COOP SCOOP
6 September 2024
A PSCS NEWSLETTER
pioneersprings.org

Getting back to basics: the place of "community" in Pioneer Springs Community School

Pioneer Springs Community School is modeled on the approach to education described by Ernest Boyer in The Basic School: A Community for Learning. Community is at the heart of Boyer's vision for effective schools, and is an essential component of Pioneer Spring's identity. At Pioneer Springs we bring our commitment to community life by exploring what it means to be a member of a classroom community, including what it means to balance the needs of individuals with the needs of the whole, with students of all ages. We also empower teachers to be leaders. Parents and families play an important role in our community by supporting education at home, staying in close communication with teachers, and volunteering in the classroom, at the school, and from home. Finally, we use our broader community as our classroom. Are you ready to make a difference in our school community? Sign-up to volunteer by reaching out to your child's teacher, filling out this form, or emailing heidim@pioneersprings.org.








IMPORTANT DATES & ITEMS TO NOTE

- 10-12 Sept: BOY 3rd grade reading test
- 10 Sept-18 Oct: Annual Fundraising Campaign
- 16 Sept: Board of Trustees meeting
- 18 Sept: WINGS meeting, 9am
- Arrival & Dismissal information
- Who to Contact and When
- Academic & Events Calendar

Support classrooms, teachers, and WINGS, our homegrown PTO, by becoming a Room Parent/ Parent Committee member by **clicking here**.

Why environmental education?

If you took a walk across our campus on a typical school morning, you might encounter Kindergarteners tending to the rain garden by the Barn, second graders weeding the pollinator garden, third graders tending our chickens, middle schoolers nature journaling by the pond, and a high school Earth and Environmental Science class analyzing the water quality of our pond. Environmental Education permeates our learning, and enables our students to develop a deep understanding of the interconnectedness of the human and natural world. Environmental education is important not only because it empowers students to be engaged citizens who can take informed action in their communities, research shows that environmental education supports academic excellence by developing critical thinking and analytical skills. You can learn more about the academic benefits of environmental education here.
At Pioneer Springs our approach to Environmental Education is grounded in the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's Earth and Environmental Standards. These standards are brought to life on our beautiful campus, which offers numerous opportunities for hands-on, outdoor learning in nature.





Supporting academic success in high school



The transition from middle school to high school can bring big changes for students and families. While elementary and middle school students are assessed with standards based grades, high school students are assessed on the traditional 100 point grading scale. Because high school transcripts are required by colleges, universities, apprenticeship programs, the military and some employers, grades become more consequential. Students are also becoming more independent and more responsible for their learning. Here are some strategies that families can use to support academic success in high school:

- Read classroom newsletters, and discuss class topics with your students
- Create a culture of reading at home-read with and alongside your student, and take trips to the library or bookstore so students can choose books related to their interests
- Create a dedicated study space in your home, perhaps at the dining room table or at a desk in a bedroom, and ensure that the study space is quite and free of electronic distractions when your student is doing homework or studying
- Teens tend to be night owls. Support good sleep habits by enable your teen to get eight-10 hours of sleep a night
- Even though teens are becoming more independent and responsible, parents and families still play a vital role in education. Stay in communication with teachers and reach out if you have questions or concerns

High school adventure awaits!

Each year high school students have the opportunity to immerse themselves in the beauty of nature through our Capstone Spring Into the Woods Adventures. PSCS has been awarded a NC Trailblazers Club grant by the North Carolina Youth Outdoor Engagement Commission enabling us to purchase equipment needed to be utilized by students on our various adventures. The grant has allowed us to purchase backpacking tents, sleeping bags, sleeping mats, mess kits, and backpacks reducing the costs associated with participating in outdoor adventures.

Information was sent home last week about the different Spring Into the Woods Adventures. We have limited spots available for each of the Spring trips. **Students that wish to participate must make a $50 deposit and register utilizing the Spring Into The Woods Registration Form by October 1.** Each trip is unique and offers students the opportunity to push boundaries, grow as a community, and overcome challenges.

Registration forms can be found at:
https://www.pioneersprings.org/uploads/1/3/3/0/133030941/high_school_spring_into_woods_registration.pdf

9th Grade- Nantahala Outdoor Center, Bryson, NC. On **April 3-4** participating students will experience a high adventure trip including beginner **Whitewater Rafting** on the Nantahala River and a **Zipline Park**. The trip is limited to 30 students and the cost for the NOC trip is $200.



10th & 11th Grades- We are offering a choice of two amazing adventures for our Sophomores and Juniors. If spots are available after the registration deadline, the trips will be opened to students that wish to attend both trips. Freshman & Seniors may also have the opportunity to sign up for remaining spots on the New River or Pisgah trips after the October 1 deadline.

Pisgah National Forest Backpacking Adventure- April 23-25. Beautiful mountain views, amazing mountain waterfalls, endless star filled skies, and countless flora and fauna await participants as we backpack through the mountains in Pisgah National Forest.

We will meet as a group once a month beginning in October to learn skills such as backcountry cooking, water filtration, camp setup, wilderness first aid, and Leave No Trace principles. We will take some practice hikes at local nature preserves, and even set up camp and do an overnight practice on the PSCS grounds. **Limited to the first 20 students to register**. The cost of this amazing all inclusive adventure is $200.

New River Gorge, WV Whitewater Rafting Camping Trip- May 1-2. Huge Rapids, fast heart pounding water, along with stretches of peaceful beauty is on the agenda of this trip. On day one we will arrive at ACE Adventure Resort, set up our mountain top base camp (tent camping), go on a hike, and make a campfire before going to bed in our tents. Day two will be adrenaline filled as we spend 6 hours rafting world class rapids in guided rafts. **Limited to the first 30 students to register**. The cost of the trip is $200 including a full day of rafting, wetsuit rental, and 4 meals.

12th Grade, Copperhead Island Camping & Kayaking- April 9-11. Our Seniors enjoy a tent camping retreat on Lake Wylie where we rent the entire island. Students will have the opportunity to kayak, play volleyball, hike, eat great food, and enjoy the company of their classmates on a final adventure before graduation. Cost of the trip is $150.

Extracurriculars at Pioneer Springs

Pioneer Springs is pleased to offer many exciting opportunities for our scholars this school year!

Designed to build individual as well as collaborative skills, and to culminate in competitive engagements, the Pioneer Plus & Athletics program supports the mission of Pioneer Springs by developing individual student interests toward keeping the "desire to learn burning bright."



Fall Athletics & Pioneer Plus
Runs Week of Sept 9 - Week of Dec 9

Athletics:
Monday &Thursday afternoons

Archery *begins mid Oct* 7th-12
(MS on Mon; HS on Mon/Thurs) $200
Intro to Fencing 6th-12th $200
Co-ed Volleyball 6th-12th $200
Co-ed Cross country6th-12th $200
Yearlong Boys Basketball 7th-12th $400





Pioneer Plus Creations
Wednesday afternoons: $125
Gardening Club K-5th
Pioneer Paper Factory K-4
Margaret's Math Camp 3rd-8th
Clay Workshop 5th-8th

Pioneer Plus Players
Tuesday afternoons 6th-12th grade: $125
Thursday afternoons K-5th: $125

Pioneer Plus Games of Strategy
Tuesday & Wednesday afternoon: $200
Competitive Chess Club 5th-12th
Dungeons & Dragons 5th-12th



Families can expect an email after they sign their student up with more information. There is a cap of 25 students on all Pioneer Plus options, and a cap of 10 for fencing. **To register, please click here for Athletics and here for Pioneer Plus offerings!** If you have any questions, please reach out toshac@pioneersprings.org

Please make your payment **here** (total due by 25th November)

This is an important announcement regarding students who will be attending 7th or 12th grade for the 2024-2025 school year:



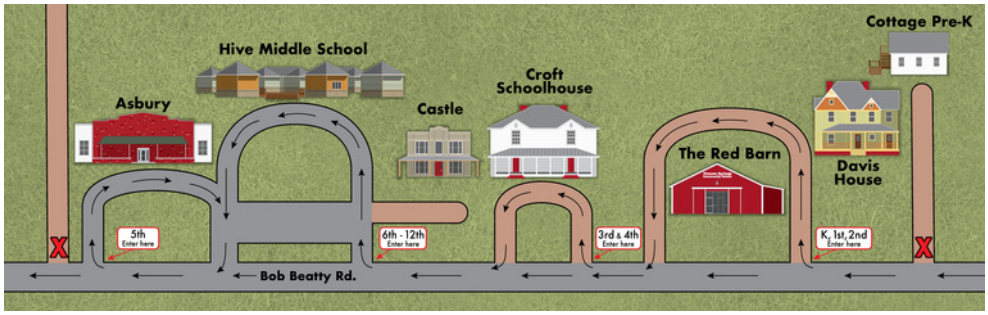
Students entering Kindergarten, 7th, and 12th grades are required to provide updated vaccination records due to additional vaccination requirements at these grades. The preferred way to submit vaccination records is through this Immunizations Update 2024 Form.
If you are unable to use the form, you may email the records to registrar@pioneersprings.org.
Finally, hard copies can be delivered in person to the front office at the Castle.

Please note that these vaccinations, or a religious/medical exemption, are due no later than 30 days from the first day of school. Students who are out of compliance upon reaching this deadline will be unable to attend school at Pioneer Springs until the appropriate documentation is received.

You can visit your child's doctor or the health department for vaccination information and to ensure your child's vaccines are up to date. If you have any questions, you may email me at ArmanC@pioneersprings.org.

Thank you,
Arman Casini, RN

Important afternoon dismissal information; action needed



PSCS works hard to ensure afternoon pickup runs safely. We need your family's assistance to ensure dismissal runs quickly and efficiently. Showing up early for dismissal blocks traffic flow on Bob Beatty Rd. and slows down the entire process for everyone. Please do not block the entrances and exits to the buildings.

Dismissal for elementary students begins at 3:00pm. Dismissal for middle and high school students begins at 3:30pm. The best time to arrive to reduce your wait in the car line is the last 15 minutes of each dismissal.

Thank you for your continued patience and cooperation as we start the new school year.

Student Smiles



Ms. Stacy's 7th grade class did stewardship on Thursday and took care of the pond trail!



Some of Ms. Tracy & Ms. Hillary's 2nd graders enjoyed tree climbing!













PSCS is gearing up to participate in the 2024 Mt. Holly Lantern festival! Grades k-5 are learning the basic shapes to ultimately create a large lantern and the high school Visual Arts class (grades 9-12) are working in groups to create several lanterns to parade on October 19th! If you are interested in more information or how to help, please email Ms. Jen: jenniferm@pioneersprings.org

Student Smiles



Mr. Nick's English IV Honours students work on crafting their first ever memoir!



Ms. Hannah's 7th graders have been learning about forces and motion this week!

Student Smiles



Ms. Megan's 6th grader used triangles and squares to build more complex figures!