The Penguin Periodical

October 2026



Hello Pioneer Families!

Welcome to this month's edition of the Penguin Periodical! We're excited to share the latest happenings and updates from our school community to keep you informed and engaged.



Principal's Message

What a wonderful October it has been! Across every classroom, our students have been learning what it means to be part of a school community: caring for one another, keeping each other safe, and finding the words to share how they feel. It has been a joy to walk the halls and see children who were nervous just a few weeks ago now greeting friends, trying new things, and taking pride in all they can do. These early lessons in kindness, confidence, and belonging set the stage for everything that comes next. Thank you for the trust you place in us each day and for being such wonderful partners in your child’s learning. We can’t wait to see what November brings!

Sincerely,

Mr. Dan Guerrero
Principal



Pyramid Model Expectations

The Pyramid Model is how we teach our little ones to manage their feelings, get along with others, and make good choices. Instead of just telling kids what not to do, we focus on teaching them what to do instead, through kindness, encouragement, and lots of practice.

At our school, this looks like three simple expectations that we talk about every day:

- **We are safe.**
- **We are kind.**
- **We work together.**

We use these three phrases throughout the day to help children understand how to treat themselves, their friends, and their classroom. You can use them at home too! The more we repeat the same message at school and at home, the faster our little ones will make these habits their own.

October Pyramid Model Star Students



Each month, our teachers will select a Star Student who has shown all of our Pyramid Model expectations in the classroom: being safe, being kind, and working together. These students will be recognized in front of their classmates and presented with a Star Student certificate from Mr. Danguino! This month, we are proud to celebrate the following October Star Students:

Kassandra Bautista in Ms. Jackie's class
David Lopez in Ms. Jackie's class
Barrett Dal Porto in Ms. Maclaine's class
April Valdez in Ms. Gisel's class
Malia Rocio in Ms. Mary's class
Anna Shikun in Ms. Jennifer's class
Sebastian Luis in Ms. Talia's class

What's Happening Around Pioneer?



Half-Day Highlights

What a busy and joyful month it has been in our Half Day classrooms! Our little learners practiced being kind, being safe, and working together, and we've loved hearing them take turns with "my turn, your turn" and use kind words with friends. Students also explored feelings through facial-expression games and stories, met the Zones of Regulation, and learned calming tools to help them get back to the green zone. During our bus evacuation, tornado, fire, and law enforcement drills, everyone showed off great listening skills. Alphabet songs have become a daily favorite, and students are proudly finding and writing the letters in their names. Many also made their first library visits and brought home a book to share with you. At home, try singing alphabet songs, writing names in shaving cream or sidewalk chalk, spotting letters on signs and cereal boxes, and asking your child, "How can we work together at home?" It was such a treat to sit down with so many of you at conferences, and we're grateful for the partnership that makes your child's first school experiences so special.

Full-Day Focus



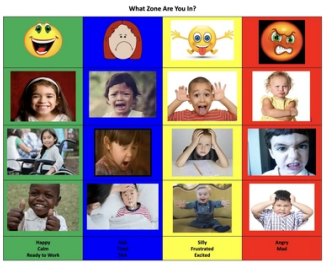
This month in Full Day, our classrooms worked together to build a strong foundation of kindness, safety, and community. As we wrapped up Unit 1, students practiced being good friends, working as a team, and making safe choices, and that focus on safety carried into our fire and law enforcement drills, where we used social stories and calm conversations to help everyone feel prepared and secure. We also enjoyed our first library and music specials, and many children have started bringing classroom books home to share with their families. As we moved into Unit 2, our attention turned to feelings: students began learning the Zones of Regulation, naming the emotions they experience, and thinking about how to solve problems, with *The Way I Feel* by Janan Cain becoming a shared favorite across our rooms, alongside classics like *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* Throughout the month, children also practiced counting, recognizing letters and their sounds, and finding their names, all while enjoying picture day and getting excited for Halloween. You can keep this learning going at home by talking about feelings using zones language, counting everyday items like stairs and plates, pointing out letters on signs and in books, keeping morning routines consistent, and checking in with your child after drills. Thank you to all of our families who joined us for parent-teacher conferences. We loved connecting with you and are so proud of how much our students have grown together this month!



Extended Day Experiences

Extended Day students have been settling into their routines this month, and the growth has been wonderful to watch. Students are moving smoothly through transitions, rotating through learning stations, and building the stamina to join longer circle and group times, including new daily storytimes. Communication has been a major focus: students are learning to express their wants and needs with words and signs such as “I want,” “help,” and “like,” and they’re practicing listening to a question and responding, often starting with a single word. We’re also working on making good choices, whether that means recognizing “stop” and “go” choices or taking turns and waiting patiently with friends. Our tornado, bus evacuation, fire, and law enforcement drills went smoothly, and students did an excellent job following directions to stay safe. At home, you can support this learning by reading together for at least 10 minutes a day, encouraging your child to use words or signs to ask for what they want, and practicing taking turns while sharing a toy or game. Thank you for making time to meet with us at conferences; your insights help us support each child, and we look forward to continuing this work together.

Understanding the Zones of Regulation



This fall, our classrooms have been learning about the Zones of Regulation, a simple way to help children notice and name their feelings. The zones sort emotions into four colors, making it easier for young children to say how they feel and what they need.

- **Blue Zone:** Low energy. Feeling sad, tired, sick, or bored.
- **Green Zone:** Calm and ready. Feeling happy, focused, and ready to learn.
- **Yellow Zone:** Rising energy. Feeling silly, nervous, frustrated, or overly excited.
- **Red Zone:** Big feelings. Feeling angry, scared, or out of control.

The most important thing to know is that there is no “bad” zone. Everyone moves through all four zones, adults included! The goal isn’t to stay green all the time but to help children recognize their zone and learn tools that help them feel calm and ready again.

Ways to Use the Zones at Home

- **Share your own zone.** “I’m in the yellow zone because I’m worried we’ll be late. I’m going to take a deep breath.” Hearing you name your feelings helps your child learn to do the same.
- **Check in often.** Ask, “What zone are you in right now?” at bedtime, after school, or during calm moments.
- **Talk about characters.** While reading or watching shows together, ask, “What zone do you think this character is in? How can you tell?”
- **Practice calming tools together.** Try smelling the flower and blowing out the candle (slow breaths), squeezing a stuffed animal, getting a hug, taking a drink of water, or resting in a cozy spot.
- **Keep it positive.** Use the zones to understand feelings, not as a punishment. A child in the red zone needs support and comfort to find their way back to green.

When we use the same language at school and at home, children learn to understand their feelings more quickly and feel more confident handling them. Thank you for helping us build these important skills together!



From the Main Office

Required Paperwork: If you've received a message from the office about required paperwork, such as proof of residency, a birth certificate, or health updates, please reach out to us so we can make a plan to get those items updated. Keeping these files complete is required for state compliance, and we're happy to help if you have questions about what's needed.

Updating Emergency Contacts: Has your phone number changed, or do you need to add or remove an emergency contact? Please let the office know so we can update your child's file. If you're not sure who is listed or which phone numbers we have, give us a quick call to check. Up-to-date contact information helps us reach you quickly in case of an emergency.

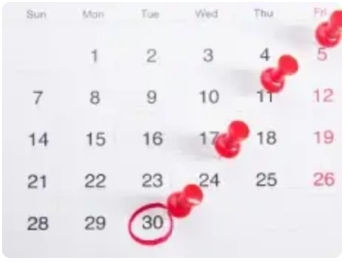
Reporting an Absence: If your student will be absent from school, please report the absence, preferably by 9:00 AM, by calling the attendance line at 630-293-6040, ext. 6300. If there is no answer, please leave a voicemail with your student's name, their teacher's name, and the reason for the absence.

Changing to a Car Rider: If your bus rider needs to be a car rider for the day, please call the office at least **one hour before** their scheduled dismissal time (40 minutes for AM Dismissal) so we can notify the classroom teacher and plan for a safe and secure transition to car rider transportation. It is important that this call be made to the office and not directly to the classroom teacher, as teachers may not always check messages throughout the school day.

- Half-Day AM: **Call before 10:30 AM**
- Extended Day: **Call before 12:30 PM**
- Full-Day/Half-Day PM: **Call before 1:30 PM**

Early Pickup: Please note that when a student is being picked up early from school, you will need to have a valid ID with you. Per district policy, and for the safety of our students, we will not release any student without seeing a valid ID.

Important Dates



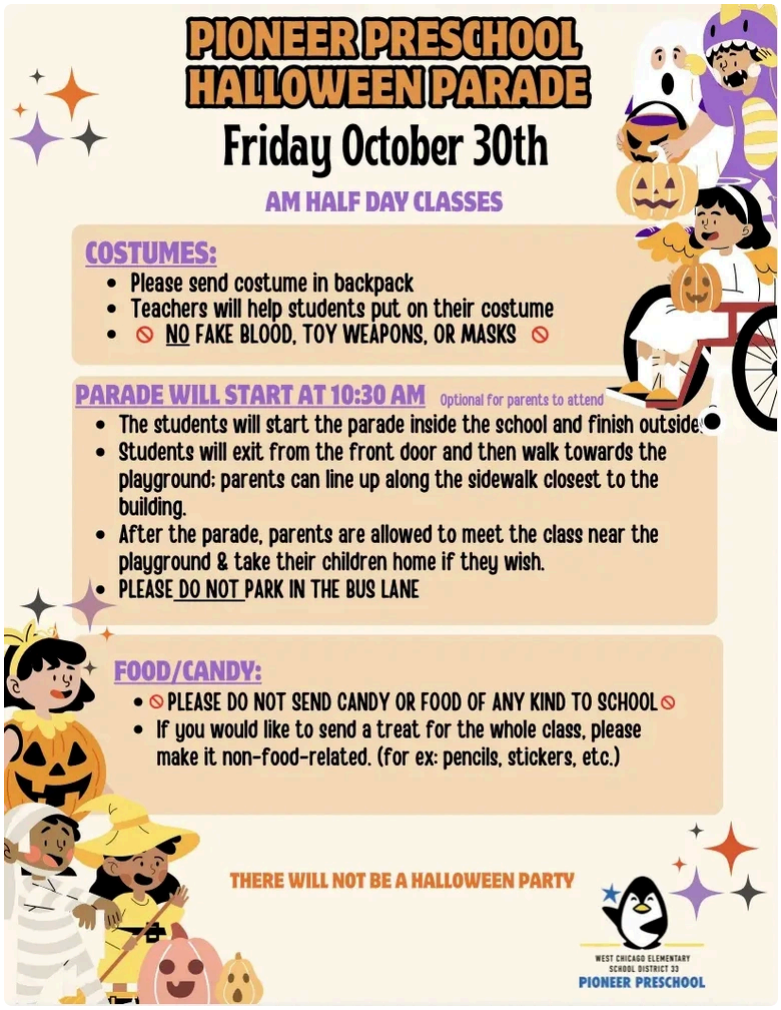
- **October 30 -** Halloween Parades
- **November 3** - NO SCHOOL - Professional Development Day (District)
- **November 16** - NO SCHOOL - Staff Training Day (Preschool Only)
- **November 20 -** Teaching Strategies GOLD Family Reports will be sent home
- **November 23 - 27** - NO SCHOOL - Thanksgiving Break
- **December 21 - January 1 -** NO SCHOOL - Winter Break

October Photo Collage



Halloween Parades - October 30, 2026

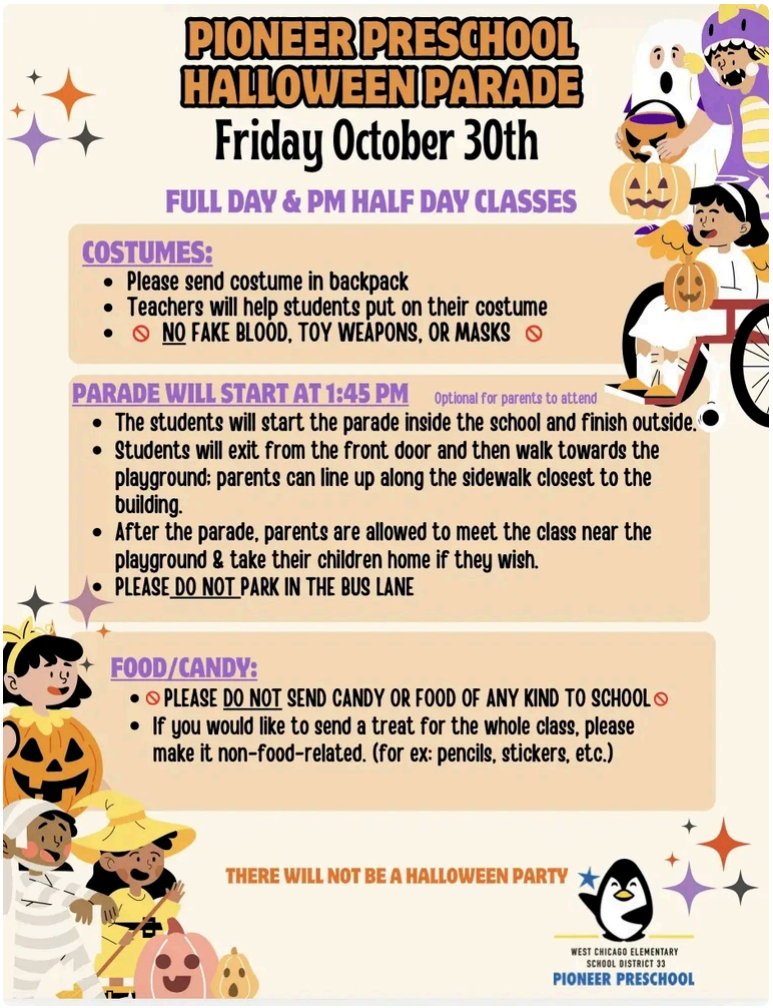
Half Day Morning (AM) Classes



Extended Day Classes



Full Day and Half Day Afternoon (PM) Classes



Pioneer Preschool Spirit Wear


PENGUINS
PIONEER PRESCHOOL
PENGUINS
PIONEER PRESCHOOL