

The Upper School at Pioneer Springs Registration Guide & Course Catalog 2025-26

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High School: An Agenda for Action

Commissioned by the *Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching*, Basic School founder Dr. Ernest Boyer outlined the role of high schools in America and articulated an “agenda for action” in his 1984 text, *High School*. Central to Dr. Boyer’s ideas about successful high schools are the inclusion of:

- clear goals shared by students, teachers and staff, and parents
- an emphasis on proficiency with both written and spoken English
- a focus on core classes (English, Math, Science, and Social Studies) as the majority of units required for graduation
- the development of digital literacy interwoven into the classroom experience and a consideration of social and ethical issues with technology
- time devoted to the opportunity to work and to consider the value of work within various cultures, different forms of work, and preparation for an occupation

Dr. Boyer also promoted the idea of a single or “core” set of classes in the first two years of high school to develop sound academic habits and a solid foundation, and a “transition school” during the last two years, inclusive of a cluster of electives designed to advance exploration and study for an occupation. The end result is a scholar prepared for academic and critical engagement who also exits high school with practical, marketable skills.

It is upon Dr. Boyer’s tenets that Pioneer Springs developed its high school program comprising five *Community In Action (CIA)* experiences through which students can pursue their personal and occupational interests while navigating academic requirements. True to Dr. Boyer’s vision, all CIAs include a heavy emphasis on core content in tandem with language and digital literacy development, as well as an integrated work component. Summarily, PSCS high school students, teachers, and parents share a common goal that students will both fulfill the requirements for graduation as well as develop specialized skills that allow them to enter the workforce or pursue continued studies in a chosen field. We look forward to this journey with your student.

North Carolina Graduation Requirements

Every high school student must meet state course and credit requirements in addition to any local requirements in order to graduate from high school. Refer to State Board of Education policy <http://sbepolicy.dpi.state.nc.us> for a list of AP/IB, Dual enrollment and other courses that may satisfy certain requirements per State Board of Education Policy. Students must meet the credit count and course requirements of the *Future Ready Core (FRC) Course of Study* or *FRC Occupational Course of Study (OCS)* as outlined below:

Future Ready Core (FRC) Course of Study	Future Ready Core Occupational Course of Study (OCS)*
4 credits in English	4 credits in English
4 credits in Math	3 credits in Math
3 credits in Science	2 credits in Science
4 credits in Social Studies	2 credits in Social Studies
1 credit in Health and Physical Education	1 credit in Health and Physical Education
6 elective credits	6 elective credits
1 computer science course (beginning freshmen 25-26)	4 credits in Career Technical Education (CTE)
-recommended 2 Foreign Lang -recommended 4 arts/ CTE/ or domain-specific	CPR training
Minimum 22 credits plus CPR training	Minimum 22 credits

* The Future Ready Core OCS Course of Study is specific to those students who qualify. FRC-OCS courses are aligned with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study in English I, II, III, IV; Math I; American History I, II, and Biology. For students entering 9th grade in 2014-15 or later, completion of 150 hours of school-based training, 225 hours of community-based training, and 225 hours of paid employment are required as part of the Future Ready Core OCS Course of Study.

For Your Information

Driver's Permit and License Requirements

All students must complete a driver education course prior to applying for a learner's permit at the Department of Motor Vehicles. Charter school students are eligible to participate in courses hosted by the traditional public school district. A student is eligible to begin Driver Education at 14 and 1/2 years of age. The course consists of 30 hours of classroom instruction followed by 6 hours of driving instruction. Before applying for a Learner's Permit or Driver's License, a student must obtain an Eligibility Certificate from his/her high school. This certificate verifies that the student is in school and making adequate academic progress toward graduation.

A student's permit or license will be revoked if a student does not pass 70% of his/her classes each semester. Students who do not meet this criterion will be reported to the DMV. Also, students who are under the age of 18 and drop out of school will be reported to the DMV and their license will be revoked.

Grade Point Average (GPA) and Weighted Grades

By virtue of the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) mandate, all high schools are required to use a 10-point numeric scale to assess student mastery of course objectives. Students receive quality points for every final grade they receive in a course. The total number of quality points divided by the total number of courses attempted by a student is how *grade point average* (GPA) is calculated. Standard courses carry the following quality points based on the grade attained in a course: A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, F=0. Students receive one-half extra quality point for each letter grade in *Honors* courses and one full quality point extra for each letter grade in *Career and College Promise (CCP)* and *Advanced Placement (AP)* courses. For example, an A in a standard Biology course is 4 pts; an A in a Biology Honors course is 4.5 pts; and an A in a CCP Biology (college-level) or an AP Biology course is 5 pts.

It is to a student's advantage to take Honors, CCP, and AP courses in subjects in which they excel and enjoy, since these courses are "weighted," which means they carry more quality points, or weight, in the student's GPA.

Class Rank

Class rank is determined by weighted grade point average (GPA). Class rank is most frequently used for college application purposes and is annually calculated after the third nine weeks grading period on a quarter schedule.

Diploma Endorsements

Students in North Carolina public schools may earn one or more [endorsements](#) on their high school diploma, although students are not required to earn an endorsement. These indicate that students have completed specific course concentrations while maintaining certain grade point averages. All five endorsements require students meet the requirements of the Future Ready Course of Study in addition to the requirements outlined below.

CAREER:

1. The student shall complete a CTE concentration in one of the approved CTE Career Pathways;
2. The student shall earn an unweighted grade point average of at least 2.6;
3. The student shall earn at least one industry-recognized credential. Earned credentials can include Career Readiness Certificates (CRC) at the Silver level or above from WorkKeys assessments or another appropriate industry credential/certification; and
4. The student shall earn at least the benchmark reading score established by a nationally norm-referenced college admissions test. The student may retake the nationally norm-referenced test as many times as necessary to achieve the required benchmark score.

COLLEGE:

1. The student shall earn an unweighted grade point average of at least 2.6; and
2. The student shall earn at least the benchmark reading score established by a nationally norm-referenced college admissions test. The student may retake the nationally norm-referenced test as many times as necessary to achieve the required benchmark score.
3. The student must take a math course that meets the University of North Carolina system minimum admission requirement.

COLLEGE/UNC ENDORSEMENT:

1. The student shall complete a mathematics course that meets University of North Carolina system minimum admission requirements
2. The student shall complete three units of science including at least one physical science with a lab, one life science and one additional science course;
3. The student shall complete U.S. History or equivalent coursework;
4. The student shall complete two units of a world language (other than English);

5. Students shall earn a weighted grade point average of at least 2.5; and
6. The student shall earn at least the benchmark reading score established by a nationally norm-referenced college admissions test. The student may retake the nationally norm-referenced test as many times as necessary to achieve the required benchmark score.

NC ACADEMIC SCHOLAR:

1. The student shall complete a mathematics course that meets University of North Carolina system Minimum Course Requirements
2. The student shall complete three course credits of science including an Earth/Environmental science course, Biology, and at least one physical science course that must include either physics or chemistry;
3. The student shall complete four course credits of social studies;
4. The student shall complete two course credits of a world language (other than English);
5. The student shall complete four elective course credits in any one subject area, such as Career and Technical Education (CTE), JROTC, Arts Education, World Languages, or in another content area;
6. The student shall have completed at least three higher-level courses during junior and/or senior years which carry quality points such as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate or Dual Enrollment courses; Advanced CTE and CTE credentialing courses; honors level courses, or Project Lead the Way courses; and
7. The student shall earn an unweighted grade point average of at least 3.50.

GLOBAL LANGUAGE ENDORSEMENT:

1. The student shall earn a combined unweighted 2.5 GPA or above for the four English Language Arts courses required for graduation;
2. The student shall establish proficiency in one or more languages in addition to English, using one of the options outlined below and in accordance with the guidelines developed by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction including completion of a four-course sequence of study in the same world language, earning an overall unweighted GPA of 2.5 or above in those courses.
3. English Learner students shall complete all the requirements of sections 1 and 2 above and reach “Developing” proficiency per the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) proficiency scale in all four domains on the most recent state identified English language proficiency test.

Pioneer Springs' Communities In Action

Pioneer Springs offers five *Communities in Action (CIA)* which exceed state requirements and are aligned with the mission of PSCS and Dr. Boyer's vision for the high school experience. In addition to earning credits toward graduation, scholars will complete the NC Graduation Project, enjoy authentic work experiences, and participate in field-specific internships. All CIAs include required courses in English, Math, Science, and Social Studies in tandem with field-specific electives. While CIA courses are prescribed, students may substitute courses based on their personal interests and ambitions.

Communities in Action experiences include:

- The Humanities: Green Cultural Studies
- Sustainable Business and Industry
- Designing the Future: Engineering, Technology, & Architecture
- The Natural Sciences
- The Teacher Apprentice

All CIAs fulfill three specific goals: (1) they meet and exceed the North Carolina graduation requirements; (2) they result in both an earned diploma and unique skill set or certification for each graduate; and (3) they include consistent opportunities for authentic work experience. As is foundational across all aspects of Pioneer Springs, our high school Communities in Action are informed by the unique lens of nature education. For example, not only will the *Designing the Future* student immerse him/herself in engineering, technology, and architecture but will do so with a consideration of biomimicry and how nature can inform design.

Another feature of the high school plan is its flexibility, allowing for students to pursue multiple interests. Students will enjoy a rotation through all CIAs in their freshman year and then choose a Community through which they will complete their high school studies. Of note, a student following one CIA may take recommended courses from a different one if they are interested in doing so.

The Humanities: Green Cultural Studies

The Humanities: Green Cultural Studies describes the investigation of cultural objects and symbols, meanings, and actions with an eye and ear for their implications for environmental politics; that is, considering sign, symbol, and icon in literature, art, music, and other societal artifacts for understanding and improving the relations between individuals, communities, species, and places.

This is the Community of language and literature, philosophy, history, politics, religion, and visual and performing arts. It is a good fit for someone who wants to be an anthropologist or archaeologist, an environmental educator or researcher, a teacher or professor, an artist, a writer or journalist, a museum curator, sociologist or psychologist, musician, ethicist or philosopher.

Students may also take advantage of the opportunity to participate in community college classes during their CIA experience and exit high school with both a high school diploma and college credit, the *College or Global Languages [endorsement](#)*, or even an associate degree.

Pathway	Recommendations
4 English	Eng I, II, III, IV
4 Math	Math I, II, III, an advanced math
4 Social Studies	Civics, Financial Literacy, World, & American History
3 Science	Earth Environmental, Biology, Physical Science
1 Health and PE	Health and PE
6 Electives	For example, Psychology, Literature to Film, Journalism
2 World Language	Level I and Level II of the same language
4 Arts or Humanities	For example, Visual Art, Music, Photography, Dance

Sustainable Business and Industry

The *Sustainable Business and Industry* Community focuses on production, consumption, entrepreneurship, and leadership. Utilizing both a scientific and career technical education approach, students will consider how to balance and plan for human and environmental needs in the context of sustainable production and resource utilization and management.

This CIA will prepare you for work in careers related to both creating and harvesting resources, designing and marketing products, sales, accounting, management of natural resources, and project management and leadership. This is the Community of business ownership, accounting, marketing, product design, and free market economics.

In addition to meeting NC graduation requirements, scholars in this Community may be eligible for:

- [high school diploma endorsements](#) (*Career, College, or College/UNC*)
- community college credits toward an [associate degree](#) within the business field
- practical work experience and industry-recognized certifications ([Accounting and Finance](#); [Business Administration/Operations](#)) within the business field and with marketing their own brand

Pathway	Recommendations
4 English	Eng I, II, III, IV
4 Math	Math I, II, III, an advanced math
4 Social Studies	Civics, Financial Literacy, World, & American History
4 Science	Earth Environmental, Biology, Physical Science, Chemistry or Biology II
1 Health and PE	Health and PE
5 Electives	For example, *Strategic Marketing, Entrepreneurship
4 Career Technical Education	For example, *Principles of Business and Finance, *Accounting
2 World Language	Level I and Level II of the same language

*North Carolina Virtual Public School and community college offerings

Designing the Future: Engineering, Technology, and Architecture

This Community embodies elements of traditional engineering like planning and assessment, architecture, including design and development, as well as technology from coding to beta testing. It relies heavily on the incorporation and application of mathematics in various contexts and with an eye toward project management.

Join this CIA if you are interested in pursuing a career as an architect or a landscape architect, a civil engineer, a cartographer, a surveyor, coder or a programmer, a hacker or an IT security technician, a CAD designer, or a construction expert.

In addition to meeting NC graduation requirements, scholars in this Community may be eligible for:

- [high school diploma endorsements](#) (*Career, College, or College/UNC*)
- community college credits toward an associate degree
- practical work experience
- industry-recognized certifications, such as:
 - [Acer Repair](#)
 - American Digital Design
 - [Architect](#)
 - [Coder](#) / Programmer (*IT Fundamentals, Java, Python, Game Development*)
 - Construction Expertise (*Green Building Mgmt, Welding*)
 - [Landscape Architect](#)
 - [Surveyor](#)

Pathway	Recommendations
4 English	Eng I, II, III, IV
5 Math	Math I, II, III, two advanced math
4 Social Studies	Civics, Financial Literacy, World, & American History
4 Science	Earth Environmental, Biology, Physical Science
1 Health and PE	Health and PE
2 World Language	Level I and Level II of the same language
4 Career Technical Education	For example, *Computer Programming I and II, CAD
4 Arts and Electives	For example, Art I, Art II, *Graphic Design, Sculpture

*North Carolina Virtual Public School and community college offerings

The Natural Sciences

The Natural Sciences refer to those sciences that use the scientific method to study nature and the universe. This CIA has many branches, including Physics, Astronomy, Atmospheric Sciences, Earth Science, Chemistry, Biology, Oceanography, Geography and Ecology, all of which provide a synthesis between theory and practical application.

Join this Community if you are interested in pursuing a medical career like a doctor or nurse or therapist, if you want to teach science or work in a forensics lab to solve crimes, or if you want to be a meteorologist, an astronomer, or an astronaut. This is the Community of research scientists, hydrologists, chemists, and pharmacists. It is also the CIA for those interested in forestry, agriculture and animal sciences, becoming a park ranger, veterinarian or vet assistant.

In addition to completing the requirements for graduation, scholars may be eligible for certification as a [NC Beekeeper](#) or [Master Gardener](#) and may be eligible for community college credit, the *Career* or *College* or *College/UNC* endorsement, and practical work experience within the field of natural sciences. Through the dual enrollment program with Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC), scholars may pursue certification in related careers and associate degrees such as:

Other Industry-Recognized Certifications

- [Emergency Medical Science](#)
- [Nurse Aide](#)
- [Ophthalmic Medical Personnel](#)
- [Pharmacy Technology](#)

Related College Transfer & Associate Degree Pathways

- [Arts Transfer Pathway](#)
- [Science Transfer Pathway](#)
- [Associate in Arts Degree \(A.A.\)](#)
- [Associate in Science Degrees \(A.S.\)](#)

Requirements	Pathway Recommendations
4 English	Eng I, II, III, IV
4 Math	Math I, II, III, an advanced math
4 Social Studies	Civics, Financial Literacy, World, & American History
4 Sciences	Earth Environmental, Biology, Physical Science, Chemistry
1 Health and PE	Health and PE
5 Electives	For example, AP Environmental Science, Physics
4 CTE	For example, *Animal Science I and II, Horticulture I and II
2 World Language	Level I and Level II of the same language

Teacher Apprentice

The Teacher Apprentice Community is inspired by the NC Teacher Cadet program and is designed for students who desire to teach in all the many contexts and capacities that includes—dance teachers, public school teachers, YMCA instructors, museum docents, and college professors to name a few.

This is a Community with three focal points: (1) expose students to the many applications of teaching, (2) train them in foundational teaching skills like lesson design, classroom management, and reflective practice, and (3) provide practical experience as a teaching assistant on the PSCS lower school campus toward developing confidence and capacity.

In addition to completing the requirements for graduation, scholars may be eligible for membership in the [Future Educators Association](#) and may be eligible for community college credit, [College or College/UNC endorsement](#), and practical work experience within this field.

Pathway	Recommendations
4 English	Eng I, II, III, IV
4 Math	Math I, II, III, an advanced math
4 Social Studies	Civics, Financial Literacy, World, & American History
3 Science	Earth Environmental, Biology, Physical Science
1 Health and PE	Health and PE
6 Electives	For example, Teacher Cadet I and II, Psychology, Adolescent Literature, Early Childhood Education*
2 World Language	Level I and Level II of the same language
4 Arts or Humanities	For example, visual art, music, drama

*North Carolina Virtual Public School and community college offerings

Course Offerings

ENGLISH

(1021) English I

Grades: 9

Prerequisite: None

This is the foundation course for all high school English courses. Students review various genres from the novel to plays to poetry and focus on the impact of figurative language and literary devices on tone, meaning, and the reader's experience of target texts. They also practice writing and related editing skills and participate in activities that foster an appreciation of literature and promote language mastery. *Honors enrollment requires a final grade of 80 or higher (traditional grading system) or a 4 or 5 (standards-based grading system) in the previous school year and teacher recommendation.*

(1022) English II

Grades: Recommended 10th

Prerequisite: English I

This course is a comprehensive survey course covering fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama. Students will develop and utilize literary analysis skills as they examine rigorous fictional and non-fictional works of literature. Students will also write a variety of multi-paragraph and single paragraph forms including literary analysis, creative compositions, as well as formal and informal essays. *Honors enrollment requires a final grade of 80 or higher in prerequisite and teacher recommendation.*

(1023) English III

Grades: Recommended 11th

Prerequisite: English II

This course is an intensive study of the English language and literature, including the essential skills of composition development, writing style, critical reading, writing and analysis, academic vocabulary, grammatical structure and rules, and academic verbal discussion as outlined and in accordance with the California Common Core Standards. English III students will study the development of American thought and the American voice in literature. Students will critically read and evaluate various forms and types of texts including novels, poetry, informational texts and visual texts. *Honors enrollment requires a final grade of 80 or higher in prerequisite and teacher recommendation.*

(1024) English IV

Grades: Recommended 12th

Prerequisite: English III

English IV is a concept-based course completing the study of literary global perspectives, focusing on European literature and foundational U.S. documents and literature influenced by European philosophy or action. *Honors enrollment requires a final grade of 80 or higher in prerequisite and teacher recommendation.*

(1031) Journalism: Newspaper, yearbook, and photojournalism

Grades: 9-12

Prerequisite: None

This course focuses on the development of questioning, research, writing, and publishing skills and culminates in active work on the school newspaper and contribution to the annual yearbook.

(1032) Journalism II

Grades: 9-12

Prerequisite: Journalism I

Journalism 2 builds upon foundational journalism skills, focusing on advanced journalistic writing, multimedia content creation, and news judgment. Students will refine their skills in reporting, writing, and editing, while also learning about ethical considerations and the legal frameworks of journalism.

(1025-BAN) Banned Books and Novel Ideas

Grades: 9-12

Prerequisite: None

This course examines the politics of literature banned across several centuries and continents.. Texts have been classified as taboo, seized, and burned and their creators punished throughout history under many different political regimes. Incorporating a range of systems of censorship from Europe to the US to Asia we will examine differences in the modes of repression and the sometimes connections between the institutions that shape a society, including religious and political.

MATHEMATICS

(2090) Foundations of NC Math 1 *

Grades: Recommended 9th

Prerequisite: Teacher recommendation required

Recommended for students who need to practice basic math functions prior to engaging in the required NC Math 1 course. This course also satisfies the requirement for a fourth math credit to graduate from high school in North Carolina and subsequently attend any **North Carolina 2-year* community college**.

(2109) NC Math 1

Grades: Recommended 9th

Prerequisite: None

A required course for graduation, this introductory math course includes studies in Algebra, Geometry, and Probability and Statistics.

(2091) Foundations of NC Math 2 *

Grades: Recommended 10th

Prerequisite: Teacher recommendation required

Recommended for students who need to practice basic math functions prior to engaging in the required NC Math 2 course. This course also satisfies the requirement for a fourth math credit to graduate from high school in North Carolina and subsequently attend any **North Carolina 2-year* community college**.

(2209) NC Math 2

Grades: Recommended 9th

Prerequisite: NC Math 1

This is required for graduation. The course continues to build upon the four strands of math skills, including Probability and Statistics and Geometry. *Honors enrollment requires a final grade of 80 or higher in previous math class and teacher recommendation.*

(2092) Foundations of NC Math 3 *

Grades: Recommended 11th

Prerequisite: Teacher recommendation required

Recommended for students who need to practice basic math functions prior to engaging in the required NC Math 2 course. This course also satisfies the requirement for a fourth math credit to graduate from high school in North Carolina and subsequently attend any **North Carolina 2-year* community college**.

(2309) NC Math 3

Grades: Recommended 11th

Prerequisite: NC Math 2

This course is required for graduation. Math 3 students study piecewise, polynomial, rational, and trigonometric functions. Geometric units focus on circles and their properties and modeling with 2D and 3D geometric figures. *Honors enrollment requires a final grade of 80 or higher in previous math class and teacher recommendation.*

(2409) NC Math 4

Grades: Recommended 12th

Prerequisite: NC Math 3

This course satisfies the requirement for a fourth math credit to graduate from high school in North Carolina and subsequently attend any **North Carolina 4-year college or university**. In NC Math 4, students use algebraic, tabular, and graphical representations to reason about mathematical and real world contexts. *Honors enrollment requires a final grade of 80 or higher in previous math class and teacher recommendation.*

(2403) PreCalculus Honors

Grades: Recommended 12th

Prerequisite: NC Math 3

This course satisfies the requirement for a fourth math credit to graduate from high school in North Carolina and subsequently attend any **North Carolina 4-year college or university**. This course is a research-based exploration of functions modeling dynamic phenomena. It is designed to better prepare students for college-level calculus and science courses.

SCIENCE

(3501) Earth/Environmental Science (EES)

Grades: 9

Prerequisite: None

This course, required for graduation, focuses on the function of the Earth's systems. Emphasis is placed on matter, energy, plate tectonics, environmental awareness, materials availability, and the cycles that circulate energy and material through the Earth systems. *Honors enrollment requires a final grade of 80 or higher/ 4 or 5 on standards based grading scale in previous science class and teacher recommendation.*

(3320) Biology

Grades: 10

Prerequisite: Earth/Environmental Science (EES) recommended

This course, required for graduation, includes a study of living organisms and their vital processes. Themes that will be covered in this course include scientific skills, ecology, biochemistry, cellular processes, genetics, evolution, classification of organisms, as well as plant and human body systems. *Honors enrollment requires a final grade of 80 or higher in previous science class and teacher recommendation.*

(3410) Physical Science

Grades: 11, 12th

Prerequisite: Earth/Environmental Science (EES), Biology recommended

This course, which meets the graduation requirement for a lab-based science, directs students to study the principles of chemistry and physics that include matter, energy, structure of atoms, chemical reactions, forces, and motion.

(3420) Chemistry Honors

Grades: Recommended 11th, 12th

Prerequisite: Earth/Environmental Science (EES), Biology recommended

Throughout this course, which meets the graduation requirement for a lab-based science, students will study matter, the components of matter, ways in which matter can change and react, atoms, the periodic table and its trends, types of chemical bonding and structures, types of chemical reactions, stoichiometry, states of matter, phase changes, gas laws, solutions, equilibrium, acids, bases, thermodynamics, and nuclear chemistry.

(3540) Astronomy

Grades: 9-12

Prerequisite: None

This science elective acquaints students with astronomy concepts including basic facts about the Earth, moon, and stars. Also included for study are galaxies, cosmology, and space exploration.

(3330) Anatomy and Physiology Honors**Grades: 10, 11****Prerequisite: Biology recommended**

This elective science course includes a study of human anatomy and physiology and is comprised of medical terminology, basic chemistry, cell and tissue structure, and the 11 systems of the human body (integumentary, skeletal, muscular, nervous, endocrine, circulatory, lymphatic, digestive, respiratory, urinary and reproductive).

(HL10) Forensic Science I Honors**Grades: Recommended 11th and 12th****Prerequisite: Physical Science (can take at same time)**

The Honors Forensic Science course is designed to introduce students to a variety of biological topics and current scientific issues. Students are encouraged to work collaboratively in groups, to design investigations, formulate hypotheses, collect data, reach conclusions, and present their findings to their classmates. The content studied in Forensic Science provides an opportunity for students to study topics in medicine, ecology, forensics, biotechnology, and environmental studies. This course is considered an elective and does not count toward required science credits for graduation. *This is an honors course and requires students to have earned an A or B in previous sciences courses.*

(3510) Ecology**Grades: 9-12****Prerequisite: None**

Ecology is the study of how organisms interact with each other and their environment at the population, community, and ecosystem levels. The goal of this elective course is to familiarize the student with ecological theory and its applications.

SOCIAL STUDIES

(4303) World History

Grades: 9

Prerequisite: None

This required course for graduation is intended to examine the historical development of the world and global issues and patterns since 1200. The course also explores underlying themes of power and authority, change and continuity, human-environment interaction, globalization, cultural diffusion, and individual and group identity. *Honors enrollment requires an 80 or higher/ 4 or 5 previous science class and teacher recommendation.*

(4318) Founding Principles of the United States and North Carolina: Civic Literacy

Grades: 10

Prerequisite: World History recommended

This course, required for graduation, provides students with a sound understanding of civic life, politics, and government, including a short history of government's foundation and development in the United States of America. Students learn how power and responsibility are shared and limited by the government, the impact American politics has on world affairs, law in the American constitutional system, and the rights that the American government guarantees its citizens. *Honors enrollment requires A or B in previous science class and teacher recommendation.*

(4311) American History

Grades: 11

Prerequisite: Founding Principles of US and NC: Civic Literacy recommended

This course, required for graduation, explores the overarching themes, trends, and concepts of our nation's history, including the development and evolution of the American system of government, the patterns and impact of migration and immigration, cultural development through the arts and technological innovations, relationships with foreign nations, and the role of both the individual and diverse groups in building the American story. *Honors enrollment requires A or B in previous science class and teacher recommendation.*

(4319) Economics and Personal Finance

Grades: 12

Prerequisite: None

This course, required for graduation, is intended to be a study of economics, personal finance, income and education, money management, critical consumerism, and financial planning. *Honors enrollment requires A or B in previous science class and teacher recommendation.*

(4800-POP) Pop Culture**Grades: 9-12****Prerequisite: None**

From music and movies to social media and trends, pop culture shapes our world. In this course, students will explore how entertainment and media influence society, identity, and everyday life. Through discussions, projects, and media analysis, we'll dive into the past and present of pop culture and its impact on the world around us.

(4800-MIL) Military History: Peace, War, and Defense**Grades: 9-12****Prerequisite: None**

This elective course examines the nature of armed conflict through a multitude of lenses and themes, including the story of war and wars; the impact of violence on people and peoples; the evolution of military institutions; the intersection of warfare with politics, international relations, economics, society, culture, and the natural environment; and both the intended and unintended artifacts of war.

(4803-HOL) Holocaust and Genocide Studies**Grades: 9-12****Prerequisite: None**

Holocaust education requires a comprehensive study of not only times, dates, and places, but also the motivation and ideology that allowed these events. In this elective course, students will study the history of anti-Semitism; the rise of the Nazi party; and the Holocaust, from its beginnings through liberation and the aftermath of the tragedy. The study of the Holocaust is a multi-disciplinary one, integrating world history, geography, American history, and civics.

(4403) Psychology**Grades: 9-12****Prerequisite: None**

Psychology, an elective course, is designed to engage students in the understanding, articulation, and dissemination of psychology as a science. Students are introduced to psychology with a focus on human development, learning, cognition, biology, society and culture.

WORLD LANGUAGE

World language classes are offered in person and online through the North Carolina Virtual Public Schools. Available languages include American Sign Language, French, Latin, German, and Spanish. Admission to colleges typically requires two credits in the same world language. Language study is available in four levels:

Level I

This course is an introduction to the study of the foreign language and its culture. It allows students to perform the most basic functions of the language with an emphasis on the development of the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing within a given context extending outside of the classroom setting when possible. Grammar is integrated throughout the course and is selected according to the language needs.

Level II

Level II scholars begin to function in real-life situations using more complex sentences and language structures. They read material on familiar topics and produce short writing samples. Practice includes written, spoken, and cultural elements.

Level III Honors (not offered for all languages)

This is a continuation of language development with greater immersion in terms of both production and reception of the target language.

Level IV

Level IV is an advanced language course that continues with a more in-depth study.. Student proficiency is increased through an intense approach involving listening, grammar, reading, vocabulary (including idiomatic expressions), speaking and writing skills.

VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS

(5415, 16, 17, 18) Visual Arts: Beginner, Intermediate, Proficient and Advanced

Grades: 9-12

Prerequisite: None

These courses are for students interested in taking art. It provides intensive work with various drawing skills and media while introducing students to the basic vocabulary of art and design. Specific topics covered include drawing, color, architecture, painting, photography, printmaking and sculpture. Careers in art are also explored.

(5420-ACR) Visual Arts: Arts and Crafts

Grades: 9-12

Prerequisite: None

Arts and Crafts is intended for the students who are interested in the creative process, especially those endeavors specific to cultural and historical significance like bead work and basketmaking. Students will learn about the art and craft of various cultures while creating works of art. Students will get to experience working with a variety of different mediums such as paint, clay, fabric, metal, wood, and yarn, while learning multiple studio techniques.

(5700-CER) Visual Arts: Ceramics

Grades: 9-12

Prerequisite: None

This class introduces students to the ancient craft of working with clay. Students will experience hand-building techniques including pinch, coil, and slab. Wheel throwing is introduced with expectations for basic levels of achievement, including cylinder, bowl, and plate forms.

(5315, 16, 17, 18) Theater Arts: Beginner, Intermediate, Proficient and Advanced

Grades: 9-12

Prerequisite: None

This course introduces students to the theatrical arts with an emphasis on creativity and collaboration.. Areas covered in depth include theatre vocabulary, roles in the theatre, movement, acting, the reading of plays, theatre design and tech, and viewing theatre performances.

(5296-ENS) Music: Music Ensemble (two semesters)

Grades: 9-12

Prerequisite: Must play an instrument; audition/ interview required.

The Ensemble course provides instrumental musicians with collaborative opportunities to examine ensemble skills and repertoire. Musicians will practice with independent and collaborative pieces and focus on performance.

(5296-THY) Music: Music Theory I

Grades: 9-12

Prerequisite: None

Explore music through all facets-- its history, how to make it, how to share it, and how to talk about it. This course explores elements like melody, rhythm, harmony, and simple music. For the music lover.

(5296-TH2) Music: Music Theory II

Grades: 9-12

Prerequisite: Music Theory I

This course is a continuation of the study of melody, rhythm, and diatonic tonal harmony and incorporates more complex concepts. Topics include harmonic progression, elemental forms and simple modulation.

(5296-SWR) Music: Song Writing

Grades: 9-12

Prerequisite: None

This course provides students with a background in the craft of songwriting. Students will study the elements of lyrics, rhythm, melody, harmony, and song structure and work on original compositions through both group and solo activities.

(5420-PH1, -PH2) Photography: Level I and II

Grades: 9-12

Prerequisite: None

These courses cover the use of the digital camera controls, including f/stops, shutter speeds, film speeds and the production of a correct exposure with increasing sophistication. Skills will include composition, criticism, lighting, and use of image editing software. Students will also learn the history of photography.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND HEALTH

(6049) Health and Physical Education

Grades: 9-12

Prerequisite: None

This course, required for graduation, is an overview of healthy living and includes units of study about mental health issues, substance use and abuse, nutrition and weight loss, disease prevention, and family life education. The physical education component allows students opportunities to incorporate activities like basketball, soccer, badminton, weight training, and volleyball. The course also includes CPR training required for graduation.

(6039-STC) Strength and Conditioning

Grades: 9-12

Prerequisite: None

In this elective course students will learn proper spotting, lifting, and warm up techniques for strength training and conditioning. . Students will also learn the importance of goal setting while creating individualized workouts. Students will incorporate responsible personal and social behavior to achieve and maintain a health-enhancing level of physical fitness.

ELECTIVE & CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE) COURSES

*online courses are designated as NCVPS

(AA21) Animal Science I

Grades: 9-12

Prerequisite: None

This course is an introduction to the basic scientific principles and processes that are involved in animal physiology, breeding, nutrition, and care in preparation for an animal science career. Topics include FFA, animal evaluation, animal diseases, introduction to animal science, animal nutrition, animal science issues, career opportunities, and animal evaluation.

(AA23) Animal Science II

Grades: 9-12

Prerequisites Animal Science I

Do you have pets? Would you like to learn all the secrets about taking care of pets? In this class you will learn about the small animals we keep as pets. From dogs to fish, you will discover all the things you will need to know to pursue a career in the animal health industry or just how to be a better pet owner.

(AP41) Horticulture I

Grades: 9-12

Prerequisites: None

This is an introductory course in horticulture and greenhouse management. Students learn fundamental skills relating to plant propagation, nutrition, floral arrangements and greenhouse and nursery production.

(AP44) Horticulture II- Landscaping

Grades: 9-12

Prerequisites: Horticulture I

This course covers instruction that expands scientific knowledge and skills to include more advanced scientific computations and communication skills needed in the horticulture industry. Topics include greenhouse plant production and management, bedding plant production, watering systems, light effects, basic landscape design, installation and maintenance, lawn and turfgrass management, and personal development.

(FA07-FA31) Fashion and Textile Fundamentals**Grades: 9-12****Prerequisite: None**

Explore the world of fashion by learning the foundational skills of garment construction, fabric selection, and color theory. Apply beginning sewing skills to produce a quality garment in the fashion lab. Dive into the fashion cycle to gain insights into the evolution of styles to identify trends and understand their place within the industry. Gain the knowledge and skills for careers in clothing design, production, merchandising, and textiles.

(FN41) Food and Nutrition I**Grades: 9-12****Prerequisite: None**

This course examines the nutritional needs of the individual. Emphasis is placed on fundamentals of food production, kitchen and meal management, food groups and their preparation, and time and resource management.

(FN42) Food and Nutrition II**Grades: 9-12****Prerequisite: Food and Nutrition I**

In this course, students experience the intersection of nutrition science and food preparation, while building skills for an expanding range of career opportunities. Emphasis is placed on health and social responsibility while improving the way people eat. Students learn how to manage food safety; plan and prepare meals for a variety of consumers and clients; and explore the food system and global cuisines.

(FH10) Culinary Arts and Hospitality I**Grades: 9-12****Prerequisite: None**

This course is designed to introduce students to the hospitality and food service industry by learning about components of professional practice and building basic knowledge and skills in food preparation, garde manger, baking, and food service operations. The introduction includes students learning food safety, breakfast cookery, salads and sandwiches, quick breads and cookies, and dining room services. Students may earn Art, English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies credit(s).

CAREER AND COLLEGE PROMISE (CCP) DUAL ENROLLMENT PROGRAM

[Career and College Promise \(CCP\)](#) is North Carolina's dual enrollment program for high school students. Pioneer Springs and Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC) have forged a partnership that offers qualified high school students the opportunity to pursue a tuition-free education in the community college setting while enrolled in high school. This allows students to get a jumpstart in the workplace and in college prep. Pioneer Springs endorses the dual enrollment program over AP courses as the best means to earn transferable college credit, meet graduation requirements, and receive extra quality points toward high school GPA calculation. The Career and College Promise (CCP) dual enrollment program offers two categories of pathways to aid the success of eligible Pioneer Springs students.

- [College Transfer Pathways](#) – Students earn tuition-free course credits toward an associate degree in the arts or sciences that will transfer seamlessly to any public or participating private college or university in North Carolina.

Pursuing the prescribed coursework in a college transfer pathway of his/her choosing affords a student the possibility of graduating with both a high school diploma from Pioneer Springs and a two-year associate degree (*with college transcript*) from CPCC. Similarly, if a student's desire is to attend a 4-year college immediately after high school graduation, the college credits earned during high school transfer seamlessly into NC public universities and colleges.

- [Career and Technical \(CTE\) Pathways](#) – Students earn tuition-free course credits toward a certificate or other valued form of job credential in a technical field. In most cases, these industry-recognized credentialing pathways can lead to an associate degree for students who wish to continue their education in the field after they begin working in the field.

These CTE Pathways prioritize hands-on learning and relevant workplace skills to prepare students for a career. Students have the opportunity to pursue certification, internships, and cooperative education (co-op) assignments with the assistance of a career counselor.

Starting in their **junior year**, qualifying students who choose to pursue a CCP Pathway build their academic schedules with both high school and college courses. By their senior year, these students may have a heavier load of college courses than high school courses.

Interested students work with their Pioneer Springs Career Development Coach to determine their **eligibility**^{*}, apply to and register as a student of CPCC, and enroll in courses prescribed by their choice of CCP Pathway(s). Once students begin taking college classes, they must maintain eligibility to participate by continuing to make progress toward high school graduation and by maintaining a 2.0 GPA for all college coursework. They will meet regularly with their Pioneer Springs Career Development Coordinator to plan and register for classes for each new term of the school year.

Tuition charges for each student's college classes are paid by the North Carolina Legislature. General fees (e.g., student fees, books) may apply and are the responsibility of the student with the possibility of available funds from Pioneer Springs Community School to offset these student costs.

^{*}**Eligibility** criteria students must meet to participate in the CCP Dual Enrollment program vary based on the student's grade level. The program targets primarily **high school juniors and seniors** while also offering a limited list of the CTE Pathway choices to freshmen and sophomores who meet additional eligibility requirements.

Eligibility: Juniors and Seniors

Juniors and seniors may choose from either of the Pathway categories after meeting these criteria:

College Transfer Pathways	Career and Technical (CTE) Pathways
2.8 or greater unweighted GPA	2.8 or greater unweighted GPA
OR Benchmark assessment scores (PSAT/SAT/preACT/ACT) (see scores)	OR Benchmark assessment scores (PSAT/SAT/preACT/ACT) (see scores)
	OR Recommendation by high school (for most CTE pathways)

Some examples of college courses that also satisfy high school graduation requirements on the high school transcript include:

- **College Transfer Pathway Courses**
 - American Literature I -or- British Literature I
 - Chemistry
 - COM231 Public Speaking
 - ENG111 & ENG112 Writing, Inquiry, & Research
 - MAT152 Statistics -or- MAT171 PreCalc Algebra
- **Career and Technical (CTE) Pathway Courses**
 - CUL-140 & 140B: Culinary Skills I (with Lab)
 - CTS-115: Information Systems Business Concepts
 - SGD-111: Introduction to Simulation & Game Development
 - COS-111: Cosmetology Concepts I
 - BUS-115: Business Law
 - AHR-110: Introduction to Refrigeration (HVAC)

Eligibility: Sophomores

It is a **rare circumstance** that a freshman or first-semester sophomore at Pioneer Springs would be nominated / approved to participate in the Dual Enrollment program. We feel strongly that early high school students should spend their first two years developing a solid footing that will result in success during their junior and senior years as they balance a dual course load.

That said, qualifying Sophomores, once approved by Pioneer Springs, may choose from [a limited list of Career and Technical \(CTE\) Pathways](#) after also meeting one of the following two (2) sets of criteria:

CTE Pathways Public School Testing		CTE Pathways Alternate Testing
Recommendation of your high school principal or his/her designee (assessment scores should be considered) and rationale for recommendation	OR	Recommendation of your high school principal or designee (assessment scores should be considered) and rationale for recommendation
Passed Math I with a grade of C or better		Demonstrated college readiness in English, reading, and mathematics on an assessment (see scores)
Score of 3 or greater on the End of Course assessment (EOC) for Math I		
Score of 3, 4, or 5 on the 8th grade End of Grade ELA assessment		

Click here for the Pioneer Springs
[Dual Enrollment On-Boarding Guide](#)

... when you're ready to make the commitment!

A Place for Your Notes & Questions