COOP SCOOP
9 August 2024
A PSCS NEWSLETTER
pioneersprings.org

A message from Dr. Rebecca Friend, Pioneer Springs Executive Director



Welcome, Parents and Families, to the 2024-25 school year. The Pioneer Springs staff is making preparations to greet students on August 26th and, while the days leading up to the start of school are routinely filled with planning sessions and required training, our team is wholly focused on starting the year with one goal: growing students. Likely many of you make a pencil mark on your wall or door frame at various intervals to indicate your child's height, first three feet tall then another two inches taller the following year and so on. Marking a child's growth is a celebration and records their growth into adolescents and young adults. It's a given that no two children grow at the same rate but the expectation is that all children will grow; it is only a matter of time. Though growing taller is a simple example, ours should be a similar expectation when it comes to student academic growth: all children will grow given time and, while no two children will grow at the same rate, we--families and staff--should expect them to know and be able to do more over time as a result of engagement in stimulating, rigorous, and targeted instruction. As we begin this school year, we ask families to share our focus on growth and to recognize, even expect, that everything from our classroom plans to our extracurricular activities to our community events are designed to promote and celebrate meaningful instruction for students. Further, we ask families to be active participants in this effort by attending orientation, participating in conferences, and reading teacher and school newsletters to stay abreast of what's happening in classrooms and across the school. We know when students grow, they become more confident in themselves and their abilities to connect to others and to the larger world and families are a big part of that process. We look forward to seeing your families in the coming weeks and we thank you for choosing Pioneer Springs.

IMPORTANT DATES & ITEMS TO NOTE

- 19-22 August: Back to school, orientation
- K-12 supply lists
- Board Meeting Minutes
- Student Driver Information will be shared at Orientation
- Academic & Events Calendar

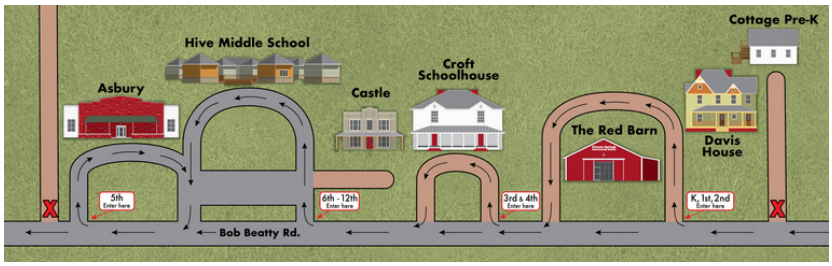
You are invited to Orientation & Covenant Conferences



Students and families are invited to join us for **Orientation August 19-22, (click here** for the schedule). At Orientation you will meet your teaching team, get an overview of what students will be learning this school year, and meet other students and families from your class. You can also pick up your carline tags, buy previously loved boots, and connect with representatives from WINGS, our homegrown PTO. See you there!

Students flourish when families and schools have a strong partnership. **At Pioneer Springs one of the first steps in building that partnership is the Covenant Conference**. At the Covenant Conference, teachers and families get to know one another. Families share information about how their student learns best, and teachers share their goals for the coming school year. Some teachers find that Covenant Conferences are most effective when they happen before the start of the year, while other teachers prefer to get to know students before meeting with families. Be on the lookout for information from teachers about scheduling Covenant Conferences in the coming weeks.

Important afternoon dismissal information; action needed



Can you believe the start of the 2024-25 school year is just weeks away? Each year, we strive to improve our afternoon dismissal and pickup to make things run as safely and efficiently as possible. Over the next few weeks, we will be sharing important information for our families to ensure picking up your scholar is as straightforward and stress free as possible.

Dismissal for the upcoming school year will be staggered into two groupings:
K-5 will dismiss at 3:00-3:30pm
6-12 will dismiss at 3:30-4 pm

The most efficient times to pick up your students without a long line have historically been the final 15 minutes of each dismissal (K-5 3:15-3:30pm, 6-12 3:45-4pm).

New for 2024-2025

We will be transporting elementary students that have older siblings to the middle/high school complex for afternoon dismissal. If you have an elementary student and a middle/high school student, you will pick up both of your students starting at 3:30pm at the middle school circle drive.

The goal of this change is to reduce the number of cars that back up on Bob Beatty Road. In order for dismissal to run safely and efficiently, we are asking three important things from families:

1. **Please arrive no earlier than 10 minutes before your student's dismissal time.** Arriving early causes too many cars arriving at one time, slowing down the process for everyone.
2. If you have both elementary and middle/high school students, complete the Sibling Afternoon Pick Up Form at the following link: https://forms.gle/hftw2SBttpFYP7gt5
3. **Have patience as we start a new school year.**

If you wish to pick up your students separately instead of having your elementary student transported to the middle/high school, that is still an option. Please be aware, once the elementary student is picked up, you will need to exit Bob Beatty Road and return to the middle school/ high school carline no earlier than 3:20pm. You will not be able to pull into the Hive Circle Drive and wait for the 3:30pm dismissal to begin. For all arrival and dismissal information, please click here.

Have a question or concern? Here's who you should contact



Your child's education is important. In fact, it's one of the most important parts of their childhoods. This means that when you have a question or concern about what's happening at school, you want a timely and accurate answer. At times, it can be hard to know who to contact. A good rule of thumb is to speak directly with the responsible staff member. The vast majority of the time, that is the classroom teacher. If you're still unsure who to contact, ask your classroom teacher, consult this document, or simply call the office (704-494-0777) and ask!

Help Wanted (paid position)



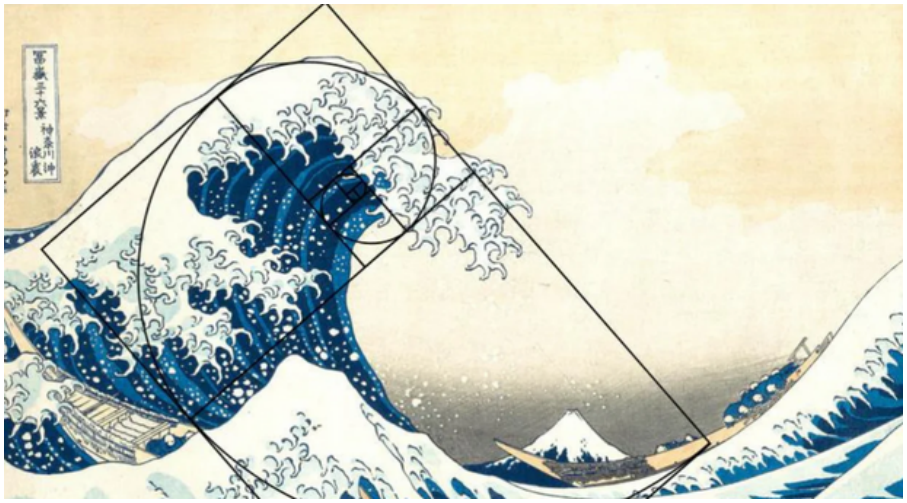
Substitute Teachers are essential to making things run smoothly when teachers need to be out. If you or someone you know is interested in more information on serving in this paid role, please contact Glenda Cheek at glendac@pioneersprings.org.

Need rain boots? WINGS has you covered!



PSCS families know that the official school uniform is clothes that can get muddy and rain boots! Each year, WINGS sells previously used boots that have been donated by families. Boots cost $5 per pair, and all proceeds go to staff appreciation events. Check out the boot sale on the back porch of the Castle during Orientation.

Marvelous Math: Games that keep math skills strong



Here are some fun puzzles and games to build math fluency and number sense this summer. Once your family has completed these activities, challenge your student to create games or puzzles of his/her own!

- Elementary-go on a nature walk and practice estimating and measuring by guessing the length of an object that you see, and then measuring it to see how accurate the guess was! You can also try this using non-standard units of measure (how many first graders long is the playground?)
- Middle School-do some paper frisbee geometry
- High School-Using the digits 1 to 9 at most one time each, place a digit in each box to find the largest/smallest possible sum of the three terms in this finite geometric series:
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Backyard science: Go on a micro-hike!



Ecosystems thrive when they connect life forms of all sizes, from towering trees to bacteria that are invisible to the naked eye. Gather your family, and explore tiny organisms in your local ecosystem by going outside with a magnifying glass, and seeing what you can discover! Mark an area one meter square, and explore, noting all of the organisms that you find. Want to learn more? Try taking a micro-hike in different areas, and compare your discoveries. Here is a detailed guide to micro-hikes.

Want more ideas? Check out STEAM Bingo!

Encourage reading through informal book clubs, by Tanya Blumenfeld, Third Grade Lead Teacher



When reading books together, don't forget to talk about what you are reading! Talking about books, answering questions, and re-telling stories helps your child develop their ability to understand what they read. A great way to encourage discussion without making it seem taxing is by participating in a summer book club where your child can meet up with peers to talk about the book. They may even like to complete some fun activities that tie into their reading (i.e. an art or cooking project) or celebrate with a party at the completion of the book. If a book club is not possible, then perhaps you could set aside some time during a family meal to all talk about what you are reading. Another idea is to have your child share with a family member. Facetime an extended family member and have them share about their book!

Recommended Reading:
Kindergarten *The Seven Silly Eaters* by Mary Ann Hoberman, *Jabari Jumps* by Gaia Cornwall
First grade *Water Boy* by David McPhail, *When Sheep Cannot Sleep* by Satoshi Kitamura
Second grade *Julian, Secret Agent* by Ann Cameron, *Race of the Birkebeiners* by Lise Lunge-Larsen
Third grade *The Familiars* by Adam Jay Epstein, *The Twits* by Roald Dahl
Fourth grade *The Mouse with the Question Mark Tail* by Richard Peck, *Inside Out and Back Again* by Thanhha Lai
Fifth Grade *The Thing About Luck* by Cynthia Kadohata, *Dancing Home* by Alma Flor Ada and Gabriel M. Zubizarreta
Middle School *The Insiders* by Mark Oshiro, *Danny Chung Sums it Up* by Maisie Chan and Natelle Quek
High School *I Will See the Sun Again* by Khashayar J. Khabushani, *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas

Heart Map



Writing over the summer is important because it gives young people the opportunity to write about their interests in a low stakes setting. This allows students to take ownership of their writing, and to write simply for the pleasure of telling a good story or describing something they find exciting. In each edition of the summer Coop Scoop, we will share writing prompts to inspire young authors.

What people, places, and things are important to you? Sensory Heart Mapping, linked here, will help young authors of all ages identify their favorite items, and to create a shape-poem about them!

Get Outside!: Discover nature in the heart of uptown at Romare Bearden Park



Named in honor of one of Charlotte's preeminent artists, Romare Bearden Park is a great place for outdoor adventures. Located between Knights Stadium/ Truist Field and the Mint Museum Uptown, Romare Bearden Park has native plant garden, an interactive waterfall, and lots of great space for picnicking. Check it out with your family, share your photos on social media and tag #pioneersprings!

Getting ready for kindergarten: creating a foundation for learning



Watching your child learn to read is a magical experience. Most children begin reading in kindergarten. You can help prepare your child for reading by reading with them (just 20 minutes a day builds a strong reading foundation), sharing stories with them, and teaching them letters. Try going on a letter scavenger hunt as you run errands.

Kindergartners also love learning math. Set your child up for success this summer by practicing counting (most kindergartners come to school able to count to 20 or beyond), and noticing patterns. Dice games help children learn how to identify how many items are in a small group.

Help your child learn shapes by looking for shapes in nature during a walk around your backyard or in a park.

Camp Smiles

