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A PSCS NEWSLETTER

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Putting the *community* into Pioneer Springs Community School

Pioneer Springs follows the Basic School model, which was described by Ernest L. Boyer in *The Basic School: A Community for Learning*. At the heart of the Basic School philosophy is the understanding that effective schools are communities of learning, and that they embody these characteristics:



- **Purposeful**—stakeholders uphold a *shared mission*, and work together to bring that mission to life
- **Communicative**—community members share ideas, solve problems together proactively and listen to one another carefully
- **Just**—everyone is treated fairly
- **Disciplined**—community members are guided by agreed-upon norms, and help each other learn to follow those norms
- **Caring**—everyone knows that they belong, and that they are seen & valued
- **Celebrative**—time is set aside to reflect on learning, and to celebrate accomplishments in small way, such as offering gratitude, and big ways, including campus-wide events

IMPORTANT DATES & ITEMS TO NOTE

- [Board Meeting Minutes](#)
- [Who to Contact and When](#)
- [Academic & Events Calendar](#)

As we rest and reflect this summer, we'd like to invite you to contemplate your place in our community of learning. What gifts do you, your family, and your student bring to our community? How can we make our community even stronger in the coming school year?

Campus improvement and fundraising update: Zen Garden work begins



The money our community raised in last fall's Annual Campaign is being used to support several important campus initiatives, including the construction of a Zen Garden at Asbury. Work on the Zen Garden is also supported by \$1,000 Window of Opportunity grant from Keep North Carolina Beautiful.

We are excited to share that grading work has begun on our Zen Garden.

When the garden is complete, students will be able to practice mindfulness by tending the garden.

Watch this space for updates on our progress!

Did you know that students frequently lose several months of learning over the summer? The good news is that you can avoid learning loss by encouraging your student to engage in reading, writing, math and science over break. Even better news is that summer learning is most effective when students pursue their own interests. **See pages 3 & 4 for some ideas for engaging students of all ages in curiosity-driven learning this summer.**

Hiking, raptors, and paddle boarding, oh my!



Latta Nature Preserve offers families many great ways to enjoy nature. [Quest Nature Center](#) offers educational programs, and interactive displays about our local ecosystem. The [Carolina Raptor Center](#) is more than simply a bird rehabilitation center, it also ignites visitors' curiosity about birds of prey. Latta has over 16 miles of trails, and a [boat launch](#) for those who want to explore nature in a canoe, kayak, or on a stand-up paddle board. Families are invited to attend educational programs at Latta, including ["A Seed's Story"](#) on July 6. If your family visits Latta this summer, share your adventures on social media and be sure to tag #pioneersprings!

Community Connections



Are you interested in introducing your children to classical music? The [Charlotte Symphony's Summer Pops](#) is a great opportunity to enjoy outdoor concerts, and the [Family Series](#) is a fun way to introduce children ages four to nine to the symphony.

Marvelous Math

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



Elementary

- Visiting the beach? [Create your own seashell memory game](#), and add the challenge of adding, subtracting, multiplying or dividing the numbers as you turn the shells over.
- [Give Kidoku a try](#) (no printer? You can copy the game boards by hand)
- [Magic Triangles](#) are an intriguing way to practice addition

Middle School

Try playing a game that involves strategy, money and score keeping, such as Yahtzee , Monopoly, or cribbage. As you play, add math discussion to your game by asking:

- What's your strategy?
- How would making a different move change your score?
- What choice here would give you the greatest chance of winning? Why?
- Which decisions are the most challenging? Why?

High School

Here are some games that you can play solo on-line, or grab pencil and paper and play them with a friend:

- [Have you got it?](#)
- [Last Biscuit](#)

Play STEAM Break Bingo and explore the world of science, technology, engineering, math and the arts! By Margaret Bonds, Instructional Data Analyst



Summer STEAM Break is an opportunity for students to pick activities to complete at their home through building, creating, exploring, and designing.

Use **STEAM BREAK Bingo** as a way to get kids outside and in the yard (or parks), and away from the television and technology. STEAM is a great way to get kids to practice expanding their imagination, problem solving skills, and creativity.

Your family can use this board like a bingo board. Try to get bingo each week of summer break! Or compete against a sibling to get bingo first. Alternatively, you can simply see how many activities you can complete this summer.

Fun ways to help your elementary school student become a stronger reader this summer, by Tanya Blumenfeld, 3rd Grade Lead Teacher

Research has shown that students who do not read during the summer can experience a loss of reading skills, whereas those who continue to read actually make gains in skills. It is important that in order to prevent students from experiencing the “summer slide”, efforts are made to help children prevent reading skill loss by practicing reading while reading for enjoyment. There are some simple actions you can do that will continue to foster their reading skills. Throughout the summer, I will be suggesting some simple activities that will hopefully help guide and inspire your summer reading! The first action you can take is to read aloud together with your child every day. You can make it fun by varying the location you read. Maybe you take your books to the park or read in a hammock in the backyard. You could even create a reading fort in your house! Make sure you let your child read a bit to you as well!



Kindergarten: *We Don't Eat Our Classmates* by Ryan T. Higgins, *A Boy Named Isamu* by James Yang

First grade: *The World Belonged to Us* by Jacqueline Woodson, *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs* by Jon Scieszka

Second grade: *You Are Home* by Evan Turk, *Wishtree* by Katherine Applegate

Third grade: *Babe* by Dick King-Smith, *The Penderwicks* by Jeanne Birdsall

Fourth grade: *Nic Blake and the Remarkables* by Angie Thomas, *Playing the Cards You're Dealt* by Varian Johnson

Fifth grade: *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'Engle, *Treasures Hunters* by James Paterson

Teen reading



Summer is a great time for teens to reconnect with their love of reading. Research shows that when students read over the summer they not only maintain their reading skills, their skills actually improve. You can help your teen read by making sure that they have access to books, magazines, graphic novels and comics that interest them. All reading, no matter what the format, is good reading! So, visit your local library or bookstore with your teen and stock-up!

Middle School: *Change the Game* by Colin Kaepernick, *Front Desk* by Kelly Yang

High School: *Children of Blood and Bones* by Tomi Adeyemi, *The Marrow Thieves* by Cherie Dimaline

One good line deserves another

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.



To encourage students to write this summer, we are running a writing sweepstakes. To enter, submit a piece of writing by [clicking here](#). The writing may respond to the prompt below, or may be about any topic of the author's choosing. Select stories will be published in the next edition of the *Coop Scoop*. Everyone who submits a story will be entered into a drawing for a PSCS swag bag, which includes a Hellbender or Mudpuppy T-Shirt, car magnet, pencils, and more!

Here is this week's prompt:

1. Choose a book with a great first line
2. Use that first line as the first line of the story that you create
3. You may include any combination of words and pictures
4. Enjoy!

Getting ready for kindergarten: Play is the best way to learn!



"Playtime is precious. Play builds brain pathways for thinking, creativity, flexibility, empathy, and many other lifelong skills."

— Heather Shumaker

All people, and young children in particular, learn through play. You can help your kindergartner get ready for school by providing plenty of opportunities for them to engage in imaginative play, and to play outdoors. Independent play is particularly important because it allows children to develop their imaginations and their sense of autonomy. When children play with other children, they also develop cooperation skills. Make-believe and storytelling provide the foundation for early literacy. You can support play by offering toys such as wooden blocks and dress up clothes that allow for open-ended play. Encourage children to imagine new uses for things. For example, a spoon could be used to stir play food, but it could also become a telephone or a rocket ship. Balance time playing with your child(ren) with time when they can play apart from adults. Most importantly, enjoy the magic of young imaginations and creativity!

Camp smiles

