

2015-2016 Parent's Guide



My Choice. My Pinellas County Schools.

www.pcsb.org



**Educating and preparing each student for
college, career and life.**

Dear Parents and Families,

We hope your school year is off to a wonderful start. On behalf of the Pinellas County School Board and everyone in the district, we want to wish you a successful and fulfilling 2015-16 school year.

We know that parent engagement is essential to student success. We created this guide to help you stay involved in your child's learning and keep track of important dates. It is just one of the many great resources the district offers to keep families informed. The school district and individual schools have websites and Facebook pages that provide important information and highlight the accomplishments of our students and teachers.

We are proud to share that our district recently became fully accredited. Pinellas County Schools earned districtwide accreditation from AdvancED, which provides Pinellas County Schools as a whole and every school in the district with a globally recognized distinction of quality. It demonstrates our commitment to continuous improvement and provides the district with tools and support to become the best it can be for our students and families.

Pinellas County Schools is dedicated to increasing student achievement, providing more choices for families, and making school a place where students are truly engaged. In an effort to tailor learning to each student's individual needs, the district has embarked on a long-range plan to personalize learning. This year, PCS is launching a model school for personalized learning and personalized learning programs at five schools. In addition to the model school, the district is launching four new choice programs.

This school year, we will continue our focus on boosting student achievement and preparing students for college, career and life. Thank you for partnering with us to support our collective vision of 100% Student Success. It is a pleasure to serve all PCS families. We hope you and your family have a terrific school year!



Linda Lerner



Chairperson
Pinellas County School Board



Michael A. Grego, Ed.D.



Superintendent
Pinellas County Schools

Pinellas County School Board

Chairperson

Linda S. Lerner

Janet R. Clark
Carol J. Cook
Rene Flowers
Terry Krassner
Peggy L. O'Shea
Dr. Ken Peluso

School Board Meetings

Pinellas County School Board meetings are generally held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month. The meeting schedule and agendas for the regular School Board meetings may be found at pcsb.org/sb-meetings. They are re-broadcast by WPDS-TV14 at 6 p.m. Wednesdays and Thursdays and 8 a.m. Saturdays on Bright House Networks Ch. 635, WOW! Ch. 2, and Verizon Ch. 46. They can also be viewed online at pinellasschool.igm2.com/citizens.



About PCS

With approximately 150 schools, including neighborhood schools, magnets, career academies, technical and adult education centers, and our own Pinellas Virtual School, we offer families a wealth of educational choices suited to students' interests, talents and abilities. We are the seventh largest district in the state and the largest employer in Pinellas County. One of our many strengths is the diversity of our nearly 116,305 pre-kindergarten through adult education students and the more than 70 choice programs that serve them.

District Strategic Goals

Goal 1

Increase student achievement resulting in improvements for every school learning gains, higher promotion (each level) and graduation rates.

Goal 2

Ensure curriculum, instruction, and assessment is designed and delivered with a focus on continuous improvement of student engagement and academic achievement.

Goal 3

Develop and sustain a healthy, respectful, caring, safe learning environment for students, faculty, staff, and community resulting in individual employee learning, student achievement and overall school improvement.

Goal 4

Develop and sustain effective and efficient use of all resources for improved student achievement and fiscal responsibility.

Goal 5

Provide quality technology and business services to optimize operations, communications, and academic results.



Stay Connected

The PCS Family Engagement Mobile App has direct links to all PCS schools, Parent Academy and mentor workshops, daily engagement tips, videos, academic support, Florida Standards and much more. The App is available for both Apple and Android Mobile devices.

To download the App, simply type "PCS Family Engagement" in the search box of either the Apple iTunes App Store or the Google Play Android App store. Visit the district's website at www.pcsb.org. There you will find a district-wide calendar, tabs specific to the needs of families and students, and a language translator featuring 80 different languages.





Get Engaged in Education!

Pinellas County Schools offers a wide array of possibilities for dedicated, caring individuals who wish to support and guide students through their volunteerism. Volunteers are needed to mentor or tutor students; assist in classrooms, the media center or the front office; share their experiences as part of the district's Speaker's Bureau or the annual Great American Teach-In; chaperone field trips; and serve with PTAs or Student Advisory Committees (SAC). To learn more, call (727) 588-5050 or visit the website at www.pcsb.org/volunteers.

Parent Advocacy Program

The Parent Advocacy Program provides support to parents with concerns about student retention and placement, suspension, expulsion, IDEA and 504 compliance issues, discipline, and advancement. The Parent Advocate advocates for the parent while ensuring that district policies and procedures are followed. If you need Parental Advocacy assistance, please contact the Office of Strategic Partnerships at (727) 588-6484.

How to Advocate for your Child/Process to resolve problems:

1. Contact the school to discuss the concern with your child's teacher, administrator, and/or counselor.
2. If you are unable to resolve the concern, contact the Parent Advocate.
3. If needed, the Parent Advocate will contact the school on the parent's behalf to gather information and to determine next steps to resolve the parental concerns.

August 2015

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PARENT TIPS

✓ *Make sure your contact information (phone number and email address) are up to date.*

✓ *Maintain open communication with your child's teacher throughout the school year.*



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9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
					Pinellas Education Foundation Traditional Senior Scholarship application opens		
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
30	31						

First day of school



bright ideas

STEM from today's youth.

Emerging Technologies • Building Economies • Developing Leaders



PTA, PTO, PTSA

Provides ways for parents, teachers, administrators, students and community members to work together to help children succeed. For more information about Pinellas County Council PTA/PTSA, visit www.pccpta.org or contact your school's PTA/PTSA.

School Advisory Committee

Members of this school-based group work together to guide the school toward continuous improvement. Florida law requires each school to have a SAC to plan and implement its School Improvement Plan. SAC membership includes the principal, teachers, support employees, students, parents, and business and community members who represent the ethnic, racial and economic community served by the school. For more information on your child's school's SAC, contact your school.

Adult and Community Schools

- Clearwater Adult Education Center
(727) 469-4190
- Dixie Hollins Adult Education Center
(727) 547-7872
- Lakewood Community School
(727) 893-2955
- Northeast Community School
(727) 570-3193
- Palm Harbor Community School
(727) 669-1140
- Tomlinson Adult Learning Center
(727) 893-2723

Bright House Networks is committed to helping today's youth become tomorrow's entrepreneurs, innovators & inventors.

Bright Ideas STEM from Today's Youth is Bright House Networks' multi-state competition where high school students dream up the coolest inventions to make their own life, community or even the world, more awesome. They show how STEM – that's science, technology, engineering and math – can bring their ideas to life.



www.brighthouse.com/brightideas

#BrightIdeasSTEM

September 2015

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PARENT TIPS

✓ *Pick out a recipe for cookies or snacks, and make the recipe with your child. The activity provides an opportunity to practice math and communication skills.*

bright house NETWORKS 

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
NATIONAL SCHOOL SUCCESS MONTH						
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
NATIONAL ARTS IN EDUCATION WEEK						
	Labor Day Schools and district offices closed			6 p.m. Countywide Graduation, Pasadena Community Church		
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
				ESE College, Career & Life Fair 6 p.m. Pinellas Park High		
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
						PCS Parent Academy Northeast High 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.
27	28	29	30			

KNOW & BE KNOWN

Go.USFSP.edu

Schedule your Campus Tour
& register for Open House
Nov. 7 or Dec. 5

USFSP

UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH FLORIDA
ST. PETERSBURG

October 2015

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PARENT TIPS

✓ *Many priority deadlines for college applications are fast approaching. Be sure to check with the colleges you are interested in to find out their exact deadlines.*



					1 Financial Aid Night, 6-7:30 p.m., Dixie Hollins High	2 Don't forget to register for USFSP's Open House on Nov. 7 or Dec. 5 at Go.USFSP.edu	3
4 Pinellas County College Fair, 1-3 p.m. USF St. Petersburg University Student Center	5 North Pinellas College/Career Fair, 6-8 p.m. Countryside High PCS Mentor Recruitment Fair, Admin Building	6 Financial Aid Night, 6-7:30 p.m., Pinellas Park High	7 International Walk To School Day	8	9	10	
11	12	13 Financial Aid Night, 6-7:30 p.m., Lakewood High	14	15 Financial Aid Night, 6-7:30 p.m., East Lake High	16 End of first quarter	17	
18	19 No school for students	20 Financial Aid Night, 6-7:30 p.m., Clearwater High	21	22 Financial Aid Night, 6-7:30 p.m., Seminole High	23	24	
25	26	27 Financial Aid Night, 6-7:30 p.m., Dunedin High	28 Report cards distributed	29 Financial Aid Night, 6-7:30 p.m., St. Petersburg High	30	31	

Cuddle up to savings with a Zoo Membership!

Zoo Memberships pay for themselves after just two visits.



There's always something new at Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo! Visit 1,300 animals and enjoy unique interactive experiences at *Parents Magazine's* #1 Zoo. Plus, with a Zoo Membership, receive unlimited daytime admission, a subscription to *Zoo Chatter* magazine, discounts on gift shop purchases, discounts on Zoo School programs and much more.

You can experience these unique opportunities:

- FEEL A STINGRAY
- WALK WITH WALLABIES
- FEED A GIRAFFE
- HOLD A LORIKEET
- TOUCH A GIANT TORTOISE
- SHOWS & KEEPER TALKS
- SPECIAL EVENTS
- RESTAURANTS & SHOPS
- WATER-PLAY AREAS
- EXCITING RIDES

Zoo School offers exciting educational experiences year round and innovative programs that are fun for all ages. Learn more at LowryParkZoo.org/Learn.

Say G'day to the Zoo's new adorable Aussie, Ceduna, a female Queensland koala.



Exit 48/ I-275 • (813) 935-8552 • LowryParkZoo.org

Choices Abound

Pinellas County Schools offers a variety of educational choices that cater to students' interests, talents and abilities. Students are assigned to zoned neighborhood schools that are close to home.

Parents who are interested in other schools or programs can apply for District Application Programs or request another school through the district's annual Special Assignment Request process. Charter schools are public schools that operate under a contractual agreement with the local School Board. For information about charter schools, call (727) 588-6209. Find out about all school options at www.pcsb.org/registration.

PCS offers 70 District Application Programs, which include themed, career and fundamental programs. Parent information sessions and fairs for application programs are scheduled in November. Parents can apply for these programs during the annual application period in January. Find out more at www.pcsb.org/choice.

Pinellas Virtual School

Pinellas County Schools has its own virtual school, which offers full and part-time programs and more than 120 rigorous and engaging online courses for students in grades K-12. All courses are developed and delivered by district teachers.

Unlike other online schools that are not affiliated with the school district, Pinellas Virtual School full-time students are able to participate in field trips with fellow virtual school students and some activities at their zoned school, such as athletics. Pinellas Virtual School students also earn a diploma from their zoned school. All students need to complete at least one online course as part of the 24 credits required for graduation. To learn more, visit www.pcsb.org/virtual.

November 2015

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PARENT TIPS



Visit www.pcsb.org/choice to view the District Application Programs Guide and discover 70 educational choices.



1	2	District 3 Application Programs Parent Info Session, 6:30 p.m. Boca Ciega High	4	District 5 Application Programs Parent Info Session, 6:30 p.m. Countryside High	6 "Hooked on Family Engagement to Increase Student Achievement!" Conference St. Pete Hilton	7
8	District 9 Application Programs Parent Info Session, 6:30 p.m. Pinellas Park High	10	11	12 District Application Programs Fair, 6-8 p.m., Gibbs High	13	14 District Application Programs Fair, 9 a.m.-noon, Pinellas Park High
15	16	17	18 Great American Teach-In	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY NOV. 23 - NOV. 27 NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS						
29	30					



Stay engaged in learning

Homework Helpline

Offers free homework help for students in grades 1 through 12. Call 727-547-7223.

Khan Academy

Offers practice exercises and instructional videos that empower learners to study at their own pace in and outside of the classroom. Visit www.khanacademy.org.

National Geographic Kids

Provides interactive videos, quizzes and lessons on a variety of topics. Visit <http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/#>.

PBS Learning Media

Offers interactive lessons and videos that can be searched by grade level and subject. Visit www.pbslearningmedia.org.

Learn Zillion

Provides Math and English Language resources for students in grades 2-12. Visit <https://learnzillion.com>.

Beyond the Classroom

Pinellas County Schools also offers a roundup of online learning programs that help students build their skills in various subjects, including reading, language arts, math, science and social studies. Offerings are accessible 24/7. Just visit www.pcsb.org/beyondtheclassroom. A link for Beyond the Classroom resources is also on the home page of the district website.

Make sure your child is engaged in learning over the winter break!

December 2015

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PARENT TIPS

✓ *Learn what you need to know about Kindergarten and the district's upcoming Kindergarten Roundups at www.pcsb.org/kg.*



		1 Florida Financial Aid Application (required for Bright Futures) opens	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
WINTER HOLIDAYS - NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS DEC. 21 - JAN. 4						
27	28	29	30	31		



Early Childhood Education

Pinellas County Schools offers families numerous early childhood education opportunities with the goal of preparing students for kindergarten and beyond. Each program offers developmentally appropriate curriculum that builds on children's emerging talents and strengths and allows children to explore and learn about their environment. Learn more about early childhood education at www.pcsb.org/early or call (727) 588-6513.

Prekindergarten 3

Serves children who are 3 years of age on or before Sept. 1 of the school year.

Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK)

Serves children who are 4 years of age on or before Sept. 1 of the school year.

Prekindergarten Exceptional Student Education (ESE)

Serves children who have reached the age of 3 and have been identified with a developmental delay.

Lew Williams Center For Early Learning

Serves children who are 1-4 years of age.

Kindergarten

Serves children who are 5 years of age by Sept. 1 of the school year in which they are enrolling. In January, Pinellas County Schools hosts Kindergarten Roundups at schools throughout the district. At these open-house events, parents can register children for kindergarten, explore kindergarten classrooms, speak with teachers and discuss expectations for the upcoming school year. Learn more about kindergarten at www.pcsb.org/kg. For information about kindergarten registration call Student Assignment at (727) 588-6210.

Spend less **EARN MORE**

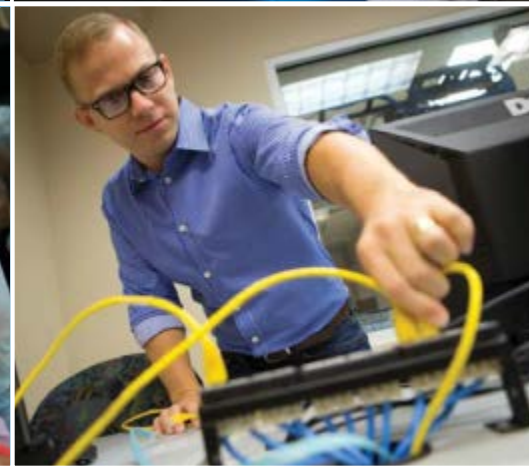
*We don't just help you save money...
We help you make money.*

SPEND LESS

With tuition at 53% less than state universities, your scholarships and hard-earned dollars go further at St. Petersburg College.

EARN MORE

St. Petersburg College graduates rank 1st in Florida for having skill sets that increase their earning potential. And our graduates' median salaries are higher than the national average.



February 2016

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DISTRICT APPLICATION PROGRAMS
ACCEPTANCE PERIOD: FEB 3 - FEB. 10

Parent Academy,
8 a.m.-2 p.m.

Countryside High

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BLACK HISTORY MONTH
FLORIDA SCHOOL VOLUNTEER MONTH

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No school
for
students

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PARENT TIPS

✓ *“It doesn’t take much time to make a big difference in a child’s life. Lending a hand, listening, offering encouragement and a smile can shape a child’s future.”*

*Michael A. Grego, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Pinellas County Schools*

SPC St. Petersburg College

Prepare for summer learning

Prepare early for summer learning. The district offers a wide variety of learning and enrichment programs over the summer. Check with your child's school to find out about summer learning opportunities.

Summer Bridge

Could your child benefit from extra support over the summer? Summer Bridge provides engaging activities and intensive instruction to prepare students for maximum success when the next school year begins. Summer Bridge is especially important for students who are performing below grade level or who need additional support to be successful. Registration for Summer Bridge traditionally begins in mid-March. Find out more about Summer Bridge at www.pcsb.org/summerbridge.

STEM Camps

Due to the high demand for programs featuring science, technology, engineering and math, the district launched summer STEM camps last year. More than 200 elementary and middle school students participated in the district's first summer STEM Robotic Camps. The camps are an offshoot of the district's popular after-school STEM Academies, where students participate in engineering design challenges, explore STEM careers and use technology to enhance their understanding of the world. The district plans to offer the popular robotic camps again this summer. Learn more about STEM programs at www.pcsb.org/stem.

Postsecondary Technical Education

Pinellas Technical College

Clearwater Campus
(727) 538-7167

St. Petersburg Campus
(727) 893-2500



March 2016

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PARENT TIPS

✓ *Let your child pick a place to explore on Google Maps. Visit Niagara Falls or take a journey to Egypt to see the pyramids.*



		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11 End of third quarter	12
13	14 No school For students	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
SPRING HOLIDAYS NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS MARCH 21-25						
27	28 Schools reopen and classes resume	29	30 Report cards distributed	31		

Focused ON YOUR SUCCESS

St. Petersburg College offers an innovative network of support tailored to your needs because our number one focus is you.

- SMALL CLASS SIZES
- ONE-ON-ONE ATTENTION
- FREE ACADEMIC AND CAREER ADVISING
- FREE TUTORING
- LEARNING RESOURCE CENTERS
- INDIVIDUALIZED LEARNING PLANS



*You're not just a number here.
This experience is very one-on-one.*

-Richard Quartararo



April 2016

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PARENT TIPS



Learning is a 24/7 enterprise for students today, and school libraries continue to become invaluable anchors for education environments. Certified school librarians play an essential part in nurturing 21st-century information literacy skills. From collaborating with classroom teachers to designing inquiry-based learning, school librarians are teaching students critical thinking, technology and information literacy skills.

- American Library Association's State of America's Libraries Report 2015.

SPC St. Petersburg
College

NATIONAL AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

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NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK

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Fall Registration
opens at
St. Petersburg
College

Earth
Day

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Referendum supports education

Referendum funds support all Pinellas County Schools' students through new or expanded classroom libraries, additional supplies, increased training opportunities for teachers and contemporary technology such as iPads, laptops, Smart Boards, Kindles and digital cameras. Since its 2004 approval by Pinellas County residents, approximately \$326 million has directly benefited education in the county.

Every reading classroom and every content classroom (i.e. math, science, social studies) in Pinellas County is now equipped with a classroom library filled with diverse and up-to-date materials. Studies show that children need access to a diverse selection of reading materials to develop into proficient readers and referendum funds are ensuring that students have plenty of books and periodicals in classrooms and media centers at every school. Tax dollars allotted by the referendum are also bringing high-quality, contemporary supplies into classrooms to augment or replace aging or out-of-date materials every year.

Referendum funds have supplemented teacher salaries, which helps the school district recruit and retain good teachers. The funds have supplied schools with reading materials, wireless mobile computer labs, up-to-date software, art supplies, band uniforms, musical instruments and many other items that enhance teaching and learning. The tax money funds numerous initiatives and programs designed to support Pinellas County Schools' vision of 100% Student Success.

The referendum will be presented to voters again in 2016. Go to www.pcsb.org/referendum.



May 2016

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PARENT TIPS



Contact city hall or a local fire station and see if they have tours available.



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NATIONAL TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK

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PCS Parent Academy
Pinellas Park High School
8 a.m. - 2 p.m.

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Memorial Day
Schools and district
offices closed

Pinellas Pathways to Graduation

The district has created three Pathways to Graduation to boost student achievement and assist families with educational planning: The Advanced Scholar Pathway, the College Scholar Pathway and the Technical/College Pathway. Each Pathway provides rigorous and relevant course options that help students successfully complete the requirements for earning a high school diploma from the state. The Pathways also prepare students for future success and allow our graduates to uniquely distinguish themselves as they apply to colleges, universities, and technical schools, or enter the workforce. Students are free to pursue different Pathways later or multiple Pathways at the same time. No matter which Pinellas Pathway(s) students choose, they will be eligible for any or all of the diploma designations if they meet the necessary requirements. To see the graduation requirements, visit the website at www.pcsb.org/graduation.

Online Learning Tools

The district offers a variety of online educational activities for students through the "Beyond the Classroom" initiative. These online learning tools, including Ticket to Read, Istation and ST Math, support learning outside of the classroom. Students are encouraged to continue these activities over holiday and summer breaks. For more information, visit the website at www.pcsb.org/beyondtheclassroom.



June 2016

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PARENT TIPS

✓ *Find a book that everyone is interested in reading and take turns reading pages or paragraphs aloud to one another.*



SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7 Last day of school Elementary School report cards distributed	8	9	10	11
12	13 Zoo School Camp starts at Lowry Park Zoo	14	15 Middle and High School report cards distributed	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

Mandatory Health Screenings

The Pinellas County School District, in accordance with FL Statute 381.0056(4)(a), provides health screenings for students enrolled in public school. These screenings include vision, hearing, scoliosis (grade six only), and Body Mass Index, along with any appropriate follow-up. Body Mass Index may be performed by either your child's school nurse or by their physical education teacher if enrolled in PE. If you do not want your child to participate in any of these screenings and wish that your child not be screened, you must notify your child's school in writing. For questions regarding physical exams, immunization requirements, or screenings, please contact School Health Services at (727) 588-6320.

Find out about the State of Florida school entry immunization requirements at www.pcsb.org/immunizations.

Family Resources

- Guidance(727) 588-6053
- Social Services(727) 588-6355
- Exceptional Student Education.....(727) 588-6032
- School Health Services(727) 588-6320
- Psychological Services(727) 588-6054

Section 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is national legislation that protects individuals from discrimination solely on the basis of their disabilities. It prohibits school districts from discriminating against disabled people. If a student is determined eligible, an accommodation plan may be developed and implemented. Eligibility is established when it is determined that a physical or mental impairment exists that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Call (727) 588-6054 for more information.



July 2016

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PARENT TIPS



Become a tourist in your city. Visit your city's downtown, explore art galleries, or check out the museums. Did you know that St. Petersburg is rated one of the nation's top art destinations? Have you ever been to the Tarpon Springs Sponge Docks?



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10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
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Important phone numbers

Who to contact in the District

Note: All numbers are (727) area code

Career Technical & Adult Education (CTAE)	588-6006
Charter Schools and Home Education	588-6209
Educational Alternative Services	588-6069
Emergency Information Line	588-6424
English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).....	588-6068
Exceptional Student Education (ESE)	588-6032
GED Information/Testing.....(North County)	538-7145
GED Information/Testing.....(South County)	592-2036
Home Education Information Hotline	588-5199
Homework Helpline	547-7223
Human Resources	588-6000 ext. 1936
Risk Management.....	588-6195
School Board Office	588-6300
Strategic Communications.....	588-6122
Strategic Partnerships	588-6405
Student Assignment	588-6210
Student Services	588-6307
Superintendent's Office.....	588-6011
Teaching and Learning.....	588-6121
Transportation Call Center.....	587-2020

Area Offices

Area 1

Ward Kennedy, Area Superintendent
(727) 588-5023

Area 2

Dr. Barbara Hires, Area Superintendent
(727) 588-5024

Area 3

Robert Poth, Area Superintendent
(727) 588-5020

Area 4


Patricia Wright, Area Superintendent
(727) 588-5022

Emergency Information

Parents should call the district's emergency information line at (727) 588-6424 for emergency messages, such as school closings due to hazardous weather. Emergency messages will also be communicated on the district website at www.pcsb.org

The School Board of Pinellas County, Florida, prohibits any and all forms of discrimination and harassment based on race, color, sex, religion, national origin, marital status, age, sexual orientation or disability in any of its programs, services or activities.



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www.twitter.com/my_pcs

www.pcsb.org