# Piney Woods Elementary School

## Parent and Student Handbook

## 2025-2026

PINEY WOODS
ELEMENTARY
*Home of the Purple Martins*

**School Hours**
Main Office hours: 7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Instructional Day: 7:40 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Student Drop-off: Begins at 7:00 a.m.
Breakfast: Served 7:05 - 7:30 a.m.
Student Pick-up: Begins at 2:30 p.m.
ICRC Afternoon Safari (on site): 2:30 - 6:00 p.m.

**Phone Numbers**
Main Number: 803-756-1100
Fax Number: 803-756-1120
Cafeteria: 803-756-1116
Nurse: 803-756-1105
District Office: 803-476-8000
Chapin Bus Transportation: 803-575-5856

**School Website and Social Media**
www.lexrich5.org/pwes
**Facebook**
@PineyWoodsElem
**Twitter**
@PineyWoodsElem
**Instagram**
@PineyWoodsElem
**PWES PTO Facebook Page: @PWESPTO**

**Administration**
**Cassy Paschal, Principal**
**Julie White, Assistant Principal**
**Emily Cates, Admin. Assistant Principal**
**Kimberly Luthren, School Counselor**

**DISTRICT CALENDAR**

**Mission**

Piney Woods fosters an enthusiastic and creative community of lifelong learners using a collaborative and inclusive learning environment that provides challenging instruction, problem solving and real world applications for our 21st century learners.

**Vision**

Piney Woods will develop well rounded, confident and responsible individuals who aspire to achieve their full potential. We will do this by providing a welcoming, happy, safe and supportive learning environment in which everyone is equal.

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## ACADEMICALLY GIFTED PROGRAM (AGP)

AGP is designed to maximize the potential of gifted and talented students by providing programs and services that match the unique characteristics of these students. At Piney Woods, AGP students are served through content classes in 3rd and 4th grades. The criteria for the identification of AGP students can be found on the district website at https://www.lexrich5.org/Page/9099. Parent Advocates for Gifted Education (PAGE) is a non-profit parent support group dedicated to promoting education for academically and artistically gifted and talented students in School District 5 of Lexington and Richland Counties.

## ACCELERATION (Board Policy IKEA and IKEA-R)

All acceleration requests must be made to the school principal or assistant principal. In each case, the district policy will be followed (see below).

### Policy IKEA Acceleration of Students

Issued 5/17

Purpose: To establish the basic structure for the acceleration of students.

Any student who, in the opinion of his/her principal/director and teacher(s), warrants consideration for acceleration and/or adjustment either by grade or subject, will be carefully tested in order to determine an educational program in his/her best interests. The criteria will include the following:

- scholastic ability and achievement level
- mental capacity
- experiential background
- emotional and social development and maturation
- complexity of curricular program

All such criteria will be supported by recommendations from the teacher(s) and principal/director and by authorized standardized tests, when applicable.

Acceleration for the gifted or academically talented student may be accomplished by one or more of the following instructional arrangements:

- subject grouping
- omission of a grade level
- content of a higher order of experiential complexity
- advanced placement programming
- provision for opportunities
- activities extended in both scope and depth

Acceleration into a higher grade level for the gifted or academically talented student will require the expressed consent and approval of the parent/legal guardian.

Adopted 2/24/69; Revised 11/16/81, 1/28/13, 5/8/17

## AR IKEA-R Whole Grade Acceleration

Issued 5/17

In whole grade acceleration a student "skips" a grade, receiving instruction at one grade higher across all subjects with older classmates. Whole grade acceleration can ensure an advanced curriculum to a student who is ready for all of the standards of the higher grade. However, it is important to consider not only the child's academic strengths, but also their social and emotional growth as well.

**Acceleration of a Student into Five-Year-Old Kindergarten**

The chief instructional officer or his/her designee will follow these guidelines when considering a request to accelerate a student into five-year-old kindergarten (place students into K5 classes who are not five years old by September 1).

- A student must be four years old by September 1 in order to be considered for acceleration.
- The family must be willing to pay tuition to the district in the amount of the state EFA K5 reimbursement amount. The specifics of the payment will be determined by the district administration.
- Each student requesting acceleration must be assessed by the school district regarding readiness and school ability to ensure that the student is not inappropriately placed in an advanced grade. A non-refundable assessment fee must be paid by the parent/legal guardian to the school district prior to the administration of the assessments.
- The district's decision is final.
- The district reserves the right to determine the placement of a student in a particular school.
- The parent/legal guardian must be willing to provide transportation for the student in the event a student is not placed in the student's home school.

A written request from the parent/legal guardian must be submitted to the chief instructional officer before July 31st of the school year in which acceleration is sought.

**Acceleration of a Student into Grades One through Eight**

Any student who, in the opinion of his/her principal and teacher(s), warrants consideration for acceleration and/or adjustment, either in subject instructional grade level or in grade placement for all subjects, will be carefully evaluated in order to determine the educational program in the student's best interest. The criteria for decisions may include achievement level, cognitive development, social/emotional behavior development, and reasoning ability. The decision of the district will be final. Any change in the educational program will require the approval of the parent/legal guardian.

If the parent/legal guardian requests whole grade acceleration for his/her child, the request must be made in writing to the chief instructional officer. The school will then form a Student Assistance Team (SAT) consisting of at a minimum, the school principal, guidance counselor, school psychologist, and classroom teacher(s). The SAT team will use available data and administer assessments that may include achievement level, cognitive ability, social/emotional behavior development, and reasoning ability. The SAT team will make a recommendation to the chief instructional officer or his/her designee. The decision of the district is final.

If whole grade acceleration is approved, the SAT team must convene within the first four to six weeks of the school year to determine if the placement is appropriate.

Issued 4/14/08; Revised 1/28/13, 5/8/17

## ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENT

Piney Woods Elementary School and District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties are pleased to be able to offer Internet access for student use. Our goal in offering this access is to enhance the educational experience for our students. The internet offers access to worldwide information in text and media form that, if properly used, will stimulate student learning. It can be a particularly powerful motivational tool for students because of the richness of the format and the depth of information resources.

The Student Behavior Handbook specifies guidelines for what is and is not permissible with technology. An Acceptable Use Agreement must be signed by a parent through Final Forms

in order for a student to have internet access. This Agreement specifically addresses the privilege of using the Internet on district network systems.

## ANIMALS AT SCHOOL

For the safety and protection of our children, we request that family pets such as dogs and cats not be brought to school. Any pets visiting a class or event must have the prior approval of the principal. Also, every attempt will be made to call the owner of animals found on school grounds, but we will be compelled to ask the county to pick up animals, if they continue to stay on the school's campus.

## ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

**ARRIVAL PROCEDURES**

**Bus riders** will arrive at 7:00 a.m. in the bus loop.

**Buses and Daycare Vans**: The driveway on the left side of the school is reserved from 7:00-7:50 a.m. and 2:00-2:50 p.m. for school buses and daycare vans. For safety reasons, parents are asked not to park, drop off, or pick up students on the left side driveway.

**Car riders** may be dropped off between 7:00-7:35 a.m. Arrivals after 7:40am, parents must sign in their student at the front office. The doors of the school will open at 7:00 a.m. Upon arrival, students should report to their designed area (cafeteria or morning room). Parents who bring 1st-4th grade children to school by car should drive around to the front entrance of the school and let their children out on the walkway leading into the front entrance of the school **when adult supervision is present**. Parents who bring their kindergarten child to school should drive around to the back entrance of the school and let their child out on the walkway leading to the back entrance of the school **when adult supervision is present**. The same procedure should be used in the afternoon at dismissal time. For reasons of safety and time, please use the carpool line for morning drop off (starting at 7:00 a.m.) and afternoon pick up of your child. Students are not to be dropped off in the parking lot for safety reasons. Parking and walking through the line of cars is hazardous. Arranging to have your child meet you at some alternate location also creates a supervision and safety concern.

**CHANGE OF TRANSPORTATION**

Change of transportation should be sent to the teacher at the very beginning of the day. If you need to make a change during the day, call the front office before 2:00 p.m. and the teacher will be notified. Teacher's access to email or phone messages during the instructional day cannot be guaranteed.

**DISMISSAL PROCEDURES**

Dismissal will begin daily at 2:30 p.m. K5 will dismiss from the back entrance. Bus riders will report to the bus loop. 1st through 4th grade car riders will dismiss to the front of the school. Please see the bus section for more details about bus arrival and dismissal.

**DAY CARE VEHICLES**

Students transported to and from school by a day care center will be loaded and unloaded in the bus loop behind the school buses.

**EARLY DISMISSAL**

If a child needs to be picked up early from school, the parent or guardian must come to the front office with a picture ID. Please allow 15 minutes to pick up your child for an early dismissal. If a child is going to be released to someone other than a parent or guardian, a note is required. Early dismissals after 2:15 p.m. are strongly discouraged.

**EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING**

When inclement weather occurs and a school closure is needed, district administrators make every attempt to provide prompt notification to parents, guardians and the public, in accordance with Board Policy EBCE. Announcements are made using the district's automated telephone system, social media, other electronic and local news media outlets.

**LATE AFTERNOON PICK-UP / SAFETY NET**
Students who are not picked up by 3:00 p.m. will be taken to the Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission (ICRC) Afternoon Safari After-school Program at Piney Woods Elementary under the Safety Net Agreement. There will be a charge of *$15.00 for this service and payment is expected at the time of pick-up*. Safety Net is for **emergency use only** and may be used a maximum of three times per family during a school year. Please contact ICRC at 803-345-6181, if you have any questions.
**PARKING:** Visitors are requested to park in designated parking areas.

## ATTENDANCE

**ATTENDANCE AND EXCUSES**
State law and district policy set specific rules for lawful and unlawful absences. A note is required (you can submit a note online at *www.lexrich5.org/pwes* under the Resources tab - Student Attendance Excuse) for each absence. All excuses should be sent to school no later than the student's third day back. After three consecutive unlawful or a total of five unlawful absences, an attendance plan is required. Students who continue to be absent unlawfully may be referred to Family Court for truancy. For more information about the S.C. Compulsory Attendance Law please visit http://www.scstatehouse.gov/code/t59c065.php.
**TARDIES**
Morning instruction begins promptly at 7:40 a.m. Being tardy causes students to miss important instructional time. Student's arrival to school on time is imperative to his or her continued success in school. Students who arrive at school after 7:40 a.m. must report to the front office with a parent or guardian to sign them in and obtain a tardy pass before reporting to class. School tardy procedure is as follows:

10 tardies – Note is sent home
20 tardies – Attendance Improvement Plan is developed with a parent conference

**MEDICAL HOMEBOUND**
Medical homebound instruction is a service that is available for students who cannot attend school for a medical reason even with the aid of transportation. A physician must certify that the student has such a medical condition, may benefit from instruction, and must fill out the medical homebound form that the school district provides. The school district then decides whether to approve the student for medical homebound services. The school district will consider the severity of the student's illness or injury, the length of time that the student will be out of school, the impact that a long period away from school will have on the student's academic success, and whether the student's health needs can be met at school. To learn more about medical homebound services, please contact the school registrar.
**MISSED STUDENT WORK**
If a student is absent for only one or two days, the parents should expect missed assignments to be sent home as homework once the child returns. However, if a student is absent for three or more days, parents need to request missed assignments from the teacher. Parents may call the school office to request assignments for students who are ill. The assignments may be picked up in the office once the work is ready. The assignments sent home will be determined by the teacher and do not necessarily represent every assignment or instruction completed in the classroom during the absence. Parents and students should expect to have some make-up work to complete when they return to school, including tests and assignments that need direct teacher instruction before completion. The missed assignments need to be completed within two days after the child returns or as soon as possible.

## BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

The faculty and staff of Piney Woods Elementary are dedicated to aiding the educational and social growth of each student and use Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) to teach students behavioral expectations. All students are taught the behavior expectations in the seven major areas of the school; cafeteria, arrival and dismissal, hallway, recess, bathroom, media center and technology use (digital citizenship).

**Purple Martin Pride PWES Expectations Matrix**

| Setting | "P" Personal Best | "M" Making Responsible Choices | "P" Positivity |
|---|---|---|---|
| School-wide Expectations | *Be prepared<br>*Give good effort | *Follow directions<br>*Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself<br>*Use materials properly | *Make safe and kind choices<br>*Be honest and fair |
| Cafeteria Expectations | * Use a quiet voice and only talk to those sitting near you<br>*Stay seated | *Pick up your trash<br>*No food or drink taken out of cafeteria | *Use kind words<br>*Use table manners |
| Arrival/Dismissal Expectations | *Walk directly to your designated area<br>*Use inside voice | *Be aware of others walking around you | *Use kind words<br>*Smile |
| Hallway Expectations | *Go directly to your destination | *Stay in line<br>*Quiet voice in hall | *Use kind words<br>*Smile |
| Recess Expectations | *Use self control | *Use equipment as intended | *Talk out differences<br>*Include others<br>*Play fair |
| Bathroom Expectations | *Wash hands<br>*Quiet voice | *Flush toilet<br>*Keep bathroom clean | *Respect Privacy |
| Media Center Expectations | *Walk in the library<br>*Quiet voice | *Return library books on time<br>*Treat books with care | *Take turns and share |
| Digital Citizenship Expectations | *Use device for school learning<br>*Only use approved websites | *Keep personal information private<br>*Be aware of your digital footprint | *Be kind online |

Each teacher will have his/her own set of procedures for addressing students who do not follow the expectations. A **Behavior Check In Form** may be used by teachers to communicate with parents about a behavioral concern. This is used after a student's behavior has been repeatedly addressed and school-wide expectations taught.

A **Discipline Referral** is given by Administration when a student has previously been addressed by a teacher or the infraction needs administrative support. Parents will be notified by the Administrator if one of these forms is issued. In addition to school-wide expectations, students must follow the Elementary Behavior Code developed by District Five. The code provides the basic rules and consequences for all students within the school district.

If a student is referred to the office, the principal or assistant principal will decide if the student's behavior warrants a time out, suspension, expulsion, or a combination of any of these as prescribed in the District Behavior Code.

**Bullying** will not be tolerated at PWES. Administration and the School Counselor will work to teach and reteach appropriate behaviors as well as handle any bullying concerns.

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The School District Five Board of Trustees is responsible for setting policies that govern the operation of the schools. Each school office maintains a Board Policy manual stating official procedures. The board's regular monthly meeting, which is open to the public, is conducted

at 7:00 pm, on the second and fourth Monday of each month. A copy of the agenda, Board Briefs, minutes of and a video of meetings are posted on the district website (www.lexrich5.org).

## BUS TRANSPORTATION

The safety and security of students, staff, and school is a top priority for School District Five. All students riding the school bus must have a current School Bus Registration on file through their assigned school. In an effort to ensure a safe bus ride for all students, the school district has made the following provisions: Bus Safety Rules must be followed at all times while on a school bus, activity bus or other district vehicle used for the purpose of transportation of students to or from school, sports programs and other school sponsored events. Consequences may be applied for any violation of these rules.

**ALTERNATE BUS TRANSPORTATION**

Students needing transportation other than their own regular bus must have clearance through the Chapin Transportation office. A signed and dated letter must be submitted to the bus office at least 24 hours in advance to request permission. Due to overcrowding on some buses, your request may not be honored.

**CONTACT INFORMATION FOR CHAPIN AREA SCHOOLS:**

John Anton, Chapin Transportation Supervisor - 803-575-5856

**KINDERGARTEN BUS RIDERS** will not be released from the bus if a parent, appropriate guardian or sibling is not at the bus stop at the time the student arrives. If an appropriate authorized individual is not at the bus stop the kindergarten student will be returned to the school and parent/guardian will be notified. Parents will need to arrange for the student to be picked up at the school immediately upon their return.

**SAFETY RULES FOR BUS RIDERS**

- **No glass containers, baseball or softball bats, lacrosse sticks or skateboards are allowed on the bus.**
- **No spitting, eating or drinking on the bus.**
- **No profanity, verbal abuse, harassment, teasing, obscene or sexual gestures.**
- **No standing while the bus is in motion.**
- **No hanging any part(s) of your anatomy out a window or passing items through the window.**
- **No throwing or shooting any type of objects.**
- **No play fighting or horse playing.**
- **Do not ride any bus that you are not assigned to.**
- **Do not ride any bus during a suspension of bus privileges.**
- **Do not vandalize the bus or ignite any flammable object.**
- **Do not hold onto the bus from the outside.**
- **Do not make excessive noise or other disruptive behavior.**
- **Keep your feet, body and bags out of the aisle.**
- **Do not block the aisle with band instruments or book bags.**
- **Students must always obey the directions of the driver.**
- **Do not exhibit behavior that disturbs the students or driver.**
- **Talk quietly and avoid loud, boisterous behavior, including singing,clapping, stomping or yelling.**
- **No spraying of cologne, deodorant, body spray or any other type chemicals or aerosols, pump spray or lotion while on the bus.**
- **Never tamper with the emergency exits or any other part of the bus including lights, horn, fire extinguishers and first aid equipment unless there are reasonable grounds to believe that an actual emergency situation exists.**
- **Students may only board and exit the bus at their designated stop or school, unless otherwise approved.**
- **Be at the bus stop 5 minutes prior to scheduled pick-up time.**
- **Usage of cell phone, iPod, MP3, GameBoy or other device that causes a disruption on the bus or distraction to the driver.**

# CAFETERIA

Piney Woods Elementary offers breakfast prior to the beginning of each school day from 7:05 a.m. to 7:30 a.m. Students or adults may purchase a nutritious breakfast at this time. Students who eat breakfast need to arrive at school no later than 7:25 a.m. Lunch is served daily beginning the first day of school or children may bring a meal from home. One carton of milk is included with breakfast and lunch, but students may purchase extra milk.

We request that students not share any food items with classmates due to health and allergy concerns. All shared food must be store bought and in compliance with the district wellness policy. Parents are also discouraged from bringing food from outside restaurants to their children at school. If restaurant food is brought in, it must be consumed outside of the cafeteria. Parents visiting are always welcome to eat lunch with their children. If someone other than a parent or guardian is going to eat lunch with a student, a note is needed. An office sign-in is required before proceeding to the cafeteria to meet your child's class. There is an additional cost for an adult lunch. Visitors at lunch may sit at designated tables with their child.

**BREAKFAST:**

1. Breakfast is sold as a full meal (no a la carte items). Student Full Pay breakfast $2.80, Adult breakfast $3.50
2. The serving hours are 7:05-7:30 a.m.
3. All students that are eating breakfast must arrive at school no later than 7:25 a.m. and should report directly to the cafeteria.

**LUNCH:**

1. The Automated Meal Program works like a debit system. Pay money into the account and the meal charge will be debited each day. Student Full Pay Lunch $3.50, Adult lunch $5.50
2. The system only allows one meal charge each day.

**CAFETERIA SNACKS -** Students may purchase snacks and ice cream daily only if he/she has money in their accounts.

**FREE/REDUCED APPLICATION -** The application must be completed online (no paper applications). Access application through this website https://www.linqconnect.com Applications MUST BE COMPLETED YEARLY. Applications for the 2025-2026 school year must be completed AFTER JULY 1, 2025. Current applications will expire on September 10, 2025.

**New Peanut Butter Guideline for Elementary Schools**

School District Five strives to address the needs of students with food allergies by working cooperatively with students, parents, and staff to minimize the risks of accidental exposure to food allergens while at school. **Beginning in the 2019-2020 school year, the district no longer serves peanut butter in elementary school cafeterias:**

1. Elementary schools in School District Five will now serve a Sunwise Sunbutter and Grace Jelly sandwich. To read more about Sunwise Sunbutter ingredients and nutritional facts, visit the company's website at https://www.eatthismuch.com/calories/sunbutter-grape-jelly-sandwich-on-whole-wheat-brea-2433622.
2. While the district will no longer serve peanut butter in elementary schools, students can still bring peanut butter and other nut products to school for their own consumption. Schools have procedures in place to avoid contact between students

with allergies to peanut butter and those opting to bring peanut butter to school for their own consumption.

3. Parents/guardians are responsible for student health and medical care during activities, events, or functions outside of the school day or normal school operations.
4. We can only accommodate allergies or alternate meal requests that are accompanied by the meal modification form filled out by a doctor. The forms need to be filled out and turned in every year. They do not roll over. You can contact the school nurse for the meal modification form.
5. Students should not consume food or drink given to them by other students. In the case of a reaction, students should immediately communicate with teachers, administrators or other appropriate adults at school.
6. The district makes every attempt to notify PTO, PTA and other groups about its peanut butter guidelines.
7. For more information on food allergies, including how to read food labels, how to educate your students and others on food allergies, and nut-free options for school snacks, visit: FARE (Food Allergy Research & Education): www.foodallergy.org.

## CAR TAGS

All students that are car riders will be given a car tag that must be displayed in the windshield of the car picking the student up. For the safety of students, please make sure that the car tag is prominently displayed and your child knows their individual number.

## CELEBRATIONS AND PARTIES

Policy ADF "School Health Wellness" requires that, during the instructional day, food brought from home to be shared with students must meet the school wellness policies guidelines, be commercially packaged and purchased from a store. This action was recommended by the district Health Advisory Council, composed of local physicians, nurses, and other medical professionals and allows staff members to monitor nutritional information and ingredients, providing the greatest health safety for our students.

Flowers, balloons, party invitations and other similar items cannot be accepted by the school for delivery to students. Parents are discouraged from bringing lunches from outside restaurants for delivery to students. Outside food that is brought into the school cannot be consumed in the cafeteria. The cafeteria offers Ice Cream and Snack Shack tickets for purchase as a fun option for party treats. Please refer to our district wellness policy for acceptable foods to be shared with others.

PWES siblings are not allowed to skip class to attend other siblings' classroom parties during the school day.

## CELL PHONES / SMART WATCHES

According to School District Five policy for elementary schools, students may possess wireless communication devices (WCD) in school, on school property, during after school activities (extracurricular activities) and at school-related functions. However, students may not use wireless devices such as cellular phones, smart watches, electronic pagers or any other communication devices while on school property during school hours (start and end of school will be denoted by the start and end bells). Students should make sure their cell phone or other electronic device is turned off or silent during the school day.

Students are personally and solely responsible for the care and security of their cell phone and WCDs. The school assumes no responsibility for theft, loss, damages, or vandalism to WCDs brought onto its property, or unauthorized use of such devices. If an emergency parent contact needs to be made, they should make a request to their teacher or administrator who will make arrangements for them to use the phone.

## CHILD ABUSE

All school personnel are mandated to report to the Department of Social Services any information received in their professional capacity which gives them reason to believe that a child's physical or mental health, or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect. These guidelines are in accordance with Section 63-7-310 (2008) of the South Carolina Children's Code.

## COMMUNICATION

### COMMUNICATION FOLDERS

Purple folders will be sent home weekly with students with a wealth of information (progress reports, assignments, upcoming events, periodic notes and much more). It is important that you read and review this information carefully. Folders should be returned to the classroom teacher the following day.

### CONFERENCES (Administration & Teachers)

Parents are encouraged to meet with a teacher or teachers for the purpose of discussing their child's work.These conferences may be scheduled by calling or emailing the appropriate teacher(s). A time will be selected which will not conflict with teachers' instructional responsibilities. Classroom concerns should be directed to the teacher first.

### CURRICULUM NIGHT/ PARENT UNIVERSITY

Specific information regarding the curriculum and instruction within a particular grade level will be presented via email to families a week prior to Parent University. The information shared provides a good foundation for the school year. All parents and guardians are strongly encouraged to attend Parent University to learn more about the information shared in the grade level curriculum presentations. This night will allow parents the opportunity to learn more about what their child will be learning throughout the school year while also allowing parents a chance to ask questions to grade level teachers.

### NEWSLETTERS

Parents are strongly encouraged to read **The Piney Woods Press**, our school newsletter. This newsletter has current information, school business and activities, as well as Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) and School Improvement Council (SIC) updates. **The Piney Woods Press** will be posted on the school website: www.lexrich5.org/pwes under the Resources tab and sent via email to parents.

### PARENT PORTAL

Parent Portal gives parents access to real-time information such as attendance, grades and detailed assignments, grade history, and much more. Parents and guardians should create their own individual Access account with login information provided by the school registrar. If any information changes during the year, parents/guardians should update the information in person in the front office so the school has the most current contact information.

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER

The school office **must** have a telephone number at which parents or guardians can be

reached during the school day, even if that number is unlisted. This is particularly important when emergencies occur. If the number is unlisted, the office staff should be told so that only authorized persons use the number. Please notify the office staff when changing address, telephone number, or place of employment.

## DIRECTORY INFORMATION

According to school board policy JRA, Public Use of School Records, directory information regarding students will be handled in a manner consistent with the **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA),** as amended.

Information that the District has designated as "directory information" regarding a student may be released to outside organizations upon request and without prior written consent from the parent/eligible student. The District defines directory information as a student's name, address, grade level, school to which he/she is assigned, awards received, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, and weight and height of athletic team members. Outside organizations requesting directory information include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, federal policy requires that local high schools must provide military recruiters, upon request, access to secondary school students' names, addresses, and telephone listings.

## DISTRIBUTION OF PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

PWES is a "Green School." Postings on our website, social media, emails, and phone calls using our automated system are the most frequent ways we distribute information and promotional materials. Family members are encouraged to visit our website for the latest news concerning our school activities. The Piney Woods Press newsletter and all other flyers will be distributed via email blast or posted electronically by the district through PeachJar, an e-flyer management system. You will receive digitally approved e-flyers to the email address that you have on file in Parent Portal.

## DRESS CODE – Board Policy JCDB-R (see below)

The following regulations on student dress shall apply in all elementary schools and shall be administered uniformly throughout the district:

- Clothing and/or hair should not be so extreme or inappropriate to the school setting as to disrupt the educational process. Therefore, clothing deemed distracting, revealing, overly suggestive, or otherwise disruptive shall not be permitted. This includes bare midriffs, halter/tank tops, see through shirts/tops/blouses, bike shorts, and short shorts.
- No vulgar, obscene or otherwise inappropriate symbols, language, or wording will be permitted on clothing or accessories.
- Clothing or accessories, i.e., book bags, jewelry, hats, etc., that display alcohol, tobacco or other drug symbols are not permitted.
- Gang attire, gang colors or gang symbols are also not permitted to be worn or displayed.
- Hats, head stockings or kerchiefs may only be worn during the school day for special occasions when approved by the principal.
- Proper shoes must be worn at all times. Special dress or costume may be worn during the school day for special occasions as approved by the principal.
- Wearing accessories or clothing that could pose a safety threat to one's self or others is not allowed. This includes heavy chains, not made as jewelry, fishhooks, multiple-

finger rings, studded bracelets or collars, nose/lip to ear chains, etc. Unusual body piercing that is disruptive to the order of the school or is a distraction to the learning environment will not be allowed.
- Perfumes/colognes should not be worn to school.
- Pants must be worn at the natural waistline and undergarments are not to be visible.

**Board Policy AR-JICA-R Student Dress**

**AR JICA-R Student Dress**

Issued 3/11

This administrative rule on student dress will apply in all schools, district-sponsored activities, district transportation, as appropriate, and will be administered uniformly throughout the district.

- Clothing and/or hair should not be so extreme or inappropriate to the school as to disrupt the educational process. Therefore, clothing deemed distracting, revealing, overly suggestive or otherwise disruptive will not be permitted. This includes bare midriffs, halter/tank tops, see-through shirts, tops or blouses and bike shorts.
- No vulgar, obscene or otherwise inappropriate symbols, language or wording will be permitted on clothing or accessories.
- Clothing or accessories (i.e. bookbags, jewelry, hats, etc.) that display alcohol, tobacco or other drug symbols are not permitted.
- Gang attire, gang colors or gang symbols are also not permitted to be worn or displayed on accessories.
- Hats, head stockings or kerchiefs may only be worn during the school day for special occasions when approved by the principal.
- Proper shoes must be worn at all times.
- Special dress or costume may be worn during the school day for special occasions when approved by the principal.
- Wearing accessories or clothing that could pose a safety threat to one's self or others is not allowed. This includes heavy chains, not made as jewelry; fishhooks, multiple-finger rings, studded bracelets or collars; nose/lip to ear chains, etc. Unusual body piercing that is disruptive to the order of the school or is a distraction to the learning environment will not be allowed.
- Pants must be worn at the natural waistline and undergarments are not to be visible.

Individual schools may have more specific and restrictive dress codes if recommended by the school administration and the school improvement council and approved by the superintendent or his/her designee.

The administration will make the final judgment on the appropriateness of dress and reserves the right to prohibit students from wearing any article of clothing or accessory which may foreseeably result in the disruption of the school environment.

This administrative rule will be reviewed on a regular basis with input and advice from parents/legal guardians, teachers, administrators and students. Subsequent recommendations to the board will be made through administrative channels.

Written notice of the district's policy and administrative rule on student dress will be provided in school handbooks distributed annually to students and parents/legal guardians.

Issued 1/23/84; Revised 8/13/84, 1/25/88, 1/23/89, 7/7/97, 7/13/98, 6/26/00, 6/24/02, 3/14/11

School District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties

## EMERGENCY SCHOOL PROCEDURES

The staff of Piney Woods Elementary recognizes that safety is one of our primary concerns.

Through collaboration with local agencies, the school staff has a clearly defined course of action in case of an emergency. School fire, tornado and lock-down drills are conducted as mandated by state law and district policy. Information for parents concerning emergency dismissal will be announced by the district's automated telephone system.

## ERIN'S LAW

The South Carolina Code of Law, Section 59-32-30(G) was amended "beginning with the 2015–2016 school year, districts annually shall provide age-appropriate instruction in sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention to all students in four-year-old kindergarten, where offered, through twelfth grade. This instruction must be based on the units developed by the board (SC Board of Education), through the department (SC Department of Education), pursuant to Section 59-32-20(B)."

The purpose of the law is to help students understand how to stay safe from sexual assault and how to report any incidents. It is important to provide students with a voice for deciding who and what touches should be allowed.

At the elementary level, instruction includes topics such as being unique, understanding feelings, being a friend, bathing suits cover private parts, good touch/bad touch, stranger danger, getting adult help, general safety rules for home and school, technology safety, and understanding peer pressure and media influences. These topics are aligned with the *South Carolina Health and Safety Education Standards* and the *Erin's Law Resource Guide* provided by the SC Department of Education. Topics are covered in many parts of our curriculum such as through the comprehensive school counseling program, academic classes, PE and health classes, and school-wide programs.

At the secondary level, Erin's Law instruction is part of the comprehensive health curriculum delivered during the second quarter by biology teachers. Students are expected to be able to explain Erin's law and understand and discuss the following indicators from the *South Carolina Standards for Health and Safety Education 2017*: I-HS.1.3, G-HS.2.7, G-HS.3.2, G-HS.3.3, G-HS.4.3, G-HS.5.1. School counselors, social workers, and psychologists may also provide programs of instruction or counseling.

## FEES

A technology fee of $25.00 per year is charged to all students in the district. This fee is due regardless of Free/Reduced lunch status. These fees along with field trips costs and other optional purchases should all be paid online using District Five Student Quick Pay www.studentquickpay.com/lexrich5/. See **FINANCIAL INFORMATION** section for online payment directions on creating a Student QuickPay account.

## FIELD EXPERIENCES

Educational field trips are planned to provide experiences correlated with subjects studied in the classroom. Students are required to have written permission from a parent or guardian prior to going on field trips. All trips are chaperoned by school personnel who may be assisted by parent volunteers. All classroom parent volunteers/chaperones must fill out

the School District Five Volunteer Application at least two weeks prior to attending a field experience. Field experience chaperones are present to help students have a safe, educational experience; chaperones must monitor students closely. A 5 to 1 ratio will be used for parent chaperones on field trips in all grade levels. One parent chaperone will be needed for every five students attending a field trip. Parents wanting to attend field trips must obtain an ID badge through the front office Ident-A-Kid system prior to the field trip date. Please bring your drivers license and complete this badge process prior to the field trip date. Siblings may not attend a field experience in a class they do not attend.

If a bus is used for transportation, a fee will be charged to cover the expense. Specific student behavior expectations are established for the safe and efficient operation of the district school buses. Bus transportation is an extension of the regular school program. Students are expected to ride the bus as part of the field trip experience. Students who violate behavior expectations while riding a bus are subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the district discipline policy. Policy EEAEC Student Conduct On Buses

**Policy EEAEC Student Conduct On Buses**

Issued 11/13

Purpose: To establish the basic structure for safe student transportation.

Safety is of prime importance for our students as we transport them to and from school and school-sponsored activities. Safety requires the cooperation of students, parents/legal guardians and school personnel.

The district charges students with the responsibility of conduct that will result in safe transportation, respect for school personnel and respect for other students. The school bus is an extension of school activity. Therefore, the board expects students to conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with the established standards for safety and classroom behavior. All bus riders must cooperate fully with the bus driver and observe the bus rules.

To ensure safe and orderly operation of the bus, the bus driver is responsible for the conduct of all bus riders. The driver may stop the bus at any time when misbehavior or threatened misbehavior presents a hazard to safe driving.

The driver will report students who create a disturbance on school buses. The principal or his/her designee as authorized by state law and regulation, may suspend or deny bus transportation to a student whose conduct is persistently and/or flagrantly detrimental to safety and order on the bus.

The board supports the use of video cameras on school buses used for transportation to and from school as well as for field trips, curricular and extracurricular events. The district will use video cameras to monitor student behavior. The district may use video as evidence in a student disciplinary proceeding. The videos are student records subject to school district confidentiality, board policy and administrative regulations.

Adopted 3/29/82; Revised 11/11/13

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

### ONLINE PAYMENTS

Make online payments for technology fees, field trips, other fees and optional purchases using District Five Student Quick Pay: www.studentquickpay.com/lexrich5/. Create an account using your child's **Student ID#** (same ID# in PowerSchool). If you have high school /middle school students on this system, use the same login and add your PWES student with their Student ID#. All payment history can be accessed through your StudentQuickPay account. Please call the office if you need assistance, (803)756-1100.

**RETURNED CHECKS**

Your checks are welcome. School District Five recognizes that occasionally a parent may inadvertently overdraw a checking account and a check may be returned by your bank. In order to recover these funds in a private and professional manner, District Five has contracted with Envision Payment Solutions for collection of returned checks. Checks should include name, address and contact telephone number. When a check is written to the school or School District, the writer of the check agrees that, if the check is returned for any reason, it may be represented electronically on the same account, and that the Service Fee for returned checks established by law may be debited from the same account. Please contact Envisions Payment Solutions at 877-290-5460 or customerservice@envisionpayments.com with questions about returned checks.

## GAVIN'S LAW

Beginning with the 2023-2024 school year, per the requirements of Gavin's Law, Act 54 of 2023, "local school districts shall collaborate with the State Department of Education, the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division, and the Attorney General's office, as appropriate, to implement a policy to educate and notify students of the provisions of Gavin's Law. This includes adequate notice to students, parents or guardians, the public, and school personnel of the change in law."

Board Policy JICFB Gavin's Law Implementation was adopted 11/13/23 and states:
"Gavin's Law (S.C. Code Ann. Section 16-15-430) is legislation that makes sexual extortion, the act of blackmailing someone using sexually explicit images or videos, a felony offense and an aggravated felony if the victim is a minor, vulnerable adult, or if the victim suffers great bodily injury or death directly related to the crime.

Gavin's Law requires the District to collaborate with the State Department of Education, the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division, and the Attorney General's office, as appropriate, to implement a policy to educate and notify students of the provisions of this law, which includes adequate notice to students, parents or guardians, the public, and school personnel.

In accordance with Gavin's Law, the District shall notify students of the provisions of this act through providing age-appropriate instruction on the dangers and consequences of sexual extortion. Additionally, notification shall be provided to parents/guardians, the public, and school personnel regarding the law.

Any student who engages in sexual extortion will be subject to disciplinary action consistent with the District's Student Code of Conduct. Any employee who engages in sexual extortion will be subject to disciplinary action consistent with the District's policies governing staff conduct. School administrators shall notify law enforcement immediately of any allegations of such conduct, as required by State law and District policy."

## GRADING PROCEDURES

**DISTRICT FIVE GRADING PHILOSOPHY**
To ensure we function as a system, where a group of units operates in unison, School District Five of Lexington & Richland Counties has created this grading philosophy. Grades in School District Five reflect evidence of student proficiency in the learning progression of content standards and skills over time. Behavior and effort are evaluated and reported separately from the academic grade. Grades should identify for teachers, students, and families clarity, gaps, and deficiencies in learning and consistently and objectively inform teachers of areas where students need remediation or acceleration. We collectively implement these practices as we aim to meet the needs of the Whole Child.

**REPORT CARDS AND GRADES**
Elementary students receive report cards every nine weeks. The evaluation of student achievement is an important function of the teacher.

**GRADING SCALES**
Student progress in grades **kindergarten through second** is reported for Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Art, Music, Physical Education, and World Language through a standards-based progress report using the following key:
**M**=Meets the grade level expectations at this time (independent achievement consistently meets grade level expectations/standards at this time.
**P**=Progressing satisfactorily towards grade level expectations at thai time (independent achievement shows inconsistent application of skills but is making progress at this time).
**U**=Unable to meet grade level expectations at this time (little or no evidence of meeting grade level expectations/standards at this time.
*****=Not assessed at this time.

Student progress in grades third and fourth grade will be reported using the following marking system:
90-100 = **A**
80-89 = **B**
70-79 = **C**
60-69 = **D**
Below 60 = **F**
**I** = Incomplete

In order to ensure parents are aware of their child's current academic progress, grades for academic assignments will be posted by teachers to PowerSchool and updated weekly. Teachers will post minor assignment grades within 5 school days and major or extended assignment grades within 10 school days. Minor assignments (such as classwork and quizzes) are assignments that count once in the gradebook and major assignments (such as tests and projects) are assignments that count twice. As a reminder, please see the Registrar in the front office to get your child's login information for Parent Portal.

**PARENT PORTAL**
Lexington District Five's online student information system, PowerSchool Parent Portal, will provide parents with real-time information to access student schedules, attendance, grades, and test scores.

Before you can log into PowerSchool Parent Portal, you will need a PowerSchool username and password. Parents may receive a username and password from the school registrar by showing a valid ID. If you have previously received a password and username, it will remain

the same. A username and password for new students will be made available at the beginning of the year.

**MISSING ASSIGNMENTS**

If a student is absent for only one or two days, missed assignments will be sent home as homework once they return. However, if a student is absent for three or more days, parents need to request missed assignments from the teacher. The assignments may be picked up in the office once the work is ready. **When requesting missed assignments, please allow 24 hours before coming by the school to collect student work.** The assignments sent home will be determined by the teacher and do not necessarily represent every assignment or instruction completed in the classroom during the absence. There may be some make-up work to complete when the student returns to school, including tests and assignments that need direct teacher instruction.

## HEALTH ROOM

The health room is operated daily under the supervision of a registered nurse. The school nurse is responsible for maintaining a health record on all students. The health room is designed to be an emergency station to care for minor illnesses or injuries that occur at school. Injuries or health concerns that occur outside of school should be treated at home or by your healthcare provider. The school nurse cannot diagnose or prescribe treatment. This is the responsibility of your family physician or health care provider.

Minor first aid will be administered for illnesses and injuries occurring at school and a record maintained on each child. Parents should notify the school nurse at (803) 756-1105 of any special health needs. The school should also be kept up-to-date on any changes in a child's health status and any changes in phone numbers of those persons to be contacted in an emergency. For more details regarding health room operations and medication administration at school, please go to the School Health Services page on the District Five website at www.lexrich5.org.

**ILLNESS**

There are times when a student should remain at home for his/her own welfare and for the protection of others. Students who have had a dental procedure requiring sedation and/or anesthetic should not return to school until the anesthetic has completely worn off and the student has full feeling returned to their mouth and tongue. Students are at a higher risk for injuring their mouth while it is numb and their pain level cannot be adequately gauged. Students who have had a tooth extracted must also remain at home until they are no longer having active bleeding. Students with a fever must remain home per SCDHEC exclusion guidelines. For other conditions that would require your student to remain at home please see DHEC's "School Exclusion List" for students who are in 1st through 12th grade and DHEC's "Childcare Exclusion List" for students who are in K3, K4, K5, or who are medically fragile. These exclusion lists may be located through the district's website or https://scdhec.gov/health/child-teen-health/school-exclusion

**IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS**

The Department of Health and Environment Control (DHEC) has designated immunization/shot requirements for school-age children. If your child's immunizations do not meet DHEC requirements, he or she will not be allowed to attend school. Please see the complete list of immunization requirements located on the District Five website under School Health Services.

**MEDICATIONS**

Medications to be taken during school hours must be brought to school and delivered to the school nurse or designated adult in the ORIGINAL container with all labels intact. Over the counter medications (including cough drops) should only be sent to school for a specific condition your child is known to experience. Whenever possible, medications should be given before or after school. All medications must be accompanied by parental permission and prescription medication also requires written authorization from the prescribing physician or health care provider. Herbals, food supplements, alternative medicinal products, and other items that do not have FDA approval also require a written order from a prescribing health care provider in addition to a parent signature.

The permission for school administration of medication form is available at your child's school and through the district's website. A record of all medications administered at school will be kept for each student. Only those students who have met all of the requirements to self medicate, will be allowed to keep medications on their person. All other medications will be kept at school and must be picked up by a responsible adult when the medication is discontinued, expired, or at the end of the school year. Medications are not sent home with students. At the time a prescription is filled, ask your pharmacist to prepare a separate bottle labeled for school use.

If medications are needed on a field trip, the parent/guardian is encouraged to provide the medication in the original pharmacy-labeled bottle with only the dosage(s) needed for the trip along with the consent form signed by the health care provider. The nurse cannot repackage any medications and will need to send the student's medication bottle containing all of their medication on the field trip if a bottle containing only the required dose is not provided. If over the counter medications are necessary, please purchase and send the smallest size available for this medication along with the consent form signed by your healthcare provider. If your student will require medication on the field trip that is not currently being given at school you will need to turn the medication, along with the required consent forms into the school nurse one week prior to the field trip. This allows time for the nurse to verify that there are not any problems with the medication and/or consent forms and to train the teacher to properly assist your student with their medications.

## HOMEWORK

The amount and frequency of homework assigned vary among grade levels and subjects taught. Homework should serve to reinforce skills and provide additional practice. At the beginning of the year, teachers explain their homework practices. If you have questions, please contact the teacher by calling the school office, using email, or by sending a note. Parents are encouraged to monitor grades on Parent Portal, passwords can be picked up at the front office. Grades are entered within 5 school days for minor assignments and 10 school days for major or extended assignments.

## HOURS OF OPERATION

Phones at Piney Woods Elementary School are answered "live" from 7:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. each school day when the main office is staffed. Messages may be left on our voicemail system after hours, and those messages will be returned the next school day.

## LOST AND FOUND

Students and parents should check the lost and found located in the landing when items are misplaced. Items not claimed by the end of each semester will be donated to local

charities.

## MEDIA CENTER

The Piney Woods media center is open from 7:30 am to 3:00 p.m. on school days. The mission of the media center is to ensure that students are effective users of ideas and information, enthusiastic readers, skillful researchers, and productive users of technology. Students are encouraged to be good listeners, kind to books and respectful of others in the media center.

Classes visit the library at designated times. Instruction may include library skills, storytime, book suggestions, and inquiry lessons. All students are encouraged to check out books to help them grow as readers. Books that are considered overdue may be renewed. If a book is lost or damaged, a notice with the cost of the book to be replaced will be sent home for payment.

## MEDIA CONSENT

Throughout the year, School District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties receive requests from newspapers, television, and radio stations for stories concerning school-related activities. Often such requests include permission for students' names and/or pictures to be used as a part of a news account or a feature story. In addition, schools and the District may like to include students' names and/or their pictures in various school newsletters, brochures, videos, websites or other publications.

During the registration process, parents have the option as to whether or not they wish to grant permission for the release of their child's name and/or picture for the purposes stated above. Please be aware that by indicating that you do not grant permission for your child's name and/or picture to be used for the purposes stated above, his/her name will not be included in Honor Roll lists, reading club lists or lists of winners in other awards programs that are printed in school newsletters or local newspapers. ****YOUR CHILD ALSO WILL NOT BE PICTURED IN THE SCHOOL YEARBOOK****

Information on a student may be released through news releases, photographs, slides or videotape. This "directory information" may include a student's name, photograph, grade level, school to which he/she is assigned, years of attendance at that school, awards received, participation in officially recognized activities, sports, weight and height of athletic team members. To ensure we have your permission to release your child's name and/or picture to the media, a Media Release Consent Form must be completed through Final Forms. Board Policy JR, describes the school district policy on records.

Under certain situations, student information may be released with or without parental consent. At the official request of law enforcement officers, a student's address, telephone number and date of birth may be released. A special resolution adopted by the U.S. Congress provides that schools will make available student names and addresses to authorized representatives of the U.S. Armed Forces. Also, release of information to emergency workers is permitted if necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other persons.

## NOTES REQUIRED FROM PARENTS

The school requires written communication from parents explaining the following:

- Absences (handwritten or submit online through school website)

- Requests for early dismissal
- Requests to miss recess or physical education
- Permission for field trips
- Permission to go home with another student (by car or day care only)
- Permission to have lunch with a student for someone other than a parent or guardian
- Prolonged absences from school (trips, hospitalization, etc.)
- Changes in method of transportation home
- Authorization to administer medicine (form required by the nurse)
- Allergic reactions (insects, mold, food)
- Food allergy or intolerance (doctor's note required for cafeteria)
- Specific medical treatment or health needs

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY

District Five encourages, supports, and values the participation and involvement of parents and families in the educational experiences of their children. The District recognizes each parent as their child's first teacher and acknowledges the powerful influence of parents on their child's life. The District, therefore, is committed to developing family-friendly schools, offices, and programs to welcome and serve parents and families in positive and supportive environments.

Parents are involved in the development of the LEA (Lead Education Agency) plan and the process of school review and improvement by being part of a planning team that develops an overall Parent Involvement Policy. In addition, all parents are surveyed. This plan is distributed to all parents with children participating in Title I schools and to the community at large. An annual evaluation of the effectiveness of parent involvement will be conducted.

District Office staff provides technical assistance, coordination, and support to participating Title I schools. To assist these schools, District Office staff will be available to assist in the writing of the Title I grant, assist in procurement, attend school improvement/renewal team meetings, assist the schools in implementing effective parent involvement activities and Parent-Teacher organization meetings. Additional responsibilities will be to provide assistance in any area requested to bring about school improvement and increase parental involvement. The District will assist each school in the development of a school-level Parent Involvement Policy. District Office staff will also see that state and federal guidelines are followed.

The schools and parents will build the capacity for strong parental involvement by entering into School-Parent-Student Compacts with staff and families of students attending Title I schools. Compacts are signed by the Principal, Teacher, Parent, and Student. Efforts to increase parent involvement will also include annual conferences to accommodate varied family schedules. In addition, an annual meeting for parents/families of students served in Title I schools will be held to provide information on Title I legislation, instructional programs and the desired outcomes for students of Title I Targeted Assistance schools. Parents will impact policy-making via opportunities to serve on School Improvement Councils, completion of parent surveys, preview of Title I plans in each school Media Center and/or serving as mentors or through other volunteer efforts. Schools will provide a number of Parenting activities during the year such as Technology, Literacy, Math/Science, Fine Arts, Testing, Cultural Celebration, Academic Information, and other student performance/academic presentations.

The Parenting Program served through Title I will coordinate and join together with other programs by inviting parents to attend parenting classes, Adult Ed classes, workshops and seminars offered by the District and/or state. Additional efforts will be made to work with other community programs to provide information and assistance regarding Title I Targeted Assistance programs.

Regarding funding, the District will reserve not less than one percent (1%) of the total Title I allocation to carry out parental involvement to include family literacy and parenting skills. In addition, each school will reserve at least 5% of their Title I allocation for funding Parent activities.

## PERSONAL PROPERTY

Toys, pets, electronic devices, extra money or any non-school related property should be left at home. The school is not responsible for lost, misplaced or stolen items or valuables that a student brings to school.

## PROOF OF RESIDENCE

Current documentation is required to be submitted every year.
Every family in our school for the 2025-2026 school year **must** provide:
1. A 2024 property tax receipt. Tax receipts are also available on line at the Lexington County Services website https://www.lex-co.com/propsearch/#/home
2. TWO different and CURRENT utility bills at the physical address (ex. telephone, cable, water, sewer, gas or electricity).

## PTO MEMBERSHIP

All families are members of the Piney Woods Elementary Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), and meetings are scheduled during the school year for families to attend. The meeting programs vary, but all are welcome to attend. Activities sponsored by the PTO include the Flock, Rock & Run, Field Day, Spirit Nights, and teacher scholarships. The PTO works cooperatively with the school to sponsor programs, school-wide and classroom activities. You may contact the PWES PTO directly at pineywoodspto@gmail.com.

## RAPID EMERGENCY CALLING SYSTEM (RECS)

The District utilizes an automated system that has the capability to communicate directly with every family in the district in a fast, efficient manner. The system will call hundreds of phone numbers in a matter of moments to notify families of school closings or delays due to inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstances. In addition, schools have the capability to use the system to only contact families of students who attend their schools with news such as upcoming teacher/parent conference days, PTO meetings, etc.

## RESOURCE PROGRAMS

**Response to Intervention (RtI):** These services are provided to students who qualify under the RtI guidelines. The students receive individual and/or small group instruction with an emphasis on the development of reading.
**ML - Multilingual Learners:** A program designed to teach English to speakers of other languages is provided.
**SAT - Student Assistance Team:** The Student Assistance Team exists to provide immediate support to teachers and parents in dealing with student's social, emotional, and academic concerns. As required by law, this team functions as an intermediate step between the recognition of a problem by the parent or classroom teacher, special education teacher and,

as appropriate, a school counselor. The team meets as needed to discuss problems, generate possible remedial action and recommend specific intervention strategies.

## RETENTION – DISTRICT POLICY IHE

All retention requests must be made to the school principal. In all cases, the district policy will be followed.

## SCHOOL COUNSELOR PROGRAM

Piney Woods has a school counselor to assist all students. School counselors work to prevent problems and help students with any kind of situation. School counselors teach monthly class lessons, conduct small groups, and meet with students individually. Students may request to visit the school counselor by asking their teacher and/or writing a short note.

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL (SIC)

A School Improvement Council (SIC) meets regularly at the school. Representatives include parents of students in the school elected by the parents of the students enrolled in the school; teachers from the school elected by the faculty; community residents appointed by the principal; ex-officio members to include the principal, assistant principal, the immediate past chairperson of the SIC and the Teacher of the Year.

Duties of the SIC include assisting the school in the preparation of the annual School Improvement Report, serving as a liaison between the school and community, and providing other assistance that the principal or school board may request.

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT

School board policy JC and regulation JC-R prohibit inappropriate verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature at school. Sexual harassment is prohibited against members of the same sex as well as against members of the opposite sex. The policy and regulation define sexual harassment, reporting procedures, and consequences. Any student who experiences a sexually offensive comment or action by another student or adult at school or school sponsored functions is strongly encouraged to tell a parent, teacher, counselor, or principal. Parents who think that their child has been subjected to sexual harassment should report this behavior to the principal.

## SMOKE-FREE FACILITY

The Piney Woods Elementary School building and grounds are designated as smoke-free.

## SPECIAL SERVICES

**Self-Contained Programs:** Self-contained special education classes are located at Piney Woods Elementary School. Specialized teaching techniques and strategies as well as modifications, adaptations, and compensations are utilized to help the student succeed.
**Resource Program:** Piney Woods has a combination resource program taught by a special education teacher. This program is designed for students with learning disabilities who spend the majority of their day in general education classes. The student's IEP team recommends the number of hours a student needs to receive special education.
**Speech and Language Development**: Piney Woods Elementary offers speech-language services for all eligible students. Classroom teachers make referrals to the speech-language pathologist throughout the school year for those students who may benefit from extra help in increasing communications skills.
**Services Available to Students with Special Health Care Needs**
**Parent Notice (IHPs, 504, IDEA, Homebound): Required By S.C. Code Ann. Section**

**59-63-90 (Supp. 2005)**
Many health care services can be provided for students to keep them at school where they can learn and participate with other students. Our goal is to provide information to parents and legal guardians about some of the services and programs available for addressing the health care needs of students during the school day to help students succeed in school. It is important that the necessary health care information is shared with the appropriate people—such as teachers on duty during recess, bus drivers, and cafeteria employees—to make sure that the students' needs are met throughout the school day.

**Individual Health Care Plans or Individual Health Plans (IHPs)**
Individual health care plans are also called individual health plans or IHPs. School nurses who are registered nurses write IHPs to guide how a student's health care needs will be met while at school. The nurse works with the student, the student's parents or legal guardians, the student's health care provider, and other school staff to write the plan. IHPs are written for students who have special health care needs that must be met by school staff during the school day. IHPs are also written for students who have been approved by the school district to self-medicate or self-monitor. To learn more about IHPs, talk with your child's school nurse, Tamela Hames, RN @ (803)756-1105 or thames@lexrich5.org.

**Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504)**
Section 504 is a federal law that requires public schools to make adjustments so that students with certain disabilities can learn and participate in settings like other students who do not have disabilities. To be eligible for services under Section 504, a student must have a condition that substantially limits one or more major life activities. A team decides if a student is eligible. The team should include the student's parent or legal guardian, the student (if able), and others who know the student or know about the student's disability, such as a teacher, a school counselor, a school nurse, and other school staff. If the student is eligible, the team develops an individual accommodation plan. The individual accommodation plan explains how the student's needs will be met while at school and may include health services for the student during the school day if needed. To learn more about Section 504, contact the Assistant Principal, at (803)756-1104.

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**
Students, ages 3 through 21 years, may receive services under the IDEA if the student needs special education and related services to benefit from his or her educational program. A team decides if a student qualifies for services under the IDEA. The team includes the student's parent or legal guardian, teachers, and other school staff. The team develops an individualized education program (IEP) if the student meets federal and state requirements. The IEP outlines a plan for helping the student receive a free appropriate public education and meet goals set by the team. The IEP may include health services for the student during the school day if needed. Contact the Assistant Principal, at (803)756-1104 to learn more about the IDEA.

**Medical Homebound Instruction**
Medical homebound instruction is a service that is available for students who cannot attend school for a medical reason even with the aid of transportation. A physician must certify that the student has such a medical condition but may benefit from instruction, and must fill out the medical homebound form that the school district provides. The school district then decides whether to approve the student for medical homebound services. The school district will consider the severity of the student's illness or injury, the length of time that the student will be out of school, the impact that a long period away from school will have on the student's academic success, and whether the student's health needs can be met at school. To learn more about medical homebound services, contact the registrar.

## STUDENT RECORDS

Certain information contained in a student's permanent record is treated confidentially, with access limited by federal guidelines and board policy. Parental review of a child's records is allowed by board policy. There is a copy of the District Five Board Policy Manual in the office and at www.lexrich5.org. According to school board policy JR, student records will be handled in a manner consistent with the **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 (P.L. 94-380).** If a child transfers and enrolls in a school other than Piney Woods Elementary School, his/her records will be transferred to that school or school system upon request. The parent/eligible student has the right to request a copy of the record that was disclosed. Parents/eligible students also have a right to request an amendment of educational records if they believe the record contains information that is inaccurate or in violation of the student's rights of privacy.

## TELEPHONE MESSAGES

Please make sure that your child/children have all of the important family information before he or she comes to school each day. In order to protect instructional time, students may not receive telephone calls except for emergencies, and teachers may not leave their students for telephone conferences with parents. Parents may leave messages for teachers with the office staff or voicemail.

## TELEPHONE CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT

Compliance with the Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA) – Use of Automated Telephone Notifications. Under a federal consumer protection law, schools need parent/guardian permission to receive automated or prerecorded calls to a cell number. At the beginning of the year, you provided contact information, including the number to which these automated calls should be directed, that the District will use to keep you informed. Should you choose to revoke consent to receive automated calls/texts on your cell phone, you may do so by notifying the District of your revocation. Please contact the Registrar at your child's school for that purpose. If you revoke consent for automated and prerecorded calls to your cell number, you may not receive time-sensitive information.

The District requires that you provide notice of any changes in contact information (physical address and telephone numbers) to the District within ten days. This includes any change in the cell number you provided to the District. Correct contact information is needed so that the District may provide you with information regarding school operations and any specific concerns related to your student. Should you fail to provide the District updated contact information, including notification that a cell phone number you have given the District has been disconnected or reassigned, please be aware that the District disclaims liability for any alleged damages resulting from your failure to do so.

## TEXTBOOK INFORMATION

Students will have access to one set of state-adopted textbooks as provided by the S.C. State Department of Education at no cost. Students are responsible for the books and must pay fines if books are lost or damaged.

## VIDEO MONITORING WHILE ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

In order to promote the safety and welfare of students and staff members while they are on school grounds, video cameras have been placed throughout the school.

- **Therefore, students and parents are hereby notified that students are subject to being videotaped on school grounds at any time and videotapes are reviewed as required to determine the safety of students and staff.**
- **Parents who wish to view footage from any of the video cameras on campus must make the request at the district level through the Office of Planning and Administration.**

## VISITORS

The board encourages authorized parents/legal guardians, grandparents and other citizens of the district to fully participate in the educational process and to visit classrooms or attend other school activities at times authorized by the district or the principal to observe the work of the school. Acceptable reasons for visits include observation of classroom instruction (with prior permission), observation of programs, participation in special events, conferring with staff and counseling, mentoring or providing support to a student. The visit should have a legitimate purpose and not interfere with the continuity or delivery of instruction. Visits should not be used for group activities, recruitment or marketing for a specific product or service.

The board and state law require that during school hours, all visitors to the school must report to the school's front office. **(Valid driver's license required)** Visitors must wear their visitors badge until they depart the building. It is important that parents know who is visiting their child(ren) during the school day. Therefore, only parents and/or legal guardians can visit a student during the school day without permission and coordination. All persons other than parents and legal guardians wishing to visit a student must receive written permission from the parent/legal guardian. Visitors are asked to please sign out at the end of each visit.

## Visitor Guidelines

The safety and security of our students and staff is of the utmost importance to us at Piney Woods. While we love having families come in and visit us, it is important for all our guests to know the guidelines that are in place to ensure we respect the learning taking place and for the safety of our Purple Martins, big and small! The following is provided as a supplement to School Board Policy KI (Visitors, dated 9/13).

**Authorized visitors encouraged**

The board encourages authorized parents/legal guardians, grandparents and other citizens of the district to fully participate in the educational process and to visit classrooms or attend other school activities at times authorized by the district or the principal to observe the work of the school.

**Visit Purpose**

Acceptable reasons for visits include observation of classroom instruction, observation of programs, participation in special events, conferring with staff and counseling, mentoring or providing support to a student. The visit should have a legitimate purpose and not interfere with the continuity or delivery of instruction. Visits should not be used for group activities, recruitment or marketing for a specific product or service.

**Visitors must report to the front office of a school**
The board and state law require that during school hours, all visitors to the school must report to the school's front office. Visitors must follow the security check-in procedures and receive authorization and a visitor's badge before visiting classes, students or elsewhere in the building. Visitors must wear their visitors badge until they depart the building. School employees should report violations of this law and school procedures to the school administration and law enforcement authorities immediately

**Authorized Visitors**
While visitors are encouraged it is essential that school visits do not disrupt instruction. And, it is important that parents know who is visiting their child(ren) during the school day. Therefore, only parents and/or legal guardians can visit a student during the school day without permission and coordination. All persons other than parents and legal guardians wishing to visit a student must receive written permission from the parent/legal guardian. The permission request must be given to the school office in advance of the visit. Any court order restricting parental visits to a child supersedes this policy.

**Visit Limitations**
There may be occasions when a school visit is not appropriate. When requesting to visit a student all visitors must state; - the specific student being visited, - the intent of their visit, - the location of the visit and - the time period for the visit. Visitors must comply with their stated reason for the visit. Visitors cannot roam the school or visit other students for whom they do not have permission. The school principal may limit the school visit if he or she believes that the visit will disrupt instruction or student assessments.

**Volunteers**
Approved and vetted school volunteers acting in their volunteer capacity are exempt from the requirements above. However, volunteers must stay within the bounds of their volunteer activities.

## WITHDRAWING A STUDENT

When withdrawing a student from school, please notify the school office 48 hours in advance so that the teachers are able to complete all records prior to the student's last day in school. The school will provide parents with a "withdrawal form" sheet listing materials their child is currently using and this can be hand-carried to the new school so that proper placement can be made. All devices must be returned and any outstanding fees paid in full. The new school will then request records.

## NON-DISCRIMINATION CLAUSE

School District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, religion, sex, age, disability, or handicap in admission to, or access to, or treatment for employment in its programs or activities. Inquiries should be directed to the Human Resource Officer, Title IX and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator, at 476-8000; and Special Services and 504 Coordinator, at 476-8000; and at 1020 Dutch Fork Road, Irmo SC 29063. Individuals with disabilities who require assistance or

special arrangements to participate in a program or activity sponsored by the school district should call 476-8000 at least 48 hours prior to the program or activity. Individuals with disabilities who require assistance or special arrangements to participate in a program or activity sponsored by Piney Woods Elementary School are asked to contact the principal at least 48 hours prior to the program or activity.