



Mears Middle School

Panther Pride News

Respect, Responsibility, Creativity, and Academic Excellence

Friday, February 12, 2021

Mears Students Visit Holocaust Museum LA



Mears students in 8th grade English Language Arts are currently reading Elie Wiesel's renowned Holocaust memoir, *Night*. As part of their studies of this important historic era, students participated in a virtual tour of the Holocaust Museum of Los Angeles. The event included an hour-long guided tour of the museum's artifacts, along with lessons on key historical events and their causes. The highlight of the tour was the guest speakers, who included a Holocaust survivor and the descendent of a survivor. Special thanks to Mears 8th grade Language Arts teachers, Ms. Sally Pak, Ms. Jessica Norton, and Ms. Mia Sison for making such incredible learning opportunities possible for our students. --Eric

Be an Upstander, not a Bystander



Virtual Tour with Kurt MacMillan, Museum Docent



Mears students who attended the virtual tour of the Holocaust Museum LA had the privilege of engaging in powerful conversation with Mitch Kreitenberg, the son of a survivor of Auschwitz. Mr. Kreitenberg reminded students of the importance of always practicing being an “upstander,” by standing up to bullying and discrimination. He stated that this is one of the best ways to honor the victims of the Holocaust.

THE NO PLACE FOR HATE® PLEDGE

MIDDLE / HIGH SCHOOL



I WILL SEEK TO GAIN UNDERSTANDING of those who are different from myself.

I WILL SPEAK OUT against prejudice and discrimination.

I WILL REACH OUT to support those who are targets of hate.

I WILL PROMOTE RESPECT for people and help foster a prejudice-free school.

I BELIEVE that one person can make a difference - no person can be an “innocent” bystander when it comes to opposing hate.

I RECOGNIZE that respecting individual dignity and promoting inter-group harmony are the responsibilities of all students.

Have You Signed the No Place For Hate® Promise Yet?
Find out how from your school's No Place For Hate® committee



At Mears, we want all of our students to be “upstanders” and to actively support a campus culture that is safe and welcoming for all.

In order to promote our school-wide commitment to creating a hate-free environment, Mears Middle School is adopting the No Place for Hate Pledge.

Beginning next week, the Pledge will be promoted by Mears Student Advisory Board. In time, we will strive to have all students and staff sign the pledge to show their support for these important values and practices.

Stay Informed and Get Involved

New Mears Family Survey for Quarter 4 Coming Soon

Mears Parents and Families,

Most of you have recently filled out an ASD Family Survey to indicate your program preference for the fourth quarter. This survey was sent by ASD in order to gauge the level of interest across the district for the different kinds of programs being offered.

Next week, on Tuesday, Feb. 16, Mears will send out its own survey, which will ask all of our families to select their school program choice. Your selection on the Mears Family Survey will be used by administrators, counselors, and teachers to prepare for the beginning of Quarter 4.

In order to ensure the smoothest transition possible into the final quarter of school, we strongly encourage our families to make their best, most well informed decision regarding selection of program.

While we will continue to remain as flexible as possible, scheduling changes for students present many challenges, and we wish to make as few as possible as we begin the new quarter. So, when you take the survey next week, please do your best to make a decision that your student and family can commit to.

In our ongoing effort to meet the needs of all of our students and their families at Mears, we will be offering four different instructional options to our students for the 4th quarter:

- **Mears At-School: For those who wish to return to the building for daily in-person instruction by Mears teachers and staff.**
- **Mears Online: For those who are not ready to return to the building, yet wish to maintain their connection with Mears and its teachers and staff.**
- **ASD Virtual: For those who would prefer a highly independent online asynchronous learning experience supported by highly-qualified ASD teachers and staff.**
- **ASD Homeschool: For those who wish to customize their online learning experience at one of ASD's homeschool options: Paideia, Frontier, Family Partnership**



**AT A GLANCE:
Mears Q4 Options, 2021**

	Mears At-School	Mears Online	ASD Virtual	ASD Homeschool
Teachers and Staff	Mears certificated staff	Mears certificated staff	ASD certificated staff	Parents, ASD Certificated Online Instructors, Paideia, Frontier
Curriculum and Platform	ASD teacher designed Canvas	ASD teacher designed Canvas	APEX and eDynamics	Highly customized, determined by the Homeschool
Learning Environment & Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-school • Synchronous, in-person instruction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At home, remote learning • Some courses will be synchronous with live lessons, while others may be primarily asynchronous • Weekly Office Hours support with Mears teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At home • Asynchronous/remote learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At home • Asynchronous • Virtual
Schedule	Mon-Tues & Thurs-Fri with Mears teachers and staff 8:45am - 2:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mon-Tues & Thurs-Fri for some synchronous classes • Wed. Office Hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open, flexible schedule 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open, flexible schedule
Online Platform	Canvas	Canvas	APEX and eDynamics	APEX and eDynamics
Course schedule	3 classes (2 core, 1 elective)	3 classes (2 core, 1 elective)	3 classes (2 core, 1 elective)	Determined by family and school

Teachers and Staff Meeting Schedule

Monday/Feb. 15 -- **No School/President's Day**

Tuesday/Feb. 16 -- Planning and CT before and after school

Wednesday/Feb. 17 -- Staff Meeting, 8:00-9:00am
Canvas Open Hours Support Session, 9:00-10:00am
Departments, 12:45-1:45pm

Thursday/Feb. 18 -- Planning and CT before and after school

Friday/Feb. 19 -- Planning and CT before and after school

Upcoming Dates for Families

Wednesday, Feb. 17, 6:00-7:00pm

➤ **Mears PTSA General Meeting**

Contact: MearsMS.PTSA@gmail.com for the Zoom link, meeting ID and passcode.

Thursday, Feb. 25, 6:00-7:00pm

➤ **6th Grade Family Welcome and Orientation** -- This online event is for all families of 6th graders planning to attend Mears next school year, 2021-22. We are excited to welcome new and returning families by introducing members of our incredible staff, along with an overview of Mears exemplary core and elective course offerings and extra-curricular activities.

Mears 10-Point Safety Plan for Students



10-Point Panther Path of Safety

- 1 When on the Mears campus, keep your mask on at all times.
- 2 Maintain 6 feet of distance between yourself and your fellow students.
- 3 Please always walk the one direction indicated by the hallway arrows.
- 4 Do not gather or socialize in the hallways: go directly to your class each period.
- 5 Do not touch your face.
- 6 Frequently wash your hands and use hand sanitizer.
- 7 Request to use the restroom and place your restroom marker outside.
- 8 Lockers will not be used.
- 9 No guests in the building: students and staff only.
- 10 Be safe for yourself and others.

The small in-school program at Mears will support students, while at the same time allow school personnel the opportunity to fine tune safety protocols and build community confidence as we prepare for a broader reopening of school at the beginning of 4th quarter on March 15.

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

As always, I will continue to provide our school community with updates in this newsletter, which is published every Friday. Go Panthers!

Students Encouraged to Join National Junior Honor Society



Attention: Current National Junior Honor Society Members

8th graders who were inducted into National Junior Honor Society last year will have our next meeting February 24th at 2pm. We will begin working on our first service project, and we will have our officer elections.

All current members should have received an invite to our NJHS Canvas Page.

Email Mrs. Lambert if you have not received the invite:
Lambert_Marah@asdk12.org



Are you interested in joining National Junior Honor Society?

Here is the NJHS application link:

<https://forms.gle/wWGhnUtPbjBjBMC9AA>

Applications are due: February 15th

Contact Ms. Sison or Ms. Lambert if you have questions!

Sison_Mia@asdk12.org

Lambert_Marah@asdk12.org

Requirements:

- 3.5 Average GPA (Q1 and Q2)
- Love for Community Service and Leadership



Panthers are Writers

Write It Like Amanda!

Amanda Gorman is the youngest poet/writer to read at a presidential inauguration. She's also our nation's first youth poet laureate. And she's only 22! You can watch her perform again at this year's Super Bowl.



In this month's contest, you will write a poem while experimenting with some of the same techniques Amanda Gorman used in her poem, "The Hill We Climb." Select a line from Ms. Gorman's poem to use as the title or first line of your poem.

Submit in Panther Pictures Course inside Canvas.

Advance to slide 2 for more information.

Entry deadline: Friday, Feb 26th.

"The Hill We Climb"

If you missed her, you can listen to Amanda recite her poem here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jp9pyMqnBzk>

To read the poem, [click here](#).

You might choose the lines:

*We close the divide because we know, to put our future first,
we must first put our differences aside*

Or,

*But while democracy can be periodically delayed
it can never be permanently defeated*

Or,

*We will not march back to what was
but move to what shall be*



Continue to Slide 3

Write Amanda-Style!

1. After selecting a first line from "The Hill We Climb," write a poem in which you describe a scene, express a belief, or share an observation.
2. The recommended length for your poem is 8 to 16 lines, but it can be shorter or longer.
3. Find places where Ms. Gorman uses rhyme, alliteration (repetition of sound) and repetition of words and phrases. Apply some of these same techniques in your poem.

That even as we grieved...

That even as we hurt...

That even as we tired...

benevolent but bold

...bruised but whole,



Then victory won't lie in the blade

But in all the bridges we've made

That is the promised glade

For all contest details go to: [Mears Creative Writing Contest Information](#)

January Flash Fiction Winners:

Winner: Ella Wheelles for her story, "A January Night."

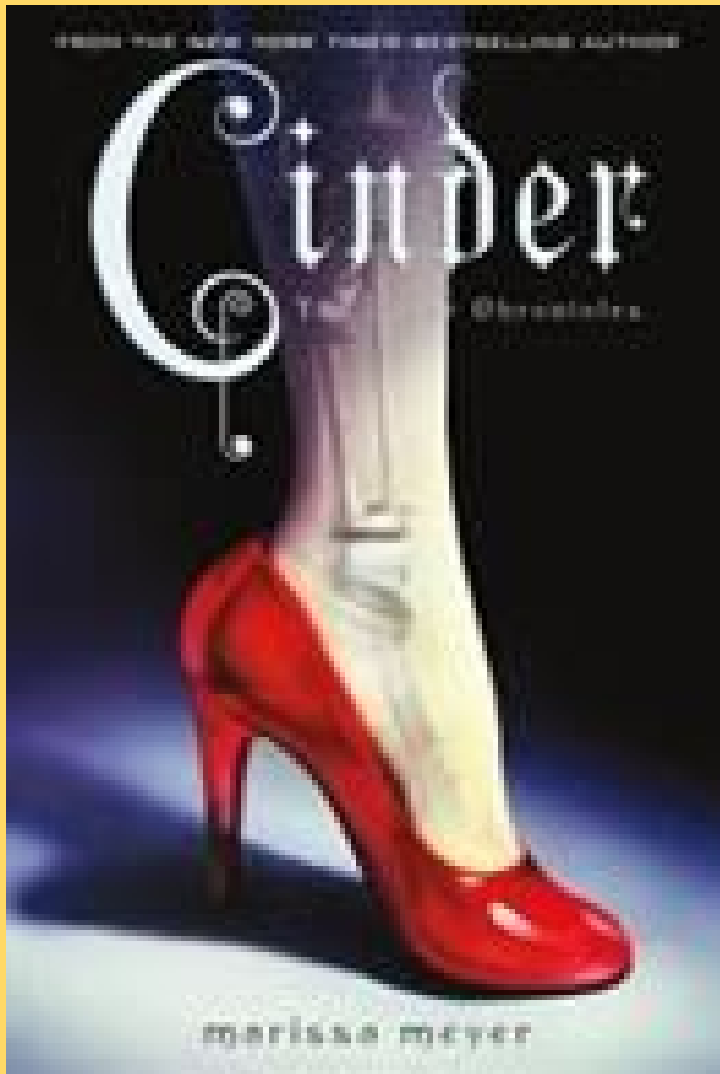
Runner-up: Molly McBride for her story, "Tik Tok Gone Viral."

Links to January's winning entries:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1uMD4jPhZ_3JA77417HWEv7AEYUDee5RP/view

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Hfwwsoak9_IXTH9n90Lf7geYC-1RBDXN/view

Panthers are Readers Mears Reads Book Club

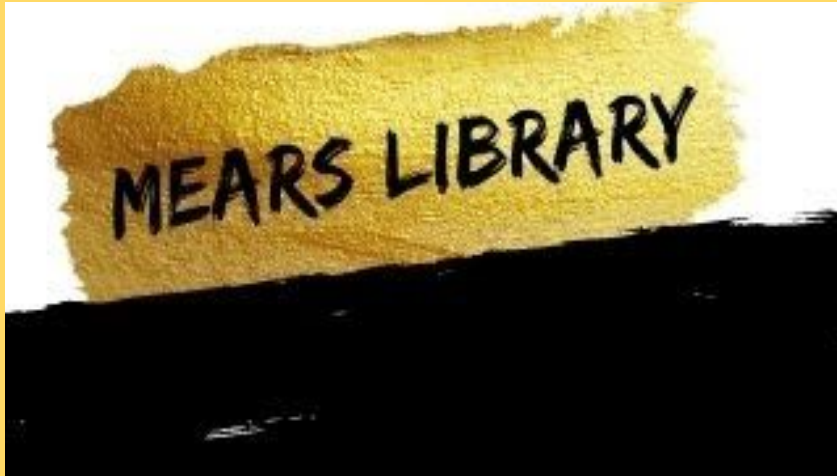


EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

February's book club meeting will be **this Tuesday, February 16th**, at 2:15PM. We will be discussing *Cinder* by Marissa Meyer.

If you would like to join us on Feb. 16th contact Mrs. Fleming at 742-6432, fleming_heather@asdk12.org, or through a student's Inbox in Canvas, to ask for the Zoom link.

Library at Mears in Canvas

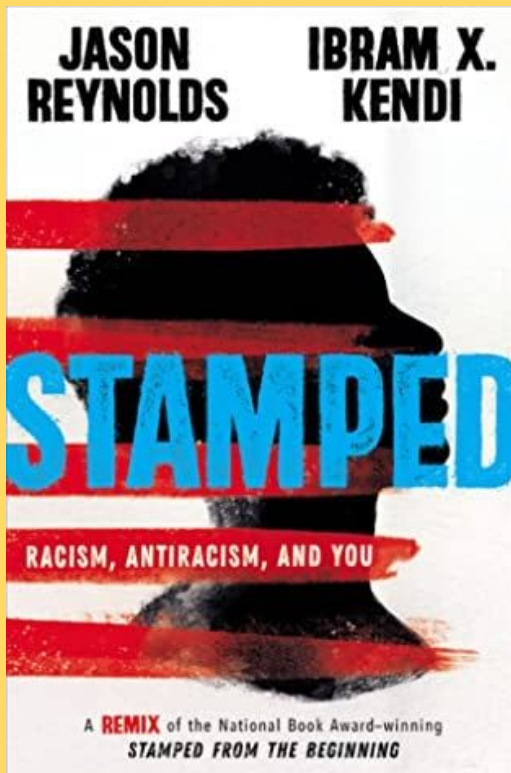


Students received an invitation to add the Library at Mears to their Canvas dashboards.

The Canvas shell for the library allows students to link directly to the catalog, get tutorials on SORA, access to databases (and their passwords), Noodletools, research skills, and more.

There are no assignments associated with the Library at Mears Canvas.

Anchorage Reads



The annual Anchorage Reads project kicked off on February 1st. The description from the [website](#) says, “Anchorage Reads is a community led program to promote reading, literacy and community-building by inspiring people of different ages and backgrounds to talk about the same book.”

The title chosen for 2021 is *Stamped from the Beginning: A definitive History of Racist Ideas in America* by Ibram X. Kendi, and the young adult version, *Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You* by Ibram X. Kendi and Jason Reynolds. The Mears library has a limited number of books to give away. Contact Mrs. Fleming if you would like a copy.

Information on where to find copies, virtual activities and discussions, and other resources, is available on the [Municipality of](#)

[Anchorage Public Library website](#).

Mears Counseling Corner

If you need any assistance in preparing for the 4th quarter, please let our counselors know by filling out a HELP Ticket:

<https://www.asdk12.org/domain/4978>



Your Counselors

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>

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. This new information includes a range of metrics and other criteria that allows districts, in close coordination with state and local health officials, to revise and adapt school opening guidelines based on the unique context of their community.

Here is a link: [ASD's Covid Matrix](#)



Congratulations to Mears' New President Curt Ehrhart and Sheila Hill as our new Treasurer.

Mears PTSA still has open leadership positions, including Vice President and Secretary. Please let us know if you are interested in volunteering to support this great organization and our wonderful school community.

Wednesday, Feb. 17, 6:00-7:00pm
➤ **Mears PTSA General Meeting**

Contact: MearsMS.PTSA@gmail.com for the Zoom link, meeting ID and passcode.

PTSA Fundraising Opportunity



2020 was a rough year for all businesses; the Black Cat Cafe is no exception. The lack of income means we need to get creative with our fundraising. Let me introduce my nominee: "Ducks 4 Bucks"!

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 target 200 ft. away. *If* the duck can successfully hit the target, you will be awarded a hoodie from our school store!



a
will

We currently sold more ducks than anticipated and we **need** PTSA assistance for this event.

I'm currently in **need** of

- social media type person
- graphics person
- writer
- few camera operators that are not afraid of flying ducks

More information at the **next** PTSA meeting. *By the way, did you pay this year's dues?*



<https://twitter.com/MearsPtsa>

First person to retweet my “Ducks 4 Bucks” post gets a free [20 oz Metal Water Bottle](#).

The school store now has masks!

Order online and you can pick up at the school while supporting the PTSA!

<https://mearsptsa.memberhub.store/store/items/123659>



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>



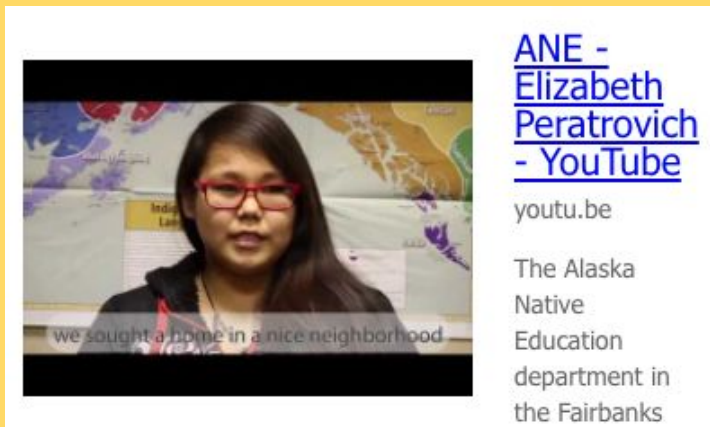
“I never gave up hope!”



Mr. Ernest Weiss, a survivor of the Holocaust, led a Survivor Talk this week with Mears students. Mr. Weiss, a presenter for the Holocaust Museum LA, was 16 years old when he and his family were taken by train to Auschwitz. Today, at 94 years old, his message to young people is about the power of hope. During his presentation, he made clear that it was hope that gave him the strength and courage to survive. Mr. Weiss, along with his father and brother,

were liberated in Eastern Europe by American soldiers in 1945.

Celebrate Elizabeth Peratrovich Day



Elizabeth Peratrovich's Day is just around the corner on Feb 16th! For those who are not familiar with Elizabeth Peratrovich, she was a Tlingit woman and an Alaska Native Civil Rights Leader who was instrumental in passing the Anti-Discrimination Bill in Alaska. Before her powerful speech in front of a packed legislative gallery, discrimination against Alaska Native people was prevalent. Video link:

<https://youtu.be/xyxtUDwRpPo>

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](#)