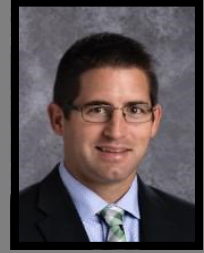


# Greetings from Jason Dolliver

## Superintendent



Dear Parents, Students, and District Stakeholders,

Spring officially began on March 20, 2020. The start of spring is such an exciting time of year because it is a season that is filled with events that provide us with memories that last a lifetime. The Spring of 2020 will be one none of us forget anytime soon. COVID-19 has turned the world upside down and has left us trying to figure out a new state of normalcy. While our little corner of the world is oftentimes shielded from what is happening across the globe, that is not the case this time around. COVID-19 has and will continue to have a dramatic impact on our daily lives. I believe it is up to us to work through this challenging time in our lives to the best of our ability and be stronger and better than ever when “normal” life resumes!

First, I feel it is important for me to urge those reading this newsletter article to heed the advice of public health and government officials. The advice is not complicated. You should frequently wash your hands, cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, avoid touching your face, and clean and disinfect often. Probably more important than these recommendations is to stay home! If you must leave your home, utilize proper social distancing strategies and avoid gatherings of more than 10 people. Like I said, none of these things are complicated. That said, they are very challenging. Effort, commitment, and sacrifice will be required. Most important of all, however, care and compassion for others is a must. To beat COVID-19, it is vital for each and every one of us to do things that are best for the greater good.

Second, it is important to remind all of you to take care of yourself and your family. That includes your physical well-being but also your social, emotional, and mental well-being. The hand humankind has been dealt is stressful. It creates fear and anxiety and is challenging us like never before. Our social, emotional, and mental stability are being attacked, and it is important to take care of this part of our overall health and well-being. While PPS’s resources are somewhat limited with respect to social, emotional, and mental health support, we have developed a program called “Be Well” aimed at doing what we can. School-based mental health practitioners are ready to provide support to those in need. Confidential support can be requested by emailing [bewell@penderschools.org](mailto:bewell@penderschools.org) or by calling 402-385-3244 ext. 6. All emails and phone messages will be answered as soon as possible. Information, resources, and as much help as possible will be provided. There are a plethora of other ways to seek and receive social, emotional, and mental support. I encourage you all to keep a close eye on yourself and those around you, and more importantly, to seek help if needed.

Third, I want to stress the importance of student participation in the District’s “continuity of learning” plan. PPS staff members have and will continue to work hard to provide the best possible enrichment opportunities and experiences for students. It is vital for students to take full advantage of these opportunities and experiences, and for parents to urge students to do what they are being asked to do. There is a strong chance that students will not return to the building until August when the 2020-2021 school year is scheduled to begin. Yes, that means students likely will not return to the building during the 2019-2020 school year. While that may be the case, students have a chance between now and when the school year is scheduled to finish (May 19) to learn and grow. The amount of growth that can occur between now and May 19 is significant. Students and their parents are urged to maximize that growth by taking advantage of every possible opportunity and experience. In the end, learning and growth are the point of the educational process. The

# Greetings from Jason Dolliver

## Superintendent



enrichment opportunities and experiences look different than the normal learning process here at PPS. That said, the focus of students and their parents should remain squarely on learning and growth. That focus will help the remainder of the 2019-2020 be as productive as possible, which will set the 2020-2021 school year up for as much success as possible. I would like to thank all of you in advance for your cooperation and effort during this unprecedented time in history.

Fourth, I think it important to inform patrons of the District's plan for employees. With every fiber of my being, I believe it is vital for PPS to pay employees what was budgeted to be paid to them. In other words, it is important for the District to hold up their end of the bargain when it comes to employee contracts and work agreements. I also strongly believe it is vital for PPS employees to hold up their end of the bargain when it comes to their contract or work agreement. That means, PPS employees should continue to perform, complete, execute, implement, etc. tasks essential to the effective and efficient operation of PPS during the time the District is closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A plan for all employees to do exactly that has been put into place, and the Board of Education is supportive of that plan. I am appreciative that everyone involved (Board members and staff members) is on the same page with respect to this plan. I believe that is the case because PPS Board members are fantastic, and because PPS staff members are simply amazing. I told staff members I would not want to work through a challenge of this nature with any other group of people, and I meant that with 100% sincerity. That same sentiment applies to the members of the Board of Education. PPS patrons should rest assured that the District is in good hands, and that we WILL come out of this situation stronger, more efficient, more effective, and better than we were before all of this unfolded!

Finally, I want to thank everyone (students, staff, parents, District patrons) for your cooperation, grace, and understanding. The hand humankind has been dealt will challenge us in ways we did not know were possible. It will take a monumental effort out of everyone of us on this planet to overcome this virus and the havoc it wreaks. While I have no idea how those out there in this world will respond, I am hopeful. That hope comes from the best possible examples of humankind I can think of ... all of you! If everyone in this world had what we in Pender (and Thurston and the surrounding areas) have, this situation would be a breeze. I feel fortunate to live in this little corner of the world, and fortunate to live amongst all of you! I know that we, like PPS, will maneuver through this situation in the best way we can, and we will come back stronger, more efficient, more effective, and better than we were before all of this unfolded!!

As is always the case, anyone with questions, comments, or concerns is encouraged to contact me. I can be reached via phone at (402) 385 - 3244 ext. 2310 or email at [jadolli1@penderschools.org](mailto:jadolli1@penderschools.org). I normally mention that I can also be contacted in person at the school, but that is to be avoided for now. Hopefully that changes very, very soon!

I hope to see you all sometime very soon and GO PENDRAGONS!!!

Dr. Jason Dolliver, Superintendent



# Greetings from Eric Miller

## High School Principal



Hello Pendragons!

Let me start by asking you all to please stay positive and see the good in the situation we are in. These truly are unique and even historic times for everyone involved. Usually during the April and May newsletter I would be letting you know about our upcoming state tests and how we have been preparing all year long for the NSCAS and the ACT. I would also be talking about upcoming activities such as Prom, which is always a favorite for our Juniors and Seniors. These events are then usually followed by Fine Arts Night where we honor our band and choir, along with speech, drama, National Honor Society, quiz bowl and our art department. Then we have all of the spring athletic competitions that happen; track, boys golf and baseball, and wrap it all up with the Activities Banquet. Finally, there is Graduation, the culminating celebration for a group of kids who have completed their 13 years of education. With all of these events “up in the air” so to speak, it is a little difficult to find the motivation to write.... The truth is, I don’t know what any of these events will look like or if they will happen this year. That is a disappointment for many of us looking forward to the next two months.

I don’t want to dwell on the unknown or the negatives though. I want to talk about what I saw this last month, and what we need from you going forward. As I said at the beginning, it is time to “See the Good!” What I saw in the week leading up to the last few days of “regular school” was absolutely amazing. I saw a staff of 60 or so people reinvent the way education is supposed to look. I saw teachers collaborating, diving into new alternative forms of lessons, and working tirelessly to get everything on to a virtual format. I saw educators across the state and even nation forming help-pages on social media so that anyone could share and get the resources they needed to keep the educational process going in their districts.

Our kitchen staff quickly developed new ways to feed an entire community of children in the event that we should be forced to shut down. Our paraprofessionals jumped in wherever they needed to make sure the educational process continued so kids didn’t miss anything in the last days of classroom education. The transportation department developed new routes for delivering meals to kids who can’t get to town. The custodians worked non-stop to make sure everything was as clean as it could be and teachers and kids could keep the room as sanitized as possible while here.

The amazing part was that all of these people at PPS had to do this with very little information or knowledge as to what was going on. In the days leading up to school closure, the Admin team was hunkered down listening to online meetings, press conferences, and updates. We were inundated by advice from attorneys, state officials and the Department of Education. All of these staff members were able to accomplish many of these tasks with updates like, “we have to be prepared to close.” or “we don’t know when, but it is going to happen.” The educators in our building accomplished all of this while keeping a normal classroom day, continuing to teach and collect student work, and utilizing every last minute of face-to-face time with students.

Pender community, if you want to “see the good” in this situation. There is proof that you have one of the finest educational staffs in the country at Pender Public Schools. What I saw these people pull off in a matter of days was next to impossible. Now we need your support through the next phase of this unknown time. We are venturing into a time of E-Learning for the foreseeable future. Parents and community members, please continue to support the teachers' efforts. This will not be perfect, and not everything will go how we planned it. Please stay in touch with your child’s teachers. Please help to keep your child motivated! There are going to be times they find this situation boring or pointless, but we can’t let that attitude win. Our staff is continuing to prepare these kids for what is ahead of them. We want every student ready to hit the ground running when we return, and we feel that with your continued support during this unknown time, we can do that.

Remember, It’s a Great Day to Be a Pendragon!!

Eric Miller,  
7-12 Principal

# Greetings from Kelly Ballinger

## Elementary Principal



April 2020

Dear Pendragon Families,

I hope this newsletter finds you well. You are all in our daily thoughts and prayers. We are certainly swimming in uncharted waters. Our current closure plan has been extended to Thursday, April 30, 2020. A decision about reopening will happen at that time. Please know that we are here to help you in whatever fashion we can.

We have many resources available during this uncertain time. Please remember our food program is available Monday through Friday. You can email your order to [schoolmeals@penderschools.org](mailto:schoolmeals@penderschools.org) or call 385-3244 x 7. Please have orders in by 9:00 a.m. each day. We also have a social/emotional help line available by calling 385-3244 x6 or emailing [bewell@penderschools.org](mailto:bewell@penderschools.org). The Pendragons Care fund is available for other needs as they arise including the technology/internet needs of our students and families. Again, please reach out if you need anything at all.

The Extended Closure Plan laid out by the district outlines our blueprint for continuing the education of our students. While it is not ideal (we really miss our kids), it is an attempt to keep our students in some kind of a routine. That routine is valuable for their learning as well as their mental health. If you have any questions about that plan or what your student is supposed to be doing, please don't hesitate to ask.

Learning can happen in many ways so **please DON'T stress**. There are many things that can be learned while students are home with their families. Cooking, crafting, outdoor activities, and chores are all amazing ways to teach valuable lessons. It is very important, however, to keep them reading, writing and using those math skills as well. There is room for and value in it all! We appreciate your partnership in this endeavor!

Please take good care of yourself both physically and mentally. Follow the advice of public health; wash your hands, cover your nose/mouth when coughing or sneezing, avoid touching your face, and clean and disinfect often. If you can – just stay home! If you must leave your home, use proper social distancing. If we all do our part, we will come through this better and stronger than ever.

As always, it's a GREAT day to be a Pendragon!

Respectfully,

Kelly Ballinger  
PK-6 Principal  
Special Services Director

# Counselor's Corner

## With Thad Nixon



Greetings to all! With the end of the year soon approaching things are getting put into the fast track for completion. Seniors have been filling out scholarship applications one after another in hopes of gaining a little extra help with tuition next fall as time is fast approaching on deadlines. I realize that we are currently living through a truly historical moment right now but would like to reassure everyone that our school is well organized and the last push for scholarships and getting seniors prepared for graduation is still approaching.

Things that I would like to inform you of are:

### Seniors...It's decision time!

Here's how to make your final college decision.

Compare your college acceptance letters, financial aid award notifications, and campus visit notes. List the pros and cons of each school using the following criteria:

- **Location** – Is the college too close? If you come home every weekend, you won't experience true campus life. Is the college too far away? If so, you may not make it home as often as you'd like.
- **Cost** – Can your family afford the school? What can you expect for financial aid beyond your freshman year? Did you receive renewable scholarships? How much in student and parent loans will you need to borrow to cover expenses?
- **Academic program** – Which college offers the degree program that best fits your career interests? What happens if you change majors? Does the college offer other degree programs that interest you?
- **Student life** – Does the school offer activities you will enjoy? If you plan to live on campus, do you like the housing arrangements provided by the school? Will you have an opportunity to work on or near campus?

Make your final decision by **May 1** and then notify the colleges you're rejecting so they can offer your spot, and financial aid, to another student.

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### Juniors... these questions will help you narrow your college choices

By picking your top colleges now, you'll be better prepared to apply for the financial aid and college application processes early next fall. Start by answering these questions:

- **What do you want to study?**  
Explore your career interests and then research colleges that offer programs in areas you may want to pursue. Use college selection tools like College Profiles at [EducationQuest.org](http://EducationQuest.org).
- **What kind of school do you want to attend?**  
Do you prefer a large university or a small college? Are you interested in a community college? What kind of student/teacher ratio do you want?
- **Where do you want to go to college?**  
Do you want to live close to home or far away? Do you want to be in a major city or a small town? How big of a factor is out-of-state or private school tuition? If you want to go out of state, investigate programs like the Midwest Student Exchange Program which may provide discounted tuition.
- **What can you afford?**  
Consider overall costs: tuition, room and board, books, transportation, and personal expenses (see "Nebraska College Costs" at [EducationQuest.org](http://EducationQuest.org)). Determine what you and your parents can afford to pay out-of-pocket and plan to apply for financial aid to help make up the difference. Calculate the loan debt you and your parents may need to incur to pay for your college education.

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### April "To Do" List

#### Seniors

- \_\_\_ Continue applying for scholarships.
- \_\_\_ Make your final college decision.
- \_\_\_ Start purchasing dorm essentials.
- \_\_\_ Start looking for a summer job.

**2020-2021  
Bus Service Request Form**

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Numbers:

Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Mom Work: \_\_\_\_\_ Dad Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Mom Cell: \_\_\_\_\_ Dad Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name Number

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I am requesting bus service for the 2020-2021 school year. \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Is this the first year you will be using the bus service? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Will there always be a parent home at pick up & drop off times? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If no, is it okay to drop your child/children off at home? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Will your child be dropped off at a location other than your home? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If yes list location & days: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list the following information for each child:

Child's First Name	Child's Last Name	Grade 2020-2021 School Year	Days Riding

Please indicate the following times your child/children needs bus service:

\_\_\_\_\_ Morning & Afternoon      \_\_\_\_\_ Morning Only      \_\_\_\_\_ Afternoon Only

\_\_\_\_\_ Everyday      Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form by July 6th, 2020 to:

Scott Pfeiffer

Pender Public Schools

609 Whitney Street

Pender, Nebraska 68047

FAX 402.385.3342

Email: [scpfeif1@penderschools.org](mailto:scpfeif1@penderschools.org)



## Census Data

Pender Public Schools must conduct a school census annually in order to get the most accurate number of persons and the most complete record of names and addresses of the patrons in our district. It is very important that every family with children ages 0 to 21 years of age complete the following.

Please return the completed form to Pender Public Schools, attention: Tab Albus at 609 Whitney Street, Pender, it can be faxed to 402-385-3342, or the information can be sent via email to [taalbus1@penderschools.org](mailto:taalbus1@penderschools.org) We appreciate your cooperation.

Parents and/or guardians first and last names: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_

When did you move to the area (if after 2017)? Month: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

List all of the children under 21 in the household, including those attending colleges or serving in the Armed Forces. AC = At College, AF = Serving in the Armed Forces

First & Last Name:	Date of Birth	Place of Birth City, State Country	Sex M/F	Age	Grade or AC/AF



## How to Contact Us

School Office

402-385-3244

On the Web at

[www.penderschools.org](http://www.penderschools.org)

On Facebook

Pender Public Schools

On Twitter

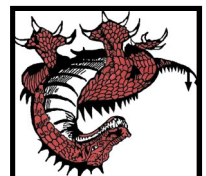
@pendragonupdate



Save your Cubby's receipts and turn them into the school office. Cubby's will donate 2% of the total receipts we collect back to Pender Public School.



Pender Public Schools  
609 Whitney  
Pender NE 68047



Non Profit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Pender, NE 68047  
Permit No. 4