



Orange Preparatory Academy of Inquiry and Innovation

400 Central Avenue, Orange, NJ 07050

Carrie Halstead, Principal



Samantha Fossella, Assistant Principal

Tarell Harp, Dean of Students

Farjana Rahman, Assistant Principal

August 22, 2025

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers,

We are excited for the start of the 2025-2026 school year here at Orange Preparatory Academy of Inquiry and Innovation! Not only are we the 8th-grade academy for the Orange Township Public Schools but we are also one of the award-winning Verizon Innovative Learning Schools. We are partners, jointly dedicated to helping your child grow socially, emotionally, and intellectually.

NEW DISTRICT MANTRA

“ONE DISTRICT...ONE MISSION...OPTIMAL SUCCESS”

We are many schools, one community.

Bound by a shared purpose and driven by a collective vision.

Every student and staff member matters.

Every voice counts.

Everyday is an opportunity to grow, lead, and inspire.

With unity at our foundation and excellence as our goal,

WE rise together.

One District. One Vision. One Future.

Dr. Gerald Fitzhugh, II, Superintendent of Schools

August 2025

Please be reminded that students report for the first day of school on Friday, September 5, 2025. This school year will be filled with continued opportunities to stretch your child's practice. It is going to be a great school year for not only the school-level staff but for each of you as well.

MORNING ROUTINE FOR STUDENTS:

- All 8th Grade Students will enter through the doors on the left side of the building (auditorium lobby entrance).
- All students are required to wear the district-approved uniform as outlined below under the “Student Attire” section of this letter.
- All students are required to place their cell phones in the Yondr pouch and lock the pouch. They will carry the pouch with them throughout the day and will unlock the pouch at dismissing, leaving the pouch and taking their cell phones home with them each day.
- Breakfast will begin each day at 7:40 am. (No student will be allowed in the building before 7:40 am each day).
- Students must arrive at school by no later than 8:20 a.m. Instruction begins promptly at 8:25 am each day. Attendance is vital to instructional support for our students. We need our students on time and present each day.

DISMISSAL:

- All students are dismissed at 2:50 p.m.
- Students will be asked to leave the premises and the surrounding area of the school immediately to make their way home. At no time will students be permitted to hang out on the corner of Lincoln and Central Avenues.

STUDENT ATTIRE:

Students should dress appropriately for a school setting. Sneakers must always be worn for physical education classes. Uniforms should be worn daily. Orange Preparatory Academy Uniform Policy is as follows:

- Gray, Burgundy, or White Polo shirt. All shirts must have a collar.
- Black Pants and/or knee-length Skirts, Slacks, Skorts. No jean or legging material will be allowed.
- Gray, Burgundy, or Black Sweater Vest or Cardigan may be worn.
- Students must change into their gym uniforms each day for gym. Gym uniforms are not permitted to be worn to school or during the school day. Gym uniforms are Gray or Burgundy tee-shirt and shorts or sweatpants.
- Sneakers or closed in shoes. Crocs and Ugg Slippers are not permitted.

IDENTIFICATION CARDS (ID's) AND SCHEDULES:

We held an ID Kiosk on Monday, August 18 – Wednesday, August 20, 2025, from 9 am to 2:00 pm. 296 students came in and took their ID pictures and these students will receive their student ID by the end of the first full week of school. Once students receive their ID card, they are required to scan their ID each morning upon entry into the building. All students will be issued their schedules on the first day of school, September 5, 2025.

CLASSROOM SUPPLIES:

For information regarding classroom supplies, please visit www.orange.k12.nj.us and select Our District and then your child's school for a comprehensive review.

STUDENT ABSENCES:

Parents are responsible for reporting daily absences to Mrs. Theresa McNeill, Administrative Assistant to the Principal, at 973-677-4135 ext. 31700. The district policy indicates that a student must be in attendance for 163 or more school days in order to be considered to have successfully completed the instructional program requirements of the grade/course to which he/she is assigned.

CHROMEBOOKS:

Students are to bring their district-issued Chromebook to school on a daily basis; fully charged. Students, whose parents attended the Parent Orientation and Rollout on August 5, 2025 and completed all required paperwork, will receive their new devices on Friday, September 5, 2025 in their Student Success Period. Students whose parents did not attend the orientation will receive their paperwork on Friday, September 5, 2025. Once the completed paperwork is submitted, a chromebook will be issued to the student.

CLUBS/ORGANIZATIONS/PROGRAMS

All afterschool clubs and organizations as well as the extended day academic program will begin on September 16, 2025. The list of those clubs and organizations is below. The Saturday academic program will begin on September 20, 2025. Forms will be sent home the first week of school for students to register for the club/organization of their choice. In addition, parents can also enroll your child in our extended day program and/or Saturday program. Based on data collected from your child's performance in 7th grade as well as their results of this year's diagnostic assessment, students may be placed in these programs for extra support. Parents of these students will be notified in advance by letter from the principal.

Clubs and Organizations	
Chorus	Model UN
Concert Band	Robotics
Cyber Café	Sewing
Dance	Student Council
Drama	Student Tech Team
Female Support	Tennis, Basketball, Soccer, and Volleyball
Jr. Debate	Visual Media/News Show
Male Support	Extend Day (Tues./Wed./Thurs.) & Saturday Academic

COMMUNICATION:

- All teachers and staff will be connected to our students and families using “Parent Square” and “Google Classroom”. Please ensure you have connected with your child’s classroom teacher on this platform and check the daily messages from all of your child’s teachers.
- E-mail & phone blasts will also be used to communicate with families. Please ensure you have updated your contact information in Genesis. It is imperative that all school personnel have the most updated information for your household.
- Parent Portal will be the means of accessing all your student’s important information, his/her progress/grades, missing assignments, and other concerns that might impact your student’s performance or well-being. If you have not done so, please ensure that you sign up for the parent portal.
- Please listen to phone blasts sent by the school and/or District. They include important information and guidance.
- If you have not signed up for the Orange App, you can download it on your Android or Apple iPhone.
- The School District’s social media platforms are a great source for posting updates & important information as well as celebrating and sharing photos of our fun activities. You can also follow our school on the following social media platform below:
 - **X formerly known as Twitter:** Orange Public School District and OrangePrep
 - **Instagram:** Orange Public School District and OrangePrepAcademy
 - **Facebook:** Orange Public School District and Orange Preparatory Academy

We are looking forward to a happy, healthy, and productive school year!

Educationally yours,

Carrie J. Halstead

Carrie J. Halstead,
Principal