



Weekly Update from Pine-Richland School District Superintendent



April 7, 2020

Greetings to Pine-Richland Students, Staff, Parents and Community,

As we prepare for a short period of spring break, the reality of the global pandemic and public health measures weigh on our hearts and minds. The increase of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Allegheny County and Western Pennsylvania means that many of us are directly connected to family or friends impacted by this disease. The revised CDC guideline that suggests "cloth masks" for people when they leave home to make a routine errand feels like an unfamiliar act. Millions of Americans have lost jobs. Both small and large businesses are feeling significant pain. Although models vary, disease **projections** indicate that the next 10 - 14 days may represent a peak in the acceleration phase followed by a period of deceleration. This **pandemic interval framework** was developed by the CDC for influenza but serves as a framework for the novel coronavirus. Social distancing and other mitigation strategies have a critical impact on progression.

We continue to monitor the impact of COVID-19 on schools across the **country**. It is hard to believe that we are in the fourth week of our continuity of learning plan at Pine-Richland. We are **so proud of the combined effort of staff, students and parents**. Survey and interview feedback from all three groups has been very positive. That feedback has also identified opportunities for improvement. As a result, we have been very focused on the following:

- **Assessment/Instructional Engagement** - A podcast was shared last week and is now **archived** on the COVID-19 website. The approach varies by grade levels based on the developmental needs of students. The implication of this approach - for staff and students - is an emphasis on learning and engagement through projects and activities. This pure focus on learning for the sake of personal growth without the traditional emphasis on "points and grades" is a huge opportunity.
- **Interactive Learning Opportunities** - As we continue to develop new technology integration skills, families will see more narrated presentations and the introduction of videoconferencing in the upcoming days and weeks. Videoconferencing, such as Google Hangout Meet, will provide the opportunity for teacher-to-student and student-to-student interaction. This shift was a major area of interest guided by the survey feedback.
- **Shift in Continuity of Learning Model** - It is critical to recognize that the PRSD model has and will continue to shift over time. There is a "tension" to continuous improvement. On the one hand, it is easy to recognize that we can and should find ways to be more effective in this learning model. On the other hand, we understand that it becomes hard to settle into a routine when changes are implemented. This tension is amplified when we consider that the approach used for a first grader and senior must be different. This reality becomes especially challenging in the home with families that have multiple children in different buildings.



We believe the areas described above represent the last substantive/structural changes to the model. As mentioned in prior updates, it is highly likely that this approach to learning will continue through the remainder of the 2019 - 2020 school year. We want to ensure that students are developing the new knowledge and skills that would have been part of the traditional school experience. With the anxiety and challenges described in the opening paragraph, a program for learning helps establish some routine for our students. We again thank the entire community - staff, students and parents - for the teamwork.

Please take a couple of minutes to **complete this week's parent survey**. **The survey opens today at 4:00 p.m. and will remain open through tomorrow at 2:00 p.m.** Although we have added an open-ended response box to the survey, please know that we continue to contact 42 families by phone each week that represent all grade levels, buildings and teams. Many of these families also have multiple children at various buildings. **It is the combination of feedback from all sources - survey and interview - that is driving improvement.**

Finally, we continue to ask for your support in enforcing social distancing. **The Pine-Richland School District facilities are closed.** Students should not be getting together on athletic fields or playgrounds. Signage prohibiting activity at the stadium is posted. We want to ensure proactive public health behaviors for our students, families and the community. **This support will be more critical as the weather improves.**

Thank you for your continued support of the Pine-Richland School District. We hope that spring break provides time to **rest and recharge**.

Respectfully,

Brian R. Miller, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Michael Pasquinelli, Ed.D.
Assistant Superintendent (7-12)

Kristen Justus, Ph.D.
Assistant Superintendent (K-6)



Board Approves Proposed General Fund Budget for 2020-2021 with Flat Millage Rate

The Board of School Directors of the Pine-Richland School District intends to adopt the Final General Fund Budget for the 2019-2020 school year at the meeting to be held at **7 p.m. on June 8, 2020** in the **DeWitt Blank Board Room, 702 Warrendale Road, Gibsonia, PA 15044**.

The proposed final budget is available for public inspection at the Pine-Richland District Administrative Offices and on the **Pine-Richland School District budget website**. The Proposed Final General Fund Budget includes

total expenditures of \$93,384,421 and total revenues of \$92,698,944 and utilization of assigned fund balance of \$685,477 for capital improvements. The Proposed Final General Fund Budget includes an estimated tax millage rate of 19.5867 mills. **This represents a flat millage rate from the current fiscal year.**

COVID-19 Website

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