



December 2020

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Pole Green Elementary School

8993 Pole Green Park Lane

Mechanicsville, VA 23116

Phone: 804-365-4700

Fax: 804-365-4717

Attendance: 804-365-4714

# POLE GREEN PRESS

## President's Message

Happy Holidays PGES families and staff,

Can you believe that we are only a few weeks away from class parties and, more importantly, Winter Break? I know it will be a great end of the year!

Giving Tuesday is just around the corner. This year it is scheduled for Tuesday December 1, 2020. We hope that you will consider making PGES PTA one of the organizations you support. Your donations allow us to continue to be a powerful voice for all of our children, a relevant source for families and communities, and a strong advocate for the education and well-being of each child. We cannot meet these goals without strong support of our parents and community members. Your donations can help with a number of resources to the students, teachers, and families of Pole Green Elementary. Please consider making a Giving Tuesday donation on our Give Lively donation site.

<https://secure.givelively.org/donate/virginia-congress-of-parents-and-teachers-mechanicsville-va/support-the-pole-green-elementary-pta>

We have several exciting spirit events coming up in December make sure to check out the events at the end of the Newsletter. We appreciate all the support that you have shown and keep coming out. We love to see all that Great Gator Pride.

November brought another Bingo Night. We want to thank all the families that were able to come out for this event. There was so much fun and laughter at the event and the children loved all the fun family competition.

Please consider joining the PTA if you haven't done so yet. You can join through online school fees or send in a check to the school. Thank you all for your support through the first half of this school year.

On behalf of the PTA board we wish you all a safe and happy holiday,

Stephanie Beardslee

PGES PTA President

president@polegreenpta.org

## Administrator's Corner

Ms. Rhonda Voorhees, Principal

HAPPY HOLIDAYS! I wish warm, safe and peaceful wishes to each of your families during this busy time of year. Family and friends are the best gifts we can enjoy, and may your hearts be overfilled! I want you each to know how your children enrich my days, and are a part of my own gifts! I am thankful to know and love each Great Gator! Thank you, as always, for sharing them with me! I look forward to our New Year 2021!

The Pole Green staff would like to say thank you to our parents and community for your support to benefit the students and school so far this school year. We appreciate the PTA sponsored activities, the community involvement and encourage parents to continue to get involved in the school activities we are permitted to host.

For absences please call the  
ATTENDANCE LINE 365-4714

## Administrator's Corner (continued)

The month of December is very busy at Pole Green Elementary School. Our school winter parties are on December 18, for all grades K- 5, 1:00-2:15pm. If you are interested in participating or assisting in student activities for your child's class, please contact the classroom teacher. We look forward to seeing you at Pole Green.

We have enjoyed our first quarter of the school year and are well into the second nine weeks. Our students are thriving each day and we appreciate parental support to assist students at school and at home. Student attendance is crucial to academic progress so as our school year progresses, some students will receive attendance and/or tardy letters home to the parent. Hanover County attendance policy specifies that a student who is absent over 20 days in elementary school may not progress to the next grade. We appreciate your notifying the school of student absence, but the county and state policy still requires attendance letters to be sent home as reminders to parents. As a result, attendance letters will be sent home, per county policy, after a number of absences to alert parents to the policy. The letters are required, per county policy, to go out at 10 days of absence and more, regardless of absence excused or not excused. If the attendance concerns appear to be chronic, you will be contacted for an attendance conference. If your child violates the attendance policy, you will be required to write an attendance waiver or your child may be retained for violating the county attendance policy. In addition, our instructional day begins at 8:10 and excessive tardies may result in a loss of instruction for your child. Please be diligent to have your students to school prior to the tardy bell to maximize their educational time and minimize the disruption to the other students when students arrive late. We appreciate your assistance in this area.

The weather is another factor to consider this time of year when we think of student attendance. Due to the unpredictability of the weather, please be aware of possible altered school days either by a decision to close schools or to release students early from school. School closing information is shared with local media by the Superintendent of Schools by 6:00a.m. If schools were to close early, your child's teacher will follow the directions you specified at the beginning of the school year. You may update or change your child's dismissal plan for emergency early closing days by contacting the classroom teacher.

## Counselor's Corner

Happy December! We hope you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving and got to spend time with those who you are most thankful for! Thanks to Gethsemane Church of Christ, we were able to donate many Thanksgiving meals to our families in need. Thanks to another generous church, Atlee Church, we are able to provide weekend snack bags for these same families. We are also working with community business partners and volunteers who are generously providing "wish list" items to our families in need for Christmas. We are beyond blessed to live and work in such a generous and caring community!

Since the beginning of the school year, your students have been receiving classroom guidance lessons once every two to three weeks. Kindergarten has learned about following rules, velvet vs. sandpaper words, whole body listening, and self-esteem. 1st has learned about optimism, being a good friend, tattling, and feelings. 2nd has learned about kindness, problem solving, diversity, and setting goals. 3rd has learned about kindness, listening, bullying, and respecting differences/empathy. 4th has learned about study skills, brain parts/mindfulness, respecting differences, and rumors/bullying. Lastly, 5th has learned about leadership, bullying, stress management, and elective choices for middle school. Students learn about life skills and important characteristics to develop in order to become a lifelong learner and good citizen in society. Classroom Guidance Memos will be sent home in January explaining upcoming lessons and topics for Spring.

Lastly, attention 5th grade parents! You will receive information about Middle School Registration meetings very soon! A letter will be sent home with more information including dates of meetings and how to sign up for meetings (meetings begin in February). I will also have more information included in the January Newsletter. It's hard to believe that you will soon be registering your student for 6th grade courses! Be on the lookout for more information soon.

Have a wonderful Holiday Season!

Sincerely,  
Sydney Hobbs  
PGES School Counselor

## Community Programs

Thank you to all of the families who have been sending in items to support our community programs so far this year. The September winning classroom was Mrs. Bowman's classroom with 496 items and our October winning classroom was Mrs. Gordon's classroom with 324 items. The items which are counted for the classroom competition are Coke Cokes, Box Tops and Little Entenmanns wrappers. A huge shout out to Mrs. Carrique's classroom as well for having 1 and 1/3 gallons worth of pop tops so far this year!

The highlight for this month is Amazon smile. Did you know that you can earn money for the school just by shopping on amazon? Perfect as we approach the holiday shopping rush. All you have to do is begin your shopping on the amazon smile web site or app, in your settings select PGES PTA as your charitable donation, and then all of your purchases will earn money for the PTA. It is as easy as that!

Heather Weston  
Community Programs

## Community Programs

We want to thank all of the students who participated in this year's Reflections Contest. We are excited to announce the Pole Green Elementary School PTA Reflections Contest 2020 Winners

Lucy McFarlane – Primary Visual Arts  
Maddie McFarlane – Intermediate Visual Arts  
Emily D'Alema – Intermediate Film Production  
Lucy McFarlane – Primary Photography  
Maxwell Martinez – Intermediate Photography

Chico Martinez  
Reflections Chair

## Penguin Patch

The time has returned for our Penguin Patch children's shop!!! Although it looks a bit different this year, it is still a wonderful experience for all our Gators to purchase items for their loved ones at a low cost. Penguin patch is 100% virtual this year but that makes things easier for all. And you can participate in just 3 simple steps.

1. Go to [www.penguinpatch.com](http://www.penguinpatch.com) Click the GREEN Shop Online Now button in the upper right hand corner.
2. Enter our school name Pole Green Elementary in the search bar and click on our school from the drop down menu
3. Start shopping!

All items are shipped directly to you and gift bags are included for every item in case your student wants to wrap them themselves. There are items ranging from 25 cents to 20 dollars, just like it was last year. So get ready to buy something nice for Grandma, Aunt Lisa and Cousin Isaiah. Penguin patch has something for everyone!

## Charleston Wrap

Good Friday to you both! The articles are below.

Great Gators are simply that...GREAT! Thank you to everyone who participated in our Charleston Wrap fundraiser! Although we were short of our goal, we DID raise money to continue to support our school and its programs. We know this year has been nothing short of crazy and yet you all showed up and showed out. We salute you all for the love and dedication you continually show to our Pole Green PTA. Great Gator families ROCK!!!!

# Grade Level News

## Kindergarten

First, we would like to thank the parents of our kindergarten students for the wonderful show of support for our Parent/Teacher Conferences.

We are thrilled that our students are thinking of themselves as READERS, WRITERS and MATHEMATICIANS. Thank you for everything that you are doing at home to promote and encourage them in these areas of development. Isn't it exciting to see the progress? We are tapping into the enthusiasm the students are exhibiting for seasonal activities by integrating our core subject areas of reading, writing, math, science and social studies into these themes. One of the Social Studies Standards of Learning that we will teach this month will be identifying the difference between basic needs (food, clothing, and shelter) and wants (luxuries). You might think of ways that you can reinforce pointing out these differences at home. In mathematics, the students are comparing sets of objects using more, less, and same (equal) and will begin focusing on number bonds (part-part-whole relationships) for numbers 0-5. Please continue to reinforce these concepts at home. Number bonds can be a very difficult concept for kindergarteners to understand. We're also teaching students about the importance of thinking of others during this season. Please continue to reinforce the sight words being taught in class, as well as have your child complete activities on Seesaw and RAZ-Kids. We would like to thank all the parents for reinforcing skills and concepts at home. It truly does make a difference in your child's education!

We will continue to update you on the skills being covered through our weekly emails. Watch for special activities planned for your child's class! 😊

Happy Holidays from Your Kindergarten Team!

## First Grade

WINTER is quickly approaching 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 fourth month of school, we see our students reading...Reading...and READING!!!

Our students are:

- W Wondering how & why things happen
- I Interested in learning new and interesting things
- N Noticing their academic strengths
- T Trying to solve challenging problems
- E Excited to dive into good books
- R Reaching out (in a manner of speaking) to offer a helping hand



# Grade Level News(Continued)

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade

The fun and excitement in 2nd grade will continue throughout December! In math, we will begin a new unit: Subtraction Facts from 20. Children will be identifying and demonstrating different strategies to help solve subtraction problems. In science, we will be learning about Habitats. Children will be able to identify the difference between living and nonliving things as well as the interdependence between the two within a habitat. We are looking forward to lots of learning throughout December! December is a magical time. We posed the following question to our 2nd graders: "If you could ask Santa one question, what would it be?"

Jackson: Who is your favorite reindeer?

Briggs: Do you have children?

Aaron: How old are you?

Kellan: How did you get your powers?

Fischer: What are all of your elves names?

Connor: Will I ever get a horse of my own?

Declan: Can you bring my dog back to life?

Bridget: How come some kids get ipads and I get underwear?

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

Tis' the season to be a Pole Green Gator! We're learning so much and enjoying spending the holiday season and spreading the holiday cheer with our friends and teachers. Our December writing focus teaches us how to write paragraphs beginning with the persuasive paragraph. And boy do we like to use persuasion. Students will also be honing their persuasion skills by writing persuasive letters as part of an elf job application process and activity. Students will be dreaming of visions of working at the North Pole this winter!

During our reading time in December, students will focus on non-fiction conventions in a variety of magazines, textbooks, and books. We'll take a look at headings, subheadings, photos, captions, table of contents, glossaries, indices and much more. We will also read holiday literature, applying the newly learned comprehension skill of summarizing (Somebody Wanted But So Then) to what's being read. Don't forget to take a look at your teacher's December book order forms to get a jump on the holiday shopping and order some books for your excited young readers.

Students are finishing up exploring the wonderful world of geometry in math, including lines, angles, polygons, and congruency. This is such an exciting hands-on math unit, full of songs, games, and creative drawings. The children usually enjoy a more spatial unit at this time since we've been doing so much computation. Next up in math, students will revisit place value to the ten- and hundred-thousands place and then add and subtract four-digit numbers.

As we shift back to science from social studies and all of the focus on the geographic features of five continents, students will explore simple machines. Through hands-on lessons that encourage cooperation and problem-solving, third graders will learn the importance of six specific simple machines and how they make our world a much easier place in which to do work! We will make our way through the scientific method to hypothesize, experiment, observe, record results, and draw conclusions. Science rules!

From our classrooms to your homes, the third grade teachers wish everyone a healthy and happy holiday season. We feel fortunate to be able to teach and learn alongside your children face to face during these challenging times. Enjoy some quality family time honoring traditions old and new and most importantly, stay as safe as possible. We look forward to an amazing 2021 with our incredibly fantastic students!

# Grade Level News(Continued)

## Fourth Grade

The month of December will be a quick but busy month for the 4th graders. In Social Studies, they will be learning about the Jamestown settlement. This is a great time to take a weekend trip to visit Jamestown and maybe even hop over to check out Williamsburg as well. The students always benefit from these personal, hands-on experiences when learning about our Virginia History.

In Math, the students will return to Multiplication and Division with larger numbers. If your child has not mastered their multiplication facts, this unit will be a challenge. There are several websites such as [multiplication.com](http://multiplication.com) that your child can use to help them learn their facts.

December brings many exciting holiday activities that we hope the students will enjoy. We wish everyone a safe and joyful winter break and look forward to kicking off 2019 with our students.

Happy Holidays!  
Mrs. Burnley and Ms Miller



## Fifth Grade

The month of December finds our students busy at work, finding solutions for decimal computation problems. In addition to math, we'll be honing our skills as fluent readers, while looking for text structures to give clues in our comprehension. Geology is the order of business in our science classes. And finally, we'll take a quick look at the continents and oceans, in our social studies classes.





# Upcoming Events

**DECEMBER 2020**



- 12/6 SPIRIT NIGHT- MOD PIZZA 10:30-9PM**
- 12/8 SPIRIT NIGHT- AR WORKSHOP 5:30-7PM**
- 12/9 SPIRIT NIGHT- AR WORKSHOP 5:30-7PM**
- 12/13-19 SPIRIT WEEK- 5 & BELOW**
- 12/14 SPIRIT NIGHT- MOE'S KIT PICK UP 6-6:30PM**
- 12/18 ROOM WINTER PARTIES**
- 12/21 SPIRIT NIGHT- MCDONALD'S 5-8PM**

Remember to any submissions to the newsletter are due on the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month.

Maurice Aufderheide— Editor  
mauriceaufderheide@icloud.com