

Dear K-5 Families,

October 23, 2020

I want to thank you for your patience as we continue our transition of all of our students from remote learning to the virtual academy.

I also wanted to take this time to update you on important information regarding the virtual academy program.

The virtual academy is an entirely new school that was created as an option for families who could not attend the hybrid programs at their brick and mortar schools.

In creating our new school we did not have the luxury of receiving a school code in POWERSCHOOL. A school code would have allowed us to distinctly remove students and teachers from their current schools and place them solely in the virtual academy. In the absence of a school code, students still remain as students in POWERSCHOOL, our students information system, in their home schools

Not having a virtual academy school code poses two particular challenges.

- 1) You will continue to receive phone messaging and emails from your student's home school. This is an issue that we cannot fix. The current and only access the virtual academy has to communicate with you is through your student's Pittsfield Public School email address.
- 2) Current Curriculum and Programs: Because all students continue to reside in their home schools in POWERSCHOOL, the access to certain programs such as IREAD are currently unavailable to some of our students. Our technology staff has diligently worked to solve this problem, and ,as of this morning, feel there is a solution. We will be sending a separate email to families with instructions as to how we are working around this issue and feel confident that this issue will be resolved by early next week.

Our teachers are working to ensure that your student's educational experience is a positive and fulfilling one. I wanted to make you aware of our administration team and their contact numbers as well as they will help you solve specific issues that you may be having. This will in turn help our teachers focus more on the delivery of instruction.

- ★ Carl Tillona - is our Principal - ctillona@pittsfield.net I would ask at this time to please reach out to me with any and all questions, and give our teachers the time to settle into teaching and getting to know your student. They are feeling the

stress of trying to provide quality instruction while not having the ability to currently offer every aspect of programming that was available to them while teaching remotely. Each day we are resolving the myriad complexities that starting a new school poses and literally, each day we are getting stronger and stronger as a school.

- ★ Rebecca Henault - is our School Adjustment Counselor - rehenault@pittsfield.net Rebecca comes to us from Williams Elementary School. She is available to help you and your students to problem solve any social or emotional needs that you are facing during this tumultuous time.

- ★ Samuel Davis - is our LMS Coordinator - swdavis@pittsfield.net Samuel is our go to person for technology. Please contact Samuel with your computer or technology concerns. Please understand that because of the beginning of our new school this week, we have had a large number of tech support needs. Mr. Davis is working diligently to resolve each and every issue and reaching out to district technology when it applies.

- ★ Thom Osborn - is our Special Education Instruction and Accountability Coordinator - tosborn@pittsfield.net Thom is working on ensuring that our students on IEPs are receiving the services they need to be successful at the virtual academy. Thom is new to Pittsfield and is currently reading and getting to know all our students IEPs. He will be developing remote learning plans to reflect your student's needs in a virtual environment.

Monday, October 26th will be a full day for PPVA students. Please disregard any messaging from the district that states otherwise.

I want to also make you aware that next Tuesday, October 27th at 7:00 pm we will hold a K-5 Learning Coach Community meeting. Our entire administrative staff will be present to introduce themselves and speak more about their roles. There will also be a question and answer session in which we will work through the challenges that you may be facing.

Once again, thank you for having the patience and flexibility as we resolve our challenges in starting our new school. PPVA!

Best,

Carl Tillona

Principal, Pittsfield Public Virtual Academy