



Pine Ridge Elementary School  
*Parent and Student Handbook*  
2024 - 2025

Dear Pine Ridge Family,

I would like to take a moment to welcome you to Pine Ridge Elementary School and community. This is a great place for your child to learn and grow. We are one of two elementary schools that service the preK - 4th grade students in the Southeast Dubois County School Corporation. Please take some time to familiarize yourself with the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook. This handbook will serve as a guide as your child navigates their years at Pine Ridge Elementary.

The teachers and staff are excited and committed to providing your child a quality education. We strive to have every student reach their full potential and with the help of you, a vital part of the team, we can make this happen. We look forward to our time together and the great things your child will accomplish now and in the future.

Sincerely,

Mr. Hinson and Staff

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## Academics

Southeast Dubois School Corporation's curriculum is centered on the Indiana Academic Standards for the appropriate grade levels. The standards are available for review at school or online at the Indiana Department of Education Internet site <http://www.doe.in.gov/standards>.

## Grading Scale

Grade	Percentages
A+	100
A	94-99
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	59 and below
CR	Credit earned on satisfactory completion of work
M	Meets Expectations
A	Approaching Expectations
B	Below Expectations

## **Grades are available in Harmony**

<https://sedubois.logickey.com/harmony/sedubois/familyaccess.nsf/hello.xsp>

Report cards will be sent home at the end of the quarter.

## Attendance

When a student is unable to attend school due to illness or other causes, parents/guardians are required to notify your child's teacher and school office by 7:50. Please note the parent name, student name, teacher, and reason for absence.

If a student needs to leave school during the day for a health-related appointment, please give your homeroom teacher and the school office advance notice of the appointment and time. This will allow staff to prepare for departure and missed schoolwork. Students shall be picked up at the office (Door 1). If someone other than a parent/guardian or person with permission (with a signed note on file at the office) is picking up the student, special directions to permit the child to leave must be received from the parent/guardian. No student shall be released to someone other than a parent/guardian or other pre-approved person.

Please contact the office at 812-817-0900 Extension 3

**Doctors' notes are required for health-related appointments**

Students and parents are urged to schedule medical and dental appointments at times when school is not in session. When conflict with school hours cannot be avoided, the principal may grant an excused

absence. Excused medical and dental absences **must be verified in writing** by the doctor or dentist's office.

An absence will be considered EXCUSED if any of the following criteria are met:

- **A parent phone call or email notifying the school of illness. Parents/Guardians are permitted 10 call-ins for illness before needing a medical professional's written authorization.**
- The student has authorization in writing from a licensed person in the legal or medical profession.
- There is a death in the immediate family.
- There is a special situation as determined by the principal: school-sponsored trips, special awards/recognition, etc.
- Any absence that is excused per Indiana Code 20-33-2

If the school does not receive a call, a phone call will be made to inquire and confirm the need to be absent. If the cause for the absence is within the above-mentioned regulations, the student may be given an excused absence. Once a student is reported as a habitual truant, all future absences must be certified by a legal or medical professional.

Make-up work will be required for an excused absence. A student will be given one (1) day for each excused day missed to complete the make-up work and receive credit for it. If the make-up work is not completed in the allowed time, the student shall not receive credit for such work.

## **VACATIONS AND DAYS AWAY FROM SCHOOL**

A special excused absence may be granted for a student going on a trip. The principal must approve these absences prior to the date of absence. If it is not pre-approved, it is considered unexcused. Students going on a trip may be excused upon meeting the following conditions:

1. The student will be absent no more than (5) five school days.
2. The student will be accompanied on the trip by a parent or legal guardian.
3. The parent/guardian will have all academic work planned ahead with their child's teacher and will have the child complete the work and turn it in upon returning to school.
4. The student must make up any additional work missed within three days of return.
5. These days will be counted toward the 10 allowable excused absences.

## **Dubois Circuit Court and Project Attend**

In partnership with Dubois County Circuit Court, Project Attend is a program designed to reduce absenteeism in local schools. The Project Attend case committee overseeing each individual referral is made up of the juvenile probation officer representing the juvenile court, referring school principal, the Indiana Department of Child Services, the Prosecuting Attorney's Office for the State of Indiana, a school representative (guidance counselor and/or teacher), and/or any other person have any interest in the student's attendance in school may also participate.

### **Step 1: Three Unexcused Absences**

- Phone call to parents/guardian- Date and Time of phone call
- Send a copy of school attendance policy via registered mail -
- Name will be placed on Attendance Officer's watch list

### **Step 2: Five Unexcused Absences**

- Phone call to parents/guardian- Date and Time of phone call

- Certified letter (or in person) mailed home with a copy of the school attendance policy and a School
- Attendance Statutory Advisement and Admonition that the parent must sign in person at the school -
- School Attendance Officer meets with parent and child (Can be done in conjunction with and simultaneous to the above requirement) –
- School investigation checklist for possible reasons:

**Step 3: Seven Unexcused Absences**

- Phone call to parents/guardian- Date and Time of phone call
- Referral to PROJECT ATTEND through Juvenile Probation Officer- Date of referral

**Step 4: Ten Unexcused Absences**

- Referral to Dubois County Prosecutor for Educational Neglect and/or Delinquency Petition filing,
- Referral to the Department of Child Services Abuse/Neglect Hotline

**Tardies**

Students are expected to arrive on time. Students who fail to arrive on time shall receive a penalty determined by the teacher. Students who are habitually tardy shall be referred to the office for disciplinary measures. Tardies and absences from school are recorded based on the following schedule:

- Less than 2.5 hours = marked as tardy
- 2.5 hours - 4 hours = half-day absence
- Anything over 4 hours = full-day absence

**Transportation**

**Bus**

The expectation for every child is that they follow the rules on the bus as they follow the rules at our school. Please talk with your child about proper behavior on the bus. Topics should include: stay seated in your assigned seat, keep conversations to a neighbor, keep your body to yourself and do not distract the driver. **Poor bus behavior will result in removal from the bus.**

If a student is to go to another destination other than their regular bus stop, the school must be notified in advance via a note or phone call. Preferably at the beginning of the day. The information in the note should include what bus he/she is to ride, where the student is going, and the duration of the change. A bus pass will be issued by the Administrative Assistant for the new destination.

### **Arrival**

If your child rides a bus to and from school and you are not sure what bus he/she rides, please contact the school and we can help. If your child is a car rider, you will pull into the parking lot on the South side of the school and will drop your child off at door 5. If you need to assist your child to the door, please get out of line and park before doing so. Students may arrive at school beginning at 7:30 am. The school day begins at 7:45 am. Parents dropping off and picking up students should abide by the following procedure.

### **Dismissal**

The school day ends at 3:00 pm. Car riders and early buses will be dismissed at this time. Students that ride late buses are released no later than 3:25 pm. Car Riders: The gate to let you into the south lot will open approximately at 2:45 due to afternoon recess. Please follow the diagram below for Car Rider pick up.

**ALL TRANSPORTATION CHANGES MUST BE REPORTED TO THE OFFICE BY 2:15 PM.**

**Mrs. Janet Uebelhor: 812-817-0900 Ex. 3001 [janet.uebelhor@sedubois.k12.in.us](mailto:janet.uebelhor@sedubois.k12.in.us)**



### **Behavior Expectations**

**Bus Behavior:** Students who ride a SED school bus are reminded of safety and behavior expectations.

- Students should remain seated while the bus is in motion.
- Students should face forward.
- Students should keep their body parts and belongings to themselves—no touching others.
- Voice levels should remain normal, with no screaming or yelling.
- There should be no foul language or inappropriate hand gestures.
- No food or drink, with the exception of water bottles are allowed.
- All school rules apply.

Riding a school bus is a privilege, not a requirement of SED. To ensure continuous safety, please make sure that your student(s) is/are aware of and are adhering to the rules. Students who do not follow these rules will receive school consequences and may be removed from the bus. If a child is removed from the bus due to behavior, it will be the responsibility of the parent to transport the student to school. Removal from the school bus is not an excuse to miss school.

### **Classroom Behavior**

Each teacher will develop a set of norms to follow while in that classroom. These norms will vary due to teaching styles and techniques. In addition, norms will be established for student behavior outside the regular classroom (hallways, gym, cafeteria, recess, etc.).

Positive student behavior, attitude, and work ethic are expected and shall be acknowledged regularly.

### **School Safety**

Weapons of any kind are prohibited on school property, buses, or at any school-related activity. (This includes pocket knives.)

### **Drugs and Alcohol**

It is in violation of school corporation guidelines to

1. Use, possess, provide to another person, or to be under the influence of any substance which is or contains any of the following (but not limited to): alcohol, marijuana, stimulant, intoxicant, depressant, hallucinogen, prescription, sold over-the-counter (without prescription), or any substance represented by the provider to be another substance (e.g. look-a-like), on school grounds at any time or any school-sponsored activity at any location, including the school bus. Under the influence shall mean that the student has the presence of an illegal substance or residue of an illegal substance due to consumption, injection or prior use within body systems and the substance alters the individual's normal behavior or the individual tests positive for the presence of an illegal substance(s) beyond a level of zero.
2. Use, possess, or provide to any person anything used or designed to be used primarily for the storage, possession, delivery, or consumption of alcohol, marijuana, stimulants, intoxicants, narcotics, depressants, hallucinogens, prescription medicines, whether on school premises at any time, or any school-sponsored activity at any location, including the school bus.
3. Examples of things that are not to be possessed or provided to another person are pills of any kind, pipes, rolling papers, clips, vapes or vape accessories, or lighters/matches.

### **Smoking and Vaping**

Southeast Dubois School Corporation is a smoke-free and vaping-free building policy. No one is allowed to use or have any tobacco and/or vaping products on school grounds, on buses, or at related activities of the school. It is unlawful for anyone under eighteen years of age to possess, purchase, or use any type of tobacco product. If caught, students may be referred to the prosecutor of Dubois County for a fine. Students are not to carry any lighters, matches, or related articles to school at any time. Any tobacco products, vaping products, or related articles will be confiscated and not returned.

### **Bullying**

**NO student shall be allowed to bully and/or threaten another student or staff member.**

Bullying is prohibited by Southeast Dubois School Corporation and the State of Indiana. Students who commit acts of bullying are subject to discipline including, but not limited to, suspension, expulsion, arrest, and /or prosecution.

**Definition.** "Bullying" is defined as overt, unwanted, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communications or images transmitted in any manner (including digitally or electronically); physical acts committed; aggression; or any other behaviors committed by a student or a group of students



against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the targeted student, creating for the targeted student an objectively hostile school environment that

- 1) Places the targeted student in reasonable fear of physical harm or damage to property;
- 2) Has a substantially detrimental effect on the targeted student's physical or mental health;
- 3) Has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student's academic performance; or
- 4) Has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the school.

**Bullying does not include:**

- 1) Participating in a religious event;
- 2) Acting in an emergency involving the protection of a person or property from an imminent threat of serious bodily injury or substantial danger;
- 3) Participating in an activity consisting of the exercise of a student's freedom of speech rights;
- 4) Participation in an activity conducted by a nonprofit or governmental entity that provides recreation, education, training, or other care under the supervision of one or more adults;
- 5) Participating in an activity undertaken at the prior written direction of the student's parent, or
- 6) Engaging in interstate or international travel from a location outside Indiana to another location outside of Indiana.

**Applicability.** Southeast Dubois School Corporation prohibits bullying in all forms. This policy may be applied regardless of the physical location in which the bullying behavior occurred, whenever the individual committing the bullying behavior and any of the intended targets of the bullying behavior are students attending a school within our school corporation and disciplinary action is reasonably necessary to avoid substantial interference with school discipline or prevent an unreasonable threat to the rights of others for a safe and peaceful learning environment. Southeast Dubois School Corporation prohibits bullying through the use of data or computer software that is accessed through any computer, computer system, or computer network.

**Possible Consequences**

(The nature of the infraction and the frequency of infractions will guide consequences.)

- Conference with parent and student (phone or in person)
- Recess/lunch detention
- In-school suspension
- After-school detention
- Saturday School
- Out-of-school suspension
- Expulsion.

**Reporting.** Anyone who believes that a student has possibly been or is the victim of bullying is encouraged to immediately report the situation to an appropriate staff member. All staff members who observe or receive a report of suspected bullying shall immediately notify the principal and school social worker. Any person who makes a report of bullying and requests to remain anonymous will not be personally identified as the reporter or complainant to the extent permitted by law. School administration will act appropriately to discipline staff members who fail to initiate or conduct an investigation for a bullying incident and for the person who falsely reports an incident of bullying.

Students may report concerns of possible bullying in person, in writing, or by electronic means. However, specific details must be provided to allow for investigation. Students are encouraged to include their names in the report and to request confidentiality so that follow-up questions can be asked by the school administration.

## **IF YOU SEE SOMETHING SAY SOMETHING!**

### **Threats**

Upon notice of threats, if determined appropriate by school staff, parents of all students directly involved shall be informed. State law requires that all threats made to/against staff members are to be reported to local law enforcement agencies.

### **Searching lockers, backpacks, purses, persons, etc.**

Upon a reasonable suspicion that a student:

1. violated or is violating a school rule or behavioral norm contained in the student handbook;
2. has violated or is violating a particular law;
3. possesses an item or substance which presents an immediate danger of physical harm or illness to students and staff or corporation property

The principal or designee may search lockers or other storage areas for student use (i.e. desks, backpacks), vehicles (i.e. bikes, cars of visiting students), and/or persons (i.e. the student's pockets, purses)

### **Cameras**

Security cameras are positioned at various locations inside and outside the school building. Video may be used by the administration to aid in resolving discipline concerns. Due to the confidentiality of other students, parents may not view the camera footage.

### **Cafe Services**

Southeast Dubois School Corporation participates in the National School Lunch Program. Menus shall be published. Prices are noted on the General Information Sheet during online registration. Free and reduced-price meals are available based on financial need. Applications for Free and Reduced lunches are available during online registration. If a family has students attending more than one corporation school, only one form is required to be completed. Information about a student's participation is confidential. Families who are unsure if they qualify should apply. For more information, please see <https://www.sedubois.k12.in.us/rangercafe>

### **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parent/Teacher Conferences will be offered in the fall for all students. Please check the newsletter and your email for scheduling updates.

### **Parent/Guardian Questions/Concerns**

Parents and guardians please reach out to your child's homeroom teacher with any questions or concerns. Teachers have voicemails; however, they are unavailable most of the school day to respond to a phone call. The best form of communication is email. We will make every effort to return communication promptly. Parents are encouraged to contact the school directly in lieu of making social media posts regarding school concerns.

### **Student Use of Phones**

The use of school telephones by students is limited to emergency calls and school business calls only. Calls for forgotten homework and permission to attend functions will be discouraged. These matters should be taken care of in advance. **Smartwatches are strongly discouraged and if they become a distraction they will be prohibited.** Cell phones are not to be used during the school day. If a student brings a cell phone for after-school use, the phone must be turned off and left in the backpack. Violations will result in cell phones and/or other devices being confiscated and sent to the office. **Parents will be required to collect cell phones and electronic devices from the office.**

### **Personal Property**

PRE will not be responsible for lost or broken items of a personal nature. Items, which may prove to be disruptive to the general school setting are not permitted. If a student brings in items which are disruptive to the general school setting (especially Trading Cards), these items will be turned into the office and returned either to the student at the end of the school year or the parent may pick them up at the school office.

### **Custodial/Non-Custodial Information**

Please make the principal aware of any legal custody agreement that pertains to your student. Communications must include copies of the court order, restraining order, divorce decree, or another court document. It is the responsibility of the custodial parent to inform the principal of all pertinent information, special concerns, and restrictions concerning child custody matters. The principal must be informed of all updates and changes that impact the child and the function of the school as they occur.

Federal and State Law automatically provides that non-custodial parents have unlimited access to all records and information concerning the education of their child unless those rights are specifically taken away.

### **Dress Code**

Modes of grooming and styles of attire that detract from an appropriate educational environment will not be permitted. Students, in their dress and grooming, must recognize the necessity for health, safety, cleanliness, and modesty at all times. The building administration shall determine what is appropriate. A student may be sent home to correct inappropriate dress or grooming. Students may also be instructed to wear clothing provided by the office for a given day. Students can be disciplined for offenses, especially repeated offenses. In general, students should always avoid extremes. The basic responsibility for appropriate dress must rest with the student and his/her parents.

#### **Guidelines:**

1. Students shall wear all items of clothing in the manner for which it was intended or designed.
  - Pants should not have holes above the knees
  - Pants and shorts must be worn at waist level (no sagging) and shall have proper belting to hold them at the waist position.
  - Pants shall not drag on the floor.
2. The wearing of any apparel that has writing, printing, symbols, or graphics that are judged to be offensive, immoral, vulgar, lewd, suggestive of, and/or implies sex, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, violence, or other subjects disruptive to the normal school environment is prohibited.
3. All shirts must have a capped sleeve and must extend past the waist.
4. Students are expected to wear shoes that are safe and appropriate. On P.E. days, athletic shoes must be worn.
5. Shorts are permitted in warmer weather. The length of the shorts must extend below mid-thigh.
6. Any attire that distracts from the educational environment is prohibited.
7. Hats may not be worn in the school building. Appropriate hats may only be worn on the playground and during specially-declared days.

## **Student Health**

### **Medications**

The school office must be notified of any medication a student is to have administered during the school day. If a child is required to have medication administered during the school day, and a parent cannot be at school to administer the medication, the nurse, principal, teacher, or school employee designated by the principal may administer the medication in compliance with the following:

1. The school office must receive written consent signed by the parent/guardian. If the medication is a prescription medication, instructions must also be received from the physician. The consent must include the following:
  - Date of consent
  - Child's name
  - Name of medication
  - time(s) and day(s) medication is to be administered
  - Dosage
  - The termination date for administering medication
2. **All medications must be turned into the office.** The exception to this policy is permitted if the medication is for an acute medical condition and can be self-administered. (Written permission from parent or doctor is required) All medication must be in its original container. Medications include prescriptions and non-prescriptions such as Tylenol, aspirin, cough syrup, lotions, ointments, cough drops, etc. Medicines stored at school may not be transported to school or sent home with students below grade 9. Parents must make arrangements for delivery and pick up of medications. Medications shall not be transported to or from school by students.

Parents of students are responsible for informing the school office of any changes in the student's health or change in medication.

The school retains the discretion to reject requests for the administration of medicine. (The above policy and guidelines are according to I.C. 34-4-6.6-3.5.)

### **Media**

On occasion, newspapers, radio stations, etc. contact us for article information. Student names, parent names and pictures will be given for stories. **YOU MAY TELL US NOT TO ALLOW THIS.** Please do so in writing and send it to the school office.

### **Parent Involvement**

A key part of a successful school is the positive involvement and support of parents. The school will inform parents of school news regularly in the principal's monthly newsletter or teachers weekly newsletter. Parents are encouraged to openly discuss school activities with their children and inquire about academic progress regularly.

The following are programs specifically designed to involve parents in our school.

### **PTO Organization**

All parents are automatically considered members of the Parent-Teacher Organization and are invited and encouraged to participate in school activities. A representative group of parents meets with the principal periodically. Names of the PTO Advisory Board are published in the school newsletter.

### **Volunteers**

There are several volunteer opportunities at Pine Ridge Elementary School. Information will go out periodically in the school newsletter. Please be sure to have an updated background check on file with Southeast Dubois School Corporation to ensure your ability to volunteer if you should decide to do so.

### **Guidelines**

- Be punctual (give advance notice if unable to be present as scheduled).
- Know and observe school safety rules.
- Dress appropriately.
- Treat all students fairly and with respect.
- Participate as guided by the teacher, principal, or other assigned staff member.
- Be positive. If unsure or concerned about something at school, discuss it with the principal.

Criminal History Checks are required of all volunteers. This process can be done by going to the “Employment” tab on our SEDubois website. Look for the “SEDCSC Background Check –Volunteer” link.

### **Weather Delays/Cancellations/Early Dismissals**

School delays, cancellations, or early dismissals due to weather conditions will be communicated through School Messenger, local radio stations WITZ, WBDC, or their affiliates, and TV Channel 25 by 6:45 A.M. Please do not call the school, the Principal, or the Superintendent for cancellation information.



## Annual Written Notification Accessing Public Benefits & Releasing Personally Identifiable Information to the Medicaid Program

The federal special education law, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act 2004 (IDEA), specifies each State's obligation to develop agreements with non-educational public agencies to ensure that all services necessary to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) are provided to children with disabilities at no cost to the parent. This includes the State Medicaid agency. School districts are permitted to seek payment from public insurance programs (Medicaid) for some services provided at school.

Under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), your consent is required for the school system to release information about your child to the Indiana Medicaid program in order to access your or your child's public benefits. You are entitled to have a copy of any information the school system releases to the state Medicaid program.

If you have previously given consent for Southeast Dubois County School Corporation to access your or your child's public benefits and to release information needed to access Medicaid funding for services provided through your child's individualized education program (IEP), the school district may release:

- Your child's name and Social Security Number;
- Your child's date of birth;
- Your child's IEP documentation including evaluations;
- The dates and times services are provided to your child at school;
- Reports of your child's progress, including therapist notes, progress notes and report cards.

Your child will continue to receive all required IEP services at no cost to you. Reimbursed services provided by the Southeast Dubois County School Corporation or Exceptional Children's Co-op does not limit coverage, change eligibility, affect benefits, or count against visit or funding limits in Medicaid programs in which your child is enrolled.

You may revoke your consent at any time. Revoking your parental consent does not change the school district's responsibility to provide all required IEP services at no cost.

You may ask questions about this program or revoke your consent at any time by contacting the Director of Special Education at Exceptional Children's Co-op.

Method of Delivery: Mailed to parent(s)\guardian(s) with progress monitoring reports.

## Pine Ridge Elementary Staff

### Office

Karl Hinson	Principal
Janet Uebelhor	Administrative Assistant
Leslie Luebbehusen	Nurse
Shea Madden	School Counselor
Jeremy Lee	School Resource Officer
Heather Williams	Technology Coordinator

### Teachers

Alyssa Merkley	Special Education Teacher
Erica Eckert	Special Education Teacher
Janell Pfau	Title 1
Brandi Kordes	Speech Language Pathologist
Michelle Grunden	Preschool
Andrea Gehlhausen	Kindergarten
Andi Longabaugh	Kindergarten
Lisa Huff	1st Grade
Tiffany Nicholson	1st Grade
Natalie Wells	2nd Grade
Brooke Wehr	2nd Grade
Tatum Englert	3rd Grade
Paula Kluesner	3rd Grade
Glenda Begle	4th Grade
Phil Winkler	4th Grade

Beth DeSchamp

Art

Katie Stone

Music

Andrea Atkins

Physical Education

Amy Jo Lytle

Library

### **Instructional Assistants**

Jennifer Eger

Donatta Jones

Sarah Beier

Amber Messmer

Susan Vaal

Jennifer Schuetter

Jennifer Knight

### **Cafe Staff**

Rachel Betz (Kitchen Manager)

Rosemary Betz

Melinda Gutsell

### **Building Stewards**

Jim Gardner

Maintenance Supervisor

Lonnie Chapman

Evening Custodian

Shelly Smith

Day Custodian