

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,

We hope you are well and enjoying the summer!

A quick personal recommendation from The Dain Train if you have an animal enthusiast at home. Earlier in July, in lieu of taking an African Safari (requested by my son, Brock), we made a trip to Glen Rose, Texas, to visit the Fossil Rim Wildlife Center and it was pretty amazing! While in Glen Rose we visited the Dinosaur Valley State Park and enjoyed Texas Toothpicks (Fried Jalapeños) and some amazing homemade cobbler at Hammond's BBQ. (KC BBQ is still waaaaaayyyy better in my personal opinion!) On the ride home, we made an impromptu stop at Arbuckle's Wilderness Park, in Murray County, Oklahoma, and had up-close and personal exchanges with several inquisitive animals including a Texas longhorn and a bison. Although we were unable to meet my son's request of jaunting to Africa for a quick weekend getaway, I think we did deliver on a fun and interesting excursion. I hope everyone is finding the time they need to rest, relax, and enjoy family and friends.

COVID Update

We are closely monitoring the County data as it relates to both COVID-19 and the Delta variant. Based on what we experienced and learned this past year, we will continue to focus on, monitor, and emphasize the following safety and mitigation efforts and measures:

- Encouraging students and staff to stay home if they are sick
- Offering free testing at school for students and staff members
- Continuing our collaboration with local and/or county health officials
- Using outdoor spaces and places as much as possible for instruction and recess
- Encouraging frequent hand-washing and using social distancing whenever possible
- Completing frequent cleaning procedures in classrooms and throughout the school
- Sharing information regarding free testing and vaccination sites in the county

As we consider masking, please know that circumstances may change and, in turn, influence our decision-making and actions throughout the remainder of the summer, the start of school, and throughout the fall and winter. We will continue to keep our school families informed and updated as we work to finalize our plans for the 2021-2022 school year. 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 upcoming school 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. Our next Board of Education Meeting is August 9th at 6:30 PM in the library of the CTE Center.

Critical Race Theory

As it becomes an increasingly discussed topic in local and national media outlets, I have had several questions regarding whether or not Critical Race Theory is taught or will be taught in the Piper School District. The Piper School District does not teach Critical Race Theory. Our school district is a learning community committed to

**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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ensuring educational equity and excellence so that students of all races and background achieve at high levels and graduate prepared for success in college, career, and life in a diverse and rapidly changing world.

Our Portrait of a Graduate stresses the following competencies in which we believe all students must master in order to be future ready:

- Initiative & Self-Direction
- Social, Global, & Cross-Cultural Skills
- Creativity & Innovation
- Communication
- Resilience & Social-Emotional Well-Being
- Critical Thinking & Problem Solving

Our curriculum is aligned to the Kansas State Department of Education's standards, which may be found at www.ksde.org

Free Meal Extension for 21-22 and Household Economic Survey

As you may be aware, the United States Department of Agriculture has approved the extension of its free meal program for all students for the 21-22 school year. The district recently released the Kansas Department of Education Household Economic Survey through the Skyward Family Access Portal. This survey replaces the previous Free and Reduced Lunch Application that many families may have completed in the past which is no longer necessary due to the USDA extension.

It is extremely important for our district funding sources that all families who may qualify under the USDA Income Eligibility Guidelines complete this survey. The results of this survey will also be used to determine those families who qualify for free or reduced learning resource fees, pay to play fees, and course fees. In addition, the results may be used to apply for available state and federal benefits, such as the Pandemic-EBT through the Department of Children and Families.

For those needing to complete the survey, please log in to your Skyward Family Access Portal. You will see a notification indicating you have an Online Form ready to be completed. Please note, families that have multiple children only need to complete one survey per household.

Enrollment Reminder

As I mentioned above, we are quickly approaching the start of the 21-22 school. Please make sure you have enrolled/re-enrolled all of your children through Skyward, submitted required documentation, and paid all applicable fees. These steps are required for your child to be on an elementary class list or receive their schedule in August.

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Proud to Be a Pirate,

Dr. Jessica Dain
Superintendent