

Principal Newsletter

Pine Grove Elementary~August 2026



Principal's Message

Welcome back to school!

It's been a busy place this summer at Pine Grove with many new improvements made possible by our generous community - both through voters passing the 2024 Bond as well as our fundraising efforts by Pine Grove families!

Thanks to the Bond passing, the following was updated at Pine Grove Elementary

- Enhance safety and security
 - Refresh student and staff technology
 - Upgrade HVAC controls
 - Upgrade plumbing
 - Replace panels and transformers
- Upgrade fire alarm system
 - Install new intercom system
 - Replace sink countertops
 - Resurface parking lot

Thanks to the fundraising from our generous community, we have a new marque out in the front of our building to improve communications with our families and neighbors, as well as a brand new kiln in our Art room!

Our staff has been busy planning and preparing for an amazing year with your student! We look forward to seeing our 1st-6th graders at the "Meet the Teacher" Open House on Tuesday, August 11th from 2:00pm-4:00pm. This is also a great time to drop off supplies. If you ordered an EduKit, they will be waiting for your student in their classroom!

The first day of school for 1st - 6th graders is Wednesday, August 12th!

We're also excited to welcome our kindergarten students! Kindergarten students will be in a Balanced Beginning group on either Wednesday, August 12th OR Thursday, August 13th. There is no school for kindergarten students on Friday, August 14th. The first full day for kindergarten is Monday, August 17th!

In place of an in-person Back to School Night, classroom teachers will email a virtual presentation with all the important details about their classroom, routines, and expectations. Keep an eye on your inbox and please periodically check your SPAM folder for emails from DCSD as they sometimes get routed to SPAM.

Looking forward to a great year!

Kelly Coonts

PGE Principal

Safety Reminders for Drop Off and Pick Up

A few safety reminders as we begin the new year:

- * All visitors must enter and exit the building through the front door. Visitors need to check in at the front office to receive a visitor's badge.
- * Please help us keep our students and parents safe during drop off and pick up by not making U-turns in the school zone on Stonegate.
- *PGE Staff Crossing Guards are at the main entrance of the school and the 4-way stop at Keystone and Stonegate. Thank you for modeling safe crossing for our students and spreading kindness to our crossing guards!
- *Please see below for additional information for how to use the Kiss-N-Go lane off of Keystone Blvd.
- *The main parking lot is closed from 8:10am - 8:30am and again from 3:10pm - 3:30pm. Please park in designated street parking for drop off and pick up.
- *We love our 4-legged friends, however, DCSD policy states that dogs are not permitted on school grounds. Please be courteous and keep your dog in the grassy areas that are off of school property.

Kiss-N-Go Lane

When using the Kiss-N-Go lane off of Keystone Blvd;

- You will pull into one lane and pull up to the cone on the sidewalk, or to the nearest car.
- Driver remains in the vehicle.
- Students must be able to enter and exit the vehicle independently and on the passenger side only.
- Immediately after dropping student(s) off, please exit the Kiss-N-Go lane.
- For pick up, once your student is in the car, you may merge to the left lane to exit if cars are still waiting for student(s) in front of you.
- Merge carefully as you exit either to the left or to the right onto Keystone Blvd.
- Absolutely NO PEDESTRIANS may cross through the Kiss-N-Go lane.



Personal Communication Device Policy

Beginning August 2026, per Board policy, at all DCSD elementary schools there will be a bell-to-bell ban on students' personal devices, including cell phones and smartwatches. All cell phones AND smartwatches (any watch that can text or call) must be kept at home or silenced and stored in a backpack for the duration of the school day.

Students who use a device at school may have it collected by staff and held in the office until a parent or guardian picks it up. Additional consequences may apply. We encourage families to leave devices at home whenever possible. PGE is not responsible for devices that are lost or damaged while at school, including those stored in backpacks.



PLC Late Start Fridays

As a reminder, all DCSD elementary and middle schools will move to a **45-minute late start every Friday** beginning Friday, August 21st. Friday late start times will be 9:10am.

*Please note, there will be NO late start the first Friday of school, Friday, August 14th. This will be a regular start time of 8:20am.

This dedicated time for **Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)** will allow our teachers to collaborate on data-driven instruction and curriculum consistency, directly benefiting our students' academic growth.

While we know this change requires adjustment, we are excited to align with our high schools and neighboring districts in prioritizing this time for educator excellence. Details regarding **transportation and BASE** can be found among several FAQs on the district's [PLC webpage](#). Here's a downloadable [2026-2027 school-year calendar](#) including late-start Fridays.

Below is a copy of Pine Grove Elementary's Bell Schedule for 2026-2027.



Bell Schedule (3).pdf

[Download](#)

39.4 KB

Lightning Dismissal

If lightning is in the area at dismissal, students stay in classrooms until signed out by a parent or emergency contact. Per DCSD policy, no one under the age of 18 may pick up a student during a lightning dismissal.

You will receive a text and email to alert you to a lightning dismissal. Please make sure you are signed up for text/email alerts!



School Entry Procedures & Breakfast/Lunch

Entry Doors by Grade:

- Front Door (Stonegate Pkwy): Grades 1 & 2
- Kindie Door (inside K playground): Kindergarten Classrooms
- 3rd/4th Grade Door (Keystone Blvd): Grades 3 & 4
- 5th Grade Door (near mobiles): Grade 5
- 6th Grade: Go directly to and from the mobile classrooms
- Please do not send your student to school prior to the listed soft start time as there is no adult supervision.



Bikes & Scooters:

- Bikes and scooters must be walked on sidewalks and crosswalks.
- Lock bikes/scooters in designated racks.
- Only foldable scooters may be brought inside.

All students are eligible for free breakfast, served only in the cafeteria starting:

- Thursday, August 13 for grades 1–6
- Tuesday, August 18 for kindergarten
- Students eating breakfast should arrive at 8:10 AM and finish before returning to class at 8:25 AM. Breakfast will be served on Fridays beginning at 9:05.
- All students continue to be eligible for free lunch beginning the first day of school.

Pine Grove Elementary

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Kelly Coonts

Kelly is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters

