

Pine Island Public School

Chris Bates, Superintendent

Kevin Cardille, High School Principal

Darren Overton, K-8 Principal

Telephone 507-356-4849 Fax 507-356-8827



Dear Parent,

In our effort to improve communication between parents and school, effective January 25th Pine Island School is instituting a telephone broadcast system that will enable school personnel to notify all households and parents by phone within minutes of an emergency or unplanned event that causes early dismissal, school cancellation, or late start. The service may also be used from time to time to communicate general announcements or reminders. This service is provided by SchoolReach, a company specializing in school-to-parent communication. Pine Island School will continue to report school closings due to snow or weather on the radio and TV stations listed in the newsletter and will use this system as an overlay to the public announcements.

When used, the service will simultaneously call all listed phone numbers in our parent contact list and will deliver a recorded message from Chris Bates or another school administrator. The service will deliver the message to both live answer and answering machines. No answers and busies will be automatically retried twice in fifteen minute intervals after the initial call.

NOTE: 1) This requires NO registration by the parent on the SchoolReach website. 2) All information and contact numbers are strictly secure and confidential and are only used for the purposes described herein.

Here is some specific information you should know:

- **Caller ID:** The Call ID will display 507-356-4849 which is the main number for Pine Island School.
- **Live Answers:** There is a short pause at the beginning of the message, usually just a few seconds. Answer your phone as you normally would; "hello" and hold for the message to begin. Multiple "hello's" will delay the message. Inform all family members of this process who may answer your phone.
- **Answering Machines:** The system will detect that your machine has answered and will play the recording to your machine. The maximum number of rings before hang-up is five. Make sure your machine answers after four rings or you may miss the message.
- **Morning & Day Calls:** In the event of a cancellation or general announcement, the broadcast message will be sent to home and cellular numbers.
- **Message Repeat:** At the end of the message you will be prompted to 'press one' to hear the message again. This is very helpful when a child answers the phone and hands it to a parent, who can then 'repeat' the message in its entirety.
- **E-mails:** If you have this option and if you supply the school with your e-mail address, you can be included in the e-mail broadcasting service. The principal can then send a text message to you or even attach a .wav file of the message sent home.

- **Attendance:** You will be notified each day your child misses a required number of classes. To minimize these calls, make sure to inform the school when you KNOW your child will miss classes on a given day.

If you have any questions, please contact 356-4849.

SchoolReach, the service provider, uses the best available technology in the industry to detect the difference between human answer and machine answer.

Here's how detection works:

1. The system detects and measures the voice energy when the phone is answered.
2. The system measures this energy in combination with the background noise and line impairments.
3. If the system determines that it is a "live" answer, it will immediately start playing the message.
4. If the system determines that it is a machine, it will wait for three full seconds of silence before playing the message with a maximum wait time of twenty seconds.
5. If the system cannot make a determination, it will default to answering machine thus requiring three seconds of silence for the message to play. In this case, you may hear a prompt to "press any key to hear the message immediately".

Some reasons for false detection:

1. Loud background noise: television, radio, general noisy environment
2. A cordless phone that has static or other foreign noise
3. Not saying "hello" or delaying saying "hello"

What can be done to remedy this?

1. Do not say "hello" more than once. If the system detected your answer incorrectly, all noise will reset the three-second counter.
2. If, after you answer, the message does not immediately play, cover the mouthpiece of the phone to cut out all background noise. The message should begin after three seconds.

Sincerely,

Chris Bates
Superintendent