Back-to-School Communication Toolkit for School Principals

Creating a Consistent, Warm, and Welcoming Experience for Every Family

Purpose

The beginning of the school year is the first opportunity to build trust with families. Every interaction should help families feel:

- Welcome
- Informed
- Connected
- Safe
- Excited about the year ahead

This toolkit provides communication templates and messaging guidance that principals can personalize while maintaining a consistent district voice.

Our Communication Promise

Every communication should reflect our district values.

District Value	What Families Should Experience
Safety	"My child will be safe and cared for."
People First	"My family matters here."
Integrity	"I receive honest, timely, and accurate information."
Collaboration	"The school wants to partner with me."
Excellence	"My child will receive an outstanding educational experience."

Communication Timeline

Timeline	Communication
3 weeks before school	Welcome Letter
2 weeks before school	ParentSquare Welcome Message
10 days before	Social Media Countdown Begins
1 week before	Website Back-to-School Hub Updated
5 days before	Meet the Teacher/Open House Reminder
3 days before	Transportation, Arrival & Safety Reminder
Day Before	"We're Ready for You!" Message
First Day	Welcome Photos & Celebration
End of First Week	Thank You & Family Partnership Message

ParentSquare Templates

1. Welcome Message

Subject: Welcome to an Amazing School Year!

Hello [School Name] Families,

Welcome to another exciting school year!

Our entire staff is looking forward to partnering with you as we create a year filled with learning, growth, and meaningful connections.

At [School Name], we believe every child deserves to feel:

❤️ Safe
🤝 Valued
📚 Challenged
🌟 Inspired

As we begin the year together, know that our commitment extends beyond academics. We are dedicated to creating a school community where every student and every family belongs.

This year we will continue to focus on:

- Safe and welcoming schools

- Strong family partnerships
- High-quality instruction
- Student success
- Open communication

Please continue checking ParentSquare regularly for important updates throughout the year.

We cannot wait to welcome your family.

Together, we'll make this our best year yet!

Warmly,

Principal Name

2. First Week Reminder

Good evening {School Name] families,

School begins this week!

Please remember:

• Arrival begins at...
• Breakfast starts...
• Dismissal...
• Transportation information...
• Dress code reminders...
• School supplies...

Our staff will be outside welcoming students each morning.

Thank you for trusting us with your children.

We're excited to see everyone!

3. End of First Week

[School Name] Families,

What an incredible first week!

Thank you for helping us start the year with positivity and enthusiasm.

We have already seen:

✔ New friendships
✔ Exciting classroom learning

✔ Smiling faces
✔ Students showing kindness

We appreciate your partnership and look forward to a wonderful year together.

School Website

Principal Welcome Message

Welcome to [School Name].

Our mission is to ensure every student feels welcomed, challenged, supported, and inspired every day.

Our dedicated teachers and staff are committed to creating an environment where students can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

We value strong partnerships with families because we know students achieve their greatest success when schools and families work together.

Thank you for choosing [School Name].

We look forward to an outstanding school year.

Social Media Toolkit

Countdown Posts

10 Days Until School!

Only 10 days until we welcome our amazing students back!

We can't wait to fill our classrooms with learning, laughter, and new adventures.

#BackToSchool
#TogetherWeGrow

5 Days

We're getting everything ready!

Classrooms ✔
Teachers ✔
Hallways ✔

All that's missing is YOU!

Tomorrow!

Tomorrow is the big day!

Remember:

✔ Get plenty of rest
✔ Charge your laptop(if applicable)
✔ Set your alarm
✔ Bring your smile

We'll see you in the morning!

First Day

Welcome Back!

Today begins another year filled with possibilities.

We're excited to learn, grow, and succeed together.

Have an amazing first day!

End of First Week

One incredible week down!

Thank you to our students, staff, and families for making this an amazing start.

Here's to a fantastic school year!

Grade Band Messaging Suggestions

Elementary Schools

Tone

- Warm
- Friendly
- Family-focused
- Reassuring

Highlight

- Building relationships
- Classroom community
- Safety
- Reading
- Fun learning
- Family events

Suggested Language

"We are honored to be part of your child's educational journey."

"Our youngest learners deserve joyful classrooms where they feel safe, loved, and inspired."

Middle Schools

Tone

- Encouraging
- Supportive
- Growth-focused

Highlight

- Independence
- Exploration
- Clubs
- Athletics
- Leadership
- Student voice

Suggested Language

"Middle school is an exciting time of growth, discovery, and opportunity."

"We are committed to helping students become confident learners and responsible leaders."

K–8 Schools

Tone

- Community-centered

Highlight

- Long-term relationships
- Family atmosphere
- Student growth from kindergarten through eighth grade
- Leadership opportunities

Suggested Language

"One campus. One family. Endless opportunities to grow."

"We are proud to support students through every stage of their educational journey."

High Schools

Tone

- Professional
- Inspirational
- Future-focused

Highlight

- Academics
- College readiness
- Career pathways
- Athletics
- Visual and performing arts
- Student leadership
- Graduation

Suggested Language

"This is a year to discover passions, pursue excellence, and prepare for the future."

"We are committed to helping every student graduate ready for college, career, and life beyond graduation."

Key Messages to Reinforce Throughout the Back-to-School Season

Safety

Every student deserves a safe, welcoming learning environment where they can thrive.

People First

Relationships are at the heart of everything we do. Every student and family belongs here.

Integrity

We communicate openly, make thoughtful decisions, and keep families informed every step of the way.

Collaboration

Together, families, educators, and our community create the strongest support system for student success.

Excellence

We are committed to providing outstanding learning experiences and exceptional opportunities for every student.

Brand Voice Guidelines for Principals

DO

- Speak directly to families.
- Use "we" and "our" to foster belonging.
- Celebrate students often.
- Keep messages concise and positive.
- End every communication with appreciation and an invitation to connect.

AVOID

- Educational jargon or acronyms without explanation.
- Overly formal or bureaucratic language.

- Long blocks of text.
- Messages that focus only on rules or compliance.

Communication Best Practices

- **ParentSquare:** Keep messages concise (under 300 words), include clear calls to action, and translate communications into families' preferred languages when possible. Use photos or short videos from the principal to personalize welcome messages.
- **School Website:** Maintain a dedicated Back-to-School hub that serves as the central source for logistics, forms, and updates. Ensure all links are current and mobile-friendly.
- **Social Media:** Post consistently using authentic photos of students and staff (with appropriate permissions), celebrate learning and school culture, and respond to questions promptly. Focus on storytelling that highlights the district's strengths and values.

By using this toolkit consistently across all schools, principals can create a unified OCPS experience while still showcasing the unique culture and strengths of their individual school communities.