

# GIRDWOOD NEWS

GIRDWOOD K-8 SCHOOL

P.O. BOX 189 GIRDWOOD, AK 99587

(907)742-5300

## Note from the Principal

Dear Girdwood PK-8 School Families,

Hope 2023 is treating you well! Due to the number of school closure days we have had, Parent Teacher Conferences scheduled for February, as well as the in-service day, have been cancelled. Students will have full school days on February 22nd, 23rd and 24th. Also, we have started the 30 additional minutes added to the end of the school day to make up for time lost during the school closures. Our school day will be 8:30 am until 3:30 pm and will continue through Thursday, March 9th. Ski Day 2-6 will end at 3:30 pm instead of 3:00 pm.

In the event another school closure were to happen, we will be switching to remote learning. Students in K-5 would refer to an email sent home by their classroom teacher by 9:00 am on the remote learning (snow day) of the plan for the day. K-5 teachers will provide the opportunity for Zoom office hours for a one-hour time slot if students or parents have questions. Zoom office hours are optional if needed. Students in 6-8 will find all activities to complete for the day on Canvas.

I would like to take a moment to honor our second quarter Citizenship Award honorees. The following students have been nominated by their classroom teacher(s) or a specialist for exhibiting the characteristics below: Griffin Marenco (Kindergarten), Harper Taylor, (1st grade), Brooks Poetter (1st grade), Tyler Conley (2nd grade), Miracle Schwarz (3rd grade), Lily Black (3rd grade), Ireland Gelosa (3rd grade), Lane Stinson (4th grade), Ariana Barber (5th grade), Shiloh Baugh (5th grade), Col Stiassny (6th grade), Tre Peterson (7th grade), Logan Wedeking (7th grade), Passage Stinson (7th grade), and Finn Gross (8th grade). These students follow the school's motto: Girdwood Grizzlies are Respectful, Responsible, and Ready to do our Best! They take initiative and have a commitment to the school and/or community. These students are often seen going above and beyond. They are often seen building up other students and strengthening other students' self-esteem with a positive attitude. They possess strength of character and the courage to do what is right. Congratulations to these students for their hard work in making our school community a better place each day!

The Anchorage School District is partnering with the Association of Alaska School Boards to conduct the School Climate and Connectedness Survey®, a statewide survey for students, staff, and families. This survey measures perceptions of each school's climate, including the engagement of students, staff, and families. We value and need input from our Girdwood School families. You are an important partner as we work to continually improve our school's environment. We are asking that one parent/guardian complete one survey from now until March 24th. If you have more than one child attending our school, you only need to fill out one survey. The survey should take less than 5 minutes. Here is the link for accessing the family survey: <https://surveys.panoramaed.com/aasb/asdfamily>. Select Girdwood K-8 School and complete the survey. All of the surveys are voluntary, anonymous, confidential, and do not ask questions about students' families. Results from this survey will be used to identify student, staff and family perceptions of school climate issues within our school(s). School staff use the results to inform their efforts to ensure schools are safe, supportive, and caring places for all students. The survey is available in English, Spanish, Tagalog, Hmong, and Samoan. Families can toggle to their target language in the upper left-hand corner. Thank you for your cooperation in this year's School Climate and Connectedness Survey®.

Just a few other reminders, second quarter report cards are now available to view on the Parent Portal. We are excited to see our middle school boys' basketball team and boys and girls cross-country ski teams underway! We hope you take a moment to attend one of their games or meets to cheer them on at some point this winter!

We are looking forward to a wonderful second half of the year and hope you can continue to help us continue to demonstrate our school motto of being respectful, responsible, and ready to do our best! Please let us know if there is anything you need to ensure your child has a successful second semester.

Wishing you all the best,

Kari Anderson, Principal



## Upcoming Events

2/7 School Store During Lunch

2/8 Middle School District Battle of the Books

2/8 MS Cross Country Ski Meet @ Chugiak 5:30 pm

2/8 Boys MS Basketball Game @ Clark MS 5:30 pm

2/10 School Ski Day #3

2/15 MS Cross Country Ski Meet @ Kincaid 5:30 pm

2/15 MS Boys Basketball Game @ Goldenview MS 6:30 pm

2/15 ACCESS Testing Ends

2/16 Spirit Day—Dress Like a Teacher Day

2/17 School Ski Day #4

2/20 President's Day--NO School

2/21 PTA Meeting @ GBC 6-8pm

2/21 School Climate and Connectedness Survey Begins for Staff and Students

2/22 School Spelling Bee

2/22 MS Cross Country Ski Meet @ Service HS 5:30 pm

2/22 MS Boys Basketball Game @ Romig MS 5:30 pm

2/24 School Ski Day #5

2/28 MS State Battle of the Books

2/28 MS Cross Country Ski Meet @ Bartlett HS 5:30 pm

2/28 MS Boys Basketball Game @ Romig MS 5:30 pm

3/2 MS Cross Country Ski Meet @ Kincaid 5:30 pm

## Anchorage School Board

**Margo Bellamy**, president  
**Carl Jacobs**, vice president  
**Kelly Lessens**, treasurer  
**Dora Wilson**, clerk  
**Dave Donley**  
**Andy Holleman**  
**Pat Higgins**

**ASD Superintendent**  
**Dr. Jharrett Bryantt**

## PTA Board Members

**Andrea Anderson**, president  
**Emily Marengo**, vice president  
**Melissa Randich**, secretary  
**Anna Russell**, treasurer  
**Julie Pierre Leclerc**, member at large  
**Nico Honegger**, member representative  
**Jennifer Derks, Shannon Dierks**, teacher representatives



Girdwood K-8 and the Girdwood PTA are on Facebook. Please check our pages out and **"LIKE"** us! We will be posting frequently and our pages will have the latest school information.

## ***Bus Note Expectations***

Per the 22-23 ASD Student Handbook, students must ride their assigned bus and get off at their assigned stop unless presenting a note to the driver from their parent/guardian that has been initialed by the principal or front office.



## **TEXT MESSAGES**

Sign Up and receive text messages from ASD regarding school closures and late busses. You must opt in. They are not automatic. Visit ASD's website to learn more about receiving text messages:  
<http://www.asdk12.org/textupdates>.



Girdwood School Parents:

Glacier Valley Transit is providing an after school activities service at The Girdwood School. The GVT bus will stop at the Girdwood School Mondays through Fridays, at 4:40 pm heading toward Alyeska Resort and looping back toward the Seward Highway.

**There is no charge for this service.**

For more information about Glacier Valley Transit and for current bus stops and schedules please visit [www.glaciervalleytransit.com](http://www.glaciervalleytransit.com) or contact Sam Marshall, Operations Manager, at 907-382-9908.



We would like to shout out a big THANK YOU to Subway and the Ice Cream Shop, Girdwood K-8's school business partners! If you know of anyone else who would like to be our partner, please let us know.



Girdwood, Alaska [theicecreamshop.com](http://theicecreamshop.com)

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

Below are the basic guidelines for reporting a student's absence:

If your child will not be at school, please call the school office at 742-5300, or email Bethanie and Robyn, **before** 10:30 am, to excuse their absence. Please make sure you call the office, even if you have told their teacher.

If you know in advance of a scheduled absence, please call the office and send a note to the classroom teacher ASAP. This will help the teacher to gather schoolwork, if needed. If your child will be gone for more than a couple of days, please fill out the extended absence form. You can get one in the office. Tardy students must stop in the office, sign in, and get a late pass, before going to class.

If parents want their child to ride a different bus home or get off at a different bus stop, they must send a note for the bus driver and have it signed by the office.

Parents picking up students before the end of the school day must come to the office to sign them out. We will call them down from their classroom when the parent gets here.

Please refer to the ASD Student Handbook for complete District policy.

## Honor Roll

We would like to take a moment to congratulate the following 7th and 8th grade students on First Semester 2022 Honor Roll:

**A Honor Roll:** Chloe Romerdahl, Ariella Gelinias, Leland Zaccaro, Harlan Loso, Duna Snedgen, Kaiden Kuber, Harper Landry, Sammy Stiassny, Logan Wedeking, Tre Peterson, Brielle Rice

**B Honor Roll:** Austin Murphy and Alden Swift

We appreciate your hard work and congratulate these students on their well-deserved success!

## ASD's Mobile App

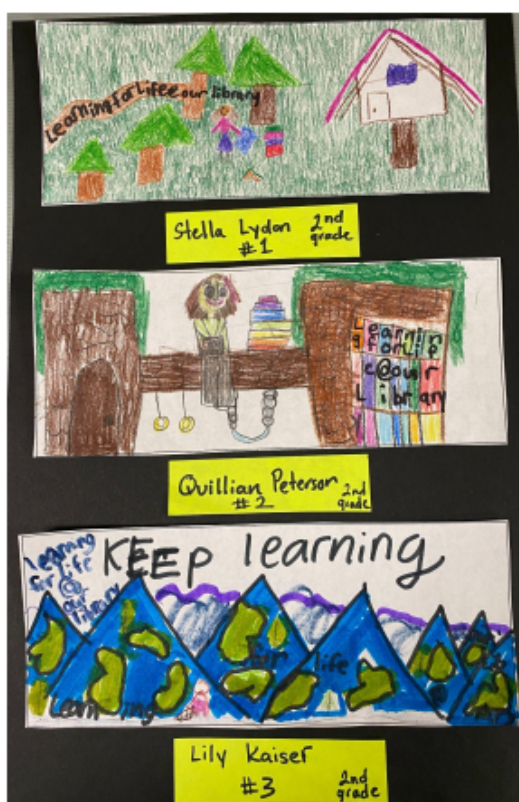
Downloading our ASD app is a great way to get the information you need in the palm of your hand. Our free app is available to anyone in our community who wants to stay connected. ASD families and students have access to additional features within the app found at <https://www.asdk12.org/mobileapp>



## **2022-2023 Girdwood Library Bookmark Contest Winners**

Congratulations to our artistically talented Girdwood students! First place winners from the K-3, 4-6 winners will go on to compete in the district wide competition this month. Unfortunately we did not have any middle school entries this year.

**This year's theme was "Learning for Life@ Our Library"**



### **Elementary K-3**

1st Place: Stella Lydon, 2nd grade  
2nd Place: Quillian Peterson, 2nd grade  
3rd Place: Lily Kaiser, 2nd grade



### **Intermediate 4-6**

1st Place: Olive Pilon, 6th grade  
2nd Place: Alexander Nadell, 6th grade  
3rd Place: Shiloh Baugh, 5th grade

# Girdwood Grizzlies 6th Grade News

Mrs. Rutherford's 6th grade class has won the P.P.C. for the second year in a row!

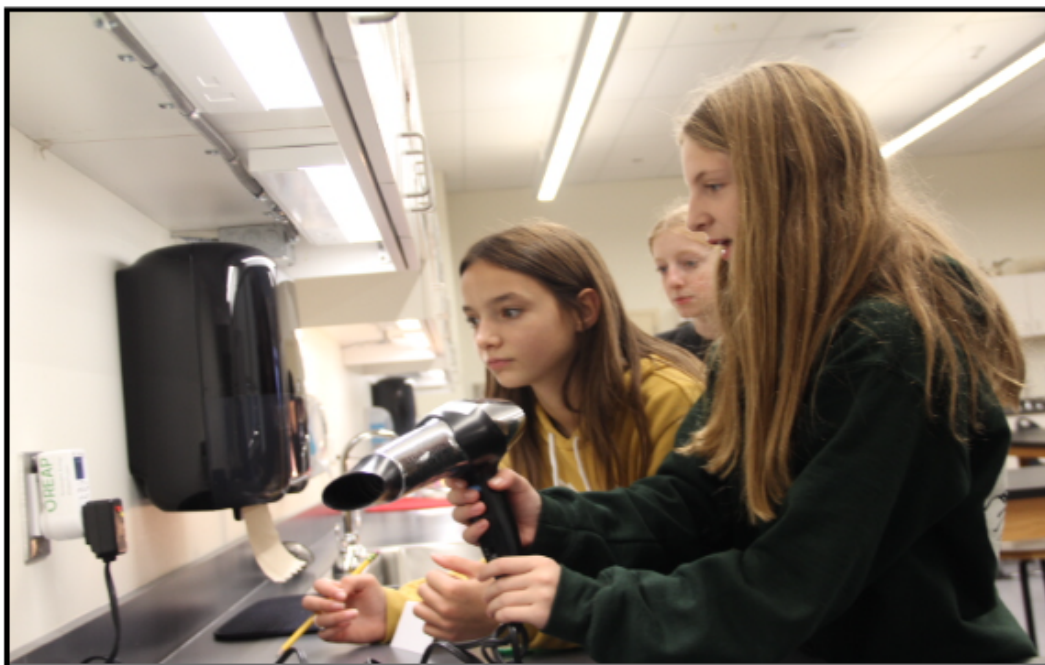
By Ruby Loso

Congratulations to Mrs. Rutherford's class for winning the Power Pledge Challenge! And what is that I hear? They won it last year too?



The Power Pledge Challenge is when K-12 students from a class in Alaska independently complete monthly challenges focused on renewable energy resources to win points. The class with the most points at the end of the semester wins a pizza party! To make it even better the winning class also gets a field trip to their local power plant! This year, our sixth-grade classroom worked extra hard to win this Challenge!

R.E.A.P. Alaska sponsors The Power Pledge Challenge. R.E.A.P. stands for Renewable Energy Alaska Project. As I said earlier, the sixth-grade class last year also won the Power Pledge Challenge! Let's hope we can keep the winning streak up and win next year as well!





## Girls Middle School Volleyball

Girdwood Volleyball closes out the season with an undefeated record! This girls team worked hard to earn their wins over the two month season. We had the smallest team by far, but we packed in a lot of power, and a whole lot of noise into our 13 players. You could hear when Girdwood came onto the court, we brought the Grizzly spirit! Of our 13 amazing players, 6 will be leaving the team for high school next year. **Alyeska Finnegan, Bethany Wells-Straley, Chloe Romerdahl, Divine Schwarz, Rosie Young and Winter Hensley** are the powerhouse 8th grade players who will be at South next year. **Harper Landry, Kiyana Palacios, Madeline Romerdahl, Maria Nafzger, Nava Stephenson, Olive Pilon and Svea Nedwick** will be returning next year to help lead the Grizzlies to another amazing season. Volleyball runs Oct-Dec and is open to all girls 6-8th grade. This is something for 5th grade girls to start thinking about!!! Volleyball is awesome! Come join the fun!! Our volleyball coaches are Amanda Sassi and Carmen Romerdahl and were joined this year by our amazing community members: Adrienne McGill, Deanna Nafzger, Laurel Nix, Sailor Kyffin, Sienna Veatch and Sloane Baugh for specialized coaching and training sessions! Our Girdwood community is the best!





Here at Girdwood PK-8 School, we would like to acknowledge with gratitude the Dena'ina people, past and present, who have lived on these lands since long before Anchorage and Girdwood were here. May we all be good stewards of these lands. Chin'an. (/CHIN-nan/ {Meaning - Thank you})



## ACCESS Testing

Beginning February 1st, Girdwood School will be conducting a state required assessment for English Language Learners. This assessment is called ACCESS and provides important feedback about the progress of our English Language Learners in reading, speaking, listening, and writing. Students will take the test using our school's computers. Only students who are currently identified as members of the English Language Learners (ELL) Program will be assessed. Assessments will be completed the first three weeks of February. More information about the ACCESS assessment can be found on the Alaska Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's ACCESS page. If you have questions about this test, you are encouraged to contact us here at school at 742-5300. You may also contact the District's ELL Department at 742-4452. Information about the English Language Learners Program in ASD can be found on ASD's website. As always, with testing, we ask that families plan so their students are in school and are well-rested for testing. Your patience and support for this process is very much appreciated as this assessment does provide useful information that helps our district and school improve programs for English Language Learners.

## 2nd Quarter Perfect Attendance

We would like to take a moment to congratulate our students who received perfect attendance for 2nd quarter:

Tucker Cothren (kindergarten), Parker Romerdahl (1st grade), Parker Strack (1st grade), Walter Fell (2nd grade), Sage Derks (2nd grade), Kate Blaine (2nd grade), Siena Strack (3rd grade), Paxson Derks (5th grade), Ezra Ranke (5th grade), Arthur Fell (5th grade), and Hollis Ranke (7th grade). Thank you for being here at school every day!

Attendance is so important in a child's school success as it is impossible to replace the learning that happens on any school day with make-up work. Regular attendance and promptness are good habits that are expected and appreciated at all levels of schooling and in the workplace. This year, make school a priority in your household. Strive for nine days (absent) or less for success! Commit to excellence in attendance. Your child's future depends on it!

## Winter Gear, Lost and Found, and Reflective Gear Reminder

Please encourage your child to bring their warm clothes and/or rain gear each day. As hardy Alaskans we go out for recess in just about any weather so our students can get some exercise and let out some energy. When stopping by the school, please check out our lost and found located in the mini-commons for gear that your child might be missing. Also, it is still dark in the morning when our students are coming to school and they are walking across crosswalks, in our parking lot, or waiting for the school bus. Please encourage your child to wear reflective clothing and remind oneself to slow down when driving during these times when students are going to school. We want to ensure all of Girdwood kiddos and community members are safe.

## Thank you Crepes de Paris!

We would like to give a big shout out to Marina and Ghenadie Trocin who own the Crepes de Paris food truck. They donated a percentage of their proceeds from food sold at the Girdwood School PTA Holiday Bazaar to the Girdwood School. This is so generous of you, and we appreciate it very much!



## A Gentle Reminder...



Well, although Mother Nature can't seem to make up her mind, it's still winter!! This is just another reminder to please make sure your child(ren) comes to school with the right gear every day: heavy, waterproof coat, snow/rain boots, gloves, and any other outdoor clothing they would need to keep them warm and dry during recess. Please send them to school with the same gear that you would send them outside to play in. Most students have outdoor recess everyday except in cases of extreme inclement weather, so they need to be prepared. Please write your child's name in **ALL** clothing and accessories. For your convenience, we have Sharpies in the office.



## Dogs on the Playground

Just a reminder to keep your dogs leashed while on the playground here at school for the safety of our students and to ensure our playground remains free of dog poop.



## After School Playground Use

Please make sure your child is being supervised by an adult if they are playing on the playground. We enjoy having them here, but cannot provide outdoor supervision after 3:45 p.m. School dismisses at 3:30 pm and, for safety reasons, students are expected to head for home, FVCS classes, or after school care on buses, bikes, feet or in a parent vehicle by 3:45.

Students are more than welcome to stay on the playground if they are with a supervising adult. This is true for all students, including middle school. The only exception is when students remain to participate in school or FVCS supervised activities. Thank you for your help in keeping all the children in our valley safe and supervised.

# STUDENT GOVERNMENT UPDATE!

- We kicked off the 3rd quarter with a staff-versus-student volleyball tournament! Girdwood School staff and junior high students played 3 games. The teachers won the first two games, but the girls volleyball team played the teachers in the third game and won!
- First Grade was awarded a class pizza party for donating the most food items to the holiday food drive. Way to go, First Grade!

## Introducing Grizzly Gary:



Grizzly Gary is our Spirit Mascot and gets to live with the class that shows the most Girdwood Grizzly School Spirit!

5th grade won Class Colors Day and got to keep Grizzly Gary for a couple of weeks.

7th grade won Crazy Hair and Hat Day. They have him until the next Spirit Day...

### **Dress Like a Teacher Day**

**Thursday, February 16**

The class with the most participation will be the next keepers of Grizzly Gary!



# Join Girdwood PTA



**Why join PTA? Our focus is supporting programs that help students be successful in their learning. Last year PTA funded over \$20,000 in programs and supplies for our students and school, including:**

School Garden, Classroom Safety Kits, Halloween Carnival, Classroom Grants, Holiday Bazaar, Running Club, Drama and Music Programs, Field Trip Transportation, Field Trip Scholarships, Teacher Appreciation Week, Battle of the Books, Field Day, and Fall Intensives. For 2022-2023... new Classroom Display Technology and so much more!

Questions? Email us at [pta.girdwood@gmail.com](mailto:pta.girdwood@gmail.com)

## Supporting Member



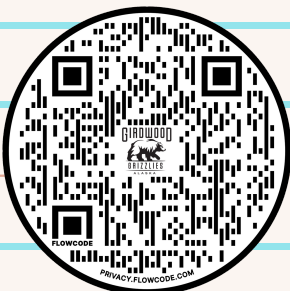
**Who should be a supporting member?** Parents, family members, friends, and community members who want to support our school and students



All \$10 goes to support Girdwood School PTA programs



Scan to become a supporting member



## Voting Member



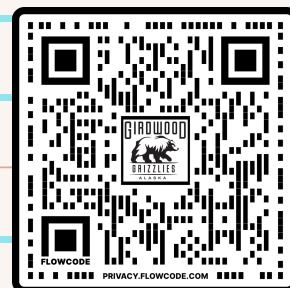
**Who should be a voting member?** Parents, teachers, and PTA board members who want to regularly attend PTA meetings and vote on our budget and bylaws.



\$6.25 goes to National & State PTA and \$3.75 goes to Girdwood School PTA



Scan to become a voting member





# Four Valleys Community School

**FVCS is based out of the Girdwood K-8 School, and this is our 41st year providing community education. Our mission is to provide fun and interesting classes and programs for all ages, focusing on recreation offerings and educational enrichment, and ranging from pickleball to art classes to yoga.**



**Visit our website to view and enroll into our classes: [www.fourvalleys.org](http://www.fourvalleys.org)**



**Sign up for our email newsletter on our website**



**Bring us your class ideas, and/or volunteer to teach a class for your community.  
We have paid positions too!**



**Join our Board of Directors!  
We meet 9 times a year, and have 3 positions open. Email [cmcdermott@fourvalleys.org](mailto:cmcdermott@fourvalleys.org)**

**We offer scholarships, financial aid and payment plans for all our classes, please come talk to us to set something up that works for you.**





**EVERY  
WEEK!**

MONDAY NIGHT VOLLEYBALL - ADULTS  
\$5 DROP IN  
WEEKLY, 6:00-8 PM

TUESDAY NIGHT PICKLEBALL - ADULTS  
\$5 DROP IN  
WEEKLY, 6:00-8 PM

WEDNESDAY NIGHT BASKETBALL - ADULTS  
\$5 DROP IN  
WEEKLY, 6:30-8 PM

ROMP & ROAR - AGES 0-5  
\$3 DROP IN  
WEEKLY (FRIDAY), 10:30 AM - 12 PM

CIRCUIT TRAINING WITH MEL - EVERY  
TUESDAY/THURSDAY  
SEE REGISTRATION FOR DATES & PRICING

AM YOGA WITH NICO & JEN  
WEDNESDAY/FRIDAY  
SEE REGISTRATION FOR DATES & PRICING

FREE RUNNING/WALKING TRACK  
\*ANYTIME\* THE GYM IS IN USE BY FVCS,  
UNTIL 8 PM MONDAY - THURSDAY

register @ [fourvalleys.org](https://fourvalleys.org)

## Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center January & February Programs

Animal Snow Tracks - Thursday Jan 19th  
Snow Day! - Thursday Jan 26th  
Winter Animal Adaptations - Thursday Feb 2  
Antler Cookie Painting - Thursday Feb 9  
It's Alive! Or is it? - Thursday Feb 16

All Ages, \$15 per participant



Register today @ [fourvalleys.org](https://fourvalleys.org)  
All AWCC partner activities sponsored in part by KMTA!

ALASKA WILDLIFE  
AWCC  
CONSERVATION CENTER

CHUGACH MOUNTAINS-TOYAHvale NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

CHUGACH MOUNTAINS-TOYAHvale NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

# KUNG FU TRY OUT DAY!

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1ST!**

Are you interested in Kung Fu, but not sure about committing to a full semester??

Come try it out for FREE this week at 4:15 PM!

Participants **MUST** register in advance, contact [brumley@fourvalleys.org](mailto:brumley@fourvalleys.org) with questions.



more information and registration available at:  
[www.fourvalleys.org](http://www.fourvalleys.org)

A decorative banner at the top of the second poster features several red paper hearts of various sizes hanging from a light-colored string with small wooden clothespins. The background is a solid light pink color.

*Girdwood Fine Arts Camp presents*

**THREE TYPES OF LOVE - THE MIDDLE KIND  
VALENTINES THEMED POLYMER CLAY ACTIVITY**

**OPEN TO 5TH GRADERS AND ABOVE (ADULTS TOO!)**

**\$10 PER PARTICIPANT - INCLUDES BOTH DATES**

**TUES FEB 7TH & WED FEB 8TH**

A smaller version of the Four Valleys Community School logo is located in the bottom left corner of the second poster.

**REGISTER AT [FOURVALLEYS.ORG](http://FOURVALLEYS.ORG)**





**YOU CAN HELP** Girdwood PTA **EARN DONATIONS**  
**JUST BY SHOPPING WITH YOUR FRED MEYER REWARDS CARD!**

Fred Meyer donates over \$2 million per year to non-profits in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington, based on where their customers tell them to give. Here's how the program works:

- Sign up for the Community Rewards program by linking your Fred Meyer Rewards Card to Girdwood PTA at [www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards](http://www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards). You can search for us by our name or by our non-profit number GP641.
- Then, every time you shop and use your Rewards Card, you are helping Girdwood PTA earn a donation!
- You still earn your Rewards Points, Fuel Points, and Rebates, just as you do today.
- If you do not have a Rewards Card, they are available at the Customer Service desk of any Fred Meyer store.
- For more information, please visit [www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards](http://www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards).

# ASD Statement of Nondiscrimination

## **Board policy 114 Nondiscrimination & Harassment**

The Board is committed to an environment of nondiscrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, economic status, union affiliation, disability and other human differences. No person shall be excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, any academic or extracurricular program or educational opportunity or service offered by the District. The District will comply with the applicable statutes, regulations, and executive orders adopted by Federal, State, and Municipal agencies.

All students and employees of the Anchorage School District have a right to pursue their education or occupation in compliance with applicable law and policy with dignity in a safe environment. Neither discrimination nor harassment of employees, students or volunteers is permitted in the District. This policy applies with regard to District facilities, premises, vehicles, computers, servers, and electronics located both on and off school property; and conduct on non-school property if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved, or school-related activity or is otherwise subject to the authority of the District.

## **Board policy 114.1 Inappropriate Behavior**

The Anchorage School District supports respectful learning and working environments and believes strongly this environment must be structured to reflect diverse cultural traditions and contributions. The District values diversity among students and staff and believes that all students and staff have the right to participate in school activities free from harassment. Behavior by Board members, administrators, employees, parents, volunteers, students, vendors, or others doing business with the District, that ridicules, harasses, intimidates, or threatens students, staff or community members, or otherwise undermines a respectful safe, and effective school environment, is prohibited. Individuals or groups are in violation of this policy if they engage in any of the above behaviors in a way that is disruptive to the work or education environment, such as:

- Making demeaning remarks directly or indirectly such as name-calling, racial slurs or “jokes”; or
- Physically threatening or harming an individual; or
- Displaying demeaning visual or written materials; or
- Defacing, damaging, or destroying property or materials; or
- Performing any other act that is clearly harassing in nature.

Any student, staff, or community member who believes that he or she has been the subject of harassment and/or discriminatory behavior should report the incident immediately to the principal or department supervisor.

Complaints regarding harassment/discriminatory behavior will be investigated immediately.

Any student, staff, or community member who violates this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Inquiries or complaints regarding any rights protected by law or policy may be addressed to the School District Equal Employment Opportunity Director, who serves as the Title IX Coordinator, ASD Education Center, 5530 E. Northern Lights Blvd, Anchorage, AK 99504-3135, (907) 742-4132 or to any of the following external agencies: Alaska State Commission for Human Rights, Anchorage Equal Rights Commission, Director of the Office for Civil Rights, Department of Education, Department of Health and Human Services.