

Wondering how to prepare your student for what comes next?

Join us for our next Pioneer 101 event!



High School students backpacking in Pisgah National Forest. PSCS students experience more complex and demanding academic, physical, and natural challenges as they get older.

You are cordially invited to join us for Pioneer 101: What Comes Next? on Thursday, March 28 from 5-6 pm.

If your student is transitioning to upper elementary, middle school, or high school next year, or if you are wondering how Pioneer Springs supports the transition to college, then this event is for you! Even if your student is not making a big transition next year, you are welcome to join us.

Members of our upper elementary, middle school, and high school teams, along with our College and Career Counselor, will share:

- What upper elementary, middle, and high school are like at Pioneer Springs
- Ways you can help your student be prepared academically and socially-emotionally for the transitions
- An overview of the college and career counseling that we offer for high school students

Students are welcome at this event. We'd love to know who to expect, so **click here to RSVP**. If you have questions, email Heidi Magi (heidim@pioneersprings.org).

STEAM Expo as part of the **2024 NC Science Festival** is Sunday, 14 April, from 11:00 am until 4:00 pm on UNC Charlotte campus.

IMPORTANT DATES & ITEMS TO NOTE

- 27-29 March: 6th & 7th grade field trip to MTOS
- 1-5 April: **SPRING BREAK**
- 8 April: Staff workday - **NO SCHOOL** for students
- 8 April: Total Eclipse
- 10-12 April: 9th grade field trip to Nantahala
- 13 April: Toss 'n Sauce
- 27 April: ArtSpring!
- [Register here for Summer Camps!](#)
- [Academic & Events Calendar](#)
- [Fridays at 10 AM: Admin Open Office Hours](#)

Come play with us at Toss 'n Sauce on Saturday, April 13 from 11-3!

In May of 2015, Pioneer Springs hosted our first annual Toss 'n Sauce Cornhole Tournament. With its wacky shenanigans and lively atmosphere, Toss 'n Sauce quickly grew into a beloved Pioneer Springs FUNdraiser and community building event.

This year, we are adding a new feature to Toss 'n Sauce—it is now a family cornhole tournament. We are excited to welcome our students to join the fun! Players in three age groups, 6th Grade & Under, 7th Grade & Over (includes adults), and Mixed Age (one adult and one student/ team), will compete for a \$200 prize per bracket in our shenanigan-infused tournament. Additionally, Toss 'n Sauce attendees will be able to enjoy yard games, face painting, fairy hair braiding, and other fun activities! Food and drinks will be sold. What's more, you can enter raffles for fabulous prizes, and bid to win one of two sets of student-painted cornhole boards.



We need every member of our community to help make this event a success. You can contribute in one or more of the following ways:

- Find a partner and [join the tournament](#) or buy a ticket to play on a team with a staff member
- Bring your family out for a day of fun! Admission is free for Toss 'n Sauce spectators!
- Enter [raffles](#) and bid on cornhole boards. You do not need to be at Toss 'n Sauce to win raffle prizes or auction items
- [Volunteer at Toss 'n Sauce](#)
- Donate raffle items (email Heidi, heidim@pioneersprings.org)
- Lend us cornhole boards (email Heidi, heidim@pioneersprings.org)
- Spread the word—invite three significant adults in your student's life to join us at Toss 'n Sauce, and/or to enter our raffles

Funds raised for Toss 'n Sauce will help with with our athletic field improvements.

School photo information



On campus school photo season are complete! School photos are posted at stjohnphotography.com. You can use the school password PSCC to access the photos. If your student had make-up photos this week, St. John's will post their photos on the website once they are processed. Whether or not you plan to buy photos, you will need to select the photo that you would like to have published in the yearbook no later than Friday, March 22. To make your selection, simply click on the photo you like, and then choose the yearbook option.

Pioneer Springs encourages educators across the region to Take it Outside!



On Saturday, March 16 Pioneer Springs staff hosted the second annual Take it Outside, a nature based educator conference. Attendees participated in interactive, hands-on sessions designed to encourage outdoor teaching and nature integration. We started the day off by building a collaborative mandala. We then built community using Raccoon Circles and low ropes courses, explored strategies for using nature to teach math, experienced the power of sidewalk chalk, solved a wild 'crime scene' and a forensic fairy tale, nature-journaled, found patterns in nature and discovered place-based math. This fabulous event was organized by our phenomenal Naturalist, Sandy Dixon, and the workshop sessions were led by our knowledgeable and inspiring staff-Margaret, Chris, Shannon, Patience, Heidi, Sandy, Michele R & Stacey.

Pioneer Springs has a bus!

Pioneer Springs has fulfilled a long-time dream and acquired a minibus. The shuttle-style bus seats 24 and is equipped with both storage and seatbelts for all riders. The bus is the first of an anticipated fleet of 2 that we will use for field trips and other community excursions.

Now we just need names for our new and future buses. Submit bus name suggestions [here](#). We will collect name ideas through Friday, March 29. After Spring Break, we will compile name ideas and share them for a community vote!



Ms. Sarah and Ms. Allie's class with our new bus.

The sport of fencing has come to Pioneer Springs! by Emmett Brzozowski



On Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:45 to 4:45 you can find 14 sword wielding students practicing in Ms. Susan's art room. They are coached by Ms. Min Johnson and Ms. Megan Lenaghan. Ms. Min is a skilled fencer who is a national fencing champion and has fenced for over 16 years. She picked up the sport as a college elective and is excited to be sharing her enthusiasm for fencing with the students of Pioneer Springs. Ms. Megan is a champion weightlifter who brings her training skills and her sense of humor to the class.

Pioneer Springs fencers range from middle school up to high school and are learning to fence **foil**. Students are outfitted with brand new foils, masks, jackets and gloves.

Mrs. Min hopes that the school will be able to implement a second fencing class to teach a more advanced version of the current fencing class in the fall and eventually host championships and tournaments. She also hopes that the current cap of 14 students could extend into a larger class in the future. Make sure to stop by the fencing class to see some real swashbuckling!

Senior spotlight

Elise Armendariz

Written by Christian Mayer, 12th grade Journalism student

Meet Elise Armendariz, a driven and compassionate student passionate about psychology and helping others. Elise's inspirational quote, "Take the moment and taste it," reflects her philosophy of embracing life's experiences fully. With her sights set on becoming a Clinical Therapist specializing in pediatric care, Elise plans to attend a four year college to major in psychology, laying the foundation for her future career. Her advice to others is empowering: "The only thing stopping you from success is you; everything you do is a step you take."

Elise is actively involved in her school community, serving as the President of the student government. She also finds joy in tutoring kids. Elise is a painter in her free time, using art as a creative outlet and a way to express herself. One of her most cherished memories is going to prom with her girls. Elise Armendariz is a shining example of a student who combines academic ambition with a compassionate spirit.



Olivia Eiger

Written by Aiyanna Houston, 11th grade Journalism student

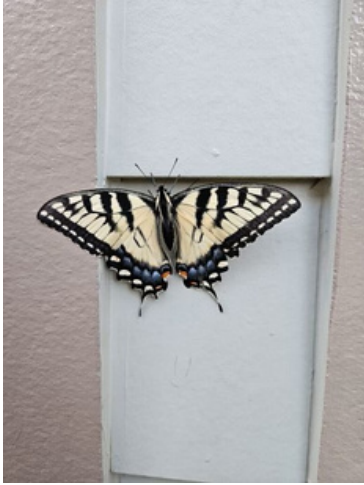
Olivia is a senior here at Pioneer Springs Community School. Though she was not here at the very beginning, she is an amazing student in this community and chose to start her high school journey here in 9th grade. Some of the things she enjoys are talking on the phone, participating in physical and occupational therapy, and listening to Taylor Swift. Olivia is very passionate and is interested in horse therapy, known as Equine-Assisted Therapy. This is where people do activities that involve horses to promote physical and mental health. Shining Hope Farm is a place that does this in Charlotte.

Though she doesn't have a clear idea of what she wants to do after high school right now, she plans to live her life to the fullest.

4th and 5th grade field trip to Camp Caraway



Classroom Happenings



A butterfly visited the Hive!



Adam Peeler, our high school Civics & Government and US history teacher, celebrated a big birthday recently. Students dressed up as Adam in celebration of his day!



Shannon O'Connor's high school Physical Science completed a stomp rocket lab last week. Phoenix Blackwood's rocket flew about 56 feet in the air. In this lab, students measured the center of pressure and center of mass for their rocket designs, created fins and attached a nose cone in order to ensure stable flight. Students measured the angle of the highest point of the rocket with 2 observers and used a bit of trigonometry to determine how high the rockets flew.

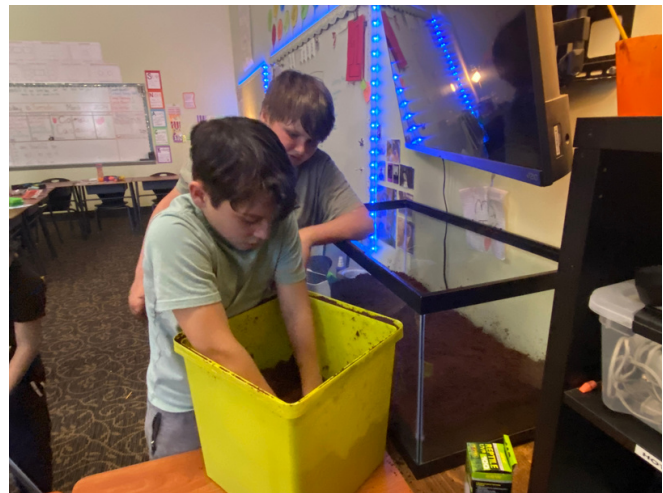
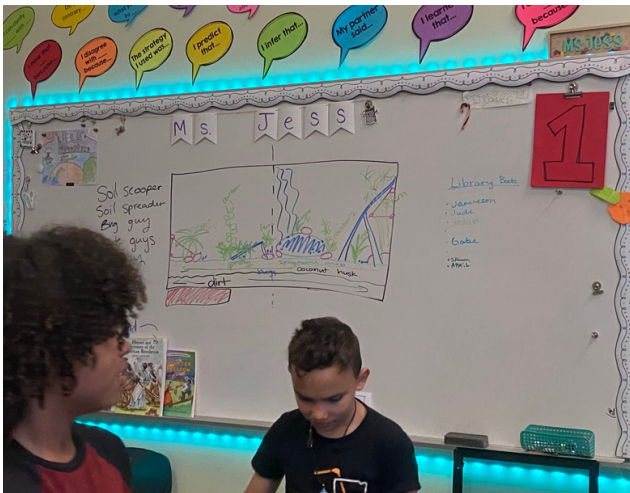
Classroom Happenings



Mr. Jacob built a cardboard model of Stonehenge to demonstrate how it may have worked as an agricultural calendar in Neolithic times. Mr. Jacob and Eric Emerson, father of 8th grader Nate Silver, visited Mr. Jeremy's middle school science classes to demonstrate how it worked. This picture depicts the way that Stonehenge directs the light through a henge (stone door) on both Spring and Fall equinox. Have you visited Stonehenge? What function do you think it played for Neolithic people?



Corey Sperling's high school Horticulture I students have been hard at work sprucing up the gardens around campus, and working with Second Grade to improve the Pollinator Garden.



Ms. Jess and Ms. Meghan's fifth grade students are adopting a red eyed crocodile skink, which will live in a student-built bioactive habitat. Students have added plants, decomposing insects, and water to the habitat, creating a self-sustaining vivarium that does not need to be cleaned! Not only are students learning about animal care, they are also learning about how organisms, geological factors and climate interact to create an ecosystem!