



**Principal Houston's Welcome Back Letter**  
***Believe. Belong. Become ~ A Safe Space where Everyone SOARS***  
*(where Believing builds Belonging and Belonging sparks Becoming)*

August 12, 2025

Welcome Back BCE Families,

I am proud to serve as your principal and school leader during the 2025-2026 school year. It is with great honor that I announce Pinellas County Schools is an 'A' rated district for the second consecutive year. By the same token, I am grateful for the efforts of my staff for ensuring that Bear Creek maintained our school grade of 'B'. As we prepare for the start of the upcoming school year, we will continue to focus on our mission of providing all children with a challenging, high-quality education for their academic and vocational success will continue to be the catalyst for our work.

As partners in education, we are charged with the shared responsibility of educating all students, while making a positive impact on their lives. As the principal of Bear Creek, it is my duty to ensure that the safety, academic, and behavior needs for every student are known and met. In the spirit of showing up, Bear Creek is committed to ensuring our campus is a safe space where everyone soars.

Our theme for the 2025-2026 school year is:

**Believe. Belong. Become ~ A Safe Space where Everyone SOARS**  
*(where Believing builds Belonging and Belonging sparks Becoming)*

- **WE Believe** – In ourselves, each other, and our ability to grow
- **WE Belong** – We are a school where everyone feels safe, valued, and included
- **WE are Becoming** – The journey of becoming the best version of ourselves academically, socially, and emotionally

Please take a moment to review the important school safety and legislative updates below.

**First Day of School – School Safety**

Due to increased safety measures, Pre-K and Kindergarten families will be allowed to walk their children to class on the first day of school Monday, **August 11<sup>th</sup>**. Parents **will not** be permitted to enter the classrooms; however, they may walk their child(ren) to the entry way or classroom door between **8:30am-8:45am**.

Beyond the first day of school, students will be required to walk to class without a parent or guardian. Please rest assured in knowing that there will be staff on hand to help your child(ren) get to their classrooms safely.

### **Wireless Communication Device Usage – Elementary Cell Phone Policy/Smartwatch Discipline Policy 5500.07**

Elementary aged students are prohibited from using cell phones/smart watches during the school day. Students must keep cell phones in the off position and smart watches in silent mode; this includes commuting via PCS transportation. **Anyone who chooses to bring a device to school will be personally responsible for the security of their device.** Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action.

### **Wireless Communication Device Usage Summary Chart**

Time Periods	Elementary	Middle	High
After School	No	No	Yes
Before School	No	No	Yes
During Lunch	No	No	Yes
Passing Period	No	No	Yes

### **IMPORTANT REMINDER for the 2025/2026 school year Electronic Back-to-School Forms are available for parents via Parent Portal:**

Please see enclosed TIPS form

- Parent Acknowledgement of Student Code of Conduct
- Media Release
- School/Classroom Library Materials Access Preference
- Directory Information Optional Opt-Out
- Network/Internet Acceptable Use Agreement
- Technology Equipment Acceptance and Responsibility
- Residency Questionnaire
- School-Based Healthcare Services
- Student Clinic Card

### **UPDATES for the 2025/2026 school year:**

Our official first day of school was Monday, August 11<sup>th</sup>. Whether students are car riders, bus riders, walk, or bike to school; please consider the following:

- Student attendance is important and being on time matters.
- Our student hours are **8:45am-2:55pm**.
- Pre-K drop-off is from 8:30am-8:45am using the designated Pre-K drop-off location in the car circle, zones 1-3. Car circle zones 1-3 are designated only for Pre-K drop off.
- **ASD car circle drop-off is from 8:30am-8:45am using the designated ASD drop-off location in the car circle, zone 3 gate.**
- Our front office hours are 8:15am-3:55pm.
- Students K-5 are not permitted on campus until 8:15am (unless enrolled in the YMCA).

- All students must adhere to the Bear Creek expectations and all students are required to wear a uniform.
  - Shirts
    - Collared solid color in navy, light blue or white (no designs or patterns)
    - Bear Creek Spirit t-shirts – can be worn on any day of the week. Shirts should always be tucked.
  - Bottoms
    - Khaki or navy shorts, slacks, skirts, shorts, capris, or jumpers.
    - No jeans, sweatpants, cargo pants or baggy clothing.
    - Pants must be worn at waistline. If not, a belt must be worn.
  - Shoes
    - Safe and appropriate footwear must always be worn. Inappropriate footwear includes, but is not limited to – Crocs, backless shoes, sandals, roller skates, and bedroom slippers.
  - Winter Wear
    - Solid color sweatshirts, sweaters, and jackets in navy, light blue or white.
    - No printing or designs allowed on outerwear.
    - Hoods/hats may not be worn inside the classroom.
- Car riders must be dropped off in the car circle **at 8:15am.**
- The afternoon dismissal is at **2:55pm.** Car riders must be picked up by **3:10pm.**
- All students (car riders, bike riders and walkers) must use the single point of entry (car circle) to gain access to our campus. **Students are not permitted on campus until 8:15am.**
- As in previous years, all students arriving before 8:30am must report directly to the cafeteria.
- Breakfast is free for all students and served daily from **8:15am - 8:45am.**
- Students arriving after **8:45am** are considered tardy and must report to the front office.

To reduce the use of paper, we will continue using electronic forms of communication with families. This year you can keep up with Bear Creek in the following ways:

- The Bear Creek website will be our primary source of communication at <https://www.pcsb.org/bearcreek-es>. All weekly communication updates will be posted on our website by 6pm on Sunday.
- ClassDojo will be used primarily for school-wide reminders and daily communication between parents and instructional staff.
- School Messenger will be used on occasion to remind families or previously communicated information shared on the Bear Creek website.
- Student agendas will also serve as a communication tool.

Bear Creek is looking forward to another great school year!

Principal Houston

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