

The Parent Bill of Rights: A Practical Guide

In August, 2023 the NC State Legislature passed Senate Bill 49, generally known as the Parent Bill of Rights. The purpose of this bill, which into effect January 1st, is to expand parents' access to information relative to their children's education and health records. While much of the bill only codified what was already readily available in schools, like the right to know what curriculum is being followed and what instructional materials are being used, there are several parts of the bill that will newly inform all North Carolina schools' operational practices. These include:

- **Parents have the right to opt-in to protected information surveys:** While PSCS has not historically distributed surveys requesting protected information (income or political affiliations, for example), Pioneer Springs will distribute any such surveys at least 10 days in advance of requesting information for parent review and will receive parent opt-in for participation in the survey.
- **Parents have the right to consent to health services offered by the school:** The law stipulates that parents must provide consent for health services, including counseling and nursing services, This is consistent with Pioneer Springs' current practice of receiving parent permission for the delivery of these services.
- **Parents have the right to ask questions about or object to instructional materials:** A parent can request information about instructional materials and the course or study or to object to materials through a process of review. Pioneer Springs has a link on the school's website through which parents can make such a request or objection. Per the law, parents should expect a response within 10 business days.
- **Parents have the right to be notified prior to any change in name or pronoun used at the school:** The law requires that the school make parents aware if a student has requested to use a name different than the legal name or a derivative of such, or to use a pronoun different than the biological gender. Pioneer Springs is committed to its continued partnership with parents in service to each individual student's needs.
- **Parents will be provided a Parents' Guide to Student Achievement on an annual basis including minimum requirements set out by the State:** Beginning with the 2024-25 school year, schools are required to distribute a Parent's Guide of Student Achievement which includes information about promotion, course of study, offered programming and services, and opportunities for parent involvement. While these items are currently available through the PSCS Family Handbook as well as various policies and family resources available on the school's website, Pioneer Springs will consolidate content for ease of access and share on an annual basis.

What's Next? Please complete the permission form.

More information about the [Parents' Bill of Rights](#) can be found on the school's [website](#) under Family Resources. The page includes the school's Parent Bill of Rights policy with hot links embedded to related policies and forms, the form to request information or file an objection, and the student permission form. Please take a moment to **complete the form about your student(s) now** in an effort to collect needed information regarding names/ pronouns and student services.

IMPORTANT DATES & ITEMS TO NOTE

- 16-31 Jan: Mid year benchmark window for K-12
- 27 Jan: [Come support our basketball team](#)
- 31 Jan: [Holistic Tea: Hands-On Math & WINGS \(PTO\) Meeting, 5pm-6:15pm](#)
- 2 Feb: Blood Drive, 9am-1pm
- 13 Feb: WINGS Staff Appreciation
- 14 Feb: Show Your Heart
- 23 Feb: K-5 End of Trimester Celebration
- 23 Feb: [Under the Snow Moon, 7pm-9pm](#)
- Fridays at 10 AM: [Admin Open Office Hours](#)

Family education Holistic Tea: Learning math through play & WINGS (PTO) meeting Wednesday, January 31 at 5 pm

A strong understanding of math is essential to success. When we were growing up, most of us were taught math through drills and rote memorization. The good news is that we now know that children learn math best through real-world, hands-on engagement and play!

Join us for our first evening Holistic Tea of the school year as Margaret Bonds, long time Pioneer Springs teacher, Instructional Data Analyst, and math education expert shares ideas for how you can support your child's growth as a mathematician through fun, engaging activities.

Play with other Pioneer Springs families as we explore games, activities, and more! Tea will be provided, so bring your own mug and a pastry to share. **RSVP here**. Questions? Email Heidi (heidime@pioneersprings.org).



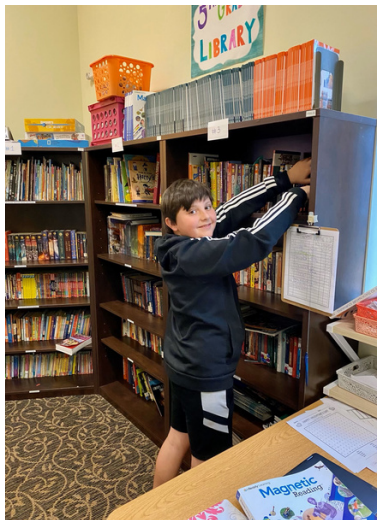
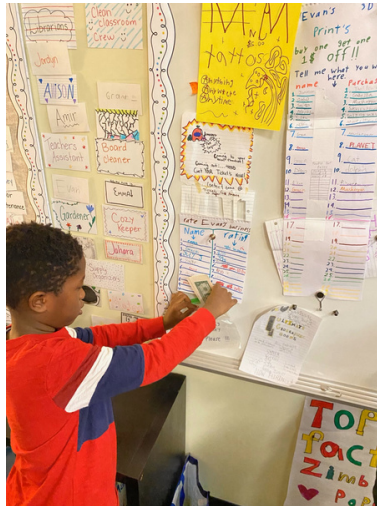
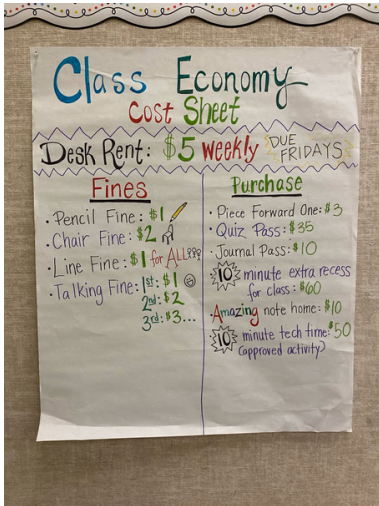
5:00-5:45, Holistic Tea; WINGS (our homegrown PTO meeting) from 5:45-6:15.

Spring Under the Snow Moon tickets on sale now-limited space, so get them while they last!



Join us for our first annual art social and auction, Under the Snow Moon. Funds raised will support the improvement of our athletic fields. The evening will include live music, socializing, heavy hors d'oeuvres, a selection of local wines and beers, and an exhibit of student art. You will have a chance to bid on the art works, and to enter raffles for fabulous prizes. This over 21 event is exclusive to Pioneer Springs families, and will be hosted at Cedar Grove, a historic house in Huntersville. Space is limited, so reserve your space today by [buying tickets here](#). Unable to make it to the event? You can still bid on art and [enter the raffles!](#)

5th grade keeps the desire to learn burning bright: Ms. Jess & Ms. Meghan's class bring economics to life



Ms. Jess and Ms. Meghan are using a Classroom Economy to teach economic concepts in social studies. Two of their students, write:

“So, the class economy is something that Ms. Jess created. It’s really fun and I think all grades should do it. Every Friday we have to pay a \$5 desk rent so you get to keep your desk. Every Monday you get \$5 for coming to school, and \$5 for doing your job. There are fines, too. Here’s what you get fined for: \$1 for the teacher finding a pencil under your desk, \$2 for not pushing in your chair, if the line doesn’t look good then every kid in the class gets a fine and a talking fine, but with the talking fine the first time it’s \$1, second time \$2, third time \$3 and so on but each time it adds on, like if you got a third talking fine you pay \$6. Here’s some stuff you can buy: Quiz pass, journal pass, 10 minutes extra recess, amazing note home, and more. Here’s some more stuff about jobs: your pay depends on the job and you can be fired from your job and every week you have to write a job application to keep your job or to get a new one. I think I covered our whole Economy Unit so this is The End.” - Gabe Preik

“To me, Ms. Jess’s economy project was very interesting. I learned a lot, but it was also very enjoyable. Each of us had jobs, some of us had multiple jobs, others had their own business, and Ms. Jess and Ms. Meghan always made learning fun! Also, we could use our money to buy things like extra recess or a snack pass to eat inside.” - Shawn Goode

**5th grade keeps the desire to learn burning bright:
Ms. Deepti & Ms. Kim's class build a math learning community
with Ms. Sherry's Kindergarten students**



Last Friday, Ms. Deepti and Ms. Kim took their students to visit Kindergarten, where they shared a math workshop with their younger peers. Students spent the week preparing for the workshop by thinking about learning goals, choosing teaching strategies, and writing lesson plans. The Kindergarteners and 5th graders had a blast learning together! Hassan Camara was excited to share his thoughts:

"Some of us in Fifth grade worked on setting up a Math workshop for kindergarten. We went to their class and set up different stations to work on different skills like addition, subtraction and making ten. First, we worked with objects to make an equation and then we solved it together. If they needed more help, we used pictures to show them subtraction just like how my teacher taught me in the class. At first they were a little confused but then they got a hang of it. That was one of the most fun times of my life and I feel good that we got to do this."

Gratitude and self-care for caregivers

Raising children is stressful. As parents and care-givers we are charged with meeting the ever-changing needs of our children, while balancing all of the things that are happening in the present moment with our hopes and dreams for our children's future. Research shows that practicing gratitude decreases stress and increases well being in all people, and in parents and caregivers in particular. [When parents and caregivers benefit, so do children.](#)



Would you like to integrate a gratitude practice into your life, or deepen your practice? Here are some ideas to try:

- Explore gratitude meditation either through your faith traditions, or [meditations such as these.](#)
- [Keep a gratitude journal.](#)
- [Reframe your thinking.](#)

Do you already have a gratitude practice? If so, share your practice on social media and tag #pioneersprings.

Need Money to Attend College or a Career School? Meet with the Experts at FAFSA Day!



Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

Who? College-or Career School-bound students and their parents / guardians

What? Help understanding and completing your FAFSA

When? Saturday, January 27, 2024 from 9 am -12 pm

Where? Colleges across North Carolina (including UNC Charlotte, the CPCC Levine Campus, and Rowan-Cabarrus Community College)

How? [Click here for more information and to register](#)

Why? FAFSA guarantees access to federal student aid programs and some state programs.

Many schools set FAFSA completion deadlines and make their school-based scholarships and other money sources contingent upon families meeting those deadlines.

You should submit your FAFSA as soon as possible to maximize your chances of getting federal grants and scholarships.

Eastern Burke State Qualifying Tournament



On Saturday, January 20 our archery team competed in the Eastern Burke County State Qualifying Tournament, which required archers to hit targets from 15 meters away. Loki Kuzma, a high school junior and member of our archery team, shares this report from the tournament:

“Our archery team, the HellBenders, had a blast! Our team shirts were a highlight, the design was striking and unique. There was satisfaction that our time spent working on shooting at 15 meters had really paid off, hopefully well enough to go to the state tournament. I felt as if we had an excellent sense of camaraderie, when we retired to the waiting space people were congratulating each other and discussing tips. Overall a wonderful experience, whether our season ends here or we go to state, I know I had a delightful time!”

BREAKING NEWS: We are state bound! We have qualified for the NC State Archery Tournament on February 16th-17th in Winston-Salem.

High School backpacking trip information session



The Spring Into the Woods camping adventures will be here before we know it! The **10th** grade have the opportunity to participate in an introduction to backpacking trip at Lake Logan Outdoor School on April 22-24. The **11th** graders put their skills to the test on a backpacking trek through Pisgah National Forest on April 24-26.

We will be holding a parent/student information session for 10th and 11th grade students interested in attending their backpacking adventures on February 6, 2024 at 5:00pm in the High School Music Room. The session will include detailed information about what students will experience on each of the trips, what to pack, and most importantly expectations while on trail.

Classroom Happenings



Last Saturday some of the families from Ms. Anna's class bundled up and braved the cold for a campus service project along Bob Beatty Road. They collected over 10 bags of litter, a tree axel and car parts. It looks great now! Thank you to all of the students and families who came out to beautify our campus.



Ms. C's 4th grade students have been hard at work on their "Bee" Kind project for several weeks now. Here is what students Ariana Phillips and Connor Vanholten wrote along with our pictures:

"We made a 'Bee' Kind Tessellation during our 4th grade science class. A tessellation is when we cover a surface with a pattern of flat shapes so that there are no overlaps or gaps. On our tessellation we wrote about a time where we were kind to others and a time when others were nice to us. Then we had to color (yay!) and cut it out on the lines. We helped our teacher, Mrs. C, arrange all of the hexagons to make the beehive shape. We worked on it a lot and it took us a couple of weeks, but we did it! We taped all of the papers, over 120 hexagons, together and picked out the spot on the 4th grade stairs where we hung it up. It looks like a real beehive!"