



NEWSLETTER

April 4, 2025

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

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

Dear Academy Families,

Thank you for the wonderful and kind birthday wishes! The many sweet notes and cards from the students made my day extra special!

Important AK STAR Mandatory Assessment April 9th and 10th (3rd grade thru 8th grade)

The AK STAR is a combination of two essential assessments: the MAP, which is adaptive and provides a personalized growth evaluation based on a student's performance—either above or below grade level—and the spring summative assessment. Together, these assessments offer a more complete and comprehensive view of student learning mastery, as well as an accurate measure of the school's student achievement and performance. This is a significant opportunity, as the result from these assessments help the Academy's staff understand how effectively classroom instruction aligns with grade-level content standards. Additionally, they provide valuable insights into areas where the Academy can improve, as well as areas in which we are already excelling.

Please make sure your student arrives well-rested and well-nourished, with a protein-packed breakfast. Thank you for offering positive affirmations such as, "You got this! Take your time and show them just how smart you are!" According to brain science, this kind of encouragement fosters a self-fulfilling prophecy—students rise with confidence and self-belief. Together we do! Together we can! 😊

Ski Day Was Wonderful!

With 399 students, staff, and parents skiing or boarding on the mountain of Alyeska, the day couldn't have been much better! The determination and perseverance of the students as they learned and refined their skiing and boarding skills was impressive. We were grateful the snow depths held despite this warm winter with little snow. We loved the day, visiting and learning together! It was such a fun-filled, amazing and unforgettable Academy learning opportunity! Thank you for your support!

Thank you! We Appreciate Our Academy Families!

Academy's families are the BEST! The support that you provide is remarkable. We are grateful! Already, parents are working on World Fair Projects, gathering items for the schoolwide Yard Sale, fixing things around the campus, planning for 8th grade graduation and the middle school annual dance, and so much more! Thank you! Thank you! Together we do! Together we can!

Questions?

If you have any questions or needs, please do not hesitate to call, come in, text, or email! WE CARE! We can fix most things quickly if we know in the early stages. We are here for you!

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



Date:	Event:
4/9-10	AK Star Testing 3 rd -8 th Grade
4/14	AK Start Testing-Science 5 th and 8 th Grade
4/14	Taekwondo Testing K-4: 12:30-1:12pm 5-7: 1:20-2:15pm
4/15	8 th Grade Science Fair
4/15-18	6 th Grade Juneau Trip
4/21-23	Aimsweb Testing KG-3rd
4/24	3 rd Grade Piano Recital 1:30-2:30pm
4/25	K-5 Music Presentation 1:20-2:20pm
4/30	Middle School Dance 6:00-8:30pm
5/1	World Fair



Traffic Safety!

Please remember that there are **two** exit lanes! The left lane is for those turning left, and the right lane for those turning right!

Please do not come in through the gate closest to the cemetery. It is an EXIT only (Busses are excepted)!

Thank you!

Kindergarten



Parent World Fair Meeting, Thursday, April 10 at 1:45 in Ms. Laura's room. Please join us to plan and organize for the biggest event of the year:-)

Kindergarten added 15 words to their Spalding spelling books. We learned two new phonograms IE as in field and DGE as in judge. Our stories and songs were about rain and ducks. The students enjoyed learning some new songs. Next week we will be reading birthday stories. This is related to our community service project. We will make birthday boxes for the homeless shelter in Wasilla. Each student will be choosing one item to bring for the boxes. Items will be due by Tuesday, April 15. Watch for the slip telling what they would like to bring. Your help and support are greatly appreciated.

During our math block we reviewed time. Students did a great job remembering time to the hour in a game they played. We also used new paper tens frame collections to count and write quantities. Being able to accurately count and talk about tens and ones is vital to all future equation work. Our class did a great job!

Permission slips for our trip to the theater went home on Wednesday. Almost half have already been returned.

The red bear paws sent out this week are the last for this school year. This class is the first to make it to the end of our hallway. Thank you for reading to your student and following up with the paws.

Feel free to contact me anytime! -- Mrs. Berg Verona.Berg@matsuk12.us



hello FIRST GRADE

Students are just a little excited about World Fair and so are we! We had many parents come to our world fair meeting on Tuesday! Be sure to watch our Facebook group to find opportunities to fill in the gaps for home projects and to help on the day of.

Highlights ... work with more advanced phonograms ci/si/ti and telling time to the hour and half hour.



Contact us anytime!

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

2ND GRADE

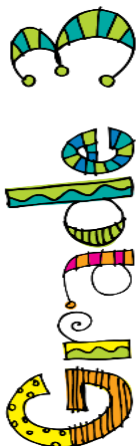
We've had an exciting week in second grade!



In Language Arts, we have been learning about point of view, discussing how different characters in a story can see the same event in different ways. We've also been working on identifying the main idea of a passage and finding key details that support it. These skills help us become stronger readers and thinkers!

In Math, we have started exploring geometry. Students are learning to identify and describe different shapes, including triangles, squares, and rectangles. We are also working on recognizing attributes like the number of sides and corners.

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



Kile's Kittlets

LA—We are nearing the end of the year and reviewing many topics that need attention. Next week, there will be no spelling test due to AK Star testing. Your child must be here on Wednesday and Thursday to take this test. Please ensure that your child is well-rested and has a full tummy.

Math - The final part of the book covers geometry. This is an enjoyable chapter with a focus on measuring and learning about various angles. Numerous hands-on learning opportunities will be explored.

Tamela Kile Tamela.Kile@matsuk12.us



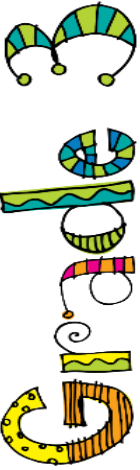
Grimes Gambit

What a great week of school! Our students have been working hard to prepare for the AK STAR test next week. We focused on reading passages, finding text evidence to support answers, and writing well-structured paragraphs with topic sentences, supporting details, and conclusions. While we continuously practice these skills, this week was all about fine-tuning them.

In addition, we explored Latin root words—**tri**, **bi**, **port**, and **rupt**—to deepen our understanding of word meanings.

In math, we reviewed various math facts, topics, and expressions to keep them fresh in our minds. We revisited multiplication and division strategies, practiced solving word problems, and worked on recognizing patterns in numbers. Students also strengthened their understanding of fractions, place value, and multi-step problem-solving.

Mrs. Grimes Austin.Grimes@matsuk12.us



FOURTH GRADE



Nielsen's News:

ELA- Our geology unit this week was exciting! We learned all about earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanoes, geysers, and hot springs. We also honed our writing skills in our response to reading. Students practiced creating a topic sentence from the question, finding text evidence to support the topic sentence and wrapping it all up in a summary sentence. The grammar focus was relative pronouns: that vs. which.

Reading goal: They've read 55,935 of the 77,500.

Math- We completed all NEW content for 4th grade math!! We covered angles, and symmetry. They really stretched their brains creating name symmetry art with multiple lines of symmetry! We have also begun a year-end review, brushing up on skills we learned a while back in the year. Please have your child work of multiplication and division basic facts. Fluency with these helps greatly when doing ALL types of math.

Mrs. Nielsen
laurie.nielsen@matsuk12.us

Benbow's Buzz

World Fair is getting closer and closer! Please be watching for the sign-up list to come out; we are quite dependent on parent volunteers throughout this time of the year. The list will also include the week after World Fair, which we are planning fun activities for our class to enjoy during our last week as fourth graders.

Language arts - This week's focus has been all about geology! It is such a great unit, and the class is getting so excited for World Fair! We did assign everyone to their groups, so don't be surprised if they start doing research or coming up with project ideas at home! Our Daily Language Review this week covered use of commas in lists and compound sentences, apostrophes to show possession, verb tenses and sentence editing.

Math - We wrapped up our unit on measurement this week with metric measurement. We also spent quite a bit of time doing skills review in preparation for our end-of-year tests. The Hands-On Equations lessons, which prepare students for algebraic thinking seem to be getting easier, but that is because the class has increased their understanding of working with variables in balanced equations! 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

We wrapped our week with volume practice for most, percent lessons with assessment for a couple and then practiced for the AKSTAR this week. All students are assigned daily homework as mastering 3 ALEKS topics and a few are still improving QuickTable fluency. Any additional homework will be make-up or redo work.

Mr. Schumacher Jared.Schumacher@matsuk12.us

5TH GRADE

The Manley Minute:

As we are gearing up for testing next week, thank you for helping to set your student up for success by making sure they get ample sleep, a nutritious breakfast and arrive at school on time!

Language Arts: This week students finished reading *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. I thoroughly enjoyed teaching this unit as all students jumped in and played the part. When speaking, they used expression and movement to take their part to the next level. To celebrate the end of the unit, students participated in a fun and engaging escape room! They applied problem solving skills and teamwork while reflecting on the themes and plot of the story.

Math: Students are still working on their fraction knowledge while completing a review of skills we've learned so far this year. Our focus this week was comparing and ordering fractions and converting mixed numbers to improper fractions and vice versa. They've worked hard and are ready for testing next week!

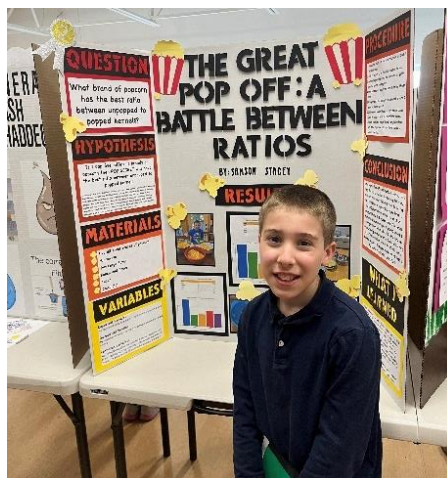
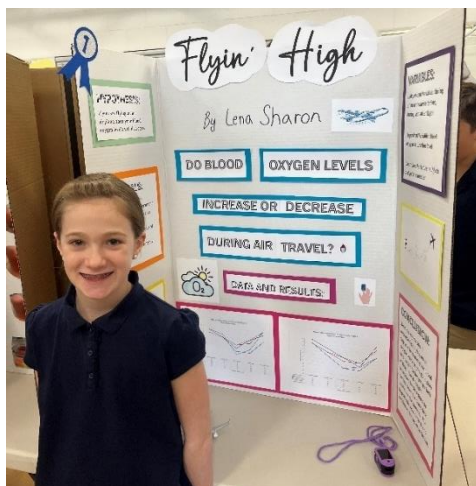
Mrs. Manley Patsy.Manley@matsuk12.us

Sturgis Super Students!

Language Arts--The focus for this week has been getting ready for next week's testing and reading about Native Americans. We reviewed reading through questions to find the key words, then searched the text for those key words. The class did a great job locating the pertinent information in the text. Once the information was located, we worked on turning that information into a written response. This is a challenging skill, but I am proud of the determination the students exhibited while they were challenged.

Math--I am pleased to report that almost all students have taken and passed the Chapter 10 test on multiplying and dividing fractions-- Way to go! We are down to just two chapters left in our math book. I have told the class that we will get to have a party if we finish the math book so we will be working extremely hard over the next two week to get to the end.

Mrs. Sturgis Sabra.Sturgis@matsuk12.us



K-5 Lab Classes



Third Grade: Students began working on their Viking shields this week! They first learned about important Viking symbols traditionally found on shields. After exploring different designs on practice paper, they painted the base of their shields. Next week, they will add their final designs.

Fourth Grade: Our fourth graders are creating Illuminated Letters. They started by learning the differences between serif and sans-serif fonts. This project is a multi-step process that requires patience and attention to detail, and they are doing a fantastic job!

Fifth Grade: Students are diving into printmaking, drawing inspiration from Japanese art. They began by sketching their designs on paper, transferring them onto linoleum blocks, and using linoleum cutters to carve out their designs. Keep an eye out for their stunning prints at the World Fair!



Kindergartners are still exploring different stories. This week, we did Cinderella and Henry Penny.

First and second grades worked on writing solid paragraphs with 4 or 5 sentences in each.

Ms. Kile



Español with Señorita Catarina

Kindergarten students are learning shapes, singing “Que Llueva” and enjoying dancing to Spanish nursery rhymes. First graders are learning clothing vocabulary and got to decide how they really feel about dried plantains using their Spanish vocabulary. Second Graders are working on their big project of the year in Spanish class. They are creating a new Alfabeto en Español to grace our Spanish classroom. All three primary grades are greatly enjoying the opportunity to listen to the simple children’s stories created especially for them by the 8th graders. Our primary students love these books unequivocally and have left many enthusiastic book reviews!



It has been a wonderful start back with 3rd, 4th and 5th grade.

Kindergarten learned how to get on Google Classroom. They worked on identifying letters on the keyboard.

First grade also learned to get on Google Classroom, identify letters on the keyboard and were introduced Google sheets. They are going to create their very own alphabet books!

Second grade is learning all about Google Sheets. We did a quick survey of food we eat for lunch and worked at entering the data from that question.

Mrs. Nielsen



What a week! The 5th graders rocked their science fair projects and presentations. Congratulations to Lena in first place, Samson in second, and Ruby in third. Well done, all!

Fourth grade dove into circulation and respiration, measuring pulse and breathing rates before and after exercise as well as modeling how fluids in our respiratory tract remove particles that we breath in.

Third grade explored how our brain controls our body, enjoying some curious optical illusions and brain tricks.

Next week we will finish out our current units and conclude intermediate science for the year with dissection in all three grades. Thank you, volunteers!

Ms. Heppner & Mr. Nick

Natalie.Heppner@matsuk12.us

Nicholas.Treinen@matsuk12.us



3rd grade - Ancient Rome - Geography, social classes, and Roman Republic/Caesar.

4th grade - Jumped into making personal Alaska maps!

2nd grade - Study, study, study for states/capitals test mixed with presenting their state slides presentations.

Mrs. Mayer & Mrs. Drummond



Middle School Spanish

Sixth graders are learning about definite and indefinite articles in Spanish. They also worked with partners and went on a web quest learning about different carnival celebrations in Spanish speaking countries.

Seventh graders are cementing the AR verb conjugations into their brains and working with transportation vocabulary this week. They have created several extremely suspect Used Transportation Lots that I urge you to visit.

Eighth grade Spatulas are finishing up with verbs like Gustar. They demonstrated a fair understanding of how these types of verbs work in their grammar test this week. They also learned about the different pronunciation of Spanish from Spain versus the rest of the Spanish speaking world. Eighth grade Sporks are working with the gerund. They played People Bingo: Gerund Edition and will be creating their own People Bingo this weekend. As always, the challenge is to do the assignment using the class's known vocabulary (contained in their Spanish Binder and Quizlet sets). Assignments that go beyond the class's vocabulary will need to be re-done.

I look forward to seeing their always interesting work on Monday.

Señorita Cady.Agoff@matsuk12.us



Outdoor Fitness

Outdoor fitness classes had a warm week running on the loop, then playing volleyball, basketball, badminton, or Capture the Flag. Both the trails and field still have big, wet soft spots which are make them vulnerable to damage. This has been the earliest breakup I can remember, so hopefully after a few weeks we can enjoy the forest trails again.

We expect students wear supportive, snug-fitting shoes with socks or light boots to every fitness class. A change of clothes and deodorant is advised for comfort after a run...

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



Sixth grade has been busy preparing for our AK Star testing next week and our highly anticipated Juneau trip.

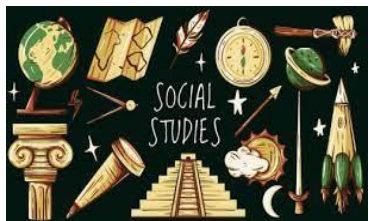
In addition to our test review, Mrs. Williams's language arts class has been working on Poetry. Mrs. Zerkel's class has been working on a collective informative essay.

In math, both classes are working on statistics.

In science, students wrapped up their unit on astronomy.

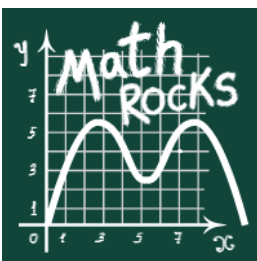
As always, please reach out if you have any questions or concerns. Have a great weekend!

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



Juneau keeps getting closer! This week the class created a small trifold to show all they have learned about Alaska's three branches of government. Next week we will take a closer look at the legislative process and talk about some of the ways bills can be stalled and never make it to a vote.

Mrs. Sturgis Sabra.Sturgis@matsuk12.us



Whew! We have been working hard in preparation for our AK STAR assessment next week, both advancing in our present chapter on volume and surface area as well as finishing the practice test for next week. Keep working hard on ALEKS and get lots of rest and fresh air as we get ready for next week!

Ms. Heppner Natalie.Heppner@matsuk12.us

“Happiness lies in the joy of achievement and the thrill of creative effort.” - Franklin D. Roosevelt

Wrights Winners!

Wright 7th LA: Students began a unit on poetry, their penultimate unit of the year! While focusing mainly on narrative poems, they briefly studied Emily Dickinson's more famous lyric poems. They also learned the TPCASTT analysis to translate more challenging poems. They worked steadily on their scripts; following peer review, they turned in a rough draft of all three scenes.

Wright 7th math: The class dove into Chapter 12's volume and surface area concepts this week. They also practiced for the Alaska STAR during warm up. Ten ALEKS topics are due each Monday.

Wright 7th history: It was Holocaust week, with a focus on the indoctrination of German citizens and steps toward genocide. Students took notes and did research on a variety of topics, including the US response and what it means to be complicit. Book groups met to complete their week 3 responses. Students should be working steadily on their reading - week 4 is next week - and their book projects, which are due April 14.

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

Mrs. Wright
Melodie.Wright@matsuk12.us



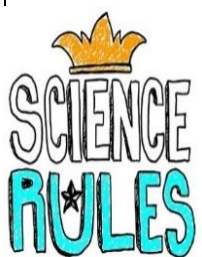
This week in English, students continued practice with our daily English skills in language, editing, and reading comprehension working with author's purpose and evaluating evidence. They demonstrated the retention of past assessed vocabulary words from weeks 21-24, as well as those with the root "therm". They were assigned 10 more words with the root "socio". Please work with your students on their spelling and definitions each week to support success. We continued reading Out of the Dust by Karen Hesse. They defined the third set of targeted vocabulary; answered questions, located textual evidence with page numbers, and practiced composing text-based evidence, short-constructed responses in preparation for the AK STAR ELA test next week. We spent class time going over the AK STAR Practice Test for ELA, as well, answering and discussing questions one at a time, practicing strategies, and gaining insight as to what to expect.

In Math, students prepared for and completed both summative assessments on Chapter 6, demonstrating mastery of skills and knowledge of targeted vocabulary. We also spent time going over the AK STAR Practice Test for Math, in anticipation of next week's state testing. We began Chapter 7 on Geometric Figures, covering Lesson 1: Angles and Lesson 2: Complementary and Supplementary Angles. 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. They should choose to work on topics that we are currently learning or those we have not gotten to yet, as they will be on the state test.

Students in History continued building geography skills, using atlases to identify answers to a variety of questions. We started our last unit of study on WWII. Students are in the process of building an ABC Book on topics connected to WWII to share with younger students during our last class period at the end of the month. They will summarize the topic's significance and illustrate it with colored visuals (crayons or colored pencils only). Students have learned about six topics – the Treaty of Versailles and other causes of WWII, Fascism, Operation Barbarossa, the Lend-Lease Act, the military strategy of Blitzkrieg, and a bit about Joseph Stalin. By Monday, they should have six pages completed (letters T, F, O, L, B, & J). Students also started reading Anne Frank: Diary of a Young Girl (pages 1-76) to enhance understanding of what it was like during the Holocaust. We held our first Harkness discussion covering the first 27 pages. Our next discussion will be on Monday.

Together, this will be a great year!

Ms. Twohy Tuesday.Twohy@matsuk12.us



Bacteria, algae, and fungi, oh my! These were some of the things we talked about in science this week. In class we have been looking at the way plants and animals have evolved over time. Each student is researching information about a specific geologic time and creating a presentation on that time period. These presentations will have a summary of what occurred during the time period, focusing on the plants and animals that lived during that time. Also, there will be a map of Alaska showing where in the state we have fossil evidence of that time period, and a map of the world during that period. Students are learning about all the fascinating creatures as they rose to prominence and then died off. They learned that 99% of all living things that ever lived have gone extinct. We are part of the 1%! This geological time period project is due on Thursday April 10th. I am looking forward to some fabulous projects!

Mrs. Dunham Susan.Dunham@matsuk12.us





Well April is upon us and spring is definitely in the air! With this in mind, please be sure your 8th grade is prepared to go outside when the opportunity presents itself, including being ready for each day's weather to include jackets and appropriate shoes, as well as weather appropriate Outdoor Fitness gear on Mondays. We are seeing a marked increase in students being ill-prepared for Outdoor Fitness, particularly not having appropriate shoes. Thank you for your support in reminding your child to arrive to school prepared.

History in 8th grade has been very powerful as we dig into the impact of British colonialism on India and the Punjabi people. The students learned about the Caste system of India, and we have also been discussing many of the uncomfortable truths colonialism. These are important concepts in understanding why we must remain vigilant to ensure such atrocities don't

happen again in the future.

My math students have been total rockstars and I am truly amazed at the progress they have made this year. As of today, two students in our class have completed their 8th grade ALEKS pies and are getting a jump start on the Algebra I concepts for next year. Moreover, several other students are making tremendous progress and will be completing their 8th grade course in the next few days. I am so incredibly impressed by their MASTERY of such huge topics. Our class focus has been equations with two variables and the class is doing fabulously well!



English I students are incredibly busy as we read Elie Wiesel's *Night* AND they are working on the Hero's Journey narratives. The deadlines are outlined in the Google classroom and the most up-to-date calendar is posted there as well.

With the longer days upon us, many students are sharing that they are staying awake until the wee hours of the morning and then struggling to be ready to learn the next day. We have state testing next week so please help ensure your child is getting adequate sleep! Thank you!

Have a fantastic weekend & enjoy the increased sunlight,

Mrs. Molina Stacy.Molina@matsuk12.us

Manley's Minute: 8th Grade LA

This week, we wrapped up reading Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. Students enjoyed the plot twist of mistaken identities, comedy and love. To celebrate the end of the unit, students participated in a fun and engaging escape room! They applied problem solving skills and teamwork while reflecting on the themes and plot of the story.

As we are gearing up for testing next week, thank you for helping to set your student up for success by making sure they get ample sleep, a nutritious breakfast and arrive at school on time.

Mrs. Manley Patsy.Manley@matsuk12.us



In Algebra 1, we are covering probability and statistics, through some lessons in the book and the Statistics report that students are working on. Everyone is working incredibly hard, and I am very excited to see what they come up with for their reports.



We are gearing up for the Science Fair, which is coming up here really soon! I am excited to see all of the different projects that these students have been working very hard on.

Mr. Farring Timothy.Farring@matsuk12.us