

Pinecrest School

Nurturing curiosity, confidence, and a love of learning since 1957

PINECREST HEADLINES

Communication from the Head of School – Issue 1, 2009-10 – Wednesday, September 9, 2009

Introduction

This newsletter is produced by the Head of School every other Wednesday and distributed to parents via our school email list-serv/reflecter, PinecrestSchool@GoogleGroups.com. If you have email and are on the list-serv, but still wish to receive a paper copy, please send an email or note to me stating this request. If you are on our list-serv, but would also like to add additional email addresses, please also let me know. All messages sent through the list-serv/GoogleGroups reflecter list will have [PinecrestSchool] in the subject line. I hope you will view the newsletter an effective means of communication and a helpful tool to stay connected to the Pinecrest community.

News and Notes

The New Parent Coffee will take place on Friday, September 11, at 9:15 a.m., in the science lab of the newer building. Nate Carmody (parent of Brooke, grade 3, & Chase, K), Chair of the Board of Trustees, and I look forward to talking with all of the new parents at that time!

Thank you to those who have turned in completed medical/emergency care forms. Please do so immediately if you have not yet done so. To review, new families joining the school who attended Pinecrest Summer Pavilion 2009 do NOT need to complete the medical/emergency care form. All other new and returning families MUST complete one form per child. (Those who attend PSP 2010 will not need to complete a new form for camp 2010; we will use the one you complete now for that purpose.)

Thank you to those who have turned in completed Virginia School Entrance Health Forms. To review, new families joining the school who attended PSP 2009 do NOT need to complete this form. All other new families MUST complete one form per child.

Pinecrest's Annual Back-to-School Picnic is Sunday, September 20, from 4-6 p.m., on the back playground. Please remember that you must bring food and beverages for your family; cutlery, napkins, and any other necessary paper products for your family; blankets and/or chairs for your family; sunscreen for your family; and anything else you may need to have a fun time with the Pinecrest community! In case of rain, the picnic will be held in the multipurpose room.

Our annual Back-to-School Night is on Thursday, September 24, at 7 p.m. We will begin with a brief whole-group gathering in the newer building multipurpose room, and then parents will proceed to their child's classroom to hear a presentation by the classroom teacher. Teachers will have handouts and their daily schedules for you at this time as well. Please note that Back-to-School Night is for parents/adults only.

On Friday, October 16, Creative Images will be here to take individual and class photos of the children. Information will be sent to parents in an upcoming Wednesday Envelope as the date gets closer. Siblings can be photographed together and/or separately – parents, please let us know your wishes. There is no pre-order with Creative Images. Everyone will be photographed on picture day, and then within two weeks, proofs will be sent home to each family. Once the proofs come home, parents can either purchase the photos or not.

Our Annual Fun Fair is Saturday, October 17. This is such a fun-filled day of games, activities, good food, and plenty of community. Please plan to join us from 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. on the front lawn of Pinecrest. More details will follow about how you can help support this event by volunteering, as well as attending.

2009-10 School Directories (one per family) will be distributed via Wednesday Envelope on Wednesday, September 16, 2009. Once you receive it, if there are any corrections or additions to your information, please email office@pinecrestschool.org to let us know.

2009-10 Community Handbooks (one per family) were distributed to new families only at Visiting Day on Friday, September 4 (or via Wednesday Envelope if you were not present). Everyone should have received a copy of the handbook via email on Thursday, September 3. If you are a returning family and you would like a paper copy, please let us know and we will send one home to you.

News and Notes – continued

Today in your Wednesday Envelopes (one per family), there will be a purple handbook agreement form. This needs to be signed and returned to the office by Friday, September 18, 2009. Thank you in advance!

I respectfully request that all parents drop off and pick up through the carpool line. This system exists to make the transition to/from school seamless and efficient for all involved. If you are unfamiliar with how carpool works, please visit pages 5-6 of the Community Handbook. If you absolutely must park, please do so in the lower lot on the grass, not up by the older building or near the dumpster. Unfortunately, we've had a couple of near accidents in recent mornings and obviously want to avoid this and keep everyone safe. Thank you in advance for your cooperation!

The next tuition payment will just be a regular monthly payment and it will be due by Thursday, October 1. Please note that reminders are not sent for tuition and bus payments and a late fee is assessed (per the Community Handbook) if tuition and bus payments are not received by the 5th of the month.

Parents of children using K-6 after-care or preschool lunch bunch will receive bills monthly via Wednesday Envelopes. Once you receive your bill, please send back payment in the form of cash or check to Pinecrest School.

K-6 after-school activities will be offered this fall, beginning the week of October 5! More information about the offerings and how to sign up will be distributed next Wednesday, September 16, in the Wednesday Envelopes.

Mark Patterson (parent of Garrett, grade 3) is serving as Volunteer Chair on this year's Board of Trustees. You will be hearing from him and his wife, Trisha Serven, a lot this year! Thanks to everyone who completed and returned the light purple Parent Volunteer Sign-Up forms from the summer mailing. It is heartening to see so many parents willing to pitch in for the school and to make our events successful! If you need another copy or haven't yet turned yours in, it is not too late. Please let us know.

New families will have the opportunity to get Pinecrest car magnets at the New Parent Coffee. If any returning or new families not able to be there on Friday would like a Pinecrest car magnet (either new or for additional vehicles), please let us know. We love to see everyone displaying their school spirit and are happy to send more car magnets home with anyone who would like them for vehicles!

We have limited extra light blue "This is community" shirts in various sizes in both long-sleeve and short-sleeve. If after seeing the shirt today, you are interested in either additional short-sleeve shirts or the long-sleeve option, please let me know. I cannot make any promises about size availability, but please let me know what you'd like and we can see what we can do. We could end up doing an additional order of more shirts if we have enough interest. The youth or adult short-sleeve shirts are \$10 each, and the youth or adult long-sleeve shirts are \$15 each.

If you have any questions relating to financial matters or requests for receipts, please contact Ms. Karen Tamayo, our finance manager, at business@pinecrestschool.org. Email is always the best way to reach her. Please understand that Ms. Tamayo works on a flexible, part-time schedule; your patience is appreciated if you have financial questions or requests. Being that she does not work daily and no one else handles our finances, it will take a few days to respond to your request. Thank you in advance for your understanding.

Unfortunately, as parents of children riding the bus already know, we began our school year without a bus driver. We refuse to compromise our commitment to finding and hiring a responsible and reliable bus driver who will offer safe and pleasant driving for your child on our school bus. We have not yet found the right person for this important job, but are searching diligently. Fortunately though, we have been able to offer bus service without an employed bus driver. In a small school, with a small staff, it is very challenging when these kind of things happen to find alternative solutions. Very frequently though, the engaged and caring members of our community offer their assistance to help make things work. Words cannot express enough appreciation to Board Chair Nate Carmody, who has his CDL (Commercial Driver's License) for stepping up to help us now. This is community. This is Pinecrest School. I will keep everyone posted of our bus driver situation once it has been resolved.

Wednesday and Friday are P.E. days for all students; please remember sneakers and comfortable clothing on these days.

I am continuing last year's tradition: If you read this newsletter and respond by email by Friday morning at 10 a.m., you will be entered in a drawing to win a long-sleeve "This is community shirt" for your child! (If you have already purchased one for your child, you could take one for yourself or we will refund the cost you paid.)

Upcoming Dates

Fri., Sept. 11	New Parent Coffee – 9:15 a.m. – science/art lab, newer building
Sun., Sept. 20	Back-to-School Family Picnic – 4-6 p.m. – back playground
Thurs., Sept. 24	All-school Back-to-School Night – 7 p.m. – begins in multipurpose room
Sat., Oct. 3	Spruce Up Day / Parent Workday – 9:30 a.m. – front lawn
Tues., Oct. 6	Board of Trustees Meeting – 7 p.m. – science/art lab, newer building
Fri., Oct. 9	K-6 Half Day – 12 noon Dismissal – no after-care
Mon., Oct. 12	Columbus Day Holiday – NO SCHOOL
Fri., Oct. 16	Individual & Class Photos by Creative Images (make-up date: April 21)
Sat., Oct. 17	Fun Fair – 11 a.m.-3 p.m. – front lawn
Thurs., Oct. 29-Fri., Nov. 6	Scholastic Book Fair – multipurpose room, newer building
Fri., Oct. 30	Halloween Parade – 9:15 a.m. – driveway circle
Fri., Oct. 30	K-6 Quarter 1 Ends (38 days)

Celebrations/Appreciations

I want to thank you all of the families who joined us for Pinecrest Summer Pavilion this summer. We all had so much fun, and the creative classes and unique activities were amazing as ever. Mrs. Hartzler says it best when she says, "It was a great summer!" It could not have been better, and we are already planning for 2010!

Happy Birthday to Ms. Tamayo (today), and happy belated birthday to Mrs. Murphy (September 2) and Mrs. Kessler (September 6)! ☺

I want to extend another warm welcome to all of the families joining our school community for the first time this year and to the new staff as well – Mrs. Kessler (Preschool 3), Ms. Mitlo (Grade 5/6), and Ms. Minnick (Library)!

Personal Note

As Head of School, there are many unpredictable moments and hectic times. Just as frequent, though, are the all-the-time things that occur and that are part of how I do my job. Some of these "regular duties" include walking around and popping in and out of classrooms; talking with teachers and staff about student concerns, questions, or cute things they have said or done; and interacting with kids. Just today, I had a preschooler enthusiastically waving at me even though I wasn't looking anywhere near him or a three-year-old tell me that she is not a baby anymore, but a big girl. Yesterday, a fourth grader reported with great authority that her glue stick had been found, and I said, dramatically, "Thank goodness, I was so worried!" and she looked at me and just laughed because we both knew I was not that worried about her glue stick. ☺

And, then there are my talks with teachers...and the deep concern that's always inherent in what they say and in their approach to teaching or how their attention, all the time, is on both big and little things that could affect a child's growth, well-being, or just simply, if s/he will have a good day. You have to love what you do if you work all hours, come to school on weekends or stay until it's dark at night, or are willing to give out your home phone number to parents and answer emails so frequently. Our teachers do. They are experts, and we are so very lucky to have them in our community. All of us who are privileged enough to work at Pinecrest School do so because we believe that, as we strive to meet the individual needs of children, in close consultation with their parents, we are enabling each student to grow academically, socially, and emotionally at his or her own pace within a nurturing and supportive educational environment. This matters to us. And, we know it matters to you too or else you would not be here.

As we begin a new school year, I want to thank you for choosing to be part of our community this year. I promise you that we will work hard and we will care deeply. And, we will enjoy every moment of working and being with your child.

Onward!

Thought for the Day
"No limits but the sky." (Cervantes)