



JANUARY, 2026 TIGER TALES

Taku Elementary Kaitlin Tallman, Principal



Principal's Corner, Kaitlin Tallman

Dear Taku Families,

Happy New Year! I hope you and your children had a joyful, restful winter break filled with special moments together. As we begin a new year, I am excited to welcome our students back to school and start fresh with renewed energy, goals, and enthusiasm for learning. Thank you to everyone for their kind words as I was out on maternity leave. We welcomed a 2nd baby boy to our family.

We are hoping for more sleep at night soon.

Looking Ahead to January

January is a wonderful time for setting goals and building positive habits. In our classrooms, students will be reviewing routines, reflecting on their progress, and challenging themselves academically and socially. Teachers will continue supporting students in developing strong academic skills.

Attendance Matters

Regular attendance is essential to student success. Each day at school provides valuable learning experiences that are difficult to replace. We appreciate your continued support in ensuring your child arrives on time and ready to learn each day. Students who attend school 90% of each month get to participate in our Attendance Parades!

Cold Weather Reminders

IT'S COLD OUTSIDE! As winter weather continues, please remember to send your child to school dressed appropriately for the cold. We go outside for recess up to -10, so coats, hats, snow pants, boots, and gloves are essential. If you need winter gear, please let us know!

A Note of Appreciation

Thank you for your ongoing partnership and support. Our school community is strongest when families and staff work together, and we are grateful for your involvement and trust. We look forward to a positive and productive January.

Wishing you and your family a happy, healthy, and successful start to the new year!

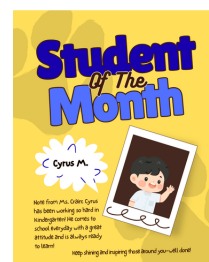
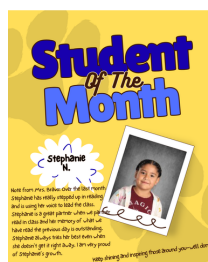
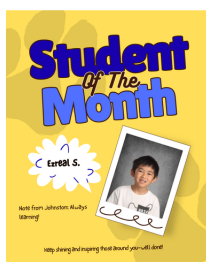
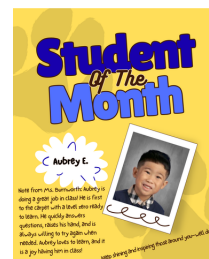
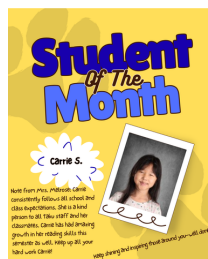
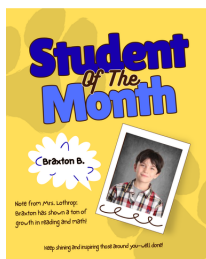
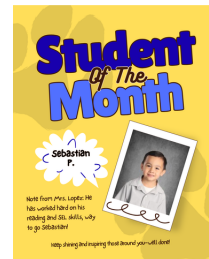
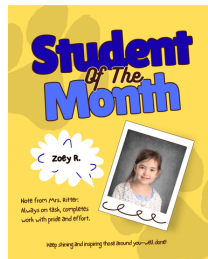
Warm regards,
Kaitlin Tallman, Principal

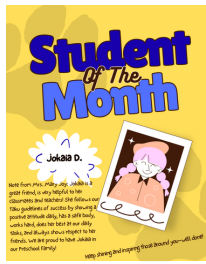
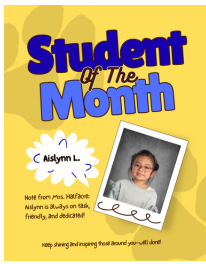
December Students of the Month

Congratulations to our Taku Tigers Students of the Month!

These students have been recognized by their teachers for their hard work, kindness, and positive impact in the classroom. We're so proud of the way they represent our school community!

Check out the pictures below with the wonderful notes their teachers shared about them. Way to go, Tigers!





Attendance Parade Info!

**DECEMBER
ATTENDANCE
PARADE**

We are celebrating those students who had 90% attendance in December! Help us cheer them on in the halls!
Families are welcome to come celebrate with us!

**TUESDAY JANUARY 13TH @
8:10AM**



JOIN US FOR OUR
FUNdraising
 EVENT at **CHUCK E. CHEESE**[®]
 Turning Fun into Funds

WE'LL GET
20%

BACK FROM ALL SALES

generated from food & gameplay at our event!
 This includes dine-in and carryout orders
 when our organization is mentioned.

CHUCK E. CHEESE
BUY 1, GET 1 FREE*
ADVENTURE ZONE ADMISSION

EXPIRES 12/31/26
 *Coupon type 35. May not be combined with Membership or Fun Pass redemption or discounts. At participating Chuck E. Cheese locations. Redeemable on the night of hosted fundraiser event. Limit 1 per guest. Coupon must be surrendered at the time of redemption. Height restrictions apply. Subject to change. ©2025 CEC Entertainment Concepts, L.P. All rights reserved.

EVENT INFORMATION

LOCATION: **CHUCK E. CHEESE**

TIME: 3:00pm - 9:00pm

ORGANIZATION: Taku Elementary

EVENT DATE: Friday, January 9th

EVENT ADDRESS:

308 E Northern Lights Blvd

Anchorage, AK 99503

To find out more, check out chuckecheese.com

CHUCK E. CHEESE
120 PLAY POINTS | for \$ 30

EXPIRES 12/31/26
 *Coupon type 18. Redeemable in-store only at your Chuck E. Cheese fundraiser event. Limit 1 per transaction. Valid at participating locations. Play Pass card or band activation required and is not redeemable. May not be combined with any other coupon, promotion or discount. May not be combined with Membership or Fun Pass redemption or discounts. Play Pass terms apply. ©2025 CEC Entertainment Concepts, L.P. All rights reserved.

CHUCK E. CHEESE
 \$ 29.99 | 1 Large 1-Topping Pizza & 4 Regular Fountain Drinks

EXPIRES 12/31/26
 *Coupon type 18. Redeemable in-store only at your Chuck E. Cheese fundraiser event. Limit 1 per transaction. Valid at participating locations. Additional toppings are at cost. May not be combined with any other coupon, promotion or discount. May not be combined with Membership or Fun Pass redemption or discounts. Restrictions may apply. ©2025 CEC Entertainment Concepts, L.P. All rights reserved.

*At participating locations only. Must book your fundraiser event at least 3 weeks in advance. Sales include all game play, food, drinks and merchandise purchased at the registers the night of fundraiser when your school or organization is mentioned upon ordering. Delivery & Carryout Orders placed directly at chuckecheese.com also apply when you add the item "School or Organ Funderiser" to your cart before check-out. ©2025 CEC Entertainment Concepts, L.P. All rights reserved. CEC-25-0249

Safe Arrival and Dismissal Procedures
Parking Lot Safety
Transportation Expectations

Please visit our website below for more information about our [Arrival/Dismissal Expectations](#).

Taku's Amazon Wishlist

We've created an Amazon Wishlist with items that would greatly benefit our students. If you're able, please take a moment to look through it and consider purchasing a few items. If you know someone who may be willing to contribute, feel free to share the link with them. Any support is appreciated, and it would mean a lot to all of us!

Thank you so much for your generosity!

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1QGLMK40TPPSK/ref=hz_ls_biz_ex

Specialist News

Art with Liz Feucht

Welcome back! This month in Art Class, students are asking "Where do artists get their ideas?" In many cases, artists get their ideas by exploring different materials and trying new things. Sometimes things work as expected, sometimes they don't. Either way, artists learn something new in the process. When your child makes or brings home something unexpected, talk about what they learned. Try asking things like:

- How did you make this artwork?
- What materials did you use?
- How did you get your ideas?
- What is something you learned while making this?
- What would you like to call it?
- What makes it special?

Thanks for supporting art in your home!

Ms. Liz



Health with Katrina Rhodes



New Year's Resolutions: Making Goals That Stick

Simply deciding to make a change is not enough to make it happen. You must make an action plan and stick with it for lasting change.

- Start small—don't make too many goals at once. Keep your goals measurable and realistic.
- Make a plan with simple steps and write it down.
- Tell someone—you and your child can share and compare progress on your goals. Try checking in every day on the way to school or at dinner time.
- Forgive yourself and adjust—Achieving your goal is not a race. The key is to just keep moving forward. If you are not reaching the steps you laid out for yourself, adjust your steps and continue on.
- Congratulate yourself—even small successes are worth congratulating yourself over!
- Bonus: Ask your child what they have learned about Setting Goals with The Great Body Shop and put these to work, too.

Learn more here: <http://bit.ly/2z1pcja>



Attendance Matters...a lot!

A day here and there may not seem like a big deal, but it adds up! As little as 15 days a year (That's 2 days a month) could seriously impact your child's learning. Missing this much school is considered chronic absence. Chronically absent kids are less likely to read at their grade level, stay on top of their school work, or make it to their high school graduation.

Parents, you are key to making sure your child gets to school as much as possible! Here are some pointers:

- Find out if there is something making your child not want to go to school, such as anxiety, depression, or bullying. If so, start talking to your child's teacher and school to work on solutions.
- Create a relationship with your child's teacher and school. They can help make school feel like a place your child wants to be and help your child not fall behind in class.
- Plan appointments and vacations outside of school hours.
- Set a regular bedtime and morning routine.
- Have your child join clubs, sports teams, or other activities that encourage regular school attendance.

Watch this video to learn more: <http://bit.ly/1JA98j7>

Now that you know why your child's attendance is so important, go back to the December issue of Family Connection and reread "How Sick Is Too Sick?" for tips on deciding when your child really shouldn't go to school.



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Making Meals Meaningful (and fun!)



Mealtimes are the perfect opportunity to connect with your child and teach healthy eating habits. Here are some tips for making dinner time the best it can be:

1. Remove distractions and talk to each other—Turn off the TV and cell phones so that your attention is on each other. Talk about your day in fun ways, such as "Rose, Thorn, and Bud." Learn about "Rose, Thorn, and Bud" below.
2. Offer your child variety—Don't give up if your child doesn't like the taste of a specific food. You'll be surprised how often kids will end up liking food they try prepared in different ways.
3. Let your child

help out in the kitchen—Younger kids may like to help set the table with napkins and silverware, while older kids might want to help prepare foods. Getting involved will help build a healthy, positive relationship with cooking and food.

4. Mix things up—Try make-your-own dishes, such as tacos or personal pizzas, or take dinner to a local park for a picnic.

Find family-friendly recipe ideas here: <https://whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/>

Rose, Thorn, and Bud Game

Rose, Thorn, and Bud is a game that will encourage you and your child to share and learn about each other's day. It is also a great way to encourage your child to reflect and express gratitude. Maybe you will learn something new about each other!

Here's how you play:

Take turns sharing your daily rose, thorn, and bud. Your **rose** is the best part of your day, your **thorn** is something disappointing that happened, and your **bud** is something that you are looking forward to.

Play during dinner or bed time and make it a nightly tradition!



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Note from Nurse Ellie

Welcome Back!

Welcome back and Happy New Year! I hope your family had a restful winter break. As we settle back into school routines, January is a great time to focus on **winter safety**, staying warm, and helping students return to healthy habits after time away

Health Focus of the Month: Winter Safety, Frostnip & Snow Gear

Why it's important:

Cold winter temperatures increase the risk of **frostnip** and discomfort during outdoor play. Wearing proper snow gear and recognizing early signs of cold exposure helps keep children safe and able to enjoy recess and outdoor activities.

What is Frostnip?

Frostnip is the **early stage of frostbite**. It can cause pale or red skin, tingling, numbness, or pain—most often on fingers, toes, ears, noses, or cheeks. Frostnip is usually reversible when treated quickly.

Tips for Parents & Students:

- Dress in **warm layers**: base layer, insulating layer, and waterproof outer layer
- Send full **snow gear daily**: winter coat, snow pants, hat, gloves or mittens, boots
- Choose **mittens over gloves** when possible—they keep fingers warmer
- Keep skin covered—hats and neck warmers protect ears and cheeks
- Remind children to tell an adult if fingers or toes feel numb or painful

Nurse's Notes

- **Please label all winter gear**—many items look alike and labeling helps gear get back to the right child quickly.
- **Extra clothes help!** Wet mittens or snow pants can make kids cold fast. A spare set is always helpful.
- **Need winter gear?** If your family needs help with coats, snow pants, gloves, or boots, please reach out—we are happy to help connect you with resources.
- **Illness reminders:** Keep children home if they have a fever, vomiting, or other contagious symptoms.

Healthy Habit of the Month

Return to routine

After winter break, consistent bedtimes, healthy meals, and regular hydration help children adjust back to school and support their immune systems during cold weather.

Contact the Nurse

907-742-5948

smith_ellie@asdk12.org

Thank you for helping keep our students safe, warm, and healthy this winter. I'm looking forward to a great start to the new year!

Nurse Ellie



Important Dates



No School - 1/19

Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday



Chuck E. Cheese

FUNdraising - 1/9

From 3:00pm - 9:00pm



PTA Meeting - 1/6

Come and join our PTA meeting from 5:30pm - 7:00pm

at the Starbucks on Dimond!

Also! Please follow our PTA Facebook with the link below.

<https://www.facebook.com/share/g/17N1pBj7mH/>

Thank You for your donation!

A big thank you to Great Alaska Pizza Co. for their generous donation of pizza for our Students of the Month! We're proud to celebrate these amazing students and their accomplishments.



THE BULLETIN BOARD, Office Ladies

HI TAKU FAMILIES!

Just some friendly reminders:

- Absences can be reported in parent connect. If you are planning a vacation please let the office know so we can enter a pre-arranged absence.
- Students who arrive to school at or after 8am (9am on Mondays) need to come through the front office to get marked tardy.



- We are striving to achieve an attendance rate of 90% or higher. Please take a moment to review the procedure, and let's keep attendance on point—because every day counts! [Attendance Procedures](#)
- If you're coming into the office at dismissal, please park in a designated spot and avoid stopping in the pick-up lane. This helps keep traffic moving smoothly. Thank you for your cooperation!

~ Rachel **Musselman** (AA) and Rachel **Ketchum** (Secretary) ~

Become a Taku School Business Partner!

Are you a local business looking to make a big difference in your community? Taku Elementary is seeking School Business Partners (SBPs) to join us in supporting our students and staff. Whether it's a small donation or a larger contribution, **every bit counts**—and every act of generosity helps us provide more for our amazing kids and dedicated team.

If you or someone you know is interested in partnering with us, please reach out at **907-742-5940** or asktaku@asdk12.org. We'd love to connect!

Important Update: New Pick-Up Change Policy

We will no longer be able to accommodate pick-up changes after 2:15pm, except in the case of an emergency. Late changes create unnecessary confusion in the office, as we need to locate students, verify bus routes, and ensure timely dismissals. We also want to avoid delays for students on the buses. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in helping us maintain a smooth end-of-day routine.

Volunteering at Taku

If you are interested in volunteering at Taku this upcoming year, please fill out the volunteer form ASAP. This must be done every school year. Parents who filled out the form last year will need to reapply.

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSft2SM758xCY0fkBu7cYj6vdYGO4RRJt7LFAqrCKaQD_HMwPMg/viewform

We encourage families to do this now, that way, as events, field trips and other volunteer opportunities arise you won't have to scramble last minute. The volunteer process includes a background check and can take up to 5 business days before ASD's Office of Equity approves or denies your application. Once we have received the approval/denial we will email you to let you know.



Taku Elementary

Email: asktaku@asdk12.org

Website: <https://www.asdk12.org/taku>

Location: [701 East 72nd Avenue, Anchorage, AK, USA](#)

Phone: [907-742-5940](tel:907-742-5940)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/taku365/>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/taku_elementary365/



Taku Elementary

Taku is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters