



Mears Middle School

# Panther Pride News

Respect, Responsibility, Creativity, and Academic Excellence

Friday, May 1, 2020

## Good Things and Affirmations

What fun things have you done?

Have you been hiking?

Have you done any baking?

Have you gone anywhere?

Something new you've learned?

WHAT HAVE YOU CREATED?

Who have you helped?

What have you read?

What have you celebrated?

Stay healthy, helpful and calm !

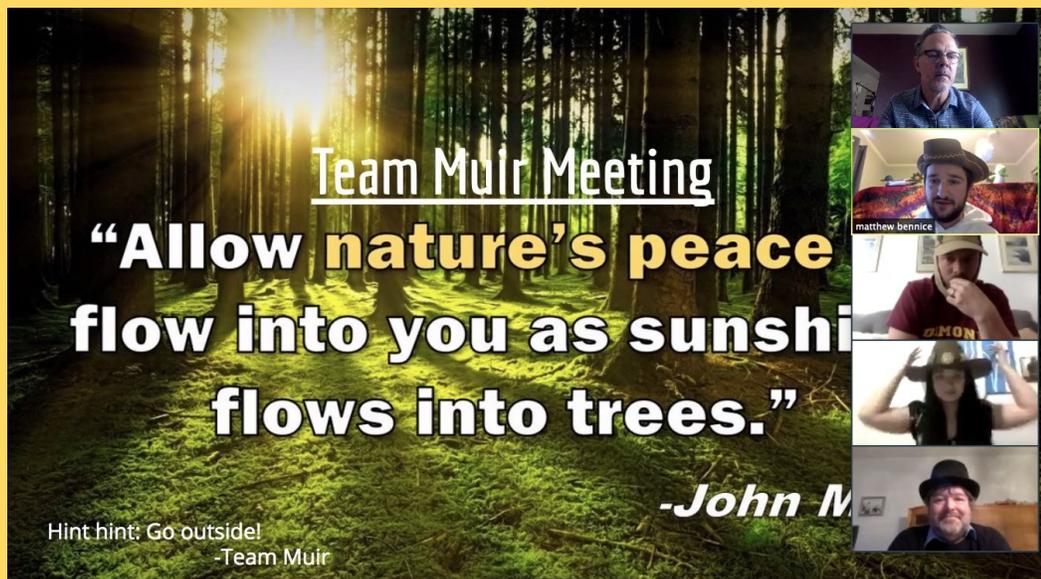
Each week, whenever members of the Mears community get together, we take a moment to focus on Good Things and Affirmations. Typically, the facilitator of each meeting begins with an invitation to others to share something positive that has happened in their life and/or to celebrate the accomplishments of others. At Mears, we often share about the successes and accomplishments of our students and our school programs. We also often share about the small victories in our lives that bring us happiness and joy--like a son or daughter getting hired for a job, the arrival of new puppy, a great hike in the Chugach, visiting with extended family on Zoom, or planting a new vegetable garden. In spite of the ongoing difficulties and challenges we face as a result of the Covid crisis, Mears teachers and staff, along with our students, commit every day to maintaining the most positive and productive outlook possible and acknowledging the contributions and accomplishments of others. We believe that by focusing on the good things, we are better educators and a better school. --Eric

# Mears Welcomes Baby York!



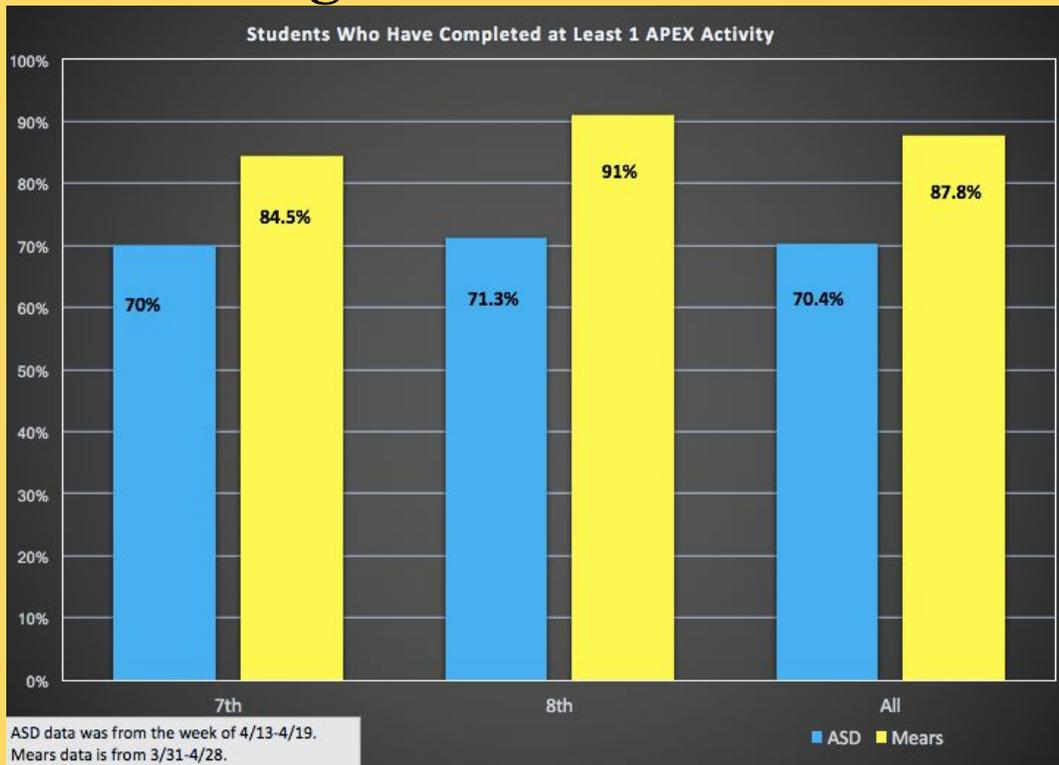
Mears teachers and staff took a moment this week to celebrate the birth of the newest member of the Mears Family, Mr. Brandon York and his wife's new baby boy! Here is a photo of Mr. York sharing new children's books that were given as a gift by the staff.

# Mears Teams Stay Connected



Mears Teams continue to host gatherings for all of their students. The meetings give students the opportunity to maintain valuable connections with their teachers and peers and to learn about upcoming events.

# Mears Online Engagement Rates Remain High



Student engagement in the online learning program remains a high priority at Mears. Our staff continues to monitor student participation rates each week. Recent data compiled by Mears math teacher, Ms. Tara Bivins, shows that Mears students remain connected to school and the vast majority are completing school work. With just four weeks of school remaining, it is essential that all students stay connected and complete as much of their work as possible. Thank you to all the parents and families for partnering with us to support our students!

## Important Updates:

### **Finish Strong!**

Education is vitally important to every one of our students. Academic engagement at school or at home strengthens us as individuals and as a community. School enriches our lives and makes us more thoughtful, creative, and empowered.

With just four weeks of the school year remaining, we need to do everything we can to promote Mears online learning program. Here are a few helpful talking points to use to promote effort and engagement at home.

- For the next six weeks, we are all working to prepare students for the next grade level, which will be more challenging than the last.
- It is critical that we take full advantage of the limited time we have left this school year.
- Teachers will continue to offer encouragement and valuable feedback to support critical learning and growth.
- Be patient. Be kind. Do your best every day!

### **Access to Student Personal Items:**

Mears student locker-item pick up begins next week on May 4th. The schedule below indicates the schedule of dates and times for pick up. Note: Musical instrument pick up is a separate process and will occur the week of May 11. More information to follow.

The pick up process requires that families indicate their student's last name form their care as they pull up. See the photo below for the parking lot map. We ask that only one family member be out of the car at a time. Please do not approach staff. The staff member will set the bag(s) with your student's items on the sidewalk. Once the staff member walks away from the bag, please approach, pick up the bag, and return to your care to leave. We appreciate your patience, as the process may take a few minutes. Any items not picked up during your assigned time will be safely stored until the Fall; there will not be an additional opportunity for these items to be picked up this school year.

## **Student Item Pick-Up Schedule**

- **Monday, May 4: : -7<sup>th</sup> Grade: Last Names A-K: 9:00 AM-3:00 PM**
- **Tuesday, May 5: 7<sup>th</sup> Grade: Last Names L-Z: 9:00 AM-3:00 PM**
- **Wednesday, May 6: 8<sup>th</sup> Grade: Last Names A-M: 9:00 AM-3:00 PM**
- **Thursday, May 7: 8<sup>th</sup> Grade: Last Names N-Z: 9:00 AM-3:00 PM**

***Closed from 12:00-12:30 for Lunch Break***

## Student Item Pick Up Parking Lot Map



### Online Elective Course Sign-ups

On Monday, April 27, Mears sent out a google form survey for current 7th graders to sign up for their 8th grade electives. Students must select their top choices for electives for the coming school year. Parents/guardians will be required to review their student's selections and sign off on the form.

If you have not done so already, please use this link below to select elective course choices for your 8th grade student: [Mears 8th Grade Elective Course Choices, 2020-21](#)

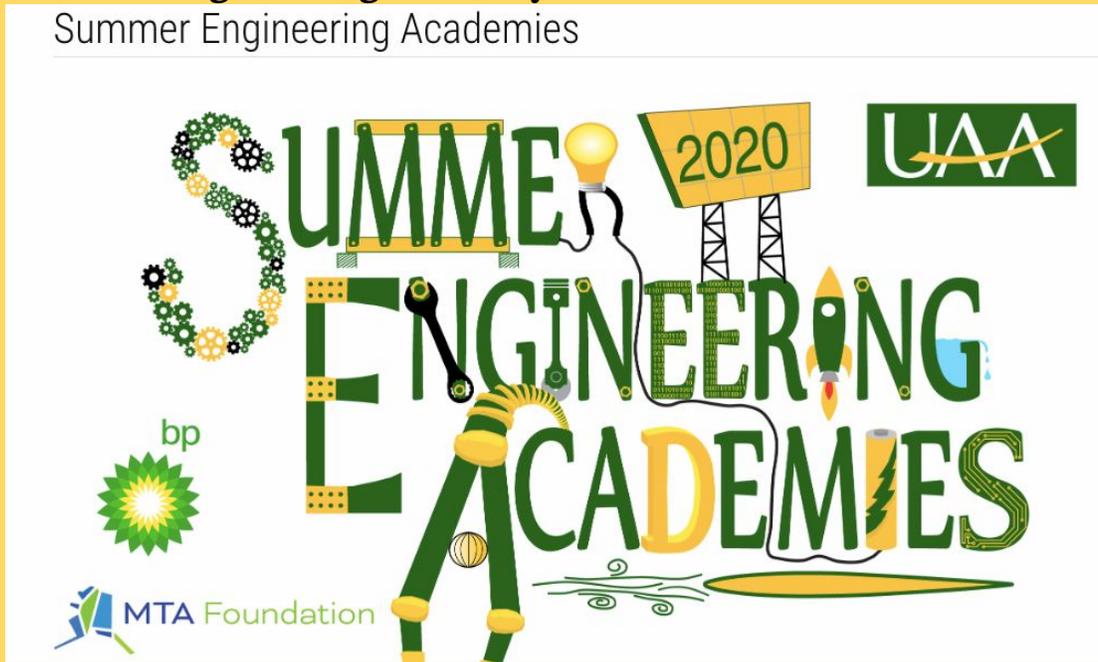
Similarly, a letter to families of current 6th graders has been sent to communicate information about a few updates made to the elective courses offered to incoming 7th graders.

### Mifi Hotspots Distribution

Anchorage School District will have mifi hotspots for families who need support connecting to the internet. If your family is in need of internet connectivity to ensure your students can access the online learning program, please contact Mears administrators, Mike Scott at [scott\\_michael@asdk12.org](mailto:scott_michael@asdk12.org) or Eric Backman at [backman\\_eric@asdk12.org](mailto:backman_eric@asdk12.org). Feel free to call the main office at 907-742-6400.

## Summer Engineering Academy

### Summer Engineering Academies



The UAA Summer Engineering Academies are a series of fun, hands-on, and engineering-themed summer camps for middle school and high school students. This summer, the Academies have moved completely online, with week-long camps focused on coding, 3D modeling, and videography. This is a great way to flex those learning muscles over the summer and increase interest in science, technology, engineering, and math.

How does it work? The camps feature:

- Pre-recorded video lectures and activities led by UAA faculty, which can be accessed at any time;
- Live lectures and activities for several hours per week led by UAA faculty;
- One-on-one and group assistance through video calls, voice calls, and live chat with College of Engineering students;
- Free online tools and software;
- Opportunities for teamwork and collaboration; and
- Progressively difficult activities that lead to an end-of-week project.

The camps cost \$100, but tuition waivers are available for families who need them. The application is now open. You can learn more at [www.uaa.alaska.edu/sea](http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/sea) or by emailing [sea@alaska.edu](mailto:sea@alaska.edu).



## ⇐ Backman Recommends ⇒



Here's an interesting new article from Edutopia about what we can learn from online learning and how we might discover ways to reach (otherwise reluctant) students in new and better ways.

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/why-are-some-kids-thriving-during-remote-learning>



**ATTENTION 8TH GRADE STUDENTS we need your T SHIRT SIZE**

The PTSA every year throws an 8th Grade Bash. This is a big event for our hard working 8th Graders. With the current events and social distancing, the PTSA has had to change it up. This Year we will be **GIVING EVERY 8th Grader ONE FREE T Shirt.** Please fill out this form that way your 8th grader gets the size they wear. Distribution will be determined once shirts are ordered. Please complete by May 5 to guarantee the correct shirt size.

Shirts will say " We are all in this Together. Class of 2024)

**[T-shirt Size Selection Form](#)**

**You can purchase an additional T-shirt for \$15 or a Hoodie for \$30 . visit [www.mearsptsa.com](http://www.mearsptsa.com)**

## **Teacher and Staff Appreciation Week, May 4-8**

Mears Students and Families,

To honor the incredible teachers and staff at Mears during the upcoming Teacher Appreciation Week, be sure to send in your messages of thanks and gratitude. Fun selfies, short videos, and email messages are all encouraged. You can email them directly to Eric Backman at [backman\\_eric@asdk12.org](mailto:backman_eric@asdk12.org) or to Ms. April Eide at [mearsms.ptsa@gmail.com](mailto:mearsms.ptsa@gmail.com).

## **Mears PTSA Hosts Zoom Meeting with the Principal,**

**Thursday, May 7, 3:00pm.** After a successful meeting with parents and families this last week, we have decided to continue to schedule weekly check in meetings with Mears Principal and PTSA President.

Eric Backman is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: PTSA/Parent and Family Meeting

Time: May 7, 2020 03:00 PM Alaska

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://asdk12.zoom.us/j/95280417273?pwd=VTM2dUIENkxBS2FKWStybEpQWlg3dz09>

Meeting ID: 952 8041 7273

Password: 593834

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## **Memory Books** online ordering \$35

<https://ybpay.lifetouch.com/Order/SelectStudent?isAdvertisementOnly=False>

Order today. Don't delay and be the parent that your student didn't get a memory book.

**ONLY 30 Left!** (as of 4.30.2020 12:03 pm)

**Once they are all sold they're gone.**

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## IT'S TIME TO RECRUIT A NEW PTSA BOARD.

DO YOU WANT TO BE PRESIDENT? 1ST VICE PRESIDENT? 2nd VICE PRESIDENT? SECRETARY? TREASURER?  
DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE THAT WOULD BE INTERESTED?

Nominations for next year's board are now being accepted. If you are interested, fill out the nomination form which can be found on our website [www.mearsptsa.com](http://www.mearsptsa.com) Our current board is termed out and has students that are moving on to High School. We need great leaders to help keep Mears PTSA running strong. [Nomination Form](#)

## THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR GREAT VOLUNTEERS.

**Mears PTSA Volunteers for 1st Semester**

**559 Hours and 45 minutes= \$14,182.06 ASD/Mears saved**

Amy Zimmerman	Kelli Carpenter
Andrew Billings	Kendra Brimhall
Anita Erickson	Kim Briley
April Eide	Lisa Jackson
Dan Marshall	Melissa Williams
Dawn Fischer-Peter	Mia Costello
Doug Adams	Misti Maisey
Elana Drager	Misty Ellis
Fadwa Edais	Nichole Caldwell
Gerianne Thorsness	Regan Hamey
Jaime Hampton	Jocelyn Smith
Jennifer O'Neill	Karen Duke
Jill Cropper	Katie Marshall

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# 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](#)