

SAFETY FIRST: PV UPDATES SAFETY PROCEDURES IN COMPLIANCE WITH COVID-19 REGULATIONS

Written by: Addi Steele '21

In past years, PVHS has been free of backpacks and doors have been locked. But, thanks to COVID-19, safety priorities have changed throughout the school.. Previously, backpacks were to be banned in classrooms due to safety concerns. It went from drawstring bags only to mesh and clear bags allowed to no bags at all. PV's school resource officer, Jamey Fah, despite him not working in the school when the original rule was instituted, gave insight on the preliminary reasoning. "Initially, the thought was if kids don't have their backpacks with them they might not have something on them that's concealable," stated Fah.

He also described the bigger purpose behind the rule was to prevent the clutter of the backpacks and to maintain safety with clear walkways in classrooms.

PV students have mixed opinions on the new backpack rule for the 2020-2021 school year. While some students feel safe having backpacks in class with them, others would prefer the backpacks to be left out of the classroom.

Senior Jaden Waterhouse generally feels safe despite the reversal of the former rule. "I feel pretty safe carrying backpacks around. I haven't really worried about my safety with having them in the classroom," she commented.

Even though Waterhouse and numerous other students in the school feel safe with backpacks in classrooms, there are also several who feel unsafe with backpacks in the school. Senior Emma Nelson has a different opinion than her classmate. "We're high schoolers, and we can all be unpredictable at times," she started. "Which is why it's kind of scary knowing that any student in the school could be carrying a gun to every class."

While students were made aware of the backpack rule being adapted to meet health and sanitary regulations, most students were not aware of teachers being encouraged to leave their doors open to promote airflow during COVID-19. This has caused controversial feelings among staff and students.

With the development of COVID-19, Fah also has some thoughts referring to the doors of classrooms. "My preference is always that the classroom doors are closed, however I understand that 2020 and COVID-19 changed the way that most people feel and the way that we have to operate." said Fah. He also believes that if doors can be closed within a health-conscious matter, they should be.

Waterhouse and Nelson are both among the students that are not bothered by doors being left open, and still feel safe.

Fah was also able to shed some light on what the hybrid model has allowed for this year. "With the reduced number of students in the building we have way more opportunities to pay attention to what's going on around the students and the building," he explained. "The students that are doing things that maybe they're not supposed to be doing or things that may be unsafe, are observed way faster because there's so many fewer kids in the building."

Whether or not students feel safe in class, Fah feels confident with the safety of the student body. He reiterated that Pleasant Valley still believes in "see something, say something" and the usage of the P3 app. Those things have not changed in this year full of changes.



The spirit of these Spartans is **UN**breakable. Here's how they showed their resilience amidst the COVID-19 global pandemic.

"I preferred hybrid and have had to adjust to all of the changes because of covid."

Abigail Reynolds, 24

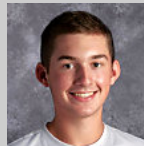


"My personal life was changed entirely and a lot of sports has been canceled."

Jocelyn Richards, 24

"During covid I moved a lot and making friends has been a lot more difficult."

Brett Rippchen, 24



"My mom had a baby over quarantine so I had more time with my family and it was nice."

Cole Roush, 24