

Hello Pirate Families,

Over the past 12-18 months, we have been getting many requests from parents/community members requesting PCS to consider forming a strong community-based soccer program that will provide our children a quality experience at a reasonable cost. Many years ago, Hamburg offered a very positive soccer experience for our youth, one in which families would come together every Saturday morning to not only enjoy watching their child(ren) play soccer, but to connect with community neighbors. But for a variety of reasons, the involvement has dwindled over the years as many families now have to drive out to Legacy or have simply decided not to play given the cost and distance in driving to Brighton. Although Legacy provides a quality experience, it is not for everyone as some parents are not interested in an ultra-competitive experience for their kids and given the demands on schedules, would prefer to have something closer to home in their own community, especially given that Hamburg Township is home to what I would consider to be one of the most beautiful outdoor soccer facilities in Livingston County, if not in Michigan and sadly, they remain empty for the most part or are seldom utilized.

Given that we have proven to provide positive, efficient and quality programs here in PCS, in addition to creating partnerships with community organizations such as HPYFA (Hamburg/Pinckney Youth Football Association) and others, the community has trust that we can also provide a soccer program that is truly a "Community-Based" program so that our kids are competing among their peers, their neighbors and their friends. In addition, we would love to begin creating a bridge from youth soccer to our high school program by utilizing our student-athletes to help officiate, chalk the fields, run clinics and help coach.

In response to the community feedback we received, we shared this information with Hamburg Township roughly 18 months ago and they were eager to support us in the endeavor of creating a community soccer program by offering us to take advantage of the beautiful fields we have in this community on Merrill Road. With that being said, our sole intent is to create a soccer program in the Hamburg/Pinckney area that can thrive, be effectively managed and most importantly, provide a soccer experience that is both competitive and fun!

I share all of this with you as we have been made aware that there is some information being shared on social media and on the the "Next Door" app that is both negative and inaccurate. I have included a post below from the the "Next Door" app that speaks to PCS possibly playing a role in preventing the Hamburg Fun Fest from happening or jeopardizing the moving Vietnam Wall that comes through our area in the summer, none of which is remotely true or viable. We are being offered the opportunity to use a handful of soccer fields to begin reestablishing a thriving, community-based soccer program, nothing more, nothing less. In addition, we have no alliance or agreement with Legacy, which some are claiming, although we do have a good relationship with Legacy as some of our athletic teams do use their facilities when needed. Please see the post below:

My dear neighbors, I'm sure you have all been to the wonderful family event held in Hamburg every June? Well we are in jeopardy of losing the use of the soccer fields that we provide the amazing laser light show and fireworks display. Pinckney Community Schools is seeking priority

rights to these fields in Hamburg and in doing so could contest the use of parking, as well as our entertainment during the Fun Fest. Our non profit organization is asking for the community's help in this matter. There is an open meeting Tuesday night at 7pm at the Township Hall. We need your support to help us reserve the rights to use this property for everyone's enjoyment during the Fun Fest and at the end of August when the Moving Wall will be here to view. As all of us volunteers work so hard for this event we ask that you help by standing up for our rights to use our park that we all as tax payers pay for. Please stop up at the Township Tuesday night 2/19 at 7pm to give us your support or the Hamburg Fun Fest may be no more. Thanks for your support, H.E.R.O volunteers

I share this with you as we have received numerous emails, text messages and phone calls from concerned community members and in the consistent spirit of transparency we operate in, I thought it would be effective to address these claims upfront. Although a formal agreement has yet to be signed with Hamburg Township, we are in the final steps in getting an agreement finalized and do hope that our actions and the trust we have built will speak for themselves as we want nothing more than to continue being a valuable resource to our community and work to strengthen our partnerships with all our stakeholders as this is a great community to live, work and play. I am both saddened and disappointed that some are looking to create a sense of divisiveness, especially by sharing false information to get community members upset. Although our society seems to thrive on getting people outraged, we will not take part in this and will continue modeling the core values and characteristics we look to hold our students and ourselves to.

Thank you,

Rick Todd
PCS, Superintendent