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Pelahatchie Elementary, the best kept secret in Rankin County



Special to
Pelahatchie News

*By Guest Columnist,
Robin Sanders,
Principal, Pelahatchie
Elementary*

The start of this school year was certainly different from years past, but Pelahatchie Elementary staff, students, and parents have helped to make this the best start possible! With many new faces in administration, faculty and staff, and students, we have spent time getting to know each other and establish friendships that will last a lifetime.

Each month, we will honor our "Chiefs with Character." This is an opportunity to recognize students for displaying positive character. For August and September, we recognized students who exhibited resilience and friendship. Our Pelahatchie family has consistently demonstrated an enormous amount of resiliency and friendliness, and everyone is determined to make this year a success!

We are also very proud of our virtu-

al learning Chiefs and are recognizing their efforts each month. It has been nothing short of amazing to observe classroom instruction as teachers seamlessly include their virtual learners into the physical class lessons and discussions.

Another endeavor we are focused on this school year is to increase parent contact to celebrate our students. Our teachers and bus drivers continuously communicate with the administration team about students who are demonstrating excellence and/or improvement at school and on the bus. It is the goal of the administration team to communicate with parents through phone or notes to let parents know that we are so proud of their child. In getting started with this new practice, we are just as proud to call and write parents and brag on their child as parents are to receive the communication. We can't wait to brag on your student next!

We are excited to see what lies ahead for Pelahatchie Elementary, the best kept secret in Rankin County. We are Pelahatchie Strong. Go Chiefs!

An open letter for Thanksgiving



Special to
Pelahatchie News

*By Guest Columnist
Dr. Teague Burchfield,
Principal, Pelahatchie
High School*

Looking back, our return to school from the 2019 Christmas Holidays was quite a comical one. I could not wait to address you all with what at the time seemed like such a hopeful message for the upcoming year. "2020 Vision" was the message (I still give credit to Mr. Bryan Collins for coining the phrase first) and it didn't take long to see that message become a worthy one for so many to start the year. What a solid message it was!

In retrospect, imagine the irony of "2020 Vision." As we transitioned into the new year, clarity for the Spring semester was present. We felt great about the direction we were heading as well as how well our students were following through with the expectations that were laid out. We wrapped up the third nine weeks with a faculty/student basketball game on the Friday before spring break with high hopes for what the fourth nine weeks would bring. From that point forward, the COVID-19 pandemic entered the picture and "2020 Vision" ceased to exist, and in many ways, clarity has been what we've all longed for ever since. How ironic!

While this lack of clarity has dominated so many areas of our profession,

what is clear is your absolute devotion to this profession. These past few months have revealed so much about the faculty and staff of Pelahatchie High School. Your willingness to uproot decades old classroom habits and embrace what we thought would be impossible have been nothing short of astonishing. You have found ways to "problem solve" when there really wasn't an answer for what at the time was unknown. Through troubleshooting, trial and error, and most importantly, collaboration with each other, you have not only survived some of the toughest educational terrain imaginable, in my honest opinion, you have thrived. And so, because of your efforts, clarity is revealing itself once again.

While all I have to provide are words, they are simply not enough to say how much I appreciate these efforts. Our "Tribe" is a phenomenal one. I am so thankful to be able to walk the halls on a daily basis and greet educators from very different backgrounds that truly enjoy their peers and the young adults they teach. Pelahatchie High School is quite fortunate to have teachers who are masterful at integrating healthy relationships with their students while pushing them to appropriate academic limits. Pelahatchie High School couldn't have a more superb collection of educators to face the obstacles that exist in today's classroom. Pelahatchie High School is fortunate to have such a dedicated teachers and staff!