

# Pella Middle School

## *Acclimating for the Future*

August 2016



### Dates to Remember:

- 9/5 Labor Day – No Classes
- 9/9 Wear your favorite in-state or college shirt
- 9/9 MS Dance -
- 9/14 PD – 90 min early dismissal
- 9/21 PD – 90 min early dismissal
- 9/22 Aaron Baart Assembly
- 9/28 PD – 90 min early dismissal
- 10/4 Picture Day
- 10/5 PD – 90 min early dismissal
- 10/10 Parent Teacher Conferences  
3:30 – 7:00
- 10/12 PD – 90 min early dismissal
- 10/18 2 Hour early dismissal
- 10/20 2 Hour early dismissal
- 10/21 No School
- 10/26 PD – 90 min early dismissal
- 10/28 First Quarter Ends

## August 2016

### **Welcome Back!**

We are off to an excellent start, and I have to thank our staff for their efforts in making it such a great success. I also want to thank the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students for their role in our successful start. The 8<sup>th</sup> grade class has begun right where they finished, and we are proud of the level of character and leadership they are demonstrating for our new 7<sup>th</sup> graders. The 7<sup>th</sup> grade class is exceeding the transition expectations we had for them. Both classes are working very hard, and we could not be more pleased with the start to the 2016 – 2017 school year. We have such unbelievably great kids here. Let your students know we appreciate each of them, and we are very proud of them and their efforts!

*Maximizing Life's Opportunities for Every Child*

# All Students

## Why What Who?

Why do we exist?

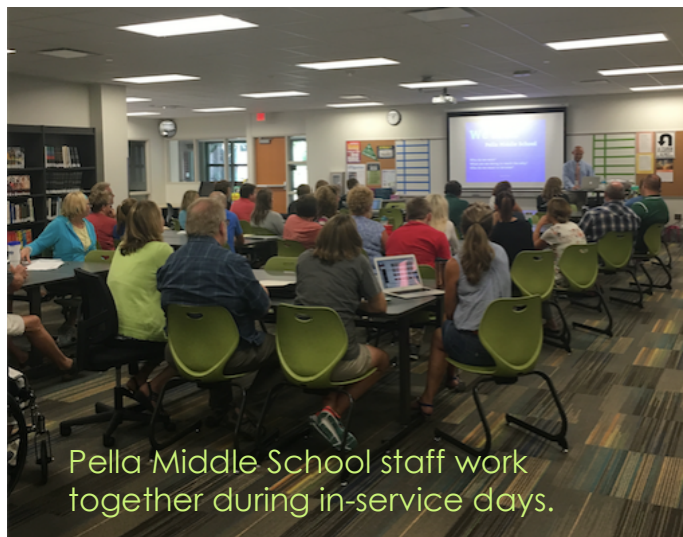
What are we doing to reach the why?

Who do we want to become?

Our Pella Middle School team kicked off our in-service days by working through the above questions because we have a strong desire to be intentional. We want to be intentional about our relationships with one another and with students, and we want to be intentional about maximizing life's opportunities for every middle school child. Due to our desires, we have to work more efficiently, effectively, and closer than we ever have, but before we do, we have to know one another on a deeper level than we ever have. Our teachers make an impact daily, and it is important for us to think about that.

1. *What do you want your legacy to be?*
2. *How are your actions at school contributing to the development of your desired legacy?*
3. *What commitments can you make at school to live out your legacy?*
4. *How can we (our MS staff) help you keep those commitments?*
- 5.

Every staff member was asked to create a visual as well as answer these, so we know how to better support one another this year in our pursuit to serve middle school students while leaving a memorable legacy along the way.



Pella Middle School staff work together during in-service days.

## New Faces

We have several new faces, as well as familiar faces in new places, at the middle school. We hope you are able to come to our meet the teacher event, and put a face with a name!

### New Faces:

Dale Barnhill – 8<sup>th</sup> History & Academic Coach

Stephanie Graham – 5-12 Orchestra

Tammy Krebs – Custodian

Juan Munoz – Spanish Teacher

Julie Nuisma – Teacher Associate

Ashton Yossi – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Math

### Familiar Faces in New Places:

Bret Denekas – Teacher Associate

Jerod Garland – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade History

Josiah Brandt – Digital Media

# All Students

Why do we exist, what do we want to accomplish, and who are we as a school/school district? These are questions and guidelines we will use to maintain our focus.

## Pella Community School District

### Why do we exist?

(Mission and Vision)

*To Maximize Life's Opportunities  
for Every Child.*

The Pella Community School District strives to be the best in the world at preparing students to be productive team members of society by teaching them to solve problems with unpredictable solutions. This happens through the following:

- Creating a passion for things students care about
- Teaching students how to ask questions that beg for solutions
- Developing a perspective that causes one to consider other points of view when considering solutions
- Experimenting with the impact of solutions to weigh the personal and economic costs of the solutions
- Teaching students ways to self-assess the quality of their solutions



### What do we want our students to accomplish?

(Goals)

#### **BECOME A PERSON OF INTEGRITY AND PERSONAL BALANCE**

- Students will manage their physical, emotional, and social health. Students will demonstrate and practice the pillars of character in a safe learning environment.

#### **IMPROVE ACADEMIC PROFICIENCY**

- All students will make growth regarding established standards and performance expectations. In addition, all students will achieve identified proficiency levels.

#### **DEVELOP COMPLEX THINKING SKILLS**

- All students will increase proficiency in problem solving models in all subject areas.

#### **BECOME AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATOR**

- All students will communicate effectively with others in a variety of contexts and formats including reading, writing, speaking, listening and interpersonal skills.

#### **DEMONSTRATE TEAMWORK/ COLLABORATION**

- All students will demonstrate the ability to work effectively with others to achieve a common goal.

#### **EXHIBIT GLOBAL AWARENESS**

- All students will analyze ways their actions, as well as the actions of others, impact the world environmentally, socially, culturally, politically, and economically.

### Who are we?

(Brand Pillars)

**We are Pella Community Schools**

Pursuing Excellence

Building Caring Relationships

Respecting and Developing Every Child's

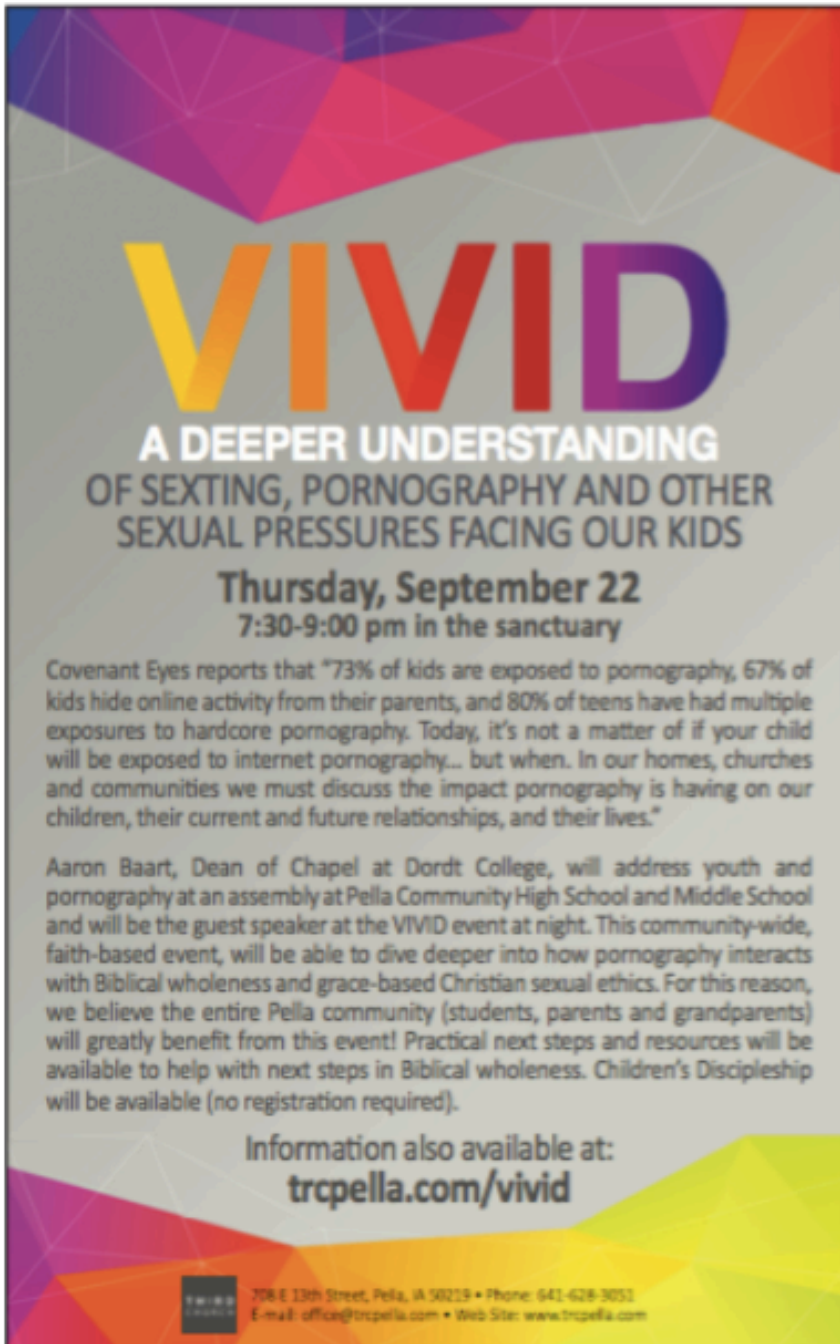
Potential



*Maximizing Life's Opportunities for Every Child*

# Aaron Baart Assembly

Unfortunately today, it's not a matter of whether your child will be exposed to Internet pornography...but when.

A poster for a VIVID event. The word "VIVID" is written in large, colorful letters (yellow, orange, red, purple). Below it, the text reads: "A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF SEXTING, PORNOGRAPHY AND OTHER SEXUAL PRESSURES FACING OUR KIDS". The date and time are "Thursday, September 22, 7:30-9:00 pm in the sanctuary". A quote from Covenant Eyes is included: "73% of kids are exposed to pornography, 67% of kids hide online activity from their parents, and 80% of teens have had multiple exposures to hardcore pornography. Today, it's not a matter of if your child will be exposed to internet pornography... but when. In our homes, churches and communities we must discuss the impact pornography is having on our children, their current and future relationships, and their lives." The speaker is Aaron Baart, Dean of Chapel at Dordt College. The poster also provides contact information: "Information also available at: trcpella.com/vivid" and "708 E 13th Street, Pella, IA 50219 • Phone: 641-628-3051 E-mail: office@trcpella.com • Web Site: www.trcpella.com".

**VIVID**  
A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING  
OF SEXTING, PORNOGRAPHY AND OTHER  
SEXUAL PRESSURES FACING OUR KIDS  
Thursday, September 22  
7:30-9:00 pm in the sanctuary

Covenant Eyes reports that "73% of kids are exposed to pornography, 67% of kids hide online activity from their parents, and 80% of teens have had multiple exposures to hardcore pornography. Today, it's not a matter of if your child will be exposed to internet pornography... but when. In our homes, churches and communities we must discuss the impact pornography is having on our children, their current and future relationships, and their lives."

Aaron Baart, Dean of Chapel at Dordt College, will address youth and pornography at an assembly at Pella Community High School and Middle School and will be the guest speaker at the VIVID event at night. This community-wide, faith-based event, will be able to dive deeper into how pornography interacts with Biblical wholeness and grace-based Christian sexual ethics. For this reason, we believe the entire Pella community (students, parents and grandparents) will greatly benefit from this event! Practical next steps and resources will be available to help with next steps in Biblical wholeness. Children's Discipleship will be available (no registration required).

Information also available at:  
[trcpella.com/vivid](http://trcpella.com/vivid)

708 E 13th Street, Pella, IA 50219 • Phone: 641-628-3051  
E-mail: [office@trcpella.com](mailto:office@trcpella.com) • Web Site: [www.trcpella.com](http://www.trcpella.com)

**Aaron Baart** visited Pella Christian students in grades 6 – 12 last year, and he delivered a compelling message. Pella Community High School and Pella Community Middle School are partnering to provide our high school and middle school students, as well all parents, information about a major societal concern in the digital age. Pornography is readily available to all, including our youth, through the Internet via their personal technology devices.

*A big part of being successful is being prepared.*

## Monthly Parent/Guardian Challenge

This year, we are going to try something new because of the changing times and unique interactions and experiences we get with students in our office. The following may or may not come as a surprise you. Believe it or not, some of our students are unable to use our office phone, complete an email in letter format, label an envelope, remember their parent/guardian's, siblings, or grandparents phone numbers, so we are going to create a fun challenge each month to see if you can assist them with some of the skills we had to have in order to survive back in the day. The first challenge is below.

### Calling...All Parents!



Office Phone Replica

A frequently asked question by students in the Middle School office: “Can I call home?” Although perhaps not surprising, what may surprise you is how many of these students are not familiar with using a landline phone (some may refer to it as an old fashioned phone!). Although many homes are getting rid of their landlines, most businesses still operate with some form of a receiver and separate dial pad. If you have a landline at home, check with your kids to see if they still remember how to dial a phone the old fashioned way! Happy dialing!

**Ability is what you have; skill is what you learn.**

*Attitude determines preparation, preparation determines outcome.*

# Character Counts!



*Character is what you show when no one is watching.*

before you speak

**think!!**

- t + is it true?
- h + is it helpful?
- i + is it inspiring?
- n + is it necessary?
- k + is it kind?

# Laptop Reminders

## Tips for Parents - Social Media

- Set parameters on laptop usage at home.
- Avoid having your student use his/her laptop in his/her room.
- Have a “charging station” in the kitchen, so it does not have to go to student’s room for charging.
- When your students are using their devices, have them sit with their backs to you, so you can see their screens.
- Anytime your students create a new account, sit next to them, so you know the usernames, passwords, and abilities of the site.
  - Then check their usage once in a while to hold them accountable.
- Have your students explain the purpose of the site they are using/accessing.

## **Avoid laptop screen breakage - speak with your student about ways to avoid spending \$349 to replace an LCD projector/screen.**

- Avoid leaving the charger tip on the keyboard when shutting the lid.
- Avoid leaving headphones on the keyboard when shutting the lid.
- Avoid leaving pens/pencils on the keyboard when shutting the lid.
- Avoid leaving papers with paper clips or staples on them when shutting the lid.

These simple steps can help students reduce the likelihood of replacing their screens.

## Academic and Eligibility Policy

The faculty and administration of Pella Middle School have developed the following policy for students who are failing classes. A list with any student failing a class will be compiled by the iStudy Supervisor through Infinite Campus software, and the list will be compiled approximately every four weeks. See schedule below. Students failing any class will be placed on the Academic and Ineligibility List. Students not participating in extracurricular activities will be required to stay after school on Wednesdays from 1:45 to 3:15 for two weeks. Students participating in extracurricular activities will be rendered ineligible under this policy to represent Pella Middle School in any public extracurricular performance, as well as required to stay after school on Wednesdays from 1:45 to 3:15 for two weeks. Once a student is placed on the Academic and Ineligibility List, he/she will not be removed until the end of the second week (i.e. Wednesday morning through Tuesday end of day for two weeks in a row).

- The academic list will be compiled on Monday at 3:15.
- Student on the academic list who is failing a class will call home on Tuesday to communicate their grade with parents or guardian.
- The ineligibility period will start Wednesday and will run through the end of the day Tuesday two weeks later.
- Each student on the list will be required to stay after school both Wednesdays during the two weeks in an after school study hall from 1:45 - 3:15. Students may also be required to stay after school at any time during those two weeks in order to receive additional academic support.
- A list of all eligible students will be provided to the athletic director, the principal, and each coach as soon as the list is compiled.
- Extracurricular activities covered by this policy, but are not limited to: football, volleyball, cross-country, wrestling, basketball, track, shooting team, softball, cheerleading, jazz band, and show choir.
- Students will participate in any co-curricular events if it is required as part of a class grade.
- Being on the academic ineligibility list does not prohibit the student from practicing with the team.
- The administration will have the final say if there are any discrepancies.
- This list is confidential and will not be posted or made public.

Welcome to Pella Middle School! My name is Anne Pentico, and I am the middle school counselor. This is my 6th year as the school counselor in this building, 10th overall. I thoroughly enjoy working with middle schooled-aged people and supporting their ever-changing needs.

As the Pella Middle School counselor, my primary responsibility is to support the academic, career, and personal/social development of every student. I will do this in a number of ways including meeting with students individually and in small groups, but also conducting large group or classrooms lessons throughout the year. I also work with parents, collaborate with teachers and staff, and consult with community services and organizations to meet the needs of Pella Middle School students and their families.

Any student can request to meet with me or can be referred by a teacher, administrator, or parent. I encourage you to reach out if you have concerns about your child, and if you would like your child to meet with me, please contact me directly. I can be reached by email at [anne.pentico@pella.k12.ia.us](mailto:anne.pentico@pella.k12.ia.us) or by telephone at [641.628.4784](tel:641.628.4784).

Thank you, Mrs. Pentico

#### **2016-2017 Approved District Calendar:**

[http://www.pellaschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/2016-17\\_SchoolCalendar.pdf](http://www.pellaschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/2016-17_SchoolCalendar.pdf)

#### **Middle School Specific Site:**

<http://www.pellaschools.org/schools/middle-school/>

#### **Middle School Handbook:**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/11sbdnoekXycEhaCmud0jfVtG3MQLNqjrFWv29sFkJik/edit>

#### **Middle School Band:**

<https://sites.google.com/a/pella.k12.ia.us/middle-school-band/>

#### **Pella 1:1 Handbook:**

[https://docs.google.com/a/pella.k12.ia.us/document/d/1QyO3\\_S4OmTFuauYwSz6IXI5SsjYh68y-h9K8qZ6M5VM/edit](https://docs.google.com/a/pella.k12.ia.us/document/d/1QyO3_S4OmTFuauYwSz6IXI5SsjYh68y-h9K8qZ6M5VM/edit)

#### **Pella Digital Learning Environment (DLE) Link:**

<http://pcsd-dle.blogspot.com/>

#### **Activities/School Calendar - has ALL 2016 - 2017 district activities:**

[http://www.littlehawkeyeconference.com/g5-bin/client.cgi?G5genie=206&school\\_id=4](http://www.littlehawkeyeconference.com/g5-bin/client.cgi?G5genie=206&school_id=4)

*Maximizing Life's Opportunities for Every Child*