

Pine Views



OCTOBER 2024

Published by the PINE VIEW ASSOCIATION

About Pine Views

Pine Views is the official newsletter of the Pine View Association. Five issues will be published each school year. The issues will be mailed to our current families and be available in the Pine View front office. The issues are also available online at www.yourpva.org under the Pine Views tab. To become a PVA Member, which is free and open to all Pine View parents and guardians, go to www.yourpva.org and click on “Join Today.”

Publication Schedule:

Quarter One: August/September/October
Quarter Two: November/December
Quarter Three: January/February
Quarter Four: March/April/May
Summer: June/July

Students, faculty, staff and parents are encouraged to submit articles and photos. **Photos must be high resolution JPEGs or PDFs. Flyers and all other submissions should be high resolution PDFs and all names and grades of students must be submitted with photographs. All submissions are due one month before publication.**

Please submit articles/photos to

pineviews@yourpva.org

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Investing in Education:

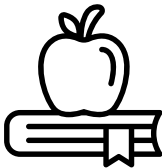
In November, voters will choose whether to continue Sarasota's 1 mill referendum, which has been in place since 2002. The referendum funds vital programs and resources in our schools.

HOW THE MILLAGE REFERENDUM IMPACTS

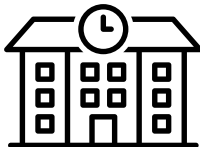
Pine View School



Provides over **\$2 million** in annual funding for Pine View School.



Funds **25 positions** at Pine View School including art teachers, music teachers, computer science teachers, counselors, administrative support staff, and campus security.



Extends student instruction time by **18 additional days.**

The Millage Referendum will be the final item on November ballots.

The Pine View Association (PVA) provides this information for educational purposes only. Learn more about the Sarasota County Schools Millage Referendum by scanning the QR code or visiting www.SarasotaCountySchools.net/Referendum.





Editors' Note

Thank you for reading Pine Views! Before we share anything else, we want to take a moment to thank Dave Gulliver, former Pine Views Editor, for his years of dedication to the magazine. With the graduation of his two children, he passed the Pine Views editorial baton, but his wit and writing style will be missed.

This publication - like everything done by PVA - is made possible by dedicated members of our Pine View community. In this first issue of the 2024-2025 school year, we want to introduce you to the various columns and stories you can expect to see each time you open a Pine Views magazine. Like you, everyone who contributes to Pine Views cares deeply about educating young people today and into the future. Our goal is to support and inform you as you, in turn, support the learners in your life. If you feel that the Pine Views team could provide additional information about something in particular, please let us know at pineviews@yourpva.org.

Parent to Parent is written each issue by the PVA President. The article will inform you about the work PVA has been doing in our school community, exciting happenings at Pine View, and future plans for PVA.

Principal's Perspective is penned by school Principal, Dr. Covert. This article will cover Pine View's achievements while also sharing about any prescient updates at the school or county level.

Student Support will be a section written by our own school counselors in each issue, sharing different ways that parents/guardians can support their students as they navigate education in the 21st century.

From the Board Room is a rundown of what PVA did at its most recent meeting(s), and serves as an opportunity to be as transparent as possible about the happenings during PVA Board meetings.

Pine View Info and **If You Need...** are up-to-date (as of each publication) lists that answer the age-old question: "Who do I call if I need to know about...?"

Elementary, Middle and High School Reports are written by PVA's teacher representatives. These dedicated educators highlight the exciting things happening in your student's classrooms, and might provide insight into what really happens when your student insists their day was uneventful.

While these are not included in each issue of Pine Views, we've made sure to share **Board Bios** of the PVA Board representatives for each school division. These representatives are the individuals you can contact to learn more about PVA, or offer your support.

Finally, we included a list of the various **PVA Committees**, as well as a quick blurb about the function of each organization, sharing the variety of ways that PVA contributes to the Pine View Community - be sure to connect with the committee that would be the best fit for your unique skills...all are looking for volunteers!

We hope you'll take some time to peruse every bit of this magazine, from our coverage of the **Pine View Fair** to PVA President Puja Dhanraj's exciting report about the ways that Pine View benefited from PVA support during the 2023-2024 school year. We're looking forward to an even more successful 2024-2025!

With gratitude,
Lindsay Sweeting and Ariana Haxhiaj
Pine Views Editors

About PVA

Pine View Association (PVA) Mission Statement

The Pine View Association is Pine View's own organization of parents, teachers, staff and friends.

The Pine View Association, working with the Pine View community, supports and advances the excellence of Pine View School.

The PVA encourages volunteerism, raises and disburses funds, promotes communication and cooperation with the school, provides input to the school on issues of concern to parents and supports gifted advocacy issues on a local and statewide basis.

PVA Committees and Chairs

Annual Sponsors:

Silke Cuff
sponsorship@yourpva.org

Community Building:

Community Service

Diana Cuellar

Parent Social Events

Susan Rigopulos

Grade Representatives:

Tanya Shaitanoff

Gaby Lodeiro

Wendy Teague

Faculty and Staff

Appreciation:

Wendy Williams

Stacey Wood

info@yourpva.org

Funding Requests:

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gretchen@yourpva.org

Garden Committee:

Lesley Sachs

Lesleybowlingsachs@gmail.com

PACE:

Wendy Teague

PACE@yourpva.org

Peramathon:

Silke Cuff

Katie Padgett

Peramathon@yourpva.org

Pine View Fair:

Lilly Thomas

Fairchair@yourpva.org

Pine Views:

Lindsay Sweeting

Ariana Haxhiaj

pineviews@yourpva.org

Pine View Pride:

Dana Moretta

dana.moretta@yourpva.org

Pinnacle:

Cindy Jaramillo

pinnaclechair@yourpva.org

Proud Python:

Lauren Fineman

Elena Reuter

laurenfineman@hotmail.com

ereuter11@gmail.com

Python Run:

Silke Cuff

Kristy Ochsendorf

silkec@yourpva.org or

kbooth9@gmail.com

Readathon:

Shauna Wagner

Nancy Vigna

readathon@yourpva.org

School Store:

Diane Thompson

Lisa Brown

pvstore@yourpva.org

Technology:

Jaime Heath

admin@yourpva.org



Parent to Parent



Dear Pine View Families,

We hope this message finds you safe and well in the aftermath of Hurricanes Helene and Milton. Our thoughts are with all those affected, and we encourage anyone in need of assistance to reach out—we are here to help in any way we can or try to connect you with resources that can help. We're incredibly thankful that our beloved Pine View School sustained mostly cosmetic damage, allowing our students to return to their vibrant learning environment, bringing back a sense of normalcy after these challenging weeks.

Despite the recent weather disruptions, we are pleased to share that the 2024–2025 school year at Pine View is off to a great start. PVA kicked things off by sponsoring the “New to Pine View” parent coffees and, thanks to our amazing Faculty and Staff Appreciation Chairs, **Wendy Williams** and **Stacey Wood**, PVA hosted a welcome back to school breakfast for our faculty and staff and provided meals for teachers before the Open Houses.

Additionally, we held our first community service initiative of the year and wanted to thank **Diana Cuellar** and **Janna Kim** for partnering with Children First to organize a back-to-school supplies drive for this wonderful local organization!

We were also thrilled that our first Parents’ Community Building event on September 14 saw over 175 parents in attendance - thank you to **Susan Rigopulos** for getting us together to kick off the new school year!

Our first major fundraiser of the year, the Read-A-Thon, was a huge success—special thanks to **Shauna Wagner** and **Nancy Vigna** whose efforts helped to raise over \$20,000 in just two short weeks!

P.A.C.E. (Partners in Achieving Classroom Excellence) allows parents to contribute directly to individual teachers’ classrooms and this program was extremely successful this year. Because of your support, every teacher and department at Pine View received a donation to his / her classroom and we had over \$63,000 in overall donations! Thank you so much to **Wendy Teague** for doing an amazing job coordinating and organizing this initiative!

We also want to be sure to extend our sincere gratitude to **Lilly Thomas** for organizing a truly spectacular Pine View Fair on October 5, despite the tight timing between both hurricanes. Under Lilly’s incredible leadership, over 60 clubs and organizations participated in the Fair, raising nearly \$33,000. Be sure to check out pages 24&25 in this issue for some amazing photos from the event!

Looking ahead, we’re excited about the upcoming **Peramathon** on **November 22**, and we’re also preparing to launch our **Grade Representatives** initiative for this school year in the coming weeks!

During our back-to-school events, many of you heard about PVA’s mission as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to enriching the Pine View experience by supporting the school’s academic, social, fine arts and technology objectives. Our support efforts are categorized into three main areas: Academic Support & Partnerships, College & Career Counseling and Community & Culture Building. Many have asked how PVA allocates the funds we raise, so we wanted to provide a breakdown of how your contributions are used.

Each summer, PVA establishes its budget for the upcoming year—we approved our 2024–2025 budget at the September 17 Board meeting. The budget includes several recurring line items that PVA supports annually. These include Agenda Books, the Pine View Garden, Pine Views Magazine, Torch/Match, *(continued on page 7)*

(continued from page 6)

faculty and staff appreciation events, student recognition events (such as PV Pride, Proud Python, and Moving Up Ceremonies), parent coffees and funding various scholarships. This year, for the first time, we've added funding to cover the cost of the senior graduation venue and support the College & Career department. This new allocation will allow our high school students to use their fundraising efforts for class trips and team-building activities, while alleviating the pressure of covering graduation expenses. For College & Career, the additional funds will help support items such as guest speakers on college admissions, essay writing workshops, financial aid and scholarship sessions and admissions panels, as well as provide additional resources for our students in the center.

Another significant way we allocate funds is through requests from teachers, administrators, clubs and the school itself. Any of the aforementioned can submit a funding request, which is reviewed and voted on at our Board meetings. Last year, we approved over \$180,000 in funding for clubs like Business Professionals of America, Jungle Robotics, Odyssey of the Mind, Pine View News, Rocketry Club, and Speech and Debate, among others. We also supported curriculum enhancements for the World Language Department, brought performances by the Florida Studio Theatre to campus, purchased elementary picnic tables, contributed to the new Pine View marquee and hosted the PV55 celebration and Veterans Day event. This school year, we have already approved funding requests from the NASA Space Club, Rocketry Club, Theater Department, Pine View Band and we are bringing back the Florida Studio Theatre performances for a second year. Investing in these programs is only possible thanks to your participation in our fundraisers.

Lastly, we want to clarify that some of our events, like P.A.C.E. and the Pine View Fair, are not fundraisers for PVA. PVA helps to organize these initiatives, but the funds raised are passed directly to the respective teachers' classrooms, clubs or organizations.

We are so excited about the 2024–2025 school year. Although it's been a challenging start, we believe that better days are ahead. As always, please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or need assistance. Thank you for your continued support—our Pine View community is truly special, and we look forward to an incredible year together!

Warmest regards,
Puja Dhanraj

Executive Committee

Puja Dhanraj - President

Silke Cuff - VP of Sponsorship,

Peramathon, Python Run

Jaime Heath - VP of School Support, Webmaster

Debbi Wolfinger - VP of Communications,
Membership, Volunteers

Wendy Teague - Treasurer, PACE,
Grade Representatives

Dana Moretta - Secretary, Pine View Pride,
Giving Challenge

Board of Directors

Ariana Haxhijaj - Pine Views

Cindy Jaramillo - Pinnacle

Gretchen Lovewell - Funding Requests

Tatyana Shaitanoff - Grade Representatives

Jeffrey Steinwachs

Lindsay Sweeting - Pine Views

Lilly Thomas - Pine View Fair, Pavers

Kyla Weiner

Wendy Williams - Faculty & Staff Appreciation

Alumni Representatives

Dr. Manav Malik

Ben Turoff

Paige Samson Wyant

Faculty Representatives

Dr. Stephen Covert - Principal

Andy Vitkus - Elementary School

Edwin Stumpf - Middle School

David Mannino - High School

Student Representatives

Gabriel Feygin - 11th Grade

Saket Sarkar - 12th Grade

Principal's Perspective



October 5, 2024

Dear Pine View School Parents and Community:

It seems like the year just began, and we already just held the annual Pine View Fair, the end of the First Quarter is almost here, and Thanksgiving Break is right around the corner! The Pine View Fair was a huge success and we thank everyone who came out to support our student clubs and organizations! It was a wonderful day of fun and food for the entire family, so thank you to everyone who came out. Also, thank you to PVA Fall Fair Chair, Lilly Thomas, and the entire PVA Fall Fair Committee for their work in

organizing, planning, collaborating with teachers, planning the booths, and making it such a successful day!

We recently learned that Pine View achieved another award- for the College Board's 2024 Advanced Placement (AP) Honor Roll, within the categories of College Culture, College Credit, and College Optimization, Pine View earned the Platinum Award level recognition. There are four levels of recognition (e.g., Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum), and Pine View far exceeded the College Board's expectations for this award in each of the categories. Moreover, Pine View also earned the AP Access Award, which demonstrates Pine View's commitment to ensuring all students access a highly rigorous program of studies including college level coursework. This award is earned when the overall percentage of underrepresented and/or low income students accessing the AP program is the same as or greater than the percentage in the school's graduating class that year.

Congratulations, Pine View! Once again, Pine View School was ranked very high on one of the many national school ranking publications. Niche.com ranked Pine View as the #2 elementary school *in the US*, the #3 middle school *in the US*, the #5 magnet high school *in the US*, and the #10 overall *best high school in America!* Way to go, Pine View, in continuing our longstanding tradition of excellence! Achievements like this are only possible through your support, our students' hard work, and incredible teachers who inspire, motivate, and challenge our students to do their best. Way to go the extra degree!

On the November 5th general election ballot, the last question pertains to renewing the 1 mill referendum for Sarasota County Schools. I believe PVA will be sharing more information, but for a complete list of what those funds go toward supporting at Pine View, and throughout the district, please, visit the Sarasota County schools' main webpage.

Our Pine View students, in grades 2 through 12, have been taking beginning of the year assessments, and many students have come home sharing their reactions to the STAR, or FAST assessments, or even the PSAT, SAT, or ACT they may have taken recently. We post our testing calendars on our website, so if you want to see information relevant to your student- take a minute a look at the calendar. We also sent home copies of the assessment results, and for both STAR and FAST, specifically shared that *these should not be interpreted as achievement results*. All students at Pine View are likely to test extremely well, and likely demonstrate above grade level competency. Our students outperformed everyone in the district and the state, and are exactly where we would expect them to be. Our teachers are using these data points simply as a check-in for where the students are, and Progress Monitoring will continue throughout the year. The School Improvement Plan (SIP) is regularly reviewed by the School Advisory Council, and available review.

It is an honor and privilege to lead such an amazing school, and we are very fortunate that we were able to have recognized our National Merit Semi-finalists and National Merit Commended Scholars recently, planning activities with the Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee to remember and honor Holocaust survivors and marking Holocaust Education Week at Pine View, and creating and sharing resource materials and videos for teachers throughout Sarasota County. Now more than ever, remembering that we cannot allow hate to prevail is incredibly important in our support of civil discourse, dialogue, and

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civic engagement. We also will be proudly partnering with our School Advisory Council (SAC), for our annual Veterans' Day celebration. Again, congratulations to Pine View for being recognized by the College Board as a Platinum Level award winner, as well as earning the Access Award by ensuring that our students are prepared for success in taking college level courses at Pine View and far surpass achievement levels in Florida and the world mean scores. These are just a few of the almost endless list of amazing programs and initiatives that serve to create a special place where we nurture the growth of gifted learners- *in partnership with you*. Oftentimes, "the negative" or "the noise" is what gets talked about or what we may see on social media- *but the reality is that we have amazing teachers who pour their hearts and souls into lifting up and preparing our students, incredibly supportive parents and community members, and absolutely wonderful students for whom we all dedicate everything we do!* We encourage all Pine View parents, and community members to be the stronger, heard, share your voices, and to share the messages of success and achievement. We encourage everyone to exercise your right to vote on November 5th.

Happy Fall, Pine View!
Stephen P. Covert, Ph.D.
Principal

Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does. --William James

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News from the Board Room

The PVA Board of Directors met on Tuesday, August 13, in the Pine View Student Union to review the annual budget, hear reports from the administration and committee chairs, and review funding requests.

The PVA Board heard from Principal Dr. Stephen Covert, as he summarized his written report as submitted, emphasizing the fact that Pine View School earned the highest school grade in the state. Dr. Covert also spoke about the State Equity Laws, the upcoming Superintendent's Community Forum/Town Hall regarding the Referendum, and reviewed the list of new faculty/staff assignments, as well as announcing any "new to Pine View" personnel.

Because this was the first Board Meeting of the school year, the PVA Teacher Representatives did not have reports to share.

VP of Sponsorship, Silke Cuff, shared a preliminary fundraising update, while VP of School Support, Jaime Heath, informed the board that Wendy Teague will lead PACE for the 2024-2025 school year. VP of Communications, Debbi Wolfinger was happy to announce that all Pine View Parents/Guardians who do not specifically opt out are now officially part of PVA.

PVA President, Puja Dhanraj, presented the 2024-2025 budget. Because several line items - specifically related to software/website costs and College/Career updates - were still in flux, the Board chose to wait until the September meeting to finalize the budget.

The following PVA board meeting was held at 6:00 PM Tuesday, September 17, in the student union.

The Board heard funding requests from the Rocketry Club and NASA Space Club, followed by a report from Treasurer Wendy Teague, who reviewed PVA's finances and presented her report as submitted.

Principal Dr. Stephen Covert announced this year's teachers of the year with a special announcement for Pine View's overall teacher of the year, Ms. Maggie Higgins. Dr. Covert summarized his report as submitted with an emphasis on Pine View's 25 National Merit Semifinalists and 30 Commended Scholars.

The Board then heard reports from each School Representative: Andy Vitkus, Edward Stumpf, and David Mannino. After this, Lesley Sachs, Debbi Wolfinger, and Gretchen Lovewell discussed the upcoming Referendum.

The PVA Board learned of several updates in the College and Career department during a presentation by Mr. Lance Bergman.

All Board Committee Chairs shared updates, followed by a vote to approve the 2024-2025 PVA budget, and an additional vote to approve the funding requests for the Rocketry Club and NASA Space Club.

Get to Know PVA Board

Executive Committee



Puja Dhanraj
President
pujadhanraj@yourpva.org

What is/are your connection(s) to Pine View?

I am a very proud PV alumna and started in 4th grade at the old campus - we moved to the current campus when I was in 8th grade. My husband Chris and I have two children, Alexander and Annabelle, who are both students at Pine View in 9th grade and 6th grade, respectively. Since Pine View has given me so many wonderful memories, I am absolutely thrilled that our kids now have the opportunity to experience the magic of Pine View for themselves!

How did you end up in Sarasota?

I was born in Sarasota, so I am a native Floridian! I graduated from Pine View in 1998 and headed to the University of Pennsylvania for college and graduate school. I spent 20+ years in Philadelphia, New York and Westport, CT before we moved back to Sarasota in 2020 to be closer to family.

Why did you get involved in PVA and what is your role?

I have always been very involved in my kids' schools and became President of the PVA Board in February 2023. My nine years at Pine View were some of the best years of my life and the school is incredibly special to me. I know that many of the opportunities I have had, I owe in large part to my Pine View education. Ultimately, I got involved with PVA to help give back to the school that I feel has given so much to me.

Silke Cuff

VP of Sponsorship, Peramathon, Python 5K

Silkec@yourpva.org

What's your connection to Pine View?

I have a daughter in 5th grade and a son in 7th grade. They both started at Pine View as second graders and we have loved our elementary school experience. The teachers go above and beyond to help the students find their passions and to make them look at learning in a different light.

How did you end up in Sarasota?

I met my husband just before he moved to Sarasota in 2007. I moved here in 2010, and our kids were born here. We couldn't imagine raising them anywhere else.

Why did you get involved in PVA and what is your role?

I became involved with my kids' schools when they were in preschool and had different levels of involvement. I started volunteering in the office three years ago, and it made me feel more connected to the school. I was asked to chair Peramathon 2022, and that's how my journey to the PVA Board began.

Get to Know PVA Board (continued)



Debbi Wolfinger
VP of Communications, Membership, Volunteers
deborah.wolfinger@yourpva.org

What's your connection to Pine View?

I have a 12th grader, Brooke, and a 9th grader, Tyler, attending Pine View. My introduction to Pine View was 27 years ago when my husband Scott started teaching here. So before even having my kids enrolled, I was able to understand the Pine View culture where I have met so many wonderful students and families.

Why did you get involved in PVA and what is your role?

After volunteering at the front desk, being the homeroom mom, and helping wherever needed around campus, I was approached to join the PVA. I have been on the board for five years now. I am on the executive board as VP of Communications. My goal is to help keep families informed and connected. I am proud to serve as a PVA member.



Wendy Teague
Treasurer, PACE, Grade Representatives
Wendy.teague@yourpva.org

What is/are your connection(s) to Pine View?

My daughters attend Pine View. Taylor is in 10th grade and Lilly is in 8th grade.

How did you end up in Sarasota?

I grew up in Sarasota but moved away after high school. My family and I decided to move back to be closer to family and have our girls attend Pine View.

Why did you get involved in PVA and what is your role?

I am the treasurer of PVA and I help out with P.A.C.E.



Dana Moretta
Secretary, Pine View Pride, Giving Challenge
dana.moretta@yourpva.org

What's your connection to Pine View?

When we moved to Sarasota our children attended Southside Elementary. We owe a huge thank you to our son's second grade teacher who acted incredibly fast to have our son, Giovanni, tested, which led to the school's recommendation and strong encouragement to attend Pine View. Giovanni started Pine View the following year as a third grader and has had incredible academic opportunities ever since.

How did you end up in Sarasota?

Our family is from New York. We moved to Sarasota in 2019 for a fabulous job opportunity my husband could not pass up! We feel so fortunate to raise our children in this amazing community.

Get to Know PVA Board (continued)

Why did you get involved with PVA and what is your role?

I was an elementary school teacher in NY for 17 years and have always been involved with parent committees, either as the teacher representative, or as the parent within my own children's schools. I believe a strong connection between home and school is important for a child's success. I was eager to get involved at Pine View and was always looking for volunteer opportunities. Currently I am the PV Pride co-chair and have been in this role for the last two years. Last year, an opportunity to join the PVA board was announced, so I decided to run for the position. Pine View is an incredibly special school, and I am so honored to be part of the PVA and assist the teachers and staff in any way I can!

Board of Directors



Ariana Haxhij
Pine Views Co-Editor
ariana.haxhij@yourpva.org

What is/are your connection(s) to Pine View?

My husband Kastriot and I have one child, Alexander, who is a 10th grader at Pine View. This is his second year at Pine View and it has been a wonderful experience for him. We are very excited and grateful to be part of the Pine View Family.

How did you end up in Sarasota?

My husband Kastriot and I used to vacation in different parts of Florida, as a young couple, and continued that tradition even after our son Alexander was born and old enough to travel. Fast-forward, after a couple of road trips to Florida during the pandemic, our son fell in love with the area and each time he would say "are we moving to Florida?", "we definitely should buy a house and move here"... That's all it took in order for us to start looking for high schools, and Pine View stood out, one of the top public high schools in the country and its unique academic program and culture. Our next road trip from Northern VA was moving to Sarasota a few years ago.

Why did you get involved in PVA and what is your role?

Pine View is a great community, with dedicated staff and faculty, and I do enjoy investing my time in building a collaborative relationship with staff and the community. Also, the opportunity to continue being involved with our son's education and get to know so many wonderful teachers who go the extra mile to ensure students' success. While this is my first year as a PVA board member, I've had the opportunity of volunteering in quite a few activities at Pine View, prior to becoming a board member, where I was approached to join the PVA. I feel privileged to continue working with so many wonderful PVA team members and non PVA parents to provide support to all Pine View students and provide my contribution to Pine Views as well.

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Get to Know PVA Board (continued)

Cindy Jaramillo

Pinnacle

cindy@yourpva.org

What is/are your connection(s) to Pine View?

My daughter is in 8th grade and my son is in 7th.

How did you end up in Sarasota?

Lots of family moved here, I visited often and fell in love with the area.

Why did you get involved in PVA and what is your role?

I have always been involved in my kids' school PTOs; I think it is so important. I am the returning Pinnacle Chair!



Gretchen Lovewell

Funding Requests

gretchenl@yourpva.org

What's your connection to Pine View?

Our eighth grader, Raleigh started PV in third grade. We were previously at Bay Haven Elementary. Raleigh's first and second grade teachers were Pine View parents and encouraged us to make the move. We're so happy we listened and are grateful to be part of the Pine View community!

How did you end up in Sarasota?

As a child in Michigan, we used to vacation to the area and began coming here for various field projects in 2002. We moved to Sarasota in 2009 when I took a job at Mote Marine Laboratory as a staff scientist to run their Stranding Investigations Program.

Why did you get involved in PVA and what is your role?

I came onto the board when Raleigh was in 5th grade. With middle school approaching, I wanted a way to stay more involved with the school and have been serving as the funding request chair since May 2020 and treasurer since March 2023.



Tatyana Shaitanoff

Grade Representatives

tatyana.shaitanoff@yourpva.org

What is/are your connection(s) to Pine View?

Before joining Pine View three years ago, our family had been on a decade-long journey looking for an academically rigorous and nurturing educational program for our four children: Alexander (10th grade), Nicholas (8th grade), Anastasia (5th grade), and Timothy (3rd grade). Having the opportunity to compare our experience with various gifted schools and programs across several states has given us a deep appreciation for how uniquely exceptional Pine View is. We are excited and profoundly grateful to be a part of the Pine View Family.

(continued on page 15)

Get to Know PVA Board (continued)

How did you end up in Sarasota?

Our family moved from Long Island, NY, to Sarasota, FL, three years ago specifically for Pine View. Remote employment opportunities enabled us to expand our search for gifted schools nationwide, and Pine View immediately stood out. We are deeply grateful to Pine View teachers and families, as well as the Sarasota community as a whole, for the amazing years shared so far.

Why did you get involved in PVA and what is your role?

It's inspiring to see how many Pine View parents volunteer, contribute, and share their expertise and passion through PVA. I was excited to join the PVA community-building initiative, and together with a group of phenomenal parents who volunteered as Grade Representatives, we are working on creating opportunities for PV students to socialize outside of the school campus and build fun lifelong memories together. If you are interested in joining the Grade Representative team, please don't hesitate to contact PVA.



Jeffrey Steinwachs

jeff.steinwachs@yourpva.org

What is your connection to PV?

We have twins, Will and Caroline, who started in 3rd grade at Pine View and are now in 12th grade. Their older sister, Abby, attended Pine View from 2nd grade and graduated in 2021.

How did you end up in Sarasota?

My wife, Ellen, and I moved to the Sarasota area in 1997 from San Francisco for a family business. We sold the business a few years later but ended up staying because we had family in the area.

Why did you get involved with PVA and what is your role?

My wife and I have been involved with Pine View in many ways over the years. As we look towards the end of our time at Pine View, we wanted to help the teachers and administrators that make Pine View special and strengthen the PVA and the school for the future.



Lindsay Sweeting

Pine Views Co-Editor

lindsay.sweeting@yourpva.org

What is/are your connection(s) to Pine View?

My daughter, Tyler, is in the fifth grade here at Pine View.

How did you end up in Sarasota?

My husband was born and raised in Sarasota. Before moving back, we lived in Asheville, North Carolina, where Tyler was born, and where we continue to live for part of each year. Work brought us back to the Gulf Coast, where we were thrilled to welcome our second daughter, Jay, who is in the first grade.

Why Did you get involved in PVA and what is your role?

I became involved in PVA by way of Peramathon during Tyler's first year at Pine View. After that, I supported

(continued on page 16)

Get to Know PVA Board (continued)

the planning committee the following year, and attended several PVA Board meetings as a result. It was then that I realized the impact of PVA in the lives of Pine View students, who are given the chance to explore their interests thanks to the incredible number of clubs and organizations that exist on campus. When I realized how vast the opportunities at Pine View can be - due to unwavering encouragement from our exceptional Pine View teachers, coupled with the support provided by PVA - I hoped to find a way to contribute. It's an honor to be part of the Pine View community as a PVA Board member, and I look forward to sharing exciting events and updates from campus as one of the editors of Pine Views.



Lilly Thomas
Pine View Fair, Pavers
lilly.thomas@yourpva.org

What is your connection to Pine View?

We have two children that currently attend Pine View School. Noah, who is starting his 6th grade year, and Riley, who is starting her 4th grade year, have thrived at Pine View with the support from the amazing teachers and staff. Pine View has been the perfect fit for my kids and family, and we cannot wait to continue our journey for many years to come.

How did you end up in Sarasota?

I was born and raised in Sarasota. I left Sarasota to attend college at Auburn University, and later moved to St. Louis, MO where I met my husband, Stephen. In 2016, we decided to move back to Florida to raise our children close to family and friends.

Why did you get involved with PVA and what is your role?

I come from a family of teachers and have always enjoyed helping around the school, either in the classrooms, on field trips or through parent organizations. When son Noah started attending Pine View, I began volunteering around campus and in the office. I joined the PVA to learn more ways to get involved in supporting our students and have truly enjoyed every minute. Last year, to expand my involvement, I volunteered to lead the PV Fair Committee. It seemed to be a natural progression to join the Board and continue to be involved with the many things PVA does to support the school, staff, and its students.

Wendy Williams
Faculty & Staff Appreciation
wendy.williams@yourpva.org

What is/are your connection(s) to Pine View?

I have 8th and 10th graders at Pine View.

How did you end up in Sarasota?

We moved here in 2017 for my husband's (Brian) job.

Why did you get involved in PVA and what is your role?

I was drawn to PVA as it is such a well run organization with so much to offer the school, staff and families. I am the Faculty and Staff Appreciation Chair.

(continued on page 17)

Get to Know PVA Board (continued)

Alumni Representatives



Dr. Manav Malik
manavm@yourpva.org

What's your connection to Pine View?

My connection with Pine View spans 35 years. I had the good fortune of attending Pine View on both the original and current campuses from 1989-1999 (grades 2-12). Ten years as a PV student were some of the most enriching and memorable years of my life. I knew that I wanted to give back to our school from the moment I left. After returning

to Sarasota in 2011 to open SmileWorks, my pediatric dental practice, I reconnected with Pine View through a business partnership. Since then, I've enjoyed being involved in as many ways as possible: volunteering regularly at school fundraisers, classroom events, speaking at Career Day, helping found the Python Run in 2014, and presenting alumni scholarships to graduating Seniors. One of my former SmileWorks team members is even a current 2nd grade PV teacher (Ms. Lengyel). Pine View holds a special place in my heart. Above all, the most endearing connection is being a PV parent of 2nd generation Pine View students - my son is in 7th grade and daughter is in 4nd grade.

What do you like most about Pine View?

The people and the environment. The students, teachers, and administrators are incredibly dedicated, motivated, and talented. The environment is supportive, non-judgmental, and enriching. The synergy of the community and the environment creates the "magic" that many of us Pine View alums feel.

Paige Samson Wyant

paige.wyant@yourpva.org

What is/are your connection(s) to Pine View?

I was a part of the Class of 2001, and attended Pine View from 2nd to 12th grade

How did you end up in Sarasota?

I grew up here! I left to go to school in Atlanta, moved up to NYC for 3.5 years, transferred my job out west and lived in LA for 8 years...and then ultimately moved back to marry my husband David Wyant, who also went to Pine View (Class of 2001) from 2nd-12th grade!

Why did you get involved in PVA and what is your role?

To maintain my relationship with — and support — the school that means so very much to me and played such an important role in my development.

Bios Unavailable:

Jamie Heath, VP School Support, Webmaster

Kyla Weiner, Board Member

Ben Turoff, Alumni Rep.

Get Involved with your PVA!

Keep the Tradition of Excellence Alive

From one-day events to everyday services, PVA manages many initiatives that serve to enhance your child(ren)'s education, boost spirits and raise funds for school projects. We invite you to read through this list of PVA's committees, find one (or many!) that interests you, and reach out to the committee chairs and join us in helping Pine View continue to be a special place.

Event Committees

Read-A-Thon

Shauna Wagner, Nancy Vigna

readathon@yourpva.org

Readathon is a student-driven literacy fundraising event that helps kids get excited about reading while raising funds for Pine View. This year's Read-A-Thon raised over **\$20,000!** We're already preparing for next year - please join us.

P.A.C.E. (Partners to Achieve Classroom Excellence)

Wendy Teague

PACE@yourpva.org

The PVA P.A.C.E. committee generates valuable donations for our teachers and instructional staff to purchase additional classroom items such as: software, classroom books, visual aids, enrichment materials and many other items. Unlimited P.A.C.E. donations may be made per classroom. It is not necessary for your child to be in the classroom(s) that you choose to sponsor.

Pine View Fair

Lilly Thomas

Fairchair@yourpva.org

The annual Pine View Fair is Pine View's biggest (and most fun) event of the school year! The fair is a chance to explore club & teacher booths, enjoy lunch, and even a chance to see some special guests in "The Dunk Tank!" All proceeds go directly to our clubs and teachers. If you're looking for a great opportunity to support your child's school and enjoy a fantastic day, please consider contributing. We will need committee members, sponsors, donations and volunteers for the day. This year's Pine View Fair raised over \$32,000! Planning is already underway for next year's Fair - help make it an even bigger success!

Peramathon

Silke Cuff and Katie Padgett

peramathon@yourpva.org

This student-led fundraising event is an annual Pine View tradition that supports our incredible school. Students are encouraged to collect pledges from family and friends to earn prizes in the weeks leading up to the Peramathon. On Peramathon day, November 22, 2024, elementary and middle school students will walk, jog, or
(continued on page 19)

Get Involved ∞ *continued from page 18*

run around the track for an hour while a DJ plays their favorite music. Parents are encouraged to come cheer on the kids as they spend an hour on the track. The top three girls and boys in each grade are recognized for their effort in an awards ceremony after the event.

Pinnacle

Cindy Jaramillo

pinnaclechair@yourpva.org, pinnacledonations@yourpva.org

Pinnacle is our annual dinner gala and auction fundraiser event for Pine View. This school year's event will be held on Saturday, February 1, 2025. Volunteers are needed for event production, decorations, fashion & art entertainment and donations.

Python Run

Race Directors: Silke Cuff, Kristy Ochsendorf

silkec@yourpva.org or kbooth9@gmail.com

The Python Run is a community wide 5K race and 1-mile fun run. This is a wonderful event for families as well as competitive runners to enjoy a safe race course with a fast finish on the Pine View track. This event is sanctioned by the Manasota Track Club and supports health initiatives at Pine View. It is scheduled for Saturday, March 29, 2025.

Year-Round Activities

Faculty & Staff Appreciation

Wendy Williams, Stacey Wood

info@yourpva.org

This group provides meals and gifts to faculty and staff to share our appreciation for all that they do. We provide catered meals during the open houses and the beginning of the school year staff meeting (August). During Faculty and Staff Appreciation Week this group provides meals, treats, and gifts every day for a week (April). Volunteers are requested for serving meals, clean up, delivery and donations.

Garden Committee

Lesley Sachs

lesleybowlingsachs@gmail.com

The PV Garden is a student-powered micro-farm where students plant, maintain, and eat the fruits of their labor. The Garden features a composting program, pollinator gardens, succulent garden, food forest, and annual crops grown with organic and permaculture methods.

The Garden is accessible for students to visit during elementary and middle school student recess periods and for high school Garden Club. Teachers can use the Garden as on-campus field trip and as an extension of teachers' classroom curriculum.

If you like spending time outdoors and engaging with students, please consider joining the Garden Committee. Volunteers do not need any garden experience or even a "green thumb" to participate. We also accept donations of gently used garden equipment, building supplies, plants and seeds.

(continued on page 20)

(continued from page 19)

Pine View Pride

Dana Moretta

dana.moretta@yourpva.org

Pine View Pride is the student recognition program for school students from 2nd to 12th grade. After each quarter, those students who earn all A's or A's and B's for Elementary School and 3.5 or 4.0 GPA for Middle and High School are eligible to enjoy a special prize. Elementary School students receive fruit bars or a smoothie, Middle School students receive a smoothie or lunch and High School students receive breakfast or lunch. Volunteers are needed to help on the day of the event to check kids in and to serve the prizes, on the chosen dates. The event runs on a Friday in November, February and April.

Proud Python

Lauren Fineman, Elena Reuter

laurenfineman@hotmail.com or ereuter11@gmail.com

Proud Python is one of Pine View's many ways of acknowledging students for their accomplishments. Each month, teachers may submit a recommendation for one student (per subject taught) whom they feel has in some way made an extra effort or progress in their classwork or attitude. The award may be for excellent work, positive attitude, effort or creative effort, kindness to others, always being on task, always being prepared, (excellent) work habits, leadership, honesty & integrity, being dependable, etc.

Elementary students receive a Proud Python button, a personal letter from Dr. Covert and an invitation to meet with Dr. Covert and Assistant Principal Roy Sprinkle in the Student Union for another treat: a frozen fruit bar or a Proud Python bookmark/ruler. The students gather in the cafeteria for their treat and one of the administrators speaks with the children and draws 5 names for additional prizes of \$3 gift vouchers for the school store. Middle school students receive a personal letter and a \$3 voucher for the school store. High school students are acknowledged with a similar letter and a bookmark.

Pine Views

Lindsay Sweeting, Ariana Haxhijaj

pineviews@yourpva.org

Pine Views is the PVA magazine, created by Pine View families for Pine View families. Every issue is full of "news you can use" – contact information for Pine View School staff, forms, notices, calendars and more. It's also a place where we celebrate the accomplishments of students, faculty and staff with photos and stories. You can help with Pine Views just by sending us photos or news about exciting happenings in the Pine View "world." If you'd like to do more – proofread, or even "cover" something happening on campus, please reach out to us at pineviews@yourpva.org.

School Store

Diane Thompson, Lisa Brown

pvstore@yourpva.org

Our amazing Pine View School Store provides a convenient place for students to shop within a school setting. We are open Monday - Friday during lunch periods for all grades. We offer a variety of reasonably priced items - school supplies, educational, practical and novelty - that students can enjoy themselves or share with a friend. The store is a service fully funded by PVA and operated by PVA volunteers.

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Finish Your Election Ballot:

Sarasota Votes on Public Education Funding

Every four years, Sarasota County residents have the opportunity to vote on the Millage Ad Valorem Referendum to support Sarasota County Public Schools. The Referendum is on the November 5th general election ballot for the first time this year and will secure a critical source of Sarasota County public school funding through 2030. Since its inception in 2002, Sarasota voters have overwhelmingly approved this property tax to benefit Sarasota County public schools.

The Referendum collects \$1 for every \$1,000 of assessed property value, after reductions for deductions and homestead exemptions, and 100% of the money collected stays in our community to support student education. Sarasota County School District is projected to receive \$114 Million per year in funding from 2026 - 2030 for its traditional public and charter schools from the Referendum without additional taxes. The Financial Advisory Committee, composed of local business members, provides oversight of the budget to ensure proper use of funds.

The Referendum is critical to providing and maintaining “A-Rated” education in Sarasota County. Currently, eighty-five (85) percent of traditional Sarasota County Public Schools have earned an “A” or “B” rating from the Florida Department of Education. The Referendum helps pay for educational resources, allows Sarasota County public schools to provide additional instructional time equaling 18 extra school days per year, supports safety and campus security measures, and enables Sarasota County public schools to recruit and retain talented educators.

Pine View School received over \$2 Million in Referendum funding to fund 25 staff positions, including campus security and monitorial aides, counselors, art teachers, music teachers and many more. Referendum funding provides eleven (11) percent of Pine View School’s 2023 operating budget with the remainder of its operating budget comprised of grants and state and federal sources. The Pine View Association (PVA) supplements educational enrichment, campus activities, and student initiatives through fundraising and community sponsorships.

Sarasota County residents benefit from “A-Rated” schools regardless of whether or not they have a student currently attending a public school. For every \$1 spent on public education, home values increase by \$20 in the community — that’s an incredible return on investment for homeowners. Additionally, student achievement results in economic growth for the entire community. A five-percent improvement in state test scores in a public school can raise property values by 2.5% in the surrounding community! Highly performing schools attract an educated workforce, increase wages, and decrease crime. Simply put, we all benefit when we invest in public schools that provide high-quality education to our students.

When you vote this November (early voting begins in October) be sure to look for the Ad Valorem Millage Referendum to fund Sarasota County Public Schools — the last item on your ballot.

To learn more about the Referendum visit www.SarasotaCountySchools.net/Referendum

¹ “Using Market Valuation to Assess Public School Spending,” NBER Working Paper No. 9054, Lisa Barrow and Cecilia Rouse, January, 2023, <https://www.nber.org/digest/jan03/school-spending-raises-property-values>

² “Good Schools: Affordable Homes: finding Suburban Sweet Spots”, Quoc Trung Bui and Conor Dougherty, New York Times, March 30, 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/03/30/upshot/good-schools-affordable-homes-suburban-sweet-spots.html?mcubz=1&mtrref=undefined&gwh=383FB3DA9180B210B8ABE396AD2EA184&gwt=pay&assetType=PAYWALL>

³ “The Impact of Educational Quality on the Community,” Stephen J. Carroll, Ethan Scherer, RAND Corporation, 2008, https://www.rand.org/pubs/documented_briefings/DB562.html

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Stephen P. Covert
Principal

Lana Marcotte
Asst. Principal of Curriculum

Kira Bryant
Asst. Principal, Gr. 9-12

Melissa Abela
Asst. Principal, Gr. 6-8

Roy Sprinkle
Asst. Principal, Gr. 2-5

Lance Bergman
College Resource Advisor, Gr. 12

Dr. Lori Wiley
College & Career Advisor, Gr. 8-11 AP
Coordinator

Eileen Cabrera
ESE Instructional Facilitator/Admissions

Kristin McCombie
ESE Instructional Facilitator/ESOL, EP

Allen Regar
School Counselor, HS A-L

Drew Grissell
School Counselor, HS M-Z

Lynn Halcomb
School Counselor, MS

Bobby Velasquez
School Counselor, Elementary

Office

Denise Valentine
Admin. Assistant, Principal

Sue Manders
Registrar

Carole McLaughlin
Admissions Secretary

Nadine Feraco
Admin. Assistant, Asst.
Principal Curriculum

Cari Linehan
Registrar Assistant

Gina Verdino
Attendance Secretary

Lori Growt
Admin. Assistant
Asst. Principal Gr. 2-5

Teri Fisher
Bookkeeper

Candice Garutti
HS Guidance Secretary

Gena Bufkin
Admin. Assistant
Asst. Principal Gr. 6-8

Faith Kona
Bookkeeper Assistant

Mary King
MS Guidance Secretary

Alycia Poteralski
Admin. Assistant
Asst. Principal Gr. 9-12

Angie Wittstruck
Student Union Manager

Mikayla Haynes
Elementary Guidance
Secretary

Laura VanHorne
Career Advisor

Misty Wells-Wimbish
Health Room LPN

Denise Smith
Receptionist

Katherine Servidio
DOH RN

Alyson Treadway
Receptionist

Laura Valek
Health Room Aide

Eugene Williams
School Resource Officer

Aides

Library/Media Aide: Pat Morgerson
Technology Support: Hugo Guardado Henriquez, Eddie Yefremov



If You Need ...

PVA provides this list to help you know whom to call when you need assistance on a specific topic. When in doubt, ask the wonderful staff and volunteers at the front desk. They are always there to help.

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 Main Office Hours: 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM
 Media Center Hours: 7:00 AM to 3:30 PM

Activities Calendar	Nadine Feraco
Activity Bus	Front Desk
Admissions	Eileen Cabrera
Announcements	Nadine Feraco
Attendance	Gina Verdino
Custodial Assistance	Front Desk
Deposit/Withdrawal of Funds	Teri Fisher
Intramural Information	Joe Digiacomio
Medical Attention	Misty Wells-Wimbush, LPN; Katherine Servidio, DOH RN
Student Parking	Front Desk
Student Sign In/Sign Out	Front Desk
Student Activities	Pat Morgerson
Student ID Badges	Guidance Dept.
To Report Theft or Vandalism	Officer Eugene Williams
Bus Transportation	941-486-2141
Transcript Request	Sue Manders
Withdrawal from School	Sue Manders

Regular Class Schedule

Period 1	7:21 AM - 8:13 AM
Period 2	8:18 AM - 9:10 AM
Moment of Silence	9:15 AM
Period 3	9:15 AM - 10:10 AM
Period 4	10:15 AM - 11:07 AM
Period 5	11:12 AM - 12:04 PM
Period 6	12:09 PM - 1:01 PM
Period 7	1:06 PM - 1:58 PM
Period 8	2:03 PM - 2:55 PM
Period 9	3:00 PM - 3:52 PM

Advisory Day Class Schedule

Period 1	7:21 AM - 8:13 AM
Period 2	8:18 AM - 9:10 AM
Moment of Silence	9:15 AM
Advisory	9:15 AM - 10:01 AM
Period 3	10:05 AM - 10:46 AM
Period 4	10:50 AM - 11:31 AM
Period 5	11:35 AM - 12:16 PM
Period 6	12:20 PM - 1:01 PM
Period 7	1:06 PM - 1:58 PM
Period 8	2:03 PM - 2:55 PM
Period 9	3:00 PM - 3:52 PM

Pine View School Mission Statement

The mission of Pine View School is to provide a qualitatively different learning environment that nurtures a passion for intellectual curiosity, encourages risk-taking, independence and innovation, and is committed to a tradition of academic excellence and social responsibility.

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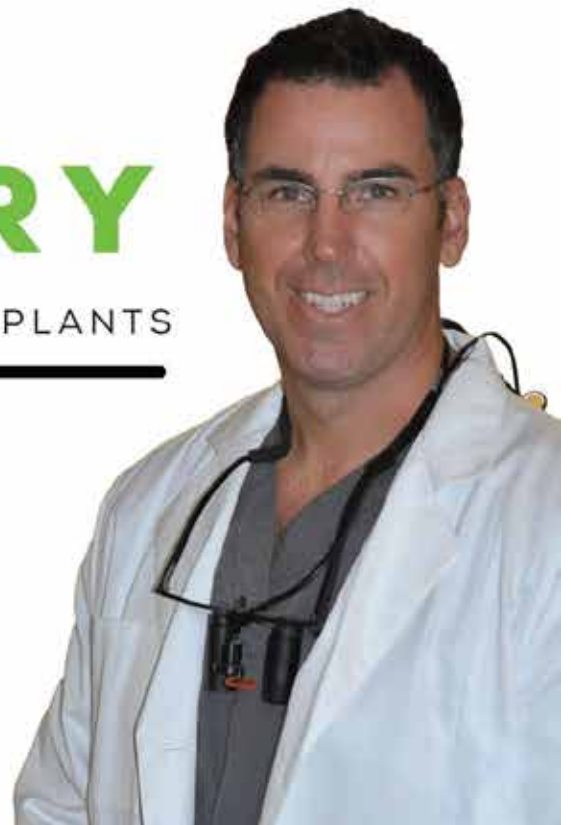
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After the Storm: Parent-Child Practices to Help Gifted Kids Heal after Natural Disasters

By Sarah Workman, JD, MSW Safe School Liaison



Natural disasters, such as hurricanes, can be overwhelming for any child, yet gifted kids are in a particularly vulnerable position when it comes to these events as their heightened emotional sensitivity and cognitive awareness often make them more prone to anxiety and stress. While many approaches can have healing benefits when supported by a steady, stable, present adult with whom the child feels safe, the current gold standard in the realm of trauma healing has moved us away from talk therapy, which can risk retraumatization, and toward somatic techniques, which work with regulating and soothing the nervous system's response to events. Specifically, Somatic Experiencing, or "SE."

What Is Somatic Experiencing?

Somatic Experiencing is a trauma healing approach that focuses on the body's sensations and the nervous system's responses. During his decades of research on mammalian behavior, Dr. Levine observed that animals in the wild often experience stressful events but recover quickly, as their bodies instinctively know how to release the energy stored during the fight-or-flight response.

From this discovery, Dr. Levine developed Somatic Experiencing techniques - practices that help individuals become more aware of their physical sensations, track them, and process these feelings in a safe and gradual way.

By learning to track and understand the body's signals, children can develop greater awareness of their internal states and gain control over their emotional responses. SE (semi-miraculously, at least in my mind) helps release the survival energy that may be trapped in their bodies after a traumatic experience, preventing long-term dysregulation and fostering resilience.

Steps for Parents to Use Somatic Experiencing with Gifted Children

1. Create a Safe and Supportive Environment

After a natural disaster, it's important to re-establish a sense of safety and routine for your child. Gifted children, as we know, often process events on multiple levels—intellectually, emotionally, and physically. To help them feel grounded, first ensure their basic needs for comfort and security are met. Allow them to share their experiences but be mindful when they need a break from rehashing. A stable, nurturing environment provides a foundation for healing.

2. Introduce the Concept of Body Awareness

Explain to your kiddo that the body holds on to stress even after a scary event has passed. You might say, "Sometimes when we feel scared, our bodies get stuck in that feeling, even after the danger is gone. By paying attention to how our body feels, we can help it calm down."

Encourage your child to notice sensations in their body when they feel anxious or upset. Ask questions like, "What do you feel in your stomach?" or "Are your muscles tight or relaxed right now?" This helps them become more attuned to their body's signals, which is a key part of SE. *(continued on page 40)*

(continued from page 39)

3. Practice Grounding Exercises

Grounding is a simple but effective technique for helping young people feel more connected to the present moment, reducing anxiety and fear. One approach is to invite your child to sit or stand with both feet firmly on the ground. Ask them to notice the sensations in their feet as they press into the floor. You can also guide them through deep breathing exercises, encouraging them to take slow, deliberate breaths, paying attention to how their body feels with each inhale and exhale.

4. Use “Titration” to Release Stored Trauma

Titration is a core Somatic Experiencing technique that involves gradually processing trauma by focusing on small, manageable pieces of the experience rather than the entire event at once. For example, if your child starts talking about the disaster and becomes overwhelmed, gently guide them to a neutral or calming topic, such as a favorite memory or a comforting activity. Then, you can slowly return to discussing the difficult experience in small doses, allowing their nervous system to process it without becoming overwhelmed. This back-and-forth between comfort and stress helps release the trauma in small, controlled ways, preventing emotional overload.

5. Encourage Movement and Physical Activity

Gifted kids, like all children, benefit from physical movement to help release stored survival charge. Encourage them to engage in physical activities (running, dancing, stretching on the couch) to help discharge any lingering tension. Wrestling or playing freeze tag and other playful movement can also help lighten the emotional load they may be carrying.

So parents... these are a lot of ideas! How do these techniques land in your system? What happens inside for you as you consider trying something new with your young person? Where does the intensity show up in your body?

Notice the sensation inside, describe it using sensation words (tight, loose, open, closed, etc.), and pay attention to what happens next. See, you're doing SE already! Soon you'll be a tracking pro and a confident guide for your child's trauma processing, from Accidental falls to Zany weather situations (<- See what I did there?). Seriously, the evidence shows that by focusing on body awareness, grounding, and gentle trauma release, parents can empower their children to regain control over their emotions and nervous system, helping them feel safe, calm, and stable once again.

Helping Gifted Children Build Resilience

Our kids and teens are amazing, and we work hard to support their wellbeing and success, yet we know life happens... and in Florida that can mean wild weather seasons. When these events arise, we know the combination of heightened sensitivity and intelligence can make gifted children more vulnerable to trauma's effects. However, by teaching our children Somatic Experiencing techniques, we give them tools to manage stress of both the present and the future.

Enjoying experimenting with the above, and please reach out to me, at sarah.workman@sarasotacountyschools.net with questions, for support, or to simply connect. Would love to hear from you, and wishing you and Happy (and quiet!) end of Hurricane Season!

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How To: Upload Attendance Excuse Note into Focus Portal

1. Log into the Focus Portal under the Families section on the Sarasota County Schools website.



2. After logging into the Focus Portal, you can access the Unexcused Absence for your student by either:



3. Either link will bring you to the Absences Summary page for your student where you will see the Unexcused absence(s) that need an excuse note. Upon placing your mouse in the Excuse Note 'No Files' box you will see the options to: Scan, Upload, or Take Photo.



4. Choose the option of Scan, Upload, or Take Photo that is appropriate for your situation. Please note that the acceptable file format for Scan or Upload is PDF only. A note can be written in Microsoft Word and exported as a PDF. Upon successful Scan, Upload, or Take Photo, the box should look as follows:



PLEASE NOTE: you will not receive a notification to save as this happens automatically after upload.

5. You have completed the Attendance Excuse Note submission process. If you leave the Absences page for your student, when you go back to the Absences page you will see that status has changed to Pending:

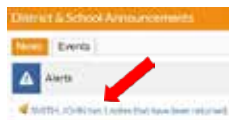


6. After the school's front office has reviewed the Excuse Note, it will be marked Approved and the attendance code will change to Excused as seen below:



OR

The Attendance Note will be marked Denied which will create an alert in the portal for your review:



Upon clicking on the Alert, you will be brought to the Absences page where you will see the Denied notice along with a link to View Message as to why it was denied and what needs to be done next.



For additional assistance, please contact Gina Verdino in the Front Office. Please note: Parents/Guardians may submit Attendance Notes via paper forms (found in the front office) or by emailing gina.verdino@sarasotacountyschools.net.



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Student Support

Meet the New School Counselors

Each issue of Pine Views will include a “Student Support” section written by our fantastic School Counselors. With the introduction of two new counselors for the 2024-2025 school year, the Pine Views team invited both to share a bit about themselves and their suggestions for coping with test anxiety.

Bobby Velasquez, School Counselor for Grades 2-5

What do you enjoy about working with elementary-aged students? I enjoy being able to encourage students regardless of age, but working with elementary kids is fun because they are so happy.

What do you like most about Pine View? So far everyone has been so kind and warm towards me since beginning at Pine View. Every kid is friendly, and all of the staff have been so grateful to have me, which feels nice. How do you like to spend your time outside of school? Outside of school I enjoy working out, spending time with my dog Jet, lounging out at the beach, reading, and watching sports.

What is your favorite tip for students who struggle with test-taking anxiety? My favorite tip for students who struggle with anxiety is to be present in the moment. If you are overly concerned with the future, you might get nervous or anxious wondering what could happen. If you’re stuck or overly worried about the past, you may not prepare the way you want for your future. For this reason, being present in the moment is the best thing you can do. It can be difficult and frustrating at times but if someone can master being present the rest will fall into place.

Drew Grissell, School Counselor for Grades 9-12

What do you enjoy about working with [high school] students? I enjoy building relationships with my students and seeing them mature. The change from 9th graders who are new to the high school experience, to seniors who are ready to head off to college is always fun to witness. I enjoy helping teens to succeed academically and socially while making a positive impact on their lives. My favorite part of working with high schoolers is when they finally realize they can truly talk to me about anything, without judgment, and seeing them open up a bit more.

What do you like most about Pine View? So far, I am enjoying the high level of student engagement in academics as well as the focus on students and parents actively being a part of the school community — it’s very inspiring!

How do you like to spend your time outside of school? I enjoy reading, playing classical guitar and learning about health and fitness. I have multiple fitness certifications and am currently working on both a yoga certification and a youth sports/mental health certification. Finally, traveling is my favorite thing to do during breaks - I try to take a solo cross country road trip every other summer to visit family in the Pacific Northwest.

What is your favorite tip for students who struggle with test-taking anxiety? For high school aged students, I like to remind them to focus on how they spend the night prior to a big test. For example: eating healthy foods, getting some exercise (outdoors!), going to bed early with no distractions, and enjoying a healthy breakfast the next morning. I encourage slower caffeine intake on their test day, as it can cause more anxiety. Finally, time management plays a huge role with test anxiety. Students who map out their study plan – so that they aren’t trying to cram a week’s worth of studying into one evening – may find that they experience less anxiety during their test.

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2024/2025

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OUT-OF-FIELD NOTIFICATION

Guidelines from the Department of Education requires schools to inform parents if any teachers are "Out-of-Field". For teachers at Pine View, this typically means they are lacking the courses for gifted education endorsement and/or ESOL. The following teachers are listed as "out-of-field": **Brooke Collins, Marisa Freedman, Meagan Hill-Jones, Katelyn Jordon, Alyson King, David Mannino, Pujja Patel and Cassandra Stanley**. All of our teachers in this category are currently enrolled in coursework that will address this "out-of-field" status.

SARASOTA COUNTY SCHOOLS

2024-2025 DISTRICT ACADEMIC CALENDAR

1960 Landings Blvd. Sarasota, FL 34231 Phone: 941.927.9000

JULY 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

1st - 5th - 240 Staff Non-Work Days
15th - 220 Staff Returns

AUGUST 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

5th - 196 Staff Return
12th - First Day for Students, 186 Staff

SEPTEMBER 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

2nd - Labor Day - Students, All Staff

OCTOBER 2024						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

18th Professional Day, Students, 186 Staff
25th - End of 1st Grading Period

NOVEMBER 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27			30

25th - 29th - Thanksgiving Break - Students, 186, 196, 220 Staff
27th - 29th - Thanksgiving Break - 240 Staff

DECEMBER 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

23rd - 31st - Winter Break - Students, All Staff

JANUARY 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19		21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

1st-3rd - Winter Break - Students All Staff
16th - End of 2nd Grading Period
17th - Professional Day - Students, 186 Staff
20th - MLK Day - Students, All Staff

FEBRUARY 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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16		18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

17th - Presidents Day - Students, All Staff

MARCH 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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2	3	4	5	6	7	8
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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

17th - 21st - Spring Break - Students, All Staff
28th - End of 3rd Grading Period

APRIL 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

18th - Mini Break - Students, 186, 196, 220 Staff

MAY 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25		27	28	29	30	31

26th - Memorial Day - Students, All Staff
29th - Last Day for Students, 186 Staff
30th - Last Day for 196 Staff

JUNE 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

12th - Last Day for 220 Staff

*orange highlighted days will be used as inclement weather make-up days if needed

REVISED 10/21/24 DV

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