

Pocomoke Middle School
2011 – 2012

School Theme
RESPECT + RESPONSIBILITY =
POCOMOKE PRIDE!

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Principal's e-mail:
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Mrs. Caroline H. Bloxom, Principal
Mr. Bryan D. Perry, Assistant Principal
Mrs. Jane P. Chisholm,
Extended School Administrator
Mrs. Peggy Jester, PTA President

This agenda/handbook is given to all students
at the beginning of the school year
and is paid for by our PTA.

Pocomoke Middle School

PMS Featured on NBC Today Show!

PMS is fully accredited by the
Middle States Association of Schools and Colleges.

ACADEMIC AWARDS

PMS has been selected as a 2011 International Model School.

PMS has received the 2011 John F. Kennedy Center for the
Performing Arts School of Excellence in Arts Education Award

PMS has been selected to appear on the U.S. Department of
Education's new website *Doing What Works*.

PMS middle level MESA team was awarded the 2010 State
Championship.

PMS has been selected as a National Reference site for Scientific
Learning Corporation.

PMS was selected as a 2008 MetLife-NASSP Breakthrough School.
Southern University of Georgia recognized PMS as a 2004 and 2005
National High Flying School.

The Maryland Association of Supervision and Curriculum
Development (MASCD) selected the PMS Pocomoke Pride
Academies as a 2003 and 2005 Program of Excellence.

PMS was selected as one of nine high achieving/high poverty middle
schools to participate in a national study in March 2002, which was
sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and conducted by the
University of Texas.

CHARACTER EDUCATION AWARDS

MSDE recognized PMS as a 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, &
2009 PBIS Exemplary School.

The Maryland Association of Supervision and Curriculum
Development (MASCD) selected PMS's Character Education Program
as a 2006 Program of Excellence.

CEP recognized PMS as a 2003 & 2006 Semi-Finalist National Schools
of Character.

The National Character Education Partnership (CEP) recognized PMS
with a 2002 & 2005 Promising Practices Citation.

The Maryland Center for Character Education recognized PMS as a 2001
Maryland Character Education School of the Year.

ENVIRONMENT AWARDS

PMS was recognized as a 2003 Governor's Green School and given
recertification in 2007 and 2011.

PMS received a 2003, 2004, & 2005 Silver Award from the Maryland
Community Forest Council and the Maryland Forest Service.

COMMUNITY AWARDS

MSDE recognized Pocomoke Middle School's Ministers Gatherings
with a 2007 Community Excellence Award.

MSDE recognized PMS and the YMCA in 2005-06 for their after-
school partnership.

School Motto

We are a school of readers and achievers!

Staff Vision

No Throw-Away Kids!

School Philosophy

Pocomoke Middle School welcomes all, embraces each, supports everyone, and hopes you find yourself better for having been here.

Mission

The Pocomoke City Public Schools, an enthusiastic rural learning partnership of parents, educators, and community agencies, empowers all students to meet rigorous academic standards and to develop into responsible, involved lifelong learners who can excel in their endeavors, contribute positively to their society, and fulfill their personal dreams.

Objectives

Objective One: All students will demonstrate improved academic performance.

Objective Two: All students will demonstrate greater respect, responsibility, and citizenship.

Objective Three: All students and staff will demonstrate frequent use and integration of technology.

Objective Four: Parents and community members will be involved in our school.

Belief Statements

We believe that...

- All children are unique and learn in different ways. Furthermore, we believe that when we find and share the ways in which students learn best, we enable them to be successful.
- The purpose of education is to assist each student to become a lifelong learner who can discover and develop his or her unique potential.
- Students learn best in a safe, nurturing environment.
- Education is the shared responsibility of the school, the governing authority, the student, the family, the government, and the community.
- Education develops understanding, tolerance, and appreciation of diversity.
- Character education promotes personal growth and civic responsibility.
- Technological proficiency is essential to students' future success.
- Extracurricular activities complement the academic program, enhance the learning process, and prepare the student for life's experiences.

SCHOOL CALENDAR 2011-2012

August 29 – First day of School
September 2 – Schools Closed; Offices Remain Open
September 5 – Schools Closed – Labor Day
October 21 – Schools Closed – MSEA Convention
November 4 – Closed for Students – Professional Day
November 23-25 – Schools Closed – Thanksgiving Break
December 22-January 2 – Schools Closed – Winter Break
January 16 – Schools Closed – Dr. M. L. King’s Birthday
January 26 – Half Day for Students
January 27 – Closed for Students – Professional Day
February 20 – Schools Closed – President’s Day
April 2 – Closed for Students – Professional Day
April 3 – Closed for Students – Prof. Day/Primary Election
April 4-9 – Schools Closed – Spring Break
May 28 – Schools Closed – Memorial Day
June 12 – Half Day for Students
June 13 – Last Half Day of School

Pocomoke Pride After School Academies

Session I: September 20 – October 27;
closed October 19 & 20
Session II: November 14 – December 15;
closed November 21, 22, 28
Session III: January 17 – March 1; closed February 23
Session IV: March 26 – May 10; closed April 26

Reports

Mid-Terms Issued: Oct. 3, Dec. 12, Mar. 5, May 14
Report Cards Issued: Nov. 11, Feb. 3, Apr. 13,
June 13 (Mailed)

Conference Nights

(PTA 5:00 p.m.; Conferences 5:30-7:30 p.m.)

Back to School Night: August 30
Conferences & Math Night: October 4
Conferences & Reading Night: December 13
Conferences & Multicultural Night: March 6
Conferences & Art Night: May 15

CALL AND ASK TO SPEAK ABOUT

During any given academic year it is only natural that certain points or questions may arise that will require clarification. Certainly, it is our desire to keep you fully informed. Therefore, the very first thing about which we wish to inform you is how to get the right person to answer your question.

School policies, procedures, and parent concerns

Mrs. Caroline Bloxom, Principal

Disciplinary action

Mr. Bryan Perry, Assistant Principal

Pocomoke Pride Academies

Mrs. Jane Chisholm, Extended School Administrator

Curriculum, testing, special education services

Ms. Faith Giddens, Curriculum Planner

Volunteers

Mrs. Sandy Buchanan, Library Media Specialist

Conferences, counseling, records

Mrs. Stephanie Covington or Mr. Mike Stone,
Guidance Counselors

Homework and class work

Your child's Teacher

Attendance issues

Mrs. Dawn Payne, Guidance Secretary

Anything to do with money

Mrs. Sandra Trader, Bookkeeper

PTA

Mrs. Peggy Jester, President

POCOMOKE MIDDLE SCHOOL POLICIES/PROCEDURES

SCHOOL HOURS

Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

ARRIVAL:

Students must be in homeroom at 8:10 a.m. No students are permitted in the building prior to 7:45 a.m. because supervision is not available. Students who arrive to school between 7:45 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. must report to the cafetorium. Students are not permitted to leave school property after arrival. **Parents are requested not to block the bus lanes between 7:45 a.m. and 8:10 a.m.**

LATE ARRIVAL:

Children arriving after 8:10 a.m. are to enter the building by the front door and report to the attendance secretary before going to class. Late arrivals will be marked in the student's planner and the student's name will be removed from the absence list. **Students must be present at least 3½ hours in order to be marked present for the school day.**

DISMISSAL:

All students will be dismissed at 3:10 p.m. Students must leave at dismissal time, unless they are remaining for an after-school activity because supervision is not available. **Parents are requested not to block the bus lanes between 2:50 p.m. and 3:30 p.m.** Students being picked up during this time should arrange to meet their parents in the side parking lot.

EARLY DISMISSAL:

Students who must leave school early need to bring a note from a parent to the office in the morning. **Parents must come into the office prior to picking up any student who is leaving early.** A sign out sheet is located in the reception office. **Students must be present at least 3½ hours in order to be marked present for the school day.**

CHANGES IN TRANSPORTATION ARRANGEMENTS:

If a change in transportation arrangements becomes necessary, **parents should send a note to school in the morning with their child.** The note should include the student's name, the bus number, and/or the name of the person they have permission to leave with. In the case of riding another bus, the address where the student should be dropped off must be given.

HOTLINE

PMS Hotline Number: 410-632-5399

Codes:

PMS General Information:	6625
PMS Grade Four:	6618
PMS Grade Five:	6619
PMS Grade Six:	6620
PMS Grade Seven:	6621
PMS Grade Eight:	6622
PMS Specials 6/7/8:	6638
County General Information:	6629
County Closings/Delays	6600

LATE OPENING/EARLY CLOSING:

School closing or late opening because of inclement weather will be phone messaged to participating families and announced on major radio stations, local television stations, and the County Closings/Delays Hotline.

OFFICE HOURS:

Staff members are on duty between 7:45 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. to answer the telephone.

VISITORS:

Due to safety concerns, **ALL visitors, parents/guardians, and volunteers are required to check in through the main office and wear a visitor's badge before going anywhere in the building.**

Teachers will be notified prior to visitors being permitted to proceed to the classroom.

ATTENDANCE

The following reasons are listed by the Maryland State Department of Education as "Lawful Cause of Absence":

1. Death in the immediate family. The local school system shall determine what relationship constitutes the immediate family.
2. Illness of a student. The principal shall require a physician's certificate from the parents or guardians of a student reported continuously absent for illness.
3. Court summons.
4. Hazardous weather conditions, which would endanger the health and safety of a student when in transit to and from school.

ATTENDANCE Continued

5. Work approved or sponsored by the school, the local school system, or the state department of education, accepted by the local superintendent of schools or the school principal, or their designees as reason for excusing the students.
6. Observance of a religious holiday.
7. State emergency.
8. Suspension.
9. Lack of authorized transportation. This shall not include students denied authorized transportation for disciplinary reasons.
10. Other emergency or set of circumstances which, in the judgment of the superintendent or designee, constitutes a good or sufficient cause for absence from school.

Parents may certify up to ten (10) student absences due to illness. All absences for student illness beyond the ten (10) must be certified with a physician's certificate. Absences beyond the ten (10) that are not certified with a physician's certificate will be unlawful.

Classroom make-up work for lawful absences must be submitted to the teacher within one week (five school days) following the student's return to class and receipt of assignments from the teacher. Students should be encouraged to complete make-up work; however, work missed during days that are determined to be unlawful cannot be made up for credit.

Family Trips: Parents or legal guardians wishing to take their children out of school for a family trip/vacation of educational value must submit their intention in writing to the principal ten days prior to the trip. Forms are available in the office. A maximum of seven school days will be excused for family trips of educational value during one school year. It is strongly recommended that families plan trips around days when schools are closed to minimize days lost from classroom instruction.

Any time a student is absent from school, a written note of explanation from the parent is required. We strive for outstanding attendance. We ask parents to schedule trips, health appointments, etc., at times when school is not in session.

DISCIPLINE

The Board of Education will not tolerate social behavior that has an adverse effect on the academic, psychological, or social behavior of other students who are actively pursuing goals provided by a system of quality education. Anti-social behavior will be dealt with in a systematic, fair, and firm manner. **A detailed statement regarding the student discipline policies of the Worcester County Board of Education is given and explained to every student at Pocomoke Middle School at the beginning of the school year.**

School Rules

Respect

- Respect yourself, others and property.
- Keep your hands and feet to yourself.
- Use the bathroom responsibly.
- Use kind words when speaking to students, teachers, and staff.
- Raise your hand for permission to speak.

Responsibility

- Be on time.
- Be prepared with the correct books, pencils, and completed assignments.
- Be on task.

Assembly Conduct:

Teachers will escort students to the assembly. It is expected that students will enter and leave the assembly area in a quiet and respectful manner. Students will be seated with their teacher in a designated area. Students are expected to remain quiet and attentive during the program. Students who display inappropriate or rude behavior during an assembly will be immediately dismissed and referred to the office for disciplinary action.

Cafeteria Conduct:

Students are expected to practice appropriate restaurant behavior. Students are expected to:

- Walk at all times.
- Take their place in line without pushing or shoving.
- Speak to those in their immediate area in a conversational tone.
- Return all trays to the disposal area.
- Clean up any mess at the table.
- Ask politely and be given permission before leaving their seat.

Students who continually disregard the rules may be assigned alternative eating arrangements.

School Rules Continued

Classroom Conduct:

Grade level teams of teachers will inform students of their behavior expectations at the beginning of the school year.

Hall Conduct:

To ensure the smooth and orderly flow of student traffic throughout our halls, we remind students to walk on the right side of the hallway. Students are to move directly to their destination, with no loitering in the halls.

Playground Conduct (4th & 5th grade):

Students are expected to play safely and practice good sportsmanship. Aggressive physical play and potentially dangerous gymnastic activity is prohibited. Playground equipment should be used as it was designed to be used. Classes are assigned specific recess areas. Students are to stay in their assigned area. Students who disregard the recess rules will not be allowed to have recess either temporarily or permanently.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE

The term “drug” includes alcohol, controlled dangerous substances, and non-controlled dangerous substances falsely represented to be controlled dangerous substances. The use and possession of these substances on school property is strictly prohibited. **Specific procedures for violation of this policy are outlined in the county student calendar, which is given to every student at Pocomoke Middle School at the beginning of the school year.**

SMOKING & TOBACCO

The use or possession of tobacco products by students is prohibited on school property. Use of tobacco products while on school property is prohibited for everyone.

DRESS CODE

1. Students are expected to dress properly when attending Pocomoke Middle School. Students should be aware that their attire should be neat and clean at all times. Proper attire is necessary in school to ensure student health, safety, and the orderly administration of the school. The administration and staff feel that student attire has a direct relationship on student attitude and behavior.
2. Any type of attire, which attracts undue attention to the wearer, and thus may cause a disturbance in the school, is not acceptable. This includes permanent and semi-permanent hair dye in unnatural colors.

DRESS CODE continued

3. All clothing must fit properly and must be worn in an appropriate manner without revealing undergarments. Clothing designed as undergarments or pajamas may not be worn as primary clothing.
4. Students may not wear apparel that contains expressions of profanity, sex, alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, violence, or other unlawful activities at any time while on school property or at school related functions.
5. Clothing that may cause damage to floors or furnishings or other school property may not be worn. In addition, students may not wear clothing that may be a hazard to the wearer or to others.
6. **Coats and hats are to be placed in lockers upon arrival to school and remain there until dismissal.** Students are encouraged to listen to daily local weather forecast and dress accordingly. **It is advised that students keep a sweater, sweatshirt, or warm-up jacket in their locker for cool days or cool rooms.**
7. Clothing must assure the wearer of reasonable modesty.
 - a. **Shorts, dresses, and skirts, which do not cover the leg to the mid-thigh, may not be worn.**
 - b. **Shirts, blouses, or tops, which expose midriff, as well as, halters, tube, and spaghetti strap tops, are not permitted.**
 - c. **Excessively tight clothes should not be worn to school.**
8. Potential consequences for violation of the P.M.S. dress code range from:
 - a. Requiring a student to change to appropriate attire
 - b. Requiring a parent/student conference
 - c. In-School Suspension
 - d. Suspension from school

Any student sent to the guidance office for violating the dress code that is unable to change into appropriate attire will not be allowed to attend regular classes and will be assigned to I.S.S. until the end of the day. The principal, based upon the frequency and severity of the violation, will determine disciplinary action.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

Radios, tape recorders, CD players, iPods, cameras, electronic games, and large sums of money should not be brought to school. **Cell phones that are brought to school must be turned off and placed in the students' lockers. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen cell phones, as lockers are provided for safe storage.** Any confiscated personal property due to inappropriate use will need to be picked up from school by a parent. **After a second cell phone offense, the student will not be allowed to bring their cell phone to school for the remainder of the school year.**

LATE TO CLASS

Students are expected to arrive to all classes on time. Students who are consistently late for classes will become involved in a disciplinary procedure outlined by the grade level team of teachers and explained to their students at the beginning of the school year.

HALL PASSES

Signed planners are required for any student leaving the classroom unless accompanied by a supervising adult. **This planner, initialed by the teacher, is the official school hall pass.**

LOCKERS

All students will be issued a locker for the storage of books, supplies, lunches, and clothing. Students may visit lockers before and after school and at times designated by the grade level team of teachers. For security purposes, students should not write their combination where others can see it or tell it to other students. If students forget their combination, they should see their homeroom teacher. **Please remember coats are not permitted in classrooms; they are to be stored in the lockers.** Lockers are the property of Worcester County Public Schools and are loaned to students for their convenience.

TELEPHONE USAGE

Students may use the office telephone under the following conditions:

1. The student has adult permission to be in the office.
2. The student is willing to state why and to whom the call is being placed.
3. The reason for the call is school related or a personal emergency.

CARE OF TEXTBOOKS

Students are responsible for all textbooks, library books, and other items issued to them during the school year. All lost or damaged items must be paid for. All monies collected are recorded by the school bookkeeper and used for replacement purposes. If a lost book or item is found, money paid will be refunded. All books must be covered by the end of the first week of school. A monthly book check will be completed to ensure books remain covered throughout the year.

LOST AND FOUND

A lost and found bin is located in the cafetorium. Parents, if your child is missing something, you may want to check in the bin yourself, as the children do not always check it.

GUIDANCE

Pocomoke Middle School has two full-time guidance counselors. Counselors have been trained to discuss student issues of concern. They are also responsible for career education, permanent record keeping, and the registration of new students.

FOOD SERVICE

ALL students will be served a FREE breakfast in their homeroom. Lunch prices are as follows: 4/5 \$2.10, 6/7/8 \$2.45. Milk (\$.55) may be purchased separately. Worcester County Public Schools participate in the National School Lunch Program. Children from households that meet federal income guidelines are eligible for free or reduced price lunch meals. Eligibility is determined by household size and income. **Forms are mailed home to students during the summer. To begin or continue in the program, forms must be returned promptly.**

JUICE MACHINES

There are two juice machines located in the cafeteria for student use. These machines are only to be used during the breakfast and lunch shifts. Students do not have permission to use these machines between classes, before school, or after school. Students use the machines at their own risk. The school can not refund money.

HEALTH SERVICES

A registered nurse is available daily. Should a student become ill during the school day, he/she may rest in the health clinic area until a parent arrives.

Illness/Injury: Students who become ill at school must notify a teacher. The teacher will refer the student, with a note, to the nurse. Parents will be notified if their child becomes seriously ill or is injured at school. If parents cannot be reached, we will use the emergency contact information provided. If the child is seriously injured, he/she will be transported to the best available setting for treatment. **It is very important that the school be kept informed of changes in telephone numbers and residence.**

Medication: Students who need to take prescribed medication must have the appropriate form signed by the physician before the medication is brought to school. The medication, its original container, and form must be left in the office. Students are not permitted to keep medicines in their possession during the school day. Our school nurse will administer all medicines, including all non-prescriptive, over the counter medications. Parents who have questions about non-prescription medicine should talk to our school nurse.

HEALTH SERVICES Continued

Information regarding medicines is noted in the Worcester County student calendar, which is distributed to every student at Pocomoke Middle School at the beginning of the school year.

GRADES & GRADE REPORTING

Pocomoke Middle School issues report cards each quarter or approximately every nine weeks. Mid-term reports are also issued. Parents may contact teachers whenever they wish an update on their child's progress.

A student in grades four through eight receives A (excellent), B (good), C (satisfactory), D (poor), and F (grades 6-8) or E (grades 4-5) (unsatisfactory) in all academic subjects.

Honor Roll/Principal's List: Students who have distinguished themselves academically by earning top grades are considered honor students and are listed on the quarterly honor roll. The criteria for each of these awards are as follows:

Principal's List – Grades 4 & 5

All A's in academic subjects

Principal's List – Grades 6 – 8

All A's in academic and special subjects

Honor Roll – Grades 4 & 5

All A's; and 1 or 2 B's

Honor Roll – Grades 6-8

A Grade Point Average of 3.25

Honorable Mention – Grades 4 & 5

No grade below a B

At the end of each quarter, an assembly is held to recognize students who have excelled during the marking term. Fifth and eighth graders, who have maintained a 3.5 GPA and who have scored at or above the 85th percentile in total math or total reading on the latest standardized test, will receive the President's Education Award at the end of the school year.

WEXL CARDS

Many incentives for all grade levels are offered by the school, civic and community organizations, and by area businesses. One of these is the WEXL card, which rewards students in grades 6, 7, and 8 who have good grades and/or an outstanding attendance record. This is an incentive program sponsored by area businesses committed to the academic success of our students. The WEXL card entitles students to special money-saving discounts at local stores.

WEXL CARDS Continued

To qualify for a WEXL card, students must meet the following qualifications: 2.5 GPA or higher, no office referrals, and absent one or fewer days in the term. WEXL cards are validated each quarter.

POCOMOKE PRIDE PROGRAM

Brave Bucks have become a popular addition to the already successful Pocomoke Pride Program. Attached to the Pride Slip is a Brave Buck. Students detach the Brave Buck from the Pride Slip and collect them in order to cash-in on special activities and raffles at the end of each month. Pride Slips/Brave Bucks acknowledge the positive behavior and academic successes of Pocomoke Middle School students. Past activities have included an ice cream sundae bar, afternoon basketball, Ghouls and Droll, pie party, holiday shoppers fair, Wok N Roll, sweets for the sweet, sporting event, movie and popcorn, and a pancake breakfast.

WHAT IS POWERSCHOOL AND PARENT/GUARDIAN ACCESS?

PowerSchool is a computerized Internet-based student information system. Worcester County Public Schools uses PowerSchool to manage student data.

A parent or guardian, of a student in grades 6-12, is able to enter the Worcester County Public Schools' PowerSchool website from any computer and view his/her child's grades and attendance information. This is a secure site that parents/guardians can access by using an individual password assigned to them.

Please be assured that your child's information is confidential and can only be retrieved by the parent/guardian and authorized school personnel.

After you have connected to the Internet, you will go to the Worcester County Public Schools' website: www.worcesterk12.com

You will then be prompted to enter your username and password. **Your password is available in our school office and must be picked up in person. The username and password will stay with your child through grade 12.**

This site allows you access to: your child's grades and attendance, grade history, attendance history, and teacher comments.

What is PowerSchool and Parent/Guardian Access? Continued

Depending on the way the teacher has the grade book set up, unrecorded scores may temporarily appear as a “()” until the teacher records the score.

Teachers still have to grade assignments and enter grades in PowerSchool, which takes time. As a general guideline, teachers may take a full week before grading and recording assignments, tests, and quizzes, and updating the gradebook.

If you have questions regarding a grade or assignment, we recommend you speak with your child first. If questions remain, please contact the teacher. As always, communication between the parent and teacher is very important for the student’s success.

How do I email a teacher?

If you are using an email client application (i.e. *Outlook, Pegasus*) clicking on one of the teacher’s names will allow you to send an email directly to the teacher selected. If you are using a web-based email such as *Yahoo* or *Hotmail*, note the address when you move your mouse over the name and send email through your web email to the teacher’s address.

Need help accessing PowerSchool and using Parent/Guardian Access?

We have a computer set up in our reception office where Mrs. Roberts or Mrs. Payne can show you how it all works!

Testing Schedule 2011-12

- March 12-15: MSA Reading & Math, Grades 4/5/7
- March 16 & 19-21: MSA Reading & Math, Grades 6/8
- April 23-May 4 (window): State Science Test, Grs. 5/8
- May 7-10: CTBS Reading & Math, Grades 4/6
- May 23: HSA Algebra I

It is our hope that the education students receive at Pocomoke Middle School is worthy of the love and care their parents have for them. We do our best to nurture children through adolescence and prepare them for high school, college, and a productive future!