POCA ELEMENTARY

PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK
2026 - 2027

POCA ELEMENTARY
2986 CHARLESTON ROAD
POCA, WV 25159

POCA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Our Vision

"WE BELIEVE IN YOU"

We are DOTS

Dream Big
Own My Choices
Think of Others
Set Goals

We Believe

* Every student can learn and deserves an equitable opportunity to learn and receive effective instruction
* Educating the WHOLE child by valuing the extraordinary social, emotional, and academic needs of ALL learners in our community
* Relentlessly fostering positive relationships to build family and community partnerships
* Fostering a culture of growth in an engaging, safe, and secure learning environment
* The use of evidence-based strategies and best practices to increase quality of learning and address the needs of all students
* High Expectations that will result in high achievement/success

MASTER SCHEDULE

7:15	Doors Open
7:15 – 7:45	Students Arrive Breakfast Available
7:45	All students should be in the building by this time.

If you are late, an **ADULT** must sign-in with the child at the main office. PLEASE DO NOT SEND A STUDENT IN WITHOUT AN ADULT AFTER 7:45.

7:50	Instruction Begins

Any student who is not in class at 7:50 will be marked as tardy.

Lunches

10:45 – 11: 15	PreK
10:50 – 11:20	Kindergarten and 1st Grades
11:25 – 11:55	4th and 5th Grades
12:00 – 12:30	2nd and 3rd Grades

2:55	Line-up for Dismissal
2:55	Parent Pick-up to Gym K – 2 and their 3-5 siblings
2:55	Parent Pick up at Library Lot 3-5 students
3:00	Bus Dismissal

ATTENDANCE POLICY

ALL ABSENCES MUST HAVE A WRITTEN EXCUSE FROM A DOCTOR OR PARENT/GUARDIAN TO BE EXCUSED. **PLEASE DO NOT EMAIL OR DOJO THE TEACHER OR ADMINISTRATION.**

THIS EXCUSE MUST BE SUBMITTED WITHIN 3 DAYS OF THE STUDENT'S RETURN TO SCHOOL, OR IT WILL NOT BE RECORDED AS AN EXCUSED ABSENCE.

A "Parent Note" may be used for illnesses that do not require a visit to the doctor (stomach bug, cold, fever, etc). You are allowed TEN (10) Parent Notes per year.

WITH WRITTEN NOTICE, EXCUSED ABSENCES INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- Medical appointments or illness verified by physician (Drs Excuse)
- Illness that does not require medical visit (Parent Note)
- Bus did not run (Bus Driver will confirm this with the office)
- School-approved activities (Field trips, Math Field Day)
- Funeral
- Legal appointments

ABSENCES THAT ARE UNEXCUSED INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- Vacations (you may use Parent Notes for excused)
- School Suspensions (In-School Suspension or Out of School)
- Absences with parent notes exceeding the allowable TEN per year
- Absences with parent note which was turned in late.

FAMILIES WILL BE NOTIFIED REGARDING YOUR CHILD'S ABSENCES BY POCA ELEMENTARY OR PUTNAM COUNTY SCHOOLS AS FOLLOWS:

THREE (3) UNEXCUSED ABSENCES
The parent/guardian will receive a written notification from the school. You may schedule a conference with the principal or parent liaison to determine a plan to help keep your child in school and avoid legal action.

FIVE (5) UNEXCUSED ABSENCES
After the fifth unexcused absence, the parent/guardian will receive written notification via a certified letter from Putnam County Schools Attendance Director, Jennifer Campbell. This legal notice advises of the consequences should your child continue to have unexcused absences.

After TEN (10) UNEXCUSED ABSENCES
If your child acquires more than 10 unexcused absences, the result is an automatic court hearing in Magistrate Court of Putnam County. You will receive written notification via certified mail of this mandatory hearing. The child/student must attend the hearing with their parent/guardian.

STUDENTS ATTENDING POCA ELEMENTARY AS "OUT OF ZONE"
Students who are consistently absent or tardy will be denied attendance as an Out-of-Zone student at any time throughout the year.

PLEASE CONTACT JENNIFER CAMPBELL, ATTENDANCE DIRECTOR FOR PUTNAM COUNTY SCHOOLS AT 304-586-0500 EXT. 1117 IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING THE ATTENDANCE POLICY.

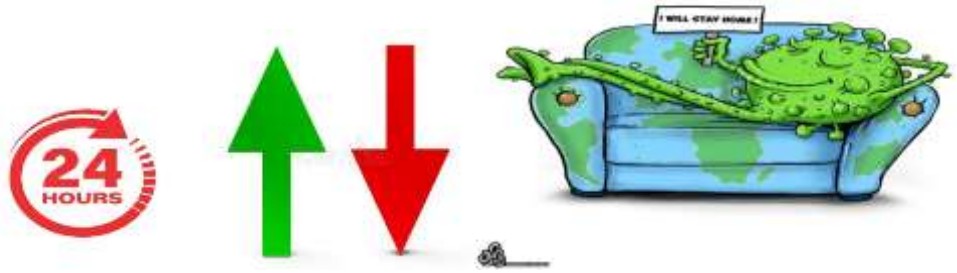


STUDENT ILLNESS

Children should not attend school when ill. Attendance is important to a student's academic success. However, when a child is ill, it is in the best interest of the child and those around him/her to stay home from school. Having a communicable condition may cause a student to be removed from the school until medical clearance for the child's return is given.

The following guidelines will help you decide if your child is ready to return to school after an illness:

• **Fever free for the past 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications such, as Tylenol**. A fever is defined as a temperature ≥ 100.4.



• No vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours. **MUST BE OUT 24 HOURS AFTER LAST EPISODE OF VOMITING OR DIARRHEA.**

• After at least 24 hours of antibiotic therapy for bacterial illnesses (strep throat, pneumonia, pink eye, etc.)

POCA ELEMENTARY



ARRIVAL

Our doors open at 7:15 a.m. PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE YOUR CHILD UNSUPERVISED AT THE DOOR OR POCA LIBRARY LOT PRIOR TO 7:15 a.m.

Reminder: **PES clocks will be the official time.** We cannot use multiple clocks or different times to determine schedules. Please use the **PES clocks** as our time reference.

Parent Drop-off:

Cars are to enter the front driveway and remain in the LEFT LANE. Please have your students unbuckled and packed-up to exit the vehicle. Pull up to the staff member (s) on duty and they will help your child exit the vehicle. PLEASE DO NOT EXIT YOUR VEHICLE AND LEAVE YOUR RUNNING VEHICLE UNATTENDED. Students are to walk IN FRONT of your vehicle if they exit on the left and must walk around your car to enter the building.

It is **not recommended to drop off your child alone in the Poca Library parking lot.** However, if you choose to use the Poca Library for drop-off, please walk your child to the front walk/door, and remind your child to exercise caution and watch carefully for moving vehicles in the driveway and parking area.

You may also park in the **limited available parking spaces directly in front of the school** and **walk your child to the front sidewalk and school entrance**.

Please use extra caution and help us keep our students safe!

Families will not be permitted to enter the building with their child.

Morning Bus:

www.putnamschools.com - Menu → Central Office → Transportation → Bus Routes

INSTRUCTIONS To locate your child's bus, click on Edit and Find or the Search icon on your web browser. You can also use Control (Ctrl F). A box will appear. Enter your street, road or subdivision name in the box and enter. This will locate all buses that go to your area. (Ex. Just type in rose for Rosebud Lane) Make sure that bus delivers children to the correct school/level (Elem, Middle, High). Click on NEXT or PREVIOUS to navigate to all buses that travel to your area. If you do not find your street, road or subdivision, try searching for the next road closest to you. Lastly, not all buses that pick up in the morning will deliver your child home in the afternoon. Please look closely at the school.

DISMISSAL

PES dismisses at 2:55

Parent Pick-up

Kindergarten - 2nd Grades (and any sibling 3rd - 5th) - Please drive to the back entrance (from Rt. 62, turn on Laurel Drive, immediate right and take the driveway that runs behind the ball field to the PMS parking lot). Please follow traffic guidance from staff on duty. You will walk to **Door 23 - GYM** - Students will be dismissed by one family at a time. Please make eye contact and acknowledge you are here for your child by waving to staff on duty.

Grades 3rd - 5th - Pick-up is at **Poca Library Parking Lot at 2:55** -

Parents will walk to the **bottom of the stairs**, where staff will release students. You may also stand by the car and wave to acknowledge staff if you are unable to walk to the bottom of the stairs.

For safety, please do not allow students to play in the parking lot or outdoor areas. **All students should go directly to their cars**, even if they are waiting for a sibling at PMS.

Thank you for helping us keep dismissal safe and orderly!

Poca Circle and Local Businesses

ONLY if you live in Poca Circle or work at one of the local businesses across the street will your child be escorted across the street.

If you choose to park across the street, then you will need to come across to get your child at the bottom of the stairs.

Evening Bus/Dismissal:

www.putnamschools.com - Menu → Central Office → Transportation → Bus Routes

INSTRUCTIONS To locate your child's bus, click on Edit and Find or the Search icon on your web browser. You can also use Control (Ctrl F). A box will appear. Enter your street, road or subdivision name in the box and enter. This will locate all buses that go to your area. (Ex. Just type in rose for Rosebud Lane) Make sure that bus delivers children to the correct school/level (Elem, Middle, High). Click on NEXT or PREVIOUS to navigate to all buses that travel to your area. If you do not find your street, road or subdivision, try searching for the next road closest to you. Lastly, not all buses that pick up in the morning will deliver your child home in the afternoon. Please look closely at the school.

ALL STUDENTS IN GRADES K-3RD MUST BE PICKED-UP BY AN ADULT AT THE BUS.

If he/she has an older sibling, you may give written permission to the driver and school administration for a K-3 student to walk from the bus to home with that older sibling. Should there be an issue with responsibility for that supervision, the request can/will be denied.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

CHANGE IN YOUR CHILD'S DISMISSAL ROUTINE
Any time there is a change in your child's normal routine, you **MUST SEND A PARENT NOTE** that morning stating the exact change. If your child is going home with a friend, **BOTH STUDENTS MUST HAVE A SIGNED NOTE FROM EACH OF THEIR PARENT/GUARDIANS.**

If there is an emergency and you must make a change by phone, **YOU MUST CALL THE OFFICE BY 2:15 p.m.**

Anyone picking up your child MUST be listed on the Emergency Card. Please ensure anyone (parent/guardian included) has a photo ID when picking up your child.

If your child is going to ride a bus home with a friend, or go home with a friend, both students must have written permission.





BUS TANSPORTATION

- Bus operators will pick up and discharge passengers only at their designated stop(s). If a student is to ride a different bus and/or picked up or discharged at an alternate established bus stop, the bus operator must be provided with a note from the parent which has been signed by the school principal.

  - An adult should be designated the responsibility of meeting the bus every day to accept responsibility for younger children**. WV STATE LAW REQUIRES ALL STUDENTS GRADES K THROUGH 3RD MUST HAVE AN ADULT PRESENT AT THE BUS STOP.** Parents/Guardians may give written permission for an older sibling (must be 4th grade – 12th grade) to supervise the younger sibling off the bus to home. Failure of a parent/designee at the stop will result in your child being returned to the school and you will be required to pick-up.

  - **Transportation is not provided for students who choose to attend a school outside their own district.**

  Transportation stops for the Poca area DOES NOT pertain to all Poca Elementary students. Only those stops that are within the Poca Elementary Attendance Zone will be available to our students. For this reason, do not assume that Poca Elementary students can ride any bus in the Poca Area. Please call the school if you have questions.

PES does not allow students to walk to/from school.

EMERGENCY CARDS

Parents should keep the school updated with telephone numbers, emergency contacts, and any student health issues that may interfere with learning or attendance. Your child will bring home an emergency card for you to complete and return to school. If any information changes during the school year, including those people with permission to pick up your child from school, please contact the school office immediately. School personnel will require photo identification from anyone seeking to pick up your child from school.

If any information on your child's emergency cards changes at any time throughout the year, please make updates with the main office.

CUSTODY/LEGAL DOCUMENTS

If at any time during the school year, you obtain court documents regarding DVP, custodial care, or visitation stipulations, please provide a copy to the office immediately. You will also need to change the emergency card and notify anyone who may transport your child to/from school.

MEDICAL/HS-18/SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS

If possible, students should be medicated at home. HOME IS BEST! If it is necessary that medications are to be administered at school, the following guidelines are REQUIRED.

ALL Medications (prescription or over the counter) must have Putnam County Medication form (HS-18) on file. The form must have **BOTH THE PROVIDER AND PARENT SIGNATURE.** Each Medication must have its own form. A new form is needed with any dosage or time change. **NEW FORMS ARE REQUIRED AT THE BEGINNING OF EACH SCHOOL YEAR.**

No medication will be administered until two (2) hours after the beginning of school or two (2) hours before the end of school. Example: School starts at 8am and ends 3pm, Medication can be given 10-1pm.

ALL MEDICATION must be registered with the school nurse. **Medications must be brought in by an adult**. Medications cannot be sent to school with the child. Possession of unregistered medication is a violation of the School's Substance Abuse Policy and will be enforced accordingly.

Medication brought in must be in **THE ORIGINAL CONTAINER/PHARMACY BOTTLE** with the appropriate label. Medication in other containers will not be administered at school. **FIELD TRIP ACTIVITIES REQUIRE A 2ND EMPTY LABELED BOTTLE FOR DAILY MEDICATIONS-PARENT MUST PROVIDE.**

If a student requires a one-half (1/2) tablet of medication, it is the parent's responsibility to prepare the tablets at home.

Measuring devices must be provided for liquid medications. Spoons or silverware is not acceptable.

No more than twenty (20) day supply of medication will be stored at school.

First and second time administration of any medication will not be done at school because of possible allergic/adverse reactions. This also includes any increase in dosage or frequency.

Students may self-administer medication with parent and physician approval. The school will assess the situation and determine if the student will be approved for self-administration.

Medications that are no longer needed or at the end of the year must be picked up by an adult. The school nurse will send home notification when it can be picked up. PLEASE PICK UP MEDICATION WHEN YOU RECEIVE THE LETTER.

Special Dietary Needs

If your child requires any special dietary needs, you must complete a Special Dietary Needs Medical Statement ANNUALLY. Please contact the office or school nurse.

Comprehensive School Counseling Program



PCS School Counseling program is designed to provide every student with the academic, career and personal/social knowledge and skills necessary to graduate and successfully function in the 21st century society. Marlene Smith, PES School Counselor, will deliver equitable, comprehensive, preventative, and developmental counseling programs which promote quality learning for all K-12 students. Parents are invited to contact Mrs. Smith for assistance regarding your child's academic, career, and/or personal/social concerns. Feel free to call Mrs. Smith at 304-755-7561 ext. 2920.

WV COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS STANDARDS

For specific grade level standards, visit https://wvde.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/K-5-Standards

GRADING SCALE

Putnam's grading scale in grades one through twelve is as follows:

A = 90-100%
B = 80- 89%
C = 70-79%
D = 60-69%
F = 0-59%

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

Poca Elementary places high priority on the development of literacy, math, and social emotional skills for all students. These skills are critical to each students' future success; however, at times, despite the best efforts of everyone involved, our students struggle in one or more areas. This is a concern to the child, teachers, school administration, district, and to parents/guardians.

What is MTSS?

MTSS is a multi-step process of providing instruction and support to promote the academic and behavioral success of all children. Individual children's progress is monitored and results are used to make decisions about further instruction and intervention. MTSS is most commonly used in addressing reading, math, and behavior, but it can also be used in other areas, such as attendance. The MTSS process is flexible and designed by the school to meet the needs of our students and typically has three tiers. Each tier provides differing levels of support.

(Source: https://www.panoramaed.com/what-is-multi-tiered-system-of-support-mtss-rti)

MTSS Three Tiers of Support

Tier 1 – Universal or primary – Majority of students (75-90%)

As the largest tier, and the foundation for the entire framework, Tier 1 encompasses the entire school with core instruction and basic interventions. This structure helps to build positive relationships between staff and students. It includes proactive classroom management strategies aimed at creating a supportive atmosphere. Students who do not respond to these interventions may move into Tier 2.

Tier 2 – Secondary – Small groups of students (10-25%)

Some students need a little extra assistance in meeting academic and behavioral goals, and it is in Tier 2 that these individuals receive that help. Often these interventions and supports are delivered in small group settings, such as reading or math groups. Check-In/Check-Out (CICO), counseling groups, and mentoring interventions are often a part of Tier 2, as well. This targeted support allows students to work toward catching up with their peers.

Tier 3 – Tertiary – Individual students (< 10%)

A subset of students has significant challenges that do not respond to the interventions and supports in Tier 1 or Tier 2. Tier 3 gives these students individualized support, both academically and behaviorally, which can include assistance from outside agencies such as behavioral specialists or family therapists.

MTSS tiers help schools to organize levels of support based on intensity so that students receive necessary instruction, support, and interventions based on need. Individuals are identified as students in need of support based on evidence/data. This helps educators to respond appropriately and provide students with the assistance they need to prosper in the classroom. (Source: pbisrewards.com)

Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS)

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports is based on principles of applied behavior analysis, the prevention approach, and the values of positive behavioral support. **The underlying theme is teaching behavior expectations in the same manner as any core curriculum subject**.
(Source: wvpbis.org)



This process uses effective instructional strategies to teach and reward students for engaging in our behavioral expectations, as well as consistent procedures and logical consequences to address inappropriate behavior at our school. Our goal is to help our students engage in those appropriate behaviors that will help them succeed now and in the future.

TITLE 1

Title I provide financial assistance to LEAs (Local Educational Agencies) and schools with high concentrations of low-income students to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards. LEAs target Title I funds to schools with the highest percentages of children from low-income families. Unless a participating school is operating a schoolwide program, the school must focus Title I services on children who are failing, or most at risk of failing, to meet state academic standards. Schools in which high concentrations of low-income students make up at least 40 percent of enrollment are eligible to use Title I funds for schoolwide programs to serve all children in the school. LEAs also must offer to utilize Title I funds to provide academic enrichment services to eligible children enrolled in private schools.
(Source: West Virginia Department of Education)

Poca Elementary is eligible for a Title 1 School-Wide Program, which serves all students in our school.

PARENTS' RIGHT TO KNOW

The federal government requires us to notify you that you have a right to request and receive timely information on the professional qualifications of your children's classroom teachers. If you so desire, you may request the following information:

1. Whether the teacher has met state qualifying and licensing criteria for the grade level(s) and subject areas to which the teacher is assigned.
2. Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status.
3. The baccalaureate degree/major the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher; and
4. Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

If you request this information, please do so in writing. We will respond to your inquiry within the timelines established under the "Freedom of Information Act".

PARENT LIAISON

Parent Liaisons serve as a link between the schools and parent/guardians, relay the needs of one to the other; educating teachers and staff on how to communicate and work effectively with families as equal partners in our school.

The Parent Liaison's job is to bridge the gap between home, school, and the community by helping parents get the information and support they need to ensure their child's academic and social success. Additionally, they work to ensure that everyone feels welcome and to help make a comfortable connection between you, the school, and your child's teacher.

Our Parent Liaison can also provide training that empowers families to become problem solvers and to strengthen families to get them involved in their child's overall achievement.

If you would like to contact Elizabeth Scott, you may do so via email at elizabeth.scott@k12.wv.us or by leaving a message at 304-755-7561 ext. 2934.

PTO

Poca Elementary Parent-Teacher Organization plays an important role by supporting building improvements through advocacy and play, fundraising for curriculum-based programs, and supporting social/family events.

Through the efforts of our families and community members, services and additional funds for improving our school and instruction are provided. Please watch for ThrillShare, Dojo messages, and Schoology calendar for PTO announcements or meetings throughout the year. Poca Elementary PTO also has a FaceBook.

Poca Elementary and Putnam County Schools Communication

Poca Elementary

https://pes.putnamschools.com/o/pes

THRILLSHARE/Poca Elementary and PCS MESSAGES

Thrillshare provides telephone and e-mail notification of school closings, emergencies, and announcements to families . To receive calls from Thrillshare (PCS Messages), **your current home and/or mobile phone must be on file at school. If you have had changes in contact information, please notify PES office.** Messages will come from an account named PCS Messages.

SCHOOLOGY

Schoology is a learning management system that provides online access to the county grade book program. Students and parents receive usernames and passwords after a child enters a new school. Students use their Office 365 credentials to sign into Schoology, and parents create their own accounts with a Schoology code attached to the student account. Schools usually send the Schoology account codes home to the new incoming class about two weeks after the beginning of school. After that point, parents must contact the school to receive an account. The central office cannot provide account information to parents or students. In the case of divorced/separated parents, both parents can have different accounts if they both have court approved access to the child.

Please remember to update your profile if you change your e-mail address. Account names and passwords can be received by e-mail when they need to be reset.

Links to both the student Schoology portal and the parent Schoology portal are available in the main menu of the PCS web site.



Class DoJo

ClassDojo brings school communities together, with one place for teachers and families to connect, communicate, and share learning experiences.

This year we'll be encouraging positive behaviors, as designed by our PBIS framework, with ClassDojo. We'll also rely on it to communicate with one another: instantly sharing messages, updates, events, and photos from class. It's simple, secure, and gives you a window into their school day!

Your child's teacher will send home information and directions for Class Dojo!

PCS communication channels include but are not limited to:

Putnam County Schools Website

District updates can be found on the PCS Website including news articles, bulletin board posts, and live feed posts.

www.putnamschools.com

Putnam County Schools Social Media

The goal of PCS social media is to share important district-wide information with our school community. See putnamschools.com for the PCS social media Rules & Guidelines

- ***Facebook:*** Putnam County Schools – WV
- ***Twitter:*** PutnamWVSchools
- ***Instagram:*** PutnamWVSchools

Putnam County Schools Mobile App – PCS Connect: Download our mobile app, PCS Connect, for up-to-date information about the district and individual schools. PCS Connect is available to download for free on Google Play (Android) and the App Store (Apple).

SCHOOL CLOSINGS/WEATHER

WEATHER DELAYED OPENINGS AND EARLY CLOSINGS

During inclement weather, school delays, closings and cancellations are communicated through local media outlets, PCS messaging, and via PCS social media. There are numerous ways to be informed regarding the status of Putnam County Schools.

Poca Elementary does endure many HIGH-WATER related incidences throughout the year. **IF YOU LIVE IN AN AREA WHERE HIGH WATER PROHIBITS YOUR CHILD FROM GETTING HOME, PLEASE COME TO PICK-UP YOUR CHILD TO ENSURE A SAFE AND TIMELY TRIP HOME.** This will be an excused early departure.

Often the transportation department is unaware of remote locations that cannot be accessed when high water occurs. For this reason, please do not wait for PCS to make a call for early dismissal. Early dismissal is typically only called when there is a county-wide or area-wide weather emergency.

Please do not call the school or the Board of Education Office, as these lines must be kept free for emergency communications and for administrative use.

Please monitor more than one media source for the status of Putnam County Schools.

It is important that every family has a contingency plan for children in case of early closings or delayed openings if no one is home at the time the student leaves or returns from school.

When school has been delayed, students should not arrive at the school earlier than the announced opening time since school staff may also be arriving late. When school is dismissed early, it is the parent's responsibility to inform children where they should go upon dismissal. Again, please do not call the school to make last minute plans as these lines must be kept free for emergency communications.

You will receive an EMERGENCY DISMISSAL PLAN to complete for your child. Should this plan change, please call the office to request a form to update the plan.

SHELTER IN PLACE/LOCK DOWN

During an emergency drill or actual event, the following procedures will be followed:

- NO ONE MAY ENTER OR EXIT THE BUILDING after the lockdown is in progress.

- The building administrator will wait until the "all clear" notification from law enforcement or central office in case of an actual emergency.

- Students will always be supervised by staff members and will have access to bathroom facilities, food, water, and medicine unless an actual emergency prohibits such access.

- Parents are advised not to come to the school during an actual emergency. They will find the building secured by law enforcement and will only be placing themselves in danger.

- Parents are asked not to call the school during an emergency. The phone lines need to be open for the school to communicate with emergency personnel and with central office personnel.

The intent of emergency procedures is to ensure the safety and well-being of students and staff. This is best accomplished by students staying where they are under the supervision of the PES staff. Your cooperation and support are very important to the safety of all.

VISITORS

All visitors must sign in at the office and receive a visitor's pass before going anywhere in the building. Meetings with teachers or other staff to discuss your child, PTO business, or any other events should be scheduled prior to your visit. Parents and visitors are not to park in the bus lane during arrival or dismissal times. Buses arrive daily for dismissal by approximately 2:40 each afternoon. If you are parked in the front parking area, you will be blocked and unable to leave until buses depart at 3:05. To avoid this, you should park at Poca Library and walk to the PES entrance.

VOLUNTEERS

We encourage all family/guardians and community members to assist us in providing fun, engaging activities for our students or to lend anyone on our staff a helping hand. Volunteers who assist with school programs, events, or regular activities will be asked to sign the volunteer's agreement and return it to the principal. Volunteers are not permitted to directly supervise students and are required to adhere to full confidentiality. Any violation of the agreement or breach of student or staff confidentiality will result in the loss of volunteer privileges.

You will receive a VOLUNTEER FORM from your child's teacher.



PURPLE STAR AWARD

POCA ELEMENTARY IS PROUD TO BE A PURPLE STAR AWARD RECIPIENT

The Purple Star Award is a designation assigned to schools which display a special commitment to supporting military children and their families. Common Ground Partners review applications and the West Virginia Department of Education issues awards to schools meeting the award's eligibility criteria. Schools receiving the award are issued an official certificate and additional electronic materials which may be used to pridefully display their status as a military-friendly school throughout the building. This award contributes to our partnership efforts to build strong bonds between schools, military service members, and community organizations which meet the specialized needs of our children and enhance the success of all students.

Please see our website for links to access support for military families.



CLASSROOM CELEBRATIONS

Foods available at school should contribute to the development of sound nutritional habits. All foods offered to students must reflect concern for the health and well-being of all students. All Putnam County Schools are being directed to follow the practices outlined on the following page.

Classroom Celebrations:

- All foods served must meet all requirements of the policy and be considered safe for all children to consume in the classroom setting.
- Healthy food items shall be considered and preferred! See a list of suggested healthy party foods in the Smart Snacks in School Guide.
- For student safety, no homemade treats are permitted!
- Approved school-wide party times during the school day will be after the end of the last lunch period.
- Food items must be commercially prepared, packaged, and factory sealed with a visible ingredient and nutrition label so they may be properly evaluated for possible allergy reactions with students. The exception would be fresh vegetables, fruits, and bottled water.
- No individual student birthday parties at school will be permitted! (Parents cannot bring food treats to individual classrooms to celebrate their child's birthday).
- Treat bags that include food are not permitted. See a list of suggested party favors for treat bags.
- Beverages permitted will be bottled water, 100% fruit juice, and milk only.
- Food allergens and ingredients—Food items containing the 8 most common allergens must be considered for children while at school (**peanuts, tree nuts, milk, eggs, wheat, soy, fish, and shellfish**). Treats that contain these allergens will not be permitted if these allergens exist with students in individual classrooms. **Food items that include peanuts or tree nuts (almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts, macadamias, pecans, pine nuts, pistachios, and walnuts) may not be served**. Cross contact can occur with food manufacturers when a safe food comes in contact with a food allergen. Precautions must be used when approving all foods containing these allergens. Chocolate candies are not permitted due to them being manufactured in plants that also contain peanuts and/or tree nuts.
- All school sponsored events that also include food items, but which may be prepared in bulk will be approved and purchased by the Putnam County Schools Child Nutrition Office and/or prepared in a Putnam County Schools facility that is regulated and permitted by the local health department. This will ensure safety and sanitation

requirements are met. The county Child Nutrition Office will follow all guidelines for safe consumption for all students.

- **These guidelines regulating foods served in schools at celebration events is subject to change as often as the WVDE and USDA regulations are revised and updated. These guidelines may change annually or as needed.**
- The county Child Nutrition Office will be available to assist schools and to offer support and guidance in the selection of appropriate food items for all children.

Good nutrition and the value of healthy food choices are often taught in classrooms. To keep our children healthy, school administrators, teachers, staff, and parents can work together to offer healthy classroom party alternatives. The focus of school parties and events should be more about the planned activities and games than the food itself. Portion sizes should be of reasonable size given the age of the students.

Healthy classroom party food suggestions (See USDA Guide to Smart Snacks in School):

- Fresh fruits with low-fat dip
- Fruit cups packed in juice or water
- Squeezable applesauce
- Raisins or dried fruit snacks
- Fresh vegetables with low-fat dip
- Hummus or low-fat dips or salsa
- Mini bagels or muffins
- Yogurt cups or tubes
- Low-fat string cheese sticks
- Low-fat Skinny pop popcorn
- Low-fat, low-salt tortilla chips, pretzels, baked chips
- Frozen 100% juice bars
- Frozen yogurt
- Low-fat pudding cups
- Whole grain cereals
- Whole grain crackers, goldfish crackers, graham crackers, animal crackers, teddy grahams
- Nutra-grain bars or low-fat granola bars (be aware of products that contain nuts)
- Rice crispy bars or rice cakes
- Bottled water
- 100% fruit juice
- Low-fat or non-fat milk

** **NO CUPCAKES OR OTHER FOODS WITH PROHIBITED DYES!**

Nonfood treat bag suggestions:

- Pencils, Pens, Crayons, Markers
- Erasers, Pencil Toppers
- Coupons
- Frisbees
- Whistles
- Keychains
- Mini Flashlights
- Shoelaces
- Bracelets, rings
- Notepads
- Jump ropes
- Finger Puppets
- Coloring Books
- Tattoos
- Bubbles
- Silly Putty
- Stickers
- Yoyos
- Paddle Balls
- Stencils
- Bookmarks
- Glow Sticks
- Kazoos
- Sidewalk Chalk
- Beach Balls
- Puzzle Games
- Magnets
- Silly Sunglasses
- Crazy Straws
- Pinwheels
- Bouncy Balls
- Magic Wands
- Rulers
- Slinkies

LUNCHEONS

During the 2026 – 2027 School Year, Poca Elementary Title 1 will host *"Lunch and Learn"* for each grade level.

Please watch for a special invitation, Dojo message, ThrillShare text message, and/or the Schoology calendar for specific dates. WE MUST HAVE AN RSVP in advance to ensure the kitchen staff has an adequate food supply. Each adult will be required to pay for lunch if you plan to eat.
If you choose to bring take-out food (McDonald's, etc.) for your child, it may not be shared with any other student.

Poca Elementary will not host holiday lunches or monthly birthday lunches, but you are welcome to eat lunch with your child any day of the week, except **for holiday lunches**.