



PLEW'S NEWSLETTER

AUGUST
2026



PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Families,

We are thrilled to welcome you back for another amazing year at Plew Elementary, where students unlock their Panther Potential! As the outdoor ramps come alive with the energy of curious minds and bright smiles, we are proud to kick off this school year with **incredible news and exciting initiatives** that promise to make this our best year yet!

A+ School ranking again!

Thanks to the hard work of our students, the dedication of our staff, and the unwavering support of our families, Plew Elementary has once again been named an A+ School for Okaloosa County! This honor reflects our shared commitment to excellence in education and the nurturing of young minds.

What to Expect This Year:

- Continued academic excellence
- Innovative teaching practices
- Enriched arts and STEM programs
- A community that celebrates growth, diversity, and collaboration

With excitement and gratitude, Tammy Matz
Principal, Plew Elementary

Reminder:

Dismissal of 780 students is not an easy task! Please be patient, and like our Okaloosa county Sheriff states, "Safety is not convenient".

I can promise it will get quicker in a few weeks!

FROM THE ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

It is my pleasure to welcome you to Plew Elementary, where we are dedicated to nurturing confident, capable, and compassionate learners.

Our ROAR Honor Code serves as the foundation for student success, guiding behavior and strengthening our school community. We are proud of the way our Panthers model these core values each day. I will lead the students through our expectations at ROAR Boot Camp this week! Thank you for choosing Plew and for your continued partnership in supporting positive behavior and academic excellence. Together, we will make this an outstanding year for every child.

Sincerely,

Heather Phillips
Assistant Principal

Phillipsh1@okaloosaschools.com

UPCOMING DATES

- **8/18:** PLA Kick-Off Meeting-6pm in Cafetorium
- **8/21:** Spirit Night at Jeremiah's Italian Ice
- **8/28:** Spirit Night at Jeremiah's Italian Ice
- **8/29:** Beautification Day, 7am

COUNSELOR'S CORNER

Welcome to a new school year! My name is Renee Baker, and I'm excited to serve as the School Counselor at James Plew Elementary. I look forward to partnering with our students, families, and staff to support every child's academic, social, and emotional growth. My door is always open, and I can't wait to help each Panther unlock their full potential!

Conversation Starters

One of the best ways to connect with your child is by asking questions that go beyond, "How was your day?"

Try a few of these conversation starters:

What are you most excited about?

What are you looking forward to the most?

How can you be a good friend?

What is one thing you are proud of?

FROM THE FRONT OFFICE

Welcome back! We are so excited to see to all of our Panther Families again and meet our new Pathers and their families as well.

Reminders

- All **transportation changes** must be received **in writing** (either hand written or e-mailed--no DOJO messages) by **1pm**
- Bus Riders: Continue to check Info Finder often
- All **check-outs** must take place by **2:30pm**.
- We are unable to answer the phones during dismissal
- Please continue to **upload absent notes/excuse into the Focus Parent Portal**. See attached tutorial for uploading notes.
- Don't forget, always **bring your ID** when coming to Plew.
- **Parent lunches will resume in September**
- Please be sure to include both front office secretaries on all your front office communications

Jennifer Gesch: jennifer.gesch@okaloosaschools.com

Rebekah Heye: rebekah.hey@okaloosaschools.com

Plew Website: <https://www.okaloosaschools.com/o/plew>

Students should not be dropped off before 8:05 am. No supervision is available before then unless enrolled in Plew Daycare's Before Care.

First Bell rings at 8:05 am

School Starts at 8:20 am

Dismissal Starts at 2:50 pm

PE REMINDERS



PE@Plew ELEMENTARY



Athletic shoes must be worn daily for active play.



Weather appropriate clothing should be worn and need to cover student while sitting, bending, stretching. If skirts or dresses are worn, shorts need to be underneath.



Water bottles need to have a closable lid, and be leakproof. Label with first and last name.



Students are not permitted to bring toys, candy, or gum to PE.



Students have PE outside when weather is above 40 degrees in the cooler months.



MUSIC NEWS



Welcome back, Plew Families! All grade levels will perform on stage just like last year! K-3rd grade will showcase during Fall Semester; 4th & 5th will be in Spring Semester.

Please be on the lookout for 2 things the 2nd week of school:

5th grade Panther Chorus information. All are welcome but spots are limited.

4th graders will play recorders again this year & how to purchase will come how via homeroom teachers.

Mrs. Hayes

FROM THE ART ROOM



The official date for **Evening of the Arts 2027** is still to be determined.

ALL Amazing Artists need an **art shirt** (old or new t-shirt) with their name on the front with a Sharpie. This will help me to know their names, AND art is messy. I can't wait to meet and see my Amazing Artists!

Abbie Wilbourne, Art Teacher

ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL

Arrival: Car Riders will line up at 7:50 a.m. No earlier!

Dismissal: Car Riders will start line up at 2:40 p.m. No earlier!
The walker gate is located on Wise Ave between 27th Street and Plew Panther Way.

Dismissal will start promptly at 2:50

See Traffic Pattern Maps (Click links below or see website)

[ALL Grade Car Ramp](#)

[K-1 Grade Ramp](#)

[2nd to 5th Grade Ramp](#)

PLA NEWS

The Plew Leaders Association (PLA) is excited to welcome our Panther families to a new school year! Together, our families, teachers, staff and community partners help make Plew an even better place for every child to learn, grow and thrive. There are no membership fees or dues, and there is a place for everyone—whether you have a little time to give or would like to take on a larger role.

Visit our website or facebook to learn more, then join us for the **PLA Kickoff Meeting on August 18th at 6:00 p.m.** in the Plew Cafetorium. Come discover how you can get involved, connect with our Plew community and **unlock your Panther potential!**



Plew is a Box Top school. To raise fund for our school, simply go to your App Store and select Boxtops4education. Type in Plew as your school and scan your grocery store purchases within 14 days of purchase. There will also be a box in the main office for those who don't want to do this on their own. I will collect these and scan them for you. Thanks for helping Plew support our children's education.



Info Finder is an extremely useful tool for parents of bus riders. Please make yourself familiar with this tool and check it often for updated stop locations and times. Info Finder can also be accessed under the "Bus Routes" tab on our website.



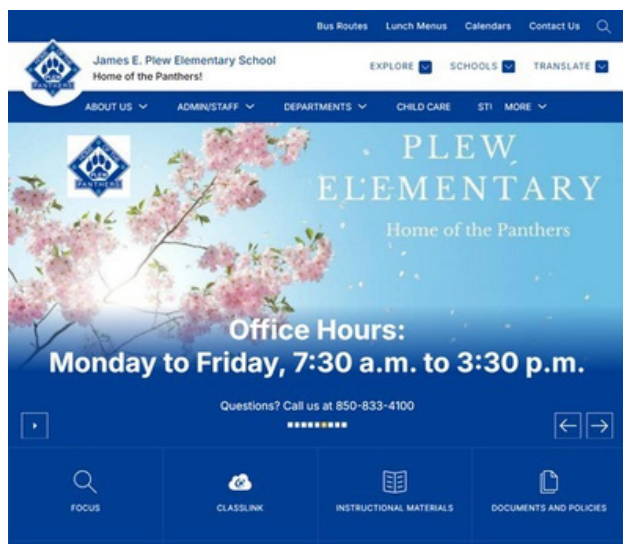
We are seeking volunteers to help for a few hours in the mornings assisting your child's teacher with necessary paperwork for class activities. Our work takes place any day that school is in session, starting when school begins until 10:30 a.m. or until we finish our tasks. We handle copying and laminating items, and we provide on-the-job training. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Moe Bennett s at (631)835-0111 or garysmoe13@yahoo.com.



Upload Attendance Excuse Note into Focus Portal

(This must be done in the browser, not on the app.)

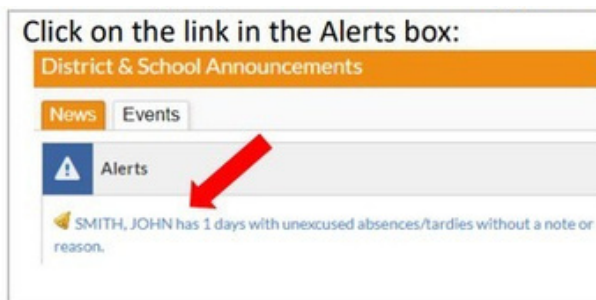
1. Log into the Focus Parent Portal by clicking on the FOCUS tab on the Plew Website



1 a. On the FOCUS home screen, select 'Access your Student or Parent Portal Account'



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



3. Either link will bring you to the Absence 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 option to: Scan, Upload or Take Photo.

Date	Daily	Excuse Note	Note Status	14
Aug 16, 2024	Unexcused	No Files	N/A	U
ABSENCES:		Scan Upload Take Photo		

4. Choose the option of Scan, Upload, or Take Photo that is appropriate for your situation. Upon Successful Scan, Upload or Take Photo, the box should look as follows:

1 Day		Search			14
Date	Daily	Excuse Note	Note Status		
Aug 16, 2024	Unexcused	Excuse Note August 16 2024.pdf	N/A	U	

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

Upload Attendance Excuse Note into Focus Portal (cont.)

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 Absence page, you will see that status has changed to 'Pending:'

Date	Daily	Excuse Note	Note Status	14
Aug 16, 2024	Unexcused	Excuse Note August 16 2024.pdf	Pending	U

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:

Date	Daily	Excuse Note	Note Status	14
Aug 16, 2024	Excused	Excuse Note August 16 2024.pdf	Approved View Message	E

OR

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

District & School Announcements

News Events

 Alerts

 SMITH, JOHN has 1 notes that have been returned.

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

Date	Daily	Excuse Note	Note Status	14
Aug 16, 2024	Unexcused	Excuse Note August 16 2024.pdf	Denied View Message	U

You can also scan the QR code to the right to be connected to a video tutorial outlining these steps.



For additional assistance, please contact the Front Office (850) 833-4100

SIGN UP TO VOLUNTEER AT PLEW

[CLICK HERE TO
APPLY](#)

OR FIND THE VOLUNTEER APPLICATION ON
OUR WEBSITE UNDER THE PARENT TAB ,
SELECT "SIGN UP TO VOLUNTEER HERE

TIPS

- RAPTOR IS NOT MOBILE FRIENDLY. IF POSSIBLE, PLEASE USE A DESKTOP OR LAPTOP
- PLEASE ONLY SELECT "SCHOOL/CLASSROOM VOLUNTEER" AND/OR "CHAPERONE"

www.okaloosaschools.com/o/plew

