

# Panther Pride Press

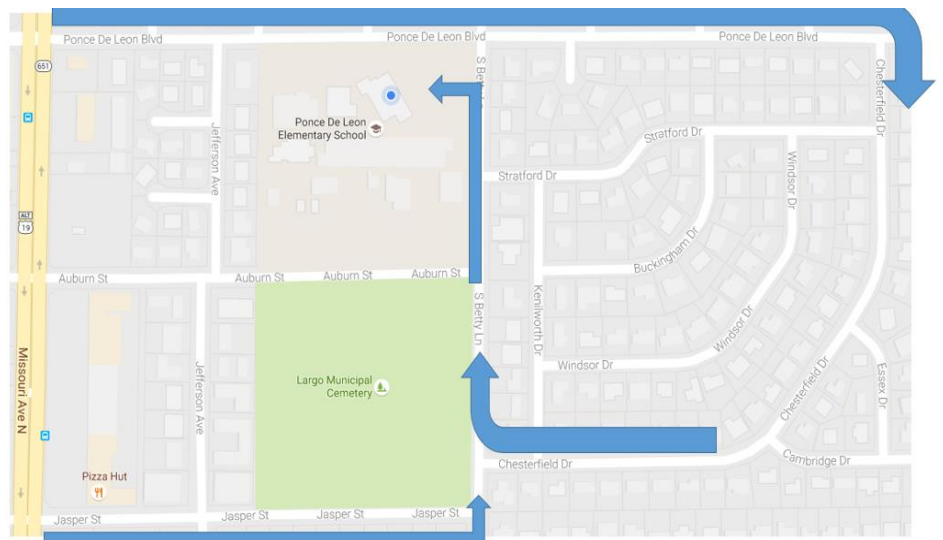
## Principal's Message

Ponce Families,

Welcome back! Thank you so much for a fantastic first two weeks of school! My name is Stephanie Blackman and I am so excited to be the new principal of Ponce de Leon Elementary. I have been working for Pinellas County Schools since 2005. I began my career as a classroom teacher at Oakhurst Elementary and in 2012, I became the assistant principal of Southern Oak Elementary. I had the unique opportunity to serve as acting principal for Southern Oak in March of 2016 through the end of the school year. Since coming to Ponce I have already had a great experience meeting the students, parents and staff. I look forward to meeting all of you at Open House! It is scheduled for grades 3-5 (including 2/3 IVE) on Monday, August 23, at 6:30 pm and grades Pre K-2 will be on September 1, at 6:30 pm.

A few changes have been made to Ponce's car circle, which is greatly impacting the flow of traffic coming into the school. We recognize that the change is an inconvenience and we do apologize. We however have been given direction from the city to continue with the changes in the afternoon only. This means that in the morning we will be opening up all entrances to the car circle as it was in the past. However, in the afternoon, it will remain as it is now with all traffic needing to enter by heading north on Betty Lane then making a left turn into school. There are two good options for routes. If you enter the neighborhood via Ponce de Leon Blvd. you can turn right onto Chesterfield Drive, right onto Betty, and left into Ponce Elementary. Another option, from Missouri you can head east on Rosery or Jasper, north onto Betty and left into school. Please see the maps below.

Mrs. Blackman



**UPCOMING EVENTS**

- 8/23 Open House (3-5) and 2/3 IVE
- 8/23-9/1 Book fair
- 9/1 Open House (VPK-2)
- 9/5 School Closed, Labor Day
- 9/16 ESOL open house 7:30 in media center
- 9/22 Picture Day
- 9/23 All Pro Parents Breakfast at 7:30



<https://www.facebook.com/PonceDeLeonelementary/?fref=ts>

**THANK YOU FOR ADOPTING A CLASSROOM**

Mears Contracting

**WELCOME BACK**

It is the beginning of a new school year and we could not be more excited for our students and staff. We sincerely hope your summer was restful and filled with sun and fun.

It is now time to become ENGAGED in your child’s school. You ask how? Become a volunteer, chaperone a field trip, become a mentor, join the PTA, adopt your child’s class, join our SAC, or participate in special events.

For additional information, please contact your Family & Community Liaison at [muscaroe@pcsb.org](mailto:muscaroe@pcsb.org).

**WHAT A DAY WE HAD AT THE ‘BACK TO SCHOOL’ JUBILEE**

St. Paul United Methodist Church provided Ponce students with filled backpacks, hair cuts, shoes, games, hot dogs, crafts and lots of hugs.

We so much appreciate their kindness and generosity shown to us not only that day but throughout the year.



**2016-2017 COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS**

- City of Largo
- Einstein Brothers Bagels (Gulf to Bay)
- Hope Depot #6321 (Ulmerton Road)
- Largo Elks Lodge (#2159)
- Nationwide Appraisal Network
- Peace Memorial Presbyterian Church (Pack-a-Snack)
- Perkins Restaurant (Gulf to Bay)
- Publix Supermarket (Corporate Office)
- St. Paul United Methodist Church
- TJ Maxx (Missouri Avenue)

**NEWS FROM ART**

Ponce de Leon Elementary's Art students have been chosen by the City of Largo to create a "Heart of Largo". The project is part of "Hearts of Pinellas", which promotes community pride for businesses as they are displayed throughout the county. Our heart will be displayed outside Ponce de Leon's Media Center. Pictured are: Keira Mnich, Lily Selvidio and Hailyn Selvidio.



**THANK YOU NATIONWIDE APPRAISAL NETWORK**

Right before the doors opened for our students, a surprise visit from "Two Men and A Truck" filled with backpacks and a gracious donation provided by Nationwide Appraisal's backpack program. Ponce was nominated by last year's recipient and Mrs. Blackman will nominate a school to receive the backpacks for next year. NAN is one of our newest partners in education.



**WE'RE ON THE WEB!**  
[www.pcsb.org/ponce-es](http://www.pcsb.org/ponce-es)

**STAY INFORMED!**

Newsletters will be sent home and posted on the school website on the dates listed below. Be sure to log in check out what is going around Ponce de Leon!

- September 23
- October 21
- November 18
- December 23
- January 20
- February 17
- March 24
- April 21

**PONCE DE LEON ELEMENTARY**

1301 Ponce de Leon Blvd.  
Clearwater, FL 33756  
**Phone** (727) 588-3573  
**Fax** (727) 588-3700

**Mrs. Stephanie Blackman**  
Principal

**Dr. Barbara Hires**  
Area 2 Superintendent  
(727) 588-5020

**Mr. Greg Logan**  
Assistant Principal

**Transportation**  
(727) 587-2020

**WELCOME BACK, FROM YOUR SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER**

I would like to start off the year by welcoming our new and returning students and families to Ponce! This is my fourth year as the school social worker at our fantastic school, and I am excited to see all of the wonderful things our students will accomplish this year! My role as the school social worker is to collaborate with families, schools, and communities to provide social and emotional support to students, enabling them to learn to the best of their abilities. It is my goal to ensure that all families have access to the resources they need, so that our students can reach their full potential!

One of the easiest ways to support your child’s success, is to ensure that they are attending school, on-time, each and every day. School starts promptly at 8:35am, and every student should be in their seat when the bell rings at this time. This year, you will notice Attendance Awareness posters and banners around our school, to support the Pinellas County School District’s goal of increasing student attendance.

**If they are not here, they cannot learn!**

Take a look at the Ponce de Leon school website, and you will notice that an icon has been placed in the upper right hand corner that says “Report Student Absence”, to make it even easier for parents and guardians to inform the school of an absence. You can simply click on the icon, then the blue button, which opens a new email where you will enter the Student’s Name, Date of Birth, Grade, Date Absent and Reason for absence. If applicable, you can attach any documentation (i.e. a doctor’s note) to support the absence. Of course, you can continue to call our front office in the morning to notify our school of your child’s absence as well. Included in your Student Code of Conduct is a list of reasons an absence will be considered “excused”. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me Monday through Friday at our school phone number. I look forward to seeing your child each and every day!

*Courtney Klingman*, School Social Worker, Ponce de Leon Elementary

**JOIN THE PONCE PTA TODAY AND HELP YOUR CHILD & OUR SCHOOL.**

Partnerships between parents, educators and children enhance children’s success. We know that children learn more and have better lives when everyone in the school community works together to share thoughts and information and work on projects to benefit children.

Please join with us to make a difference in the education, health, and welfare of our children.

Complete the form below and return it with your \$5.00 Ponce de Leon PTA member dues.

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**Parent Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Child’s/Children’s Name and Grade Level:**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please complete and submit this form with \$5.00 cash or check to the Ponce de Leon PTA. Return to Anita Anderson (President), Robin Mills (Treasurer) or send it in to your child’s teacher.