COOP SCOOP

13 December 2024

A PSCS NEWSLETTER

pioneersprings.org

MISSION MOMENT: FOREST FEAST








Pioneer Spring's mission is to immerse students in a community of learning that connects them to the natural world. In support of this mission, PSCS is pursuing the National Wildlife Federation EcoSchools certification. In addition to classroom EcoSchools activities, each month, our campus community completes a school-wide environmental education action. This month's focus is Wildlife Winter Gifts. Students in grades K-12 have been studying how local wildlife adapts to winter. Ms. Sandy helped elementary classes create cozy winter shelters for our wildlife friends including brush shelters and even a hibernaculum. Margaret Bonds led students in making a decorative forest fest with help from volunteers and high school Student Government representatives. Click here for information about how you can support birds this winter, and click here to learn how to identify birds that may be overwintering in your yard.

IMPORTANT DATES & ITEMS TO NOTE

- 16 Dec: Board of Trustees meeting
- 18 Dec: WINGS meeting, 9am
- 19 Dec: Teacher Appreciation Event
- 19 Dec: HS Semi-Formal, 6:30pm
- 20 Dec-2 Jan: Winter Break
- 3 Jan: Staff workday - **NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS**
- High School Exam Schedule
- Academic & Events Calendar
- Who to Contact and When

Please join our PTO, WINGS, at 9 am on Wednesday, December 18 for our monthly meeting. This is a great opportunity to find out how you can contribute to the PSCS community, and to connect with other families. Check-in at the Castle. If you have any questions, email wings@pioneersprings.org.

Vision to Learn will be here on 12/17 to dispense glasses

A MESSAGE FROM WINGS: ATTENTION 3RD, 4TH AND 5TH GRADE FAMILIES...



We have an exciting event coming up on Thursday, December 19th! Our 3rd, 4th and 5th grade families will be hosting the upcoming all staff teacher appreciation event. The theme for this event is Cookies and Cocoa.

We are kindly asking for **3rd, 4th and 5th grade families** to sponsor this all staff appreciation event by donating supplies, food and/or volunteering (the sign up link is below). We really appreciate your support and we are so thankful for you.

https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F094DACA62FA0FF2-53375504-cookies

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HS Fall Call to Adventure waiver and permission slips went home this week. Click here for more information!





GET COMFORTABLE. Stories have been told and read for time immemorial because they are pleasurable and because sharing them draws people together. This is not necessarily obvious to children. At home, it's good to mix reading with warmth and affection. I try to express that in the way I sit. We tuck in on the couch or in a comfy chair. I try to snuggle with my little one, "Scoop" and even with my older ones, ages 13 and 11. Or we lie on the living room floor, all of us, while I read aloud. Even if your child is behind in reading and there's pressure to make progress, try to make reading time feel comfortable and caring.

READ SLOWLY. I like to stop for a couple of seconds about every half page or so when I'm reading to Scoop. The words and the story are more complex than she is used to. I want to give her time to absorb it. Sometimes I stop and look at her and smile when we're reading. Sometimes she doesn't say anything to me when I smile, and that's fine. Sometimes she smiles back. And sometimes she makes a little comment. " 'Mrs. Frisby is afraid ,' I think," she'll say. I don't have to do much to show her she's doing well when she does that. Sometimes I'll just nod and smile or kiss the top of her head. And then I keep reading. I read slowly too. Nice and steady to let the words sink in. There's no rush.

GIVE THEM A FEW WORDS TOO. Scoop loves it when I say, "And the next chapter is called…" and she gets to read the title of the chapter to me. Look for little moments when your child can help you read a more advanced book and see that it's within his or her range someday. Even if it's just reading the word 'I' or 'and,' it helps. "See, you're on your way!" is a powerful message.

EXPRESS YOURSELF (as much as you can). The power of reading aloud for kids is in developing their ear for language, for what words sound like and how sentences work. Capturing that is key and it's simpler than it might sound. You don't have to act out the roles and make it theater, you just have to capture the sound of language and the cadence of words—which ones run together, which ones get a bit of emphasis.

DON'T FREAK OUT. Ok maybe you're great at reading aloud. But maybe you're not. Maybe you fear it. Is it ok if you're not confident in your own reading? Yes. But more important than telling you it's okay I want to suggest a way to make you feel more confident and therefore more likely to read to your kids: preview the section you are going to read. The night before you read to your little one, take the book to bed and read the part you'll read the next night. If you've read it through beforehand, you'll remember even if you don't realize it. Please know that I do this all the time, even though I am a former English teacher and principal. I like to know where the book is going and to be ready for tough spots or content that's challenging. It just makes me feel confident to know where things are going. If you're nervous about reading, it will help you as well. As will starting simply. I know—I said read challenging books. But you can always build up to them. Reading to your child is a marathon not a sprint so it's fine if you need some time to build your own comfort and skill. Just please don't let that fear stand between your child and what will help them most.

For more childhood literacy tips check out Doug's latest book 'Reading Reconsidered' http://bit.ly/1Qod38a and visit his blog at teachlikeachampion.com/blog