



Pine Brook School

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Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to a new school year! We are excited to partner with you as we begin another year of learning, growth, and success for our Pirates!

Creating a safe, focused, and engaging learning environment remains a top priority. To support this goal, in accordance with New Jersey law (P.L. 2025, Chapter 195) and District Policy 5516 - Use of Electronic Communication and Recording Devices, our school follows an "Off and Away" expectation for all personal electronic devices during the school day. This includes cell phones, smartwatches used for communication, wireless earbuds (such as AirPods), and similar electronic devices.

Devices may not be used during instruction, lunch, transitions, or on the school bus unless specifically authorized by school administration or required as part of an approved accommodation. Students who use electronic devices during the school day may have the device confiscated and be subject to consequences in accordance with district policy.

Students with accommodations outlined in an Individualized Education Program (IEP), Section 504 Plan, documented health plan, approved translation services, or other circumstances authorized by the principal or required by law will continue to have those supports in place. Our school remains committed to honoring all required accommodations while ensuring equitable access to learning for every student.

As a middle school, we recognize that many students have access to personal devices outside of school; however, this access requires consistent adult oversight. We urge families to actively monitor and guide their child's technology use and to engage in ongoing conversations about responsible digital citizenship. Social media platforms such as Snapchat, Instagram, and TikTok are intended for users age 13 and older. If you choose to permit access to these or similar platforms, we strongly encourage you to implement parental controls, regularly review online activity, and reinforce expectations for safe, respectful communication. Current research clearly indicates that excessive screen time, cyberbullying, and social media use can have significant negative effects on children's attention, emotional well-being, peer relationships, and academic performance.

Thank you for your continued partnership and support. By working together, we can provide a positive, safe, and distraction-free learning environment where every child can thrive. We look forward to a wonderful school year!

Sincerely,
Julie Szustowicz
Principal