

The Parent "O"bserver

12/2/22 -- Edition 6, Volume 9 -- #o_braves @Occoquanes

Multicultural Night WAS AWESOME!!!!

Major Attendance Concern

This is an EXTREMELY serious and concerning issue that is happening in the school here (and across the county) that I need to address with everyone, as this is going to be a change in the way things are done on our end, as we continue to work our way back to normal operations with absences before the pandemic hit. I would like to go over these with you now, as this is going to start impacting you and your children immediately.

Before the Pandemic hit, we had a percentage of 5% of our students who were considered to be a Chronic Absentee Concern. What this means is that this student has missed 10% or more of the school days that they have been enrolled in the school. So, if we have 184 days in a school year, and you missed 19 school days, then you would be a student we would consider to be a Chronic Absentee Concern, as you now have missed 10.3% of all school days.

Last year, we had a Chronic Absentee rate of 13%, which is up 8 points before the Pandemic. However, so far this school year we have a Chronic Absentee rate of 22%, which is up 17 points from before the pandemic. This means that almost a quarter of our students have missed 10% of the school year. This is astonishingly high for a school to have, but if they start attending school each and every day, this number can be reduced.

The state has been enforcing this more strictly on the schools to try to get this fixed and rectified, so we are going to be starting with trying to get us back on track with this now so that we can get this number lower by the time we get to the end of the school year.

So, unless your child is running a fever, they should be in school. If your child has a doctor's appointment, then they should be attending school either in the morning or afternoon when they do not have their doctor's appointment. Now, I know there will be some exceptions to this, as is any case, but we really need to get back to normal and get our students back into the school on an everyday basis. Otherwise, we have no other choice but to involve the Attendance Officer as the state has

mandated us to do so.

Another big reason why we have so many students with this Chronic Absentee Concern is that students and their families have been traveling back to their homeland or going on vacation. I will no longer be marking these trips as an excused absence unless you have to go back to your country for an immediate family member who has passed or is ill (and we will need verification of this as well). We need the families to please plan your trips accordingly, and to please try to plan any trip around the days the students are not going to be in school and limit the number of days they will be out of the building to a minimum. Otherwise, we have no other choice but to involve the Attendance Officer as the state has mandated us to do so.

Now, I know this is a lot of information, and it is not the happy news we all want to hear, but this is something that we all NEED to hear. Please work with me on this so that we can try to reduce this number and ensure that we will continue to be recognized as a high-performing school not only in the county, but also in the state. Let's not allow the data point of Chronic Absentee Rates be the only reason we are unable to celebrate the students' academic success with these awards and recognitions.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Attendance (Regulation 724-1)

Should a student miss too many days of school, there WILL be an attendance meeting. During this meeting, it may be required that if your child continues to miss school, the parent may need to provide a **doctor's note** every time they are absent, not just a parent note or a phone call.

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Title I Information



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

Picture Retake Day

When

Wednesday, Dec. 14th, 9-11 am

Where

12915 Occoquan Road Woodbridge, VA

Winter Strings and Chorus Concert

When

Thursday, Dec. 15th, 6-7:30pm

Where

12915 Occoquan Road Woodbridge, VA

NO SCHOOL FOR WINTER BREAK-- December 19 through January 2

When

Monday, Dec. 19th, 8am to Monday, Jan. 2nd
2023 at 4:30pm

Where

This is an online event.

First Day Back to School

When

Tuesday, Jan. 3rd 2023 at 9am

Where


12915 Occoquan Road Woodbridge, VA




Occoquan Elementary School


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Where Everybody Is Somebody
A PWCS "School of Excellence"

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