



1 November 2024

A PSCS NEWSLETTER



pioneersprings.org

DO YOUR PART TO SUSTAIN PIONEER SPRINGS



Pioneer Springs is a unique school with an ambitious mission: to connect students to the natural world and their community through education. Our teachers' commitment to meeting each student where they are at, and to create a climate of curiosity, joy, and exploration in our indoor and outdoor classrooms makes a huge difference in the life of our students. This is a school that students are excited to come to, and where they know that they belong.

You can help sustain this mission by contributing to our Annual Campaign:

- **Click here to donate—you can make a one-time donation, or set-up a monthly donation (\$25/month will get us to our goal!)**
- **Click here to learn about employer matching gifts**
- **Spread the word to friends and family, and ask for a gift on behalf of your student**

Families who reach a \$150 giving minimum will receive a special thank you gift. Click here to claim your gift, and thank you! If you have not yet made your contribution, donate today and make a difference in the lives of all of our students!

THANK YOU, WINGS, OUR SCHOOL PTO, FOR A FABULOUS STAFF APPRECIATION EVENT!



On Monday our Parent Teacher Organization, WINGS, hosted a fabulous soup and salad bar for staff. The food was delicious, and everyone felt deeply appreciated.

A huge thank you to all of the families who made donations, and who volunteered. Dana Erato did a marvelous job coordinating the event, and Erin Scheichl and Stephanie Costas' incredible leadership of WINGS helped make the event a success!!

IMPORTANT DATES & ITEMS TO NOTE

- 1 Oct-31 Oct: Annual Fundraising Campaign
- 1 Nov: Raffle Ends
- 5 Nov: 1/2 staff workday. Early release for students, 11:30 am
- 8 Nov: Fairytale & Folklore Festival
- Nov 18-22: Digital Citizenship Week
- Board Meeting minutes
- Academic & Events Calendar
- Who to Contact and When

BE A PART OF THE ENCHANTMENT!



You are cordially invited to **join us on 8 November for the Folklore & Fairytale Festival** (click here for schedule), a beloved Pioneer Springs Tradition celebrating myths, folk tales, and fairy tales! Guests are strongly encouraged to wear homemade costumes inspired by a beloved childhood story.

CALLING ALL FAIRY GODMOTHERS AND GODFATHERS (AKA VOLUNTEERS)



We need you to make Folklore and Fairytale Festival magical.

Here's how you can help:

- Transform our campus into an enchanted space! Join us all day on Thursday to set-up set pieces and props.
- Support performances on Friday.
- Help break-down the festival after school on Friday.

Ready to wave your magic wand? [Click here](#) to volunteer. If you have questions, email Heidi Magi (heidim@pioneersprings.org).

WELCOME TO THE FOLKLORE HOLLOW! BY ARDEN HUGHES, PSCS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT



The Folklore Hollow is THE booth to visit for Folklore & Fairytale Festival souvenirs.

Folklore Hollow is a business founded by the high school Sustainable Business Communities in Action class. We will be selling all types of trinkets from candles to flower crowns to plant pots. Our products are great for birthdays and the holidays. We will also be offering services of fairy hair and glitter tattoos. The fairy hair will be clamped in and difficult to remove so please be sure of your decision.

We have been planning and working on this booth for about six weeks now and we are very excited to share it with you. I have had a lot of fun and learned a lot about marketing with my co-CMOs (Chief Marketing Officers), Jaden and McCoy. We have worked very hard on this business and I really hope you come check out our booth during the Folklore and Fairytale Festival!

List of products:

Wands
Flower Crowns
Plant Pots
Jewelry (earrings, necklaces, bracelets)
Fairy Hair
Glitter Tattoos

JOB OPENING: BE A SUBSTITUTE TEACHER (PAID POSITION)



When teachers are out, substitutes make all the difference. If you are interested in being a substitute teacher, please come to Sub Training on Thursday, November 7 at 4 pm in the Castle. Questions? email glendac@pioneersprings.org.

BENCHMARK UPDATE

Renaissance See Every Student.

This month we performed benchmark assessments for students in Kindergarten through 12th grade, using a new-to-Pioneer-Springs assessment, Renaissance Star. We will use data from these assessments, together with information gathered from class work and teacher observations, to personalize learning for your students. Be on the look-out in the coming weeks for information from your teachers about what we learned from the assessments, and about how we will personalize learning for your student.

PIONEER SPRINGS HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS LEARN THE ART OF MUSICAL IMPROVISATION IN ENSEMBLE

Attending a small high school has a lot of advantages, including small class sizes, and belonging to a tight-knit community. With these advantages, however, come some substantial trade-offs. Pioneer Springs is too small to field a football team, does not have a marching band, and cannot sustain a full size orchestra.

Gwen Postle, our high school music teacher, introduced a new course, Ensemble, designed to give high school musicians a chance to play music at school.

This semester ensemble includes a saxophonist, a violinist, a percussionist, and a cellist. Student-musicians explore music theory concepts, including scales, rhythm, and composition, and use those music theory concepts to rehearse pieces that they are developing for performance. Students are refining their ability to read music, and are also building improvisation skills and the ability to play by ear.

For some of the Ensemble students, this course is their only opportunity to play with other musicians. For other students, this course supplements community based music education. The cellist, who also plays in a community orchestra, reports that because Ensemble focuses on music theory, she has noticed she has a stronger understanding of the orchestra that she is playing in orchestra than she would have without the course!



HELP PSCS ACHIEVE OUR ECOSCHOOLS CERTIFICATION

Throughout the 2024-25 school year, Pioneer Springs Community School is striving to achieve EcoSchools U.S. certification. The international program is hosted by the National Wildlife Federation in the United States, and represents environmental education excellence for PK-12 schools. Through hands-on environmental actions, students are building environmental literacy skills that will help make a difference in the world today and empower them to serve as the environmental leaders of tomorrow.



PSCS has adopted an EcoSchools theme for each month throughout the school year. The month of October was PSCS Day Outside. Every grade level was challenged to spend as much time learning outdoors as possible. Teachers removed the walls from the classroom and conducted their lessons in our amazing Pioneer Springs natural spaces, allowing students to learn while surrounded by the beauty of nature and breathing fresh air.

November has been deemed Race to Zero Waste month. The actions of our entire community will help us meet the November goal! We are asking staff, students, and family members to focus on sustainability, waste reduction, recycling, and reusing. There are several ways you can help us meet our EcoSchools waste reduction goal for November:

1. Have a discussion with your students about ways your family can reduce waste in your home. Conduct a waste audit by looking at how much is being thrown away vs recycled on a weekly basis. Discuss opportunities your family has to reduce the amount of electricity and water being utilized on a daily basis.
2. The Week of November 18-22 is Waste Free Lunch Week. Each day, we are throwing away hundreds of single use plastics during our lunch periods. Our November goal is to significantly reduce this amount of waste by encouraging students and staff to bring lunches that are as free of single use plastics as possible. Students will be tracking the amount of waste PSCS is throwing away during lunch throughout the week with hopes of seeing a significant reduction. Your family can help us reach our waste free lunch goals by thinking about ways to pack lunch items without using traditional sandwich baggies, disposable shopping bags, or prepackaged food.
3. Participate in the PSCS Reusable Lunch Container Exchange. Many families have gently used lunch boxes and reusable lunch containers that their students no longer utilize. Maybe your student needed a bigger container as they aged or they outgrew a character pictured on the container. If you have any unused lunch containers, please consider donating them to be rehomed to another family. Donated lunch containers can be placed in collection boxes at each carpool location as well as in front of The Castle beginning November 4.

A lunch container exchange table will be set up during the Folklore and Fairytale Festival on November 8 for families to donate or pick up reusable containers to use for Waste Free Lunch Week (and every week)!

Be on the lookout for updates on our November Race to Zero Waste actions and future EcoSchools challenges.



MEET THE NEWEST MEMBER OF OUR COMMUNITY BY COREY SPERLING, HIGH SCHOOL CTE AG TEACHER



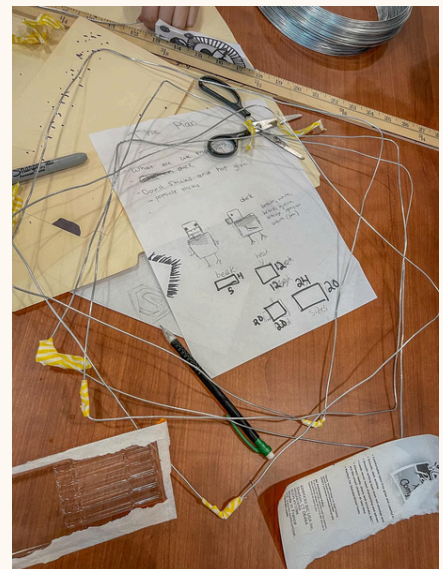
The "Ag" (Agriculture) program is a prime example of what Pioneer Springs was built on. Each Ag class has a Supervised Agriculture Study throughout the entire semester that provides real life experiences and the skills they learn in the classroom. In our Animal Science I class, the project the students proposed and was approved, was to bring chickens over to the high school area of campus. These students research the materials needed to build a coop and run, budgeted for those expenses, researched and selected the proper chicken breed for our use and we are working on drafting a donation letter to secure more funds for supplies.

Well, I am happy to announce that our four chickens (all hens) came in yesterday! We have two Barred Plymouth Rock hens and two Rhode Island Red hens! The students will be responsible for caring for their chickens, along with educating the other K-12 students about our chickens. I am also happy to announce that we have a custom coop being built by a group of students and their teacher James Reeves from Shelby High School. I have secured that donation to assist the Animal Science I students and once it is on campus, the students will need to add shingles to the roof (for longevity) and attach a chicken run.

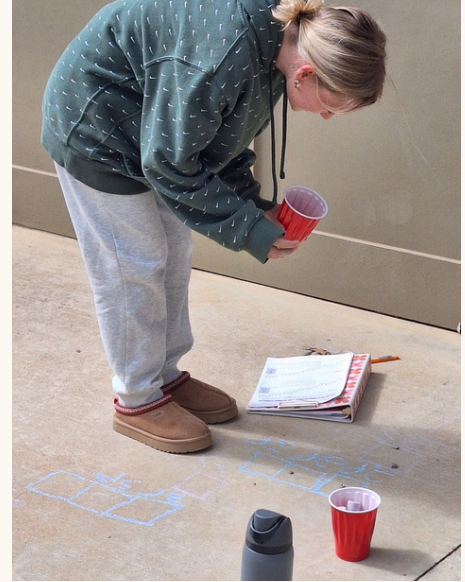
This project has been a success because of the hard work and dedication of the students in this class. When the semester closes out, each of these students will walk out of Animal Science I, with a project proposal that documents everything they accomplished. This can be used for college applications or to add to their resume. This is just one of the many projects happening within the Ag program! Stay tuned to see what the Horticulture I students are working on and the lofty community goal we have in place.

STUDENT SMILES

Ms. Jen's Lantern Parade edition



STUDENT SMILES



Last week Ms. Shannon's Chemistry students practiced writing out electron configurations for various elements using pebbles and sidewalk chalk. Electron configurations are the summary of where, in terms of energies, the electrons are located around a nucleus in an atom of any element. Electron configurations are a more detailed model that allow chemists to more fully understand and predict bonding behavior among elements. The Chemistry class will be using this knowledge in our next unit to identify bonding electrons and predict trends that occur within the Periodic Table.



Ms. Brandi's class had their outside day! They investigated pumpkins and carved Pumpkin Jack.

STUDENT SMILES



Mr. Corey's Animal Science class visited Ms. Jess & Ms. Meghan and shared their newly hatched chicks and the knowledge they have gained in caring for them since their arrival. 5th grade was so grateful and intrigued by the information and the hands on experience! Lots of questions were asked and answered, thank you to Mr. Corey and his students.



This week, Ms. Deepti taught 5th graders about balanced and unbalanced forces through a lively game of tug-of-war! They saw balanced forces in action when the rope stayed steady and unbalanced forces when it moved toward the stronger team. It was a fun, hands-on way to bring science to life!