COOP SCOOP
27 September 2024
A PSCS NEWSLETTER
pioneersprings.org

LET'S REACH 100%: INTRODUCING THE ANNUAL CAMPAIGN & GET MUDDY DERBY





Did you know that charter schools receive significantly less funding than traditional public schools? Bridging this funding deficit is essential for providing high quality academics, and a unique educational experience. Pioneer Springs has a commitment to hosting fundraisers that are connected to our mission, and that build community.

Our first fundraiser of the year, our Annual Campaign, starts October 1! During this year's Annual Campaign, our goal is that 100% of our families participate in each of these three simple ways:

1. Make a contribution that is economically sustainable for your family
2. Invite at least three significant adults in your child's life to support Pioneer Springs through our Annual Campaign
3. Celebrate our environmental mission by getting outside and getting muddy and by joining us for the Get Muddy Derby



Whether you are a long-time Pioneer Springs family, or if you have just joined our community, you are probably wondering just what will happen at the Get Muddy Derby. The Get Muddy Derby is a fun-run that has evolved out of the beloved Reach for the Trees tradition. It will be an all day community-wide event that includes:

- A fun run for Kindergarten-second grade
- A fun run with student-designed obstacles for 3rd-5th
- A muddy obstacle course and environmental literacy challenge for middle school
- A special event designed by our high school student government for high school students

Families are encouraged to attend. Students, staff, and visitors are encouraged to wear wil homemade hats that show-off school spirit (think Kentucky Derby meets Salamander pride)!

We need your help to make this event magical. To volunteer, email heidim@pioneersprings.org, or come to our committee meeting on Wedesnday, October 1 after morning drop-off.

IMPORTANT DATES & ITEMS TO NOTE

- 1 Oct-31 Oct: Annual Fundraising Campaign
- 1 Oct: Pioneer 101, 5-6 pm
- 3 Oct: Volunteer Training
- 7-11 Oct: Benchmarking window
- 18 Oct: Get Muddy Derby
- Board Meeting minutes
- Who to Contact and When

If you need to pick your student up early, we kindly request that you do so **no later than 2:30 pm**.

WHY DO WE FUNDRAISE? BECAUSE TOGETHER WE CAN REACH HIGHER AND GO FURTHER!



Pioneer Springs has a unique vision–a belief in holistic education that connects students to the natural world and their community, while fostering joy, wonder, curiosity, and life-long learning in every student. We are a community school that depends on all of our stakeholders–including families–to make this vision a reality. As a tuition-free public charter school we receive 37% less funding than traditional public schools. That leaves a BIG gap between the funds that Pioneer Springs receives and what we need to educate your student(s). Our commitment to low student-teacher ratios in our elementary school, a campus with both historic and modern buildings, and extensive outdoor learning spaces is only possible through our community's financial support. Together, we can reach higher and go further!

Here are some of the projects that our fundraising will support his school year:

- athletic field improvements
- completion of our Zensory Garden
- support Spring Into the Woods field trip scholarships
- improvements to our outdoor education spaces
- and much, much more!

Thank you for supporting our educational community!

DUTCH BULBS SALE



We are introducing a new dimension to our fundraising plan this year. High school students will have the opportunity to sell Dutch Mills flower bulbs on behalf of Pioneer Springs. Half of the proceeds from the bulb sale will be contributed to the Annual Campaign, and the other half will go to the high school fund to support school dances and high school class legacy gifts.
If you have a high school student, use this link to order bulbs and to share this opportunity to support Pioneer Springs with friends and family. Even if you do not have a high school student, you are welcome to buy bulbs!
All online bulb orders must be placed no later than October 25. Please direct any questions to heidim@pioneersprings.org.

JOIN US FOR PIONEER 101: BUILDING A STRONG SCHOOL-HOME PARTNERSHIP



A strong school-home partnership is the foundation for student success. At our first Pioneer 101 event of the year, we will explore ways to build a strong partnership. We hope you can join us on Tuesday, October 1 from 5:00-6:00 pm in the Music Room. RSVP here.

GET OUTSIDE & GET MUDDY TO SHOW YOUR PIONEER SPRINGS PRIDE THIS OCTOBER

At Pioneer Springs, we believe in embracing the great outdoors – and sometimes, that means getting a little muddy! With our focus on nature and environmental education (and a dash of good, old-fashioned messy fun), our students dive deep into learning – and the dirt.

Every muddy boot print supports what makes us unique. From our sprawling woods and peaceful pond to our vibrant school gardens, fundraising helps us maintain these natural gems – along with the dedicated staff that brings integrated environmental education to life. So, join us in the Annual Campaign as we celebrate our wild connection to nature with the Get Outside & Get Muddy Challenge! It's time to dig in, have fun, and show off your Pioneer Springs pride!

Here are the challenge basics:



- **When**: October 1-October 31
- **Who**: PSCS students, staff, and families, as well as our extended PSCS families (grandparents, aunts & uncles, friends of your family, etc)--everyone is welcome to join us!
- **Where**: our campus, your backyard, a local park, the mountains, beach, or just about anywhere outdoors
- **How**: Track your time outdoors and complete specific nature challenges outdoors; as you spend time outdoors and complete nature challenges, you will earn points. Report your points using this form by noon on November 1 and win a collector's enamel pin.
- **Spread the word**: encourage others to take the challenge by sharing your adventures on social media and tagging #PSCSgetoutside&muddy

We can't wait to see and hear about your muddy adventures!

SHOW YOUR SALAMANDER SPIRIT!



Are you on the hunt for Pioneer Springs spirit wear? We have you covered! You can buy gear in one of two ways:

- Stop by the office to buy Hellbender and Mudpuppy t-shirts, car magnets, stickers, and more
- Check-out our online gear store for t-shirts, tote bags, sweatshirts, hats and sweatpants. The online gear store is a pop-up shop created in partnership with Scarlet & Gold. It will be open through October 10, and then will be temporarily closed to restock the shop with new items. Scarlet & Gold donates 10% of profits from online purchases to PSCS.
- Shipping is free from Sunday, Sept 29 - Sunday, October 6, 2024

Are you interested in gear that we do not currently offer? Fill out this form, and we will see what we can do!

OVERVIEW OF FUNDRAISING EVENTS



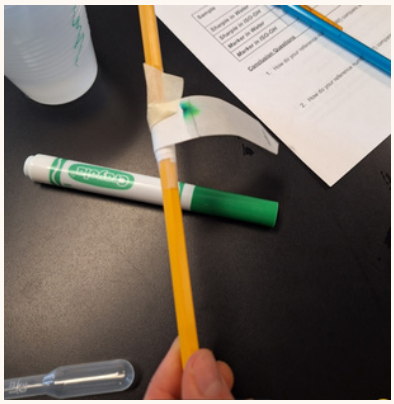
Pioneer Springs has a commitment to limiting the number of times that we ask you to make a financial contribution each school year. This year, we will have three community fundraisers. Check out this page to learn about our fundraising goals, and this page to learn about our fundraising celebrations.

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS LEAD ZENSORY GARDEN DESIGN



Last school year, Ms. Vickie's Environmental Literacy students worked with our school Naturalist, Sandy Dixon, to earn a $1,000 grant from Keep North Carolina Beautiful called the Window of Opportunity grant to support the creation of a Zensory garden behind Asbury. Over the summer, we graded the garden area. This past week, Sandy met with middle school students to envision the Zenory garden design. Students designed a garden that include a water feature, seating, and plenty of rocks. This week Sandy, Mr. Randolph, and Mr. Chris met to finalize the design. In the coming weeks, students will prepare the area for hardscaping and planting. Keep an eye out for updates! In addition to being funded by the Keep North Carolina Beautiful grant, the Zensory Garden is also supported by our fundraising efforts.

STUDENT SMILES


Chemistry students in Ms. Shannon's high school class worked on a two part lab on chromatography. This is a separation technique that uses a liquid solvent and a dense cellulose paper to separate homogeneous mixtures. In Part A, the lab groups compared Crayola washable markers to Sharpie permanent markers. In Part B, they will select plant samples from campus, extract plant pigments and use chromatography to analyze the composition of different plant pigments in their samples.





Ms. Crystal's class celebrated a student's birthday this week!






Ms. Tracy's 2nd grade class weeded the butterfly pollinator highway and inspected small critters. All were safely released!

STUDENT SMILES

"Banning books gives us silence when we need speech. It closes our ears when we need to listen. It makes us blind when we need sight." – Stephen Chbosky

This week was American Library Association's Banned Books Week and Mr. Nick's Banned Books high school class took their mission of spreading knowledge to the rest of the campus. The students read, wrote essays about, and gave presentations on, the 10 most banned books of 2023. They also read historically banned (age appropriate) books to each grade level on campus. #BannedBooksWeek



