

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,

Gratitude is the inward feeling of kindness received.

Thankfulness is the natural impulse to express that feeling.

Thanksgiving is the following of that impulse.

~Henry Van Dyke

During this time of the year, it's important to me to think about all of the things for which I am thankful. I am eternally grateful to our students, staff, and families who despite the challenges we've faced this year, have worked together to support our students in their learning journeys. While as a community we may not always agree on every topic, no matter the perspective, we can all agree that the wellbeing of our students must remain our number one priority.

Last week we had the opportunity to celebrate American Education Week. It was a time to celebrate ALL of those involved in public education and to thank them for the positive differences they have made in thousands and thousands of lives. To be honest, our staff is under a kind of pressure that is unprecedented, and yet, they continue to give our students their absolute best. I am so thankful to call these people my team!

I want to wish everyone in our community a restful and wonderful Thanksgiving break. Please take the time to connect with family and friends, decompress, and do something that speaks to your soul. I am thankful for each and every one of you!

COVID Testing Availability

We were recently notified that the funding to process the PCR saliva tests we have been able to offer to our families will no longer be available after the Thanksgiving break. We have submitted a grant application to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment for new testing supplies which we hope to have in place following the break. We do have the rapid antigen tests necessary for the current High School test to stay model, but there may be a lag in the availability of on-site PCR tests. Due to the limited nature of this grant, once our new testing system is fully operational it will be restricted to **ONLY** students and staff. We hope to have more information to share with you when we return from break.

COVID-19 Mitigation Strategies and Optional Masking Protocols

As a reminder, at the November Board of Education Meeting, the Board voted 7 to 0 for optional masking and revised quarantining procedures for our high school students and staff at both Piper High School and the CTE Center. Please find below the guidelines we are following:

- 1. If there would be a positive COVID-19 exposure, all students and staff who were exposed (regardless of vaccination status) would have the following options:**

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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- *Option 1: 5-Day Masking & Testing*

Students will be allowed to stay in school if they wear a mask and test daily for COVID for five school days.

- *Option 2: One Test on Day 5*

Student would quarantine at home and test with a PCR test on day 5 following exposure. If the test returns a negative result, the student may return to school day 7, assuming student has not presented with any COVID symptoms.

- *Option 3: No Testing*

Students who do not wish to follow Option 1 & 2 would be quarantined from school for 10 calendar days.

2. Additional Information:

- All students must wear a mask riding the school bus whether to-and-from school or for extra-curricular events
- Masking will be optional for all school and district sanctioned events taking place at PHS and the CTE Building
- A close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of someone for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period with a person who has COVID-19

The Board of Education is dedicated to monitoring our COVID-19 data and discussing district protocols monthly. As we consider COVID protocols, please know that circumstances may change and, in turn, influence our decision-making and actions. Additionally, the Board of Education continues the monitoring of the district data to discuss the next steps and timeline of making masking optional for the rest of the district in the very near future. The next discussion of masking will take place at the **December 13th Board of Education Meeting**. If you are interested in addressing the Board at their December, please notify the Board Clerk, Mitch Nutterfield at mnutterfield@piperschools.us by the end of the day on **December 6th**.

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 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.

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Please find below our weekly update on District COVID data:

	Students (Aug. 19- Nov. 19) *Running Total	New Student Cases (Week of Nov. 15-19)	Staff (Aug 13-Nov. 19) *Running Total	New Staff Cases (Week of Nov. 15-19)
Piper Early Childhood	3	0	2	0
Piper Prairie Elementary	32	1	5	0
Piper Creek Elementary	27	3	2	0
Piper Middle School	19	4	1	0
Piper High School	24	1	3	0
TOTALS	105 (Running Total)	9	13 (Running Total)	0

Proud to be a Pirate,

Dr. Jessica Dain
Superintendent of Schools