



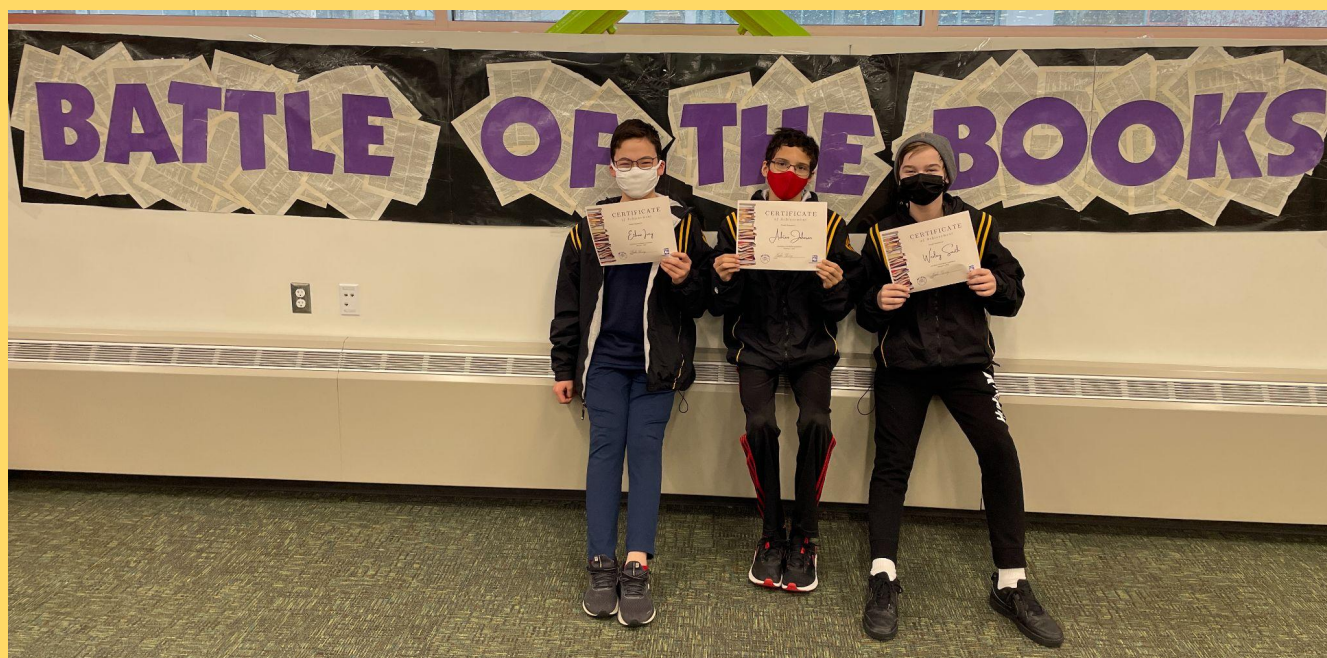
Mears Middle School

Panther Pride News

Respect, Responsibility, Creativity, and Academic Excellence

Friday, February 4, 2022

Panthers Shine at Battle of the Books



Pictured from left: Ethan Ivey, Ashton Johnson, and Wesley Smith

Twelve teams from around the district gathered in the West/Romig Middle School library to compete in Battle of the Books and they did an outstanding job displaying sportsmanship and knowledge. The day ended with Mears in sixth place after 48 questions. All of the students at Mears who participated in Battle of the Books this year worked hard and dedicated many hours to reading and practicing. **Go Panthers!**

Morning Announcements Team



Special thanks goes out to Mr. Nick Middleton and the incredible students on the Student Advisory Board, who welcome students and staff every day with morning announcements. In addition to sharing important announcements, SAB students lead the Pledge of Allegiance and the weekly Dena'ina Land acknowledgment.

Celebrating Effort and Improvement



Ms. Grapes Pascual has been working hard to encourage her students in math to always do their very best to learn and grow. She awards students with Certificates of Achievement for reaching their improvement goals on their iReady Diagnostic Assessments.

Stay Informed/Get Involved

Planning Ahead:

Friday, Feb. 11 – NAEP Testing for Mears 8th Graders – No change to bell schedule

Wednesday, Feb. 16 – Staff Meeting, 3:00-4:00pm, Library


The annual Parent/Teacher Conferences scheduled for Feb. 16-17 are cancelled. Instead, these will be regularly scheduled school days.

Friday, Feb. 18 – State Release Teacher Work Day; No school for students

Monday, Feb. 21 – President's Day Holiday








Thursday, Feb. 24 – New Families Online Orientation Event, 6:00-7:00pm

⇐ Backman Recommends ⇒



Celebrate Black History Month this year with a closer look at the lives of various Black Americans who have made indelible marks on history with their artistry, professional achievements, and community activism. We've compiled a list of films premiering this month, as well as programs available to stream in February.

Premiering in February:

 Through the Banks of the Red Cedar FEBRUARY 1	 Owned: A Tale of Two Americas FEBRUARY 7	 Marian Anderson: The Whole World in Her Hands FEBRUARY 8	 Just a Mortal Man: The Jerry Lawson Story FEBRUARY 10
 The American Diplomat FEBRUARY 15	 American Reckoning FEBRUARY 15	 Fannie Lou Hamer's America FEBRUARY 22	


[What to Watch for Black History Month, PBS, 2022](#)

Great Activities for Discovery and Growth

Join **Ilakucaraq Virtual Sessions** to discover who you are and connect with other **Alaska Native Youth**

Tuesdays
3:30-5:00pm
Feb. 15 - Mar. 1
Via Zoom

Open to all Alaska Native high school students located anywhere in Alaska.



Ilakucaraq (pronounced Ee-la-cou-jaw-ga-ck) means "being together" in Yugtun, the language of the Yup'ik people of Southwest Alaska. Facilitated by Alaska Humanities Forum Staff and guest Culture Bearers, each free session explores Alaska Native cultures and personal identity through a different theme. Register for one, several, or all of the sessions.

Feb. 15 - What are my strengths?
Feb. 22 - Families can be complicated
Mar. 1- Home, head, and the heart

Visit www.akhf.org/ilakucaraq to learn more and register

The Ilakucaraq Project is funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Alaska Native Education Program.

ALASKA HUMANITIES FORUM

ALASKA NATIVE HERITAGE CENTER

NYO
Native Youth Olympics!
Starts February 7th
Practice is Before School,
M-TR 645a to 745a

Traditional Contests:
*AK High Kick
*Stick Pull
*Kneel Jump
*One-Foot High Kick
*One-Hand Reach
*Scissor Broad Jump
*Seal Hop
*Two-Foot High Kick
*Wrist Carry

If Interested, pick up the sports permission slip + physical, complete + return to the Mears Main Office (physical is only needed if you do not have one already on file) + free to participate!

Made with PosterMyWall.com

<https://www.akhf.org/ilakucaraq>

Mears Welcomes New Indian Education Youth Tutor



Welcome Ms. Gabriella Hesselink, who will serve as Mears' new Indian Education Youth tutor. Ms. Hesselink will work directly with students in classrooms throughout the day, providing academic and social and emotional support. We are all thrilled to welcome Ms. Hesselink to the Mears family.

Mears Electronic-Device Policy Reminder



Mears students continue to do a great job following the new school cell phone policy. With no phone use in the hallways and at lunch students are engaging in more outgoing and healthy social behaviors.

If the policy is violated, devices will be picked up by family at the front window. We recognize this is an imposition for families, so please speak to your students about not using phones during the day. Please call or email if you have any questions.

Important Parking Reminder



Parents and family members are reminded that designated handicapped parking spaces are reserved exclusively for those with Reserved Parking Placards.

When dropping off or picking up your students, please be mindful of where you are parking and be sure that you are making space for others and abiding by the law.

Thank you. –Mears School Administration

Bus Behavior: Showing Respect to Our Hard-Working Drivers



Mears Families:

In general, we've been truly proud of Mears students on the buses this year. However, in the last few weeks, I've noted an uptick in noncompliance and messiness on the school buses. Please speak to your student if he/she rides the bus, reminding him/her that it's truly important to be respectful on the school bus. I've been completely blown away by how clean and orderly the MPR has been during lunch this year, and I need students to employ this same level of respect and care as they ride the buses.

Thanks in advance for speaking to your student.

Regards,

Mike Scott, Mears AP

Morning Drop Off and Afternoon Pick Up: Please Drive Extra Slow

With the dark, slippery conditions, it remains important to drive very slowly as you drop off or pick up Mears students. Families should use only the right lane (curb lane) for student pick up. The other lane is reserved for slowly driving into the parking lot. Students cross the driveway at several points, so please drive slowly as you enter and as you leave to ensure safety for all.

Regards, Mike Scott, Mears AP

Mears Activities Update



Cross Country Skiing, Boys Basketball, and Archery are now underway with hundreds of students participating in these great extra-curricular activities.

Here is a great photo of Mears students practicing their archery skills under the guidance of Ms. Heather Fleming.

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/1lI5oSifxCsxF-MNlknP6hBp0FPtELfeI/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>

COVID-19 Return To Play

Mears Families:

In addition to the standard forms and COVID-19 waiver, if a student has recently tested positive for COVID-19 and seeks to begin or return to a sport or activity, families should fill out the **COVID-19 Return-To-Sports** form. The school nurse can provide more information; however, it's essentially a form (linked above and below) that requires 2 steps:

1. If the student has a confirmed positive COVID-19 test, a healthcare professional must sign off that he/she is able to return to the sport or activity prior to participation (not required to return to school).
2. Upon submission of this form, coaches will employ the slow re-entry process to ensure safety. **Please view the document to see the transitional return process. (Apologies: Last week I included the wrong link-please view this one).**

- a. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vsUwRmFJTh5s4ecdD0wJ2PW8ywX2-J5U/view>

Although the form is not new, our employment of the document will be more stringent. All families that agree to participate in sports sign the COVID-19 waiver, which makes the Return to Play documentation part of the process.

Our hope is to enhance safety and help students as they restart strenuous activity. If you have any questions please contact Mike Scott, Mears AP, or Karin Richards, Mears Nurse.

scott_michael@asdk12.org

richards_karin@asdk12.org

Upcoming Activity Events

Cross Country Skiing

DATE	STYLE	LOCATION	TIME
February 9, 2022	Mixed Relays	Kincaid	2:30 PM
February 16, 2022	Skate	Service HS	5:30 PM
February 23, 2022	Skate	Chugiak HS	5:30 PM
March 2, 2022	Freestyle Championships	Kincaid	5:30 PM

Boys Basketball

Please use this link to see dates/times/locations for boys basketball:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/e/2PACX-1vQZXUeKA-yyzAvNgF0TWfYc3dUrhGCOVttlgKbzI7mWbDwcHIy3mwDQId4xoo61NQ/pubhtml>

For all Mears Activities: Remember Mears families:

1. Students must be accompanied by a parent or guardian;
2. All spectators must wear masks at all times at indoor events.

Thanks for your help and support!

Mike Scott, Mears AP

Panthers Write!

February's Writing Contest



Lights, Camera, Action

Create a Video Story

This month, tell a story in 4 minutes or less in which you include a social media mishap. Use at least two of the following social media terms in your story:

- #Blessed
- This Ain't It
- Delete Your Account
- Social NOTworking
- Instafamous

Record your 4-minute story in Canvas Studio.
Deadline for video submissions is Friday, February 25th.

Story Guidelines:



1. Make your story fit the theme of social media slogans. Use at least two of the slogans provided. (You may use more than two.)
2. Tell your story in no more than 4 minutes.
3. The story can be fiction or nonfiction, or a blend of the two.
4. Write out a draft of your story first, even though the story entry itself will be spoken words, recorded using the Canvas studio tool. (See the video tutorial on Canvas studio inside the Canvas module.)



Planning your Video Story:

- Start with action!
- Organize your story around a beginning, a middle, and an end.
- Write it out. Have another person read it and give you feedback.
- Read your story multiple times, play it in your mind, practice it in front of your dog. Become so familiar with your story that you don't even need notes.
- Perform a timed rehearsal. Remember, no more than 4 minutes.
- Remember to tell your story and not simply read it. Consider volume, pauses, voice, body posture, hand gestures, facial expressions.
- When you are ready to record, watch the instructional video in this module on how to record using Studio and how to submit your completed video.

Congratulations to January's Writing Contest Winners:
Madden Hamey and Marissa Kimura

January Writing Contest Winners

Library at Mears

We have been gearing up for the district Battle of the Books competition. Our school battle was held to determine which team would go to the district contest on Feb. 1st. Ethan Ivey, Wesley Smith, and Ashton Johnson were the winners!



Mears Health Update

Important Covid Health Reminders:

Updated Resources for Families



**COVID Close Contact and
Quarantine Policy**

<https://sites.google.com/asdk12.net/returntoschoolpolicy/return-to-schoolwork>

- [COVID 19 Updates Home Screening Guidelines](#) (All languages may not be updated, but communications is working on this)
- [Return-to-School/Work Policy](#)

Other Important Links:

[Anchorage Covid Vaccination Info](#)

[ASD Covid Information Link](#)

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



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 -- Feb. 22, 2022 5:30pm

Meeting Dates for Spring Semester: 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.

[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

Congratulations to Abrianna Helzer for her amazing cover design for this year's Yearbook.

Mears Delivers Kare Kits



Special thanks to all the great students in Mears Community Service class, along with their teacher Mr. Greg Ross, who worked hard these last few weeks collecting donations for Kare Kits to fill Blessing Boxes throughout Anchorage.



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](#)