Principal: Valerie Lewis, vlewis@bcps.org  
Assistant Principal: Melissa Markle, mmarkle@bcps.org  
Administrative Secretary: Shanel Diggs Harris, sdiggsharris@bcps.org  
Front Office Secretary: Connie Nittinger, cnittinger@bcps.org  
School Counselor: Tina Kubala, kkubala@bcps.org  
School Nurse: Kelly Franker: kfranker@bcps.org  
Caliday Extended Care: (410) 329 – 8378

School Hours: 9:15 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
Morning Drop-off Times:  9:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.  
Afternoon Pick-up Time:  4:00 p.m.

Empowering with Audacity

PRINCIPAL’S MESSAGE

Happy October, Pine Grove Pandas!

The 2022-2023 school year is underway. Our community excitement was evident at Sneak-A-Peek at Your Seat and Back to School Night. Many thanks to our teachers, staff, parents, and community members that contributed to a great opening.

During Back to School Night, I communicated our School Progress Plan key actions.

CLIMATE

1. Teachers will create and sustain a safe, welcoming and supportive classroom environment which values inclusivity and diversity.

2. Teachers explicitly teach and model social emotional learning skills and strategies and integrate them into academic content.

LITERACY and MATHEMATICS

1. Teachers will explicitly teach content aligned to the rigor of the standards including modeling through sharing their thought process aloud as they approach and complete
tasks (i.e., utilize Elements of Effective Teaching and Learning High Leverage Strategies and AVID WICOR strategies such as focused note taking).

2. Time on task should reflect high expectations and ensure that students do the vast majority of the cognitive work of the task.

Also, during Back to School Night, Ms. Markle discussed our safety and emergency response procedures. Teachers reviewed and practiced these procedures with students during the first weeks of school. As we are all aware, our students, staff and neighboring school sprang into action with these emergency response procedures on September 20th. I commend our teachers, staff, and students for following directives, while remaining calm. I am grateful for the outpouring of support from parents, PTA, feeder schools, and Central Office during and after the emergency event in our community. Your calls, emails, pats on the back, and surprise treats were greatly appreciated.

AVID NEWS

Pine Grove Elementary continues to be an AVID school. AVID stands for Advancement Via Individual Determination. Its purpose is to shift schools to a more equitable, student-centered approach and close the opportunity gap, so that all students are prepared for college, careers, and life. Our AVID schoolwide initiatives include color coding, desk organization, and Costa’s Level of Questioning. This year, we are adding focused notetaking.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL WELLNESS

During overwhelming times in our life, it’s important to find ways to relax and cope. Linked below is a virtual calming room, which is a space for students, families, and staff to find tools and strategies for managing emotions and feelings. Enjoy and take some time for yourself!
https://scs.bcps.org/cms/one.aspx?pageId=69240670

COUNSELOR’S CORNER

October is Bullying Prevention Month. Ms. Kubala will be conducting classroom lessons in each grade to enable students to recognize bullying behaviors, teach students ways to promote positive peer relations, as well as teaching students how to put an end to bullying, including asking for help.
For PK and Fifth Grade Only: Magnet Programs

Magnet applications are currently available online. The purpose of Magnet programs is to enhance students’ educational experiences and academic performance by providing unique learning environments, innovative instructional programs, and specialized programs of study and/or experiences that extend and enrich the existing BCPS curricula, promote student diversity, and align with evolving community and industry/business needs.

2022-2023 Magnet information can be accessed with the following link: https://dci.bcps.org/department/educational_options/educational_opportunities/magnet_programs

The application deadline is 1:00 p.m. on Friday, November 4, 2022.

GRADE-LEVEL NEWS

PRE-K

Our Pre-K students are off to a great start this year! We are learning classroom routines to help us to be safe and helpful in school. Pre-K students are also learning about the importance of letters, listening for sounds, sorting and shapes, as well problem-solving with peers.

KINDERGARTEN

Leaves are changing colors, and Kindergarten is falling in love with learning! We have been busy this last month with settling into our routines, building friendships, and learning academic skills! Not only have we been learning about characters and setting through the Gingerbread Man, but we have also learned the letters of our names through the famous book, Mrs. Bindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten. In Math, we are writing numerals and counting given sets up to 10. This month our focus is building our math workplace routines which promotes independence, self-choice, and having collaborative conversations with our peers that builds mathematical vocabulary. We appreciate all your help at home with preparing your children for the long day at school. Coming to school prepared with learning materials, a good night’s rest, and a full belly makes for a “ready to learn” day in Kindergarten!
**1st**

First graders have been busy building school families in their classrooms by getting to know each other, establishing routines and expectations, and learning how to solve problems peacefully. In ELA, we have been reading different texts about neighborhoods and identifying elements of realistic fiction and nonfiction texts and exploring what authors do and where they get ideas. In Math, we have been working to establish classroom standards around exploring and communicating about numbers, developing number sense and number combinations (with an emphasis on combinations to 10). We are excited to host a First Grade Family Game Night on October 18th. More information is coming soon!

**2nd**

Second graders have been hard at work! In Phonics, students have worked on reading and writing words with closed syllables. Students have also been reading a mix of realistic fiction and informational text as they explore the unit one essential question: *How do different places affect us?* In Math, second graders are just finishing up the first unit which focused on even and odd numbers, adding and subtracting within 20, and skip counting to solve problems. Don't forget to join us for our second-grade family night on October 11th! Please RSVP to your child's teacher by Thursday, October 6th.

**3rd**

It’s been a hardworking start to third grade! In ELA, students are working to build their reading and writing abilities. We have explored different genres such as folktales, realistic fiction, informational text, and traditional tales. As students are reading, they are thinking about how environments affect us. Students have also practiced analyzing characters and their traits, inferring theme, retelling a story, and identifying text features. Students are learning how to write a personal narrative in our writing workshop. In Math, 3rd graders are concluding Unit One: *Addition and Subtraction Patterns* in the next few weeks. In this unit, students use efficient math strategies to build fluency with basic addition and subtraction facts. Determine whether two expressions are equal. Write equations to represent one-step story problems. Use strategies based on place value, properties of operations, or the relationship between addition and subtraction to fluently add and subtract within 100. 3rd grade students have also been learning about financial literacy in Social Studies. It’s never too soon to begin building a deeper understanding of the financial world! Ask your kids about wants versus needs, spending and saving, benefits and costs, and the roles of producers and consumers.
4TH

4th Grade Family Night is on October 11th from 6:30 - 7:15 p.m. in the Cafeteria. We look forward to playing Bingo with you!

On October 28th, 4th grade will go to Camp Puh'Tok, rain or shine, for a fantastic Native American field trip. We are grateful to the parents/guardians who have volunteered to chaperone or be station leaders, and we are looking forward to a wonderful trip! Stay tuned for more information.

5TH

Fifth grade is very busy learning! In Math we are about to start a unit on adding and subtracting fractions. Advanced Math students will be finding the surface area of prisms. In Social Studies, we are studying the 13 colonies. In ELA we will continue to practice multiple skills which include determining the main ideas and the supporting key details in an informational text. Because of the complexity of fifth grade texts, students will be determining a number of main ideas within a text. Don’t forget that instrumental music starts the week of Oct 3rd.

Ms. O’ Keefe’s CLS Class- The students have been working on the Zones of Regulation and building a classroom community.

Mrs. Ryan’s CLS Class- Students have been working on Zones of Regulation and classroom routines. Mrs. Ryan has been going over expected classroom behaviors and feelings that people express. The class will finish the unit of working together and getting ready to start a new Science Unit.

Mrs. Bittner KCLS Class- Mrs. Bittner has been establishing routines and getting a chance to know classmates and the adults that work in the classroom.

ESOL

This semester in Elementary ESOL (Grades 1-5), we will be developing our English skills as we learn about and discuss nutrition, exercise, and food from different cultures. We will celebrate our heritage by compiling a Pine Grove Elementary ESOL cookbook. Your child will be asking for help selecting a favorite recipe that is popular in their family’s native country. In Kindergarten ESOL, we will start the Fall by building our English vocabulary, including names of colors, shapes, emotions, parts of the body, and school-related words. I am excited to work with our ESOL students and know that we are going to have a fun and productive year together! ~Ms. Thesen
LIBRARY

This month in the Library, students in grades K-1 are learning how to be a Responsible Library Citizen by taking care of their library books. Grades 2-5 are learning how to be responsible Digital Citizens by not sharing personal information online, maintaining a small digital footprint, keeping their password safe, and identifying what to do if they are, or see, cyberbullying when online. All students have begun to check out library books. As a reminder, students in grades K-1 are allowed one book each week while students in grades 2-5 are allowed to select 2 books each week. All books are to be returned the following week during the student’s library class period. I am happy to see so many students demonstrating responsibility by bringing their books back on time! ~Ms. Benz

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

5th grade instrumental students begin lessons on Thursday, Oct. 6. Students who are playing instruments should have a schedule that was handed out on Thursday, September 29. I am looking forward to working with them this year.
If you have any questions, please contact me at bmessinger@bcps.org and I will be glad to assist in any way I can. ~Mr. Messinger

VOCAL MUSIC

In Mr. Pugh's Music class, the students are distinguishing the difference between “beat” and “rhythm.” See if your child can give you an example of each, or if they can give you an example of a song that has a distinct rhythm! Also, ask your child what performer they believe has the best rhythmic moves to a beat!

DATES TO REMEMBER

October 5th – Schools Closed for Systemwide Professional Development Day / Yom Kippur
October 11th – Family Game Night for 2nd Grade (5:30-6:15 p.m.), 4th Grade and Ms. O'Keefe’s Class (6:30-7:15 p.m.)
October 17th – PTA Meeting 6:30 – 7:30 p.m.
October 18th - Family Game Night for 1st Grade (5:30-6:15 p.m.) and 5th Grade (6:30-7:15 p.m.)
October 21st – Schools Closed for MSEA Convention
October 24th – Schools Closed for Systemwide Professional Development Day
October 25th - Family Game Night for Pre-K and KG (5:30-6:15 p.m.) and 3rd Grade (6:30-7:15 p.m.)
October 26th – Fall Individual Pictures
ELEMENTARY MATH HOMEWORK HELPERS

Beginning the week of October 3rd, BCPS-TV will begin airing “Math Homework Helper Shorts.” These vignettes are short math lessons timely aligned with the elementary math curriculum for students in Kindergarten through Grade Five, featuring Joe Teng, Supervisor of Elementary Math, alongside Max, the fun, math-loving puppet from the long-running show “Math Homework Helpers.” New videos will be released weekly through the month of October specific to each grade level (K-5). “Math Homework Helper Shorts” can be seen on Schoology, Vimeo, BCPS-TV Channels Fios 34/Comcast 73.

Then on Wednesday, November 4th, 4:30 – 5:30 pm, the premiere episode of “Math Homework Helpers LIVE” will air LIVE on BCPS-TV Fios Channel 34 / Comcast 73, streaming on www.bcps.org, and the BCPS YouTube channel.