

# The Pioneer Springs Community School Covenant Policy (approved 6/28/16, revised 3/16/20)

**Purpose:** In keeping with the *Basic School* philosophy and, more specifically, the idea of a *Covenant for Learning* between the parents, students, and the school, this policy requires the administration to provide *The Pioneer Covenant*, defined below, to all parents and students at the beginning of each school year toward clarifying and formalizing the responsibility of both the home and school to work together in partnership.

This policy will be revisited annually by the Governance Committee to ensure the content and effectiveness of this policy supports academic and program quality. It will specifically be considered with regard to any barriers for participation by students or families and toward identifying strategies to support successful school and family interactions.

## Pioneer Covenant

*Parent/Guardians please review this document with your child.*

*Please sign the Acknowledgement Page and return. Keep body of document for reference.*

With respect to the significance of Community within the *Basic School* philosophy, the Pioneer Covenant outlines the responsibility for each stakeholder in our community (including Students, Parent/Guardians, Teachers, Administrative Team and Staff, and Board of Trustees) to wholly support the mission of our school and to facilitate ideal communication and commitment.

This covenant is an agreement between all community stakeholders and is based on the shared vision and mission of Pioneer Springs Community School. The intention is to highlight each party's responsibilities in the wonderful task of educating our children. This covenant is to be based upon mutual trust that Pioneer Springs Community School will be a community of learning and committed to excellence.

### **We expect that our Students will:**

#### **Academic**

Take advantage of learning opportunities by participating in discussions, experiments and classroom lessons. Be open to working in small and large groups and one-on-one situations.

#### **Social**

Participate in social activities to the best of their abilities. Students shall expect to be treated, and are expected to treat others, with respect, patience, compassion, and understanding.

#### **Emotional**

Express their needs so adults can be supportive, while adults will be fully aware that each child communicates needs differently.

### **Home/School Connection**

Bring home classroom information such as newsletters or homework assignments. Complete assignments to the best of his/her abilities in a timely manner to deepen understanding of learned concepts.

Abide by the Student Code of Conduct.

### **We expect that all Parents/Guardians will:**

#### **Academic and Home/School Connection**

Parents will be responsible for ensuring that his/her child is prepared and on time for school each day.

Support children in their academic pursuits by reading with them daily and helping with assignments.

Parents will examine and discuss items and school work brought home each day with his/her child.

Participate in classroom celebrations that support learning.

Attend parent teacher conferences and information sessions. Work as a team with school staff to encourage and support children academically.

Read teacher newsletters and school communications to stay informed of classroom and school events.

#### **Social and Home/School Connection**

Parents will take advantage of multiple opportunities to contribute to a positive school community and a strong academic program by getting to know the stakeholders within our school community and by being positive, active forces in their communications. This includes service on the School Improvement Team and contribution to the School Improvement Plan, participation on the Parent Advisory Council to consider issues affecting policy and operations, and active participation in trimester celebrations, Spring into the Woods events, and other academic engagements that improve student learning.

Parents are expected to participate (classroom, library books, preparing materials, field trips, weekend/summer workdays, parent teacher community, phone calls, class celebrations) throughout the school year to assist us in creating a community of learning.

Parents make every attempt to attend school sponsored programs, seminars, socials, beautification project days, and fundraisers.

Parents acknowledge the cancerous effect on the community of improperly airing grievances on social media, and therefore agree to refrain from starting or participating in negative online

media commentary about the school, its board of trustees, administrators, faculty or staff, or other pioneer parents, or families.

### **Professional and Home/School Connection**

Parents will make every effort to understand Pioneer Springs' *Basic School* foundation, and its mission and vision as expressed in its charter.

Parents will support the mission of Pioneer Springs.

Parents will have confidence in the Pioneer Springs faculty, realizing that they continuously work to keep the interest of all children at the forefront.

Parents will actively support the school, when possible, through wishlists, fundraisers and committees.

Parents will complete the school's annual Time and Talent survey detailing skills and talents to enrich the school.

Parents will contact their student's teacher first in cases of uncertainty or disagreement, and make every effort to work out problems with the teacher before involving the school leaders.

Parents will abide by the Pioneer Springs Family Handbook.

### **We expect that our Teachers will:**

#### **Academic**

Be prepared to teach children every day with developmentally appropriate concepts, materials and activities.

Create a purposeful classroom environment, where routines are established and children feel safe and supported.

Use a variety of quantitative and qualitative assessments to identify areas for growth for every child. Communicate those targeted areas to parents on a regular basis.

#### **Social**

Provide opportunities for students to solve problems and work together. Model warmth and fairness with discipline. Encourage children's positive behavior without the use of extrinsic rewards.

#### **Emotional**

Support children and adults in a calm, gentle manner, using positive languaging.

#### **Professional**

Participate in staff development and implement recommended instructional practices.

Confer with parents at least three times each year to discuss formal progress monitoring and student growth. This includes providing benchmark data and assisting parents in understanding

both how to interpret data and how to use it to support students at home and in partnership with school efforts.

Will provide regular communication, including a weekly email newsletter, about classroom activities and needed resources for completion. This includes providing login credentials to online resources.

**We expect that our Pioneer Springs Staff and Administrators will:**

**Academic**

Ensure students are provided with opportunities to become literate and well informed about themselves and the world around them. Our top priority will be for every student to be linguistically empowered, confident in the use of language and able to communicate ideas. We consider literacy to include competency in reading, writing, speaking, listening, numeracy and the arts. We will engage every child in the exploration of global curricular themes.

**Social**

Ensure Pioneer Springs Community School is a communicative place where all members speak and listen carefully to each other. As the school grows, time will be set aside for teachers and students from various grade levels to work together. Parents will be involved in an honest, open climate of authentic discourse.

Ensure staff receive annual training about the importance of parents and families in our school environment and how best to utilize them as a resource and partner, including how to communicate with parents and how to coordinate volunteer efforts.

Ensure PSCS is culturally sensitive and makes information available to all families in a manner that is easy to access, including translated documents and interpretations.

Ensure that activities and meetings are scheduled at various times in recognition of the varied schedules of our families.

Establishes a Parent Advisory Council to formally involve parents in the process of representation regarding policy development and operational items.

Ensure Pioneer Springs Community School is a celebrative place. Opportunities will be provided for parents, teachers and students to meet as needed and affirm their common goals and celebrate their successes. We will offer classroom performances and/or art opportunities each year as a way for our students to celebrate their learning.

**Emotional**

Ensure Pioneer Springs Community School is a disciplined place. Students will discover that life is a balance of freedom and constraints. Children will be taught to live within limits. Individual rights will be respected while the rights of the group will also be served.

Ensure Pioneer Springs Community School is a caring place. It will offer a people-centered environment. Opportunities will be provided for parents, teachers, and students to know and support one another.

**We expect that all members of the Board of Trustees will:**

**Follow the Board Code of Conduct as outlined below:**

- Uphold the mission and charter for Pioneer Springs Community School
- Define strategic direction of school and develop policies which will move school towards its goals
- Delegate authority for the administration of the school to the Directors, and establish a process for accountability of the Directors
- Refrain from advising staff members in operational areas
- Act with integrity
- Avoid any conflicts of interest or the appearance of impropriety that could result from their position, and refrain from using their board membership for personal gain or publicity
- Recognize that a board member has no legal authority as an individual and that decisions can be made only by a majority vote at a board meeting
- Abide by majority decisions of the board, while retaining the right to seek changes in such decisions through ethical and constructive channels
- Be knowledgeable about not only local educational concerns, but also state and national issues
- Attend scheduled board meetings
- Prepare for all board meetings by reading and understanding the board documents in advance of board meetings and come to board meetings informed concerning the issues under consideration
- Respect the confidentiality of privileged information and make no individual decisions or commitments that might compromise the board or administration
- Represent board decisions to the community without bias or prejudice
- Commit to stand by this code of conduct and speak with one voice in concert with fellow Board members
- Maintain a positive culture, orderly decision-making processes, and transparency

*Please sign the next page and return. Print one Acknowledgement Page per child.*

**Pioneer Covenant Acknowledgement Page**

We respectfully request that all Students, Parents/Guardians, Teachers, Staff, Administrative Team, and Board of Trustees read this document and demonstrate their support of the principles outlined by signing the covenant. We are all stakeholders charged with the task of educating our children. In every decision made and every action taken, we serve as role models for our children. Investing time to understand lines of communication and responsibilities will yield positive results for children and adults. We believe that Pioneer Springs is a unique place where mutual respect, calm discourse and kindness will always prevail.

We, the undersigned, agree to follow the expectations set forth in the Pioneer Covenant. We enter this agreement in good faith and trust.

Parent/Guardian #1 Print Name

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Signature

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Parent/Guardian #2 Print Name

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Signature

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Student Print Name

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Signature

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Staff

Print Name

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Signature

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Board Trustee

Print Name

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Signature

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Date \_\_\_\_\_