

## Superintendent's Message – Fall 2020

Greetings Panthers and Panther Families,

As we enter the end of the summer, we are thrilled to have the opportunity to welcome students back on campus. COVID-19 brought with it many challenges for all. This summer we created a safe and socially-distanced environment for those who were on campus, got ready to teach a new reading curriculum in the elementary school, prepared for new grade levels and coursework challenges, created a 2020-2021 reopening plan, and welcomed new staff.

In a survey of the community, as well as a staff survey, over 80% said they believed their children would benefit from going back to in-person learning. In order to accommodate this and with the the lack of internet availability in parts of our district, the need for financial stability in the community to have students back in school, and our current student achievement data, the administrative team and department heads set out to create a plan that included students on campus as much as possible. We want students back and learning full time as quickly as possible. For in-depth details about our reopening plan, we recently held three informational Zoom meetings open to the community. If you were not able to participate, a recording of one of the meetings is posted on our website home page: [www.pval.org](http://www.pval.org).

Beginning in September we will have students on campus all day Monday-Thursday. The length of student day will vary slightly with staggered bus times for elementary and high school students. Students will be given a packet of work for Fridays and teachers will be available to answer questions. On Fridays, training will be provided to teachers and work will be created to be used in the event we must move to remote learning again. In addition, the building will be deep cleaned. The longest COVID-19 is said to be able to survive on surfaces is three days. It is our hope this measure will better protect our students and staff.

If you have students attending school this Fall, more information on specific procedures will be provided complying with guidance from the Center for Disease Control and the New York State Education Department. Some of these procedures will involve a change in student pick up and drop off and screening protocols. We will deliver this information through the mail and on the parent broadcast system, district Facebook page and our school website

This Fall, Pine Valley will be operating under a “no visitor” policy in order to better protect employees and students. Until further notice we will not be permitting parents to drop off materials for their children. However, in order to best take care of our students, we want to accommodate where we can. Please call the main office (High School: 988-3276 ext. 4307; Elementary: 988-3293 ext. 3306), and we will do our best to assist with getting students whatever they may need.

Interscholastic sports and other extracurriculars are currently canceled for the season. If this changes, more information will be provided at that time. I understand the importance of these activities in a student's life and will do whatever we can to bring these events and programs back in a safe way as soon as possible.

We are beginning this school year with two new principals. Mrs. Brandi Meacham has played an integral part in our reopening plan since her start in July as our elementary school principal. We were thrilled to welcome Mrs. Kourtney Almeida home in August as our junior-senior high school principal. She has had time to become immersed in the plan and guidance as well before students return to campus. Our team is complete and focused on doing the best we can for our students every day.

Thank you for your understanding, outpouring of support, and love during this time. The road ahead is definitely uphill, and we know we have work to do to make up the time missed; but as a team, we are dedicated to getting better for our students. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to me. For regular updates, please see our school Facebook page or Twitter account. I post regularly on my personal Twitter account about school happenings, @brybooth, and check my email regularly, [bbooth@pval.org](mailto:bbooth@pval.org).

Go Panthers!

Bryna Moritz Booth