



NEWSLETTER

December 6, 2024

Principal: Barbara Gerard
<http://matsuk12.us/acc>

Phone: 907-746-2358
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Dear Academy Families,

Good News!



The renewal of Academy's charter occurred at last night's School Board. Birchtree, American, and Midnight Sun's charters were also approved. All four charter schools have provided years and years of outstanding education for students across the Mat-Su Borough, and the waitlists clearly demonstrate the preference as choice schools for families.

No Contract Agreement Signed

Sadly, the four charter schools have yet to sign contracts with the MSBSD. The four schools were given insufficient time to thoroughly vet the ten-year contract the district administration had developed.

This proposed contract has major changes when compared with the previous ten-year contract and charter school supporters felt it would be unwise to rush into a ten-year legal obligation without analyzing and evaluating the long-term consequences, implications, and risks. The four charter schools are unaware of any issues that occurred these past ten years, or 28 previous years for Academy and Midnight Sun that would warrant the need for major charter school policy changes that infringe on charter school autonomy and charter school governance. We will keep you posted as we work towards a fair, equitable ten-year contract with MSBSD.

Questions? Concerns? We Care!

Please do not hesitate to call, text, email if you have any questions or concerns! WE CARE! I CARE!

Together we can! Together we do!

With Warm Regards,

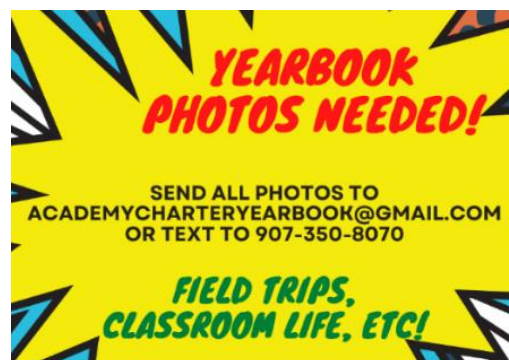
Barbara Gerard, Principal
907-841-5704 Barbara.Gerard@matsuk12.us



Date:	Event:
12/11-13	MAP Testing Grades 2-8
12/13	7 th Grade Debate
12/18	Pajama Day!
12/19-1/3	Winter Vacation No School!

Looking for Parent Volunteers!

- DEBATE JUDGE NEEDED!
Legal training preferred-
Friday, December 13th
- Clean light covers in
classroom
- Hang art display system
- Fix/replace blinds in Mrs.
Kramer's room



**YEARBOOK
PHOTOS NEEDED!**

SEND ALL PHOTOS TO
ACADEMYCHARTERYEARBOOK@GMAIL.COM
OR TEXT TO 907-350-8070

**FIELD TRIPS,
CLASSROOM LIFE, ETC!**



"Run, run as fast as you can..." could be heard a lot this week in kindergarten. We did different versions of the gingerbread man story. Students have been sequencing, comparing and discussing the differences between the stories. If you have a chance, stop by our end of the hallway to see the gingerbread people the students created.

Our math this week was on symmetry. Students learned that a line of symmetry can go any direction, but that both sides must be the same. It went beautifully with our gingerbread man focus from reading. We began the week making countdown chains for the upcoming holiday. Students were nervous and excited to get to use the staplers by themselves to create the chains. Since we made them in a red/green pattern, they can be used to practice skip counting by twos.

Pajama day is a very fun day coming up the day before Christmas break. We are asking for families to donate some items for our afternoon activities. We would like mini candy canes and chocolate kisses for prizes in Ms. Laura's room. I will be doing candy cane reindeer and could use 8 to 10 more boxes of regular size candy canes. Please let me know if you can donate any of these items. Please see the sign-up sheet in the front office to come in and read a story or do an activity with our classes on the morning of the 18th.

Feel free to reach out at any time:-)

Mrs. Berg
Verona.Berg@matsuk12.us



We read "Owl Moon" and had GREAT discussions about figurative language, because the book offers so many great examples! Plus, it had us wanting to go owling too, although everyone did come up with their own adventure they would like to do!

Writing had students sharing the steps of making hot cocoa, practicing "how to" writing.

Math introduced the commutative property, having the class work with number bonds. Be on the lookout for the Doubles Rap recording before Christmas break ... they are practicing hard!

Mrs. Mayer & Mrs. Drummond
Betsy.Mayer@matsuk12.us
Jessica.Drummond@matsuk12.us



In writing, we've been focusing on practicing capitalization and ending punctuation. Students are learning to ensure every sentence starts with a capital letter and ends with the correct punctuation mark. You can help at home by encouraging them to double-check their writing for these details.

In math, we are excited to share that we've mastered two-digit subtraction! The students have worked hard to understand regrouping, and their confidence is growing. Next, we'll begin exploring new math concepts to keep the momentum going.

We're also enjoying our new novel study on The Wild Robot! The students are captivated by the adventures of Roz and are having thoughtful discussions about the story's themes and characters.

Mrs. Saunders and Mrs. Kramer
Erin.Saunders@matsuk12.us Kimberly.Kramer@matsuk12.us



Grade 3

Grimes Gambit

LA - This week the students did a Novel Study of the Chocolate Touch by Patrick Skene Catling with Mrs. Besse. Students read in pairs and whole group, then discuss and answer comprehension questions about their reading. Students also entered thirty words into their Spalding Notebooks.

Math—The multiplication and division facts of 3 were conquered this week! Students worked hard this week to successfully learn and work with the multiplication fact 3. Students also completed a Math Mystery, which was a great review of different math topics we have completed so far this year.

Mrs. Grimes austin.grimes@matsuk12.us



Kile's Kittlets

LA—This week, we continued The Exploration of North America in Amplify. We are working hard on cursive because, after the holiday break, all written work will be done in cursive. Students will not have a spelling test next week due to MAP testing on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. We need to get these scores, so please plan on having your child well-rested and ready to do their best.

Math - Students are working hard on their ALEKs pies. Many are very close to completing their third-grade pie. We are moving forward with multiplication and will complete it next week. After completion, we will play many games to help with fluency and confidence in multiplication and division.

Tamela Kile Tamela.Kile@matsuk12.us



FOURTH GRADE

Nielsen's News:

Thank you all for coming to our family feast! We hope you enjoyed it and the holiday.

ELA-This week we started a unit on inventors. Each student is reading about an inventor and then creating a report to share with the class. They have all be excited to read what their person invented. In language, we covered the prefixes mis-, pre-, sub- and the suffixes -ion, -ist, -er. We reviewed correct sentence structure, comparative, and superlative adjectives and did a deeper review of adjective describing nouns and adverbs describing verbs.



Please make sure your child is reading 15 minutes OUT LOUD to you daily.

Reading goal: They've read 24,965 of the 77,500. Keep reading!!

Math- This week we covered adding and subtracting of like fractions and practiced converting improper fractions to mixed numbers and mixed numbers to improper fractions. We are loving building all the models in our math notebooks! We reviewed time, money, and multistep story problems.

Mrs. Nielsen
laurie.nielsen@matsuk12.us

Benbow's Buzz



Family Feast was amazing! Thank you to all of our families for making this such a memorable day for all.

Please make sure that your child has all of their winter gear every day! I have kiddos nearly every day who have forgotten their coat or boots, etc. We have up to an hour of outside time some days.

Language Arts - We are continuing to practice phonograms and spelling rules, as well as sentence writing, during our Spalding lessons. We are almost done reading King Arthur and the Round Table and have enjoyed the discussions each day as we compared the story to information we learned in the Middle Ages unit and our previous story, Robin Hood. Please take the time to listen to your child read and help them identify important information throughout the chapter. We worked on identifying correct punctuation in sentences, understanding how suffixes change words, sentence editing and comparing with adjectives as part of our Daily Language Review. Additionally, we have been identifying the dependent and independent clauses in complex sentences and getting practice writing complex sentences as part of our Spalding lessons.

Math - This week we built on our understanding of fractions and factors to simplify fractions. We have been taking time to review previous content, and I continue to see students struggling with basic math facts. Automatic recall of the basic multiplication facts is absolutely vital to success in fourth grade math, especially now that we have reached division and are beginning fractions soon. Although we will practice multiplication facts every day in class, I do encourage you to make sure that your child finds time at home every day to practice as well.

Please reach out to me if you have any questions or concerns!
cherie.benbow@matsuk12.us

SCHUMACHER MATH

Math class this week worked on more fraction skills. We'll be ready to do final assessments or re-dos next week. We started a fraction application Mathopoly board this week. It won't be due until next year. Less than half the class was interested enough in baking during school to complete a bonus homework assignment, which was disappointing. Students are expected to complete assignments by working at home and at school. Quicktables is a 30 minute per day task until all are finished. Finally, students need to master 2 or 3 ALEKS topics daily.

Mr. Schumacher Jared.Schumacher@matsuk12.us



The Manley Minute:

Language Arts: For Spalding this week, we entered 30 words in our Spalding notebooks and took our spelling test on Friday. Although the editing process took longer than expected, students finished and presented their persuasive essays. They are proud of their essays, and they should be! For our grammar section, we reviewed commas in a series. Our Book Club party is right around the corner. Most students have been keeping up with the reading and doing well on their weekly check ins, please remind your student that next week is our final week to finish the book!

Math: Adding and subtracting decimals has been the name of the game this week. When adding or subtracting decimals, be sure to line up the decimal and annex a zero if needed. Subtraction across zeros continues to be a concept this group struggles with, but we continue to practice! Just a reminder, ALEKS topics are encouraged at home, but Knowledge Checks need to be completed at school. Thank you for your support.

Mrs. Manley
Patsy.Manley@matsuk12.us

Sturgis Super Students!

We took a break from our normal spelling this week to focus on syllable types and patterns within those types. This skill is very helpful in spelling more complex words as it enables students to separate words into syllables and spell each syllable.

In addition to our Spalding work, the students have begun to write a persuasive essay based on the adventures of Don Quixote. Each student came up with an opinion as to whether or not Don Quixote's actions were justified by his good intentions and provided two reasons to support their opinion. Next week we will be editing rough drafts and creating a final draft.

Math-- We (almost) did it! A goal has been to reach the end of the first math workbook by the end of the first semester. We are incredibly close to this goal so I fully expect we will complete this early next week. Great job students!

Mrs. Sturgis
Sabra.Sturgis@matsuk12.us



Outdoor Fitness

Outdoor fitness classes biked and played games this week. The Trail Tamer crew worked with what snow we had left and cleared trails and rode the infamous Bridge of Doom over the Beaver Pond Loop. It was a good week on studded tires for fun times exercising with frisky students.

Mr. Schumacher Jared.Schumacher@matsuk12.us Mrs. Molly Molly.Nichols@matsuk12.us

K-5 Lab Classes



This week in art, third graders had fun drawing a majestic moose and adding creative doodles in the antlers. They also learned about mosaics and how tiny pieces can come together to create a larger image. They worked on creating one from paper scraps.

In fourth grade, students began studying the Taj Mahal, focusing on its incredible symmetry. They also practiced one-point perspective to better understand how to create depth and balance in their artwork.

Fifth graders started an exciting printmaking project with linocut prints. They are learning to carve their designs carefully and transfer them to paper, creating bold and unique prints.

Mrs. Saunders and Mrs. Grimes



Kindergarteners are reading and comprehending different stories and poems. After we discuss the various characters, settings, and plots, they love to act them out.

First Graders are refining their sentence structure and writing.

Second Grade is correcting sentence punctuation, spelling, and good handwriting skills.

Ms. Kile



Español with Señorita Catarina

Kindergarten students are having a blast learning their colors and dancing to Spanish Christmas carols! The festive spirit is alive as we explore holiday traditions in both Spanish and English.

First and second graders are diving into the world of Alaska animals. We're reading different versions of *Los Tres Osos* and getting to know all the animals that live in the wild, cold north. A special thanks to Mrs. Nichols for creating the adorable Alaska Animal headbands that our students wear with pride!



Kindergarten is learning the story of The Gingerbread Man so they can retell it with puppets and make videos of their stories next week. First grade is practicing The Mitten to retell on video next week. Second grade is reviewing story elements and working on building their own books on Book Creator.

Mrs. Nielsen



3rd grade - What is Beringia? Hopefully your kiddo can tell you all about it!

4th grade - Introduction to the Middle Ages and the feudal system.

5th grade - Native Americans of the West and the Westward Expansion

Mrs. Mayer & Mrs. Drummond



This week we are back with upper elementary, and we are changing how we grade! Starting this unit, we are adopting the same grading method as Geography. Each class period will close with an Exit Ticket, worth 3 points out of the total of 10 for the day. The other 7 points are based on participation and behavior for the day. If a student is absent, they will be given the Exit Ticket as homework, and can still be awarded the 10 points for the day if they complete and return it. Please reach out if you have any questions!

As for our science units, 3rd grade is exploring the mysteries of a floating train in "Balancing Forces," 4th grade is learning about "Waves, Energy, and Information" through a study of dolphin communication, and the 5th graders are doing a deep dive into the nanoscale of atoms and molecules with "Modeling Matter."

We also briefed the 5th graders on expectations for the Academy Science Fair, which will be held on April 1st. Project proposals are not due until January 30th, but we want them looking for ideas and inspiration whenever possible.

Ms. Heppner & Mr. Nick

Natalie.Heppner@matsuk12.us

Nicholas.Treinen@matsuk12.us



Middle School Spanish

Our 6th graders learned about the incredible migration of the monarch butterfly, connecting it to Mexican cultural traditions. The students created their own *mariposas* (butterflies) as part of a beautiful memorial project. They also conducted live weather reports in front of their classmates, practicing both their Spanish speaking skills and their understanding of weather vocabulary.



The 7th graders had a fun and creative week making sock puppet music videos! They karaoked and sang along to popular songs while explaining important Spanish grammar rules. We also introduced the irregular verb *tener* (to have), and students are already applying it in sentences and conversation. Keep up the great work, 7th graders!

Our 8th grade Spatulas are diving into regular *-IR* verbs, focusing on vocabulary retention and helping each other succeed. They're working hard to reinforce what they've learned by practicing with their peers and finding new ways to remember key concepts.

Meanwhile, the 8th grade Sporks are learning about *boot verbs* (verbs that change in the stem), and they're pushing themselves to write more sophisticated sentences. The challenge this week is to move beyond just doing the bare minimum—students are encouraged to stretch their language skills to new heights. Both 8th grade groups are also using their creative food truck projects and menus to practice extemporaneous speaking and ordering food in Spanish. The food truck projects have allowed students to get creative while practicing their conversational skills in real-world contexts!

Señorita Cady.Agoff@matsuk12.us



Middle School Art-Ventures

Most of sixth grade has finished their "Castle Winter Windows" landscape on toned paper. We began drawing goofy gnomes this week and will finish next week. Our seventh graders completed their colorful "Kusama Pumpkins" pop art and are starting a painting inspired by Texan artist Eli Halpin's funky animals with antlers. The art elective class, "Fantasy Map Drawing", is coming along nicely! Their hand-drawn maps are nearly finished, and we will be adding color this week and next. See some highlights from these fantasy map artists!



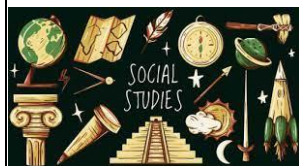
6th grade has been working hard as we near the end of our first semester. Both language arts classes have been working on their Christmas children's books and we have started on our Julius Caesar unit. In math, Mrs. Zerkel's class is working on algebraic equations, and Mrs. Williams's class is working on geometry. In Science, students are working on the excretory system.

Next week, we will have MAPS testing on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.

As always, please reach out if you have any questions or concerns. Have a great weekend!

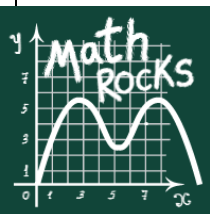
Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Zerkel

Amanda.Williams@matsuk12.us Katherine.Zerkel@matsuk12.us



Our overview of the American Revolution is being followed by a quick look at the French Revolution. This incredibly brutal time is a great follow up to our study of the Enlightenment as it shows how all of the ideas brought about during that time resulted in action.

Mrs. Sturgis Sabra.Sturgis@matsuk12.us



I am so impressed with my 6th graders' hard work and progress in fractions, decimals, and percents. This week we finished our unit with great success and moved on to multiplying with fractions. Next week we will work through multiplying as well as dividing with fractions, hopefully before MAP assessments start on Wednesday. Keep up the pace with those ALEKS units! A pat on the back for some really fabulous work coming back after Thanksgiving!

Until next time! Ms. Heppner Natalie.Heppner@matsuk12.us

7TH GRADE

Wrights Winners!



JUDGE NEEDED. I'm short one judge for our class debate next Friday, Dec. 13. Please pass on this one-hour volunteer opportunity to anyone with legal training who'd be willing to help. Thanks!

Wright 7th LA: This week was all about debate practice. Students were placed into their debate teams and rotated through both sides of the two debate topics prior to class debates that begin next Friday. Their final assessment for this semester will be based on their personal debate performance. The team who wins overall will be granted an exemption from the class's final project in the spring.

Wright 7th math: Students tested on Chapter 6's focus on percents on Thursday. Next week, they'll be doing several whole-group extension and application activities based on concepts they've already learned. Ten ALEKS topics are due each Monday.

Wright 7th history: The class studied the impact of WW1 on the U.S. this week. They took notes on wartime propaganda, shifting gender roles and how war affected the U.S. economy. They also created their WW1 technology presentation, which each student will present next week. Our Harkness discussion was a compare/contrast of 2 wartime poems by Wilfred Owen and Rupert Brooke.

All homework and handouts are on Google Classroom or ConnectEd. Have a great weekend!

Mrs. Wright Melodie.Wright@matsuk12.us

"All growth depends upon activity. There is no development physically or intellectually without effort, and effort means work." – Calvin Coolidge

This week in English, students continued daily practice with grammar, editing, and reading comprehension and demonstrated knowledge of the spelling and meanings of last week's vocabulary with the roots "jur, jus, jud," were assigned 10 more words with the roots "ben, bene, bon," and tested on retention of the 40 words from Weeks 9-12. Students continued reading All Quiet on the Western Front (finishing chapters 5 & 6), learned targeted vocabulary for chapters 7 & 8 to support understanding in context, answered and discussed comprehension questions supported with textual evidence, and completed the third quiz on Chapters 5 and 6.

In Math, students continued working in Chapter 1. They took quizzes on Lessons 3 (Convert Unit Rates) and 4 (Proportional and Nonproportional Relationships), with Lesson 3 proving to be the most challenging. Students prepared for and completed the mid-chapter quiz, covering Lessons 1-4 on Friday. Please encourage your child to support Chapter 1's content in ALEKS by working in the "Ratios, Proportions, and Measurement" pie. What students are introduced to and practice at home will enhance understanding in class.

Students in History continued practicing using an atlas to answer various world geography questions and their study of Europe and demonstrated knowledge of questions from Weeks 9-12. They learned more about the major battles of WWI, with each student researching a different battle that will be presented on Monday. We covered the sinking of the Lusitania, America's initial neutrality, the Zimmermann Telegram and how it was decoded and published, and the result of America's eventual involvement in the war.

Since next Friday is my last day with the students, all assignments to be included in the S1 grade should be submitted no later than Wednesday, 12/11.

Together, this will be a great year!

Ms. Twohy

Tuesday.Twohy@matsuk12.us



Seventh grade science experimented with DNA dogs. Students were able to recreate what a dog would look like based on random DNA characteristics. Some of the drawings were fantastic! This week students shared their family tree and the traits that were most prevalent in their family. Most students enjoyed this assignment and really appreciated learning more about the members of their family. The students retake a quiz on Punnett squares, if their first grade was not up to their expectation. Almost everyone has been successful with the skill of determining the probability of dominant and recessive traits. We are finishing the semester with a look at genetic inherited diseases. Students are preparing a slide presentation on the disease they chose to study. I look forward to learning the latest research these budding geneticists' have discovered.

Mrs. Dunham Susan.Dunham@matsuk12.us





Happy December! It is hard to believe that the Holiday break is just around the corner, and we will begin gaining daylight in just 16 days!

In Civics, we have reached the final element of course: Economic Systems. We will have our final exam next Thursday afternoon! I have been so impressed by how much the students have learned this semester and how actively they have engaged on such a wide range of complex topics. Next up (2nd semester) in History: China!

In 8th grade math we have continued to expand into two-step equations and the students are becoming more confident in their abilities each day. They are also starting to see how all of their foundational skills come into play with these larger concepts. Our group also continues to soar in their ALEKS progress, and I am so incredibly proud of every single student!

The Honors English I students completed Pearl S. Buck's historic novel, *The Good Earth* and took the exam on Thursday. Again, I can't stress enough how impressed I have been with our huge conversations regarding the realities facing the people of China in the very early 20th century. I have watched the students' understanding explode both in scope & their ability to verbally analyze & discuss these complex themes. As always, I am so incredibly amazed by of the students mature, thought-provoking questions and their ability to engage in such great literary discussions. It is hard to believe this group has completed four amazing classic novels this semester.



Have a great weekend,

Mrs. Molina

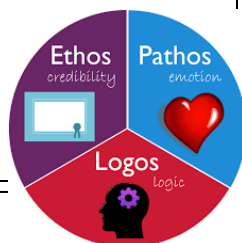
Stacy.Molina@matsuk12.us

Manley's Minute: 8th Grade LA

This week we looked at the ancient art of persuasion by learning about Aristotle's ideas of ethos, pathos, and logos. Students then put their skills to the test by making ordinary sentences more persuasive by incorporating rhetorical questions, facts/statistics, bold claims, exaggeration, or appeals to emotions or authority. They also reviewed the components of an argumentative essay and began research on a topic they chose to support their claim.

Mrs. Manley

Patsy.Manley@matsuk12.us



We are cruising through our look into how monomials and polynomials all play together to get us set up for our deep dive into quadratic and binomial equations.



We are getting into the thick of light waves and having some in-depth discussions about the energy that light carries and how that affects our day-to-day lives.

Mr. Farring Timothy.Farring@matsuk12.us