

The Parent "O"bserver

10/2/26 -- Edition 10, Volume 4

New Items Added to the Newsletter that are Important

Vision and Hearing Screening Notice

In accordance with Virginia law, Kindergarten and 3rd grade students will participate in routine vision and hearing screenings during the school year. Virginia requires schools to conduct vision and hearing screenings for students in Kindergarten and in Grade 2 or 3. Screenings will begin **October 5** and will continue until all eligible students have been screened. If you do not wish for your child to participate, please contact the school nurse, **Mrs. Terman**, before the screening date. Parents/guardians will be notified if screening results indicate that further evaluation may be needed.

Health Conditions and Medications

If your child has a medical condition such as asthma, severe allergies, seizures, diabetes, or another health concern that may require emergency medication at school, it is highly recommended that a physician-signed healthcare plan and any necessary medications (such as an inhaler or EpiPen) be provided to the school clinic. Please review your child's health information in ParentVUE and update it as needed. Required forms can be found on the PWCS Student Health Services website at https://www.pwcs.edu/support_services/student_health/index under the **"Medications at School"** tab. If you need assistance or have any questions, please contact our school nurse, Mrs. Terman.

Absence Related to Illness

When you are reporting absence due to illness, please be specific about symptoms such as fever, nausea, vomiting, sore throat, and/or cough. If your student has a diagnosis from a healthcare provider, please include that information. Please refer to the link below to learn more about when to keep your child home due to illness.

[When to Stay Home: A Guide to Student Illness](#)

Attendance Statement

Every Day Counts!

Attendance matters at every grade level. When children attend school regularly, they have more opportunities to build strong foundational skills, develop meaningful relationships with their teachers and classmates, and gain confidence in their learning. Consistent attendance also helps children feel connected to their school community and fosters a positive attitude toward education.

The habits children develop in elementary school often stay with them throughout their lives.

Regular attendance teaches responsibility, perseverance, and the importance of showing up prepared to learn each day. These valuable habits can later support success in middle school, high school, college, and future careers.

We understand that absences sometimes cannot be avoided. When your child is absent, it is important to communicate with the school and your child's teacher as soon as possible. This helps us support your child and keep them connected to their learning.

It is also important to remember that an absence is an absence, whether it is excused or unexcused. Whenever a child misses school, they miss valuable classroom instruction, learning experiences, discussions, and opportunities to connect with their peers and teachers. Every school day provides important learning that contributes to your child's growth and success.

By working together to prioritize attendance, we can help every child build the skills, habits, and confidence they need to thrive both in school and beyond.

Cell Phone Policy

Elementary and Combination (K-8 and Traditional) School Grade Students

All cell phones and personal electronic communication devices must be turned off and stored away and may not be used at any time within the school building or on school grounds or during any instructional periods, regardless of location, including field trips.

Dual-purpose watches may be worn at school, but wireless/cellular features must be turned off during the school day (e.g., must be placed in airplane mode).

Students are permitted to use their cell phones and personal electronic communication devices(s) while on school buses, while in parent/guardian vehicles, and before they enter or after they exit school grounds.

Cell phones and wireless communication devices may be used on school buses provided the device does not distract the driver, compromise safety, or violate the Prohibited Content and Use for All Students provisions detailed below.

For more information on this topic, please visit the following link:

https://www.pwcs.edu/parents/wireless_device_use/index

New SOL Scores

This year the SOL scores have been adjusted and raised by the Virginia Department of Education. Previously, the passing score was 400.

Please see the picture below to review the new scores.

Reading Assessment Cut Scores: 2026 – 2027

Grade Level	Fail/Below Basic	Fail/Basic	Pass/Approaching	Pass/Proficient	Pass/Advanced
Grade 3	0-408	409-417	418* -443	444-501	502-600
Grade 4	0-414	415-425	426* -450	451-513	514-600
Grade 5	0-401	402-413	414* -445	446-509	510-600

Math Assessment Cut Scores: 2026 – 2027

Grade Level	Fail/Below Basic	Fail/Basic	Pass/Approaching	Pass/Proficient	Pass/Advanced
Grade 3	0-375	376-409	410* -442	443-520	521-600
Grade 4	0-383	384-410	411* -444	445-517	518-600
Grade 5	0-378	379-410	411* -444	445-510	511-600

Note: Scale score in **bold with asterisks(*)** indicates the minimum score considered "passing" in the 2026-2027 school year.

ParentVue and EZ A2B Bus App Changes Coming

Effective June 30, 2026, two apps commonly used by PWCS families—ParentVUE and the EZ A2B bus tracking app—are being updated by their respective vendors. The current versions of both apps will no longer work after June 30.

ParentVUE

ParentVUE is transitioning to a new version of its app. Families should download the version labeled "ParentVUE (New)" in the Apple App Store or Google Play Store. You can also [download directly here](#).

EZArrival

The EZ A2B bus tracking app has been renamed EZArrival. Families should search for "EZArrival" in the Apple App Store or Google Play Store, or [download it directly here](#).

To be prepared for summer school and/or the 2026-27 school year, families are encouraged to download both new apps as soon as possible to ensure uninterrupted access to grades, attendance, and transportation information.

Items that Will Always be Relevant for Parents to Review

SchoolQuality Profile (AKA: SOL Results)

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) released the annual Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) test results and updated the [School Quality Profile](#). We are well on our way to fully recovering from the pandemic. Occoquan has scored some of the highest scores in Reading and Math. Our African-American scores are what I am most proud of, as we have now surpassed the achievement gap in this category. PWCS will work diligently to support continued academic progress, acceleration, and recovery.

Dismissal Times

Students are no longer allowed to be dismissed from the office between the times of 3:30 and 4:00 due to disruptions to the dismissal process. If you need to pick your child up early, you will need to do so before 3:30. Otherwise, you will need to wait until 4:10 to come into the office to pick them up.

Late Bus Information

Transportation's Late Bus Notification web page is now available for parents and schools. The page will list buses that will be late 15 minutes or more to start their run. Please save the link below to review it:

https://www.pwcs.edu/departments/transportation/bus_delays

Bus App

There will be a new bus tracking app used this school year for you to be able to track your child's bus more reliably. Information about EZ A2B can be found on the [EZ A2B webpage](#).

Free Mental Health Care

PWCS recognizes that this time of year can be particularly challenging for many students. To ensure that every student has access to the support they need, we would like to remind parents that free mental health telehealth services are available to all PWCS students through Hazel Health – at no cost. Together, we can make a significant difference in the mental well-being of our students now and beyond.

Visit the [PWCS Hazel Health webpage](#) for more information.

Continuous Improvement Plan

Our ambitious Continuous Improvement Plan ensures we are on the right track to navigate the journey back to pre-pandemic levels by investing in our instructional core, maintaining high expectations to ensure academic excellence, and strengthening infrastructures along the way toward greater equitable and accessible academic achievement for all students.

Please click the link below to take a look at the plan in what will be some of its final stages.



**Occoquan Elementary - Entire Plan (w_ Notes & Addendums)
(1).pdf**

Download
1.0 MB

site plan

SCALE 1" = 80'

Summary:

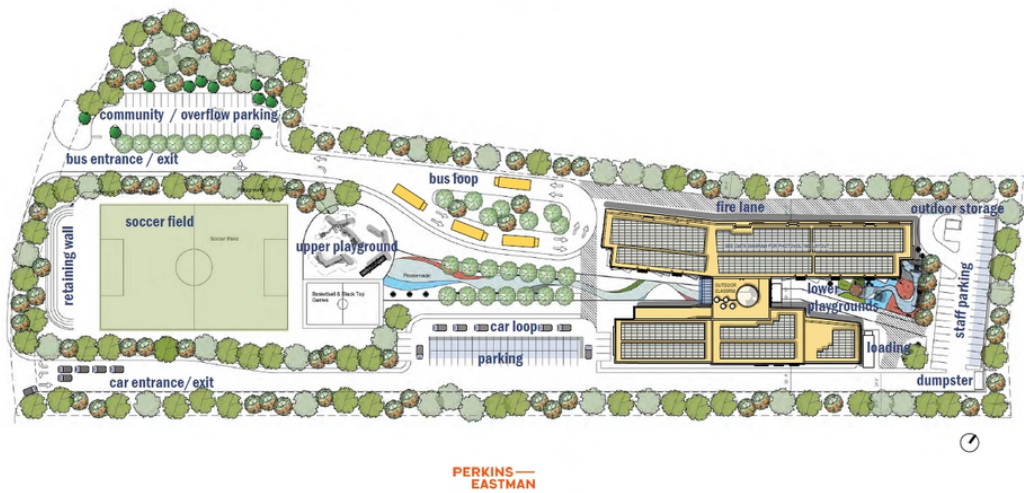
The Building is situated at the far East of the site with the front entrance lobby leading to the heart of the school. In the heart, there is a circular monumental stair with an integrated indoor slide that connects the first two levels. With the Gymnasium and Cafeteria on the first floor and the Media Center on the second floor, all of these spaces are connected by the heart of the school. An academic wing to the north houses most all of the classrooms, except for music and strings which is located across from the media center. The Academic wing is 3 stories tall, while the other portions of the building are 2 stories tall.

There is a secured playground in the East courtyard for Kindergarten. There are spaces for other playgrounds around the site, including in the front closer to the academic side of the building. There will be landscape and playgrounds and athletic fields accessed by the public close to Occoquan Road.

The traffic flow and drop off is controlled by separating the bus loop (on the North) and car loop (on the south) of the campus. There is a walkway in the center of the site to provide the opportunity to connect the front playgrounds and fields to the school in a playful manner.

Building Data:

2/3 stories
123,770 actual gsf



PERKINS —
EASTMAN

Title I Information

Key information for Title I

- Please be sure to check out the Occoquan school compact for information about Title I (it is the document directly above), staff agreements, student agreements, and parent agreements, as well as our goals for the year in reading and math.
- Reading support is provided through small-group instruction and before and after-school tutoring.
- Math support is provided through small-group instruction, co-teaching lessons with the classroom teacher, before and after-school tutoring, and one-on-one individual support for math intervention.
- Thank you for supporting our awesome Occoquan students!

PARENTAL RIGHT TO INFORMATION ABOUT TEACHERS:

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act, most recently reauthorized as the Every Student Succeeds Act, states that parents in Title I schools have the right to request certain information about their child's teachers. The information that you have a right to request about your child's teacher is:

- Whether the teacher has met state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subjects the teacher is teaching.
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which state qualification or licensing has been waived.
- The baccalaureate degree major of certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.
- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

At Occoquan ES, we are extremely proud of our teachers and paraprofessionals, and are happy to provide you with any of the information above pertaining to your child's teacher(s). If you have such a request, please call the school at 703.494.2195 and ask for the information you are interested in.

Parental Opt Out of Assessments

Parental Notification of Assessment Opt Out Policies under The Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 According to the Virginia Department of Education, "All students in tested grade levels and courses are expected to participate in Virginia's assessment program, unless specifically exempted by state or federal law or by Board of Education regulations." On December 10, 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA) was signed into law. Section 1112(e)(2) of ESSA states that parents of students in Title I schools have a right to know about state or division policies regarding student participation in any assessments mandated by ESSA, including any policy, procedure, or parental right to opt students out of such assessments. The Commonwealth of Virginia does not currently have an Opt Out policy for SOL assessments. However, Section 22.1-253.13:3.Cof the Code of Virginia states that, "The Board of Education shall not include in its calculation of the passage rate of a Standards of Learning assessment for the purposes of state accountability any student whose parent has decided to not have his child take such Standards of Learning assessment, unless such exclusions would result in the school's not meeting any required state or federal participation rate." Prince William County Public Schools regulations state that, if a parent or guardian decides to not have a student take a state or local assessment, then the person making the request should be informed about the academic consequences that decision could have on the student.

If you would like to receive more information about this topic, please contact the principal.



Grade Level Newsletters

Grade Level Newsletters

Please click on the grade level below that your child(ren) is in order to read their specific information from their teachers.

Grade Levels update their information once a month.

[Kindergarten](#)

[1st Grade](#)

[2nd Grade](#)

[3rd Grade](#)

[4th Grade](#)

[5th Grade](#)

[Gifted](#)

[The En"CORNER"](#)

[EL Department](#)

[Special Education Department](#)

[Music Club Page](#)

[Strings](#)

[Important Event Dates](#)

Event Information

Title 1 Family Night

When?

Wednesday, Oct 7, 2026, 06:00 PM

Event Information

NO SCHOOL--Teacher's Professional Development Day

When?

Monday, Oct 12, 2026, 09:00 AM

Event Information

PTO/Advisory

[Join with Google Meet](#)

Meeting link

meet.google.com/gfb-gpss-ivf

Join by phone

(US) [+1 361-360-8283](tel:+13613608283)

PIN: 480920922

[More phone numbers](#)

When

Thursday Oct 15, 2026 · 7pm – 8pm (Eastern Time - New York)

When?

Thursday, Oct 15, 2026, 07:00 PM



Occoquan Elementary School

Where Everybody Is Somebody
A PWCS "School of Excellence"

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Facebook: www.facebook.com/OccoquanElementary

Twitter: [@occoquanes](https://twitter.com/occoquanes)



Michael Lint

Michael is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters