



SEPTEMBER, 2025 TIGER TALES

Taku Elementary Kaitlin Tallman, Principal



Principal's Corner, Kaitlin Tallman

Dear Taku Families,

Welcome to September! The first few weeks of school have been filled with excitement, energy, and lots of learning. Thank you for helping your children arrive each day ready to grow, connect, and learn.

How you can support at home

- Read together every day. Even 15 minutes of shared reading makes a big difference.
- Ask about school. Try asking what they learned each day or who they played with at recess.
- Encourage independence and routines. Have your child pick their clothes out for the next day or pack their backpack the night before.
- Utilize routines in the mornings and at night. We want kids at school and on time every single day!

Safety Reminders

- Morning drop off begins no earlier than 7:40. Supervision is not available until then.
- If you need to get out of your car to help your child during pick up / drop off, please park and walk them.
- For the safety of all - no cellphone usage during pick up and drop off!
- The back parking lot is for parking only. Please don't utilize that space to turn around - students are actively walking to and from the school in that area.

Thank you for your continued support and teamwork!

Warm regards,

SAEBRS Family Notification

This year our teachers will be completing a universal social-emotional behavior screener (SAEBRS). Important information we want to share in partnership with all families.

1. This screener will take place 3 times a year (Fall, Winter, Spring).
2. The teacher rating will be completed outside of class time and will not disrupt learning.
3. This screener will help our teachers strengthen classroom structures and the school meet students' social, emotional and behavioral needs.

Please check in with the principal if you have further questions or would like more information.

MAP Growth Newsletter Information 2025-2026

MAP Growth is the ASD and State of Alaska required benchmark/interim reading and mathematics assessment for students in grades 3-9. Grades 10-12 students identified as needing Tier II and Tier III reading and mathematics support also take MAP Growth as part of the Anchorage School District's MTSS framework.

Alaska's Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) has partnered with NWEA to implement a creative approach to a balanced statewide assessment that connects fall and winter MAP Growth benchmark/interim assessments and the Alaska spring AK STAR summative assessment. AK STAR eliminates the spring benchmark/interim assessment window for grades 3-9 by combining the summative and benchmark assessment into one test that produces a spring benchmark score, which includes a growth measure. More information is available at the State of Alaska AK STAR website, education.alaska.gov/assessments/akstar.

MAP Growth is an online, adaptive assessment that provides each student a personalized testing experience with data that speaks to their individual progress and growth in mathematics and reading.

The MAP Growth reading and mathematics benchmark will be administered in person during the fall and winter benchmark windows. The spring benchmark will be embedded in the AK STAR summative assessment as outlined above.

- Fall Benchmark 1: September 3 - September 12 (make-ups through September 19)
- Winter Benchmark 2: December 1 - December 12 (make-ups through December 18)
- Spring Benchmark 3: embedded in AK STAR administered during the summative assessment window: March 30 - April 17 (make-ups through May 1)
 - *MAP Growth assessment only: Grades 10-12 identified as needing Tier II and III support*

MAP Growth practice tests and tutorials allow students and families the opportunity to become familiar with the types of questions and tools available on the actual MAP Growth assessments such as the highlighter and calculator. An overview of these resources with links to the practice tests are compiled on the [MAP Growth Practice Tests Quick Sheet](#).

mClass Newsletter Information

2025 - 2026

As part of The Alaska Reads Act, the State of Alaska requires that districts administer an early literacy screening tool three times a year to students in grades K-3 to identify potential reading difficulties in order to improve reading outcomes for students. Families can read more about this comprehensive K-3 reading policy at The Alaska Reads Act website: education.alaska.gov/akreads

mClass with DIBELS 8th Edition Assessments is the State of Alaska Department of Education's and ASD's Early Literacy benchmark screening and progress monitoring tool for students in grades K-3 in reading. mClass utilizes curriculum-based measures and is used by schools as part of the ASD Comprehensive Assessment System to support informed instructional decisions.

The Alaska Department of Education & Early Development explains the decision to adopt mClass as the statewide literacy screener here:

<https://education.alaska.gov/Alaska-Reading-Resources/Statewide-Early-Literacy-Screener>

mClass screening assessments will only be administered in-person during the benchmark window listed below:

- Fall 2025: September 2 - 12

Results for K-3 students that were assessed during a benchmark window, will be available in Parent Connect by September 26, 2025 [ParentConnection Login Information and Reference Guide](#):
parentconnect.asdk12.org

Mark your calendar for Taku Elementary School

PICTURE DAY!

September 16th

ALL PICTURES ARE ORDERED
AFTER PICTURE DAY!

Scan QR code to view and
order AFTER Picture Day.



Your student's
Online Code is
their school issued
ID number



<https://shop.imagequix.com/g1001271368>

www.fitzgeraldphotos.com
Questions? alicia@fitzgeraldphotos.com
Made with PosterMyWall.com

Fitzgerald
PHOTOGRAPHY



Join our team



Open Positions

Teacher Positions

Subs

Interventionst

Noon Duty

Sped Teacher



**Teacher
Position**



**Recourse
Teacher**



**Teacher
Position**



Noon Duty



Sub & Interv.

**Questions? Call us at 907-742-5940
or email Asktau@asdk12.org**

Join us for the first 2025-2026

PTA MEETING



Who?

Parents + Guardians
Teachers + Staff
Friends + Family
Community Members

When?

Thursday,
September 4th
5:30pm

Where?

Taku
School
Library

Why?

- Connect with parents + teachers
- Help build new student activities + programs
- Volunteer opportunities to benefit our kids
- Stay informed + increase school spirit



Join Today!

SAFE ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Arrival

School Drop off and supervision begins at 7:40am (8:40 on Mondays). Please do not drop off students before 7:40 (8:40 on Mondays). Thank you. Students who are not in their classroom by 8am will be marked late.

Thank you for having your students in school on time.

As always, the beginning of the year can be a little hectic during drop off and pick up. Please be patient, flexible, and safe.

- Please do NOT let your students out among the parked cars.
- **Wait until you are at the "Drop off and Pick Up Begins Here" sign.**
- **Please stay in your vehicle when you are in the drop off and pick up lines unless you park.**
- **For the safety of everyone, please do not park on street corners leading into our parking lots. This ensures clear visibility and smooth traffic flow for all.**
- Pull all the way forward for drop off and pick up.
- Please do NOT park during drop off and pick up. This is the key to keeping our vehicle line moving.
- The lot is busy and we want to keep all kids safe. Thank you for your help.

- Strive for 7:45 drop off. This is a good rule of thumb.

Dismissal

School dismissal is at 2:30pm. It is a busy and hectic time, especially for a couple of weeks until we get our flow down.

PRO TIP: Feel free to come at 2:25 and avoid the initial traffic jam. :-) Staff will supervise students outside until 2:45pm. At 2:45, students and staff will enter the building and you will need to park and come to the office to pick up your student.

Please be patient, flexible, and safe.

- Please use the pickup line and stay in your vehicle.
- Pull all the way forward to the drop off and pick up sign.
- Staff will help kids get in and out of vehicles
- Staff will supervise and waive you forward so we can load as many vehicles at a time as possible.
- NEVER waive your student into traffic or between parked cars.
- If at all possible, have your student enter and exit your vehicle on the right side out of the way of passing traffic.
- Do NOT block the bus lanes - both the entry and the exit. **No U-turns in the bus loop or staff parking loop.**
- If you are meeting your student, please wait by the main crosswalk near the road. We will send students to you.

Parking Lot Safety

Safety for our students is our number one priority.

If you are picking up or dropping students off, please stay in your vehicle when going through the car line. If you need to get out of your car, please park, and walk up to our parent waiting zone to pick up your child(ren).

For everyone's safety, please use the crosswalk when crossing the street if you are parked down the block. **Avoid** walking in the bus zone, as it can be dangerous and drivers may not be able to see you around the buses. Thank you for helping us keep everyone safe!

For the safety and smooth operation of our school, please note that students should **not** be dropped off or parked at the ice rink side of the school. All students must be dropped off and picked up at the **front pick-up/drop-off zone**. This policy helps ensure the safety of all students and prevents disruption to the flow of buses departing the school.

A quick reminder: for safety reasons, students **cannot** be dropped off **before 8:40am on Mondays** and **before 7:40am on Tuesday-Friday** due to low staffing. We ask that you **not have your child wait outside until those times**, as staff are not yet available to supervise students.

Thank you for helping us keep everyone safe.

Also, please **stay off phones** while driving in the parking lot at Taku during pick up and drop off.

Thank you for your assistance with this!

Transportation Expectations

Bus Transportation:

Riding the bus is a privilege. If a student's conduct is such that the health, safety, comfort, or well being of other students/staff is jeopardized, the privilege of riding the bus may be denied.

Bus Rules:

- Follow all the school rules while waiting at the bus stop and riding on the bus.
- Wait in line quietly and board when it is your turn.
- Fighting, yelling, & foul language are not allowed.
- Everyone must be seated when the bus is in motion and stay seated until reaching the bus stop.
- When walking on the sidewalks, stay clear of the curb area.
- Always be respectful of the bus driver and follow the driver's directions.

The consequences for the above rules are:

1st Referral: Warning letter from bus driver given to Principal for conference with student.

2nd Referral: Probationary status. May lose bus privileges.

3rd Referral: Bus suspension for 1-3 days.

4th Referral: Suspension for 5-7 days; possibly until end of the quarter

*Fighting on the bus moves a student to step 3.

Bicycles:

If students have parent permission, they are welcome to ride their bicycles to school as long as they observe bicycle safety rules. Students who ride bicycles should be aware of the following:

- Before riding their bicycle to school, the student must have a signed bicycle permission form on file in the office.
- Helmets are required. No Exceptions!
- Bicycles will remain locked throughout the day to the bike rack.
- Upon entering the school grounds, bikes are to be walked directly to racks.
- If bicycle safety rules are not followed, permission to ride will be revoked.

Taku's Amazon Wishlist

We've created an Amazon Wishlist with items that would greatly benefit our students. If you're able, please take a moment to look through it and consider purchasing a few items. If you know someone who may be willing to contribute, feel free to share the link with them. Any support is appreciated, and it would mean a lot to all of us!

Thank you so much for your generosity!

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1QGLMK40TPPSK/ref=hz_ls_biz_ex

Health with Katrina Rhodes

Dear Families,

This letter is to let you know that your child's class will be receiving age-appropriate lessons on child sexual abuse and assault prevention education as required under the state's [Alaska Safe Children's Act](#) ([Erin's Law](#)).

Erin's Law Education is comprised of two lessons (one lesson at the beginning of each semester) taught during the Health classes. Combined, these lessons meet the full requirements for students under the [Alaska Safe Children's Act](#) ([Erin's Law](#)) and are designed to help prevent childhood sexual abuse. These lessons will be presented in a non-threatening way, along with the skills needed for self-protection and will be handled in a sensitive, respectful manner.

Information about the lessons can be viewed [HERE](#).

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1J4mCSGZi6GBUv14WBpiO-7gsrj7DbXtA?usp=sharing>

If you do **NOT** want your child to receive the instruction under the Alaska Safe Children's Act, you must write a letter to the school principal requesting that your child be excused from these specific lessons.

Thank you for partnering with us as we continue to provide learning opportunities to improve the safety and well being of our students.

Sincerely,

Katrina Rhodes Hill
SEL Health Specialist

Art with Liz Feucht

Welcome back, Taku Tigers! After many years of being the art teacher with the name that people are afraid to say, I'm officially calling myself "Ms. Liz" now. But don't worry, I'll still answer to "Ms. Feucht!" This is my 11th year at Taku, and I'm so excited to get started.

This month in art, students are asking "How do artists reflect on their own work?" Students are learning to talk about their own artwork with peers.

When students bring artwork home, continue the conversation! But instead of asking, "What is it?" try these questions:

- How did you make this artwork?

- What materials did you use?
- How did you get your ideas?
- What is something you learned while making this?
- What would you like to call it?
- What makes it special?

These kinds of questions focus on the process more than the end product and encourage exploration and learning.

Liz Feucht
Art - Taku Elementary



Library with Lori Moore

Taku Library Corner

Book check out for 1st-5th has started at the Taku Library! As students continue to enjoy checking out books from our school library, we kindly remind families to help children keep track of their books. They are automatically checked out for two weeks at a time during their Library time. Caring for library books teaches responsibility and ensures everyone has access to great reads.

Did you know?

- Reading just 20 minutes a day at home exposes children to nearly **2 million words per year!**
- Children who read regularly develop **stronger language and vocabulary skills**, setting a solid foundation for success in all subjects.
- Shared reading time, even with picture books, helps build attention, listening skills, and a lifelong love of learning.

Thank you for supporting your young reader's journey—and helping them grow one book at a time!
Ms. Moore

Taku Librarian

Note from Nurse Ellie

Welcome!

September is here, and classrooms are in full swing! This month we're focusing on building strong habits to keep germs from spreading and to help everyone stay healthy through the start of the school year.

Health Focus of the Month: Handwashing & Germ Prevention

Why it's important:

Handwashing is one of the easiest and most effective ways to prevent the spread of germs. Children come into contact with hundreds of surfaces each day, and proper handwashing helps reduce absences from colds, flu, and stomach bugs.



Tips for Parents & Students:

- Wash hands with soap and warm water for at least **20 seconds** (sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice).
- Wash hands **before eating, after using the bathroom, after recess, and after coughing or sneezing.**
- Encourage kids to sneeze or cough into their **elbows**, not their hands.
- Remind children not to share drinks, food, or utensils.

Nurse's Notes

- **Illness reminders:** How sick is too sick? Students must be fever-free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication before returning to school. A Fever is a Temperature of 100.4 Fahrenheit or greater. Other reasons to keep home: Vomiting 2 or more times in 24 hours, diarrhea, or cough accompanied by a sore throat.
- **Vision, Hearing and Growth Screenings:** Vision Screenings are scheduled September 26th and Hearing and Growth screenings will start in October. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Healthy Habit of the Month

Make handwashing fun!

Use songs, stickers, or special soap at home to encourage kids to wash for the full 20 seconds.

Contact the Nurse

📞 (907)-742-5948

✉️ smith_ellie@asdk12.org

Keeping our school healthy is a team effort—thank you for reinforcing these habits at home!
Warmly,

Nurse Ellie



Picture Day! - 9/16

All pictures are ordered after picture day!



MAP Testing 9/2 - 9/3

Make sure your student(s) get enough sleep and breakfast to prepare them for testing!



PTA Meeting - 9/4

Come and join our PTA meeting from 5:30pm - 6:30pm!



mClass Testing - 9/10

Family Engagement Event - 9/26

THE BULLETIN BOARD, Office Ladies

Just some friendly reminders:

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- A photograph of two young women standing side-by-side and smiling. The woman on the left has curly blonde hair, wears glasses, and a black and white striped shirt. The woman on the right has long brown hair and wears a grey turtleneck under a dark floral cardigan. Behind them is a framed painting of a tiger with vibrant, colorful stripes. A small portion of a tiger plush toy is visible in the bottom left corner.

~ Rachel **Musselman** (AA) and Rachel **Ketchum** (Secretary) ~

Important Update: New Pick-Up Change Policy

Are you a local business looking to make a big difference in your community? Taku Elementary is seeking School Business Partners (SBPs) to join us in supporting our students and staff. Whether it's a small donation or a larger contribution, **every bit counts**—and every act of generosity helps us provide more for our amazing kids and dedicated team.

If you or someone you know is interested in partnering with us, please reach out at **907-742-5940** or **asktaku@asdk12.org**. We'd love to connect!

Become a Taku School Business Partner!

We will no longer be able to accommodate pick-up changes after 2:15pm, except in the case of an emergency. Late changes create unnecessary confusion in the office, as we need to locate students, verify bus routes, and ensure timely dismissals. We also want to avoid delays for students on the buses. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in helping us maintain a smooth end-of-day routine.

Volunteering at Taku

If you are interested in volunteering at Taku this upcoming year, please fill out the volunteer form ASAP. This must be done every school year. Parents who filled out the form last year will need to reapply.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSft2SM758xCY0fkBu7cYj6vdYGO4RRJt7LFAqrCKaQDHMwPMg/viewform>

We encourage families to do this now, that way, as events, field trips and other volunteer opportunities arise you won't have to scramble last minute. The volunteer process includes a background check and can take up to 5 business days before ASD's Office of Equity approves or denies your application. Once we have received the approval/denial we will email you to let you know.



Taku Elementary

Email: asktaku@asdk12.org

Website: <https://www.asdk12.org/taku>

Location: [701 East 72nd Avenue, Anchorage, AK, USA](#)

Phone: [907-742-5940](tel:907-742-5940)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/taku365/>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/taku_elementary365/



Taku Elementary

Taku is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters

