Piney Point Elementary School



FAMILY HANDBOOK 2023-2024

Piney Point Elementary School 8921 Pagewood Lane, Houston, TX, 77063 Phone: (713)-917-3610 Fax: 713-917-3613

The mission of Piney Point Elementary School is to provide a safe and supportive learning environment where all students are expected to reach their full potential.

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This handbook is designed to familiarize parents and students with the policies, procedures, programs, and personnel at Piney Point Elementary School. Please take time to read through the handbook and discuss it at home. If you have questions that are not answered in this booklet, feel free to call the school office at 713-917-3610 for further information.

Contact Information and School Hours

Principal	Kendal Bailey	kbailey@houstonisd.org
Assistant Principal	Milagro Sasmita	msasmita@houstonisd.org
Assistant Principal	Tara Hawkins	Tara.Hawkins@houstonisd.org
Assistant Principal	Luis Castaneda	lcastan2@houstonisd.org
Counselor	Ana Serrano-Pedrazo	Ana.SerranoPedraza@houstonisd.org
Wrap Around Specialist	Nelly Argueta-Solorzano	Nelly.Argueta@houstonisd.org

Websites to Remember:

Houston ISD	www.houstonisd.org
Piney Point	www.houstonisd.org/PineyPointES
Piney Point on Twitter	@PineyElem

Office Hours:

7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

School Hours:

7:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Tardies begin after 7:30 a.m.

Piney Point Elementary School

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ATTENDANCE POLICY

Piney Point's teachers and staff are focused on your child's education. To achieve the goals, we need your support to have your child here **every single day.** Every minute of instructional time that students miss is a lost opportunity for learning. Students with excessive absences will automatically be referred to the principal or Attendance Committee to determine whether summer school is required or if the student should be referred to truancy.

School hours are 7:30 A.M. - 3:00 P.M. each day. <u>If a student is dropped off after</u> <u>7:35, the parents MUST come inside to sign the student in.</u>

Attendance is taken each day at 9:30 a.m. Students arriving after 9:30 a.m. will be counted absent. Students with medical appointments who leave during the day are not counted absent if they return to school with a statement from the medical practitioner.

EXCUSE NOTES

Please send a note every time a child returns to school after an absence, with this information:

- 1. Date
- 2. Child's first and last name
- 3. Date of the absence(s)
- 4. Reason for the absence
- 5. Parent/Guardian signature
- 6. Current phone number

Students should bring an excuse in writing within three school days of the absence. All notes should be turned in directly to the office.

LEAVING BEFORE THE END OF THE SCHOOL DAY

Students who need to leave school for an appointment must be checked out through the office. Students will not be allowed to leave with adults who have not been authorized by legal guardians. The person picking up student must present a physical form of identification for security purposes.

We encourage parents to schedule all appointments after school; if that is not possible, parents must pick up students before 2:00 P.M. Students will not be released to parents after 2:00 P.M. This plan is in place for the safety of all students. Teachers and staff are busy preparing for dismissal, and teachers are not able to alter a student's plan for getting home when it is late in the day. A parent conference will be scheduled for any student who is repeatedly picked up early.

TARDIES

School begins at 7:30 A.M. each day. We have a full schedule, and it is important that students are at school on time in order to take full advantage of their day. Your child misses essential learning with each tardy.

Oversleeping, alarm clock trouble, or transportation issues are considered unexcused tardiness. Plans should be made to ensure that students arrive on time each day.

<u>Students who arrive after 7:35 must be signed in at the office by a parent or legal</u> <u>guardian.</u> Repeated late arrival may result in loss of privileges, parent conference, or a truancy notice.

DRESS CODE POLICY

At Piney Point Elementary School, we are preparing your children for middle school, high school, college, and beyond. To provide the best possible learning environment, students will adhere to the official Piney Point uniform policy.

- Khaki or Navy Pants, skirts, dresses, shorts may be worn. (Skirts, dresses and shorts must be at least knee length.) No jeans or denim.
- Shirts must be plain white, forest green, or navy blue with collars. (No designs or slogans other than Piney Point allowed.)
- Piney Point jackets or button-down white, forest green, and/or navy blue sweaters (without emblems or markings, NO HOODS allowed) can be worn inside the building.
- Students should wear shoes that will support their feet such as tennis shoes or sneakers. (Shoes that are made of plastic or rubber such as Crocs, Yeezy's Foam Runners, jellies are not allowed at school.)

Piney Point emblem jackets and shirts (optional) are available for purchase in the main office.

BACKPACKS

Every student must bring a <u>clear or mesh</u> backpack to school. Students are discouraged from bringing items of value, as they will not have their backpacks with them always. Valuable possessions or cash can easily be lost at school. Students are also discouraged from bringing purses, as there is no need for makeup, perfume, or many of the items typically carried in purses.

ACADEMICS

Students will receive report cards at the end of each six-week grading period, on the following dates: October 6, 2023 November 17, 2023 January 12, 2024 March 8, 2024 April 26, 2024 June 5, 2024 In addition, students will receive progress reports halfway through each six-week grading period, informing parents of progress so far.

Ask your child for the report card and call us if they say they did not receive one! The academic grades will reflect the class work, projects, and tests completed for that period. The parents are required to sign their child's report card and return to school.

All 1st-5th grade teachers record students' grades in the online gradebook system called HISD Connect/PowerSchool. **Parents have access to their child's grades by registering in the parent section of the HISD portal at <u>www.houstonisd.org</u>**

HOMEWORK

Homework assignments will vary from class to class. Your child's teacher will provide specific information regarding homework during parent orientation meetings and through Class Dojo. Students are also expected to read a minimum of 20 minutes per day at home. Students learn at their own pace. If you feel that your child's homework is too difficult or is taking an excessive amount of time, please contact your child's teacher.

Work with your child to schedule time and space each day to complete homework assignments. Check to see that homework is done. Help your child organize his/her materials for a successful day. Check his/her backpack daily for messages or work sent by the teacher.

GRADE PROMOTION POLICY

Piney Point Elementary adheres to HISD and State promotion policies. We consider each student's academic performance on an individual basis to determine if the student is ready for work at the next level. The following may affect a student's promotion to the next grade:

- o Attendance
- o Classroom grades
- o High Frequency Word Evaluation

COMMUNICATION

Communication between parents and school is vital. Any time you have questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact your child's teacher or the campus. Our campus number is 713-917-3610. Additionally, please feel free to contact any staff member through email or the Class Dojo app.

The school uses the methods to communicate with our Piney Point families:

- Weekly School Newsletter/ Student Folder (Thursdays)
- Class Dojo
- Report cards and parent conferences
- Sending home samples of student work
- School events scheduled throughout the year
- PTO meetings
- Calls on School Messenger system

Teachers may conference with all parents during their planning/conference period, and before/after school by appointment. Parents wishing to set an appointment for a conference can send a message in Class Dojo to their child's teacher or call the school office.

For questions about particular grade levels, please contact the administrator in charge: Pre-K, Kinder, and 1st Grades – Ms. Sasmita 2nd and 3rd Grades, ECSE, and SLL – Ms. Hawkins 4th and 5th Grades – Mr. Castaneda

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are scheduled during the school year to support classroom activities. While on field trip, students are expected to be with a teacher and on their best behavior. Teachers can ask for chaperones, which MUST be cleared through VIPS. The teacher is responsible for all students even if chaperones are present. Therefore, parents are **NOT** to separate from the group with their child at any time.

For any field trip, permission slips will be sent home by the teacher to be signed and returned. No student will be allowed to go on a trip without written permission on the appropriate Field Trip Form. A Medical Emergency Treatment form must be on file with the nurse for any student with medical needs.

HISD Code of Student Conduct still applies for field trips, as field trips are still part of the instructional day. A high standard of conduct is expected of students who participate in field trip activities. If students misbehave on field trips, consequences will be assigned per District policy.

FIELD TRIP CHAPERONES

Parents must complete a Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS) application and be approved prior to chaperoning a field trip. VIPS registration can be completed online on the HISD website. Please note that the VIPS application process can take up to a week for processing.

If a parent is invited to chaperone a field trip, the parent may not bring any nonschool aged or school-aged siblings. Supervision is critical, and the chaperone must be solely concerned with watching the students on the field trip.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

VOLUNTEERS

Below are listed guidelines and helpful hints for campus volunteers. Please read these guidelines carefully so that your volunteer experience can be comfortable and rewarding for

you, your child, and the campus. The following suggestions are the result of guidance from parents and staff. Understanding how grateful we are for parents' time and support, please accept the following guidelines with our thanks!

When serving as a classroom volunteer, please:

• Go to www.houstonisd.org/vips to complete the Volunteer in Public Schools course and background check procedure prior to volunteering for the first time.

• Sign into the Raptor system at the office when working at school.

• Wear a "Volunteer" badge while on campus. Badges are available in the office and must be worn by all visiting adults as a safety measure.

• Make arrangements for preschool siblings. It is important to maintain the learning environment of the campus for students. Preschool aged siblings should be supervised at all times. They should not be in the classrooms or other academic areas during instructional times except at teacher request.

• Use the cell phone golden rule...Turn it to off or on "vibrate" when you are working in the classroom.

• Model school rules and procedures – We ask that all volunteers follow classroom and school rules. As adults, our goal is to model the appropriate choices for our students.

- "Clean up" before leaving. This facilitates transitions between activities and keeps Piney Point beautiful for all.
- Have fun! Enjoying yourself and know that you are making a difference for our school.
- Remember to sign-out and to put your badge away when leaving campus.

CONFERENCES

Parent/Teacher conferences are a valuable tool to be used in helping children achieve academic success and remain motivated at school. Be sure to take advantage of this tool! Because it is so important, please follow these guidelines to ensure that you have the best possible conference with your child's teacher.

If an issue arises throughout the school year regarding academics or behavior, the teacher should be your first point of contact. If the issue is not resolve, please contact one of the Assistant Principals.

To arrange for a conference:

- 1. Join Class Dojo. Download the app on your smart phone to get daily updates.
- 2. <u>Make an appointment-</u> use Class Dojo, write a note to the teacher, or email the teacher to arrange an appointment time.
- **3.** Stay "tuned in" to your child so you know when to request a conference.
- **4.** Review all test papers, Progress Reports, and communications from the teacher that signal trouble areas.

*Please **do not** drop in for just a minute at the beginning, middle or end of the day. These are crucial times when the teacher and students need each other's full attention. Teachers **will not** be called out of class for a conference. Instructional time belongs to the students, but teachers may meet during planning time or outside school hours.

Grade	Ancillary Time
РК	11:00-11:55
К	11:00-11:55
1st	12:00-12:55
2nd	9:30-10:25
3rd	8:30-9:25
4th	1:00-1:55
5th	7:30-8:25

Piney Point Elementary Teacher Conference Schedule

<u>**Please note:**</u> Teachers may have other scheduled meetings during this time.

Make sure to confirm appointment time with the teacher before the meeting is set to take place.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

Piney Point parents are always welcome at school. If a parent or legal guardian wishes to observe in a classroom, prior approval from the Assistant Principal or Principal is required. Also, parents must be approved through Volunteers in Public Schools {VIPS}. Parents who are not VIPS approved will be escorted by a Principal's designee to observe a classroom.

One parent/legal guardian can observe a class at a time to limit the distraction to the educational process. Parents or guardians may not record video nor audio of the class observation session. During the observation, you may **not** chat with the teacher, your child, or any other child. This distracts the teacher and interrupts the instructional time. Observations should last no longer than <u>20 minutes</u> and will not be permitted on assessment days.

ΡΤΟ

The Piney Point PTO does an excellent job of providing many benefits for our children and encourages close relationships between teachers and parents. The meetings and programs for parents are informative and current. PTO meetings are scheduled throughout the year and advertised through Class Dojo and newsletters. Many fundraising activities provide important enrichment materials and opportunities for the schools. There are many volunteer opportunities for parents through the PTO. Please contact Ms. Lahana for further information about how to get involved.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION AND ARRIVAL/ DISMISSAL

Piney Point students use a variety of methods of transportation to come to and leave from school, and it is essential that you put a <u>consistent</u> plan in place for your child. Please see

the attached Morning Map and Dismissal Map to guide your morning and afternoon routines for drop off and pick up. In the morning, parents are to drop off students by the cafeteria. Please wait in line to drop-off your child. Do not pass other cars (even if there seems to be room ahead). Once a series of cars has dropped off their children and moved forward, another line of cars can come forward. If you want to accompany your child into campus in the morning, you must legally park on the street or in a visitor parking space and walk your child to the cafeteria. Establish a routine that your child understands and can follow. If you must alter the pattern due to an appointment or other plans, be sure your child knows the changes before leaving home in the morning, submit in writing, and call the main office. Our teachers will be aware of how your child typically gets home in the afternoon, and they are advised not to release the child without prior written approval.

Any changes in the usual routine must be discussed with your child and submitted in writing to the school on the morning of the change. The school must be notified even if the person picking up your child is on the emergency contact list. **Dismissal changes will NOT be accepted after 2:00 p.m. with respect to the safety of your child.**

BUSES

The Houston Independent School District provides buses for students who live **over two miles** from the school to which they are zoned. A parent must request district transportation in the front office or by calling the HISD Transportation office: 713-556-9400. Students <u>must</u> live in the eligible zone to ride the bus. Each bus rider should catch the bus and be delivered to the bus stop closest to home. For those students who live closer to the school, private bus companies can also be contacted to provide transportation for a fee. Parents can call the front office for their phone numbers. Private bus companies are not affiliated with Piney Point Elementary or HISD, and any concerns should be addressed to the private company.

Students may not ride the bus to a babysitter's house or to visit friends, and they may not invite other non-eligible students to ride on the bus. To ensure your children's safety, students may not ride on another bus route without a prior approved change in route.

It is important that we work closely with our children to teach the importance of good bus conduct. The rules and procedures are reprinted here for reference. Please read and discuss them with your child.

BUS RULES AND PROCEDURES

- 1. Bus riders should be at their assigned stop five minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive. (Parents/Guardians should supervise students until they have loaded bus. For safety reasons, no child should be left unsupervised at a bus stop}.
- 2. Students should respect the property of others.
- **3.** Students should board and exit the bus in a quiet and orderly manner (no pushing, shoving, shouting, or other disruptions).

- 4. Students must stay seated until the bus driver dismisses them.
- 5. When buses arrive to school in the morning, students sit in their homeroom lines.
- 6. If a bus is late in the afternoon, students will remain in the dismissal area where supervision is provided until the bus arrives.
- 7. Students are to treat drivers with respect and courtesy.
- 8. No fighting, horseplay, throwing of items, or obscene language will be allowed on buses, at the bus stops, or walking to and from the bus stop.
- 9. Students <u>must</u> stay seated when the bus is in motion.

When a violation of these rules is reported, school administrators will issue a consequence in accordance with HISD Board Policy and the Code of Student Conduct. **Misbehavior on the bus or at the bus stop may result in suspension from the bus. Repeated misbehavior can result in exclusion from riding the bus.** Parents will be responsible for transporting their children to school and home should they be suspended or excluded from riding the bus.

Each bus rider must be responsible for his/her own behavior at the bus stop, in bus lines, on the bus, and traveling to and from the bus stop. Misbehavior and rowdiness jeopardize the safety of riders and cannot be tolerated. Parents are encouraged to become familiar with HISD Board Policies and Consequences governing bus transportation expectations.

Note that all provisions of the HISD Code of Student Conduct apply to scholars when being transported by HISD transportation services. Violations of the HISD Code of Student Conduct while on an HISD school bus will be referred to the appropriate campus administrator for disciplinary action.

BUS ELIGIBILITY

All routes and eligible zones are established by the HISD Routing and Scheduling Department. Drivers <u>must</u> run the route and pick up at the locations determined by Routing and Scheduling-please do not ask drivers to make changes in the route. Eligible students must ride the bus route that comes nearest to their residence, and they must ride the same route in the morning and in the afternoon.

BUS LANE

The bus lane is a "NO PARKING" and "NO DROP OFF" zone for passenger cars.

CAR RIDERS

Piney Point has a dismissal system that places student safety first! All car riders are given either a Gold (Pre-K, Kinder and older siblings) or Green (1st-5th Grades) car sign with students' names and grade level assignments. If you do not have a car tag, you must come into the

office to request one with your photo ID. Staff will call students to the Gold or Green area to assigned cars. Car signs should be placed on the car's front windshield at the bottom right corner for easy visibility by school personnel.

Please follow any signs that are posted, and please be courteous to staff and to other drivers-we are all part of the Piney Point family.

For the safety of all children and adults at dismissal, please adhere to the following guidelines:

- Cell phones may not be used in the carpool lane and school zones. Do not park in the bus zone.
- Remain in your car **always** when using the carpool lane.
- Anyone picking up a student from Piney Point must have a physical ID ready for verification purposes.

Students who walk or carpool should not arrive at school before 7:05 A.M, as no one is on duty to supervise them and ensure their safety. Similarly, parents/guardians must pick up students by 3:00 unless students are participating in an after-school program. Teachers and staff are not available to supervise them. After 3:15, you must come inside to sign out your child.

WALKERS

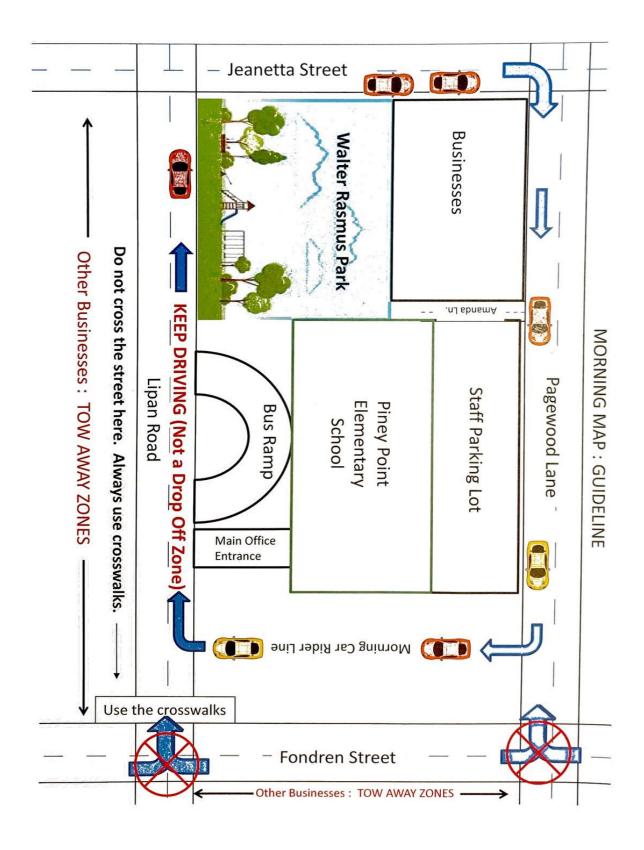
Students will be walked to the front office to be released. Parents must have a "Walker Form" to pick up their student from the front office.

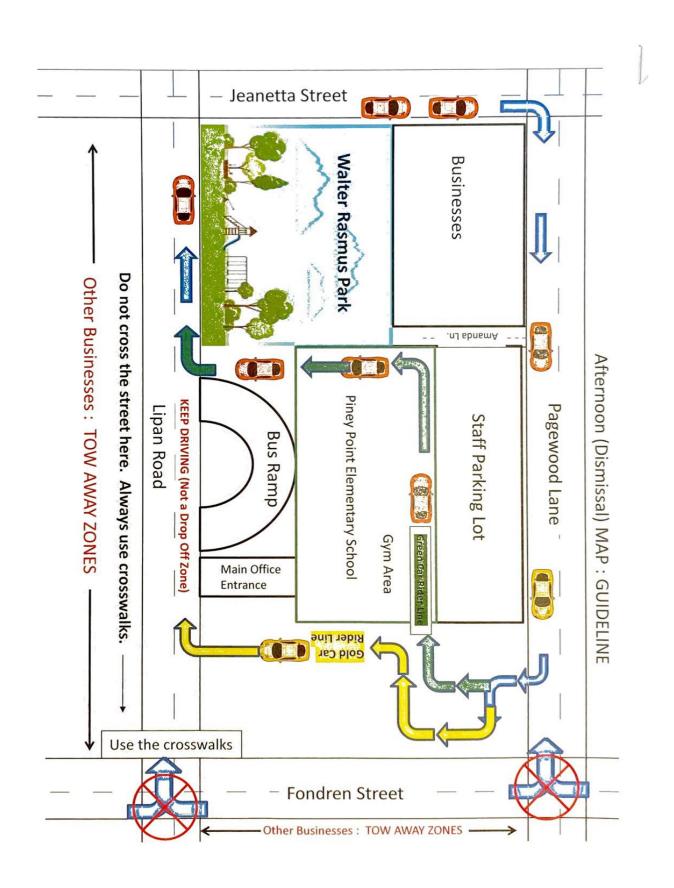
PARKING

Please follow all parking signs and guidelines around Piney Point Elementary and do not park in the business parking lots around the school. Businesses will tow cars.

Do not park your car and leave it unattended in fire lane or red zone. Cars may line up in this zone at dismissal time as long as the driver stays in the car. The faculty and staff parking lot is reserved for Piney Point Elementary faculty and staff only. Do not park in this area during dismissal to wait for your child.

Follow all driving laws when you drive in Piney Point's parking and drop-off areas. Do not speed or drive recklessly, and do not raise your voice or become aggressive with other drivers who may frustrate you. Smoking in cars is not allowed on HISD campuses. Do not leave children unattended in cars for any amount of time.





EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

It is imperative that all information on each child's enrollment card and Rainy Day Form be complete and kept current. If phone numbers (home, work, emergency, or doctor) change, please notify the school office immediately. In the event of an emergency, we must be able to reach a parent/guardian. Directory information is considered part of the public record. If parents do not wish to have such information released, they must submit such a request to the principal in writing.

Be sure that you have a plan for picking your child up during the day should he/she become ill at school.

Students should <u>not</u> be picked up from school early except in emergency situations or for appointments that <u>cannot</u> be scheduled at other times. Every minute of learning counts.

Physical photo IDs will be checked for verification any time a student is picked up. Persons that are not on the enrollment form will not be permitted to pick up a child, for any reason.

WEATHER EMERGENCIES

Have a plan for inclement weather days. Be sure that your child is familiar with your plan and can follow it. If it is necessary to close school for the day because of weather conditions, this information will be carried by all local news stations and a callout will be sent. Whenever possible, the decision will be made before 6:30 A.M.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

For the safety and protection of all students, medication (either prescription or over the counter} may not be brought and kept by students to be taken during the school day. This includes cough drops, sunscreen, insect repellant, and inhalers. **Never send your child with medication on their person to take during the day.**

The school nurse or an administrator may dispense medication during the school day if the parent brings a bottle with a prescription and completes the appropriate paperwork. Even for over-the-counter medications, parents must have a prescription label; doctors will provide this for students who experience chronic pain or have other conditions. The label must clearly show the child's name, type of medication, and dosage. Please request the medical form from the main office or nurse if your child will need medication during the day.

Students must be free of fever and/or vomiting for 24 hours before they may return to school after an illness. Certain communicable diseases require special handling or restrictions in the school setting. The HISD policy regarding communicable disease control measures can be found online.

Food Allergies

The district requests to be notified when a student has been diagnosed with a food allergy, especially those allergies that could result in dangerous or possibly lifethreatening reactions either by inhalation, ingestion, or skin contact with the food. It is important to disclose the food to which the student is allergic, as well as the nature of the allergic reaction. Please contact the school nurse or campus principal if your child has a known food allergy or as soon as possible after any diagnosis of a food allergy.

MEALS AND FOOD SERVICE

BREAKFAST

Breakfast is available to all students free of charge in the classroom at 7:30 a.m.

LUNCH

Students may bring a healthy lunch or receive a free lunch at school. Lunch is free for all students, regardless of income level. The menu is available online at www.houstonisd.org

Students may bring thermos bottles and non-carbonated drinks in cans **(NO Coke, Dr. Pepper, or other sodas).** For health reasons, lunch items may **not** be bought, sold, or **traded**, among students. We encourage students to eat a healthy lunch. Please refrain from bringing jumbo size chips or drinks.

If students violate cafeteria rules, disciplinary consequences may be implemented by teachers and administration.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Birthday celebrations can take place during <u>recess</u> time. Cupcakes or treats must be store-bought and may not contain nuts of any kind due to potential food allergies. **Arrangements must be made with your child's teacher in advance.**

Party hats, favors, decorations, or balloons should be reserved for off-campus parties. Invitations to off-campus birthday parties are not to be distributed at school. Do not have flowers, balloons, gift baskets, etc. delivered to school for individual students. Such items will not be delivered to the classroom as they would cause a disruption to the instructional day.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR

At Piney Point, we follow HISD's Code of Student Conduct, which is available on HISD's website for review, or can be requested in our main office. In accordance with district guidelines and policies, we have implemented a school wide set of

expectations and consequences for academics and behavior.

The Piney Point Behavior Management Plan is based on the recognition that behavior can be modified, controlled, and improved through instruction. The staff enlists the participation and support of parents in upholding high standards for children's behavior. Our goal as we resolve every discipline issue is to reengage the student in learning and repair relationships that may have been affected. If you have a question or concern, please reach out to the administrative staff.

We use an app called **Class Dojo**, which can be downloaded onto your phone. The teacher will give you a special access code for you to be added to your child's class. (A special code is needed per child because of different homerooms.) With Class Dojo, a teacher will share the student's conduct and any important messages. There is a feature to send individual messages to teacher if needed. We highly encourage you to download and participate. If you cannot access the Class Dojo application, please contact your child's teacher by email or leave a message in the front office.

CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONICS

Parents and guardians will determine whether it is appropriate for their children to carry cell phones at school. Students who do bring cell phones must have them <u>in</u> <u>their backpacks</u> to use only to communicate with parents <u>after school</u> starting at 3:00 p.m. Cell phones should be turned **OFF** for the entire school day. Cell phones that are visible (turned on, in use, or heard) during the school day will be confiscated and turned in to the office. The student's parent will have to come to the office to retrieve the phone. Per school policy, a \$15.00 fee will be charged on the third instance that a phone is confiscated. Cell phones that are unclaimed at the end of the school year will be sent to district for destruction.

Please do not allow your children to bring toys, electronics, or other valuable items to school. Items that cause a disruption to the learning process will be confiscated and may be kept until the end of the school year. The school will not be held responsible for valuable items lost on school property.

SECURITY

HISD police officers patrol the Piney Point campus throughout the day. Parents who would like to volunteer to help with safety at arrival and dismissal should contact Ms. Lahana.

LOST AND FOUND

Please see that your child brings only the necessary clothing and supplies to school. All removable articles of clothing as well as other belongings (such as lunch kits) should be clearly <u>labeled</u> with the child's first and last name to prevent loss. Lost and found articles are kept for one month. Any unclaimed items will be donated to charity.

HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 2023-2024 Academic Calendar							
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Key Holidays Teacher Preparation Days (no students) Teacher Development Days (no students) School Day Start and End Times 7:30-3:00 Elementary 8:30-4:00 K-8 and Middle School 8:30-4:10 High School		anuary 5	Labor Day Fall Holiday Thanksgiving H Winter Break Martin Luther K Spring Break Chavez Huerta Spring Holidays Memorial Day Juneteenth	ing, Jr. Day Day			
Significant Dates August 14, 2023 Teachers report to v August 28, 2023 First day of school December 22, 2023 Last day of first ser January 9, 2024 First day of school June 5, 2024 Last day of school June 6, 2024 Last day of school	mester semester for students		October 2 November 10 3 – December 22 February 23 – April 19	Report Card Date October 9 November 17 January 12 March 1 April 26 June 5 (ES, K-8, MS June 14 (HS)			