

JAMES MADISON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Monthly Cat Tracks August 2025

Dear JMMS Families,

Welcome to a new school year! I hope your summer was filled with rest, fun, and time to recharge. As we prepare to welcome students back to school, we are filled with excitement for the year ahead.

Middle school is a time of incredible growth—academically, socially, and emotionally. Our team is dedicated to creating a safe, supportive, and engaging environment where every student can thrive. Whether your child is stepping into middle school for the first time or entering their final year with us, we're here to partner with you in making this a successful and memorable year.

In the coming weeks, we encourage you to:

- Complete the **Annual Update** in Infinite Campus to ensure we have the most current contact information and health details. [Here is a link](#) that will take you to Infinite Campus to complete the OLR.
- Attend our **Open House on Wednesday, August 27th from 4:30-6:30**, where you'll meet teachers, explore classrooms, and learn more about the learning experiences planned.
- Review the Back to School mailing information that was sent home to each family in the USPS mail.
- Review and complete our [JMMS Virtual Registration Form](#).

Please take a few minutes to read through the rest of this newsletter for important information about start dates, supplies, and updated policies—including our **bell-to-bell phone-free expectations**, which help keep the focus on learning.

We are excited to build strong relationships with your children and look forward to the year ahead with optimism and purpose. If you have any questions or need support as the year begins, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Let's make it a great year—together.

Warm regards,
Poyee V. Xiong
Principal, James Madison Middle School

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Read all about it...

James Madison Virtual Registration: Please click here to review some important information about the upcoming school year and attend our virtual JMMS registration which is different from the AASD Annual Update/Online Registration. <https://forms.gle/mkjotEAm3hsrBYBS8>

Bell to Bell Phone Free Middle Schools in the AASD: Please review the JMMS Smartphone/Personal Device family letter that each middle school is sharing with their school community. This information was also shared last week in an email with all families.

- [English Version](#) [Spanish Version](#) [Hmong Version](#)

Athletic Paperwork for 2025-26: If your child will be in 7th or 8th grade and plans to participate in a sport or co-curricular activity next year, please read the [Athletic Letter](#) carefully. The letter includes a link to our **mandatory online paperwork**, which can be completed from any computer or smartphone.

Important Reminders:

- A hard copy of a current WIAA Physical Examination Form, signed and dated by a medical professional, must be submitted to the JMMS office to finalize eligibility.
- All paperwork, the physical, and the \$40 participation fee must be completed before your child is allowed to practice or compete.

Students with incomplete information will not be eligible to participate until everything is submitted. We strongly encourage you to complete the paperwork, turn in the physical, and pay the fee as soon as possible to avoid any delays. This information is also outlined on our [Madison website](#) under athletics.

Fall Sports first practices: [Sign up for a Fall Sport by clicking here!](#)

- Cross Country: August 18, 6-7pm, parent meeting at 7-7:30pm, meet in JMMS cafeteria
- 8th Grade Rebels Football: August 4, 5-7pm, Appleton East practice fields
- Softball: August 18, 3:30-5:30, meet at the Appleton East Varsity softball field
- Volleyball: August 18, 3:30-5:00, meet in the large gym at JMMS

Back-to-School Tips

- Start easing back into school-year routines: earlier bedtimes, device-free evenings, and consistent wake-up times
- Talk with your child about goals for the year—both academic and personal.
- Remind them that it's normal to feel nervous and excited. We'll work together to make the transition as smooth as possible.
- [Quick link](#) to our school supply list

 **Counseling & Support Services:** Our counselors are here to support students academically, socially, and emotionally. If your child has any special considerations or needs as they return to school, please reach out—we're here to help.

Celebrate our teachers' return with us!

Please consider purchasing an item from our [Amazon List](#). We will be giving out teacher prizes to our teachers when they return on August 25th!

Literacy Focus at Madison Middle School:

Our school improvement goals include increasing achievement of our Students with IEP's through implementing research-based Specially Designed Instruction and needs-based programs and services.

Across the school, we are placing a strong emphasis on **literacy across the entire school day**—not just during reading and language arts time. Students will learn strategies for and engage in reading, writing, speaking, and listening activities in **all subject areas**, from science to social studies to math.

Research shows that when students are given multiple opportunities to practice literacy skills across the curriculum, their overall academic achievement improves. According to the *National Institute for Literacy* and the *International Literacy Association*, integrating literacy into all content areas helps students deepen comprehension, retain information, and develop critical thinking skills. In fact, literacy-rich instruction in every subject has been linked to higher student engagement and long-term academic success.

All of our teachers will be trained in sheltered instruction protocols (SIOP):

SIOP Model:

The SIOP Model is a framework for teaching content, ensuring that instruction is comprehensible and supports language acquisition alongside content learning.

SWIRL as a Strategy:

The SWIRL strategy, or approach, is a way to incorporate all four language skills (speaking, writing, interacting, reading, and listening) into lessons, ensuring that all students have opportunities to practice and develop all areas of their language and literacy abilities.

How it works:

- **Speak:** Teachers encourage students to share their ideas orally, fostering fluency and communication skills.
- **Write:** Students are given opportunities to write down their thoughts and ideas, reinforcing language learning and promoting literacy.
- **Interact:** Teachers facilitate discussions and interactions, allowing students to practice their language skills in a social context.
- **Read:** Students engage with various texts, expanding their vocabulary and comprehension skills.
- **Listen:** Students actively listen to teachers and peers, improving their listening comprehension and ability to understand different perspectives.

Some of our teachers already spent this summer learning more about how to teach reading across the day by participating in this book study:

Jennifer Serravallo's *Teaching Reading Across the Day* emphasizes that literacy instruction should not be confined to a single block of reading time, but instead woven seamlessly into all parts of the school day.

Teachers will walk away with practical strategies to:

- **Integrate reading skills across content areas**, such as math, science, and social studies, to reinforce comprehension and vocabulary in varied contexts.
- **Use authentic reading opportunities** throughout the day—like reading directions, word problems, primary sources, or nonfiction texts—to build fluency and critical thinking.
- **Differentiate reading support** for all learners by using conferring, small groups, and targeted strategies based on student needs.
- **Support reading through writing, speaking, and listening**, recognizing how all language domains contribute to deeper comprehension.
- **Create a culture of literacy**, where reading is viewed as essential, meaningful, and joyful in every classroom setting.

JMMS STAFF
Summer Book Study Meeting

HELLO!

TEACHING
Reading
ACROSS
THE DAY

Our leaders and staff are engaging in a summer virtual book study on strategies for teaching literacy in all content areas. We hope you are enjoying summer!

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