



Pine Island Academy is so excited to welcome you! Kindergarten is such an exciting time, and we are sure you have many questions. We have included information for you that families most often want to know as they are preparing for kindergarten.

**What is the security like at Pine Island Academy?**

At Pine Island Academy, security and safety are our top priorities. Once all students have arrived, all doors remain locked throughout the building, with entry permitted only through the front office. Our entire campus is enclosed by fencing, and the grounds are continuously monitored by custodians and teachers throughout the day. To ensure identification, all teachers wear name tags, while visitors and volunteers are required to sign in at the front desk and wear a provided name badge.

**Is kindergarten a full or half day program?**

Kindergarten is a full day program in St. Johns County. Your child's day will include reading, writing, math, science, social studies, recess, lunch and resource classes.

**What time does school start and end?**

Our school day begins at 8:00am (when the tardy bell rings). On Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, school releases at 2:20 pm and on Wednesday at 1:20 pm. We do offer extended day hours 7:00 am – 6:00pm. More information can be found on our website.

**Where are the kindergarten classrooms located?**

All Kindergarten classes are located on the same hallway at Pine Island Academy.

**How is discipline addressed in the kindergarten classroom?**

Pine Island sets high expectations for behavior. All Kindergarten classroom behavior plans revolve around the PIA WAVE and the six pillars of character. WAVE – We are Respectful, Responsible and Safe, we Value ourselves and each other, EVERYONE ACHIEVES and the six pillars are: Caring, Trustworthiness, Fairness, Respect, Responsibility, and Citizenship. All classrooms recognize students for respecting values and beliefs at PIA!

### **How will the teacher communicate with me?**

- Home-School Folder
- Classroom Newsletters
- School Newsletters
- Emails/Phone Calls

### **What resources does my child receive while at school?**

- Art
- Music
- PE
- Media / Library

### **What are the core academics in kindergarten?**

Below is a brief description of some of the skills that will be covered this year. All Kindergarten children are expected to reach these skills by the end of the year. We do realize that students come to school at varying levels, both socially and academically. The Year-at-a-glance is the district's curriculum guide that outlines what students learn throughout the year.

You can review that information at <https://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/year-at-a-glance/>

### **Reading and Writing**

Students will learn to:

- Recognize letters and sounds
- Read simple words and sentences
- Retell stories
- Build vocabulary
- Write sentences
- Use punctuation
- Express ideas in writing

### **Math**

The teachers will use a hands-on approach to help the students achieve many mathematical skills. Students will learn to:

- Count and recognize numbers
- Add and subtract
- Identify 2D and 3D shapes
- Compare numbers
- Measurement
- Create graphs
- Solve simple problems

### **Social Studies**

Students will learn to:

- Follow rules
- Respect others
- Understand past, present, and future
- Recognize holidays
- Learn about communities
- Identify Florida on a map

## **Science**

These topics are taught through experiments and exploration throughout the year. Students will learn to:

- Plants and animals
- Five senses
- Moon, sun and stars
- Motion and forces
- Sorting objects by size, shape and color

## **Will my Kindergartener be going on field trips?**

Yes, they have in-house field trips as well as off campus field trips. All field trips will be connected to our curriculum.

## **What can I do to help my child build his/her independence?**

Independence and responsibility go hand and hand. Encourage your child to try things on his or her own (packing up backpack, tying their shoes, opening containers, self-help skills). Realize that your child will make mistakes but will grow in the process.

## **Can parents volunteer in the classroom?**

Yes! During Kindergarten Orientation PTO will have a volunteer sign up list for parents to complete. All parents MUST complete a volunteer form and be approved PRIOR to volunteering in the classroom or attending field trips.

## **What kind of backpack should I get for my child?**

A **full-size** backpack that will fit a folder/binder and lunchbox. We prefer our students NOT to have backpacks with rolling wheels and appreciate your attention to this matter. Our backpack carts do not accommodate those backpacks.

## **Will my child be able to refill a water bottle?**

Yes, we have several water refill stations throughout our school. A refillable water bottle should come to school each day. Please make sure that your child can open and close the water bottle.

## **What will the first few weeks of kindergarten be like?**

Pine island embraces building our school family and spends the first few weeks creating that community. Our teachers will be focused on building relationships, implementing routines and procedures and helping all of the students adjust to spending the day at school. We will spend time learning:

- Following directions
- Working and playing with others
- Using the bathroom independently
- Managing backpacks and materials
- Participating in classroom routines
- Building confidence and independence

**Will my kindergartener have tests in kindergarten? How will I know how my child is doing academically?**

We measure progress with several tools throughout the year.

- A readiness screener within the first 30 days of school
- Progress monitoring assessments three times per year
- Classroom-based assessments throughout the year. These will help teachers understand each child's strengths and needs to allow for adjustments in instruction.

**You will receive:**

- Report cards every nine weeks
- Home Access Center
- Access to the STAR test data
- Fall conference with teacher
- Ongoing updates from your child's teacher

**How can I make my child's kindergarten year a success?**

- Support your child's teacher
- Stay involved
- Be positive, positive, positive

# Kindergarten Key Information

- Visit <https://www-pia.stjohns.k12.fl.us/> for information and updates.

## School Hours

- 8:00 – 2:20 – Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday
- 8:00 – 1:20 - Wednesday (early release) –

## Staggered Start

The week before school starts, you will receive a sign up to select ONE of the following days: August 10, 11, 12, 13 to participate in staggered start. This will be your child's first day of school.

Staggered start divides the class into 4 small groups. This provides an opportunity for the kindergarten teacher to get to know the students, teach routines, and ensure students are comfortable in their environment before introducing them to the whole class.

**Beginning on Friday, August 14**, all kindergarten students will attend class together.

- **Escorting students to class** – Parents can walk students to class on their staggered start date.
- **PTO Welcome Breakfast, TBD** –All kindergarten parents will be invited to join PTO to celebrate the beginning of their child's educational journey. I would encourage you to attend to get to know other families in our community. We need you! Exact date and time will be communicated as we get closer to our start date.

## School Access (visiting your student during the day) –

Pine Island and SJCS D want you to be an active part of your child's education. It is required that all visitors/volunteers have School Access to be on campus during the school hours. Please make it a priority to visit our School Access link located at <http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/volunteer/> to become an active part of the Pine Island Learning Community. **This includes:**

- Chaperoning on field trips
- Volunteering in the classroom, attending classroom parties, etc.
- Parent/Teacher conferences

## AM Parent Drop Off Carline –

When dropping off in the morning, students need to be prepared to exit the vehicle as soon as a staff or patrol opens the door on the **passenger** side of the vehicle.

### **PM Parent Pick-up Carline** –

Be prepared at the beginning of the school year for the time it takes to dismiss students safely in the PPU line. As the year moves forward, the car rider line becomes much more efficient and moves at a quicker pace. Remain in your car during PPU to ensure the safety of all students. We will not release children to parents walking up. Should you need to change your child's dismissal transportation, please email transportation BEFORE 7:00 AM. If there is a situation during the day and a change in normal dismissal is needed, please email [piatransportation@stjohns.k12.fl.us](mailto:piatransportation@stjohns.k12.fl.us) **BEFORE 1:30 PM (12:30 PM on Wednesdays)**. Include your child's name, grade, teacher and how they need to get home.

### **Lunch** –

Lunch is always new for our Kindergarten friends. Please begin to work with your students over the summer on opening items they bring lunch.

### **Attendance Policy** –

Any student who has been absent from school is to submit a PIA Absentee form the day the student returns to school stating the cause of the absence, completed, and signed/submitted by parent/guardian.

- If your student has been out for 3 or more days, you need to provide a note from a physician.
- You will receive the automated phone notification that your child is absent.
- If your child is leaving early, send in a note to your child's teacher stating the need and reason for the early checkout request. To assist our front office please pick up your child before 1:20 pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and by 12:20 pm on Wednesdays.

### **Peanut Awareness School** –

Pine Island encourages families to send in peanut-free snacks for celebrations and classroom parties. A Peanut Awareness letter will be sent to all families before school begins with snacks that are safe for all students.

### **Health**—

Please remember that if children are sent home with illness or out sick, they must be free of vomiting, diarrhea or fever without the aid of medication for 24 hours before they can return to school.