



Mears Middle School

Panther Pride News

Respect, Responsibility, Creativity, and Academic Excellence

Friday, January 28, 2022

Snow Panthers



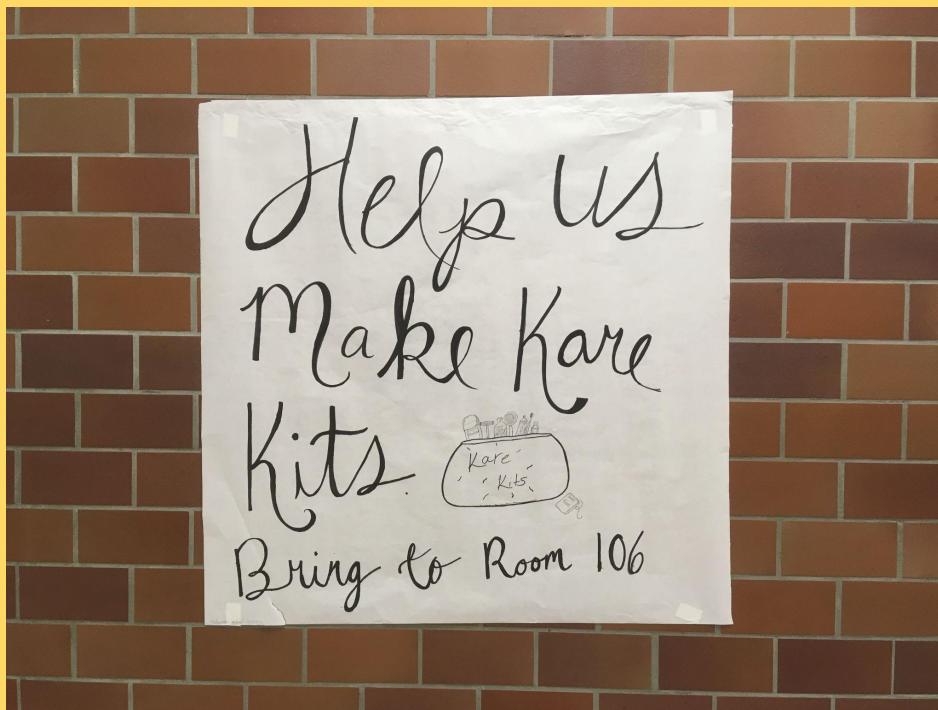
Students at Mears Middle School have a long history of strong participation in winter sports. One of the most popular and challenging of these activities is cross-country skiing. Mears currently has 53 students participating in the sport. During races, student-athletes compete in both forms of XC skiing: skate and classic. Congratulations to all our student-athletes and a big thank you to their amazing coaches, Ms. Megan Perkins and Ms. Holly Barclay. **Go Panthers!**

NJHS To Lead Student Tours



This week, students in National Junior Honor Society gathered in the library to begin planning for upcoming 6th grade student tours from feeder elementary schools. Student leaders at Mears play a very important role in welcoming new students to the Panther Family. Thanks to Ms. Mia Sison for her leadership of NJHS.

Last Day: Kare Kits for Blessing Boxes



EXAMPLES OF WHAT'S NEEDED:

- Hairbrush
- Combs
- New Socks
- New Underwear
- Hand Soap/Bar soap
- Toothbrush/Toothpaste
- Deodorant
- Dental Floss
- Shampoo
- Chapstick
- Mouthwash
- Shaving Cream/Razors
- Tissues
- Hand Sanitizer
- Feminine Products

About Blessing Boxes

Blessing Boxes are located all over Anchorage and provide food and other essential goods for anyone who need them. This inspiring project was created by Mears/Diamond Alumni, Ashley Perry. Mears is committed to supporting Ashley's vision of providing for those in our community who are less fortunate.

<https://www.pointsoflight.org/awards/alaskan-teen-volunteers-to-provide-food-and-essentials-to-families-in-need-with-blessing-boxes/>

BRING ANY ITEMS TO ROOM 106 BY 2/28/22.

DONATED ITEMS WILL BE DISTRIBUTED INTO "BLESSING BOXES" ALL ACROSS ANCHORAGE.

Stay Informed/Get Involved

Planning Ahead:

Wednesday, Feb. 2 – Leadership Team Meeting, Library, 3:00-4:00pm

Friday, Feb. 11 – NAEP Testing for Mears 8th Graders – Adjusted bell schedule, 4th period

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

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/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 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 2, 2022	Classic	Bartlett HS	5:30 PM
February 9, 2022	Mixed Relays	Kincaid	5:30 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!

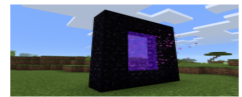
January Writing Contest

Exploring Portals

C. S. Lewis used a wardrobe, J. M. Barrie used the second star to the right, and Lewis Carroll used a rabbit hole—each a gateway to another world. This month, pick an object that is important to you and transform it into a portal to an alternate world. Write a story about someone discovering the portal and adjusting to life where everything is foreign. Take into consideration where this secret passage is located and what it feels like to pass through it.

The deadline is Friday, January 28th. Stories can be no more than 1,000 words. Please submit stories to the Panther Participation course inside Canvas.

Exploring Portals



Consider the following questions as you plan your story:

- What world will the main character travel to?
- Who will be in your story?
- How will they be transported?
- What awaits them in this new place?
- Do they return, and if so, how?



[Click here to begin your story.](#) (Have your Google Drive open.)



Submission Guidelines:

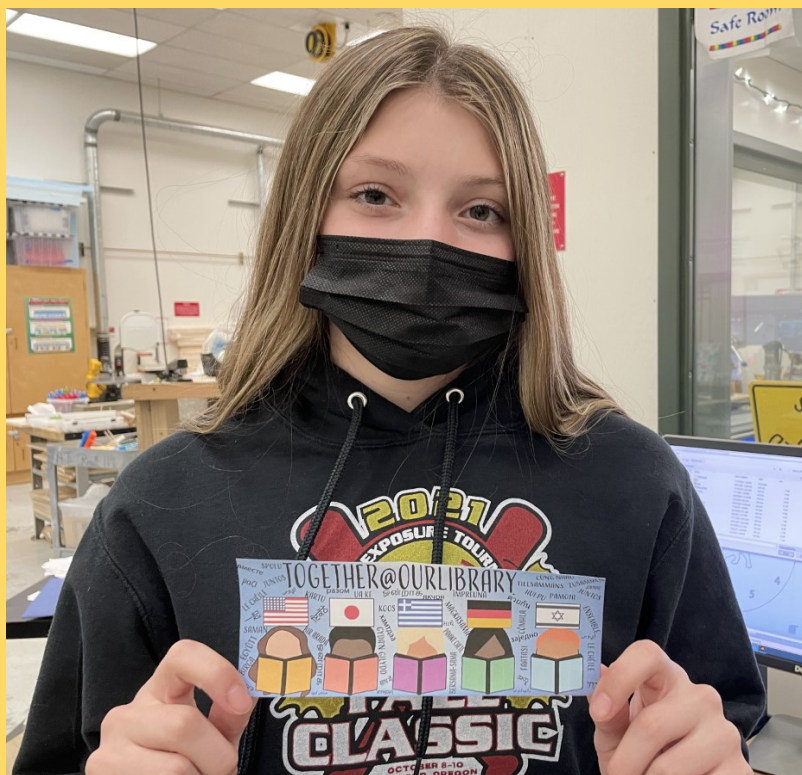
Go to Panther Participation.
Click on January Writing Contest.
Click “Start Assignment” at the top.
Select “Google” tab. (Must have your ASD Googledrive open.)
Find and select your story.
Click submit.

[Click here to submit in Panther Participation.](#)

Deadline is Friday, January 28th.

Library at Mears

ASD Bookmark Contest Winner



Please congratulate **Addyson Solberg**, this year's winner of the ASD district-wide bookmark contest. Addyson's bookmark will be copied and distributed to students and staff throughout the district.

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.



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](#)