



Mears Middle Schools

Panther Pride News

Respect, Responsibility, Creativity, and Academic Excellence

Friday, August 12, 2022

Mears Welcomes New Students



Mears 7th graders enjoying their first tour of the school during Panther Camp on Friday.

Mears Parents and Families,

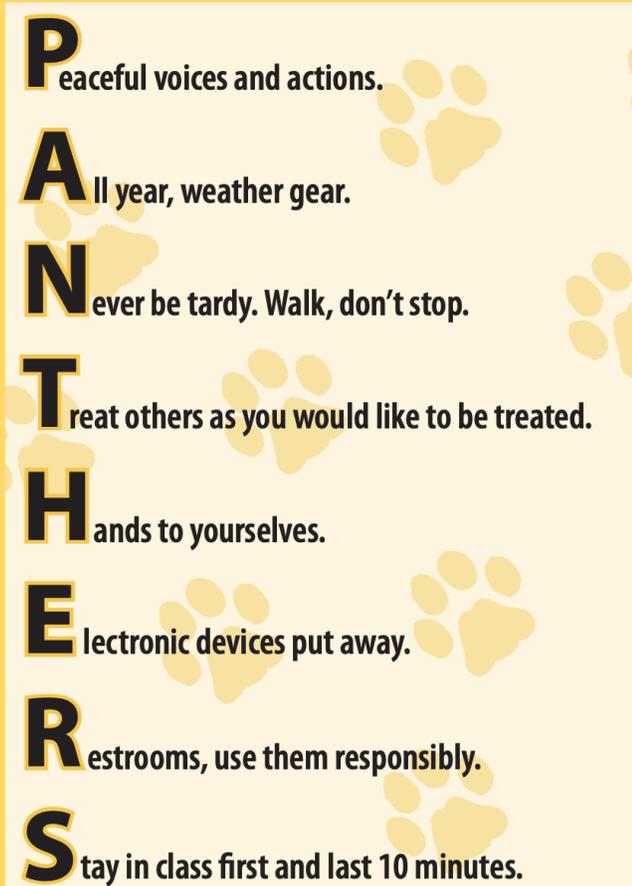
This week, Mears Middle School welcomed the students, parents, and families of the new 7th grade class, along with a number of new 8th grade families who will join the Mears Family this year. Our new students enjoyed two great days of Panther Camp, which was led by a number of dedicated members of Mears staff who returned early to help students get a strong start to the school year. I am excited to report that enrollment is quite strong this year, with 750 students registered and set to begin the year on Thursday, August 18th. Mears teachers and staff will be returning to school on Monday, Aug. 15, to ready their classrooms and prepare the first lessons of the year. All of us at Mears are looking forward to a great school year and to providing all of our students with exceptional opportunities to learn, grow, and have lots of fun!

Go Panthers! – –Eric Backman, Principal

Things to Know on your First Day...

Be Respectful, Responsible, & Safe

Community Expectations



Mears Policies & Procedures to Note:

- Cell Phones/Electronic Devices - No cell phone use from 8:00 am -2:45 pm in Hallways or at Lunch. Teachers will determine use in classrooms.
- Dress Code/Decorum - School appropriate to maintain safe, focused, and respectful learning environment
- **Backpacks, Purses, Handbags** or other assorted personal storage items must be stored and locked in individual lockers. They cannot be carried about during the day, with the EXCEPTION of Mears Tote Bags. These can be purchased in the main office or at the school store.

Stay Informed/Get Involved

Upcoming Events for Students, Parents, Families



Mears Incredible Main Office Staff Welcomes You!

Ms. Hayley Adams-Kelly, Registrar

Ms. Ava Goodman, Administrative Assistant

Ms. Robin Spartz-Hays, Budget and Finance

All families of returning ASD students are reminded that you need to register online for the new school year. If you have not done so already, be sure to register here:

[ASD Parent Connect Portal](#)

Next Week's Calendar:

Monday, Aug. 15 – Teacher and Staff Work Day at Mears, 8:00am-3:30pm

Tuesday, Aug. 16 – Teacher Cross-District In-service Day

Wednesday, Aug. 17 – Teacher and Staff PD Day at Mears, 8:00-3:30pm

Thursday, Aug. 18 – First Day of School, classes begin 8:15am, school doors open at 7:30am for early arrivals, with supervision in the MPR. The MPR will remain open to students until 3:30pm for late pick up.

Friday, Aug. 19 – Regular School Day

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Mears Main Office at 907-742-6400. We look forward to welcoming each and every one of you to Mears Middle School for the 2022-23 school year. **-Go Panthers!**

ASD Transportation Update

ASD families are likely now aware that there will be limited transportation services provided by the district. The situation is the result of a shortage of bus drivers. As a result, the district has instituted a rotating schedule of transportation service, which will impact all schools. ASD is working hard to fill vacancies through aggressive recruitment efforts. The district is also working with the Municipality and other agencies to find solutions to this challenge.

Unfortunately, Mears will not have any bus service to begin the year, during Cohort 1. Mears will have one bus line running during Cohort 2, #61. Mears busses #80-87 will all run during Cohort 3. See below for Cohort bussing schedule:

Cohort 1 (Bus #1-38): Aug. 18-Sept. 9

Cohort 2 (Bus #39-77): Sept. 12-Sept. 30

Cohort 3 (Bus #78-116): Oct. 3-Oct. 20

As of today, Friday, Aug. 12, ASD has made available individual bus schedules and information for all students. Please visit [Q ParentConnect](#) to see your student's schedule.

Here's a step-by-step guide for accessing Q Parent Connect:
<https://confluence.asdk12.org/x/QQP6Cg>

Mears Transportation Plan

Due to ASD's transportation shortage, Mears will adjust student drop-off and pick-up locations to accommodate for more cars. Additionally, Mears will be open and supervised for early drop-off at 7:30am and will extend supervision at the end of the day until 3:30pm. Students who arrive early or stay late must be in the MPR.

To minimize the number of cars entering the Mears parking lot, families are encouraged to consider safe alternatives to get to school, including walking and riding a bike. Please be sure that students are appropriately dressed for cold weather and that they have reflective clothing when it gets dark. Bike riders should always wear a helmet.

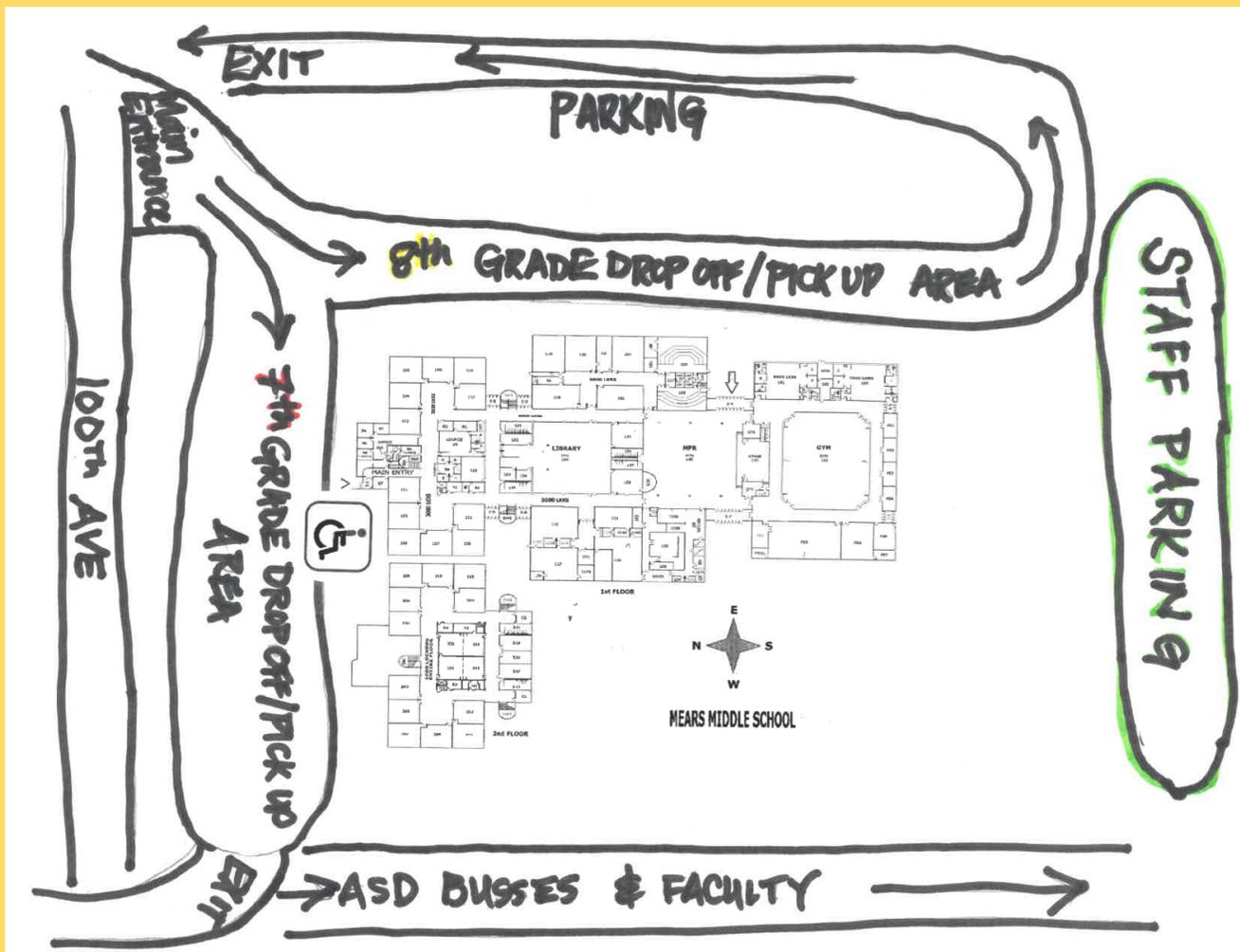
Families are encouraged to consider carpooling whenever possible.

Additionally, families who will be driving to school should plan on an early arrival and also consider safe alternative places in the neighborhood to drop their children off. This will help prevent bottleneck traffic in the mornings and afternoons in the campus parking lot.

Student Drop-Off and Pick-Up Information

Student drop-off and pick-up areas will include two distinct zones, one for 7th graders and the other for 8th graders. The zone for 7th grade drop-off and pick-up will be in the lot in front of the main office (front/north side of school). The 8th grade zone will be along the east side of the school in front of the MPR. Parent drivers will all enter the lot through the main entrance. Staff will be present to help guide drivers. Signage will be posted throughout the parking areas. Parking for people with disabilities will remain in the front of the main office.

Please note 7th and 8th grade drop off zone areas below:



Mears Activities Update

Mears Students and Families,

Welcome to the 2022-23 school year, which will provide our students with many incredible opportunities to learn and grow through academic and extracurricular activities.

Please be sure to read *Mears Panther Pride News* every week to stay up-to-date on all activities-related information.

Sports & Activities: Get Involved! Middle school is a great time to try new things and meet new people. Here at Mears we have an amazing array of activities & sports for everyone. Below is a list of the upcoming Interscholastic and Intramural options. Here is a direct link to our Sports & Activities on our [Mears Website](#) for more information on signing up. You can find the sign up forms on our website. Once completed, [scan](#) and email the forms to our AAFF: spartz-hays_robin@asdk12.org or forms can be dropped off at the main office between periods 1 & 2 *Fee waivers are granted based on need.

22-23 SPORTS & ACTIVITIES	SEASON START:	SEASON END:
Cross Country Running	August 22nd	October 6th
Basketball - Girls	August 22nd	October 8th
Baseball (Baseball is coordinated by American Legion.)	Spring	Spring
Softball (Softball is coordinated by Anchorage Sports Association)	Spring	Spring
Wrestling	October 17th	December 7rd
Volleyball	October 17th	December 10th
Cross Country Skiing	January 12th	March 2nd
Basketball - Boys	January 10th	March 3rd
Track & Field	March 6th	May 8th
Soccer	Spring 2022	Spring 2022
Archery 1	September 13th	October 8th
Archery 2 (same as 1 but with differe	January 11th	February 5th
Native Youth Olympics	TBA	TBA
Tennis	April 18th	May 13th

ASD
MIDDLE
SCHOOL
BASEBALL

Starting Week of August 22, 2022
Sign-up now through
Alaska Legion Baseball

Contact Kathleen Navarre
(907)441-4373
knavarre32@gmail.com

SCAN ME

Register now at: www.alaskalegion.com

For Boys and Girls
All Skill Levels Welcome.
Practices are after school.
Games mostly on Saturdays in
September on turf fields.
ASD Hardship Waiver
available on registration.




Mears Counseling Corner

Mears is fortunate to have two exceptional counselors, Ms. Teresa Harrison (7th graders) and Ms. Caitlin Burr (8th graders), who bring a wealth of experience, compassion, insight, and professionalism to our school community. Ms. Harrison and Ms. Burr are already busy at school, working to finalize student schedules. We are thrilled to announce that Mears has already met its enrollment projection for 2022-23 (750 students), so we can anticipate that most classes will be full. While our counselors always do their best to create schedules that include student's first choice requests for electives, it is not always possible for students to get all of their requests right away. Please keep in mind that over the course of their two years at Mears, the vast majority of students will have the opportunity to take all of the electives they have requested.



Teresa Harrison, 7th Grade
harrison_teresa@asdk12.org
907-742-6428



Caitlin Burr, 8th Grade
burr_caitlin@asdk12.org
907-742-6424

Mears Student Health Update

A Message from Ms. Karin Richards, Mears School Nurse:



Hello, Mears families and welcome to the 22-23 school year! I look forward to seeing familiar faces and meeting incoming students and families. I wanted to send out important reminders for the beginning of the school year. Immunizations are the first topic. ASD has a policy of "No shots, No school" and we will be strictly adhering to this policy this school year. Please make sure your student's vaccinations are up to date. If you have a medical exemption, this will last the entirety of your student's education with ASD. Religious exemptions need to be renewed each year and

must be notarized. Both medical and religious exemptions can be hand delivered, faxed or emailed to me. Here is a link to immunization requirements

<https://www.asdk12.org/Page/6617>.



PTSA General Meeting Schedule: All Mears Community Members are Welcome -- Second Wednesday of each month

Semester 1: Sept. 14, Oct. 12, Nov. 9, Dec. 14

Semester 2: Jan 11, Feb. 8, Mar. 8, Apr. 12, May 10

Topic: Mears PTSA General Meeting

Time: Sep 14, 2022 05:30 PM Alaska

[PTSA Zoom Meeting Link](#)

Meeting ID: 981 2989 0912

Passcode: 986530

Be Sure to Get Your Mears Gear for 2022-23!



PTSA is proud to announce its new online store. Items can be purchased online and delivered directly to your home. <https://mearsptsa.squarespace.com/>

Parents and Family Members, please consider supporting Mears PTSA by becoming a volunteer, which is a fun and valuable way to support our students and teachers.

PTSA Volunteer Interest Form:

<https://forms.gle/P8yYKMPSuwzPR2ZU8>

A Helpful and Caring Staff



Mears teachers and staff are committed to helping students whenever they need it. Here is Mr. Matthew Bennice guiding a group of students during Panther Camp, as they learn how to open a combination lock. A special thanks goes out to all the teachers and staff who assisted with Panther Camp this year. The event was a huge success!



We are on Dena'ina Homeland

Mears Middle School acknowledges that we operate and gather on the traditional land of the Dena'ina Peoples and honor, with gratitude, the land itself and the people who have stewarded it throughout the generations.

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](#)