

# PINE PLAINS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Dear Parents and Guardians:

We are in the process of winding down the 2019-2020 school year. Students, parents, our teaching and administrative staff have certainly made the best of a very difficult situation. Circumstances required that we totally change the way we provide instruction to our students on literally one day's notice. It has been both difficult and in many ways exhausting since our buildings were shut.

The teachers, administration and students have been working continuously since March 16<sup>th</sup>. We did not observe a spring break or unused snow days. As a result, we will meet our state required 180 days of instruction on June 12<sup>th</sup>. We will end remote instruction on that date. Activities such as laptop pick up, textbook return and yearbook delivery will be scheduled to occur after that date. Your principal(s) will be sending information about that separately as it gets closer.

As the circumstances and rules around the COVID situation continue to evolve we continue to plan for summer and the coming year. Certainly, none of us know what September will look like but we want to be prepared. To that end, we will be forming two committees to begin planning.

In early July we will be putting together four Remote Learning Task Forces throughout the district. There will be one for Cold Spring, one for Seymour Smith, one for the Jr. High (grades 6-8), and one for Sr. High (grades 9-12). These task forces will conduct an evaluation of the programs, software, and websites used during the closure caused by COVID-19 to determine what worked well and what needs improvement. Each team will be guided by the following question: Given the information and knowledge we have now, what could we do differently to ensure continuity of learning should we not be able to open our buildings in September or if there is a future need for a similar closure? With this information and planning time, we can collaboratively review and revise our Remote Learning Plan to improve our remote teaching approach to enhance the experience for students and families.

The second planning group will be a Re-Entry Task Force with all of our Administrators, Directors, Union Representatives, and other key personnel such as nurses, social workers, school psychologists, parent representatives from each building, and a Board of Education member. The purpose of this Task Force is to develop processes and procedures to re-open schools with the health and safety of our students and staff as our top priority. We will utilize the Guidance on Re-Opening Schools following Covid-19 Closures provided by the Capital Region BOCES. This guidance document, [can be found by clicking here](#), contains a lot of points to consider during all aspects of the school day from arrival, lunches, dismissal, fire drills, cleaning procedures, transportation to and from schools, and much more. The document does not have answers, but is more of a discussion starter that we can use as a framework to guide our preparation District-Wide and for each individual school to prioritize the health and safety of our students and staff when we return to school.

We have the time now to prepare for September both instructionally and logistically. We will keep our parents and the community as a whole informed on the work of these two planning groups as the summer progresses.

Finally, I would like to remind you of the school budget vote on June 9<sup>th</sup>. You will receive an absentee ballot for this election and a postpaid envelope in accordance with the Governor's Executive Order. You will also receive a budget newsletter outlining not only the budget but also the purchase of replacement school buses and the Board election. I ask that you review this material, complete the absentee ballot, sign the back of the envelope and return the ballot in time for the district to receive it by 5 pm on June 9<sup>th</sup>.

Once again, thank you for your support and be well.

Dr. Martin D. Handler  
Superintendent