



Mears Middle School

Panther Pride News

Respect, Responsibility, Creativity, and Academic Excellence

Friday, May 7, 2021

Celebrate Teachers Week, May 3-7



WHAT THE
EDUCATOR DOES IN
TEACHING IS MAKE
IT POSSIBLE FOR
THE STUDENTS TO
BECOME
THEMSELVES.

Paulo Freire
We Make the Road by Walking

This week is National Teacher Appreciation Week and at Mears and throughout ASD we have a tremendous amount to celebrate. During this year of unprecedented challenge, our teachers and staff have steadfastly dedicated themselves to serving our community's young people with a level of dedication which has been truly inspiring. Since last Spring, our teachers have faced a shifting landscape of expectations related to health and safety, modes of instruction, curriculum design, scheduling, and more. And through it all, Mears teachers have never lost sight of their individual and collective commitment to providing exceptional care and education for our students every single day. On behalf of the Mears community, please join us in celebrating our teachers this week and always! --Eric & Mike

Japanese Children's Day



Students in Ms. Kiyoko Loer's Japanese classes celebrated Children's Day this week on May 5th. Children's Day is a Japanese national holiday which is set aside to respect children's personalities and to celebrate their happiness. To commemorate the day, students created origami samurai hats.

Honoring a Survivor



This week, students in Mears 8th grade English Language Arts classes attended a moving and powerful Survivor Talk, hosted virtually by the Holocaust Museum LA. Students had the honor of meeting 93 year old Holocaust Survivor, Ms. Engelina Billaur, pictured here with students from Ms. Pak's class.

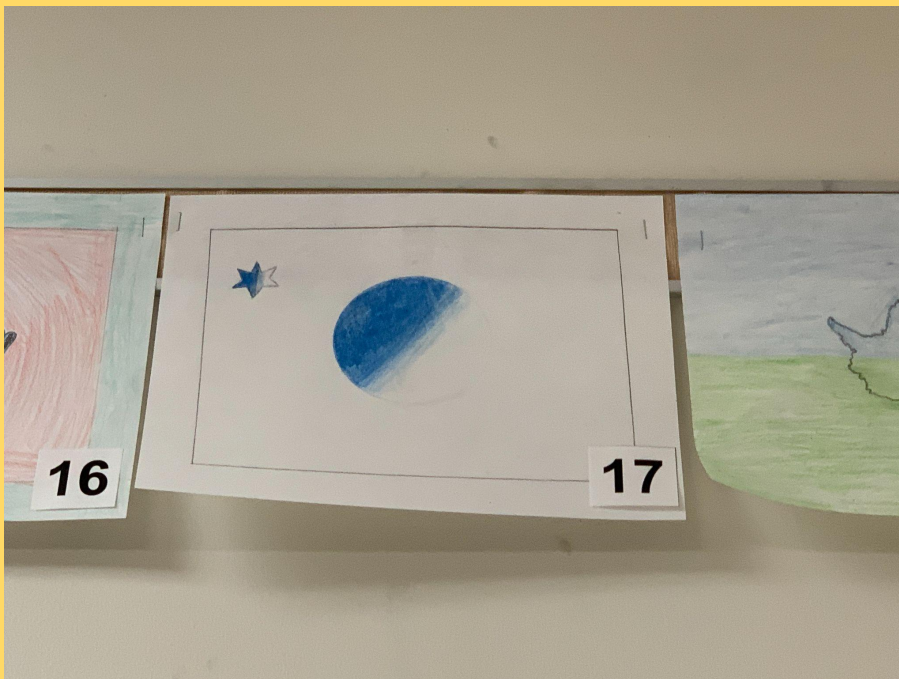
“We The People”

Learning the US Constitution



Students in Mr. Nick Middleton's social studies class are preparing a final project called "We the People" focused on Civil Liberties and the Constitution. For their final, student groups will present on Voting Rights, Equal Protection, Freedom of Religion and Expression.

Winning Flag Design



During their study of world geography, students in Ms. Holly Roberts class have been designing flags for different areas of the globe. Here's the winning flag design for Antarctica by 7th grader, Darin Aspiras.

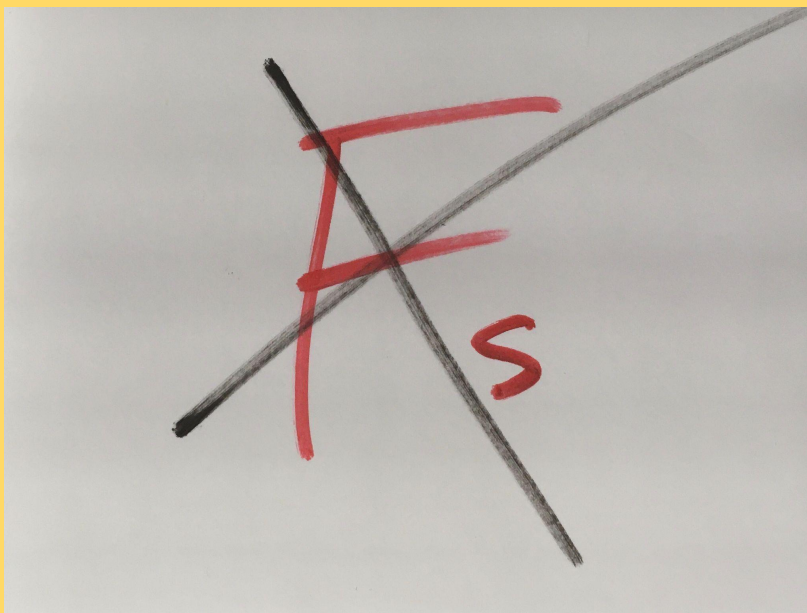
BEST EFFORT -- Finish Strong!



There are just 10 days left of school and at Mears we want to be sure that every student finishes the school year having worked hard to do their very best.

Beginning last week, Mears teachers and staff have launched the end of year FINISH STRONG Campaign, which is a school-wide effort to encourage every student to give their best effort and to pass all of their classes.

To support students, teachers in Mears six Collaborative Teams are offering students in jeopardy of failing classes individualized support to help them improve their final grades for the year. Teachers supporting students in this PUSH-TO-PASS effort will be reviewing gradebooks, identifying missing assignments, and promoting good study habits and work completion. In certain instances, teachers will be reaching out to families for additional support.



Parents and families are strongly encouraged to join us in encouraging all Mears students to give it their all for the next month of school.

Go Panthers!

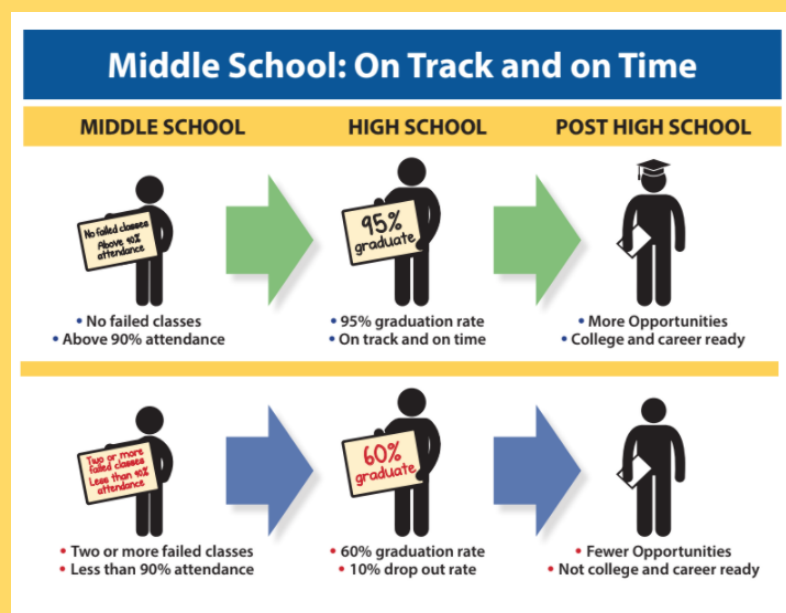
ASD Summer School Opportunities

Anchorage School District Summer Learning Program, 2021

Summer school registration has now opened for any students who have received one or more Fs/Incompletes during the 2020-21 school year. 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



Middle school counselors will work with individual families to finalize the registration process and answer individual planning questions. Link: [Contact Mears Counselors](#)

ASD Career Exploration Program

Open to all Current ASD 8th Graders this Summer

The Career Exploration Summer School Program is designed to provide incoming freshman students the opportunity to explore up to 6 different career fields of interest. Students will participate in career and education planning, hands-on career exploration classes and possible industry tours and field trips. <https://www.asdk12.org/Page/15050>

8th Graders Interested in DHS ROTC



If you are an 8th grader interested in joining the United States Army Junior Officer Training Corps, check out the [DHS JROTC Informational Video](#)

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 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>

Student-Athletes Hit the Track



Mears track is finally all clear of snow and ice and the Panthers are running fast!

Mears Staff Schedule: May 10-14

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00-8:30am	Planning	CT	Alternating: Staff Meeting 8:00-9:00am/ CT Leads 8:45-9:55am	Planning	Planning
	Instruction Time 8:45 - 2:00	Instruction Time 8:45 - 2:00	Instruction Time 10:15-1:55 Duty Free Lunch (12:25-12:55)	Instruction Time 8:45 - 2:00	Instruction Time 8:45 - 2:00
2:00-2:30	Duty Free Lunch	Duty Free Lunch		Duty Free Lunch	Duty Free Lunch
2:35-3:15pm	Planning	Planning	Dept.	CT	Planning

See above for weekly CT and Department meeting schedule.

Friday Fun Day: Crazy Hair/Crazy Socks Day



May 7 -- Crazy Hair/Crazy Socks

May 14 -- Springtime Celebration Day

May 21 -- School Spirit/Team Color Day



Links to Fun Day Photos:

[Mears Friday Fun Day 1980s Photos](#)

[Mears Friday Fun Day Hawaii-Beach Photos](#)

[Mears Friday Fun Day Colorful Covid Masks/Crazy Socks Photos](#)

Next Thursday is Bike to School Day



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>



Brent Haugen,
907-742-6428

Caitlin Burr,
907-742-6424

Crysta Svendsen,
907-742-6426

Visit this link to meet Mears
Counselors:

<https://sites.google.com/asdk12.net/mearsteachervideointros/home>

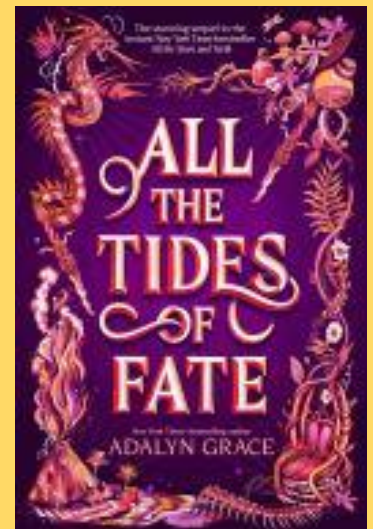
Panthers are Readers Mears Reads Book Club

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

The May book that we chose is: ***All the Tides of Fate*** by Adalyn Grace, book two of the series we started in April.

Our next meeting is on Wednesday, May 19th. We will meet using a Zoom, and we will start at 2:45PM.

Contact Mrs. Fleming at 742-6432, fleming_heather@asdk12.org, or through the Canvas Inbox to get the Zoom information.



Summer Reading Opportunities

Free Audiobooks Every Week

AudioFile Sync AUDIOBOOKS FOR TEENS

WANT ALERTS ABOUT FREE AUDIOBOOKS ALL SUMMER LONG? TEXT syncya to 866-984-0598 or visit audiobooksync.com

For title releases, TEXT syncya to 866-984-0598 or visit audiobooksync.com

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

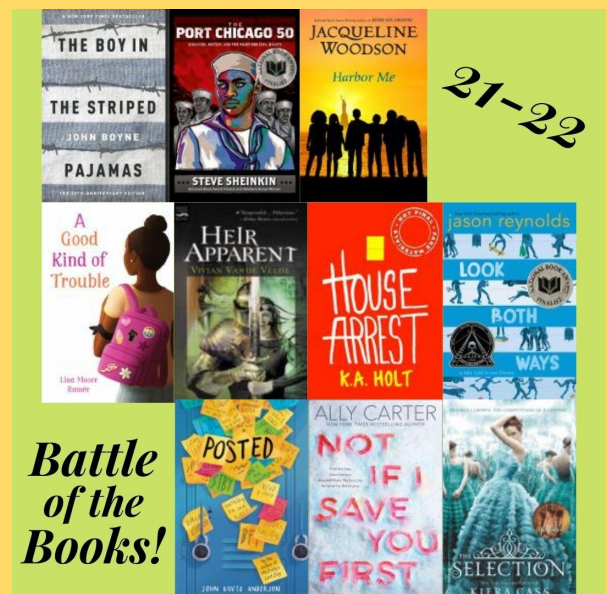
AudioFile Sync offers FREE audio books for teens throughout the summer. Every week, two new audio books are offered. The second set of books, *Trell* and *They Went Left*, became available yesterday, May 6th.

Register with an email address at 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

Write an Epistle to Last Year

An epistle is a formal letter that follows standard letter format, but is written in a scholarly tone. Your letter, however, can be written in whatever tone matches how you feel about the past year. Write a letter to this past year as if last year is a person you are corresponding with.



A lot happened in the previous year; so much that you won't be able to address it all. See the next slide for suggestions to help get started.

Submission deadline: **Tuesday, May 18th.** (Submit to Panther Picture in Canvas.)

Talking Back to 2020 Brainstorm

Consider one or more of these ideas to address in your letter to 2020.

- Elections
- Space X
- Online School
- The Game *Among Us*
- The Vaccine
- New Friends/New Experiences
- Mears Middle School
- Pandemic



Crafting your Letter

1. Follow proper letter format. Begin with a salutation (Dear 2020.), and end with a closing (Sincerely, Your friend, Your ex-friend for sure, etc).
2. Start a new paragraph each time you change time, place or topic.
3. Focus on tone. Use strong word choice and an expressive voice to convey exactly how you feel about 2020.
4. Remember to personify the year. Address 2020 as you would a person. Assign it human characteristics. Write a love letter to 2020 if the year treated you well. Unfriend 2020 in your letter if the year disappointed you. Write something in between if it was a mixed year.

April's Writing Contest Winners

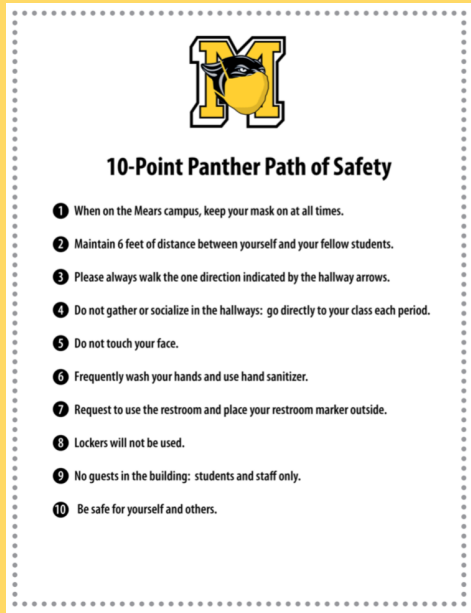
First Place: Ella Wheelles, for her poem, "Fall Wonderland."

Runners-up (tie): Oriah Jensen for "Umber Leather Chair"

Molly McBride for "Heroes."

Congratulations, winners, and thank you to all who entered our ekphrastic poetry writing contest.

Covid Safety Update



After six weeks of in-person school, I am pleased to continue to report that our students and staff are doing a tremendous job adhering to the Covid mitigation plan. Everyone wears a mask without question, students are sitting socially distanced in classrooms, and classes are taking advantage of warmer days and taking their nutrition breaks outside and/or are leaving classrooms for walks around the building.

Keep up the good work, Panthers! --Eric

Here is a link to the [ASD School Safety Plans](#), where you will find all the details for Mears' Covid safety protocols.

Recently Updated: ASD's Health and Safety Covid Matrix

ASD's planning and decision-making process for determining the District's risk level for conducting school takes multiple community factors into consideration. The District conducts this process in close conversation with the Municipality of Anchorage and the State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services. In recent months, organizations such as the Center for Disease Control, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the World Health Organization have expanded their guidance and resources regarding safely providing public education.

Here is a link: [ASD's Covid Matrix](#)
[New CDC Guidance for Schools](#)

Important Reminder to All Parents and Families: **Please Stay Home When Feeling Ill**

"I'd like to ask for parents' continued attention when conducting home symptom screening before sending children to school. While more and more parents are becoming vaccinated, children are still susceptible and can spread COVID-19 at school. Just a single positive case in a school can close an entire classroom and potentially cause the entire class to quarantine as close contacts. The school community has done a great job thus far, and COVID-related impacts to our classrooms have been minimal. Let's stay vigilant."

--Dr. Deena Bishop



Mears Middle School Anchorage, AK

PTSA

PTSA Meetings

Upcoming PTSA meetings held @ 6:00 pm via zoom

- Tuesday, June 1st

Join Zoom Meeting

Contact the Mears PTSA for the link to join.

board@mearsptsa.com



Mears Yearbooks on Sale Now!

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

Purchase your yearbook at:

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

“Ducks 4 Bucks”! PTSA’s Last Fundraising Effort for the Year

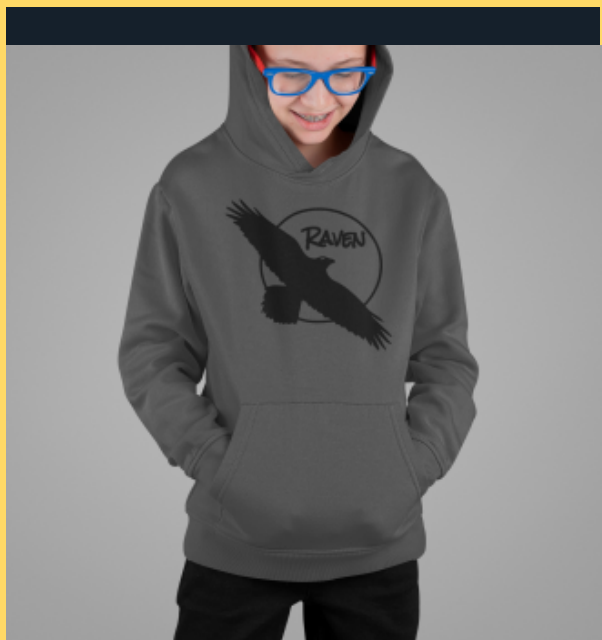


Event Description:

We are selling Ducks for \$4 on our school store at the following link:

<https://mearsptsa.memberhub.store/store/items/671092>

We will securely attach your order number(s) to our yellow rubber duckies. These ducks will be fired from a student built [trebuchet](#) at a target 200 meters away. If the duck can successfully hit the target, you will be awarded a hoodie from our school store!



[Team Clothes Order Forms](#)

Thank you for the continued support of the Mears PTSA. Our school store sells PE approved clothing, beanies, baseball caps, hoodies, and more is online www.MearsPTSA.com.

Join Mears PTSA Membership and become part of an organization that is the leading Child advocacy group in the Nation. You not only become a member of Mears. But Alaska PTA and National PTA. Membership benefits include Office Depot/Office Max, Hertz, and more. Learn more at www.MearsPTSA.com

Ways you can help us raise funds doing your day to day shopping and holiday shopping.

Amazon Smile smile.amazon.com/ch/92-0138999

Shutterfly <http://mearsptsa.shutterflystorefront.com>



<https://twitter.com/MearsPtsa>

#pantherforce



Darth, Chewbacca, and the X-wing Red Leader joined forces at Mears on May 4th.

“May the 4th Be With You!”



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](#)