



Mears Middle School

# Panther Pride News

Respect, Responsibility, Creativity, and Academic Excellence

Friday, April 23, 2021

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## *Students Enjoy Outdoor Fun on Earth Day*



Thursday, April 22 -- Mr. Dennis Sorenson's students in PE enjoyed sunny days playing tennis this week out on the courts. With beautiful views of the rising sun over the Chugach, students relished the opportunity to exercise and play together in the warmer days of Spring.

# Brain Break



Students in Ms. Lisa Peckham's English Language Arts class enjoy their daily "brain break" outside in the morning sun. Many teachers are breaking up the long 90 minute block periods with short walks and social time outside. There are real academic benefits to taking breaks and giving the mind a rest.

# Practice Makes Perfect



Earlier this week, the entire staff and student body practiced an ALICE drill. The drill concluded with a school-wide evacuation. Staff and students did a tremendous job of listening and following directions throughout the activity. Special thanks to Mr. Mike Scott for his continued vigilance in supporting campus health and safety.



# Friday Fun Day

## Colorful Masks and Crazy Socks



Upcoming Friday Fun themes:  
April 23 -- Colorful Covid Mask/Crazy Sock  
April 30 -- Favorite Animated Character  
Tuesday, May 4 -- Star Wars Day  
May 7 -- Crazy Hair/Crazy Socks Day  
May 14 -- Springtime Celebration Day  
May 21 -- School Spirit/Team Color Day

Links to Fun Day Photos:

[Mears Friday Fun Day 1980s Photos](#)

[Mears Friday Fun Day Hawaii-Beach Photos](#)

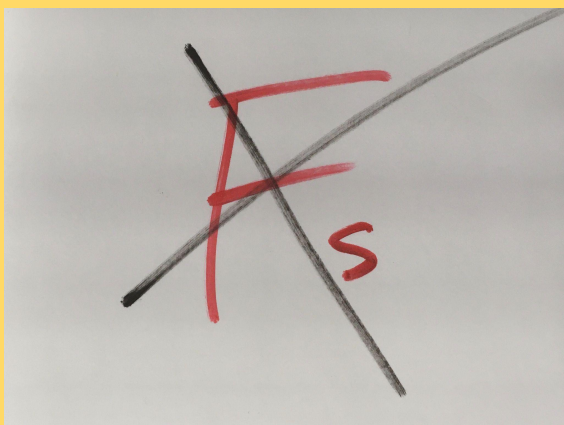
# BEST EFFORT -- Finish Strong!



**There are just 20 days left of school and at Mears we want to be sure that every student finishes the school year having worked hard to do their very best.**

Beginning this week, Mears teachers and staff have launched the end of year FINISH STRONG Campaign, which is a school-wide effort to encourage every student to give their best effort and to pass all of their classes.

To support students, teachers in Mears six Collaborative Teams are offering students in jeopardy of failing classes individualized support to help them improve their final grades for the year. Teachers supporting students in this PUSH-TO-PASS effort will be reviewing gradebooks, identifying missing assignments, and promoting good study habits and work completion. In certain instances, teachers will be reaching out to families for additional support.



Parents and families are strongly encouraged to join us in encouraging all Mears students to give it their all for the next month of school.

## **Go Panthers!**

# ASD Summer School Opportunities

## Anchorage School District Summer Learning Program, 2021

Summer school registration has now opened for any students who have received one or more Fs/Incompletes during the 2020-21 school year. There are morning and afternoon sessions, which will allow students to make up as many as four classes if needed.

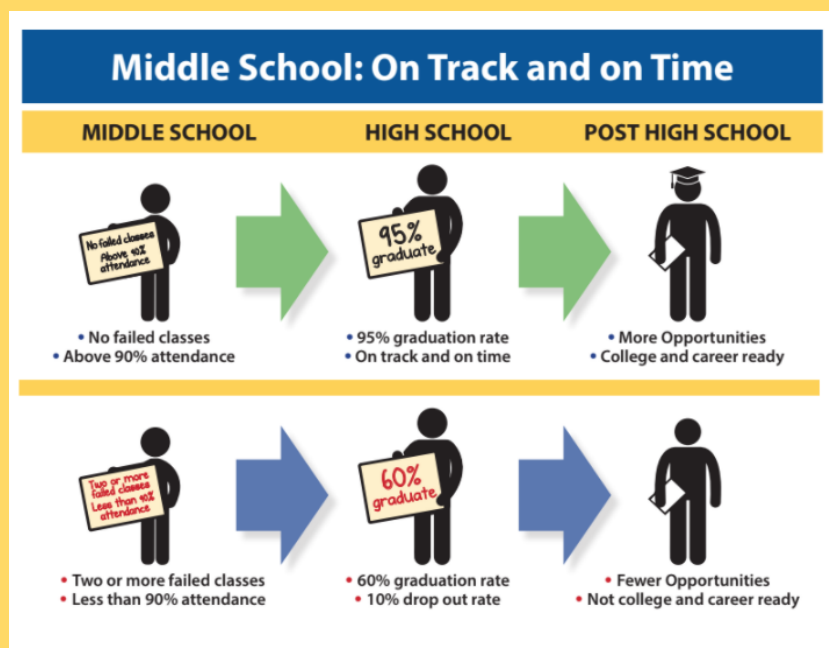
ASD Summer Learning Information Link: <https://www.asdk12.org/Page/18096>

### Session 1: June 2-30 and Session 2: July 12-August 6

Mears counselors will be meeting individually with students at school over the next two weeks to make Summer School goals and review current Quarter 4 grades. During the meeting, the counselor, along with the student, will make a phone call home to parents and guardians to facilitate the registration process. Link: [Contact Mears Counselors](#)

Parents and guardians should make every effort to take any phone call you receive from a Mears staff member. If you are unavailable to take the call, please do your best to return the call to Mears counseling office at your earliest convenience.

Middle school counselors will work with individual families to finalize the registration process and answer individual planning questions.



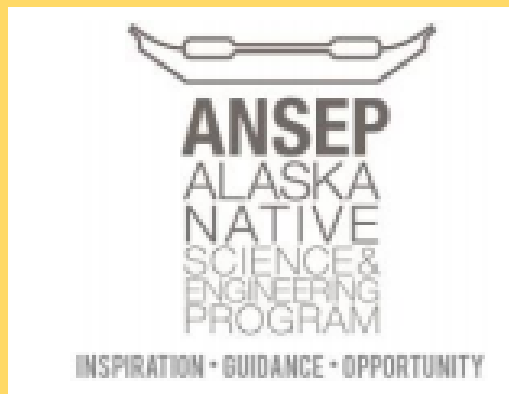
*Start planning now and make sure your student is On Track for High School Success!*

# ASD Career Exploration Program

## Open to all Current ASD 8th Graders this Summer

The Career Exploration Summer School Program is designed to provide incoming freshman students the opportunity to explore up to 6 different career fields of interest. Students will participate in career and education planning, hands-on career exploration classes and possible industry tours and field trips. <https://www.asdk12.org/Page/15050>

## ANSEP Summer Career Exploration Program



The Alaska Native Science & Engineering Program (ANSEP) Career Explorations is organized to provide project exploration for current and past ANSEP participants who have yet to enter high school (i.e., students currently in 6th, 7th, or 8th grade in the 2020 – 2021 school year). This experience promotes education and careers focusing on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

Career Exploration sessions include a five-day, academic, hands-on experience that emphasizes increasing knowledge and skills while re-engaging students with ANSEP. Career Explorations activities will involve hands-on, exploratory projects led by industry professionals, University faculty, or ANSEP staff.

Each Career Exploration session will focus on a STEM subject area such as: ENGINEERING, BIOLOGY, MARINE SCIENCE, HEALTHCARE, ENERGY, or CODING BUSINESS.

All Career Exploration sessions will be remote so that students can participate from anywhere.

Tentative session dates are: - June 7-11 - June 14-18 - June 21-25 - July 12-16 - July 19-23 - July 26-30

Online Information Link:

<https://www.ansep.net/component/stem-career-exploration/>

If you have questions or need additional information, contact us at (907) 786-0905 or [ansep\\_msa@uaa.alaska.edu](mailto:ansep_msa@uaa.alaska.edu).

**The application due date, April 23, 2021**



# Activities at Mears Middle School

## Activities 2nd Session: April 26th-May 20th

We'll start a new session on April 26th. We hope to see you there for one of our three opportunities: Tennis and Racquet Sports, Basketball, or Track+Field. Please sign up soon, as all activities have enrollment caps.

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

- Middle School Participation Form
- COVID-19 Supplemental Waiver of Liability
- Health Examination Form

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>

## Dimond High School Football Announcement



If you're interested in playing football at Dimond high in the fall, once school is out, Coach Dennis will hold DHS football weight training sessions, Tuesday's and Thursday's at 3-4:45 PM. An additional session will occur on Wednesday's at 1:45-4:45 PM. He emphasized that incoming freshmen are welcome, but not until May 25th. He will have any parental-permission documentation needed at the sessions.

If you have additional questions, please visit the DHS Football Facebook page or contact Coach Dennis directly via email: [miked@CHIALASKA.com](mailto:miked@CHIALASKA.com)

# Mears Staff Meeting Schedule: April 26-30

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00-8:30am	Planning	CT	Alternating:  Staff Meeting 8:00-9:00am/  CT Leads 8:45-9:55am	Planning	Planning
	Instruction Time  8:45 - 2:00	Instruction Time  8:45 - 2:00	Instruction Time  10:15-1:55  Duty Free Lunch (12:25-12:55)	Instruction Time  8:45 - 2:00	Instruction Time  8:45 - 2:00
2:00-2:30	Duty Free Lunch	Duty Free Lunch		Duty Free Lunch	Duty Free Lunch
2:35-3:15pm	Planning	Planning	Dept.	CT	Planning

See above for weekly CT and Department meeting schedule.

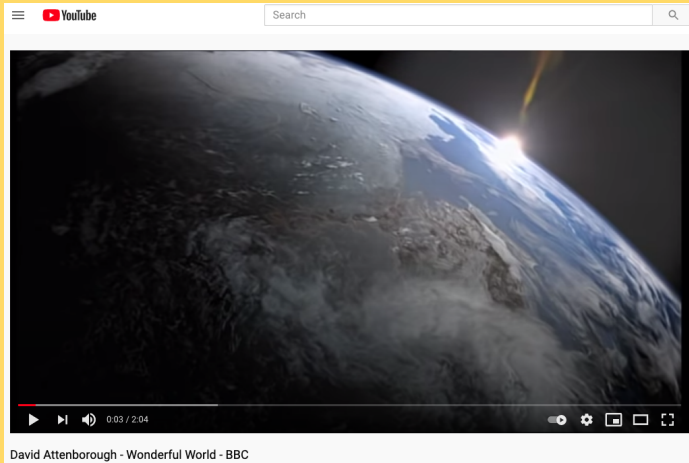
Wednesday, April 28 -- CT Leadership Training, 8:45-9:55am

Friday, April 30 -- Friday Fun Day Theme/Favorite Animated Character Day





## ⇐Backman Recommends⇒



In celebration of Earth Day 2021, please enjoy this 2 minute clip, “Wonderful World,” narrated by Sir David Attenborough.

Compliments of Ms. Caitlin Burr, Mears Counselor.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B8WHKRzkCOY>

## Mears Counseling Corner

If you need any assistance in preparing for the 4th quarter, please fill out a HELP Ticket: <https://www.asdk12.org/domain/4978>



Brent Haugen,  
907-742-6428

Caitlin Burr,  
907-742-6424

Crysta Svendsen,  
907-742-6426

Visit this link to meet Mears Counselors:

<https://sites.google.com/asdk12.net/mearsteachervideointros/home>

# Panthers are Readers

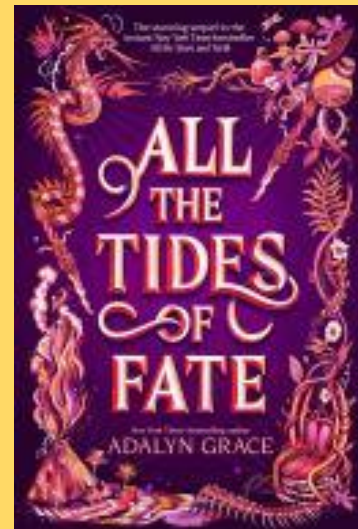
## Mears Reads Book Club

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

The May book that we chose is: ***All the Tides of Fate*** by Adalyn Grace, book two of the series we started in April.

Our next meeting is on Wednesday, May 19th. We will meet using a Zoom, and we will start at 2:45PM.

Contact Mrs. Fleming at 742-6432, [fleming\\_heather@asdk12.org](mailto:fleming_heather@asdk12.org), or through the Canvas Inbox to get the Zoom information.



## Summer Reading Opportunities

**AudioFile Sync** AUDIOBOOKS FOR TEENS

WANT ALERTS ABOUT FREE AUDIOBOOKS ALL SUMMER LONG?

For title releases, TEXT syncya to 866-984-0598 or visit [audiobooksync.com](http://audiobooksync.com)

APRIL 29 - MAY 5	MAY 6 - MAY 12	MAY 13 - MAY 19	MAY 20 - MAY 26
 <b>COME ON IN</b> by Adi Alsaid (Recorded Books)	 <b>TRELL</b> by Dick Lehr (Candlewick on Brilliance)	 <b>MONKEY</b> by Wu Ch'ang-an, Arthur Waley (Naxos AudioBooks)	 <b>WHAT MAKES US</b> by Rafi Mittlefehlt (Brilliance Audio)
 <b>ILLEGAL</b> by Francisco X. Stork (Scholastic Audio)	 <b>THEY WENT LEFT</b> by Monica Hesse (Hachette Audio)	 <b>DESCENDANT OF THE CRANE</b> by Joan He (Dreamscape Media)	 <b>ALIVE</b> by Scott Sigler (GraphicAudio)

AudioFile Sync offers FREE audio books for teens throughout the summer. Every week, two new audio books are offered, the first two become available on April 29th.

Register with an email address at [audiobooksync.com](http://audiobooksync.com), then use the SORA app to access and listen to the books. This is the same app that the Anchorage School District uses for electronic books. Just add Audiobook Sync as a library.

## Battle of the Books

The tentative list of titles is now available for the 21-22 Battle of the Books season. Start reading now and get a head start for next year!

More information is available on the [Mears Battle](http://Mears Battle) web page or join the [Mears Battle Canvas Hub](http://Mears Battle Canvas Hub).



# Panthers are Writers



## April Contest Details:

- Poems should be no more than 20 lines.
- Deadline for April submissions is Friday, April 30th.
- Submit your poem and the picture on which you based your poem as a text entry inside the Canvas panther pictures course.

[https://asdk12.instructure.com/courses/167345/assignments/4131205?module\\_item\\_id=9434052](https://asdk12.instructure.com/courses/167345/assignments/4131205?module_item_id=9434052)

(To include your photo, click on the 3 dots above the text box and select the insert image icon.)

Here are the winners of March's writing contest:

First place -- Arianna Dance, for her entry entitled, "The Return."

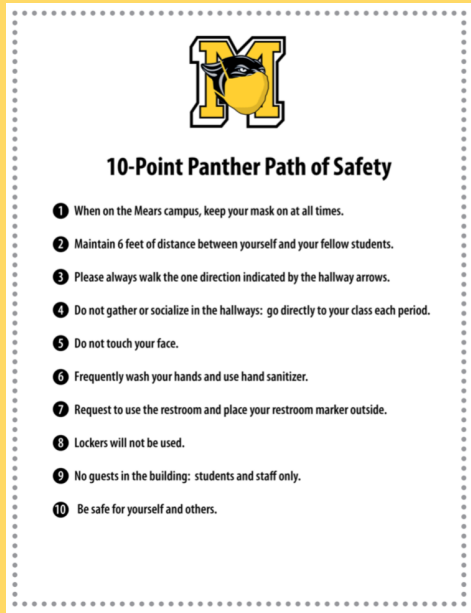
Runner-up -- Karleen Kama, for "The Return of Me."

Congratulations and thank you to all students who participated in the March competition.

## Mears April Creative Writing Contest



# Covid Safety Update



After six weeks of in-person school, I am pleased to continue to report that our students and staff are doing a tremendous job adhering to the Covid mitigation plan. Everyone wears a mask without question, students are sitting socially distanced in classrooms, and classes are taking advantage of warmer days and taking their nutrition breaks outside and/or are leaving classrooms for walks around the building.

Keep up the good work, Panthers! --Eric

Here is a link to the [ASD School Safety Plans](#), where you will find all the details for Mears' Covid safety protocols.

## Recently Updated: ASD's Health and Safety Covid Matrix

ASD's planning and decision-making process for determining the District's risk level for conducting school takes multiple community factors into consideration. The District conducts this process in close conversation with the Municipality of Anchorage and the State of Alaska Department of Health and Social Services. In recent months, organizations such as the Center for Disease Control, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the World Health Organization have expanded their guidance and resources regarding safely providing public education.

Here is a link: [ASD's Covid Matrix](#)  
[New CDC Guidance for Schools](#)

Important Reminder to All Parents and Families: **Please Stay Home When Feeling Ill**

"I'd like to ask for parents' continued attention when conducting home symptom screening before sending children to school. While more and more parents are becoming vaccinated, children are still susceptible and can spread COVID-19 at school. Just a single positive case in a school can close an entire classroom and potentially cause the entire class to quarantine as close contacts. The school community has done a great job thus far, and COVID-related impacts to our classrooms have been minimal. Let's stay vigilant."

--Dr. Deena Bishop



# Mears Middle School Anchorage, AK

PTSA

## PTSA Meetings

Upcoming PTSA meetings held @ 6:00 pm via zoom

- Tuesday, May 4th ( Nominations for board positions accepted)

## **Mears Yearbooks on Sale Now!**

**Make Sure to Order a Copy of This Special  
Commemorative Yearbook!**



Purchase your yearbook at:

[ybpay.lifetouch.com](https://ybpay.lifetouch.com)

Use school code: 13921121

## PTSA Volunteer Needs & Upcoming Meetings

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:

- Committee Members for the 8th Grade Graduation Celebration
- Open Vice President Position
- Open Board Secretary Position
- Yearbook Sales Promotion & Distribution
- Social Media Coordinator
- School Store & Merchandise

2020 was a rough year for all businesses; the Black Cat Cafe is no exception. The lack of income means we need to get creative with our fundraising.

Let me introduce Mears upcoming fundraising opportunity: “Ducks 4 Bucks”!



### Event Description:

We are selling Ducks for \$4 on our school store at the following link:

<https://mearsptsa.memberhub.store/store/items/671092>

We will securely attach your order number(s) to our yellow rubber duckies. These ducks will be fired from a student built [trebuchet](#) at a target 200 meters away. If the duck can successfully hit the target, you will be awarded a hoodie from our school store!

We currently sold more ducks than anticipated and we **need** PTSA assistance for this event.

We are currently in **need** of

- social media type person
- graphics person
- writer
- few camera operators that are not afraid of flying ducks



More information at the **next** PTSA meeting. *By the way, did you pay this year's dues?*



<https://twitter.com/MearsPtsa>

## Team Clothes Order Forms



**Thank you for the continued support** of the Mears PTSA. Our school store sells PE approved clothing, beanies, baseball caps, hoodies, and more is online [www.MearsPTSA.com](http://www.MearsPTSA.com).

Join Mears PTSA Membership and become part of an organization that is the leading Child advocacy group in the Nation. You not only become a member of Mears. But Alaska PTA and National PTA. Membership benefits include Office Depot/Office Max, Hertz, and more. Learn more at [www.MearsPTSA.com](http://www.MearsPTSA.com)

Ways you can help us raise funds doing your day to day shopping and holiday shopping.

**Amazon Smile** [smile.amazon.com/ch/92-0138999](https://smile.amazon.com/ch/92-0138999)

**Shutterfly** <http://mearsptsa.shutterflystorefront.com>

# Swan Take Off



I managed to capture this moment with a photograph earlier this week during a walk on the Coastal Trail. I am sharing it with the Mears community as a small tribute to Earth Day, and the good fortune we all have in living in a place of such striking natural beauty. Enjoy the outdoors! --Eric

## **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.

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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](#)