



September 2021
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Issue 1

Pole Green Elementary School
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POLE GREEN PRESS

President's Message

Administrator's Corner

Ms. Rhonda Voorhees, Principal

I would like to say thank you to the students, parents, staff, and community for a GREAT start to the school year. It was great to see you at the Virtual Back-to-School night on September 28.

Schools participate in a number of safety drills as practice of our crisis management plan. Some of these drills include fire drills, earthquake drills, tornado drills, and intruder drills. Students are made aware that we will practice drills for their safety, and to follow the teacher directions for the different drills. This year, our safety drills will be a little different to ensure social distancing, but still important to model good safety procedures in case we need to use them. Together, we will keep our Gators safe!

For absences please call the
ATTENDANCE LINE 365-4714

Dear PGES Families,

Happy fall, ya'll! Can you feel fall in the air...we hope soon? I hope everyone has settled into the school year groove by now. Thank you to all those who came out for our first PTA meeting last month during Bingo. I can't wait to see you again at our next meeting and Bingo night, Oct 15th.

As you know, the fall fundraiser with Charleston Wrap is underway! All orders need to be placed by October 8th. All prizes and merchandise will be delivered to you, not the school.

Reflections is underway also! The deadline to turn in applications to Mrs. Cross is October 22nd. This year's theme is "I can change the world by..." Please encourage your children to participate in this wonderful, artistic experience.

Thank you for continuing to check out our newsletter on the PTA website and on Facebook. You can find it at polegreenpta.org. Also, don't forget to like and follow us on Facebook for the latest updates, events, news and pictures!

I look forward to working with all of our great volunteers and staff this year!

Sincerely,
Amber Hancock
PTA President
president@polegreenpta.org

Administrator's Corner (Continued)

PGES FACEBOOK

PGES has a Facebook page. Please LIKE us on Facebook @polegreenelementaryschool. Our goal is to share highlights of students throughout the school day. Students will only be photographed for Facebook if you granted permission through the forms sent home at Open House. If you would like to change your response at any time, please contact your child's teacher.

October – Anti-Bully Prevention Month

The month of October is the official month for anti-bully prevention. At PGES, we practice anti-bully activities throughout the school year. However, in recognition of Anti-Bully Month, we will have extra activities with our students. October 20 is UNITY DAY and the color Orange represents students commitment to be united, as a GREAT Gator team, to stand against unacceptable behaviors and bully behavior. We welcome our community and parents to join us in wearing orange on October 20.

FUN RUN IS MARCH 17, 2022! SAVE THE DATE! SAVE The GATOR SLIDE!

The Fun Run will be our school-wide fundraiser that supports instructional materials and resources for all students. The school fundraiser focus is on instructional technology and instructional materials for students. Funds will also be used to pay for the Gator Slide which has been damaged beyond repair by non-PGES students. Of course our students are disappointed that the slide is currently not usable. The estimated cost to replace is \$5000. The BoosterThon Fun Run theme will focus on character traits that we emphasize each day at PGES. So, look for more information to come, but save the date – March 17! More details to follow in 2022!

Parent Communication & Who Do I Ask?

The PGES staff is very busy each day planning, preparing and implementing structured academic opportunities for the students. We encourage parents to volunteer in any manner which time permits. To assist teachers, students and parents, the administrative responsibilities have been divided. Although the below list is not inclusive, this includes an idea to direct parent questions, if needed.

Rhonda Voorhees, Principal

Test Data Analysis

School Improvement

Personnel

Crisis Safe School Plan

Student Placement

Elizabeth Verlander, Assistant Principal

SOL testing

Textbooks

Student Discipline

Bus and Transportation

Special Education & 504 Plans

Keeping students safe is an important responsibility for us each day, and we request your help in keeping our school safe. Please be prepared to show picture identification when you are picking up your child. Also, make sure you have returned the Student Emergency Card and the Student Clinic Card which include valuable information as to who you have given permission to contact in case of an emergency at school in the event the parent cannot be reached.

We appreciate your support and understanding as we all work together to keep the students and educational environment at Pole Green safe and secure for everyone.

The Hanover County School Board recognizes the importance of keeping all students safe. Unfortunately, this recognition includes the danger sex offenders pose to student safety. Therefore, to protect students while they travel to and from school, and attend school or school-related activities, each school in the Hanover County school division shall request automatic electronic notification of the registration or re-registration of any sex offenders in the same or contiguous zip codes as any school within the school division. This information is obtained according to the procedure established by the Virginia Department of State Police. Information on sex offenders and the "Crimes Against Minors Registry" can be located at <http://sex-offender.vsp.virginia.gov/or index.htm>.

Administrator's Corner (Continued)

Attendance Line

Student absences need to be documented by the parent by a phone call to the school, a written note to the school or an email to the school. You may let the teacher know in advance of scheduled absences if the student will be out all day. PGES has a voicemail attendance line for you to leave messages when your child is out sick, 365-4714. If we do not receive a message from you regarding a child's absence, you will be contacted as is HCPS policy. If you need to speak with the nurse, you may contact her directly at 365-4704.

ATTENDANCE

We want to emphasize the importance of attendance for student academic progress as outline in the Code of Virginia section 22.1-254 through 22.1-269. Our instructional day is 8:00a.m.-2:30p.m. Teachers offer additional help, reading, and games for students who arrive early, 7:30a.m.-8:00a.m. This is also a good time for students who choose to eat breakfast at school upon arrival. We want to make sure parents understand the attendance policy for Hanover County Public Schools related to excused and unexcused absences. We recognize there will be student absences for illness and unexpected circumstances, and we will work with our families. Student absences for Covid-19 illness or quarantine will not apply to the attendance policy.

Excused Absences: If a student is absent, the parent should contact the school by calling the attendance line at 365-4714 or sending in a note within 3 days of the absence. This will make the absence marked 'excused'. However, after 10 excused absences, medical documentation for absences to be marked excused will be required. In addition, even if all days are marked excused, the state law requires school systems to share attendance letters home to parents to prompt improved attendance. The dates on the attendance letter will be followed with (e) for excused or (u) for unexcused. If a student misses 20 days or more, regardless if excused or unexcused, the student will violate the attendance policy and may not receive credit for the school year and be promoted to the next grade. If this occurs, administration will have meetings with parents of impacted students.

Unexcused Absences, when a parent does not communicate the reason for the absence, will follow these steps in accordance with the law:

- After 5 unexcused absences, parents will be contacted by a school administrator to develop a plan to prevent further absences
- After 5 unexcused absences, a school level conference is held with school administration and parent(s) to support student attendance
- After 8 unexcused absences, a second attendance meeting will be held to develop a more formal attendance plan
- If attendance does not improve, a referral may be made to the school Social Work services to contact the family about student attendance.

If a student misses 20 days or more, regardless if excused or unexcused, the student will violate the attendance policy and may not receive credit for the school year for promotion to the next grade. If this occurs, administration will have meetings with parents of impacted students.

Counselor's Corner

This month we are focusing on being a Bully-Free school! "Let's make Pole Green a GREAT place to be by making sure we are bully-free, and remember, GREAT Gators accomplish GREAT things!" We say this school motto every morning as a reminder that we strive to be GREAT to ourselves and others. Last month, many grade levels received lessons from me on kindness, acceptance, and empathy. These foundations are key when being a good friend to others. This month our focus is on Bullying. Students in grades K-2 will focus on friendship and kind words, while grades 3-5 will have discussions about the different types of bullying and how to report it. Students will also discuss these topics during their Morning Meeting with their classroom teacher. Lastly, we will celebrate being Bully-Free by having a school Spirit Week October 18th-22nd. More information to come regarding activities planned for each day!

Take care,
Sydney Hobbs
PGES School Counselor

Counselor's Corner

Welcome back everyone!

If you don't know me yet, my name is Sydney Hobbs and I am the School Counselor here at Pole Green! This is my sixth year at PGES and I am looking forward to a new school year with all of our GREAT Gators! I received a Master's degree from Virginia Commonwealth University in Counselor Education and a Bachelor's degree from Longwood University in Psychology and Sociology. I am a graduate of Hanover County Public Schools and feel blessed to be able to stay in Hanover County. I am an avid animal lover and have two dogs, as well as a pet-sitting business! I enjoy riding horses, being outside, reading, and spending time with family and friends. I love being an advocate for all students and being able to promote life-long learning through the PGES School Counseling Program.

What does a School Counselor do?

A school counselor is an advocate for all students. Their job is to make sure all students feel safe and all student needs are met. School counselors are able to provide these services through classroom guidance lessons, small group counseling, individual counseling sessions, parent workshops, and professional development for staff. School counselors have the ability to meet with and develop relationships with all students in the school. Relationships with all students is just one benefit of the job! We are able to help students create strategies and solve problems, which encourages students to become self-advocates and independent individuals. We aim to provide support and understanding throughout the school year and beyond.

I will be visiting each classroom every 3 weeks to teach a new lesson. Here are some of the topics I cover:

Kindergarten- Rule Following, Whole Body Listening, Tattling, Acceptance, Friendship, Feelings, Cooperation, Careers

1st Grade- Positive Thinking, Friendship, Feelings, Confidence, Problem Solving, Focus, Appreciating Differences, Careers

2nd Grade- Honesty, Checking Work, Goal Setting, Friendship, Feelings, Bucket Filling, Diversity, Feelings, Careers

3rd Grade- Listening Skills, Empathy & Inclusion, Kindness, Conflict Resolution, Anxiety/Coping Strategies, Growth Mindset, Cooperation, Careers

4th Grade- Diversity & Inclusion, Mindfulness, Study Skills, Goal Setting, Perseverance, Stress Reduction, Test Taking, Careers

5th Grade- Leadership, Coping Strategies, Organization, Peer Pressure, Different Points of View, Middle School Transition, Careers

I also offer small group counseling and will send home group permission forms throughout the year.

Some of the groups that MAY be offered this year are:

- Friendship
- Behavior Choices (lower grades)
- Anxiety (Keeping Calm)
- Divorce & Separation (Banana Splits)
- Self-Esteem
- Life Skills (upper grades)

If you have any additional questions about the PGES School Counseling Program, I can be contacted at 804-365-4705 or shobbs@hcps.us.

I am looking forward to another awesome school year!

Sincerely,
Sydney Hobbs
PGES School Counselor

Grade Level News

Kindergarten

We will begin Phonological Awareness and Literacy Screening (PALS), as well as the Virginia Kindergarten Readiness Program (VKRP), in October.

The VKRP is a statewide initiative focused on building a comprehensive understanding of a child's school readiness and success. The VKRP will focus on four key areas: Mathematics, Literacy, Self-Regulation and Social Skills.

Based on research, PALS assesses those skills that seem to be the best predictors of future success in reading. This assessment measures rhyme awareness, beginning sound awareness, alphabet recognition, knowledge of letter sounds, and spelling of simple three letter words. PALS-K provides a direct means of matching literacy instruction to specific literacy needs and strengths.

You might want to check out the following website:
<https://pals.virginia.edu>. Sites that do a good job of reinforcing some of these important skills are <https://www.abcya.com> and <http://www.starfall.com>. The most important thing that you can do to help your child is to spend time reading together. You can also help your child to do his best by making sure he comes to school on time, well rested, and having eaten breakfast. Thank you for being our partners in education! We recognize that YOU, as a parent, are the most important role model in your child's life.

First Grade

AUTUMN is upon us and our FIRST GRADE GATORS are so excited to see all the seasonal changes outside! The FIRST GRADE TEACHERS are noticing some changes, too, inside the classroom. As we make our way through the second month of school, we see our students growing...and growing...and growing!

A Attitudes are positive
U Understanding more and more
T The classroom buckets are filling up
U Using better manners
M Making good choices
N Never give up approach

Reflections

Let your student show their artistic flair with the PTA's annual Reflections contest.

PTA Reflections is a nationally acclaimed program to encourage artistic creativity in the classroom and at home. Students of all grades and abilities are encouraged to participate and explore the arts based on the 2021-2022 theme: I Will Change the World By...

Students may submit entries in any or all of the following categories:

Dance Choreography
Film Production
Literature
Music Composition
Photography
Visual Arts

Applications have been sent home and are via email submission by October 22nd. Spare applications will be available outside of the art room and on the PTA website. Please email all entries to samhudgins21@gmail.com.

Grade Level News(Continued)

2nd Grade

Fall is certainly in the air as the leaves are changing color and the air feels just a bit more cool and crisp. As the season changes, second graders do, too. They are becoming more independent by the day. During the month of October, we will begin to work with the children in small guided reading groups and the students will independently work in their Daily 5 stations (Read to Self, Read to Someone, Listen to Reading, Work on Writing, Word Work). They will spend their time on authentic literacy activities that will enhance their fluency, accuracy, and comprehension . . . and their LOVE of reading! Our comprehension focus this month will be on making predictions and identifying narrative story elements. Our writing focus will continue to be IDEAS and writing stamina but also complete sentences and types of sentences. We truly are readers and writers in second grade!

During our science time this month, we will investigate the properties of magnetism and gravity. Students will enjoy a wide variety of hands-on activities and experiments following the scientific method that we learned during the first week of school. Next up will be our social studies unit exploring geography. Students will learn important map skills on small scale neighborhood and community maps while also focusing on the continents and oceans on world maps and globes. Eventually, second graders will begin to specifically explore their very own continent of North American including its countries, mountains, rivers, and lakes. We create salt dough maps at the end of the unit as a culminating activity to represent everything that we have learned about where we live.

In the area of mathematics, students will begin to hone in on their number sense skills with addition and subtraction. In second grade, we really take the time to learn a variety of strategies to increase the students' speed and accuracy of basic math facts. This particular unit includes many, many games that allow the children to practice new skills that they've learned. As always, we begin each math lesson with our first five minutes of number routines and a daily word problem focus. We are inching closer and closer to a full math workshop model complete with choice boards and whole group, small group, and one-on-one instruction.

October is an exciting and busy month for sure. Along with all of that pumpkin and apple picking, costume making, and sports playing, be sure to take note of the many PTA spirit night events coming up during the month of October. Remember, too, that October 11th is a Flexible Learning Day and October 14th is Picture Day. Smile, second grade!

Grade Level News(Continued)

3rd Grade

October came quickly and we are rolling into our routines in third grade. Our writing focus will be IDEAS as students get used to the routines of writing workshop and independent journal writing. We will use a variety of mentor texts written by amazing authors to jumpstart lessons about where authors get their ideas and how to write a seed story rather than a watermelon story (narrow that idea to a small event and then elaborate!). Students will engage in many word study lessons to read and spell unknown words by identifying parts of words they know. In third grade, we write across the curriculum all day long and we love it!

Third grade is certainly that bridge between learning to read and reading to learn. We continue to learn so much about literature through our daily interactive read aloud times. We use these stories as springboards for our comprehension skill focus each day. We will focus heavily on comprehension skills in third grade beginning with author's purpose, making predictions, identifying genre, making connections between reading selections and using text features to read and comprehend of nonfiction text. Students will continue to work in guided reading groups to read at their instructional level to practice these skills. In the area of mathematics, third graders will begin to work on computation. The students will use problem solving, mathematical communication, mathematical reasoning, connections, and representations. They will estimate, add and subtract two whole numbers to 99 within practical word problems, distinguish between expressions that are equal and not equal, identify missing parts in patterns, and solve problems for input and output rules limited to addition and subtraction. It is important to practice fluency of facts as well.

We are moving from economics onto learning all about matter and measurement during science. As we use our Foss kits, students will be involved in many hands-on experiments during this unit. The focus is on water and how various solids and liquids interact with water, including a focus on dissolving. They will explore many solids dissolve more easily in hot water than in cold water. Science rules!



Grade Level News(Continued)

4th Grade

The Fourth Grade Team is off to a great start! We spent the month of September learning 4th grade expectations and establishing friendships with all our friends returning for F2F instruction.

In Language Arts, we have been learning about narrative writing, summarizing and genres. One of the challenging tasks for fourth grade is being able to identify the genres of a variety of books. We encourage you to read daily with your child and discuss the genre of the book as well as the narrator. As we start the new month, we will look at the author's purpose and how to use context clues to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words.

For this month in Math, we are focusing on basic multiplication and division. If your child does not have their math facts memorized, we encourage you to incorporate this into your daily routine at home. You can practice facts anywhere! Try reciting them in the car on the way to the store or while setting the table for dinner. Also, there are many fun and creative websites that allow the students to practice their facts. As we wrap up the month, we will look at number patterns.

In our Virginia History, we will learn about the Native Americans that lived in Virginia in the past, as well as the current state recognized tribes. Students will look closely at their way of life and how Native Americans used Virginia's natural resources in their daily lives.

Our Science unit for the month will be on Ecosystems. Students will study different ecosystems and how all living and nonliving things interact with each other.

Thank you for all your help and support,
The 4th Grade Team

5th Grade

Our 5th graders are starting off the year with great fervor and with great fun. We're all so glad to be back in the classroom with some old friends, and making new friends, too.

Though this school year will look different in many ways, many things remain the same: strong academic programs, life-long skills, supportive staff, creative endeavors in the Inspiration Lab, and innovative resources to enhance technology skills.

The 5th grade math classes will be focusing on "Whole Number Computation". Science classes will wrap up the "Energy" overview with a close look at electromagnets, followed by "Mixtures". ELA classes will develop an understanding of phonics along with building vocabulary, while tailoring our reading and writing instruction for more individualized needs.

And finally... the most anticipated rite of passage for our 5th graders will happen this year... the DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) program will begin later in the year, and will wrap up with an exciting graduation ceremony sometime in the New Year.

What is happening this month

October 2021

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
3	4	5	6 Shrimp Shack 4-8pm	7	8	9
10	11 Gelati Celesti 2-8pm	12 McDonald's 5-8pm	13 PTA Board Meeting 6:30-7:30pm	14	15 PTA Meeting/BINGO 5-7:30pm	16
17	18	19	20 The Patron 4-8pm	21	22	23
24 Mod Pizza 10:30am-10pm	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Remember to any submissions to the newsletter are due on the 20th of each month.
 Maurice Aufderheide— Editor
mauriceaufderheide@icloud.com