

Pioneer Union Elementary School District
Berry Creek Elementary



Parent & Student Handbook

2025–2026 School Year

“Greatest Little Mountain School for the World”

SCHOOL VISION

The vision of the Berry Creek School community is to produce students who are motivated to be lifelong learners and capable of setting clear educational and personal goals. With the support of the community and parents, our students will graduate with the necessary academic and social skills to achieve these goals.

SCHOOL MISSION

It is our Mission to achieve excellence by:

- Providing a safe, clean & well maintained school environment
- Promoting parent & community involvement
- Promoting high expectations of each individual
- Teaching a valuable and meaningful curriculum
- Encouraging life-long learning
- Preparing students to be responsible, productive citizens

Rebuilt 2024/25 school year, after the September 8, 2025 Camp Fire

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Staff List

Pioneer Union Elementary School District

Administration

- **Darcy Pollak** – *Superintendent / Principal*
Oversees all staff, programs, operations, and finances. Leads student discipline, HR, and evaluations.
- **Nicole Cardwell** – *Executive Assistant*
Coordinates superintendent directives, office management, policies, and daily staffing logistics.
- **Sarah Haase** – *Director of Maintenance, Operations, and Transportation (MOT)*
Oversees campus maintenance, transportation, and school safety.

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Oversees all staff, programs, operations, and finances. Leads student discipline, HR, and

evaluations.

- **Lillian Day** – *School Secretary*

Manages parent communications, safety protocols, and supply inventory.

Instructional & Student Support Team

- **Tom Peet** – *Teacher (Teacher in Charge)*

Responsible for classroom instruction, student academic performance, and behavior.

- **Julie McIntosh** – *Teacher (Vertical Alignment Lead)*

Focuses on curriculum alignment, student academics, and behavioral monitoring.

- **Kellee Perez** – *Teacher (Educational Technology Lead)*

Teaches and integrates educational technology in classroom learning.

- **Patsy Oxford** – *Literacy Coordinator*

Leads the school's literacy programs and assessment initiatives.

- **Adrian Elliot** – *Literacy Tutor & Substitute Teacher*

Provides substitute teaching and supports the literacy program.

- **Summer Markut** – *Program & Media Specialist*

Manages library resources, school communications, media content, and PBIS.

Support Staff

- **Amy Novak** – *Instructional Aide*

Assists with student supervision and classroom support.

- **Crystal Davis** – *Instructional Aide*

Provides support in classrooms and during supervision duties.

- **Heaven Wilsey** – *Instructional Aide*

Engages in student supervision and classroom assistance.

- **Randi Erhard** – *Instructional Aide*

Supports classroom instruction and recess/lunch supervision.

- **Sarah Haase** – *Van Driver*

Responsible for school sanitation, campus safety, and student transportation.

- **Aurora Manzone** – *Van Driver & Custodial*

Responsible for school sanitation, campus safety, and student transportation.

Specialized Services (BCOE/Contracted)

- **Jonathan Frazer** – *SPED Specialist*
Manages all IEPs and supports special education needs.
- **Rob Gibson** – *Speech-Language Pathologist (BCOE SLP)*
Provides speech therapy services.
- **Teresa Moyer** – *School Psychologist (BCOE/Contract)*
Offers psychological educational services.
- **TBD** – *BCOE Counselor*
To provide behavioral, academic, and emotional guidance.
- **TBD** – *BCOE Wellness Coach*
To support student wellness education and PBIS initiatives.
- **Korrin Brooks** – *Community Schools Liaison*
Builds partnerships with families and community agencies to support whole-child services, student success, and family engagement as part of the California Community Schools Partnership Program (CCSPP)

Welcome to Berry Creek School!

At Berry Creek School, we're more than a campus — we're a community. With small class sizes and big hearts, we combine personalized learning with meaningful connections between students, staff, and families.

Whether you're brand new or returning for another great year, we're excited to grow and learn with your family!

Who We Are

Berry Creek is a small, rural TK–8 school with self-contained, multi-grade classrooms and an average class size of just 20 students. That means your child gets the attention they need and the relationships that help them thrive.

We're proud of: - Strong academics - Awesome enrichment & extracurriculars - A

culture that feels like family

Enrollment: Easy & Paperless

Enrollment is now **fully online** at www.puesd.org — saving trees and saving you time.

You'll need: - Your child's **birth certificate** (or other proof of age) - **Immunization records** (required by law) - If available: records from a previous school

You'll also fill out digital permission slips, acknowledgments, and forms. All forms will be **sent home in paper form**. Need another copy? Just ask!

When Can My Child Start?

Transitional Kindergarten (TK):

Students who turn **4 between September 2 and June 2** may enroll in TK, as outlined in **Education Code 48000(c)**.

Kindergarten:

Children who turn **5 on or before September 1** may enroll in kindergarten.

First Grade:

Children who turn **6 on or before September 1** are eligible for first grade.

Early entry may be allowed on a case-by-case basis with: - Parent/guardian approval
- Space availability - School board determination

Proof of Age

Acceptable documents include: - Birth certificate - Baptismal certificate - Passport - Affidavit of parent/guardian

(Ed Code 48002)

Daily Schedule

- **Regular Days:** 8:10 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
- **Wednesdays:** Early release at 1:30 p.m.
- **Minimum Days:** See school calendar

Visitors

Please check in at the front office, sign in, and get a visitor pass before entering campus or classrooms. Volunteers are welcome and appreciated!

Lost & Found

Lost items go to the cafeteria Lost & Found. Items are donated throughout the year; you'll be notified before donation days. Label belongings to help them return home.

Weather Plans

You'll receive alerts via our all-call system: - **Green:** School on time - **Yellow:** Late start (10:00 a.m.) - **Red:** School closed

Final decisions made by 6:00 a.m. Keep contact info updated!

Expanded Learning Opportunities Program (ELOP) After School Program (ASP)

We are proud to offer an **After School Program** on our campus, provided in partnership with the **Butte County Office of Education**. This enriching afterschool program supports academic achievement, youth development, and family engagement in a safe and supportive environment.

Program Overview

The ASES Program is **available to all students** every day that school is in session. The program offers:

- **Academic support**, including homework assistance and tutoring
- **Enrichment activities**, such as art, STEM, music, and physical activity
- **Health and wellness education**, fostering social-emotional growth
- **A safe, supervised environment** until the end of the program day

The program is designed to complement the regular school day and promote positive youth development in alignment with state ASES goals.

Program Hours

The program operates **every regular school day**. The program operates immediately following school dismissal until 4:30 p.m., except on minimum days when it ends at 3:30 p.m. or 2:30 p.m.

Site Coordinator

The ASES program at our site is coordinated by **Jenna Miller**, who oversees daily operations, student safety, staff supervision, and communication with families.

How to Apply

Applications for the ASES Program are available in the **school office**. Enrollment may be limited based on program capacity and staffing, and priority may be given according to the ASES grant requirements. Families are encouraged to submit completed applications as early as possible to secure placement.

For additional questions or support, please contact the school office or reach out directly to Ms. Jenna Miller.

30 Extra Days of Enrichment

Includes: - Summer Camp - Saturday Excursions

Enrollment & Eligibility

Priority goes to: - TK–6th grade - English Learners - Foster/homeless youth - Students eligible for free/reduced meals

All are encouraged to apply! Forms are **sent home**.

Inclusion for All

Supports for IEPs, 504s, and diverse learning needs are provided. We celebrate every learner!

Attendance Recovery Program (ARP) –Coming Soon!

Miss a day? Make it up through ARP!

How?

Attend: - After-school tutoring - Saturday School - Enrichment days via

ELOP One session = one recovered absence.

Open to all students. Forms and session dates sent home.

Food Services

Nutritious meals are provided to students each day school is in session.

Breakfast: 7:45 - 8:10 am

Lunch: 12:00 -1:00 pm

Check out our tasty menus—posted fresh each month in the hallway and online

We are pleased to inform you that *Thermalito Union Elementary School District* will be implementing the Community Eligibility Provision for all schools that are within and sponsored by our District that participate in the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs for the 2025-2026 School Year.

All students enrolled at the above schools are eligible to receive free meals for the (2025-2026) school year. Your child(ren) will be able to participate in these meal programs without having to submit an application or fee. No further action is required of you. If we can be of any further assistance, please contact me at (530) 538-2970.

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the agency (state or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (AD-3027), found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of

the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call 866-632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410(2) Fax: 202-690-7442
- (3) E-mail: program.intake@usda.gov

Attendance

Why Attendance Matters

Regular attendance (missing less than 10% of school days) is a proven foundation for academic success. Students who meet this benchmark are more likely to earn higher grades, master core subjects, and graduate on schedule.

Missing school—even a few days early in the year—can negatively affect learning trajectories.

Half of students who miss just **2–4 days in September** wind up missing nearly a month overall in a single year

Call by 8:30 a.m. to report absences. Tardy? Check in at the office.

Excused:

- Illness
- Medical/dental
- Family funeral
- Religious events

Unexcused:

- No credit for missed work
- Risk of SARB referral after 10+ absences

Short-Term Independent Study

In accordance with Education Code Section 51747, short-term independent study may be available for students who require absences of 3 or more consecutive days. Families must provide the school with at least 24 hours' notice prior to initiating independent study. Elementary students are limited to a maximum of **14 cumulative days** of short-term independent study per school year. Approval is at the discretion of the school administration and based on adherence to district policies and procedures.

Forms & Info Updates

- Forms sent home each year
- Notify the office if your contact info or living situation changes

Testing & Report Cards

- **CAASPP (Gr. 3–5)** each spring
- **Report Cards:** 3 times per year
- Standards-based grading (1–4 scale)

Student Records

- Parents may review, request corrections, or meet with staff to interpret •
- Records are confidential (shared only with educational need)

School Rules & Behavior Expectations

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

Pioneer Union School District uses a Tier I PBIS framework to promote a positive school climate and consistent behavioral expectations across all settings. PBIS is a proactive, school wide system that supports students' academic, social, and emotional success by:

- **Clearly teaching school-wide expectations**
- **Recognizing positive behavior consistently**
- **Using data to guide decisions and interventions**
- **Collaborating among staff, students, and families**

Behavioral Expectations

Our four core school-wide values are:

- **Personal Best** – Be ready to learn and always do your best.
- **Be Responsible** – Own your behavior and learning.
- **Be Safe** – Follow rules and procedures to keep everyone safe.
- **Be Respectful** – Treat others the way you want to be treated.

These expectations are taught explicitly in all environments (e.g., classroom, playground, cafeteria, restrooms, hallways) and reviewed throughout the year—including after school breaks and when new students arrive.

Positive Reinforcement

Students demonstrating expected behaviors receive recognition through a structured acknowledgment system, including:

- PBIS tickets that can be redeemed at the student store
- Special privileges or class-based incentives
- Celebrations and verbal praise aligned to desired behaviors

All staff participate in recognizing students for positive behavior, and students have daily opportunities to be acknowledged.

Corrective Discipline

Minor behaviors are handled in the classroom through proactive strategies like reteaching, redirection, and student conferences. Repeated or major behavior infractions may result in office referrals, additional support, or parent contact. The focus remains on **teaching appropriate behavior** and restoring a positive learning environment.

Team-Based Implementation

A dedicated PBIS team meets monthly to review discipline and behavior data, assess progress, and adjust strategies. Input is also gathered from families and staff to ensure the system reflects our school community's needs.

To learn more about our full PBIS Tier I Plan—including lesson plans, discipline flowcharts, behavior definitions, and professional development—please visit our school website at .

Let me know if you'd like this adapted for grade-specific handbooks or formatted with graphics.

Nondiscrimination & Harassment

We welcome all students, regardless of race, gender, religion, background, or identity.

Sexual harassment is not tolerated. Report any concerns to a trusted adult. (Ed Code 48900.2 & 212.5)

8th Grade Graduation

To graduate, students must: - Earn a 2.0 GPA - Complete the 8th Grade Project - Pass the Constitution Test (75%) - Have <10 unexcused absences - Demonstrate basic computer skills

Co-Curriculars

Join in! - Student Council - Clubs - Field Trips - ELOP Events

To participate: - Maintain 2.0 GPA - Follow attendance/behavior rules

Parent Rights & Liabilities

You have the right to be informed, involved, and supported.

You may be liable for damages caused by your child (up to \$10,000). Attendance at school may be required if your child is suspended for certain behaviors (Ed Code 48900.1).

Good Citizenship Counts

What We Teach:

- Fairness, kindness, responsibility
- Integrity and accountability
- Caring for others and the community

John Wooden's Pyramid of Success

We use these traits daily: - Hard Work - Friendship - Cooperation - Self-Control - Initiative - Enthusiasm - Determination - Confidence - Poise - Team Spirit

Additional Notices

- **Asbestos Plan:** Available at District Office
- **Teacher Qualifications:** Available upon request
- **Insurance:** Not provided by school
- **Directory Info:** Parents may opt out
- **LCAP:** View at puesd.org

Thank You for Being Part of Berry Creek! We're so glad you're here. Questions? Call or stop by the office anytime!

