



Mears Middle School

# Panther Pride News

Respect, Responsibility, Creativity, and Academic Excellence

Friday, July 31, 2020

---

Greetings Mears Families,

Welcome to the 2020-21 school year! I hope that this message finds you and your family happy, healthy, and enjoying this beautiful summer weather.

For all those who are new to the Mears family, I wish you a warm welcome to our wonderful school community. For those returning to Mears, welcome back to another school year, which will be filled with exciting opportunities for continued learning and growth.

For all of us at Mears and throughout ASD, this year certainly promises a number of historic challenges. Yet, it is important to recognize that all the difficult questions and situations that we will face together offer a real opportunity for growth. Through creative-thinking and problem solving, building strong and respectful relationships, and by maintaining a clear focus on what is best for our students, we will continue to learn and grow as a school community.

As you are already likely aware, Mears Middle School, along with all ASD schools, will begin the year using a distance learning model. Of course, all of us would prefer to be with our students in the school building and in our classrooms learning and growing together. Yet, with the high rates of Covid transmission in our community, the risk to everyone's health and safety is just too great. Yesterday, ASD's superintendent, Dr. Deena Bishop, announced that district schools will be using the distance learning model for at least the first quarter of the school year, which will end in October. All of us hope that by this time the risk level posed by Covid will be considerably lower and we can return to the school building.

As we get ready for this unique school year, a number of families are asking important questions about the different options for school this year. To help address some of these questions, I have compiled a list of resources below, which I hope are helpful. I have also included a few important dates for upcoming meetings for our students and their families.

Tomorrow, ASD is hosting a Leadership Summit for all school administrators and leaders. The meeting will provide important information regarding many of the details about the opening of our schools on August 20th. I am committed to keeping everyone in our community as informed as possible and will surely be sending updates to all of our families in the days and weeks ahead.

In the meantime, I hope you all continue to enjoy the long and sunny days of summer. I look forward to connecting with all of you soon and to the start of the school year. Take care and stay healthy.

Here's to a great school year! Go Panthers!



Eric Backman  
Principal

[Mears School Website](#)

# Important Dates for Students and Families:

In order to keep our school community as informed as possible, Mears has scheduled two virtual informational meetings next week on Thursday, Aug. 6, and Friday, Aug. 7. Parents, families, and students are all welcome to join either one of these events with the principal and other staff members to learn about the upcoming school year and to address any questions you may have. You can find the meeting invitations and Zoom links below:

## **Welcome to Mears Community Meeting**

**Thursday, Aug 6, 2020 06:00 PM Alaska**

Meeting link:

<https://asdk12.zoom.us/j/94007064792?pwd=OFZtTG9yVzhZb05xQ0tFWUN2a0pCZz09>

Meeting ID: 940 0706 4792

Passcode: 261686

## **Welcome to Mears Community Meeting**

**Friday, Aug 7, 2020 02:00 PM Alaska**

Meeting link:

<https://asdk12.zoom.us/j/92045288697?pwd=dWV2VldzbDhOTjZBanlIUeptejNlZz09>

Meeting ID: 920 4528 8697

Passcode: 638195

## **Virtual Student Orientation Dates:**

**Tuesday, August 11, 9:30-11:00am -- 7th Graders**

**Wednesday, August 12, 9:30-11:00am -- 8th Graders**

More information about the orientation meetings, including Zoom links, will be sent to families during the week of Aug. 3-7.

## **First Day of School:**

**Thursday, August 20**

# Important Resources:

## Virtual School and Homeschool Options

<https://www.asdk12.org/Page/15662>

If you are considering options other than ASD's "In-School" option, here is the link to information about both the Virtual and Homeschool choices.

## Airplane Arms: Navigating Back to School Episode 3

<https://asdk12.co/310a0Pq>



This is an informational video that discusses the various differences between ASD's In-School and Virtual School options.

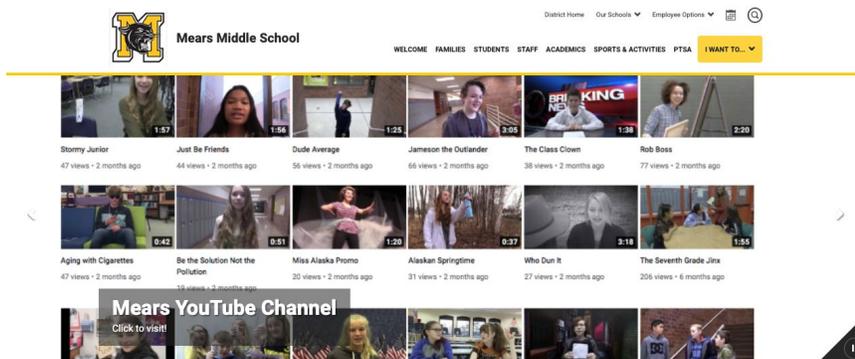
## School Start Plan

For families with important questions about ASD's school start plan, please visit:

<https://www.asdk12.org/2020start>

Here all school start information is available, including links to important information related to Covid-19 and ASD's Risk-level Matrix, school safety plan, and operational guidelines.

## 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

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Mears Memory Books ordered last Spring still have yet to arrive from the printer. Mears PTSA anticipates that the books will arrive sometime in August. Once they are here, we will coordinate a distribution plan and get them out to all the families that placed an order. Thank you for your continued patience.

## Order School Supply Kits Now

The Mears PTSA will be offering pre orders of school supply kits. This was a big hit last year. So they wanted to offer it again. Pre-Orders will begin the week of July 20th. Watch their Facebook Page, [mearsptsacom](https://www.facebook.com/mearsptsacom) for when the pre order link goes live. Elective supply kits will be available once schedules are distributed.

The PTSA is also still on the hunt for incoming officers. The current officers children have moved onto high school but they are graciously getting the PTSA up and running for this year. If you are interested in volunteering your time to hold a position on the board. Email them at [mearsms.pts@gmail.com](mailto:mearsms.pts@gmail.com)

PE clothing, Spirit wear and last year's team clothing will be available for purchase next week as well.

---

## 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? 2 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](http://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 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](#)