

River Oaks Elementary School Dolphin Gazette

September 2024



Dear River Oaks Families,

We have completed the first two- weeks of school for the 2024-2025 school year. Our students are excited and engaged in learning. River Oaks theme for the 2024-2025 school year is “River Oaks: Learning Together, Growing Together”. When you learn together, your grow together, as it allows and requires you to think in different ways and consider different perspectives. This school year as we each have our own learnings and findings, but we will also propel each other to the next level.

Back to School Night (updated times)

Back to School Night will be on Thursday, September 26, 2024 from 5:00pm-6:45pm. There will be two sessions offered for parents that have multiple children in different grades and/or parents who get off of work later. Both sessions will offer the exact same information. The first session will be from 5:00pm - 5:45pm and the second session will be from 6:00pm-6:45pm. Families please enter through the main door (door 1). Please do not park in the bus loop.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

River Oaks is a PBIS school. Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is an evidence-based, tiered framework for supporting students’ behavioral, academic, social-emotional, and mental health. It is a way to create positive, predictable, equitable and safe learning environments where everyone thrives. PBIS shifts the major focus from reactive approaches to more preventative measures that provide **CORE (TIER ONE)**, **TARGETED (TIER TWO)**, and **INTENSIVE (TIER THREE)** supports that encourage positive social, emotional, and behavioral growth in all students.

Looking for Parent Volunteers to be a Part of School Committees

If you are interested in being a part of the Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) Team and/or the School Advisory Council, please send Dr. Gibson (gibsonnl@pwcs.edu) an email by September 16, 2024.

- The Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) Team- a team that creates, monitors, and revises (as needed) a plan that is aligned with PWCS strategic priorities that focuses on continued growth in academic performance for all students, positive culture and climate, and family engagement. The CIP team meets every 1st Wednesday of each month at 4:15pm at River Oaks.
- The purpose of the School Advisory Council is:
 - represent and assess the needs of the school community and staff;
 - help develop the School Strategic Plan;
 - act as an advisor to the school administration on the budget, and on the implementation, evaluation and modifications of the School Strategic Plan;
 - identify concerns, obtain community and staff feedback, and support the educational system.
 - will reflect equity and diversity in accordance with the School Division Strategic Plan.

The Local School advisory will meet once a month (day TBD) at 5:30pm via Zoom.

Attendance Matters: Every Student, Every Day

Having students in school every day is very important, but we know that things happen such as students getting sick, family emergencies, etc. Please be sure to report the reason of the student’s absence to the school. If your child is ever absent from school, please report the absence by doing any of the following:

- ParentVue, for day of and future absences- can only put in one absence at a time through ParentVue

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- Provide Doctor's note and/or Parent letter- can either bring to the front office or email Ms. Santos (santcm1@pwcs.edu) and Ms. Parada (paradaol@pwcs.edu)
- Call the front office at 703-441-0050

Absences must be reported within 5 days of the student's return to school.

PWCS Attendance Policies and Regulations

Types of Excused Absences:

- personal illness of the student;
- death in the student's immediate family or household;
- required court appearance; and
- preapproved absence for certain reasons pertaining to a parent's military deployment

Types of Unexcused Absences:

- missing a ride, or a bus, or car trouble;
- failure to produce an appropriate explanation or requested documentation for an absence; and
- traveling (within the country or out of the country)

Truancy vs. Chronic Absenteeism

Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10% or more (based on the 180-day school year that means approximately 18 days per year 2 to 3 days pr month) of the academic school year for any reason, including excused absences, unexcused absences, and suspensions.

Truancy is the act of accruing one or more unexcused absences.

Attendance Letters

Prince William County Public Schools (PWCS) follows the provisions of Virginia law [regarding compulsory attendance for all school-aged students and addressing chronic absenteeism](#). PWCS is committed to monitoring student attendance data and communicating with families.

PWCS communicates with families regarding attendance through daily attendance notifications for unverified absences and letters that are generated based on student attendance records.

Attendance letters that are automatically generated are sent to notify parents of:

- Truancy status when students accrue three or more unexcused absences.
- Excessive excused absences.
- Chronic absentee status when students are absent 10% of their current enrollment.

The goal of attendance letters is to inform parents of student attendance concerns, educate them on the importance of attendance, and encourage communication between families and the school. PWCS has many resources available for students and families needing support with attendance-related matters.

Missed instruction, regardless of the reason, can have significant academic consequences. Therefore, the broader emphasis is on improving attendance for every student.

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Here Comes the Bus App



Wondering where the bus is? Now you will know. This app has the most accurate and updated location of buses.

- See real-time map locations for your student's buses.
- Get push-notifications when the bus gets close by.
- Get everyone to the stop at the right time, every time.

How to Sign Up for Here Comes the Bus

1. Go to the [Here Comes the Bus website](https://herecomesthebus.com/) - <https://herecomesthebus.com/>
2. Click **Log In** (you can change the language to Spanish or French by clicking the links at top of the website)
3. Click the **Sign Up Today** button
4. Select the **I have the code** option
5. When creating a new account, use School Code **76348** on the User Profile screen
6. Under "My Students," click "Add." Enter your child's last name and student ID number
7. Once you confirm your information, you're ready to begin using Here Comes the Bus!

Download the Here Comes The Bus mobile app through Apple App Store or Google Play.

If you have questions or want to leave feedback about this service? Please contact hctb@pwcs.edu.

Upcoming Events/Dates to Remember:

- Tues., Sept. 3rd
 - Lockdown Drill
 - Kindergarten Vision Screening
- Sept. 15th - Oct. 15th - Hispanic Heritage Month
- Mon., Sept. 16th - PBIS Celebration Kick-off
- Thurs., Sept. 19th - PTO Meeting @6:00pm. This is an in-person meeting. All families please enter through door 9.
- Mon., Sept. 23rd - Tues., Sept. 24th - Vision and Hearing Screening for Students in Kindergarten and 3rd grades
- Thurs., Sept. 26th - Back to School Night 5:00pm-6:45pm. Families please enter through the main entrance (door 1).
- Wed., Oct. 2nd - School Custodian Appreciation Day
- Thurs., Oct. 3rd - Schools and Offices Closed

PTO Website and Email

To keep up to date with what is going on with River Oaks PTO or volunteer opportunities please be sure to visit their website at <https://roespto.ptboard.com/>. If you want to contact the PTO you may contact them via email at riveroakselementarypto@gmail.com. The PTO will have a table at Back to School Night on Thurs., Sept. 26, 2024 in the main hallway for membership and volunteers to be elected officers.

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This Christmas Talent Competition

This Christmas Talent Competition will be held at Forest Park High School, on November 2, 2024 from 5pm-8pm. This show is an opportunity for Prince William County students, staff, and parents to come out and show their talent, while having a chance to win some amazing prizes, they are also giving back to families in need, because through proceeds from the show we are able to purchase Christmas gifts for underprivileged children! How amazing is that!

Students, staff, and parents can audition, as there is no age requirement. The talent doesn't have to be a Christmas rendition, must be age appropriate, and no profanity or vulgar language, no obscene gestures, and talent must be age appropriate. This show is hosted by non-profit 501 (c)(3), PowerMax Company. We hope that your students will join us! Please see the attached flyer for more specific information.

Prohibited Parking

This is just a friendly that parking is prohibited in the reserved spaces of the Community Club House. If you park there, then they will tow your vehicle. That area is not the school's property, and no one can park in the reserved spots because that is for their employees. There is parking in the Community Club House that is open to the public and not reserved spaces. Also, please do not park in homeowner's driveways or in front of their driveways. Thank you for your cooperation.

Safety First

Safety is our number one priority. Please remember the following for entry into the building, arrival, and dismissal.

- Photo ID (government issued) must be presented to enter the building and dismissal of students. The physical photo ID must be presented to staff and cannot be accepted on a cell phone.
- No cars are permitted in the bus loop from 8:00am-9:00am and from 3:00pm-4:00pm. We have late buses and cars cannot be in the bus loop while students are boarding or exiting the bus. Parents should not pass any buses that have red lights flashing.
- We know that everyone wants to drop off or pick-up students but please slowdown in the school area and do not go around other vehicles. Thank you for your understanding and patience.
- Parents are strongly encouraged to utilize the established Kiss and Ride line for student drop-off and pick-up. By doing so, we can maintain a smooth flow of traffic and minimize risks.
- While we understand that some parents may choose to use the community association lot, please be aware that doing so is at your own risk. If you decide to use this lot, please remember to yield to pedestrians.
- Parking in areas marked as fire lanes or no parking zones poses serious safety risks. Violators may be ticketed by law enforcement.
- We kindly request that parents refrain from parking or stopping vehicles in the cul-de-sac area. Such practices lead to additional traffic congestion and make it challenging for school buses to enter and exit the school premises.
- Do not make illegal u-turns in the middle of the streets

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Transportation Changes

PWCS has made changes to their policy of when parents/guardians need to inform the school of any student transportation changes. Parents/guardians must call the front office at 703-441-0050 by 2:00pm to make transportation changes. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Communication

Effective communication is important for the home-school connection. When contacting a staff member please be aware that staff have 24 - 48 hours (Mon.- Fri.) to respond to all messages (phone, School Status, email). If there is an emergency, please contact the front office. During the school day staff members are engaged with students and are not always accessible to their emails or phone.

Informational Items:

- School Hours – 8:45AM-3:25 PM. Tardy Bell rings at 8:45AM.
- Office Hours- 8:00AM- 4:00PM.
- Doors open for student entry at 8:30am, so please do not drop off your children before 8:30AM.
- A parent or guardian must accompany and sign in children arriving at school after 8:45AM.
- **If you need to pick up your children during school hours, you must present a Government Issued Photo Identification Card and sign them out from the office.** The office staff will call for the children to meet you in the office after your arrival and check out. The purpose of this procedure is to reduce disruptions to classroom instruction, as well as for safety reasons. All dismissal changes must be made in writing before 2:00PM. If you are picking up students for early dismissal, you must pick them up by 2:30PM. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Warm regards,

Dr. Gibson
Principal

Mrs. Herrera
Assistant Principal

Ms. Burton
Administrative Intern