

PINE LEVEL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



Breathe.
Work Hard.
See Growth.

PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK 2024-2025

Christen Harry, Principal

Lyman Woodfin, Superintendent



AUTAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

153 W. Fourth Street
Prattville, AL 36067
(334) 365-5706

AUTAUGA COUNTY SCHOOLS

Motto

Equip. Engage. Excel.

Vision Statement

The Autauga County School system values its rich tradition of excellence in a rapidly changing world. ACS aims to consciously create an environment of respect and inclusion that prepares and motivates students to become lifelong learners by instilling the knowledge, critical thinking skills, and leadership traits necessary to succeed in life. In a safe and supportive environment, the district's schools provide for every student's intellectual, social, and physical development by fostering an engaged, creative, and respectful community of learners, families, and community partners.

Mission Statement

Autauga County Schools is dedicated to fostering the whole student in an academically rigorous environment, where everyone is known and valued, by creating pathways designed for success.

Equal Education Opportunity Statement

It is the policy of the Autauga County Board of Education that no student will be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any program or activity on the basis of sex, race, religion, belief, national origin, age, ethnic group, or handicapping condition.

AUTAUGA COUNTY BOARD MEMBERS

Tracey Strichik	District 1
Kim Crockett	District 2
Jamie Jackson	District 3
Billy Hollon	District 4
Kyle Glover	District 5

Autauga County Schools Strategic Plan

ACADEMIC ADVANCEMENT

Ensure all students demonstrate continuous academic improvement.

SAFE AND HEALTHY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Implement and promote strategies designed to foster a trauma-informed school district to improve the safety and well-being of students, employees, and parents.

QUALITY PERSONNEL

Recruit and retain highly-qualified professional candidates and provide quality professional learning experiences based on individual needs.

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

Ensure efficient, effective, and accountable management of operations and resources.

STAKEHOLDER RELATIONS

Implement and increase strategic communication among all stakeholder groups.

Pine Level Elementary School

2040 Highway 31 North

Deatsville, Alabama 36022

(334) 358-2658

Fax (334) 358-2309

www.pinelevelem.com

Dear Parents/Students:

Welcome to Pine Level Elementary School! This handbook is intended to acquaint you with the procedures which are unique to the operations of our school. The faculty and staff are excited about the 2024-2025 school year. With several teachers retiring, we have a lot of new faces around the school building ready to make this the best year ever! Student success is expected and encouraged in a positive environment at Pine Level Elementary. Our staff is a hardworking and disciplined faculty, prepared to help students achieve academic growth as well as social and emotional growth by providing them with the best learning environment possible.

Pine Level has 8 Bulldog Character Traits we will be working on this year. PLES Bulldogs are Leaders, Respectful, Responsible, Organized, Diligent, Problem Solvers, and they have Integrity and a Growth Mindset. These 8 Character Traits will be taught and modeled throughout the school year. We believe these traits will support each child as they discover and develop his/her unique gifts and talents. As our students develop these 8 Bulldog Character Traits, they will become active partners in their own education and their initiative, responsibility, and self-confidence grows.

Pine Level has one facility dog, Gunner, who works to support your children in the classroom and throughout the school. Gunner works with all students and teachers throughout the school providing social and emotional support. We are so grateful to have him at Pine Level.

Parental and community involvement is a key factor in the educational development of every student. Your participation in your child's education is vital to their growth and development. Please encourage and support your child(ren) in all of their efforts. The faculty and staff need your support, but most importantly, your child(ren) need you supporting them in their school work and social and emotional growth.

As we enter into this school year's journey, we will be focusing on realizing that in difficulty lies opportunity. Our Motto this year: Breathe. Work Hard. See Growth. We will strive to do this and more!

Christen Harry
Principal

PINE LEVEL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

**2040 Highway 31 North
Deatsville, AL 36022
(334) 358-2658**

Vision

Always Learning...Always Leading

Mission Statement

It is the mission of Pine Level Elementary School to produce lifelong learners who reach their full potential by becoming leaders and responsible citizens.

2024-2025 Theme

In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity
~ Albert Einstein

2024-2025 Motto

Breathe. Work Hard. See Growth.

MASCOT – BULLDOGS

SCHOOL COLORS – BLUE AND WHITE

Title I

Pine Level Elementary is school-wide Title I. The aCIP (Title I information included) is located in the front office, website, and media center.

This handbook is provided to inform you of procedures that are unique to the operation of Pine Level Elementary School. It has been adopted for our school by the Autauga County Board of Education. Other policies are included in the [Autauga County Public Schools Parent-Student Code of Conduct](#), located online at www.acboe.net and the student section of the [Autauga County Board of Education Policy Manual](#). The policy manual is accessible in the school office, school library, ACS website and the Autauga County Board of Education Office.

This handbook does not contain all procedural practices or policies that govern the operations and processes of Pine Level Elementary School.

8 Bulldog Character Traits

PLES Bulldogs are:

- 1. Leaders**
- 2. Respectful**
- 3. Responsible**
- 4. Problem Solvers**
- 5. Organized**
- 6. Diligent**

PLES Bulldogs have:

- 7. Integrity**
- 8. A Growth Mindset**

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PINE LEVEL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Students who arrive **by car** will be admitted through the **doors adjacent to the gym** and supervision will be provided. Students transported **by school buses** must enter the school through the **front doors of the school**. Parents should drop their children off at the assigned door by **7:57 a.m. Do not drop your children off after this time. There will be no school personnel to supervise them.** Parents must have their ID to enter school after 8:00 a.m. **Parents will be unable to talk with teachers or walk their children to class in the mornings.**

Students transported by car or those who walk should not arrive on campus before **7:05 a.m.** Students arriving at school before 7:45 a.m. will need to report to their grade level hall.

Students arriving by car after 7:57 a.m. must enter through the front center doors of the school and be signed in by a parent/guardian. Cell phone usage is prohibited in the Front Office.

Students who eat breakfast at school should go directly to the lunchroom. After students finish eating, they will report to their appropriate grade level hall. **Breakfast will stop being served at 7:50 a.m. Doors to the lunchroom will close at 7:50 a.m.**

School is dismissed at 3:00 p.m. Students riding buses will be escorted to the buses. Those students who are car-riders will be supervised in the gymnasium until they are picked up. Students attending the YMCA After-School Program will be escorted to the appropriate room. All other children will be supervised in designated locations (halls) to load the buses. **There should be no smoking or cell phone usage in the car-rider line. For students remaining after 3:15 p.m., parents/guardians will be required to park and come in to the front office to sign-out their children. Students will be moved from the car-rider line to the front office. You must have an ID or car rider tag to pick up your child.**

ASBESTOS (Annual Report)

The Autauga County School System has completed the required asbestos inspections in accordance with the requirement of federal law. There are no major changes in the status reports as reflected in management plans. A copy of the asbestos management plan is on file in the office of the Superintendent of Education and is available for public viewing during regular working hours.

ATTENDANCE

Coming to school every day is vital to a child's education. School becomes difficult when instruction is missed. We ask that you make every effort to keep your child in school. Students who check-in prior to 11:35 a.m. or check-out after 11:35 a.m., are counted present for the school day. However, if a child checks in, he/she is tardy. **(A perfect attendance certificate will not be awarded to a student with an absence, check-in, or check-out.)**

When a child is ill, please use good judgment in deciding whether or not to keep him/her at home. A written excuse signed by the parent/guardian is required of all students after each absence. Excuses are to be sent to school **within three (3) days** of returning to school. Excuses will not be accepted after three (3) days.

To receive make-up work, call the school office prior to 8:30 a.m. for work to be available that afternoon. Make-up work should be completed as quickly as possible after returning to school. Reasons for excused absences are: illness, death in the immediate family, inclement weather (as determined by the principal) which would be dangerous to the life and health of the child, legal quarantine, vacations, emergency conditions as determined by the principal, and prior permission of the principal. Requests for absence exceptions to those above must be submitted to the principal two weeks prior to absence.

A written note from parents or guardians will excuse absences for up to but **not exceeding seven (7) absences during the school year. Further absences will require a written excuse from a medical doctor or court official.** All excuses must be presented within three (3) days of return to school. It is the policy of the Board to comply with Act 93-672 as adopted by the Alabama Legislature. Parents/guardians or persons in charge of children are required to ensure that their children enroll and attend school and conduct themselves in accordance with written policy on school behavior adopted by the local board of education. The failure of a parent/guardian and persons in charge of children to exercise this responsibility is a crime. If convicted, said persons shall be fined not more than \$100 and may also be sentenced to hard labor for the county for not more than 90 days.

WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD AT HOME (ACBOE HEALTH GUIDELINES)

Regular attendance at school is encouraged and is necessary for your child's progress. However, he/she should stay at home if he/she has any of the following conditions in order to prevent the spread of communicable diseases to others.

1. Fever-temperature of 100.4 or above. Child should remain at home until fever free for 24 hours or on an antibiotic for 24 hours.
2. Vomiting-Your child should remain at home if they have vomited within the last 24 hours.
3. Diarrhea-Your child should remain at home if they have had diarrhea within the last 24 hours.
4. Undiagnosed rash-Your child should not attend school until the rash has been diagnosed and treated. It could be measles, chickenpox or some other contagious disease.
5. Pink Eye (conjunctivitis)-Pink eye is contagious. Your child should be seen by your doctor and treated before returning to school.
6. Lice and/or Nits (eggs)-Your child should not return to school until he/she has been treated with a lice shampoo and removed as many nits as possible. You must accompany your child upon his/her return to school and bring a receipt for lice shampoo. Take your child to the office to see the school nurse.

If the nurse sends your child home, you still need to write an excuse for their absences.

Unspecified illnesses-There are times when your child looks and feels like he/she is too ill to study or learn in school. If so, there is no point in being at school. He/she will not be able to learn.

BULLYING

Ensuring student and staff safety is critical to maintaining an environment conducive to learning. Harassment and/or bullying will not be tolerated and will be handled immediately. Please make every effort to contact school personnel when your child has experienced harassment and/or bullying. You may complete a Student Harassment and Bullying Complaint Form and submit it to the school office. **This form is available on the school website and in the school office.**

BUS REGULATIONS (Policy 5.32)

Students riding school buses are subject to the rules and regulations established by the Autauga County Board of Education. Any student who fails to abide by the established rules will be prohibited from riding the bus, and it will become the parent's responsibility to provide transportation. Safety is a serious concern and misconduct will not be tolerated. Please see Autauga County School District Parent-Student Code of Conduct @ www.acboe.net for bus rules. Referrals are written at the discernment of the driver. Bus consequences could result in bus suspension and mandatory parent conference before riding the bus again.

Bus issues need to be addressed by the Autauga County School System Transportation Department (334-361-3897) and bus changes cannot occur without a completed and approved temporary transportation form presented to the driver.

IF TRANSPORTATION CHANGES MUST BE MADE DURING THE DAY, WRITTEN NOTIFICATION MUST BE BEFORE 2:00 P.M. WE STRONGLY URGE YOU TO HAVE TRANSPORTATION PLANS IN PLACE BEFORE YOUR CHILD COMES TO SCHOOL EACH DAY. STUDENTS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO CHANGE MODE OF TRANSPORTATION UNLESS THE SCHOOL/TEACHER IS NOTIFIED BEFORE 2:00 P.M IN WRITING. PLEASE SEND WRITTEN NOTIFICATION TO SCHOOL TO ENSURE TEACHERS ARE AWARE OF ANY CHANGES.

CHECK POLICY

Pine Level Elementary School will accept personal checks for lunch and fees. No two party checks will be accepted. This courtesy will be revoked for persons guilty of writing checks that must be returned for insufficient funds. There will be a \$25.00 returned check fee. All checks should be made payable to Pine Level Elementary School.

CHILD FIND

The Autauga County School system is committed to providing educational opportunities to all exceptional children. Services are provided to students identified with special needs according to the Alabama Administrative Code, to include the areas of Autism, Deaf-Blindness, Developmental Delay, Emotional Disturbance, Hearing Impairment, Intellectual Disability, Multiple Disabilities, Orthopedic Impairment, Other Health Impairment, Specific Learning Disabilities, Speech or Language Impairment, Traumatic Brain Injury, and Visual Impairment.

If you live in Autauga County and have a child or know of a child who is exceptional and between the ages of 0-21, and not in school, call 334-361-3843 or write...CHILD FIND, AUTAUGA COUNTY SCHOOLS, SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, 127 WEST FOURTH STREET, PRATTVILLE, ALABAMA 36067.

COMMUNICATION

Home-to-School communication is vital for optimum student learning. Every Tuesday, your child will bring home his/her Tuesday folder. This will include graded papers, student work samples, and a conduct/study habits report. Review this with your child and sign and return it on Wednesday. Send any communication and/or correspondence from home back to the teacher in this folder. This is our method of keeping you fully informed of your child's grades and conduct on a weekly basis. **PLEASE CHECK YOUR CHILD'S FOLDER.** **Parent Square** will also be used to communicate with parents/guardians throughout the year.

Additionally, the PLES Newsletter will be sent home in these folders monthly. School Website, Instagram and Facebook will be used to provide information and updates.

PUBLIC COMPLAINT – (Policy 7.05)

COUNSELING

A counselor is available to assist both you and your children. The counselor visits the classrooms regularly working with students on study skills, self-awareness activities, and building positive self-esteem. An individual student may ask the counselor for help with problems he/she may have. Parents should feel free to contact the counselor if they have any questions or when services are needed for their child.

DELIVERIES

Deliveries of balloons, flowers, etc. to the school will remain in the office until the end of the day. Students will be called to pick these up at 2:45 p.m. Balloons and other deliveries that may cause a safety concern will not be permitted on school buses.

DISCIPLINE

We want our students to enjoy school. We also believe it is very important that they behave and do their best. When behavior becomes a problem, the teacher will implement his/her discipline plan. Please work as a team with teachers and administrators to ensure that your child's conduct and academic progress are on target. Please refer to the Policies and Procedures sent home by the homeroom teacher and the Autauga County Code of Conduct for additional information concerning discipline.

DRESS CODE – See Board Policy 5.19

Children need to dress comfortably for school. Pants must fit at the waist and be appropriate in length. Baggy and/or dragging pants will not be allowed. Girls' shirts should cover their stomachs. If a child can raise their arms and see their stomach, the shirt is inappropriate. Spaghetti strap dresses or tops are not permitted. Dresses and skirts should be no more than 2 inches above the knee. Shorts must be mid-thigh. **NO SHORT SHORTS.** Leggings can be worn with a shirt that comes to the student's fingertips. Sleeveless shirts are permitted provided the arm hole does not expose the child's body. Students are not to wear clothing depicting tobacco, alcohol, drugs, or inappropriate language. **Holes or rips in jeans are not permitted above the knee. Tennis shoes must be worn during physical education to ensure students' safety.**

Any clothing that would cause a distraction or bring negative attention to a child should not be worn. Please refer to the Autauga County Code of Conduct for additional specific guidelines concerning dress. It is best to put your child's name on any article of clothing that will be removed.

CELL PHONE/SMART WATCH POLICY

If a student brings a cell phone to school, it must be turned off and placed out of sight at all times while on campus at school. If a student's phone makes any sounds or if a student has the phone out, the phone will be taken up and placed in the front office for a parent/guardian to pick up. If a student uses the cell phone they will be subject to discipline according to the Autauga County Code of Conduct.

DRUG FREE SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY ACT

No student or parent/guardian shall consume, have in possession, or have consumed any alcoholic beverage or drugs while he/she is on the school premises, enroute to and from school or a school activity, or under the jurisdiction of the school.

Tobacco use on school grounds or while on school sponsored events is prohibited.

CHECK-OUT PROCEDURES

It is very important that children be in school all day. If appointments must be made during the school day, please send a note stating the reason and time your child will be checking out of school. Students **must** be checked out through the office by a parent/guardian or a person on the checkout card. For the safety of our students, **we will ask for photo ID when checking your child out of school.** Please do not check children out of school after 2:30 p.m. for any reason as instruction continues until our 3:00 p.m. dismissal.

EMERGENCY CLOSING OF SCHOOL

If it becomes necessary to cancel school due to an emergency situation, every effort will be made to notify parents, students and school personnel at the earliest possible time through local television and Parent Square communications. Concerned individuals should stay tuned to the local television stations for information. If possible, we will notify you by a call out. Parents may receive communication via Parent Square.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Emergency drills are practiced regularly in accordance with Autauga County Board of Education Policy and Fire Marshall Regulations. Drills are also practiced for the safety of our children so that in the event of an actual emergency they will know what to do. **Safety procedures prohibit us from allowing children to be checked out during a tornado warning.**

Emergency procedures for both fire and tornado are posted in each classroom.

FAMILY EDUCATION RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

The Family Education rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the students education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student’s education record within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the School principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request an amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or student believes is inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible student may ask the School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the school principal [or appropriate official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has contracted, to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failure by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:
Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-4606

FIELD TRIPS (Non-Refundable)

During the school year students will take field trips. Please adhere to the 9:00 a.m. deadline set for turning in money and required forms on the due date. Money must be turned in to the bookkeeper in advance so that checks can be written to pay for the cost of the trip. Unfortunately, money cannot be received after the deadline, as checks will have been written. Every effort is made to ensure you pay the correct amount for field trips and that they are as cost efficient as possible. A signed Permission Form **and** a signed Waiver of Liability form must be received from each student attending a field trip. Only parents/legal guardians or grandparents may chaperone. **Siblings, cousins, etc... are not permitted to attend or chaperone field trips.**

GIFTED SERVICES

Gifted students are those who perform at or who have demonstrated the potential to perform at high levels in academic or creative fields when compared to others of their age, experience, or environment. These students require services not ordinarily provided by the regular school program. Students possessing these abilities can be found in all populations, across all economic strata, and in all areas of human endeavor.

Teachers, counselors, administrators, parents/guardians, peers, self, or any other individuals with knowledge of the student’s abilities may refer a student. Additionally, all second grade students will be observed as potential gifted referrals using a gifted behavior checklist.

For each student referred, information is gathered in the areas of Aptitude, Characteristics, and Performance. The information is entered on a matrix where points are assigned according to established criteria. The total number of

points earned determines if the student qualifies for gifted services. For more information contact the Autauga County Special Education Department, Dr. Sharon Streeter at 334-361-3843

ACADEMIC GRADES - GRADING SYSTEM/PROMOTION AND RETENTION Policy 6.19

Kindergarten teachers will use a different scale. This information will come home with your child.

Grades 1-2 will use numerical grades in English Language Arts and Mathematics. Students must pass both English Language Arts and Mathematics to be promoted to the next grade.

Grades 3 will use numerical grades in all of the following:

Mathematics Science English Language Arts Social Studies

Students must pass both English Language Arts and Mathematics to be promoted to the next grade.

*See Alabama Literacy Act below for promotion linked with the Reading portion of the ACAP State Testing.

Grades 4-5 will use numerical grades in all of the following:

Mathematics Science English Language Arts Reading Social Studies

Students must pass English Language Arts, Reading, and Mathematics to be promoted to the next grade.

Grading Scale

A = 90-100

B = 80-89

C = 70-79

D = 60-69

F = 0-59

A yearly numerical average of 60% or above constitutes a passing grade. You child's homeroom teacher will provide you with the breakdown of major and minor grades.

**Alabama Literacy Act (Alabama Act 2019-523) - Commencing with the 2023-2024 school year, third grade students shall demonstrate sufficient reading skills for promotion to fourth grade. Students shall be provided all of the following options to demonstrate sufficient reading skills for promotion to fourth grade*

- *Scoring above the lowest achievement level, as determined by rule of the State Board of Education, on a board approved assessment in reading*
- *Earning an acceptable score on an alternative standardized reading assessment as determined and approved by the State Board of Education*
- *Demonstrating mastery of third grade minimum essential reading standards as evidenced by the reading portfolio*
- *Qualification under the Good Cause Exemption according to the Alabama Literacy Act*

If you have a concern about your child academically, behaviorally, or social emotionally please contact your child's teacher. Do not reach out to the administration unless you have spoken with the teacher first.

A counselor is available to assist both you and your children. The counselor visits the classrooms regularly working with students on study skills, self-awareness activities, and building positive self-esteem. An individual student may ask the counselor for help with problems he/she may have. Parents should feel free to contact the counselor if they have any questions or when services are needed for their child.

HOMEWORK POLICY

A responsible amount of study and preparation is essential for the academic growth of each student. Homework should be used to supplement, compliment, and reinforce classroom teaching and learning. Please review homework, as well as class work, with your child to help him/her develop good study skills. Contact your child's teacher if you have questions.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

The instructional program at Pine Level Elementary School is designed so that our students receive 370 minutes of instruction each day. This time is divided among specific subjects in accordance with guidelines established by the Alabama State Department of Education. Objectives are outlined in the Alabama College and Career Ready Standards for each subject included in the curriculum. A quality education for each student at Pine Level Elementary School is our instructional focus.

LATE ARRIVALS

Students should be seated in their classrooms by 8:00 a.m. Students who arrive after 7:57 a.m. **will not** be admitted to class without a parent signing them in through the office. **Do not drop your child off late as you will be called** to come back to the school to sign your child in before he/she can go to class. All children arriving late must be checked in through the office-no exceptions.

LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER

The library is open for all students to enjoy. Children will be checking books out to bring home on a regular basis. Please take time and share reading with your child. Students are responsible for the care of the books they check out. Students are responsible to pay for lost or damaged books. No refunds will be given once a damaged or lost book has been paid for. If the lost item is found, please keep it for the student's personal use unless you wish to donate it back to the school.

LOANED TECHNOLOGY DEVICES

Students will be assigned an iPad or Chromebook to use during the school year. Students will only be permitted to bring home this device when needed per teacher discretion if a parent/guardian fills out a Device Agreement Form.

LUNCH AND BREAKFAST

Please fill out the Free and Reduced Lunch Forms if they apply to you. For safety reasons, visitors will **not** be permitted to eat lunch/breakfast with students. There will be outdoor picnics where visitors will be welcome. Non-guardians must be with a parent.

<u>Breakfast</u>	<u>Lunch</u>
Student-Free	Student-Free
Employee-\$3.25	Employee-\$4.75

CHARGED MEALS IN THE CAFETERIA

The Board of Education strongly discourages the charging of a reimbursable meal to a student's meal account. Uncollected Child Nutrition Program (CNP) charges constitute a bad debt which is unallowable. CNP is a federally funded self-sustaining program. If a charged meal occurs, it shall only be charged in case of emergency as determined by the cafeteria manager or his/her designee. Parents will be notified of charged meals immediately. This shall be done from phone calls from the cafeteria manager's office, by letter and/or by automated caller. Cafeteria personnel may begin making phone calls for debts owed as early as 6:00 a.m. and as late as 8:30 p.m. Parents who fail to pay for charged meals may be turned over to the Department of Human Resources for child neglect or abuse. Also, the privilege to charge a meal may be denied if efforts are not made to pay the debt. If charging privileges are denied, the Cafeteria Manager must ensure that no child in grades PK-3 and/or a disabled child will be denied a meal. The Principal has the right to decide if an alternative meal may be served to a student owing money and this may be done grades PK-12. Although an alternative meal is served, it shall meet federal guidelines for a reimbursable meal and there will be a charge to cover the cost of the meal. The money that is owed may be for a student whose eligibility status is paid, reduced or free. All debt must be paid prior to a student progressing to the next grade. CNP debt not paid will remain on a student's account as that student progresses through the school system or if the student transfers to another school within the system. A student will not be allowed to participate in commencement activities or withdraw without paying uncollected CNP debt. Meals will not be charged to adult employees or visiting adults. A la carte purchases will not be charged to a student or an

adult at any time. If a student owes money, the student will not be allowed to purchase a la carte even if the student has cash in hand, until the delinquent account is satisfied.

MEDICATIONS AND EMERGENCIES (5.41)

Occasionally a child will need to receive medications at school. When this is necessary, a parent/guardian is responsible for completing a Medication Consent Form which is included in the back of the Autauga County Public Schools Parent - Student Code of Conduct. Every child will receive a copy of this form as part of their back-to-school paperwork. **The doctor, as well as the parents, must sign the consent form.** The form allows the physician to give the school directions on how to give the required medication and any side effects that may occur from the medication. The first dose of any medication should be given at home where any reaction may be observed by the parent/guardian and reported to the physician.

All medicine must be in the original prescription bottle, clearly labeled by the pharmacist with the student's name, name of the medication, dosage, and time the medication should be given at school. Most pharmacists will be glad to give you an extra labeled-bottle to keep at school if you ask.

All medications must be brought to school by a parent. Students may not have ANY medicines in their possession at any time while at school, on school buses or at school-sponsored events. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action.

Parents are responsible for keeping their child's medicine refilled for school use and for getting an updated Medication Consent Form signed by the physician when there is a medication and/or dosage change. There should never be more than one month's supply of medicine left at school.

Parents are encouraged to schedule medication times before or after school, if at all possible. Securing, safeguarding, and administering medicines are time consuming and disruptive. With the realization that at times medication during the school day is necessary in order that the child be present at school, full cooperation will be given to assure that your child receives the necessary medication safely. School personnel will oversee the administration of all medications. The school has no medications, such as aspirin, Tylenol, or cough medicine available to dispense to students.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-Teacher conferences are encouraged. It is vital that we work as a team for the success of your child. If you feel the need to talk with a teacher, please let that teacher know. You may email the teacher requesting a conference, or call the school office at 334-358-2658.

Conferences need to be scheduled at least one day in advance. **Parent-Teacher conferences will be scheduled during a teacher's planning period, before school or after school.**

Student instructional time is essential; parents/guardians will not be permitted to interrupt classroom instruction to talk with the teacher. Likewise, no conference will be permitted during instructional time unless approved by the principal. Written correspondence is always welcomed especially through ParentSquare.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

Parent volunteers are very important to our school. We encourage parents who have available time to contact the school counselors or front office staff to offer their time and talents to assist at the school. The counselors will hold two parent volunteer trainings throughout the school year. Parents will need to attend the volunteer training to help with Duty Free Lunches, Fall Fun Day, Field Day, Library, etc... Parents are not required to participate in a Parent Volunteer Training to attend field trips, picnic lunches, class events, etc... Parent volunteers must sign in through the office.

PARTIES/CELEBRATIONS/SPECIAL EVENTS

There will be times throughout the year that the school and/or grade-levels will have parties, celebrations, or special events. Not all activities are designed or safe for parents and siblings to attend. It is at the grade-level teachers' and/or principal's discretion as to which events parents and siblings are invited to attend.

Siblings older than Kindergarten and younger than college age are NOT permitted to attend classroom parties and/or special events at school other than specifically stated by Administration.

For student birthdays, parents may send a store purchased individually wrapped special snack or a store-bought bakery snack to school with their child. Parents may also drop these items off in the front office to be delivered to the child's class. These items will be eaten during the students' snack time. Parents will not be permitted to go down to the classroom during this time. Homemade snack items will NOT be permitted for school parties and celebrations.

SCHOOL FACILITIES

All school facilities will be used under the supervision of the principal.

SCHOOL SECURITY

Security of students and the school is very important. We do not want to alarm the students, but we are cautious in our daily routine and activities. To assure safety, a school surveillance system is in place. All exterior doors to the school will remain locked at all times so no one will be able to enter the school building except through the main entrance. However, the doors will open from the inside; in case of an emergency, the students can exit the building safely. Weapons detectors will be used at most events involving outside visitors.

SECTION 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 will be followed. Please contact the 504 Coordinator, Ms. Robyn Raven, PLES Counselor, with any questions @robyn.raven@acboe.net

SNACKS

Snacks/Drinks are available for purchase each day. Items range from \$0.50 - \$2.00 and should be paid for at the time of purchase. Parents should encourage their child to use only snack-money, not lunch-money, to buy snacks. Students may also bring snacks from home. **Carbonated drinks are not allowed.** Chewing gum is not permitted at any time.

TEXTBOOKS (Policy 6.05)

All textbooks issued to the students are property of the State of Alabama and the local public school system. Textbooks, which are damaged or lost during the course of the school year, must be paid for by the student to whom the book is issued.

TRANSPORTATION ARRANGEMENTS

Children should know before leaving home each morning how they will get home. Rainy day plans should be made in advance by **sending a note to the teacher or a message in Parent Square by 8:00 a.m.** Please do not tell your child to call home during the day to make plans for transportation.

TRUANCY DEFINITION (Policy 5.03)

A parent, guardian, or other person having charge of any child officially enrolled in Alabama public schools (K-12) shall explain in writing the cause of any and every absence of the child no later than three (3) school days following return to school. A failure to furnish such explanation shall be evidence of the child being truant each day he is absent. The child shall also be deemed truant for any absence determined by the principal to be unexcused based upon the State Dept. of Education's current School Attendance Manual. Seven unexcused absences within a school year constitute a student being truant for purpose of filing a petition with the Court.

The Interagency Committee on Youth Truancy Task Force recommendations known as the Early Warning Truancy Prevention Program timeline for reporting truancy shall define the truancy status of any student as follows:

1. First truancy/unexcused absence (warning)
Parent/guardian shall be notified by the principal or his/her designee that the student was truant and the date of the truancy. Parent/guardian shall also be provided with a copy of Alabama's compulsory school Attendance laws and advised of the penalties that can be applied and the procedures that shall be followed in the event that other unexcused absences occur.
2. Third truancy/unexcused absence – Letter will be sent home with student to the parent
3. No earlier than the fifth unexcused absence (conference) – Early Warning Truancy
The parent, guardian, or person having control of the child shall (1) attend a conference with the attendance officer (2) participate in the early warning program provided by the juvenile court. Attendance at one of these conferences shall be mandatory except where prior arrangements have been made or an emergency exists.

Failure to appear at the early warning program shall result in the filing of a complaint/petition against the parent under *Code of Alabama* (1075), {16-28-12© (failure to cooperate), or a truancy against the child, whichever is appropriate.

4. No earlier than seventh unexcused absence, the parent will be referred to truancy (court), or file a complaint/petition against the child and/or parent/guardian, if appropriate.

VISITORS

ALL visitors must sign in through the school office and get an identification badge. People in the building without proper identification should be immediately escorted to the office. Remember we are taking these precautions to safeguard your children.

Visitors must remain calm, professional, and respectful the entire time they are on campus. Profanity will not be tolerated. If after a warning, a visitor refuses to comply with the requests of a PLES staff member, they will be asked to leave the school. **If the visitor refuses to leave, the School Resource Officer or the Autauga County Sheriff's Department will be called. Depending on the nature of the events, further actions may be taken by Administration.**

WITHDRAWALS AND TRANSFERS FROM SCHOOL

The parent/guardian must notify the office when a child is withdrawing from the school. To officially withdraw a child from school, the parent must sign a release form. All textbooks, digital devices, and other school related materials must be returned to the school before withdrawal can be completed. Because the withdrawal process takes time, we ask for at least a **24-hour notice**.

MENINGOCOCCAL DISEASE

What is meningococcal disease? Meningococcal disease is a serious illness, caused by bacteria. It is the leading cause of bacterial meningitis in children 2-18 years old in the United States.

How do you catch the disease? The bacteria that cause meningococcal disease are very common. The disease is most common in children and people with certain medical conditions that affect their immune system.

College freshman living in dormitories also have increased risk of getting the disease. The disease is spread through exchange of respiratory droplets or saliva with an infected person including kissing, coughing, sneezing, and sharing drinking glasses and eating utensils. In a few people, the bacteria overcome the body's immune system and pass through the lining of the nose and throat into the blood stream where the cause meningitis. Meningitis is term that describes inflammation of the tissues surrounding the brain and spinal cord.

What are the symptoms?

- *Fever
- *Red rash
- *Headache
- *Drowsiness
- *Stiff neck
- *Nausea and vomiting

Meningococcal Vaccine: Who should get the vaccine and when?

MCV4, or the meningococcal vaccine, is recommended for all children 11-12 years of age and for unvaccinated adolescents at high school entry (15 years of age). High school seniors should also consider obtaining the vaccine prior to entering college, especially if they are planning on living in a dormitory. Please consult your physician or local health department for more information.

Warning

Possession of a gun in a school zone is a violation of federal law. A violation could result in a \$5000.00 fine and/or five (5) years in a federal prison.

Autauga County Schools 2024-2025 School Calendar

August 1-6	Institute/Teacher In-service Days
August 7	School Opens
September 2	Labor Day
October 11	Early Dismissal for Students
October 14	Fall Break/No School
November 11	Veterans Day
November 25-29	Thanksgiving Holidays
December 18	Early Release for Students
Dec 19-Jan 3	Christmas Holidays for Students
January 2-3	Teacher In-service Day
January 6	School Resumes
January 20	Martin Luther King Jr. Day/No School
February 17	President's Day/No School
March 7	Early Dismissal for Students
March 24-28	Spring Break
April 19	Teacher Work Day/No Students
May 23	Last Day of School/Early Release

9wks Grade Periods

1st 9wks ends Oct. 11, 2024
2nd 9wks ends Dec. 18, 2024
3rd 9wks ends Mar. 7, 2025
4th 9wks ends May 23, 2025

Report Card Issue Dates

1st 9wks Oct. 21, 2024
2nd 9wks Jan. 10, 2025
3rd 9wks Mar. 14, 2025
4th 9wks May 23, 2025

Progress Report Issue Dates

1st 9wks September 11, 2024
2nd 9wks November 13, 2024
3rd 9wks February 12, 2025
4th 9wks April 16, 2025