



APRIL, 2026 TIGER TALES

Taku Elementary Kaitlin Tallman, Principal



Principal's Corner, Kaitlin Tallman

Dear Taku Families,

Happy April! As we welcome the arrival of spring, we are excited to embrace student growth and continued learning at Taku. The energy in our classrooms is strong as we are working hard to the final stretch of the year. As we gain light, remember to maintain good sleep schedules at home so students come in fresh and ready to learn! Consistent attendance remains essential for

student success - every day provides meaningful learning opportunities.

This Friday we are excited to celebrate our Kinder - 3rd graders who were #1 in the District in Reading growth at the middle of the year assessment! Join us for catered breakfast beginning at 7:00 in the gym. We'll look ahead for our End of Year Goals while we eat and celebrate!

Upcoming Events:

AK STAR Testing: 3/30 (Science), 3/31 (Reading), 4/1 (Math)

4/3 - Breakfast Celebration at 7:00 in the gym

4/10 - Taku Chuck E Cheese Night

Warm regards,

Kaitlin Tallman, Principal

mClass

2025 - 2026

As part of The Alaska Reads Act, the State of Alaska requires that districts administer an early literacy screening tool three times a year to students in grades K-3 to identify potential reading difficulties in order to improve reading outcomes for students. Families can read more about this comprehensive K-3 reading policy at The Alaska Reads Act website: education.alaska.gov/akreads

mClass with DIBELS 8th Edition Assessments is the State of Alaska Department of Education's and ASD's Early Literacy benchmark screening and progress monitoring tool for students in grades K-3 in reading. mClass utilizes curriculum-based measures and is used by schools as part of the ASD Comprehensive Assessment System to support informed instructional decisions.

The Alaska Department of Education & Early Development explains the decision to adopt mClass as the statewide literacy screener here:

<https://education.alaska.gov/Alaska-Reading-Resources/Statewide-Early-Literacy-Screener>

mClass screening assessments will only be administered in-person during the benchmark window listed below:

- Spring 2026: April 20 - May 1
- Makeup Window - May 4 - 8, 2026

Results for K-3 students that were assessed during a benchmark window, will be available in Parent Connect by May 15, 2026 [ParentConnection Login Information and Reference Guide](#):
parentconnect.asdk12.org

2026 AK STAR and Alaska Science Assessment

Each spring, Alaskan students are provided an opportunity to show what they know. When students show what they know, teachers and parents can partner to promote student success. The State of Alaska Department of Education has partnered with NWEA to align and connect the English language arts (ELA) and mathematics tests with the MAP Growth benchmark assessments students take in fall and winter.

This balanced assessment system targets instruction to better support meeting students' individual learning needs. In addition, students will take only one assessment per content area (ELA and math) and be provided two scores as follows:

1. Summative assessment result at grade-level
2. MAP Growth interim benchmark result, including growth from fall to spring

AK STAR, the Alaska System of Academic Readiness, is comprised of English language arts and mathematics and is administered to students in grades 3-9. The Alaska Science Assessment is administered to students in grades 5, 8 and 10. The purpose of a large-scale, summative assessment is to provide parents and schools an overall picture of a student's progress in meeting the Alaska standards at grade level.

Parents can locate resources for AK STAR and the Alaska Science Assessment, including directions for Student Readiness (Practice Tests and Tutorials), student testing times and general assessment information on the ASD website at <https://www.asdk12.org/akstar>.

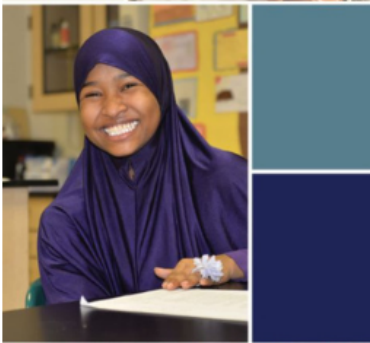
Parents can also help by ensuring their children are well rested, eat a nutritious breakfast, and are at school on time for the days of testing. Please avoid scheduling appointments on your child's testing days.

The ASD AK STAR and Alaska Science Assessment testing window allows for school assessment scheduling flexibility. Students! Get ready to show what you know during our school's AK STAR and Alaska Science Assessment testing dates: 3/30 - Science, 3/31 - Reading, and 4/1 - Math

**2026 ASD AK STAR and Alaska Science Assessment Testing Window:
March 30-April 17**

(Make-ups through May 1)

State of Alaska Window: March 30-May 1



**Anchorage School District, Title I
Family, Staff and Community Advisory Committee**

- Do you have a child who attends a Title I School?
- Have you ever wondered what it means to be in a Title I School?
- Are you looking for an opportunity to meet with other families to talk about your child's education and the direction of Title I?

Then this Advisory Committee is for YOU!

Purpose

- Review Title I program details.
 - Represent and express the ideas and opinions of the families from your school.
 - Share Title I information with families and the general public.
- Evaluate and advocate how the family engagement program is working and determine what steps need to be taken to improve it.

Meeting Date & Time:

Wednesday, April 15th

5:30 PM -7:00 PM

ASD Education Center Board Room
Dinner and childcare will be provided

Location:

5530 E. Northern Lights Blvd.

More Information:

Meg'n Gall gall_megn@asdk12.org

Jen Buchanan buchanan_jennifer@asdk12.org

907-742-6036

RSVP



Head Lice - 10 Steps To Stay Ahead



HEAD LICE – 10 STEPS
TO STAY AHEAD HANDOUT

HEAD LICE (or pediculosis) are annoying little insects that live on the human scalp and feed on blood. They are a small, tan-colored critter (less than 1/8 long). They may live for days or weeks depending on temperature and humidity. They deposit tiny, gray/white eggs, known as “nits”, on the shaft of hair 3 – 4mm from the scalp because the eggs need the warmth from the scalp for hatching. They cannot live for more than 48 hours away from the scalp as adult insects, and eggs cannot hatch at temperatures lower than those found close to the scalp. Lice do not carry disease but are a nuisance. They are not sign of uncleanness; they love clean hair because it is easier to hold on to! Lice are transmitted by direct contact, head to head. They crawl, they do not fly or hop. Once discovered, child must stay home only until they have been treated.

STAYING AHEAD OF HEAD LICE:

1. Watch for signs/symptoms of head lice: excessive itching or scratching head especially behind ears and nape of neck.
2. Check family members for lice and nits/eggs at least once a week. It helps to use natural light and a magnifying glass.
3. Treat only family members who have lice. Treatment of choice over the counter/prescription medication that kill head lice and nits.
4. Use these specialized shampoos exactly as instructed to be most effective. Use product over sink. Keep eyes covered with washcloth.
5. Removing all nits (eggs) with a special fine-toothed comb is the most effective way to get rid of them. This may be a tedious job.
6. Wash infested articles that can be laundered at 130 F (54.4 C) and dried on the hot setting. (hats, pillows, bedding, clothing, etc)
7. Toys, personal articles, bedding, other fabrics, and upholstered furniture that cannot be laundered with hot water and a dryer or dry-cleaned can be kept away from people (in a plastic bag) for more than 2 days if there is concern of infestation.
8. Head lice can live for 1 -2 day away from the scalp; chemical treatment of the environment is not necessary. Vacuum floors, carpets, mattresses, and furniture.
9. Continue to check head daily for at least 2-3 weeks after discovery. Removing nits EVERY day for 3 weeks is the most effective treatment
10. Help prevent lice infestation by encouraging your child not to engage in activity that causes head to head contact.

Contact your School Nurse if you have questions

SCHOOL

SCHOOL NURSE

PHONE

Taku Elementary
Kinder - 3rd Grade

BREAKFAST CELEBRATION



**JOIN US FOR
A DELICIOUS
MORNING!**

7:00AM - 7:40AM

APRIL 3, 2026 IN THE GYM

Taku's Kinder - 3rd graders are #1 in the District amongst Title I schools for Reading Achievement! Let's celebrate!!

Join us for Taku's

March Attendance Parade

Thursday, April 2nd

At 8:10 AM

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



ASD Make-Up Days

Dear ASD Families and Staff,

So far this year, schools have closed for four days because of weather conditions. The school calendar already included two closure days, so we need to make up two extra days.

The approved school calendar includes make-up days if they are needed. To make up the extra closure days, the following changes will be made:

- **Friday, April 17** will be a **full school day**
- The **last day of school for students** will now be **Thursday, May 21**
- The **last workday for teachers** will be **Friday, May 22**

IMPORTANT REMINDER: FRONT OFFICE ENTRY ONLY

For the safety and security of all students and staff, **ALL parents and visitors who enter the building MUST come through the FRONT OFFICE and sign in.**

Side doors are NOT to be used by parents at any time – including during morning drop-off.

Even if you are just stepping in briefly, you are required to enter through the main entrance and check in at the office.

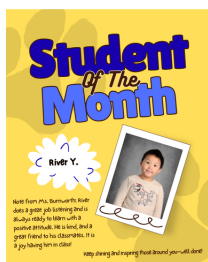
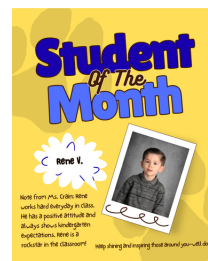
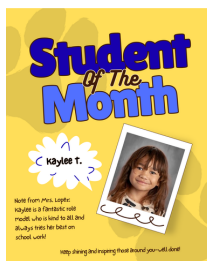
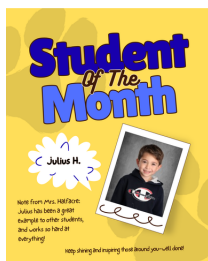
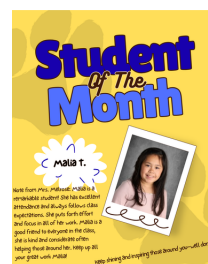
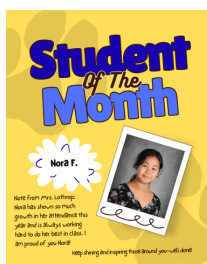
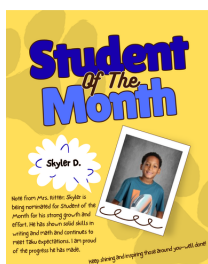
Thank you for helping us keep our school safe by following this procedure every day!

March 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!

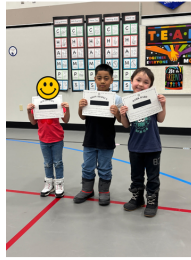


Check out the latest things with our students!

We loved celebrating our students at our 3rd Quarter Awards Assembly!

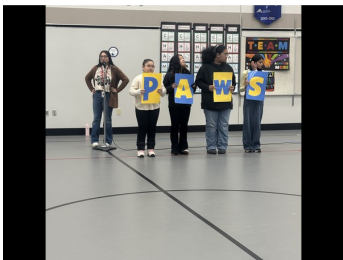
Students were recognized for showing a Positive Attitude, Always Safe, Working Hard, and Showing Respect.

We are so proud of all of their hard work, keep it up!



Our PAWS Assembly was a great reminder of what makes our school community so strong! We talked about having a Positive Attitude, Always Being Safe, Working Hard, and Showing Respect, and our students are doing an amazing job putting these into action every day.

We're so proud of the effort and positivity we're seeing around our school!



Recess = smiles, laughter, and lots of fun! Our students are making the most of their time outside, staying active, and enjoying every minute with their friends.





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

The Counselor's Corner with Ms. Bauer

Spring is officially here! As we head into the final stretch of the school year, it's a great time to refresh our routines—especially those involving our digital lives and our school community.

Spotlight: The PAWparazzi Project!

We are thrilled to introduce a new, student-led initiative at Taku: The PAWparazzi Project! Our Student Council (the "PAWparazzi") is now on the hunt for one Kindness Superstar from every classroom each month. Our goal is to let students lead the way in making kindness "headline news."

- **The Selection:** To help us find our stars, teachers will vote monthly to nominate the student who best exemplifies kindness in their classroom.

- **The Board:** Check out our brand-new PAWparazzi Wall of Fame located right at the front of the school!

- **The Recognition:** Each month, nominees will have their "PAWparazzi" photo and their story of kindness displayed for the whole school to see and celebrated over the morning announcements.

Featured Resource: NetSmartz

With social media and gaming being such a huge part of student life, NetSmartz is a free resource designed to help families navigate digital citizenship.

NetSmartz offers materials for grades K-12 to help bridge the gap between "being online" and "being safe."

What NetSmartz Provides:

Tip Sheets: Quick guides on cyberbullying and privacy.

Engaging Videos: Age-appropriate lessons that make safety stick.

Conversation Starters: Easy ways to talk about digital footprints without the lecture.

Pro-Tip: Digital safety is about building "digital muscles." Use these tools to help your child become a critical thinker online!

April Digital Wellness Checklist:

Try incorporating these three small habits this month:

The "Common Area" Rule: Encourage device use in shared family spaces.

Tech-Free Mornings: Keep the first 20 minutes of the day screen free.

Check-In: Ask your child to show you their favorite app and let them be the teacher!

Questions? I'm here to support your family. If you have questions, please don't hesitate to reach out!

Wishing you a kind and safe April!

Abby Bauer, School Counselor

Phone: 907-742-5974

E-mail: bauer_abby@asdk12.org

Note from Nurse Ellie

Spring Is Hopefully Springing (soon)!

With warmer weather and melting snow comes **allergy season**. Many students start to experience sniffles this time of year—but how do you know if it's allergies or a cold? Let's break it down so we can keep kids comfortable and in school when appropriate.

Health Focus of the Month: Seasonal Allergies vs. Common Cold

Why it's important:

Allergies and colds can look very similar, but they are treated differently. Knowing the difference helps families decide when to send children to school and when they should stay home and rest.

Is it Allergies or a Cold?

Likely Allergies:

- Clear, runny nose
- Sneezing fits
- Itchy eyes, nose, or throat
- Watery or red eyes
- No fever
- Symptoms last for **weeks** or come and go

Likely a Cold:

- Thicker nasal drainage (yellow/green)
- Cough and congestion
- Mild fever possible
- Body aches or tiredness
- Symptoms improve within **7–10 days**

A Helpful Visual to decide Allergies Vs. Common Cold

Tips for Managing Symptoms

- Wash hands and face after being outdoors
- Change clothes after outside play to remove pollen
- Keep windows closed on high pollen days
- Talk to your child's healthcare provider about allergy medications if needed
- Encourage plenty of rest and fluids for both colds and allergies

Nurse's Notes

- **When to stay home:** Fever, vomiting, diarrhea, or not feeling well enough to participate in class
- **Allergy plans:** If your child has known allergies, please make sure the school has updated information and any needed medications
- **Outdoor play:** We will continue to go outside—please dress your child in layers for changing spring weather

Healthy Habit of the Month

Fresh air & clean hands!

Encourage kids to enjoy outdoor play, but follow up with good handwashing to reduce allergens and germs

Contact the Nurse

(907) 742-5948

smith_ellie@asdk12.org

If you're ever unsure whether your child is dealing with allergies or illness, feel free to reach out—I'm happy to help!



Important Dates



4th grade Symphony - 4/14

4th grade field trip to the Symphony Orchestra.



K-3 Breakfast Celebration - 4/3

Waffles and What Not will be catering (waffles, eggs, bacon, donuts, etc.)!

Our event will be focusing on celebrating our MOY growth and looking at EOY goals and what we can do to meet and exceed those goals.



PTA Meeting - 4/14

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/1FAIpQLSft2SM758xCY0fkBu7cYj6vdYGO4RRJt7LFAqrCKaQDHMwPMg/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

