

PIONEER MIDDLE SCHOOL



WELCOME TO PIONEER MIDDLE SCHOOL

Welcome to Pioneer Middle School, home of the Eagles. Our school and staff are focused on growing and improving to provide the most positive and successful experience for our students and families. As we return to in-person learning, our building and district are implementing Character Strong Curriculum to meet the social and emotional needs of our students and to strengthen our school and district culture by creating a warm and accepting environment where all students will thrive as we begin the new school year.

Every staff member has a strong view that the education we offer is vital to your success in whatever future you have. To help you with the skills you need in life we offer the following academic programs:

- A full range of comprehensive Science, Math, History, and ELA courses.
- Elective classes such as General Music, PE, and Health/ Nutrition.
- Exploratory opportunities including offerings in STEM and CTE courses, Fine Arts, and Fitness.
- AVID (Advancement Via Individual Achievement) to support college and career readiness.
- Intervention programs to meet the learning needs of every student.
- Consistent screening of student achievement of academic skills.

In addition to these academic programs we are focused on improving the culture of our school with the following:

- Character Strong SEL and Leadership Curriculum.
- PBIS program throughout the school to support our SOAR expectations.
- Restorative Justice program that works in conjunction with our discipline matrix.
- Advisory program to support the social and emotional development of each student.

Welcome to Pioneer Middle School and let's have a great year.

Mrs. Tricia Van Marter, Principal
Pioneer Middle School

ABOUT PIONEER MIDDLE SCHOOL

All Pioneer Middle School students will work toward demonstrating the individual character qualities, emotional strength and social skills to succeed. They will learn to understand the importance of work and how performance, effort, and decisions directly affect their future educational and career opportunities. They are encouraged to contribute to the betterment of school and community and understand their responsibility to contribute to both family and society. They are taught to demonstrate knowledge and skills that reflect responsible citizenship in a democratic society.

SOAR EXPECTATIONS – All Pioneer School District students are individuals of good character.

- **Safe:** Pioneer students will demonstrate and understand and apply safe actions and behavior as part of their learning process and educational experience.
- **Organized:** Pioneer students will develop an understanding and application of organizational skills such as methodical study habits, planning and prioritization, engaging in mental preparation and goal setting, and taking responsibility for one's own learning.
- **Accountable:** Pioneer students will engage in the understanding and application of knowledge and skills of taking account for one's own educational and social experience to persevere as part of the learning process.
- **Respectful:** Pioneer students will engage in and demonstrate respect for themselves, other people, and property.

PIONEER MIDDLE SCHOOL PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

ADVISORY

Advisory is a Tier 1 system built into the master schedule that allows staff and students to meet regularly in small groups with a teacher or academic advisor to provide strong benefits including:

- Supporting strong academics.
- Help students navigate the social and emotional issues unique to middle school.
- Create a positive school culture.
- Facilitate easier communication.

Advisory is designed to create a strong support system that students need to develop academically, socially, and emotionally.

ASB GOVERNING BODY AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

ASB officers (president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer) are elected in the spring for the following school year. Advisory representatives are elected at the beginning of the school year.

The ASB Council sponsors a number of events during the school year. These typically include dances, socials, fundraisers, and assemblies. An assembly may be scheduled for things like school spirit, student recognition, holidays, and/or community service. Grade-level students may conduct fundraising activities to help sponsor special class trips, pending the prior approval of the administration and school

board.

School dances are a part of Pioneer Middle School social activities. Pioneer dances run from **3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., usually on Fridays. Our dances have a closed-door policy; once a student enters, s/he may not leave. Students must make arrangements to attend activities prior to the day of the event.** Only current Pioneer students are allowed to attend - no high school students or students from other schools will be admitted.

ASB social events maintain an academic and behavioral expectation for participation and participation can be restricted. Some of the reasons participation may be restricted include, but are not limited to:

- Students who were suspended within the previous two weeks prior to the dance or do not meet the behavior requirements communicated by ASB and/or administration.
- Students who did not attend at least half of the school day (or 4 periods) or do not meet attendance expectations requirements communicated by ASB and/or administration.
- Students who were not picked up at the designated time and contact with guardians with an agreed upon plan of improvement in place.
- Students of behavioral and/or academic concern (formally evaluated by staff prior to the dance).

SCHOOL DANCE NOTE - Your child must be picked up by 5:15 p.m. following a school dance, or the student may not be allowed to attend the next dance event. Also, if your child is to be picked up by someone other than his or her own parents, the student must have prior permission arranged in writing or through confirmation with the office and/or administration by the parent/guardian in order for the student to leave the dance with another adult. The prior permission notification notice must specify with whom your child may leave and the person picking up the child must be included in Skyward Family Access. Students without prearranged permission from the school from a parent/guardian will NOT be released from the school to go with another adult.

ATHLETICS AND ELIGIBILITY

Students are able to participate in athletics through the middle school and our participating TCAA athletic league with middle schools in Mason and Thurston County. Our athletic league philosophy is to create/individuals who display positive behavior at all times throughout the social areas, whether they are in the classroom, on the field, on the court, or in the community. Student-athletes must maintain athletic eligibility in two separate areas of both academic and behavioral as well as sign the athletic code contract and all supporting requirements. Further questions or inquiries can be made to the Athletic Director, Tonya Youngquist.

1st season (Fall): Boys' Flag Football and Girls' Volleyball

2nd season (early Winter): Boys' Basketball

3rd season (late Winter): Girls' Basketball

4th season (Spring): Boys' and Girls' Track

Coaches make an attempt to allow all members of the team to participate in competitions. Pioneer maintains a "no-cut" philosophy to allow all students who turn out to be part of a team. A sports physical is required for each student to participate in a sport. The physical is good for a period of 2 years (24 months). There is a fee per Sport chosen and a one-time yearly fee for ASB.

BATHROOM PASSES

Students will use an electronic pass to use the bathrooms. This pass allows staff to monitor where students are at all times and for what length of time. The number of bathroom passes per class varies per teacher.

BELL AND CLASS SCHEDULES

Pioneer Middle School operates on a seven-period day with transition periods. Every Wednesday, the entire district participates in an early release day where students are sent home unless supervised for after-school athletics for staff to participate in a variety of trainings, meetings, and other essential activities.

Students will receive a bell schedule developed to meet the comprehensive academic and behavioral needs of each student which does allow for some flexibility in regards to enrichment and RTI (response to intervention) courses. This schedule will be developed in conjunction with the school counselor and grade-level teams to meet these needs.

Schedules will not be changed based on the desire of students or parents, but on the communicated, academic and behavioral needs identified for students and their overall success. Any schedule change request must follow the process for schedule changes identified below unless it is an administrative change with regard to compliance with an IEP or 504 plan.

1. Request is submitted by the teacher team or parent to the counselor.
2. The request is reviewed and communicated to impacted teachers and administration.
3. If the change is approved, the school counselor will communicate with the student and parent/guardian within two school days of the request unless a safety issue is identified.
4. A printed schedule will be provided to the student and the start date will be communicated to staff.

Note: changes in this process may occur due to the need for particulate situations of student health and safety.

CAFETERIA

The cooperation of all students in keeping the cafeteria clean and orderly is essential. During the 2021-2022 school year, students will need to be 3-foot social distanced during lunch. Leaving a mess on tables or floors will result in school cleaning assignments and/or fewer cafeteria privileges. Various behavioral interventions and activities will be utilized in order to maintain a safe and productive cafeteria environment.

It is essential that each family take time to fill out the “free and reduced” paperwork for meal benefits so the school lunch program can ensure the ability to offer food services and programs to all students as effectively as possible.

CELL PHONES All cell phones should be turned off and put away during the school day. Failure to comply with this expectation can result in disciplinary actions. We encourage students to come to the office if the need arises to call a parent. If a parent needs to contact their child, office staff will call the student out of class to speak with the parent.

Students will not use telecommunication devices in a manner that poses a threat to academic integrity, disrupts the learning environment, or violates the privacy rights of others.

Electronic Devices and Toys

Toys and electronic devices such as gaming devices, tablets, etc. are not allowed at school and should remain at home. The school district is not responsible for the loss or damage to items brought to school. Repeated inappropriate use can result in disciplinary action.

If your child requires the use of devices or accommodations that require specific items on a regular basis such as, but not limited to listening devices, anxiety mitigating items, etc. will be written into their IEP or 504 plan.

DRESS CODE:

Our dress code includes: Acceptable dress and appearance which does not endanger the health, safety, is not offensive to others, and is not disruptive or detrimental to the educational process. Any clothing that gives staff reason to believe that it may cause a disruption for the learning atmosphere or be offensive to others will be banned. Please make sure your child wears the appropriate shoes for school (i.e. tennis shoes on PE day). Flip flops are not allowed due to safety and risk of injuries.

The dress code applies to males and females. The following garments are prohibited.

Upper Garments - Strapless garments, one strap, spaghetti straps, halters, backless (holes, cut outs, low cut) garments and garments exposing the midriff. Hats and/or hoods may not be worn in the building during the school day unless it is Spirit Day.

Lower Garments - Low riding pants, skirts, or shorts exposing undergarments sitting or standing. Length for dresses, skirts and shorts is mid-thigh or below. Pants with rips or cut outs should not have exposed cut outs above mid-thigh.

All Garments - See through garments and clothing conveying messages (writing, pictures, symbols, or logos) that are: crude, vulgar, profane, violent, death-oriented, sexually suggestive, gang affiliated or promote alcohol, drugs and tobacco are not permitted. Chains and particularly wallet chains or neck chains, are not allowed. Spiked accessories and safety pins worn as decoration are not allowed.

Headwear - Hats, visors, hoods, and other head apparel are not allowed INDOORS at school. They will be confiscated and returned at the school's discretion. If there are special dress up/costume days which may involve hats, students will be notified.

Footwear - Flip-Flops are not allowed at school and tennis shoes are required for PE.

EIGHTH GRADE PROMOTION

Participation in the Promotion Celebration is a privilege given to all 8th-grade students who have successfully met academic requirements. These requirements include having a minimum 1.5 GPA, and no student may fail a course twice.

In addition, all fines (including previous years), for such items as lunch charges, library books or textbooks, Chromebooks, etc., must be paid before 8th-grade students will receive promotion tickets.

Promotion Attire and Behavior: Parent support of the Promotion Ceremony is essential to its success. This event is not a formal event, therefore tuxedos, limos, formal gowns, etc., are not appropriate. **All regular school rules and dress code standards apply.** We encourage dress that is casual, neat, and clean. Students who choose to violate the dress code will be given the option to change or not participate in the official ceremony.

Suspensions/Behavior: Students who are suspended on the day of the ceremony will not be permitted to attend. Students who exhibit extreme behavior concerns and those who have excessive truancies and or suspensions from school may be excluded from the ceremony. The administrator or administrative designee shall have the option of removing any student from participation in the ceremony because of unacceptable behavior on campus before or during the ceremony.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Opportunities for students to participate in extracurricular activities may occur. The school activities are here to make the school experience even better. All students are to understand and follow all academic and behavioral expectations that would occur during the normal school day at any school extracurricular or experience.

FIELD TRIPS

Please reference "*FIELD TRIP, EXCURSIONS & OUTDOOR EDUCATION*" under the district section of students' rights and responsibilities.

Note: That yearly expectations of academic and behavioral expectations will be communicated and expected to meet. Failure to meet communicated parameters may result in loss of opportunity to participate in any middle school field trip.

GRADES AND GRADING PERIODS

Pioneer Middle School operates on a three-term grading period. During this time a mid-term report will occur in the middle of each grading term as well as a final report grading at the end of each grading team. The parent/guardian is asked to review the interim report with the students and to consult with his/her teachers. Please feel free to contact the school to make an appointment. Reports are mailed home to parents, but it is encouraged that parents log into Qmlativ to periodically check their child's academic progress and communicate any needs or concerns at any time. Parents are encouraged to email their child's teacher with any questions or concerns.

HOMEWORK

Homework contributes toward building responsibility, self-discipline, and lifelong learning habits. It is the intention of Pioneer Middle School to assign homework in a way that is meaningful and is used to reinforce classroom learning objectives, to see whether students understand the lesson, and to find/use more information on the subject. Homework can also serve as a communication link between school and home that shows what children are studying. Homework will be utilized with professional judgment with an understanding of the overall child and balance time and resources that are equitable and understanding of life outside of school.

Responsibility of the Student

It is the responsibility of the student to:

- Track homework and other assignments and their due dates.

- Clarify with the teacher any instructions not understood.
- Turn in homework on the due date and understand late work expectations.
- Complete homework to the best of your ability and as directed.
- Arrange a proper study area, either at home or in school and manage time to accomplish homework assignments.
- Establish a regular weekly study schedule that is relatively free from distraction (television, telephone calls, etc.).
- For preplanned absences (family vacations, school activities, sports, etc.) students should approach the teacher prior to the absence for assignments so work is completed upon their return.

Responsibility of the Parent/Guardian

It is the responsibility of the parent to:

- Follow up with your child and teachers in regards to assigned homework practices • Assume your student will have to study to do every night.
- Set up a comfortable location for doing homework. This does not have to be a “special” room but should have good lighting and be free of distractions. Allow your student(s) to study in the way each of them learns best.
- Make sure your student has the necessary supplies.
- Work with your student’s outside activity schedule and preferences when setting up regular homework time.
- Help your student get organized.
- Ask and understand your child’s teachers and school homework policy.
- Show interest in your student’s schoolwork and discuss what your student is learning.
- Watch for signs of failure or frustration.
- Discuss with your student and then, if necessary, contact the teacher to clear up any misunderstandings, troubleshoot problems, discuss time management, and be informed about your student’s learning progress.
- Check progress on homework through Family Access.
- Coordinate homework efforts with the teacher in special cases.

Responsibility of the Teacher

It is the responsibility of the teacher to:

- State clearly the purpose of the assignment.
- Explain how the assignment is related to the topic under study.
- Ensure that the child has the skills to complete the homework assignment by providing demonstration of skills during guided practice in the classroom.
- Explain how the assignment might best be carried out.
- Explain what the student needs to do to demonstrate the assignment has been completed.
- Provide a specific written explanations of long-range assignments so that the requirements and expectations are clearly understood by the students and their parents.
- Review the assignment before giving it to students and anticipate difficulties.
- Define “late” for assignments and consequences for lateness, and clearly communicate both to students. Repeat periodically.

- Have students write down assignments or hand out written assignments rather than relying only on communicating assignments orally.
- Give special consideration to limiting weekend assignments (review, voluntary projects, or make-up work).
- Provide feedback in a timely manner.
- Use the results of homework to plan future instructional activities.

HONOR ROLL

Students will be recognized for honor roll based on their GPA and term grades. The academic requirements will be reviewed and set yearly and will be recognized each year based on meeting those set levels.

- Honors is defined as a GPA between 3.5 - 3.74
- High Honors is defined as a GPA between 3.75 - 4.0

LEAVING SCHOOL EARLY

A family needing to pick up their student early in the day must follow the school process:

1. The student must have a note signed by a parent or guardian. The note should state the time and the reason for the release.
2. If a student forgets his/her note, the school must speak directly to a parent/guardian. They must give verbal permission for the student's release.
3. When a student is being picked up, he/she must attend class until the attendance office calls him/her for check out. The parent/guardian must come to the office and request that the student is released.

There are no exceptions to the above requirements.

LIBRARY

Library services will be limited due to safety concerns regarding COVID-19 exposure during the 2022-2023 school year. Students are encouraged to use the Timberland Regional Library which provides online access and services to students until school libraries are able to fully open. There are no fines for overdue books, but students are required to pay for lost or damaged books.

LOSS/DAMAGE OF STUDENT BELONGINGS

The school district continually strives to make our schools a safe place, both for students and their personal belongings. Unfortunately, incidents sometimes occur which can result in damage or loss of personal property owned by or in the possession of students. Accordingly, parents are reminded that the school district cannot be responsible for loss or damage to personal property brought to school by students. Thus, any personal belongings brought to school are at the student's own risk. If the value of an item is such that you cannot afford its loss, please make certain that your child does not bring the item to school.

LOST AND FOUND

Many children buy similar-looking coats and clothes. Be sure to write your child's name inside their coats, sweaters, sweatshirts, gloves, backpacks, lunch pails, etc. Students who find lost articles are asked to take them to the office. Unclaimed items will be distributed to charity during winter break and at the end of June.

MAKE-UP WORK

Following an absence or suspension, students have the right to and **MUST** make up missed assignments along with requesting reasonable assistance from their teachers. Responsibility for obtaining assignments for make-up work rests with the student. **Arrangements are to be made with the teacher immediately upon returning to school.**

PARKING

For those parents who simply need to come inside the building, spaces are generally available in the parking lot provided. Please do not park along any of the curbs or the blue marked zone.

PBIS/RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Pioneer Middle School utilizes a PBIS framework and restorative justice to support school-wide discipline as noted in “discipline” in the district section of students’ rights and responsibilities.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a proactive approach to establishing the behavioral supports and social culture needed for all students in a school to achieve social, emotional, and academic success.

Restorative Justice at Pioneer Middle School is a set of principles and practices inspired by indigenous values used to build community, respond to harm/conflict and provide individual circles of support for students. By building, maintaining, and restoring relationships between members of the entire school community, we help to create an environment where all students can thrive. Our program is implemented through a 3-tier, school-wide model.

- Tier 1 is characterized by the use of social-emotional skills and practice (classroom circles) to build relationships, create shared values and guidelines, and promote restorative conversations following a behavioral disruption. The goal is to build a caring, intentional, and equitable community with conditions conducive to learning.
- Tier 2 is characterized by the use of non-punitive responses to harm/conflict such as harm circles, mediation, or family-group conferencing to respond to disciplinary issues in a restorative manner. This process addresses the root causes of the harm, supports accountability for the offender, and promotes healing for the victim(s), the offender, and the school community.
- Tier 3 is characterized by 1:1 support and successful re-entry of youth following suspension, truancy, expulsion, or incarceration. The goal is to welcome youth to the school community in a manner that provides wraparound support and promotes student accountability and achievement.

PE LOCKERS

Middle School students are allowed to have their own PE locker. Lockers are the property of the school. We reserve the right to check lockers randomly to assure that there is no illegal or questionable paraphernalia at school.

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION

RTI or response to intervention is a school-based intervention program in which each student will be placed in a class focused on learning improvement or acceleration based on their individual needs.

Students will participate and be placed based on data from State SBAC scores, district progress monitoring, and teacher data to determine individual learning needs to be addressed along with specific, targeted interventions to improve learning.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Pioneer community civic groups offer several scholarships to eighth graders. The scholarships are redeemed upon enrollment in any higher education institution, including vocational schools. Following is a list of scholarships available to eighth graders.

Tom Terjeson: These awards (\$500 each) are given to students who have the highest academic achievement and citizenship in the following disciplines:

- Math - for outstanding achievement in math and citizenship.
- Technology/Engineering- for outstanding achievement in technology, engineering skills, and citizenship.
- Social Studies - for outstanding achievement in Social Studies and citizenship.
- Language Arts - for outstanding achievement in Language Arts and citizenship.
- Science - for outstanding achievement in Science and citizenship
- Citizenship - for outstanding achievement in leadership, citizenship, involvement in extracurricular activities, and high academic achievement.
- Arts: for high achievement in either (both/and) the fine arts or performing arts plus good citizenship. (Started 2016 due to Jeffrey A. Kent Memorial Scholarship being discontinued.)
- Community Service: given to students who have submitted written essays informing the Foundation of their voluntary community involvement

Pioneer School Merit Award: This award (\$300) is given anonymously by a member of the Pioneer community to a student who is of good academic standing (3.0 or higher), puts forth outstanding effort, has good citizenship and will pursue education after high school.

Peg Stock Scholarship: This award (\$300) is given for whatever the current principal deems is scholarship worthy: for a significant change/improvement in academics, behavior, or citizenship; for overcoming personal obstacles and/or challenges to achieve success; for being a student who is exemplary in his/her treatment of others. This scholarship is in honor of Peg Stock who worked in the Pioneer School District for 25 years, 14 years as a teacher, and her last 11 years as principal.

Pioneer Education Association Nancy Edwards Memorial Scholarship: Two awards (\$250 each) are given for outstanding effort toward academic excellence and citizenship. Each recipient must have been enrolled in the district for a minimum of 4 years. The recipients of this scholarship are determined by the voting members of PEA with input or suggestions from the middle school faculty.

Joe and Rachel Iko Memorial Scholarship: This scholarship (\$500) was started in 2004 by Pioneer teacher Karen Everett and her family to honor her parents. Karen was nine years old and her sister Miriam was six years old when the Ikos adopted them from Croatia where they were living in poverty. They were wonderful, loving, and supportive parents. Caring for and giving to others was a special gift that the Ikos possessed. Joe died in 1981 and Rachel in 1985. Their family wants to pass on their legacy of giving by sponsoring this scholarship for one of Pioneer's students.

Pioneer Academic Athletic Trophy (PAAT): Two awards are given to students who have been ACE recipients for two years, have exhibited qualifications above and beyond for the ACE award, and have shown excellent leadership on and off the court/field.

SECURITY VIDEO CAMERAS

Pioneer Middle School utilizes security cameras on campus to help maintain a secure and safe learning environment. Unsafe, inappropriate conduct viewed and/or recorded on video cameras may result in disciplinary action.

TELEPHONE

The office phone will be available only on an emergency basis. Students will be given phone messages before school, at lunch, or after school, unless it is an emergency.