PUTNAM COUNTY COMMUNITY UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT #535

Providing Foundations Together, Cultivating Individual Growth

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August 1, 2026

Dear Putnam County Families and Community Members,

It is with great excitement, humility, and gratitude that I welcome you to the 2026-2027 school year as the new Superintendent of Putnam County CUSD #535. It is truly an honor to join a district with such a rich tradition of excellence, a dedicated staff, supportive families, and a community that takes tremendous pride in its schools.

This school year is especially meaningful for my family. My wife, Rebekah, and I are excited that our three children will also be beginning the school year as Putnam County students. Our sons, Chase and Brayden, will be attending Putnam County Primary School in kindergarten and first grade, while our daughter, Alayna, will be a third-grade student at Putnam County Elementary School. Like many of you, we'll be experiencing the excitement, anticipation, and even a few first-day jitters that come with the start of a new school year. Knowing that my own children will be learning and growing in our schools reinforces my commitment to providing every student with an exceptional educational experience.

One of the things that makes Putnam County special is the strong partnership between our schools and our community. Our district has long been known for providing students with outstanding educational opportunities while maintaining the small-town values that make every child feel known, valued, and supported. I am excited to become part of that tradition and to work alongside all of you as we continue building an exceptional future for our students.

As your superintendent, I believe leadership begins with listening. Over the coming months, I look forward to meeting many of you, learning more about your hopes for our schools, and building lasting relationships throughout the district. My goal is to lead with integrity, transparency, and a student-centered focus while honoring the traditions that have made Putnam County a source of pride for generations.

I look forward to an outstanding school year filled with learning, growth, and celebration.

Go Panthers!

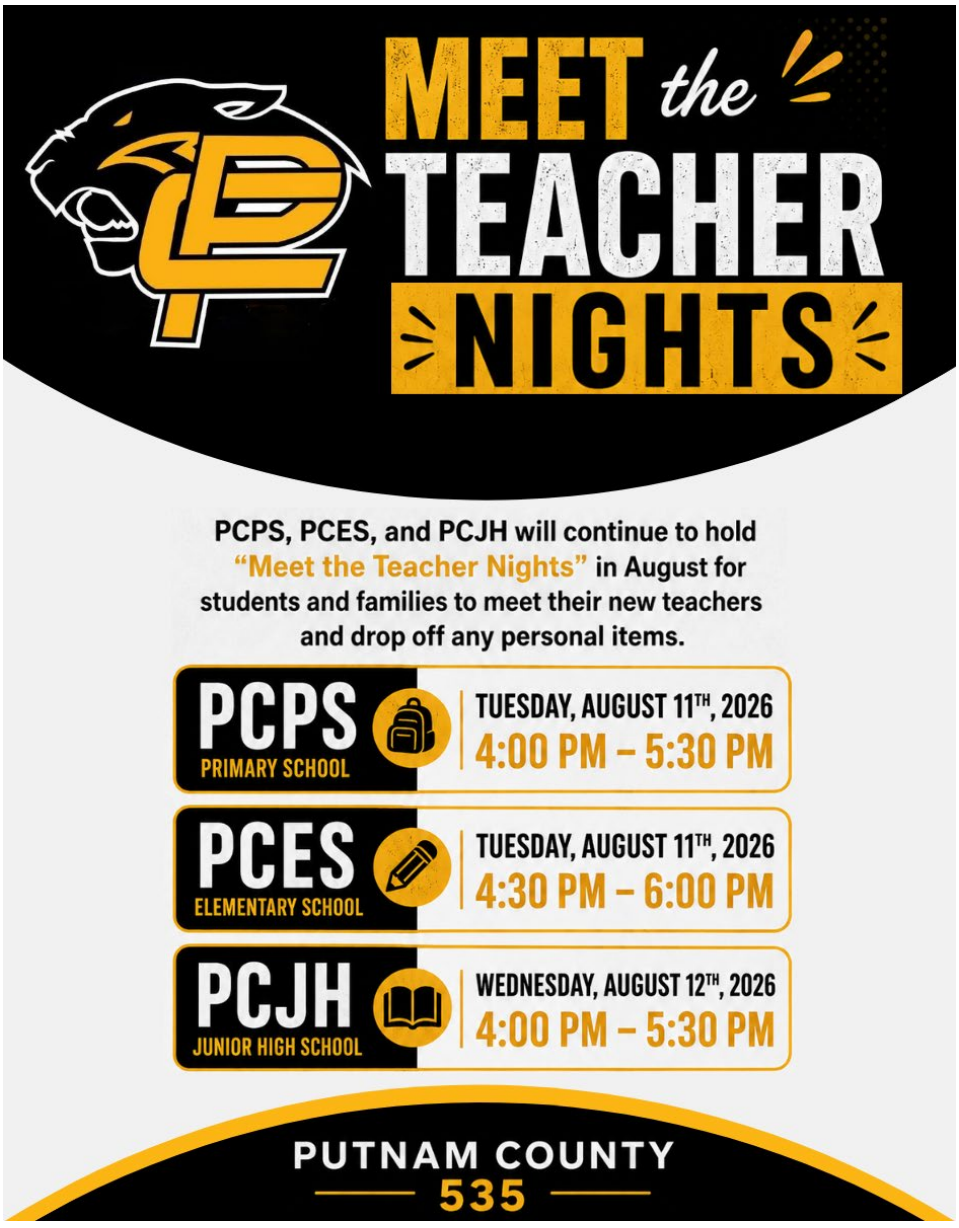
Cody Martzluf
Superintendent
Putnam County CUSD #535

Important Dates

Thursday, August 13, 2026 – First Day of School – **1pm dismissal**

Friday, August 14, 2026 – **1pm dismissal**

Meet the Teacher Nights



Supply Lists

The Board of Education approved the purchase of school supplies for students for the 2026–2027 school year. As a result, the District will provide the majority of essential supplies needed for your child(ren) – Click Here for more information

New Staff

We are pleased to welcome the following new staff members to Putnam County CUSD #535 for the 2026–2027 school year. We are excited to have them join our district and look forward to the experience, energy, and expertise they will bring to our students, staff, and school community!

- Cody Martzluf - Superintendent
- Kristina Frackowiak – PCHS Paraprofessional
- Nicholle Jones – PCPS Paraprofessional
- Ashley Johnson – PCHS Ag Teacher
- Emily Matas – PCES/ PCJH/ PCHS Speech Language Pathologist
- Christina Kealey – PCJH Paraprofessional
- Madison McGunnigal – PCES 3rd Grade
- Ashley Robson – PCHS Social Science
- Ethan Staley – PCJH Paraprofessional
- Katie Watters – PCJH English
- Jasmine White – PCHS Spanish
- LeAnne Williams – PCES Paraprofessional
- Anna Harmon – PCES Head Cook
- Douglas Campbell – PCJH Custodian

Staff Changes

The following staff are changing roles and/or locations for the new school year:

- Ray Veronda moving to PCHS from PCJH
- Megan Dauck moving to PCPS from PCJH
- Michelle Yepsen moving to PCES as a Cook
- Tara Lindenmier moving from Paraprofessional to Kindergarten teacher at PCPS
- Tara Treber moving from Paraprofessional to Secretary PCPS
- Carey Schorn moving from Secretary at PCPS to Student Services Administrative Asst

Student Attendance

Every day at school matters.

Regular attendance and active participation in school are important to your child's success. Being present each day helps students stay on track academically, build positive relationships with peers and adults, develop responsibility, and make the most of their educational experience. Whether your child is beginning their first year of school or preparing to graduate, every school day provides valuable opportunities to learn and grow.

Our goal is to partner with families to help every student develop a positive attitude toward school and establish the habit of being present and ready to learn each day. We understand that some absences are unavoidable, including illness and family emergencies. Vacations may also be excused at the discretion of the building principal; however, prior notice is required.

If your child will be absent, please contact your child's school or call the 24-hour attendance line at (815) 882-2800, ext. 6. Thank you for partnering with us to support strong attendance and student success!

Student Cell Phone Use

The District has long recognized the importance of limiting cell phone use during the school day and has maintained restrictions on personal devices during instructional time. In many ways, Putnam County CUSD #535 was ahead of the curve in recognizing the impact that cell phones can have on student focus, engagement, and learning.

Recently, the Illinois General Assembly passed legislation requiring school districts across the state to establish and enforce restrictions on student cell phone use during the school day. While our District was already moving in this direction, the new state law provides a consistent statewide expectation for schools.

Putnam County CUSD #535 will continue a strict ban on student cell phone use during all school hours at all schools. This approach is designed to reduce distractions, increase student engagement, encourage meaningful face-to-face interactions, and create an environment where students can focus on learning.

We appreciate the partnership of our students and families as we implement this updated expectation. Our goal is simple: fewer distractions, stronger connections, and a greater focus on learning.

Transportation Update

Please note the following transportation changes for the 2026–2027 school year:

Transfer Buses to PCES

- JH and HS students who walk home will be dropped off at Ernest Bassi Park rather than PCES.
- K–1 students will continue to be dropped off at PCES unless they have a high school sibling riding the same bus.
- This change is intended to help improve traffic flow and student dismissal at PCES.

Transfer Buses from PCJH to PCPS

- Walking students from PCJH will be dropped off at Elm Street & Main Street.
- Students with K–2 siblings will continue on the bus to PCPS so they can be dropped off with their younger siblings.
- This change will help reduce congestion around PCPS during dismissal.

Thank you for your patience and cooperation as we work to make transportation and dismissal as safe and efficient as possible for our students and families. If you have any questions, please contact Johannes Bus Service Inc at 1-888-712-3506 or one of our school offices.

Morning Drop Off

For the safety and supervision of all students, students should not be dropped off or arrive at school before 7:15 a.m. Please plan accordingly, as staff supervision will not be available prior to 7:15 a.m.