



# Panda Press

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Caliday Extended Care: (410) 329 – 8378

**School Hours: 9:00 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.**

## PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Happy December PGE Families!

It's the most wonderful time of the year!

Last month, we had a great turnout for American Education Week. Thank you to all of our families who visited. Also last month, our students enjoyed a Magic Laser Show sponsored by our PTA. The PTA also gave away coats and facilitated a Savers fundraising drive. Thank you so much to the PTA for being an amazing support to our school and community.

Today, we revealed our November attendance winners. The following classes earned the opportunity to display the Excellent Attendance Banner in their classrooms for the month of December.

- KG- Ms. Heckscher's class at 95.85%
- 1<sup>st</sup> grade- Ms. Auffarth's class at 95.22% (2<sup>nd</sup> time winner)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> grade- Ms. Gentle's class at 95.29%
- 3<sup>rd</sup> grade- Ms. Lauter's class at 96.95% (3<sup>rd</sup> time winner)
- 4<sup>th</sup> grade- Mr. Dunn's class at 96.45%
- 5<sup>th</sup> grade- Mr. Manzo's class at 95%

Congratulations to all!

December 22<sup>nd</sup> will be the first asynchronous day for students and possibly the start of inclement weather. Therefore, beginning Monday, December 4<sup>th</sup> devices and chargers will be sent home with students daily. Devices nor chargers will be sent home with students who have outstanding balances. You may contact the office to find out how to pay replacement fees. Please remind your students that they will need to transport devices and chargers to and from school daily, and review device etiquette such as proper handling, keeping the protective case on, keeping the device sticker and mark free, fully charging the device for the next school day, and only using devices for teacher-directed educational purposes.

December is packed with lots of exciting events, and what better way to end the year than to bring families together to celebrate the community we share. On December 7<sup>th</sup> we will showcase the talents of our students in the Winter Concert. Mr. Messinger and Mr. Pugh have been working with students to bring you a special musical treat. Please come out to support our students as they have been practicing very hard. We have planned 12 days of PGE spirit beginning December 6<sup>th</sup> through December 21<sup>st</sup> (see the flyer below).

I am grateful for the parent support and caring community culture here at PGES. It is my hope that you take the time to enjoy your loved ones during the holiday season. Make every second together count. Have a safe Winter Break!

Ms. Lewis, Principal

### MESSAGE FROM THE MAIN OFFICE

If you have changed your phone number, email, and other contact information, please notify the main office so this can be updated in Focus. We need to be able to reach you in case of an emergency.

### DATES TO REMEMBER – A LOOK AHEAD...

**Monday 12/4** – Devices and Chargers will be Sent Home with Students

**Wednesday 12/6 – Thursday 12/21** – 12 Days of PGE Spirit

**Thursday 12/7** – Winter Concert at 6 p.m.

**Tuesday 12/19** – PTA Meeting

**Friday 12/22** – Asynchronous Day for Students (students work from home)

– Winter Break Begins at the End of the School Day

**Tuesday 1/2** – Schools and Office Reopen

# 12 Days of Holiday Cheer

1



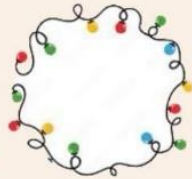
Dec. 6  
Dress like your  
favorite elf.

3



Dec. 8  
Grinch/ Green Day

2



Dec. 7  
Holiday Bling

4



Dec. 11  
Jingle Bells

5



Dec. 12  
Tree Topper  
(hat/ hair  
accessory)

7



Dec. 14  
Warm and  
Cozy

6



Dec. 13  
Candy Canes  
(wear red and  
white)

8



Dec. 15.  
Tacky Sweater

9



Dec. 18  
Holiday Socks

11



Dec. 20  
Ruldolph Day  
(wear red and  
antlers)

10



Dec. 19  
Mad About  
Plaid

12



Dec. 21  
Polar Express  
(Wear  
Pajamas)

## CARPOOL

Parents, please take note of the **Right Turn Only** sign at the carpool exit. There are no left turns out of the carpool lane from 8:00-9:30 a.m. and 3:00-4:30 p.m. When cars attempt to make left turns during these times, it backs up the carpool line. We also ask that you do not cut in line in front of those who have been patiently waiting their turn. We appreciate your assistance with helping our carpool to run smoothly.



## 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, Costa's Level of Questioning, and focused notetaking.

## SOCIAL - EMOTIONAL WELLNESS



### Elementary Social and Emotional Learning Daily Activities December 2023

Mind Over Matters Suggested Activities Mind Over Matters 2023-2024 Campaign			
Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
<b>Healthy Relationships</b>  Play "Kindness Bingo" or use the bingo cards to gather additional ideas to promote kindness.	<b>Coping Skills – The 'Turtle Technique'</b>  This 'Turtle Technique' shares a visual to help children control their emotions and includes strategies and links to a turtle story that teaches a self-regulation strategy.	<b>Coping Skills – Art Helps!</b>  Explore <a href="#">100 Art Therapy Exercises</a> to support students with their emotions, relaxation, focusing on happiness, as well as trauma and loss activities. *Check out #11	<b>Healthy Relationships</b>  Enjoy this read aloud of <a href="#">Shubert Sees the Best</a> , a Conscious Discipline text, that focuses on positive intent and relationships.

Choose any 3 activities to complete each week. 😊				
On the outside of a paper bag, create a self-portrait. On the inside, fill it with things that represent who you are.	If you could give a gift to anyone in the world, who would it be and what would you give him or her?	Instead of saying I can't do this, try saying I need some help understanding this!	Making something for someone can be a great way to feel good and help someone else feel great too!	Make a list of all the ways you can be helpful to others in 2024.
<b>Circle Prompt:</b> What does it look like and feel like to be supported?	<b>Count all of the objects of a certain color in the room.</b> If you're getting frustrated and about to say or do something that you'll regret later, distracting yourself by counting all the green objects in the room is a much better choice!	<b>Circle Prompt:</b> When I get stuck on a math problem, my next step is to...	<b>Circle Prompt:</b> What strategies do you use when you feel a big emotion?	<b>Circle Prompt:</b> What is something you are looking forward to this winter?
<b>Breathing:</b> Frost Breath!  Inhale deeply through your nose. Slowly exhale through your lips watching the warm air leaving your body!	<b>Movement:</b>  Stand with your feet wide apart. Reach your hands out to the side. Remember to keep your body nice and tall. Spin and twist like a falling snowflakes!	<b>Breathing:</b> Lazy 8 Breathing 	<b>Movement:</b> As a Brain Break, do 20 jumping jacks, 15 squats, 10 lunges and 5 pushups. Or play some oldies but goodies like <i>Simon Says</i> , or <i>Red Light/Green Light</i> .	<b>Breathing:</b>  Hot Cocoa Breathing!  Breathe in 1-2-3-4 to smell the hot cocoa. Blow out 1-2-3-4-5-6 to cool the hot cocoa.

Office of School Climate and Culture: MTSS

December 2023

## COUNSELORS' CORNER

As part of our School Counseling Program, each class will be participating in a counseling core curriculum lesson during the month of December on personal safety and decision-making. The lessons are based on Baltimore County Public Schools' Personal Safety Program PK-5: Making Healthy Decisions curriculum. This program includes age-appropriate information on body safety and neglect and abuse prevention strategies. It highlights the importance of telling a trusted adult about uncomfortable situations. Our goal is to help children be better able to handle the issues of personal safety should they arise.

Keeping your child safe is a priority to all of us at Pine Grove Elementary. It is our hope that these lessons will help to reinforce the information and strategies that you have already given your children, and that your family can discuss together the important information presented in these lessons. Please feel free to contact Tina Kubala at [kkubala@bcps.org](mailto:kkubala@bcps.org) or Carly Okeson at [cokeson@bcps.org](mailto:cokeson@bcps.org) with any questions about the program. We can be reached by phone at (443) 809-5267.

Happy Holidays!

## READING SPECIALIST

The hustle and bustle of the end of the year is here. As adults, we are often caught up in the whirlwind of festive preparations. It can be easy to overlook the simple pleasures that can create lasting memories with our children. The timeless activity of **READING TOGETHER**.

One of the greatest gifts we can give our children is the ability to explore worlds beyond our daily lives through the magic of books. Reading together opens great conversations, imagination, and creativity. During the month of December and through the holiday break, spend time snuggling with your child(ren) and let the words on the pages create a magical atmosphere. Reading together provides a unique bonding experience creating amazing moments that your child(ren) will carry with them through adulthood.

How to Make Reading A Part of Your Family Time?

- Read bedtime stories
- Play board games
- Visit your local library
- Read a recipe and cook something yummy together
- Create a comfy reading space in your home
- Put your child in charge of reading the grocery list at the store

## ESOL

Hello from Ms. Thesen! We have had a fun and productive fall in our ESOL classes. In grades 1-5, we have been developing our English skills while learning about the world around us through maps, readings, and discussions. Students enjoyed looking at pictures of schools in different countries and comparing them to our school. After Thanksgiving break, students will research and write about a country of their choice. This month's kindergarten topics include pronouns, parts of the body and emotions. Starting in mid-December, all students will focus on preparing for our upcoming annual language assessments in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

If any parents are interested, registration starts in early December for [free English classes](#) through the Community College of Baltimore County. There are both online and face-to-face options. For more information about **CCBC ESOL** classes, email [esolfamilyliteracy@ccbcmd.edu](mailto:esolfamilyliteracy@ccbcmd.edu) or call (443) 840-3456.



As always, parents can reach me at [athesen@bcps.org](mailto:athesen@bcps.org) if you have any questions about our ESOL program or need assistance with any other language-related issues. You can also use the Talking Points app or reply to one of my messages in your preferred language. I will receive it in English. I have truly enjoyed getting to hear from more parents this year with the Talking Points app! - Ms. Thesen

## **GRADE-LEVEL NEWS**

### **PRE-K**

Pre-k students continue to show kindness as we learn friendly and helpful behaviors! We have learned how to be problem-solvers using our Solution Suitcase! Prekindergarten friends are building reading skills by learning sight words, using picture clues, and answering WH questions. Pre-k mathematicians have been talking about shapes and their attributes, sorting, and counting/comparing groups to determine more/equal/fewer. We are looking forward to building fine motor skills by creating a variety of holiday crafts this month!

### **KINDERGARTEN**

We are working hard to master skills in Kindergarten! We can identify all letters and are mastering sounds now. We are using these sounds to read and write CVC (consonant, vowel, consonant) pattern words with the short vowel sounds. We are using sight words and our letter sounds to read and write sentences in good form. In math we continue to use mathematical tools and strategies to problem solve. Please help your child become a fluent reader with good comprehension by reading and discussing stories for at least fifteen minutes every day. Can your child find sight words in the story? Make two sets of sight word flash cards and play Memory for a fun way to master sight words! Thank you for sending Prepared Pandas every day!

### **1<sup>st</sup>**

**Phonics:** We are working on digraphs, r-controlled vowels, and blends.

**Reading/Writing:** We started a unit about Being a Good Citizen. We will write an informational step by step book.

**Math:** We are working on addition, subtraction and the strategies to help with fluency.

**Social Studies:** We will learn about the state of Maryland as being a part of a community.

### **2<sup>nd</sup>**

Our second graders are working hard to reach their goals! In phonics, students will continue blending and spelling words with long vowel sounds. Students will learn more long vowel spelling patterns and silent letters in upcoming lessons. In reading, students read a variety of narrative texts that include fairy tales and fables as they explore the essential question: What lesson can we learn from the characters in stories? Students will also finish writing opinion essays and move onto writing narratives. They will create an imaginative story to show their understanding of the key parts of narratives. In math, students will be working through Unit 3 which focuses extending knowledge of place value by applying strategies for multi-digit addition and subtraction with up to three-digit numbers. In number corner, students will learn about shapes and their attributes. They will make predictions and find patterns to classify shapes and find lines of symmetry. In addition, students will organize and read data from graphs. Second

graders are helping to solve a problem in science in our Building Blocks unit. They are acting as structural engineers to explore the properties of materials in order to determine the mixture that will best support a retaining wall. We will continue to read aloud books that celebrate the season. Second grade will also enjoy a craft on Wednesday, December 20<sup>th</sup>, prior to the winter break.

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

Third graders are rapidly expanding their reading, writing, and math skills at an alarming speed. Currently, third graders are adding and subtracting multi-digit equations to a point where some of it is now able to be completed mentally! WOW!! In reading, third graders just wrapped up learning about influential documents, symbols, monuments, and holiday that represent our nation and are crafting an expository essay in order to teach others. For content, third graders just wrapped their civics unit and learned all about their three branches of government and the leaders at each level. Third graders are now embarking in their new health unit called "Healthy Relationships" and review everything from peer pressure to tattling vs. telling. Third grade recess has been restructured to ensure everyone is safe and socially happy! The third-grade teachers are happy to announce that their field trip planning has commenced and will be announced soon! Third grade teachers are in desperate need of tissues, hand sanitizer, desk wipes, chalk, jump ropes or any recess equipment you may have laying around! Thank you so much for all of your continued support!

### 4<sup>th</sup>

We loved seeing so many of you during American Education week and enjoyed meeting with you on Conference Day. If you have a chance, come check out our "Gifts to the World" display in the front hallway for the month of December! Our students wrote about a hypothetical gift they would give to the world this holiday season. In reading this coming month, we will be reading a variety of stories and asking ourselves, "What makes someone a hero?" Be sure to ask your student about what we are reading about in school! Please also make sure your students are reading each night and turning in their bookmarks for the end of the year Kona Ice celebration from the PTA! As always, we are appreciative of any donations of tissues and dry erase markers. Wishing you a wonderful holiday season and a happy new year!

### 5<sup>th</sup>

This December, 5th graders are working on their DBQ (document-based questioning) where they will enhance their essay writing skills to prepare them for middle school and beyond. At completion, they will begin their first Social Studies Unit: Colonial Regions. During this unit, students will learn about how colonial regions affected the economy and the lives of colonists. In Reading, students have been learning about the Wild West and its significance to the growth of America. Students have been especially interested in this topic and have enjoyed hearing first-person accounts and deepening their vocabulary understanding. Two of our 5th grade math classes are continuing Math Unit 3, Place Value and Decimals, whereas our third 5th grade class will be working with ratios. Our students are excelling in all areas of math and we are excited to continue challenging them!

### **Ms. Koumides' ISDM Class**

During the month of December, our ELA centers will be reviewing the question, "How can I be my healthiest me?" We will introduce and explore everyday habits and the essentials of healthy living. In Phonics, we will continue focusing on letter sounds and sight words. Our Math centers will continue working on counting, less and more, and exploring addition/subtraction. In SEL, we will hone in on calming strategies and self regulating our emotions.

### **Ms. Ryan's ISDM Primary Class**

In December, we will be continuing our work on Community Heroes and focusing on our essential question "what makes a community?" In ELA, we will be reading about different communities in order to make and check predictions about our texts, as well as identify the theme and supporting details throughout. In Math, we are working on addition and subtraction up to 10, and in SEL we are focusing on giving back to our community.

## **SPECIAL AREA NEWS**

### **ART**

Greetings from the Art Studio,

It has been a very busy time for all PANDA artists.

- 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students are finishing their Georgia O'Keefe inspired flowers and leaves...taking something small and making it powerful.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> grade is looking closely using observational drawing of food to create a colorful still life.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> grade is working on art elements using shapes to create nutcracker-inspired artwork.
- Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade are working on shapes and texture with their trees.

Please congratulate three third-grade students for receiving honorable mention in the BCFD poster contest. Zeke Wamiti, Lincoln Howarth and Noelle Lancaster received prizes and participated in an awards ceremony November 28 at Loch Raven High.

Also, please congratulate the following students for having their work accepted in the Virtual Central Area Superintendent Art Show. Owen Norton, Lucie Caplan, River Turpin and Zuri Amollo.

You can see all the work in this link. [The Superintendent's Gallery: Central School Zone Exhibition \(adobe.com\)](#)

Second session of art club started November 29 and will run until January 31 on Wednesdays at 8:00 AM.

Just an FYI... Students should wear layers to adjust to the warm temperature in the art studio.

Please consider sending in an old...light weight shirt or smock to cover your students' clothes.

Please consider sending in tissue boxes to support all the Pandas with running noses.



Enjoy every moment of this special and busy time of year. It's a great time to make art and to make memories.

### **LIBRARY**

November was a wonderful month of giving thanks for our family, friends, and school community. This month, library students in grades K-3 as well as our ISDM students, will partner up with Mrs. Ebersole in Makerspace to travel around the world in order to learn about different holidays celebrated in other countries. Students in grades 4 and 5 will continue to identify award winning books in order to help them understand what makes us enjoy reading. And again this year, all students will participate in the world wide movement "Hour of Code". Students will explore computer coding using the website

<https://hourofcode.com/us/learn>.

I wish each of our students a safe and happy holiday. Remember, you may want to visit our local library over the winter break for extra reading and fun activities. - Mrs. Benz.

### **MAKERSPACE**

In December, we will be collaborating with Library to learn about different holidays around the world. In Makerspace, we will focus on Diwali, Kwanzaa and the Lunar New Year. We will learn about customs and traditions, read stories and build a craft/activity related to these holidays. Students will also receive a passport to take home at the end of the month to show the holidays covered.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

During the month of November, students worked on striking skills by participating in Pillo Polo/Floor Hockey drills and skills. 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades will continue to practice Fitness-gram curl-ups, push-ups and increasing endurance for the Pacer assessment.

In the Month of December students will be participating in the Movement Education Equipment (M.E.E.). This unit provides students with physical, social, emotional, and intellectual benefits. The obstacle course challenges students through a series of movement experiences. Students will be given the opportunity to solve individual and group tasks, to gain self-confidence and self-esteem, to socialize in cooperative settings, to develop physically, and to have FUN!

### **VOCAL MUSIC**

Students in Mr. Pugh's Vocal Music class have been learning to identify line and space notes on a staff. They've used mnemonic devices to help them remember where to properly place given notes. Later on this month, we will be learning more about dynamics in music and tempo!

The 5<sup>th</sup> grade students are preparing for their Winter concert which will be held on Thursday, December 7<sup>th</sup> at 6pm along with Band and Orchestra.

## **INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC**

Students in 4<sup>th</sup> grade will complete their study of the string orchestra and begin learning about the brass family.

Students in 5<sup>th</sup> grade will prepare and present the Winter Concert. The concert is on Thursday, December 7<sup>th</sup> at 6 PM. Students should arrive at 5:30 p.m. dressed nicely. (No jeans, t-shirts or jeans if possible.) The concert should last about 45 minutes.

## **SPANISH**

5<sup>th</sup> Grade Spanish:

Students will be working on our end of unit projects. They are completing an "application" for a game show in which they must describe themselves and their family members in Spanish. They can discuss physical appearance, personality, relationships and likes or dislikes. At the end of the month, we will complete our required end of unit assessment in Schoology.

4<sup>th</sup> Grade Spanish:

We will begin our second unit "Mi Familia Moderna" (My Modern Family). We will the following vocabulary: family/relationships, favorite activities, likes and dislikes, personality traits and pets. As always, throughout the unit, we will work on developing our listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in the target language.