



Whispering Pines School

The Panther Press

Quarterly Newsletter, Vol.1 | September 2026



Principal's Message

Dear Whispering Pines Community,

As the new principal of Whispering Pines School, it is truly an honor to join this incredible school and the vibrant Miramar community. I am excited to begin this journey alongside our students, families, staff, and community partners. From the moment I arrived, I felt the warmth, pride, and strong sense of belonging that make Whispering Pines such a special place.

At Whispering Pines, we believe that every student matters, every voice is important, and every success, big or small, deserves to be celebrated. I am committed to building meaningful relationships with our students and families, listening, learning, and working together to ensure that every child feels supported, challenged, and inspired each day.

Guided by our theme, "Together, We Grow," we will continue to foster a safe, inclusive, and engaging learning environment where students are encouraged to reach their fullest potential. As a new member of this community, I look forward to partnering with you as we build on the strong traditions of excellence that already exist here.

I am excited for all that we will accomplish together and grateful for the opportunity to serve as your principal. Thank you for welcoming me into the Whispering Pines family.

With Panther Pride,

Dr. Jenny Delos Santos-Thelwell

Principal, Whispering Pines School

#TogetherWeGrow | #BuildingOnExcellence | #PantherPride



TOGETHER WE GROW



GROW

TOGETHER, WE GROW.

G

GOALS

We set clear learning goals and monitor our progress **every** day.



R

RIGOR

We engage in challenging instruction that pushes us to **think deeper** and do more.



O

OWNERSHIP

We take **responsibility** for our learning, behavior, and our success.



W

WORK TOWARD COMMENDABLE

We give our **best effort**, use feedback, and keep **improving** to reach Commendable and beyond.



STRONG ROOTS. BRIGHT FUTURES.

Citrus Health Network



Community Partnerships
That Support Growth,
Independence, and
Opportunity



About Citrus Health Network

Citrus Health Network is a leading nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the lives of people with behavioral health, developmental, and intellectual disabilities. Through a wide range of services, they provide compassionate care, individualized support, and opportunities that promote independence, well-being, and meaningful community inclusion. Their programs help Students Grades 6th - 12th reach their full potential and build brighter futures.

Mr. Jonny Dextre

Middle School Teacher

Mr. Jonny Dextre works with all of our Middle School students at Citrus Health Network. He teaches all subjects and provides a structured, supportive learning environment that helps students build academic skills, confidence, and independence.

Mr. Richard Pardo

High School Teacher

Mr. Richard Pardo teaches High School Math, Science, and Social Studies. He engages students with hands-on, real-world learning experiences that make the curriculum meaningful and accessible, while helping them develop critical thinking skills for the future.

Ms. Iris Goldstein

High School Teacher

Ms. Iris Goldstein teaches High School Reading and English. She supports students in developing strong literacy skills, effective communication, and a love for learning through engaging and individualized instruction.

TOGETHER WE GROW. TOGETHER WE LEARN. TOGETHER WE SUCCEED.

Florida Palms



Building Hope Through Partnership: How Florida Palms Academy and Whispering Pines School Are Changing Lives Together



Every child's journey toward success begins with the right support system. At Florida Palms Academy, that support extends far beyond the classroom. As a specialized residential treatment program serving children with complex emotional, behavioral, and mental health needs, Florida Palms Academy provides a comprehensive continuum of care that combines residential services, behavioral health treatment, medical care, nursing, individual and group therapy, psychiatric services, and a safe, structured living environment—all designed to help students heal, grow, and prepare for successful futures.

What makes Florida Palms Academy truly unique is its seamless integration of treatment and education. Through its longstanding partnership with Whispering Pines School and Broward County Public Schools, students continue receiving a high-quality public education while participating in residential treatment. Educational services are delivered on the Florida Palms Academy campus, allowing teachers, therapists, behavioral specialists, nurses, residential staff, and administrators to collaborate daily in support of every student's academic, emotional, behavioral, and social development.

This multidisciplinary approach ensures that every aspect of a student's care is coordinated around one common goal: helping each child reach their fullest potential. Academic instruction is strengthened by therapeutic support, while treatment is reinforced through meaningful educational experiences. Together, these services provide students with the confidence, stability, and skills necessary to successfully transition back to their home schools, families, and communities.

Leading this collaborative effort is Principal Garrick S. Keidan, whose career has been dedicated to exceptional student education, educational leadership, school safety, and behavioral supports. Under his leadership, Florida Palms Academy has continued to foster a culture where compassion, accountability, innovation, and collaboration guide every decision. Mr. Keidan has worked to strengthen the partnership between Florida Palms Academy and Broward County Public Schools while ensuring that students receive an individualized educational experience that complements their therapeutic journey.

Mr. Keidan believes that meaningful student success is achieved when educators, clinicians, medical professionals, residential staff, and families work together as one team. His leadership philosophy centers on the whole child—recognizing that lasting academic achievement is closely connected to emotional wellness, personal growth, and positive relationships. By cultivating an environment where every professional shares responsibility for student success, Florida Palms Academy continues to provide children with opportunities to overcome challenges, build resilience, and discover their strengths.

Today, Florida Palms Academy stands as a model of integrated care, where education and treatment are delivered side by side in a supportive and nurturing environment. The partnership with Whispering Pines School ensures that students remain connected to a rigorous public education while receiving the comprehensive services needed to address their individual challenges.

Every lesson taught, every therapeutic breakthrough, and every milestone achieved reflects the dedication of professionals who believe that every child deserves hope, opportunity, and the chance to succeed. Through collaboration, innovation, and an unwavering commitment to excellence, Florida Palms Academy continues to transform lives—one student, one family, and one success story at a time.

TOGETHER WE GROW. TOGETHER WE HEAL. TOGETHER WE SUCCEED.

Whispering Pines School Adults with Disabilities Program



Community Partnerships
That Support Growth,
Independence, and
Opportunity



ARC Broward

Teacher: Ms. Kim Murphy

ARC Broward empowers people with disabilities to grow, develop, and thrive through a continuum of adult services. Its adult programs include day training, socialization, recreation, creative activities, wellness support, and pathways to workforce and certificate opportunities. Ms. Kim Murphy serves students at this location by supporting instruction, celebrating progress, and helping adults build confidence, connections, and readiness for the future.

L.I.F.E. Developmental Center

Teacher: Ms. Bernadette Conway

L.I.F.E. Developmental Center helps adults with special needs experience life to their fullest potential. The program provides a welcoming, home-like environment where adults can continue learning, build friendships, develop independence, and discover their strengths. Ms. Bernadette Conway supports students at this site by guiding instruction, encouraging participation, and helping each adult grow with confidence and purpose.

United Community Options

Teacher: Ms. Nancy Holden

United Community Options of South Florida prepares children and adults with unique abilities for full and rewarding lives. Its services include meaningful day activities, community-based supports, and employment-focused opportunities that encourage inclusion and independence. Ms. Nancy Holden works with students at this location by teaching practical life skills, promoting community engagement, and helping adults strengthen the tools they need for everyday success.

TOGETHER WE GROW. TOGETHER WE LEARN. TOGETHER WE SUCCEED.



Student *Spotlight*



London Yearby



Grade: 12th

Achievements

- ★ Honor Roll
- ★ Just Do It... I Did Award
- ★ NASEF MarioKart 8 Champion

Favorite Subject

London's Favorite Subjects can be found in Mr. Daniel Jones Classroom. "I like the competitions we enter and learning about new technologies."



★ Why We're Proud

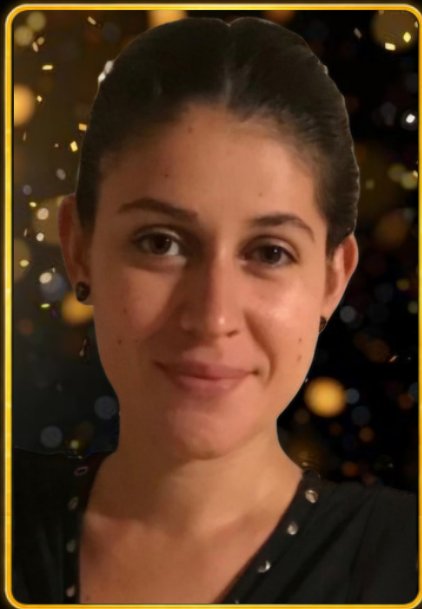
We are incredibly proud of London for consistently demonstrating a great attitude and making positive choices each day. Her excellent attendance and outstanding behavior sets a wonderful example for others and shows Her commitment to success and learning.



BE RESPECTFUL. BE RESPONSIBLE.
BE A PANTHER.



Faculty/Staff *Spotlight*



Karina Hoogesteyn

Role/Department: Literacy Coach



Years at Whispering Pines
6 Years



Spotlight Highlights



SAC Chairperson



Student Government Advisor



Why We Appreciate Them



Ms. Karina Hoogesteyn has been a valued member of Whispering Pines for six years, serving five years as an English/Reading teacher and the past two years as a Literacy Coach. Her dedication to student growth extends well beyond the classroom, as she has also served as our School Advisory Council (SAC) Chairperson for five years and as one of our Student Government Advisors for four years. Through each of these roles, Ms. Hoogesteyn consistently demonstrates an incredible commitment to our students by encouraging leadership, supporting academic success, and helping students find their voices. Her dedication and continued support makes her an important and greatly appreciated member of the Whispering Pines family.



BE RESPECTFUL. BE RESPONSIBLE.

— **BE A PANTHER.** —



WHISPERING PINES SCHOOL

COMMUNITY

Spotlight

2026 - 2027

We are proud of our Active community Partners
for their dedication and commitment to our
Students and Staff at Whispering Pines School.



Publix



Miramar News



Miramar Police

Together We Grow

'I'm here to stay.' New principal aims to shine light on Miramar's hidden school

By Morgan C. Mullings

July 22, 2026 10:45 AM



Jenny DelosSantos-Thelwell is the new principal at Whispering Pines, a non-traditional school in Miramar for students with emotional and behavioral disorders. Courtesy Jenny DelosSantos-Thelwell

Page 1

Miramar High School is instantly recognizable from the street by its towering patriot logo. Behind it lies a school few people know: Whispering Pines.

Though mostly unseen, the K-12 center educates students every day, students who are looking for consistency.

Jenny DelosSantos-Thelwell aimed to provide that stability from the moment she started as principal in July.

"Our students at Whispering Pines have emotional, behavioral disorders. They may be autistic as well, it just depends on each individual student," Thelwell told the Miramar News.

"So they'll go to Whispering Pines, where they can receive other services to empower them, and give them the ability to ... deal with their behavior through therapeutic services."

Thelwell has a special connection with the students. She started as a substitute teacher before becoming an ESE specialist working with disabled students.

She then earned a master's degree in special education, where she studied as many disabilities as possible.

"I love that their disability doesn't tell them who they are. They're still kids," she said.

Page 2

She was also assistant principal of another non-traditional school, The College Academy at Broward College.

"My coursework along with my experience as an ESE specialist, and as a teacher overall, definitely has prepared me for this position," she said.

The new principal said her main goal is consistency, to bring relief to parents and students. Thelwell is the fourth leader the school has had in the past two years.

"I'm here to stay," Thelwell said. Whispering Pines students are learning the same things and taking the same exams as traditional students. Despite this, Thelwell said, sometimes students with disabilities are too often overlooked.

"They're already leaving their actual school to come to this alternative setting, so what does that do their psyche? I'm really working on beautifying the campus," Thelwell said.

Thelwell is known for being intentional in connecting with students from all demographics and looking out for their futures.

"Quite a few students benefitted from scholarships due to her research," Bardetta Haygood, who hired Thelwell as assistant principal at The College Academy, told the Miramar News. "She has the right skill-set to make a difference in that community."

DUNKIN' CRUISER

WHISPERING PINES
PANTHERS



RECAP!

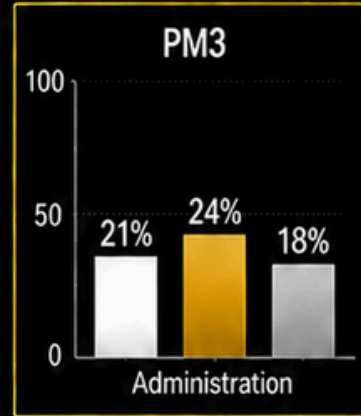
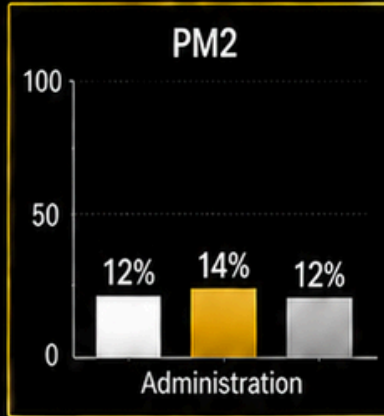
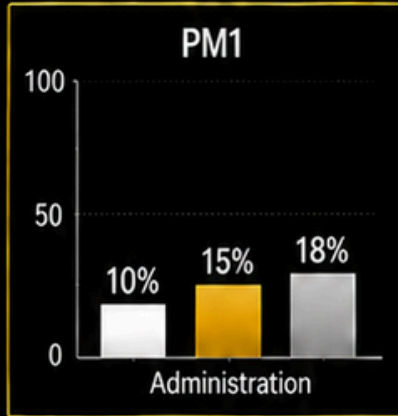


TOGETHER, WE GROW!

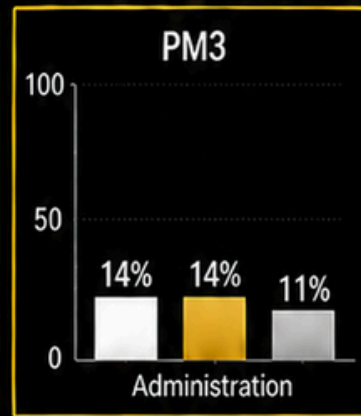
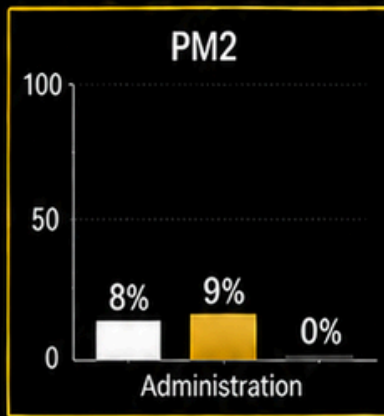
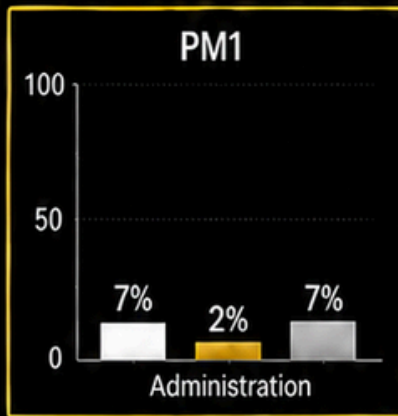


DATA DASHBOARD

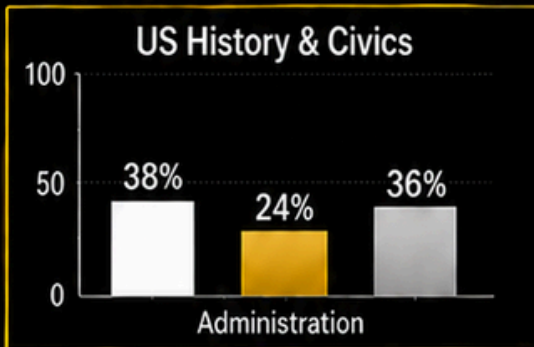
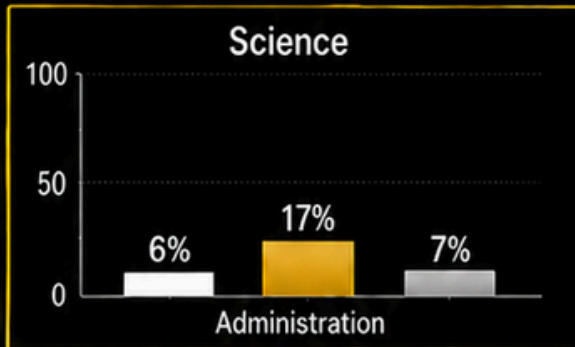
Achievement Level 3 and Above (%) by Administration and Year for ELA Reading



Achievement Level 3 and Above (%) by Administration and Year for ELA Mathematics



Science / US History & Civics



Administration

● 2024

● 2025

● 2026



Whispering Pines School

Together, We Grow

Save the Dates

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL (SAC)
SCHOOL ADVISORY FORUM (SAF)

2026-2027

EVERY 1ST WEDNESDAY AT 10:00AM

SEPT
02

OCT
07
Joint SAF
meeting

NOV
04

DEC
02

JAN
06

FEB
03

MAR
03

APR
07
Joint SAF
meeting

MAY
05

SAF meeting will take place at 11:00AM immediately following SAC



WHO: ALL STAKEHOLDERS



PURPOSE: To discuss school academic and programming.



WHISPERING PINES CARES FOR OUR *Community!*

WE ARE PROUD TO BE A
COMMUNITY ELIGIBILITY PROVISION (CEP)
SCHOOL FOR **2026-2027!**

Enjoy
FREE
BREAKFAST
and
LUNCH
ALL YEAR LONG!



NOURISHING MEALS
TO FUEL SUCCESS



SUPPORTING EVERY
STUDENT, EVERY DAY



STRONGER TOGETHER,
BUILDING A HEALTHIER COMMUNITY



FOCUS ON LEARNING.
WE TAKE CARE OF THE REST!



NO APPLICATION • NO FEES • NO WORRIES
JUST ONE MORE WAY WE'RE HERE FOR YOU!



THANK YOU FOR BEING PART OF THE *Whispering Pines* FAMILY!



Whispering Pines School

Upcoming Events



What's Coming Up at Our School



HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Celebrating culture,
history, and the many
contributions of
Hispanic communities.



FUN FRIDAYS

Enjoying engaging
activities that build
school spirit,
connection, and fun.



CAMPUS BEAUTIFICATION PROJECT

Working together to
transform the front of
Whispering Pines School
into a clean, welcoming,
and beautiful space.



ONE TEAM. ONE PURPOSE.



TOGETHER, *We Grow.*



WHISPERING PINES
PANTHERS



Whispering Pines School

Jenny Thelwell, Principal

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH SPIRIT WEEK

Many Cultures. One Panther Family.



SEPTEMBER 22-25, 2026

TUESDAY



TUESDAY –

¡REPRESENTA TU CULTURA! DAY

Wear clothing or accessories that represent your culture, heritage, or family traditions.



WEDNESDAY



WEDNESDAY –

HISPANIC ICONS DAY

Dress inspired by a notable Hispanic/Latino leader, artist, athlete, musician, or historical figure.



THURSDAY



THURSDAY –

¡VAMOS, EQUIPO! DAY

Wear a soccer jersey, team shirt, or athletic gear representing your favorite team or Hispanic/Latino athlete.



FRIDAY



FRIDAY –

**FIESTA FRIDAY /
PANTHER PRIDE DAY**

Wear black and gold with festive Hispanic Heritage flair.



TEACHER DOOR DECORATING CONTEST



THEME:

Celebrating
Hispanic Heritage Month



Decorate your classroom
or office door to highlight
a Hispanic/Latino country,
influential person, tradition,
landmark, or cultural
contribution.



Doors must be
completed by
Wednesday morning.



Judging will take place
on Thursday.



Winners will be
announced on Friday.



Let's celebrate culture, community, and pride together!



WHISPERING PINES SCHOOL

FUN FRIDAYS

TWICE A MONTH BEGINNING IN OCTOBER



Students can earn special activities, treats, and incentives through positive behavior, effort, and Panther pride!



BASED ON POINT SHEETS AND POSITIVE CHOICES.

Together, We Grow!



TOGETHER, WE GROW

CAMPUS BEAUTIFICATION PROJECT

Enhancing our school. Inspiring our students.
Strengthening our community.

*Building Pride.
Building Community.
Building a
Brighter Future.*



**A BEAUTIFUL SCHOOL
BUILDS BRIGHTER TOMORROWS.**

Together, we are transforming the front of Whispering Pines School into a bright, welcoming, and inviting space that reflects the excellence of our students, staff, and community.

PHASED PLAN. POWERFUL IMPACT.

PHASE I



NOVEMBER 19, 2026

- ✓ Freshening our entrance
- ✓ Planting beautiful flowers and greenery
- ✓ Creating a welcoming first impression

PHASE II



FEBRUARY 12, 2027

- ✓ Building on our progress
- ✓ Adding vibrant color and landscaping
- ✓ Continuing the transformation



**A PARTNERSHIP THAT
GROWS MIRAMAR**

We are proud to partner with the City of Miramar and Vice Mayor Carson Edwards and his team to make a lasting impact on our school and our community.



**STRONGER
TOGETHER.**

United for a better school and community.



**BEAUTIFYING
OUR CAMPUS.**

Creating a safe, welcoming, and inspiring environment.



**INVESTING IN
OUR FUTURE.**

Every improvement benefits our students.



**TOGETHER,
WE GROW.**

Building pride. Building community. Building a brighter future.

*Thank you for helping us **grow** a brighter future for our Panthers!*





CAMPUS BEAUTIFICATION PROJECT EXAMPLES

Building Pride.
Building Community.
Building a
Brighter Future.



EXAMPLE 1



EXAMPLE 2

OUR VISION

A more vibrant, welcoming, and inspiring campus for our students, staff, and community.



**ENHANCE
OUR ENVIRONMENT**



**CREATE A
WELCOMING CAMPUS**



**BUILD
COMMUNITY PRIDE**



**INSPIRE
BRIGHTER FUTURES**

**TOGETHER, WE MAKE A
BRIGHTER TOMORROW**



WHISPERING PINES SCHOOL COMMENDABLE LAB PROJECT

Building Pride.
Building Community.
Building a
Brighter Future.



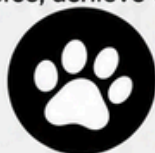
★ OUR PURPOSE: A STUDENT-CENTERED SPACE WHERE LEARNING GROWS, CONFIDENCE RISES, AND POTENTIAL BECOMES PERFORMANCE.
Grower = Regulate · Reap = Instructs · Achievement



Our Commendable Lab Project is transforming underused areas into vibrant, student-centered work spaces where learning comes to life. By creating dedicated Literacy and Math Labs, we are providing engaging environments that support reading, writing, problem solving, and critical thinking. These spaces give our students the tools, resources, and opportunities they need to grow in confidence, achieve their goals, and reach their full potential.



TRANSFORM
UNDERUSED SPACES



CREATE FUNCTIONAL
LEARNING WORK SPACES



EMPOWER
STUDENT SUCCESS



BUILD A
BRIGHTER FUTURE



TOGETHER, WE MAKE A BRIGHTER TOMORROW



Follow Us



STAY CONNECTED

WITH WHISPERING PINES SCHOOL!



FOLLOW US. LIKE US. WATCH US. **GROW** WITH US.



INSTAGRAM

@WhisperingP1nes

Follow us for photos, stories, updates, and a behind-the-scenes look at Panther Pride!



X (TWITTER)

@WhisperingP1nes

Get the latest news, announcements, and celebrate our students and staff!



YOUTUBE

@WhisperingPinesSchool

Subscribe to our channel to watch events, highlights, and important messages from our school!



YOUTUBE CHANNEL:

<https://www.youtube.com/@WhisperingPinesSchool>



VISIT OUR SCHOOL WEBSITE

<https://whisperingpines.browardschools.com/>

Find important information, calendars, resources, and everything you need to stay connected with our school community.



ONE TEAM. ONE PURPOSE.

| *Every Student. Every Day.* |

TOGETHER, WE GROW.



Contact Us:

<https://whisperingpines.browardschools.com/>

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