

Superintendent's Message – Spring 2020

Greetings Panthers and Panther Families. As we enter the end of the school year, things look a lot different in Pine Valley than when I arrived in December. Covid 19 has brought about many temporary changes in our district and had a long-lasting impact on all of us. My heart goes out to all those affected directly by this disease.

Currently our high school is closed. Faculty can only enter the high school building while being escorted by our School Resource Officer. This was done in an effort to minimize exposure through building access and to allow our cleaning staff to prioritize the elementary school. The elementary school has become home to staff member teams creating meals to be delivered to families (meals are delivered to coolers or boxes put out by our families), organizing instructional packets for both elementary and high school students, and nursing/ technology support.

We are currently operating with only essential employees with the majority of employees working from home. Those working from home are sending materials to essential employees to be printed and disseminated, creating digital lessons and maintaining a work log. Those in the district are following social distancing protocols and go through a health screening twice a day.

Our biggest challenges have been maintaining the human approach that is so important for our students in a time of social distancing, finding innovative ways to provide instruction to much of our district that does not have internet access, and supporting the ever-evolving needs of our students, families and staff. Each of these challenges has been met with love, compassion, understanding and hard work. Our community and school have pulled together and very quickly become the family that I had such dear memories of when I was in school. Pine Valley is such a special place because of the people and the community we serve. I have been blown away by the showing of support, relationships quickly built, and country work ethic that is alive and well.

As we enter the final stretch of the school year, I know that our seniors are those suffering the most. This is in no way what any of us wished for their final year. Currently, we do not know what commencement will look like for these students, grading policies are evolving and there is no clear indication of whether spring sports will be able to continue or not. It is our goal as a school to provide our seniors with as much normalcy as we can, as soon as we can. If we do not get to re-open this school year, we will work on creative solutions for these seniors.

Our Capital Project is entering the design phase. We are proceeding with this phase of the project as the architects do not need to be on site and it will have limited cost implications. After the design phase, we will reassess where we are financially as a district. Our goal will obviously be to continue; however, my overarching goal is to ensure that Pine Valley will be sustainable for many, many years to come.

We have decided to move forward with only one administrative opening. We will be temporarily absorbing the Director of Special Education job as an administrative team. Depending on how this works out, this could be a long-term or short-term solution. Currently we are hiring a new elementary principal from a phenomenal pool of candidates. Previously the Elementary Principal and Director of Special Education jobs were partnered, and it created issues in the building due to how time consuming each job is. Please stay tuned for an announcement regarding our new hire.

Thank you for your understanding, outpouring of support and love during this time and for helping me very quickly make this my home again. I come to work every day (even during this pandemic) even more in love with our school, community and staff. I am truly blessed to be a panther again. 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.

Go Panthers!
Bryna M Booth