

UN-OFFICIAL Pontchartrain Elementary New Parent Survival Guide

Compiled by PES PTA

Welcome to Pontchartrain Elementary School. We are so glad you have joined us.

We know that starting any new school can be overwhelming, especially one the size of Pontchartrain.

That is why we have compiled this small, but hopefully helpful, booklet to answer many of the most commonly asked questions new parents have. This booklet however **does not** replace the student handbook. Your child will receive a handbook the first week of school. Please be sure to read the handbook, as it is the governing entity to all school rules and regulations.

We invite you to take your time and read through the information enclosed. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the school or your PTA. We will do our best to help you.

Sincerely,

PES PTA



Table of Contents:

Registration

- General Information
- School Supply Packs
- Uniform Sales

Class Rosters

Bus Information

Kindergarten Orientation

Kindergarten Screenings

First Day of School

- Kindergarten
 - Uniforms
 - Lunches
 - Morning location
 - Bus/Car Procedures
 - School Information Packets
 - PTA Information Packets

- T-1 through 3rd Grade;
 - Uniforms
 - Lunches
 - Morning location
 - Bus/ Car procedures
 - School Information Packets
 - PTA Information Packets

Second Day of School Onward

- Kindergarten
 - Morning location

- T-1 through 3rd Grade
 - Morning location

General Information

Registration

Pontchartrain Elementary School (PES), like many of the St Tammany Parish schools, holds two formal student registrations. One is in April and the other is in August. You may register at either one. Generally speaking, registration will take you approximately 1-2 hours depending on the lines and number of students being registered.

It is imperative that you check either the St Tammany Parish School Board website or the Pontchartrain Elementary website to ensure you bring everything you need in order to register your child. It is no fun to wait in line just to find out you haven't brought something, or have brought the wrong thing.

Tours:

School tours are held during registration, as the principal has time. There are usually two opportunities during the registration to go on a tour.

Uniform Sales:

The PES PTA will have a table on-site where it will be selling Pontchartrain Elementary uniform t-shirts (and sweatshirts in limited sizes). These shirts are not mandatory to purchase. They do however conform to school uniform guidelines and make the dress choice in the morning a little easier.

The t-shirts are available throughout the year for purchase. Sweatshirts will be available through the PTA First Day packs, and only on a pre-order basis.

School Supply Packs:

The PES PTA will also have a table on-site where it will be selling Pontchartrain Elementary student supply packs. The packs are grade specific and contain all school board required student supply items. If you prefer to buy your own supplies, many of the local merchants have supply lists for each school and grade level available. Wal-Mart, Walgreens, and Target are among them.

Supply Packs are **not** available for purchase after registration.

Supply Packs are delivered to your child's classroom prior to the first day of school.

Class Rosters

Pontchartrain Elementary Administration generally posts all class rosters approximately 2 days prior to the first day of school. If school commences on a Friday (which it usually does), the rosters are posted outside the school on the Wednesday evening just prior to school commencement.

The rosters are posted in the windows of the school facing the breezeway that leads to the bus loop. If you do not know where that is, just follow the crowd, as there is always a large gathering of curious students and parents.

The rosters are **not** posted, or available, prior to 5pm. Typically they are posted by 6pm and stay up until the end of the first week of school.

Students will be listed by their name as given on their official birth certificates. They are not listed by nicknames.

Students who are part of the special education program, including gifted, will be only listed on their homeroom class rosters. This is for child privacy laws.

If you are unable to get to the school prior to the first day of school to check your child's roster, there will be tables set up in the gym with teachers and volunteers guiding the children as to which teacher they have and where the class is located.

Bus Information

School bus information and schedules are generally posted on the same evening as class rosters.

The lists are given by bus number and usually contain:

- Bus number
- Driver Name
- Subdivision served
- Assigned bus stop addresses
- Approximate pick up and drop off times



Kindergarten Orientation

KINDERGARTENERS DO NOT COMMENCE SCHOOL ON THE SCHEDULED FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL WITH THE T-1 THROUGH 3RD GRADES. THEY TYPICALLY START APPROXIMATELY ONE AND ONE HALF TO TWO WEEKS LATER.

Once class rosters are posted, kindergarten teachers commence contacting the parents of the students in their class.

This is usually done via a phone call and is kept pretty short.

Not all kindergarten teachers call but rather contact you by other means; possibly email.

Kindergarten Orientation is ALWAYS on the first day of school for the T-1 through 3rd graders.

Orientation usually begins at 10 or 10:30am. Please call the school to verify.

Orientation usually lasts approximately 1.5 - 2 hours.

Students DO NOT need to wear uniforms to orientation, though they can if they want to.

Parents are asked to take the children to the classroom (there will be volunteers to help you find your way) and leave them with the teachers. The parents then attend a brief orientation in the gym given by the school principal. Parents then return to the classroom where they get to spend time with the teacher and students while he/she delivers all pertinent class information to you.

REGARDLESS of whether you have been contacted by your teacher, you should attend orientation. It has happened when a teacher cannot get in touch with all parents and the parents don't come to orientation. **PLAN ON COMING** as lots of important information is distributed then.

Your teachers will advise you at orientation as to your child's screening date and school start date.

Kindergarten Screenings

All children entering Kindergarten receive a "screening" by their teacher.

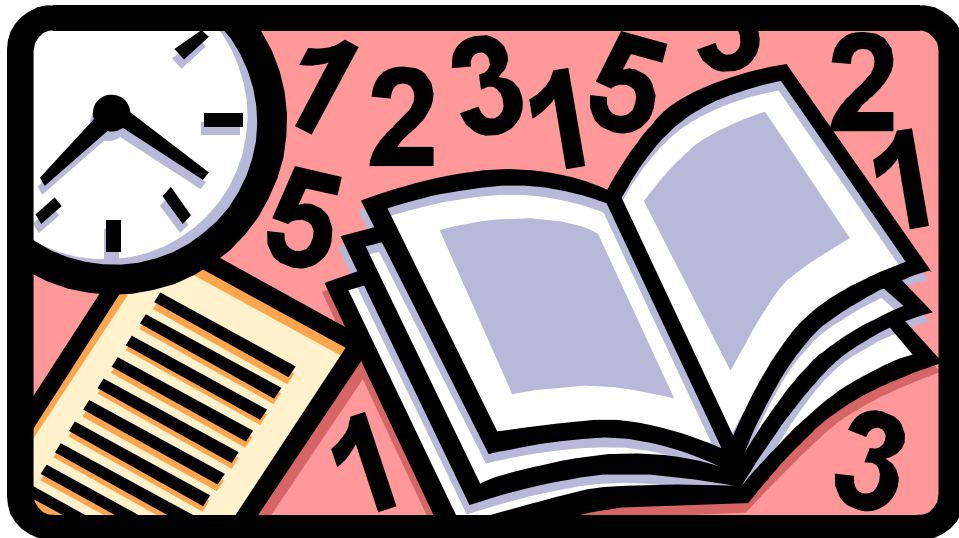
Your teacher will make arrangements with you as to when this screening will take place.

The screenings are held during the two weeks after T-1 through 3rd grade start school and prior to the Kindergarten starting school.

They are typically held in the child's classroom while the parent waits outside.

Usually they only take approximately 30 minutes.

Teachers often have forms and paperwork for parents to fill out while the screenings are taking place.



First Day of School Kindergarten

The first day of school for Kindergarten is generally one and one half to two weeks after the first day of school for T-1 through 3rd grade.

Not all kindergarteners will have the same start date.

In an effort to ease the children into school, the kindergarten classes are "stagger started". By this, we mean that your child's class will split the start date.

Half of the class will start on one day. The remainder of the class will start the next school day. The entire class then returns on the third day and there on out.

Your kindergarten teacher will schedule your child's start date with you at either orientation or during your child's screening.

Uniforms:

All students **MUST** come to school on the first day and every day after that in their school board approved uniforms. If the child is out of uniform code the parents will be called and appropriate clothes must be delivered.

Lunches:

Students may bring a lunchbox (or bagged) lunch to school at the child's / parent's discretion.

If you want your child to eat the cafeteria lunch, they can do so as early as the first day of school.



Lunch costs \$1.00 per day.

The cafeteria will feed the students on the first day of school **EVEN** if you forget to send your payment.

Where to go on the first day:

Students should go straight to their classroom on the first day of school. Parents are welcome to walk them to class on the first day if you wish to. There will also be many teachers and volunteers on hand directing the children to their classes.

Bus/Car Procedures:

We encourage all parents to put a nametag on your child. Please include:

Child's name

Teacher name

Indicate "bus", "Car" or "aftercare"

Bus #



Students should have a nametag for at least the first week of school. This allows them and the teachers to get into a system and understand what they need to do.

Kindergarteners who ride the bus will be assigned a 3rd grade "Bus Buddy" who will be riding the same bus. They will meet the kindergartener at the classroom and take them to the bus. This continues for a few weeks or until the teachers are confident that the child knows what to do.

Children who go to aftercare and who ride via car will also have escorts until they are comfortable with the process.

School Information Packets:

The school will send home packets on the first day of school. Some teachers do hand them out prior to that (at the screenings). This includes all of the important information the school needs to get to you. Included in the packet are emergency information cards, student handbooks, and other information you should be sure to read through.

PES PTA FIRST DAY PACKS:

Your students will also receive an envelope from the PTA. Inside this packet are a number of forms and information sheets. These forms include t-shirt and sweatshirt order forms, birthday book club order forms, PTA membership applications, PTA volunteer opportunity information and sign up sheets, as well as other important information. Please take the time to read through this packet as well. Opportunities are numerous for getting involved at the school. This packet will help you do so.



First Day of School

T-1 through 3rd Grades

The first day of school will be announced in the local newspapers as well as on the St Tammany Parish School Board website. The school will not contact you with this information.

Uniforms:

All students **MUST** come to school on the first day and every day after that in their school board approved uniforms. If the child is out of uniform code the parents will be called and appropriate clothes must be delivered.

Lunches:

Students may bring a lunchbox (or bagged) lunch to school at the child's / parent's discretion.

If you want your child to eat the cafeteria lunch, they can do so as early as the first day of school.



Lunch costs \$1.00 per day.

The cafeteria will feed the students on the first day of school **EVEN** if you forget to send your payment.

Where to go on the first day:

Students should go straight to their classroom on the first day of school. Parents are welcome to walk them to class on the first day if you wish to. There will also be many teachers and volunteers on hand directing the children to their classes. If the children do not know who their teacher is, then they will need to proceed to the gym where teachers and volunteers will be standing by to help them figure that out.

Bus/Car Procedures:

We encourage all parents to put a nametag on your child. Please include:

Child's name

Teacher name

Indicate "bus", "Car" or "aftercare"

Bus #



Students should have a nametag for at least the first few days of school. This allows them and the teachers to get into a system and understand what they need to do.

School Information Packets:

The school will send home packets on the first day of school. Some teachers do hand them out prior to that (at the screenings). This includes all of the important information the school needs to get to you. Included in the packet are emergency information cards, student handbooks, and other information you should be sure to read through.

PES PTA FIRST DAY PACKS:

Your students will also receive an envelope from the PTA. Inside this packet are a number of forms and information sheets. These forms include t-shirt and sweatshirt order forms, birthday book club order forms, PTA membership applications, PTA volunteer opportunity information and sign up sheets, as well as other important information. Please take the time to read through this packet as well. Opportunities are numerous for getting involved at the school. This packet will help you do so.



Second Day of School and Onward Kindergarten

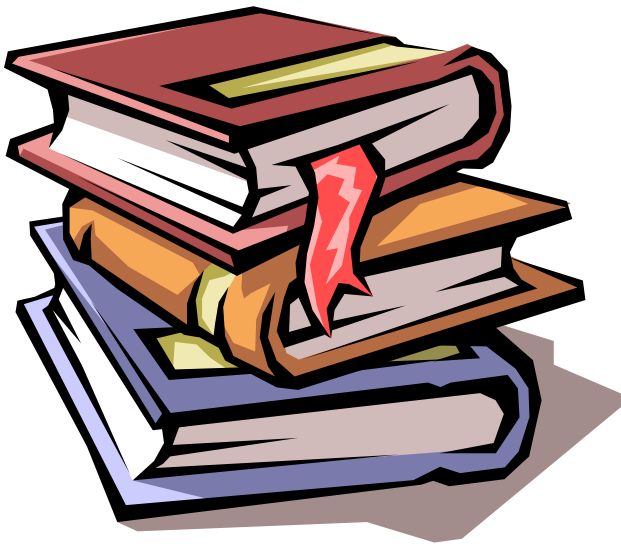
Parents are encouraged to start letting your children get themselves to their morning locations as soon as possible after the first day of school. We know this may be scary (usually more so for the parents than the children), but it really does help end the separation anxiety so many of them (and you) are feeling.

From the second day forward, all kindergarten children will go to the kindergarten yard at the end of the red hall. Their teachers will let them know on the first day of school, exactly where this yard is and how to get there.

Teachers and volunteers will be there to help direct the children.

Children riding the bus will be unloaded right into the kindergarten yard. They will not enter the school with the older children. Their teachers will explain this to them on the first day as well.

It is very important that your child continue to come with a nametag so that if they do need assistance, the teachers and volunteers can help them more readily.



Second Day of School and Onward

T- 1 through 3rd grade

Parents are encouraged to start letting your children get themselves to their morning locations as soon as possible after the first day of school. We know this may be scary (usually more so for the parents than the children), but it really does help end the separation anxiety so many of them (and you) are feeling.

From the second day forward, all T-1 through 3rd grade students will go to the playground at the end of the main hall. This playground is in the back of the school building. Their teachers will let them know on the first day of school, exactly where this yard is and how to get there.

Teachers and volunteers will be there to help direct the children.

Children riding the bus will be unloaded on the bus loop and will proceed down the breezeway into the main hall and then out onto the playground. Their teachers will explain this to them on the first day as well.

It is very important that your child continue to come with a nametag so that if they do need assistance, the teachers and volunteers can help them more readily.

General Information



Volunteering:

Many opportunities exist at Pontchartrain to volunteer. You have opportunities in the classroom, in the office, and in the school as a whole through the PTA.

Teachers will ask for volunteers usually via a sign up sheet at Open House. This is a great way to get a feel for your child's class while helping the teacher at the same time.

The PTA sends home a volunteer packet in the First Day Packs, which are sent home the first day of school. There are over 30 committees all looking for volunteers.

The front office is always in need of friendly volunteers to help them answer the phones, check in/out students, check in volunteers, and the like.

Open House:

Pontchartrain generally holds an Open House approximately 2-3 weeks into the school year. There is a general information session in the gym and then the parents and students go to the classrooms to meet with the teachers. This is a great opportunity for parents and teachers to talk after having had a few weeks of school to get a feel for things.

Breakfast and Lunch Menus:

PES Cafeteria lunch and breakfast menus are sent home with the students at the beginning of each month.

Car Line Times:

Car Line usually commences unloading in the mornings around 8:35am. It commences loading as soon as the afternoon bell rings and the children depart the school.