28 March 2025

COOP SCOOP

A PSCS NEWSLETTER

pioneersprings.org

HOW DO OUR GARDENS GROW?











Elementary students have been working in their class gardens with Ms. Sandy, our school naturalist, and their teachers. When students garden, they cultivate plants, and they cultivate academic skills. Gardening provides opportunities to practice academic skills, including reading and following directions on seed packets, using math to measure planting depth, and applying scientific knowledge about what plants need to grow, in a real-world setting!

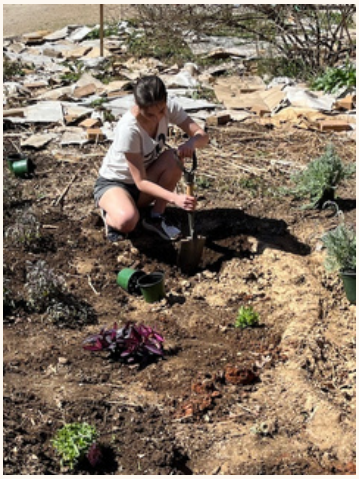
On Monday's Teacher Workday, staff members completed CPR & AED training with the Red Cross. Thank you to Arman for coordinating this important training that makes PSCS safer for everyone.

IMPORTANT DATES & ITEMS TO NOTE

- 2 April: Report cards issued
- 3-4 April: 9th grade trip to Nantahala
- 4 April: Make up photos, 9am
- 9 April: WINGS meeting, 8:45 am
- 14-18 April: **Spring Break**
- 21 April: Staff workday - **NO SCHOOL** for students
- 23 April: Blood drive, 9am-1pm
- 23-25 April: 10th & 11th grade backpacking trip
- 26 April: EarthSprings
- Summer Camp information
- Academic & Events Calendar

BUILDING COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS, INTERPERSONAL, AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS THROUGH RESTORATION OF A RAIN GARDEN, BY COREY SPERLING





Community in Actions at Pioneer Springs is a valuable experience for students to participate in real world experiences and take on new challenges. In the Natural Resources community, facilitated by Mr. Corey, students start on projects that will benefit their school and or community while working on real world skills. This year's group of 10th grade high schoolers, Ryan, Issa, Emily, Peyton, Emma and Rebecca have been working on a complete restoration of the Rain Garden by the Kindergarten Barn. Rain gardens capture and filter stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces, preventing pollution and promoting groundwater recharge, while also providing a beautiful and functional landscape design.

To begin the process of restoration, the students first had to figure out how this project would be funded. We opted for writing a grant proposal to fund the total project. Mr. Corey reviewed the grant specifications with the students and they chose a part of the grant to write. Unfortunately, we need not receive the funds this year, but this process was still a beneficial part of the learning experience. As the students were writing the grant, they were also removing all of the weeds and overgrowth from the existing garden to prepare the grounds for future plantings. This also included the excavating of copious amounts of soil to create a bowl shape to the garden. This was a lengthy and strenuous process that all of the students performed at a high level and with enthusiasm. When taking breaks from excavating and pulling weeds, the students were put in charge of designing the future of the garden. What would it look like? What plants would we choose? What plants are good for a rain garden? The students provided resources and their own research to develop a well thought out plan for the new rain garden. Their plan was to use native plants in a color scheme of cascading pinks, purples and white. The next step in this process was to create a scale landscape design to conceptualize the garden. The students took measurements, created a map and plotted out where each plant would go. Everything was coming together!!

Then a funding source became available! Oakdale Greenhouse, off of Statesville road (go visit because they are great), generously donated $300 worth of plants. So during the CIA days, the students hopped in the bus and took a field trip to pick out their plants. When we arrive there, Mr. Corey gave the staff a brief overview of the process and then the students took it over. They worked hand in hand with the talented staff, asking questions, pricing their plants out to come under budget and they were so successful. Although we had to change some of the types of plans we originally wanted, they adapted, but kept their color scheme; all the while getting more plants then expected and staying under budget!





Now that we had the plants, we spent two days putting them in the ground and tending to them to ensure they would survive. The rain garden, as it stands, is half planted, but there is hope around the corner. Mr. Corey has secured a donation of compost, from Mecklenburg County Solid Waste to use in the garden to provide nutrients and make the garden look more manicured. The grant proposal that the students wrote in the fall will be revised and resubmitted for the spring grant and if we can get it, we can purchase the rest of the plants.

This group of students were amazing in their determination, enthusiasm, adaptability, knowledge and leadership. These skills and more are so valuable in the next stage of their life and beyond. I am beyond proud of each and every one of them! At the end of the school year, they will be getting a project portfolio to add to their resume for college applications or jobs. And, we are not done yet! We have been quietly working on another project that is a major environmental issue globally. We are going to address this issue at Pioneer Springs and partner with a Charlotte based organization to tackle it. Stay tuned!

PHOTO PROOFS ARE AVAILABLE NOW!

MAKE UPS WILL BE 4/4 AT 9AM!



Order on or before the Early Bird Deadline of 04/04/2025 to receive 15% off your entire order and delivery to school ($25 minimum order required for Early Bird Special). ALSO - DON'T FORGET to choose your yearbook selection(s) BEFORE the early bird deadline!!

To view/order photos, click on:
www.stjohnphotography.com

1. **Choose SCHOOLS and then FIND MY SCHOOL:**
2. **Password is: PSCC**
3. **Search by Student's First & Last Name (or first only, or last only)**

Please contact our office with any questions you may have at info@stjohnphotography.com or call 704-889-7800 Monday-Friday 8:30-4:00.

GET READY FOR EARTHSPRINGS

Calling all gardeners and plant lovers! Do you have a green thumb, and love propagating plants? If so, consider donating small plants and starts to the WINGS EarthSprings plant sale. Watch the *Coop Scoop* for more information, or email wings@pioneersprings.org.

This year's EarthSprings is expanding! PSCS will be renting booth space to artisans and craftspeople to sell their wares. Click here to register for a booth. Email heidim@pioneersprings.org for more information, and spread the word to creators in your community!

A NOTE FROM WINGS

PIONEER W.I.N.G.S

Join us at 9 April at 8:45am to learn about WINGS, school happenings, volunteer opportunities, and ways to support our school!
Check-in at the Castle.

Our Student Pantry could use one more big restocking to get use through to Summer break. Please consider a donation and drop to the Castle marked WINGS STUDENT PANTRY.

PANTRY OPEN

Thanks for your generosity - https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F094DACA62FA0FF2-50806161-pioneer#/

STUDENT RUN POP-UP COFFEE SHOP, TUESDAY AFTERNOONS



High school sustainable business students have created a po-up coffee shop, named after the upper school Hellbender mascot, Bender's Beans and Brews!

Visit the coffee shop Tuesday afternoons from 1:20-2:30 at the Davis General Store!

LEARN ABOUT OUR SUMMER CAMPS AND REGISTER TODAY







Summer camp registration is now open! Sign-up today to ensure that you have a spot!! From Camp PreOneer for rising Kindergarteners and First Graders to cooking and building camps, as well as camps exploring our National Parks, Milan, Tokyo and more! Our summer offerings are sure to excite wonder for students in preK through Sixth Grade.

Click here for more information and to register.

DISPATCHES FROM MOUNTAIN TRAIL OUTDOOR SCHOOL





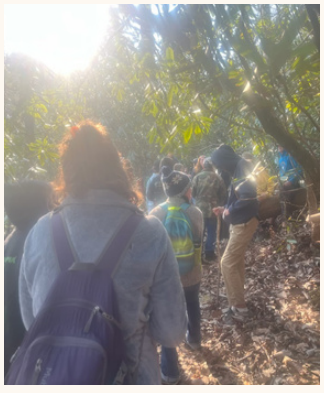















STUDENT SMILES










Ms. Shannon's high school Physical Science students studied the 4 types of friction: static, sliding, rolling and fluid friction. Mr. Corey helped us to put that new knowledge to use learning an ancient fire-starting technique called a bow drill. In the end, although several students successfully got smoke started and some even got the necessary small coal, we weren't able to start a fire with the friction method only. In the end, it was a magnesium striker to the rescue to get the fire actually going. Everyone agreed - this looks soooo much easier on TV! Learn about other ancient fire-starting techniques with this overview and digital images of materials from the Science Museum of the UK, "Ways of Catching a Spark: A History of Fire-Making Methods"









Teachers and staff celebrated World Down Syndrome Day by rocking their odd and fun socks! It is celebrated on March 21 because people with down syndrome are born with 3 copies of the 21st chromosome instead of 2!