



OPPORTUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL

240 West 113th Street
New York, NY 10026

Telephone: 212-866-6137
Fax: 212-665-7436
www.ocsny.org

Veronica Deshazor
Dean of All Students

Linda Willis
Assistant to the Dean

Dear Parents,

On behalf of the staff at Opportunity Charter School, I am happy to welcome you to the 2022-23 school year! We are looking forward to a productive and successful year for our students and are excited to be starting a new year, with new opportunities as we come out of this global pandemic. Below are some highlights to review regarding some of Opportunity Charter School's policies and procedures to review with your child so that they are best prepared for the upcoming school year.

Uniforms

Opportunity Charter School is a uniform school. OCS believes there are numerous benefits to wearing uniforms, such as improved behavior, increased security, and focusing on academics rather than apparel. Students who abuse the uniform policy will be held accountable, and parents/guardians may be required to come to the school to bring in appropriate attire and/or attend a meeting. We do not allow hats, beads, gang flags, du-rags, low-hanging pants, see-through clothing, exposed undergarments or mid-drifts, jeans, leggings or **non-OCS colored** sweaters, sweatpants or sweatshirts and slippers/Crocs. Additionally, students may not be allowed to participate in any school-related enrichment activities if they are not in uniform during the school day.

The Middle School Uniform consists of Black or Khaki colored pants or skirts (Skirts must be Knee length or longer) and Burgundy collared shirts with OCS Logo. The Middle School Gym Uniform is Gray or Burgundy sweatpants and sweatshirt, both with OCS logo. The High School Uniform consists of Black, White, or Gray collared shirts with the OCS Logo (is optional) and black pants or skirts (Skirts can be no shorter than 2 inches above the knee). Links can be found on the OCS website to purchase appropriate OCS apparel.

****If there is a dress-down day for any reason; we will notify you before the dress-down day. If your child tells you there is a dress-down day and you have not received written notice of this event, please clarify with a school staff member before sending your child to school out of uniform.**

Tardiness

First period classes start at 8:00 am each day. Students should be arriving to school prior to morning entry which starts at 7:55am. If you know your child is going to be late, please notify the main office at 212-866-6137. Lateness deemed excusable due to extenuating circumstances will be excused. Tardiness due to a verified family emergency or other circumstance, deemed acceptable will be excused with documentation. Students who have not been excused are expected to serve detention/accountability and may lose school incentive or privileges. Parents will be notified of accountability once assigned.

Lunch Policy

Middle School students do not go off-campus for lunch. Instead, students have a designated time and location for eating inside the building. Students are not allowed to eat their lunch or any food inside the classroom while class is in session. All food is to be discarded or stored in backpacks before class resumes.

Students in the 11th and 12th grades, and Honor students in 9th and 10th grade are permitted to leave the building for lunch, under the condition that they meet all school expectations for the day (i.e are in full uniform and have not received any write ups). Students who are consistently not in uniform, have received an excessive

amount of write ups or who return late from lunch three (3) times will have their lunch privileges revoked for the semester.

Cell Phone Policy

Per school policy, Opportunity Charter School is a No Cell-Phone environment. Use of cell phones/tablets and other non-school related electronics are not permitted during class time. To assist with making our school a phone-free space to improve teaching and learning this upcoming school year we will be using a **new** system called [Yondr](#). Yondr has been implemented in over 1,000 schools across 21 countries to facilitate an engaged learning environment.

We believe that phones have great utility. We have also found that learning improves drastically and peer conflict decreases when students are fully engaged with their teachers and classmates.

The Yondr Program utilizes a simple, secure pouch that stores a phone. Every student will secure their phone in a personally assigned Yondr pouch when they arrive at school. Students will maintain possession of their phones and will not use them until their pouches are opened at the end of the school day. Students are required to bring their Yondr pouch to and from school each day and are responsible for their pouch at all times.

Yondr recently surveyed over 900 school partners to measure the effects of creating phone-free educational environments. These schools achieved notable progress in multiple areas:

- **65% of schools saw an improvement in academic performance**
- **74% of schools saw an improvement in student behavior**
- **83% of schools saw an improvement in student engagement in the classroom**

If there is an emergency during the school day and you need to get incontact with your child, please reach out to the main office (212-866-6137), your child's principal, or the Dean. In an effort to best serve your child, we appreciate your full support in adoption of the Yondr Program at our school.

If you have any questions about the rules and expectations for this upcoming school year, please feel free to contact me or discuss them with your child's Principal. All school staff contact information can be found in the directory on the school website, [OCSNY.org](#). It is very important that you and your child are fully informed regarding standards related to appropriate behavior for a safe and productive school year. Please feel free to review the OCS Parent and Student Handbooks which can be accessed on our website. We look forward to collaborating with you this school year!

Thank you,



Veronica DeShazor
Dean Of All Students
347-867-5638
Veronica.Deshazor@ocsny.org



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How Yondr Works



POUCH

As a student enters school, they place their phone in their assigned Yondr pouch.



SECURE

The pouch is closed and secured. Each student keeps their pouch throughout the day.



EXIT

When leaving school, the student taps their pouch to an unlocking base to release their phone.

Frequently Asked Questions

What if I want to reach my child during the school day?

We want our students to be engaged in their learning. If you need to contact your child during the school day, contact the main office at 212-866-6137

What if there is a school emergency?

In case of a school emergency, we direct our students to safety first, following our school emergency preparedness protocol.

Will my student's phone be safe?

Students are in possession of their phone - in their Yondr pouch - for the entire school day. We will advise students to store the pouch in their backpacks or lockers where it is completely safe.

What if the Yondr pouch gets damaged* or a student is caught on their phone?

The Yondr pouch is property of Opportunity Charter School. If a student damages their Pouch or is caught on their phone, Administration will collect the phone/Pouch and call home and further disciplinary action may follow (case by case)

*Note: Damage consists of any signs that the physical integrity of the pouch has been compromised, whether intentional or unintentional, as determined by the school or Yondr staff.