

## Age appropriate competition builds resilience and self esteem

Competition is a natural part of life. Whether it's racing to finish a puzzle, playing a game of tag, or participating in a spelling bee, we encounter various forms of competition every day. However, when it comes to children, it's essential to ensure that the competitions they engage in are age-appropriate, fostering growth, learning, and most importantly, fun.

At our school, we value the holistic development of each child. This is why Pioneer Springs added an after school athletics program this year. We understand that healthy competition can encourage children to strive for their best while teaching important life skills such as teamwork, resilience, and sportsmanship. However, we also recognize the importance of ensuring that competitions are tailored to suit the developmental stage of each child. Research shows that when adults help children and teens understand winning and losing, and give children and teens the opportunity to engage in meaningful competition, they help young people build resilience, empathy, and the capacity to learn from failure. So, what does age-appropriate competition look like?

**Focus on Participation:** For our youngest learners, the emphasis should be on participation rather than solely on winning. Activities should be structured to encourage all children to join in, regardless of skill level. This helps build confidence and a sense of belonging within the group.

**Collaboration over Competition:** As children grow older, fostering a spirit of collaboration alongside healthy competition is crucial. Team-based activities, where success is measured collectively rather than individually, can promote a sense of unity and cooperation among peers.

**Adjusting Difficulty Levels:** Tailoring the difficulty level of competitions to match the developmental stage of the children involved is key. Activities should be challenging enough to be engaging but not so difficult as to be discouraging. This ensures that children are appropriately challenged and have the opportunity to experience a sense of accomplishment.

**Celebrating Effort and Improvement:** Instead of solely focusing on outcomes, such as winning or losing, it's important to celebrate the effort and improvement shown by each child. Recognizing individual progress fosters a positive learning environment where children feel motivated to continue growing and developing their skills.

**Encouraging Sportsmanship:** Teaching children how to win graciously and lose gracefully is a fundamental aspect of age-appropriate competition. Emphasizing the importance of fair play, respect for opponents, and resilience in the face of setbacks helps instill lifelong values that extend far beyond the realm of competition.

**Providing Constructive Feedback:** Feedback should be constructive and aimed at helping children improve rather than criticizing their performance. Encouraging self-reflection and offering guidance on areas for growth empowers children to take ownership of their learning journey.

### IMPORTANT DATES & ITEMS TO NOTE

- 15 April: [Board meeting](#)
- 16 April: [Blood Drive 9am-1pm](#) & WINGS Staff Appreciation 11am-2pm
- 17-19 April: 12th grade field trip
- 22 April: Earth Day
- 24-26 April: 10th & 11th grade field trip
- 27 April: ArtSpring!
- 3 May: [Junior & Senior Prom](#)
- 8-14 May: Author's Tea window
- [Register here for Summer Camps!](#)
- [Academic & Events Calendar](#)

**ACT scores were distributed Friday, 12th April. Portraits from St. John's Photography will be distributed Monday, 15th April to teachers to go home with students.**

**Age appropriate competition fosters important skills, including:**

**Leadership:** Being able to identify the strengths and weaknesses of a group and help everyone reach their full potential. Help a team reach or exceed their goals. Make sure that everyone is working together effectively, and holding those that are not meeting expectations accountable

**Effective Communication:** relaying important information to each team member, updating others on their progress/challenges they are facing, responding promptly and accordingly.

**Problem-solving:** each obstacle no matter how similar will have its own unique challenges, that require individuals to think outside the box and come up with new solutions. Those that think creatively will be more successful overcoming problems.

**Resilience:** It has been stated that you learn more from your losses than your victories. In life you will not succeed in every endeavor initially. Learning how to reflect in the face of defeat and learn how to improve from your shortcomings is crucial for future success.

**Teamwork:** Everyone is unique and brings different skills to a team. Within a team, defined roles can help individuals work together as a cohesive unit to highlight each other's strengths while covering deficiencies. Being able to work well together as a team helps everyone achieve more.

Many teenagers today are already competing in many ways:

- Competing in sports/athletics
- Auditioning for a role in theater
- Applying for jobs
- Applying for scholarships/college
- Competing with themselves to accomplish their own goals/improve in their hobbies

Developing these skills will help teenagers achieve more of their goals, be more suitable for positions in their future, and become more well rounded individuals.





## Come play with us & support Pioneer Springs



Join us on Saturday, April 12 from 11-3 on the Pioneer Springs campus for our annual Toss 'n Sauce Family Cornhole Tournament! Play in the tournament for a \$200 prize, play yard games, get fairy hair, hang out with other Pioneer Springs families, buy lunch and have a good time! Spectators attend for free.

Can't make it to the tournament? You can still support Toss 'n Sauce by entering our raffle for prizes including Pioneer Springs honey, zoo tickets, and a family photo shoot or by bidding on our fabulous auction items including cornhole boards and student art.

## Pioneers' ongoing evaluations of our safety plans



Photographs by Oscar Lin, 10th grade Photography student

Here at PSCS, we take school safety seriously. Karen Fairley, Executive Director of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's Center for Safer Schools, visited PSCS on March 28th. Ms. Fairley toured our campus and met with several students to discuss the safety measures and procedures in place. After her visit, she was very pleased with our safety protocols.

Ms. Fairley even had time for a game of cornhole with 2nd grade!

## Staff Appreciation



On Tuesday, April 16 WINGS, along with Middle School families, will show our staff how much we appreciate them by hosting a Spring Salad Bar. We'd love to invite you to help make this event special. Sign-up to donate food or to volunteer [here](#). Questions? Contact WINGS ([wings@pioneersprings.org](mailto:wings@pioneersprings.org)). A huge thank you to Holly Webster for coordinating this event.

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## Spring Blood Drive

OneBlood will be hosting a blood drive on campus **Tuesday, 4/16 from 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM**. The Big Red Bus from OneBlood will be parked in the carpool lane between the Hive and the Castle. **Please do not block this area for the blood drive.**

[Click here](#) to sign up! The last time slot to donate blood is 1:00 PM.

This fundraising activity will help our school as well as raise awareness in supporting our community by giving the gift of life.



High School Students who are 16 years old or older can donate with parents' consent and must bring a consent form to the bus. All donors and prospects must have a picture ID showing date of birth. For students, OneBlood will accept a print out form from PSCS administration with their date of birth or if they can be identified by a teacher or staff member. Eligibility and Consent Forms can be printed at the castle.

OneBlood strongly encourages all donors to have a good breakfast/meal and drink plenty of water before and after donating.

Give hope this Spring and give blood!



Attention Juniors and Seniors, Prom tickets are on sale now!!



**PURCHASE YOUR TICKETS HERE**

or at the front office through April 26th.

3rd May, 6-9 PM  
Sweet Magnolia Estate  
10101 Bailey Rd,  
Cornelius, NC 28031

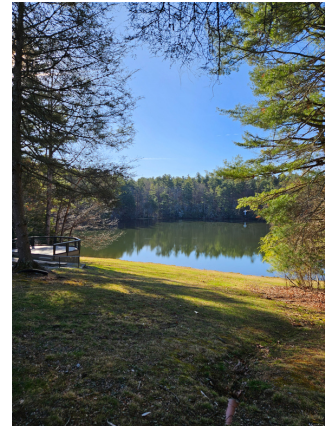
Get your yearbooks - the pre-sale has officially begun!



The last day of the yearbook pre-sale will be 21st April, standing at \$35. Designed and perfected by the high school Journalism class. Don't miss it! Use the QR code or [click here](#) to order your yearbook.



# 6 & 7 grade field trip





# Classroom Happenings



As part of a unit on volcanology, Ms. G's students created model volcanoes. The solo cups represented the magma chamber, and the liquid inside represented magma. When their volcanoes erupted, the "lava" flowed onto the sand, which represented cooled lava from past eruptions.



Shannon O'Connor's Honors Chemistry students are studying chemical compounds. They recently did a lab designed to discover the elements in particular compounds by conducting flame tests on several metal salts. The metal cations in these salts all have signature ways they change the color of a high intensity flame. Students then used this qualitative test to determine the cation portion of three unknown samples to match the substance with its formula. In preparation for this lab, students learned about the fire triangle, different types of fires, fire extinguishers and the PASS method for putting out a fire. The most impressive color display in these pictures is from copper (II) sulfate which burns with a bright blue-green color from the copper ion.



Ms. Jess and Ms. Meghan's 5th grade students are studying the Constitution Convention in social studies, and created a convention of their own.



# Classroom Happenings



Alex Sutton's high school World History students are studying the Industrial Revolution. They simulated child labor in factories, and calculated their horse power to gain a deeper understanding of the social and technological changes brought about by increased mechanization of labor.



In high school Physical Science, students are studying mixtures and compounds. In a recent multi-day lab students separate a heterogeneous mixture back into its original components using techniques like filtration, sifting with a sieve, magnetism, decanting, density differentiation and solubility in water. For the last step of the lab, students will use evaporation to separate sodium chloride (salt) back out of water.



High school Ecology students, led by Shannon O'Connor, started a squirrel population project before Spring Break. Students are researching if there is a difference in the number of squirrel dreys (nests) across 3 different habitats on campus: forest, pond, and human disturbed. They learned how to record these points with GPS and will be creating an accurate GIS map of their data. They used a clinometer to determine the angle to the drey, calculated the height off the ground (with my help and bit of trigonometry) and will be comparing the heights to see how high squirrels prefer to build their nests. They are working on creating posters to display their data analysis and conclusions to answer our research question.