



**Pinewood Intermediate School**  
Where Great Students Emerge!

- **MOHONASEN**  
Central School  
District
- **2011-2012**  
**PINEWOOD**  
Parent Handbook

Cover artwork credit:  
Natalie Colberg  
Troy Herholz  
Lily Belber



★ WHERE GREAT STUDENTS EMERGE! ★

**MOHONASEN**

Central School  
District

**2011-2012**  
**PINEWOOD**

Parent Handbook

901 Kings Road  
Schenectady, NY 12303  
518.356.8430

<http://www.mohonasen.org/PW>



★ WHERE GREAT STUDENTS EMERGE! ★

★ **School Contacts****PRINCIPAL**

*Michele Whitley*  
356-8430

**ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL**

*Deborah Kavanaugh-Farnan*  
356-8430

**SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST**

*Michelle Gaffney*  
356-8430

**SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER**

*Liz Haynesworth*  
356-8430

**SCHOOL LIBRARY**

*Mindy Holland*  
*Jill Purcell*  
356-8438

**SCHOOL NURSE**

*Carol Post*  
356-8440

**GUIDANCE**

*Amy Christopher*  
356-8430

**SPEECH THERAPIST**

*Kathy Ives-Kline*  
356-8430

**DIRECTOR OF SCHOOL SAFETY & SECURITY**

*Jeffrey Jackson*  
356-8355

**GRADE 3**

*Diane Krawiecki*  
*Debra Kuebler*  
*Elaine Lounsbury*  
*Lori Ranze*  
*Kathy Shafer*  
*Brenda Stahl*  
*Kim Trestick*  
*Julie Varley*  
*Jeanette Wager*

**GRADE 4**

*Christine Altomer*  
*Patricia Amering*  
*Amanda Brousseau*  
*Heidi DePiero*  
*Marie Furlong*  
*Michelle Howard*  
*Marianne Masick*  
*Lauren Neale*

**REMEDIAL MATH/  
READING**

*Josh Hughes*  
*Kevin Cummings*  
*Tammy Pangman*  
*Melissa Prescott*  
*Gina Ralston*  
*Chelsey Hammond*

**GRADE 5**

*Ryan Buzzo*  
*Cortney Colvin*  
*Maria Gilroy*  
*Karleen Kelts*  
*Susan Nelson*  
*Cheryl Rasmussen*  
*Kristen Taylor*  
*Carrie Townsend*  
*Cristina Wheeler*

**ART**

*Claudia Turner*

**MUSIC**

*John Burmeister*  
*Kim Hitchcock*  
*Sherri Strichman*

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

*Kevin Deviero*  
*Kathleen Murnane*  
*Bill Mottola*

**SCIENCE LAB**

*Diana Jamack*

**DEVELOPMENTAL SKILLS**

*Kerry Vumbaco*

**COMPUTER LAB**

*Cynthia Spuzu*

**SPECIAL EDUCATION**

*Stephanie Arnold*  
*Christine Patterson*  
*Amanda Rider*  
*Krista Zajesky*

**MONITOR**

*Alexander Magiera*

**TEACHER ASSISTANTS/  
AIDES**

*Maria Britti*  
*Brianna DiBiase*  
*Mary Favre*  
*Mary Gradoni*  
*Wendy Wood*

**MAIN OFFICE  
SECRETARIES**

*Madaline Hackett*  
*Lisa Karandy*

★ WHERE GREAT STUDENTS EMERGE! ★

## ★ District Contacts

### ★ Mohonasen

#### District Administrators

##### **SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

*Dr. Kathleen Spring .....356-8200*  
*kspring@mohonasen.org*

##### **ASSISTANT FOR SUPERINTENDENT FOR BUSINESS**

*Denise Swezey .....356-8210*  
*dswezey@mohonasen.org*

##### **ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT FOR CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

*Patrick McGrath .....356-8205*  
*pmcgrath@mohonasen.org*

##### **DIRECTOR FOR SPECIAL AND ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION**

*Karla Empie .....356-8221*  
*kempie@mohonasen.org*

##### **ADMINISTRATOR FOR STUDENT & OPERATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES**

*Christopher Ruberti .....356-8222*  
*rubertich@mohonasen.org*

##### **DISTRICT ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATORS**

- English Language Arts (6-12)

*Lisa Cutting*  
 356-8345

- Literacy (K-2)

*Arlene De Siena*  
 356-8266

- Science

*Gerald Garing*  
 356-8254

### ★ Other District Contacts

##### **ATHLETIC DIRECTOR**

*Joseph Scalise.....356-8270*

##### **AQUATICS PROGRAM SUPERVISOR**

*Marc Vachon .....356-8240*

##### **BUSINESS OFFICE SUPERVISOR/ DISTRICT TREASURER**

*Tracey Freemantle.....356-8230*

##### **CONTINUING EDUCATION**

*Patricia Hopkins .....356-8303*

##### **COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR**

*Adrienne Leon.....356-8250*

##### **DIRECTOR OF FACILITIES**

*Joseph Mayo .....356-8228*

##### **FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM SUPERVISOR**

*Kimberly Gagnon.....356-8225*

##### **TRANSPORTATION**

##### **DEPARTMENT SUPERVISOR**

*Randy Jerreld .....356-8260*

##### **WEBMASTER**

*Erin McNulty.....356-8250*



## ★ This & That

### ACADEMIC INTERVENTION SERVICES (AIS)

AIS services are provided to students who need support in the areas of English language arts (ELA) and math. School districts are required to provide AIS for students who receive a Level 1 or 2 on any of the NYS assessments. However, the level and frequency of services is determined on an individual basis.

Additionally, through Pinewood instructional programs there are different layers of intervention services designed to support students. These services may be “push in” during class time or “push out.” There are reading and math specialists professionally trained to provide these services to students.

After school academic support sessions are also held for qualifying students.

### ACCESS TO THE BUILDING AFTER THE SCHOOL DAY

All students are encouraged to take the time during the school day to ensure they have packed all personal belongings and instructional materials required for the evening and the following school day. In the event that a student must return to school to obtain instructional materials necessary for the following school day, the main doors of the school will be open until 7 p.m. A custodian can be asked to assist parents/students in obtaining needed materials from a student’s classroom. For the safety of the student and to maintain building security, **STUDENTS MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY A PARENT OR GUARDIAN** to re-enter the building after 2:50 p.m.

### AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Depending on interest and budgetary factors, Pinewood offers a variety of extracurricular activities each school year. Here are some of the activities we have offered:

- Lego Club
- Fit Club
- Art Club
- Chess Club
- Science Enrichment
- Math Olympiad
- Intramurals

### ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL TIMES

#### *Arrival:*

School begins at 8:20 a.m. each morning. Students who arrive after 8:40 a.m. are legally tardy and must be signed in by a parent/guardian and have a note.

Students enter the building through the main entrance. **FOR SAFETY REASONS, PARENTS MAY NOT DROP OFF THEIR CHILDREN PRIOR TO 8 A.M.,** as there is no supervision for them.

Parents are encouraged to get their child off to a good start each school day and make every effort to have him/her to school on time.

#### *Dismissal:*

Students will board the buses at 2:50 p.m. For the safety of each student, any parent who wishes to pick up their child must sign him/her out at the security desk in the main office. Photo identification may be required. Any parent who needs to pick up their child during the school day must send a note in that morning.

★ WHERE GREAT STUDENTS EMERGE! ★

## ★ This & That-continued

### ASSESSMENT/TESTING

Teachers continually assess student performance. Assessment methods may include observations, conferences between student and teacher, a review of a student's written work and/or a variety of informal assessments.

New York State tests are also used to help students reach higher standards of learning. Please check the district website for testing dates and a breakdown of exams.

### BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Students typically enjoy celebrating their birthday with classmates. There are various means to do this and teachers have discretion on how a student's birthday will be acknowledged in the classroom. In general, large parties and/or handing out gift bags of any kind is not permitted.

Due to possible student allergies, parents should coordinate with their child's teacher about how to best acknowledge their child's birthday. Parents can ask the teacher about bringing in a special snack. Snacks should be individually portioned. If the teacher agrees, he/she will provide guidance on when to bring in the snack and when it will be distributed in the classroom. Healthy snacks are strongly encouraged.



### *Some suggestions include:*

- fruit
- individually wrapped cheese snacks
- cheese and crackers
- raisins and dried fruit
- pretzels
- popcorn
- cereal bars
- drinkable yogurts
- rice cakes
- graham/animal crackers

Sufficient snack should be provided for all students in the class.

To be sensitive to those who may not be invited to the party, invitations to birthday parties outside of school can not be distributed in the

classroom, unless the entire class is invited.

Through specific communication with the classroom teacher, parents in some classrooms may agree to share their home mailing address. Parents should ask their child's teacher if he/she can provide this mailing list in order to mail invitations to individual students.

A unique way to celebrate is to donate a book to the Pinewood Library. Please check with the librarian about needed titles.



WHERE GREAT STUDENTS EMERGE!

## ★ This & That-continued

### CHARACTER EDUCATION

Pinewood's Character Education Program focuses on promoting a school community of respect, responsibility, and positive citizenship. Each month, the Character Counts Committee focuses on a specific theme (examples include: respect, responsibility, kindness, honesty, good sportsmanship, etc.), which teachers are encouraged to integrate in their planning across curriculum areas. Students are encouraged to create projects that represent each month's trait. These projects are displayed throughout the school to promote a shared understanding and language among Pinewood students.

In addition, every grade level nominates four students each month who have displayed exceptional behavior that is symbolic of the theme for that month. These 12 students receive a certificate and t-shirt. They also have their picture taken and displayed on the Pinewood webpage, Character Counts bulletin board, and Pinewood lobby monitor. The Character Counts committee holds a design contest each year. Students are asked to illustrate what character means to them. The winning graphic is used on t-shirts that are distributed each month for that school year. At the conclusion of the school year, a reception is held to recognize the nominees and their parents.

### CONFERENCE DATES/ REPORT CARD DATES

Parent Conferences are an important time for parents and teachers to work together by sharing information, discussing student expectations and

setting goals that will help the child grow as a learner and succeed in school. All parents are encouraged to schedule a fall conference with their child's teacher.

Students will be dismissed at 11:30 a.m. on the day of the conferences to allow for afternoon meeting times with parents. Parents can sign up for conferences at open house each September. Parents may schedule an additional conference at any time with their child's teacher.

Report cards for students in grades 1-5 are distributed three times a year. These dates can be found in the district calendar.

### DRESS CODE:

Students must wear safe clothing and footwear (e.g. sneakers) to school at all times. Students are advised against wearing flip-flops, sandals, clogs, open toe/back, platform, or heeled shoes. Students wearing unsafe footwear will not be permitted to use the playground equipment or participate in physical education. If a student is unable to wear sneakers to school due to a special event, etc., they should bring their sneakers to school and change to participate in recess and PE. Parents should also ensure that outer clothing is not brief and covers all undergarments. Avoid garments that are strapless or have thin straps (e.g. tank tops, dresses, halter tops). All shirts should cover the waist and meet the top of pants/shorts/skirts. Shorts/skirts and dresses can be worn at an appropriate length (shorts/dresses/shirts should be

★ WHERE GREAT STUDENTS EMERGE! ★

## ★ This & That-continued

no shorter than just above the student's knee). Students are not permitted to wear spray-on hair color or dye for any reason, as it presents a distraction to the learning environment. For a complete list of dress code guidelines, please refer to the Mohonasen School District Code of Conduct at [www.mohonasen.org](http://www.mohonasen.org).

### ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND TRADING CARDS

All electronic devices and trading games, cell phones, iPods, MP3 players, DS devices, collectable cards (e.g. Pokemon, Bakugan, YuGiOh), etc., are not permitted in school. These valuable items often create a significant distraction (disputes over ownership or loss) and are not necessary in school.

### FAMILY FUND

In recent years, Pinewood families and the wider school community have been increasingly affected by a number of personal tragedies. These have included house fires, deaths, significant illnesses and more. The Pinewood Family Fund was developed with the intent of supporting families during these times of crisis. The goal of the fund is to provide families with a monetary donation to lessen the financial strain they may be experiencing as a result of their tragedy. Referrals are submitted by teachers and administrators, and are reviewed by a committee. Money for the fund is raised through structured fundraising activities that are facilitated by a committee comprised of the principal, school social worker, and several classroom teachers. Parents are also welcome to assist

in the fundraising events. For further information, please contact the school social worker.

### INTRAMURALS

Intramurals are offered by the physical education department before school to all students in grades 3-5. Two sessions are held, one in the fall and one in the spring. Details are typically sent out by the physical education department each fall.

### LUNCH GUESTS

The Pinewood cafeteria is a place for students to learn and practice socialization skills as well as skills required for eating in public.

Parent lunchroom guests are welcome to sign in with the monitor and join their children for lunch, beginning in October. This provides time for students to acclimate and learn lunchroom expectations and routines. Guests are asked to limit their visits to no more than once per month. (Capacity is limited.)



Guests are asked to send in a note to the teacher the morning of their lunch visit, arranging to purchase school lunch (hot lunch, PBJ, yogurt, bagel) OR to bring a simple bagged lunch. (NO FAST FOOD PLEASE.)

Guests are asked not to share food with or lend money to a child other than their own.



WHERE GREAT STUDENTS EMERGE!

## ★ This & That-continued

### “NEXT TO NEW” CLOSET

In today’s financial climate, many families are experiencing difficulty managing costs associated with purchasing school supplies and clothing for their children. This demand, coupled with the general challenges of parenting, can cause a great strain. Pinewood’s “Next to New” Closet houses donated (used and possibly new) clothing items and school supplies for students in need. For further information, please contact the school social worker.

### OUTSIDE RECESS

Weather permitting, students will go outdoors daily for recess throughout the school year. As the weather becomes colder, parents should send their child to school with warm clothing (winter coat, hat, gloves, boots, etc.). Students who do not come to school with appropriate clothing will be asked to remain in the cafeteria during recess.

### PINEWOOD PALS

Pinewood Pals pairs students with adult mentors within the school building in an effort to foster supportive relationships that focus on enhancing students’ academic and social progress. Interactions may include, but are not limited to, morning check ins, special lunch, conversations with the student’s teacher regarding academic progress, etc. Each Pal creates a unique experience designed to connect with the child. A Pal can be a teacher, administrator, counselor and/or support staff member. Students are referred to the program by their classroom teacher.

### SCHOOL NEWS NOTIFIER

Mohonasen’s “School News Notifier” is designed to help keep parents and the community more in touch with what is happening at Mohonasen schools.

SNN is a free, opt-in e-mail alert system that parents and residents can sign up for to receive e-mail alerts from the district. With SNN, district officials send updates and reminders about district activities and information about



school closings and delays. Additionally, parents/community members can sign up to receive text message alerts about closings/delays on their cell phone.

You can choose to receive any or all of the alerts and you can unsubscribe at any time.

Parents are strongly encouraged to take advantage of this tool.

To sign up, visit the district’s website, [www.mohonasen.org](http://www.mohonasen.org).

### STUDENT COUNCIL

Pinewood’s Student Council consists of students in grades four and five. Representatives are elected by their classmates. Meetings are held after school once a month.

### “LIKE” US ON FACEBOOK

To receive even more district news and information, make sure to follow Mohonasen on Facebook. Find us at [www.facebook.com/Mohonasen](http://www.facebook.com/Mohonasen).

★ WHERE GREAT STUDENTS EMERGE! ★

## ★ Events Unique to the 5th Grade

### SWIM INSTRUCTION

All fifth graders participate in swim instruction for five weeks each spring. Bathing suits and towels are required. Details are typically sent out by the physical education department each fall.

### WESTERN HEMISPHERE DAY

As part of the social studies curriculum, each fifth-grade classroom chooses a country and does an extensive study on the language, culture, economy, etc. Different classrooms have different requirements for projects, but some include writing a letter to the leader of the country, drawing the country's flag and/or making a detailed map of the country's physical landscape. On Western Hemisphere Day, all students rotate to each of the 10 classrooms and have a scavenger hunt. There are also food tastings and individual or group performances done in the cafeteria for the entire fifth grade. Performances include, sporting explanations, dance, song, and language exercises.

### TRACK AND FIELD DAY

Each year, fifth graders participate in a track and field day, during which the physical education department places students in different events and competitions. The morning consists of students completing and competing in track events, such as 500-meter

dash, high jump and shot put. Students receive awards for placing first, second and third in each event. All students must show good sportsmanship. Students, parents, and teachers spend the afternoon together enjoying lunch and social activities.

### END OF THE YEAR FIELD TRIP

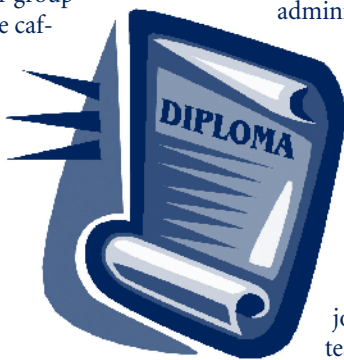
In June, the fifth-grade class takes an educational trip. This trip is a reward for completion of not only fifth grade, but also elementary school. Students need to be in good academic and behavioral standing in order to participate. The location and details of the trip change from year to year depending on cost and availability of venues.

### MOVING UP

Moving Up Day is a time when the administrators and teachers

recognize fifth grade students and present each one with a diploma.

Because of limited seating, each family receives two tickets to attend the event. After the awards ceremony, everyone is welcome to join the students and their teachers for snacks and refreshments, which are provided by the fourth-grade classrooms.



## ★ Homework Guidelines

Mohonasen Central School District leaders believe that homework plays a critical role in teaching and learning. It also provides an excellent opportunity for parents to become aware of their child's daily academic experiences. The purpose of homework is to strengthen academic skills and reinforce concepts taught by teachers. Appropriately assigned homework not only improves student achievement, it also develops time-management skills, self-discipline, independence, personal responsibility, and the ability to follow directions and prioritize.

### AMOUNT OF HOMEWORK

To promote consistency and fairness, students generally have about 10 minutes of homework per subject a night. However, this is just a general guideline and teachers vary in their beliefs and system for assigning work.

Reading for pleasure in itself is an extremely important pastime that can have a great impact on a student's success. The research is clear that students who read regularly are more successful in school. It is important for teachers and parents to continually encourage students to read a book of their own choosing for at least 20 minutes per day.

### HOMEWORK REQUESTS

In the event that a student is absent from school, all homework requests should be made to the main office (356-8430) by 8:30 a.m. Student work will be available for pick up outside the security monitor's window by 2:30 p.m. that day.

### STUDENT'S ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of each student to record his/her homework assignments in their student agenda book that is provided at the beginning of the school year. Students are encouraged to seek clarification about homework assignments they feel are unclear. It is each student's responsibility to complete homework and return it at the time it is due. Students at all levels who are experiencing difficulty with their homework are encouraged to seek help from their teachers.

It is incumbent on parents in the early grades, and students themselves as they mature, to request homework assignments missed based on absences. Students who are ill may take it upon themselves to complete homework while staying home, depending upon the illness.

### PARENT'S ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES


It is the parent's role to reinforce the importance of homework and to encourage their child to finish his/her homework in a timely manner. Parents are encouraged to set rules regarding homework. Research shows that when parents set clear rules defining where, when and under what conditions their child needs to complete their homework, the task becomes more routine and less cumbersome – and the child is more likely to be successful. Parents should provide guidance for their child but not provide answers or do the homework for them.

Parents are also encouraged to find out what procedures and requirements their child's teacher has with regards to student absences.

★ WHERE GREAT STUDENTS EMERGE! ★

## ★ Homework Guidelines-continued

### HOMework TIPS FOR PARENTS

- \* Express the importance of a good education and the value of doing homework to your child.
  - \* Make sure your child has a quiet, well-lit place to do homework. Make this location a permanent one.
  - \* Watch your child for signs of frustration. If your child becomes frustrated, suggest a short break and then return to the task.
  - \* If your child is struggling to complete an assignment, you may need to contact your child's teacher.
- 
- \* At various times during the school year, positively reinforce how well your child is doing.
  - \* Please attend open house to find out specific policies for your child's classroom.

## ★ Pupil Personnel Support Services

### MISSION STATEMENT

*"Our purpose is to work with the school community to promote the development of independent, resilient, successful students empowered to explore and achieve their academic, social and emotional potential."*

### GUIDANCE COUNSELOR

The elementary school counselor teams with parents, teachers, support staff, administrators and community members to give students every possible opportunity for success. The school counselor's role is broad and various methods, including: preventive school-wide programs; classroom guidance lessons; crisis intervention; and small group and individual student sessions

are used. The school counselor assists in the social, emotional and academic development of students, while focusing on the future through goal-setting and career awareness.

### O.K. PROGRAM

The O.K. Program is for 4th graders. It provides students with information regarding drug and alcohol awareness. The program also addresses good decision making, positive coping strategies and resisting peer pressure. Skills are taught through role play, game playing, videos and other experiential activities to enhance positive learning.

WHERE GREAT STUDENTS EMERGE!

## ★ Pupil Personnel Support Services-cont.

### **SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER**

The school social worker collaborates with teachers, administrators, students and families, and interfaces with community-based providers to respond to and support students' social-emotional and behavioral needs. Social work at school is purposefully short term. Through individual and small-group counseling, referrals to outside agencies, individualized programs and crisis intervention, the school social worker addresses the needs of students to promote their social-emotional progress. The social worker is also responsible for providing social-work services to students who have counseling on their Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

### **SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST**

The school psychologist collaborates with parents, teachers, support staff, administrators and community members to support the needs of students. The school psychologist works with students who require specific academic/behavioral support and provides psychological testing when appropriate. The school psychologist also responds to questions regarding student evaluation and testing, behavior plans, the Student Success Team and the Committee for Special Education (CSE) process.

### **STUDENT SUCCESS TEAM**

The Student Success Team is a team of teachers, administrators, parents, the school psychologist, the guidance counselor and social worker, who are all trained in collaborative problem solving and team development. This team can help teachers and parents develop strategies to support the success of all students. The team focuses on academic, social and emotional issues that children may be experiencing and helps put in place steps to provide additional support/interventions.

### **STUDY BUDDY PROGRAM**

The Pinewood-Draper Study Buddy Program pairs Pinewood students with middle school peer tutors to assist with organization and homework completion. The program meets once a week after school hours in the Pinewood cafeteria. It is coordinated by the school social worker.

### **MENTOR PROGRAM**

The vision of the Bradt-Pinewood mentoring Program is to foster positive relationships between our students and graduate students through structured and therapeutic activities focused on improving student communication skills, cooperative interaction skills, and self-esteem. The targeted population is students who are emotionally vulnerable (shy, withdrawn, anxious, etc.), and/or who may struggle to engage cooperatively with peers. This program is offered year to year based on student need generally from February-April.

★ WHERE GREAT STUDENTS EMERGE! ★

## ★ Library/Media Center

The Pinwood library circulates more than 44,000 books during the school year. There are more than 14,000 items in the collection, including books,

periodicals and Playaways (books on MP3 players). The library has

Internet access, databases and an automated circulation system. The librarian works in collaboration with classroom teachers to instruct information literacy and to promote reading.

The best way for a student to become a better reader is for him/her to read. At Pinwood, students are encouraged to select books that appeal to them. If a student is having trouble finding the right book, the student or his/her parent should contact the librarian for assistance.

### CIRCULATION INFORMATION

Students may take out three items at a time and they may have up to five items checked out of the library at once. Exceptions are made for school projects and special circumstances. All items circulate for a period of two weeks.

The library is open for lending purposes from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday. Students are encouraged to utilize the library throughout the day.

Community members may also check out materials as *community borrowers*. Community borrowers must follow the same rules as students. Math textbooks

are also available in the library. Parents may check out these books for the entire school year.



### SUMMER CIRCULATION

Students are encouraged to check out materials at the end of the school year for summer reading. With a signed parent permission slip, students may check out up to 10 books for the summer. Additionally, each Pinwood student selects one book each year for their summer reading project. Information relating to the summer reading project is distributed each spring.

### OVERDUE ITEMS AND RENEWALS

All books and magazines have a two-week circulation period. Books may be renewed for additional two-week loan periods.

Students will not be allowed to borrow more materials until all overdue items are returned or paid for.

### BILLING

In order to maintain the school's materials and resources, parents/students are responsible for what students take out from the library.

Bills for damaged materials or lost items must be paid before a student may resume borrowing from the library.

### VOLUNTEERS

Parent volunteers are welcome to assist in the library to help circulate and repair books. Please contact the librarian by calling 356-8438.

★ WHERE GREAT STUDENTS EMERGE! ★

★ **Music & Art****MUSIC AT PINewood**

Pinewood students are exposed to a variety of instruments in their music classes. They also sing, dance and learn the basics of reading music.

In third grade, students learn to play a small, flute-like instrument called a recorder. Students are asked to bring in \$5 to cover the cost of the instrument.

In fourth grade, students can join a singing group. The fourth- and fifth-grade choir meets after school once a week. After rehearsal, students can be picked up by parents or they may take the late bus.

In order to join the choir, students should enjoy singing, have a good attendance record and demonstrate positive behavior.

**THE BAND PROGRAM**

Students who wish to be in the Pinewood band program are placed in a lesson group, which typically consist of four to six students. These groups meet once a week for 30 minutes. Students are required to attend these lessons in order to participate in the band.

In order to participate in lessons, students must have an instrument. Students should have an instrument by the middle of September; however, the sooner a student has their instrument, the sooner he/she can get started. Beginner lessons typically start during the last full week of September.

Participation in the band program is a commitment. Students are expected to come to their weekly lessons and practice 100 minutes per week. This commitment is necessary in order for students to have a successful experience.

**STRINGS PROGRAM**

Students in the strings program are expected to attend 30-minute lessons once a week. The actual time of the lesson typically rotates so that students do not miss the same instruction every week. The number of students in each lesson varies depending on the instrument; however there are typically three to six students in each lesson.

Students should obtain an instrument before starting lessons. Instruments can be rented from several local stores. There are also a small number of instruments that can be loaned by the school to students at no cost. These instruments are distributed on a first-come-first serve basis.

Students will learn violin, viola, cello, or bass using two method books—Essential Elements (1st version) and Suzuki School method. A music stand will also be necessary. Students will receive an assignment in their method books at every lesson. They are expected to practice at least 100 minutes per week.

WHERE GREAT STUDENTS EMERGE! ★

## ★ Music & Art-continued

### THIRD GRADE ORCHESTRA AND PINWOOD ORCHESTRA

As students become ready, they will be invited to join their respective orchestras. Third graders can join the Third Grade Orchestra, while fourth- and fifth-grade students can play in the prestigious Pinewood Orchestra.

When a student shows an appropriate skill level, a permission slip is sent home for the student to stay after school one day a week to rehearse with the orchestra. The Pinewood Orchestra rehearses during the entire academic year, while the Third Grade Orchestra begins each January.



### PERFORMANCES

There are several performance opportunities for each performing group. A schedule of these events will be distributed at the beginning of each year.

While the orchestra music will be taught in lessons, students need to continue this work on their own by practicing at home. Students who do not demonstrate improvement may not be permitted to perform.

### ART AT PINWOOD

During art class at Pinewood, students use a number of different mediums and learn about art history. Art Club is open to fifth graders who are enthusiastic about art and demonstrate positive behavior. The club typically meets once a week after school. There are two sessions of Art Club—fall and spring—to accommodate all of the students who wish to participate.

*Art Smocks:* In order to help protect each student's clothing during art class, parents should send an art smock to school in September. A discarded, long sleeve, oversized shirt is fine.



★ WHERE GREAT STUDENTS EMERGE! ★

## ★ Special Areas

### FOOD SERVICE

The Mohonasen Central School District Food Service Department offers a nutritionally balanced breakfast and lunch program to students in grades K–5. All meals are low in fat and provide balanced servings from each food group daily. A variety of menu items both hot and cold are served for breakfast and lunch. Monthly menus are provided to students via their backpack or can be found online at [www.mohonasen.org/food](http://www.mohonasen.org/food). Breakfast is

served from 8 - 8:30 a.m. daily (students are allowed to get off their bus upon arrival for breakfast) and costs \$1.00. Daily offerings include a variety of hot items, cereals, bagels, yogurt, fruit, juice and milk. Lunch is served from 10:50 a.m. - 1:10 p.m., and costs \$2. Lunch includes a menued lunch item plus daily sandwiches and grab bags.

A snack bar is available to students. Students may bring cash to pay for snacks. Their meal account may not be used.

#### *How do students pay for their meals?*

All students are assigned a school meal account with a keypad number. Parents can pay for their student's meals daily or prepay in advance using cash, check or credit card. If a parent wants to prepay, they can send in cash or a check with their student to be deposited into the student's account by the cashier. Parents can also go online to [www.PayPAMS.com](http://www.PayPAMS.com) and pay using a credit or debit card. Parents may also monitor their children's purchases from this account. Check out Mohonasen's Food Service website at [www.mohonasen.org/food](http://www.mohonasen.org/food) to find out more.

#### *Charging Policy*

Students may charge any combination of meals up to a value of \$6. In the event a student forgets his/her money after he/she has reached their charge limit, they will be offered a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, fruit and milk at no charge until daily charges are paid. PayPAMS.com offers parents the ability to monitor their child's account online so that they will know when a student needs money in his/her account. Parents can even set it up so that they receive an automatic e-mail reminder when their child's account gets low.

#### *Free & Reduced Price School Meals:*

Children from households that meet federal income guidelines are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. If a student's application determines that he or she is eligible for free lunches, breakfast will also be free. Students who are eligible for reduced-price lunches pay .25 cents per lunch and may eat breakfast at no cost. Applications for free or reduced lunches are sent out every August to each household in the district. Applications are also available online at [www.mohonasen.org/food](http://www.mohonasen.org/food). Anyone who doesn't receive one by mail should contact the food service department and an application can be mailed or sent one home with a child. Applications may be sent in at any time throughout the year.

Questions or Concerns? Please contact the Food Service Department at 356-8225.

★ WHERE GREAT STUDENTS EMERGE! ★

## ★ Special Areas-continued

### HEALTH OFFICE

#### *Absences/Attendance*

When a child is absent, his/her parent should notify the office at 356-8430 as soon as possible. If the school is not contacted by a child's parent/guardian, someone will call the person listed on the student's emergency card that morning.

New York State law requires that the school keep a written excuse of any student absence on file. When a student is absent, he/she should bring this excuse to the main office when they return to school. The excuse should state the reason for the absence, the date(s) of the absence and the parent's signature.

Please remember that vacations are NOT considered legal absences and teachers are not required to provide work.

#### *Illness:*

If a child has symptoms of illness, such as sore throat, fever, or upset stomach, they should not be sent to school. It is school policy that, for your child's protection as well as that of their classmates, a student must be fever-free for 24 hours without medication before they return to school.

#### *School Screening:*

A school screening is completed on all third- and fifth-grade students if a current physical is not on record. This includes height, weight, vision and hearing, as well as scoliosis for fifth graders.

#### *Physicals:*

New York State requires all incoming fourth graders to have a physical exam. Parents should make sure the immunization section is completely filled out, along with the newly required BMI section. NYS also requires a Dental Health Certificate from a child's dentist. Forms are available on the Mohonasen website at [www.mohonasen.org](http://www.mohonasen.org).

#### *Medications:*

All prescription, as well as any over-the-counter medication, will require an original signed physician order and a signed parent consent indicating medication name, dosage, time to be administered, reason for medication and any adverse reactions that need to be observed. All over-the-counter medications are required to be in an original, unopened container. All meds need to be brought in by a parent to the health office and orders and consents have to be renewed each school year. Please



note that the signed student Emergency Information Health Card is NOT an acceptable parental consent for administering medication. Please remember students are NOT allowed to carry,

transport or store medication in school at any time. At the end of the year all medication must be picked up by a parent.

## ★ Special Areas-continued

### **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

At Pinewood, students with disabilities frequently work side-by-side with their peers and are actively involved in all aspects of Pinewood life. The students often receive additional services or participate in specialized programs to accommodate their disabilities and facilitate success in school and life.

What follows is a BRIEF explanation of some of the district's programs, plans and resources for students with disabilities. For more information, parents should contact Mohonasen's Director for Special and Alternative Education at 356-8221.

#### ***Consultant Teachers***

Since the goal is to provide a quality education in the least restrictive environment, most disabled students learn side-by-side with their peers in general education classrooms. Consultant teachers are special education teachers who work with the regular classroom teacher to help "integrated" students find success in the general education environment. Consultant teachers, for example, may co-teach lessons, re-structure assignments, provide special accommodations and follow-up with students and/or teachers after class.

#### ***Resource Room***

Special education teachers are available to meet with students in small groups outside the general education classrooms to make sure students receive the supplemental supports needed to meet high academic standards. The nature of these supports is spelled out in each student's Individual Education Plan (IEP).

The resource room is staffed by special education teachers and teacher assistants who provide additional instruction to strengthen the skills of disabled students. Resource room teachers and teacher assistants also work to provide students with necessary accommodations and modifications.

#### ***Special classes***

While all disabled students are encouraged to participate in general education classes, for some this environment proves to be very restrictive. Some students require the additional support and structure of special classes designed to address their unique instructional needs. These "self-contained" classes have low student-to-teacher ratios and allow for more individualized instruction related to academic, behavioral and social emotional needs.

#### ***Individualized Education Plan (IEP)***

The Committee on Special Education must develop an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for all special education students.

In developing the IEP, the committee considers evaluations, student strengths, concerns of the parent and where appropriate, student performance on state and district assessments.

An IEP documents the following: present level of performance; how the student's disability impacts his/her participation in the general curriculum; classification of the disability; annual goals; recommended programs and services; eligibility for state or alternate assessments; a list of any alternative

★ WHERE GREAT STUDENTS EMERGE! ★

## ★ Special Areas-continued

accommodations; a list of any assistive technology devices; and transitional goals at the appropriate time.

### **Program/Testing accommodations**

Students with IEPs or 504 Plans often have testing or classroom accommodations as part of their elementary program. Accommodations may include: additional strategies for participating in class activities, for acquiring class notes or for completing homework. Testing accommodations are provided only as the result of a recommendation by the Committee on Special Education (CSE) or 504 Compliance Committee.

### **504 Plans**

“504 Plans” are developed to support students whose physical or medical needs have a significant negative impact on their success in school. Special accommodations are written into 504 Plans to ensure that students with disabilities receive a free and appropriate education. Accommodations, for example, may include providing additional time and/or alternative locations for tests or special strategies for participating in class activities. A 504 Plan is not the same as an IEP (Individual Education Plan), which is generally much more intensive.

### **Psychological testing**

At the request of the Student Success Team and/or the parent/guardian, a student can receive psychoeducational testing, which may include tests of ability and/or achievement level. A psycho-educational evaluation must be authorized by Mohonasen’s Office of Student Services. Testing is conducted

by the school psychologist. Students with an IEP are required to receive an updated evaluation at least every three years.

### **Web resources**

The Internet is a helpful source of information for parents and students who want to learn more about a particular disability, find resources, network with others, etc. What follows are a few sites that address some common disabilities

- \* *Asperger Syndrome Education Network*  
<http://www.aspenj>
- \* *Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorder*  
<http://www.chadd.org>
- \* *Learning disabilities*  
<http://www.ldonline.com>
- \* *National Attention Deficit Disorder Association*  
<http://www.add.org>
- \* *National Information Center for Children and Youth Disabilities*  
<http://www.nichcy.org>
- \* *Obsessive-Compulsive Foundation*  
<http://www.ocfoundation.org>
- \* *New York State Talking Book and Braille Library*  
<http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/tbbl/index.html>
- \* *Vocational and Education Services for Individuals with Disabilities*  
<http://www.vesid.nysed.gov>
- \* *Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services*  
<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/index.html>

## ★ Special Areas-continued

### TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Mohonasen transports 3,500 students more than a half million miles annually. Staff in the Transportation Department work hard to provide safe and efficient service to all students.

Postcards are mailed home notifying students of their ASSIGNED bus stop approximately two weeks before the start of each new school year. Students are asked to report only to this stop.

Please be patient the first few weeks of school to allow drivers to adjust bus routes and times. Pick-up and drop-off times may vary 5-10 minutes either way.

#### *Bus notes*

In the event that a student wants to ride an alternate bus than he or she is scheduled to ride, (i.e., to go to a friend's house after school) parents are required to send a written note that must be turned in at the front office in the morning. Bus drivers will require students to produce the approved note before allowing them to board a bus they are not scheduled to ride.

#### *Bus Rules*

The safety of all students is the district's primary concern. All buses are school property and are subject to all rules set forth in the Code of Conduct. Each student has an individual responsibility to help ensure the safety of all students on the bus by following the rules.

Coming to school, going home and riding buses for extracurricular events or field trips, all students are expected to listen to and obey all instructions from transportation personnel and adhere to the following rules:

1. Behave in a safe and orderly manner at the bus stop, school bus port and on the bus.
2. Look both ways if crossing a road AND wait for the driver's hand signal or directions before crossing.
3. Enter and exit the bus in an orderly fashion.
4. Stay seated at all times.
5. Keep the bus clean and free of litter. Flinging things in or out of the bus is not allowed.
6. Keep all parts of your body inside the bus at all times.
7. Be responsible for your own belongings.
8. Always respect others, the bus and yourself.
9. Speak quietly, using appropriate and respectful language.
10. Refrain from activities that may damage the bus.
11. Use of illegal substances (alcohol, tobacco and drugs) is prohibited.
12. Refrain from bringing objects (including skateboards, large musical instruments or school projects) onto the bus that may present a safety hazard.
13. Please do not bring food or drink on the school bus. Some students have allergies and food, etc., on the bus could cause a medical emergency.

★ WHERE GREAT STUDENTS EMERGE! ★

## ★ Special Areas-continued

### *Changing an assigned bus stop*

If you want to request a change in an assigned bus stop, contact the Transportation Office by phone at 356-8260.

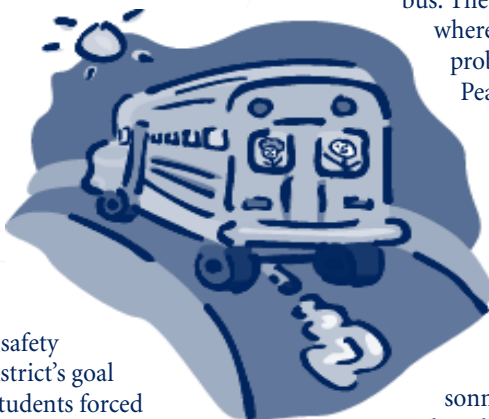
Mohonasen's policy is to try to honor change requests to existing bus stops – provided there is enough room on the bus.

For obvious safety reasons, the district's goal is to have no students forced to stand on buses. During the first two weeks of school, bus routes may need to be adjusted to meet this goal.

### *Late Buses*

Late buses are provided, Tuesdays and Thursdays, for some academic programs.

Students are required to get a bus pass from their teacher or school official in order to ride a late bus.



### *Peaceful School Bus Program*

At Mohonasen, it is very important that students feel safe and comfortable riding to and from school on the bus. The bus can be a place where bullying and other problems can occur. The Peaceful School Bus Program is a whole-school preventive-based program, designed to teach students how to build and maintain a “peaceful school bus.” Together, administrators, bus personnel, teachers, parents, and students work on preventing and decreasing the amount of bullying and inappropriate behavior taking place while promoting a positive community on the each bus. Faculty and staff members facilitate meetings with each bus and driver three times a year during the school day to discuss the dynamics of the bus, identify potential or existing problems, discuss the rules of the bus, and to teach problem-solving and social skills. At the end of each month, the buses that have consistently demonstrated positive behavior are awarded the Peaceful School Bus Award. Students on these buses earn a Peaceful Bus magnet that is displayed on their bus for that month, and they are also able to vote together to decide on a spirit day (e.g. hat day, backwards day, sports day). Through the spirit day, students are recognized for their accomplishments. The Peaceful Bus Program is a 3-5, school-wide program.





**MOHONASEN**  
Central School  
District

**2011-2012**  
**PINEWOOD**  
Parent Handbook

901 Kings Road  
Schenectady, NY 12303  
518.356.8430

<http://www.mohonasen.org/PW>