

To Our PCHS Students, Families, Staff and Community:

I'm in my office this morning reflecting on the "happenings" over the last week. There have been many good things rise up from this situation. Students, you have been amazing and have conducted yourselves with class while preparing to be away from here for an extended time. Mr. Wilson and I cannot express in words our appreciation for the way our faculty and support staff have stepped up to the challenges placed at our feet. We are going to stay positive and make the best of a difficult situation.

I would also like to share with you some of my thoughts on how we are going to handle this state mandated school closure.

First - I am sorry to all of our students who have spent so much time practicing and preparing for spring sports, musicals, and other extra-curricular events. It is "OK" to have feelings of loss or frustration. We could see the emotions in your eyes as the situation became "real" as we left the building on Monday afternoon. You may feel like all your work was for nothing, but I can promise you it was not.

We should all strive to be lifelong learners. One of our jobs is to continue to find ways to learn from our experiences, even the tough ones. In life, we do not always get the outcomes we want, but you have dedicated yourself to the process of getting better - and it is a trust and faith in that process that will enable you to grow. Love the process, not the outcome. Identify the traits within you that keep you pushing forward during tough times. Some of you may recall us using the term "GRIT" in recent years. Find your "GRIT". We will continue to look for re-scheduling opportunities as we move forward.

Second - We have created a world that is always moving at a frantic pace. This is a great time for us ALL to learn to slow down and enjoy each moment instead of worrying about rushing through each one to get to the next one. Slow down..... Take the next few days and relax, stay healthy, get some fresh air and ENJOY THE BREAK.

Take time to work on YOUR GOALS. Take some time to explore YOUR PASSIONS. Get better at SOMETHING. Take some time to explore a NEW INTEREST. Teachers have provided resources from all of your classes that will help you stay on top of course material, but we highly encourage all students to take time to learn about things that interest you!! You have a world of knowledge at your fingertips; take time to explore new topics and ideas, new colleges or a potential career. It would be a great time to knock out some of those SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS you've been procrastinating over.

My hope for all students is to be able to talk with you about the new things you learned or the goals you achieved while school was closed. Take advantage of this once in a lifetime opportunity to spend time learning for learning's sake and not for a grade or "points." Use this unprecedented time wisely and it could change your life. I can't emphasize strongly enough, PLEASE DON'T WASTE THIS MOMENT. Create a HEALTHY ROUTINE and SCHEDULE and stick with it.

I believe that Pinckneyville Panthers are highly-motivated self-starters and I know you all want to learn and grow. We (your teachers and administrators) also want to share in your experience. We will be setting up an email address at ourstories@pchspanthers.com. Please send your goals and activities to this email. You can make videos, write blogs, share artwork, talk about your struggles, talk about your progress, or describe how you are spending time in any format that you feel is appropriate - be creative. We will take these stories and then share them out via social media...so please make sure they are of high quality. Also, feel free to tag our Facebook or Twitter pages and

share your story by social media. We would also LOVE it if you could use the hashtag [#PantherNation](#) [#BetterTogether](#) anytime you share information about your goals.

Every generation has historical events that can be connected with them. We are in the middle of an event that people will discuss and analyze about for years to come. This situation will provide all of us with an education that no classroom could ever adequately simulate. Hopefully, you will examine the event and develop an enduring appreciation for our society's global interdependence. I hope that each of us wrap our heads around the relationship between personal responsibility and personal freedom. I encourage all of us to experience how to truly be still. You NEED to take some time to be still and reflective.

Lastly - You all need to know that we love you and we want what is best for you. The one thing I can promise is that you will remember this moment for the rest of your lives. When you look back on things as adults I promise that someone in your group will say, "Do you remember when school got shut down for a couple of weeks?" What will your memories of this time be? Please use your time away from PCHS to help imagine and build a better world. We will all be [#BetterTogether](#) if we do.

See you soon,

Mr. H

Keith Hagene
Superintendent, Pinckneyville Community High School
[#PantherNation](#) [#BetterTogether](#)

P.S. – Call each other instead of texting. Hearing the human voice is a wonderful thing. If you need anything at all, please reach out to us here at the school by email or telephone. Mr. Wilson and I will be in the building each day. khagene@pchspanthers.com or twilson@pchspanthers.com.

My office phone number: 618-357-5013 ext. 111 Mr. Wilson: 618-357-5013 ext.150

You can also communicate with your teachers and coaches. They will make sure you are heard.