

Pine View School

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Dear Pine View Middle School Families,

We have had a fabulous beginning to the school year! Classes are in full swing with coursework, and students are making new friends, and navigating their middle school schedules. We are excited to share some information about a new initiative with all of you. Read on to learn about Pine View Middle School's, *Away for the Day!*

You will probably not be surprised to hear that the Pine View faculty are avid learners and lifelong students of child development. We love to watch your children grow intellectually, but we are also very invested in their social and emotional development during these critical middle school years. One challenge is the increasingly prominent role that cell phones and electronics play in our adolescent's lives. We worry about the content students can be exposed to if they are not on the protected school network, as well the potentially distracting nature of watching videos, taking pictures, and using online communication.

One of the important functions of school is socialization – children need to learn cooperation, sharing, negotiation, self-advocacy, critical thinking, creative problem-solving. These skills come from repeated opportunities to interact, talk, and build relationships. We have seen these opportunities declining as more and more students have brought cell phones and electronics to lunch.

Pine View Middle School Away for the Day will start on Tuesday, September 4, 2018. At that point, we will ask all students to power off any personal electronic devices (phones, iPads, game systems, certain watches) and leave them in their backpacks during school hours (9:12 – 3:52). If you and your child need to communicate during those hours, we ask that you use the school phone, as stated in Pine View policy. A student may still use his or her device under a teacher's supervision. This policy is not meant to punish or inconvenience our students or families; it is in alignment with the Sarasota County School Board Policy 5.38 on Student Use of Electronic Devices.

We will explain this policy in detail to the students to make sure they understand. We do not want to confiscate anyone's phones, so we will gradually implement appropriate consequences – first: a warning, second: the loss of the device for the day, and third: requiring a parent to come and pick up the device at the end of the day. We know there may be an adjustment period, but we think that what the students gain will be a greater focus on their studies and engagement with each other, as well as fewer distractions.

Thank you for your help and support of Pine View, our wonderful teachers, and fabulous students!

Sincerely,



Sue Fair
Middle School Assistant Principal
Pine View School