



The Power of the Parent: Supporting learning at home

We have completed one third of the school year, and parent-teacher conferences are just around the corner. Now is a good time to reflect on how the school-home partnership is going for your family. Here are some steps that you can take to strengthen that partnership:

Show your children that you value what they are learning

- Tell your student how excited you are about what they are learning and how they are learning—most lessons are caught, not taught, and your student’s attitude towards school will mirror your own
- Ask leading questions about what your student is learning
- Volunteer either in the classroom, or volunteer to help prep materials at home

Communicate with teachers and with Pioneer Springs

- Read teacher newsletters and the Coop Scoop weekly
- Contact teachers when you have questions or concerns

Provide learning opportunities beyond the classroom

For more information, visit our blog [here](#)

Are you looking for ways to help your middle or high school student?
Check out [6 Tips to Support Teens in School](#).

Parent-Teacher Conference season is here



Parent-teacher Conferences are an important opportunity to check-in on your student’s academic, social-emotional, and cognitive progress. Be on the lookout for information from your teacher(s) about scheduling in-person, virtual, and/ or phone conferences. You can prepare for conferences by talking with your student about how their classes are going, reviewing the report card (sent home via email), and reviewing iReady and/or NC Check-In data. Come to the conference with any questions that you have, and be sure to ask what you can do at home to support your child’s development. For more information about conferences, [click here](#).

IMPORTANT DATES & ITEMS TO NOTE

- 7 Dec: Blood Drive
- 8 Dec: [The Wizard of Oz at 6 PM](#)
- 9 Dec: HS Astronomy Star Gazing Party
- 13 Dec: [Pioneer 101](#)
- 15 Dec: HS Winter Ball
- 20 Dec: Read in your PJs Day
- 21 Dec–2 Jan: Winter Break
- 3 Jan: Staff Development – NO SCHOOL for students
- 11 Jan: [HS Whitewater Center Trip](#)
- 12 Jan: K-12 [World Heritage Day](#)
- Fridays at 10 AM: [Admin Open Office Hours](#)

Pioneer Players presents: The Wizard of Oz!

When an unexpected tornado rips through her Kansas farm, Dorothy and her dog, Toto, are whisked away to the magical land of Oz. She meets a Scarecrow who needs a brain, a Tin Man missing his heart and a Cowardly Lion who need a bit of courage. Together, they tunefully follow the Yellow Brick Road to the Emerald City to meet the all powerful Wizard of Oz. The Wizard will grant their wishes and return Dorothy home if only they can meet his requirements.

The Wizard of Oz is a one-day only performance on Friday December 8th, 2023 at Mt. Zion United Methodist Church located at 19600 Zion Ave, Cornelius, NC 28031. Doors open at 5:45 pm for general seating. Curtain is at 6 pm.

This heartwarming production is family-friendly and open to all ages. Regular tickets are \$5.00 and PSCS Student tickets are by donation. Purchase your tickets in cash at the door or in advance online at:

pioneerplayers.ticketleap.com/wizard-of-oz/

Additional questions can be directed to allisonc@pioneersprings.org



HS Winter Ball



Pioneer Springs High School students are cordially invited to join us at the Winter Ball, a semi-formal event, on December 15th from 6:30-9 pm. Tickets are \$25 each and can be purchased [here](#). Volunteer set up/ break down, [click here](#) to sign up.

Location: The Ivory Barn
14415 NC-73, Huntersville, NC 28078

Pioneer 101



Please join us on December 13th, from 6-7pm for Pioneer Springs 101. The academic team will be answering questions about our school. Questions must be submitted ahead of time. Childcare is offered for children aged 5-10. [Click here](#) to submit your questions, requests for childcare and to RSVP. Please RSVP by December 11th. For questions, email: heidim@pioneersprings.org

'Tis the season to show your gratitude



We cannot believe how quickly 2023 is coming to a close and how the holiday season will be upon us before we know it! WINGS, our homegrown PTA, will be collecting contributions for staff gifts for ALL teachers, administrators and support staff. We will pool the money collected to distribute a cash gift evenly amongst our amazing staff! You can [make your contribution on-line](#), or stop by the office with cash or a check.

On Tuesday, December 19th the Second and Third Grade families will show our support and appreciation for our wonderful staff with a Winter Cookie exchange. If you'd like to donate cookies, cocoa or decor, or to volunteer [sign-up here](#).

Jen Nourse made an excellent venison chili for our fall staff appreciation event. [Here's the recipe](#).

High School Communities in Action: Natural Sciences students win agriculture education grant, by Anja Magi, 10th grade Natural Sciences student

A few weeks ago my Natural Sciences Community in Action (CIA), mentored by Corey Sperling, lived up to our name by taking the action of collecting information to apply for the North Carolina Farm Bureau "Agriculture in the Classroom" grant, worth up to \$500 to spend on an agricultural project. This week we found out that we were lucky enough to win the grant (with a score of 59/60 at that), securing our group \$427, which we will spend on seeds and tools for next semester's growing season. One of the requirements for the grant is that we have to use the money to educate, so come springtime we will be working with lower grades to teach them about plants and how to grow them. Exciting!



Excerpt from Corey L. Sperling, Agricultural Teacher

I am very proud of these students. They took on the challenge of research and writing this grant. As their mentor, I made minor adjustments to what they wrote and I supplied them information that only a teacher could do needed for the grant. Applying for a grant is a challenging and detailed project and receiving a grant is even more difficult with the competition. For this grant, 113 organizations applied. Not only is this group growing plants and educating younger students at Pioneer Springs, but our goal is to use food grown and tea to supply to the Pioneer Springs School Community and if we are successful in growing a large supply of food, we will create care baskets to those in need of the community. This group is truly breaking barriers and our mission goes beyond just planting seeds and growing plants.

Star Party

We will be having a Star Party for exploration of our night sky on Saturday, December 9th from 8:30-10:30pm.



This event is open to any PSCS high school students and any adult chaperones who would like to attend. Join us as we use planispheres to locate common constellations, observe interesting phenomena through the school's telescopes and experience how scientists study space. Guests are asked to bring snacks or desserts to share. Hot cocoa and tea will be provided. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Shannon (shannon@pioneersprings.org). In the event of inclement weather, the backup date will be Saturday, December 16th at the same time.

PRIDE donations

Sixth and Eighth Grade scholars are now actively taking donations for all of their chosen P.R.I.D.E. projects, and we need your help! P.R.I.D.E.



is a service project that scholars research and thoughtfully select to participate in with a group of their peers. Scholars will present a timeline of their projects to a panel of experts on January 17th, 2024, which will include the reason for selecting their chosen project and sharing the specific needs for each of the non-profits they have partnered with! Please see the attached list of flyers that explain what each group is collecting. Donations can be left in the container outside of the castle, or outside of H9 until January 12th. Thank you in advance for your participation! Please view our [donation list](#) and/ or our [PRIDE QR code flyer](#).

Classroom Happenings



First grade prepared for the Thanksgiving Break with some leaf crafting.



The fifth grade teaching team enjoyed the rain-at long last!



The High School dance class went to see the UNC-Charlotte Dance Department's Fall Concert featuring a dance that was inspired by the art work "Girl with a Pearl Earring", a Martha Graham dance reimagined along with other dances. We also encountered a robot delivering food.

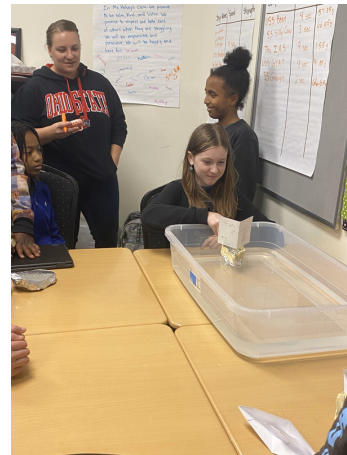
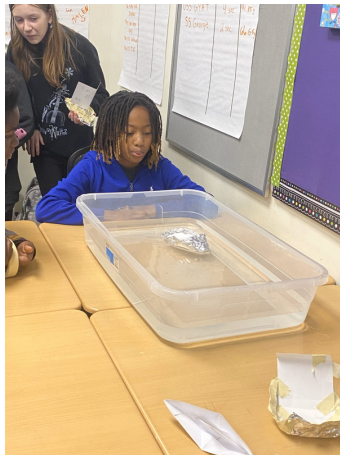
On the November 27 Staff Development day the Kindergarten teaching team visited the Catawba Cultural Center to prepare for the January 12 World Heritage Day. We'd love your input for World Heritage Day-[share your ideas here.](#)



Classroom Happenings



PreK watched birds, made butter, and crafted leaf hats.



Sixth Grade made boats and tested their speed and buoyancy.

Coming next week, our 50/50 raffle! Tickets are \$1 each and the winner will split the proceeds with the school. Tickets will be sold in the car line and at the front office. Good luck, everyone! For questions, email heidim@pioneersprings.org