Greetings Parents and Family Members,

So much can be said about 2020, with the impacts felt deep, far and wide. While I do not want to discount the significance of all that has happened and all that could yet occur, I do want to direct the focus to the potential for good that can come from what we have learned during the challenging times we all experienced. I wish safety, good health (physical and mental) and rejuvenated optimism to everyone in the Ponderosa community.

As I write this letter, I am energized with excitement knowing that Monday, January 11, we will again open our doors for in-person learning at Ponderosa. Back in December, when Dr. Siegfried shared his plan to reopen schools on January 11, I was overjoyed. Now, just days away from the actual date, I am delighted, eagerly anticipating the moment students again arrive and walk through our doors for school. As we prepare for this shift back to in-person learning, I want to commend our students and families for the commitment given to connecting and participating in the remote learning that happened in November and December. I also want to recognize and celebrate the Ponderosa staff for their work in developing engaging and meaningful online learning experiences for our students. The time invested by our staff to develop consequential instruction for students and to host synchronous learning experiences that were engaging and dynamic was considerable and admirable. While we were not perfect, we have come a long way since last spring. There were many challenges to overcome, for everyone, to make remote learning a success. I want to personally thank students, parents and staff for the commitment to this effort. We did this together!!!
Coming back, it’s important for everyone to know and accept that we are not through the pandemic. We still have a long way to go and need to act responsibly if we are to avoid going back to a remote learning scenario. Below you will find a brief detailed reminder of the established protocols we implemented at the beginning of the school year. These protocols will remain in place and continue on as expectations for our Ponderosa community.

**Morning Arrival**

Children should arrive at school **no earlier than 7:45 a.m.** Doors will **not** open and adult supervision will **not** be available until **7:45**. Students will continue to be expected to enter the building through their assigned grade-level wing. The main entrance will not be available to students or parents 7:45 a.m. – 8:00 a.m. Students will have the option to eat breakfast, which will be delivered to each classroom. Our staff will be on hand to help children as they arrive to school.

The first bell will ring at **7:55 a.m.**. We hope to have each child in class, ready to start the day at **8:00 a.m.** Children arriving after **8:00 a.m.** will be considered tardy and must enter the building through the main entrance. Parents will not be permitted entry to the building to sign tardy students in. Our office sign in students who arrive late to school.

**Dismissal**

School will conclude at **2:45 p.m.** Dismissal will be staggered according to the ways in which students go home from school. Students being picked up by a family member or walking home will be dismissed through the grade-level entrance from 2:40 – 2:45 p.m. Students riding the bus will be escorted to the buses at 2:45 p.m. If riding a bus, students are encouraged to go directly home from their bus stop. Students who attend the Panther Club Before & After care program will be picked up by a Panther Club staff-member. Those students who attend an offsite childcare program will wait to be picked up in our main lobby. During the dismissal timeframe (2:30 – 3:00), our main entrance will be closed to visitors. Parents coming to the building during this time are encouraged to wait for their child at their grade level entrance.

**WHAT PROCEDURES ARE IN PLACE FOR HANDLING VISITORS AT PONDEROSA?**

Our building policy will remain changed for visitors. Parents and family members will be permitted in the front lobby only. In an effort to maintain the health and wellness of our students and staff, **visitors will be required to wear a mask at all times**. Visitors will need to remain in the lobby and will not be permitted to move beyond the lobby, deeper into the interior of the building. Visitors will not be able to volunteer, visit classrooms or eat lunch with students. Access to the playground during recess will also not be permitted. Parents and family members can access the main lobby to pick up students from school or to attend building meetings. If attending a meeting, visitors will need to have a previously scheduled appointment. All appointments must be scheduled by phone and in advance. In an ongoing effort to provide a safe environment at school, we will continue to check visitors in using the Raptor ID system at Ponderosa. Raptor is a visitor registration system that scans and reads a driver’s license and/or valid ID, checking the visitor’s information against the National Sex Offender data base. If no match is found, the system will print a visitor’s sticker with a picture identifying that individual as an approved visitor. Every visitor, parent and/ or family member will be expected to check in at the front desk every time they visit the building. **Please have your ID with you each time you come to Ponderosa.**
It is important that parents are aware that students will be expected to wear a mask for the entire school day. There are only three reasons a student can remove his/her mask:

- To eat breakfast/ lunch and/ or to take a drink.
- To catch a breath during recess (must be socially distanced and put the mask back on after normal breathing is recovered).
- To catch a breath after extreme physical exertion (non-recess related).

Students must otherwise wear a mask throughout the school day. In the interest of keeping everyone healthy, these expectations will be strictly enforced. Students will be held accountable to these expectations.

Once again I want to share my excitement as we anticipate having students back at school, learning in-person, on Monday. I am eager to get the second semester underway, knowing that being in-person is what is best for our kids. Happy New Year everyone. I wish you all a healthy and happy 2021.

If we can be of help to you in any way, please contact us in the Ponderosa main office at 720-747-2800.

Sincerely,

Mr. Chad M. Gerity
Principal

Mrs. Bridget Contreraz
Assistant Principal

Welcome back Ponderosa! During this time and return to in-person learning, please remember the following:

1. Complete your student’s COVID symptom tracker on your parent portal each morning.
2. Please keep your student home with any ill symptoms and notify the school nurse for COVID testing availability.
3. Be sure to wash hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds.
4. Maintain six feet distance from people outside your household.
5. Wear a face mask when out of your home.

Thank you and stay safe and well.

Jennifer Aloni, MSN, RNC
School Nurse
Ponderosa Elementary School
Phone: 720-747-2809 or 720-393-2169
Fax: 720-747-2888
Looking to save Time and Money?

FREE Meal Pick-up

Starts Monday January 11th
for all Students 18 and under

Preschool, K - 12 Remote Learners, & Quarantined Students:

Pick up 7 days of Breakfast and Lunch
Every Monday at any High School Location*

7:15 AM - 8:30 AM
or
11:00 AM - 12:30 PM
*Endeavor not included

Middle & High School Hybrid Learners:

Pick up 5 days of Breakfast and Lunch
every Monday at any Middle School Location*

7:15 AM - 8:30 AM
or
11:00 PM - 12:30 PM
*Challenge not included

Need a Later Pick-up?
Smoky Hill High School is open from 3:00 - 5:00 PM

Dedicated to Excellence
Cherry Creek Schools

Thank you for supporting the
Food and Nutrition Services Program!

This institution is an equal opportunity provider
Buscas ahorrar Tiempo y Dinero?

**Entrega de alimentos gratis**

*Inicia el Lunes 11 de Enero*

para todos los estudiantes menores de 18 años

**Estudiantes de Preescolar, K-12 en aprendizaje remoto & en Cuarentena:**

Recibe Desayunos y Almuerzos para 7 días
Cada Lunes en cuanquier locación de High School *

**7:15 AM - 8:30 AM**

o

**11:00 AM - 12:30 PM**

*Endeavor no incluido*

**Estudiantes de Middle & High School en aprendizaje Hibrido:**

Recibe Desayunos y Almuerzos para 5 Dias

cada Lunes en cualquier Locación de Middle School *

**7:15 AM - 8:30 AM**

or

**11:00 PM - 12:30 PM**

*Challenge no incluido*

*Necesitas recoger los alimentos más tarde?*
Smoky Hill High School esta abierto de 3:00 - 5:00 PM

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Gracias por el apoyo al programa de Servicios de Alimentos y Nutrición!

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