



Mears Middle School

Panther Pride News

Respect, Responsibility, Creativity, and Academic Excellence

Friday, August 14, 2020

Welcome Back to School, Panthers!

The screenshot shows a Kahoot! quiz interface. The question is "Where can you find Canvas?". The score is 56. The correct answers are:

- Under "Students" on asdk12.org
- The Landing Pad on the Mears website
- canvas.asdk12.org
- All of the above

Ms. Holly Roberts leads an interactive Kahoot quiz about Canvas during this week's Panther Camp.

On Tuesday and Wednesday this week, Mears hosted two highly successful and well attended Panther Camp sessions. At Tuesday's event, Mears had the opportunity to welcome the new class of 7th graders. Wednesday's Panther Camp focused on returning 8th graders. Both events were, of course, designed to welcome students and give them a clearer sense of what to expect as we head into this new and especially unique school year. Mears teachers, Ms. Megan Perkins and Ms. Holly Roberts, led both events, and a number of additional teachers and faculty participated as well. Participating students learned about the new class schedule, the Canvas online learning platform, and even took a virtual tour of the school. Most importantly, Mears students were given the opportunity to begin to make important connections with their classmates and their teachers.

Dear Mears Families,

As we head into the new school year, I hope that you are all well and enjoying the last remaining days of summer.

This week, Mears teachers and staff have returned from their summer break and are busy preparing for the opening of school on Thursday, August 20. As you might imagine there is a tremendous amount to learn, as teachers and staff develop the means to deliver engaging curriculum and instruction virtually. Indeed, distance learning will require that all of us--teachers, students, parents, and families--adapt to new methods and routines, including the way we teach, learn, meet, communicate, and engage in activities together.



Still, despite all that is new, I want to assure our parents and families, and especially our students, that at Mears our highest priority is to foster and maintain strong and trusting relationships. Establishing quality and respectful bonds with our students remains the bedrock of our educational program, and this aspect of our school community remains constant, especially in the face of historical change.

In fact, this year at Mears we will be working harder than ever before to make sure that all of our students feel welcome and connected, and that they are part of a community that cares. We are excited to welcome all of our students back and we look forward to seeing them virtually on Thursday, August 20. Important information about class schedules, the Canvas online learning platform, and the daily school schedule appear below. Go Panthers! --Eric

Important Updates:

School Begins on Thursday, Aug. 20th

Daily Schedule:

Classes are held on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday

Wednesdays are a non-teaching, eLearning “Utility” Day. Students will use Wednesdays to study and complete assignments, and also to get extra help from teachers and staff. Mears is currently developing a Wednesday Help Schedule, which will be published in next week’s edition of *Panther Pride News*.

8:45 - 10:15am 1st Block

10:25 - 11:15 2nd Block

11:15 - 11:30 Nutrition Break

11:30 - 12:20 2nd Block continued

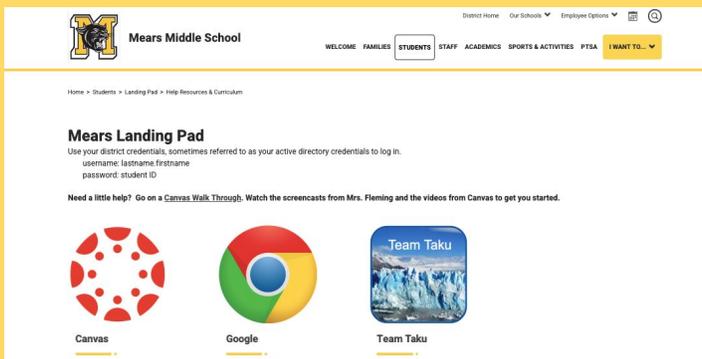
12:30 - 2:00 3rd Block

- Students must log into their classes using Zoom at the beginning of each session.
- Attendance will be taken.
- Student work will be assessed and graded
- Teachers will offer direct instruction for 30-45 minutes.
- Remainder of class period will be dedicated to work completion, study, discussion, Q & A, small group work, activities...

Student Schedules Available Next Week:

Finalized students schedules will be available for students and families to view in Q on Tuesday, August 18th.

Accessing Your Classes and Course Content:



Beginning next week, students may also view their classes and course content, along with their teacher's Zoom meeting links, through their Canvas page. Just visit the Landing Page under the Student tab on the Mears website for assistance in accessing Canvas.

<https://www.asdk12.org/domain/4940>

Schedule Change Requests:

Please note that Mears' ability to make schedule changes is limited this year, by the necessity to keep class sizes small. If and when we return to the school building for face-to-face instruction, class enrollment must be capped to ensure adequate social distancing.

Mears Counseling Services:



Mears counselors have returned to school!

Be sure to visit their webpage, which includes important contact information.

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



Ms. Caitlin Burr, Counselor, Team Echo and Team Blackstone

burr_caitlin@asdk12.org

907-742-6426



Mr. Brent Haugen, Counselor, Team Raven and Team Eklutna

haugen_brent@asdk12.org

907-742-6428



Ms. Crysta Svendsen, Team Muir and Team Surprise

svendsen_crysta@asdk12.org

907-742-6424

Review Zoom Classroom Expectations:

Students and their families are encouraged to review the following expectations for Zoom meeting etiquette. All teachers at Mears will expect students to abide by these rules.



Outreach to Mears Families, Wednesday, Aug. 19:



Next week, on the day before school starts, Mears teachers and staff will be calling home to all of our families. We believe strongly that establishing strong connections with our families will be critical to supporting all of our students this year. The purpose of the call is to welcome our students and to check in with families as we prepare to begin the school year at a distance.

ASD Technology Distribution:

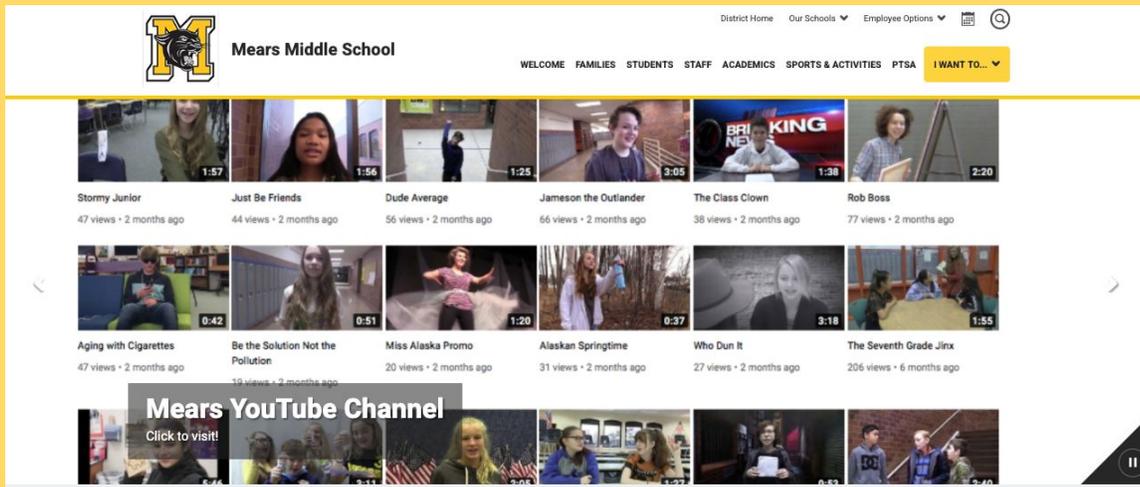
If your student needs a Chromebook device and/or internet connectivity, please send an email to Ms. Ava Goodman, Administrative Assistant, at Mears. You can call her as well. We will submit an application for technology on your behalf.

goodman_ava@asdk12.org

907-742-6400

Let's be sure that every student at Mears has the technology they need to fully access the curriculum and to be completely connected to their teachers and classmates!

Mears Website:



Mears students and families are encouraged to visit [Mears Middle School Website](#) regularly, as we continue to update information to support our community during this challenging time.



Memory Books Update

After a long wait, Mears Memory Books have been sent from the printer. Once they arrive, which should be sometime next week, we will notify our families of the distribution plan. This information will likely be included in next week's *Panther Pride News*.

Order School Supply Kits Now

Mears PTSA will be offering pre-orders of school supply kits. This was a bit hit last year, so we want to offer it again. Watch Mears PTSA Facebook page for when the order link goes live. Email MearsMS.PTSA@gmail.com.

Mears PTSA Leadership Positions Available

One of the best ways you can support students and teachers at Mears is to volunteer for PTSA Leadership.

**WANT TO BE PRESIDENT? 1ST VICE PRESIDENT?
2ND VICE PRESIDENT? SECRETARY? TREASURER?**

Nominations for next year's board are now being accepted. If you are interested, email us your nomination form which can be found on our website www.mearsptsa.com Our current board is termed out and has students that are moving on to High School. We need great leaders to help keep Mears PTSA running strong.

Mears PTSA Celebrates Teachers and Staff with Gifts



Special thanks goes out to Mears PTSA for their special delivery of Panther icon face masks and other essential supplies for the start of the year. On behalf of all the teachers and staff, thank you for your support and ongoing generosity. We couldn't do this without you! --Eric

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](http://www.mearsmiddle.com)