

# TOGETHER PCS



## SPLASHING INTO SUMMER

Welcome to TogetherPCS, the district's monthly newsletter featuring students, staff, alumni, coaches, curriculum, community partners and so much more!

In this issue, we get to know Theresa Badurek - the University of Florida/IFAS Urban Horticulture Extension Agent for Pinellas County. We also feature our Cyber Ambassadors, who not only spent a week at camp planning digital responsibility campaigns but will also bring their plans back to their schools in the fall. And we celebrate SUMMER! Our campuses are bustling with activity - from enrichment camps to SAT prep to Driver's Ed to learning a trade - there's no summer slowdown at PCS.

Do you know someone who should be featured in TogetherPCS? Please click the "Nominate Here" button below.

[NOMINATE HERE](#)



School Staff Returns:



August 1

**First day of School (students):**  
August 11

Please visit our **Back-to-School** page for important reminders and dates.

**Reminder:** Don't forget to follow our Back-to-School countdown on social media and submit your student's first-day photos.



## WHAT'S INSIDE



East Lake Middle School students record their digital responsibility podcast at the Cyber Ambassadors Camp in June.

### **Cyber Ambassadors take over Stavros Institute**

Almost 100 students representing 20 elementary and middle schools spent a week attending the Cyber Ambassador Academy with one goal in mind: create a message that conveys the importance of being digitally responsible and be

### **PCS Continues to Elevate Academic Excellence**

According to the Department of Education, Pinellas County Schools outpaced the state in many areas in the Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) Progress Monitoring 3 (PM3) testing. Some highlights include:

- Pinellas County Schools is **first** among the large districts in ELA proficiency and ranked 14th in the state across all school districts.
- Pinellas County Schools is **third** among the large districts in Mathematics proficiency and ranked 17th in the state across all school districts.
- Among the large districts in Grade 5 science proficiency,

prepared to share that message with their schools at the start of the year.

For the “Tech Talk” team from Safety Harbor Middle School, that meant developing a podcast addressing the issues of password protection and online safety. They will introduce the first episode – which features stories about getting hacked on Roblox and PlayStation – to the student body in August.

“It will go out during SOAR time (homeroom) at school,” said Safety Harbor seventh grader Gio Rosado, who designed the team’s logo and came up with the name of the podcast. “Hopefully (the students) can relate because we discuss a lot that impacts them.”

The academy was created as an extension of the district’s digital responsibility campaign, which began at the start of the 2024-25 school year. Students were encouraged to “Power Up Learning and Power Down Distractions” when the district’s new cell phone policy went into place.

*[Read the full article](#)*

the district is **first** and ranked third in the state among school districts.

- In grade eight, PCS is **first** among the large district in science proficiency and ranked 12th in the state across all school districts.
- Among large districts, Pinellas County Schools is **first** in Civics and ranked 11th in the state across all school districts.

“These results demonstrate the continued excellence and effort of our students,” said Superintendent Kevin Hendrick. “Pinellas County Schools is committed to 100% student success and I am incredibly proud of the work we did as a community throughout the 2024-25 school year.”

*[Read the full article and see results](#)*

# SUPPORT TOGETHER

## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



*Theresa Badurek, Tarpon Springs High School class of 1994, is the Urban Horticulture Extension Agent with UF/IFAS for Pinellas County.*

Until a friend was accepted into the program at the University of Florida, Theresa Badurek didn’t know what defined a landscape architect. In fact, she was quite sure she would be an art major in college.

Fast forward 30 years and she feels the position she’s held for 15 years as the Urban Horticulture Extension Agent with UF/IFAS for Pinellas County was drawn up just for her.

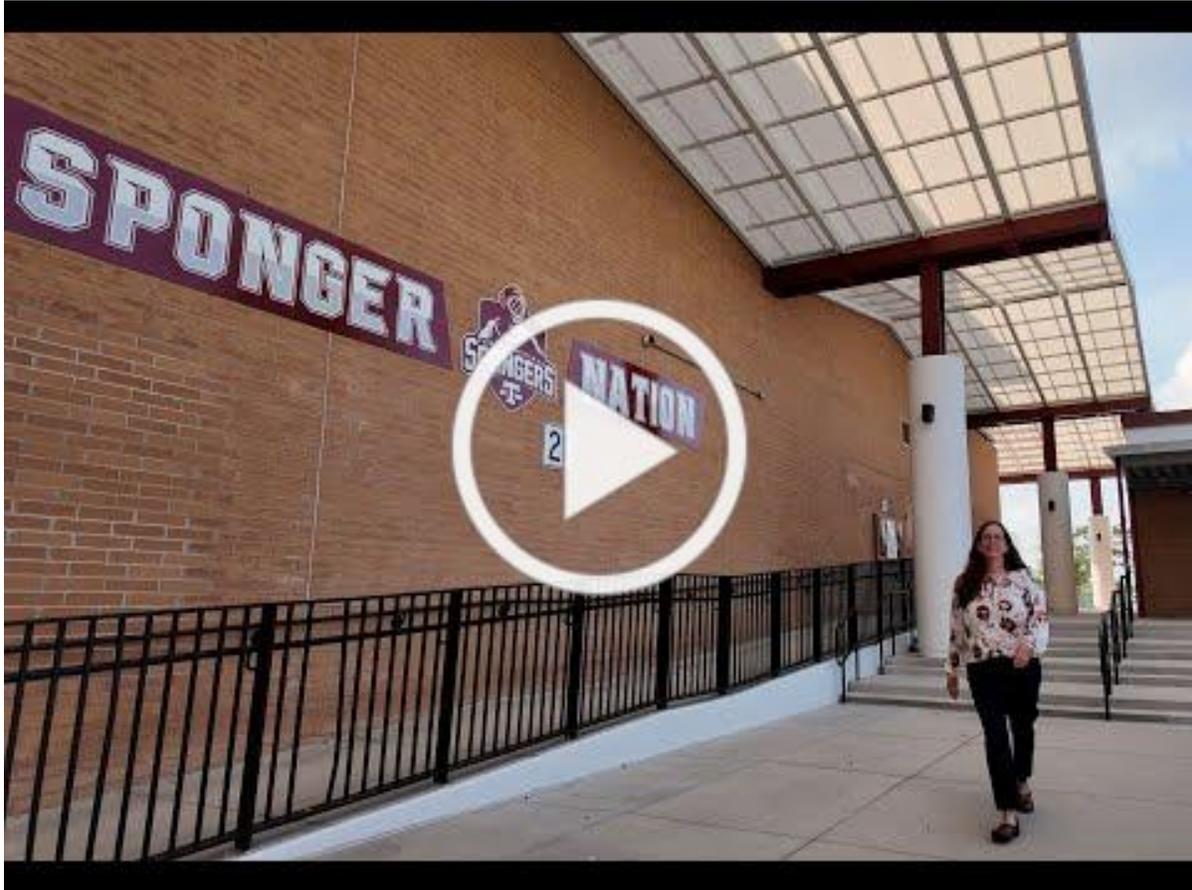
“I just kept looking into what I wanted to learn more about,” said Badurek of how her path evolved from art to landscape architecture to extension agent. “I didn’t know my plan in high school, but I have found a job that gives me great fulfillment.”

Badurek graduated from Tarpon Springs High School in 1994 and – thanks to her dual enrollment at St. Petersburg College – she started college at the University of Central



Florida as a sophomore. After scouring the course descriptions, her art major turned into a biology major with a concentration in botany.

*[Read the full article](#)*



**July 15, 2025 | 10:30 a.m.**  
School Board Meeting

**July 15, 2025 | 5 p.m.**  
PTC Graduation  
First Baptist Church of St. Petersburg

**July 29, 2025 | 5 p.m.**  
School Board Meeting

**July 29, 2025 | 6:30 p.m.**  
School Board Budget Hearing



**First-year teachers celebrate**

**Aug. 11, 2025**  
First Day of School

**Aug. 12, 2025 | 5:30 p.m.**  
Listen and Learn  
Ridgecrest Elementary School

**Aug. 19, 2025 | 10:30 a.m.**  
School Board Meeting

**Aug. 21, 2025 | 7 p.m.**  
Countywide Graduation  
St. Petersburg High School

## "Rookie" season

Ryan Beckman can draw many similarities from his 12 years as a college baseball coach to his first year as a middle school teacher, but after trading in the diamond for the classroom, he is right where he is meant to be.

"Middle School is really awesome if you think about it. Kids are learning themselves for the first time," said Beckman after attending the district's second annual 'Rookies of the Year' event, which celebrates first-year teachers, on May 30 at PTC Clearwater. "It's chaos, but within that chaos is them experiencing new things for the first time."

*[Read the full article](#)*

### The Superintendent Says...

"Happy Summer! I am thrilled to report that Pinellas County schools are busier than ever. With Summer Bridge wrapped up and camps in full swing, we are seeing thousands of students taking advantage of PCS's summer offerings.

We can't wait to get back into the classrooms on August 11, but until then, please continue to enjoy time with family and friends. See you soon!"



*To help spread the word, please forward this newsletter to community members who are interested in public education. Sign up by clicking the button below.*

[SIGN UP HERE](#)



**VISION: 100% STUDENT SUCCESS**  
**MISSION: EDUCATE AND PREPARE EACH STUDENT FOR COLLEGE, CAREER AND LIFE**

[PCS Compliance Statement](#)