in an English course, and an “A” in eight other semesters of English credit, the “B” would not be used unless it is a best additional credit.

Ties for valedictorian or salutatorian will produce co-valedictorians or cosalutatorians, respectively. If there is a tie for valedictorian, there will be no salutatorian; however, there may be a valedictorian and then multiple salutatorians.

To be eligible for valedictorian or salutatorian, students must have been in attendance at that school for at least their previous and current years.

Part-time dual enrollment students are considered eligible for valedictorian or salutatorian.

Students who have elected to pursue accelerated graduation options (18- credits/early graduation) are also considered eligible for valedictorian or salutatorian.

GPA calculations for honors and class rankings will be made upon completion of the fourth nine weeks of the senior year. f) Any student who is designated as a member of the respective year graduation class, whether 24 credit graduation option, 18 credit option, or accelerated graduate, will be eligible for the award.

Credit Recovery and Credit Replacement

GRADE FORGIVENESS

Grade forgiveness policies for required and elective courses are limited to replacing a grade of “D” or “F” with a grade of “C” or greater that is subsequently earned in the same or comparable course, with principal approval.

Retaking a Course to Improve a Grade

The higher grade will be used to calculate the grade point average (GPA). A student may receive credit only for the course that is counted; duplicate course credit cannot be awarded for the same course.

Required Courses: Forgiveness policies for required courses will be limited to replacing a grade of “D” or “F,” or the equivalent of a grade of “D” or “F,” with a grade of “C” or greater, or the equivalent of a grade of “C” or greater, earned subsequently in the same or comparable course.

Elective Courses: Forgiveness policies for elective courses will be limited to replacing a grade of “D” or “F,” or the equivalent of a grade of “D” or “F,” with STUDENT PROGRESSION PLAN

2022-2023 Page 76 of 95 a grade of “C” or greater, or the equivalent of a grade of “C” or greater, earned subsequently in another course.

Exceptions: The only exception to these forgiveness policies will be made for a student in the middle grades who takes any high school course for high school credit and earns a grade of “C,” “D,” or “F” or the equivalent of a grade of “C,” “D,” or “F.” In such case, the grade forgiveness policy allows the replacement of the grade with a grade of “C” or greater, or the equivalent of a grade of “C” or greater, earned subsequently in the same or comparable course.

In all cases of grade forgiveness, only the new grade will be used in the calculation of the student’s GPA. Any course grade not replaced according to the grade forgiveness policy will be included in the calculation of the cumulative GPA required for graduation. [§ 1003.4282, Fla. Stat. (2022)]

Core Curriculum Courses:

At the secondary level, core courses are considered any English, Math, Science, and Social Studies courses of study. These courses provide credits that are mandatory for students to receive a state issued high school diploma. Core courses are taught by highly qualified teachers that are certified or working towards their certification in the subject area they are teaching. OCHS adheres to the state recommendations of available resources to use for each course. Pacing of the content is created utilizing current curriculum maps and other resources to ensure that all students gain mastery of the content. Core courses may be at the level of regular, honors, or Advanced Placement. Core courses offered for the 2023-2024 school year include:

English	Math
ELA 1	Algebra 1A
ELA 1 Honors	Algebra 1B
ELA 2	Algebra 1 Honors
ELA 2 Honors	Geometry
ELA 3	Geometry Honors
ELA 3 Honors	Algebra 2

	Math for Data
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<u>Science</u>	<u>Social Studies</u>
Environmental Science	World History
Environmental Science Honors	World History Honors
Biology	
Biology Honors	

Elective Courses:

A high school elective is a **course that's not part of the core curriculum**. Electives are usually part of high school graduation requirements, but students are free to take whatever classes interest them. It's a chance to learn new skills and explore career paths.

Each year OCHS students will have a variety of elective courses to choose from in order to build their schedule. In order for an elective class to “make”, there must be a number of students interested in taking the class that justifies using a class period section to accommodate the student requests.

Club membership: Discuss on Wednesday or Friday and then design this section.

AP Info

AP is the enrollment of an eligible secondary student in a course offered by the Advanced Placement program administered by the College Board. Postsecondary credit for an AP course may be awarded to students who score a minimum of 3 on a 5-point scale on the corresponding AP exam. Each postsecondary institution establishes their own distinct method of awarding college credit for AP scores. AP courses are designed to be taken mostly during the 11th and 12th grades with some exceptions being made at the 10th grade level. AP courses that will be offered will be:

AP Language

AP Literature

AP Chemistry

AP Biology

AP Calculus

AP US History

AP Psychology

Students must maintain a C or above in all AP classes at all times to remain in the class. Any student who is earning a D or F in an AP class will be rescheduled to another class on level with their performance.

CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION

The Career & Technical Education (CTE) Programs section is responsible for developing and maintaining educational programs that prepare individuals for occupations important to Florida's economic development. These programs are organized into 17 different career clusters and are geared toward middle school, high school, district technical school, and Florida College System students throughout the state. With the help of partners in education, business and industry, and trade associations, each program includes the academic and technical skills required to be successful in today's economy.

Student Code of Conduct (SCC)

Supports our schools in maintaining safe, nurturing, participatory and productive learning environments. In order to maximize learning time and promote positive behaviors, every school must establish multi-tiered systems of support for students' social, emotional and behavioral needs. This includes developing clear expectations, teaching social-emotional competencies, and fostering positive relationships among all members of the school community. OCHS is committed to an instructive, corrective, and restorative approach to behavior. If behavior incidents arise that threaten student and staff safety or severely disrupt the educational process, the response should minimize the impact of the incident, repair harm, and address the underlying needs behind student behaviors. In accordance with the SCC, all disciplinary responses must be applied respectfully, fairly, consistently, and protect students' rights to instructional time whenever possible. A safe, welcoming, and productive school requires the support of all staff, students, and families.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Student Rights

- To receive a free high-quality public education
 - To be safe at school
 - To be treated fairly, courteously, and respectfully
 - To bring complaints or concerns to the school principal or staff for resolution
 - To tell their side of the story before receiving a consequence
 - To be told the reason(s) for any disciplinary action verbally and in writing
 - To be given information about appealing disciplinary actions
- introduction Student Rights & Responsibilities 3
- To express opinions, support causes, assemble to discuss issues, and engage in peaceful and responsible demonstrations

Student Responsibilities

- To read and become familiar with this policy
- To attend school daily, prepare for class, and complete class and homework assignments to the best of their ability
- To know and follow school rules and instructions given by the

school principal, teachers, and other staff • To tell school staff about any dangerous behavior or bullying that occurs at school, on the way to and from school, or in the school community • To bring to school only those materials that are allowed • To treat everyone in the school community with respect • To respect school property, community property, and the property of others

Parent/Guardian Rights • To be actively involved in their child's education • To be treated fairly and respectfully by the school principal, teachers, and other staff • To notified promptly if their child is disciplined for inappropriate or disruptive behavior and informed of the consequences assigned • To appeal disciplinary actions taken • To receive information about their child's academic and behavioral progress

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities • To read and become familiar with this policy • To make sure their child attends school regularly, on time, and to notify the school before the school day begins if their child is absent • To give the school accurate and current contact information • To tell school officials about any concerns or complaints respectfully and in a timely manner and work with the school principal, teachers, and other staff to address any academic or behavioral concerns regarding their child • To talk with their child about the behavior expected in school • To support their child's learning and school activities at home • To be respectful and courteous to staff, other parents, guardians, and students • To respect other students' privacy rights

School Staff Rights • To work in a safe and orderly environment • To be treated courteously and respectfully • To bring complaints or concerns to school administration, [Network](#) and District offices • To receive supportive professional development and resources

School Staff Responsibilities • To explicitly teach, re-teach and model clear behavioral expectations to all students • To actively supervise all areas of the school building and use positive strategies to redirect behavior • To provide engaging learning activities that minimize opportunities for disruption • To intervene early and de-escalate inappropriate behaviors • To identify and respond effectively to students' social, emotional, and/or behavioral health needs, including referring students for additional support when necessary • To treat everyone in the school community fairly and with respect

• For administrators to review the circumstances surrounding each situation and exercise their discretion to assign interventions/consequences in the best interest of the school community • For administrators to apply the SCC accurately, consistently, and in a nondiscriminatory manner, including providing students with opportunities to respond, notifying parent/guardians when disciplinary action is taken, and recording all

disciplinary action in the District student information system introduction Student Rights & Responsibilities

[5 Chief Executive Officer or Designee Responsibilities](#) • To monitor the implementation of prevention strategies and the safety and security program in each school • To systematically monitor and publish suspension, expulsion, and other disciplinary data disaggregated by race/ethnicity, sex, limited English proficiency, and disability • To prepare recommendations for improving school discipline • To create guidelines for effective school discipline • To establish procedures for reciprocal reporting with the [Marion County Sheriff's Department](#)

Insert link to MCPS Code of Conduct?

Insert Dress Code and Uniform Policy

OCHS Dress Code and Uniform Policy

Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday: OCHS Dress Code

Tuesday: Professional Dress Uniform

Friday: Spirit Day Uniform

OCHS Dress Code: (patterned after MCPS Dress Code with additions)

It is expected that students wear to school or school functions neat, clean, appropriate clothing (as listed below) that meets the standards of this educational environment. Any extreme in clothing, cosmetics, jewelry, or appearance that may disrupt the normal operation of the school will not be acceptable. It is not the intention of these guidelines to usurp the authority of parents in determining what appropriate dress is and grooming for their children in accordance with the age and grade of those youngsters. The school will work with parents in encouraging our young people to assume this responsibility

and to execute it sensibly as they mature. The purpose of the home and school working together should be to help students accept and cooperate with the guidelines.

1. . Students shall wear shoes for foot protection and for hygienic reasons while on school grounds or school transportation. For safety reasons, shoes with wheels and/or skates may not be worn on the school campus/bus. It is recommended that students wear closed toe/closed heel shoes to school. Flip flops, slides, or bedroom slippers are not allowed.
2. Students must not wear clothing and accessories which are harmful, disruptive, or hazardous to health or safety. Undergarments should not be visible at any time.
3. Students (male and female) are not to wear hats of any kind within the school building unless approved by the school administration for special occasions and specific locations. "Hats" should be interpreted literally as "hats" or head-coverings and will include bandanas, berets, beanies, knitted caps, hoods (such as attached to sweatshirts), caps, sweatbands, visors, and similar hat-like apparel.
4. Students are not to wear T-shirts or other garments, or other items with pictures, logos, phrases, decals, patches, emblems, or words printed on them that are obscene or disruptive in the judgment of the school administration. This will include, but not be limited to: nude/semi-nude figures; figures in sexually suggestive postures; or logos of alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, or prohibited substances; or gang identification. A tattoo that is obscene or disruptive in the judgment of the school administration needs to be covered.
5. Tops must be long enough to clearly overlap the belt line or stay tucked in during the course of normal movement throughout the day. Shirts falling below mid-thigh length will be tucked in. No bare-midriff shirts/blouses, sleepwear, muscle shirts, or tank tops will be worn. No sleeveless shirts allowed.
6. Garments will be secured at the waist. Shorts and skirts are permitted at all grade levels and will be no more than 4 inches above the top of the knee cap or longer.
7. Jewelry and accessories shall be worn in a way that does not present a safety or health hazard or cause a disruption to the education process.
- 8.. High school students must display a current school-issued identification badge at all times while on campus. This badge must be clearly visible and worn above the waist. Failure to wear this ID will result in a dress code violation and students will be required to purchase an ID before entering a classroom on campus.

9. Leggings, jeggings, gym shorts, sweat pants, or biker shorts are not permitted. Clothing made of spandex is not permitted.

Regulations in reference to grooming and dress for special activities such as athletics, fine arts and drill team will be governed by the immediate person in charge of these activities under the direction of the principal.

Appropriateness and moderation in all things, concern for the health and safety of the students, and the avoidance of distractions to the educational process are the guiding principles of the student dress code. Styles and fads are constantly changing and cannot possibly be covered by specific rules and regulations. The task of evaluating what is proper in the way of dress and grooming is highly controversial, and opinion among people varies. Individual schools will assume responsibility for ruling on specific items of clothing and general appearance for reasons of safety and health, or for the order, well-being, and general welfare of students.

School administrators are authorized to employ appropriate disciplinary procedures to carry out and enforce this policy. These are minimum standards that will be enforced at each school. Schools have the right to set higher standards based on administrative procedures. School uniforms may be adopted at individual schools.

Tuesday Mandatory Professional Dress Uniform:

Young men will wear:

- Dress shoes (no tennis shoes)
- Khaki pleated dress pants (no denim like material or work pants)
- White button us dress shirt (short or long sleeve)
- Blue School Blazer with logo
- Yellow neck tie or bow tie
- Belt (optional)
- Shirt will be tucked in.

Young women will wear:

- Dress shoes (no heels higher than 2 inches)

- Khaki pleated dress pants or khaki knee length skirt (no denim like material or leggings)
- White dress shirt (short or long sleeve)
- Blue School blazer with logo
- Belt (optional)
- Shirt will be tucked in.

Friday Spirit Day Uniform:

For all students:

- Jeans or casual dress pants (no shorts)
- Gray school polo, authorized club t-shirt, or athletic jersey as decided upon by admin and coach

Students that do not abide by the dress code will be given a dress code violation and will be required to change into the appropriate garments before attending class. A parent will be called to bring appropriate clothing to school for the student and will be expected to produce appropriate clothing within one hour of the phone call notification. Excessive dress code violations will result in loss of the privilege of non uniform dress code days and students will be required to wear a school uniform every day of the week.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Student Code of Conduct

Dear Student and Parent: As required by state law, the board of trustees has officially adopted the Student Code of Conduct in order to promote a safe and orderly learning environment for every student.

We urge you to read this publication thoroughly and to discuss it with your family. If you have any questions about the required conduct and consequences for misconduct, we encourage you to ask for an explanation from the student's teacher or School administrator.

The student and parent should each sign this page in the space provided below, and then return the page to the student's school.

Thank you. Elizabeth Brown, Principal

We acknowledge that we have received a copy of the OCHS Student Code of Conduct for the 2023–2024 school year and understand that students will be held accountable for their behavior and will be subject to the disciplinary consequences outlined in the Code.

Please print name of student: _____

Signature of student: _____

Print name of parent: _____

Signature of parent: _____

Date: _____

School: _____

Grade level: _____

Please sign this page, remove it, and return it to the student's school. Thank you.