

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,

Happy Holidays! It is hard to believe we are in the final month of 2024, and we are almost done with the second quarter of the school year! We hope you all join us for our PTA Holiday Bazaar this Saturday, December 7th, from 12-4 pm, and our Primary Holiday Concert on December 12th. Both events are sure to bring you some holiday cheer! Our community is amazing and gives so much during this time of year! We have many programs that reflect Girdwood's caring community culture. Our students will soon be gathering canned food for our annual canned food drive that helps support local families. We will also continue our Angel Tree and hope you will reach out to brighten the holiday season for local families.

We are looking for parents to join us during our PTA meetings. Our next PTA meeting is at the Girdwood Brewing Company on Tuesday, December 10th, starting at 6:30 pm. We typically meet in the back room. The more the merrier! Please consider joining us. We would really like to see some new faces to join us with new ideas. That being said, we are so grateful for all the hard work our current PTA puts into making our school community a great place to learn and have fun.

During the month of December, we are completing our winter MAP Benchmark Assessment in math and English language arts for grades 3-6 this week and mClass testing for students in grades K-3 Monday, 12/9. These are assessments that help us determine if students are making adequate progress. These tests are given three times a year to see how students are progressing. A large part of students making adequate growth is through good attendance in school. Please make sure that your children are in school unless they are ill. The goal for each student is to be in school 90% of the school year. That means students can only miss approximately 17 days of the entire year to reach this goal. A high attendance rate is important because students are more likely to succeed in academic and social skills when they attend school consistently. It is difficult for their teacher and the class to build their skills and progress if a large number of students are frequently absent.

Just a few reminders for all:

- Keep up with your child's grades and assignments through accessing Q Parent Connect at any time. Do you know how to login to Q? If not, give our front office a call at 742-5300 to get your login and password.
- Winter is here! Please send your student to school with appropriate gear and clothing. We go outside everyday rain or shine unless the temperatures are below negative 10 degrees.

Students begin winter break on December 20th and return to school on January 6th. I hope you all have an excellent holiday season and winter break!

All The Best,

Kari Anderson, Principal

Upcoming Events

12/9 K-5 mClass Winter Benchmark Assessment

12/10 3rd MAP Reading Winter Benchmark Assessment

12/10 Middle School Girls Volleyball Game @ Begich 6pm

12/10 PTA Meeting from 6:30-8pm @ GBC

12/12 K-2 Fieldtrip to the PAC to see Peter and the Wolf

12/14 Middle School Volleyball Jamboree @ Clark 9am-12pm

12/17 K-3 Primary Holiday Show 6:30pm

12/19 Family Game Night at the Gerrish Library

12/20 End of 2nd Quarter, Grading Day for Teachers, No School for Students

12/21-1/5 Winter Break, No School

12/26 Family Game Night at the Gerrish Library 4-6pm



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Jennifer Derks, Shannon Dierks, teacher representatives

After School Playground

Use

For the safety of our students and a more smooth after school dismissal, the Girdwood School playground will be closed from 2:30-3:00 pm Monday through Friday. School dismisses at 2:30 pm and, for safety reasons, students are expected to head for home, or after school care on buses, bikes, feet or in parent's cars. The only exception is when students remain to participate in school or FVCS supervised activities. Playground closures immediately following school to ensure a smooth and safe transition are a standard policy with elementary schools across our school district. Thank you for your support in keeping our students safe and for your understanding.





Help Your Child Succeed in School: Build the Habit of Good Attendance Early

DID YOU KNOW?

- Starting in preschool and kindergarten, too many absences can cause children to fall behind in school.
- Missing 10%, or about 2 days each month over the course of a school year, can make it harder to learn to read.
- Students can still fall behind if they miss just 1 or 2 days every few weeks.
- Being late to school may lead to poor attendance.
- Absences and tardiness can affect the whole classroom if the teacher has to slow down learning to help children catch up.

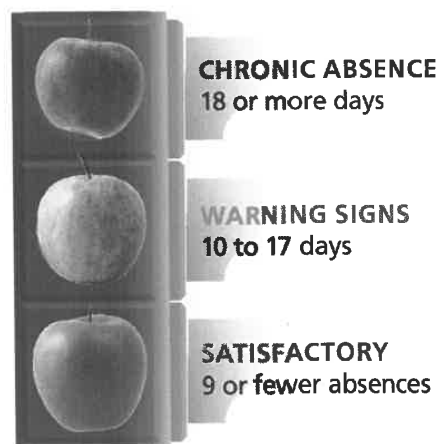
Attending school regularly helps children feel better about school—and themselves. Start building this habit in preschool so they learn right away that going to school on time, every day is important. Eventually good attendance will be a skill that will help them succeed in high school and college.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Set a regular bedtime and morning routine.
- Lay out clothes and pack backpacks the night before.
- Keep your child healthy and make sure your child has the required shots.
- Introduce your children to their teachers and classmates before school starts.
- Develop backup plans for getting to school if something comes up. Call on a family member, a neighbor or another parent.
- Try to schedule non-Covid-19 related medical appointments and extended trips when school isn't in session.
- If your child seems anxious about going to school, talk to teachers, school counselors and other parents for advice on how to make your child feel comfortable and excited about learning.
- If you are concerned that your child may have Covid-19, call your school for advice.
- If your child must stay home due to illness or quarantine, ask the teacher for resources and ideas to continue learning at home.

Revised October 2021

When Do Absences Become a Problem?



Note: These numbers assume a 180-day school year.

Visit Attendance Works at www.attendanceworks.org for free downloadable resources and tools!



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})



Just a reminder to keep your dogs leashed when visiting the Girdwood School or the school playground. This is for the safety of our students and to ensure that our playground remains free of dog poop. Thank you for your cooperation!

Parent Volunteers

One of the best things about Girdwood School is how active our families are within our classrooms and school. We greatly appreciate all your help and hope to continue this partnership. We strongly suggest ALL parents complete the ASD online volunteer application asap, as well as complete the parent driver paperwork in the front office. If you plan to do any of the following, you will need to complete the online volunteer application: assist teachers in prepping for a project, being a chaperone, classroom volunteer, field trip volunteer, PTA volunteer, reading tutor, science fair judge, special events or project volunteer, and library helper. Basically, if you plan on helping out at any function or volunteering in any format, you will need to complete the ASD online application at least 7 days prior to volunteering in the school or for a school event. Please go to the following link to complete the ASD volunteer online application process: <https://www.asdk12.org/Page/13771>. In regard to parent drivers, we will no longer be able to accept paper applications a few days prior to or the day of a field trip. The parent driver paperwork will need to be completed at school in the front office. All parent driver paperwork will need to be completed at least 10 days in advance of all field trips. The front office staff will need a copy of your driver's license, proof of auto insurance, and registration. We look forward to working with you and appreciate your kindness and help this school year!



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.



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 School Parents:

Glacier Valley Transit will be providing an after school activities service at The Girdwood School, but only if your son/daughter calls them. Your child can call them at the end of the day, if they need a ride after school or after their sports practice. They are only running one bus right now and they will not come to the school unless they get a prior phone call. This is a free service. They don't mind stopping at the Girdwood School, so please don't feel that this is an imposition to them. Please have your put the GVT number in their phone, 907-382.9909.

For more information about Glacier Valley Transit and for current bus stops and schedules please visit www.glaciervalleytransit.com or call 907-382-9909.



Sign up to receive text message alerts from our school

Parents and community members can sign up to receive SMS text messages from ASD or our school. ASD will use this service to communicate school closure information and general district news. Our school uses this service to share news and updates with families. Additionally, ASD's Transportation Department will send a text message when school buses are more than 20 minutes late.

Text messages will only be sent to people who opt-in to receive texts. Users can opt-out at any time. This service is not intended to replace existing communications, but rather help enhance them.

Visit ASD's website to learn more about receiving text messages, how to opt-in and to read frequently asked questions. Learn more at www.asdk12.org/textupdates.

ASD's vendor, School Messenger, does not charge for the text messages users will receive, However, wireless providers may charge for individual text messages depending on the plan associated with a person's phone. Users should familiarize themselves with their wireless package before opting-in to receive text messages.

Greetings Girdwood Families,

With snowdays, holidays, and winter months here, there is no better time to curl up with a good book and read!

You are welcome to visit our library anytime during school hours and to utilize our public libraries as much as possible. When going to the library isn't practical, students have 24/7 access to free ebooks and audiobooks.

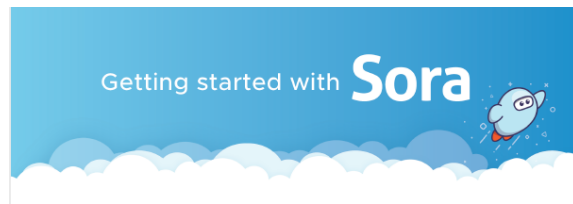
Our ebook and audiobook collections contain read-aloud books, popular ebooks, battle books, and so much more. Checking out these FREE eBooks and audiobooks is easy.

Students of the Anchorage School District can access books via the **SORA** app at no cost using their school login on any device. Your student will know how to access these books as their login is the same one they use for their Google Apps at school. We have also practiced this in library class.

I would like to see Girdwood increase our use of this excellent resource! Please take some time to explore SORA with your family today.

Thank you and enjoy!

Meghan Nedwick



With SORA, you can read more books!

- 1 Access Sora from student ASD Clever accounts or install the Sora app from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store select Anchorage School District and set it as MY SCHOOL or go to <https://soraapp.com/library/anchorageak> in your browser.
- 2 Log in using your ASD Google account. STUDENTS: last.first@asdk12.org and the Password they use at school.
- 3 Browse the EXPLORE Tab to find an ebook or audiobook to check out. You can close the book and go to the SHELF
- 4 Tap on an ebook or audiobook to start reading....
Books automatically return after the set check-out time so there is no need to return books manually.

mClass Winter Benchmark ELA Assessment Family Information

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 at the following website: <https://education.alaska.gov/Alaska-Reading-Resources/Statewide-Early-Literacy-Screener>. mClass screening assessments will be administered in-person at Girdwood School to our K-3 students on 12/9/24. Results for K-3 students that were assessed during a benchmark window, will be available in Parent Connect after winter break. [ParentConnection Login Information and Reference Guide](https://parentconnect.asdk12.org) can be found at parentconnect.asdk12.org.

Student Government Update

By: Isaac Gates

Holiday Food Drive

Get your cans and non-perishable items ready!

The holiday food drive has started!

All of the items will go to the needy, so your donations will be going to a good cause.

The food drive started on December 2nd and ends on the 18th.

Spirit Week

Merry Monday

Tis the season to wear holiday clothes!

Twass' the Night Tuesday

Dress up in your finest pajamas!

Whiteout Wednesday

Let it snow by wearing white clothing.

Class Colors Thursday

Represent your class

Freedom Friday (no school)

Student will partake in holiday spirit activities (if they want) coded by these days.

Anchorage School District Compliance/Equal Employment Opportunity Office

REVISED: 8/2007; 8/2012; 5/2013; 7/2014

ASD Statement of Non-discrimination for ASD Publications

The Board is committed to an environment of non-discrimination 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. The District notes the concurrent applicability of the Individuals with Disabilities Act, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the relevant disability provisions of Alaska law.

Inquiries or complaints may be addressed to the District's Compliance/Equal Employment Opportunity Executive Director, who also serves as the Title IX and ADA/ADAAA 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, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Director of the Office for Civil Rights-U.S. Department of Education or Office of Civil Rights-U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.



Emergency Response

The Anchorage School District (ASD) is committed to ensuring the safety and security of our students, staff, and visitors. Take a moment to review this guide to ensure you are prepared in the event of an emergency situation at school. ASD follows the response protocols established by the ASD School Board. School and district staff train yearly on emergency protocols and situation management and students take part in drills throughout each school year.

Actions in an emergency



STAY PUT

"**Stay Put**" is ordered when there is an issue **INSIDE/OUTSIDE** the building. Police activity in the area, a wild animal nearby, or a medical incident are all common causes. Everyone returns inside the building, exterior doors are locked and "business as usual" generally continues inside the school.



LOCKDOWN

LOCKDOWN is ordered when there is an issue **OUTSIDE the building**, most often police activity in the area that could pose an imminent threat, such as a weapon or unstable individual. All interior/exterior doors will remain locked until the 'all clear' is given.



ACTIVE THREAT

Ordered when there is a threat **INSIDE the building**. Students and staff will use ALICE Protocols. Do NOT call staff/students during an active threat. Parents are not allowed on site during Stayput/Lockdown/Active threat (ALICE).



EVACUATE

Ordered when people must exit the building due to unsafe circumstances such as fire, gas leak, or building damages. If student pick-up or off-site reunification is required, instructions will be communicated by the district.



SHELTER IN PLACE

Ordered when personal protection is necessary from dangerous weather conditions such as a gas leak, blizzard, or hail. May also be ordered in the event of a hazmat situation in the area.

Please note: some situations may require a combination of actions above.

Examples of school actions

Severe weather - Schools may **Shelter in Place** until weather passes; could delay release of students at end of day until safe to exit building.

Fire or Hazmat Situation in the Area - **Evacuation** or **Shelter in Place**, depending on location and severity of fire/hazmat issue.

Threat of Violence or Weapon on a Person - **ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate)**, **LOCKDOWN (exterior threat)**, or **Evacuation**, depending on the situation.

Intruder - Requires an immediate **Lockdown or ALICE**. **Police Activity in the Area** - **Lockdown** or **Stay Put** may be called for by any staff member at the school.

What do I need to know and do?

- If you're at a school and an emergency occurs, **follow protocol** with students and staff.
- We know families want information right away. Experience has taught us that initial information is almost always incorrect. Please know, our security and administrative staff are working hard to determine what the real situation is and will communicate with families as soon as information is verified as accurate and next actions have been determined.
- **Do not call the school or security staff**, as they are working on the situation and ensuring your student's safety. **Do not go to the school**; this may interfere with procedures. Only public safety personnel will be allowed in/near a school during an emergency situation.
- We understand you may want to communicate with your student during an emergency, however, **please refrain from calling**; it may prevent him/her hearing important, possibly life-saving, instructions.
- It is vital parents and guardians **keep their information updated in ASDConnect**. We will utilize email, text messaging, and phone calls to communicate with you.
- The fastest way to get information in an emergency situation is to **follow us on Twitter and Facebook (@ASD_Info)**. It is our first and fastest means of getting messages out. Also, check our website for alerts on the homepage.

KMTA & WINTER WILDLANDS ALLIANCE SNOWSCHOOL



NOW BOOKING: JAN - MARCH 2025

SnowSchool connects students throughout Southcentral Alaska to the wild and wonderful world of snow by bringing the outdoors to the classroom through your choice of two program types:

Classroom Visit

What: KMTA education staff will lead an hour-long, hands-on indoor/outdoor educational program aligned with school curriculum

Where: Your classroom and surrounding areas

Who: Open to K - 8th classes

How Much: Pricing available per class upon request



Field Trip

What: KMTA education staff will lead a full-day snowshoe adventure as well as pre- and post-field trip classroom visits

Where: Center Ridge in Turnagain Pass

Who: Open to 3rd - 8th classes

How Much: Pricing available per class upon request; transportation credit available

For pricing, dates, and curriculum, contact Josh Vantrease
✉ jvantrease@kmtacorridor.org or visit our website: bit.ly/4flaCON

The Anchorage School District does not endorse these materials or the viewpoints expressed in them.

GINGERBREAD HOUSE KITS



**In Person
Event!**

**\$40 per
kit**



Hand-crafted kits provided by John and Jeanne
Hanson

**Join us Thurs,
Dec 12th from
5 - 7pm**

*Please
register at
fourvalleys.org*



Mushrooms to Dye With

Dye silk with pigment
from mushrooms and lichen

Take home 2 dyed scarfs & a gift bag
Just in time for the holidays

Friday Dec 13, 6-8 PM

Cost \$45 Ages 18+
Girdwood School Art Room

Register at fourvalleys.org



Candlelight APRES SKI YOGA

JOIN ASHLEIGH BICKNELL FOR RESTORATIVE YOGA AFTER SKIING
SATURDAYS IN DECEMBER
7TH, 21ST, AND 28TH
FROM 6PM-7PM

**\$20 DROP
IN
\$50 FULL
SESSION**





ALASKA WILDLIFE CONSERVATION CENTER DECEMBER

JOIN NATURALISTS FOR FUN HOLIDAY THEMED ART
ACTIVITIES ON DEC 5TH AND/OR DEC 12TH!
RUMOUR HAS IT THE VERY POPULAR ANTLER PAINTING EVENT IS ONE OF THESE DAYS...



\$15 PER CLASS

REGISTER @ FOURVALLEYS.ORG



ECO HOLIDAY GARLANDS *Ladies Night Out*

Join Beks and fellow ladies for a fun evening
of crafting eco garlands on **Wed, Dec 18th**

\$20 Per Person

**IN THE ART ROOM
6-8 PM**



Register at FourValleys.org





ROMP & ROAR



THURSDAY'S DEC 5, 12, & 19

5-6 PM

\$3 PER FAMILY

PARENTS MUST ACCOMPANY KIDS

AGES 0-5



Introduction to Digital Media

Join Photographer
William Melton
for two (2) days of info, practice,
and Q & A.

Wed, Dec 11th
& Thurs, Dec 12th
from 5:30pm-
7:30pm



\$40 Per
Person

Register @
fourvalleys.org



WEEKLY ADULT SPORTS

DECEMBER 2024

@ THE GIRDWOOD SCHOOL GYM



TUESDAY
PICKLEBALL
6-8 PM



WEDNESDAY
BASKETBALL
6-8 PM



THURSDAY
SOCCER
6-8 PM



\$5 DROP IN, REGISTER IN PERSON

Available Now! NORDIC RENTALS

**\$35 Per Set
(Boots, Skis, Poles)**

All rentals given out in AS-IS condition

**Rental program is for those
interested in the FVCS
Nordic Program in
January & February****

**Collect gear IN PERSON @ FVCS Office
M-Th 3-5 PM**



STRENGTH TRAINING WITH LAUREN

Wednesdays Nov 27, Dec 4, & Dec 11

6:30 - 7:30 PM

Drop in for \$10



Register @ [FourValleys.org](https://www.FourValleys.org)

The Artery in Girdwood Presents AFTERSCHOOL ART

New dates for December!

Weds Dec 4th, 11th, and 18th

From 2:45-4:00pm

Grades 2+

\$40 per participant



Register now at [FourValleys.org](https://www.FourValleys.org)



Moose Safety

Parents—teach kids to Be KidSafe around moose:

- Remember that moose are wild animals
- Don't scream and run
- Never get between a mother moose and its calf

Stay away from moose:

- Keep at least 100 feet away (2 houses) from any moose and twice as far from one with a calf
- Get behind something big if a moose comes toward you
- Avoid moose: go back home, to school, to the nearest Safe Home or find a different, safe walking route
- Don't try to pet or feed moose
- Don't throw snowballs or objects at moose

Signs of a moose ready to attack:

- It dashes around, its ears go down, it will lick its lips, and the hair goes up on the back of its neck. You are too close if you can see all this!



Anchorage School District
Assessing & Improving for Success W 110

Rain Gear, Lost and Found, and Reflective Gear Reminder

Please encourage your child to bring their rain/snow gear to school every 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. Remember, we do live in a rain forest, so it's not always snowing but sometimes raining in winter. Please make sure their winter gear is waterproof.

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. Please label all belongings. We have black and silver Sharpies in the office for anyone to borrow, if needed.

We are still losing minutes of daylight every day and it's dark in the morning when they get here. 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.



**Big Brothers Big Sisters
of America**

Big Brothers Big Sisters Drop-Off Bin

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Alaska has provided Girdwood School with a donation drop-off box. This bin is located across from the school parking lot. Please donate gently used clothes, shoes, and cloth items only. Please do not drop household items or leave items next to the bin. To donate household items please call Big Brothers Big Sisters at (907)563-1997 to set up a time for pick up. This service is provided for free by Big Brothers Big Sisters. These donated items are used to stock local Value Village locations and the proceeds of the items are given to Big Brothers Big Sisters of Alaska in order to help them reach their yearly goal of serving 2,000 children across Alaska.

Sign up for FVCS Classes!

Four Valleys Community Schools has classes going on now and are constantly rolling out lots of new ones for community members of all ages. If you feel unable to take any of our classes due to class costs, please contact FVCS at www.fourvalleys.org or by phone at 907.742.5317. We have financial aid, scholarships, and payment plans available.



GRIZZLY GEAR



order online

Support Girdwood School PTA!
We are trying something new
this year, please check out our
online fundraising platform!





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. 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.

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:

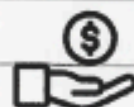
School Garden, Classroom Safety Kits, Halloween Carnival, Classroom Grants, Holiday Bazaar, Running Club, Drama and Music Programs, Field Trip Transportation, Field Trip Scholarships, Teacher Appreciation Week, Battle of the Books, Field Day, and Fall Intensives. For 2022-2023, new Classroom Display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

Questions? Email us at pta.girdwood@gmail.com

Supporting Member



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



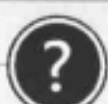
All \$10 goes to support Girdwood School PTA programs



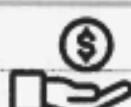
Scan to become a supporting member



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

