



Mears Middle School

Panther Pride News

Respect, Responsibility, Creativity, and Academic Excellence

Friday, October 2, 2020

Mears Teacher Takes Virtual to the Next Level



Mears science teacher and department chair, Ms. Joanna Hubbard, has taken virtual instruction to the next level. A recent article published by the *Anchorage Daily News* highlights Ms. Hubbard's field trip this week to the Anchorage Zoo, where she gave students the opportunity to virtually interact with a range of animal species and educational installations. Ms. Hubbard's desire "to make zooming more interesting" is an exceptional example of Mears teachers' ongoing efforts to bridge the gap and make meaningful, real-world connections with students.

Link to the article: ["A Field Trip to the Alaska Zoo Goes Virtual," ADN](#)

Mears Students Create Heroes



Eighth grade English Language Arts students have recently been exploring the topic of heroes. In a unit called The Challenge of Heroism, students in Ms. Mia Sison's and Ms. Sally Pak's classes have been tasked with creating an original story about a hero's journey.

During the brainstorming stage, students were asked to draw or paint a picture of their hero.



Student Writing Sample:

Luna is good at fighting and scaring off people when she fights, but when it comes to verbal arguments with the ones she loves the most she tends to break down emotionally. She lives in a time where there are powerful people that try to make others work for them. No one would speak up about the issue, but Luna decided that she'd had enough. -- Evelyn Gutierrez

Mears Math Innovates

Math Work: Nearpod Draw It

***** Submitted

***** Submitted

***** Submitted

***** Submitted

***** Submitted

***** Submitted

Mears math teachers have adopted the innovative interactive technology of Nearpod to provide real-time feedback for students as they complete work. Here is a sample from Ms. Agripina Pascual's class.

If you haven't seen them yet...
Be Sure To Check Out Mears Team Videos!

MEARS OPEN HOUSE

Mears Family Feedback Form

TEAM MUIR

TEAM ECHO

TEAM RAVEN

COUNSELORS

PE/ELECTIVES

TEAM SURPRISE

BLACKSTONE TEAM

TEAM EKLUTNA

Mears teachers and staff had a great time producing this collection of Team Videos. In lieu of meeting in-person with your teachers in classrooms during a traditional Open House, Mears staff decided to introduce themselves digitally. Special thanks to Mears Librarian, Ms. Heather Fleming, who created this webpage to showcase this video collection.

[Mears Open House Team Videos 2020](#)

Mears Creative Writing Contest

Write a personal narrative in which you describe a challenging situation you experienced recently. Include your reactions and responses to the situation as you write about it. Finally, at the end of the personal narrative, make it clear to the reader what discovery or lesson you learned from this experience. Remember, even unfortunate situations can yield positive



Your personal narrative should be no more than 1,000 words. The deadline for submissions is **Friday, October 30th**.

Welcome to the launch of the 2020-21 Mears creative writing contest. At the start of each month between now and May, Mears students will be presented with a new writing prompt. Students will have all month to brainstorm, craft and polish their writing before submitting it to the contest. Take advantage of this opportunity to explore your creative side by checking out the October writing prompt below. More information, examples, writing tips and submission instructions can be found by clicking in the links and slides on the Mears landing pad.

All of us have stories to tell. All are welcome and encouraged to join in! Feel free to direct any questions to Mr. Pease at pease_thomas@asdk12.org

Join Mears READS Book Club



The first meeting will be on Wednesday, October 7, 2020 at 1PM through Zoom.

Access Zoom links, discussions, activities, participate in the leaderboard, earn badges and more by joining the Mears Middle School Battle of the Books Canvas course. There won't be assignments or lessons, I promise. Use the link below to join:

<https://asdk12.instructure.com/enroll/NXKT7C>

Contact Ms. Heather Fleming at fleming_heather@asdk12.org if you are interested in joining this great group of readers!

MATHCOUNTS Competition Series

Calling all students who want to be challenged in mathematics in a fun and competitive environment! All students are welcome to join Mears' MATHCOUNTS club! We will meet weekly on Tuesday's (beginning October 20th) from 3pm-3:45pm (on Zoom for now). The goal is to grow together with our math skills while building confidence—and compete!



Are you in? Questions? Contact this year's sponsor:
Mrs. Marah Lambert (Mears Math Teacher):
Lambert_Marah@asdk12.org



MATHCOUNTS provides engaging math programs to US middle school students of all ability levels to build confidence and improve attitudes about math and problem solving.

our mission

Stay Informed and Get Involved

Teachers and Staff

Monday/Oct. 5 -- Staff Meeting Check-in, 8:00-8:30am
Tuesday/Oct. 6 -- Planning and CT before and after school
Wednesday/Oct. 7 -- i-Ready Training Session for Department Leads, Counselors, Administrators, 8:00-10:00 (sign up in MLP)
Wednesday/Oct. 7 -- Leadership Team 11:00am-12:00pm
Wednesday/Oct. 7 -- Departments 12:45-1:45pm
Thursday/Planning and CT before and after school
Friday/Planning and CT before and after school

Parents and Families

Friday/Oct. 16 -- End of First Quarter
Monday/Oct. 19 -- Second Quarter Begins
Wednesday-Thursday/Oct. 21-22 -- Teacher Conferences

Important Updates:

ASD's Health and Safety Covid Matrix

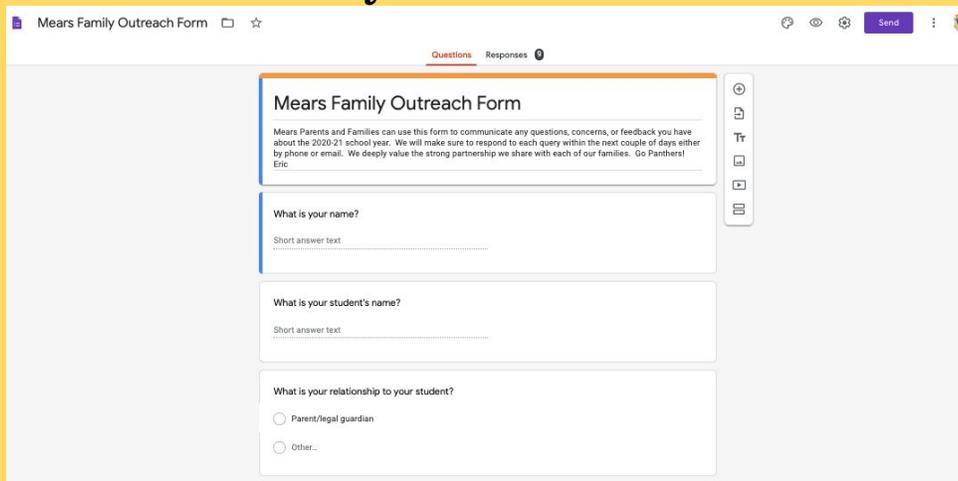
ASD's planning and decision-making process for determining the District's risk level for conducting school takes multiple community factors into consideration. The District conducts this process in close conversation with the Municipality of Anchorage and the State of Alaska Department of Health and 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 to the new ASD Covid Community Health Matrix, which will serve as a guide to decisions related to the eventual return to our school buildings.

[ASD's Covid Matrix](#)

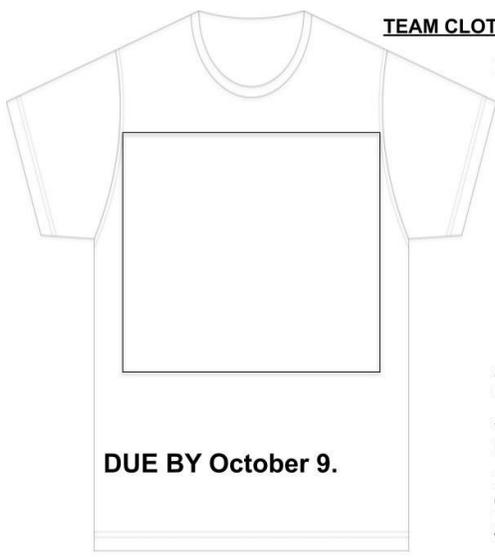
Mears Family Outreach Form

A screenshot of a web-based form titled "Mears Family Outreach Form". The form is displayed in a browser window with a blue header bar. The form content includes a title, a paragraph of introductory text, and three question fields. The first question is "What is your name?" with a "Short answer text" input field. The second question is "What is your student's name?" with a "Short answer text" input field. The third question is "What is your relationship to your student?" with two radio button options: "Parent/legal guardian" and "Other...". The form is set against a light blue background with a white border.

Mears Parents and Families can use this form to communicate any questions, concerns, or feedback you have about the 2020-21 school year. We will make sure to respond to each query within the next couple of days either by phone or email. We deeply value the strong partnership we share with each of our families. Go Panthers! --Eric

[Mears Family Outreach](#)

Deadline Extended to Oct. 9: Student Team Clothing Design Contest



TEAM CLOTHING DESIGN CONTEST

Design requirements:

- 1 Color (no exceptions)
- Think of your team color/s and name
- Image will only be on front (inside the square) of shirt and hoodies
- DO NOT include year
- Can be hand drawn or digitally drawn in the color of your team (ex. Red Mountains for Eklutna)
- Include your name with drawing

Once a design is picked.
Pre-Orders will then take place.

Shirts will be \$15
Hoodies will be \$30

******Each winning design/ team will receive a Free Team T Shirt.**

Email your Team Teacher the design of your shirt OR
MearsMS.PTSA@gmail.com
www.MearsPTSA.com

DUE BY October 9.

Students are strongly encouraged to enter the design contest for Mears Teams clothing and swag! Artwork is due by the end of September and should be submitted to Mears PTSA. Designs will be used for each team's t-shirts, sweatshirts, and other items.

Reminder: ASD Adopts Online Safety Measure Parents and Families are Encouraged to Discuss Gaggle with Students



Ensuring student health and safety is the highest priority at Mears and throughout ASD. For this reason, ASD has taken the step to proactively monitor student online content through the use of Gaggle, a cyber-security service that scans all documents in the Google educational suite that all ASD students use.

In a typical year, all content that is turned in by students is reviewed by teachers in a classroom setting. However, in the new virtual classroom environment, different tools need to be employed to help ensure student safety.

Beginning this school year, all documents that appear in a student's G-Suite will be reviewed for images and/or language that is inappropriate or in some way communicates a potential risk to student health and safety. If such content is detected, school administrators are contacted for further investigation.

For more information, please review the link below and/or feel free to contact Mears school administration at 907-742-6400. <https://www.gaggle.net/>

Mears Counselors Are Here to Help



[Mears Counseling](#)

[Counselor Help Ticket Link](#)



Fill out the Survey

Help Mears Become a School of Excellence



THE National PTA School of Excellence recognition program opens the lines of communication and critical thinking within school communities to make data-driven decisions that yield positive, long-term results.

Help Mears become a School of Excellence 4 Years in a row. Completion of this survey helps us know where we as a School and PTSA can improve.

<https://forms.gle/YNXRtuRvaruBA6tP7>

PTSA Leadership Wanted

We are still on the hunt for 2020/2021 Board members. President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. [Nomination Form](#)



Join Mears PTSA Membership and become part of an organization that is the leading Child advocacy group in 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 about the benefits at www.MearsPTSA.com

Congratulations to the Winners of our Membership Drive:

Parent Winner



Teacher Winner



Student Winner



Mears Panther Grants



Mears PTSA is now accepting Panther Grants Applications for Parents and Staff to submit. We have \$21,000 that will be rewarded to Parents/Students and Teachers/Staff. The amount awarded may vary with the number of requests. Every year Mears PTSA provides grants for staff but this year we are opening it up to families as well.

Submit by October 15.

These grant requests are for ways to help with making your student/s digital learning a little more successful.

Grant Request for Families

<https://forms.gle/Xy1cuoAkQxpAX2uM6>

Grant Request for Staff/Teachers

<https://forms.gle/qw3dBDVpWhwPm2Ft5>

I Matter Because...

2020-2021



CALL FOR ENTRIES:

What is Reflections? Watch this youtube video on what it is.
<https://youtu.be/IX-rzWHnY5Q>

Do you enjoy art, music, and dance or have an interest in writing, producing films, and taking photos? Then join us and have fun unleashing your inner artist with PTA Reflections! This year's theme, "I Matter Because..." calls for your own unique interpretation through the arts.

Pick up submission guidelines and an entry form today from www.MearsPTSA.com and return by **December 1, 2020**. **Submit digital copies of all entries to MearsMS.PTSA@gmail.com. Save original work for us to collect at a later time**

Divisions: Film Production, Visual Arts, Dance Choreographer, Music Composition, Special Artist, Photography, Group Dance, Cultural Heritage, and STEAM.

Student Entry Forms are found at www.MearsPTSA.com

For inspiration, visit the Reflections virtual art gallery and learn more about prizes and scholarships at PTA.org/Reflections/Awards.

Were on Facebook

Visit the School Store on Wednesdays

Mears PTSA will be open outdoors on the east side of Mears every Wednesday 10-2. Weather permitting. Call the office if you're unsure if we're set up. School Store is open. Orders clothes online or stop by www.MearsPTSA.com



Mears PTSA has had to slim down its budget due to school buildings being closed. The PTSA supports many events and grant programs at Mears and will continue to support them this year, even if they are held virtually. We ask that you continue to support the PTSA. To help, you can donate or purchase spirit wear.

Orders purchased by Wednesday will be ready for pick up on Friday between 8:45 and 2 pm.



Masks are available online.

**School Supply Kits are still available.
\$30-\$65.**

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](#)