



East Lake High School

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Good afternoon East Lake families,

This is Dr. Smith with your weekly call-out:

The first week of school has been outstanding! I now truly understand the meaning behind the phrase, “It’s Better at the Lake.” Your students are an incredible group of young people, and I’m genuinely thrilled to be their principal. It has been a pleasure getting to know them this week, and I’m confident we’re headed for a fantastic year together.

A huge thank you goes to our dedicated faculty and staff for their hard work in making this opening week run so smoothly. I hope our families recognize how fortunate we are to have such an exceptional team of educators. Your students will greatly benefit from their expertise, professionalism, and caring approach.

As we move forward, there’s a lot to cover following our first week. Please take a moment to carefully review the information below, as it contains important updates.

Schedules:

- Our counseling team has been doing a great job with the scheduling process and we are down to our last few change requests. Counselors will still manage requests at the beginning of the week to complete all submissions. Submission deadlines for scheduling change requests are tonight, Friday 8/15, by 10pm.
- If you have recently submitted a scheduling change request, please allow our counselors to process those requests over the next week. They will respond once your request has been processed.

Student Expectations

- Cellphones are only allowed before/after school and during lunch.
 - Phones and other electronic devices (e.g. headphones, smart watch) must be turned off and put away during instructional time.
 - Teacher may approve device use but this will be rare.
 - [Strategic Communications / Power Up \(pcsb.org\)](http://www.pcsb.org)
- Headphones are not allowed to be used during the school day. Please discuss this with your student. Headphones need to be put away and can be accessed before and after school.

- Dress Code: Please review the dress code (see example slide in Opening Day PowerPoint on the school website)
 - Dress code will be enforced. Please discuss the dress code with your student and check daily their attire.
 - For both boys and girls, key issues with dress code so far have been shirts that do not cover the stomach, shorts that are too short (past mid-thigh), spandex shorts, and tank tops.
 - [Code of Conduct / V. Dress Code \(pcsb.org\)](#)
 - PCSB Student Code of Conduct PDF:
 - <https://www.pcsb.org/cms/lib/FLO1903687/Centricity/Domain/6122/2025-2026-PCS-Student-Code-of-Conduct.pdf>

Focus:

- Start reviewing focus weekly to ensure you are aware of your student's academic progress. Our teachers add grades throughout the week and it is good practice to review your student's grades weekly. If you are having any difficulties with focus, please reach out to student services.

Absences and Permission to Leave (PTL)

- We have made the process of reporting absences and PTLs much easier. On our school site (at the very top), there is a link that says, "Report Student Absence." It will take you to a page that you can report an absence or request a PTL.
- Click the appropriate link and you will complete a brief form and we take care of the rest. No need to call or email anymore.
- The direct link is below.
 - <https://www.pcsb.org/Page/20925>

Bus Riders:

- Beginning Monday, 8/18, students on busses which arrive to East Lake at 7:18 or later will begin receiving bus tardy passes. The color of the pass will alternate randomly each day throughout the week. If your student receives one of these, they will present it to their 1st period teacher who will note in FOCUS they were tardy to class due to a late bus, and not just a regular tardy.
- They will not be required to visit the Student Conductor tardy system if receiving one of these passes in the morning.

School Entry/Exit & Safety:

- Gates open at 7:00 AM along with the Cafeteria
 - Buildings and classrooms open at 7:15 AM
 - 5-minute warning bell at 7:20 AM
 - 1-minute warning bell at 7:24 AM
- Doors remain locked during the day per safety policy following the 7:25 AM start bell.
 - Students are to never prop open doors or let anyone in on campus.
 - Late arrivals must enter through the front office.

- All virtual and dual enrollment students coming on to campus either 2nd, 3rd, or 4th period must enter through the front gate by the main office.
- All virtual and dual enrollment students that are leaving campus anytime after 4th period, must exit through the front gate by the main office.
 - **To maintain campus safety, we are enforcing a single point of entry and exit during the school day.** Students must use only the main gate by the front office unless there is an emergency.
 - We understand that the north gate may be more convenient for accessing the parking lot; however, using unauthorized exits poses a security risk. An open/propped gate or allowing someone to enter through an unmonitored access point, compromises the safety of everyone on campus.
 - Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our school secure.

Car line (drop off and pick up):

- Carline has improved since day one, but we want to continue improving the speed for car line moving forward. Please continue to follow the traffic patterns as instructed. In the afternoon, have your student cross and walk down the walkway to find your car. Several cars wait to pick up at the crosswalk near the front and this causes a break in the flow of traffic.
- All drop off and pick ups need to move through the car line. Please do not drop off in neighborhoods, in the student parking lot, or the side of the road.
- Please leave a little earlier to ensure you get to school on-time. School will start at 7:25am and the north gates will close to all students to maintain security of our campus. All late arriving students will report to the front gate at the main office.

Tardies:

- Recording of tardies per period will start next week.
- The tardy process is the same as last year.
- If a student is late to class, they will have to report to a tardy station/kiosk and enter their lunch pin (see attached map for tardy station/kiosk locations).
- The “Student Conductor” system will notify the parent each time a student is tardy.
 - The system will also let you know the consequence the student receives.
- Tardies follow a progressive disciplinary pattern:
 - 1st-3rd – warning, minor infraction, parent contact
 - 4th-5th – lunch detention, parent contact
 - 6th-7th – after-school detention, parent contact
 - 8th – 1 day consequence IC, parent contact
 - 9th – 2-3 days consequence IC/ABS, parent contact conference
 - 10th – Parent conference
- Please address getting to class on time with your student.

Grade level assemblies:

- We will be hosting grade level assemblies next week for all students. Administration and other staff members will be addressing each grade to provide a host of school information, as well as expectations on campus. (PowerPoint will be posted to the website for your review mid-week).
 - Monday 8/18 – all juniors 3rd period, all seniors 4th period
 - Tuesday 8/19 – all freshmen 3rd period, all sophomores 4th period

PTSA & SAC:

- Thank you for a great meeting this week. We appreciate all the attendance and support for our PTSA and SAC. Get involved! Consider joining PTSA by visiting the site below.
 - <https://www.pcsb.org/domain/2207>

College and Career center:

- 12th grade students: College/Career
 - Does your student need assistance with College Applications (Common App), Bright Futures (test scores/hours), or SSAR?? See Ms. Gallaty in our College/Career center! Office hours after school in Student Services, 2-3pm
- 10th-12th grade students that are interested in College/Scholarships
 - The first step is to make sure you take the SAT or ACT. Make sure to register for a weekend SAT or ACT at ELHS! This is done directly through the [SAT/ACT](#) website (click for links).
 - *Contact your counselor if you have any questions about registering!*

Athletics:

- Pinellas County Athletics is rolling out season ticket packages. We have non-football all sports packages and football packages available through GoFan.co
 - These new ticket packages are replacing the family pass option.
- All of our sports teams are back in action (golf, cross country, bowling, swimming, volleyball, football). Please review the upcoming games/meets on the school website.
 - Friday night football is back! We will be visiting Fivay high school tonight for our pre-season kickoff. Come out and support your Eagle football team.
 - Volleyball starts the regular season next week after a tremendous 2-0 pre-season showing. They travel to Bishop Mac next Tuesday for a JV/V match.
 - Next week, Football travels to Georgia: Friday, August 22nd, The Eagles will face off against Camden County to start their regular season.
 - Cross Country opens the season next Saturday, Aug 23rd at the Ragin Storm Challenge in Tampa @ 8 am.
 - ELHS Swim opens the season vs St Pete and Lakewood at Northshore Pool Wednesday, Aug 20th

Free-Reduced Lunch:

- The application for free and reduced lunch is available by visiting <https://www.myschoolapps.com>
- If your child had an approved free/reduced meal status last year, it will expire on Sept. 23.
 - A new application must be submitted for the 2025-26 school year to continue receiving meal benefits.
 - If a new application is not submitted, then, beginning Sept. 24, your student will need to pay for lunch.
- All students at East Lake High School are eligible to receive a free breakfast every day with no application needed.
- We encourage all families who believe they may be eligible to apply. There are additional scholarship funds and assistance available for standardized testing fees for students from qualifying families.
 - For assistance with free or reduced meals, contact Susie Zufall - zufalls@pcsb.org or 727-547-7151