



Mears Middle School

Panther Pride News

Respect, Responsibility, Creativity, and Academic Excellence

Friday, January 29, 2021

Building Community & Making New Friends



Students in Mears' in-person program enjoyed taking a walk together outside during their late morning nutrition break on Friday. Mears students attending the program are enjoying the opportunity to get to socialize with their peers and many are beginning to develop new friendships. Mears staff take students on short walks outside on most days (weather permitting) to get fresh air and to socialize at a safe distance.

Stay Informed and Get Involved

Important Dates for Parents and Families

Mears Parents and Families,

As we begin to prepare for the upcoming transition to 4th quarter, which begins on March 15th, Mears is planning to host a number of events for our parents and families. Please make note of these dates and times. More information will follow in the days to come.

--Eric

Monday, Feb. 1-5

- **ASD/Mears Family Survey Window Opens** -- Please be on the lookout for an email on Monday, Feb. 1 that will include this survey. It will include questions to gauge each families' preference for 4th quarter options for students. Options will include in-person instruction at Mears, as well as various online options including Mears Online.

Tuesday, Feb. 2, 4:00-5:00pm

Thursday, Feb. 4, 6:00-7:00pm

- **Quarter 4 Parent/Family Informational Meetings** -- Please join school administrators and counselors during either session to learn more about the 4th quarter options for students.

Join Zoom Meeting Link:

<https://asdk12.zoom.us/j/93471848814?pwd=dklVR2Y2eTVnZEYvUkRsSnBWZ29QZz09>

Meeting ID: 934 7184 8814 Passcode: 493426

Wednesday, Feb. 10, 12:30-2:15pm

- **Optional Drop-in Parent/Teacher Sessions via Zoom** -- Mears teachers will be available via their class Canvas zoom links to meet with parents and families to discuss current student progress. More information to follow.

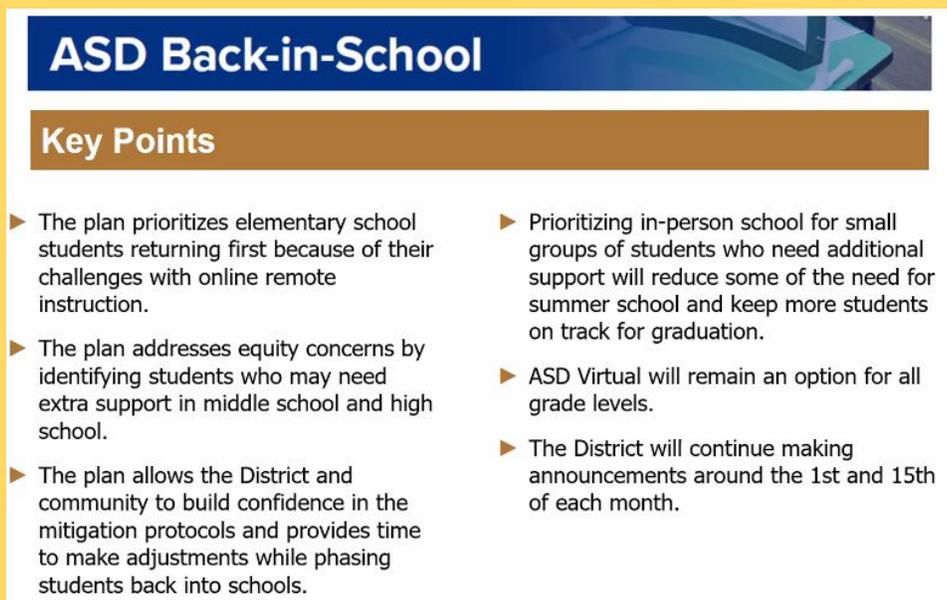
Thursday, Feb. 25, 6:00-7:00pm

- **6th Grade Family Welcome and Orientation** -- This online event is for all families of 6th graders planning to attend Mears next school year, 2021-22. We are excited to welcome new and returning families by introducing members of our incredible staff, along with an overview of Mears exemplary core and elective course offerings and extra-curricular activities.

Teachers and Staff

- Monday/Feb. 1 --** Staff Meeting
Planning and CT after school
- Tuesday/Feb. 2 --** Planning and CT before and after school
Q4 Family Informational Session, 4:00-5:00pm (Optional)
- Wednesday/Feb. 3 --** Staff Meeting, 8:00-9:00am
Canvas Open Hours Support Session, 9:00-10:00am
Departments, 12:45-1:45pm
- Thursday/Feb. 4 --** Planning and CT before and after school
Q4 Family Informational Session, 6:00-7:00pm (Optional)
- Friday/Feb. 5 --** Planning and CT before and after school

ASD Return to School Update



ASD Back-in-School

Key Points

- ▶ The plan prioritizes elementary school students returning first because of their challenges with online remote instruction.
- ▶ The plan addresses equity concerns by identifying students who may need extra support in middle school and high school.
- ▶ The plan allows the District and community to build confidence in the mitigation protocols and provides time to make adjustments while phasing students back into schools.
- ▶ Prioritizing in-person school for small groups of students who need additional support will reduce some of the need for summer school and keep more students on track for graduation.
- ▶ ASD Virtual will remain an option for all grade levels.
- ▶ The District will continue making announcements around the 1st and 15th of each month.

Mears Families,

This week, middle and high schools throughout ASD have reopened their doors to small groups of students for in-person support and instruction. While the majority of students in the district are generally showing success while learning online, the students selected for the small in-school programs

have demonstrated a need for additional support.

At Mears, we are excited to welcome back a cohort of about 35 students, who were invited to attend based on meeting certain criteria. Due to ongoing safety mitigation efforts and the need to continue to staff Mears' robust online educational program,

staffing for the in-school program is limited. Therefore, Mears in-school program will remain small and focused on those students who have already been selected.



10-Point Panther Path of Safety

- 1 When on the Mears campus, keep your mask on at all times.
- 2 Maintain 6 feet of distance between yourself and your fellow students.
- 3 Please always walk the one direction indicated by the hallway arrows.
- 4 Do not gather or socialize in the hallways: go directly to your class each period.
- 5 Do not touch your face.
- 6 Frequently wash your hands and use hand sanitizer.
- 7 Request to use the restroom and place your restroom marker outside.
- 8 Lockers will not be used.
- 9 No guests in the building: students and staff only.
- 10 Be safe for yourself and others.

The 10-Point Safety Plan used by all students and staff at Mears.

The small in-school program at Mears will support students, while at the same time allow school personnel the opportunity to fine tune safety protocols and build community confidence as we prepare for a broader reopening of school at the beginning of 4th quarter on March 15.

Here is a link to the [ASD School Safety Plans](#), where you will find all the details for Mears' Covid safety protocols.

As always, I will continue to provide our school community with updates in this

newsletter, which is published every Friday. Go Panthers! --Eric

Students Encouraged to Join National Junior Honor Society



Attention: Current National Junior Honor Society Members

8th graders who were inducted into National Junior Honor Society last year will have our next meeting February 10th at 2pm. We will begin planning our first service project and talk about officer positions!

All current members should have received an invite to our NJHS Canvas Page.

Email Mrs. Lambert if you have not received the invite:
Lambert_Marah@asdk12.org



Are you interested in joining National Junior Honor Society?

There is an interest meeting on February 3rd for prospective members (for 7th or 8th graders) to join Mears' NJHS!

Zoom Meeting info for February 3rd at 2pm: Meeting ID: 915 1292 6008 Passcode: 351546
Email us if you have any further questions, or if you would like the direct Zoom link!

Sison_Mia@asdk12.org Lambert_Marah@asdk12.org

Requirements:

- 3.5 Average GPA (Q1 and Q2)
- Love for Community Service and Leadership



Please join us -- NJHS Meeting Zoom Link for Wednesday, Feb. 3, 2:00pm:

<https://asdk12.zoom.us/j/91512926008?pwd=Z0J6SzFmbis5SWg0bzRkd1M5NVZ2dz09>

Panthers are Writers

January Writing Contest

FLASH FICTION or The Super Short Story



- Tell a story in 200 words or less.
- **Categories:**
 - > “No, not my cell phone.”
 - > “Tik Tok gone viral.”
 - > “COVID--blocked and unfriended.”
- Deadline: Friday, January 29th.

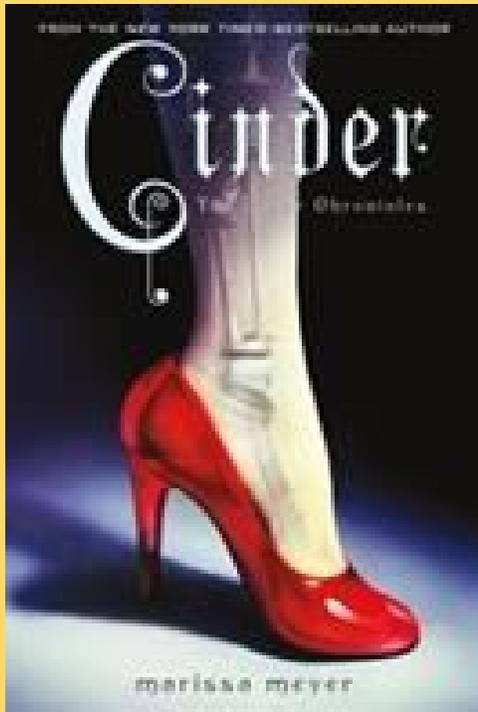
For all contest details go to:

<https://sites.google.com/asdk12.net/mears-creative-writing-contest/home>

The screenshot shows the Mears Middle School website. At the top left is the school logo, a stylized 'M' with a panther head. To its right is the text 'Mears Middle School'. Further right is a navigation menu with links: 'District Home', 'COVID Incident Report', 'Our Schools', 'Employee Options', and a search icon. Below this is a secondary menu with links: 'WELCOME', 'FAMILIES', 'STUDENTS', 'STAFF', 'ACADEMICS', 'SPORTS & ACTIVITIES', 'PTSA', and a dropdown menu 'I WANT TO...'. The main content area features a banner with colorful balloons (red, blue, green, yellow) and the text 'CREATIVE WRITING... STORYTELLING CONTEST DECEMBER'. Below the balloons is a large black box with yellow text that reads 'CONGRATULATIONS!' and '1st Place: Ella Wheelles 2nd Place: Winry Olivieri'.

Panthers are Readers

Mears Reads Book Club



EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

February's book club meeting will be on Tuesday, February 16th, at 2:15PM. We will be discussing *Cinder* by Marissa Meyer.

If you would like to join us on Feb. 16th contact Mrs. Fleming at 742-6432, fleming_heather@asdk12.org, or through a student's Inbox in Canvas, to ask for the Zoom link.

Curbside Pickup

Jane Mears Library
**CURBSIDE
PICK
UP**



- 1** PLACE HOLD
in the Mears catalog
- 2** WAIT FOR
NOTIFICATION
email, Remind, etc.
- 3** PARK & CALL
Tues. & Thurs.
9am -5pm

More information/details at: <https://mearslibrary.weebly.com>

Curbside pickup of library materials is still going strong! Books and puzzles can be checked out and picked up. Contact Mrs. Fleming at 742-6432, fleming_heather@asdk12.org, or through Canvas Inbox in a student's account.

Go to the [Mears Library website](https://mearslibrary.weebly.com) for more information, help, and resources.

Mears Counseling Corner

If you need any assistance in preparing for the 3rd quarter, please let our counselors know by filling out a HELP Ticket:

<https://www.asdk12.org/domain/4978>



COUNSELORS

Your Counselors

Brent Haugen,
907-742-6428

Caitlin Burr,
907-742-6424

Crysta Svendsen,
907-742-6426

Visit this link to meet Mears Counselors:

<https://sites.google.com/asdk12.net/mearsteachervideointros/home>

Does Your Family Need Some Extra Support?

CARES Act Voucher (Gift Card) Program Application

Introduction

The Voucher Program is made possible through CARES Act funding from the Municipality of Anchorage. This program will provide vouchers to individuals and/or families living within the municipality to help them with certain daily expenses such as groceries, diapers, medication, gasoline, etc. The vouchers will be made up of non-transferable gift cards from local participating stores that can be redeemed for those daily expenses. You will receive one voucher per address with the exception of those living in a residential program that requires sharing a physical address. Households including minor children are eligible for an increased benefit.

Recently Updated: ASD's Health and Safety Covid Matrix

ASD's planning and decision-making process for determining the District's risk level for conducting school takes multiple community factors into consideration. The District conducts this process in close conversation with the Municipality of Anchorage and the State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services.

In recent months, organizations such as the Center for Disease Control, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the World Health Organization have expanded their guidance and resources regarding safely providing public education. This new information includes a range of metrics and other criteria that allows districts, in close coordination with state and local health officials, to revise and adapt school opening guidelines based on the unique context of their community.

Here is a link: [ASD's Covid Matrix](#)



Congratulations to Mears' New President Curt Ehrhart and Sheila Hill as our new Treasurer.

Mears PTSA still has open leadership positions, including Vice President and Secretary. Please let us know if you are interested in volunteering to support this great organization and our wonderful school community.

PTSA Fundraising Opportunity

2020 was a rough year for all businesses; the Black Cat Cafe is no exception. The lack of income means we need to get creative with our fundraising. Let me introduce my nominee: "Ducks 4 Bucks"!



Event Description:

We are selling Ducks for \$4 on our school store at the following link:

<https://mearsptsa.memberhub.store/store/items/671092>

We will securely attach your order number(s) to our yellow rubber duckies. These ducks will be fired from a student built [trebuchet](#) at target 200 ft. away. If the duck can successfully hit the target, you be awarded a hoodie from our school store!



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will

We currently sold more ducks than anticipated and we **need** PTSA assistance for this event.

I'm currently in **need** of

- social media type person
- graphics person
- writer
- few camera operators that are not afraid of flying ducks

More information at the **next** PTSA meeting. *By the way, did you pay this year's dues?*



<https://twitter.com/MearsPtsa>

First person to retweet my “Ducks 4 Bucks” post gets a free [20 oz Metal Water Bottle](#).

The school store now has masks!

Order online and you can pick up at the school while supporting the PTSA!

<https://mearsptsa.memberhub.store/store/items/123659>



Thank you for the continued support of the Mears PTSA. Our school store sells PE approved clothing, beanies, baseball caps, hoodies, and more is online www.MearsPTSA.com.

Join Mears PTSA Membership and become part of an organization that is the leading Child advocacy group the Nation. You not only become a member of Mears. But Alaska PTA and National PTA. Membership benefits include Office Depot/Office Max, Hertz, and more. Learn more at www.MearsPTSA.com

Ways you can help us raise funds doing your day to day shopping and holiday shopping.

Amazon Smile smile.amazon.com/ch/92-0138999
Shutterfly <http://mearsptsa.shutterflystorefront.com>



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Mears Students are Back on the Court



This week at Mears, students in Mr. Dennis Sorenson's in-person PE class had the opportunity to exercise in the gym. In small, socially-distant groups, students played badminton and volleyball. Of the 35 students currently enrolled in the in-person program at Mears, 20 of them are taking PE. In addition to giving students a physical outlet for exercise, they are all enjoying the opportunity to meet face-to-face with their teacher and also to socialize on a daily basis and make new friends.

Mears Middle School Mission

Through teamwork and cooperation, all students become partners in their own educational progress, fostering self-respect, responsibility and integrity.

[Mears Middle School Website](#)