

September 2, 2020

Dear PCS families, students, and staff,

Welcome to those of you who are new and welcome back to our old PCS hands! I'm so excited that we will get to see each other in person this year. :) My name is Becky and I am the PCS therapist.

Please take what delights you and leave the rest.

1. **Covid and politics and wildfires, oh my!** I started writing these emails last spring when Covid turned our world upside down. Social distancing and fear for our health and the health of our loved ones and the intense political climate have been challenging. And now we've piled on wildfire evacuations and hazardous air quality! Many of us experienced this recent trauma because we were evacuated, suddenly homeless, or helping to house someone who was displaced. I hope you are all safe now and back to your homes. But the fire continues to affect us every day. This smoke is wearing on our nerves just like Covid has and is likely to make us anxious, depressed, and irritable. If you find this is true for you, be gentle with yourself and know that your feelings are normal and real.
2. **Appreciation for our amazing teachers and staff:** A very special thank you to our school nurse, Danielle Plocki, who has educated us and set up safety measures to make it possible for us to return to school. Amazing! Our teachers are doing double/triple/quadruple duty. Along with all the new health protocols, they are also simultaneously teaching the students at home and in the classroom. This is a tremendous undertaking and I am thoroughly impressed with our teachers, administrators, and support staff for their dedication, creativity, and hard work! Thank you to our administration and our board for their willingness to allow us to go back to in-person learning.
3. **Appreciation to our families and students:** Thank you to all of *you* who are patiently and tenaciously navigating through this new way of learning. You are being asked to show up and support your student in a whole new way. Students, I know independent study is extremely challenging. I hope you are finding ways to make it work for you. Ask for the support you need. Your PCS staff is here to help you. I am so proud of you.
4. **How to thrive.** Over the next few weeks I will be delving into the ways we can stay emotionally and mentally healthy. For those of you who were with PCS last spring, much of this will be review. I need a refresher! Through the spring, I was fairly on point with my self-care and was truly living the values I shared with you. Over the summer my routines got wonky and it's time to reset. The things that help us with our emotional well-being are the same things that help us stay physically healthy

such as getting enough rest, exercise, healthy food, sunshine, nature, water, and having routines, meditating, and being connected with loved ones.

More to come on all of this. But for now I wanted to say hello, introduce myself, and let you know I'm here to support you so please reach out if you or your family need anything.

Warmly,

Becky