

Hello Ponderosa Families and Parents,

Four weeks officially in the books. School is off to a great start. I have to say that I am just so impressed with how easily students have transitioned back to school amidst the constraints of the pandemic and having been gone from in-person learning for such a lengthy period of time. I commend parents and family members for your support in promoting the safe practices that are expected at school this year. By partnering together, we are certain to emerge from this unique life experience stronger, wiser and better.

As we move deeper into the school year and the weather begins to get colder and potentially more wet, it's important for everyone to remember that we officially open the school doors at 7:45. Even on the cold wet days, we will not be able to open the school earlier than 7:45. We do not have enough staff on hand to provide adequate supervision until 7:45. This means students arriving prior to 7:45 will wait outside until the doors open for the day. I encourage parents to arrive at school closer to 7:45 as the colder, more wet weather becomes more frequent.

This year we are hosting all of our family meetings (Accountability, PTCO, PASS, etc...) remotely. This is one of the many necessary changes that we have been required to implement due to the COVID – 19 pandemic. I truly want to promote the meetings we host for parents as each is designed to better connect parents and family members to the school environment. Please be sure to check your email for invitations and links to the parent meetings we will be hosting online.

During the 2020/ 2021 school year, Ponderosa is fortunate to partner with an organization called SECOR to provide our families needing support with food over the weekend. The food is approximately enough for a family of four. If you are interested please contact our school social worker Jenn Calabrese at jcalabrese@cherrycreekschools.org to sign up. You can also reach her by calling 720-747-2811. Once enrolled in this program, food will be sent home every Friday with your child.

The new expectations implemented to help keep students, staff and families healthy have been overwhelmingly embraced. Parents, thank you for reinforcing our expectations that students wear masks and socially distance from one another when at school. Our kids are doing a great job making sure to keep their masks on and they are working hard to remember to watch their distance around classmates. Overall, we are very proud of our Ponderosa Panthers. These steps we take together to promote and maintain a healthy environment at school are working and with the support of our families and parents we can continue through the school year happy, healthy and learning.

I sincerely hope the beginning of the school year has gone smoothly for the students and families at Ponderosa. From our perspective the school year has begun in a magnificent way, all things being considered. We hope to continue on this positive path, feeling fortunate to have the opportunity for an everyday, in-person learning experience. I am excited about the possibilities that lie ahead for our students and their achievement.

Sincerely,

Chad Gerity
Principal – Ponderosa Elementary