



Amy R. Borio
Principal

Jessica Buckle
Assistant Principal

"Together we Share, Discover, Create, and Achieve"

August 5, 2022

Dear Pine Grove School Students and Families,

Welcome back! We are thrilled to welcome our Pine Grove Family to the 2022-2023 school year. I hope you enjoyed a summer filled with fun and relaxation. I had a plan for the summer that included reading as many books as I could, spending quality time with my family, and getting to the beach or pool as much as possible. I feel pretty accomplished with those goals! In addition to walks, seeking out the best ice cream spots in the state, and spending time with friends and family, the Borios are headed to Key West, Florida for a week. While I am a little sad to see summer come to an end, the beginning of a new school year always brings a sense of excitement and invigoration!

The beginning of a school year offers us a fresh start, a new beginning, and gives us an opportunity to reinvent ourselves. Our hope this year is to start out strong doing all the things that will set us up for success. The following quote by Plato got me thinking about the start of our school year, ***"The beginning is the most important part of the work."*** When we focus on doing our best and being our best at the beginning of anything we do, we have more of a chance of accomplishing what we set out to do.

We invite you to join us in setting some positive intentions for the school year. When you begin with intentions to be the best you can be, you are likely to focus on how you want to show up and what kind of person you intend to be. Have a talk with your child about how they are going to think, feel and behave this year as they enter a new school year. Some suggestions include:

- I will be kind in my words and actions
- I intend to be on time for school
- I am going to work hard
- I will be a leader and lead by example

To our Pine Grove Students, your teachers and principals are looking forward to an exciting adventure of learning this year. We hope you are thinking of all the ways you intend to show up and give your very best effort this year. Let's all try to be kind, work hard, lead by example, and be on time for school each day! Before summer ends, be sure you have written down the titles of the books you have read. You can get a summer reading log [here](#). All PGS students who return a reading log will be invited to our Summer Reading Ice Cream Social at the end of September. I'm sure you are anxious to find out who your teacher will be! Your grown up can check PowerSchool on Thursday, August 18th to find out. That day you will also get an email with a letter from your teacher, a supply list, and a link to a google form about how you will go home from school each day.

Remember that when we work together we can share good ideas, discover new things, create innovative solutions to problems, and achieve great success! After all, that's our school motto...Together we will share, discover, create, and achieve! Let's get started! Included is some important information about this school year.

With exuberance and anticipation,

Amy R. Borio

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Important Information for the 2022-2023 School Year

The First Day of School

On August 29, 2022 at 8:35 am Pine Grove School will open its doors for the 2022-2023 school year. To help ensure every student knows where to go, we will have a fully staffed arrival team here to greet all students grades K-4. This team of adults will have class lists and brightly colored orange signs for each grade. Children should look for the sign as they arrive and wait for a teacher or staff member to lead them inside to their new classroom. We will follow this routine for roughly two weeks, slowly transitioning students towards entering and walking to class independently. A smaller version of our arrival team remains in place year round to ensure a positive start to each school day.

Arrival Time and Start of School Day

School begins at 8:50 am. Doors will open at 8:35 am, which is 5 minutes later than in the past. This year we ask you to join us in an intention to begin school on time! That means that our school announcements will begin promptly at 8:50. Students are expected to arrive prior to that time so that they can be unpacked and at their desk for our 8:50 am start. Students can be dropped off until 8:50 am on the side of the gym. If you arrive for drop off after 8:50, please park in the front parking lot and walk your child into the school to sign them in.

Curriculum Night - September 1, 2022

Each fall, parents, guardians, and staff come together to discuss the upcoming year. We call this night Curriculum Night. ***This event is for grown-ups only.*** Your child's teacher will talk to you about grade level curriculum, home/school connection, class routines and procedures. It is a great opportunity to meet your child's teacher and get a sense of what to expect in his or her new classroom and grade level. This year we will hold Curriculum Night on Thursday, September 1, 2022. Please click [HERE](#) for the schedule.

New Staff

Each year we say goodbye to staff members and welcome new ones. Below is a list of new faces you will see this year at PGS. Some are new to Avon and some just new to our school. Please join me in giving a warm welcome to the following individuals:

First Grade: Mrs. Sandy Phillips was an interim teacher last year but will join us permanently this year.

Second Grade: Miss Allison Driscoll will be teaching second grade.

Special Education: Mrs. Gina Vamvakis will be the special education teacher supporting our fourth grade team.

Art: Mrs. K.A. O'Brien will be our full time art teacher and Ms. Jennifer Stabnick will be part time (shared with RBS)

Security: Mr. Paul Verrillo will be our new security specialist.

Name Changes: Kelly Stokowski will now join us as Mrs. Russo

Updates

Each summer our maintenance and custodial departments work hard to get Pine Grove School ready for the coming year. All of the improvement efforts focus on the safety of our building and campus, as well as providing the most innovative equipment and technology to match our needs and support academic achievement. This year, updates included the following:

- New safety doors at the school entrance
- Freshly paved parking lot
- New carpet in the library
- New gates at our campus perimeter

Bus Arrival, Parent Drop Off and Dismissal...PLEASE NOTE THAT OUR PROCEDURES HAVE CHANGED.

BUS ARRIVAL: I strongly encourage all children to take the bus to and from school. Not only does this allow children to have some time to socialize prior to school starting, it also keeps traffic in our parking lot to a minimum. If you choose to drop off or pick up your child this year we ask for your help in ensuring that our parking lot remains safe and orderly by following the directions that follow.

PARENT DROP OFF: We ask that if you are dropping off your child, you do so via the [Attached Traffic Plan](#) ***Please do not park and walk your child in unless you arrive after 8:50 am.*** The front entrance of the school is reserved for students who arrive by bus. All families who are driving their child to school are expected to follow the traffic pattern and drop their child off on the side of the building. This helps us ensure the safety of all who enter the school as well as keeping bus traffic running smoothly. Our school doors open at 8:35 am. At that time, you will see staff arriving at their posts in the front and side of the building. Students should not be dropped off prior to 8:35 am.

Please be sure to do the following:
Stay in line. Do not pull around other vehicles
Have your child ready to exit the vehicle on the left side only (driver side)
Stay in your vehicle, our staff will assist if needed in opening car doors

DISMISSAL

Each child should have a dismissal plan that is consistent. Along with your teacher letter, you will also receive an email with a link to a dismissal plan Google Form. We ask that every parent complete one form for each child and include your dismissal plans prior to the first day of school. If your child has a different dismissal plan on a given day, please send in a note or an email informing us of the change by 1:00 pm on full days or 11:00 am on half days. A reminder that we cannot accept phone calls to inform us of dismissal changes and children cannot be dismissed from their classrooms to their parents after 3:00 pm. This practice helps us to ensure a smooth end of the day.

Dismissal is at 3:25 pm. At that time our end of day announcements will be made and buses will begin to be called. Parent pick up will take place from our gym. Adults picking up children are asked to park in the parking lot and walk across the crosswalk to check in with our security specialist. Upon arrival you will be asked to show identification and your child's name will be added to the pick up list. Once you give your name, please proceed to the blacktop near the gym. A staff member in the gym will call your child's name and they will be dismissed to you through the gym doors. Parents who need access to the building will need to do so through the front entrance.

Important Dates

- Friday, August 26 - Kindergarten Meet and Greet 10-10:45 am, Popsicle Social on Playground immediately following
- Friday, August 26 - Grades 1-4 Meet and Greet
Students Last Names begin with A-L 1:30-2:00 pm
Students Last Names begin with M-Z 2:15-2:45 pm
- Friday, August 26 - New Family Orientation 3:00 pm- Cafeteria. Popsicle Social in courtyard immediately following
- Monday, August 29 - First day of school HALF DAY, dismissal at 11:50 am (staff PD in the afternoon)
- Tuesday, August 30 - Second day of school HALF DAY, dismissal at 11:50 am (staff PD in the afternoon)
- Thursday, September 1 - Curriculum Night (see link above)
- Monday, September 5 - No School, Labor Day
- Wednesday, September 7 - School Picture Day **The following link will become active on Wednesday, August 24, 2022 through the end of the day on Wednesday, September 7, 2022**
Link: <https://order.grynnandbarrett.com/api/v2/keys/lookup/gb?key=3H8Z4W8Z>
Code: **3H8Z4W8Z**
- Friday, September 23 - Summer Reading Ice Cream Social (courtyard after lunch)
- Monday, September 26 - No School, Rosh Hashanah
- Thursday, September 29 - First PTO meeting 6:30 pm

Communication

While we communicate with families in a variety of ways, there are a few that you should plan to look for regularly. Each Friday we will send home a short, one page newsletter that we call "Trending Now." It will include important information about what is happening at PGS, reminders about upcoming events, and a short article from the principals about a topic of interest. We will try to attach to that email and newsletter any other documents of importance from the week. When communication is necessary and urgent, we will send your family an email or perhaps a letter in hard copy. You are welcome and encouraged to reach out to us with any questions or concerns you may have. Many of your questions may be answered by reviewing our website [PGS Website](#) and our Avon Public Schools Elementary Handbook. The best way to reach us is to call the school office, or send an email to pinegroveoffice@avon.k12.ct.us. You can also always contact Mrs. Buckle or myself directly at our email addresses.

PGS-PTO

Please see the following link for our Parent Teacher Organization and to sign up for Konstella (scroll all the way to the bottom, the new code to join is **CMJ9MX** all capital letters) [PGS PTO](#)
