

PINE HOLLOW
MIDDLE SCHOOL
STUDENT HANDBOOK
2023-2024



PINE HOLLOW MIDDLE SCHOOL

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Bell Schedule

The instructional day for 2023-24 is 8:15 am -3:00 pm

Period	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
1st Period	8:15-8:50 Flight School	8:15-8:50 Flight School	8:15-8:50 Flight School
2nd Period	8:52-9:51 Core 1	8:52-9:51 Core 1	8:54-9:40 Elective 1
3rd Period	9:53-10:52 Core 2	9:53-10:52 Core 2	9:44-10:30 Elective 2
4th Period	10:54-11:19 Lunch	10:56-11:42 Elective 1	10:34-11:33 Core 1
5th Period	11:21-12:20 Core 3	11:46-12:32 Elective 2	11:35-12:00 Lunch
6th Period	12:22-1:20 Core 4	12:34-12:59 Lunch	12:02-12:59 Core 2
7th Period	1:24-2:10 Elective 1	1:01-2:00 Core 3	1:01-2:00 Core 3
8th Period	2:14-3:00 Elective 2	2:02-3:00 Core 4	2:02-3:00 Core 4

WCPSS Student Code of Conduct

All students are expected to be familiar with and to comply with the WCPSS Code of Student Conduct and school board policies governing student behavior and conduct. All Code of Student Conduct policies are contained in the WCPSS Student/Parent Handbook, which is distributed to all students and parents at the beginning of each school year or upon enrollment in the WCPSS. If there is a conflict between the rules expressed in the handbook/agenda/planner and the Code of Student Conduct policies, the WCPSS Code of Student Conduct policies shall take precedence.

General Expectations

Attendance/Absences

Daily attendance in school is important to academic success. Parents are encouraged to keep students home from school only when necessary and for those reasons which are approved and excused by Board Policy (see WCPSS Parent/Student Handbook). Upon return to school from an absence, a note explaining the absence, signed by the parent, should be given to one of the student's teachers who will forward it to the main office. An email is also acceptable. The note/email is to be presented within two days. Students

are responsible for obtaining work from teachers and making up all missed assignments per School Board Policy 6000. Requests for **planned absences** for religious and/or educational reasons are to be made on Form 1710 and submitted in advance to the principal.

Communication from the Principal

Every Sunday Dr. Carrington communicates information and upcoming events to our parents/community via School Messenger and our website (<https://www.wcpss.net/domain/10494>). The weekly message is updated on our website and then emailed to every address we have on file for our students. A text message is also sent to parent cell phones alerting them that the weekly message is available. Phone messages will generally only be sent in the event of an emergency or other situations in which it is critical to get information to parents right away. If your contact information changes during the year, please let the office know so that we can keep you informed and up-to-date.

Communication from Teachers

Every team maintains a website and uses it to keep parents informed as to team activities, upcoming due dates, etc. Individual teacher webpages can be accessed via the team website. Every staff member's email is available on our website in case parents need to contact us. Per School Board policy, school staff will only communicate with students via email if the communication comes via the student's WCPSS email account.

Visitors

Parents and other community members are welcome to visit our school. All visitors are required to check-in at the main office immediately upon arrival. After checking-in, visitors are asked to wear a pass so that our staff are aware that they have been to the office. Former students, or students currently attending another school, are not permitted on our campus until 3:30 on any day that school is in session.

Arrival/Dismissal

The school day for students begins at 8:15 AM and ends at 3:00 PM. Students should not come onto campus, or enter any buildings, before 7:45 AM as we do not have staff to supervise them. Upon arrival to school, students will report directly to their team area, or the cafeteria if they wish to eat breakfast. Breakfast will be served until 8:09 AM. Students will remain in the cafeteria or their team area until the 8:09 bell at which time students may go to their locker (if they have been issued one) and report to 1st period.

Walkers and carpool students should exit campus promptly at the end of the day unless they are under the direct supervision of a teacher/coach. Carpool students who have not been picked up by 3:30 are escorted to the office so that they can be adequately supervised.

Carpool Procedures

All cars are required to travel the designated route in the morning and afternoon. Students are only permitted to enter/exit their vehicle alongside the curb in front of the school. This is for their safety as it can be very dangerous to walk in the parking lot during arrival/dismissal. Cars are expected to pull up as far as possible to avoid gaps in the line so that everyone can exit campus as quickly as possible. Everyone's time is precious and carpool runs much better when everyone follows the procedures. Only those students who live in our designated walk zone are allowed to walk off campus at dismissal. Students are

not allowed to leave campus to meet their ride elsewhere as we are responsible for their safety until they are picked up from school.

Checking-In and Checking-Out of School

Students who arrive late should report to the main office with a parent to sign-in. Students who need to leave school early for reasons such as a doctor or orthodontist appointment should present a note to their teacher. At the appointed time, the student should request permission from his/her teacher to go to the front office. In the front office, the student should be signed out by a parent/guardian. Students will not be signed out after 2:30 PM except for extreme emergencies.

Cell Phones

Students are allowed to bring cell phones with them to school, but they are not allowed to use them until 3:00 pm unless a teacher has given them explicit permission. Therefore, phones should be turned off/powered down once a student arrives on campus, and they may be turned back on at 3:00 pm. Because students are not permitted to use their phones during the school day, parents are asked not to text their students during the day as this puts students in a difficult situation if they are using their phone without permission from a teacher.

Parents who need to speak with their student immediately should call the office, and we will be happy to deliver a message or get the student to the phone if it is an emergency. Students using their phone without permission might have their phone confiscated. Confiscated items are sent to the office and held for the parent to pick up. The main office is open from 7:30-4:00 during every school day. We will provide as much security as possible for confiscated items, but **we are not responsible for their loss.**

School-Wide Grading Procedures

Philosophy of Grading

At Pine Hollow, we believe a grade communicates a student's demonstrated understanding of the curriculum. We expect all students to turn in work on time. We cannot evaluate student achievement on work not submitted; therefore, missing work is recorded as a zero unless/until it is submitted.

Late Work

Any work turned in after the due date is subject to penalty (up to 10%) at the teacher's discretion. Teachers must give students at least one day to submit homework (HW) that is late. Teachers must give at least three days to submit late assessments that are not HW. Teachers are allowed to accept late work beyond these parameters, at their discretion. Teachers will contact parents if/when a pattern of work not being submitted develops.

Grade Improvement/Recovery

Pine Hollow works with students and parents when grades are low and/or a student wants to improve their grade. Some examples of grade recovery include re-testing (when a student takes another test of equal rigor assessing the same skills/Standards. The re-test, whether higher or lower, replaces the original grade); grade replacement (when the student is able to demonstrate mastery of the skills/standards such that the lower/missing grades can be replaced); academic contract (when the student/teacher/parent agree what missing work must be completed and what habits must be improved in order to improve the

grade. Upon completion of the contract, the teacher will grade the submitted work and exempt other assessments not included in the contract). These are but a few examples of options that might be available to students who wish to improve their grade. Please contact a teacher or counselor if you are unclear as to how a grade can be raised in a particular teacher's class.

Extra Credit

If extra credit is offered, it is only offered to students who have completed all regular assignments and is directly related to the curriculum.

How Grades Are Calculated

PLTs (Professional Learning Teams) that consist of teachers teaching the same grade and subject (i.e., 6th Grade Science) and departments (i.e., Health/PE) will collaborate to determine their method of grading students and how much each assignment or category "counts." This information will be shared by individual teachers at the start of the year/semester.

Homework

The purpose of homework is to:

- Extend and enrich school experiences through related home activities
- Reinforce learning by providing practice and application.

In order to make homework effective, teachers will:

- Ensure that homework supports the curriculum for the course and/or the middle school instructional program.
- Ensure that expectations for homework are communicated both to the student and to the parent through written classroom expectations at the beginning of the course.
- Provide due dates for homework that are reasonable for the amount of work being given.
- Coordinate with other teachers on their team (to the extent possible) in order not to overload students on a particular night.
- Provide timely and meaningful feedback on homework.
- Communicate with the student and/or parent when they see a pattern of the student not meeting expectations with homework.

In order to make homework effective, students will:

- Make note of their homework assignments, due dates, and assessment dates in their agenda.
- Attempt all homework to the best of their ability.
- Work to create an organized system to turn in work that has been completed.
- Advocate for themselves and ask for help if they are feeling overwhelmed when working hard on their assignments.

In order to make homework effective, parents should:

- Encourage homework completion.
- Help ensure that students have a system for keeping track of their assignments and whether they are turned in.
- Monitor the Parent Portal and the student agenda.
- Advocate for their student and ask for help if they are seeing frustration on the part of the student or homework that is exceeding the maximum amount of time listed below.

Because we value students having a full experience with learning and extra-curricular activities while still staying engaged in family and community life, we do not expect any student to work on homework for greater than 90 minutes per night. We do acknowledge that homework may take longer when (1) students choose to take more rigorous courses, such as courses that carry high school credit; and/or (2) when students fail to prepare, study, or complete homework according to the set or suggested time schedule.

The first point of contact for concerns about homework should be the classroom teacher. In general, teachers are most able to respond to emails quickly but phone calls are also welcome. After that, the next contact should be the student's counselor.

Missing Work Due To Absences

The following are school-wide expectations for missing work due to absences:

- If the absence is approved in advance and/or if the work is assigned by the teacher in advance, all make-up work is due upon the student's return to school, including tests/projects assigned for the day of return. Teachers should use discretion and may make exceptions in the case of students whose excused absences were not planned in advance, were beyond the student's control, and the nature of which would not support make-up work the day of return.
- If the work was not assigned in advance, for absences of one (1) to three (3) days, the student will have one day for each day absent. For absences exceeding three (3) days, the student may have two (2) days for each day absent to make up work. Special consideration will be given in the case of extended absences due to injury or chronic illness.

Grade Reporting

Report cards are issued four times a year. Interim reports are issued at the midpoint of each nine-week grading period. Teachers update their grades weekly in their online gradebook through PowerSchool. All students are expected to be responsible for their learning and monitor their progress. Below are the numerical values for letter grades.

A 90-100	B 80-89	C 70-79	D 60-59	F Less than 60
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Promotion Requirements

To meet promotion requirements, a middle school student must pass Language Arts and Math, Social Studies or Science, and at least half of their other courses.

Other Information

Tardies

Students have sufficient time between classes to attend to their personal needs without being late to class. Students who are tardy to class repeatedly are subject to consequences according to the PHMS Pyramid of Interventions for Behavior. Tardies start over at the beginning of each new grading period.

Medication

Middle school students are permitted to self-medicate with over-the-counter medication. Students are not permitted to share medication with other students. All prescription medication should be given to the

office in a labeled pharmacy bottle along with Form 1702 signed by a physician. Students are not permitted to carry prescription medication with them from class to class unless it has been directed by a physician and Form 1702 is on file in Student Services.

Breakfast/Lunch

Students are responsible for sharing in the clean-up of the cafeteria after they eat. Students are not permitted to have food from fast food restaurants in the cafeteria (McDonalds, Bojangles, etc). If parents/guardians wish to bring fast food to their child, space will be provided for the student to eat in the office. Lunch accounts may be opened with the cafeteria manager. Checks may be made to Pine Hollow Middle School Cafeteria. The cafeteria will stop serving breakfast at 8:09 am.

Lockers in the Hallways

Most students do not need or want a locker assigned to them. Most students keep their things with them during the day and take their bookbag with them from class to class. If a student needs a locker assigned to them, they should speak with a teacher. For students who are given permission to use a locker, they must keep it locked at all times. Lockers are subject to search at any time if there is reasonable suspicion to believe something is in a locker that threatens the safety/security of the school.

Lockers in Locker Rooms

The school does not have enough lockers in the gym to assign students to individual lockers. But there are plenty of lockers in the locker rooms for each student to secure their belongings during their PE class. Students are expected to provide their own lock and secure personal items during classes in the gym in order to prevent theft. Students should remove all items from the locker and remove their lock at the end of PE class.

PE Clothes

There is no PHMS PE uniform that students are required to purchase. Furthermore, while changing clothes is encouraged for personal hygiene, it is not required. For safety reasons, however, Pine Hollow students are expected/required to wear athletic tennis shoes that lace up during the weeks of PE and Fitness.

Book Bags

Book bags with wheels are not allowed as they can damage the floor. Because large book bags can be a tripping hazard, students are encouraged to use the smallest bag possible.

Interruptions During the Day

In order to protect our instructional time, we will not call students out of class except for an emergency. We will take a message and deliver it to the student as soon as possible.

School Transportation

Riding the bus is a privilege, not a right. Students are expected to behave appropriately and follow the directives of the school bus driver at all times. Failure to do so may result in suspension from the bus. Students are only permitted to ride the bus that is assigned to them based on their home address, and

they are only allowed to get on/off at their assigned bus stop. PHMS staff will not sign notes for students to ride home with another student or on a bus other than that to which they are assigned.

All routes and bus stops are assigned by the WCPSS Transportation Department, not Pine Hollow Middle School. For the most up-to-date information regarding bus stops, requests for bus stop changes, etc. please visit <http://www.wcpss.net/parents/transportation>.

After-school activity buses will run a limited route on Monday through Thursday to help students who remain after school for athletics, tutoring, school-sponsored extracurricular activities, etc. Students who leave campus after dismissal may not return to campus in order to ride an activity bus. Only students who are under the direct supervision of a teacher/coach are permitted to ride an activity bus.

Field Trips

Our students have opportunities to take part in field trips at various times during the year. Teams often establish rules and guidelines for who is eligible to go on a field trip in order to encourage students to make good choices and to ensure that students on field trips represent our school in a positive manner. Therefore, it is important to pay careful attention to permission forms and written information regarding field trips in order to be aware of the expectations and procedures.

Field Trip Refunds

Our school-wide policy regarding field trip refunds is that we will refund the full amount unless the school has already paid the company/vendor. After that point, refunds are issued after the trip has been taken and we know exactly how much, if any, money remains. Many trips require the school to pay a certain amount even if a student does not go; therefore, the full amount may not be able to be refunded once the school has submitted payment.

Parent Portal Accounts

Parents can monitor their student's grades and attendance, in real time, throughout the year with a Parent Portal account. WCPSS will create accounts for families who do not already have access to the Parent Portal. At the beginning of the year, primary contacts in PowerSchool should have received an email from our data manager (Ms. Thomas), with instructions on how to access this new account. If an additional access setup is required, please email Ms. Thomas at bwthomas@wcpss.net.

PTSA

Annual dues to join the Pine Hollow PTSA are \$10 for individual students and \$15 for parents/guardians. The PTSA supports all teachers and students, and parents are encouraged to join. Meeting dates/times can be found on the calendar on our website. More information regarding PTSA is available on our website under the Families tab.

Volunteers

Parents are encouraged to complete the on-line registration process and volunteer. There are multiple opportunities to volunteer at Pine Hollow, many of them coordinated through the PTSA. All volunteers are required to be approved by WCPSS before they can begin, including field trip chaperones, so make sure you complete the volunteer registration process if there is any chance you plan to volunteer this year. For more information please visit the Volunteer webpage located at the Pine Hollow site under Families tab, also found [here](#).

School Sports

Pine Hollow offers a variety of interscholastic sports for 7th and 8th grade students. Our 6th grade students are eligible to be managers. Fall Sports include: Cheerleading, Football, Girls' Soccer, and Volleyball. Winter Sports include: Boys' Basketball, Girls' Basketball, and Cheerleading. Spring Sports include: Boys' Soccer, Boys' Track, Girls' Track, and Softball. All student athletes are required to meet minimum eligibility standards for participation (see our website for details.) Student athletes who are tracked-out should not be dropped off for practice prior to 3:00.

Student Council

Representatives to the Student Council are elected from each team. The purpose of the Student Council is to involve students in activities and projects in the school and community. Student Council sponsored projects may include dances, skate parties, school beautification, United Way projects, and community food drives.

Honor Roll/Climbers

Each nine weeks students are recognized for their academic achievement. There are two Honor Roll lists that are posted at the end of each grading period. One is for students with straight As (4.0 GPA) and the other is for students with a 3.0 or higher GPA for the quarter. In addition, students who improve two letter grades in a class, from one quarter to the next, will be recognized as Climbers. Honor Roll and Climbers students receive a certificate for their achievement and academic excellence.

National Junior Honor Society

Seventh grade students who have attended Pine Hollow Middle School for at least one full semester and who have maintained a cumulative GPA of 3.8 or higher are candidates for the PHMS NJHS. Students who wish to be considered for induction are required to submit additional information to be reviewed by the Faculty Council. The selection process is based upon five principles: character, citizenship, service, leadership, and scholarship.

Concert and Assembly Etiquette

We expect our students to always be on their best behavior during any assembly, concert, performance, etc. by following these rules at all times:

- Refrain from talking or distracting behavior (tapping feet, humming, etc)
- Applaud at the appropriate times
- No food/drink in the auditorium
- No booing or negative comments

Library Learning Commons (LLC)

At Pine Hollow, we refer to our Media Center as the Library or LLC. Our librarian is Ms. Ziller (kziller@wcpss.net). The Virtual Library can be accessed here: bit.ly/phmsvirtuallibrary

Visiting Your LLC

- **During the School Day (7:45 - 3:00):** Students must have a pass from their teacher to come to the LLC.

- **Lunch Time:** Students are permitted to use the LLC with a signed pass from their teacher during their lunch period, but they cannot eat lunch in the LLC. Students should eat lunch before coming to the LLC.
- **Dismissal:** Students should stay with their last period teacher during dismissal time, but may return library books on their way to carpool or the bus ramp.

All students regularly visit the LLC with their team for library circulation. Students should:

- bring ALL library materials they have checked out to the library during these class visits
- return or renew their materials

Students are encouraged to explore their library and check out books that interest them. In addition to scheduled class visits, students are encouraged to visit the LLC at any time during the school day with a pass from their teacher.

Research

Access NCWiseOwl through your WakeID portal for quality research databases.

Home login: Username: wiseowl21

Password: wiseowl21

Explore additional research website on the Research section of the Virtual Library: bit.ly/phmsresearch

Reading

Students access the Destiny Discover Library Catalog through their WakeID portal. Click on the Follett Destiny button.

- Click on topics, collections, and search for books of interest
- Place books on hold
- Rate/review a book
- Check your library account to see what books are checked out and when they're due

Explore eBooks and audiobooks on MackinVIA. Information about these digital books can be found here: bit.ly/phmsdigital

Checking out Library Books and Loan Periods

The PHMS Library collection includes print books, eBooks, and audiobooks. All items have a 3-week loan period. Students use the self-checkout station to check out their library books by entering their student ID number and scanning their own books. Students ARE NOT to check out books for other students. Books are returned to the book return at the circulation desk inside the library.

Overdue Materials

Students receive overdue notices several times during the school year and are expected to return their library materials on time. Students should check their library account in Destiny Discover to see when their books are due.

Lost Materials

Students should see Ms. Ziller in the library if they've lost a library book. Replacement options will be discussed at that time. Additional information about library policies and procedures can be found here: bit.ly/phmspolicies

The PHMS Library Learning Commons is YOUR library! See Ms. Ziller about volunteer and book discussion opportunities.

Student Code of Conduct

Student Conduct

Pine Hollow uses a Pyramid of Interventions for Behavior. The goal of the Pyramid is to have a common understanding as to who addresses misbehaviors (teachers or administrators) and the consequences available depending upon the misbehavior. As much as possible, we try to avoid out-of-school suspensions and keep students in school, but we will not tolerate behaviors which negatively impact the learning environment and prevent others from learning. Among the options we may use to address inappropriate behavior besides out-of-school suspension (OSS) are:

- **Mediation:** Students who are involved in situations of on-going bullying or harassment, or physical aggression and/or fighting, may be referred for mediation.
- **After-School Detention (ASD):** Parents are notified at least one day in advance when students are assigned to ASD in order to make transportation arrangements. Failure to attend ASD, or removal from ASD for inappropriate behavior, will result in more serious consequences. Students who are late to ASD are not permitted to enter and are assigned consequences accordingly.
- **In-Class Suspension (ICS):** ICS is an intervention similar to In-School Suspension in which the student spends the day with one teacher and completes work sent by his/her other teachers. This gives the teacher an opportunity to spend some time discussing concerns with the student in an attempt to solve the issues and avoid future misbehaviors.
- **In-School Suspension (ISS):** ISS is an intervention in which a student spends the day in our ISS program and completes work sent by his/her other teachers. Students are not allowed to talk or sleep in ISS and are not allowed to participate in any athletics or extra-curricular activities on the day(s) they are in ISS. Students who serve multiple days of Out-of-School Suspension are frequently assigned to a day or two of ISS when they return in order to support their transition back to school and to help them get started on any missing assignments.
- **Alternative Learning Center (ALC):** Students are assigned to ALC for an extended period of time (more than a day or two) after repeatedly violating Level I and Level II offenses according to the Student Code of Conduct. Parents are involved in this process and specific plans are developed in order to help reduce the misbehaviors and help the student transition back to his/her regular classes successfully. While in ALC students continue to complete the assignments sent by their regular teachers. Important note: not all students are assigned to ALC as a result of misbehaviors. Students are sometimes assigned to ALC as an academic intervention in order to help them improve their grades.

This is not an all-inclusive list, but these are some of our commonly used alternatives to OSS. **Students assigned to ISS and/or Out-of-School Suspension may not attend any after-school activity (as a participant or spectator) on the day of the disciplinary action.** Teachers will review discipline plans, school rules, and the WCPSS Code of Student Conduct in more detail with students at the beginning of the year.

Dress Code

The WCPSS dress code was revised in 2019. Please see the WCPSS website (<https://www.wcpss.net/domain/50>) for a copy of the district's new dress code.

Nuisance items

Skateboards, roller blades, roller skates, etc. are not permitted on campus at any time. Students are not permitted to bring basketballs, footballs, soccer balls, etc. to school.

Flowers, Balloons, etc.

We do not accept flower and balloon deliveries. Students are not allowed to carry flowers, balloons, stuffed animals, pillows, blankets, or any other non-instructional items that may cause a distraction during the school day.

Dismissal from Extra-Curricular Activities and Athletics

Students are encouraged to attend athletic events, concerts, play, dances, etc. and make prior arrangements to be picked up in a timely manner. **Students are not permitted to leave campus and then return for an extra-curricular event unless they are accompanied by a parent.** Students who have not been picked up thirty minutes after the conclusion of the event might not be permitted to attend future events/activities.

School-aged, non-Pine Hollow students must be accompanied by an adult in order to attend an extra-curricular or athletic event on our campus.

Conduct During Fire Drills

In order to maintain a safe and secure environment, students are expected to remain **completely silent** during a fire drill. Students who choose to talk during a fire drill are subject to disciplinary action, including suspension.

Physical Aggression/Fighting

Physical aggression or fighting toward students and other people is prohibited. A student who is attacked may use reasonable force in self-defense, but only to the extent necessary to get free from the attack and notify proper school authorities. A student who exceeds reasonable force may be disciplined even though someone else provoked the fight. No student shall engage in fighting or physical aggression towards others, including but not limited to:

- a. Choking, hitting, slapping, shoving, scratching, spitting, biting, blocking the passage of, or throwing objects at another person in an aggressive, confrontational or dangerous manner.
- b. Taking any action or making comments or writing messages that might reasonably be expected to result in a fight or physical aggression.

Issues and/or Concerns

There will be times when issues arise that need to be addressed, and we always want to be responsive to our students and parents. Most of the time, the issues involve miscommunications or a lack of communication, and are quickly resolved once the parties have a chance to speak. If a parent or student

has a concern about a policy or an employee, the following procedures should be followed in order to resolve the issue as quickly as possible:

- Contact the person with whom the problem exists first and make them aware of the concern and give them an opportunity to fix it.
- If the problem has not been resolved at that point, contact an administrator or counselor and make them aware of the concern and give them an opportunity to fix it.
- Always make an appointment. If you make an unscheduled visit to the office, the person with whom you wish to speak will likely not be available, and we do not interrupt instructional time for unannounced visits.

Please remember that choosing not to report an issue or concern when it happens can prevent us from fully addressing the issue later.

Conferences

Parent conferences may be arranged directly with the team/teacher or through Student Services. Teachers cannot leave their classes for unscheduled conferences, so an appointment should be made. Upon arrival at the school for a conference, parents are required to sign in at the main office.