

PIPER USD 203

3130 N. 122nd St. | Kansas City, KS 66109

p. 913.721.2088 | f. 913.721.3573 | www.piperschools.com



Dear Pirate Nation,

Happy Tuesday Mateys! What amazing weather we are experiencing right now—I absolutely love this time of year! The crisp morning air, the cool evenings, and the anticipation of the changing colors of the leaves all make mid-October such a beautiful time. Before jumping into a recap of last night's Board of Education Meeting, I wanted to share two brief pieces of information with you.

Walmart Donation

Our wonderful friends at our local Walmart recently donated 3,107 school supply items worth \$9000 to the Piper School. A huge thank you to Dave Albracht and his team for their generous donation to our students.

Traffic Concerns on Hutton Road

In an effort to address some parking lot safety concerns for student pedestrians at the middle school, a new traffic pattern has been implemented at the middle school campus. While the new traffic pattern has aided tremendously in creating a safer situation at the middle school, it has obviously created unintended backups in traffic entering the high school parking lot in the morning that is continuing all the way to the Hutton/Donahoo Intersection. In order to help remedy the situation, the Unified Government has agreed to send some KCKPD officers to help with the traffic flow build-up. Additionally, the UG shared they have in the plans to remove the four-way stop and add 4-way traffic lights to that intersection within the next year. While we continue to problem-solve additional modifications to the traffic flow on that entire campus, here are some possible modifications that families could possibly try to see if it helps with the traffic flow:

- **Middle School Car Riders:** Instead of driving all the way down 110th Street and dropping off directly in front of the Middle School, perhaps turn left on Knetter Way (road between PMS and PHS) and allow the middle school students to use the sidewalk to safely walk to the front entrance of the school
- **PHS Drivers:** plan for an earlier arrival time to lessen the traffic volume on Hutton Road before school starts. **Generally, arriving by 7:10 allows for an easy entrance into the parking lot.**

Piper High School will continue to be flexible with first block tardies as we find a better solution for traffic flow. Please know that we will continue working to find a better solution to the issue and apologize for any frustration or inconvenience this situation had create. We appreciate your patience and support as we work through this matter.

Board of Education Overview

As always, we have many staff and students to recognize in the District, and last night was no exception. The following staff members and students were recognized at last night's meeting for their positive contributions to the District:

**John Bakarich, III ~ Larry Beashore ~ Ashley Biondi ~ Kim Brown ~ Desiree' Fergus ~ Theresa Fisette ~ Jeb Vader
Dr. Jessica Dain, Superintendent of Schools**

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October 2nd, National Custodian Workers' Day

National Custodial Worker's Recognition Day is celebrated every year on October 2nd. Businesses use this holiday to recognize the work of their custodial teammates. These employees are critical to any successful business and National Custodial Workers' Recognition Day aims to bring them into the spotlight. If custodians were to disappear, we'd notice a difference overnight. There are so many things that go into running a well-maintained building. Custodial workers have been on the front lines of COVID-19, thinking of others before themselves and their families, to keep our schools safe.

These teammates go above and beyond to serve our district. They begin their days early in the mornings and often work until close to midnight to ensure classrooms and learning environments are ready for students. They work in extreme heat and cold conditions and never complain. They are the glue that keeps our facilities running and ensure that learning environments are clean, safe, and ready for learning. Please join us in thanking these valuable members of our team.

Custodial Staff

- Piper High School – Gloria Baker, Anesha Jackson, Elmer Colon
- Piper Middle School – Johnny Calhoun, Vernon Garrett, Wiley Masters
- CTE – Robert Tatum
- Prairie Elementary – Mark Spradlin, Deena Liston
- Piper Creek Elementary – Sylvia Johnson
- DO/Pre K – Charlotte Llamas

Maintenance / Grounds staff - Pat Henry, Richard Finn, John Whaley, Ken Winzer, Kevin Hamm, James Greenlee, and Kiefer Vicker

Piper High School Black Leaders of America ACCELERATE Conference

On September 23, 2021, two Piper High student representatives (senior Langston Bassett and junior Jillian Collier), Principal Nguyen, and Amber Buck attended the Student Voice & Choice workshop with the Kauffman Foundation and Startland, a non-profit organization that focuses on developing entrepreneurial mindsets and ventures. There, the students used design thinking to come to the following conclusion about how to infuse the district's Real World Learning efforts with student voice and choice. The group identified that marginalized groups of students need a way to see that their voice, presence, and concerns are valued so that they can leverage their Piper experience into post-secondary fulfillment. They realized that the upcoming Black Leaders of America conference was a way to start filling this need. Leveraging the collaborative work with the Kauffman Foundation and Startland, Piper High's Black Leaders of America group held its first off-site conference on October 1. Sixty students from Piper High, Bishop Miege, Lawrence High, and Lawrence Free State attended ACCELERATE: Empowering Students of Color for Success.

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The student-initiated conference's four sessions focused on intersectionality, mental health, entrepreneurship, and scholarship essay writing. Speakers were all Black professionals from the metro area. The goal was to empower students of color to identify and pursue their interests throughout their high school career. We celebrate these members of the PHS BLA Board who facilitated this amazing learning opportunity for the KC Metro students of color: Jillian Collier, Lisa Calhoun, Jonika Jenkins, Langston Bassett, Jai Moore, Masya Calhoun, Frances Obiesie, Che Clemons, Andre Randle, Adriana Lopez, Jamarri Jarrett, Nnenna Okoye, Amiyi Union-White, Jahnye Jamison, Amara Williams, and Marisa Covington. Also thanks to the educator sponsors Amber Buck, Justin Richmond, and Kyle Moore who helped in this process.

Piper Prairie Elementary Kindergarten Teachers

As many of you are aware, there is currently a substitute-teacher shortage being felt across the United States. While we have a great partnership with Morgan Hunter, currently finding long-term substitutes is a challenge not exclusive just to the Piper School District. After a unique and challenging substitute teaching situation at PPE, the strong kindergarten staff pulled together to make a very difficult decision that based on what was best for students. Please help me in recognizing and thanking them: Valerie Anaya, Rachel Robb, Mary Rogers, Laura Lee Harris, Megan Finley, Kendra Rexroat, Christy Martin, Stephanie Corlee, Abby Klinger, Daneen Kelsey, Britney Calvert, and Bilee Jo Grable.

Board of Education Approvals

- District Strategic Plan and Balanced Scorecard (Please find attached)
- Hiring of incite Design Studio (iDS) for architecture and engineering services for pre-bond services

COVID-19 Mitigation Strategies and Optional Masking Discussion

The Board of Education is dedicated to monitoring our COVID-19 data and discussing district protocols on a monthly basis. As we consider COVID protocols, please know that circumstances may change and, in turn, influence our decision-making and actions.

Last night the Board of Education voted 4 to 3 to keep masking in place for all students. However, they also tasked the District Administration to outline options for contact tracing and quarantining guidelines if they decided to allow the high school students the opportunity to make wearing masks optional. The next discussion of masking will take place at the **November 8th Board of Education Meeting**. Community members interested in speaking at this meeting should contact the Board of Education Clerk, Mitch Nutterfield, and sign up no later than November 1st.

COVID-19 Mitigation Strategies Discussion

We will continue to keep our school families informed and updated. The safety of students, staff, and our community is, and will continue to be, our top priority. Please know that there may be instances during the school

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year where unpredicted or unexpected circumstances lead to us needing to make quick decisions. If this occurs, we will communicate with you as quickly as possible.

At the current time, we have created a spot on our district website with [Frequently Asked Questions](#) regarding the specific COVID protocols we are following at this time.

Please find below our weekly update on District COVID data:

	Students (Aug. 19- Oct. 8) *Running Total	New Student Cases (Week of Oct. 4-Oct. 8)	Staff (Aug 13- Oct 8) *Running Total	New Staff Cases (Week of Oct. 4-Oct. 8)
Piper Early Childhood	1	0	1	0
Piper Prairie Elementary	27	5	5	0
Piper Creek Elementary	16	9	1	1
Piper Middle School	10	0	0	0
Piper High School	16	4	3	0
TOTALS	70 (Running Total)	11	10 (Running Total)	1

Proud to be a Pirate,

Dr. Jessica Dain
Superintendent of Schools

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