



Mears Middle School

# Panther Pride News

Respect, Responsibility, Creativity, and Academic Excellence

Friday, May 21, 2021/special edition

*Once a Panther, Always a Panther!*



Yesterday afternoon, Mears teachers and staff said goodbye to students on the last day of the school year. In an annual tradition, faculty members lined up on the west-facing lawn and waved farewell to each of the 16 busloads of students as they headed home for summer. Special recognition and congratulations go out to our 8th graders, who will now embark on the next chapter of their journey as high school students. All of us at Mears are extremely proud of this group of exceptional young people, who have made an incredible difference in our community by leading the way through this most historic school year. **Go Panthers!**

# Tribute to Mears 8th Graders The Class of 2025

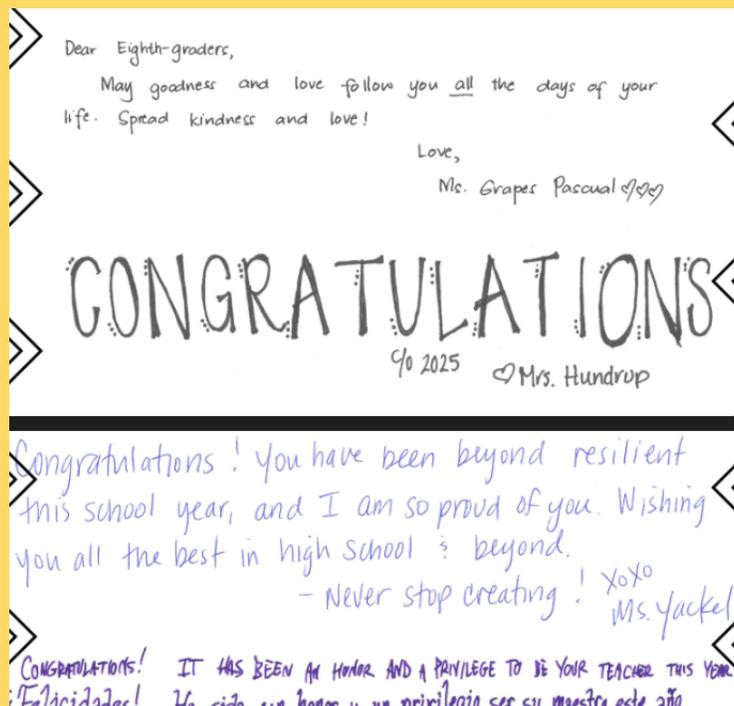
## Farewell Video



To express gratitude and congratulations, Mears Teachers have created a video tribute for our 8th graders and their families.

Link:  
[20-21 8th Grade Send-off.mp4](#)

## Send-off Letter from Staff

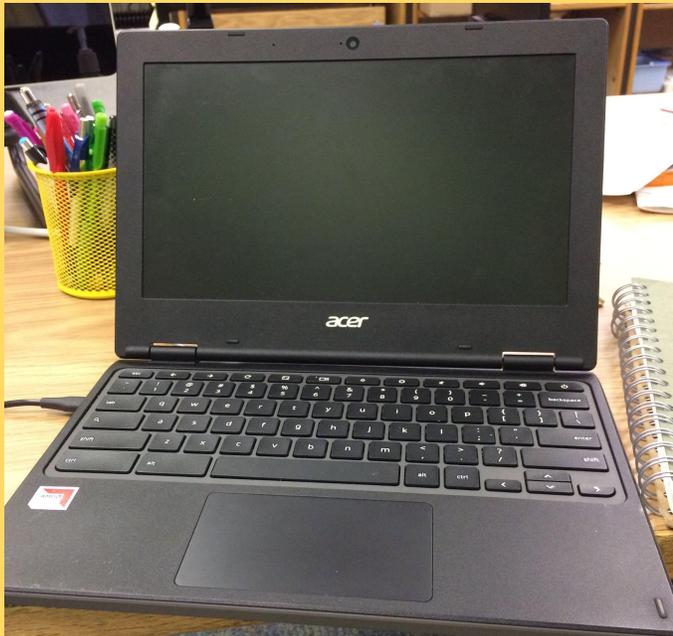


Teachers at Mears have hand-written a letter to our 8th graders, wishing them well and saying thank you.

Link: [20-21SendoffLetter.pdf](#)

# Special Announcements

## Hold on to your ASD Chromebook



Students with district-issued Chromebook computers should plan to hold on to the device for the summer and use it again next school year.

If you happen to be leaving ASD, be sure to return your computer to Ms. Fleming in the library before you depart for summer. Thank you.

- Mears Commemorative Yearbook Ordering Deadline, Friday, May 28
  - Purchase your yearbook at: [ybpay.lifetouch.com](http://ybpay.lifetouch.com)
  - Use school code: 13921121
  
- Awards and Certificates Distribution Day, Thursday, June 3, 5:00-7:00pm -- Honor Roll, Team Awards, and Music Awards
  - Contact Ava Goodman at: [goodman\\_ava@asdk12.org](mailto:goodman_ava@asdk12.org)

# Go Panthers!

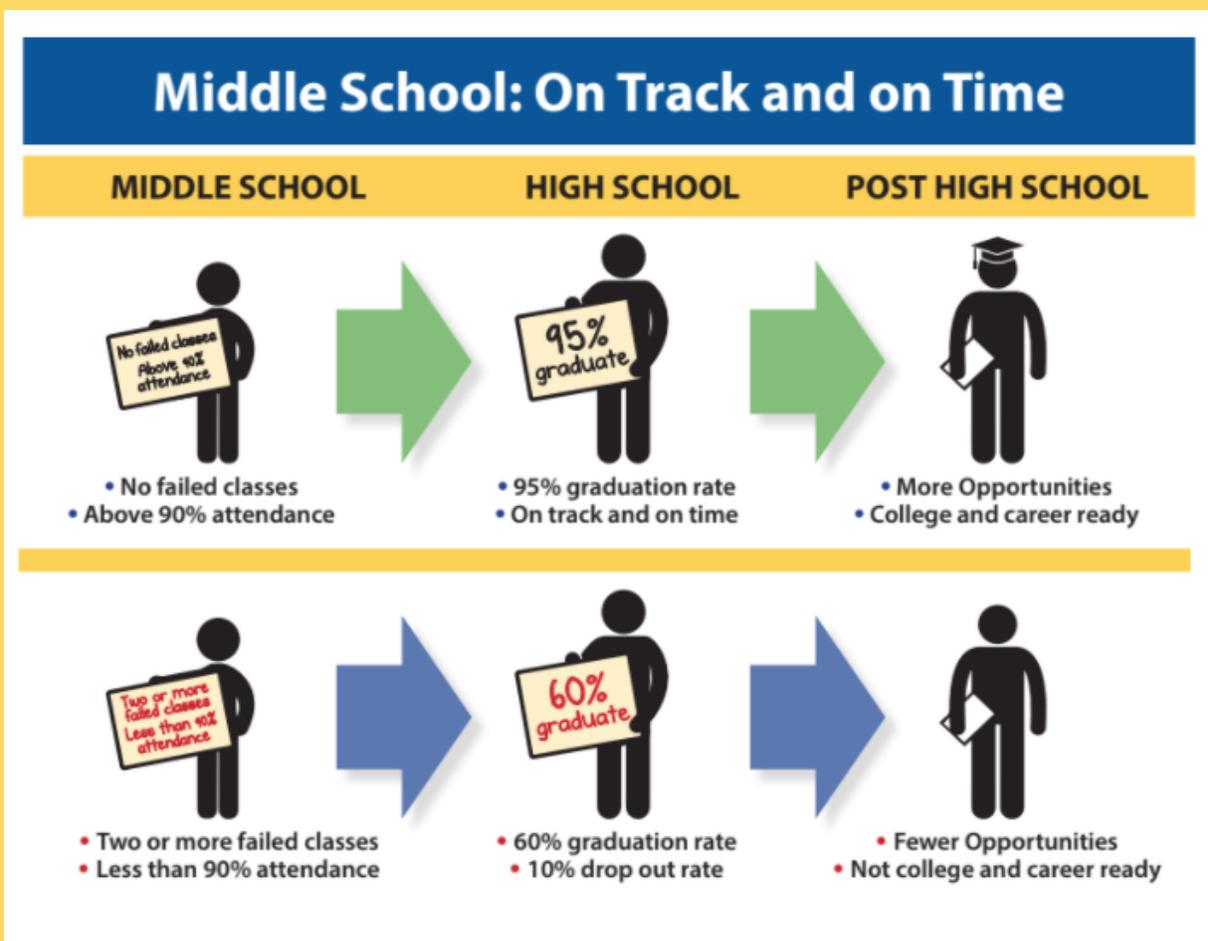
## ASD Summer School Opportunities

### Anchorage School District Summer Learning Program, 2021

Summer school registration is opened for any students who have received one or more Fs/Incompletes during the 2020-21 school year, including new grades soon-to-released for 4th quarter. There are morning and afternoon sessions, which will allow students to make up as many as four classes if needed.

ASD Summer Learning Information Link: <https://www.asdk12.org/Page/18096>

Session 1: June 2-30 and Session 2: July 12-August 6



# Activities at Mears Middle School

## 2021/22 Mears Middle School Activities & Sports

At this point, we look forward to fully implementing all of our sports and activities during the 2021/22. While we will likely still have some of our mitigation strategies in place, we are excited to offer interscholastic opportunities, with students traveling to other middle schools for contests. Additionally, we will have a number of intramural activities, which will occur entirely at Mears. Please take a moment to review the 21-22 schedule attached to this email. In preparation for next year's sign ups, we've included the information below regarding paperwork submission. Have a great summer!

### Families must fill out the following forms for students to participate in sports:

- Middle School Participation Form
- COVID-19 Supplemental Waiver of Liability
- Health Examination Form

Added to these forms, if a student has tested positive for COVID-19 in the three months prior to the activity, families should fill out the **COVID-19 Return-To-Sports** form.

Forms can be scanned and emailed to our AAFP: [spartz-hays\\_robin@asdk12.org](mailto:spartz-hays_robin@asdk12.org) or dropped off at the school by your student near the main office between periods 1 and 2: designated basket supervised by Ms. Spartz-Hays.

Visit Mears website for all activities updates and information: <https://www.asdk12.org/domain/4260>

## Panthers are Readers Summer Reading Opportunities Free Audiobooks Every Week

The banner features the AudioFile Sync logo and a text box: "WANT ALERTS ABOUT FREE AUDIOBOOKS ALL SUMMER LONG? For title releases, TEXT syncya to 866-984-0598 or visit audiobooksync.com". Below is a grid of audiobook covers:

APRIL 29 - MAY 5	MAY 6 - MAY 12	MAY 13 - MAY 19	MAY 20 - MAY 26
<b>COME ON IN</b> by Adi Alsaid (Recorded Books)	<b>TRELL</b> by Dick Lehr (Candlewick on Brilliance)	<b>MONKEY</b> by Wu Ch'eng-en, Arthur Waley (Naxos AudioBooks)	<b>WHAT MAKES US</b> by Rafi Mittlefehldt (Brilliance Audio)
<b>ILLEGAL</b> by Francisco X. Stork (Scholastic Audio)	<b>THEY WENT LEFT</b> by Monica Hesse (Hachette Audio)	<b>DESCENDANT OF THE CRANE</b> by Joan He (Dreamscape Media)	<b>ALIVE</b> by Scott Sigler (GraphicAudio)

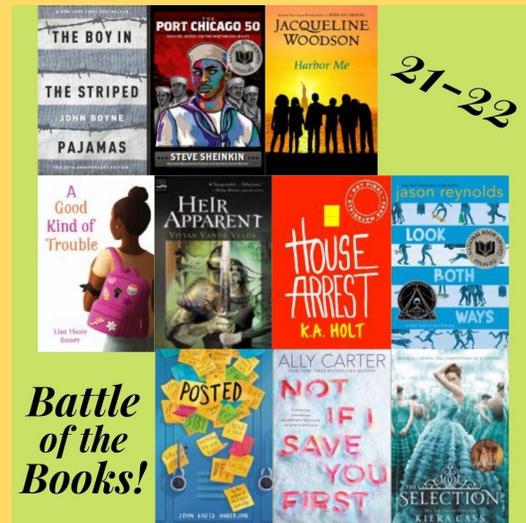
AudioFile Sync offers FREE audio books for teens throughout the summer. Every week, two new audio books are offered. The second set of books, *Monkey* and *Descendant of the Crane*, became available yesterday, May 13th.

Register with an email address at [audiobooksync.com](http://audiobooksync.com), then use the SORA app to access and listen to the books. This is the same app that the Anchorage School District uses for electronic books. Just add Audiobook Sync as a library. Ask Mrs. Fleming if you need help!

# Battle of the Books

The tentative list of titles is now available for the 21-22 Battle of the Books season. Start reading now and get a head start for next year!

More information is available on the [Mears Battle](#) web page or join the [Mears Battle Canvas Hub](#).



# Panthers are Writers

Mears Families, please enjoy reading the winning entries for the May Writing Contest by Ella Wheelles, “Dear 2020,” and Deegan Devore, “Hope Is With Us All.” Congratulations to all the students who participated in Mears writing contests throughout this school year. Keep reading and writing and imagining! And, thanks to Mr. Thomas Pease for organizing and promoting the contest.

## Dear 2020,

It pains me to be here talking to you again, but we really have been through so much together. You’ve been a bittersweet year. I walked into the new year longing for change and boy did I get some. Through the passing of my lifelong best friend and childhood cat, new friends, old friends, a new school, and of course the global pandemic, I’ve come to learn a lot about myself and my environment. 2020, you were a year of everything from smiles and bursts of confidence to panic attacks and mental breakdowns. Though there were some times where I couldn’t see anything but the dark side closing in, there were times when the shadows were only that, shadows. “The past is memories, the future is imagination, and the present is a gift.” I heard someone say once. 2020 was an exploratory year for all of us and you sure took me on some great adventures. Finding myself and my real friends wasn’t your most enjoyable mission, nor was it mine, but our most important. 366 days is all you had, and truthfully, I wasted a lot of it. If I could go back I would. I would take lots more pictures. I would be sure to say goodbye. I would stop to breathe every once and a while. It was amazing, living in this fast-pace where everything could change in a millisecond, but it was also terrifying. I was convinced to not let that fear take over. Stopping to smile every once in a while was the only thing I could do. We’re still here waiting for your storm to pass, but it will. We’re still waiting, still holding on to that hope we found with you. Thank you, for the epic highs and lows. The triumphs and defeats. 2020, I’m sure I’ll never forget you.

Sincerely,  
Ella Wheelles

# Hope Is With Us All

By: Deegan Robert Devore

Dear 2020,

I don't think you could have done worse. I mean, come on covid-19 messed all of our lives up, and then school! I don't want to insult you, I mean you must be a nice guy but you really messed a lot of people's lives up. Like the only thing good about it was "among us". Even then it lost its fun very fast.

A lot of people died, the riots discrimination and the sickness, that hurts people who are just like me. Many people lost their lives standing up for what they believe in... people killed them because they were different. The color of your skin doesn't make you weird or disgusting. Your ethnic identity doesn't make you wrong. 2020 you hurt so many people, but i've seen so many people come from the ashes of darkness and hurt, and have been loved.

2020 there's a story, a myth more alike. Pandora was meant to be a woman made by the gods and goddesses. They gave her a jar and a very high amount of curiosity. When she opened the jar all the bad things in the world flew out but just before it could escape she trapped hope inside the jar. That meant that no matter what happens the world will always have hope. That's what we will always have, hope. People can't take that away from us and never will.

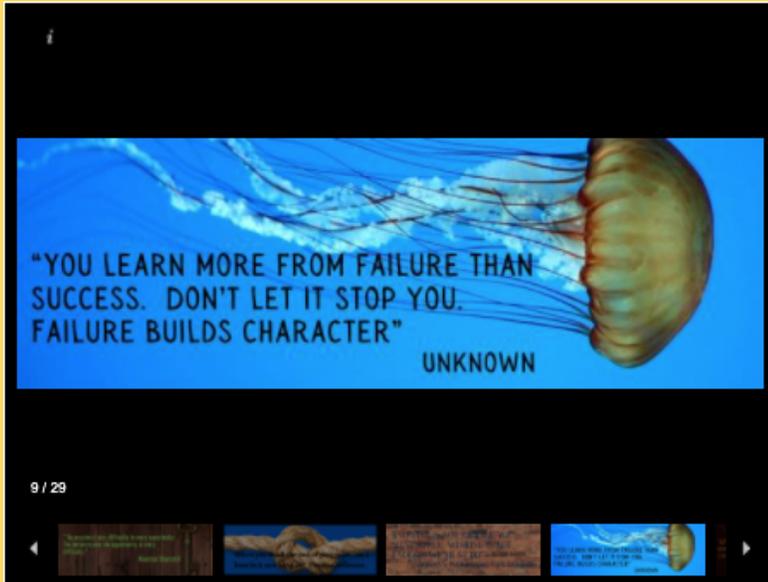
You threw at us what we never expected to happen, but you didn't take away hope. You didn't take away freedom, you just took away some of the happiness. The graduations, the parties, family and lives. But the one thing you didn't take from us, is hope.

Sincerely,

Deegan Robert Devore

# Mears Counseling Corner

If you need any assistance in preparing for the 4th quarter, please fill out a HELP Ticket: <https://www.asdk12.org/domain/4978>



Caitlin Burr  
burr\_caitlin@asdk12.org  
907-742-6424

Crysta Svendsen  
svendsen\_crysta@asdk12.org  
907-742-6426



## PTSA Meetings

Upcoming PTSA meetings held @ 6:00 pm via zoom

- Tuesday, June 1st

Contact the Mears PTSA at [user@memberhub.com](mailto:user@memberhub.com) and ask for the Zoom authentication information.



**Mears Yearbooks on Sale Now! Purchase Deadline is May 28th.**

**Make Sure to Order a Copy of This Special Commemorative Yearbook!**

Purchase your yearbook at:  
[ybpay.lifetouch.com](http://ybpay.lifetouch.com)  
Use school code: 13921121

### **PTSA Volunteer Needs & Upcoming Meetings**

We are actively recruiting for Volunteers and for Open Board Seats and hope that you will join us! We specifically need volunteers for the following:

- Committee Members for the 8th Grade Graduation Celebration
- Open Vice President Position
- Open Board Secretary Position
- Yearbook Sales Promotion & Distribution
- Social Media Coordinator
- School Store & Merchandise

Are you interested in supporting Mears PTSA as a volunteer? If you'd like to learn more, please fill out this brief survey:

[Mears PTSA Volunteer Interest Form, 2021-22](#)

# Congratulations Mears Students You Made It!!!



## 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](#)