



Mears Middle School

# Panther Pride News

Respect, Responsibility, Creativity, and Academic Excellence

Friday, April 1, 2022

## *Mears Orchestra Earns Superior Rating*



Congratulations to Mr. Matthew O'Connor and all the student-musicians in Mears Advanced Orchestra, who last week received a rating of "Superior" at ASD's district-wide Orchestra Festival. "Superior" is the highest rating possible and is evidence of the incredible progress Mears young musicians have made this year. Special thanks goes out to Mr. O'Conner, Mr. Edwards, and Ms. McCubrey for their incredible instruction and leadership of Mears music program. Of course, we also congratulate all of our student-musicians for their hard work and talent.

**Go Panthers!**

# NJHS Plans Carnival



## NJHS Supports Make a Wish Foundation

Come to the NJHS-sponsored Spring Carnival, Friday April 8. All proceeds go to Make A Wish.

# Rummage Sale for Refugee Relief



## Community Service Supports Ukraine Refugees Relief Effort, Saturday, April 9

Be sure to participate in the Spring Rummage Sale by donating to the cause. All proceeds will go to supporting refugee relief for Ukraine.

# Stay Informed/Get Involved

Note: AK STAR Testing has been temporarily postponed due to technical issues at the state level.

Tuesday, April 5 – AK STAR Testing, **Temporarily Postponed**

Wednesday, April 6 – AK STAR Testing, **Temporarily Postponed**

Thursday, April 7 – Alaska Science Assessment, 8th Graders

Friday, April 8 – Test Make Ups

|     | Tuesday 4/5   |               | Wednesday 4/6 |               | Thursday 4/7 |               |
|-----|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
|     | Reading       |               | Math          |               |              | Science (8th) |
|     | 7th           | 8th           | 7th           | 8th           | 7th          | 8th           |
| 1st | 4th (testing) | 1st           | 4th (testing) | 5th           | 1st          | 4th (testing) |
| 2nd |               | 2nd           |               | 6th           | 2nd          |               |
| 3rd |               | 3rd           |               | 7th           | 3rd          |               |
| 4th |               | 1st Lunch     |               | 1st Lunch     | 4th          | 1st Lunch     |
|     | 2nd Lunch     | 4th (testing) | 2nd Lunch     | 4th (testing) | 2nd Lunch    | 4th           |
| 5th | 5th           |               | 1st           |               | 5th          | 5th           |
| 6th | 6th           |               | 2nd           |               | 6th          | 6th           |
| 7th | 7th           |               | 3rd           |               | 7th          | 7th           |

## Tech Tips for Students Before Thursday's Science Test:

1. Locate your district-issued Chromebook and make sure it is fully charged.
2. Students should hold down the Chromebook power button for 10 seconds. The screen will go black, hold for a couple more seconds to get to 10.
3. Let the button up, then press/release to turn the computer back on.

## Bring Quiet Reading Activity:

4. Be sure to bring a good book, comic, or magazine to read after testing. No electronic devices are allowed during the testing session, and students will need a quiet activity after their test is completed.

# Mears Counseling Corner

## 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.

[DHS Transition to High School Resources](#)

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

# Mears Health Update

## Important Covid Health Reminders:

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

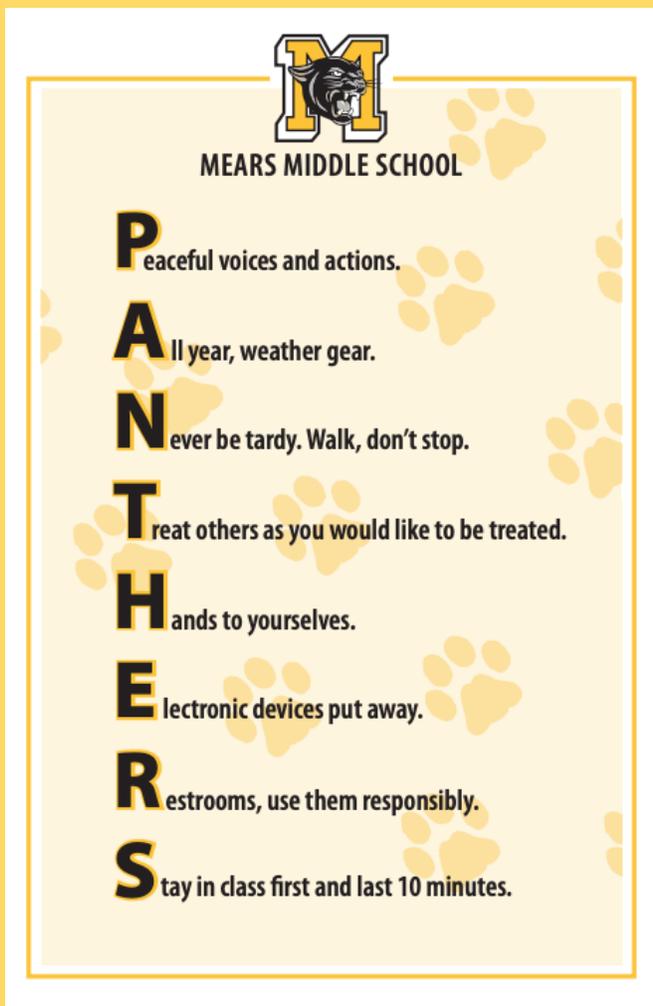
- [COVID 19 Updates Home Screening Guidelines](#) (All languages may not be updated, but communications is working on this)
- [Return-to-School/Work Policy](#)

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

Mears Families:

Track and Field season began yesterday, March 17th, and we already have nearly 100 participants. Please know that we welcome additional sign ups through the first week, so the deadline for sign up is 3:00 pm on Thursday, March 24th.

Additionally, we're looking forward to starting **tennis and soccer**; these intramural sports begin on April 18th, which is a week later than initially planned. My hope is that the weather will be just a bit warmer, allowing for more outdoor enjoyment.

If your student is involved in the Track and Field team, the district has published the new schedule. See link:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/e/2PACX-1vSddovJU77zzzfz298lFwll2rUudSkNID1dSDOs5TLyXX0iEU9mRKGKsKm5k-UEEsrsCJP5cOf4uqBK/pubhtml>

Best Wishes,

Mike Scott, Mears AP

## **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/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](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>

# 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)

## Mears Library Library Loves Spheros

As a part of the computer science unit Mrs. Hubbard's science classes have started working with Sphero's. Planning routes, aiming, speed differences and driving without running into anything are the goals for day one.





### **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 -- April 19, 2022 5:30pm**

Meeting Dates for Spring Semester: Apr. 19, May 3, 2022

[Mears PTSA Zoom Link](#)

### **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 Final Orders Due by April 1st**



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

# Engaging Learning About Natural Selection



The activity pictured here is called “Clip Birds” and is a natural selection simulation. Mr. McDonald’s class and Mr. Anderson’s class team up for the activity. Students have different beak sizes (binder clips) and must gather food to reproduce and have babies. The teachers track changes in the population from season to season, and also look at what happens to a population when an invasive species (spoons) is introduced and what happens as the habitat is destroyed.



## 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](#)