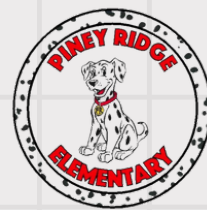


Piney Ridge Elementary School



Hello Piney Families!

The 2026-2027 school year is off to a great start, and it has been wonderful getting to know our students! There is so much excitement in our classrooms as children settle into new routines, make friends, and begin exploring new learning opportunities. Over the next few weeks, we'll be gathering information to help ensure instruction is aligned with each student's needs. As part of this process, PreK students will take the Early Literacy Assessment, Kindergarten students will begin the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment, and students in grades 1- 5 will participate in STAR reading assessments. Thank you for sharing your amazing children with us. We are grateful for your partnership and are looking forward to a fantastic year of learning, growth, and memorable experiences together!

Sincerely,
Brie Bower and Morgan Pratt

Brie Bower, Principal

Morgan Pratt, Assistant Principal
& 504/ADA Bld. Coordinator



**September
2026**

6315 Freedom
Ave Sykesville,
MD 21784

Voice
(410)751-3535

Fax
(410)751-3539

School Hours:
9:15 – 3:45

preattendance@
carrollk12.org



Need to contact an
administrator?
A teacher?
Check the
Staff Directory!

Bus Riders

- Students will have a colored tag on their backpack with their bus number. Please do not remove this tag.
- PreK students will have a red luggage tag on their backpack in addition to the colored bus tag. Please make sure this tag stays on your child's backpack.
- PreK and K students need to have a parent/guardian present at the bus stop in the PM.

Important
Transportation
Reminders



Walker Procedures

New this year

- Students who walk to and from school will follow different procedures.

Walking to school (AM):

- Students can be dropped off at the normal location- Door 6, "The North Entrance".

Walking home from school (PM):

- Students who walk home from school will be dismissed with the third wave (our last wave of students).
- Parents/guardians will pick up their students at door 12- "The Tunnel".
- **This door will close at 4:10.**

REMINDERS

- Bring your ID.
- Students will only be dismissed to those who have permission to pick up (not emergency contacts).
- Once students are picked up by their adult, they are in their care/supervision.
- Parents and guardians should not park to pick up a "walker". You will be asked to join the car line.



Please remember that our staff needs to get in the parking lot in the morning. Parents/guardians should not arrive before 8:40.

Drop Off Procedures:



When dropping off students, parents/ guardians should not exit the car. Only parents/guardians of students in PreK should assist students in and out of the car each day.

Pick up here





Helping Kids K-5 with Transitioning Back to School



Returning to school can bring up big feelings—excitement, nerves, uncertainty, and everything in between. With connection, preparation, routines, and consistency, we can help our children feel safe, confident, and ready.

HOW ROUTINES & CONSISTENCY CAN HELP KIDS

Routines and consistency create predictability, which helps reduce stress and builds confidence. When kids know what to expect, they feel safer and more in control.



REDUCES ANXIETY

Knowing what comes next helps kids feel secure and less worried about changes or the unknown.



BUILDS CONFIDENCE

Consistent routines help kids feel prepared and capable of handling their day.



SUPPORTS EMOTIONAL REGULATION

Predictable routines make it easier for kids to manage big feelings and bounce back from challenges.



STRENGTHENS CONNECTION

Routines create meaningful time for connection, which helps kids feel seen, heard, and supported.



ENCOURAGES INDEPENDENCE

With practice and consistency, kids learn what to do and feel more confident handling tasks on their own.

HOW PARENTS CAN HELP



TALK ABOUT IT

Name the feelings and let your child know it's okay to feel nervous. Listen and validate without trying to "fix" the worry.



PREPARE TOGETHER

Visit the school, meet the teacher if possible, and talk about what their day will look like. Knowing what to expect builds confidence.



CREATE A GOODBYE ROUTINE

Keep goodbyes short, consistent, and positive. A special phrase, hug, or high-five can provide comfort and predictability.



FOCUS ON STRENGTHS

Remind your child of times they've handled hard things before. Celebrate their courage and growth.



STAY CONNECTED

Let them know you're thinking of them. A note in their lunchbox or a text to their teacher (if appropriate) can go a long way.

The Power of Routines & Consistency

Small, consistent steps each day create a sense of safety and stability—helping kids feel ready to learn and thrive.



PREDICTABILITY REDUCES ANXIETY

Knowing what comes next helps kids feel more in control.



PREPARE THE NIGHT BEFORE

Lay out clothes, pack backpacks, and review the plan for tomorrow.



CONSISTENT MORNING ROUTINE

A calm, steady start helps set the tone for the day.



AFTER-SCHOOL RHYTHM

Structure after school time with snack, play, and downtime.



CONSISTENT BEDTIME

Good sleep supports emotional regulation and school success.

*A final
reminder*

Transitions take time, and every child is different.

Your support, patience, and consistency make all the difference.



YOU'VE GOT THIS. AND SO DO THEY.



Piney Ridge Elementary School



Important Information for PRE Families

- Same day dismissal changes must be emailed to preattendance@carrollk12.org no later than 2:00 PM.
- Free and Reduced Meal Information linked below

Meal Benefits



[CCPS Important Dates Linked HERE](#)

Notice of Non-Discrimination

The Board of Education of Carroll County does not engage in discrimination that is unlawful or contrary to Maryland State Department of Education guidance on the basis of age, color, genetic information, marital status, mental or physical disability, ancestry or national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. The Board of Education of Carroll County is firmly committed to creating equal employment and educational opportunities for all persons by providing an environment that supports optimal academic achievement and productive work and is free from any form of unlawful discrimination, including access to school facilities, educational programs, and extracurricular activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Director of Human Resources 125 North Court Street Westminster, MD 21157 (410) 751-3070.

Piney Ridge Elementary School



Important PRE Dates

September 7- Labor Day (Schools Closed)

September 18- Early Dismissal for students (1 PM dismissal)

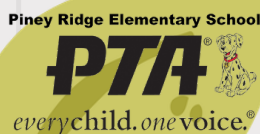
September 23- Fall Picture Day

October 15- Early Dismissal for students (1 PM dismissal)

October 16- No school for students (Professional Development for teachers)

Need more information?

Check our WEBSITE regularly for news, resources and important topics.



Upcoming PTA Meetings:

9/10

10/7

PTA Events:

10/2- Family Dance

10/13- Fun Run

10/14- Fun Run Rain Date

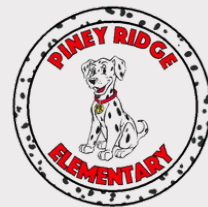
All visitors to the school must come to the main entrance and ring the doorbell.

Upon entering, proceed to the office to sign in. Visitors must show a photo ID.

Parents/Guardians may visit during lunch, after September 16.

Any school volunteers must complete CCPS Volunteer Training at least 7 days prior to volunteering in the school.

Piney Ridge Elementary School



MATH

What is math fact fluency?

Math fact fluency means being able to solve basic addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division facts accurately, efficiently, and flexibly. Fluency is more than simply memorizing facts. It includes understanding how numbers work, using strategies to solve facts, and eventually recalling familiar facts quickly and confidently. Fact fluency will be a focus this year in your child's mathematics classroom!

How can families help at home?

Math fact practice can be quick, meaningful, and even fun! Try some of these ideas:

 Play games: Use dice, playing cards, or simple board games to practice facts.

 Ask “How did you figure it out?” Encourage your child to explain their strategy rather than focusing only on the answer.

 Look for patterns: Talk about relationships between facts, such as knowing 5×6 can help with 6×6 .

 Practice during everyday moments: Work on facts while driving, waiting for an appointment, or during mealtime.

 Keep it short and positive: A few minutes of practice each day is more beneficial than long, stressful practice sessions.

 Use what your child knows: Encourage strategies such as making a ten, using doubles, breaking numbers apart, or using a related fact.

Most importantly, focus on understanding and confidence—not speed alone. When children understand the relationships between numbers and have opportunities to use efficient strategies, fact fluency develops naturally over time.

Piney Ridge Elementary School



READING Time

Join Carroll County Public Library staff and CCPS ELA Specialists to learn about ways to support your child's reading development at home and how to foster a love for literacy.

CCPS/CCPL Family Literacy Nights

Eldersburg 11/17



Carrolltowne
Eldersburg
Freedom
Linton Springs
Piney Ridge

Mt. Airy 11/10



Mt. Airy
Parr's Ridge
Winfield

Finksburg 11/4



Cranberry Station
Mechanicsville
Sandymount

Taneytown 11/18



Elmer
Wolfe
Runnymede
Taneytown

North Carroll 11/12



Ebb Valley
Hampstead
Manchester
Spring Garden

Westminster 11/19



Friendship Valley
Robert Moton
Westminster
William Winchester
Carroll Springs



Carroll County Public Library
Definite Possibilities

Every Child, Every Day



CCPS Elementary ELA

Piney Ridge Elementary School



ways to help your child with reading at home



MSDE FAMILY GUIDES

Family Guides for Student Success

Parents and guardians are their child's first teachers, and your insight is essential to helping your child succeed. When families and educators work closely together, students benefit. The Family Guides for Student Success outline the key literacy and math skills your child will learn from pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. These guides show what students should know by the end of each grade and support your child in meeting Maryland's learning expectations. Your partnership with your child's teacher makes the biggest difference. Stay in communication, ask questions, and reach out for ideas or activities to support learning at home.

MSDE is currently updating the Family Guides on this website to ensure they meet federal accessibility requirements and to provide clearer vocabulary and concepts in the math sections.

Family Guides - Division of Instructional Programs



September 2026

Piney Ridge Elementary
Breakfast

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Condiments: • Syrup • Cream Cheese • Grape Jelly • Margarine	1 Hot Breakfast Entree Variety of Breakfast Breads Variety of Cereal 100% Fruit Juice Variety of Fruit	2 Hot Breakfast Entree Variety of Breakfast Breads Variety of Cereal 100% Fruit Juice Variety of Fruit	3 Hot Breakfast Entree Variety of Breakfast Breads Variety of Cereal 100% Fruit Juice Variety of Fruit	4 Hot Breakfast Entree Variety of Breakfast Breads Variety of Cereal 100% Fruit Juice Variety of Fruit
7  Labor Day	8 Hot Breakfast Entree Variety of Breakfast Breads Variety of Cereal 100% Fruit Juice Variety of Fruit	9 Hot Breakfast Entree Variety of Breakfast Breads Variety of Cereal 100% Fruit Juice Variety of Fruit	10 Hot Breakfast Entree Variety of Breakfast Breads Variety of Cereal 100% Fruit Juice Variety of Fruit	11 Hot Breakfast Entree Variety of Breakfast Breads Variety of Cereal 100% Fruit Juice Variety of Fruit
14 Hot Breakfast Entree Variety of Breakfast Breads Variety of Cereal 100% Fruit Juice Variety of Fruit	15 Hot Breakfast Entree Variety of Breakfast Breads Variety of Cereal 100% Fruit Juice Variety of Fruit	16 Hot Breakfast Entree Variety of Breakfast Breads Variety of Cereal 100% Fruit Juice Variety of Fruit	17 Hot Breakfast Entree Variety of Breakfast Breads Variety of Cereal 100% Fruit Juice Variety of Fruit	18 Hot Breakfast Entree Variety of Breakfast Breads Variety of Cereal 100% Fruit Juice Variety of Fruit
21 Hot Breakfast Entree Variety of Breakfast Breads Variety of Cereal 100% Fruit Juice Variety of Fruit	22 Hot Breakfast Entree Variety of Breakfast Breads Variety of Cereal 100% Fruit Juice Variety of Fruit	23 Hot Breakfast Entree Variety of Breakfast Breads Variety of Cereal 100% Fruit Juice Variety of Fruit	24 Hot Breakfast Entree Variety of Breakfast Breads Variety of Cereal 100% Fruit Juice Variety of Fruit	25 Hot Breakfast Entree Variety of Breakfast Breads Variety of Cereal 100% Fruit Juice Variety of Fruit
28 Hot Breakfast Entree Variety of Breakfast Breads Variety of Cereal 100% Fruit Juice Variety of Fruit	29 Hot Breakfast Entree Variety of Breakfast Breads Variety of Cereal 100% Fruit Juice Variety of Fruit	30 Hot Breakfast Entree Variety of Breakfast Breads Variety of Cereal 100% Fruit Juice Variety of Fruit		

Assorted Breakfast Cereals: Apple Cinnamon Cheerios , Cheerios , Cinnamon Toast Crunch , Cocoa Puffs , Rice Chex , Trix

All menus are subject to change. We make it our priority to serve the menu as planned, but sometimes situations arise where we need to make substitutions. We will make every attempt to substitute similar products when they are available. We appreciate your understanding.

Milk Choices: Nonfat Milk , Low Fat Milk , Nonfat Chocolate Milk , Nonfat Strawberry Milk , Whole Milk , 2% Milk

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LUNCH

September 2026

Piney Ridge Elementary

Lunch

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
	1 Entree Choices • French Toast Sticks with Sausage Patty • Mini Pizza Bagels • Chef Salad Grab and Go Combo Featured Sides • Tater Tots • Corn Fruit and Vegetable Bar	2 Entree Choices • Spaghetti with Meatsauce with Garlic Knot • Mozzarella Cheese Sticks with Marinara Dipping Sauce • Chef Salad Grab and Go Combo Featured Sides • Green Beans Fruit and Vegetable Bar	3 Entree Choices • Pizza Crunchers • Teriyaki Chicken over Rice with Dinner Roll • Chef Salad Grab and Go Combo Featured Sides • Steamed Broccoli Fruit and Vegetable Bar	4 Entree Choices • Cheese Pizza • Pepperoni Pizza • Popcorn Chicken with Dinner Roll • Chef Salad Grab and Go Combo Featured Sides • Steamed Carrot Coins Fruit and Vegetable Bar
7  Labor Day	8 Entree Choices • Walking Taco • Deep Dish Cheese Pizza • Chicken Caesar Salad Grab and Go Combo Featured Sides • Corn Fruit and Vegetable Bar	9 Entree Choices • Chicken Nuggets with Dinner Roll • Pretzel Bites & Cheese • Chicken Caesar Salad • Savory French Fries Grab and Go Combo Featured Sides • Steamed Broccoli Fruit and Vegetable Bar	10 Entree Choices • Macaroni and Cheese with Soft Pretzel Rod • Hot Dog • Corn Dog • Chicken Caesar Salad Grab and Go Combo Featured Sides • Green Beans Fruit and Vegetable Bar	11 Entree Choices • Cheese Pizza • Pepperoni Pizza • Chicken Patty on a Roll • Chicken Caesar Salad Grab and Go Combo Featured Sides • Steamed Carrot Coins Fruit and Vegetable Bar
14 Entree Choices • Deep Dish Cheese Pizza • Orange Chicken over Rice • Crispy Chicken Salad Grab and Go Combo Featured Sides • Steamed Broccoli Fruit and Vegetable Bar	15 Entree Choices • Nachos Grande • Popcorn Chicken with Dinner Roll • Crispy Chicken Salad Grab and Go Combo Featured Sides • Corn Fruit and Vegetable Bar	16 Entree Choices • Grilled Cheese Sandwich • Hamburger on a Roll • Cheeseburger on a Roll • Crispy Chicken Salad Grab and Go Combo Featured Sides • Crispy French Fries • Tomato Soup Fruit and Vegetable Bar	17 Entree Choices • Pizza Crunchers • Pork BBQ Sandwich • Crispy Chicken Salad Grab and Go Combo Featured Sides • Baked Beans Fruit and Vegetable Bar	18 Entree Choices • Cheese Pizza • Pepperoni Pizza • Cheesesteak Sub • Crispy Chicken Salad Grab and Go Combo Featured Sides • Green Beans Fruit and Vegetable Bar
21 Entree Choices • Homestyle Chicken Tenders with Buttermilk Biscuit • Chicken & Cheese Quesadilla • Southwest Chicken Salad Grab and Go Combo Featured Sides • Baked Beans Fruit and Vegetable Bar	22 Entree Choices • French Toast Sticks with Sausage Patty • Hot Ham and Cheese • Southwest Chicken Salad Grab and Go Combo Featured Sides • Tater Tots • Corn Fruit and Vegetable Bar	23 Entree Choices • Popcorn Chicken with Dinner Roll • Garlic Cheese Pizza • Southwest Chicken Salad Grab and Go Combo Featured Sides • Steamed Broccoli Fruit and Vegetable Bar	24 Entree Choices • Chicken Nuggets with Dinner Roll • Cheese Tortellini with Marinara Sauce with Garlic Cheesy Twiz-Stik • Southwest Chicken Salad Grab and Go Combo Featured Sides • Green Beans Fruit and Vegetable Bar	25 Entree Choices • Cheese Pizza • Pepperoni Pizza • Corn Dog • Southwest Chicken Salad Grab and Go Combo Featured Sides • Mixed Vegetables Fruit and Vegetable Bar
28 Entree Choices • Deep Dish Cheese Pizza • Popcorn Chicken with Buttermilk Biscuit • Crispy Chicken Salad Grab and Go Combo Featured Sides • Smart Crackers • Mashed Potatoes • Corn Fruit and Vegetable Bar	29 Entree Choices • Chicken Nuggets with Dinner Roll • Mozzarella Cheese Sticks with Marinara Dipping Sauce • Crispy Chicken Salad Grab and Go Combo Featured Sides • Green Beans Fruit and Vegetable Bar	30 Entree Choices • Grilled Cheese Sandwich • Chicken Patty on a Roll • Crispy Chicken Salad Grab and Go Combo Featured Sides • Tomato Soup Fruit and Vegetable Bar		

Fruit and Vegetable Bar: Applesauce , Blueberries , Cinnamon Applesauce , Fresh Apples , Diced Pears , Fresh Pears , Chilled Peaches , Bananas , Fresh Grapes , Fresh Carrots , Cucumber Coins , Tossed Salad , Coleslaw , Spicy Coleslaw , Green Peppers and Cherry Tomatoes , Red Pepper Hummus

All menus are subject to change. We make it our priority to serve the menu as planned, but sometimes situations arise where we need to make substitutions. We will make every attempt to substitute similar products when they are available. We appreciate your understanding.

Milk Choices: Nonfat Milk , Low Fat Milk , Nonfat Chocolate Milk , Nonfat Strawberry Milk , Whole Milk , 2% Milk

Piney Ridge Elementary School



CARROLL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS LEGAL NOTICES IN PUBLICATIONS

Carroll County Public Schools (CCPS) is required to include one or more legal notices in publications and handbooks. A Notice of Non-discrimination is required in publications for distribution. In addition, the ADA Accessibility Statement is required in all publications pertaining to events to which the general public, including parents/guardians, is invited.

The following statement should be included in all publications:

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Board of Education of Carroll County does not engage in discrimination that is unlawful or contrary to Maryland State Department of Education guidance on the basis of age, color, genetic information, marital status, mental or physical disability, ancestry or national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

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The following statement about program accessibility should be used in advertisements, brochures and flyers publicizing events to which the general public, including parents/guardians, is invited:

ADA ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

Carroll County Public Schools (CCPS) does not discriminate on the basis of disability in employment or the provision of services, programs or activities. Persons needing auxiliary aids and services for communication should contact the Communications Office at 410-751-3020 or publicinfo@carrollk12.org, or write to Carroll County Public Schools, 125 North Court Street, Westminster, Maryland 21157. Persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability, may use Relay or 7-1-1. Please contact the school system at least one (1) week in advance of the date the special accommodation is needed.

Information concerning the Americans with Disabilities Act is available from the Director of Facilities Management, (410) 751-3177, or the Communications Officer, (410) 751-3020, 125 North Court Street, Westminster, Maryland 21157.