Integration Briefing: Two Schools, Two School Boards, The History (Part II)

Last month we explored the first 50 years of Pella Christian Grade School and Pella Christian High School. They were two different schools who started at two different times and shared a common purpose - Making Christian Education available to families in south Central Iowa.

When we last left off in the 1970s small family farms were alive and well in Mahaska, Jasper, and Marion counties. Enrollment at Peoria Christian peaked at well over 131 students in 1962. Sully Christian enrolled 190 in 1972, and Oskaloosa enrolled 227 in 1987 during its heyday. Most of those students went on to attend Pella Christian High School.

Things changed. The 1950s baby boom turned into a 1970s baby bust. The farm crisis of the 1980s hit small farmers hard. At the same time more efficient farming technology resulted in fewer farmers overseeing larger numbers of acres and doing so for longer periods of time as life expectancy increased. Fewer school-age children lived in the existing housing stock, particularly in the countryside as population growth flattened. The chart examines population changes over a 50-year period.

There was one exception to low population growth: Marion County - Specifically Pella. Over the same 50-year period Pella saw significant industrial and population growth, leading to enrollment increases at Pella Christian Grade School flowing into Pella Christian High School.

As Pella Christian High School enrolled a higher percentage of students from Pella Christian Grade School, the schools’ decisions and futures grew much more closely intertwined. Today 70% of the Pella Christian High School students come from Pella Christian Grade School. The strategic thinking, collective decision-making, and stewardly use of resources required for sustainable Christian education in south Central Iowa necessitate a common vision and unified governance. Hence, why we’re pursuing formal integration efforts.

In the next Integration Briefing we’ll explore how church membership has changed over the last 50 years and how those changes have affected local Christian schools. —- Dan Zylstra, Head of Schools Pella Christian Schools

Enrollment/ Re-enrollment for the 2023-24 School Year

The enrollment/re-enrollment process at Pella Christian Schools opened March 1. The process will again be completed in the PC Family Portal. Re-enrollments need to be completed by March 31, 2023 to continue our partnership in educating and nurturing your child for a life of service in God’s kingdom. Know families interested in Pella Christian? Encourage them to visit our website at www.pceagles.org to begin the conversation and schedule a campus tour. It would be a joy to meet them!

Welcome

Please join us in welcoming Maestro Lorenzo Escalante Chan and Maestra Esmirna Rodríguez Medina to the Pella Christian community! Maestro Lorenzo Escalante will serve as first grade Spanish Immersion teacher, while Maestra Cordero is on maternity leave. During the summer, he will transition to PCHS to serve as an immersion teacher. Maestra Rodríguez will serve as the 2023-34 second grade Spanish Immersion teacher.
The Pella Christian Grade School Board met in regular session on Monday, February 20, 2023. Leslie Steinkamp opened the meeting with devotions and prayer. The board approved the hiring of Katie Dolejski as a Point of Sale Position in the Cafeteria and adjustments in the Spanish Immersion staffing. The board received reports from the directors and committees, including the approval of bus fees and salaries for 2023-2024 and adjustments to the Teachers’ Contract Addendum.

### Board Briefs

- **March 7, 1.35 p.m. dismissal, Parent Teacher Conferences**
- **March 8, 2:35 p.m. dismissal, professional learning**
- **March 9, 11:35 a.m. dismissal, Parent Teacher Conferences**
- **March 10, No School, teacher work day**
- **March 13-17, No School, Spring Break**
- **March 22, 2:35 p.m. dismissal, professional learning**
- **March 29, 2:35 p.m. dismissal, professional learning**
- **March 30, SPARK Sharing Night**

### March

- **April 5, 2:35 p.m. dismissal, professional learning**
- **April 7, No School, Good Friday**
- **April 12, 2:35 p.m. dismissal, professional learning**
- **April 19, 2:35 p.m. dismissal, professional learning**
- **April 20, Spring Musical grades 3-5, 6:30 p.m.**
- **April 21, A Grand Day**
- **April 26, 2:35 p.m. dismissal, professional learning**

The board approved Jenna Huitink and Glenda Van Workoem as nominees for the board for the 2023-2024 school year. The board discussed Educational Savings Accounts (ESAs) and their impact on enrollment and admissions decisions, both for this year and for future years to come. Kent Breems closed the meeting with prayer.

### Employment Opportunities

Pella Christian Grade School has the following employment opportunities for the 2023-24 school year.

#### Teaching Positions
- **Lower Elementary Teacher** full time.
- **Middle School History/Language Arts position** full time.
- **Band Lesson Instructor** part time. The position would entail partnering with our Band Director to facilitate lessons for 5th-6th grade students.
- **Art Teacher** part time. The position would entail teaching 3rd-6th grade students.
- **Media Specialist** part time. The position would entail overseeing all elements of the media center and teaching media skills to sections of our K-5 one time per week.

#### Extended-Care Assistant Director

Extended-Care is a service at Pella Christian Grade School which provides bell to bell enrichment care for preschool students when not in class.

#### Full Time Instrumental Music Teacher

Pella Christian Grade School and Pella Christian High School are seeking a shared full-time Instrumental Music Teacher. The primary teaching responsibilities include middle school and high school bands.

#### Support Staff Positions

- **Extended Care Aide** part time. Extended-Care is a service at Pella Christian Grade School which provides bell to bell enrichment care for preschool students when not in class.
- **Financial Assistant Position** Pella Christian Grade School and High School are seeking a Financial Assistant to support the Pella Christian Treasurer in tasks related to financial data entry and financial records management.
- **Custodian/Maintenance Position** starting May of 2023.

Applications will be accepted until positions are filled. Interested applicants can contact dirksenb@pellachristian.net or pellachristian.net

### Coaching Positions

- **Varsity Volleyball Coach** Pella Christian High School is looking for a varsity volleyball coach for the 2023 season.
- **Assistant Baseball Coach** Pella Christian High School is looking for a couple of individuals to serve as assistant coaches in the baseball program. If you or someone you know would be interested, please contact Dan Branderhorst at branderhorstd@pceagles.org

**A Grand Day**

Pella Christian Grade School is excited to welcome grandparents and grand friends for a A Grand Day on Friday, April 21. A third through fifth grade musical will be held on Thursday, April 21 at 6:30 p.m. in the Pella Christian High School auditorium. A Grand Day will start with a short chapel in the Eagle Gym followed by classroom visits. Lunch will be offered for visitors wanting to stay. Planned activities will end following lunch.

Please let your grandchild know if you plan to attend lunch so they can send in your lunch reservation. The menu will include Sliced Ham, Mashed Potatoes, Gravy, Dinner Roll, Fruit, Cookie & Milk. Lunch will be free will donation.