

## PINECREST HEADLINES

*Communication from the Head of School – Issue 1, 2017-18 – Wednesday August 30, 2017*

### **Growing Our School**

Board Chair Nick Wakeman's most recent email to the school community was sent August 21. This email has been printed and will be sent home in Wednesday Envelopes today.

Yesterday morning, we were given an updated completion date from ModSpace for the new lower school building: it is now Monday, September 11. This date includes time for county approvals, but we are cautious that everything that needs to be done will get done by this date.

Also, because there is much to be done once we take occupancy, we cannot yet set a move-in date. Everything is largely dependent on county and zoning approvals (many are required to follow up on our Special Exception Agreement the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors granted us in June 2014) as well as necessary things we need to do before we can move in like make sure telephone service is connected and our phone system is installed, move in furniture and much more. We want to have a ribbon cutting ceremony before we officially welcome students into the building too. We will provide more information on all of this as soon as we have it.

We will continue to provide more updates when we have them.

As we make this final push to finish this project, there are still opportunities to contribute to the capital campaign. You can do that [online](#) or by check to the school. Specifically, we are looking for contributions for the last furniture purchases. In particular, we need cubbies for the classrooms, office chairs for the teachers and conference room, as well as a new conference table. We are reusing and repurposing many things from our old building and from many donations, but additional furniture purchases will still require approximately \$1000 / room. We have already received one generous contribution for a room from a current family. We would love to receive more as well. Of course, any contribution will be appreciated. Donations towards furniture will be recognized on the donor wall separately – as well as donations towards appliances from last spring. You can make a donation online with the above link or by check; please note when donating that you wish this gift to be towards furniture purchases.

Photos are updated regularly to [this album on Facebook](#) (it's a big album as this process has been going on for quite awhile!).

We appreciate everyone's support and patience so much. It remains to be true that whatever is happening outside is not representative of inside. Inside both at Pinecrest and at Peace, our students are learning, our students are safe and our students are happy to be at Pinecrest.

I also want to say thanks to everyone who has made positive comments about how the building looks and how exciting things are to me recently. It may seem simple, but when you have been working on this for years, it feels really good to hear this kind of feedback, and it's much appreciated. I know Nick and rest of the building committee feel the same way.

### **News and Notes**

We had an awesome first day of school on Monday, and the week has been smooth as well. Yay! Class photos were emailed to each class on Monday – there were so many happy faces. :) :)

Thank you for completing the online medical/emergency care form and turning in other necessary beginning of the year forms.

There is no school on Monday, September 4, because of the Labor Day holiday.

Pinecrest is offering the option of purchasing a pizza lunch for your child one Friday a month throughout this school year. **The first one is next Friday, September 8. Pinecrest Pizza Fridays (PPFs) are available to all K-6 students, preschool students in after-care and all staff.** Thank you to the families that have signed up to sponsor each Friday with pizza and to the families who are being dessert sponsors! All of this generosity allows us to maximize profits from this fundraiser and we are so appreciative. All sponsor slots have been filled. PPFs are a fundraiser for the school. The pizza lunch costs \$7.50 per child and includes two slices of cheese pizza, and one dessert item (likely a brownie or a cookie). No drink is included. Fill out the form via the link below and you are minutes away from not having to pack lunches once a month on Friday mornings. :) <https://fs9.formsite.com/pinecrest/PPF/index.html> You will have the option of selecting one, some, or all Fridays. **Orders must be placed by 2:00 PM the Thursday prior to each PPF.**

We will be having a Spirit Day on Friday, September 8 (not this Friday but next Friday), and we will all wear our new "This is community shirts" with 60 on the back on that day. We have these occasionally, and it's always fun to start the school year with one. Teachers will also request this year's school shirts on field trip days and maybe for other occasions, but otherwise, children are welcome to wear the shirts whenever they desire. At Pinecrest, kids (and parents too!) in Pinecrest shirts is definitely one of my favorite things!

We will be offering a fall session of RunFit Kidz for 1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> graders coached by Mrs. Vogus. It will run for 7 weeks beginning Monday, September 18, and the 5K will be on Saturday morning, November 18. Our RunFit groups have become an important part of the Pinecrest community and we look forward to participation this fall. More details will follow very soon with a registration link. TBD about other fall after-school activities.

For families new to Pinecrest, Board Chair Nick Wakeman and I will host the New Parent Coffee on Friday, September 8, at 9 a.m. Thanks to those who have RSVPed and we look forward to seeing many of you.

Our annual Back-to-School Nights will take place on Tuesday, September 12 (Preschool 3/4, Preschool 4, Kindergarten and Grade 1) and Thursday, September 14 (Grades 2/3, 4 and 5/6). Both events will begin at 7 p.m. at Pinecrest. We will begin with a brief whole-group gathering in the multipurpose room, and then parents will proceed to their child's classroom to hear a presentation by the classroom teacher. (Ms. Pence and Ms. Mitlo will be borrowing classrooms at Pinecrest for the night to do their presentations.) Teachers will have handouts and their daily schedules for you at this time as well. Back-to-School Night is for parents/adults only. If you are not able to attend Back-to-School Night, the packet from your child's teacher will come home to you in the next Wednesday Envelope.

2017-18 Community Handbooks (one per family) were distributed to new families only at Visiting Day (or via backpack or Wednesday Envelope if you were not present). Everyone should have received a copy of the handbook via email on August 23. If you are a returning family and you would like a paper copy, please let us know and we will send one home to you.

A small gold handbook agreement form was sent home in today's Wednesday Envelopes. This needs to be signed and returned to the office as soon as possible. Thank you in advance.

The 2017-18 School Directory is going to be distributed via email this year. It will come out very soon. It is going to be a link to a Google Drive file that you will always be able to access and that will reflect any changes made to the directory in real time. I suspect there may be many initial changes as, unfortunately, there seemed to be many mistakes with the directory when some people reviewed it at Visiting Morning. I apologize for this and feel badly this happened. Ms. Sullivan made the directory before she left and I did not check her work before we copied it for Visiting Morning proofreading; I should have though. Thank you for your patience with us.

In addition to putting the school directory in the Google Drive folder we are creating, we are also going to put other helpful items for you like class lists, the school calendar and more. The idea is that this will only be available to those who have the link and will be a resource for you to find what you need efficiently. If you have suggestions for what you would like to see in this online resource, please let me know. You may think of something we have not yet.

I told the children this but wanted to let parents know too. We are going to wait to get K-Kids started until we are all back together in one place. We purposely did not elect officers last spring because we were in two locations and because we still are, it is another reason why it makes sense to wait. It will be a shorter year for K-Kids, but it will be a great one and I look forward to another wonderful group of K-Kids members. I will be advising K-Kids on my own this year. To quote from the student-created flyer that was sent in the summer mailing: "K-Kids is a club linked to Kiwanis International that is for kids from second to sixth grade who want to help other people, by doing service projects run by kids!!!! Kids will also get to run meetings and decide what service projects to do. To become a member of this awesome club you have to pay a \$2.50 dues

fee to show your loyalty to the club.” Those who have not joined yet will find the flyer in Wednesday Envelopes today in case it was missed in the summer mailing.

Thank you to everyone who is using the carpool line in the mornings. Please continue to do so; please begin doing so if you haven't started yet. A couple of things will help with efficiency during this process – please share this information with anyone who will be dropping off or picking up your child regularly:

- seat your child on the passenger side of the backseat if possible
- have your child put away or put down any toys or food s/he may be holding
- have children unbuckled or just about unbuckled and ready to hop right out of the car when it is your turn
- stay in your vehicles / parents should not get out of the car for any reason in the carpool line. We can undo or fasten (most) carseat buttons. (I have often joked that helping my nieces in and out of their carseats when they were younger ended up being professional development for me, but I didn't realize it at the time! :))
- Please do not conference with the teachers or me at drop-off or dismissal; we must avoid anything that delays getting through the line so the line does not overflow onto Annandale Road

**PINECREST:** Drop-off at Pinecrest begins daily at 8:35 a.m. From 8:35-8:45 a.m., there are two staff members outside ready to receive your child from your vehicle each morning. This “kiss-and-ride” system is our preferred method of dropping off. **If you arrive to drop off your child after 8:45 a.m. when the teachers have gone inside, you will need to get out of your car and walk your child to the building. The door will also be locked at this time so you will need to call the office at 703-354-3446 to be let in.**

**PEACE:** Drop-off at Peace begins daily at 8:25 a.m. You do not need to get out of the car at drop-off or pick-up. There is a circle drive that you can drive in and out. Ms. Pence and Ms. Mitlo will be taking turns at the door to greet the students. **Students should get out of their cars on their own. If you arrive after 8:45 a.m., you will need to call Ms. Mitlo's cell phone (sent by email on August 22 – “Peace Logistics 2017-18”) to be let in. The door will be closed and locked at 8:45 a.m.** In the afternoons, it will be both teachers Monday, Wednesday and Thursday; Ms. Mitlo and Mrs. Edwards Tuesday; and Ms. Pence and Mrs. Edwards Friday. Pick-up at Peace is at 3:25 p.m. **Anyone not picked up by or at 3:35 p.m. will be brought to Pinecrest for pick-up there.**

**School begins officially at Pinecrest and at Peace at 8:50 a.m.,** and any children arriving after this start time will be marked tardy. (The number of days a child is tardy and absent per quarter is tracked and recorded in each child's permanent file.)

We use car placards at dismissal for both preschool and K-6. Two turquoise placards were in your summer mailing. Please put one placard in each parent's vehicle (even if you use after-care primarily) so it is there and ready, and if more placards are needed for others who will pick up your child(ren), please let us know. When it is time for dismissal, the placard should be displayed on the driver's side window when you are waiting in line and pulling up to the circle for staff to see. Thank you to everyone who has been using the placards; it helps us run dismissal more efficiently. **The ideal positioning of the placard is in the driver's side window before you pull into the circle; this allows us to know who is next and have the children ready in the right spots for loading in.** Right now, admittedly, the placards are not as necessary given the space we are using for drop-off and pick-up, but soon when we have our new normal, we will need to rely on placards more and so I appreciate everyone getting into good habits with them now.

Please remember sneakers and comfortable clothing for PE days with Coach Botchway and music days with Mrs. Edwards. Music often includes rhythm and movement activities. PE is on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Music is on Tuesdays and Fridays.

Pinecrest School has a [Facebook page](#) and a [Twitter page](#); please like and/or follow us if you're on these social networks!

Faculty and staff members engage in regular professional development throughout the year. Ms. Sambro recently renewed her CPR and first aid, and Mrs. Cullen participated in three Fairfax County Office for Children sessions this summer.

If you read this newsletter and respond by email by Friday morning at 10 a.m., you will be entered in a drawing to win a “retro” Pinecrest shirt for your child (or maybe you!).

## **Finances**

If you signed up for ACH for tuition payments, the invoice is sent to you five days before the first of each month. The email comes from *Pinecrest School* <[quickbooks-email@intuit.com](mailto:quickbooks-email@intuit.com)>. Please add this address to your approved senders/contacts list and, if you have not received an invoice shortly before the first of the month, please check your spam or junk folders. This

first month, it is possible the invoice only went to one parent (please check with each other); going forward, invoices will be sent to both parents each month. If you signed up for Unlimited After-care, your payment for this was included in your tuition invoice.

If you signed up for ACH for tuition payments and are using before-care and/or after-care on a drop-in basis, you will have the option on your invoices for care to pay by ACH with the transaction fee added. (You will not have the credit card option because it's either one or the other with each family's account. We appreciate your understanding.)

If you did not sign up for ACH for tuition payments and are using before-care and/or after-care on a drop-in basis, you will have the option on your invoices for care to pay by credit card with the processing fee added. (You will not have the ACH option because it's either one or the other with each family's account. We appreciate your understanding.)

If you did not sign up for ACH for tuition payments, you will not receive any sort of reminder for tuition payments. Tuition installments are due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of every month September – January and March – June. A \$50 late fee is charged if tuition payment is not received on or by the fifth day of the month.

If you are using Unlimited After-care, your payment for Unlimited After-care should be made by or on the 1st of the month with your tuition payment.

If you are using drop-in after-care and/or before-care, you will be billed after use and you are expected to pay after you receive the invoice by email. The email comes from *Pinecrest School* <[quickbooks-email@intuit.com](mailto:quickbooks-email@intuit.com)>. Please add this address to your approved senders/contacts list and, if you have not received an invoice shortly before the first of the month, please check your spam or junk folders.

Mrs. Sim, our finance associate, handles all questions about payments or similar. Please address questions about this directly to her. Mrs. Sim works on a part-time schedule. It is best to contact her by email at [business@pinecrestschool.org](mailto:business@pinecrestschool.org). Please understand that you may not be able to receive a same-day response, but that you'll hear back as soon as possible and within a timely manner. If you are requesting a bill or a receipt or something else that you need specifically for a certain date, it is best to give us as much notice as possible.

August and September before-care and after-care will be billed together as one month after September ends.

## Photos

From Facebook:

[First Day of School - Pinecrest at Peace](#)

[First Day of School - Pinecrest](#)

[2017-18 Staff Selfie](#)

## Upcoming Dates

More details will follow soon about upcoming events/activities if not included here.

Friday, September 1	2017-18 Tuition Installment 2 of 10 Due (A \$50 late fee is charged if tuition payment is not received on or by the fifth day of the month.)
Monday, September 4	Labor Day Holiday – No School
Friday, September 8	New Parent Coffee – 9 a.m.
Friday, September 8	Pinecrest Spirit Day – This year's This is community shirts with 60 on the back please
Friday, September 8	Pinecrest Pizza Friday – sign up by 2PM the day before at <a href="https://fs9.formsite.com/pinecrest/PPF/index.html">https://fs9.formsite.com/pinecrest/PPF/index.html</a>
Tuesday, September 12	Back-to-School Night 1 – Preschool-Grade 1 – 7 p.m.
Wednesday, September 13	Board of Directors Meeting – 7 p.m. – upper school building
Thursday, September 14	Back-to-School Night 2 – Grades 2-6 – 7 p.m.
Friday, September 22	K-6 Half Day – 12:05 p.m. Dismissal / After-care offered until 6 p.m.  Quarter 1 Faculty Development Time
Sunday, October 1	2017-18 Tuition Installment 3 of 10 Due (A \$50 late fee is charged if tuition payment is not received on or by the fifth day of the month.)
Friday, October 6	Pinecrest Pizza Friday – sign up by 2PM the day before at <a href="https://fs9.formsite.com/pinecrest/PPF/index.html">https://fs9.formsite.com/pinecrest/PPF/index.html</a>
Monday, October 9	Columbus Day Holiday – No School
Wednesday, October 11	Board of Directors Meeting – 7 p.m. – upper school building
Friday, October 13	K-6 Color Run – 2-3:35 p.m. – driveway
Friday, October 20	Individual and Class Group Photos by Creative Images – morning
Friday, October 27	K-6 Quarter 1 Ends (43 days)
Monday, October 30	K-6 Quarter 2 Begins
Tuesday, October 31	Halloween Parade – 9:15 a.m.

## Celebrations/Appreciations

Thank you to all of the families who joined us for our 2017 summer camp! It is so fun to see our students here and especially get to know new students before the school year begins. If you wish to share parent feedback, please do so here [Parent Feedback Link](#) – thanks to those who have already completed this form!

Welcome to all of the families joining our school community for the first time this year – we're glad you're here!

## Piece of Light

This is a regular section in my newsletter. I use this space to share articles or pieces that I love or that I feel are thought-provoking, valuable or useful – or some combination of all of those factors. Today I am sharing two pieces that I shared at this time last year too.

1. I often share this at this time of year:

[25 Ways To Ask Your Kids “So How Was School Today?” Without Asking Them “So How Was School Today?”](#)

2. This one is a good complement to the one above and focuses on asking your children thoughtful questions:

[The Key Jar: 48 Questions to Ask Your Kids by Glennon Doyle](#)

## Piece of Light Part 2 – in Action

Give your eclipse glasses a second chance! Astronomers Without Borders and Explore Scientific are collecting glasses to be sent to schools in South America and Asia when eclipses cross those continents in 2019. You can donate your glasses by mailing them here: AWB Eclipse Glasses Donation Program  
Explore Scientific, 1010 S. 48th Street, Springdale, AR 72762.

(Thanks to one of our former teachers who relocated out of the area for sharing this with me!) :)