



Mears Middle School

# Panther Pride News

Respect, Responsibility, Creativity, and Academic Excellence

Friday, March 4, 2022

## *Angry Birds vs. Screaming Goats*



On Thursday, March 3, Mears hosted an outstanding spirit event, which featured a great basketball game played by Mears co-ed teams, The Angry Birds (in blue) vs. The Screaming Goats (in black). Students, who cheered enthusiastically for both teams, filled the gymnasium with positive school spirit. Special thanks to Mr. Jason MacDonald and Mr. Greg Ross, and all the players, who helped make this such a great event. **Go Panthers!**

# Nickels 4 NICU



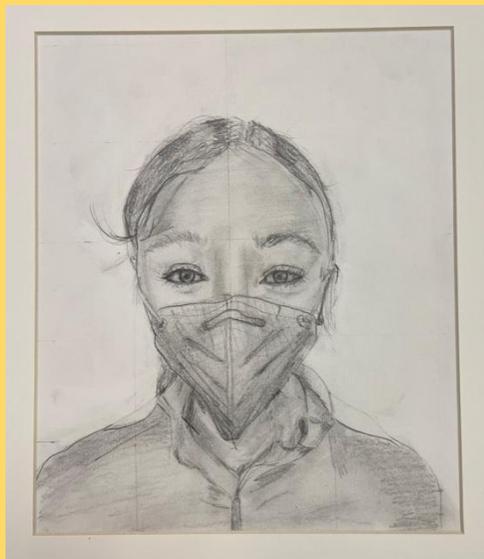
Team members from the Angry Birds and the Screaming Goats sold Nickels 4 NICU bracelets as part of a very successful fundraiser for the NICU/Children's Hospital at Providence, Anchorage. Over \$800 was raised for this great cause. Congratulations to everyone who participated and donated.

# Team Muir Goes to Skateland



Students and staff who are on Team Muir enjoyed a fun-filled afternoon at Skateland on the last day of school before Spring Break. The field trip is a great example of the kind of community-building activities that Mears Collaborative Teams promote.

# Anchorage Youth Art Month Features Mears



March is **Youth Art Month**, and we have several Mears students who have artwork featured throughout the community. Images are attached. Locations and names are listed below.

Over Spring Break, all are encouraged to enjoy art installations featuring Mears artists, along with other students from throughout the district.

Special thanks goes out to Ms. Kat Yackel, Mears incredible fine arts teacher, who has worked to help organize and curate Youth Art Month shows throughout the municipality.

# Mears Artists Featured

## Anchorage Museum:

Magazine Squirrel Collage by **Annie Wu**

Pencil Pandemic Self Portrait by **Luke Gaskill**

Paper Mache Bird Sculpture by **Quinn Berkey**

Magazine Horse Collage by **Madilyn Lefebvre**

Pencil Pandemic Self Portrait by **Sophia Scott**

Paper Mache Duck Sculpture by **Tatum Bales**

Magazine Dog Collage by **Jennie Becker**

## Loussac Library:

Mixed Media Pandemic Self Portrait by **Bethany Peronto**

Pencil Pawn Drawing by **Jacqueline Hill**

## 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Mall:

Magazine Fox Collage by **Ariana Ramirez**

## *Stay Informed/Get Involved*

Planning Ahead:

Friday, Mar. 4 – State Release Teacher/Staff In-Service Day; No school for students

Mon.-Fri., March 7-11 – Spring Break; No School

Mon. March 14 – Beginning of 4th Quarter

# Mears Students Respect Choice: ASD's New Masking Policy

Mears Families,

Starting Monday, February 28th, the Anchorage School District began the optional, parent-choice masking policy in schools. At Mears, we have spoken to students about this change and have asked that everyone respect the choices of others in masking or not masking.

We want all of our families to know that Mears students have done a tremendous job in showing respect for each other and their respective choice regarding masking.

We extend our appreciation to all of our students and their families for continuing to support Mears by showing flexibility and patience, as well as respect and understanding. We are hopeful that over the next few months our community will continue to experience positive health trends, as well as the opportunity to enjoy further relaxation of COVID-related mitigation strategies. –Mears Administration

## Mears Health Update Important Covid Health Reminders:

Updated Resources for Families

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

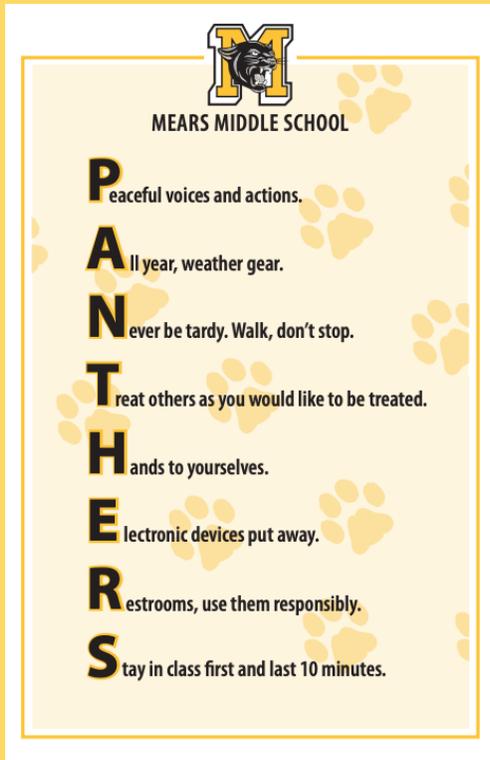
- [COVID 19 Updates Home Screening Guidelines](#) (All languages may not be updated, but communications is working on this)
- [Return-to-School/Work Policy](#)

Other Important Links:

[Anchorage Covid Vaccination Info](#)

[ASD Covid Information Link](#)

# New Panther Expectations Poster



Credit to the Mears Foundations team in developing the content of the new poster and Tom Hoffman, local graphic designer, for his donated work on the design and layout. Students can now see these awesome looking posters throughout the building: Thanks, everyone!

## Mears Activities Update



Boy's basketball, cross-country skiing, archery, and Junior Native Youth Olympics have all had great seasons. Students have learned a great deal about each sport, and I'm happy to report that for many students this was their first exposure to their respective sport, and this is the ultimate aim of all of our activities. Thanks to families for encouraging your students to get involved!

Here is a great photo taken at the spirited Angry Birds v. Screaming Goats fundraising basketball game on March 3.

**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](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/1115oSifxCsxF-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](mailto: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>

## City Champs



Congratulations to the Mears Boys Varsity Team and their coach, Mr. Jason MacDonald, who just won the City Championship with an undefeated season. The JV Team went 7-1!

# COVID-19 Return To Play

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](mailto:scott_michael@asdk12.org)  
[richards\\_karin@asdk12.org](mailto:richards_karin@asdk12.org)

## PLAY SOFTBALL!



**ABOUT ASD MIDDLE SCHOOL FASTPITCH SOFTBALL**

Interested in playing a safe and fun team sport while making new friends and representing your school? Anchorage Sports Association is partnering with the Anchorage School District to offer Middle School Fastpitch Softball for girls attending middle school.

All practices held after school from 3:00-4:30pm (days subject to availability).

**Who:** Girls: 6th, 7th & 8th Graders in Middle School  
**When:** Practices: At least 2x practices per week beginning March 22  
Games: Saturdays beginning April 30  
**Where:** Practices: Local Middle Schools  
Games: Chuck Albrecht Softball Complex

For more information and to register, please visit <https://www.anchoragesports.com/mfsfpitch>  
Or call the ASA Office at 907-562-1513

"The Anchorage School District does not endorse these materials or the viewpoints expressed in them."

## Softball Is Coming Soon

I'm excited to say that softball will begin soon. It starts the week of March 22nd. See the flier above for more information and contact Anchorage Sports Association (907) 562-1513 if you're interested in this fantastic opportunity. Please note: Annual family cap at Mears does not apply to softball, as it is an outsourced sport provided by the Anchorage Sports Association. Mears does collect paperwork. Please contact ASA if you have any questions. Mike Scott, Mears AP

# Upcoming Activity Events

## **Track and Field**

Track and Field begins after spring break: Thursday, March 17th. Please see the link below for more information on dates/times for events. As with most of our activities, practice is held at Mears, 3:00-4:30 PM

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/e/2PACX-1vSddovJU77zzzfz298lFwl2rUudSkNID1dSDOs5TLyXX0iEU9mRKGKsKm5k-UEEsrsCJP5cOf4uqBK/pubhtml>

## **For all Mears Activities: Remember Mears families:**

1. Students must be accompanied by a parent or guardian;

Thanks for your help and support! – Mike Scott, Mears AP

# Mears Counseling Corner



## 2021-2022 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Transition to DHS

Dimond offers 3 major opportunities to prepare our incoming freshmen

### Future Freshman Fair Monday February 28<sup>th</sup> 6:00 -7:30pm @ DHS

Current 8th grade students, who will be entering Dimond High School in the fall of 2022, and their parents/guardians are encouraged to attend. We'll share information about 9th grade classes, sports, and activities. Department chairs, counselors and teachers will also be onsite to answer questions.

### 8th Grade DHS Tours by Team March 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> 90-minute Tours @DHS

Transportation will take Mears students to Dimond during the school day.

March 16<sup>th</sup> AM Session - Team Muir 9:30-10:50am - About 120 students  
March 16<sup>th</sup> PM Session - Team Raven 12:15-1:35pm - About 120 students  
March 17<sup>th</sup> PM Session - Team Echo 12:15-1:35pm - About 150 students

### Mears DHS Elective Course Requests Schedule: March 22<sup>nd</sup> 11:25-2:45pm

Dimond counselors will come to Mears to instruct students on the process for elective course requests.

4<sup>th</sup> period 11:25-12:10pm Team Echo Part 1 (A-K)  
5<sup>th</sup> period 12:15-1:00pm Team Raven  
6<sup>th</sup> period 1:05-1:50pm Team Muir  
7<sup>th</sup> period 1:55-2:45pm Team Echo Part 2 (L-Z) and any students who may have missed an earlier session.

Dimond High School has no policy/procedure concerning honors classes for English and social studies. It will be based solely on teacher recommendations, and we will honor parent/guardian requests as well.

Below is the google folder Dimond has shared with us. This will have more information.  
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1rreulQf4wvVyWO4IFmpU0l2oovbT5InS?usp=sharing>

## Future Freshman of Dimond High School Class of 2026!

Current 8th grade students, who will be entering Dimond High School in the fall of 2022, and their parents/guardians are encouraged to attend. We'll share information about 9th grade classes, sports, and activities. Department chairs, counselors and teachers will also be onsite to answer questions. Please see the flier below for more information.

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](mailto:burr_caitlin@asdk12.org)  
907-742-6424

Crysta Svendsen, 8th Grade  
[svendsen\\_crysta@asdk12.org](mailto: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 -- March 15, 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.

### **PTA Fundraising Opportunity**

We are proud to announce our new Mears PTSA School Store Online! We are able to bring many brand-name items delivered directly to your home!

<https://mearsptsa.squarespace.com/>

# Mears 2021-22 Yearbook Sales Have Begun

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

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

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## 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](#)