

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 New Year 2025! January brings us to the second semester of this 24-25 school year, and we are excited for the introduction of our middle school co-ed wrestling team and the return of our boys and girls cross-country ski team which are both underway. We are also looking forward to our upcoming school-wide ski days. Please complete the ski day packet as soon as possible along with payment to Girdwood School for transportation and a payment to Alyeska for the ski program.

I would like to take a moment to honor our Girdwood PK-8 School second quarter Citizenship Award honorees. The following students have been nominated by their classroom teacher(s) or a specialist for exhibiting the characteristics below: Maxwell Glassett (Kindergarten), Titus Falter (1st Grade), Langley Davis and Avie Martyn (2nd grade), Soren VanderHoek and Liam Skriloff (3rd grade), Aiden McCombs (4th grade), Christopher Steinfort-Leeds and Laura Mark (5th grade), Havelah Falter and Lane Stinson (6th grade), Miley Lindsay (7th grade), Andrew Gates and Olivia Love (8th grade).

- The student follows the school's motto: Girdwood Grizzlies are Respectful, Responsible, Reliable, and Ready!
- The student takes initiative and has a commitment to the school and/or community. The student is often seen going above and beyond.
- The student is often seen building up other students and strengthening other students' self-esteem with a positive attitude.
- The student possesses strength of character and the courage to do what is right.

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. We go outside everyday rain or shine unless the temperatures are below negative 10 degrees. 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. It's very dark on our sidewalks, in our crosswalks, and around our parking lot when students are coming to school. Please encourage your child to wear reflective clothing and remind oneself to slow down when driving during times when students are walking to school. We want to ensure all of Girdwood kiddos and community members are safe!

Also, a reminder to 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.

In gratitude for you all,

Kari Anderson, Principal
Girdwood PK-8 School

Upcoming Events

1/17 2nd Quarter Citizenship Awards in the MPR @ 2 pm

1/20 No School—Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

1/21 Free Play Mornings for Preschool Ages @ the Gerrish Library 10:30-11:30am

1/22 Family Storytime for Preschool Ages @ the Gerrish Library 10:30-11:30am

1/23 Family Game Night @ the Gerrish Library 4-6pm

1/24 Family Movie Night @ the Gerrish Library 4-6pm

1/28 Free Play Mornings for Preschool Ages @ the Gerrish Library 10:30-11:30am

1/29 Family Storytime for Preschool Ages @ the Gerrish Library 10:30-11:30am

1/29 Middle School Cross Country Meet @ Chugiak 6pm

1/30 Family Game Night @ the Gerrish Library 4-6pm

1/31 School Ski/Board Day

2/5 Middle School Cross Country Meet @ Service 6pm

2/7 School Ski/Board Day



Anchorage School Board

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Margo Bellamy

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TBD, vice president

Melissa Randich, secretary

Andrea Peterson, treasurer

Julie Pierre Leclerc, member at large

Nico Honegger, member at large

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.

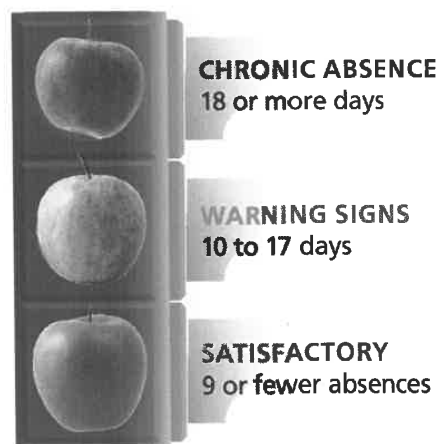
Attending school regularly helps children feel better about school—and themselves. Start building this habit in preschool so they learn right away that going to school on time, every day is important. Eventually good attendance will be a skill that will help them succeed in high school and college.

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.

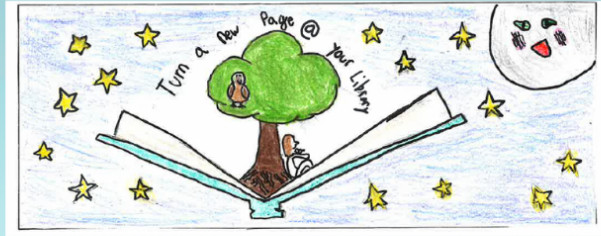
GIRDWOOD SCHOOL

24/25 BOOKMARK CONTEST WINNERS

First place winners from primary (K-2) and intermediate (3-5) go on to compete with other ASD elementary school winners. First and Second Place winners from middle school go to compete against other ASD middle schools. Overall winners will be announced in late January and are printed and distributed for student use to all ASD libraries next fall.



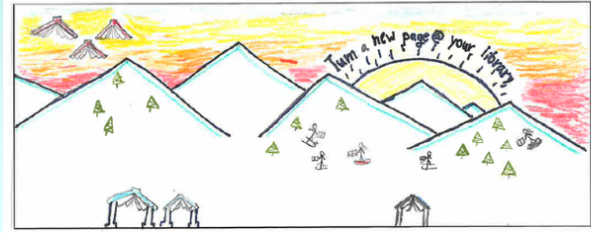
1st Place- Primary
Lillian Phillips - 2nd Grade



1st Place- Intermediate
Quillian Peterson - 4th Grade



2nd Place- Primary
Olivia Glassett- 2nd Grade



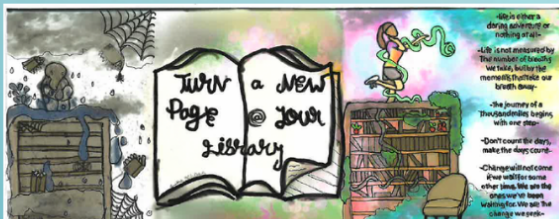
2nd Place- Intermediate
Isabel Love -4th Grade



3rd Place- Primary
Owen McCombs- 2nd Grade



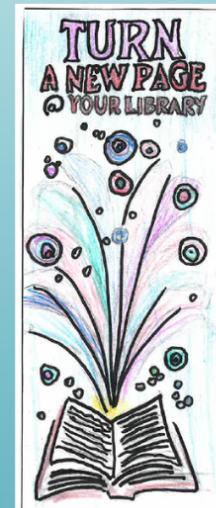
3rd Place- Intermediate
Avery Elliott- 3rd Grade



1st Place-Middle School
Ruby Doobie Gelinas- 6th Grade



2nd Place- Middle School
Reagan Martyn
6th Grade



3rd Place- Middle School
Aria Rice
6th Grade

Congratulations!

P.E. Footnotes from Mrs. Quinn
January 7, 2025

Students and staff are getting excited for our 6 School Ski Days! The Ski Program is part of our P.E. program, promoting a fun, healthy winter sport! Whether your child needs either a lift ticket, rentals, lesson, or all three the cost is \$220. More information will be sent home soon.

School Ski Days are:

January 31.
February 7
February 14
March 21
March 28
April 4



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 were administered in-person at Girdwood School to our K-3 students back in December. Results for K-3 students that were assessed during the benchmark window are currently available in Parent Connect. [ParentConnection Login Information and Reference Guide](#) can be found at parentconnect.asdk12.org.

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.

January 17, 2025

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I'm excited to share that Girdwood PK-8 will implement a new visitor management software system in our school beginning **January 21, 2025**.

The Raptor Technologies safety software will add an extra layer of campus security. Upon entry, visitors, volunteers, and ASD staff whose primary location is outside of our campus must sign in using the self-serve kiosk.

The software has been piloted at ASD schools and is now being rolled out District-wide. The District is implementing the visitor management system to aid in the standardization of visitor check-in procedures in all schools, which supports [Board Policy 3515.5](#).

Starting January 21, 2025 all adult visitors to Girdwood PK-8 will be required to present and scan a current government-issued photo ID upon entering the school. This adjustment to our visitor management policy is a significant step forward in strengthening our school's safety protocols.

As part of our ongoing commitment to ensuring the safety and security of our students, staff, and school community, we are excited for this important enhancement to our ASD visitor management policy.

This new requirement will enable us to:

- Quickly and accurately verify the identity of all visitors.
- Enhance our ability to maintain a secure environment for our students and staff.
- Ensure that we have accurate records of who is in our buildings at all times, further enhancing our ability to respond in the event of an emergency.

What is Raptor?

The visitor management system records the visitor's name, date of birth, and last four digits of the ID, and checks against a national database of registered sex offenders. Schools will follow School Board policy regarding registered sex offenders in the building (see: [Restrictions on Sex Offenders on Campus BP 3515.5](#)). The registered sex offender database is the **only** official database checked by the system. No other data from the ID is gathered or recorded and the information is not shared with any outside agency.

We understand that changes in protocol may require adjustments from our community, and we appreciate your cooperation and support in making our school a safer place for everyone. Please rest assured that all information collected will be treated with the utmost respect for privacy and confidentiality, used solely for the purpose of enhancing the security of our school premises.

Thank you for your understanding and your continued partnership in keeping our school community safe.

Kari Anderson, Principal
Girdwood PK-8

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
Learning & Teaching for Tomorrow



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.

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.

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**



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)



WEEKLY ADULT SPORTS JANUARY 2025

@ 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

VOLLEYBALL SKILLS

for Girls with Coach Jen Wellner

Build skills early for volleyball in middle school!
Players will practice drills, learn the rules, and
scrimmage.

Monday & Thursdays in January
Jan 13, 16, 23 & 27

4:30-5:30 PM



Register @ FourValleys.org



KUNG FU

with Sifu Shayla



MONDAYS, JANUARY 27th - MAY 12th

Now open for 4
years old and
up!

Beginners (ages 4-8) from 2:45-3:45pm

Intermediate/early advanced (ages 8-14) 3:45-4:45 pm

\$140/per person for 14
classes

Scholarships and
payment plans
available



REGISTER AT FOURVALLEYS.ORG



GIRDWOOD FINE ARTS, WINTER SERIES PRESENTS:

FEB 7, 6-8:30 PM &

FEB 8, 10 AM- 2 PM

BATIK SILK SCARF PAINTING

AGES 16+, \$20

FEBRUARY 13

PRINT MAKING & COLLAGES

2:45-4:45 PM, AGES 9-14, \$15

FEBRUARY 19

WIRE JEWELRY CREATION

2:45-5:00 PM, AGES 12+, \$15

All fees are for registration only

Register @ FourValleys.org





Fused Glass

with Laura Walter

Make a Wall or Window Hanging

Tuesday, Jan 21

6:00-7:00 pm

& Thursday, Jan 23

6:00-8:30 pm

Ages 12 and older

\$65

Register at FourValleys.org





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

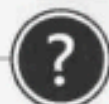


Why join PTA? Our focus is supporting programs that help students be successful in their learning. Last year PTA funded over \$20,000 in programs and supplies for our students and school, including:

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



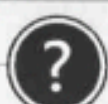
All \$10 goes to support Girdwood School PTA programs



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

