

Pine Street Elementary School

2025-2026



Parent/Student Handbook

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Dear Pine Street Families,

On behalf of the staff of Pine Street Elementary School, welcome to a new school year!

Parents are a child's first and most important teacher. Working together, we can provide a learning environment which will support as well as challenge your child to achieve excellence.

Children are very precious to us, and we take our job of educating and caring for them seriously. Our goal is to provide an excellent education for your children and to make sure they are safe when they are with us.

This handbook gives an overview of a few procedures and expectations for our school. Please let us know how we can be of service to you. It is going to be a great year!

Stetina Haines-Williams

Principal of PSE (Pine Street Elementary)

Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)

Pine Street Elementary is a PBIS School. We teach positive behavior strategies.

Our Roadrunner Creed is:

"A Roadrunner is in the Right Place at the Right Time doing the Right Thing Because we are Respectful, Responsible, and Ready."

Student Attendance:

Attendance in all grades is extremely important. Students do better in school when they attend consistently. Absences cause students to fall behind with assignments and learning state standards. Students cannot achieve their best if they are not here for direct instruction because so much of what goes on at school cannot be made up. It is also true that a child misses instruction when he/she is checked out during the day or arrives late to school.

If your child gets sick during the school day, we will have the nurse call you if it is necessary to pick up your child. In the event that your child must be absent, he/she must bring a **written excuse** within three days of his/her return to school. Otherwise, the absence is unexcused. Please review the Rockdale County Public Schools Handbook for the [attendance policy](#) as well as the reasons for which absences will be excused.

Tardies and Early Check-Outs:

1. The tardy bell rings promptly at 7:35 a.m.
2. If a child is not in their classroom at that time, he/she is considered tardy and must be checked in by an adult.
3. Notes also need to be written for late check-in and early check out.
4. Checking in late or checking out early is considered a “tardy.” Please try to make appointments for your child after the school day ends.

Breakfast:

Children who are eating breakfast at school need to be in the cafeteria by 7:30 a.m. Students who ride the bus should have enough time to eat breakfast daily. If you bring your child to school, just be aware of this time if he/she wishes to eat breakfast. Since we begin school at 7:35 a.m., we stop serving in the cafeteria at 7:30 a.m. and transition to sack breakfast so there is sufficient time for students to get to class prior to the final tardy bell.

Lunch:

For students who bring lunch from home, it is recommended that they not bring carbonated drinks, anything in glass containers, or food from area restaurants. Additionally, students do not have access to heat food in microwaves or utilize staff refrigerators.

Transportation:

BUS

- ★ We currently have about 8 buses which serve the Pine Street district. Some of our buses run A and B routes.
- ★ For safety reasons, good behavior is expected on the buses at all times.
- ★ Buses unload each morning beginning at **7:00 a.m.**
- ★ Riding a bus that is not your child's assigned bus requires upon approval from the district transportation office. This approval can take up to two weeks. Forms for non-home drop off are located in the front office.

CARS

- ★ Cars must stay in the car line and let your child out on the front sidewalk. The sidewalk is where adults are posted to assist your child and monitor for safety.
- ★ **Please do not let your child out in the parking lot at any time.**
- ★ If you prefer, you may park and walk your child to the door. Most parents are on a tight schedule in the mornings. Please be considerate of others when you are dropping off your child. **Please park in a marked parking space so that traffic can flow safely and visibility of cars and people is maintained.**

Any changes in afternoon transportation **must be in writing.** We cannot make changes over the phone. Remind your child to turn in this written request to his/her teacher first thing in the morning so all adults involved in the dismissal of students are notified. **All transportation changes must be submitted in writing to the office no later than 1:00pm.**

Dismissal:

If you are picking up your child in the afternoon, please be aware that you should be here no later than 2:20 p.m. Car riders and daycare pick up will be at the front entrance while buses are loading at the same time on the side of the school. Be sure to make your daycare center aware of the time for pick-up.

In order to reduce confusion at the end of the school day, **we ask that you not come into the school to check out your child after 1:45.** At this time, we are preparing for and beginning dismissal procedures. The front office and administrative staff must remain focused on a safe and orderly dismissal.

When checking out a student, **please be prepared to show a valid picture ID.** Parents will complete Annual Updates through their Parent Portal which will include the names of who you have authorized to pick up or have access to your child. Please communicate with your child's teacher and the front office if transportation changes.

If you have a child who is dismissed with car riders please **remain in your car**, and we will bring your child to your car as you drive up. We ask this in fairness to all parents who also are waiting and as a safety precaution. For regular car riders, parent pick-up tags will be issued to each parent/guardian through the front office. If you switch cars or someone else is picking up your child, please put the pick-up tag in the different car. Otherwise, the driver will need to show ID and check out the child through the office.

Parents and Visitors:

We want to highlight some safety protocols that will be important to keep in mind if visiting the school or checking out a child from school. For the safety and order of the school, **ALL PARENTS/VISITORS NEED TO BRING A VALID ID AND CHECK IN AT THE OFFICE,** during school hours regardless of the length of the visit.

Parents will be asked to complete the Annual Update through their Parent Portal Account. Through this process, parents are asked to give the names of all people that may have access to your child. This would include those that are allowed to pick up the child from school in the

event the parents are unable to be reached as well as anyone the parents give permission to have lunch with their child.

All visitors are expected to wear a visitor badge in plain sight while in the building.

Safety is a top priority. Visitors should come into the front doors of the school and directly to the office to sign in, have their identification verified, and receive a visitor badge. Upon exiting the building, visitors should check-out with the office staff.

In an effort to protect the instructional time, we ask that you call or write a note to your child's teacher if you need to speak with him/her. We want to have open communication with parents, so please know that the teacher will get back to you in a timely fashion when he/she does not have students.

Thirty-minute scheduled classroom visits/observations are allowed. However, it is imperative that this visit be for observation purposes only. An administrator or designee must be present for the duration of the visit. We value our instructional time, so if a conference is needed, please schedule a time that does not interfere with instruction. We ask that parents schedule time to visit at least a day in advance. We discourage "pop-in" visits to protect the instructional time and assure the good order of the classroom learning environment. Due to privacy of other students, there should be no video recordings or pictures taken of students during observations.

Other Key Areas of Information:

Personal Items: Please label hats, coats, sweaters, etc. Labeling will help us get the lost item to the owner. If your child loses an item, there is a lost and found area near the stage in the cafeteria. After a reasonable amount of time, unclaimed clothing will be donated to charity.

Sending money to school: If you send money to school, please put the money in an envelope for the teacher. Write your child's name and the purpose for the money so that the money is placed in the correct hands.

Birthdays: We do not have birthday parties at school. However, parents may bring or send cupcakes to school to be enjoyed during the assigned lunch time. Our office staff will make sure the cupcakes get to the class. Cupcakes and treat bags must be purchased from a store and in its original container. Bring them to the office and the staff will notify the teacher that the treats have arrived. They will be served during lunch. Parents must notify the teacher at least 1 day in advance that they will be bringing items. This will provide us with time to address any student allergies or other concerns. Please do not send anything that contains nuts. If a student distributes party invitations, all students in the classroom should receive one.

Cell Phones and other electronic devices: Georgia's Distraction-Free Education Act (HB 340), signed into law this year, requires all public schools in the state to enact a policy and procedure for the use of personal electronic devices at school and school sponsored events by students in kindergarten through eighth grade (K-8). After

researching potential solutions, Rockdale County Public Schools (RCPS) will be implementing the use of Yondr pouches to secure personal devices in **Pre-Kindergarten through 8th grade** for the upcoming school year.

Students will be asked to turn off their personal device upon entering the school building. Students will place their device in a lockable pouch that they will keep with them throughout the school day. Pouches will be unlocked at the end of the school day. Pouches will remain at school. Any student who willfully damages or alters the Yondr pouch will face disciplinary action and will be charged a fee to cover the cost of repair or replacement.

Students with medical needs or disabilities that require access to a device during the school day may be eligible for accommodations. Students who monitor their blood sugar levels with their device must have a Diabetes Medical Management Plan on file to maintain possession of their device during the school day and at school sponsored events. Parents and guardians should contact their school to discuss individual needs and arrangements.

Students are allowed to call home using the school phone if the teacher determines that it is necessary. Students will not be called to the office to receive phone calls. Parents and guardians who may need to reach a student for urgent or emergency matters should contact their school's front office.

In accordance with the law, the RCPS policy defines a personal electronic device as any portable electronic device that is capable of transmitting, receiving, or accessing communications, data, or media. This includes but is not limited to smartphones, smartwatches, tablets, e-readers, headphones, and other devices with functionalities such as wireless communication, internet access, messaging, video recording, gaming, social media access, or data transmission. This does not include any listening devices or other technology issued by RCPS or as approved by school administrators.

Elementary student use of ALL electronic devices, whether personal or school owned, are governed under the Federal Trade Commission COPPA (Child On-line Privacy Protection Act). As a partner in educating your child and protecting their rights and the rights of other children, if it is found that your child is participating in website or app use at school or in a way that involves the school, that is not directly related to their education, you will be notified, and your child may receive a discipline consequence. This includes, but is not limited to, social media sites.

Volunteers/Fieldtrips

Any volunteers that will be unsupervised with children (chaperones on fieldtrips) will need to have a background check. This went into effect in January 2025. The

background check is \$52 dollars. The parent is responsible for covering the fee. Parents will also need to complete the mandated reporter compliance module.

Student Medications: In order to have prescription medicine administered by the school, the parents must provide the following:

1. Parents must request in writing that school personnel administer the medication. (Form JGCD-E-1 must be signed and submitted.)
2. Medication must be in a prescription bottle properly labeled with specific orders for administering the medication
3. Over the counter medication must be brought to the school in the original container with written directions from the parent on how and when to administer.
4. Parents, **please do not send medication on the bus**. Please bring it into the school to avoid a potential harmful situation.

The school nurse will administer medications. Her hours are 7:00 a.m. -3:00 p.m. Medications will be dispensed after that time by the principal's designee.

Parent/Teacher Conferences: Conferences are planned within the RCPS (Rockdale County Public Schools) school calendar although parents can request a conference at any time. The days listed on the district calendar for parent/teacher conferences are **Tuesday, November 11th and Friday, March 27th.**



Discipline Code of Conduct:

The behavior code for students enrolled in Rockdale County Public Schools is based on the philosophy of our school board that each student has a right to expect to be able to learn in an environment free from distractions and duress of any sort. Students are expected to demonstrate respect for self and others, demonstrate courtesy of others, behave in a responsible manner, take school seriously, dress appropriately and avoid violation of the student Code of Conduct. Below you can see the main rules in the Code of Conduct. The complete Code of Conduct with full descriptions can be found in the [RCPS Parent Handbook](#)

located on the district website under Handbooks and also linked to each student's ClassLink page.

Rule 1..... Disruption and Interference With School

Rule 2..... Damage, Destruction, or Theft of School Property

Rule 3..... Damage, Destruction, or Theft of Private Property

Rule 4..... Assault and/or Battery on a School Employee

Rule 5..... Fighting and/or Battery to a Person Not Employed by the School

Rule 6..... Bullying/Teasing

Rule 7..... Weapons and Dangerous Instruments

Rule 8..... Narcotics, Alcoholic Beverages, Stimulant Drugs, Controlled Substances or Medications

Rule 9..... Disregard of Directions or Commands

Rule 10... Unexcused Absences and Tardiness

Rule 11... Dress and Grooming

Rule 12... Parking and Traffic-Related Violations on Campus

Rule 13... Refusal to Accept Disciplinary Action

Rule 14... Use of Profane, Vulgar, or Obscene Words, Gestures, Pornographic/Vulgar Materials or Actions Which Disrupt School System Operations

Rule 15... Gambling on School Property or at a School Function

Rule 16... Misbehavior on Bus

Rule 17... Criminal Law Violations

Rule 18... Sexual Misconduct or Inappropriate Display of Affection

Rule 19... Rude and Disrespectful Behavior

Rule 20... Tobacco/Smoking-Related Offenses

Rule 21... Cheating, Plagiarism, or Academic Dishonesty

Rule 22... Altering Records, Misrepresenting Information, Forgery

Rule 23... Misuse of Computer, Network, Internet, or Intranet

Rule 24... Loitering, Trespassing, or Breaking and Entering

Rule 25... Other Misbehavior

Rule 26... Misbehavior While Off School Property

Rule 27... Cumulative Offenses

Dress Code:

Children come to school to learn and often what a child is wearing influences his attitude toward working and learning. Rule 11 in the Parent Handbook highlights the district dress code for students. Some highlights of the dress code are listed below.

Please consider the following when sending your child to school:

- A. Clothes should be neat and clean.
- B. Students may wear shorts to school. They must be non-clinging (no spandex) and should be to the child's fingertips when his/her arms are extended by their side.
- C. The length of dresses and skirts should be to the child's fingertips when his/her arms are extended by their side.
- D. Leggings or Jeggings may be worn with a dress, skirt or shirt that reaches below their fingertips when his/her arms are extended by their side.
- E. Tops must completely cover the midriff when arms are raised. (Sleeveless shirts are fine provided they have a collar and are not a tank top).
- F. For safety, please remember appropriate shoes for PE. Areas of our playground are rocky and uneven so please be sure your child wears sensible support shoes to school every day. Flip-flop type, slip on, or dressy-heeled shoes are not safe in the school environment.
- G. Pants must be worn at waist level.

The following list is just a few things that will not be allowed. This list is not all inclusive.

- A. See-through or mesh clothing
- B. Tank tops or spaghetti straps (must have shirt or sweater over)
- C. Leggings or jeggings (without an article of clothing over them of an appropriate length)
- D. Hats/bandanas/kerchiefs/visors
- E. Clothing displaying alcohol, tobacco, drugs or objectionable language or pictures.
- F. High heeled shoes, cleats or skate shoes, flip flops
- G. Brightly colored hair that is disruptive to the learning environment. (pink, purple, blue, green, etc.)
- H. Any article of clothing, accessory or personal decoration is deemed disruptive to the learning environment.
- I. Face piercing (nose, eyebrow)
- J. Low-cut top clothing or too short bottom clothing (short-shorts, mini-skirts)