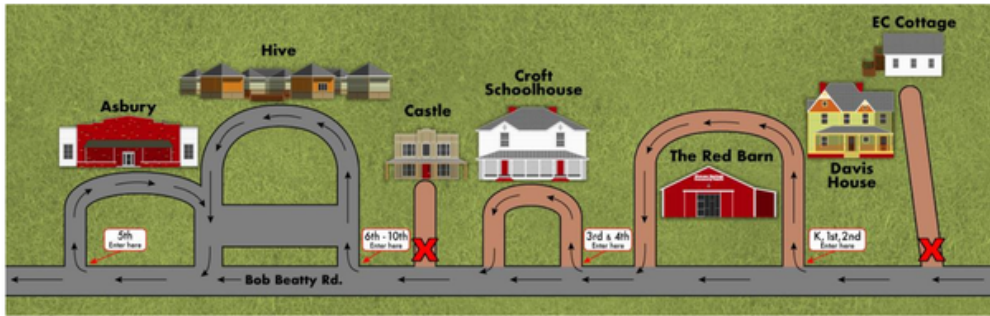




Welcome back from Winter Break!



At our December Pioneer 101 event, we got lots of questions about how to improve traffic on Bob Beatty Road. There are many things that we can do as a community to make carline safer, quicker, and more efficient:

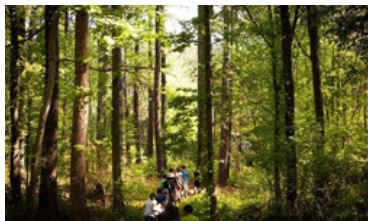
- Arrive during the "flow zone" (8:00-8:15 in the morning; 3:15-3:25 in the afternoon for elementary and 3:30-3:40 in the afternoon for upper school)
- Be fully present-stay off your phone or use hands-free devices
- Be patient
- Do not stop on the railroad tracks
- Turn right from Bob Beatty onto Old Statesville

Getting back into the school routine

It's hard to believe that Winter Break is over already!

As we settle into the second half of the school year, here are some ideas to help your student have a successful school year:

- Reestablish (or establish) a bedtime routine for children and teens alike
 - Kindergarteners need 10 or more hours of sleep each night
 - Children ages 6-12 need 9-12 hours of sleep each night
 - Teens need 8-10 hours of sleep
- Make a weekly schedule that includes:
 - Extracurricular activities
 - Time to connect as a family
 - Outdoor time
 - Time for homework and reading
- Teach elementary and older students how to use a planner, and review their planner with them (this is especially helpful for kids and teens with ADHD)
- Choose a space for homework and stick to it
 - Stock the space with supplies, such as pencils, highlighters, and chargers
 - Consider setting out yummy, healthy snacks



IMPORTANT DATES & ITEMS TO NOTE

- 5-10 Jan: HS Final Exams
- 10 Jan: End of Semester 1, HS
- 11 Jan: HS Whitewater Center Trip
- 12 Jan: K-12 World Heritage Day
- 15 Jan: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day - **NO SCHOOL** for students & staff
- 16-31 Jan: Mid year benchmark window for K-12
- 25 Jan: HS Semester 2 Academic Open House
- Fridays at 10 AM: Admin Open Office Hours

Strong communication is the cornerstone of a healthy community. At Pioneer Springs we strive for clear, direct communication. If you have a question or concern, the best practice is to speak directly with the other person, or people, involved. **If you are unsure who to contact, check here.**

If you're still unsure, check in with the office in person, or by phone at 704-494-0777 and we'll help connect you!

Math education that makes math relevant to life

Consider this quote about math education:

A major shift is called for from an environment that focuses on getting answers to one that focuses on the thinking process itself; teaching through sense making and problem solving is very different from teaching rules to get answers. Van de Walle, 1994, p.13
If we think about math in terms of thinking processes, sense making, and problem solving-how does that change how we talk about math with our students?

Doing math is about more than getting to a correct answer quickly. We want to build math minds and develop mathematical thinking that can be used across subjects and areas in a student's life. The verbs that should describe the action taking place in a math classroom, or during math practice, should be: explaining, justifying, manipulating, representing, evaluating, analyzing, reasoning, problem solving and more! Think about how beneficial being a math mind will be for your student if they develop the above skills.

One way we are developing math minds is using Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI) in our math classes. CGI is an approach to teaching mathematics that tailors instruction based on students' individual cognitive development, allowing educators to understand and build upon students' intuitive problem-solving strategies.

In practice, in the classroom and at home, CGI is most easily demonstrated by using the CRA model (concrete, representational, abstract). Think of the CRA model like a staircase for your student's math journey. First, they touch and play with actual stuff (concrete), like counting toys or snacks. Then, they draw pictures or use visuals (representational) to connect those ideas. Finally, they move on to using symbols and numbers (abstract), like the math we see on paper.

When your student is struggling with a math concept, consider giving them a visual model or actual stuff to manipulate with their hands. For example "Draw a picture of what this problem looks like" or "let's collect rocks to use for this work". Use this site for more detail and tips on using the CRA Model and CGI at home: [Practice Math at Home With the Concrete, Representational, Abstract Model \(CRA\)](#).

High School Final Exam and EOC Exam Schedule

We are in the final stretch of the first semester in high school! As we wrap-up our courses, high school students will take final exams in each of their courses between January 4 and 10. Final exams range in format from traditional essay and multiple choice exams, to projects, portfolios, and demonstrations of mastery. Read class newsletters for more information. Students enrolled in the following courses take standardized state exams on the following dates:

- Career and Technical Education courses, final exam, Friday, January 5
- Biology, End of Course exam, Monday, January 8th
- Math I & Math III, End of Course exam, Tuesday, January 9th
- English II, End of Course exam, Wednesday, January 10th

Reminder: how to track your student's academic progress

You can best support your student's academic growth when you understand their progress. In addition to checking-in with teachers, here are two helpful tools for gaining insight into your student's academic growth:

If you have a high school student, check [PowerSchool](#).

For families with elementary and/or middle school students, [check their math and reading growth in iReady](#).

If your student is in grades 2-5, we are using [Fluency Flight](#), a fun and powerful tool to help students learn their math facts. Automatic knowledge of math facts not only helps students complete math problems accurately and efficiently, it also builds their math sense. Please support your student in completing four Fluency Flight sessions each week. Each session should take 8-ten minutes to complete.

Camellias, a classic January bloom in the South



Take a look around the gardens in your neighborhood, and you are sure to see white or pink flowers on evergreen Camellia shrubs bringing a hint of spring beauty to the winter landscape. Originally cultivated in Asia for the production of black, green, white, and oolong tea, in North Carolina Camellias are prized for their evergreen leaves and white or pink blooms. Camellias thrive in full to partially sunny sites with well drained soil. You can learn more about Camellias [here](#) and [here](#). If you spot any Camilla blooms, share them on social media and tag #pioneersprings.

We're looking forward to seeing you at World Heritage Day, Friday, January 12!



Join us as our students celebrate global cultures, and explore Charlotte's connection to the rest of the world! [Click here](#) for more information. [Read about all of our annual events here.](#)

Save the Date: Fundraiser Art Auction and Cocktail Party, Friday, February 23



You are invited to join us for an adult-only art auction and cocktail party fundraiser on Friday, February 23. The planning committee will meet at the Castle on Wednesday at 1:30 and at 5:30 pm on Wednesday via [Zoom](#). Watch this space for more information!

Classroom Happenings

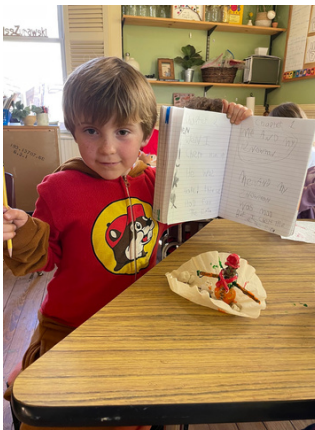
Attention 2nd and 3rd grade families: Due to a staffing change at Camp Weaver, the 2nd and 3rd grade Spring into the Woods Field Trip dates have changed. **2nd and 3rd Grade will now be taking their field trip to Camp Weaver on March 7 & 8.** Please contact Chris Simeral (chris@pioneersprings.org) if you have any questions.



Gwen Postle led high school music students in a seasonal music performance at the Davis house on December 20.



Ms. Holly and Ms. Jackie's 2nd grade students embracing their new reading buddies!



Ms. Sarah and Ms. Allie's first grade students spent the day before break reading with their new reading buddies, building snowmen, and writing stories about them!

Classroom Happenings



Mr. Chris introducing Ms. Crystal and Ms. Megan's 2nd grade students to their new reading buddies.

10th grade Design the Future students, mentored by Kristin Chiperfield, are making great progress on the kiosk they are building for the Hellbender's Hoard snack bar that the Sustainable Business and Entrepreneurship students will be opening in late January.



Alex Oxindine's World History students preparing for World Heritage Day.

Shannon O'Connor's high school students used chemistry to uncover secret messages, crack a code, and solve a chemistry mystery!



RAFFLE RESULTS!

Did you win the 50/50 Raffle?



Cameron Johnson from Ms. Kara and Ms. Shelli's third grade class drew our winning 50/50 raffle ticket on Thursday! If you have **ticket number 1396430** please email Ava Alexander (avaa@pioneersprings.org) and Heidi Magi (heidim@pioneersprings.org).