



NEWSLETTER

January 31, 2025

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

Phone: 907-746-2358
Fax: 907-746-2368

Dear Academy Families,

Close to Signing a Ten-Year Contract

I am pleased to announce that the four charter schools Birchtree, American, Midnight Sun, and Academy are close to finalizing an agreeable ten-year contract. The rewrite efforts and negotiations with the district have required significant time, energy, and careful consideration. Ensuring the protection of charter school autonomy and the freedoms granted under Charter Law and Statutes has been a top priority.

Academy's High School Design-Build is Nearing Advertisement

I am excited to announce that the Academy's high school design-build RFP is nearing advertisement! We look forward to the creativity and expertise of contractor-architect teams as they develop proposals for a space that includes a grand hall with a stage, innovation labs, and a college-inspired facility that is both efficient and purposeful.



Thank you in Advance for Celebrating and Pampering Academy's Wonderful Staff

The entire staff is eagerly anticipating the incredible breakfast treats and lunches that will fill the week of February 3-7! We are truly grateful to the Academy families for pampering us!

Needs? Please do not hesitate to text, call, come in!

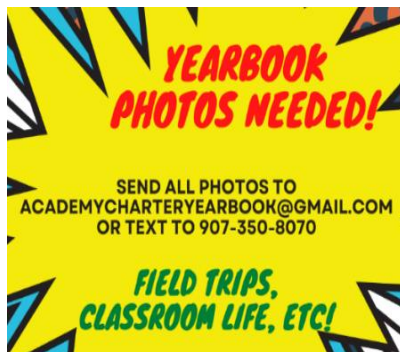
I CARE! WE CARE!

With Warm Regards,

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

Looking for **Parent Volunteers!**

- Clean light covers in classroom
- Fix/replace blinds in Mrs. Kramer's room
- Fix blinds in Mrs. Sturgis' room
- Caulk windowsill in Spanish classroom
- Paint bulletin boards
- Paint weight room



Date:	Event:
2/3-7	Middle School Intensives
2/3-7	Staff Appreciation Week
2/12	7 th Grade Bake Sale

7th Grade Fundraiser!

7th grade Birthday Box fundraiser
is Feb. 12.

Birthday boxes contain all ingredients for a child's birthday party - cake mix, frosting, streamers, paper products, treats, etc. - needed for a child of a family in crisis. Boxes will be donated to Alaska Family Services and MyHouse to give out whenever a child receiving services has a birthday. To this end, 7th grade students will be hosting a bake sale building-wide at the end of the day Feb. 12. Treats will be \$1-2 each and used to fund the contents of those boxes. Thanks for your support!





Kindergarten celebrated our 100th day of school this week. Students made crowns, played a yes/no game about 100 and heard stories and poems about it too. We are proud of the progress they have made and look forward to seeing how far they can go by the end of the year! We did not introduce any new phonogram sounds, but we did add ten more words to our Spalding spelling notebooks.

Our math time was all about 100. Students were given the option to count alone or with a partner to see if collections were more than, less than or equal to 100. They were surprised at how small 100 items could look. We finished the week talking about dollars.

February is near. We have a trip to the theater on Tuesday. If you signed up to drive, we are expecting you. I sent notes with your students on Friday of your passengers. We will eat snack before we leave and enjoy lunch upon our return.

Our Valentine's party will be here before we know it. Watch for a signup from our room parents if you'd like to help. Students may bring cards for their classmates. Please have your student sign who the card is from. Cards should not be addressed to any particular students. We pass them out without matching names to holders. 26 for the entire class or 13 for just their group. Thank you for your help and support!
Have a great weekend!

Mrs. Berg Verona.Berg@matsuk12.us



hello FIRST GRADE



If you ever want to have your heart warmed, come read one of our

Elephant & Piggie books to the class, haha. There is NOTHING like reading them to a group of first graders! And now they are reading them with each other to practice reading with expression - they are LOVING it!

They also thoroughly love exploring 2D and 3D shapes in math!

Contact us anytime!

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

2ND GRADE

Our second graders have been busy!

In language arts, Mrs. Kramer's group is diving into their novel studies, while Mrs. Saunders' group is making great progress in Read Live—some students will even be graduating from the program over the next month!

In math, we are wrapping up our money unit and getting ready to explore data, which will include fun activities with graphs and charts.

With the cold weather sticking around, many students have been forgetting their winter gear—please remind them to pack hats, gloves, and warm coats each day. We appreciate your help in keeping everyone warm, comfortable, and ready to learn!

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



3rd Grade

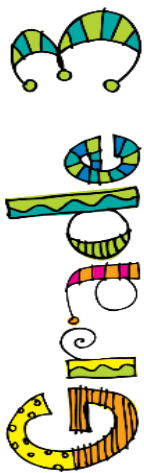
Kile's Kittlets

LA—This week, we worked a lot on comprehension and answering questions by restating them. We are also working on parts of speech and identifying them. Students enjoy the Amplify Unit “Astronomy: Our Solar System and Beyond.” They have great questions and insight.

Math: This week, we continued to become fluent in multiplication games and started to explore and understand how fractions work. They did great.

Tamela Kile Tamela.Kile@matsuk12.us





Grimes Gambit

Language Arts (LA): This week in Core Knowledge, we began *Unit 8: Native Americans*. Students are reading *Native American Stories*, a collection of historical fiction stories told from a child's perspective. Each story highlights the contributions of children within their tribes. This week, students read about hunters and gatherers. Be sure to ask your student each evening about what they are learning!

Math: This week, we conquered our multiples of 8! Students engaged in various games to reinforce their multiplication and division skills. They are encouraged to continue practicing at home using **Prodigy** and **Aleks**.

Stay tuned for more learning adventures next week!

Mrs. Grimes austin.grimes@matsuk12.us



FOURTH GRADE

Benbow's Buzz



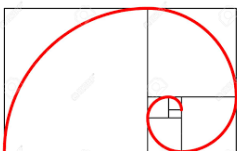
Nielsen's News:

ELA- Our American Revolution Unit is coming to an end. It has been a fantastic time of learning all about the birth of our nation. This week we covered famous battles, spies & traitors, and becoming a nation. The highlight of the week was definitely learning to make invisible ink! In grammar we covered dialogue and its punctuation.

Reading goal: They've read 39,750 of the 77,500. Awesome reading over break! Keep reading!!

Math- We finished our decimal unit, did a few days on number and shape patterns and started our unit on customary units of measurement. Students enjoyed learning about Fibonacci and his sequence. In measurement, our focus was on linear measurement and its conversions. This week we changed our review work. For the rest of the year we will be doing algebraic thinking practice, input-output and area & perimeter practice.

Mrs. Nielsen
laurie.nielsen@matsuk12.us



We are in desperate need of Kleenex! If we don't get some soon, our class will be left with no other option than to use their sleeves! Please grab a box or two while you're out and about and get them sent in as soon as possible.

Language arts - We are learning so much about the American Revolution! This week we read about some famous women from the American Revolution, such as Sybil Ludington, Mary Ludwig Hayes, Deborah Samson and Margaret Cochran Corbin. Because the chapters in Johnny Tremain are a bit longer, I am giving two to three days per chapter. We worked on placing commas in dates, lists, city and state, and compound sentences, the use of apostrophes in contractions and for ownership, identifying simple subjects and predicates, and analogies as part of our Daily Language Review.

Math - This week we worked with adding and subtracting improper fractions and mixed numbers. We are really focusing on making sure that answers are in simplest form before submitting papers for grading. While working through fractions, we also took some time to learn how to create a Line Plot using information that has been provided. As we have been taking time to review previous content, 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 fractions. When we start working through geometry, those facts will again be necessary for area and perimeter. 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

The Manley Minute:

Brrr! It's cold outside! Just a reminder that 5th graders have outdoor fitness two days per week. Thank you for sending them with *all* their winter gear. This includes snow pants, coat, hat, gloves and boots.

Language Arts: We took our monthly 50-word test along with a regular spelling test on Friday. In class, we've continued diving into the exciting world of the Renaissance! So far, we've explored the incredible works of painters like Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Raphael. Through our Harkness discussions, we've been tackling big questions about each chapter, helping us think critically about the ideas and values that shaped this period. We've also learned about the importance of manners and Renaissance ideals, like creativity, exploration, and the pursuit of knowledge. A highlight this week was drawing portraits of Mona Lisa on paper that was taped under their desks.



Math: In math class, we've been exploring patterns and how they show up in numbers and equations. From identifying number sequences to understanding how patterns help us predict what comes next, it's been a fun challenge. We've also been diving into the order of operations, making sure we follow the correct steps to solve equations accurately. Students have done exceptionally well with this concept; I'm proud of them!

Mrs. Manley Patsy.Manley@matsuk12.us

Sturgis Super Students!



Language Arts--I am incredibly proud to report that according to our latest 50 word test the class's average spelling level has grown a whole year's worth. What a great accomplishment! I believe that with continued work we can bring that class average up another year's worth by the end of the school year. This would be a great accomplishment that would also boost reading comprehension and writing skills.

We also continue to move along in our study of the Renaissance. We are working on reading through a passage numerous times in order to develop a deeper understanding of the text. Reading through a second or even third time has really increased student comprehension.

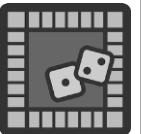
Math--This week was all about GCFs and LCMs as we continue to prepare to work with fractions. Students worked hard to remember how to do prime factorization and to learn the difference between a factor and a multiple. These skills will be essential when we get into fractions operations that require finding a common denominator or simplifying fractions.

Mrs. Sturgis Sabra.Sturgis@matsuk12.us

SCHUMACHER MATH

My fifth-grade math class finished practicing fraction division, fraction multiplication and diagraming fraction word problems this week. All students were challenged to draw detailed solutions to the problem and then back it up with a fraction operation solution check. I quizzed knowledge of the content and am heading toward a test next week. Two students are working on a statistics report for Mathopoly outcomes. Students are assigned daily homework as mastering 3 ALEKS topics. Any additional homework will be make-up or redo work.

Mr. Schumacher Jared.Schumacher@matsuk12.us



Outdoor Fitness

Outdoor fitness classes remembered how winter clothing works this week. For some reason, older students seem to need more reminders. Our recent snow has created excellent trail conditions for biking so that will continue until we get enough fluffy goodness for snowshoeing, skiing and sledding. Too many middle school students were not prepared for the cold, I suggest asking your child if they will be prepared for their next outdoor fitness class.

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

K-5 Lab Classes



This week in Art, we welcomed our 3rd, 4th, and 5th-grade classes as they began their exploration of ceramics! Students jumped right into their projects, practicing different types of coils such as braided, zigzag, and curved designs.

3rd Grade: Students designed and began working on their tic-tac-toe boards. Their creativity truly shined, with designs ranging from pizza-themed boards to cat-inspired ones!

4th Grade: Students crafted beautiful coiled hearts, showcasing their skills and unique artistic styles.

5th Grade: Students designed and created coiled bowls, applying their knowledge of ceramic techniques to shape and build their unique pieces. Stay tuned for more exciting updates as we continue our ceramic journey!

Mrs. Saunders and Mrs. Grimes



3rd grade - Exploration of North America - Christopher Columbus and Juan Ponce de Leon

4th grade - American Reformation - Temperance Movement, mental illness, free public education and abolitionism

5th grade - Civil War - causes and reconstruction

Mrs. Mayer & Mrs. Drummond



Kindergarten had a fun week learning about opuestos (opposites)! We practiced words like “grande” and “pequeño” (big and small) and “alto” and “bajo” (tall and short). To help reinforce these opposites, we sang Arañita Pequeñita (The Itsy Bitsy Spider), adding some fun actions to match the vocabulary. The kids had a blast moving to the song and using the opposites in context.

In first and second grade, we entered el churro into our Me Gusta/No Me Gusta books. The majority of students revealed that the taste of churros was a hit! We also began exploring sea animals this week and even spent some time dancing to lively pirate songs. These songs are a great way to get their energy out while reinforcing vocabulary in a fun, interactive way.



It has been a great week back with Kindergarten, First and Second grades!

Kindergarten is working on learning story elements: characters, setting, plot, and resolution/conclusion so they can begin creating online stories. First grade jumped back into coding, working on building algorithms that allow characters to have actions based on events. This is a great lesson on cause and effect!

Second grade is finishing Christmas stories and also jumping into code. We had a special guest from code.org visit us on Monday. She was thrilled at the perseverance and problem solving going on with our young students!



It's been a week of good, hard, science work for the upper elementary grades!

Third graders are learning about how an organism's traits influence its chances of survival and will use that knowledge to design solutions to our own problems in the role of "biomimicry engineers."

Fourth graders are piecing together our energy system, beginning with the energy source and all the conversions it undergoes, from the power plant all the way to the electrical devices in your home.

Fifth grade has begun a unit which explores how the parts of the Earth system interact to create the natural phenomena we observe. Science Fair proposals were due this week, and next week we will consult individually with each student to hone their Science Fair experiments. Please let us know if you have any questions! Projects are not due until April 1st.

Ms. Heppner & Mr. Nick

Natalie.Heppner@matsuk12.us

Nicholas.Treinen@matsuk12.us



Kindergarten, first, and second grade all continue to work on interpreting poetry.

Ms. Kile

Middle School Spanish

In sixth grade, students worked hard with telling time in Spanish, and this week, they took their *time* test. Many students found success in learning how to say the time, and we're excited to continue practicing in more real-life contexts in the weeks ahead!

Seventh graders are diving deeper into possessive adjectives. They've been presenting their dream houses to each other while practicing how to say "my," "your," and "his/her" in Spanish. This group is also getting back into the swing of Spanish class after a little break and doing well.

Eighth grade Spatulas have truly mastered the *o-ue* boot verbs, and by the end of the week, they were ready for a new type of boot verb. They wrapped up the week with a hilarious *Fishbowl* vocabulary game—lots of laughs and learning all in one!

Eighth grade Sporks have conquered the tricky mechanics of using *gustar* and similar verbs. They're now ready to take on more complex grammar structures when we return from Intensives. I'm impressed with how quickly they've grasped these concepts!

Señorita Cady.Agoff@matsuk12.us



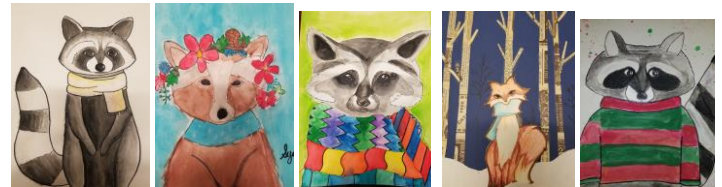
Middle School Art-Ventures

with Ms. Christensen

Seventh grade is working on their paintings in the style of Texas/Alaskan artist, Eli Halpin. Her antlered animals that she paints are the inspiration for the art students' compositions. The students will use a combination of watercolor paints, acrylic paints, and watercolor pencils to render their antlered (or horned) animals.

Sixth grade art students are learning landscape composition techniques by studying the artworks of Canadian artist, Ted Harrison. He was known for his colorful landscapes of the Canadian arctic. Students have drawn their layered landscapes and will paint their artwork next week, using bright colors in Harrison's style.

Our elective class, "Cozy Winter Animals", is finishing up this week. Middle school students have experimented with illustration techniques to add cozy elements to the animals we have drawn and painted. Here are a few completed artworks by students in this class.



6th grade is gearing up for their Spring Intensives next week. Students should arrive in their fitness clothes Monday-Thursday and have their uniform to change into. They will need to bring a snack and lunch per usual. On Friday, students will not have fitness and should wear their uniforms to school. Feedback letters are due **Friday**. In the event your student is absent, they still need to email Mrs. Gerard their letter by the end of school Friday.

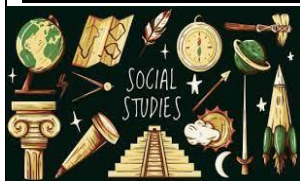
In Mrs. Williams's Language Arts Class, students worked on comprehension strategies and vocabulary through novel study in small groups. Mrs. Zerkel's Language Arts Class finished their novel *Refugee* and is now working on their research paper.

In math, both classes finished Chapter 8 on inequality and linear equations.



In Science, students are continuing their exploration of space. As always, please let us know if you have any questions or concerns.

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



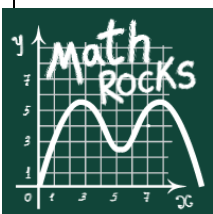
We wrapped up our study of the three branches of government at the national level this week. The students are well-prepared to use this knowledge to examine Alaska's three branches of government when we get closer to our trip to Juneau.

Mrs. Sturgis Sabra.Sturgis@matsuk12.us



My 6th grade math students have put in excellent effort this week, and we have worked through writing algebraic expressions from phrases and word problems, along with a review of the commutative, associative, and identity properties and an introduction to the distributive property. It has been a great week! Today we took a quick check on our mastery of this chapter's content before students have a change in routine for intensives next week. Enjoy those intensives, and I'll see you after!

Ms. Heppner Natalie.Heppner@matsuk12.us



7TH GRADE

Wrights Winners!

7th grade Birthday Box fundraiser is Feb. 12. Birthday boxes contain all ingredients for a child's birthday party - cake mix, frosting, streamers, paper products, treats, etc. - needed for a child of a family in crisis. Boxes will be donated to Alaska Family Services and MyHouse to give out whenever a child receiving services has a birthday. To this end, 7th grade students will be hosting a bake sale building-wide at the end of the day Feb. 12. Treats will be \$1-2 each and used to fund the contents of those boxes. Thanks for your support!

Wright 7th LA: The class wrapped up its short story unit by finishing up their radio play podcasts, discussing the impact of curiosity and independent thought in "The Last Dog" short story, creating a class review on concepts and then testing on them Thursday. On Friday, students got a preview of a study on character arc by choosing to read either *Two Old Women* by Velma Wallis or Jack London's *Call of the Wild* during next week's intensives. Reading ahead will create less work/stress the following week.

Wright 7th math: Students tested on chapter 8's algebraic equations and inequalities on Friday. Ten ALEKS topics are due each Monday, including the week of intensives.

Wright 7th history: After taking notes on Eugenics and Black Tuesday, students discussed the Flapper culture and its similarities and differences with young people today. They reviewed for the 1920s unit test using Gimkit and tested Wednesday. Most students were able to complete and turn in their suffrage podcasts; those that didn't know they must meet with Mrs. Wright to fix.

All hand-outs and homework are on ConnectEd or Google Classroom. Have a great weekend!

Mrs. Wright Melodie.Wright@matsuk12.us



"If January is the month of change, February is the month of lasting change. January is for dreamers... February is for doers." – Marc Parent

This week in English, students continued practice with our daily English skills in language, editing, and reading comprehension. They demonstrated knowledge of vocabulary with the roots "frail, fract, frag" and were assigned 10 more words with the roots "junct, join, jug." Please work with your students on their spelling and definitions each week to support success. Due to intensive week, the quiz will be on 2/11. Students finished All Quiet on the Western Front! After reading Chapters 9-12, discussions were held, and students completed two 10-question, multiple-choice, open-book quizzes (one for Chapters 9 & 10 and another for Chapters 11 & 12). There will be a final, open-book test after intensive week. For the weekly writing entry, students wrote about overcoming obstacles.

In Math, students continued working in Chapter 5 on Expressions. They were assessed on Lesson 3: Properties of Operations; learned about, practiced, and were assessed on Lesson 4: The Distributive Property; and reviewed, practiced, and demonstrated concepts presented in Lessons 1-4 prior to completing the Mid-Chapter Quiz. They finished the week covering Lesson 5: Simplify Algebraic Expressions and began Lesson 6: Add Linear Equations. This is the chapter where students are applying many of the previously taught skills in Chapters 1-4. As a reminder, students are required to complete ten topics or more each week in ALEKS. Please encourage them to work on these at home, as class time is not sufficient. Students should engage in the **"Equations and Inequalities"** pie to support concepts introduced and practiced in the new chapter of learning.

Students in History continued building geography skills, using atlases to identify answers to a variety of questions. Students learned about Presidents Harding and Coolidge and the corruption of the Teapot Dome scandal. They also were introduced to the Great Migration during WWI and the blossoming of the Harlem Renaissance and John Scopes and the significance of the Scopes Monkey Trial, involving the theory of evolution. We also looked at the fashion of the 1920s, flappers, "jive talk," and the dance craze of the Charleston. To end the week, students learned more about Henry Ford's impact on the times with the affordable Model T and various significant events of the decade from a timeline and Internet scavenger hunt.

Together, this will be a great 7th-grade year!

Ms. Twohy Tuesday.Twohy@matsuk12.us



Seventh grade science started this week with a BANG! The Big Bang Theory and the formation of the universe. Students are especially interested in how the universe formed, what was the first element, and other questions that scientist have not proven as fact but have developed theories and gathered evidence to support these theories. I imagine these students are also asking question at home too. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions. This week many students joined the 100% club by learning the names and symbols of the first 32 elements on the periodic table. Way to go kids! If your child has not learned them yet, please use the week of intensives to quiz them (flashcards are very helpful)! Students also researched the history, uses and interesting facts about an element and presented those to the class on Thursday. After intensives the classes will be learning about chemical reactions. So, we may end the UNIT with a BANG!

Mrs. Dunham Susan.Dunham@matsuk12.us





Just like that, January is in the rearview and February is upon us! Each year, the 8th graders always lament how quickly this final year of middle school just flies by! It is truly mind boggling.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: Next week is Intensives. Please remind your child of the following:

- Monday through Thursday, students should arrive dressed and ready for their fitness activity, which begins promptly at 7:45 a.m. After fitness, all students must change into their uniforms.
- Please remind the students that uniforms are required whenever they are on campus, except during fitness activities. All students must have a uniform with them at school, regardless of their intensive.

My 8th grade Math class has been CRUISING & they have learned so much this year. We continue to delve into huge topics & my students are proving to not only be hard workers, but they are becoming math rock stars! I am so proud of every single one of them!

The Honors English I students are now half-way through Homer's *Odyssey* and their Harkness discussions never disappoint. When we return to our regular schedule on the 10th of February, the students will have read through Book 16 and have complete their (mock) Twitter posts using the RAFT writing strategy. This is such a fun & interesting form of content analysis.

Our history focus continues to be China and this week we learned about the infamous Chinese leader, Mao Zedong, briefly discussed his ranking among the world's worst dictators and we began our discussion of the Cultural Revolution in China.

Have a great weekend & stay warm,

Mrs. Molina

Stacy.Molina@matsuk12.us



Manley's Minute: 8th Grade LA

As we wrap up *The Good Earth*, we've had some powerful discussions about the choices of the main character, Wang Lung. Emotions have run high, and opinions have varied widely, with many students offering thought-provoking perspectives on his decisions. We'll finish the novel after Intensive week.

Mrs. Manley

Patsy.Manley@matsuk12.us



We are cruising through Radical Equations; I am excited to see how well these students do on their upcoming mid-chapter test right before the intensive break.



We are having a great time looking into Natural Selection and preparing for the Science Fair! Students are working hard in class on their work and at home on their science fair projects.

Mr. Farring Timothy.Farring@matsuk12.us