



Amy R. Borio  
Principal

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*"Together we Share, Discover, Create, and Achieve"*

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August 7, 2023

Dear Pine Grove School Students,

It's almost time to be back together! We can't wait to see your smiling faces! We have so many questions to ask. What have you done this summer? What books did you read? Who have you spent time with? What are you looking forward to most about this school year? Whatever you did, we hope you had fun and we hope you are feeling ready to come back to Pine Grove School. We can't wait for you to get here! It gets a little lonely in the summer without all of you here. We are excited to see how much you all have grown. We bet you got taller. And, we are super excited to meet all of our new Kindergartners!

We have had great summers! Mrs. Borio went to the beach a lot, and spent a week with her family in Ocean City, Maryland. She also spent a lot of time with her two French Bulldogs, Remy and Millie. Mrs. Buckle had different adventures with her kids every day and spent over two weeks in Maine with her family and her dog, Penny Pancakes. Now that we are rested, we are ready to get back to work. The start of the school year always fills us with joy! It is a great time to make new friends, set new goals, and learn new things. We have some new friends joining us this year. Besides some new students, and all of our Kindergarten friends, we also have new staff joining us. You can find the names of our new staff here in this letter. Mrs. Buckle and I have been planning for the start of the year and a fun Summer Reading Celebration. Have you been reading? We hope so, but if not, it's NOT too late! Fill out a reading log [Download Here](#) or write down what you have read on a paper and bring it to school with you the first week so that you can be a part of our big celebration later in September. You are probably anxious to find out who your teacher will be! Your grown-ups can check PowerSchool on Thursday, August 17th to find out. That day you will also get an email with a letter from your teacher.

Parents, we are looking forward to a great year together. In my welcome back letter to staff I told them about my strong belief that we are "better together." This year one of our focuses will be using our collective capacity, or shared experiences of success, to help our students learn more effectively. We hope that this work will also encompass families. When we work together to make decisions, solve problems, and plan for success, our students will benefit in positive ways. We look forward to our partnership with all of you this school year! Included in this letter is some important information about the start of the year. Please feel free to reach out with any questions

With exuberance and anticipation,

*Amy R. Borio*

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Principal

*Jessica Buckle*

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Assistant Principal

# Important Information for the 2023-2024 School Year

## The First Day of School

On Tuesday, August 29, 2023 at 8:35 am Pine Grove School will open its doors for the 2023-2024 school year. To help ensure every student knows where to go, we will have a fully staffed arrival team here to greet all students grades K-4. This team of adults will have class lists and brightly colored orange signs for each grade. Children should look for the sign as they arrive and wait for a teacher or staff member to lead them inside to their new classroom. We will follow this routine for roughly two weeks, slowly transitioning students towards entering and walking to class independently. A smaller version of our arrival team remains in place year round to ensure a positive start to each school day.

## Arrival Time and Start of School Day

School begins at 8:50 am. Doors will open at 8:35 am. This year we ask you to join us in an intention to begin school on time! That means that our school announcements will begin promptly at 8:50. Students are expected to arrive prior to that time so that they can be unpacked and at their desk for our 8:50 am start. Students can be dropped off until 8:50 am on the side of the gym. If you arrive for drop off after 8:50, please park in the front parking lot and walk your child into the school to sign them in.

## Curriculum Night - August 31, 2023

Each fall, parents, guardians, and staff come together to discuss the upcoming year. We call this night Curriculum Night. ***This event is for grown-ups only.*** Your child's teacher will talk to you about grade level curriculum, home/school connection, class routines and procedures. It is a great opportunity to meet your child's teacher and get a sense of what to expect in his or her new classroom and grade level. This year we will hold Curriculum Night on Thursday, August 31, 2023. Please click [HERE](#) for the schedule.

## New Staff

Each year we say goodbye to staff members and welcome new ones. Below is a list of new faces you will see this year at PGS. Some are new to Avon and some just new to our school. Please join me in giving a warm welcome to the following individuals:

***First Grade:*** Ms. Alyssa Ritacco and Ms. Cally Roy will be joining the first grade team.

***Third Grade:*** Mrs. Danielle Roy joins us from RBS in third grade.

***Fourth Grade:*** Mr. Joel Robinson joins us from RBS in fourth grade.

***Special Education:*** Linda Gerosa is the long term sub for Joanna Fracasso, and To Be Determined for the LTS for Gina Vamvakis. Both are planning to return in January.

***Teaching Assistants:*** Monalissa Doane, Elizabeth Martin, Jaime Schlagenhauf, and Lindsay Steele

***Other Changes:*** Mary Labowsky will be moving to Kindergarten. Lauren Lorenzet and Hannah Rossignol will be moving to second grade. Allie Driscoll will be moving to fourth grade. Elena Musto returns to third grade. Ewa Sliwowski will return to PGS as an English Language Learner teacher.

## Updates

Each summer our maintenance and custodial departments work hard to get Pine Grove School ready for the coming year. This year we had one very large project which was the installation of a new security alarm system throughout the entire school. We also had some fresh paint added to spaces that needed updating. Other than that, it was a relatively quiet summer at PGS.

## Bus Arrival, Parent Drop Off and Dismissal

***BUS ARRIVAL:*** We strongly encourage all children to take the bus to and from school. Not only does this allow children to have some time to socialize prior to school starting, it also keeps traffic in our parking lot to a minimum. If you choose to drop off or pick up your child this year we ask for your help in ensuring that our parking lot remains safe and orderly by following the directions that follow.

***PARENT DROP OFF:*** We ask that if you are dropping off your child, you do so via the [Traffic Plan Here](#) ***Please do not park and walk your child in unless you arrive after 8:50 am.*** The front entrance of the school is reserved for students who arrive by bus. All families who are driving their child to school are expected to follow the traffic pattern and drop their child off on the side of the building. This helps us ensure the safety of all who enter the school as well as keeping bus traffic running smoothly. Our school doors open at 8:35 am. At that time, you will see staff arriving at their posts in the front and side of the building. Students should not be dropped off prior to 8:35 am. ***Parents who attempt to cross the crosswalk to drop off will kindly be asked to return to their vehicles and join the car drop off line.***

**Please be sure to do the following:**

**Stay in line. Do not pull around other vehicles**

**Have your child ready to exit the vehicle on the left side only (driver side)**

**Stay in your vehicle, our staff will assist if needed in opening car doors**

**DISMISSAL**

Each child should have a dismissal plan that is consistent. You will soon receive an email from SchoolPass, which is our new dismissal management system. As you may remember, Pine Grove School piloted a program last year, and this year the district has decided to adopt a program for the district. We will be transitioning to SchoolPass for the 2023-2024 school year. For those new to Pine Grove, SchoolPass is a secure app you can get on your phone that will track all of your child's dismissal plans. You can set a regular dismissal plan and make changes when needed. This is also how you will report absences for your child. Again, more information will be coming soon.

Dismissal is at 3:25 pm. At that time our end of day announcements will be made and buses will begin to be called. Parent pick up will take place from our gym. Adults picking up children are asked to park in the parking lot and walk across the crosswalk to check in with SchoolPass. Once you are checked in, please proceed to the blacktop near the gym. A staff member in the gym will call your child's name and they will be dismissed to you through the gym doors. Kindergarteners will be dismissed from the set of doors closer to the playground along with their older siblings, and students in grades 1-4 will exit through the doors closer to the parking lot. Parents who need access to the building will need to do so through the front entrance.

**Important Dates**

- Monday, August 28, 2023 - Kindergarten Meet and Greet 10-10:45 am, Popsicle Social on Playground immediately following
- Monday, August 28, 2023 - Grades 1-4 Meet and Greet  
Students Last Names begin with A-L 1:30-2:00 pm  
Students Last Names begin with M-Z 2:15-2:45 pm
- Monday, August 28, 2023 - New Family Orientation 3:00 pm - Cafeteria. Popsicle Social in courtyard immediately following
- Tuesday, August 29, 2023 - First day of school
- Thursday, August 31, 2023 - Curriculum Night (see link above for more information)
- Monday, September 4 - No School, Labor Day
- Wednesday, September 6, 2023 - School Picture Day  
Link: [Grynn & Barrett](#) (Create an account, then enter the code)  
Code: **3E9Y9T5**
- Monday, September 25, 2023 - No School, Yom Kippur
- Thursday, October 5, 2023 - First PTO meeting 6:30 pm

**Communication**

While we communicate with families in a variety of ways, there are a few that you should plan to look for regularly. Each Friday we will send home a short, one page newsletter that we call "Trending Now." It will include important information about what is happening at PGS, reminders about upcoming events, and a short article from the principals about a topic of interest. We will try to attach to that email and newsletter any other documents of importance from the week. When communication is necessary and urgent, we will send your family an email or perhaps a letter in hard copy. You are welcome and encouraged to reach out to us with any questions or concerns you may have. Many of your questions may be answered by reviewing our website [PGS Website](#) and our Avon Public Schools Elementary Handbook. The best way to reach us is to call the school office, or send an email to [pinegroveoffice@avon.k12.ct.us](mailto:pinegroveoffice@avon.k12.ct.us). You can also always contact Mrs. Buckle or myself directly at our email addresses.

**PGS-PTO**

Please see the following link for our Parent Teacher Organization and to sign up for Konstella (scroll all the way to the bottom, the new code to join is **CMJ9MX** all capital letters) [PGS PTO](#)