



Mears Middle School

Panther Pride News

Respect, Responsibility, Creativity, and Academic Excellence

Friday, December 10, 2021

Winter Concert Celebration



This week, Mears is celebrating great music performances by all of the musical groups at school. Concert and jazz band, orchestra, and choir have all performed this week to large, in-person audiences here at school. Special thanks goes out to Mears incredible music teachers: Mr. Matt O'Connor, Ms. Cari McCubrey, and Mr. Jason Edwards. **Go Panthers!**

Bowl-making in Art



Students are learning to make bowls with Ms. Yackel using a pottery wheel during their lunch periods. In this photo, a group of 7th grade art students are working on centering their clay.

Dimond Robotics Visit



Students from Dimond High School's renowned Engineering and Robotics programs visited Mears this week to share their knowledge and skills. Mears currently offers two classes in robotics, along with five sections of Design and Modeling. Many students from Mears matriculate to Dimond's engineering and robotics classes.

Stay Informed/Get Involved

Thursday, Dec. 16 -- Last day of Fall Semester

Friday, Dec. 17 -- No School for Students; Telework Day for all Staff

MAP Testing: Week of 12/13: Make-up Testing (Mon, Tue, Wed)

Lost and Found at Mears



Mears Families,

On the last day of the semester, December 17th, we will donate or discard all items in our lost and found. **Please encourage your student to take one last look if they are missing anything.** The lost and found is located to the right of the Mears stage in the MPR.

Thanks for your help!

Cell Phone/Electronic Device Policy: Big Changes Semester 2



Beginning on January 3rd, the first day of semester 2, students will no longer be able to use their cell phones or electronic devices in the hallways, multipurpose room, or any other school areas between the hours of 8:00 AM and 2:45 PM. Teachers will remain in complete control of electronic device use in their classrooms.

We ask that you also discuss this huge change with your student to ensure a successful transition to the new policy. Please review the following information for consequences if students violate the policy that starts on January 3rd, 2022; **we depend on your support for the successful implementation of this new policy.**

As part of this support, we ask that you communicate with your student through the office.. When you text or call your student during class, it can create a behavioral concern for the staff member that does not help provide the best possible educational experience.

For infractions in the hallway/MPR, we will use the following structure and use the updated electronic device spreadsheet and Q. to keep track of related behavior:

- 1st infraction: phone taken and returned by same staff to student.
- 2nd infraction: phone taken provided to administration for parent pickup.
- 3rd infraction: phone taken provided to administration for parent pickup + work detail.
- 4th infraction:: phone taken provided to administration for parent pick up+In School Suspension (ISS).
- 5th infraction: phone taken provided to administration for parent pick up+ 2 ISS and mandatory meeting with administration for behavioral plan consideration.

Please call or email if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

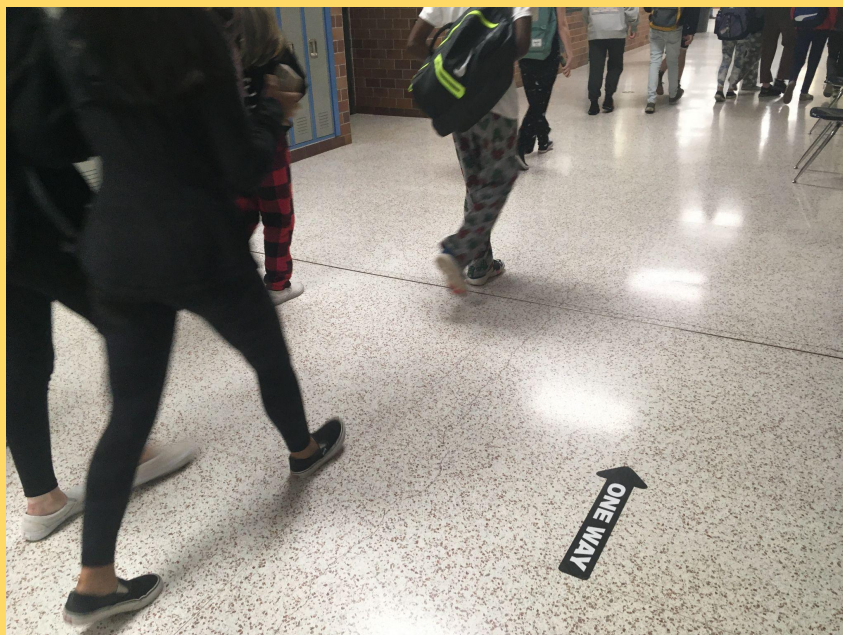
Mears Administration

Bag and Backpack-Free Hallways: Beginning January 3rd

With the return to two-way hallways and full locker use, the administration has decided to eliminate the use of bags and backpacks of any kind in the hallways starting January 3rd.

We've made this decision for three reasons:

1. Safety: We recognize that a school without bags and backpacks in the hallways is inherently safer because items are visible to staff at all times.
2. Clarity: Despite our best efforts to define appropriately-sized bags and backpacks this quarter, students continue to have a hard time distinguishing; by eliminating backpacks we're able to ensure a crystal-clear message and prevent behavioral infractions related to bag/backpack use.
3. Opportunity: Now students have the opportunity to fully employ their lockers, making backpack use unnecessary.



In short, we're convinced that keeping our hallways bag and backpack free starting January 3rd will result in many benefits for our students.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to email me.

Regards,

Mike Scott

Mears AP

scott_michael@asdk12.org

Mears Activities Update

Cross Country Skiing and Boys Basketball start right after the break, so if you're interested, please submit your paperwork in advance.

Families must fill out the following forms for students to participate in sports:

- Middle School Participation Form
 - https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xnIL0dz4uKW6YsMk_MrWGZd4mjAkPMj5/view
- COVID-19 Supplemental Waiver of Liability
 - <https://www.asdk12.org/cms/lib/AK02207157/Centricity/Domain/4260/COVID-19%20Waiver.pdf>
- COVID-19 Return To Play
 - <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vsUwRmFJTh5s4ecdD0wJ2PW8ywX2-J5U/view>
- Health Examination Form
 - <https://drive.google.com/file/d/11I5oSifxCsxF-MNIknP6hBp0FPtELfeI/view>

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>

Upcoming Activity Events

Boys Basketball

This popular sport starts on January 10th. Submit your paperwork soon!

Cross Country Skiing

This exciting event begins on January 6th. Submit your paperwork soon!

Volleyball

Link for Middle School Volleyball Schedule: [2021 VB Schedule Tentative.pdf](#)

Panthers Write!



November, 2021 Writing Contest Winners

After lengthy deliberation, judges finally identified November's winners from a stack of excellent stories.

In first place, for her story, "A Bulgarian Holy Night," is Dara Stoyanovska.

And in a three-way tie for runner up are:

Hamey Madden for "The Thanksgiving Guest"

Marissa Kimura for "A Dragon's Feast"

Rae Huff for her story about reaching out to a person in need.

Congratulations to all four writers!

December Writing Contest

FLASH FICTION or The Super Short Story



- Tell a story in 200 words or less.
- **Categories:**
 - > "What's App with that?"
 - > "Dude, the mullet is back!"
 - > "Help! I'm in cell phone jail."
- Deadline: Tuesday, December 14th.

Tips for Writing Flash Fiction:

Stories cannot exceed 200 words.

Although this is a very short story, stories still need a beginning, middle and end, developed characters, a defined setting and a clear conflict.

Complete an outline provided before beginning your draft.

Introduce the main character, setting and conflict immediately. Think action, dialogue, description.

Keep the number of characters to a minimum. The story is too short to develop many characters.

Make every word count. Use active verbs.

Try writing out your story draft without worrying about the 200-word limit. Once you have a rough draft written, go back and eliminate words, phrases, or entire sentences that do not move the story forward.

Once you get closer to 200 words, go back and delete unnecessary words, especially “thens,” “thats,” “thes,” and “ands.”

Consider a surprise or a sudden twist at the end.



Flash Fiction Outline



Category Choice:

Characters + their traits:

- 1.
- 2.

Conflict:

Setting:

Event:

Briefly describe the main scene or event:

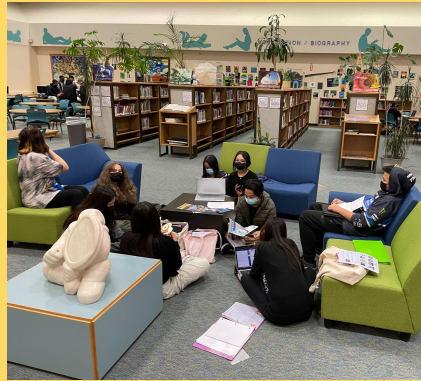
Words/Phrases/Images to include:

Possible Endings:

Library at Mears

Lunch Time Madness

Students enjoy some downtime in the library.



Mears Counseling Corner



Make sure your student has joined the counseling canvas page. Updates from the counseling office will be made throughout the year on Canvas. If students have not done so already, please have them click the invite link below.

Invite link: [Mears Counseling Canvas Page](#)

Caitlin Burr, 7th Grade
burr_caitlin@asdk12.org
907-742-6424

Crysta Svendsen, 8th Grade
svendsen_crysta@asdk12.org
907-742-6428

Nurse Dan's Health Update

Important Covid Health Reminder:



Important Links:

[Anchorage Covid Vaccination Info](#)

[ASD Covid Information Link](#)

[ASD Return to School/Covid Mitigation Plan](#)



PTSA Meeting Schedule

Parents, family members, and students are all welcome and encouraged to participate in PTSA meetings. Be sure to mark your calendars and come join us to learn all the ways that PTSA supports the Mears school community.

Upcoming PTSA General Meeting -- Jan. 18, 2022 5:30pm

Meeting Dates for Spring Semester: Feb. 22, Mar. 15, Apr. 19, May 3, 2022

[Mears PTSA Zoom Link](#)

Meeting ID: 958 2804 2654

Passcode: 124813

All meetings for the first semester will be held via zoom.

PTSA Volunteer Needs

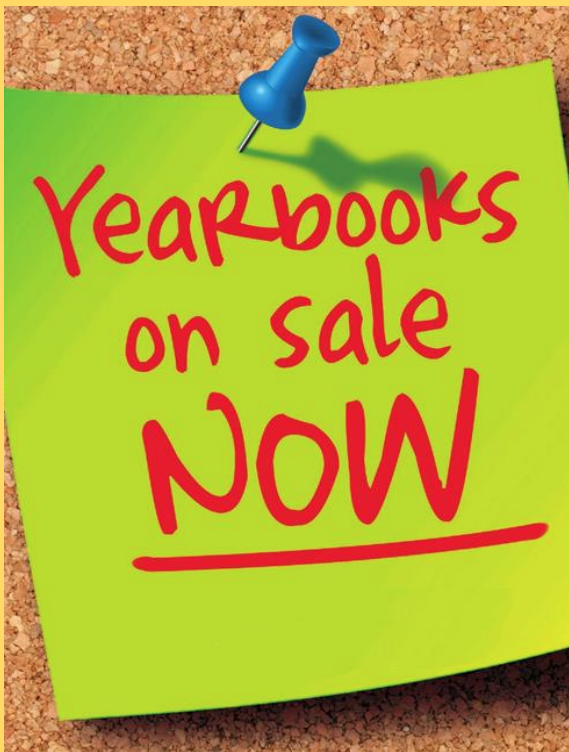
We are actively recruiting for Volunteers and for Open Board Seats and hope that you will join us! We specifically need volunteers for the following:

- Open Vice President Position
- Open Board Secretary Position
- School Store & Merchandise/ Morning and Lunchtime Shifts Now Available
- Merchandise Inventory
- Social Media Coordinator
- Yearbook Sales Promotion & Distribution

Are you interested in supporting Mears PTSA as a volunteer? If you'd like to learn more, please fill out this brief survey:

[Mears PTSA Volunteer Interest Form, 2021-22](#)

Mears 2021-22 Yearbook Sales Have Begun



2021 – 2022 Yearbooks are on sale now! Purchase your yearbook at www.ybpay.com use Yearbook ID: 13921122 Mears PTSA

Not-So-Ugly Sweater Day



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](#)